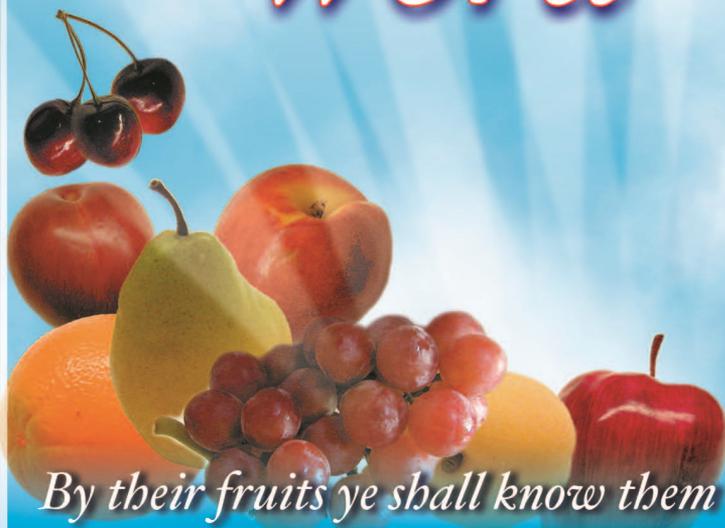


*Knowing
God
by His
Word*



By their fruits ye shall know them

Knowing God by His Word

**By My Word
Ye Shall Know Me**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was
with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1*

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Knowing God by His Word

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Can We Know God by His Word?

“We are what we think.” Does this also hold true with God? Let us rephrase this well-known biblical verse:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God. John 1:1



In the beginning was the Thoughts, the Thoughts were with
God, and the Thoughts were God.

The critical question is this: Can we tell the difference between God’s thoughts and our thoughts? Can we also tell the difference between *the way* God expresses His thoughts and the *way* we do? Surely there must be distinct differences. *Chapter 1* describes these differences. It demonstrates that God’s thoughts and the way He speaks are so distinct that they can be readily recognized by any thoughtful person—anyone who uses his mind—his ability to think, to reason, and to understand—to recognize his Creator. Is not God infinitely superior to us? If this is true, should we not then be able to know Him just by His Word?

This book offers many quotations to demonstrate the distinctions of divine Word, to show how God has spoken throughout the ages and once again in this age.

Can we draw closer to our Creator than by coming in touch with His Mind—blending His thoughts with ours? What an honor to come so close to our Creator! What a blessing to be immersed in “the ocean of His Words”!

Chapter 2 presents you with a unique challenge. It offers 75 quotations from the Bible and the Bahá'í Scriptures and asks you to tell the source of each quote—whether it comes from the Bible or from the Bahá'í Writings.

Chapter 3 proves that contrary to what many people believe, miracles should never be used as an evidence of the divine origin of a religion. It shows that no miracle—however astonishing—can compare with the convincing powers of God's Word. Nothing can reach, touch, and transform the human heart as His thoughts do.

Chapters 4 and 5 offer many selections from the Bible and the Bahá'í Scriptures to demonstrate the distinction of the divine Word. *Chapter 6* presents some examples of Bahá'í prayers.

This book does not introduce the Bahá'í Faith. It is prepared for those who are already familiar with this Faith, but wish to receive more evidence concerning its divine origin. For those who have no knowledge of the Bahá'í Faith, a brief introduction is provided in the appendix. References for further reading are offered for those who wish to receive more evidence concerning the latest Revelation from God—the Bahá'í Faith.

Part I



How Does God Speak?

*Knowing God By
His Word*

I

The Distinction of the Word of God

The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

Christ (John 14:10 NJK)

The following pronouncement by Christ is perhaps the most clear and definitive guidance on how to tell truth from falsehood, how to know the difference between the divine and the deceptive, yet it is widely ignored:

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.

Christ (Matt. 18-20)

What are the fruits of God's Messengers and Redeemers? Their positive influence on human life, accomplished through their Word. By raising the level of morality and spirituality, they raise a new civilization.

The Word of God is glorious, supreme, and exalted beyond human understanding. Like a mirror, it manifests the Spirit and the Splendor of God. Seeing the Word of God is like seeing God Himself.

The Word of God is the king of words and its pervasive influence is incalculable. It hath ever dominated and will

continue to dominate the realm of being. The Great Being saith: The Word is the master key for the whole world, inasmuch as through its potency the doors of the hearts of men, which in reality are the doors of heaven, are unlocked...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.

Verily our Lord of Mercy is the Helper, the Knowing, the Wise.¹ Bahá'u'lláh

Every **word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God is endowed with such potency as can instill new life into every human frame...² Bahá'u'lláh

The **words** I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Christ (John 6:63 NIV)

The Heavenly Word is endowed with creative powers far beyond our conception. It is so awesome that in one instant, it created the universe. “The Word” is the Spirit of God that appears in all great Messengers and Redeemers.

In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was with God, and the **Word** was God. John 1:1

Analogies always shed light on abstract meanings. By replacing “Word” with “Light,” the inner meaning of the preceding passage glows with clarity: “In the beginning was the Light, and the Light was with God, and the Light was God.”

If we obey God’s guidance that we should test a tree by its fruits, we cannot get lost or confused. For the heart can see the uniqueness and authority of God’s Word, just as the eye can see the uniqueness of the sun and can distinguish it from the moon. Every soul is endowed with this capacity. Every human being can discern the distinction of the divine:

The Word which is uttered by God shineth and flasheth as the sun amidst the books of men. Happy the man that hath discovered it, and recognized it...³ Bahá'u'lláh

So all...marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. Luke 4:22 NKJ

No man ever spoke like this Man! John 7:46 NKJ

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me... Christ (John 10:27)

Search the vast literature of the entire human race, and try to find only one author who has spoken like God's great Messengers and Redeemers. Find one person who has borne as luscious and as magnificent fruits as they have. Then the meaning of Christ's admonition and command that we should know a tree by its fruit becomes as clear to you as the sunrise. To help you see the distinction of the divine Word, many comparable examples are offered in this book from the Hebrew Prophets as well as the Words of Christ, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh.

If you read only one of Bahá'u'lláh's many books and ponder on *what* He said and *how* He said it, you will instantly recognize Him. Every one of His 15,000 Epistles testifies to His divine distinction and authority. The same holds true with the Báb. So far only a small portion of His Works has been translated into English, but every page of His Works testifies to His supreme station and mission.

“Indeed these manifest verses are conclusive testimony for those who seek true guidance.”⁴ “Concerning the sufficiency of the Book as a proof, God hath revealed: ‘Is it not enough for them that We have sent down unto Thee the Book to be recited to them?’”⁵ The Báb

Indeed, were all the inhabitants of heaven and earth and whatever existeth between them to assemble together, they

would utterly fail and be powerless to produce such a book, even though We made them masters of eloquence and learning on earth.⁶

The Báb

Coming on the Clouds

The only thing that can prevent us from discerning the distinctions of the Word of God is the immense and drifting clouds of traditions and theological theories. As soon as we start saying, “I think Christ must come this way or that way, He must do this or that, He must say this or that, my pastor said this or that, a famous theologian believes this, a noted evangelist thinks that”—as soon as we engage in such thinking, we leave the solid ground of God’s beautiful vineyard of luscious fruits and begin to float into the obscuring clouds of traditions and theology. As soon as we leave the vineyard and become air borne, we lose the purity of our vision and get lost in the massive mists of human imagination; of age-old assumptions and illusions that are passed from generation to generation.

This is why Christ said that “He cometh *with* the clouds” (Rev. 1:17), “*on* the clouds of heaven” (Matt. 24:30), and “robed *in* a cloud” (Rev. 10:1). Did He have a special purpose in using the word “cloud”? Bahá’u’lláh teaches that He did. The “cloud” on which God’s Messengers and Redeemers ride symbolizes not only age-old traditions and unfounded assumptions, but also the physical frame of God’s great Teachers and Messengers. For ***their bodies obscure the light of their Spirit and make them look like everyone else***. Their physical forms do not allow the short-sighted to see their celestial splendor, to behold the beauty of their Spirit, which always descends from heaven with unmatched power and glory.

From the beginning of their lives till the end thereof, in conformity with the laws established in the previous religion, they [the believers] worship God, piously adore Him...At the

hour of His manifestation [in a human being], however, they all turn their gaze toward their own selves and are thus shut out from Him, inasmuch as *they fancifully regard Him as one like unto themselves*. Far from the glory of God is such a comparison.⁷

The Báb

A Tree is Known by Its Fruits

Christ's admonition that we must know a tree by its fruits is the most clear and critical instruction for finding the truth, yet seldom do theologians quote it. Perhaps the main reason for avoidance is this: the instructions leave no room for theology, no opportunity for personal interpretation and speculation.

The idea that a tree can best be known by its fruits conveys this message: God has given to every human being the capacity to recognize His Word. Therefore, no one needs a mediator—a theologian, a pastor, a priest, or a scholar—to tell him how to recognize the Word of God. The instructions make the prevailing theological arguments—regarding how Christ must come—totally obsolete.

Thus on the Day of Resurrection God will ask everyone of his [own] understanding and not of his following in the footsteps of others. How often a person, having inclined his ears to the holy verses, would bow down in humility and would embrace the Truth, while his [religious] leader would not do so. Thus every individual must bear his own responsibility, rather than someone else bearing it for him...How often the most insignificant of men have acknowledged the truth, while the most learned have remained wrapt in veils. Thus in every Dispensation a number of souls enter the fire by reason of their following in the footsteps of others.⁸

The Báb

According to the clear directive given by Christ—that a tree is known by its fruit—anyone who reads the Gospel with a pure and humble heart will know that Christ speaks only the Word of God. The truth seeker does not need to go to his rabbi nor does he need a degree in theology. Based on this same principle, anyone who reads the writings of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh with a pure and humble heart will know that they too spoke only the Word of God.

Consider the following statement by Christ:

My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. ***If a man chooses to do God's will***, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.

Christ (John 7:16-17)

Does Christ declare, “To know the truth, you must be a well-versed theologian”? Does He say, “To recognize Me, you must know Greek and Hebrew”? No, the only requirement He mentions is ***doing God's Will***. Of course, it is God's Will that we should use ***His*** standards, such as fruits, not ***our*** standards, such as our personal, private interpretation of His Word, which we are asked not to use as the standard of truth. It is also His Will that we should never seek miracles as evidence of His presence in His Messengers.

The best way to know, and even to see God, is to look at His Word. Socrates said, “Speak that I may see thee.” God's Word is an image of His thoughts:

The Lord...revealed himself...through ***his word***. I Samuel 3:21

Can any human being compete with God? Can anyone speak like Him? Without any question, we can recognize “the signs of God” manifested in His Word as clearly as the sun.

He hath endowed every soul with the capacity to recognize the signs of God. How could He, otherwise, have fulfilled His testimony unto men, if ye be of them that ponder His Cause in their hearts. He will never deal unjustly with any

one, neither will He task a soul beyond its power. He, verily,
is the Compassionate, the All-Merciful.⁹ Bahá'u'lláh

In this age we have the Word of two divine Figures. Each of them by Himself carries the heavenly torch. When we walk in their vast beautiful vineyards, we witness hundreds of thousands of verses, each verse hanging like a luscious fruit upon the tree of divine guidance. By walking through two vineyards and tasting their fruits, we become even more certain of the significance of the Word of God as the surest evidence of His presence in humble human beings such as Christ, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh.

God has given the gift of “tasting a fruit” to every human being. If you want to test an apple, you do not go to a gifted apple eater! The same holds true with testing and tasting the Word of God. Without any question you have the capacity to know if Christ, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh spoke the Word of God, simply by reading and meditating on their Scriptures. Study the selections that are presented later in this book to see if you can find anyone in the entire history of human race who has spoken like them. In fact, as a research project, go to the largest library you can find, read as many books as you can in search of any writing in the vast literature of humankind that would resemble the selections that follow. Before reviewing those selections, it is helpful to look at some of their distinguishing features.

Distinguishing Features of God's Word

As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will

not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire...

Isaiah 55:9-11 NIV

The one who comes from above is above all; the one who is from the earth belongs to the earth, and speaks as one from the earth.

Christ (John 3:31 NIV)

We often speak of “the Word of God.” What is the difference between the way He speaks and the way we speak? If you saw the Word of God next to the words of one of your favorite authors, could you tell the difference? Resolving this question is critical because our Creator teaches us that by His Word alone we can know Him. We need no other evidence.

What would be the best way to know someone? To talk with him, and then look at his life. Simply by talking with him, we can learn a great deal about him. The same holds true with knowing God. His Word manifests His thoughts. They give us a glimpse of His glory and greatness. No portrait, no image could reveal God to us as clearly and intimately as does His Word. If this is true, should we not then study His way of speaking and manifesting Himself to us? Part II offers over 200 selections from biblical and Bahá’í Scriptures spoken to humankind in different languages and cultures over the course of 3,500 years.

What are some of the unique features of God’s Word?

- Perhaps the most distinguishing feature of His Word is the authority with which He speaks. As we examine His Thoughts, we feel humbled before His supreme authority. We see His Word shining as brightly as the sun among the stars.
- Another feature of God’s Word is His abundant use of metaphors in a unique way. It is the interpretation of metaphors that has divided the believers and has often prevented them from welcoming God’s new Messengers and Redeemers.

- A third feature of God’s Word is its content. The examples that follow clearly show that what matters to God is quite different from what matters to us.

