

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE KITÁB-I-AQDAS

A transcript for audio-cassette from series

WINDOWS TO THE PAST

by Dr. Darius Shahrokh

Let us start with one paragraph from the letter of March 5, 1993, from the Universal House of Justice, addressed to the Bahá'ís of the world giving the glad tidings of the release of English translation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas.

A Book of such indescribable holiness is, itself, a symbol of the incomparable greatness of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, and is, indeed, a potent reminder of the high respect which is due to all that has flowed from His prodigious, truth-bearing pen. May the friends of God ever be mindful of its exalted rank among the sacred texts of the Faith; treasure it as the bread of life; regard possession of it as a sacred honour, as a priceless legacy from the Pen of the Most High, as a source of God's greatest bounty to His creatures; place their whole trust in its provisions; recite its verses; study its contents; adhere to its exhortations; and thus transform their lives in accordance with the divine standard.

I. HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

This talk will be presented in nine parts. The first is a review of history and background.

Bahá'u'lláh states about the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, "By God! Such is the majesty of what hath been revealed therein, and so tremendous the revelation of its veiled allusions that the loins of utterance shake when attempting their description...blessed those who peruse it! Blessed those who apprehend it! Blessed those who meditate upon it! Blessed those who ponder its meaning!" (1)

How a mortal like me should talk about and describe the Most Holy Book without feeling of inadequacy if the loins of utterance shake when attempting to describe it? My limited words are like the babbling of a child trying to describe the sun. All I can tell you is that the sun has risen to the zenith of its splendor, emanating its life-giving light and heat. It will guarantee our survival only if we expose ourselves to its revitalizing rays.

Kitáb, pronounced Kaytahb, not Keetab, means the book. The letter "i" between two hyphens is pronounced ay and means "of". Aqdas means most holy. Persians call it Kitáb-i-Muṣṭatáb-i-Aqdas meaning the revered book of Aqdas. It is more reverent to refer to it as Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Aqdas, or The Most Holy Book. The word Aqdas is also used as a woman's name. This book is designated by Bahá'u'lláh as the "Mother Book", the "Quickener of Mankind," and the "Ark of His Laws." The prophets of the past have alluded to it as the "New Heaven," the "New Earth," the "Tabernacle of God," the "Holy City," and the "New Jerusalem coming down from God."

Shoghi Effendi called it the Charter of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. I mentioned that Bahá'u'lláh called it the Mother Book. It is timely to mention three other mothers. Ásíyih Khánúm, the wife of Bahá'u'lláh, is called Ummu'l-Káinát, or the mother of creation; Tehrán is called Ummu'l-'Álam, the mother of the world; and the temple in Wilmette, the Holiest Temple and the Mother Temple.

Not much is mentioned about the wife of Bahá'u'lláh and the wife of the Báb. After the passing of Ásíyih Khánúm, or Navváb, Bahá'u'lláh revealed a tablet in her honor, and mentioned that in all of the worlds of God she will be His companion.

To me, it is the highest station any mortal can achieve; and as for the wife of the Báb, Khadíjih Bagum, when she passed away, Bahá'u'lláh honored her by stating that all who died on the day of her passing were blessed to enter the Abhá Kingdom. What a tribute!

As was mentioned, the Guardian stated that the Kitáb-i-Aqdas is the Charter for the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. Also he has

designated three other charters. The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Charter of the Administrative Order. The Tablets of the Divine Plan (fourteen tablets by 'Abdu'l-Bahá addressed to the believers of United States and Canada) as the Charter for spiritual conquest of the planet, and finally, the Tablet of Carmel as the Charter for the institutions at the World Center.

The laws and ordinances revealed by Bahá'u'lláh are not all contained in the small Kitáb-i-Aqdas revealed by Bahá'u'lláh in 1873. According to the Guardian, Bahá'u'lláh's writings such as Ishráqát (The Splendors), Bishárát (Glad Tidings), Tarázát (Ornaments), Tajalliyát (Effulgences), Kalimát-i-Ferdawsíyyih (Words of Paradise), Lawh-i-Aqdas (Most Holy Tablet), Lawh-i-Dunyá (Tablet of the World), and Lawh-i-Maqsúd (Tablet of Maqsud) are supplements to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. (2) As an example, in the Tablet of Ishráqát which was revealed in the honor of a believer, in the eighth Ishráq, Bahá'u'lláh states, "This passage now written by the Pen of Glory is accounted as part of the Most Holy Book."

Further supplements to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas are Questions and Answers, Bahá'u'lláh's Will and Testament, also referred to as the Crimson Book or Most Great Tablet (Lawh-i-A'azam), and finally, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament. (3) The explanations of the two authorized interpreters, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, are the final supplements to this Most Holy Book. What is available to you in English includes the original Kitáb-i-Aqdas plus all of the explanations by Bahá'u'lláh and the authorized interpretations.

Bahá'u'lláh gives a strong warning about unauthorized interpretations of Kitáb-i-Aqdas with the following words: "Whoso interpreteth what hath been sent down from the heaven of Revelation, and altereth its evident meaning, he, verily is of them that have perverted the Sublime Word of God, and is of the lost ones in the Lucid Book."

Next in rank to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas is the Kitáb-i-Íqán, or the Book of Certitude. Among the supplements, I mentioned Questions and Answers. In the Persian Bayán, the Báb forbade His followers to question "the One Whom God Shall Make Manifest," namely Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'u'lláh annulled that law and after revealing the Kitáb-i-Aqdas permitted the believers and Zaynu'l-Muqarribín (the Ornament of

the Intimate Ones), who was a mujtahid (doctor of Islámic laws) before becoming a Bahá'í, to ask Him any questions about the application of the laws and ordinances.

The Book of Questions and Answers which constitutes an appendix to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas is the fruit of these questions and answers compiled by Zaynu'l-Muqarribín, the most eminent transcriber. Zaynu'l-Muqarribín was a man of great humor who used to cheer the believers, and at times, amuse Bahá'u'lláh. He became a Bábí in 1852, the year Bahá'u'lláh was put in the Síyah-Chál. Attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh after His return from Sulaymáníyyih, and a tablet from Bahá'u'lláh put his soul on fire. Except for a few years of exile in Mosul, he spent his life near Bahá'u'lláh. He took great pains when transcribing the tablets to make sure of their accuracy. At present day, all tablets in his handwriting are considered accurate. As for the difference between a tablet and a prayer, prayer is for us communing with God and a tablet is when Bahá'u'lláh addresses us.

Bahá'u'lláh's writings are about 15,000 documents, some in the size of a book such as the Kitáb-i-Aqdas and Kitáb-i-Íqán, and some in the form of tablets and short letters.

Chronologically:

1. In Baghdád, He revealed His mystical writings such as The Seven Valleys and The Four Valleys; spiritual and moral exhortations such as The Hidden Words; and interpretation of the past Holy Books and proof of the station of the Báb in the Kitáb-i-Íqán.

2. In Adrianople, He addressed the kings, emperors and ecclesiastics, thus proclaiming His Faith worldwide. In this period the beginning of the revelation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas took place. Bahá'u'lláh stated that for years petitions were made about laws and ordinances, but He held His pen back. In Adrianople, He revealed a brief portion in Persian but it was not distributed and was kept in safekeeping.

During the period in Adrianople, the two pilgrimage tablets were revealed and, one by one, were sent to Nabíl-i-A'zam, the historian, who was instructed that, on behalf of Bahá'u'lláh, he should perform the pilgrimage with prescribed rites. Apparently when he did the

2 pilgrimage to the House of the Báb in Shíráz, performing proper
rites, which start from outside the city, the people, not knowing
the significance of it, thought he had lost his mind. The other
house is the Bayt-i-A'zam or Most Great House, also called the
'House of God' which is Bahá'u'lláh's House in Baghdád.

Two things are timely here. A part of the rites for pilgrimage
to these two Houses, which is an obligation to men who could afford
it, is to shave their head. Later in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Bahá'u'lláh
forbade shaving of the head, and in questioning, it was made clear
that whatever laws in other writings are contrary to the laws of
the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, the latter takes precedence. Up to this day,
Nabíl-i-Azam is the only person who has performed all of the
rites of pilgrimage to these two Houses. Secondly, pilgrimage
to one of these two Houses (whichever is the closer) is a spiritual
obligation. However, these two Houses are second in holiness to
the holy shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb in the Holy Land.
'Abdu'l-Bahá, in a tablet, adds the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh to these
two Houses as a choice for the obligatory pilgrimage.(4)

3. Stage 3 of His writings is at the beginning of the 'Akká period,
when the prayers of fasting were revealed in anticipation of the
law which soon was established in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. It was five
years after His incarceration in the Most Great Prison and more
than half of His ministry over in 1873 when He revealed the
Kitáb-i-Aqdas in the confines of a room in the House of Uddí
Khammár, also know as the House of 'Abbúd.

