

Star of the West

"We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations; that all nations shall become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; that diversity of religion shall cease and differences of race be annulled. So it shall be. These fruitless strifes; these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the 'Most Great Peace' shall come."

Words of BAHA 'ULLAH.

VOL. 13

BAHA 1, 78 (March 21, 1922)

NO. 1

The Bahai Revelation—The Religious Need of the Time

By CHARLES MASON REMEY

IN this day the religious formulae of the past—superstitions, creeds and dogmas—no longer ease the conscience of the world nor bring satisfaction to the mind of the individual adherent of these systems of thought. Humanity is in need of a spiritual power and knowledge with which to meet and solve the problems and conditions of this new day and age. Hence, the general changing and unsettled condition of the religious world which is causing a large and an increasing number of progressive people to quit thinking within the prescribed limits of the religious thought of the past, and to search diligently for those universal fundamental truths of the spiritual realm of life and being, the knowledge of which truths is the religion of God.

The Bahai Movement offers to the world an all-inclusive, universal, spiritual teaching, so broad that people of all races and of all creeds find place therein. It is essentially a religious movement, a spiritual teaching, free from the limitations of sect and "ism," and constructive in its building upon the true faith of the individual and upon the pure teach-

ings of the past, thus increasing love and devotion to God and creating within each soul the desire to manifest the light of these divine attributes through brotherly service to one's fellowmen.

OBJECT.

The object of the Bahai Revelation is the religious unification of all people. The teaching has come into the world to fulfill all divine teaching of the past. It stands as the goal toward which truth has always worked, through its appearance in the prophets sent unto various peoples of the past ages, and it is the beginning of that age of divine enlightenment and peace, the coming of which has been the theme of all revelations of the past—The Kingdom of God on earth. Thus the Bahai Movement establishes the universal religion which is the foundation of inter-religious, inter-racial and international brotherhood and peace. It offers to mankind a practical basis of unity, one which is in direct line with the great world needs of this age, and it is paving the way for the great universal civilization which will evolve as people of all religions, races and nations

cipline and rules.' His Holiness Christ answered them: 'These are the days of marriage and not the days of discipline. The days of rules and discipline will come afterwards.' This means that the fruit of the trees will be gathered in summer and not in the spring. There were some people who appeared at Khorassan, and in reality revived the religion of His Holiness the Prophet, otherwise his religion would have been utterly destroyed. These people were souls who were severed from all desire save service.

"Now also our hope is that in these days the Holy Cause may yield its fruits.

That the friends of God may become so self-sacrificing that the Cause may bring forth much fruit. The days are passing, before long a whirlwind of dust will place everybody in their graves.

"As long as we are living we must be all the time thinking of the promotion of the Word of God, so that the heavenly life may illumine all the world and may change this world of dust into paradise and change this wilderness of thorns into a rose garden."

(Translated by Mirza Azizollah S. Bahadur. Copied by E. H. S., Teheran, Persia.)

"The Tree of Life is just beginning to grow . . . This Tree of Life is the *Book of the Covenant*"

The Last Tablet Revealed by Abdul-Baha for the Bahais in America

To all the friends of God in America—The Glory of God rest upon them!

He Is God!

O ye friends of God!

Abdul-Baha is day and night thinking of you and mentioning you, for the friends of God are dear to him. Every morning at dawn I supplicate the Kingdom of God and ask that you may be filled with the breath of the Holy Spirit, so that you may become brilliant candles, shine with the light of guidance and dispel the darkness of error. Rest assured that the confirmations of the Abha Kingdom will continuously reach you.

Through the power of the Divine springtime, the downpour of the celestial clouds and the heat of the Sun of Reality, the Tree of Life is just beginning to grow. Before long it will produce buds, bring forth leaves and fruits and cast its shade over the East and the West. This Tree of Life is the *Book of the Covenant*.

