

Some Notes on Baha'i Proofs Based on the Qur'an

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I. INVESTIGATION OF TRUTH

1. We are told in this quotation that even if a bad man should bring us news we ought to investigate: "O Believers: If any bad man come to you with news, clear it up at once, lest through ignorance ye harm others" and "speedily have to repent of what you have done." (Hujurat 49:6)
2. It is the duty of every Muslim to investigate the claim found in the Bahá'í teachings that the Day of judgement, repeatedly promised in the Qur'án, has indeed come, and that in the blessed persons of the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh we find the fulfilment of the prophecies regarding the two Manifestations to appear on that Day, i.e. the Mihdí and the return of Christ to the Sunni, and the Qá'im and the return of Imam Husayn to the Shi'as.
3. Whilst it is true that in the Qur'án we are told that Islam is the one and "true religion of God" and that Muhammad is the "Seal of the Prophets", this should not stop the God-fearing Muslim from fully investigating the truth about the Bahá'í Faith because:
 - a. The Qur'án calls upon us to investigate the truth, and not to imitate blindly.
 - b. We find in the Bahá'í Faith a key which makes the Qur'án itself explain to us the true meanings of "Islam", "Seal of the Prophets" and the "Day of Judgment".
4. In the Qur'án we are told that it would be wrong to imitate blindly one's parents or spiritual leaders.

Let us see how the verses of the Qur'án confirm this point:

- a. Muhammad explains how the unbelievers were led to turn down His message merely because they wanted to follow their fathers. According to the Qur'án the excuse of such unbelievers, never accepted by God, was: "Verily we found Our fathers of that persuasion, and verily, by their footsteps do we guide ourselves." (Zukhruf-43:21)
- b. Muhammad further explains that the desire to imitate one's parents was true also in religions before Him: "And thus never before Thy time did we send a Warner to any city but its wealthy ones said: 'Verily we found our fathers with a religion, and in their tracks we tread.'" (Zukhruf-43:22)
- c. The Qur'án also describes the condition of unbelievers when judged by God, and shows how the only excuse given by them would be that they were misled by their leaders—but, such an

excuse would not be accepted by God: “Oh our Lord! Indeed we obeyed our chiefs and our great ones and they misled us from the way of God.” (Ahzab-33:67)

5. Let us not also argue that we must follow what the majority of men believe. Note this verse:
“But if thou obey most men in the land, from the path of God will they mislead thee” (An'am – 6:116)
6. Let us remember that the Qur'án, which was sent by Almighty God for the guidance of men, could also be misleading, if not properly understood. This makes the investigation of truth on the part of every Muslim an absolute necessity: “Many will He mislead by such parables - and many guide...”. (Baqarah: 2:24)
7. Furthermore, the following verse teaches us that when an Apostle of God appears, men are likely to oppose Him, as He always comes with that which their “souls desire not”:
“So oft then as an Apostle cometh to you with that which your souls desire not, swell ye with pride, and treat some as impostors and slay others?” (Baqarah – 2:87)
8. Finally, let us be confident in our search for God's truth He will assuredly assist us:
“And whoso maketh efforts for us, in our ways will we guide them.” (Ankabut – 29:69)

II. THE MEANING OF ISLAM

Because of the following three verses in the Qur'án:

- a. “The true religion with God is Islam”. (Imran-3:17)
- b. “Whoso desireth any other religion than Islam, that religion shall never be accepted from him. and in the next world he shall be among the lost.” (Imran-3:79)
- c. “This day have I perfected your religion for you, and have filled up the measure of my favours upon you: and it is my pleasure that Islam be your religion.” (Ma'idah-5:4)

The Muslims consider the religion of the Qur'án to be final.

The Bahá'í teachings throw light on this subject and show that this is not so. Islam is the surrender or resignation of one's will to God's Will as expressed by God's latest Messenger. At the time of Muhammad, therefore, those who resigned themselves to the latest Manifestation of the Will of God through the Qur'án, were called Muslims. But the Qur'án does not stop there in the use and application of the word “Islam” or “Muslim” For example Noah is called a Muslim (Yunus - 12:71-72). Abraham, Jacob and his children are likewise called Muslims (Baqurah- 2:130-132). Moses and His followers are also called Muslims (Yunus -12:83) and (A'raf-7:125). Finally the Disciples of Christ are called Muslims, and here is the text:

“And when I revealed unto the Disciples (of Christ), 'Believe on Me and on My Sent One,' they said 'We believe; and bear Thou witness that we are Muslims.’” (Ma'idah-5:111)

Thus, we see that what the Author of the Qur'án meant by “Islam” was the Universal Religion of God, past, present and future. Such universal religion is, of course, the only “true religion” accepted by God, as the aforementioned verses testify. Islam, in its true and universal sense, has now found expression in the Bahá'í Faith. Let the sincere Muslim, therefore, take these verses, defining the meaning of Islam, as a stepping stone, not as a stumbling block in his search for truth.

