

Do You
Believe in
Jesus or
in Bible
Scholars?

**Do You Believe
in Jesus or in
Bible Scholars?**

*A Secret Most Believers
Do Not Know*

Hugh Motlagh

www.TheKnowledgeOfGod.com



www.GlobalPerspective.org

Do You Believe in Jesus or in Bible Scholars?

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What Would Jesus Say?

The purpose of this small book is to challenge true Christians to test their faith by discovering if they really practice what they profess. To accomplish this purpose, some of its contents are presented as if Jesus spoke once again to His faithful followers through His beloved disciple John, as He did by revealing the Book of Revelation long ago.

I

What Would Jesus Say?



Test One

This chapter offers a brief commentary concerning Jesus' critical instructions on how to separate the divine from the deceptive. This is the only instruction Jesus offered on this most significant topic. He spoke in perfectly plain and literal language. Every human being with the ability to think can understand the meaning of His message, yet because it does not say what people's "itching ears" like to hear, it is widely ignored or misinterpreted. It needs to be repeated until everyone begins to "hear" its meaning. The commentary is designed to serve two purposes:

- To clarify and amplify Jesus' instructions.
- And to bring Jesus closer to you as if He is sitting next to you and talking to you. This approach is helpful especially

for those who love their church and feel threatened by a new name. The authority with which Jesus speaks may break their sense of complacency.

To get a full picture of Jesus' instructions, let us examine His entire discourse presented in Chapter 7 of Matthew. At first thought, some of the verses in the chapter may appear unrelated or out of place. But as we shall see, they constitute integral parts of a single profile:

- What is a true picture of a Messenger or Redeemer from God?
- What is the true picture of a Christian seeker who wants to recognize such a Messenger and Redeemer?

The two parts work like hand and glove. Can you wear a glove on a closed fist? To fit, the hand must be ready for the glove.

By beginning His discourse with the profile of a true seeker, Jesus sets the tone. He helps the seeker prepare himself spiritually for the task. Without the spiritual preparation, no directions, however specific, no proofs, however convincing, can touch the heart. The Seed of Truth can grow only in a spiritually receptive heart. Have you forgotten the parable of the seed sower? It presents a truth as unchanging and everlasting as God Himself: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear" (Matt. 13:3-9 NIV).

The Counsels and Commands of Our Lord

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| <p><i>The Lord Speaks:</i></p> | <p><i>What are the critical points of our Lord's instructions? What would He say to you if He spoke in today's language through John, His beloved disciple?</i></p> |
| <p>Matthew 7:1-5 NEB</p> <p><i>Pass no judgment, and you will not be judged.</i> For as you judge others, so you will yourselves be judged, and whatever measure you deal out to others will be dealt back to you. Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye, with ever a thought for the great plank in your own? Or how can you say to your brother "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is that plant in your own? You hypocrite! First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's.</p> | <p>Human beings tend to have double standards, one for themselves, one for others. They tend to judge themselves and their beliefs more favorably. "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes" (Prov. 16:2).</p> <p>This rule applies not only to people's views of their character but also to their views of their beliefs. Consider the people who engage in discussions on controversial issues. How many times do you recall hearing one of them say: "Thank you for telling me this. I have been wrong all my life and now suddenly see the truth"?</p> <p>The first and foremost requirement for knowing the truth is justice. How can a person who is unjust about personal issue, be a good judge of the truth? How can he be able to apply his standards impartially to his own beliefs and those of others?</p> |

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| <p>Matthew 7:6 NEB <i>Do not give dogs what is holy</i>; do not throw your pearls to the pigs: they will only trample on them, and turn and tear you to pieces.</p> | <p>The Words of God are precious jewels of truth. Why give those jewels to people who neither have the desire to receive them nor the wisdom to appreciate them? Would you offer a gift to someone who throws it back at you?</p> <p>To appreciate the truth, the seeker must be receptive. This rule does not always hold true with <i>other</i> people. Sometimes it pertains to <i>you</i>. Be fair in your judgment. It is not always the other person who fails to appreciate the genuine pearls of truth and knowledge. Sometimes <i>you</i> may be the one. Be careful to see the plank you your own eye as clearly as you see a thorn in someone else's.</p> |
| <p><i>The Lord Continues:</i></p> | <p><i>What are the critical points of our Lord's instructions? What would He say to you if He spoke in today's language through John, His beloved disciple?</i></p> |
| <p>Matthew 7:7-11 NEB <i>Ask, and you will receive</i>; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there a man</p> | <p>To recognize a new Redeemer, the truth seeker must not only have a good heart but also a <i>thirsting</i> heart. Suppose you are traveling in desert and run out of water. How concerned are you about finding water? That is how you must search for the pearls of truth. God does not force His gift of guidance on passive or fearful people.</p> <p>What are the signs of being a true Christian? An essential sign is trust in</p> |

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| <p>among you who will offer his son a stone when he asks for bread, or a snake when he asks for fish? If you, then, bad as you are, know how to give your children what is good for them, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask him!</p> | <p>God's guidance. Prayers from sincere hearts are always answered. In your search for truth depend on God. What is a sign of such dependence? Courage. What does avoidance and fear of being deceived indicate? Lack of trust in God's commands. Failure to believe that the One who <i>gave</i> the command to seek will also offer the protection to those who <i>obey</i> the command. Is it not predicted that lack of faith in God will be an epidemic disease of the last days? "...when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8 NEB). But how can a believer who lacks faith be aware that he lacks faith? Does a sleeper know that he is asleep?</p> |
| <p><i>The Lord Continues:</i></p> | <p><i>What are the critical points of our Lord's instructions? What would He say to you if He spoke in today's language through His beloved disciple?</i></p> |
| <p>Matthew 7:12 NEB <i>Always treat others as you would like them to treat you:</i> that is the Law and the prophets.</p> | <p>What is another sign of a true Christian? Justice and fairness. Treating others as one's self is the best evidence of this. Anyone who fails to see the entire human race as equal members of the family of God cannot be a true disciple of Jesus. If it is hard for you to understand and practice this principle, it will be equally hard for you to be a judge of the truth.</p> |

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| <p>Matthew 7:13-14 NEB <i>Enter by the narrow gate.</i> The gate is wide that leads to perdition, there is plenty of room on the road, and many go that way; but the gate that leads to life is small and the road is narrow, and those who find it are few.</p> | <p>Numbers have magical powers. Do not allow this magic to lull your soul. It is so easy to blend with the crowds, and so difficult to stand out by yourself with a few. Do not be afraid to take the road less traveled. Remember the first advent. How many took that road? Remember the days of Noah? How many took His road? This is the way it will be again. Remember this prediction: “<i>As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man</i>” (Matt. 24:37 NIV).</p> |
| <p><i>The Lord Continues:</i></p> | <p><i>What are the critical points of our Lord’s instructions? What would He say to you if He spoke in today’s language through His beloved disciple?</i></p> |
| <p>Matthew 7:15 NIV <i>Watch out for false prophets.</i> They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.</p> | <p>Watch for cunning deceivers who look good only on the outside. How can you do this? Only by investigating, only by tearing the deceptive clothing and taking an inward look. It is impossible to accomplish this task without persevering, without careful and impartial research, without taking time to read, without paying close attention, without “watching,” without asking some critical questions.</p> <p>Taking this step is absolutely essential, yet most people skip it. They do not take “the road less traveled.”</p> |

Matthew 7:16-20 NIV

By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

How can you tell the difference between the divine and the deceptive? By their “fruits.” What does this mean? Learn as much as you can about everything that has resulted from the One who claims to be the Lord, to speak the Word of God, the One who says, “I am a Prophet or Redeemer from God.” Nothing is off limits; investigate “the Tree” and its “fruits” thoroughly. The life, the character, and the teachings of the One selected and sent by God are so distinguished, so superior, there is no way you can make mistake, there is no way you can fail in your investigation. The Word of God is His most supreme miracle. It shines as brightly as the sun. God’s promise is not “you *may* know.” It is “you *will* know.” Do not distort or dilute His decisive guidance that you should depend on “*fruits*.” History shows that human beings do not like “fruits.” They prefer miraculous feats. Be on guard against this human weakness. Never expect anything miraculous from your Lord. Only “*an adulterous*” or *faithless* generation has such an expectation (Matthew 16:4).

Matthew 7:21 NIV

Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does

How can you be a *true* Christian? Only by *obeying* God’s commandments and instructions. Simply claiming to be a Christian and continually saying, “My Lord and Savior is Jesus Christ” will not get you to heaven. If you fail to

the will of my Father who is in heaven.

obey God's instructions, you are *not* God's friend. You are only a stranger. There will be many "Christians" who someday will say, "While on earth we always called Jesus our Lord and Savior." In response, they will hear: "An evidence of true faith is obedience. If you are traveling in a plane and you have true faith in the pilot, you obey him. Paying lip service to Jesus, without having enough trust to obey His commands, is hypocrisy."

Matthew 7:22 NIV

Many will say to me on that day, "**Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name..?**"

When you pass away from this life and face God's judgment, you will try to win favors by claiming to have made prophecies in Jesus' name, but you will receive no favors. Prophesying in Jesus' name is a violation of the clear guidance given in the Scripture. Have you not known that "**No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation**" (II Peter 1:20)? This deviation from Jesus' teachings, this unauthorized behavior has gone to extreme. It has divided the scholars and leaders of the one faith of God into various schools of interpretation. It has led even to a war of words among theologians.