If you saw God, would you know Him? No! No one can see God, but He allows us to recognize Him through His Word. That is the only way we can “see” our Creator, the only way we can know Him, love Him, and draw near to Him. What a great honor to spend every moment of our lives in the presence of the One who created us.

Many people doubt the existence of God. Their doubt is not due to lack of evidence, but due to lack of spiritual preparation. The same holds true with knowing or recognizing God’s Word as expressed in various Scriptures. If the believers truly know the Scriptures of their own faith, then they will also be able to know the Scriptures of other faiths because all authentic Scriptures have the one Author. If some believers fail to recognize the sacred Writings of another religion, it indicates that they do not truly know the sacred Writings of their own religion either. To test this idea, select a few verses offered in this book from various Scriptures, read them to your friends, and then ask them to identify their source. You will discover that they will be unable to tell any difference between the verses, unless they have heard them before, or they contain certain clues like “Father” in place of “God.”

Watch...! Pray Always.

Christ (Luke 21:36)

Please read all the passages presented in the following chapter carefully, thoughtfully, and prayerfully. Do not rush! It is preferable to go back and read them a second time to get a clear picture of the way God speaks. If you read these quotations prayerfully and humbly before God, He will undoubtedly reveal the truth to you.

In the following statement, the Báb encourages the truth seekers *to meditate* on the verses. Meditation is a state of total submission and receptivity before God; it is thinking with one's soul and heart; it is putting one's trust in God, it is rising above the clouds:

Indeed, if any living creature were to pause to meditate he would undoubtedly realize that these verses are not the work of man, but are solely to be ascribed unto God, the One, the Peerless, Who causeth them to flow forth from the tongue of whomsoever He willeth...¹⁰ The Báb

A deep desire to know the truth must be present in your heart. God hides Himself from anyone who does not seek Him with all his heart and soul:

You will find him, if indeed you search with all your heart and soul. Deut. 4:29

Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time. Heb. 9:28

Purge your sight, that ye may perceive its glory with your own eyes, and depend not on the sight of any one except your self, for God hath never burdened any soul beyond its power.¹¹ Bahá'u'lláh

Judge ye fairly the Cause of God, your Creator, and behold that which hath been sent down from the Throne on high, and meditate thereon with innocent and sanctified hearts. Then will the truth of this Cause appear unto you as manifest as the sun in its noon-tide glory.¹² Bahá'u'lláh

O people, if ye deny these verses, by what proof have ye believed in God?¹³ Bahá'u'lláh

Part II



Has Anyone Spoken Like This?

*No one ever spoke the way this man [Jesus]
does.*

John 7:46

2

Never Spake Man Thus

John 7:46

Section I

*The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our
God stands forever.* *Isaiah 40:8*

This part contains 75 quotations from Hebrew, Christian, and Bahá'í Scriptures. Since God often speaks in “metaphoric language,” some of them may be difficult to understand. Because of their profound and symbolic meanings, it is best to read them over the course of several days while meditating on their meanings.

Test yourself by identifying the source of each quotation:

H: *Hebrew Scriptures* BA: *Bábí Scriptures*
C: *Christian Scriptures* BH: *Bahá'í Scriptures*

For references, see page ????

1

Have you ever heard about a prisoner who spoke with such authority to a powerful king who had put Him in prison?

I am the Countenance of God Whose splendor can never be obscured, the Light of God Whose radiance can never fade. Whoso recognizeth Me, assurance and all good are in store for him, and whoso faileth to recognize Me, infernal fire and all evil await him.¹

H C BA BH

2

Have you ever heard anyone speak with such power and authority? Have you known anyone so fearless, so willing to sacrifice himself for God?

O Jews! If ye be intent on crucifying once again Jesus, the Spirit of God, put Me to death, for He hath once more, in My person, been made manifest unto you. Deal with Me as ye wish, for I have vowed to lay down My life in the path of God. I will fear no one, though the powers of earth and heaven be leagued against Me...I have come in the shadows of the clouds of glory, and am invested by God with invincible sovereignty.²

H C BA BH

3

Have you heard anyone claim “the knowledge of all that hath been”?

I was but a man like others, asleep upon My couch, when lo, the breezes of the All-Glorious were wafted over Me, and taught Me the knowledge of all that hath been.³

H C BA BH

4

Has anyone claimed to know the secrets of your heart?

O FRIENDS!

Verily I say, whatsoever ye have concealed within your hearts is to Us open and manifest as the day; but that it is hidden is of Our grace and favor, and not of your deserving.⁴

H C BA BH

5

O HEEDLESS ONES!

Think not the secrets of hearts are hidden, nay, know ye of a certainty that in clear characters they are engraved and are openly manifest in the holy Presence.⁵

H C BA BH

6

Have you known anyone who claimed to own the universe?

All that belongs to the Father is mine.⁶

H C BA BH

7

Have you known anyone who made the world to tremble?

He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed.⁷

H C BA BH

8

Wash from your hearts all earthly defilements, and hasten to enter the Kingdom of your Lord, the Creator of earth and heaven, Who caused the world to tremble and all its peoples to wail...⁸

H C BA BH

9

Have you heard a descendant claim to have lived before an ancestor?

You are not fifty years old...and you have seen Abraham! “I tell you the truth,” he answered, “before Abraham was born, I am.”⁹

H C BA BH

10

Have you ever heard anyone claim to have talked with Moses from the midst of the Burning Bush?

Indeed We conversed with Moses by the leave of God from the midst of the Burning Bush in the Sinai and revealed an infinitesimal glimmer of Thy Light upon the Mystic Mount and its dwellers, whereupon the Mount shook to its foundations and was crushed into dust.¹⁰

H C BA BH

11

Have you ever heard anyone say that he is both the root and offspring of someone?

I...am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.¹¹

H C BA BH

12

Have you known anyone who claims to have known God from all eternity?

From all eternity I have indeed recognized Thee [God] and unto all eternity will ever do so through Thine Own Self and not through any one else besides Thee.¹²

H C BA BH

13

Have you ever heard anyone offer such grave warnings?

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.¹³

H C BA BH

14

Have you ever heard Mount Sinai speak?

Mount Sinai is astir with the joy of beholding Our countenance. She hath lifted her enthralling voice in glorification of her Lord, saying: '...Great is the blessedness of Thy people, could they but know Thee and inhale Thy sweet savors; and woe betide them that are fast asleep.'¹⁴

H C BA BH

15

Have you ever heard anyone extend such an invitation and claim such an exalted station?

O peoples of the earth! Give ear unto God's holy Voice...Whom the Almighty hath graciously chosen for His Own Self. He is indeed none other than the True One, Whom God hath entrusted with this Mission from the midst of the Burning Bush.¹⁵

H C BA BH

16

Has anyone ever warned you not to sleep, and blessed you for staying awake?

This is the day when I come like a thief! Happy the man who stays awake...¹⁶

H C BA BH

17

Has anyone promised to enthrone you?

At the renewal of all things, when he sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones...¹⁷

H C BA BH

18

Have you ever heard anyone call himself “the Word of God”?

Verily I am none other but the servant of God and His Word, and none but the first one to bow down in supplication before God, the Most Exalted; and indeed God witnesseth all things.¹⁸

H C BA BH

19

Has anyone promised to go and prepare a place for you in his father’s mansion?

In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.¹⁹

H C BA BH

20

Has anyone claimed to have come to fulfill a promise given long time ago to take people to God’s mansions in heaven? Have you heard anyone say that he has opened the gates of paradise?

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...²⁰

H C BA BH

21

Verily, on the First Day We flung open the gates of Paradise unto all the peoples of the world, and exclaimed: ‘O all ye created things! Strive to gain admittance into Paradise, since ye have, during all your lives, held fast unto virtuous deeds in order to attain unto it.’ Surely all men yearn to enter therein, but alas, they are unable to do so by reason of that which their hands have wrought.²¹

H C BA BH

22

Have you ever heard anyone say that if you recognize him, you have recognized God?

The recognition of Him Who is the Bearer of divine Truth is none other than the recognition of God, and loving Him is none other than loving God.²²

H C BA BH

23

Have you heard anyone speak for God like this?

Verily I am God, no God is there but Me, and aught except Me is but My creation. Say, worship Me then, O ye, My creatures.²³

H C BA BH

24

Have you ever heard anyone speak with such authority?

This is the plan prepared for the whole earth, this is the hand stretched out over all the nations. For the Lord of Hosts has prepared his plan: who shall frustrate it? He is the hand stretched out, and who shall turn it back?²⁴

H C BA BH

25

Have you ever heard anyone advance such a claim and speak with such authority?

This is the Voice of God, if ye do but hearken. This is the Day Spring of the Revelation of God, did ye but know it. This is the Dawning-Place of the Cause of God, were ye to recognize it. This is the Source of the commandment of God, did ye but judge it fairly. This is the manifest and hidden Secret; would that ye might perceive it. O peoples of the world! Cast away, in My name that transcendeth all other names, the things ye possess, and immerse yourselves in this Ocean in whose depths lay hidden the pearls of wisdom and of utterance, an ocean that surgeth in My name, the All-Merciful.²⁵

H C BA BH

26

Have you known anyone who is so intimately linked to God?

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God...²⁶

H C BA BH

27

Have you heard anyone claim that God has created everything for his sake?

I have fashioned all created things for Thy sake, and I have, by virtue of My Will, set Thee sovereign Ruler over all mankind.²⁷

H C BA BH

28

Have you ever heard anyone claim to hold in his grasp the kingdom of earth and haven?

By the righteousness of the One true God, He is none other than the sovereign Truth Who hath been made manifest through the power of Truth. Are ye in doubt concerning the Báb? Verily He is the One Who holdeth, by Our [God's] leave, the kingdoms of earth and heaven in His grasp...²⁸

H C BA BH

29

Have you ever heard a prisoner say to a powerful king?

We are truly the supreme Ruler.²⁹

H C BA BH

30

Have you heard anyone claim that everything he says or does is by God's command?

The Lord God of your fathers...hath sent me...³⁰

H C BA BH

31

I do nothing on my own authority, but in all that I say, I have been taught by my Father.³¹

H C BA BH

32

He speaketh not as prompted by His own self, but as bidden by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.³²

H C BA BH

33

Had it been in my power, I would have, under no circumstances, consented to distinguish myself amongst men...³³

H C BA BH

34

By My life! But for the obligation to acknowledge the Cause of Him Who is the Testimony of God...I would not have announced this [message] unto thee.³⁴

H C BA BH

35

God is the source of my being, and from him I come.³⁵

H C BA BH

36

Not of Mine own volition have I revealed Myself, but God, of His own choosing, hath manifested Me.³⁶

H C BA BH

37

O concourse of light! By the righteousness of God, We speak not according to selfish desire, nor hath a single letter of this Book been revealed save by the leave of God, the Sovereign Truth.³⁷

H C BA BH

38

From Him [God] proceed their [Messengers'] knowledge and power; from Him is derived their sovereignty. The beauty of their countenance is but a reflection of His image, and their revelation a sign of His deathless glory.³⁸

H C BA BH

39

Have you ever heard anyone call himself “the Most Exalted”?

I am the Most Exalted One Who hath been veiled...³⁹

H C BA BH

40

Have you ever heard anyone say that someday God will reign?

Our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!⁴⁰

H C BA BH

41

Have you known a prisoner who has sent such a message to the kings of the earth?

O kings of the earth! He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is come. The Kingdom is God's, the omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting... Wash from your hearts all earthly defilements, and hasten to enter the Kingdom of your Lord, the Creator of earth and heaven...⁴¹

H C BA BH

42

Have you heard anyone make such a prediction?

On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords.⁴²

H C BA BH

43

Have you known anyone who has told the kings that they are servants, and that he has created them through a word?

Ye are but vassals, O kings of the earth! He Who is the King of Kings hath appeared, arrayed in His most wondrous glory... Arise, and serve Him Who is the Desire of all nations, Who hath created you through a word from Him, and ordained you to be, for all time, the emblems of His sovereignty.⁴³

H C BA BH

44

Have you known anyone who claims to have the promise of victory over all humankind?

O Thou the Supreme Word of God! Fear not, nor be Thou grieved... Ere long God will bestow upon Thee rulership over all men, inasmuch as His rule transcendeth the whole of creation.⁴⁴

H C BA BH

45

Verily, We shall render Thee victorious by Thyself and by Thy Pen... Erelong will God raise up the treasures of the earth—men who will aid Thee through Thyself and through Thy Name...⁴⁵

H C BA BH

46

Have you known anyone who claims that God has given him the authority to forgive sins?

The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.⁴⁶

H C BA BH

47

O Thou the Supreme Word of God!...unto such as have responded to Thy Call... We have assured forgiveness of sins...⁴⁷

H C BA BH

48

Have you known anyone who has claimed to know the deeds of every human being on this planet?

O YE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD!

Think not that which ye have committed hath been effaced in My sight. By My beauty! All your doings hath My pen graven with open characters upon tablets of chrysolite.⁴⁸

H C BA BH

49

Have you known anyone who claims to have at his commands the keys of death and Hades, of heaven and hell?

I hold the keys of death and Hades [the realm of the dead].⁴⁹

H C BA BH

50

All the keys of heaven God hath chosen to place on My right hand, and all the keys of hell on My left...⁵⁰

H C BA BH

51

Have you heard anyone declare that he will separate the people of the world and put them on his right and his left?

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goat. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.⁵¹

H C BA BH

52

Have you heard anyone call himself “the Lord of all worlds”?

