

Two Kinds of Prophecy

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Translated from Persian



Two Kinds of Prophecy

Question: In the books of the Prophets there are tidings of the future; that is, certain events and incidents have been explicitly or implicitly announced and unseen matters foretold, which in this day are witnessed to have come true in their entirety. How were these events of the present day foreseen in the past?

Answer: The Prophets of God draw upon both His boundless universal grace and His particular grace, that is, upon divine revelation and inspiration. They foretell certain events through revelation and inspiration, which are the heavenly splendours, the intimations of the heart, and the scattering rays of the light of the Day-Star of Truth. This grace is like the resplendent rays of the sun, and the hearts of the Prophets are even as mirrors. Thus They affirm that Their words have proceeded from revelation and inspiration.

The second kind of discovery is due to the fact that the Prophets are able Physicians and informed of the mysteries of the universe. They have Their finger on the pulse of the world, and They diagnose and foresee the ailments and illnesses which are to come. It is from the appearance, signs, and conditions of the universe itself that They infer these mysteries. Thus, when an able physician notes certain signs and symptoms in the body of a patient, he diagnoses future ailments, illnesses, and conditions. This proceeds from his knowledge, skill, and power of inference.

But the tidings of the Prophets are all founded upon the scattering rays of the light of truth and proceed from pure inspiration and revelation. For past, present, and future apply only to the world of creation, not to the world of God. In the realm of Truth, past, present, and future are one and the same: The beginning is even as the end and the end even as the beginning. For in the eternal and everlasting realm of God, time holds no sway and no distinction can be made between past and future, as past and future are contrary to that which has neither beginning nor end. In a realm that has no beginning and no end, how can past, present, and future even be imagined? Observe that even in an outward sense time has no sway in the world of the intellect, even though it holds sway in the mind of an intelligent person, for the power of the mind has ever apprehended and encompassed all things and will forever continue to do so.

Consider for example the sun itself: It knows neither morning, nor noon, nor evening—all times are one; all moments are the same. But on account of the rising and setting of the sun, the inhabitants of the earth see mornings and evenings and reckon the days and nights. Thus all these times are one in the sun and all these days are identical and indistinguishable.



TRANSLATION

Likewise, in the realm of truth, past, present, and future are the same, and future events are even as past and present occurrences. From the perspective of that realm, all events and incidents take place in the present and are witnessed by the Prophets and the chosen ones. And so it is that the Prophets herald events that will transpire two or three thousand years hence, for they abide in the realm of truth, wherein the mysteries of the universe are revealed and laid bare. Infer from this statement the truth of the spiritual discoveries of the Holy Ones and reflect and ponder thereon—the matter is indeed clear and manifest.