To see the fulfillment of this sign, all you need to do is look at a list of publications about the end-time prophecies. You will find every conceivable prediction about how Jesus will return. All those interpreters

prophesy in Jesus' name. They say, "Our Lord Jesus Christ says..." and then come up with their own version of what Jesus meant.

A first grader has no right to run the class. When you claim to know more than you are capable of knowing, you transgress your limits, you act like a toddler who says, "I am the teacher!" Claiming knowledge of "metaphoric miracles" is a transgression against God.

Transgress not thy limits, nor claim
that which beseemeth thee not.
Prostrate thyself before the
countenance of thy God, the Lord of
might and power.¹ Bahá'u'lláh

Who are the ones who transgress their rights, who prophesy in Jesus' name without permission? To know the answer, study these verses in close proximity:

Beware of false prophets, men who come to you dressed up as sheep while underneath they are savage wolves...many will say to me, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, cast out devils in your name, and in your name perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them to their face, "I never knew you; out of my sight, you and your wicked ways!"

Matthew 7: 15, 22-23 NEB

Who then are “the false prophets” referred to in this passage? Answer: Those who prophesy in *Jesus’* name. Who would prophesy in *Jesus’* name? Only those who claim Jesus’ name: Christians. The ones who say, “We are sure, this is the way our Lord Jesus Christ will return.” Examine the next verse: “They come to you in sheep’s clothing.” What does the metaphor “sheep” stand for? The people of God’s pasture, namely, Christians. Jesus sometimes referred to His followers as sheep (John 10:3-4).

Notice how clearly the following verses predict the appearance of leaders and teachers who keep telling Christians that Jesus will come *later*:

Who then is a faithful and wise servant [church leader], whom his master made ruler over his household [church], to give them [lay people] food [true knowledge of the second Advent] in due season [of the Advent]? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant [church leader] says in his heart, “*My master is delaying his coming,*” and begins to beat his fellow servants [abuses his authority], and to eat and drink with the drunkards [those

who are complacent, asleep, unaware like himself], the master of that servant [who is Jesus Christ] will come on a day when he [church leader] is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two [a symbol of severe punishment] and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites [who pay only lip service to Jesus, but have no faith to obey Him]. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 24:45-51 NKJ

How could a guest delay his arrival? Only when the designated time has past. Would God *not* keep His promise? Would He not send Jesus at the appointed time? Then what does the word “*delay*” indicate? *That after the Advent has taken place, the church leaders continue to believe and tell people that the Master will come later.*

Matthew 7:22 NIV

Many will say to me on that day, “*Lord, Lord, did we not...drive out demons and perform many miracles?*”

The fulfillment of this sign can be seen in the extreme preoccupation of many Christians with both demonic powers and dramatic miracles. Some Christians have personified, glamorized, and deified the devil. They have laid blame on evil forces, beyond their control, as excuses for their own evil deeds. They attribute all kinds of incredible powers to Satan. They engage in exorcism to drive out the demons in mentally disturbed patients.

When a famous evangelist fell from grace as a result of adultery, he said, “The devil is trying to destroy my ministry!” Apparently many believed him. He still lives in magnificent mansions and enjoys enormous popularity and power.

Many theologians put more emphasis on miracles as the evidence of Jesus’ divine station than on His Word, the Word of God, the very power that created the universe. Any mention of miracles draws huge crowds.

Both of these unseemly acts—the glorification of the supernatural, and preoccupation with demonic powers—have denigrated the faith of God.

They have given it the image of “the magic arts” and witchcraft. They have obscured and sometimes erased the clear and definitive line between religion and cult, causing the alienation of many thoughtful and sincere people from their faith.

The Book of Revelation condemns “the magic arts,” the belief that bestows a high status on magics and miracles, the assumption that makes them appear as the true basis of faith in me. A warning could not be more severe than this:

But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, ***those who practice magic arts***, the idolaters and all liars—***their***

place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. Revelation 21:8 NIV

Who are “the cowardly”? The ones who put more trust in their fears than in God. Who are “the unbelieving”? Those who have no faith in Jesus’ instructions. Who are the ones who practice magic arts? Not the magicians who entertain, but Christians who put their faith on the miraculous, the mystical, and the magical. The ones who build their faith on sand, on the untestable and the unprovable.

The belief in “the magic arts” has been especially extended to Jesus’ Return. It has made Christians totally complacent to the news of His coming. For they falsely believe that He will break through the clouds with enormous fire power to burn countless billions of people. What an astonishing expectation from the One who is the essence of Love! It is not the clouds of heaven He must break through; it is the clouds of illusions and false assumptions that rise from the believers’ hearts and souls. Breaking through those clouds is infinitely more difficult. The clouds of heaven stand ready at God’s commands, but not the clouds of human heart. They are obstinate and rebellious. They are so heavy, they have always concealed His great glory and supreme splendor.

Matthew 7:23 NIV

Then I will tell them plainly, "***I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!***"

Those of you who carry Jesus' name but disobey His commands, who instead of examining His fruits, preoccupy yourself with prophesying in His name and glamorizing miraculous and demonic powers have no place in His glorious Kingdom of heaven.

Why does Jesus speak so harshly? Why does He call "wicked" the ways of those of you who disregard "fruits" and deify and glorify miracles and demonic powers? Because you use His name as a show, just to look good in your eyes and the eyes of your friends and loved ones. You like to stay in your comfort zone, in your church, and keep saying, "My Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," but when He commands you to set aside your personal interpretation of prophecies, when you are told that ***only the Lord has the right "to bring to light what is hidden in darkness"*** (I Corinthians 4:5), you disregard His wishes. You claim to love Jesus, but when He asks you to take the initiative in finding Him, you distort or disregard His clear and repeated instructions.

You pride yourself in being literal, but when the literal prevents you from pursuing your selfish desires, when it requires courage, self-sacrifice, and detachment, you use your imagination to alter its plain meaning in order to preserve your present position, to stay where you are and do what you like.

Notice how clearly this instruction is given in the Scripture:

Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time.

Hebrews 9:28

Now notice how a famous theologian, who has sold millions of copies of his books, distorts the meaning of that literal and clear instruction, which requires from you to actively search for Him:

“Unto them that look for him shall he appear.” Does that mean that if one doesn’t happen to be looking into the sky, or at least thinking of Christ’s return when He comes to catch away His bride, he’ll be left behind? Surely not. Our going to heaven at the Rapture does not depend upon whether we even believe in that blessed hope much less are looking for Christ at that particular moment. Our ticket to heaven is the finished redemptive work of Christ on the cross. If one’s faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, he will be taken to heaven at the Rapture even if he has never heard of such an event. If all Christians are included, then why does it say, “Unto them that look for him”? Simply because it is expected of all Christians to be looking for Christ.²

Now take a few minutes and a piece of paper and try to write in your own words what that theologian said. See if you can make any sense out of it:

To claim loyalty to Jesus, but stay loyal to your own selfish desires is hypocrisy, among the gravest of sins. You consider yourself to be the first among the faithful, but in His sight you are the last. What did Jesus mean by this verse?

Many who are *first* will be *last*, and many who are *last* will be *first*.

Matthew 19:30 NIV

It is better to claim *no* loyalty to Jesus and ignore Him than claim *loyalty* and disobey. If you claim to be His true disciple, more is expected from you:

That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows... ***From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded;*** and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

Luke 12:47-48 NIV

Imagine if someone claims to love you and to cherish your presence in many letters and phone calls, who invites you repeatedly to his heart and home, who pleads with you to visit him, but when you accept his invitation, when you come to see him, he shuts his heart and

home to you. How angry you will be? This is how your Master feels. In His sight, those who claim His name, but disobey Him, are indeed “evil doers.” They do evil not only to themselves but also to others by depriving them of His light.

O SON OF DESIRE!

The learned and the wise have for long years striven and failed to attain the presence of the All-Glorious; they have spent their lives in search of Him, yet did not behold the beauty of His countenance. Thou without the least effort didst attain thy goal, and without search hast obtained the object of thy quest. Yet, notwithstanding, thou didst remain so wrapt in the veil of self, that thine eyes beheld not the beauty of the Beloved, nor did thy hand touch the hem of His robe. Ye that have eyes, behold and wonder.³ Bahá'u'lláh

Each believer is accountable to share the glory of God’s presence with others. In the Parable of the Talent, Jesus called *His fearful servant* by the same harsh word. He called him not only *wicked* or *evil-doer* but also *lazy*. He is lazy, because he does not take time to investigate the news of His long-awaited arrival. Most of you are sound asleep. It seems no warning, no word, however harsh, can move you out of your complacency and negligence.