Beseech ye the one true God to grant that ye may taste the savor of such deeds as are performed in His path, and partake of the sweetness of such humility and submissiveness as are shown for His sake. Forget your own selves, and turn your eyes towards your neighbor. Bend your energies to whatever may foster the education of men. Nothing is, or can ever be, hidden from God. If ye follow in His way, His incalculable and imperishable blessings will be showered upon you. This is the luminous Tablet, whose verses have streamed from the moving Pen of Him Who is the Lord of all worlds. Ponder it in your hearts, and be ye of them that observe its precepts.⁵²

H C BA BH

53

Has anyone told you that paradise is on your right hand and invited you to enter? Has anyone also asked you to extinguish the flame of your soul’s burning desire for its Creator by humbling yourself and entering the paradise of His presence?

Paradise is on your right hand, and hath been brought nigh unto you, while Hell hath been made to blaze...Haste ye to enter into Paradise, as a token of Our mercy unto you, and drink ye from the hands of the All-Merciful the Wine that is life indeed.⁵³

H C BA BH

54

If ye follow the Cause of God, We will forgive you your sins, and if ye turn aside from Our command, We will, in truth, condemn your souls in Our Book, unto the Most Great Fire. We, verily, do not deal unjustly with men, even to the extent of a speck on a date-stone.⁵⁴

H C BA BH

55

Has anyone promised to give you as inheritance a glorious kingdom that was prepared for you since the beginning of time?

Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world."⁵⁵

H C BA BH

56

Have you heard anyone predict that "the heavens shall be rolled up"?

All the host of heaven shall crumble into nothing, the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll...⁵⁶

H C BA BH

57

Have you heard anyone predict that every valley shall be lifted up and every mountain brought down?

Great is indeed your blessedness inasmuch as His unfailing grace hath been vouchsafed unto you and ye have been aided to recognize this Cause—a Cause through whose potency the heavens have been folded together and every lofty and towering mountain hath been scattered in dust.⁵⁷

H C BA BH

58

Every valley shall be lifted up, every mountain and hill brought down; rugged places shall be made smooth and mountain-ranges become a plain. Thus shall the glory of the Lord be revealed, and all mankind together shall see it; for the Lord himself has spoken.⁵⁸

H C BA BH

59

Have you ever heard anyone speak so strongly against self-deception, the favorite hobby of human beings?

Say: The heavens have been folded together, and the earth is held within His grasp, and the corrupt doers have been held by their forelock, and still they understand not. They drink of the tainted water, and know it not. Say: The shout hath been raised, and the people have come forth from their graves, and arising, are gazing around them. Some have made haste to attain the court of the God of Mercy, others have fallen down on their faces in the fire of Hell, while still others are lost in bewilderment. The verses of God have been revealed, and yet they have turned away from them. His proof hath been manifested, and yet they are unaware of it... *They hasten forward to Hell Fire, and mistake it for light.*⁵⁹

H C BA BH

60

Have you ever known anyone who has made such sacrifices for you?

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.⁶⁰

H C BA BH

61

I am well pleased to lay down My life in Thy path and ere long to return to Thy presence.⁶¹

H C BA BH

62

Verily, He hath consented to be sorely abased that ye may attain unto glory...⁶²

H C BA BH

63

Have you known anyone who desires pain and suffering in his love for God?

As My tribulations multiplied, so did My love for God and for His Cause increase, in such wise that all that befell Me from the hosts of the wayward was powerless to deter Me from My purpose. Should they hide Me away in the depths of the earth, yet would they find Me riding aloft on the clouds, and calling out unto God, the Lord of strength and of might. I have offered Myself up in the way of God, and I yearn after tribulations in My love for Him, and for the sake of His good-pleasure. Unto this bear witness the woes which now afflict Me, the like of which no other man hath suffered.⁶³

H C BA BH

64

Have you ever heard anyone make such predictions about the earth and the hosts of heaven?

For look, the Lord is leaving his dwelling-place; down he comes and walks on the heights of the earth. Beneath him mountains dissolve like wax before the fire, valleys are torn open, as when torrents pour down the hill-side...⁶⁴

H C BA BH

65

All the host of heaven shall crumble into nothing, the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll, and the starry host fade away, as the leaf withers from the vine...⁶⁵

H C BA BH

66

Have you known anyone utter such words with such authority?

The heaven of every religion hath been rent, and the earth of human understanding been cleft asunder, and the angels of God are seen descending. Say: This is the Day of mutual deceit; whither do ye flee? The mountains have passed away, and the heavens have been folded together, and the whole earth is held within His grasp, could ye but understand it. Who is it that can protect you? None, by Him Who is the All-Merciful! None, except God, the Almighty, the All-Glorious, the Beneficent.⁶⁶

H C BA BH

67

Has anyone called himself “this mighty Word of God,” “the sovereign truth,” the most exalted One,” and “the Source of all wisdom”?

Verily ye have been especially favored by God through this mighty Word. Then do not withdraw from the sanctuary of His presence, for, by the righteousness of the One true God, He is none other than the sovereign Truth from God; He is the most exalted One and the Source of all wisdom...⁶⁷

H C BA BH

68

Has anyone claimed to be “the way,” “the truth,” or “the spirit of truth”?

I am *the way* and *the truth* and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.⁶⁸

H C BA BH

69

These are *the true* words of God.⁶⁹

H C BA BH

70

This is *the Way* of God for all the inhabitants of earth and heaven and all that lieth betwixt them. No God is there but Me, the Almighty, the Inaccessible, the Most Exalted.⁷⁰

H C BA BH

71

Behold the evidences of Him Who is the Truth as clear as the sun.⁷¹

H C BA BH

72

I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But *when he, the Spirit of truth, comes*, he will guide

you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me...⁷²

H C BA BH

73

Verily, He Who is the Spirit of Truth is come to guide you unto all truth. He speaketh not as prompted by His own self, but as bidden by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.⁷³

H C BA BH

74

...*the Spirit of truth*, whom *the world* cannot receive because it *neither sees Him nor knows Him*...⁷⁴

H C BA BH

75

Do you know anyone who equates paradise and hell with acceptance and rejection of his words?

I affirm that no Paradise is more sublime for My creatures than to stand before My face and to believe in My holy Words, while no fire hath been or will be fiercer for them than to be veiled from the Manifestation of My exalted Self and to disbelieve in My Words.⁷⁵

H C BA BH

Answers

1. BA 2. BH 3. BH 4. BH 5. BH 6. C 7. H 8. BH
9. C 10. BA 11. C 12. BA 13. C 14. BH 15. BA 16. C
17. C 18. BA 19. C 20. BH 21. BA 22. BA 23. Bahá'í
24. H 25. BH 26. C 27. BA 28. BA 29. BA 30. H 31. C

32. BH 33. BH 34. BA 35. C 36. BH 37. BA 38. BH
39. BA 40. C 41. BH 42. C 43. BH 44. BA 45. BH
46. C 47. BA 48. BH 49. C 50. BA 51. C 52. BH
53. BH 54. BA 55. C 56. H 57. BH 58. H 59. BH
60. C 61. BA 62. BH 63. BA 64. H 65. H 66. BH
67. BH 68. C 69. C 70. BA 71. BH 72. C 73. BH
74. C 75. BA

Part III



Should We Know God by Miracles or by His Word?

*Blessed rather are those who hear the word of
God.*

Christ (Luke 11:28 NIV)

3

The Miracle of Words Versus “the Magic Arts”

A False Assumption

Among the darkest and gloomiest clouds of illusions on which every Messenger and Redeemer must ride is the false assumption that He must prove Himself by miraculous means. To be credible, He must break the laws of nature: turn water into wine, gravel into gold, float like a feather, fly like a bird, raise a rotting corpse to life, ride upon the clouds, rapture the righteous, instantly eliminate the evil, and punish the perverse of the planet.

Such acts are engaging, entertaining, and fascinating, but they are the works of magicians, not the Messengers. They are food for the flesh, not for the spirit. They entertain and astonish the eye, but do not satisfy the soul. Twice the *Book of Revelation* categorizes those who “practice magic arts” with evildoers, such as murderers:

He who overcomes will inherit all things, and I will be His God and he will be my son. But the cowardly...the murderers...[and] those who practice *magic arts*...their place will be the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

Rev. 21:7-8

See also Rev. 22:15

What kind of “magic arts” can make a person deserving of such severe punishment? Only the kind that can mislead people, that an impostor uses to prove his power.

Not only those who perform the magic arts are condemned, but also those who ask for them:

A wicked and adulterous [disloyal] generation asks for a miraculous sign. Christ (Matt. 12:39)

See also I Cor. 10:9-11; Mark 8:12; 15:32; Luke 11:29; John 4:48

What more could God say to discourage such an expectation? Is the condemnation not harsh enough? Why then do people continue to ignore it? ***The greatest and most glorious wonders in all the universe are the Words and Thoughts of God.*** Yet most people would rather see physical abnormalities and deviations than the wonders of Words. Anyone who says, “In order to accept the expected Redeemer, I must see Him come down from the sky, raise the dead to life, or bring a city from heaven” is setting miracles as a precondition for acknowledging Him. Without knowing, he has shown disloyalty to God’s covenant that only ***He*** has a right to test His creatures. Setting miraculous conditions is the same as testing God. Consider this conversation:

The tempter: If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread (Matt. 4:3).

Jesus: Scripture says, “Man is not to live on bread alone, but on every word that comes out of the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4)

Jesus did not come to turn stone into bread, but to turn stony hearts into sweet and tender hearts. Jesus implied that the true miracle is the Word of God. That is the most evident sign of His awesome majesty and infinite glory. God is a Spirit and uses only spiritual means to touch and transform spirits. His Word ***is*** His Spirit. It is His ever-speaking Voice, His ever-living and ever-present Wonder.

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but **the word** of our God stands forever. Isaiah 40:8 NIV

Heaven and earth will pass away, but **my words** will never pass away. Christ (Matt. 24:35 NIV)

The Word of God, exalted be His glory, endureth for ever...¹
Bahá'u'lláh

It is **God's Words** that kindles love's fire and set it ablaze.²
'Abdu'l-Bahá

Miracles are so unreliable that they can deceive even the most astute believers, the very elect:

For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible. Christ (Matt. 24:24)

The deceivers are so good at producing physical wonders that they may deceive the masses of people. Producing 'miracles' is well within the powers of human beings. Modern technology can produce the most magical wonders.

In his letters, Paul refers to “counterfeit miracles, signs, and wonders”:

The coming of the lawless one will be...displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders... II Thess. 2:9

Once again his statement undermines what many people desire and depend on: earthly and heavenly wonders.

Physical miracles or “magic arts” may mislead; spiritual miracles—the Words and Thoughts of God—never do. **No deceiver has the vision, the wisdom, and the power to produce what only God can produce.**

As evidence of their faith, many Muslims claim that Muhammad made the stones to speak, and they present testimonials to prove their point. Now what is more credible? The testimonial of ancient people reporting on what the stones

were reputed to have said long ago, or the ever-present Word of God to every seeker of truth, to everyone who has eyes to see and hearts to hear?

Please note that in Revelation 21:7-8, Christ first declares “He who overcomes will inherit all things,” then He lists the evil acts or obstacles that the individual must overcome to receive the rewards, and finally pinpoints the punishment for those who fail to overcome. In His list of evil acts He not only condemns “*the magic arts*” but also *the cowardly* to the “fire” of remoteness from God. Again, what kind of behavior born of fear would justify such a severe punishment? Only the kind that leads to an escape from the truth: the fear of *new* knowledge and a *new* name, the fear of leaving one’s comfort zone to seek and find *new* truths.

Once again this confirms the underlying message in the parable of the talents. Why was one of the three servants punished? For uttering this seemingly innocent and ordinary alibi, “I was afraid” (Matt. 25:25). He was condemned for failing to be adventurous and enterprising. What was he called for being afraid? “Lazy and wicked” (Matt. 25:26). This harsh judgment shows how much God despises the spiritually timid. What were the spiritually adventurous servants promised? They were told “I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness” (Matt. 25:23). The splendid reward shows how much God glorifies courage.

Millions of people worship their illusions—such as traditional expectations of the Return—as the truth. Some of them sacrifice their lives and even their eternal destiny for the idols that fallible people like themselves have created:

Consider the multitude of lives that have been, and are still being, sacrificed in a world deluded by a mere phantom which the vain imaginations of its peoples have conceived.³

Bahá’u’lláh

We are asked again and again to be content with what God has established as the evidence of His presence in His supreme Messengers, and not to create false expectations based on human desires and standards.

Throughout all ages people have glamorized and glorified miracles. They have relied on one formula, on one simple and visible standard as a means of identifying their expected Redeemer. They have assumed that He will distinguish himself by displaying the most astonishing supernatural powers. This simple formula has been accepted and followed by the followers of all religions in all ages, and has always proven to be wrong, to be against God's design of creation, and yet people continue to cling to it. They like to be amused and surprised by physical feats. What history teaches, or evidence proves, makes no difference to them. They avoid facing this bitter reality: that they must *look* for their Master, that they must do their homework, that they must spend time searching, thinking, meditating, praying, and reading. If they hear a statement contrary to their desire, they simply ignore it.

A university professor, who taught religion 101, always asked the same question in his final examination: Describe Saint Paul's travels. The students knew this secret, and they would limit their studies to this one question. But then after several years the instructor changed his question. He asked the students to evaluate and analyze Christ's prophecies about His second coming. A student who had spent his time playing football and baseball knew nothing about prophecies. So at the beginning of his response he wrote, "Who am I to interpret the words of my Lord and Savior?" Then he wrote all about Paul's travels. That is how most people respond to prophecies. They keep believing and repeating what they have heard for ages and eons. They cannot handle new encounters and possibilities.

