

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."—BAHA'O'LLAH.

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The Bahai Revelation

Address* by JENABI FAZEL MAZANDARANI, delivered at the Third Session of the Bahai Congress, New York City, April 27th, 1920.
Manucher Khan, Interpreter.

THERE is no doubt that there are two powers in the world, the power of spirituality and the power of materiality. There is no doubt that the advancement of man is in the world of morality. Man's honor depends upon his soul and upon his morality. If man lacks spirituality and morality he is nothing but a mere animal and is in common with animals. There is no doubt that man needs a teacher for the education of his morality and the education of his soul. History proves to us that without a teacher for these two phases, morality and soul, and without education, man cannot be supreme. The greatest morality in the world is love. Love and morality are the foundations of this world. Love in the world of humanity is the cause of its salvation. Love and unity are the honor and progress of this world. Love and unity are the foundations of its life; love and unity are the cause of man's entrance into the Kingdom of God; love and unity are the cause of eternal life.

All the Manifestations of God appeared in this world only that love and unity should prevail among mankind. The prophets of the world had no other aim except love and unity amongst humankind. When we look into the heavenly books we see the same thing, that

* See page 182 for Jenabi Fazel's words of greeting upon his arrival at the Convention.—*The Editors.*

all the aims have been this aim and nothing else. We see that in those spiritual books and in those Divine books, every corruption is forbidden; we see only inimical passions have been prohibited in those Divine books, and they have united the people in love and harmony. When we look into and consider the Divine books, we see all the aims of all the prophets have been to perfect man's morality and to establish love and unity among all mankind. They have no other aims besides these.

When we look into the history of every religion, we see that in their own cycle and in their own time they established their aims and objectives. You know that in their own time they did good work; that is to say, they established love and unity as far as it was possible in their own time. In the time of Moses, as much as it was possible in that time, and when the time of Jesus came as much as it was possible in his time. But by and by superstitions crept into those pure religions and caused dissensions, and some blind imitations made it so that the people shunned religion. Today we see in every nation that some people run away from religion entirely. No sooner do you say a word about religion than they run away from you and say, "We are not ready to hear anything about religion."

Now, let us see why they are shunning and turning away from religion.

These people see only the superstitions which are among the people but do not see the reality and the significance of the religions; they see only the misunderstandings. They see only the blind imitations. Religions are like mirrors which are covered with dust and their brilliance is entirely dull now. The dust that has covered the mirrors is nothing but these blind imitations or superstitions. It is because of these superstitions and ignorances, which have caused dissensions among the religions of the world, that they are inimical to each other, and hatred has arisen among them. Great wars and bloodshed have been brought about by these same blind imitations. But when we look to see the essential principles of all the religions we see that their aims have been one. Jesus had the same aim as Moses and Abraham and the other prophets, and they had no other aim and no other purpose except love and unity among humankind. All these differences and dissensions were brought about by the aforementioned superstitions and men's ignorance. The primary principles are unchangeable, but, of course, the secondary principles and branches are changeable according to the exigencies of time. We know that as time passes everything is changed; as you say nowadays, everything is changing. The laws of commerce and of other transient things are changing with the exigencies of time. The only differences that occur in religions is in the outer and secondary laws, not in the essential principles. There is nothing important about those transient things, they change with the exigencies of time. The point to be considered is the principles only. The people of the world do not look at the principles and the important points but they adhere to the trifling things, so of course there is dissension among them. These differences in religions have caused the very de-

struction of the whole world. If a wise man peruses the situation of the world today, will he deny that in this time and cycle there is need of unity among religions? Can all these differences and dissensions remain as they are? How long should there be differences in the world, and when is the perfection of the world to come?

BAHA'O'LLAH has dawned from the horizon of Persia, and has established laws for the unification of all religions, and he has made the world understand that the reality and the principles of all religions have been the same. He has brought to light the foundation of all religions, and these principles have been published in his book. They are the same things, but with new explanations which are very effective and influential, so that those commands renew the world of soul and the world of heart. We see that with Divine power he is dispelling those differences. This is what we see with our own eyes. What can be seen with the eyes and felt with the heart cannot be denied. If a mason claims he can build a beautiful building and he builds it right before our eyes, can that be denied? Such a fact cannot be denied. This is what BAHA'O'LLAH claims. He said his aim was to bring unity and harmony among humankind. There is unity among people who come under his standard, and he is pointing out to the people the real qualities of religion and is dispelling superstition and ignorance. This was his declaration and claim, and he attained to his aim.

We have come from the East. Now, the East was the centre of fanaticism. The people of the East were immersed in such superstition and fanaticism that they were very inimical to each other; they even considered each other as filthy and infidels, and they would not communicate with each other, would not

talk to each other. They thought it praiseworthy to murder each other, and not only did they think this action praiseworthy but they thought if they murdered one of their friends they would be nearer to God!

There were many followers of this belief in Persia, that is, those who thought that if they should kill each other they would be nearer to God. This was not according to the Holy Book at all. The Holy Book invited the people to love and harmony, while all of this emanated from superstition and ignorance. But since the manifestation of BAHÁ'O'LLAH, people of different religions and different nations have entered under its banner, and they now manifest the utmost love and unity towards each other.

For instance, the Jews were very superstitious and very fanatical. In the time of Christ they did not believe in Christ and they did not accept Christ, but now hundreds and hundreds of them have entered under this standard; and also the other older nations that did not believe in any of the new religions. When you enter one of the Bahai meetings, you see men from different races and from different nations. You cannot distinguish the Jew from those of other religions. You see a large number of people with great harmony and love towards each other, whereas each was formerly under a separate religion. This unity of religion has been established and brought about only by the Words of BAHÁ'O'LLAH.

This is the greatest power that reveals itself in the human world. This is the aim of all the Divine Manifestations; this is that which is prophesied in the Holy Book, that the "last" day will come and there will be perfect unity among the people; that the day will come when the "wolf" and the "lamb" will graze in the same pasture, and the day will come when all differences will

be removed. Now, we see that by this Revelation and this Manifestation all the differences are removed. Can such a tangible case be denied? Since the declaration of the Manifestation thousands and thousands of the Bahais have been killed. This tree has been watered by the martyrdom of hundreds and hundreds of people. From the beginning of this Manifestation up to this present time, about fifty or sixty thousand have been murdered. They were murdered by the ignorant—killed and tortured in all sorts of ways. The history of this Cause is very long indeed. Whatever happened or took place in former religions, and former Manifestations, appeared in this Manifestation also. The holy aim of the Bahais cannot be denied by anybody. In this time, which is a luminous time, we see that it needs such a great Manifestation, and it needs the unity of the people. Of course, it necessitates that all the secrets of the religious Books should appear; and this is essential that all the shining hearts from God should again be near to God.

Now, we can feel perfectly sure that if it were not for the Bahai Cause the whole world would be running away from religion; that is to say, people would see only superstitions of religion then and turn away. This period necessitates a great Manifestation, more than any other period. His Holiness BAHÁ'O'LLAH appeared to mankind and said: "Ye are all the branches of one tree and the fruits of one tree; ye are all of one race; ye are all created by the same God." Put aside all your blind imitations and adhere to the principles of religion and then you will all be united. My hope is that we endeavor every day to spread this Cause as much as we can, because the progress of the world and the attraction of the attention of people to religion is not realized by any other way except this way.