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| | <p>Thou [God] didst bring mankind into being to know Thee and to serve Thy Cause, that their station might thereby be elevated upon Thine earth and their souls be uplifted by virtue of the things Thou hast revealed in Thy Scriptures... Yet no sooner didst Thou manifest Thyself and reveal Thy signs than they turned away from Thee and repudiated Thee and rejected that which Thou didst unveil before their eyes through the potency of Thy might and Thy power.⁴</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Bahá'u'lláh</p> |
| <p><i>The Lord Continues:</i></p> | <p><i>What are the critical points of our Lord's instructions? What would He say to you if He spoke in today's language through His beloved disciple?</i></p> |
| <p>Matthew 7:23-29 NIV <i>“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.</i> The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the</p> | <p>If you are <i>wise</i>, you will <i>obey</i> Jesus' instructions. You will be a disciple whose faith stands as firmly as a house built on a rock. If you are <i>foolish</i>, you will <i>disobey</i> me. You will be a disciple whose faith is as unstable as a house built on sand; it will not endure.</p> <p>O YE THAT ARE FOOLISH, YET HAVE A NAME TO BE WISE! Wherefore do ye wear the guise of shepherds, when inwardly ye have become wolves, intent upon My flock? Ye are even as the star, which riseth ere the dawn, and which, though it seem radiant and luminous,</p> |

rock. ***But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.***

The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

leadeth the wayfarers of My city astray into the paths of perdition.⁵

Bahá’u’lláh

He is truly wise whom the world and all that is therein have not deterred from recognizing the light of this Day, who will not allow men’s idle talk to cause him to swerve from the way of righteousness. He is indeed as one dead who, at the wondrous dawn of this Revelation, hath failed to be quickened by its soul-stirring breeze. He is indeed a captive who hath not recognized the Supreme Redeemer, but hath suffered his soul to be bound, distressed and helpless, in the fetters of his desires.⁶

Bahá’u’lláh

Therefore, ***obey the command to use “fruits” as the decisive and true evidence of my divine presence and great glory in the temple of a humble human being***, who may walk among you ***“as a thief.”***

Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

Christ (Luke 11:28 NKJ)

If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. John 15:10 NKJ

For God hath ordained that all the good things which lie in the treasury of His knowledge shall be attained through obedience unto Me, and

every fire recorded in His Book,
through disobedience unto Me.⁷

The Báb

Assist me and assist them, O my
Lord, to obey Thee and to keep Thy
precepts. Thou, verily, hast power to
do what Thou choosest.⁸ Bahá'u'lláh

What if you disobey the clear
commandment that the way to know
me is my fruits, not your personal
interpretation of prophecies?

Now by this we know that we know
Him, if we keep His commandments.
He who says, "I know Him," and
does not keep His commandments, is
a liar, and the truth is not in him. But
whoever keeps His word, truly the
love of God is perfected in him. By
this we know that we are in Him.

I John 2:3-5 NKJ

Where else in the entire Gospel can
you find instructions and standards by
which you can separate truth from
falsehood? In this most significant and
perfectly literal pronouncement, I have
given you the ultimate standard by
which you can separate the divine from
the deceptive. It is the standard to
which your own common sense
testifies. It is the proof your own
reason recognizes and accepts. Can
you find any other standard that is
more reasonable than fruits or works?

I am the Tree planted by God. He has
given me such heavenly fruits no one

can imitate. What else do you expect me to do for you? Am I a magician to entertain you? My sole purpose is to satisfy your spiritual hunger, to give you the food from heaven. My fruits offered under my new name Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, are as wholesome, as splendid, and as divine as the ones I offered you the first time under my previous name Jesus Christ. My bread is as perfect, as nourishing, and as heavenly as the one I gave you long ago.

I bestowed on you the potential to cultivate fruits and grains for your body. The earth provides your earthly food. The task of offering you the heavenly food is all mine. I have come to bring you the celestial fruits and grains, the bread that satisfies your soul. Did I not tell you that I am the living bread that descends from heaven?

I am the *living bread* which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he *will live forever*.

Christ (John 6:51 NKJ)

Once again I have come to offer you that same bread:

This is the food that conferreth *everlasting life* upon the pure in heart and the illumined in spirit. This is *the bread* of which it is said: "Lord, send down upon us Thy bread from heaven." This bread shall never be

withheld from them that deserve it, nor can it ever be exhausted. It groweth everlastingly from the tree of grace; it descendeth at all seasons from the heavens of justice and mercy...

O the pity! that man should deprive himself of this goodly gift, this imperishable bounty, this everlasting life. It behooveth him to prize *this food that cometh from heaven...*⁹

Bahá'u'lláh

Can you find anyone who can produce such a perfect bread and heavenly fruits as I am offering you now?

Say: By the righteousness of the Almighty! The measure of the favors of God hath been filled up, His Word hath been perfected, the light of His countenance hath been revealed, His sovereignty hath encompassed the whole of creation, the glory of His Revelation hath been made manifest, and His bounties have rained upon all mankind.¹⁰

Bahá'u'lláh

Test my fruits, partake of my bread, examine my scriptures to see my power, my glory, and my distinction. All signs testify to my divine mission and station:

Is there any doubt concerning God? Behold how He hath come down from the heaven of His grace, girded with power and invested with

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| | sovereignty. Is there any doubt concerning His signs? Open ye your eyes, and consider His clear evidence. ¹¹ Bahá'u'lláh |
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Once again, you have a chance to put your faith to the test. Choose one of these:

- I do not like fruits, and will not use it as the standard of knowing my Lord. The best and only way of knowing my Lord is through prophecy. I know my interpretation of prophecy is correct. I will continue to look to the sky as the place from which my Lord will come. First he will destroy the wicked, then he will make a new earth and a new heaven for all wonderful Christians who live today or have died before.
- I will obey the command of my Lord. I will use “fruits” as the standard of knowing Him on His return. I am asked not to prophesy in my Lord’s name. Therefore, I will leave the interpretation of prophecies to the One who satisfies the standard of fruits. If He declares that the word *sky* is spiritual, I will accept His judgment as the truth. I make a commitment to continue my investigation of Bahá’u’lláh’s claim that He is the expected Savior and Redeemer we have been waiting for.

2

The Language of Metaphoric Miracles



Test 2

Let us assume that Jesus continued His loving counsels. Let us assume that He inspired John to speak on His behalf about the meaning of His prophecies. What would He say about the unique language of "*metaphoric miracles*"?



O my dear disciples on earth! Have you forgotten that God speaks in metaphoric language? Did not a simple metaphor conceal my supreme splendor from the Jews? Ponder the vision my mother Mary had about me:

The Lord God will give him *the throne of his father David*, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

Luke 1:32-22 NIV

I was a humble, gentle, and homeless man. Imagine the son of a carpenter changing suddenly into a military figure who would conquer the Roman army and establish himself a king as glorious and mighty as David! This is as miraculous, it requires as much "magic arts" as your expectation that I must return from the sky. Why did God make such a promise to my mother? There is no qualification in her vision, no words such as "if" or "perhaps," no condition whatever. Ponder this question in your heart until you resolve it, until your soul attracts a ray of truth from God's infinite Wisdom. Why then did my mother receive that vision?

- Did God make a false prediction?
- Did God lie to her on purpose?
- Or did God use the common language of "*metaphoric miracles*" to *test* my mother and all those who heard her vision? Can you think of any other reason?

Alas, you have not still learned the most critical lesson of history. Once again you expect me, the one who is the essence of absolute love, the one who cares for all his creatures, who would give a thousand lives for the poor, the disadvantaged, the rejected, and all the wronged ones of the earth, people who have known nothing in their lives except pain and suffering—you expect me to return and burn all these men and women to death because some of them have not known God and others have disobeyed my Gospel? In my first Advent, did I not show my greatest love for the sinners? Millions of those you call "sinners" have not had opportunities to learn to love me and my Father. Why should I destroy such people? Is that just? Have I not asked you to forgive "seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:21-22)? Instead of inviting these people to God, instead of once again leading them through love and reason to my Kingdom, why would I kill them? They too are my children. Why would a loving father kill his ignorant, helpless, and negligent children?

These false expectations about my Return have come mostly from theologians, who have attained the highest levels of "book learning." But mere information or "book learning" cannot lead you to my glorious Kingdom. The gifts that can guide you are

spiritual purity and *wisdom*—wisdom to know the need for searching and accepting the true standards of knowing me, and spiritual purity, the gift that will make you worthy of my glory.

As there is physical sickness, so there is spiritual. Literal-mindedness is the deadliest theological disease. It can destroy the soul as readily as leprosy can destroy the body. Just four letters *K, I, N, G* caused the spiritual slaughter of millions of Jews over the course of 2,000 years. Have you not been warned that "*the letter kills but the spirit gives life*" (II COR. 3:6 NIV)? Why then are you putting your everlasting destiny in the letter of the prophecies you have never been even authorized to interpret?

The Book of Revelation speaks of an encounter that involves two hundred million mounted troops (Revelation 9:16). Notice how some of the highly educated theologians interpret the following prediction, and how they "prophesy in my name," without being authorized. Examples like this are found abundantly in Christian publications:

Jesus speaks the Word which releases a plague to smite the vast armies of the Antichrist and the 200 million strong Oriental army. They are immediately blinded; their eyes are consumed away in their sockets. They are immediately dumb; their tongues are consumed away in their mouths. In fright, they reach out and grab one another for security. That only frightens them more, so they turn to fight among themselves. Their flesh begins to consume away from their bones. Their blood gushes to the earth, creating the pool of blood described in Revelation 14. It stretches over an area of about 185 miles in the valley of Megiddo and the Plains of Jezreel.¹²

Any theologian who considers himself an authority on the future, who interprets the prophecies, and tells people to take his word for truth has abused his authority. I have condemned such acts in the strongest words. Do you not have ears to hear, eyes to see? Let me repeat those forgotten warnings again: You are not authorized to prophesy in my name. But if you decide to violate this command, should you not at least use a little common sense? Do you really

believe that this prophecy about "mounted troops" is literal? Do you believe that 200 million soldiers will gather in Jerusalem to fight against me? Do you believe that the United States and all other Christian countries, who own the mightiest weapons, will send all their soldiers to fight against me?

If I came down from the sky with thousands of angels, will not such a spectacular scene force all people to open their hearts to my unspeakable glory? Why would they send their soldiers to Israel to fight against me? Can you imagine feeding and providing for the physical needs of 200 million people even for one day? Can you imagine transporting those 200 million soldiers to Israel? If all the airports in the world could be transferred to Israel, there would not be enough space for planes to land for that many people.