Accepting God's Standard

Many theologians are proud of being literalist and ultra-literalist. They say we must not insert our thoughts into the word of God, but rather take them literally. But what do they do when a passage contradicts their literal interpretation? They do exactly what they claim should not be done. They find a hidden meaning for the literal. Let us see how they interpret this quote:

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

Hebrews 9:28

The following is an interpretation offered by a famous and influential theologian with several million copies of his books in print:

“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. Reference is not to an elite group of Christians, those who continually look for Christ, as the only one who will be Raptured. The Bible does not teach a “partial Rapture” of the worthy (however that is defined), leaving the unworthy behind.

To the author of the epistle to the Hebrews looking for Christ was the normal attitude for every Christian...So “unto them

that look for him shall he appear” is just another way of saying, “unto all Christians shall he appear.” Isn’t that redundant? No. He’s speaking of the Rapture, and at that time Christ appears only to His bride as He catches her up to heaven.⁴

Can you paraphrase the preceding quotation in your own words? Can you make any sense out of it? On the basis of the preceding interpretation, can you state why the Gospel said: “Unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time”? As the preceding example shows, when some believers, who pride themselves to be literal, discover a passage that contradicts their theories, they distort the literal in such a way that it will not undermine their theories.

God’s ways are often contrary to ours. We admire the powerful. We expect greatness from the famous, the rich, the educated, and the learned. God surprises us by selecting as the Manifestation of His Self someone with none of those qualifications. He favors the son of a carpenter from a small town in Palestine with no religious education, or an ordinary young merchant from Persia, with almost no schooling. Even the Báb Himself finds this strange!

Behold, how strange that a person brought up amongst the people of Persia should be empowered by God to proclaim such irrefutable utterances as to silence every man of learning...⁵

The Báb

We should not impose our preferences and mundane wishes on God. We all love to see dramatic displays of divine power and glory. But God wants us to be patient. He wants us to have faith, to wait and witness them after we have passed away from this realm. We can also witness His wonders in this world, but only with an inner eye.

People have all kinds of expectations regarding how Christ will return. It is hard to find two believers who will agree on

everything. How then can God respond to all these expectations? “A third grade Sunday School teacher was teaching that God was omnipotent—that He was able to do anything. She asked the class, ‘Is there anything that God cannot do?’ One little boy held up his hand. ‘Well,’ replied the boy, ‘He can’t please everybody.’”

The Báb encourages us again and again to use God’s standards of truth rather than our own:

Ponder for a while in thy heart, have pity on thyself and turn not aside thine attention from proofs and evidences. However, seek not proofs and evidences after thine idle fancy; but rather base thy proofs upon what God hath appointed.⁶

The Báb

It is incumbent upon a lowly servant to acquiesce to whatever proof God hath appointed, and not to follow his own idle fancy. If the wishes of the people were to be gratified not a single disbeliever would remain on earth. For once the Apostle of God had fulfilled the wishes of the people they would unhesitatingly have embraced His Faith. May God save thee, shouldst thou seek any evidence according to thy selfish desire; rather it behooveth thee to uphold the unfailing proof which God hath appointed. The object of thy belief in God is but to secure His good-pleasure. How then dost thou seek as a proof of thy faith a thing which hath been and is contrary to His good-pleasure?⁷

The Báb

The Word of God

Who was Christ? This brief verse describes Him:

The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us.

John 1:14

What made Him great? His Spirit or His flesh?

It is the Spirit that gives life—He is the Life-giver; *the flesh conveys no benefit whatever*—there is no profit in it. *The words (truths) that I have been speaking to you are spirit and life.*

John 6:63 AB

As we can see, Christ was the Word of God—the Spirit of God—who took human form to live among humans. He was the heavenly Light who focused His Light on an earthly mirror.

An emphasis on miracles—wonders of flesh—diverts our attention away from both the Messenger (His supreme Spirit) and His Message (His sublime teachings). A Christian author first quotes this passage from the Hebrew Scriptures: “The people of Nineveh believed God” (Jonah 3:5); and then he states that the preceding verse “is one of the most remarkable statements in the story, but it never seems to make the impression the whale does. The swallowing of a little man by a big fish is merely a matter of size. The man has only to be small enough and the fish big enough and the job is done. But for that little prophet to walk into New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, London, or any other city and bring that city to repentance and belief in God is some achievement!”

In the following verse, Paul points out the insignificance of physical feats compared to spiritual wonders:

If I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love,
I am nothing.

I Cor. 13:2

What if a person produced many incredible signs, what if he came from heaven, but he had a flawed character? Should we turn to him?

How Jesus Reasoned With the Jews

Let us now see how Jesus, the Word of God, reasoned with the Jews, how He conversed with them to prove His identity, how

He called Himself “bread” “flesh” and “water” as symbols for the Word—His true essence—that lay hidden behind the mirror of His physical form. This enlightening conversation is recorded in John 6:27-65:

Jesus: Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.

The Jews: What must we do to do the work of God?

Jesus: The work of God is this: to believe in the one whom he has sent.

The Jews: What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’

Jesus: I tell you the truth...the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

The Jews: Sir, from now on give us this bread.

Jesus: I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

The Jews: Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I came down from heaven’?

Jesus: No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him...Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me...he who believes

has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If a man eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

The Jews: How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

Jesus: I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Our forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever.

Disciples: This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?

Jesus: Does this offend you? This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.

What happened after Jesus made the preceding statement? “From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.”

The Jews were seeking something *supernatural* to satisfy their eyes. Jesus wanted to give them something *spiritual* to satisfy their soul. He wanted to draw their attention to Himself and His Word. He told them that He Himself was the real food. If they were hungry enough, they could eat Him! For a literal-minded person, this is too much to bear. Even some of His disciples

who had followed Him for the wrong reason—such as waiting to see physical feats—could not deal with His language and left Him. They too expected their Master to bring them edible foods—honey, milk, bread, and olives—from heaven. Note Jesus’ conclusion in this most enlightening dialogue:

The spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. John 6:63

As we can see, Jesus completely downgraded the significance of physical feats, and presented Himself—namely His Word—as the most convincing and conclusive evidence of truth.

The Word of God or the Spirit of God was Christ’s true identity. That Spirit revealed its glories to the world, but was hidden in an ordinary body. That was the evidence by which He wanted the Jews to accept Him.

For what would **you** like to be accepted and respected? For your soul, or for your savings? For your purity or for your power? For your character or for your complexion? Does not that principle also hold true with God?

What an astonishing similarity there is between the Jews of the time of Jesus and the Christians of our time. We find many today who say that they will believe only if they see Jesus Christ physically descend from heaven. They do not take the time needed to examine the Word of God for this age. They do not consider the Báb’s or Bahá’u’lláh’s Words worthy of attention. As we saw, the Jews were in the same mood: they wanted to see something to physically descend from heaven. Their wishes were of course not fulfilled. The only evidence they were given was the Word. But the Word meant nothing to them. They responded like a person who says, “I am thirsty,” and in place of water, you give him a book. For them a piece of bread meant a lot more than just Words. The analogy that Christ Himself was the bread that had descended from heaven did not appeal to them at all. Bahá’u’lláh’s statement that He too has

come from heaven—His Word and His Spirit—does not appeal to many Christians, either.

God is my witness! The Promised One Himself hath come down from heaven, seated upon the crimson cloud with the hosts of revelation on His right, and the angels of inspiration on His left, and the Decree hath been fulfilled at the behest of God, the Omnipotent, the Almighty.⁸ Bahá'u'lláh

He, verily, hath again come down from Heaven even as He came down from it the first time.⁹ Bahá'u'lláh

In the preceding conversation, Jesus taught still another lesson: gaining and guarding the gift of faith is not so simple. As we choose God, so does He choose us. The Creator does not want the wrong kind of people to enter His heavenly banquet; He does not want the kind who accept Him by the evidence of physical feats, or what Jesus calls “the magic arts.” He wants those believers who accept Him by the evidence of His Word. If people do not like what God offers them, let them leave, as did some of Jesus’ disciples.

The Concept of Mutual Choice

God guides only those souls to His heavenly banquet who stand humble before Him with their hearts and minds open and with their egos folded under their feet.

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws [attracts] him...

Christ (John 6:44)

He is the One Who guideth at His Own behest whomsoever He pleaseth.¹⁰ The Báb

Please do not think even for one instant that you can choose God all on your own. Do not also think that you can choose the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh all on your own. You can choose them in

word, but not in the heart. What human beings want to say is completely under their control. Not so with their heart. The heart is commanded by two forces: the soldiers of the human soul, and the Commander in Chief: the Spirit of God. The spiritual union between God and humans is always mutual. It can take place only when both partners say “Yea!” Unless the heart is pure enough, God does not enter. We can be His friend in word, but not in the heart:

O MY FRIEND IN WORD!

Ponder awhile. Hast thou ever heard that friend and foe should abide in one heart? Cast out then the stranger, that the Friend may enter His home.¹¹

Bahá'u'lláh

O SON OF DUST!

All that is in heaven and earth I have ordained for thee, except the human heart, which I have made the habitation of My beauty and glory; yet thou didst give My home and dwelling to another than Me; and whenever the manifestation of My holiness sought His own abode, a stranger found He there, and, homeless, hastened unto the sanctuary of the Beloved. Notwithstanding I have concealed thy secret and desired not thy shame.¹²

Bahá'u'lláh

O SON OF EARTH!

Wouldst thou have Me, seek none other than Me; and wouldst thou gaze upon My beauty, close thine eyes to the world and all that is therein; for My will and the will of another than Me, even as fire and water, cannot dwell together in one heart.¹³

Bahá'u'lláh

O WEED THAT SPRINGETH OUT OF DUST!

Wherefore have not these soiled hands of thine touched first thine own garment, and why with thine heart defiled with desire and passion dost thou seek to commune with Me and to enter My sacred realm? Far, far are ye from that which ye desire.¹⁴

Bahá'u'lláh

Our relationship with God is based on freedom—freedom to accept His gift of guidance:

The path to guidance is one of love and compassion, not of force and coercion. This hath been God’s method in the past, and shall continue to be in the future! He causeth him whom He pleaseth to enter the shadow of His Mercy. Verily, He is the Supreme Protector, the All-Generous.¹⁵ The Báb

This is how the Báb encouraged His followers to recognize and accept Bahá’u’lláh:

Seek ye refuge in God from whatsoever might lead you astray from the Source of His Revelation and hold fast unto His Cord, for whoso holdeth fast unto His allegiance, he hath attained and will attain salvation in all the worlds.

‘Such is the bounty of God; to whom He will, He giveth it, and God is the Lord of grace abounding.’¹⁶ The Báb

Safeguarding Human Freedom

A dramatic display of God’s infinite powers, such as the coming of Christ from the sky, would have another consequence: It would destroy the spiritual design of creation. One of the most fundamental laws that binds us to our Creator is this: He does not directly reveal His glory to us. He always hides behind the veils of glory, and allows His Messengers and Redeemers to reveal only glimpses of His greatness, on a scale that does not compel us into submission, on a level that does not destroy the gift of freedom and faith: not seeing and still believing.

He is and hath ever been veiled in the ancient eternity of His Essence, and will remain in His Reality everlastingly hidden from the sight of men.¹⁷ Bahá’u’lláh

Does God’s relationship with us suddenly take a new turn?
Does He suddenly take away our freedom of choice by

revealing His infinite power and majesty to our physical eyes? Does “the unchanging nature of his purpose” (Heb. 6:16) suddenly change?

At the beginning of His ministry, the Báb asked His followers to continue practicing the laws of their own faith. Why?

...so that the people might not be seized with perturbation by reason of a new Book and a new Revelation and might regard His Faith as similar to their own, perchance they would not turn away from the Truth and ignore the thing for which they had been called into being.¹⁸ The Báb

This statement demonstrates God’s infinite wisdom and respect for our freedom of choice. He who is All-Powerful knows that His creatures resist change, that they prefer tradition over the truth. He does not want to shock them. He loves them so much that He does everything possible to protect them from denying Him.

God is the first to practice the laws of wisdom. He is our supreme Model. He knows that we become addicted to our customs, traditions, attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and illusions, just as we become addicted to chocolate and coffee. He knows gradual withdrawal diminishes the pain.

Among God’s most supreme blessings is the gift of faith. Faith comes from believing before seeing. The expression of God’s supernatural powers would destroy or diminish the gift of faith.

Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

Christ (John 20:29)

Many believers act like a little girl who was praying, “O God I know you love me, but let me get an A on my test, and let my brother get an E. That way I will be sure.”

It is absolutely essential for God to preserve a balance between the concealment and the revelation of His glory. This balance is

so delicate that if it ever changed, it would undermine the entire design of creation. God's state of concealment and revelation can be compared with the distance of the sun and the earth. Scientists state that if that distance changes, life on earth will become impossible. The supreme Designer has set a perfect distance between the sun and the earth—one that allows the healthiest growth on our planet. The same principle applies to His distance—or the intensity of the revelation of His glory—to us. An essential aspect of knowing God is understanding the principle of concealment and revelation. Here the Báb refers to this principle, the twin ways in which God relates to us:

...the glory of His all-glorious Revelation, and the sublimity of His most sublime Concealment.¹⁹ The Báb

The splendor of His appearance [revelation] far surpasseth that of any other appearance. His divine concealment is far more profound than any other concealment.²⁰ The Báb

Anyone who truly knows God also knows that God would never impose Himself on His creatures by virtue of His supreme powers, by a dramatic display of His glory. Anyone who truly knows God also recognizes the Manifestations of His glory, His great Messengers.