After entering 'Akká, a number of believers requested the book of
laws, but they had to wait. According to a tablet from Bahá'u'lláh
it was revealed around July 1873. However, for about one year
it was not distributed. Bahá'u'lláh states the reason for it
was the law of Huqúqu'lláh which was a bounty to the believers,
but He was concerned about their reaction which might not be worthy
of the Day of God. After it was released, He instructed the
believers that the law of Huqúqu'lláh was not binding for four
years. Many Persian believers offered Huqúqu'lláh but it was not
accepted. (5)

4. In the period after the revelation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas many
of His major tablets were revealed which became supplemental to

the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. He mentioned in them that they are part of the Mother Book. The major themes and subjects of these supplementary tablets address the following:

- Importance of the Covenant and obedience to the Center of the Covenant.
- Eventual conquest of the Faith, enveloping the planet.
- Consultation in all affairs.
- Most Great Peace.
- Function and station of the Universal House of Justice.
- Education of children.
- Universal language and script.
- Good manners, trustworthiness, truthfulness, uprightness and a chaste life.

'Abdu'l-Bahá states that the state of excitement during the revelation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas was such that Bahá'u'lláh ate very little, and, at times, for a few days wouldn't eat at all. (6)

During His own lifetime, Bahá'u'lláh commented upon the translation by one of the believers, "although the intention of the translator was good, such an action in these days will lead to differences and is therefore not permissible." (7)

Kitáb-i-Aqdas was revealed in Arabic, and not necessarily all Persians can read it. Now that the English translation of Kitáb-i-Aqdas is released by the House of Justice in fulfillment of wishes of Shoghi Effendi, it tells us that the time is ripe for the world to enter another stage. Great events such as the two World Congresses signaled passage of the Faith into another stage. As the believers passed through these doorways, they took and will take the whole of humanity with them. There is no doubt that the release of translation of Kitáb-i-Aqdas in this Holy Year, during which also the second World Congress was held, foretells drastic changes in the fortunes of the Faith with humanity its beneficiary.

A Bahá'í state, according to the message of May 1953 of the Guardian, will become established when not only the Bahá'í Faith is the state religion, but also when all civil matters and laws are done in accordance with the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. Shortly after its revelation Siyyid Javád-i-Karbilá'í, a very esteemed believer who had known the Báb when He was a youth, was anxious for all

believers to implement the laws. In a tablet to him, Bahá'u'lláh counselled him to exercise caution and wisdom in its implementation.

In the year it was released, a great teacher, Jamál-i-Burújirdí, who later became a notorious covenant-breaker, was in 'Akká. Bahá'u'lláh permitted him to copy certain parts of it for Bahá'ís in Persia, and again He emphasized wisdom and discretion in its application. All Manifestations of God, through Their mercy, have permitted gradual implementation of Their laws because of man's attachment to old laws and customs. It is interesting that this proud teacher asked Bahá'u'lláh to make him exempt from obedience to the laws of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, and Bahá'u'lláh granted it. He served the Faith for forty years, but from the beginning it became clear to many believers that he was corrupt and egotistical.

Bahá'u'lláh gave him the title of Ismu'lláh-ul-Jamál (the Name of God, Jamál). He was the foremost teacher and received many tablets from Bahá'u'lláh who overlooked his shortcomings. He used to be a mujtahid (doctor of Islamic law) before he became a Bahá'í, but did not discard his clergy robe and large turban. Believers used to flock around him. On one occasion when two distinguished believers (one of whom later became a Hand of the Cause by Bahá'u'lláh) were travel-teaching, Jamál became very jealous and secretly told the believers to stay away. When Bahá'u'lláh heard about this, He rebuked him severely which shattered his prestige, but he recovered and regained his position.

He had just finished a great assignment from Bahá'u'lláh, and that was to transfer the remains of the Báb to a place of safety, then he went to Adrianople to see Bahá'u'lláh. Bahá'u'lláh's barber, Muḥammad 'Alí-i-Salmání, recounts the following story. He states, "I heard that Jamál was in town. When I went to Bahá'u'lláh's reception room, I noticed Jamál was sitting in one corner with his usual large turban and he was holding his hand so it could be kissed (common in Islám but forbidden by Bahá'u'lláh). I walked in and said 'Alláh-u-Abhá' and without paying any attention to him, I went and sat in the other end of the room. After awhile I laid on the floor. I wanted to deflate his ego and vanity. Then I looked at him and said, 'How are you?' He only shook his head. Then I left. The next day I was told that Bahá'u'lláh summoned him, so I took him to Bahá'u'lláh. Mírzá Mihdí was standing in

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/ the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. I stood at the door. Jamál went in pretending he was trembling and fell on the ground which was a mere act. Bahá'u'lláh was seated. Mírzá Mihdí went forward to help Jamál to get up, but Bahá'u'lláh stopped him saying, 'Leave him alone, he will get up by himself.' After awhile he sat and then stood up. Then Bahá'u'lláh dismissed him without saying anything."

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/ After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas was released, under the instruction of the King of Martyrs, Jamál went to Khurásán to solicit funds to help the expenses of the Holy Household. Jamál wrote a complaining letter to Mírzá Áqá Ján, Bahá'u'lláh's secretary, that nothing he does is accepted by Bahá'u'lláh or pleases Him.

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/ After the passing of Bahá'u'lláh, even before the rebellion of Muhammad-'Alí came to open, Jamál caused a disturbance in Tehran, seeking leadership. Then he allied himself with Muhammad-'Alí, and Jamál was cast out as a covenant-breaker. His fall was very dramatic. His last days were spent in destitution, and those who had adored him abandoned him. His son, Lutfu'lláh-i-Mawhibat, dissociated from him. The son was a great artist, and illuminated many tablets which are preserved in the Archives at the World Center. In Tehran he used to be a neighbor of ours, but I never knew he was the son of Jamál.

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/ The lesson from this is any time you like a teacher, instead of exalting him, pray for him so he does not fall a victim of ego. Another point which needs your attention is that regardless how polished a teacher may be, any time question arises about his or her accuracy, believers must refer to the authentic books. Mírzá 'Abu'l-Faql, the great scholar, insisted that the believers should abstain from crediting verbal traditions. This includes pilgrim notes. (8)

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/ 3 Another story tells you about the response of believers when they received the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. The Father of Badí, the martyr-messenger, or Fakhrush-Shuhdá, the Pride of Martyrs, was called by Bahá'u'lláh "Abá Badí," meaning the Father of Badí. Number of years after martyrdom of his son, when he was in his eighties, he attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, and he begged for martyrdom. His wish was granted. He took the first copy of the

Kitáb-i-Aqdas to Khurásán, and talking about it and teaching it, he was telling everyone how the prophecy of Bahá'u'lláh about the downfall and assassination of Sultán 'Abdu'l- Azíz was fulfilled. Do you think any one doubted the teachings and laws or questioned them? He was martyred in a year after his relatives reported him to the clergy. That fulfillment mentioned by Abá Badí was like a miracle to the believers, and, as you know, was the factor in Mírzá 'Abu'l-Faḍl gaining his unshakeable certitude. Now our miracle is the victory of the Covenant and the rapid progress of the Faith in the world and the fulfillment of prophecies of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and Shoghi Effendi.

Let it be known that the Kitáb-i-Aqdas is the medicine for the ailing humanity, sometimes bitter and sometimes sweet, but inevitably its healing effect will lead us to the Kingdom of God on earth. Just like a patient who accepts the advice of a skilled physician, whether it be a bitter medication or the painful amputation of a diseased part, we must accept wholeheartedly the law, and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

II. CIRCUMSTANCES

Let us talk about the circumstances surrounding the revelation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. Bahá'u'lláh appeared in the Middle East where the dominant religion was Islám. Although when He declared Himself, He was the follower of the religion before Him; namely, a Bábí, he had been raised as a Muslim in a Muslim family.

Judaism and Islám are examples of religions with laws; however, in the Christian Faith there are not many laws given by Christ. Because of this, for people of Christian background, it may be difficult to appreciate the significance of religious laws, and the vital role they play in the life of community. Christ's message was mainly directed towards individual salvation and love.

The effect of personality and the background of the Manifestation of God manifests in almost every feature of that religion. In many laws we find such examples:

1. The law of Huqúqu'lláh, initiated by the Báb, was revised, and reinstated in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. In Islám there is a law for

Khums, which means one-fifth of the profit to be given for charity.