You can discover a thousand reasons why this prophecy cannot be literal. Forget about people. Think about my infinite power. Can I not destroy all the soldiers of the earth without ever seeing them? Why would I then bring myself—the Lord of humankind—to the level of military generals, fighting with the people I created? The literal consequences of this prophecy alone is so outrageous, even a child can understand it must have an inner meaning.

If you cannot understand this prophecy, who gives you the wisdom to know the others? The wars predicted in the Book of Revelation and other chapters of the Scriptures will not be waged by weapons but by words, not by bullets but by books. Yes, already many wars have been waged against me. But they are spiritual wars. In years to come, countless millions, among them many of my own followers, Christians who go to church and worship me, will rise against me. They will write countless books to discredit me. They will speak from their pulpits against me and my teachings. They will use the communication media under their power—television, radio, and the Internet—to deny my divine glory. They will try to find fault with everything I have said and done. This is the war I predicted in the Book of Revelation. Such wars are not new; they have always been waged against God and His loved ones.

I could cite hundreds of examples of "*metaphoric language*" used in the Scripture, especially in relation to prophecies. The example

of war alone should awaken you to reality. If you fail to understand this prophecy, how can you claim to understand the others? Who gave you the wisdom to know?

Once again you have a chance to put yourself to the test. Choose one of these:

- I am sure the predicted wars are literal. I know our Lord will come to create a better world, but first He must get rid of all the bad people by force, by killing hundreds of millions.
- The loving Lord would not hurt even an ant, let alone kill people. Perfect love never acts in an unloving way. The predicted wars must be spiritual, waged with words against our Lord. Who would wage that war? The ones who have the most to lose. The ones in charge.

3

Who Knows the Meaning of Prophecies?



Test 3

You have still another chance to test your obedience to God's instructions, another opportunity to see if you are a **Christian** who respects God's commands or a **Churchian**, who follows the traditional interpretations of your church. The next test of your faith comes from these verses:

Therefore ***judge nothing before the appointed time***; wait till the Lord comes. ***He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts.*** I Corinthians 4:5 NIV

...no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. II Peter 1:20-21 NKJ

For *we know in part* and we prophesy in part, but when perfection [Christ] comes, *the imperfect disappears*.

I Corinthians 13:9-10 NIV

Now what objections do you have to Bahá'u'lláh as the Return of the Lord Jesus Christ with the new name: The Glory of God?

Please list them:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

If your objections have the slightest connection to the interpretation of prophecy, you are once again disobeying your Lord. Your Lord has told you that you do not have the wisdom or the right to know *the true meaning of prophecies*. God has never given that wisdom and that right to anyone except to *the Lord Himself*. Only *He* has the absolute authority to interpret His own Words, to clarify the mysteries, to settle the issues about which people differ. When Jesus came the first time, was there anyone beside Him who understood the true meaning of prophecies?

Once again put your faith to the test. If you could not know Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, by His fruits, would God say, “Ye *shall* know them by their fruits”? Would God give you a false promise? Ask yourself: If the Jews had used God’s instructions, instead of following their own agenda—a desire for power and glory—would they have denied their Redeemer?

Now for a moment forget our Lord’s clear instructions about the permissible standards by which you can recognize Him on His Return. Use your own reasoning powers. Take a look at several books of prophecy written by *faithful scholars* from several denominations such as:

- Roman Catholic
- Greek Orthodox
- Baptist
- Mormon
- Jehovah Witnesses
- Seventh-day Adventists

Who are the scholars who wrote the books of prophecy? They are highly *educated* people with Ph.Ds from the most prestigious Christian seminaries. They are also *sincere* in their faith. They *truly love Jesus Christ* as their Lord and devote their lives to His service.

What will you discover in the writings of these sincere, intelligent, and highly educated scholars? You will discover many variations of views about every issue covered in the Bible, except perhaps the meaning of the spiritual life of a true Christian, such as following God's greatest commandment: Love. But On what topic will you discover the most variation of views? On the prophecies of the second Advent. The reason is obvious; when our Lord gives instructions about practical issues, He speaks in plain ordinary language. He says, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 19:19), or "If you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (Matthew 6:14). He speaks in such a plain language that even a child can understand. But when He utters prophecy, His language becomes metaphoric, obscure, sometimes even seemingly contradictory. To test this, just open the Book of Revelation and glance at only one page.

As we noted, the Jews had two seemingly *opposite* profiles of their Messiah as do the Christians of this age. If they had deciphered the difficult and obscure language of "*Metaphoric Miracle*," would they have denied their Redeemer? Who had the wisdom to resolve the issue for them except the Lord Himself? Once again who has that wisdom today?

To further prove to yourself the complexity of the language of prophecy, forget about the diverse denominations such as Catholics, Mormons, and Baptists, who are separated by some fundamental theological principles. Just take the orthodox, middle-of-the-road scholars who refer to themselves as "Evangelical Christians." Are they in agreement about the meaning of prophecies? Consider the following brief quotation from one of the most wonderful Christian scholars, who wrote an entire book to bring *peace* among various factions of just *orthodox Christians*,

let alone the extremes. Here is a brief quotation from the cover of his book:

You have a right to know *why men of God* who agree on all the essential fundamentals of the faith *differ so widely* and battle so tenaciously *over prophecy*.¹³

The author of this enlightening and candid book is Dr. Robert P. Lightner, professor of theology at one of the most prestigious Christian universities: *Dallas Theological Seminary*.

Use your rational powers: “‘Let us reason together’ says the Lord” (Isaiah 1:18). Are you willing to listen to your Lord’s encouragement that you should use your mind, that you should take advantage of your reasoning powers? Would you build your house on shifting sands? Aside from their differences, many of these competent and sincere scholars keep changing their minds about the meaning of prophecies. After all, they are as human as the rest of us.

Does your mind and your inner instinct allow you to accept and, in effect, obey the judgment of fallible people who keep changing their minds? Is it a sound decision to build your everlasting destiny on the views of scholars who are so irrational, so emotional, so opinionated that they actually fight with each other? Their wars are waged not with weapons but with words. Is this an exaggeration? No, listen once again to Dr. Lightner:

You have a right to know why *men of God* who agree on all the essential fundamentals of the faith differ so widely and *battle so tenaciously* over prophecy.¹⁴

Why does Dr. Lightner says, “You have a right to know”? And who is “you”? The book is written by a scholar for lay people. The theologians do not want the lay people know the extent of their differences. That is why Dr. Lightner says, “You have *a right* to know.” He wants to bring the issue of extreme differences of opinions out of the closet. What will happen if lay people find out that the theologians are at war? They will lose their confidence in them. Which leader would want that to happen? Would you?

Now decide what or who *you are*: a true *Christian*, or a true *Churchian*? If you obey the clear commands of our Lord Jesus Christ that you should know Him on His Return by His *fruits*, you are a true Christian and you *shall* find Him and know Him. This is God’s promise. If you are a true *Churchian*, you will disobey the clear instructions that you should let *the Lord* clarify the mysteries for you, and that *you should not take that right for yourself*. The choice is clear: “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29 NKJ).

Consider the prediction Jesus made:

At that time many will turn away from the faith.

Matthew 24:10 NIV

But when I, the Son of Man, return, how many will I find who have faith?

Luke 18:8 NLT

St. Paul portrayed a more clear picture of those many Christians who “turn away from the faith” in this age. You will not, in your wildest dreams, think that the following verses may apply to you. Yet will they not apply if you *disobey* the clear instructions of our Lord? The problem you and everyone else faces is this: *You do not know that you do not know until you know*. Notice how accurately these prophecies describe the people of our time, including Christians:

For people...will act *as if they are religious*.

II Timothy 3:2,5 NLT

Now compare the following two quotations. The first one describes those who lived at the time of the *first* Advent, the second those who live in *our time*. Notice that in both cases, people *read their Scripture and keep learning*, yet they stand far from the truth.

About the people of the first Advent:

You search and investigate and pore over the Scriptures diligently, because you suppose and trust that you have eternal life through them. And these [very Scriptures] testify about Me! *And still you are not willing (but refuse) to come to Me, so that you might have life.*

Christ (John 5:39-40 AB)

About the people of second Advent:

They are ***the kind who...are...always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth***. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so also these men oppose the truth. II Timothy 3:6-8 NIV

Interview a hundred Christians on random and see if you can find even one who will make this confession: “I am an example of the kind of people who fulfill St. Paul’s prophecy. I am the kind who is always reading Christian magazines and books and listening to sermons, but I have only one problem: I am never able to acknowledge the truth.” Is not lack of acknowledgment by both leaders and by lay people an evidence of the fulfillment of the prophecy?

Notice how accurately the following prophecy describes today’s churches. It declares that ***the church leaders tell people what they like to hear***. This is precisely what many politicians of our time are guilty of doing:

For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, ***they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear***. II Timothy 4:3 NIV

Would church leaders promote the message presented in ***The Glory of the Father***? No, this book is a threat to established beliefs. It teaches people to think for themselves, to be independent. It asks them not to leave their everlasting destiny in the hands of their pastor, priest, rabbi, or mulla.

What about lay people? Would they like to hear the message of this book? No, human beings suffer from the same weakness: virtually all people love their comfort zones; change is painful. What message then do most people like to hear?

- Stay in your denomination or your synagogue. Yours is the safest.
- Everyone is a deceiver. Do not take a look beyond your beliefs.