III. THE MEANING OF THE SEAL OF THE PROPHETS

The verse designating Muhammad as the “Seal of the Prophets” is as follows:

“Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but He is the Apostle of God, and the Seal of the Prophets: and God knoweth all things.” (Ahzab-33:40)

This has been interpreted by Muslims to mean that the doors of Prophethood have been closed for ever.

Let us now consider the following points to see whether such an understanding is correct:

1. The Jews were required by Exodus 31:16-17 to keep the Sabbath as an eternal covenant: "Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual Covenant. It is a sign between me and the Children of Israel for ever."

Both Jesus and Muhammad broke the Sabbath. Does it mean that they were wrong?

2. Jesus has been referred to in Revelation 1:11, as Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last. Likewise He said in Luke 21:33 "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but My words shall not Pass away". If Jesus was to be the Last, why did Muhammad appear after Him? If the words of Jesus were not to be changed why did Muhammad reveal the Qur'án?
3. The reason why such verses are found in the Holy Books is that all the Prophets of God are one in their reality. What applies to one applies to all. The following verses demonstrate this point:
 - a. "Say ye: 'We believe in God, and that which hath been sent down to us, and that which hath been sent down to Abraham and Ismael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes: and that which hath been given to Moses and to Jesus, and that which was given to the Prophets from their Lord. No difference do we make between any of them.'" (Baqarah-2:130)
 - b. We make no distinction between any of His Apostles." (Baqarah -2:285)
"Verily We have revealed to Thee as We revealed to Noah and the Prophets after Him, and as We revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and Jesus and Job, and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and to David gave We Psalms." (Nisa-4:61)
4. The Qur'án teaches that God's Revelation is endless; its source is inexhaustible:
 - a. "Should the sea become ink, to write the words of my Lord, the sea would surely fail ere the words of my Lord would fail, though we brought its like in aid." (Kahf -18:109)
 - b. "If all the trees that are upon the earth were to become pens, and if God should after that swell the sea into seven seas of ink, His words would not be exhausted for God is Mighty, Wise." (Luqman-31: 26)

Referring to the Jews, the Qur'án criticizes them in the words: "'The hand of God,' say the Jews, 'is chained Up'. Their own hands shall be chained up—and for that which they have said shall they be cursed. Nay ! outstretched are both His hands! At His own pleasure does He bestow gifts." (Maidahn-5:69)

5. Muhammad assures us that God by his behest is free to send His Chosen One to men:
 - a. "By His own behest will He cause the angels to descend with the Spirit on whom He pleaseth among His servants, bidding them, 'Warn that there is no God but Me; therefore fear Me, '" (Nahl -16:2)
 - b. "God chooseth Messengers from among the angels and from among men: verily God Heareth, Seeth." (Hajj-22:75)
6. Another interesting point we find in the Qur'án is the setting forth of a universal principle governing the appearance of the Messengers of God. This principle which has no exceptions and therefore does not exclude Islam, provides that any people who receive the Messenger of God are given a fixed term or appointed time. At such an appointed time, a Divine Book is revealed by God through His Messenger, which seals the past term and starts the new one.

Here are the verses:

- a. "Every people hath its set term. And when their time is come, they shall not retard it an hour; and they shall not advance it." (Ar'raf-7:33)
 - b. "To each term its Book. What He pleaseth will God abrogate or confirm: for with Him is the Source of Revelation." (Ra'd-13:38)
 - c. "Neither too soon, nor to late, shall a people reach its appointed time." (Mu'minun-23:43)
7. From the verses we have so far quoted under this section two points emerge which prove that the expression "Seal of the Prophets" cannot mean the end of Divine Revelation. The two points are:

- a. In view of the oneness of the Prophets of God, a title which applies to one of them could apply to all of them.
- b. God's revelation is endless, His freedom to send His Chosen Ones to us is unrestricted, and He has fixed for each religion its appointed times.

Why then, was Muhammad designated “Seal of the Prophets”? This is what we shall consider in our next point.

8. A distinction is made in the Qur'án between two words:

“nabi” (prophet) and “rasool” (apostle or messenger).

Note this verse:

“We have not sent any Apostle, any Prophet before Thee....”(Ha'jj-22:51)

Also note in the following two verses how Moses is referred to as an Apostle as well as a Prophet, but Aaron, the brother of Moses is referred to merely as a Prophet:

“And commemorate Moses in the Book; for He was a Man of purity: moreover He was an Apostle and a Prophet.” (Maryam – 19:52)

“And we bestowed on Him (Moses) in Our mercy His brother, Aaron, a Prophet.” (Maryam-19:54)

The word “nabi” (prophet) means “he who foretells” a future event; whereas “rasool” means “he who is sent with a message” from God. All the Chosen Ones of God were “nabi's” or prophets because they warned their people and foretold the advent of the most great event in religious history, the Day of Judgment, which, it is interesting to note, is referred to in the Qur'án (Súrá 78) as the “Naba” (The News)—a word from the same root as “nabi”, A “nabi”, therefore, according to the usage of the Qur'án becomes more specific and acquires the meaning of “he who foretells the Day of Judgment.”