2. Bahá'í fasting has resemblance to Islámic fast, but adjusted to solar Bahá'í calendar.
3. Various movements during prayer. In the eastern culture, hands are raised in supplication to higher authority. Bowing and prostration are various positions for humility and servitude.
4. Dowry is given both ways in the Middle East. In India and among the Jews, the man receives the dowry. In Islám the woman receives the dowry. Bahá'u'lláh reinstated the law of dowry with the woman receiving it, and modified it to a low amount.
5. In the Islámic culture of Bahá'u'lláh's time, music was condemned by the clergy and considered to be conducive to pleasure and lust. Musicians were denounced as the agents of Satan and subject to punishment. To such a society, Bahá'u'lláh revealed the following words in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, "We have permitted you to listen to music and singing. Beware lest such listening cause you to transgress the bounds of decency and dignity," and further He states, "We have made music a ladder by which souls may ascend to the realm on high. Change it not into wings for self and passion." What a befitting statement. No room in the Faith for many x-rated songs of today.
6. Mourning. The customs of those days, and yet today, is some celebrating with playing music and making merry, while others cry, scream and beat upon their heads. Bahá'u'lláh revealed in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, "Lament not in your hours of trial, neither rejoice therein, seek ye the Middle Way which is the remembrance of Me in your afflictions and reflection over that which may befall you in the future."
7. Bahá'u'lláh in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas has forbidden muttering of the Holy Words as well as cursing. In Ishráqát He states, "Defile not your tongue with the cursing and reviling of any soul." In the Lawh-i-Dunyá, or the Tablet of the World, He censures the Shí'ih sect for the "foul imprecations when they invoke the word 'mal'ún' (accursed) with a guttural sound of the letter ayn." The Moslem clergy used to mutter or move their lips while walking in public pretending to recite the Qurán. Also, anytime anyone displeased them they would curse that person by calling him "mal'ún." However, they would say it with guttural 'ayn' which supposedly made it stick better as well as showing their superiority, being able to produce that guttural sound which the illiterate were not capable of, so they would say "mal'ún".

No one has the right to question the wisdom of any law revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, but understanding certain factors enables us to explain them better to the outside world.

III THE TEXT, THE BOUNTY

The subject of the third part of this talk is the text, the bounty. The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, in the Guardian's words, is "the brightest emanation of the mind of Bahá'u'lláh." Though basically a book of laws and ordinances, yet its laws are interwoven with passages of spiritual counsel. Of it, Bahá'u'lláh speaks, "By My life! it hath been sent down in a manner that amazeth the minds of men."

There is no pattern for this interweaving of the two, nor is there any apparent connection between them. After expounding some of His choicest teaching or revealing some of His counsels, abruptly He changes the subject and gives one or two more laws. There are deliberate gaps in the laws which will be filled by the Universal House of Justice, so designated by Him.

Of a number of laws given by the Báb some were confirmed, or modified and reinstated by Bahá'u'lláh, such as the calendar, the Feast and Huqúqu'lláh. Whichever laws of the Báb which were not confirmed by Him, according to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, were abrogated.

Bahá'u'lláh states in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, "Think not that We have revealed unto you a mere code of laws. Nay, rather, We have unsealed the Choice Wine with the fingers of might and power." We might superficially consider it a poetic and beautiful verse and neglect the metaphor. With this sentence, He gives a different meaning to His laws. The dictionary describes the law as rule of conduct enforced by a controlling authority, but He describes His laws as the Choice Wine. In another passage, in a language full of authority and compassion, He states, "The tongue of My power hath, from the heaven of My omnipotent glory, addressed to My creation these words, 'Observe My commandments for the love of My beauty.'" These verses are so unique. What does choice wine have to do with law. In Islám and the Bahá'í Faith, drinking of wine is forbidden. Obviously, the metaphor gives the spiritual analogy of a good and strong wine. Instead of binding with

limitations the one who drinks it, it eliminates inhibition and gives the feeling of liberation. Similarly, the Choice Wine of Bahá'u'lláh's laws will free and liberate those who obey them. Bahá'u'lláh has opened a new phase in the spiritual evolution and moral transformation of mankind. Although in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, He has set specific punishments for wrongdoing; nevertheless, by transformation of human nature, His laws will become a part of our conscience, freeing us from our baser nature and thus liberating us.

You see, motivation for avoiding wrongdoing and crime is based on spiritual strength and moral value. Protection is built from within and not by erecting walls outside. This is a novel concept of law as the instrument of liberation. The primary agent for enforcement of His laws is not fear but the love of His beauty. And if there is fear, it is not the fear of fire of hell, but the fear of displeasing the One we love.

Before I discuss various aspects of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, it is most timely to read the matchless words of the Guardian describing in God Passes By a summary of this Most Holy Book: (9)

In this Charter of the future world civilization its Author— at once the Judge, the Lawgiver, the Unifier and Redeemer of mankind — announces to the kings of the earth the promulgation of the "Most Great Law"; pronounces them to be His vassals; proclaims Himself the "King of Kings"; disclaims any intention of laying hands on their kingdoms; reserves for Himself the right to "seize and possess the hearts of men"; warns the world's ecclesiastical leaders not to weigh the "Book of God" with such standards as are current amongst them; and affirms that the Book itself is the "Unerring Balance" established amongst men. In it He formally ordains the institution of the "House of Justice," defines its functions, fixes its revenues, and designates its members as the "Men of Justice," the "Deputies of God," the "Trustees of the All-Merciful," alludes to the future Center of His Covenant, and invests Him with the right of interpreting His holy Writ; anticipates by implication the institution of Guardianship; bears witness to the revolutionizing effect of His World Order; enunciates the doctrine

of the "Most Great Infallibility" of the Manifestation of God; asserts this infallibility to be the inherent and exclusive right of the Prophet; and rules out the possibility of the appearance of another Manifestation ere the lapse of at least one thousand years.

In this Book He, moreover, prescribes the obligatory prayers; designates the time and period of fasting; prohibits congregational prayer except for the dead; fixes the Qiblih; institutes the Huqúqu'lláh (Right of God); formulates the law of inheritance; ordains the institution of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár; establishes the Nineteen Day Feasts, the Bahá'í festivals and the Intercalary Days; abolishes the institution of priesthood; prohibits slavery, asceticism, mendicancy, monasticism, penance, the use of pulpits and the kissing of hands; prescribes monogamy, condemns cruelty to animals, idleness and sloth, backbiting and calumny; censures divorce; interdicts gambling, the use of opium, wine and other intoxicating drinks; specifies the punishments for murder, arson, adultery and theft; stresses the importance of marriage and lays down its essential conditions; imposes the obligation of engaging in some trade or profession, exalting such occupation to the rank of worship; emphasizes the necessity of providing the means for the education of children; and lays upon every person the duty of writing a testament and of strict obedience to one's government.

Apart from these provisions, Bahá'u'lláh exhorts His followers to consort, with amity and concord and without discrimination, with the adherents of all religions; warns them to guard against fanaticism, sedition, pride, dispute and contention; inculcates upon them immaculate cleanliness, strict truthfulness, spotless chastity, trustworthiness, hospitality, fidelity, courtesy, forbearance, justice and fairness; counsels them to be "even as the fingers of one hand and the limbs of one body"; calls upon them to arise and serve His Cause; and assures them of His undoubted aid. He, furthermore, dwells upon the instability of human affairs; declares that true liberty consists in man's submission to His commandments; cautions them not to be indulgent in carrying out His statutes; prescribes the twin inseparable duties of recognizing the "Dayspring of God's Revelation" and of observing all the ordinances revealed by Him, neither of which, He affirms, is acceptable without the other.

Let me tell you an eye-opener story about interpolation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. A great clergyman of Islám whose name was Mírzá Muḥammad Hasan, but was known as Mírzá-i-Shírází, is someone you rarely come across his name. His father was the cousin of the Báb's father, and obviously he was from Shíráz. He received his degree of Ijtahád, or doctorate in Islámic law, from Shaykh Murtaday-i-Ansari who bestowed this degree only to three people. One died and the third one was Fadl-Qaini, or Nabil-i-Akbar, (should not be mistaken for Nabil-i-'Azam, the historian). When the illumined Shaykh Murtaday-i-Ansarí died, Mírzá-i-Shírází became his successor as Marja'-i-Taqlid, or "the reference point for imitation," the highest position in Islámic hierarchy. He became so powerful that he issued a fatva, or edict, boycotting use of tobacco which had prospered the British and the corrupt government of Írán. The use of tobacco in Írán completely stopped, and the Sháh was forced to cancel the contract, paying a large fine to the British.

After this great Mujtahid retired, through some relatives, he asked for a visit by a distant relative, Núru'd-Dín, whose mother, Zahrá Bagum, was the sister of the wife of the Báb. This only visit, which was held secretly at dawn, revealed some facts that boggle the mind. He confessed and confided to Núru'd-Dín, who was a Bahá'í, that when young he saw the Báb in Isfahán in the meeting of clergies, and he accepted the Cause and later on accepted Bahá'u'lláh, but stayed as a leader of Muslims. Núru'd-Dín asked him, "Why didn't you announce your faith, causing conversion of masses?" He said, "My dear relative, was I any better than Vahíd, the greatest clergy, who on behalf of the king, confronted the Báb and accepted Him? What did the people and clergy do to him? Tied him with his turban to a horse and dragged him all over the city until he died. I stayed in my high position and served the Cause from that angle. For example, when the prince governor of Tehran (1882-83) imprisoned Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Faql and many great scholars of the Faith for two years, I wrote an edict to the king. I said, 'Why, without reason and without my permission, are you doing this? It has been because of you that this religion has spread all over. Muhammad has said that man seeks after what is forbidden. Your persecution attracts people. As soon as you receive this letter, free them with kindness.' The king did exactly that; he summoned the Bahá'í prisoners, gave each one a gold coin and set them free."