- You know you are saved. Why take chances?
- You do not need to do anything, except wait and wish. The Lord will come, at the right moment, and do everything for you. Why bother?
- You are lucky. You are a Catholic, a Baptist, a Mormon, a Jehovah Witness, or a Seventh-day Adventist. You have the truth. When the time comes, the Lord will lift you to heaven and leave all the bad people to perish in their pain. But who are all those bad people? They are always the neighbors next door, or some unknown people in far away places, such as China, Chad, India, or Indonesia.

Many Christian authors quote the preceding prophecies about the decline of the church in our time and the loss of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, but I have not seen even one author or pastor who says, “The prophecies may pertain to me or to my church!” They always pertain to someone else or some other church, perhaps to the person who disagrees with the one who quotes them, or to all the other unknown or unspecified Christians somewhere in the universe! Is there anyone who hears what the Spirit says to the churches?

You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen!...He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Christ (Revelation 2:4-7 NIV)

Ponder the following verses. Notice the amazing confrontation between the Jews and Jesus. The problem they faced is identical with the one Christians face today. They wanted a powerful Savior to save them from their physical sufferings right away. Our Lord told them that they had the wrong order of things. First they must suffer, and ***then*** attain glory. God does not give anyone a handout. We must work to get paid. Why should God make an exception in this age? Jesus also showed them that only ***He*** had the right to tell them what the prophecies meant. Why should that rule change the second time? He told them that they were ***spiritually dull, slow learners***:

And [Jesus] said to them, O *foolish ones* (sluggish in mind, dull of perception) and *slow of heart to believe* everything that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary and essentially fitting that the Christ, the Messiah, should suffer all these things before entering into His glory (His majesty and splendor)? Then beginning with Moses and... all the prophets, *He went on explaining and interpreting to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning and referring to Himself.* Luke 24:25-27 AB

Please ponder this question as long as necessary: Why would the people at the first Advent of our Lord fail to understand the meaning of prophecies, but the people at the *second* Advent understand them? What could have caused such a drastic shift in people's hearts and souls, in their wisdom to suddenly gain such an insight?

Once again you have a chance to test your faith by choosing one of these:

- I am a true *Christian*. I will continue to test "*the fruits*" of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation exactly as my Lord has guided and commanded me: By His "*fruits*," and *not by my personal interpretation of prophecies*. I will continue to examine the ten fruits, ten signs or standards presented briefly in this book.

I am a true *Churchian*. I will base my everlasting destiny on the following beliefs, actions, and assumptions:

- *I will continue to insist that I can only know my Lord on His return through prophecies.*
- *I will continue to believe that the interpretation of my church is accurate.*
- *I will continue to assume that I have the wisdom to tell the difference between the prophecies that express "metaphoric miracles" and those that are literal.*
- I will continue to wait for the Lord. I know that eventually He will come from the sky, burn all the bad people, and take my body to heaven. In case I am not living at the time of His

coming, He will take out my body out of the grave or make a new one for me. I will always need my body.

Part II

The Final Appeal



Bring thyself to account each day ere thou art summoned to a reckoning; for death, unheralded, shall come upon thee and thou shalt be called to give account for thy deeds.¹⁵ Bahá'u'lláh

If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. John 15:22 NKJ

4

What Would Jesus Say? Part II



The Final Appeal

Let us assume that our Lord continues to talk to you through John in today's language. What would He say? How would He present His final appeal?



My beloved disciples, Christians of all denominations! God is both loving and just. Justice demands that everyone receive that which he or she deserves. You have a powerful imagination. You can make yourself believe anything you like to believe:

All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes...

Proverbs 16:2 NIV

You also have the power to surround yourself with people who will tell you what your itching ears like to hear:

For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather

around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. II Timothy 4:3

You have the glorious choice of freedom. You can obey your imagination and self-interests. But if you wish to receive my blessings you must obey me. No one is worthy of obedience except me—not your parents, your spouse, your pastor, your priest, or your friends. No one! If you disobey, you face the consequences:

But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. Luke 12:48 NIV

But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. Matthew 12:36 NIV

Let me once again appeal to your conscience, to your love for me and to your loyalty to my name.

What is faith? How can you gain faith in God? If God came to your home and proved Himself through miracles, would that lead to true faith?

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1 NKJ

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed. Christ (John 20:29 NKJ)

Why then do you expect me to do what your own mind rejects? Why should I suddenly destroy the glorious gift of faith?

Does not your expectation indicate that in order to be acceptable to you, I must engage in some miraculous feats, some magic arts? See if you can find any relationship between these two verses:

...many will turn away from *the faith*. Christ (Matt. 24:10 NIV)

Only an evil, *faithless* generation would ask for a miraculous sign. Christ (Matt. 12:39 NT)

Do not both verses relate to *lack of faith*? Is not your expectation that I must produce “*a miraculous sign*,” that I must come from the sky and burn all the bad people and save you—who consider yourself faithful—a fulfillment of my prophecy that when I return, I will find little faith among my followers? Consider also this rhetorical question:

...when the Son of Man comes, *will he find faith on the earth?*
Christ (Luke 18:8 NIV)

What is the most concrete, visible evidence of your faith in me? It is your obedience. If you disregard my instructions, if you ignore my fruits and insist on miracles, what does that indicate? Is that not a sign that you are not faithful to me? Ask yourself: why did I give you the analogy of *the Tree* and its *fruits*? To mislead you?

Read all my heavenly words. Notice how I reasoned with the Pharisees who stood before me with closed hearts, who constantly tried to argue with me to win points. If you wish to deny me, you can find as many points as they found and even more. But if you are faithful to me, first open your hearts, then disregard everything you have learned from theologians. They are as fallible as you are. Can you find a single verse in my Scripture that they are authorized interpreters of my prophecies? In my first Advent, religious leaders were the first to deny me and condemn me. Has human nature changed since my first Advent?

Once again consider the past. Did not the Jews also expect literal fulfillment of prophecies with messages of “*metaphoric miracles*”? Did they not believe that I should come from an unknown place? Did they not say Nazareth was not a place worthy of the birth of their Messiah (John 1:46)? Did they not say that I was one like them with parents, brothers, and sisters? And did I not respond by declaring that a Prophet is not respected in his home and his country (Matthew 13:57)? Did not Hebrew prophecies indicate that I would be a king? Could not God explain to them the kind of “king” I would be? Did God indicate even *once* that I would be a *spiritual* King? Why didn’t He? God is All-Knowing. He knew the reasons the Jews would produce to deny me. All He needed to do was connect the word “*spiritual*” with the word

“**king**”? Why did He not? Why did He consistently refer to me as a **king**? Why did He even compare me with **king David** (Psalms 132:11)? Why did He refer to me as a “**ruler over Israel**” (Micah 5:2)?

Did God wish to mislead the Jews? No, never! He wanted to **test** them. He wanted to separate the complacent from the courageous. He wanted to know who was humble enough to listen to me. He wanted to separate those who loved me for **my own sake** from those who loved me for the sake of **worldly gains and glories**. The strategy worked perfectly. All those who denied me did so for selfish reasons. I separated the faithful from the unfaithful, the closed hearted from the open hearted. The prophecies with “**metaphoric miracles**” were given the **second** time for **the same reason** they were given the **first** time. If not, why would I give you two sets of opposite instructions—that I would come from the sky, and that I would come as a thief?

Know verily that **the purpose underlying all these symbolic terms...hath been to test and prove the peoples of the world;** that thereby the earth of the pure and illuminated hearts may be known from the perishable and barren soil. From time immemorial such hath been the way of God amidst His creatures, and to this testify the records of the sacred books.¹⁶

Bahá'u'lláh

Can you find **a single verse** in the entire Bible to show that God’s **standards** have suddenly changed? Can you find any evidence in the Scripture that God altered His language of prophecy between my two Advents? If you cannot find such a verse, why then do you make it up and base your everlasting destiny on a false assumption, on the desire of your imagination? Why do theologians create verses and commands from their own minds? What authority do they have to say, “This time is different. This time our Lord will come with **physical** power”? Is there a single verse, even a clue in the entire Scripture with this message: “Theologians have the wisdom to know which prophecies are literal, which prophecies are symbolic”?

Your mistaken notion that “*metaphoric miracles*” are literal has prevented you from taking seriously the news of my second Advent. This false assumption has kept you complacent in your churches. It has fulfilled my prediction that my parousia (coming and presence) among you will be like that of a thief in a house. The news of my advent has been around for 150 years, and yet I am still unknown to most of my followers.

After *overcoming* this obstacle, this illusion—that miracles and magic arts are the true test of my glory and grandeur—examine my words to see what evidence I presented to convince the Jews in my first Advent. Apply that same evidence to know me the second time. Did I not tell them again and again that my “*works*” and my “*bread*” testify to my divine station? What difference do you find in the meaning of “*fruits*,” “*works*,” and “*bread*”?

Once again I have come like a thief to test your sincerity, devotion, and obedience to me. The same test was used in my first Advent. By a few metaphors I separated the sincere from the insincere. You are facing the same test. Your eternal life is on trial. This is “the hour of trial” that has come upon you and all the peoples of the earth. Do not take this trial lightly. Do not run away. Do not ignore the news of my coming. *Persevere* in your search, and I will protect you from the trials:

Because you have kept My command to *persevere*, I also will *keep you from the hour of trial* which shall come upon the whole world, *to test* those who dwell on the earth.

