

that particular time. The basic truths of religion do not change but may be developed further. Some social teachings may change according to the needs of the times. Moses, for example, brought Commandments for which society, in the time of Abraham, had not been ready. In this age Bahá'u'lláh has taken these teachings further, as appropriate for today."The All-Knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy. Every age hath its own problem, and every soul its particular aspiration. The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require."

Prophecy

There are many prophecies in the Jewish Scriptures about the coming of the Promised One, the Lord of Hosts. It is clear from these Scriptures that He will come to the Holy Land from the east:"And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east." [Ezekiel 43:2]

Bahá'u'lláh, Whose name means "Glory of God", came from Persia which is east of the Holy Land. And again:

"And the glory of the Lord came into the house by way of the gate whose prospect is towards the east."

[Ezekiel 43:4]

The Person

Who came to prepare the way for Bahá'u'lláh was called the Báb, which means the Gate.

Because of

His claim to be a Messenger of God, Bahá'u'lláh was sent as a prisoner and an exile through different parts of the Turkish empire and eventually to the Holy Land. As Micah prophesied:"In that day also he shall come even to thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain ... Feed thy people in the midst of Carmel..." [Micah 7:

10-12]

Bahá'u'lláh

was banished first to Assyria (now part of Iraq), then to the city of Constantinople, then again to the fortress within the fortified city of Akka. When finally released from the fortress, he stayed on an island in the Na'mayn river. During His banishments He travelled on the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, lived as a Holy Man on Mount Gar-lu and pitched His tent on Mount Carmel, the "Mountain of God" where Elijah had dwelt in his cave.

The

Holy Land

In "The Tablet of Carmel", Bahá'u'lláh wrote: "Call out to Zion, O Carmel, and announce the joyful tidings: He that was hidden from mortal eyes is come!...Hasten forth and circumambulate the City of God that hath descended from heaven ... Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee." It is on Mount Carmel that, in response to Bahá'u'lláh's own instructions, the beautiful Shrine of the Báb has been erected and surrounded by gardens. Within these peaceful gardens now stand the buildings which constitute the Bahá'í World Centre. Bahá'u'lláh Himself is buried near Akka, so, for Bahá'ís, this part of the Holy Land is the most sacred spot on earth. Bahá'í prophecy states that the twin cities of Haifa and Akka will become the future capital of a federated world.

The Family

The basic building-block of society is the family unit. Its healthy functioning is therefore vital: "The integrity of the family bond must be constantly considered and the rights of the individual members must not be transgressed." Respect for parents remains important: "O My people! Show honour to your parents... Beware lest ye commit that which would sadden the hearts of your fathers and mothers."

To Bahá'ís, as to Jews, the stability and progress of the family depend on its unity: "If love and agreement are manifest in a single family, that family will advance, become illumined and spiritual." "Note ye how easily, where unity existeth in a given family, the affairs of that family are conducted; what progress the members of that family make, how they prosper in the world. Their concerns are in order, they enjoy comfort and tranquillity, they are secure, their position is assured, they come to be envied by all."

In this age Bahá'u'lláh teaches that all mankind must become like one human family: "The diversity in the human family should be the cause of love and harmony, as it is

in music where many different notes blend together in the making of a perfect chord."

Justice

Bahá'u'lláh

makes justice the primary teaching underpinning a righteous and spiritual society: "O people of God! That which traineth the world is Justice, for it is upheld by two pillars, reward and punishment. These two pillars are the sources of life to the world."

"The purpose of justice is the appearance of unity among men."

The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh are based on the principles of justice and unity and include:

Removal of all prejudice

Equality of women with men

A spiritual attitude to economics

Removal of poverty

Education for all

A universal peace treaty

A world federation

A common language for world communication

In this

New Age the Lord of Hosts is summoning His people to follow His guidance.

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