"Another time Jamálu'd-Dín-Afghání was planning to make mischief in Istanbul. (He was a pan-Islámist and notorious mischief-maker.) He had interpolated some material into the Kitáb-i-Aqdas such as the mosques of Islám should be demolished and Mecca and Medina should be razed plus other rubbish. He inserted these into the Kitáb-i-Aqdas and translated it into Turkish and gave it to Sultán 'Abdu'l-Hamíd, the Sultán of Turkish Empire in latter years of Bahá'u'lláh. The Sultán wrote me about this book and asked what should he do. I said, 'You have no right to interfere in these religious matters. This might be caused by spitefulness. Send all such books to me, and I will decide what to do.' Then I threw them all in the river." Wow! This is almost like the Pope being secretly a believer.

IV. INFALLIBILITY, AUTHORITY, AND KNOWLEDGE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

The fourth part of this talk is about the infallibility, authority, and knowledge of Bahá'u'lláh. In the Kitáb-i-Aqdas Bahá'u'lláh declares the doctrine of the Most Great Infallibility of the Manifestations of God, and that no one else can possess it. It is the inherent characteristic of the Manifestation of God, the same way that light and heat are inherent to the sun. The reason that His power is hidden behind the veil of His human temple is that if His glory were to be openly revealed, all human beings would instantly recognize Him, and, by so doing, they would lose their free will and become puppets of God. However, Bahá'u'lláh always revealed a measure of His hidden glory to those who had recognized Him for further certitude and confirmation. There are many stories.

Just one story at this time will suffice. When the Hand of the Cause and silver-tongued poet, 'Alí-Muhammad-i-Varqá, who eventually with his twelve-year-old son, Rúhu'lláh, drank the cup of martyrdom, attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká, he found Bahá'u'lláh's face very familiar, as if he had seen Him before. He was losing sleep trying to remember where he had seen Him. In a market place? In the believers' gatherings? He got nowhere, until one day Bahá'u'lláh told him, "Varqá, burn away the idols of vain imagining." All of a sudden, he remembered his childhood dream.

As a child he saw that he was playing in the courtyard with some dolls when God appeared to him and took his dolls and burned them in a fire. Yes, that was when he saw Bahá'u'lláh! Imagine, that was ten or fifteen years before, when Bahá'u'lláh was in Baghdád. He appeared in that child's dream to make him an apostle of Bahá'u'lláh and a Hand of the Cause.

Another day, when in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, in adoration, a thought occurred to him that he recognized Bahá'u'lláh as the Supreme Manifestation, but how grateful he would be if Bahá'u'lláh in the course of His conversation would mention a certain sentence from the Qur'án. It didn't take long before Bahá'u'lláh mentioned that verse. Now listen to this. Varqá was delighted and overjoyed, but told himself that it may have been a mere coincidence. Abruptly, Bahá'u'lláh turned to him and said, "Inham káfi nabúd?" "Wasn't this sufficient enough proof to you?" He was dumbfounded, was shaken but assured. No wonder later on, he begged Bahá'u'lláh that he and one of his sons could be accepted as a sacrifice for 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and it was granted.

One believer, Áqá Riḍá-i Sa'ádatí, stated that in the gathering of friends, if Bahá'u'lláh turned His face to a person, that person was unable to gaze upon His countenance. Therefore, Bahá'u'lláh used to look to the right side as He spoke, so the friends might find it easier to look at His face, and if He ever turned His face towards the friends, He would close His eyes and speak. (10)

I can tell you the story of Ismá'íl who looked at Bahá'u'lláh's eyes and saw hundred-thousand sunlit and billowing seas surging upon His countenance. Later he ended his own life because he had seen a glimpse of the glory of Bahá'u'lláh and could not bear the burden of this life. I wish there were time to tell you in detail.

There are many passages in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas about His exalted station. He states that the word Prophet or Messenger should not be used to describe Him. He is the Supreme Manifestation and the Inaugurator of the Day of God. (11)

An influential person in Iṣfahán became a Bahá'í, corrected many of his bad habits and shortcomings, but could not overcome his addiction to alcohol. When the believers would smell it on his

breath, he would say in defense, "This addiction is very strong. I do it in privacy of my home and harm no one else, and besides, I am too lowly a servant for Bahá'u'lláh to be concerned about my private life." (Don't many of us think or say the same thing.) Finally, he was permitted to go for pilgrimage. One day sitting in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh while Bahá'u'lláh was pacing back and forth, a thought occurred to him that it is true that Bahá'u'lláh is a great prophet, but he wondered what He meant when He stated, "I am the Sender of the Messengers and the Revealer of the Books?" He had not finished his thought when Bahá'u'lláh walked to him, put His blessed hand on his shoulder and said, "It is true, We are the Sender of the Messengers and the Revealer of the heavenly Books." With this, he became transformed and accepted Bahá'u'lláh with every fiber of his being. Upon his return, no more smell of alcohol on his breath, and upon inquiry, he told the friends that if Bahá'u'lláh could read his mind, surely He could see his actions. He, indeed, is Omnipresent and Omniscient.

While Bahá'u'lláh dealt with believers with kindness and mercy, He did not respond positively to those who did not believe in Him and demanded a miracle. He dealt with sovereigns and religious leaders with authority. In Kitáb-i-Aqdas, revealed while a prisoner in the confines of a small room, He addressed the kings in a language ringing with authority. He states, "O kings of earth! He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is come. The Kingdom is God's...Ye are but vassals, O kings of the earth! He Who is the King of Kings hath appeared, arrayed in His most wondrous glory, and is summoning you unto Himself, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting." His warning to all religious leaders in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas starts with, "Say, O leaders of religion! Weigh not the Book of God with such standards and sciences as are current amongst you, for the Book itself is the unerring Balance established amongst men..."(12)

Concerning His ever-present and supernatural knowledge, Bahá'u'lláh addressing Nabíl-i-Akbar in the Tablet of Wisdom (Lawh-i-Hikmat) reveals the following words, "...whenever We desire to quote the sayings of the learned and the wise, presently there will appear before the face of thy Lord in the form of a tablet all that which hath appeared in the world and is revealed in the Holy Books and

Scriptures. Thus do We set down in writing that which the eye perceiveth. Verily, His knowledge encompasseth the earth and the heavens. This is a Tablet wherein the Pen of the Unseen hath inscribed the knowledge of all that hath been and shall be - a knowledge that none other but My wondrous tongue can interpret." No wonder He could reveal the Kitáb-i-Íqán containing two hundred pages within the span of forty-eight hours without a single reference book.

V. OBEDIENCE, LIBERTY, THE COVENANT OF GOD

The fifth part of this talk is concerning obedience, liberty, and the Covenant of God. Shoghi Effendi, knowing that the believers in the Cradle of the Faith had been brought up within a society where the significance of religious laws and their implications were understood, directed the Spiritual Assemblies in that part of the world to begin to enforce some of the laws of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas for Bahá'ís. He urged them not to compromise, and to uphold the standard of justice and impartiality.

Present-day society in the Western World is not, however, oriented to obedience to religious laws. Its tendency to move towards materialism and the Christian tradition have been major factors. As I said before, Christ did not give many laws. His message mainly stressed individual salvation and love. Up to now only a few of the laws of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas have been given to the Western World, and when the Synopsis of Kitáb-i-Aqdas in 1973, one hundred years from its revelation, was released, the implementation of many of its laws was not mandatory. The release of the English translation shows advancement in maturity of the Western believers.

We are growing, and in this process are getting more and more exposed to the rays of the Sun of Truth which in fullness of time means salvation of mankind. Bahá'u'lláh states that every created thing in this physical world has a counterpart in all the worlds of God. The same basic principle which operates in nature also could be found in the world of man and in religion. (13)

A tree receives its nourishment through its roots. Its life depends on the soil for survival, but its trunk, branches and leaves grow

away from the soil as if the tree does not like the soil and reaches for the rays of the sun. The branches obey the laws of nature, but if they had choice and showed attachment to the soil, the outcome would be rotting.

We live in this material world, and our existence depends on earthly things. However, with our choice, our soul should become detached from material things and turn to spiritual qualities. Attachment to the vanities of this world with its pomp and glory brings darkness to our soul.

With spiritual decline of today and abuse of power by corrupt authorities and leaders, people look upon the word "obedience" with suspicion and fear. Upon hearing that word, dictatorship, blind acceptance and religious fanaticism come to their mind. Such fears are well-understood and justifiable. Look at the recent events and abuse by false prophets and corrupt leaders. The voice of religious leadership, which in the past inspired people, is now heard with indifference or hostility. The reason is that with the coming of Bahá'u'lláh, all religious leaders have become fallen stars.

As one studies man's behavior, one sees that people wholeheartedly obey any person or institution that speaks the voice of truth and has the authority to do so. The same person who rebels against blind obedience follows the highway or street signs to get to his destination, or as a patient who trusts his physician, follows his advice even if it is amputation of his limb. The same goes for the Divine Physician. Bahá'u'lláh states in the opening paragraph of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, "The first duty prescribed by God for His servants is the recognition of Him Who is the Dayspring of His Revelation...It behooves everyone who reacheth this most sublime station, this summit of transcendant glory, to observe every ordinance of Him Who is the Desire of the World. These twin duties are inseparable. Neither is accepted without the other."