Revelation 3:10 NKJ

How can you pass your test? *By acting wisely. Only wisdom can save you from losing the eternal life that I bestowed on you.*

Wherever you look in God’s holy Scriptures, you find the word “*wisdom*” stands out. Wherever you look, you discover that the wise are the favored ones of your Lord. In God’s holy Scriptures, those who refuse to act wisely are called “wicked.” Daniel in his prophecies of the end of the age, which is now, used the same words: *wise* and *wicked*. He used them as opposites:

...*the wicked* shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but *the wise* shall understand. Daniel 12:10 NKJ

Once again ponder my parable of the Banquet of the Kingdom. What was the difference between the two groups of five women? Wisdom and lack of it. What did the wise women do? They remained awake, aware, and watchful. They knew they could miss “the Heavenly Thief,” who promised to arrive at midnight, the darkest hour, when most people are sound asleep, when ignorance, negligence, unawareness, and apathy are at their peaks. How could the wise ones stay awake? What gave them the strength to avoid their comfort zones? *The extra “oil” they had.* What does that symbolize? You can discover the meaning of that critical word simply by studying that parable. What separated one group of five women from the other? *Wisdom.* That was the only difference between them.

How is a wise person known? By the good choices he makes. How can a person make good choices? What qualities does he have and what rules does he observe? First test your own judgment by writing the five most significant rules a wise person observes, then compare your list with what follows later:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How can you make good choices? If you are wise, what virtues adorn your soul and what rules guide your spiritual life?

- You are *humble* and keenly aware of this fact: to err is human.
- You are *courageous*. Fear does not prevent you from investigation.
- You *do not start with any preconceived notions*. You do not say, “I am sure my Lord must come this way.”
- You know people resist new ideas, especially if beliefs and emotions are involved.

- If a historical lesson is being repeated, you remember that people have short memories.
- You know you cannot see your weaknesses. If you are closed-minded, prejudiced, fearful, as a rule, you do not know it. History shows that people always ***deny being or acting like their ancestors***:

How terrible it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you build tombs for the prophets your ancestors killed and decorate the graves of the godly people your ancestors destroyed. ***Then you say, “We never would have joined them in killing the prophets.”*** In saying that, you are accusing yourselves of being the descendants of those who murdered the prophets.

Christ (Matt. 23:29-31 NLT)

- You do not leave your spiritual destiny in the hands of theologians, who have always been the first to reject God’s Messengers and Redeemers. Notice how clearly this prophecy reveals the mental and spiritual state of the leaders of our time:

...the wisdom of their wise men shall vanish and the discernment of the discerning shall be lost. Isaiah 29:14 NEB

Bahá’u’lláh confirms:

The denials...of these leaders of religion have, in the main, been due to their lack of knowledge and understanding.¹⁷

Bahá’u’lláh

Do religious leaders ***not*** have a vested self-interest to preserve the status quo? Why then would you forget this critical historic lesson?

- You know among human weaknesses is love for miracles or “the magic arts.” You know people love quick and easy solutions to old problems. They want their Lord to come and do everything for them, to suddenly save them from the mess they have created.
- You are ***critical***, but ***open-minded***. This is a difficult balance to achieve. You can reach this balance by acting like a jury

member. You listen to both sides of the issue before making up your mind. You have heard the other side, the miraculous side, in your churches. Now you are hearing, perhaps for the first time, the other side. Test everything tradition has taught you about the Lord's Return with the touchstone of new knowledge you have received in my Second Advent. Ask God fervently to get involved, to bestow on you His help. Then make up your mind only on the basis of evidence. Do not let your selfish desires make any impact on your decision. Do not allow anyone to get involved except you and your Lord.

If you are wise, you are also prudent. You do not risk your everlasting life. You leave no stones unturned until you discover if I am your promised One, if I am the same supreme Spirit that appeared long ago in the name of Jesus Christ, the Anointed One of God, and now in the name of Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God.

Consider this example. If you had a little child, would you not take every precaution to protect him or her? Why then do you not take every precaution to protect your everlasting life, to make sure if I am or am not your Lord? I have seen so many of you to be so fearful of my new followers. So often they invite you to investigate the news of my Return and you run away as if you have seen a lion? Have you not read these prophecies?

Why do you long for the day of the Lord? That day will be darkness, not light. ***It will be as though a man fled from a lion...*** Amos 5:18-19 NIV

Flee ye the One Who hath sacrificed His life that ye may be quickened [receive life]?¹⁸ Bahá'u'lláh

They will flee...from dread of the Lord and the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to shake the earth [the hearts of humankind]. Isaiah 2:21 NIV

Is avoidance a sign of *wisdom* or *folly*? How can you deny me without studying my evidence? I have fulfilled far more prophecies in my second Advent than in my first. I have seen time and again that my new followers ask you to read a book about the hundreds of prophecies I have fulfilled, and yet you refuse to examine the

evidence. Why? Does not this indicate lack of faith in my prophecies of the Second Advent? I warn you not to take my invitation lightly. Act according to the rules of wisdom in finding me. Follow my commandments. Search for me with all your heart and soul. Evasive emotions can only blind you to my glory. Remember the parable of the banquet of the Kingdom. Do not forget the destiny of the five women, who were called foolish. Do you remember what happened to them? They missed me and were not allowed to enter my Banquet. Why? Because they showed qualities exactly opposite to the wise women.

What are the signs of foolishness? Once again, make your own list before reading any further. People, as a rule, love their own ideas:

Now compare your list with this:

- Lack of humility. It is saying, “I am absolutely right. I know the Lord has **not** come!”
- Complacency. It is saying, “I love my church. I am comfortable with my beliefs, and don’t care what else there is.”
- Fear of being deceived. It is saying, “I know I have eternal life. Why risk looking into another religion?”
- Conformity to authority figures. It is saying, “I don’t know enough about the Bible. My pastor, priest, or rabbi will tell me the truth.”
- Loss of memory of the past. It is forgetting the lessons of history. It is forgetting how the people who went to their synagogues, who prayed with the word **Lord** on their lips, but denied their Lord! They worshipped His name, but killed the One whose name they worshipped! Anyone who forgets that lesson is totally devoid of wisdom.

Keep in mind that the five *foolish* women, who found the door to my Banquet closed, were *also* my followers. They too were expecting my arrival. But because of their foolishness, they *missed* me. *I* did not miss them; *they* had to take action. The responsibility of staying awake, finding me, and following me to my Banquet was theirs.

Don't assume that I will come from above and take you to heaven because you go to the "right" church and carry my name, Jesus Christ. If you lack the *oil of wisdom*, you too will miss me. You will get stuck in your comfort zone.

Yes, I said, "Every eye shall see Him" (Revelation 1:7). But what if your eyes are closed? Will you be able to see me? What if your eyes are defective or blind? Why do you apply selective memory to my prophecies? Why do you *not* remember this critical instruction for seeing?

*I counsel you to buy from me...salvæ to put on your eyes,
so you can see.* Christ (Revelation 3:18 NKJ)

Were ye to *cleansæ your eyes*, ye would readily perceive how My deeds testify to the truth of My words, how My words are a guide to My deeds. Blinded are your eyes! Perceived ye not the greatness of the power of God and of His sovereignty? Beheld ye not His majesty and glory?¹⁹ Bahá'u'lláh

Think for a moment. Once again try to understand why the Jews denied me. They thought that *they* had the right to set the rules. They made two assumptions:

- That they could know me *only* through prophecies, and,
- That they knew what the prophecies meant.

Both of those assumptions are false, especially if they are tied together. *That combination is a perfect prescription for failure, it is deadly.* And that is exactly what you are doing. Why do you refuse to learn your lesson from that failure? Why are you still acting the way the Jews did long ago?

To know me, all they needed to do was look at me; at my life and teachings, at my **works**. I was a Tree planted by God. My fruits were infinitely superior to any fruit produced by humans. Every verse I spoke manifested God's distinction and glory. Anyone with a good heart could know me, anyone with a pure heart could "**see**" the divine in me as clearly as the sun:

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall **see** God.

Christ (Matthew 5:8 NKJ)

He who has seen Me has **seen** the Father. Christ (John 14:9 NKJ)

Once again, anyone gifted with a pure heart can recognize the divine in my voice and my words, can find everlasting life and spirit in my utterance:

The words that I speak to you are **spirit**, and they are **life**.

John 6:63 NKJ

I am the One...from Whose utterance **fountains of living waters** have streamed forth unto all created things.

Immeasurably exalted is this boundless grace; immensely blessed is this resplendent favor.²⁰

Bahá'u'lláh

To know me, you do not need **Greek** and **Hebrew**, you need **Good Hearts**, you do not need a **Degree in Theology**, you need **Detachment** from **Tradition**. Annas and Caiaphas were the greatest Jewish theologians among the Jews. They stood against me and condemned me to death, yet Mary Magdalene, a simple peasant, and Peter, a pure-hearted fisherman, recognized my glory. Did those two beloved disciples of mine have any degrees, any publications? No, their supreme assets were pure, detached, and humble hearts. The same holds true today. Do not depend on Bible scholars and best-selling authors of prophecy. Have you ever heard me say, "Blessed are Bible scholars or best-selling authors, for they shall see God?" No, but I have said, "Blessed are **the pure in heart**, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

The pearl of faith is not cheap gravel to be thrown at anyone who claims my name. It is the most precious gift of mine bestowed only on the pure in heart. Pray with all your heart and soul, at every moment of your waking hours, to become worthy of standing

before me. Let your praying and my blessings like rain purify your hearts from the age-old dusts of illusions that surround you and blind you to my light. If you overcome those dusts, you will see me shine as brightly as the sun.