The Qur'ánic verse quoted above designating Muhammad as the, “Seal”, does not state that Muhammad is the Seal of the “rasool”'s (Apostles or Messengers), but only the Seal of the “nabi”'s (Prophets prophesying about the Day of Judgment). The verse does not imply, therefore, that there will be no more Apostles or Messengers to be sent by God, but merely states that Muhammad (also called a “Warner” - See 33:44-45) is the Last of God's Chosen ones to warn and prepare the world for the advent of the Day of Judgment, as immediately upon the termination of His Dispensation, the Day of Judgment, itself, shall come. This is precisely what both the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh have announced: that their Day, which immediately followed Muhammad's Dispensation, is the completion and fulfilment of the prophecies of all past religions, the advent of the promised Day of Judgment.

9. In the light of the above explanation on the difference between “nabi” and “rasool”, how reassuring, then, become these heart-warming words of the Qur'án: “O Children of Adam! There shall come to you Apostles (rasool's) from among yourselves, rehearsing My signs to you; and whoso shall fear God and do good works, no fear shall be upon them, neither shall they be put to grief.” (A'raf-7:35)

The Bahá'ís believe that Muhammad was indeed the Seal of the Prophets, that the Day of Judgment has come, that two of God's Apostles, the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh have already appeared, and have taught in their Writings how God's revelations are continuous and progressive, and will continue to be sent to man in ages to come.

“Such is God's method carried into effect of old; no change canst thou find in God's mode of dealing.” (Fat'h-48:23)

IV. HAS THE DAY OF JUDGMENT COME?

1. The Qur'án teaches that the meaning of the Day of Judgment is a mystery which will be revealed by God on the Day of Judgment itself.

“They will ask thee of the Hour—for what time is its coming fixed? Say: The knowledge of it is only with my Lord: none shall manifest it in its time but He.” (A'faf-7:187)

What the mind of man has thought or thinks about the Day of Judgment is more imagination. How can the leaders of Islam say that the Day of Judgment has not come, and still try to explain its nature and signs literally?

2. It is further pointed out in the Qur'án that the contents of that Holy Book are divided into two parts: the part that is easily understood (called the “perspicuous”) and the part which is in picture or story form (called the “figurative”). The first part is clear and straightforward, whilst the second part is revealed in a style which is full of figures of speech and therefore cannot be properly understood. The second part needs interpretation. That interpretation, according to the Qur'án, is not man's function, but God's; and God shall reveal at a later age its interpretation. Here are the verses:

“He it is Who hath sent down to Thee the Book (the Qur'án). Some of its verses are of themselves perspicuous;—these are the basis of the Book—and others are figurative. But they whose hearts are given to err, follow its figures, craving discord, craving an interpretation; yet none knoweth its interpretation but God.” (Al-Imran-3:5)

“And now have We brought them the Book: with knowledge have we explained it; on guidance and a mercy to them that believe. What have they to wait for now but its interpretation? When its interpretation shall come, they who aforetime were oblivious of it shall say, 'The Prophets of our Lord did indeed bring the truth.’” (A'raf-7:51-52)

The Bahá'ís point out that most of the verses in the Qur'án which are “figurative” are those describing the Day of Judgment. As the meaning of the Day of Judgment is to be disclosed by God only when that Day actually comes, the advent of that Day and the promised interpretation of the Qur'án must necessarily come together. Tho Bab and Bahá'u'lláh not only proclaimed that the Day of Judgment has come, but have given us clearly in their writings, the true meanings of all the symbols and allegories of that Holy Book.

3. The description set forth in the Qur'án of the phenomena to take place in the physical world on the Day of Judgment is most arresting. For example the earth is to change into another earth (See Zumar-39:67; Ibrahim-14:48; Inshiqaq-84:3; Qaf-50:44; Rum-30:50; Hadid-57:17) and the heaven is to be cleft and split asunder (See Inshiqaq-84:1; Infitnr-82:1; Naba'-78:19; Anbiya-21:104; Rahman.-55:37; Dukhan-44:10; Furqan-25:25; Zumar-39:67). In the Súra of Tawkir-81 we even read: “When the heaven shall be stripped away”.

And in the Súra of Ma'arij-70: “When the heavens shall become as molten brass.”

Furthermore, the earth is to quake and the mountains are to pass away (See Naml-27:88; Waqi'ah-56:5; Qari'ah-101:5; Muzammil-73:14; Mursalat-77:10; Naba'78:20; Takwir-81:3; TaHa20:105).

Likewise, the sun is to be folded up and lose its light (Takwir-61) and the stars are to disperse and be blotted out (Infitar-82; Mursalat-77).

Now let us compare other verses with the above description. Here are four verses. Notice the words underlined:

“What! Are they sure that the overwhelming chastisement of God shall not come upon them, or that that Hour shall not come upon them, suddenly, while they are unaware?” (Yusuf-12:107)

“Warn them of the day of sighing, when the decree shall be accomplished, while they are sunk in heedlessness, and while they believe not.” (Maryam-19:39)

“But on the day of Resurrection some of you shall deny the others, and some of you shall curse the others.” (Ankabut-29:25)

Let us now ask ourselves this question: If the overwhelming description of the changes in the physical world to take place on the Day of Judgment is to be interpreted literally, would it be reasonable to expect that the unbelievers would still be “unaware” of it, would not know its occurrence, and particularly, after the “decree would be accomplished” for them to be still sunk in “heedlessness” and not to believe, and above all for men to “deny” and “curse” one another? Wouldn't the physical signs and portents be so drastic that there could be no room for unbelief, heedlessness and cursing to continue?