In America, in these days, severe winds have surrounded the lamp of the Covenant, hoping that this brilliant light may be extinguished and this Tree of Life may be uprooted. Certain weak, capricious, malicious and ignorant souls have been shaken by the earthquake of hatred, of animosity, have striven to efface the divine Covenant and Testament, and render the clear water muddy so that in it they might fish.* They have arisen against the Center of the Covenant like the people of the *Beyan* [The Book of the Bab] who attacked the Blessed Beauty (BĀHĀ 'ULLĀH) and every moment uttered a calumny. Every day they seek a pretext and secretly arouse doubts, so that the Covenant of BĀHĀ 'ULLĀH may be completely annihilated in America.

O friends of God! Be awake, be awake, be vigilant, be vigilant! His Holiness the Bab made a Covenant for BĀHĀ 'ULLĀH with all the people of the *Beyan*,

*This is a saying in Persian meaning: "One creates trouble in order to profit by it."

so that on the day of the appearance of "Him-whom-God-shall-manifest"; and of the radiation of the light of BAHA 'ULLAH, they might believe and be assured, arise in service and promulgate the Word of God. Later the people of the *Beyan*, like Mirza Yahya and many others, arose against the Blessed Beauty, invented every sort of calumny, aroused doubt in the minds of the people, and from the books of His Holiness the Bab, that were full of references to "Him-whom-God-shall-manifest," tried to prove BAHA 'ULLAH false. Every day they wrote and spread a pamphlet opposing BAHA 'ULLAH, caused trouble and perplexity among the people; they inflicted the greatest injury and cruelty, yet counted themselves firm in the Covenant of His Holiness the Bab. However, when the light of the Covenant of His Holiness the Bab lighted the universe, then all the faithful and sincere souls were freed from the darkness of the violation of the people of the *Beyan* and shone like brilliant candles.

BAHA 'ULLAH in all the Tablets and Epistles forbade the true and firm friends from associating with and meeting the violators of the Covenant of His Holiness the Bab, saying that no one should go near them because their breath is like the poison of the snake that kills instantly.

In the *Hidden Words* He says: "Esteem the friendship of the just, but withhold both mind and hand from the company of the wicked."

Addressing one of the friends He says: "It is clear to your honor that before long satan, in the garb of man, will reach that land and will try to mislead the friends of the Divine Beauty through temptations which arouse the desires of self, and will cause them to follow the footsteps of satan away from the right and glorious path, and prevent them from attaining the blessed shore of the King of Oneness. This is a hidden information of which we have informed the chosen ones lest they may be deprived of their praiseworthy station by associating with the embodiments of hatred. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all the friends of God to shun any person in whom they perceive the emanation of hatred for the glorious Beauty of Abha, though he may quote all the heavenly utterances and cling to all the Books." He continues, glorious be His Name: "Protect yourselves with utmost vigilence, lest you be entrapped in the snare of deception and fraud." This is the advice of the Pen of Destiny.

In another address He says: "Therefore, to avoid these people will be the nearest path by which to attain the Divine good-pleasure; because their breath is infectious, like unto poison." In another Tablet He says: "O Kazim, close thine eye to the people of the world; drink the water of knowledge from the heavenly Cup Bearers and listen not to the nonsensical utterances of the manifestations of satan, because the manifestations of satan are occupying today the observation posts in the glorious path of God and preventing the people by every means of deception and ruse (from following the path). Before long you will witness the turning away of the people of *Beyan* from the Manifestation of the Merciful."

In another Tablet He says: "Endeavor to your utmost to protect yourselves, because satan appears in different robes and appeals to everyone according to each person's own way, until he becomes like unto him (satan), then he will leave him alone." In another Tablet He says: "Shun any man in whom you perceive enmity for this Servant, though he may appear in the garb of piety, of the former and later people, or may arise to the worship of the two worlds." In another Tablet He says: "O Mahdi! Be informed by these utterances and shun the manifestations of the people of hell, the rising-place of Nimrods (King who cast Abraham into the fire), the rising-place of Pharaohs,

the fountain of Tagut (satan, or any object worshipped except God), and the soothsayers."

Again He says: "Say, O my friend and my pure ones! Listen to the voice of this beloved prisoner in this Great Prison. If you detect in any man the least perceptible breath of violation, shun him and keep away from him." Then He says: "Verily, they are manifestations of satan." In another Tablet He says: "And turn your faces to the Great Countenance for before long the foul odors of the wicked persons will pass over those regions. God willing you may remain protected during those days."

