WHY IS REPENTANCE THE GATEWAY TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD

2000 years ago, a preacher announced to the populace in Judea: "Repent for the Kingdom of God is at Hand". Quite a few have, perhaps, wondered why repentance had to be a pre-requisite for the advent of the Kingdom of God. Or why GOD would need man's repentance in order to institute His Kingdom on Earth? Very intriguing question, indeed. Yet we have to assume that the preacher knew what he was talking about.

Similar calls can be heard today. In the same sense, if not in the same words. Today's calls occur in religious, scientific, social, political and economic circles, albeit, bearing the stamp of the focus of each circle.

Except in fundamentalist religious circles, the desired outcome is no longer defined in terms of the advent of the "Kingdom of God on earth". Rather, the outcome is couched in humanist terms. None the less, a pre- requisite for "repentance", described in modern terms as the need for a change, or correction of the errors that are manifest in the ways things are being done, is still evident.

In the intervening 2000 years, biblical scholars and Christian religious circles have given various interpretations to this call to the Judeans of antiquity. Today, we see similar debates raging on all spectrums of today's futurist outlook. Some see a relationship between the call of 2000 years ago and the futuristic forecasts of today. Others are not yet convinced, while the pure humanist does not see a correlation at all because he rejects the very idea of a Kingdom of God.

Modern man is generally averse to thinking of the supernatural as a power controlling his destiny, his environment or his institutions. For such, any "kingdom" that is instituted and operates on earth is only of man's making. Today's humanists are more comfortable speaking about a more "humane society" in a world fashioned by man.

A dispassionate look may lead an objective person to the conclusion that, perhaps, there is little difference between the two world views, and that the apparent differences are only a function of the use and understanding of language, between 2000 years ago and today. Indeed, today's call for a "humane society" could be described as a subset of the characteristics of the religious' "Kingdom of God" which also envisages a society in which justice and equity prevail. The only difference being that the latter is under the guidance of a Supreme Being, whose Will is absolute, all-embracing and forever unchangeable.

For some, this difference may be insignificant. For others, it is too crucial to ignore or even irreconcilable. Therefore, we need to ascertain whether indeed this difference is insignificant, insurmountable, or whether it is, again, simply a question of language.

Prophecies generally include a call to repentance, whereas modern man's call for a humane society simply calls for changes in the way things are currently done.

But, is change, as desired by modern man, the same as "repentance"?

A comparison of the two words may help us answer this question. The word "repent" implies "feeling or expressing sincere regret or remorse about one's wrongdoing or sin", while the word "change" implies "the substitution of one thing for another." This comparison shows a major difference between

the two concepts. The former indicates a recognition of the violation of a "sacred principle", while the latter, at best, acknowledges the problems of an existing situation and the desire to move towards a "better one", without acknowledging, or being aware of any sacred principles that should form the bedrock of the desired goal.

Mankind's history is full of unsuccessful attempts at lasting change, none of which appear to have been accompanied by or founded on true, complete and lasting change of heart (repentance). This begs the question of whether repentance is the missing ingredient that is key to the establishment of the more humane, equitable and just society that many so desire, dream of, or prophesy? Religious prophesies appear to affirm this idea, although the reasons for this are often not very clear.

In the book "In the Light of Truth", the author, Abdrushin (Ernst Oskar Bernhardt), addresses this and many other pressing questions of the ages and today. His explanations brings into focus the importance of the concept of "sacred principles". He posits that the conscious or unconscious violation, or disregard of sacred principles invariably lead to the ultimate failure of any attempt at bringing about lasting change, irrespective of the amount of accompanying good will. He describes these "sacred principles" as the self-acting Laws of Creation. Interestingly, he explains how these same laws manifest in the physical world, and that the lasting success of scientific achievements are only possible because man has based his endeavours in this area on acknowledging and adapting to their "sacred principles" (i.e. laws). For example, the spiritual/philosophical Law of Balance becomes evident in the Newtonian Law of Action and Equal and Opposite Reactions; the Law of Homogeneity, is evident in the Law of Genetics; the Law of Radiation, is evident in the Law of Conservation of Energy, etc., etc.

The Law of Conservation of Energy, a fundamental concept of physics, implies that energy can neither be created nor destroyed. But can change from one form to another. This law of physics suggests that everything in the Universe is a manifestation, in one form or the other, of energy that has "always existed". Physics has not been able to identify the source of this evident and universal energy/force. Notwithstanding, Einstein's famous equation of E=MC2 is a representation of this law that governs the transformation of matter to energy and vice versa. The observation of this law has guided all of the famous, or infamous, achievements in the field of atomic energy generation.

In the language of the ancients, the source of this "primordial energy", is simply referred to as the Supreme Being, (GOD) and the forms that take shape within, and from the associated radiating force field are seen as dependent entities, subject to this Supreme Being or Creator. The same can be stated in scientific parlance as "all things exist in a field force ("Kingdom") that emanates ("belongs to") from the primordial energy Source, and that matter is formed from and dissolved back into energy in accordance with universal unchangeable laws ("sacred principles")" which, logic suggests, can only be attributed to the primordial energy source itself.

Some religious traditions, and some modern philosophies, ascribe to man, who is but a manifestation of this energy, the same essence, or power, as the "primordial energy". These traditions, or philosophies espouse the view that anything that emanates from man must therefore be a "sacred principle".