Surely the answer is that the signs of the Day of Judgment must be interpreted symbolically, not

literally. Then we would understand why unbelief and heedlessness would still prevail at such a time.

4. From the above we note that the events of the Day of Judgment are to be taken symbolically. We shall now see how these spiritual developments are also to take place gradually:

a. "And they will bid Thee to hasten the Chastisement (Day of Judgment). But God cannot fail His threat. And verily, a day with Thy Lord is as a thousand years, as ye reckon them." (Hajj-22:46)

This verse shows us that the "Day of Judgment" is not an ordinary day of 24 hours, but 1000 years.

b. "He bringeth forth the living out of the dead, and He bringeth forth the dead out of the living; and He quickeneth the earth when dead. Thus is it that ye too shall be brought forth." (Rum-30:18)

The "bringing forth", mentioned in this verse, is generally accepted by commentators to be a reference to the Day of Judgment. Thus we see how the resurrection of the dead, or the new creation, as it is sometimes called in the Qur'án, on the Day of Judgment is likened to the growth of vegetation from the earth in the physical world; and vegetable growth is a gradual process.

5. We are further told in the Qur'án that on the Day of Judgment, God shall reveal a new "Book", that there will be a "call" and that the "new creation" is none other than the "Faith of God".

a. "And on the Day of Resurrection will We Bring forth to him (man) a Book which shall be proffered to him wide open." (Bani-Isra'il-17:14)

b. "On that day shall God call you forth". (Baní Isra'il-17:54)

c. "And list for the day whereon the Crier shall call from a near place: the day on which men shall in truth hear that shout will be the day of their coming forth from the grave." (Qaf-50:41)

d. "Set thou thy face then, as a true convert, towards the Faith (the religion of God), this creation of God, with which He hath made men. No change is there in God's creation, for, lo, it is the right Faith." (Rum-30:30)

So we see how the Day of Judgment is to Witness the revelation of a new Book, which is none other than the Holy Writings of Bahá'u'lláh. The "Crier", referred to, is also Bahá'u'lláh, and the "near place" from where He "called" the people, was Baghdad, which is near Arabia. It was in Baghdad that Bahá'u'lláh announced His Mission. Finally, according to the last verse, God's "making" and "creation" of man, is through the revelation of His "Faith", and life in His sight is acceptance of His Faith.

6. We shall now see how the Qur'án, itself, explains some of the terms and expressions used in the description of the Day of Judgment:

a. Life: One of the important events on the Last Day is that the dead will find life. As we have already seen, this means a spiritual life, the life of faith. The following verse was revealed when Hamzih, the uncle of Muhammad, joined Islam. Hamzih, who was a pagan before his becoming a Muslim, is referred to as "dead". His subsequent acceptance of Islam, is referred to as "being quickened", and receiving "light":

"Shall the dead, whom we have quickened, and, for whom we have ordained a light whereby he may walk among men, be like him, whose likeness is in the darkness, whence he will not come forth?" (An'am-6:122)

(This verse is of particular interest, because it shows that "life" and "light" are both to be taken spiritually, not physically.)

"While the gods whom they call on beside God., create nothing, but are themselves created. Dead are they (the unbelievers), lifeless ! and they know not when they shall be raised." (Nahl-16:20-22)

“O ye Faithful! Make answer to the appeal of God and His Apostle when He calleth you to that which giveth life.” (Anfal-8:24)

- b. Light: On the day of Judgment, the sun is to be folded up and lose its light, thereby casting confusion in the heavens, the stars, the clouds etc. as well as the earth. When the sun, the centre of the solar system, is disturbed, naturally all the units of that system are also to suffer. The Bahá'í interpretation is, of course, that light is spiritual light, not physical; therefore, the centre of light in our system, the sun, symbolizes the Manifestation or Apostle of God in each Day or Dispensation. Darkness, or the loss of light, represents the unbelief, the heedlessness and wickedness of the people. The heaven symbolizes God's religion, from where the Manifestation shines. The sun is always shining but often we cannot see its light, because of clouds. Clouds are moisture coming from the earth. In the spiritual meaning the Light of God is always pouring forth, but men cannot always see it because of the clouds of human fancies and imaginings which rise from the hearts and minds of men (the earth) and obstruct this light. Stars represent spiritual leaders, who appear in the heaven of religion, after the sun has set, that is after the Manifestation of God has left this world. The fall of the stars symbolizes their spiritual downfall in the eyes of men.