In the 18th chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, 6th to 9th verses, His Holiness Christ says: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee."

And in the 21st chapter and 38th verse of the Gospel of Matthew He says: "But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him." Also in the 22nd chapter and the 14th verse of the Gospel of Matthew He says: "For many are called, but few are chosen."

In the holy writings of His Holiness BAHA 'ULLAH, in a thousand places at least, the violators of the Covenant are execrated and condemned. Some of the heavenly passages will be mentioned.

In short, all the friends in America know that the founders of this sedition, namely, violators of the Covenant, are people whose aims are known to all the friends. Yet, O glorious God, they are deceived by them!

Praise be to God, you know with perfect clearness that His Holiness Christ was extremely kind and loving, yet there were people like Judas Iscariot who, by their own deeds, separated themselves from Christ. Therefore, what fault of Christ's could that be? Now the Nakazene (violators) say that Abdul-Baha is despotic, drives some people out and excommunicates like the Pope. This is not so at all! Any person who has left (the Cause) did so because of his own actions, intrigues and evil plots. If this objection be raised against Abdul-Baha, they must also object to the Blessed Beauty who, with distinct and conclusive command, forbids the friends from companionship and familiarity with the violators of the people of *Beyan*.

Supplication:

O Lord of the Covenant! O luminous Star of the world! The persecuted Abdul-Baha has fallen into the hands of persons who appear as sheep and in reality are ferocious wolves; they exercise every sort of oppression, endeavor to destroy the foundation of the Covenant, and claim to be Bahais. They strike at the root of the Tree of the Covenant, and count themselves persecuted, just as did the people of *Beyan* who broke the Covenant of His Holiness the Bab, and from six directions shot arrows of reproach and calumny at Thy blessed body. Notwithstanding this great oppression they call themselves oppressed. Now this servant of Thy threshold has also fallen into the hands of oppressors.

Every hour they contrive new intrigues and fraud, and bring forth new calumny.

O thou BAHĀ'ULLĀH! Protect the stronghold of Thy Cause from these thieves and safeguard the lamps of the Kingdom from these malevolent winds!

O thou BAHĀ'ULLĀH! Abdul-Baha did not rest a moment until he had raised Thy Cause and the Standard of the Kingdom of Abha waved over the world. Now some people have arisen with intrigues and evil aspirations to trample this flag in America, but my hope is in Thy confirmations. Leave me not single, alone and oppressed! As Thou didst promise, verbally and in writing, that Thou wouldst protect this gazelle of the pasture of Thy love from the attacks of the hounds of hatred and animosity, and that Thou wouldst safeguard this persecuted sheep from the claws and teeth of the ferocious wolves, now do I await the appearance of Thy bounties and the realization of Thy definite promise. Thou art the true Protector, and Thou art the Lord of the Covenant! Therefore, protect this Lamp which Thou hast lighted, from the severe winds.

O thou BAHĀ'ULLĀH! I have forsaken the world and its people, am heart-broken because of the unfaithful—and am weary. In the cage of this world I flutter like a frightened bird and long for the flight to Thy Kingdom.

O thou BAHĀ'ULLĀH! Make me to drink the cup of sacrifice, and free me! Relieve me from these difficulties, hardships, afflictions and troubles! Thou art the Assister, the Helper, the Protector and the Supporter! *

Now, some of the writings, prayers and verses of the Blessed Beauty will be mentioned in which association with the violators is forbidden:—

In the Persian Commune He says: "Protect this Servant from the doubts of the persons who have turned away from Thee and are deprived of the sea of Thy knowledge. O God, O God! Protect this Servant through Thy bounty and generosity from the evil of Thine enemies who have broken Thy Covenant and Testament."

In another place He says: "O my God, and the aim of my life! Protect this weak one with Thy mighty hand from the voice of the Na'ik."*

Also He says: "Ye have taken one whom I hate to be your beloved, and my enemy to be your friend."