Shouldst thou...gain a true understanding of God in thine heart of hearts...thou wouldst be able to recognize Him [Bahá'u'lláh], visible and resplendent, when He unveileth Himself before the eyes of all men.²¹ The Báb

Avoiding Arguments

A closer study of the way Jesus reasoned with the Jews shows that He never engaged in an argument or debate to win points. On the contrary, sometimes He put obstacles in front of people and asked them to jump. The obstacle He placed in their path again and again was His abundant use of symbolic language.

Imagine how you would feel if someone asked you to drink his blood and eat his flesh! That is the way the literal-minded Jews felt. We can find all the following messages implied in the statements that Jesus uttered to the Jews:

This is the highway to heaven. If you like it, come on board, and if you do not, leave. The gift of faith is not cheap. I am in no mood to argue with you or to impress you with my powers. All I will give you is my Word. If you do not like it, I do not want you in my banquet. How can you expect to be with Me if you do not like the real Me in Me? If you are not attracted to my Word, my Father does not want to attract you either. He will not delight in seeing your soul in the glorious paradise of His presence.

Not only did Jesus reject the literal-minded Jews, but also a few disciples who had followed Him for the wrong reasons. He did not want them in His banquet either. On the surface, they left their Master. But in truth, it was the Master who rejected them by refusing to play their games.

God's Infinite Love for Humans

The glory of God that appeared in Jesus has come once again to bring us the celestial bread that descends from heaven. The following words of Bahá'u'lláh manifest a glimpse of the infinite love of the Creator for His creatures. They show how passionately God loves us and wants us to enter the paradise of His presence:

“We nourish your souls for the sake of God; we seek from you neither recompense nor thanks.” 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, that perchance, through the wondrous favors of the Sun of Truth, the dead may be brought to life, and withered souls be quickened by the infinite Spirit. Make haste, O my brother, that while there is yet time our lips may taste of the immortal draught, for the breeze of life, now blowing from the city of the Well-Beloved, cannot last, and the streaming river of holy utterance must needs be stilled, and the portals of the Ridván [paradise] cannot for ever remain open. The day will surely come when the Nightingale of Paradise will have winged its flight away from its earthly abode unto its heavenly nest. Then will its melody be heard no more, and the beauty of the rose cease to shine. Seize the time, therefore, ere the glory of the divine springtime hath spent itself, and the Bird of Eternity ceased to warble its melody, that thy inner hearing may not be deprived of hearkening unto its call. This is My counsel unto thee and unto the beloved of God. Whosoever wisheth, let him turn thereunto; whosoever wisheth, let him turn away. God, verily, is independent of him and of that which he may see and witness.²²

Bahá'u'lláh

The Two Gravest Obstacles Christians Face

Some acts look deceptively normal and innocent, yet have the gravest consequences. Ignoring God's invitation to His heavenly banquet is one of them. This seemingly simple and normal act leads to the most devastating consequences not only for the individual who ignores the invitation but for all the

human race. If humankind had accepted Bahá'u'lláh's call to the Kingdom, our world would now be quite different. We would not have child abuse, rape, robbery, suicide, family violence, drug abuse, prejudice, war, poverty, pollution, depression, despair, psychosis, neurosis, and countless other evils on the scale that we have them now. They would have been reduced long ago to a fraction of what they are today.

Thus anyone who ignores God's invitation faces not only unpleasant consequences in the life to come for being unjust to himself, but also for being unjust to countless others. He must carry some responsibility for the suffering that other citizens of this planet endure.

To those who engage in evil acts, Jesus assigns the most severe punishment: the burning fire of separation from God (Matt. 13:36-43). In the *Book of Revelation* He then specifies the acts that lead to such a severe punishment. Two of those acts are quite extraordinary:

- ***Being fearful or cowardly, and***
- ***Engaging in “the magic arts.”***

Both of these acts, which at first glance do not look evil, are singled out and included for a special reason: the Master knows that at “the end of the age” these two weaknesses will afflict most of His beloved followers on an epidemic scale. He knows that these two weaknesses will be the main obstacles that will prevent them from recognizing Him. To encourage His followers to overcome them, He promises the best rewards to those who succeed and warns of the worst punishment for those who fail.

Christ's concern with these two weaknesses is indeed prophetic. For they are the very obstacles that have prevented Christians from responding to the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. For the most part, the majority of Christians fear any strange name, such as Bahá'í or Bahá'u'lláh. That fear causes them to engage in avoidance, to

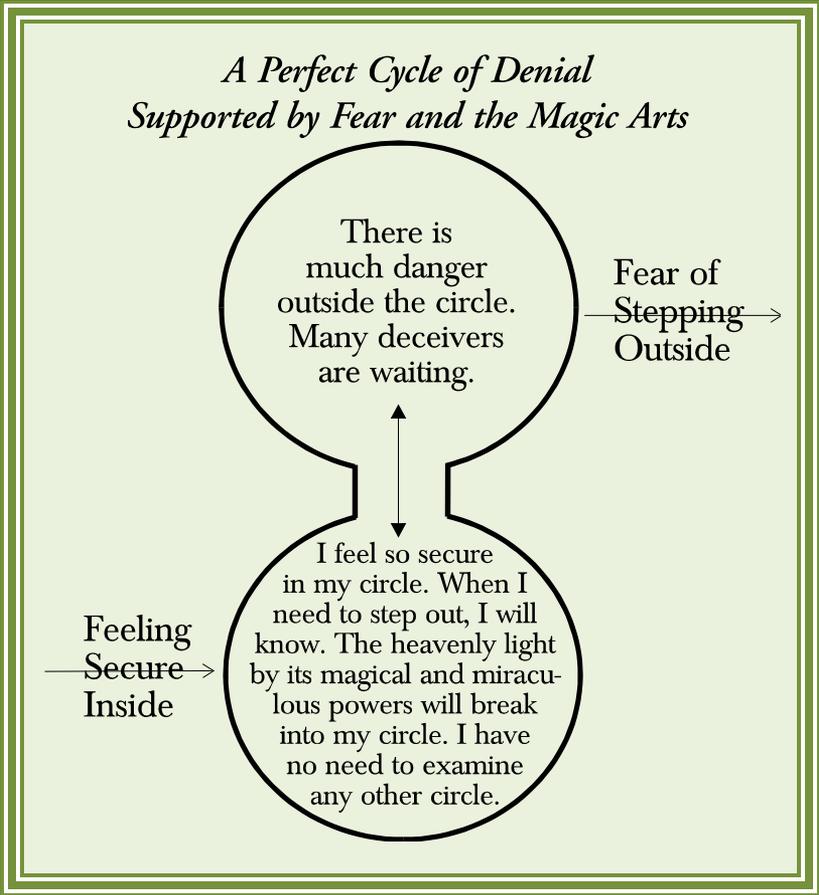
a failure to investigate Bahá'u'lláh's call to the Kingdom. At the same time, while they are avoiding His call, they feel secure in their own surroundings. They have full confidence that they are right.

How can they feel so secure and confident? They can be by putting their trust in “the magic arts.” This is how it works. To begin with, they are absolutely certain that when their Redeemer comes, He will engage in a heavenly display of the most magical and astounding acts—such as soaring through the air without a parachute or plane, and being surrounded by thousands of angels descending with grace and glory. As the poets have depicted and the painters have displayed, this will be the most majestic spectacle human eye has ever seen. The greatest display of fireworks produced by humans will pale into utter darkness compared with this glorious and triumphant return of the Master to this planet. They are so sure of this belief, they dismiss any possibility that they can miss him.

To prevent any doubt from taking root, they offer a special meaning for the Master's other predictions, such as promising to come “like a thief” and asking everyone “to watch.” A believer cannot be exposed to contradictory prophecies. Only one of those must prevail. Which one? What do most people prefer? A humble, gentle, and persecuted man, who looks like them, or a powerful Figure who comes from the sky and offers a quick remedy for everything that has gone wrong. Further, if they believe, as prophecies have foretold, that every eye shall see Him, how then can their eyes miss Him? If they are so sure of their expectations, why then should they look elsewhere? Why should they take the time to examine *any* claim, to read *any* book, to attend *any* meeting.

Thus these two seemingly innocent but most critical and devastating weaknesses—singled out specifically by Jesus in the *Book of Revelation*—have prevented and continue to prevent hundreds of millions of Christians from investigating

the most astonishing evidence that the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh present. It does not matter how many literal prophecies these two Messengers fulfill. It does not matter what they taught, or how they spoke and lived. The majority of Christians simply feel no need to go beyond their secure surroundings. These two weaknesses create a perfect and almost unbreakable cycle of denial.



Prophecies declare that God is angry with the human race.

Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes out of it! The Lord is angry with all nations...

Isaiah 34:1-2

See also Zeph. 2:1-3

Why is God angry? It is now more than 150 years since the Báb revealed the good news of the coming of the Kingdom and asked people to enter. Yet after such a long period of time, that invitation has been ignored on a wide scale. People care more for their trivial desires than for the One our Creator has called the Desire of the World.

The Fire Tablet

Bahá'u'lláh has revealed an Epistle called “the Fire Tablet.” It shows His pain at the widespread suffering endured by humankind and their ignorance and unresponsiveness to His call. It is one of His most moving and powerful works. He mourns bitterly the state of the world and asks God, how long this suffering should continue. At the end of the Epistle, God responds with supreme compassion and asks Bahá'u'lláh to be patient. Then Bahá'u'lláh expresses His loyalty and submission to God. Here are a few selections from that Epistle:

Bahá'u'lláh prays:

In the Name of God, the Most Ancient, the Most Great.

Indeed the hearts of the sincere are consumed in the fire of separation: Where is the gleaming of the light of Thy Countenance, O Beloved of the worlds?

Those who are near unto Thee have been abandoned in the darkness of desolation: Where is the shining of the morn of Thy reunion, O Desire of the worlds?...

Coldness hath gripped all mankind: Where is the warmth of Thy love, O Fire of the worlds?

Calamity hath reached its height: Where are the signs of Thy succor, O Salvation of the worlds?

Darkness hath enveloped most of the peoples: Where is the brightness of Thy splendor, O Radiance of the worlds?...

Abasement hath reached its lowest depth: Where are the emblems of Thy glory, O Glory of the worlds?

Sorrows have afflicted the Revealer of Thy Name, the All-Merciful: Where is the joy of the Dayspring of Thy Revelation, O Delight of the worlds?...

Sore thirst hath overcome all men: Where is the river of Thy bounty, O Mercy of the worlds?

Greed hath made captive all mankind: Where are the embodiments of detachment, O Lord of the worlds?...

The drunkenness of passion hath perverted most of mankind: Where are the daysprings of purity, O Desire of the worlds?...

Thou seest Me forbidden to speak forth: Then from where will spring Thy melodies, O Nightingale of the worlds?

Most of the people are enwrapped in fancy and idle imaginings: Where are the exponents of Thy certitude, O Assurance of the worlds?

Bahá [Bahá'u'lláh] is drowning in a sea of tribulation: Where is the Ark of Thy salvation, O Savior of the worlds?...

*The universe is darkened with the dust of sin: Where are the breezes of Thy forgiveness, O Forgive of the worlds?*²³



God responds:

O Supreme Pen, We have heard Thy most sweet call in the eternal realm: Give Thou ear unto what the Tongue of Grandeur uttereth, O Wronged One of the worlds!

Were it not for the cold, how would the heat of Thy words prevail, O Expounder of the worlds?

Were it not for calamity, how would the sun of Thy patience shine, O Light of the worlds?

Lament not because of the wicked. Thou wert created to bear and endure, O Patience of the worlds.

How sweet was Thy dawning on the horizon of the Covenant among the stirrers of sedition, and Thy yearning after God, O Love of the worlds.

By Thee the banner of independence was planted on the highest peaks, and the sea of bounty surged, O Rapture of the worlds.

By Thine aloneness the Sun of Oneness shone, and by Thy banishment the land of Unity was adorned. Be patient, O Thou Exile of the worlds.

We have made abasement the garment of glory, and affliction the adornment of Thy temple, O Pride of the worlds.

Thou seest the hearts are filled with hate, and to overlook is Thine, O Thou Concealer of the sins of the worlds.

When the swords flash, go forward! When the shafts fly, press onward! O Thou Sacrifice of the worlds.

*Dost Thou wail, or shall I wail? Rather shall I weep at the fewness of Thy champions, O Thou Who hast caused the wailing of the worlds.*²⁴



Bahá'u'lláh responds:

*Verily, I have heard Thy Call, O All-Glorious Beloved; and now is the face of Bahá flaming with the heat of tribulation and with the fire of Thy shining word, and He hath risen up in faithfulness at the place of sacrifice, looking toward Thy pleasure, O Ordainer of the worlds.*²⁵

Part IV



**Has Anyone Spoken
Like This?**

4

Never Spake Man Thus

John 7:46

Section II

1

Have you known anyone who claimed to be the king of the world?

The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.

Christ (Rev. 11:15)

He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is come. The Kingdom is God's, the omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting.¹

Bahá'u'lláh

The Kingdom is Mine. I, Myself, am, of Mine own right, its Ruler.²

Bahá'u'lláh

2

Have you heard anyone claim to have heavenly armies?

The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

Revelation 19:14

3

Have you heard anyone claim to have a fearless army, a company of His chosen ones, who arise and summon people to the path of God?