Let us now review some of the Qur'ánic verses on the meaning of light:

“God is the light of the Heavens and the Earth.” (Nur-24:35)

“Fain would they put out God's light with their mouths: but God only desireth to perfect His light, albeit the infidels abhor it.” (Tawbah-9:33)

“Now hath a light and a clear Book come to you from God.” (Ma'idah-5:17)

“This Book have we sent down to Thee that by their Lord's permission Thou mayest bring Men out of darkness into light into the path of the Mighty, the Glorious.” (Ibrahim-14:1)

These are but few of many such verses in the Qur'án. There is a tradition in Islam, not included in the Qur'án that on the Last Day the sun will rise from its “maghrib” (its west, or setting point). Muhammad's sun set in Islam. The new Sun, Bahá'u'lláh, rose from Islam.

- c. The Earth and its Quaking: We read in the Qur'án (Hajj-22:1 and Zilzal-99:1) that on the Last Day the earth will quake. We have already seen that the “earth” means the hearts of men. Here are two verses which confirm this:

“Mens hearts, on that Day shall quake.” (Naziat-79:8)

“Then were the faithful tried, and with strong quaking did they quake.” (Ahzab-33:11)

- d. Fire: Addressing the believers Muhammad describes their condition before their belief:

“And when ye were on the brink of the pit of fire, he drew you back from it. Thus God clearly showeth you His signs that ye may be Guided.” (Imran-3:99)

- e. Physical senses: “Their (the unbelievers') hearts and their ears hath God sealed up; and over their eyes is a covering.” (Baqarah-2:6)

“Deaf, dumb, blind: therefore they shall not retrace their steps from error.” (Baqarah-2:17)

“Hearts have they with which they understand not, and eyes have they with which they see not, and ears have they with which they hearken not. They are like the brutes: Yea they go more astray: they are the heedless!” (A'raf-7:178)

- f. The Return: In the following verses Muhammad reports the argument between Him and the Jews:

“To those who say, 'Verily, God hath enjoined us that we are not to credit an Apostle until he present us a sacrifice which fire out of Heaven shall devour.

“Say: Already have Apostles before Me come to you with miracles and of which ye speak. Wherefore slew ye them? Tell Me, if ye are men of truth.” (Al-Imran-3:179-180)

In the above verse we see how Muhammad, in the words:

“Wherefore slew ye them?” accuses the Jews who were living in His time, of slaying the

Apostles of God of former ages. How could the Jews living in the days of Muhammad have existed thousands of years before, in the age of former Prophets? Why should Muhammad have charged them with slaying those Prophets? The only answer is that the "return" means not the return of the self-same people, but the return of the same qualities in the people.

Such also is the expected return of Jesus Christ (see Nisa-4:158 and Zukhruf-43:61) on the Day of Judgment. His coming does not mean the descent of the self-same Jesus from the physical sky but to the advent of the promised Apostle of God with the same qualities as Jesus evinced during His mission. He was Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, whose holy life and teachings are the very foundations of love and peace in the world today.

- g. God and His Angels: The Verse that states that God and His angels will come in the Day of Judgment reads as follows: "What can such expect but that God should come to them overshadowed with clouds, and the angels also, and their doom be sealed? And to God shall things return." (Baqarah-2:206)

"God", here, refers to the Manifestation of God who is to appear on the Last Day. God is Spirit and beyond visibility or material things. The Qur'án further testifies that what applies to the Manifestation of God, applies to God Himself:

"In truth, they who plighted fealty to Thee (Muhammad) really plighted that fealty to God." (Fat'h-48:10)

As to the "angels" they are the saints and heroes of God's Faith who trumpet its news. Note this verse: "And if we had appointed an angel, we should certainly have appointed one in the form of a man, and we should have clothed him before them in garments like their own." (An'am-6:8)

- h. Two Blasts: The Qur'án announces that the Trumpet of God, i.e. the Cause of God will have two blasts on the Day of Judgment, signifying two Manifestations of God, to follow each other, as did the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh. "And there shall be a blast on the Trumpet, and all who are in the Heavens and all who are in the Earth shall expire, save those whom God shall vouchsafe to live. Then shall there be another blast on it, and lo! arising they shall gaze around them: And the earth shall shine with the light of her Lord." (Zummar-59:68-69)

"One day, the disturbing trumpet-blast shall disturb it, (the universe), which the second blast shall follow... Verily, it will be but a single blast" (Nazi'at-79:6.7 & 13)

Notice the word "follow" as Bahá'u'lláh did follow quite closely after the Bab. Also notice that the two blasts are really considered one blast, as the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh whose Causes have become merged into one single world Faith. The reference in the first verse to the earth shining with the "light of her Lord", refers to the name of Bahá'u'lláh. BAHÁ means "glory splendour, light" in Arabic. The second part of Bahá'u'lláh's name means, of course, "of God", which is the equivalent of "of her Lord."

- i. Other Signs:

1. Among other signs in the Qur'án to occur on the Day of Judgment are that the Jews will no more be subjected to the Christians, that enmity and hatred between the Jews themselves and sectarianism amongst the Christians will continue till the Day of Judgment. Here are the verses:

"Remember when God said: 'O Jesus!... I will place those who follow Thee above those who believe not (the Jews), until the Day of resurrection. Then to Me is your return, and wherein ye differ will I decide between you.'" (Al-Imran-3:48)

"We have put enmity and hatred between them (the Jews) that shall last till the day of resurrection." (Ma'idah-5:69)

"And of those who say, 'We are Christians'... they too have forgotten a part of what they were taught; wherefore we have stirred up enmity and hatred among them that shall last till the day of the Resurrection." (Ma'idah-5:17)

We see how true have been those prophecies, how the Jews after centuries of subjection have

established themselves as an independent nation in Israel, and how enmity and hatred are changed into unity and love, when Jews and Christians become Bahá'ís'.