That is why Bahá'u'lláh has attached such importance to one of the basic principles of His faith; namely, independent investigation of truth. We cannot accept Him as the skilled Divine Physician for mankind and neglect or ignore His prescription. When He orders the reading of His writings twice a day, we must do exactly that.

A prescription for twice-a-day medicine cannot be replaced by random taking if one is looking for a cure. The more one deepens in His writings, he becomes more confirmed in his recognition. The better we know Him, the more we love Him and for His love, obey Him even better. This is what I call a righteous cycle. Vicious cycle is the opposite, and that is the unfortunate situation of drifting away.

Bahá'u'lláh's view of so-called liberty is expressed in the following passage from the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, "Consider the pettiness of men's minds. They ask for that which injureth them, and cast away the thing that profiteth them...We find men desiring liberty, and priding themselves therein. Such men are in the depth of ignorance...Know ye that the embodiment of liberty and its symbol is the animal...We approve of liberty in certain circumstances, and refuse to sanction it in others...Say: true liberty consisteth in man's submission unto My commandments, little as ye know it."

In every civilized country there are bounds of constitutional law. To overstep such bounds brings anarchy. Bahá'u'lláh advocates the same bounds of law except that man must adopt His laws and teachings for this age which offer ample liberty within its framework.

Now let us address the Covenant of God with people. Man physically is an animal and bound by the laws of nature, but spiritually is bound to the Covenant of God with him. In every covenant there are two parties involved. The mere act of creation brings about the Covenant of God with man which has two sides. God in His part creates man in His own image which is the act of bestowing upon him His attributes. He provides him with his physical needs in this life, and sends His Messengers to guide him so he may grow closer to God.

The part that man, who has free will, has to play in this covenant is to be conscious of these bounties, to recognize His Manifestations, and abide by His teachings and laws. The covenant of God is similar to the terms which a school principal lays down for the students. The moment a child walks into a school, he, without knowing it, enters into a covenant with the principal. Again, this covenant has two sides. The principal provides the educational

needs, appoints the teachers and draws up a program. The part that the child plays is to learn the lessons and follow the instructions. In this way he acquires knowledge. The terms of this covenant are drawn up by the headmaster, and the child has no say in it. The principal is strong, knowledgeable, and wise. The purpose of man doing his part of the Covenant with God is to become a spiritual being and acquire eternal life. In view of past discussion, we acknowledge the authority, knowledge, and wisdom of Bahá'u'lláh; therefore, we observe His commandments for love of Him.

VI. REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

In the *Lawh-i-Maqsúd*, which is one of the supplementary tablets to the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Bahá'u'lláh states, "The structure of world stability and order hath been reared upon, and will continue to be sustained, by the twin pillars of reward and punishment." He has authorized the House of Justice to legislate punishments for breaking other laws which He Himself has not formulated, or has given the House the freedom to modify His punishment for certain crimes such as in case of arson and murder.

Bahá'u'lláh in the same tablet states, "Justice hath a mighty force at its command. It is none other than reward and punishment for the deeds of men. By the power of this force, the tabernacle of order is established throughout the world..."

In the present-day society justice is not served. The tendency is towards leniency, reduction of sentence, and to try to direct the blame on the society. As we witness, violence and crime have increased at an alarming rate. The teachings of Bahá'u'lláh advocate the opposite attitude. Many people today could disagree with Bahá'u'lláh's teaching in this regard. They would rather advocate education instead of punishment. These people are mainly concerned about life on earth and are not aware of life after death.

To demonstrate the benefits to the soul when a person receives his punishment, Bahá'u'lláh gives the following example. If a man steals the seed of a plant from someone in springtime and returns it soon he does not owe the owner anything more, but if

he waits until summer, he owes the owner a plant with its fruits. Similarly, the burden of sin is much lighter if the sinner receives his punishment in this life. As for kindness and forgiving an act of crime, the following story will shed some light on the subject.

Lawh-i-Dunyá (The Tablet of the World) was revealed in the honor of Áqá Mírzá Áqá-i-Afnán, Núru'd-Dín, whom as you recall, I referred to when I told you the story of the great mujtahid who was secretly a believer. This tablet was revealed in the honor of Nuru'd-Din after nine days that the pen of Bahá'u'lláh was stilled due to the martyrdom of seven believers in Yazd, (1891). In that tablet, He stated that He was so overjoyed and grateful to God that His exhortations have had such effect on His followers that the believers did intercede on behalf of their enemies.

To appreciate this statement, the following explanation will help. In those days lived the generation of believers who were previously Bábís, and following Islámic tradition, used to draw their swords in their defense. Such a transformation, to be martyred without defense, and then the relatives intercede on behalf of the murderers is worthy of appreciation. The story behind this statement is as follows. Hájí Muhammad Riḍá attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká. He begged Bahá'u'lláh to accept him as a martyr. Bahá'u'lláh told him it was not necessary as many souls already had sacrificed their lives, but he was very insistent and to his second request, Bahá'u'lláh remained silent, and Hájí took His silence as a sign of consent. Later he asked Bahá'u'lláh to assign him a city. Bahá'u'lláh told him to go to 'Ishqábád. On July 1, 1889, Hájí had invited all believers of 'Ishqábád to a feast. On that day he received a tablet from Bahá'u'lláh honoring and blessing him for his services and assured him that his deeds were manifest before Him. In that tablet He stated that a great upheaval has occurred in that city and described it as an attack of a serpent on a believer who is the recipient of the bounties of his Lord.

This tablet was read out to the friends gathered in that feast. Mírzá 'Abu'l-Faḍl, who was present, explained that since Bahá'u'lláh used the past tense, it was an absolute and inevitable. Hájí Muhammad Riḍá got up and said he believed that he was the one whose martyrdom Bahá'u'lláh foretold. 'Ishqábád was a new city in Russian

Turkemanistán, close to the border of Írán. Many persecuted Bahá'ís found it peaceful, but the progress of the Faith aggravated the Muslims in that city who plotted the assassination of a number of prominent believers. About five weeks after the day that the tablet was read, two Muslims attacked Hájí in the marketplace with daggers and stabbed him thirty-two times amidst great jubilation of the crowd that watched. They were seen to lick their daggers. Russian police came and took them into custody. On discovering the plots, the believers sent a petition to the government which investigated, and after a trial, sentenced the two murderers to be killed by hanging and the rest of the plotters to life in Siberia. This was unusual for Muslims who used to be rewarded by Persian authorities for killing Bahá'ís. The family of the murderers and prominent Muslim merchants begged the believers for intercession. A gathering of prominent believers was called, and after consultation they told the government their request for reduction of the sentence. This was kept a secret by the government. The day of the execution arrived. The gallows were erected and the graves were dug. The prisoners were led to the scaffolds. When the moment came, they announced that because of the intercession of the honorable Bahá'ís the sentence was reduced to life in Siberia.

This was the act that pleased Bahá'u'lláh, and He called it a princely act. Later on, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in Paris Talks has made it clear that the victims have no right to forgive a crime since suffering from the punishment is negligible compared to the benefits for the protection of society.

VII. PROPHECIES

Part seven of this talk is about prophecies in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. In 1873 Bahá'u'lláh wrote, "O banks of Rhine! We have seen you covered with gore, inasmuch as the swords of retribution were drawn against you; and you shall have another turn. And we hear the lamentation of Berlin, though she be today in conspicuous glory." Now after two world wars, we clearly can see the fulfillment of His prophecies revealed nearly half a century before the first world war. The severe oppressive treaties in both wars raised the lamentation of Berlin.

About Tehrán, He states in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, "Let nothing grieve thee, O Land of Tá, for God hath chosen thee to be the source of the joy of all mankind...The day is approaching when thy agitations will have been transmuted into peace and quiet calm. Thus hath it been decreed in the Wondrous Book." This prophecy makes a believer proud of coming from Tehrán in contrast to the present shame of other Persians in view of recent events.

He could foresee the gap between the death of the Guardian and the election of the Universal House of Justice. In the passage about Huqúqu'lláh in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, He states that "the endowments dedicated to charity revert to God, the Revealer of Signs. No one has the right to lay hold on them without leave from the Dawning-Place of Revelation. After Him, the decision rests with the Aghsán (Branches), and after them with the House of Justice, should it be established in the world by then ...otherwise the endowments should be referred to the people of Bahá." You notice He mentioned Aghsán, meaning Branches. Both 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi were Ghusn, or Branch. Then we saw in 1957 when Shoghi Effendi passed away how for over five years the Hands of the Cause, as the custodians of the Faith, conducted the affairs of the Faith, including administration of Huqúqu'lláh until the Universal House of Justice was elected in 1963.

About the next Manifestation, in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas He confirms what He had previously revealed on the first day of Ridván, as well as in Adrianople in the Kitáb-i-Badí, with the following words, "Whoso layeth claim to a revelation direct from God, ere the expiration of a full thousand years, such a man is assuredly a lying imposter. We pray God that He may graciously assist him to retract and repudiate such a claim..."