Also He says: "The company of the wicked ones increaseth sorrow, and the association with the pious ones removes rust from the heart. The one who desires to associate with God, let him associate with His friends; the one who wishes to hear the words of God, let him hear the words of His chosen ones."

Also He says: "Do not associate with the wicked, because the company of the wicked changeth the light of life into the fire of remorse. If thou asketh for the bounties of the Holy Spirit, associate with the pure ones, because they have quaffed the eternal chalice from the hands of the Cupbearer of eternity."

Also He says: "The greatest of degradation is to leave the shadow of God and enter under the shadow of satan."

Also He says: "O ye servants! There is nothing in this heart save the effulgences of the splendor of the morn of meeting (with God), and it does not speak but the absolute truth from your Lord. Therefore, do not follow self; break not God's Covenant and violate not His Testament. Proceed with perfect

*Na'ik—Croaker. Also refers to the calf worshipped by some of the Israelites.

steadfastness and with heart, soul and tongue, turn unto Him, and be not of the thoughtless."

And still He says: "You have forgotten God's Covenant and violated His Testament."

And again He says: "If anyone comes to you with the book of the wicked, put him behind you."

Again: "Among the people are those who have broken the Covenant, and among them are those who have followed what was ordained by the All-knower, the All-wise. My affliction is not from my imprisonment and persecution, or from what comes to me from my rebellious servants, but from the actions of those who attribute themselves to this persecuted One and commit among the people that which is degrading to the honor of God. Verily, they are of the seditious!"

Likewise speaking for the violators He says: "Thou hast made the pulpits for Thy mention, the proclamation of Thy Word and the manifestation of Thy Cause, and we [the violators] have ascended them to proclaim the breaking of Thy Covenant and Testament."

Likewise He says: "Take what has been ordained for you and follow not those who have broken God's Covenant and Testament, for lo! They are the people of error."

Again He says: "Those who have broken the Covenant of God, notwithstanding His commands, and have turned away, they are the people of error before the Most Opulent, the Exalted."

And He says: "Those who have been faithful to God's Covenant are the highest ones in the sight of the exalted Lord. Those who have become negligent are of the people of fire in the sight of Thy Lord, the Beloved, the Independent."

Likewise He says: "Blessed is the servant or maid-servant who believes, and woe to the polytheists who have violated the Covenant of God and His Testament, and deviated from My right path."

Likewise He says: "I implore of Thee not to deprive me of what Thou possessest or what Thou hast ordained for Thy chosen ones who have not broken Thy Covenant and Testament. Say! Die with your hatred! Verily, He is come by whom the pillars of the world have been shaken, and because of whom the feet have stumbled, save those who have not broken the Covenant, but have followed what God revealed in His Book."

Likewise He says: "The Supreme Concourse will pray for the one who is adorned with the garment of faithfulness between heaven and earth; but he who breaks the Covenant is cursed by heaven and earth."

Likewise He says: "Take hold of what has been revealed unto you, with a power superior to that of the hands of the unbelievers who have violated the Covenant of God and His Testament, and have turned from the Face."

Also He says: "O Yahya! Verily, the Book has come! Take it with a power from us and do not follow those who have broken the Covenant of God and His Testament, and have denied what has been revealed from the Powerful, the All-knower."

Likewise He says: "I awoke this morning, O my God, under the shadow of Thy great bounty and have taken, with Thy power, the pen to mention Thee with such mention as shall be a light unto the pure and fire unto the wicked who have violated Thy Covenant, denied Thy verses and put aside the Kawther

of Life which appeared by Thy command and was revealed by the finger of Thy will."