There lay concealed within the Holy Veil, and prepared for the service of God, a company of His chosen ones who shall be manifested unto men, who shall aid His Cause, who shall be afraid of no one, though the entire human race rise up and war against them. These are the ones who, before the gaze of the dwellers on earth and the denizens of heaven, shall arise and, shouting aloud, acclaim the name of the Almighty, and summon the children of men to the path of God, the All-Glorious, the All-Praised.³

Bahá'u'lláh

4

Have you heard anyone claim that “God hath come down”?

Whether ye rejoice or whether ye burst for fury, the heavens are cleft asunder, and God hath come down, invested with radiant sovereignty. All created things are heard exclaiming: “The Kingdom is God’s, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.”⁴

Bahá'u'lláh

5

Have you ever heard anyone give such a message?

Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come.

Christ (Rev. 14:7)

‘Hath the Hour come?’ ‘Nay, more; it hath passed, by Him Who is the Revealer of clear tokens! Verily, the Inevitable is come, and He, the True One, hath appeared with proof and testimony...and the tribes have lamented, for fear of God, the Lord of Strength, the All-Compelling.’ Say: ‘The stunning trumpet-blast hath been loudly raised, and the Day is God’s, the One, the Unconstrained.’ ‘Hath the Catastrophe

[the great Tribulation] come to pass?’ Say: ‘Yea, by the Lord of Lords!’ ‘Is the Resurrection come?’ ‘Nay, more; He Who is the Self-Subsisting hath appeared with the Kingdom of His signs.’⁵ Bahá’u’lláh

6

Have you ever known anyone tell you that people will see your glory and you will be called by a new name?

The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings *your glory; you will be called by a new name* that the mouth of the Lord will bestow. You will be a crown of splendor in the Lord’s hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Isaiah 62:2-3

7

Have you ever heard anyone make such a promise, claim such a station, and give such a warning?

O peoples of the world! Whatsoever ye have offered up in the way of the One True God, ye shall indeed find preserved by God, the Preserver, intact at God’s Holy Gate. O peoples of the earth! Bear ye allegiance unto this resplendent light wherewith God hath graciously invested Me through the power of infallible Truth...and verily God will not forgive disbelief in Himself, though He will forgive other sins to whomsoever He pleaseth. Indeed His knowledge embraceth all things.⁶

The Báb

8

Have you heard about anyone promised to enthrone you?

I tell you this: in the world that is to be, when the Son of Man is seated on his throne in heavenly splendor, you my followers will have thrones of your own... Christ (Matt. 19:28)

O SON OF SPIRIT!

My first counsel is this: Possess a pure, kindly and radiant heart, that thine may be a sovereignty ancient, imperishable and everlasting.⁷ Bahá'u'lláh

9

Have you ever heard anyone claim to have the power to make everyone believe in him?

Should it be Our wish, it is in Our power to compel, through the agency of but one letter of Our Revelation, the world and all that is therein to recognize, in less than the twinkling of an eye, the truth of Our Cause.⁸ The Báb

10

Have you ever heard anyone promise to make everything new, to call into being a new creation?

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...The old order of things has passed away...***I am making everything new!***
Christ (Rev. 21:1,4-5)

Whither are gone all created things...?...Lo, the entire creation hath passed away! Nothing remaineth except My Face, the Ever-Abiding, the Resplendent, the All-Glorious. This is the Day whereon naught can be seen except the splendors of the Light that shineth from the face of Thy Lord, the Gracious, the Most Bountiful. Verily, We have caused every soul to expire by virtue of Our irresistible and all-subduing sovereignty. We have, then, called into being a new creation, as a token of Our grace unto men. I am, verily, the All-Bountiful, the Ancient of Days.⁹ Bahá'u'lláh

Beseech ye the one true God to grant that all men may be graciously assisted to fulfil that which is acceptable in Our sight. ***Soon will the present-day order be rolled up, and a***

new one spread out in its stead. Verily, thy Lord speaketh the truth, and is the Knower of things unseen.¹⁰ Bahá'u'lláh

11

Have you heard anyone claim to have seen “a pure river of water of life” flowing from a heavenly throne?

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb... Christ (Rev. 22:1)

Say: We have caused the rivers of Divine utterance to proceed out of Our throne, that the tender herbs of wisdom and understanding may spring forth from the soil of your hearts. Will ye not be thankful?¹¹ Bahá'u'lláh

He is the Tree of Life that bringeth forth the fruits of God, the Exalted, the Powerful, the Great.¹² Bahá'u'lláh

12

Have you ever heard anyone predict that a time will come when the “wolf” and the “sheep” live together in peace, when old enemies will become intimate friends?

Round his waist he shall wear the belt of justice, and good faith shall be the girdle round his body. Then the wolf shall live with the sheep, and the leopard lie down with the kid; the calf and the young lion shall grow up together... Isaiah 11:5, 6, 9

We desire but the good of the world and happiness of the nations; yet they deem us a stirrer up of strife and sedition worthy of bondage and banishment... That all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled—what harm is there in

this?...Yet so it shall be; *these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away, and the “Most Great Peace” shall come*...Yet do we see your kings and rulers lavishing their treasures more freely on means for the destruction of the human race than on that which would conduce to the happiness of mankind...These strifes and this bloodshed and discord must cease, and all men be as one kindred and one family...Let not a man glory in this, that he loves his country; let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind.¹³ Bahá'u'lláh

13

Have you heard anyone claim to have created you from “one tree”?

We have created you from one tree and have caused you to be as the leaves and fruit of the same tree, that haply ye may become a source of comfort to one another. Regard ye not others save as ye regard your own selves...It behooveth you all to be one indivisible people...¹⁴ The Báb

14

Have you ever heard a speaker call himself “Alpha and Omega”?

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “Who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”
Christ (Rev. 1:8)

15

Have you ever heard anyone call himself a “mystic Bird” singing in the highest heaven?

Give ear to the melodies of this mystic Bird warbling in the loftiest heights of heaven. The Lord hath, in truth, inspired Me to proclaim: Verily, verily, I am God, He besides Whom there is none other God. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise.¹⁵
The Báb

16

Have you ever heard anyone call himself God's "most mighty Trumpet"?

We have chosen thee [Bahá'u'lláh] to be our most mighty Trumpet, whose blast is to signalize the resurrection of all mankind.¹⁶

Bahá'u'lláh

17

Have you heard anyone call himself "the resurrection"?

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this? Christ (John 11:25)

18

Have you heard anyone predict that the dead will rise?

But thy dead live, their bodies will rise again. Isaiah 26:19

19

Have you ever heard anyone give such a command to the dead to get out of their graves?

Speed out of your sepulchers [graves]. How long will ye sleep? The second blast* hath been blown on the trumpet. On whom are ye gazing? This is your Lord, the God of Mercy.¹⁷

Bahá'u'lláh

20

Has anyone promised to show you his glory?

* The first blast was the Advent of the Báb; the second blast the Advent of Bahá'u'lláh.

I will show my glory [Glory of God] among the nations...***No longer will I hide my face from them***, I who have poured out my spirit upon Israel. Ezekiel 39:21, 29

21

Have you heard anyone regard himself as the one who “had concealed His Face from the sight of creation”?

He that was hidden from the eyes of men is revealed, girded with sovereignty and power!...O ye that inhabit the heavens and the earth! There hath appeared what hath never previously appeared. He Who, from everlasting, had concealed His Face from the sight of creation is now come...He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is made manifest. The Kingdom is God’s...All eyes are gladdened, for He Whom none hath beheld, Whose secret no one hath discovered, hath lifted the veil of glory, and uncovered the countenance of Beauty.

...The hands of bounty have borne round the cup of everlasting life. Approach, and quaff your fill.¹⁸ Bahá’u’lláh

22

Have you ever heard a speaker describe his eyes and his feet like this?

These are the words of the Son of God, whose eyes are like blazing fire and whose feet are like burnished bronze.

Christ (Rev. 2:18)

23

Have you ever heard a human being say why or with what he created you?

O CHILDREN OF MEN!

Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust?

That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all

times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory.¹⁹ Bahá'u'lláh

24

Have you heard anyone say that those who love him are so rich as to possess all things?

The essence of wealth is love for Me; whoso loveth Me is the possessor of all things, and he that loveth Me not is indeed of the poor and needy.²⁰ Bahá'u'lláh

25

Have you met anyone so kind, tolerant, and forgiving?

You have learned that they were told, “Love your neighbor, hate your enemy.” But what I tell you is this: Love your enemies and pray for your persecutors; only so can you be children of your heavenly Father, who makes his sun rise on good and bad alike, and sends the rain on the honest and the dishonest. If you love only those who love you, what reward can you expect? Surely the tax gatherers do as much as that. And if you greet only your brothers, what is there extraordinary about that? Even the heathen do as much. There must be no limit to your goodness, as your heavenly Father’s goodness knows no bounds. Christ (Matt. 5:43-48)

26

Have you ever seen such love from anyone?

He [God] hath cherished and will ever cherish the desire that all men may attain His gardens of Paradise with utmost love, that no one should sadden another, not even for a moment...²¹

The Báb

27

Have you ever read such sweet and tender words crowned with such authority? Have you ever heard anyone say that we should be as humble toward each other as we are toward God?

Beseech ye the one true God to grant that ye may taste the savor of such deeds as are performed in His path, and ***partake of the sweetness of such humility and submissiveness as are shown for His sake***. Forget your own selves, and turn your eyes towards your neighbor. Bend your energies to whatever may foster the education of men. Nothing is, or can ever be, hidden from God. If ye follow in His way, His incalculable and imperishable blessings will be showered upon you. This is the luminous Tablet, whose verses have streamed from the moving Pen of Him Who is the Lord of all worlds. Ponder it in your hearts, and be ye of them that observe its precepts.²²

Bahá'u'lláh

28

Have you known anyone speak so forcefully and frankly against pretension and hypocrisy?

Be careful not to make a show of your religion before men; if you do, no reward awaits you in your Father's house in heaven...No; when you do some act of charity, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing; your good deed must be secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you...

In your prayers do not go babbling on like the heathen, who imagine that the more they say the more likely they are to be

heard. Do not imitate them. Your Father knows what your needs are before you ask him. Christ (Matt. 6:1, 3, 7, 8)

29

Have you ever known anyone speak for God in this way?

God desireth not to see...any soul deprived of joy and radiance. He indeed desireth that under all conditions, all may be adorned with such purity, both inwardly and outwardly, that no repugnance may be caused even to themselves, how much less unto others.²³ The Báb

30

Have you ever known anyone teach people to love one another with such authority?

Look not upon the creatures of God except with the eye of kindness and of mercy, for Our loving providence hath pervaded all created things, and Our grace encompassed the earth and the heavens.²⁴ Bahá'u'lláh

31

Have you heard anyone make such a promise?

For if you forgive others the wrongs they have done, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, then the wrongs you have done will not be forgiven by your Father. Christ (Matt. 6:14-15)

32

Have ever known anyone who has criticized negligent and argumentative people like this?

O BRETHREN IN THE PATH!

Wherefore have ye neglected the mention of the Loved One, and kept remote from His holy presence? The essence of

beauty is within the peerless pavilion, set upon the throne of glory, whilst *ye busy yourselves with idle contentions*. The sweet savors of holiness are breathing and the breath of bounty is wafted, yet ye are all sorely afflicted and deprived thereof. Alas for you and for them that walk in your ways and follow in your footsteps!²⁵ Bahá'u'lláh

33

Have you ever heard anyone criticize apathetic people like this?

I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God. Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent. But if you do not wake up, *I will come like a thief*...I know that you have little strength, yet *you have kept my word and have not denied my name*.

Christ (Rev. 3:1-3,8)

34

Have you ever heard anyone make such a criticism and such a promise?

I called and you did not answer, I spoke and you did not listen; and you did what was wrong in my eyes and you chose what was against my will. Therefore these are the words of the Lord God: My servants shall eat but you shall starve; my servants shall drink but you shall go thirsty; my servants shall rejoice but you shall be put to shame...*the Lord God shall give you over to death; but his servants he shall call by another name*.

Isaiah 65:12-15

35

Have you ever known anyone who spoke about pretenders like this?

O YE SEEMING FAIR YET INWARDLY FOUL!

Ye are like clear but bitter water, which to outward seeming is crystal pure but of which, when tested by the divine Assayer, not a drop is accepted.²⁶ Bahá'u'lláh

These are the words of him who has the sharp, double-edged sword. I know where you live--where Satan has his throne.

Yet you remain true to my name... Repent therefore!

Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. ***To him who overcomes***, I will give some of the hidden manna. ***I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it...***

Christ (Rev. 2:12-13, 16-17)

36

Have you ever heard anyone complain like this?

How veiled are ye, O My creatures...²⁷ The Báb

Behold how great is the Cause, and yet how the people are wrapt in veils.²⁸ The Báb

37

Have you heard anyone speak about a veil that covers all nations?

...the covering that covereth all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. Isaiah 25:7

...the peoples of the world are wrapt in palpable veils.²⁹ Bahá'u'lláh

38

Have you ever heard anyone criticize the “drunk” people of our time with such authority and candor?

Loiter and be dazed, enjoy yourselves and **be blinded, be drunk** but not with wine, reel but not with strong drink; for the Lord has poured upon you a spirit of deep stupor; he has closed your eyes, the prophets [people who make predictions], and muffled your heads, the seers.

All prophetic vision has become for you like a sealed book. Give such a book to one who can read and say, 'Come, read this'; he will answer, 'I cannot,' because it is sealed. Give it to one who cannot read and say, 'Come, read this'; he will answer, 'I cannot read.'