2. We must bear in mind Muhammad refers to His Cause and to His Book as the means for deciding between the differences, and settling the disputes of religions in His day (See Nahl-16:63-64). Therefore, when He speaks of the Last Day as the Day when differences and disputes of religions will be finally settled, He surely means the advent of a fresh measure of Divine Grace through another revealed religion from God. In the following verse, notice the wide circle of religions which will all have their various matters and problems cleared up and settled on the Day of Judgment:

“As to those who believe (Muslims), and the Jews, and the Sabeites (or Sabians) and the Christians, and the Magians (Zoroastrians) and those who join other gods with God (pagans) of a truth, God shall decide between them on the Day of Judgment: for God is witness of all things.” (Hajj-22:17)

3. The Day of Judgment is clearly stated to be the Day of Unity. Bahá'u'lláh announced and through His teachings is establishing the unity of mankind in this glorious age: “O our Lord For the day of whose coming there is no doubt, thou wilt surely gather mankind together. Verily God will not fail the promise.” (Al-Imran-3:7)

“Say: Aye, the former and the latter (religions) gathered shall they all be for the time of a known Day.” (Waq'iah-56:49-50)

- j. Life after Death: According to the Bahá'í interpretation of the Qur'án and the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, the soul of man, after the death of the body, receives at once its individual judgment for its life and actions in this material world, This could be called the individual resurrection of the soul of man in the next world, where it would receive its due reward or punishment. The following verses of the Qur'án testify to this truth:

- k. In the story of the martyrdom of Habíb, the carpenter, by the people of Antioch the Qur'án states: “It was said to him (Habíb), 'Enter thou into Paradise! And he said, 'Oh, that my people knew how gracious God hath been to me, and that He hath made me one of His honoured ones.” (YaSin-36:25-26)

“And repute not those slain on God's path to be dead. Nay, alive with their Lord, are they richly sustained, rejoicing in what God of His bounty hath vouchsafed them.” (Al-Imran-3:163-4)

“Oh, thou soul which art at rest, return to thy Lord, pleased, and pleasing Him: Enter thou among My Servants, and enter thou my Paradise.” (Fajr-89:26-30)

V. HOW CAN WE DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE TRUE & THE FALSE?

1. The Qur'án teaches that miracles are not signs whereby people should be led to believe. The revelation of a Holy Book by the Apostle of God is sufficient:

“And they say, 'Unless a sign be sent down to Him from His Lord...' Say: Signs are in the power of God alone. I am only a plain spoken warner. Is it not enough for them that We have sent down to Thee the Book to be recited to them? In this verily is a mercy and a warning to those who believe.” (Ankabut-29:49-50)

This does not mean that the Manifestations of God are powerless to produce miracles. In fact a study of the lives of the Bab and Bahá'u'lláh will show the superhuman powers that they possessed. The proof of the mission of the Manifestation of God, however, should not be based on miracles. One proof, as stated above, is the revelation of a Book. The Bab and Bahá'u'lláh revealed their Writings in Arabic and Persian. The Holy Writings of Bahá'u'lláh have been assessed to cover 100 volumes, some of which have already been translated into English and other languages.

2. Another proof found in the Qur'án to demonstrate the validity of a Divine Message is based on the idea that if it is truly from God, it will spread and will receive the response and allegiance of men:

“And as to those who dispute about God (i.e. God's religion), after pledges of obedience are given

to Him, their disputings shall be condemned by their Lord, and wrath shall be on them, and theirs shall be a sore torment.” (Shura-42:15)

The Bahá'í Faith has not only received a response from men, but no less than 20,000 of its devoted adherents have already given their lives as a testimony to its truth.

3. Another proof found in the Qur'án on the mission of prophets is that the true Faith of God, like a good tree, yields good fruits, that the true Prophets and their followers receive Divine blessings and are assisted by God, and that the false or evil prophet, like a bad tree, is uprooted and his lies and misleading teachings are made known to man. Here are the verses:

“Seest thou not to what God likeneth a good Word? To a good tree: its root firmly fixed, and its branches in the Heaven: yielding its fruit in all seasons by the will of its Lord. God setteth forth these similitudes to men that haply they may reflect. And an evil word is like an evil tree, torn up from the face of the earth, and without strength to stand.” (Ibrahim-14:29-31)

“Assuredly in this present life will we succour our Apostles and those who shall have believed it.” (Mu'min-40:54)

“God hath written this decree: 'I will surely prevail, and My Apostles also'. Truly God is Strong, Mighty.” (Mujadilah-58:21)

“Our word came of old to Our Servants, the Apostles, that they should surely be the succoured, and that our armies should procure the victory for them...” (Saffat-37:171-3)

“Verily, falsehood is a thing that vanisheth.” (Baní Isra'il-17:83)

“Nay, we will hurl the truth at falsehood, and it shall smite it, and lo! it shall vanish.” (Anbiya-21:18)

In full conformity with the above principle, notwithstanding the almost life-long imprisonment of Bahá'u'lláh, and the martyrdom of the Bab and no less than 20,000 of its loyal followers, the Bahá'í Faith has succeeded in diffusing its light throughout the five continents, in 254 countries of the world, in translating and disseminating its literature in more than 200 languages, and in winning to its ever swelling ranks believers from all the religions and most of the races of mankind. Isn't this an eloquent proof of the truth and validity of its divine mission?