Say: “***The True One is come evident as the shining sun; O pity that He should have come into the city of the blind!***”²¹

Bahá'u'lláh

The Jews failed because they set their wishes above mine, their standards above their Lord's. They did not look with a pure heart, they did not obey their scriptures, they did not choose to do God's will:

The Jews were amazed and asked, “How did this man get such learning without having studied?” Jesus answered, “My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. ***If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.***”

John 7:15-17 NIV

Today you are far more privileged to know me in my second Advent than the first. Not only you have the Old Testament but also the New. You have two sets of instructions and a clear historical lesson on how to ***succeed*** in knowing a new Redeemer from God, and how to ***fail***. Many of you blame the Jews for rejecting me. Did you realize that if you deny me, more blame will fall on you? Your choice is more clear. Many more prophecies predict my second Advent, many more signs testify to my glory, among them hundred volumes of scriptures written without pause or any change of mind.

All you need to do is put your preconceived notions and unauthorized interpretations of prophecies aside. And then listen to my Voice with all your heart and soul. I am ***the same Spirit*** that once appeared in the name of Jesus Christ. Only my ***name*** has changed. I prophesied in the book of Revelation that if you are worthy, I will honor you with the gift of a new name. That name—Bahá'u'lláh, which means ***the light of God*** and ***the glory of God***—appears many times in the Scripture. Ponder these few prophecies among many others:

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of **the glory of the Lord**, as the waters cover the sea. Habakkuk 2:14 NIV

...as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with **the glory of the Lord**. Numbers 14:21

Did I not tell you that if you have faith **you will see the glory of God?** John 11:40 NIV

And **the glory of the Lord** will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. Isaiah 40:5 NIV

...they will see **the glory of the Lord**, the splendor of our God. Isaiah 35:2 NIV

If you grew up in an English speaking country, you heard the words Jesus Christ from childhood. If you had grown up in an Arabic speaking country, you would have heard **Ísá Masíh**. If someone asked you “Do you believe in **Ísá Masíh**?” you would be totally puzzled, because you are not familiar with that word. The word Christ is a modified version of a Greek word. If someone asked you, “Do you believe in Christus?” you may again be confused. You may even think about Christopher Columbus. The name Christ did not descend from heaven. It is a common Greek word, meaning anointed, or blessed. Search the entire Hebrew scriptures and try to find any prophecies that uses the word “Christ” even once. You will find no prophecy with that title. Because the Hebrew Scriptures are in Hebrew language. They do not contain such a Greek word. Read the entire Hebrew Scriptures to see if you can find even the Hebrew version of the word Christ used with any degree of clarity that comes even close to the prophecies that predict my new title **the Glory of God**.

To be more faithful to the original words, some English translations of the Bible use the Hebrew word **Yahweh** for God and **Rabbi** for my title, Master. Let us do the same with the word Bahá'u'lláh. To see the astonishing clarity of prophecies that point to His new name, read the preceding prophecies once again, this time with the Arabic version of His name in place of the English:

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of **Bahá'u'lláh**, as the waters cover the sea. Habakkuk 2:14 NIV

And **Bahá'u'lláh** will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. Isaiah 40:5 NIV

...as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with **Bahá'u'lláh**. Numbers 14:21

Did I not tell you that if you have faith you see **Bahá'u'lláh**? John 11:40 NEB

...they will see **Bahá'u'lláh**, the splendor of our God. Isaiah 35:2 NIV

Notice how plainly the Book of Revelation predicts the coming of two divine Beings who give light to **the City of God**, a symbol of divine Revelation. These two prophecies were spoken centuries apart, yet notice how similar they are:

The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for **the glory of God** gives it light, and the Lamb [the Báb] is its lamp. **The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.** Revelation 21:23-24 NIV

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and **the glory of the Lord** rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. **Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.** Isaiah 60:1-3 NIV

Read the preceding prophecies once again with some of its critical words such as “light” “glory” and “the glory of the Lord” in Arabic:

The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for **Bahá'u'lláh** gives it light, and the Lamb [the Báb, the One who sacrificed Himself] is its lamp. **The nations will walk by its Bahá, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.**

Arise, shine, for your **Bahá** has come, and **Bahá'u'lláh** rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his Bahá appears over you. **Nations will come to your Bahá, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.**

The gift of the new Name is prophesied throughout the entire Scripture:

The nations will see...your glory [Bahá]; you will be called by **a new name** that the mouth of the Lord will bestow.

Isaiah 62:2 NIV

...his servants [new followers] he shall call by **another name**.

Isaiah 65:15 NEB

We should listen to God's voice, the authority with which He speaks. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good (I Thess. 5:21). We should "Cast away" that which we have, and "take fast hold" of that which God commands. "Purge" our ears from everything you have heard from fallible human beings:

Cast away, O peoples of the earth, **that which ye have and take fast hold of that which ye are bidden by the All-Powerful**, He Who is the Bearer of the Trust of God. **Purge ye your ears and set your hearts towards Him** that ye may hearken to the most wondrous Call which hath been raised from Sinai, the habitation of your Lord, the Most Glorious.²²

Bahá'u'lláh

What can we expect from God? More than a bright and beautiful City that is lighted, just like the earth, with two sources of light, a Sun called **Bahá'u'lláh** for the day, and a Lamp called **the Lamb** for the night? What does our heart desire? More than a pure river of life that flows from the presence of Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God, and His Gate the Lamb of God? What does our hearts hope for? More than the tree of life that bears a new crop of fruits not once a year, but every month of the year? What do our hearts wish for? More than crops of leaves that cure every disease, every pain and suffering that may touch our lives? All those wondrous gifts are found in Bahá'u'lláh's celestial and supreme Word:

- **Two sources of light:** The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for **the glory of God** [Bahá'u'lláh] gives it light, and **the Lamb** [the Báb] is its lamp. Revelation 21:23 NIV

- ***A pure river of life:*** And he showed me a ***pure river of water of life***, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of ***God*** [Bahá'u'lláh] and of ***the Lamb*** [the Báb]. Revelation 22:1 NKJ
- ***The tree of life:*** In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was ***the tree of life***. Revelation 22:2 NKJ
- ***Fruits:*** [The tree of life bore] twelve ***crops of fruit***, yielding its fruit every month. Revelation 22:2 NIV
- ***Leaves:*** And ***the leaves*** of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:2 NIV
- ***The promise to come and bestow all those blessings:*** Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book. Revelation 22:7 NIV

He, verily, is come with His Kingdom, and all the atoms cry aloud: 'Lo! The Lord is come in His great majesty!'²³ Bahá'u'lláh

Lo! He is come in the sheltering shadow of Testimony, invested with conclusive proof and evidence, and those who truly believe in Him regard His presence as the embodiment of the Kingdom of God. Blessed is the man who turneth towards Him...²⁴ Bahá'u'lláh

Followers of the Gospel...behold the gates of heaven are flung open. He that had ascended unto it is now come. Give ear to His voice calling aloud over land and sea, announcing to all mankind the advent of this Revelation...²⁵ Bahá'u'lláh

Behold how He hath come down from the heaven of His grace, girded with power and invested with sovereignty. Is there any doubt concerning His signs?²⁶ Bahá'u'lláh

By God! This is He Who hath at one time appeared in the name of the Spirit [Christ]...²⁷ Bahá'u'lláh

*The time foreordained unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled.*²⁸

Bahá'u'lláh



Dear readers:

The divine command is clear: *We must give up our personal interpretation of prophecies*, especially those with “*metaphoric miracles*,” and *submit to God’s standards*, taste His heavenly fruits, the food He has sent us from heaven. Obeying God’s command is the ultimate test of our faith.

In the following statement, Bahá'u'lláh uses the example of “*the sun*” and “*the shower*” in place of “*the tree*” to prove the same point. As we know a tree by its fruits, so do we know the sun and the rain by their effects:

The proof of the sun is the light thereof, which shineth and envelopeth all things. The evidence of the shower is the bounty thereof, which reneweth and investeth the world with the mantle of life.²⁹

Bahá'u'lláh

When our Lord says, “*By their fruits ye shall know them*” is He asking you to do anything extraordinary, anything unreasonable? No, He is asking you to do the most sensible thing. Consider this analogy. Suppose you wanted to buy a car. What would your common sense, your reasonable mind tell you to do? To find as much as you can about that car. If your common sense tells you to do this, why then would that same sense not ask you to follow the same course of action for knowing or testing a Redeemer from God? The reason it would not is totally emotional. Your negative emotions, based on past conditioning, prevent you from carrying out the most sensible and reasonable thing your mind tells you to do.

If you have true faith in the words of Jesus, you will continue your search with confidence. You know you are on the right track. You know by following His commands you cast your vote of confidence in His Word. What if you fail to obey His clear

instructions? What if you reject not only the command of the Lord but also the voice of your own conscience, supported by reason?

Perhaps you don't have faith in yourself, but don't you have faith in our Lord who said, "You *shall* know"? As you see, the question is not whether you have faith in yourself, but whether you have faith in our Lord, the One you worship and adore in words, the One you constantly call "My Lord and Savior." But when His commandment requires courage, change, self-sacrifice, and perhaps willingness to become an object of ridicule by some of your fearful and closed-minded relatives, friends, or Church members, then you withdraw, you shy away from the commands of Jesus. Read this statement from our Lord:

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me.

Because I live, you also will live. *On that day* you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

Whoever has my commands and obeys them...I...will...show myself to him.