Then the Lord said: Because this people approach me with their mouths and honor me with their lips while their hearts are far from me, and **their religion is but a precept of men, learnt by rote**, therefore I will yet again shock this people, adding shock to shock: **the wisdom of their wise men shall vanish** and the discernment of the discerning shall be lost.

Isaiah 29:9-14

We behold it [the world], in this day, at the mercy of rulers **so drunk with pride** that they cannot discern clearly their own best advantage, much less recognize a Revelation so bewildering and challenging as this.³⁰ Bahá'u'lláh

39

Have you ever heard anyone talk about the complacency of human beings like this?

O YE THAT ARE LYING AS DEAD ON THE COUCH OF
HEEDLESSNESS!

Ages have passed and your precious lives are well-nigh ended, yet not a single breath of purity hath reached Our court of holiness from you. Though immersed in the ocean of misbelief, yet with your lips ye profess the one true faith of God. Him whom I abhor ye have loved, and of My foe ye have made a friend. Notwithstanding, **ye walk on My earth complacent and self-satisfied, heedless that My earth is**

weary of you and everything within it shunneth you. Were ye but to open your eyes, ye would, in truth, prefer a myriad griefs unto this joy, and would count death itself better than this life.³¹ Bahá'u'lláh

40

Has anyone promised to put you on his throne simply by making an effort to “overcome”?

These are the words of the...ruler of God’s creation...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. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Christ (Rev. 3:14-22)

41

Have you ever known anyone who addressed some of the religious leaders in this way?

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, leadeth the wayfarers of My city astray into the paths of perdition.³² Bahá'u'lláh

42

Have you seen a young unschooled merchant write a letter like this to one of the most powerful religious leaders of his time?

All thy life thou hast accorded worship unto Us, but when We manifested Ourselves unto thee, thou didst desist from bearing witness unto Our Remembrance, and from affirming that He [the Báb] is indeed the Most Exalted, the Sovereign Truth, the All-Glorious. Thus hath Thy Lord put thee to

proof in the Day of Resurrection. Verily He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

...Shouldst thou return unto Us... We shall transform thy fire into light. Truly We are powerful over all things... We shall therefore banish thee from Our presence as a token of justice on Our part. Verily we are equitable in Our judgment.³³

The Báb

43

Have you ever known anyone punish fearful people so severely? Have you ever seen anyone who fails to invest his talents receive such harsh words?

Then the man who had been given one bag came and said, "**Master...I was afraid, and I went and hid your gold in the ground.** Here it is--you have what belongs to you." "You lazy rascal!" said the master..."you ought to have put my money on deposit, and on my return I should have got it back with interest. Take the bag of gold from him, and give it to the one with the ten bags. For the man who has will always be given more, till he has enough and to spare; and the man who has not will forfeit even what he has. **Fling the useless servant out into the dark, the place of wailing and grinding of teeth!**"

Christ (Matt. 25:24-30)

44

Have you known anyone who address the oppressors of the earth with such authority?

O OPPRESSORS ON EARTH!

Withdraw your hands from tyranny, for I have pledged Myself not to forgive any man's injustice. This is My covenant which I have irrevocably decreed in the preserved tablet and sealed it with My seal of glory.³⁴

Bahá'u'lláh

45

Have you ever heard anyone give you such good news? Have you heard anyone say that a mountain shall see the glory of the Lord (Bahá'u'lláh)?

Let the wilderness and the thirsty land be glad, let the desert rejoice and burst into flower. Let it flower with fields of asphodel, let it rejoice and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon is given to it, the splendor too of *Carmel and Sharon*; these **shall see the glory of the Lord** [Bahá'u'lláh], the splendor of our God. Strengthen the feeble arms, steady the tottering knees; say to the anxious, Be strong and fear not. **See, your God comes with vengeance, with dread retribution he comes to save you.** Then shall blind men's eyes be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

Isaiah 35:1-5

46

Has anyone promised to fill the world with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord?

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of **the glory of the Lord** [Bahá'u'lláh], as the waters cover the sea.

Habakkuk 2:14

47

Have you ever known anyone talk about a city that does not need the sun and the moon?

The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for **the glory of God gives it light...**

Christ (Rev. 21:23)

48

Have you ever heard anyone predict the descent of a city from heaven, a city that radiates with the glory of God?

And he showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming sown out of heaven from God. ***It shone with the glory of God...***
Christ (Rev. 21:10-11)

49

Has anyone ever asked you to arise, so that the glory of the Lord may shine upon you?

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. Isaiah 60:1-2

50

Have you ever heard about a temple that “was filled with smoke from the glory of God”?

And the temple was filled with smoke from ***the glory of God*** and from his power... Christ (Rev. 15:8)

5

Never Spake Man Thus

John 7:46

Section III

1

Have you ever heard a “thief” who asks the householder to be “awake” and “dressed”?

Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed. Christ (Rev. 16:15)

2

Have you ever heard anyone make such a prediction about “the mountain of the Lord”?

In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.” The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train of war anymore.

Isaiah 2:2-4

3

Have you ever heard anyone speak to Mt. Carmel with such authority and power?

Render thanks unto thy Lord, O Carmel. The fire of thy separation from Me was fast consuming thee, when the ocean of My presence surged before thy face, cheering thine eyes and those of all creation, and filling with delight all things visible and invisible. Rejoice, for God hath in this Day established upon thee His throne, hath made thee the dawning-place of His signs and the day spring of the evidences of His Revelation. Well is it with him that circleth around thee, that proclaimeth the revelation of thy glory, and recounteth that which the bounty of the Lord thy God hath showered upon thee. Seize thou the Chalice of Immortality in the name of thy Lord, the All-Glorious, and give thanks unto Him, inasmuch as He, in token of His mercy unto thee, hath turned thy sorrow into gladness, and transmuted thy grief into blissful joy.¹

Bahá'u'lláh

4

Have you ever heard anyone ask Mt. Carmel to speak to Mt. Zion?

Call out to Zion, O Carmel, and announce the joyful tidings: He that was hidden from mortal eyes is come! His all-conquering sovereignty is manifest; His all-encompassing splendor is revealed. Beware lest thou hesitate or halt. Hasten forth and circumambulate the City of God that hath descended from heaven, the celestial Kaaba round which have circled in adoration the favored of God, the pure in

heart, and the company of the most exalted angels. Oh, how I long to announce unto every spot on the surface of the earth, and to carry to each one of its cities, the glad-tidings of this Revelation—a Revelation to which the heart of Sinai hath been attracted, and in whose name the Burning Bush is calling: ‘Unto God, the Lord of Lords, belong the kingdoms of earth and heaven.’² Bahá’u’lláh

5

Have you met anyone who is so fearless before his powerful and cruel enemies? Have you heard anyone speak like this against those who plot against him?

Are ye wickedly scheming, according to your selfish fancies, ***an evil plot against Him*** Who is the Most Great Remembrance of God [the Báb]? By the righteousness of God, all who are in the heaven and on earth and whatsoever lieth between them are regarded in My sight even as a spider’s web, and verily God beareth witness unto all things. ***Indeed they will not lay plots but against themselves***. God hath caused this Remembrance to be, in very truth, independent of all the dwellers of earth and heaven.³ The Báb

6

Have you ever heard anyone say that God laughs at those who plot against Him?

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One...The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them. Then he rebukes them in his anger... Psalms 2:1-5

7

Have you ever head anyone express his anger to all nations?

Come near, you nations, and listen; pay attention, you peoples! Let the earth hear, and all that is in it, the world, and all that comes out of it! *The Lord is angry with all nations...*

Isaiah 34:1-2

8

Have you ever seen such love and devotion in anyone? Have you ever heard anyone offering his life as a sacrifice for a person he has never met?

I have sacrificed myself wholly for Thee [Bahá'u'lláh]; I have accepted curses for Thy sake, and have yearned for naught but martyrdom in the path of Thy love. Sufficient witness unto me is God, the Exalted, the Protector, the Ancient of Days.

...By My life, Thou art the Well-Beloved in the sight of God and His creation. Verily, there is no power except in God, and sufficient witness unto Me is your Lord, Who is, in very truth, the Omnipotent Avenger.⁴

The Báb

9

Have you ever heard a young prisoner, in a far away land in the East, issue such a command to the people of the West and utter such a prophecy?

Issue forth from your cities, O peoples of the West and aid God ere the Day when the Lord of mercy [Bahá'u'lláh] shall come down unto you in the shadow of the clouds with the angels circling around Him, exalting His praise and seeking forgiveness for such as have truly believed in Our signs.⁵

The Báb

10

Have you ever heard anyone make such a prediction?

He Who is the sovereign Truth [Bahá'u'lláh] will suddenly appear amongst you, invested with the power of the mighty

Word, and ye shall then be confounded by the Truth itself, and ye shall have no power to ward it off; and verily I am a witness over all mankind.⁶ The Báb

11

Have you heard anyone be called, “the Best-Beloved of the world”?

While engulfed in tribulations I heard a most wondrous, a most sweet voice...saying: ‘By God! This is the Best-Beloved of the worlds, and yet ye comprehend not. This is the Beauty of God amongst you, and the power of His sovereignty within you, could ye but understand. This is the Mystery of God and His Treasure, the Cause of God and His glory unto all who are in the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation, if ye be of them that perceive.’⁷ Bahá’u’lláh

12

Have you heard anyone claim to have authority both in heaven and on earth?

Full authority in heaven and on earth has been committed to me...I am with you always, to the end of time [age].
Christ (Matt. 28:18-20)

13

Have you ever known anyone to say that you cannot find rest anywhere in the universe until and unless you submit to his command?

O SON OF MAN!

Wert thou to speed through the immensity of space and traverse the expanse of heaven, yet thou wouldst find no rest save in submission to Our command and humbleness before Our Face.⁸ Bahá’u’lláh

14

Have you ever heard anyone say this about himself to God?

Out of utter nothingness, O great and omnipotent Master, Thou hast, through the celestial potency of Thy might, brought me forth and raised me up to proclaim this Revelation. I have made none other but Thee my trust; I have clung to no will but Thy Will... Indeed sufficient unto Me is God, the Exalted, the Powerful, the Sustainer.⁹ The Báb

15

Has anyone promised you “inscrutable” gardens?

O My servants! Seek ye earnestly this highest reward... gardens which remain inscrutable to anyone save Myself, and naught therein hath been made lawful unto anyone except those whose lives have been sacrificed in His Path. Hence beseech ye God, the Most Exalted, that He may grant you this meritorious reward, and He is in truth the Most High, the Most Great.¹⁰ The Báb

16

Have you ever heard anyone say that *he* created all things from dust and will return them to dust again?

O BRETHREN!

Be forbearing one with another and set not your affections on things below. Pride not yourselves in your glory, and be not ashamed of abasement. By My beauty! I have created all things from dust, and to dust will I return them again.¹¹

Bahá'u'lláh

17

Have you known anyone who asked you with such authority to give him your whole heart?

O SON OF DUST!

All that is in heaven and earth I have ordained for thee, except the human heart, which I have made the habitation of My beauty and glory; yet thou didst give My home and dwelling to another than Me; and whenever the manifestation of My holiness sought His own abode, a stranger found He there, and, homeless, hastened unto the sanctuary of the Beloved. Notwithstanding I have concealed thy secret and desired not thy shame.¹² Bahá'u'lláh

18

Have you known anyone who has called the poor “My trust”?

O YE RICH ONES ON EARTH!

The poor in your midst are My trust; guard ye My trust, and be not intent only on your own ease.¹³ Bahá'u'lláh

19

Have you heard anyone claim to be able to give eternal life?

I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. Christ (John 10:10 NKJ)

O SON OF BEING!

If thine heart be set upon this eternal, imperishable dominion, and this ancient, everlasting life, forsake this mortal and fleeting sovereignty.¹⁴ Bahá'u'lláh

...free thyself from the veils of idle fancies and enter into My court, that thou mayest be fit for everlasting life and worthy to meet Me. Thus may death not come upon thee, neither weariness nor trouble.¹⁵ Bahá'u'lláh

My eternity is My creation, I have created it for thee. Make it the garment of thy temple.¹⁶ Bahá'u'lláh

20

Have you known anyone who will endure forty years of exile and imprisonment for your sake, without seeking any reward from you?

Consider the mercy of God and His gifts. He enjoineth upon you that which shall profit you, though He Himself can well dispense with all creatures. Your evil doings can never harm Us, neither can your good works profit Us. We summon you wholly for the sake of God. To this every man of understanding and insight will testify.¹⁷ Bahá'u'lláh

21

Have you ever heard anyone say that “the learned and the wise” have spent their lives in search of him?

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.¹⁸ Bahá'u'lláh

22

Has anyone called you “moving form of dust”? Have you seen such authority combined with such love?

O MOVING FORM OF DUST!

I desire communion with thee, but thou wouldst put no trust in Me. The sword of thy rebellion hath felled the tree of thy hope. At all times I am near unto thee, but thou art ever far from Me. Imperishable glory I have chosen for thee, yet

boundless shame thou hast chosen for thyself. While there is yet time, return, and lose not thy chance.¹⁹ Bahá'u'lláh

23

Has anyone called you “fleeting shadow”?

O FLEETING SHADOW!

Pass beyond the baser stages of doubt and rise to the exalted heights of certainty. Open the eye of truth, that thou mayest behold the veiless Beauty and exclaim: Hallowed be the Lord, the most excellent of all creators!²⁰ Bahá'u'lláh

24

Has anyone asked you to make such a supreme sacrifice?