In a Tablet to Abdul-Baha He says also: "O God! This is a Branch which has sprung forth from the Tree of Oneness, the Sadrat of Thy unity. O God, Thou seest him (the Branch) looking to Thee and clinging to the rope of Thy bounties. Protect him in the shelter of Thy mercy! Thou knowest, O my God, that I do not desire him save for what Thou dost desire him, and I do not choose him save for what Thou dost choose him. Assist him with the hosts of Thy earth and Thy heaven. Assist, O God, those who assist him and choose those who choose him. Confirm those who draw nigh unto him and debase those who deny him and do not want him. O God, Thou seest that at this moment of revelation my pen shakes and my being trembles. I ask Thee, by my impatience in Thy love and my willingness to proclaim Thy Cause, to ordain for him and his friends what Thou hast ordained for Thy Messengers and the faithful ones of Thy revelation. Verily, Thou art the Powerful and the Omnipotent! By God, O people, my eye weeps, and the eye of Ali (the Fourth Caliph) weeps in the Supreme Concourse; my heart throbs, and the heart of Mohammed throbs in the Courts of Abha; my heart and the hearts of the prophets lament with the people of knowledge, if you are of those who are possessed with sight. My sorrow is not for myself, but for the one who comes after me in the shadow of the Cause with a clear, undeniable reign; because these will not acknowledge his manifestation and will deny his evidences and verses, will dispute his power, will antagonize him and will be traitors to his Cause, as they did to his person in those days, and ye were witnesses."

Again in a Tablet to Abdul-Baha He says: "O Greatest Branch! Verily, thy illness caused me sorrow, but God will cure thee, and He is the most generous and best helper. Glory be upon thee and upon those who serve thee and encircle thee! Woe and torment be upon him who opposes and torments thee! Blessed is he who befriends thee, and hell be for him who opposes thee."

Likewise He says: "Is it possible that after the dawning of the Sun of Thy Testament from the horizon of Thy greatest Tablet, that any foot shall slip away from the right path? We said, O my supreme pen, it behooves thee to do as thou hast been bidden by God, the Exalted and the Great. Do not ask about that which melts thy heart and those of the denizens of paradise who encompass Thy wonderful Cause. Thou shouldest not know what We have hidden from thee. Thy Lord is the Veiler and the Knower. Turn thy most luminous face to the greatest aspect and say: O my merciful God! Decorate the heaven of *Beyan* with the stars of steadfastness, trust and truth. Verily, Thou art the powerful over what Thou willest. There is no God save Thee, the Wise and the Generous!"

In short, from these holy utterances and those of His Holiness Christ it becomes clear, evident and proved, that man should associate with people who are firm in the Covenant and Testament, and befriend the pure ones; because bad associates bring about infection of bad qualities. It is like leprosy; it is impossible for a man to associate and befriend a leper and not be infected. This command is for the sake of protection and to safeguard.

Consider this text of the New Testament: the brothers of His Holiness Christ came to Him and it was said, "These are your brothers." He answered that his brothers were those who believed in God, and refused to associate with his own brothers.

Likewise, Kurat-ul-Ain, who is celebrated in all the world, when she believed in God and was attracted to the divine breaths, forsook her two eldest sons; although they were her two eldest children, because they did not become believers, she thereafter did not meet them. She said, "All the friends of God are my children, but these two are not. I will have nothing to do with them."

Consider! The Divine Gardener cuts off the dry or weak branch from the good tree and grafts to it (the tree) a branch from another tree. He both separates and unites. This is that which His Holiness Christ says: that from all the world they come and enter the Kingdom, and the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out. (Matt. 8: 11, 12). Noah's grandson, Canaan, was detested in the sight of Noah, and others were accepted. The brothers of the Blessed Beauty detached themselves from Him, and the Blessed Beauty never met them. He said: "This is an eternal separation between you and me." All this was not because the Blessed Beauty was despotic, but because these persons, through their own actions and words, deprived themselves from the bounties and bestowals of the Blessed Beauty. His Holiness Christ did not exercise despotism in the case of Judas Iscariot and His own brothers, but they separated themselves.

In short the point is this: Abdul-Baha is extremely kind, but when the disease is leprosy, what am I to do? Just as in bodily diseases we must prevent intermingling and infection and put into effect sanitary laws, because the infectious physical diseases uproot the foundation of humanity; likewise one must protect and safeguard the blessed souls from the breaths and fatal spiritual diseases, otherwise violation, like the plague, will become a contagion and all will perish. In the early days, after the ascension of the Blessed Beauty, the center of violation was alone; little by little the infection spread, and this was due to companionship and association.