According to a tablet from Bahá'u'lláh written to a believer, on the first day of His declaration in the Garden of Ridván, He made three very important statements:

1. Forbidding the use of sword in His Dispensation in defense of their lives for the sake of their Faith.
2. No Manifestation of God will appear before the expiration of one thousand years.
3. The advent of a new Day with infusion of a fresh capacity into all beings.

He prophesied in Kitáb-i-Aqdas The New World Order, also referred to by the Báb in the Bayán with these words, "Well is it with him who fixeth his gaze upon the Order of Bahá'u'lláh and rendereth thanks unto his Lord." Bahá'u'lláh, in the Mother Book states, "The world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this New World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System - the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed."

For an ordinary man it was very difficult in 1873 to see the upheaval of the century ahead. Bahá'u'lláh states, "A new life in this age, is stirring within all the peoples of the earth; and yet, none hath discovered its cause or perceived its motive." With release of power and revelation of such statements, the quiet condition of the world changed for the worse to prepare for the birth of the New World Order. The following is a good analogy: As soon as the new life begins in an egg, the condition inside the egg changes radically. The alteration of the contents of the egg which was food for the people, is not pleasing anymore, but the new life thrives on the altered contents until the shell breaks open, and a new creature is born. All that is left of the egg is its broken shell. This is very much the state of the world today. The ever-worsening of corruption, immorality, anarchy, and chaos is not pleasing, but we are witnessing a new world community in its embryonic form growing within the womb of the old. A lotus is growing out of a swamp!

In another instance, Bahá'u'lláh states, "And when the appointed hour is come, there shall suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake. Then and only then will the Divine Standard be unfurled, and the Nightingale of Paradise warble its melody."

We read Bahá'u'lláh's prophecies exactly like a person who is taken to a garden by a gardener. The gardener is talking about different flowers, shrubs and trees, and all the person sees are indentations in the soil indicating where the seeds are planted.

VIII. LAWS AND ORDINANCES

The eighth part will briefly cover the laws and ordinances of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. Mírzá 'Abu'l-Faḍl, the greatest scholar of the Faith whose writings rank second to the Holy Writings and the writings of the Guardian, states that the laws of God in the Holy Books of the past and those of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas may be divided into three categories:

First Category - Devotional laws and ordinances such as prayer, fasting, Huqúqu'lláh and pilgrimage. As mentioned earlier, these laws are not in a sense a law in its rigid and literal meaning defined in the dictionary as "a rule of conduct enforced by a controlling authority." Such laws are not enforced with pressure from an institution, but rather they are a spiritual obligation based on the love of the believer.

Second Category - The laws which basically benefit the individual such as cleanliness, writing of will and burial.

Third Category - The laws which concern the society such as forbidden things, punishments for crimes and establishment of House of Justice.

The laws and principles ordained by Bahá'u'lláh in His writings constitute the two pillars sustaining the institutions of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. The Guardian, distinguishing the laws from the principles, describes them as "the warp and woof of the institutions, upon which the structures of His World Order must ultimately rest." (14) This means one cannot consider himself a true believer by having recognized Bahá'u'lláh and by doing just the devotional laws, yet staying aloof from the administrative part. In this regard, in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, Bahá'u'lláh states, "They whom God endued with insight will readily recognize that the precepts laid down by God constitute the highest means for the maintenance of order in the world and the security of its peoples. He that turneth away from them, is accounted among the abject and foolish."

Today, being in embryonic stage of development, we cannot visualize the age of glories when teachings and laws of Bahá'u'lláh will govern the life of man on this planet. Then, and only then, will the wisdom and significance of all the laws of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas become manifest.

Remember, we are like the onlookers in the garden with some indentations where the seeds are and see a few stakes here and there. Some, in our naiveness, could criticize the coarseness of the stakes or object to the pattern where the seeds were planted, not knowing the size and shape of each plant or tree.

The time does not permit discussion of laws and ordinances one by one. We are very lucky to know English and must be most grateful for the translation of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas into English. I remember in my youth in Persia only by learning Arabic or attending specific classes, one could learn about the contents of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. The quotation from the Guardian in God Passes By, summarizing the Kitáb-i-Aqdas which was read in part 3 of this talk is a treasure. Read it over.

In the remaining time, three major laws of prayer, fasting and Huqúqu'lláh will briefly be discussed, and a few words mentioned about health, education, teaching and the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. According to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, fasting and obligatory prayer constitute the two pillars that sustain the revealed Law of God. (15) 'Abdu'l-Bahá states that prayer and fasting are the causes of awakening and mindfulness and are conducive to protection and preservation from tests. (16) According to the Guardian, the obligatory prayers, the Tablet of Ahmad and the long healing prayer are invested with special potency and significance.

Obligatory prayer is one of the rituals in the Faith. The other is the prayer for the dead when one recites it in congregation with everyone standing. Obligatory prayer is a private devotional act, and must be performed with all of its rites, mainly ablution and facing towards the Qiblih. Bahá'u'lláh appointed His own resting place as the Qiblih or the point of adoration. It is preferable to stand while reciting the short prayer. The long and medium prayers have their specific positions and movements. 'Abdu'l-Bahá states that one may say the morning obligatory prayer as early as dawn.

Once every twenty-four hours one must repeat "Alláh-u-Abhá" ninety-five times which also requires ablution; however, one may use one ablution for reciting the prayer followed by repeating "Alláh-u-Abhá" ninety-five times. For every obligatory prayer missed, one

does ablution, prostrates and says "Glorified be God, the Lord of Might and Majesty, of Grace and Bounty" or just "Glorified be God."

After that one sits cross-legged and repeat eighteen times "Glorified be God, the Lord of Kingdoms of earth and heaven." If one has missed two obligatory prayers, one prostrates twice and with the last prostration repeat the first verse, but only say the second verse eighteen times in cross-legged position. Excused are those below age fifteen, over seventy, the ill and women during their period. At that time women should do their ablution and repeat ninety-five times "Glorified be God, the Lord of Splendor and Beauty" between noon and the next noon.

On the subject of fasting, I wish to state that it must be done with the spirit of joy, and it is abstinence from food, water and smoking. Excused are those before age fifteen, over seventy, the ill, pregnant, nursing, women during period, those engaged in heavy labor, or on journey for more than nine hours. During the fast when a woman is menstruating, she should do the ablution and repeat ninety-five times the same verse, "Glorified be God, the Lord of Splendor and Beauty" between noon and the next non. Exemption from the laws of prayer and fasting does not mean prohibition.

In regard to Huqúqu'lláh, the Báb ordered His followers to give priceless gifts to 'Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest.' Bahá'u'lláh abrogated that law and absolved the believers from this obligation. Hájí Sháh-Muhammad-i-Manshádi' was a devout Bábí. When he recognized Bahá'u'lláh as the Promised One, he divided some of his wealth among his children and took the rest as a gift to Bahá'u'lláh who kindly accepted it but returned it to him. He gave him the title of Amínu'l-Bayán, or the Trustee of the Bayán. He was the one who handed the Tablet ~~to~~ Badi' to be taken to the Sháh. In his travels to Írán he became acquainted with Hájí 'Abul-Hasan-i-Ardekání. Both were from Yazd. That time was the early part of Bahá'u'lláh's incarceration in 'Akká, and anyone suspected of being His follower was not permitted to enter the city, such as Nabíl-i-A'zam, the great historian, who had to live in caves in Haifa.

Hájí Sháh-Muhammad, who trusted Hájí 'Abul-Hasan and had made him his assistant, traveled in disguise as Arabs with a few loaded camels. Unrecognized, they were permitted into the city. When

Bahá'u'lláh heard about their arrival, they were told to see Him in the public bath but not to show any sign of recognition. Hájí 'Abul-Hasan had never seen Bahá'u'lláh, and with the first glance at Him, his body shook and collapsed and had to be taken out with his head bleeding. On one of their trips, Hájí Sháh-Muhammad, the first trustee, was killed and Hájí 'Abul-Hasan was injured, but survived. Bahá'u'lláh appointed him as Amín-i-Iláhí, or the Trustee of God. He is also known as Hájí Amín. His services extended as trustee of Huqúqu'lláh from the latter part of the ministry of Bahá'u'lláh to the ministries of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and early years of Shoghi Effendi. He was appointed a Hand of the Cause posthumously by the Guardian, who also designated him as one of the nineteen Apostles of Bahá'u'lláh. 'Abdu'l-Bahá named one of the doors of the Shrine of the Báb after his name. When invited into friends' homes, he did not approve of multiple dishes and usually asked for one kind of food and very simple. Usually, he used to say, "Just add some water to your soup." Bahá'ís referred to it as "soup of Hájí Amín" which usually ended to be a delicious meal. Following him, Hájí Ghulám-Riḍá became trustee with the title of Amín-i-Amín, and after him, Hand of the Cause Valíyu'lláh-i-Varqá, followed by his son, Hand of the Cause 'Alí-Muhammad-i-Varqá, the present trustee. He is the third generation Hand of the Cause.

