

ABDUL-BAHA

True Happiness, Wisdom and Progress. The Dawn of Knowledge.

THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM.

But the question remains—How is the great King going to come? Will the heavens suddenly open and the sound of a great trumpet announce His speedy descent upon us? Oh no—that could not be, for material things do not exist in the Spiritual Realms, and it would have to be a material trumpet in order for us to hear with our material ears; and our material eyes could not perceive a Spiritual body. Then how will He come? To harmonize with the laws He Himself has established, and to conform to that which He hath ordained for Himself, He must be born of earthly parents, and grow up in like manner with every child born into this world. God will never violate His own laws, nor perform any unnecessary miracle in order to accomplish what He has preordained.

There need be no speculation as to the manner of His coming, for the Bible is very specific on this point, notably Isaiah 9:6—"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Many misguided people, ignorant of the symbolic language used in the sacred writings, have confounded this passage with the prophecies relating to the coming of Christ, and for proof of this we have only to turn to the words of Christ Himself to understand that it did not refer to Him, but to the One whom He prophesied should come after Him; the One whom He declared was greater than He—"The Father, the Lord of the Vineyard, who would come and destroy the wicked husbandman who cast his son out of the Vineyard and killed him"—Luke 20:9; Mark 12:1.

Christ did not claim to be "The Prince of Peace"—but did claim for Himself the very reverse, Luke 12:51-52: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." In Matt. 10:36, this passage ends: "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

The Most Great Peace, which Christ and the Prophets referred to at divers times, was that which should follow the advent of the Prince of Peace, the Lord of the Vineyard, after He would come and take the vineyard from the dishonest husbandman, and give it to those more worthy, the same time referred to by Daniel—"After Michael should stand up." After that time would be realized the time mentioned in Daniel, 12th Chapter—"Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

In another Talk we will have occasion to refer more fully to this very important passage.

The prophecies thus far quoted, show us plainly that God is to come to this earth, and establish His everlasting Kingdom; that He will come as a man, and coming as such, will be born of earthly parents, and grow up like other children born into this world. But some may say, if the miraculous does not attend His coming, how shall we know Him, and also know the time when to look for Him, and in what part of the world will He make His appearance? Here again the Bible is very clear. At that time, it tells us, He shall send an advancer, Malachi 3:1—"Behold I will send My Messenger, and He shall prepare the way before Me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in, behold He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts." But you may say you are in as great a dilemma as ever, for how shall we know the Messenger, that He is the one? Christ said: "The day or the hour no man knoweth," but after mentioning man's things that would happen before the Great Event would take place, He reminds us that "when we shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors," Matt. 24. Daniel informs us that at that time, "the wise shall understand, but the wicked shall not understand." Now who are the wise and who are the wicked? The wise are they who, according to the teachings of the Sacred Writings, are honestly seeking to know God, and the wicked, those who are indifferent to God, and unconcerned about Spiritual things.

The Angel told Daniel "to close the book and seal it until the time of the end," hence the Bible would be a sealed book until the Messenger should come who would reveal its hidden words. The Bible is a book of prophecies, foretelling future events, and there is no possible way of proving the prophecy until the prophecy is fulfilled, and to those who are not earnestly seeking the light of God's Truth, how can they understand the Wonderful Book? Isaiah reminds us of this, Chapter 29:11, 12—"And the vision of all is become unto you as the word of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I am not learned." The learned say they cannot read it, because it is a sealed book to them, and the unlearned say they cannot read it, because they are unlearned.

As before remarked, there is no way of proving prophecy until the prophecy is fulfilled. If I predict a certain event, or series of events, which are going to take place at a given time in the future, is there any possible way that I can convince you my predictions are true, until the time arrives for their fulfillment? Certainly not. We must wait until the appointed time, then if they come to pass, you must, as a rational being, believe me to be a prophet; but if they do not come to pass, then you would be justified in condemning me as a fraud. And it is in about this relation we stand toward the Bible; until we have been instructed in the hidden meaning of its contents, it is a sealed Book to us, and we cannot rightly understand it; the prophecies must surely come to pass, before we can believe them. The office of the Messenger whom God shall send will be to break the seals, and, by His revelations, end the wonders mentioned in Daniel 12:6, revealing to us the fulfillment of prophecy; and by this we shall know Him.

Already the Sun of Truth hath arisen in the obscure horizon of prophetic wonders, and its clarifying rays, so bright and penetrating, have lighted up the understanding of the wise, and with them have caused those wonders to end. The prophecy of Isaiah they know for a certainty has been fulfilled, Chap. 9:V. 2, 3—"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."

The Advancer, the Messenger, whom God would send, the One whom He promised. He would give us, who would feed us with knowledge and understanding, has come. The people that walk in darkness have seen the Great Light, upon them hath the Light shined. And in our next Talk we will tell the wonderful story of how, when and where He came, and the marvelous things He has revealed.

Next Week: The Messenger.