John 14:18-21 NIV

Notice how clearly He tells us the way we can see Him. Every Christian with an inner "eye" can and shall see his Lord. But what if a person does not have an "eye"? Jesus makes no promises to him. Only obedience to Jesus' command gives a believer eyesight to see His Lord on His Return. Those Christians who continue to give themselves the right to interpret the prophecies, according to their own fallible minds, violate the command of the Scripture. They are not loyal to their Master, and Jesus will not show Himself to them. Those who *fail* to use "*the fruits*" as they are commanded will be unable to see *the Glory of God*, which is hidden in the ordinary human temple of *the Heavenly Thief*.

Some Bible translations use Jehovah or Yahweh in place of God. They use a non-English word for God. Let us do the same for *Glory of God*:

Did I not tell you that *if you have faith* you will *see Bahá'u'lláh*?

The Lord gives only one condition for seeing Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God. That condition is *faith*. How can you show your faith? Only by obeying His commands. Only by using His standards of knowing Him, not *your* standards.

If you follow Jesus' instructions, you *will* know Him, you *shall* know Him. This is God's standard; this is God's promise. If you follow His instruction, He will not deceive you. What do you expect, if you don't follow it? If you *fail* to follow the clear command of our Lord, if instead of listening to Him, you listen to your church members, are you then a true *Christian* or a true *Churchian*?

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you... *Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me.*

Christ (John 14:18, 21 NIV)

5

Who is the True Christian?

Is the true Christian the one who goes to “the right” church regularly? Few would accept such a narrow definition. Who then is a true Christian? *The one who obeys Jesus Christ*, the one who respects the command of his or her Lord that the only authorized standard the servant can use to know the Master on His Return is the purity and perfection of His *fruit*:

By their FRUIT you will recognize them...Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but ONLY HE WHO DOES THE WILL OF MY FATHER... Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock...But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

Christ (Matthew 7:16-26 NIV)

Ponder these verses to recognize the honor of obeying God’s commands:

But why do you call Me “Lord, Lord,” and do not do the things which I say?

Christ (Luke 6:46 NKJ)

...observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Christ (Matthew 28:20 NKJ)

Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

I John 2:3 NKJ

But this is what I commanded them, saying, “Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.”

Jeremiah 7:23 NKJ

You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

Christ (John 15:14 NKJ)

If you love Me, keep My commandments. Christ (John 14:15 NKJ)

If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.

Christ (John 14:23-24 NKJ)

He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.

Christ (John 14:21 NKJ)

If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

Christ (John 15:10 NKJ)

Are You a Christian or a Churchian?

It may be hard to find anyone who fits perfectly into one category. Read the traits listed in each column and then see which one describes you more accurately.

Traits of a True Christian

- His focus is Jesus Christ, not the pastor, the priest, church members, large crowds, and beautiful buildings.
- He does not write the recipe for his own

Traits of a True Churchian

- His focus is the Church. As long as he likes his pastor and the people who come to the church, he feels satisfied.
- If he finds that a command does not suit his best interests, either he ignores it or distorts it.

theological pie; he is sensitive to the exact directives and commands of his Master.

- He lives by the highest ethical standards. He has a heart pure from deception, prejudice, and pride. He is as innocent and humble as a little child.
- He obeys our Lord without any regard to what his parents, pastor, priest, or the most popular theologian, author, or evangelist may say.
- He pays no attention to what the masses of people believe or do.
- He considers himself accountable to God.
- He takes responsibility for his spiritual choices.
- He is not complacent or fearful of being deceived. He trusts the Lord and acts with courage.
- He remembers this most significant lesson in all history: People have always shown enormous powers of self-deception. They persecuted in the name of God the Ones sent by God!
- His ethical values are no better than average person on the street. (Studies indicate that there is little if any difference between the ethical values of those who go to church and those who don't. What does this mean?)
- He picks what he likes to believe or not to believe. He prepares and bakes his own pie of beliefs.
- He moves from church to church to find the one that agrees most with his beliefs.
- He is loyal to the church his parents took him during his childhood and as a rule avoids other churches.
- He is afraid of talking with "non-believers," the ones who may challenge some of his cherished beliefs. Subconsciously he fears that they may steal his precious pie of faith.
- He may enjoy talking with "sinners," because they remind him that he is not one of them.
- He likes his beliefs because he can continue to wipe his life's record clean. He knows that simply by saying, "My Lord and Savior is Jesus Christ" his sins are forgiven.

This lesson removes every trace of self-righteousness from his heart.

- He obeys his Master’s command that he should ***always pray*** to become worthy of finding Him. He prays ***every day*** for this most supreme honor and most glorious gift.

- When it comes to beliefs, he is mainly or totally dependent on his favorite pastor or priest, and if he is of Jewish Faith on his favorite rabbi.

You may see in the acts and beliefs of a “***Churchian***” some humor. But behind the humor lies something quite serious: the possibility of denying the Lord.

Many Christians assume that if they go to their churches regularly, pay their tithes, attend Bible studies, pray, and read the Scripture, they have been faithful to the Lord. Is this not the same assumption the Pharisees made? There is only one sign of being a true Christian: It is being obedient to the commands of our Lord Jesus Christ. That command is this: The way to know Him on His Return is to examine His fruits, and not depend on personal interpretation of prophecies. That command was ignored at the first advent and it is being ignored today. Violating this command is a clear sign of lack of faith in the One who spoke it.

Every Act Has a Consequence

What if you fail to investigate? God gave you freedom of choice to act as you wish, but He also gave you responsibilities. Notice the words of our Lord to those who ignored or denied His call:

But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

Christ (Luke 12:9 NKJ)

God does not send Messengers and Redeemers to be ignored. Imagine if you sent a letter to a loved one, but he or she refused to receive and read the letter. Bahá’u’lláh’s warning to those who

refuse to open His letter is the same as Jesus'. He says if they ignore **Him**, God will ignore **them**. Is this unfair?

God will verily do unto them that which they themselves are doing, and will forget them even as they have ignored His Presence in His day. Such is His decree unto those that have denied Him, and such will it be unto them that have rejected His signs.³⁰ Bahá'u'lláh

We cannot set the rules. God does. He has a well-established covenant that He treats us the way we treat Him:

...with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.
Christ (Matthew 7:2 NIV)

Do you wish to be ignored by God? All you need to avoid this unpleasant consequence is to take a little time for your soul, the real you, the one who for all eternity will outlast your physical form, the shell in which you live for a few years. All you need to do is take a little time away from serving “**the shell**” and devote it to yourself, the everlasting “**pearl**.” This is the wisest investment you can ever make in yourself and your future. It will bring you everlasting honors:

To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.
Christ (Revelation 3:21 NIV)

Great is the blessedness of him who hath in this Day cast away the things current amongst men and hath clung unto that which is ordained by God...Who is come from the heaven of eternity...invested with so invincible an authority that all the powers of the earth are unable to withstand Him.³¹ Bahá'u'lláh

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.
I Peter 5:4 NIV

In an Epistle sent to a powerful religious leader Bahá'u'lláh wrote:

Woe, then, unto thee, O careless one that doubtest! If thou deniest Me, by what proof canst thou vindicate the truth of that which thou dost possess? Produce it, then, O thou who hast

joined partners with God, and turned aside from His sovereignty that hath encompassed the worlds!

Know thou that he is truly learned who hath acknowledged My Revelation...and soared in the atmosphere of My love, and cast away all else besides Me...³²

Failure to *investigate*, failure to *test* Bahá'u'lláh's claim will prevent you from receiving unimaginable blessings from God. The losses for ignoring this most glorious outpouring of God's grace are enormous:

He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. *John 3:36 NKJ*

*No man can obtain everlasting life, unless he embraceth the truth of this inestimable, this wondrous, and sublime Revelation.*³³ *Bahá'u'lláh*

*How regrettable indeed that man should debar himself from the fruits of the tree of wisdom while his days and hours pass swiftly away. Please God, the hand of divine power may safeguard all mankind and direct their steps towards the horizon of true understanding.*³⁴ *Bahá'u'lláh*

Appendix

A Rehearsal for Your Day of Reckoning

Bring thyself to account each day
ere thou art summoned to a
reckoning; for death, unheralded,
shall come upon thee and thou
shalt be called to give account for
thy deeds.⁵⁵ Bahá'u'lláh

Practice your future encounter with God. Suppose it is your day of reckoning, and you are asked for what reason you ignored or denied Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God. What answer would you give? Rehearse your response by writing it here. Do not take this request lightly, your eternity depends on it:

I would be delighted to make a collection of these responses. If possible, please send me a copy. You do not need to mention your name.

Here are some answers; check the ones that may apply to you:

- Didn't have enough time to investigate the news of the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Depended on my pastor, priest, rabbi, Bible scholars, best selling authors, who told me not to believe in Bahá'u'lláh.
- Did not wish to alienate my loved ones.
- Did not have enough trust in myself, and was afraid of being deceived.
- Did not have enough trust in God.
- Believed that my personal interpretation of prophecies was accurate.
- Bahá'u'lláh did not agree with my theological or doctrinal beliefs.
- Hundreds of Millions of Christians, who ignore or reject Bahá'u'lláh, cannot be wrong.
- My life is full of miracles. If Bahá'u'lláh were the One we are expecting, God would have shown me.
- The Holy Spirit told me to stay in my church.
- Loved my church so much, I did not want to leave it.
- Felt more secure to be a part of the majority.
- Did not have true faith in the Bible. I was a Christian because I liked the people in my church.

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Chapter 5

30. *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, pp. 256-257.
31. *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 48.
32. *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 82-83.
33. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 183.
34. *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 174.

Appendix

35. *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, (Arabic), no. 31.