Bahá'u'lláh states, "Say: O people, the first duty is to recognize the one true God - magnified be His glory - the second is to show forth constancy in His Cause and, after these, one's duty is to purify one's riches and earthly possessions according to that which is prescribed by God." (17) In another tablet, He states "...and whoso fulfilleth the things h hath been commanded, divine blessings will descend upon him from the heavens of bounty of his Lord..." and then He gives these words of warning, "O People! act not treacherously in the matter of Huqúqu'lláh..." (18)

Bahá'u'lláh, in another tablet, states nothing is more reprehensible than to beg for funds in the name of God. (19) During His time, Bahá'u'lláh, commenting on Huqúqu'lláh, stated "There is a prescribed ruling for Huqúqu'lláh. After the House of Justice hath come into being, the Law thereof will be made manifest in the conformity with the Will of God." (20) So you see, things do not happen at random. Everything follows a prescribed pattern

like the implementation of the law of Huqúqu'lláh for the West.

We can easily find a parallel to the statement of Bahá'u'lláh about Huqúqu'lláh when He states "The benefit of such deeds reverteth unto the individual." (21) Let us examine a tree. The blossoms, flowers and fruit are produced as a result of sustenance which comes from the soil. We can say that existence of the tree depends on the soil. Every year it sheds its leaves and gives back to the soil a portion of its wealth. The fallen leaves kill the weeds under the tree and later act as a fertilizer for the tree. It is immaterial to the soil if the tree sheds or not. The tree itself is the beneficiary. Huqúqu'lláh is the material aspect of the covenant of Bahá'u'lláh, a spiritual obligation, and the giver is the beneficiary.

Concerning healing, in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas Bahá'u'lláh directs His followers to consult a skilled physician when ill. After such consultation, to take the remedy, and at the same time pray for healing. Whenever a member of His family became ill, He asked for a physician to come. He does not advocate faith healers and similar practices. In treating the patients, Bahá'u'lláh in Lawḥ-i-Ṭib, or the Tablet of Medicine, advises the physician first to turn to God and then prescribe the remedy. He states that a physician who has recognized Him and is filled with His love will exert such an influence that his mere visit will restore health to the patient. One of these was Áqá Mírzá Muḥammad-Riḍá-i-Tabíb, in whose honor the above tablet was revealed. He used to cure patients by prescribing very simple remedies. 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated that the science of medicine will be so perfected in the future that most diseases will be treated with foods, herbs and natural remedies. Shoghi Effendi stated that there is no such thing as Bahá'í healers or Bahá'í type of healing. In Lawḥ-i-Ṭib Bahá'u'lláh praises the science of medicine as the most meritorious of all sciences, and it is at the end of this tablet where He revealed the most often recited prayer, "Thy Name is my healing, O my God..."

The power of the Holy Spirit, which has been exclusive to the Manifestations of God, can heal without physical means. Christ, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh healed people. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, on whom this power was bestowed by Bahá'u'lláh, also healed people when doctors failed. In early days 'Abdu'l-Bahá used to prescribe medicine to

the sick, but later Bahá'u'lláh directed Him not to do it so the believers might turn to the medical profession.

Mírzá Ja'afar-i-Yazdí, who was a learned clergy, on exile of Bahá'u'lláh, accompanied the caravan from Baghdád to Istánbul. He was 'Abdu'l-Bahá's helper by riding to the villages and buying the provisions. He went in exile with Bahá'u'lláh into the barracks of 'Akká. He became severely ill and doctors gave up on him and did not visit him anymore. When he breathed his last, Mírzá Áqá Ján, Bahá'u'lláh's secretary, ran to Bahá'u'lláh with the word of death. Mírzá Ja'afar's body was limp and his family around his bed were mourning their loss. Bahá'u'lláh said, "Go and chant the healing prayer. He will come alive. As the prayer was chanted he slowly began to move, and in about one hour lifted his head and sat up and began to laugh and tell jokes.

'Abdu'l-Bahá's remedies included cutting down certain foods, fasting, and a delicious pomegranate sauce. This was from pomegranates grown in the garden of Ridván near 'Akká. It was most likely through the will of 'Abdu'l-Bahá that cure occurred.

Dr. Yunis Khán-i-Afrúkhtih, the writer of Memoirs of Nine Years, which were spent with 'Abdu'l-Bahá in 'Akka', writes that he became badly ill with severe carbuncles and pain. He states, "At that time Dr. Argstú Khán was visiting and we were staying in the Pilgrim House. This doctor treated me with everything he knew, but I was getting worse. After three weeks of suffering, one night the excruciating pain became very bad. The pilgrims could not sleep with my moaning so two hours after midnight, we decided to send the caretaker to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. I don't know if the Master was asleep or awake, but all I know is that when the caretaker came back I was fast asleep and woke up the next afternoon without any pain. Not having seen the Master for all those days, I slowly walked towards His house, but I met Him on the road. He inquired about my health and showered me with His bounties. I found it opportune time to beg Him for complete recovery. He advised blood-letting by suction cups or phlebotomy which frightened me. The look on my face showed fear. He said in amused voice, 'Good gracious! I want to send you to face the swords of the enemy and you are afraid of suction cups!' Being outspoken with my blabbing habits, I dared to say jokingly, 'When that happens, God will give

me the fortitude! But if I wanted to have the suction cups why would I come to You?' He smiled and that was the final remedy for me. I was healed without any physical means.

About education: the Kitáb-i-Aqdas has placed enormous responsibility upon parents and local Assemblies to educate the children in academic as well as spiritual education. 'Abdu'l-Bahá in one tablet states that parents who fail in proper upbringing of their children commit a sin which God cannot forgive. (22) No reason for me to elaborate on emphasis that is placed on education of the girls since you are all familiar with it. 'Abdu'l-Bahá warns us not to become over-academic and ignore the virtues, moral values, and the spiritual aspect of education.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, in another tablet, praises the station of devoted teachers and describes their service as true worship of God. He calls them the spiritual fathers of the children they teach. Now we see why Bahá'u'lláh has honored the teachers by including them in His formulation of inheritance in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. They are the only non-member of the family who are beneficiaries. A non-Bahá'í teacher does not inherit. The law of inheritance is only applicable if one does not leave a will.

As for teaching of the Cause, Bahá'u'lláh regards it as the "most meritorious of all deeds." In one tablet He states, "God hath prescribed unto every one the duty of teaching His Cause. Whoever ariseth to discharge this duty, must needs, ere he proclaimeh His Message, adorn himself with the ornament of an upright and praiseworthy character, so that his words may attract the hearts of such as are receptive to his call. Without it, he can never hope to influence his hearers." (23) It leaves no doubt. He states without an upright character he can never hope to influence his hearers. When teaching His Cause, one must present it like offering a gift to a king with feeling of love and humility and, above all, with readiness to draw from the power of Bahá'u'lláh.

Bahá'u'lláh often taught His followers how to teach. The foremost of these instructions was to pray for the seeker, and also have him pray for guidance of God. The next was to begin teaching with accounts about other religions, their history and accounts of their

Founders, similar to what He has written in Kitáb-i-Íqán. The last was not to disclose everything about the Cause at first, but teach little by little, likening it to the process of feeding an infant.

Hájí Mírzá Haydar-'Alí, the Angel of Carmel and writer of The Delight of Hearts, states the following words from Bahá'u'lláh about teaching the Cause. The teacher must have a pleasing disposition and deal with people in a spirit of loving kindness. One should not make the seeker feel defeated, but acknowledge his point of view and present him with an alternative point of view and invite him to examine it. Trying to win an argument causes the seeker to think of defense rather than listening. These are truly pearls from Bahá'u'lláh.

We must remember that the honor of teaching the Cause, which the past dispensations had given to the religious leaders and the clergy, has now been bestowed on every one of us. To tap on the powers of Bahá'u'lláh is to have faith in Him and assume the position of lowliness in relation to Bahá'u'lláh's station, the same way that water flows from a higher plane on to a lower one. Then His statement in The Hidden Words, "Humble thyself before Me that I may graciously visit thee" will materialize! However, the vital condition for drawing on the powers of Bahá'u'lláh is to arise to serve the Cause. The power to create a new spirit is from the Revelation of God. We can act only as channels.

Bahá'u'lláh states about His laws, "Consider the mercy of God and His gifts. He enjoineth upon you that which shall profit you, though He Himself can well dispense with all creatures. Your evil doing can never harm Us, neither can your good works profit Us. We summon you wholly for the sake of God." (24)

Now a few words about the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, or Dawning-Place of Mention of God. Bahá'u'lláh in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas has ordained that in every locality an edifice be built with utmost perfection for the exclusive purpose of worshipping God. In it only the Words of God may be read or chanted. He urges His followers to conduct prayer services in the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár at the hour of dawn. Later on, Bahá'u'lláh has explained that prayers are accepted between dawn and sunrise or even up to two hours after sunrise.