But, this view is easily refuted by science! One of the accepted fundamentals of science is that a Law (sacred principle) should apply unchangeably across the board. For example, gravity on a distant planet behaves the same way as on earth. By contrast, earthly laws, emanating from human thinking (principles), vary widely from country to country and from one year to the next. This wide variation in human laws, and interpretation exist even today, in spite of the many years of cross cultural exposure of societies. Studies in the field of Psychology also demonstrate that humans "see" and interpret their "world" in relative terms, even if these perspectives change with time. This body of evidence, especially the latter, suggest that, left to our own devises, humans may be incapable of "seeing" or constructing a universal principle that is applicable across the board. This conclusion raises the question of what happens to a system that tries to operate outside, or in conflict with the universal principles.

We know from the study of science that inviolable laws govern practically all observable natural physical relationships and processes, to which man adheres for many of his successful and sustained achievements.

By contrast the non-science-based activities of man, like politics, sociology, economics, etc., that are based entirely on man's thoughts and views, appear to exhibit a high degree of instability, often followed by collapse. Since the only objective difference between the stable and the unstable activities of man is the basis on which they are founded and operated, is it illogical to conclude that any system not based on the universal principles of nature, will be out of harmony, and, being unsustainable by the laws, cannot last long? Abdrushin confirms this conclusion with his revelation of the existence and description of laws that govern man's thought activities, much like the natural physical laws govern the processes that produce results in the natural physical world. He states also that In the same was as ignorance or disregard of physical natural laws can lead to disastrous consequences for man, so too does ignorance or disregard of the laws that govern our thoughts. This revelation is very important because it helps modern man understand/recognize that his social activities that emerge from his thought processes are also subject to a set of universal laws.

From this perspective, it can be said that the Kingdom of God (the operation of the universal principles) always exists, and persists. It is Man, who by his choices, can create situations that place him out of synch with the Kingdom of God. Also, it is up to man to choose to recognize his limitations and harmonize his laws with the Supreme Laws of Creation1. Such recognition, if genuine, will elicit nothing but remorse for the chaos and harm caused up to now by such thinking (i.e. true repentance), followed by an unrelenting commitment to acknowledge and base all future actions on the sacred principles that govern all existence.

Thus, the call for repentance is NOT because GOD needs man to institute the Kingdom of GOD, nor will man be compelled to enter the Kingdom of GOD. Instead it can now be seen as a call born out of love to mankind living and suffering in error, to wake up to the disastrous consequences of pursing principles that are out of synch with the universal sacred principles.

This picture hopefully gives full meaning to the prophesy of 2000 years ago. It also shows that today's calls for change, without an equal call for "repentance", i.e. without knowing, acknowledging and fully committing one's thoughts and actions to the sacred principles of life, are nothing but passing fancies that are doomed to failure.

Two questions remain, from a scientific perspective, regarding to prophesies :

1) are there automatic conditions that trigger extensive conversion of energy from one state into another?

2) can man prepare himself to adapt to such changes?

The big bang theory of physics, and the laws of bio-geo-chemical cycles already give scientific confirmation to the cyclical nature of things. This is evident in the eventual return of "things" to "their" point of origin, or the continual movement towards a state of equilibrium. These cycles appear to pursue their own courses, driven by specific laws or mechanisms that are yet unknown to scientific man.

According to the ancients, significant imminent transitions in the eternal cycle were made privy to the specially selected individuals, and through them people were told to prepare for the coming changes. These prophesies/oracles usually included new revelations or teachings that the audience needed in order to prepare for the changes to come.

In a similar fashion today, a few are able to see and are pointing to signs of the grave and imminent changes that are heading in our direction. Although today's problems are attributable to mankind's activities, the warnings are not fundamentally different from prophesies that are couched as punishment because man ignored the injunctions of the deities, or the sacred universal principles of life. [1]

Abdrushin explains in the book "In The Light of Truth" the cycle of formation and dissolution of matter, i.e. conversion of matter back into energy and then regrouping to form matter. He explains, as some physicists have postulated, that each visible world moves invariably towards its own event horizon, the point beyond which the conversion of its matter back to energy accelerates. As this approaches, it brings about noticeable and severe changes within and around the world in question.

Perhaps, the cries and warnings emanating from various segments of today's society are a combination of changes brought about by the natural progression in the Law of Cycles, and the collapse of human activities that are not in harmony with the universal law of balance and therefore not sustainable by it. Regardless, both explanations accord with the fundamental premise of this article that man is a product of the creative process, and that man's success can only be realized when he is guided by the sacred principles of existence.

The fact that calls are made to mankind to repent/change implies that such a possibility exists. Whether this occurs, or not, is left to each person's choice or desire. Those who take such calls seriously, may perhaps, as a first step, wish to seek any new revelations that accompany such calls, from where they can learn, and adapt themselves to the sacred principles (laws) that will govern the new cycle of existence. Those who advocate changes may also want to learn, in order to recommend changes that are in tune with the "sacred principles", if they want their recommendations to be lasting.

"All has been accomplished! The way to the Light and thereby to eternal life for individual spirits has been pointed out! Human spirits may now consider for themselves in this final hour which path they wish to

[1]The subject of why man is endowed with this property (capacity) is beyond the scope of this article.

take: either to eternal damnation or to eternal bliss; for according to the Divine Will they have the free choice!"

Abdrushin