4. Another proof found in the Qur'án to distinguish the true from the false is the fulfilment of prophecies found in former religious scriptures:

“But they say, 'If he come not to us with a sign from his Lord... ! 'But have not clear proofs for the Qur'án come to them, in what is in the Books of old ?’” (TaHa-20:133)

As the purpose of these notes is merely to present briefly some of the proofs of the Bahá'ís World Faith found in the Qur'án, it would not be within our present scope to consider here the scriptures of all past religions. It would be enough to state that a study of the literature of the Faith will show that it has the clearest and most convincing proofs based not only on the Qur'án, but also on the Old Testament for the Jews, the New Testament for the Christians, as well as the Holy Books of the Zoroastrians, the Buddhists and the Hindus.

5. The last proof that the Qur'án gives us to use as a criterion for truth and falsehood is this verse:

“Say: O Jews, if ye profess that ye rather than other men are the Friends of God, then wish for death, if ye are men of truth. But never on account of their previous handiwork will they wish for it, and God knoweth the wrong doers!” (Jumu'ah-62:6)

Willingness on the part of followers to offer their lives is the criterion. A study of Bahá'ís history will show how the 20,000 martyrs who died for the love of Bahá'u'lláh did so with utmost confidence, dedication, selflessness and spiritual joy.

VI. WHY HAS BAHÁ'U'LLÁH BROUGHT US NEW LAWS

1. Religious teachings are divided into two parts. The first part consists of teachings which deal with the spiritual life of man, unity, truthfulness, chastity etc. Such teachings are eternal and unchangeable and constitute the basis of every religion. The second part consists of laws dealing

with the material life of man, such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, foods and times of prayer and fasting, prohibited foods etc. These teachings are not the essential parts of religions. They are changed by each Manifestation of God to suit the conditions of His age.

The above principle is also upheld by the Qur'án. Regarding the changeable laws affecting the material life of man we read the following:

“To every one of you (Moses, Jesus & Muhammad) have We given a law, an open path. And if God had pleased He had surely made you all one people.” (Ma'idah-5:52-3)

“To every people have We appointed observances which they observe. Therefore let them not dispute this matter with Thee, but bid them to Thy Lord.” (Hajj-22:66)

2. Regarding the unchangeable part of religious teachings, which affect the spiritual life of man, we note that Muhammad calls the Old Testament, in one instance, “Al-Furqán” (See Anbiya-21:49), and then uses the same title for the Holy Qur'án (See Furqan-25:1). Of course the laws of the Old Testament are different from those of the Qur'án, and the two Holy Books are not the same, but by applying the same title to both Books, Muhammad was conscious of the spiritual and fundamental teachings of the two Books, which of course are the same.

In the same way, in this age, when Bahá'u'lláh has appeared, whilst the essence of His spiritual and moral teachings is the same as past Revelations, but, in compliance with the needs of an ever-changing and progressive society, He had to reveal also laws and ordinances to meet the requirements of this age.

Another reason that is based on our study of the Qur'án and could be cited to explain why Bahá'u'lláh has revealed new laws is that there are certain laws in the Qur'án, which have become out-of-date, and can no more be practiced today, and therefore must be replaced by new ones. Let us take, for example, the following verses: “O Believers! Only they who join gods with God are unclean!” (Taubah-9:28)

“As to the thief, whether man or woman, cut ye off their hands in recompense of their doings.” (Ma'idah-5:42)

To consider those who join gods with God as unclean or to cut the hand of the thief are laws that the majority of Muslims find it difficult, and in most cases impossible to obey. Such laws have become void, forgotten and cancelled. Wouldn't God replace them? The answer is given in the following reassuring verse of the Qur'án:

“Whatever verses we cancel, or cause to forget, we bring a better or its like. Knowest thou not that God hath power over all things.” (Baqarah-2:100)

3. There is a clear ordinance in the Qur'án strictly warning the Muslims against sectarianism. Note these two verses:

“Observe this Faith, and be not divided into sects there in.” (Shura-42:11)

“And be ye turned to Him, and fear Him, and observe prayer and be not of those who unite gods with God: of those who have split up their religion and have become sects, where every party rejoices in what is their own.” (Rum-30:30-1)

Despite these clear injunctions Islam has split itself into 72 sects. Is this keeping God's Commandment? What else but the power of a fresh Revelation from God could unite this divided Islam and indeed this divided world? In the following verse we are assured that such unity can only come from God:

“Hadst Thou (Muhammad) spent all the riches of the earth, Thou couldst not have united their hearts but God hath united them, for He is Mighty, Wise.” (Anfal-8:64)

VII. FURTHER REFERENCES.

1. Addressing the community of His followers, Muhammad foreshadows that His people will not be the last or final, but an intermediate people: that is, other religious communities will come after

Islam: "He guideth whom He will into the right path. Thus have We made you an intermediate people." (Baqarah-2:136-7)

2. Muhammad refers to His religion as the of right path. (See Zukhruf-43:61). But as He gives "Islam" its universal implication, He also gives "right path" a wider meaning to include the way of God, whether at His time or in the future. This is made clear in the verse: "Guide Thou us on the right (straight) path." (Fatihah-1:5)

This is further confirmed and becomes even more pronounced in the following verse: "And God calleth to the Abode of Peace and he guideth whom He will to the right path (way)." (Yunus-10:25)

It is most interesting that Baghdad, where Bahá'u'lláh announced His mission, was known as the "Abode of Peace", or "Dar-es-Salaam" in the original Arabic. So God's Holy Messenger, Bahá'u'lláh, did call the people to both the outer Abode of Peace, Baghdad, as well as the inner Abode of Peace, which is God's Holy City and His Good-Pleasure, and guided them to God's right path, which represents His Faith. If we should take the "right path" in this verse as Muhammad's religion, then the Muslims did not need to be guided, as they were already guided!

3. After successive exiles from Baghdad to Constantinople, and from there to Adrianople, Bahá'u'lláh was finally banished to Akká, in the Holy Land. It is indeed God's mysterious plan, that of all the countries in the world, it should be the Holy Land where Bahá'u'lláh should be finally exiled to—the Holy Land repeatedly promised in the Old and New Testaments as the seat and home of the Promise of All Ages. Furthermore, of all the towns and centres in the Holy Land, it should be to Akká that He should be sent, not of His own free will, not through the request of friends, but by His own enemies, who thought they would, in this way, be exterminating Him and His Faith. They were ignorant of God's mysterious plans. They were in reality being used by Almighty God to bring to fulfilment His promises of old. Some of the traditions regarding Akká, accepted by both Sunnis and Shi'as as true and authenticated sayings of the Holy Prophet of Islam are recorded here: "Akka is a city in Syria, to which God hath shown His special mercy". (From Abdu'l-Aziz, son of Abdu's-Salam).

"I bring you tidings of a city betwixt two mountains in Syria, in the middle of a meadow which is called Akká. Verily, he that entereth therein, longing for it and eager to visit it, God will forgive his sins, both of the past and of the future. And he that departeth from it other than a pilgrim, God will not bless his departure." (From Ibn-i-Mas'ud)

"I announce unto you a city, on the shores of the sea, white, whose whiteness is pleasing unto God—exalted be He! It is called Akká. He that hath been bitten by one of its fleas is better, in the estimation of God, than he who had received a grievous blow in the path of God." (From Anas, son of Malík).

"Blessed is the man that hath visited Akká, and blessed he that hath visited the visitor of Akká."

4. We read this verse in the Qur'an:

"Lo! ye are they, who are called to expend for the Cause of God: and some of you are niggards: but whoso is niggardly shall be niggard only to his own loss; for God is the Rich and ye are the poor: and if you turn back, He will change you for another people, and they shall not be of our like." (Muhammad-47:40)

Muhammad was asked who were the people He referred to as "another people", who were to replace the Arabs. One of His followers, Salmán, a Persian, was sitting near Him. Muhammad patted on the legs of Salmán and said. "He, and his people." And then He continued: "By the True One, in Whose hand is My life, if the Faith of God should be suspended in the Pleiades, surely, men from Persia shall reach it." (This tradition is accepted by both Sunnis and Shia's and is included by Nasafi in his book, Vol. IV, page 169, as well as by Muhammad Farid Vajdi, in his book, third edition, page 676.)

And now to end this study of the truths of the Qur'an, let those holy verses ring in our ears:

"O Our people! Obey the summoner of God and believe in Him, that He may forgive your sins, and rescue you from an afflictive punishment. And he who shall not respond to God's Preacher, yet

cannot weaken God's power on earth, nor shall he have protectors beside Him... These are in obvious error.” (Ahqaf-46:30-31)

And let this prayer of Bahá'u'lláh assist us in winning the good-pleasure of God in this glorious Day:

Create in me a pure heart, O my God, and renew a tranquil conscience within me, O my Hope! Through the spirit of power confirm Thou me in Thy Cause, O my Best Beloved, and by the light of Thy glory reveal unto me Thy path, O Thou the Goal of my desire! Through the power of Thy transcendent might lift me up unto the heaven of Thy holiness, O Source of my being, and by the breezes of Thine eternity gladden me, O Thou Who art my God! Let Thine everlasting melodies breath tranquillity on me, O my Companion, and let the riches of Thine ancient countenance deliver me from all except Thee, O my Master, and let the tidings of the revelation of Thine incorruptible Essence bring me joy, O Thou Who art the most manifest of the manifest and the most hidden of the hidden.

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