There is no doubt that in the future when the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh will be established in every city, a sufficient number of Houses of Worship will be built with a new social pattern regulating people's way of life. Then there will be a balance between spiritual and physical needs. While the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár will be the focal point of spiritual activity, around it there will be a cluster of institutions as its dependencies. These dependencies, according to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, will include hospitals, orphanages, schools, universities, hostels and similar institutions. The cluster of humanitarian and administrative activities circling around the House of Worship combines the spiritual and physical principles of the Faith.

Shoghi Effendi has stressed that the characteristic nine-sidedness of the House of Worship is for the sacredness of number nine as the number of Bahá and perfection, and not for the nine existing religions. (25) He states within its chastened walls and in its spiritual atmosphere, the worshippers, free of trappings of elaborate ceremony, worship one true God, as manifested in this Age in the Person of Bahá'u'lláh. To them, such an edifice symbolizes the fundamental verity underlying the Faith; namely, that religious truth is not absolute, but relative, and the Divine Revelation is not final but progressive, and finally, nothing short of direct and constant interaction between the spiritual forces emanating from a House of Worship and its social, humanitarian, educational and scientific aspects of its dependencies will be able to remedy the long suffering of mankind. This was from a letter of Shoghi Effendi in 1929 to the American Bahá'ís when the Mother Temple was under construction.

Such combination of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and its dependencies is called the Institution of Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. Bahá'u'lláh has forbidden displays of pictures or statues as well as sermons and use of musical instruments. Only human voice may be heard.

IX. MATURITY OF MAN - BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S COVENANT AND HIS PROMISE TO BE WITH US

The ninth and the last part of this talk is about the maturity of man, Bahá'u'lláh's covenant and His promise to be with us.

In His writings, Bahá'u'lláh has given three signs for the maturity of mankind.

1. The decline in the fortunes of kings. He states in one of His tablets, "One sign of the maturity of the world is that no one will accept to bear the weight of kingship." (26)
2. Discovery of transmutation of elements or the achievement of alchemy. In one tablet He states that such transmutation and its reverse is possible, but "the knowledge thereof is with Us in the Hidden Book." He promises that such a discovery will be realized which will be one of the signs of maturity of mankind, but warns that after its discovery a great calamity would await the world unless mankind came under His shelter. (27)
3. The third sign or condition mentioned in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas is the adoption of an international language. (28) This should not be mistaken for the auxiliary language which is for the near future. It is referring to a single language for the whole world which will occur in the distant future.

The Guardian states that the prelude to maturity of mankind is the Lesser Peace when political unification of nations will take place and wars end. He states that three evolutionary processes simultaneously shall take place. One is maturation of the Spiritual Assemblies; second, completion of the building of the Arc. The last one is the Lesser Peace. As believers and proponents of the Minor Plan of God, we have an enormous responsibility towards the first two processes. The last one will be done through the Major Plan of God, well beyond our control and capacity.

Finally, in this Dispensation, God's greatest bounty to man has been the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh and His Covenant; namely, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi. Our part of this Covenant is to recognize Bahá'u'lláh and obey Him, and have faith when He states in the Kitábi-Aqdas, "Be not dismayed, O peoples of the world, when the Day-Star of My beauty is set, and the heaven of My tabernacle is concealed from your eyes. Arise to further My Cause and to exalt My Word amongst men. We are with you at all times, and shall strengthen you through the power of truth."

After Bahá'u'lláh's Ascension, the believers were quite disheartened. 'Abdu'l-Bahá comforted them and to soothe the wound

of separation assured them now that Bahá'u'lláh's soul was freed from the confines of His physical form, He would be ever more present like the rays of the sun unobscured by the clouds.

For the last story, I wish to honor Mr. Adíb Táherzádeh, whose books The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh were directly quoted throughout this talk, by presenting a story about his honorable father, Hájí Muḥammad-i-Málmírí, showing how Bahá'u'lláh was with him all the time. As a young man, Hájí attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akka' for nine months and returned to his home town of Yazd. He lived a full life of one hundred years.

When Hájí received His permission to attain the presence of Bahá'u'lláh he went to join a prominent believer from province of Baluchistan for their pilgrimage. They went to a port city by the Persian Gulf to sail for Bombay and via Egypt to go to 'Akka. To their surprise, they noticed about one hundred people from Baluchistán were already there waiting for a boat to take them to Arabia for pilgrimage to Mecca. As you know, such pilgrimage is called Háj, and the one who performs it with all of its rites will become Hájí. These people became very excited to see the prominent man from their province and not knowing that he was a Bahá'í, they assumed that he also would be going to Mecca with them. Their joy and excitement had no bounds but brought a problem. The prominent man, not wishing to disappoint them, tried for a week or more to convince Hájí to go to Mecca on the way to 'Akka which also would make the trip shorter, but Hájí was adamant that his desire was to attain the presence of the Beloved and how they should part and each one goes his own way. Finally, this prominent man gave in, and told the people that he would not be going with them to Mecca.

On the third day of their arrival in 'Akka, they were permitted for the first time at the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. Hájí threw himself at the feet of Bahá'u'lláh who told him, "Well done! May God bless you." Do you think Bahá'u'lláh said this because the way Hájí threw himself on His feet? No, listen to this. Bahá'u'lláh said, "People were going to Mecca and you did not go there for the love of God. Instead, you considered coming to 'Akka to be of prime importance. Truly, your understanding is correct. Pilgrimage to Mecca can be valued only with Our permission."

While in 'Akká, he told Bahá'u'lláh's secretary, Mírzá Áqá Ján, to mention his request to Bahá'u'lláh for a tablet or even a few words in His own handwriting since he had heard that the Báb had said that should any of His followers live during the days of Bahá'u'lláh they should try to get a tablet, a line, or even a word in His own handwriting because such a possession would be superior to anything else. Mírzá Áqá Ján refused to give this message to Bahá'u'lláh on the grounds that He had not taken the pen since He was poisoned. One day when Hájí was in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, the Blessed Beauty told him that He had written a tablet for him in His own handwriting and that he would receive it. Another time, Hájí gave the names of some other believers, and asked if a tablet could be revealed for each of them as well. A little later Bahá'u'lláh stated that a tablet was revealed for each of those people, but they would be sent to him after his departure.

At the end of nine months of pilgrimage in 'Akká before Hájí was dismissed, Bahá'u'lláh directed him to go to Mecca and perform the pilgrimage with all its rites and so he became a Hájí by Bahá'u'lláh's permission. After his return to Yazd he was hoping to receive his own tablet with the rest, but the special tablet did not come with the rest which were in the handwriting of Bahá'u'lláh's secretary. Some time later when Hájí's cousin went to 'Akka', Bahá'u'lláh sent a message of assurance that Hájí would receive that tablet. Many years passed. Hájí, slightly heartbroken but confident, continued his fervent and overzealous teaching activities in Yazd until because of danger, he decided to leave the city. In the middle of the night as he was going to mount his donkey, a Bahá'í woman approached him and gave him a tablet in Bahá'u'lláh's handwriting and said, "Twenty-four years ago when a believer returned from Baghdád he gave this tablet to me and said Bahá'u'lláh had told him the recipient would be found later." Now many years had passed since that believer was martyred. Imagine! This tablet was written when Hájí was a child. Later on 'Abdu'l-Bahá confirmed that this was the tablet Bahá'u'lláh had specifically revealed for Hájí.

Hájí Muḥammad Ṭáhir-i-Málmírí had no reason to doubt that Bahá'u'lláh was with him at all times. When Hájí was a child Bahá'u'lláh revealed a tablet in his honor in His own handwriting.

When in the port-city, from thousands of miles, his determination not to divert to Mecca was manifest before Bahá'u'lláh, and finally in the middle of that eventful night with great ecstasy he witnessed the consummation of it all by receiving that special tablet. Now with great joy his blessed soul from the Abhá Kingdom is observing how Bahá'u'lláh is with his sons who are among the foremost in rendering service to the Cause. It suffices to know that Jinábí-Adíb-i-Táherzádeh, whose books are a treasure house of knowledge, is also a member of the Supreme Institution, the Universal House of Justice.

Friends! Bahá'u'lláh has promised to be with all of us at all times. What we need to do is to turn to Him and tap on His powers with faith, humility, and by arising to serve His Cause. The Báb has stated that every religion of God has been endowed with potency to become a world religion. The reason they did not succeed was the failure of their followers to practice the teachings. So I wish to close with these warning words of the Guardian.

Not by the force of numbers, not by the mere exposition of a set of new and noble principles, not by an organized campaign of teaching - no matter how worldwide and elaborate in its character - not even by the staunchness of our faith or the exaltation of our enthusiasm, can we ultimately hope to vindicate in the eyes of a critical and skeptical age the supreme claim of the Abhá Revelation. One thing, and only one thing, will unfailingly and alone secure the undoubted triumph of this sacred Cause, namely, the extent to which our own inner life and private character mirror forth in their manifold aspects the splendour of those eternal principles proclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh. (29)

Friends, the Law was written, the translation is given, so let it be obeyed and let it be done!

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10. The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. III, p. 303.
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19. Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 202 (1963 ed.)
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