This has been translated after the dear Master's Ascension & the Three Seals affixed to the original text after him. Shoghi 23/1/22.

(Translated by Mrs. Hoagg, Ali Mohammed Bakir and Rouhi after the ascension.)

Letter accompanying above message.

Haifa, Palestine,
January 24, 1922.

My dear Corinne (True):

The enclosed Tablet is one that the beloved Master wrote shortly before his ascension, but did not sign. The original is being sent to Roy Wilhelm, but you will find that Shoghi Effendi has affixed the seals of the Master to the original in Persia and also put a note that explains itself.

. . . . It is to be hoped that this heart-breaking appeal of the Master will not have been in vain; that his call to the firm ones to protect the Cause for which he lived and suffered, will awaken

them to the realization of what "protection" means. Can any one longer feel that because the Master was loving and kind to his enemies, even the Nakazene, that anyone else can do as he did? It is very clear that our duty is to obey his commands regarding this and no longer play with fire. You who have been here know how strict the Master was concerning the association with the violators of the Covenant here. Yet I have seen Badi 'Ullah and his family in the house of the Master. He was the law-maker and could break his own law; but we are his flock that must be protected. I do pray that all the people

may become awakened to this duty through this saddest of appeals.

. . . . Before long the Will (and Testament) of the dear Master will be ready for America and elsewhere. Shoghi Effendi is translating it now. How wonderfully the Beloved provided for the protection of the Cause. This will be a happiness to the sincere and a test to the weak. Let us pray that

the friends in America will arise with strength and goodwill to obey and to serve. This is the least we can do now, that the beloved Master may be pleased with us, and forgive our many omissions as well as commissions. . . .

Much love to all the friends and to each one of your family.

Affectionately,

Emogene (Hoagg).

A glimpse of Abdul-Baha as the Gardener

See illustration page 8

Pasadena, Calif.
Nov. 15th, 1921.

My Dear Miss Buikema:

I have not forgotten that you accorded to me the great privilege of sending you some words regarding our recent visit to the Master, Abdul-Baha, that you might use them perhaps to advantage in the STAR OF THE WEST. I am so happy to be able to share with the friends the wonderful impressions which we received there and to send you, for publication, the accompanying photograph. This picture was taken in the garden surrounding the Shrine of BAHA 'ULLAH at Bahje on the morning of May 1st of this year for Mr. French and me.

We had spent two days in the presence of our Master in Bahje, accompanying him at morn and evening into the Shrine to pray and supplicate at the Holy Threshold. On this particular morning, Sunday, the first of May, as we passed through that beautiful garden brilliant with early spring flowers, I begged the Master to grant us the favor of pausing for a photograph in order that I might bring back to the friends in America this glimpse of him as he stood among his flowers. How near it brings him! To me, no picture which we have ever had is quite so typical. Truly, he is the Gardener, and in the hearts he is planting only seeds of Love.

During the three days which we passed in his presence at Bahje, the strongest impressions which I received all bore

upon the necessity of *Obedience* and *Reverence*. It may be too much to expect that all will be equally reverent, for that only comes with a deeper perception of the station of the Center of the Covenant. But even those who are attracted superficially to the Bahai teachings must recognize the justice of the commands of Abdul-Baha, and that all human and spiritual welfare must lie in obedience to those commands.

I asked one question which will be of interest to all the Assemblies and the answer an infallible guide. It had distressed me greatly that, in some places I had seen and known of, extraneous matter was being introduced into the regular Bahai meetings until these meetings had lost their spiritual illumination, growing thereby into intellectual pastimes rather than into an humble and reverent attitude toward the *Words* of the Messengers. When I mentioned these things to the Master he looked up with that inimitable smile and said: "*Ask them where in the teachings of BAHA 'ULLAH they find these things.*"

The answer was so sweet, so courteous and so final that I leave it with the friends to ponder upon, hoping that it may bind us more and more closely together in pursuance of the Light which is to be found only in the pure teachings.

Faithfully yours in the service of the Center of the Covenant of God.

Nellie S. French.