O friends! Prefer not your will to Mine, never desire that which I have not desired for you, and approach Me not with lifeless hearts, defiled with worldly desires and cravings.²¹ Bahá'u'lláh

25

Has anyone called you “son of dust”? Have you even known anyone who has condemned in this way the people who want to feel superior simply by words, such as winning an argument?

O SON OF DUST!

Verily I say unto thee: Of all men the most negligent is he that disputeth idly and seeketh to advance himself over his brother. Say, O brethren! Let deeds, not words, be your adorning.²² Bahá'u'lláh

26

Has anyone told you that you are his treasury?

O YE SONS OF SPIRIT!

Ye are My treasury, for in you I have treasured the pearls of My mysteries and the gems of My knowledge. Guard them from the strangers amidst My servants and from the ungodly amongst My people.²³

Bahá'u'lláh

27

Have you heard anyone ask such questions and utter such warning?

What hath befallen you...? Will ye not fear the One true God, He Who is your Lord, the Ancient of Days?...O ye who profess belief in God! I adjure you by Him Who is the Eternal Truth, have ye discerned among the precepts of these Gates anything inconsistent with the commandments of God as set forth in this Book? Hath your learning deluded you by reason of your impiety? Take ye heed then, for verily your God, the Lord of Eternal Truth, is with you and in very truth is watchful over you.²⁴

The Báb

28

Have you heard anyone glorify God with such beauty and power?

In the Name of God, the Most Exalted, the Most Holy. All praise and glory befiteth the sacred and glorious court of the sovereign Lord, Who from everlasting hath dwelt, and unto everlasting will continue to dwell within the mystery of His Own divine Essence, Who from time immemorial hath abided and will forever continue to abide within His transcendent eternity, exalted above the reach and ken of all created beings. The sign of His matchless Revelation as created by Him and imprinted upon the realities of all beings, is none other but their powerlessness to know Him. The light He hath shed upon all things is none but the splendour of His Own Self. He Himself hath at all times been immeasurably

exalted above any association with His creatures. He hath fashioned the entire creation in such wise that all beings may, by virtue of their innate powers, bear witness before God on the Day of Resurrection that He hath no peer or equal and is sanctified from any likeness, similitude or comparison. He hath been and will ever be one and incomparable in the transcendent glory of His divine being and He hath ever been indescribably mighty in the sublimity of His sovereign Lordship. No one hath ever been able befittingly to recognize Him nor will any man succeed at any time in comprehending Him as is truly meet and seemly, for any reality to which the term ‘being’ is applicable hath been created by the sovereign Will of the Almighty, Who hath shed upon it the radiance of His Own Self, shining forth from His most august station. He hath moreover deposited within the realities of all created things the emblem of His recognition, that everyone may know of a certainty that He is the Beginning and the End, the Manifest and the Hidden, the Maker and the Sustainer, the Omnipotent and the All-Knowing, the One Who heareth and perceiveth all things, He Who is invincible in His power and standeth supreme in His Own identity, He Who quickeneth and causeth to die, the All-Powerful, the Inaccessible, the Most Exalted, the Most High. Every revelation of His divine Essence betokens the sublimity of His glory, the loftiness of His sanctity, the inaccessible height of His oneness and the exaltation of His majesty and power. His beginning hath had no beginning other than His Own firstness and His end knoweth no end save His Own lastness.²⁵

The Báb

29

Have you ever received such an invitation?

Set your faces towards Him (Bahá’u’lláh) on this Day which God hath exalted above all other days, and whereon the All-Merciful hath shed the splendor of His effulgent glory upon

all who are in heaven and all who are on earth. Arise thou to serve God and help His Cause. He, verily, will assist thee with the hosts of the seen and unseen, and will set thee king over all that whereon the sun riseth. Thy Lord, in truth, is the All-Powerful, the Almighty.²⁶ Bahá'u'lláh

30

Have you ever heard such loving counsels?

The generations that have gone on before you—whither are they fled? And those round whom in life circled the fairest and the loveliest of the land, where now are they? Profit by their example, O people, and be not of them that are gone astray.

Others ere long will lay hands on what ye possess, and enter into your habitations. Incline your ears to My words, and be not numbered among the foolish.

For every one of you his paramount duty is to choose for himself that on which no other may infringe and none usurp from him. Such a thing—and to this the Almighty is My witness—is the love of God, could ye but perceive it.

Build ye for yourselves such houses as the rain and floods can never destroy, which shall protect you from the changes and chances of this life. This is the instruction of Him Whom the world hath wronged and forsaken.²⁷ Bahá'u'lláh

31

Have you known anyone make such a claim and such a promise? Have you ever known anyone who prefaces his thoughts thousands of times with the word “Say,” which is the equivalent of the biblical phrase, “Thus saith the Lord”?

Say: O ye lovers of the One true God! Strive, that ye may truly recognize and know Him, and observe befittingly His precepts. This is a Revelation, under which, if a man shed for

its sake one drop of blood, myriads of oceans will be his recompense. Take heed, O friends, that ye forfeit not so inestimable a benefit, or disregard its transcendent station.²⁸

Bahá'u'lláh

34

Have you heard anyone offer so many blessings?

Say: Blessed the slumberer who is awakened...Blessed the eye that is solaced by gazing at My beauty...Blessed the insatiate soul who casteth away his selfish desires for love of Me and taketh his place at the banquet table which I have sent down from the heaven of divine bounty for My chosen ones. Blessed the abased one who layeth fast hold on the cord of My glory; and the needy one who entereth beneath the shadow of the Tabernacle of My wealth. Blessed the ignorant one who seeketh the fountain of My knowledge; and the heedless one who cleaveth to the cord of My remembrance. Blessed the soul that hath been raised to life through My quickening breath and hath gained admittance into My heavenly Kingdom.²⁹

Bahá'u'lláh

35

Have you ever heard such an invitation?

Verily this is none other than the sovereign Truth; it is the Path which God hath laid out for all that are in heaven and on earth. ***Let him then who will, take for himself the right path unto his Lord.***³⁰

The Báb

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" ***Whoever is thirsty, let him come;*** and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

Christ (Rev. 22:17)



Conclusion

Did you hear the “Voice of God” in the preceding passages?

“The watchman [the one who protects and awakens others] opens the gate for him [the Shepherd], and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and *his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.*” Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them...

Christ (John 10:3-6)

Did you “see” God in the preceding passages?

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

If you had known Me, you would have known my Father also... Christ (John 14:7)

Simply by looking at the words and deeds of Christ, we can also see God. How can anyone see the “Me” in Christ? By looking at His Spirit. How can we know a Spirit? By the way it expresses itself in words and deeds. The Word is the Creator Himself manifested in thoughts. It is the visible expression of His wisdom, glory, and majesty. It is the most convincing evidence of God’s presence in His supreme Messengers and Redeemers. Nothing in all the universe can compare with beholding the thoughts of God. Nothing can be more breathtaking, or more beautiful, or more blessed. God’s Word is the most marvelous miracle that Heaven can bestow on humans. It is God’s ever-present and ever-shining splendor. Its glory eclipses the sun:

The Sun of Divine Utterance can never set, neither can its radiance be extinguished.³¹ Bahá’u’lláh

The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the word of God endures for evermore. Isaiah 40:8

The spiritual lives of Christ, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh are identical. The way they speak is also identical. Although their words are arranged differently, yet they carry the same “tone,” the same distinction, uniqueness, and authority. Simply by looking at their words, we can see God. No evidence can compare with this, no proof can be more convincing. Please note that all the passages quoted from these Messengers were spoken spontaneously without the slightest hesitation, pause, or correction. Here the Báb specifies the speed with which He spoke the Word of God:

He revealeth no less than a thousand verses within the space of five hours. He reciteth verses at a speed consonant with the capacity of His amanuensis [secretary] to set them down.³²

The Báb

And again:

[He] writes a thousand verses of prayer in the course of five hours without pause of the pen...³³

The Báb

The Báb's Ministry lasted about six years. Yet within that short period of time, in spite of imprisonment and exile, He revealed countless verses. In one of His works He testifies that, “He hath, up to the present, revealed no less than five hundred thousand verses.”³⁴ He revealed this incredible wealth of knowledge while in His twenties mostly in Arabic, a foreign language He did not study! While He was a little child, His teacher told His guardians that the Báb had no need for a teacher.

Unfortunately much of His works has been lost, stolen, or destroyed. Only twenty volumes have survived. Of those, only one volume, a compilation, has been translated into English. If that compilation were revealed continuously, it would have taken the Báb about 18 hours to record it, at the rate of one page every five minutes, or 3.3 verses per minute. No wonder God presents His Word as the mightiest miracle.

The great Messengers are like mirrors. They all reflect one God. In every one of their verses, God's glory and power is evident. If possible, reread all the quoted Scriptures again and again to discern more clearly their divine distinction. Each time you read, their inner light will grow brighter and become more visible to your soul.

To see if you can detect any difference between the quotations offered, block out their references, and read them a second time. You can also ask someone to read them to you without citing the sources.

Part V

Seeking the Blessings of God

Bahá'í Prayers

The Bahá'í Scriptures offer hundreds of prayers, reflecting the whole spectrum of our spiritual needs. The following is a brief selection from the works of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. (The titles are added by the author of this book.)

6

Bahá'í Prayers

Prayer for the Enrichment of the Spirit

Create in me a pure heart, O my God, and renew a tranquil conscience within me, O my Hope! Through the spirit of power confirm Thou me in Thy Cause, O my Best-Beloved, and by the light of Thy glory reveal unto me Thy path, O Thou the Goal of my desire! Through the power of Thy transcendent might lift me up unto the heaven of Thy holiness, O Source of my being, and by the breezes of Thine eternity gladden me, O Thou Who art my God! Let Thine everlasting melodies breathe tranquility on me, O my Companion, and let the riches of Thine ancient countenance deliver me from all except Thee, O my Master, and let the tidings of the revelation of Thine incorruptible Essence bring me joy, O Thou Who art the most manifest of the manifest and the most hidden of the hidden!¹

Morning Prayer

I have wakened in Thy shelter, O my God, and it becometh him that seeketh that shelter to abide within the Sanctuary of Thy protection and the Stronghold of Thy defense. Illumine my inner being, O my Lord, with the splendors of the Day-

Spring of Thy Revelation, even as Thou didst illumine my outer being with the morning light of Thy favor.²

Healing

Thy name is my healing, O my God, and remembrance of Thee is my remedy. Nearness to Thee is my hope, and love for Thee is my companion. Thy mercy to me is my healing and my succor in both this world and the world to come. Thou, verily, art the All-Bountiful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.³

Protection

I have risen this morning by Thy grace, O my God, and left my home trusting wholly in Thee, and committing myself to Thy care. Send down, then, upon me, out of the heaven of Thy mercy, a blessing from Thy side, and enable me to return home in safety even as Thou didst enable me to set out under Thy protection with my thoughts fixed steadfastly upon Thee.

There is none other God but Thee, the One, the Incomparable, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.⁴

Expressing One's Devotion to God

I beg Thee to forgive me, O my Lord, for every mention but the mention of Thee, and for every praise but the praise of Thee, and for every delight but delight in Thy nearness, and for every pleasure but the pleasure of communion with Thee, and for every joy but the joy of Thy love and of Thy good-pleasure, and for all things pertaining unto me which bear no

relationship unto Thee, O Thou Who art the Lord of lords, He Who provideth the means and unlocketh the doors.⁵

Tribulation

Thou knowest full well, O my God, that tribulations have showered upon me from all directions and that no one can dispel or transmute them except Thee. I know of a certainty, by virtue of my love for Thee, that Thou wilt never cause tribulations to befall any soul unless Thou desirest to exalt his station in Thy celestial Paradise and to buttress his heart in this earthly life with the bulwark of Thine all-compelling power, that it may not become inclined toward the vanities of this world. Indeed Thou art well aware that under all conditions I would cherish the remembrance of Thee far more than the ownership of all that is in the heavens and on the earth.

Strengthen my heart, O my God, in Thine obedience and in Thy love... Verily I swear by Thy glory that I yearn for naught besides Thyself, nor do I desire anything except Thy mercy, nor am I apprehensive of aught save Thy justice...

Immensely exalted art Thou, O Lord of the heavens and earth, above the praise of all men, and may peace be upon Thy faithful servants and glory be unto God, the Lord of all the worlds.⁶

Remover of Difficulties

Is there any Remover of difficulties save God? Say: Praised be God! He is God! All are His servants and all abide by His bidding!⁷

God Sufficeth All Things

Say: God sufficeth all things above all things, and nothing in the heavens or in the earth or in whatever lieth between them but God, thy Lord, sufficeth.

Verily, He is in Himself the Knower, the Sustainer, the Omnipotent.⁸

Seeking God's Blessings

O Thou Whose face is the object of my adoration, Whose beauty is my sanctuary, Whose habitation is my goal, Whose praise is my hope, Whose providence is my companion, Whose love is the cause of my being, Whose mention is my solace, Whose nearness is my desire, Whose presence is my dearest wish and highest aspiration, I entreat Thee not to withhold from me the things Thou didst ordain for the chosen ones among Thy servants. Supply me, then, with the good of this world and of the next.

Thou, truly, art the King of all men. There is no God but Thee, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.⁹



Glorified be Thy Name, O Lord! In whom shall I take refuge while Thou art in truth my God and my Beloved; unto whom shall I turn for shelter while Thou art my Lord and my Possessor; and towards whom shall I flee while Thou art in truth my Master and my Sanctuary...?

I beseech Thee, O my Lord, by Thy most effulgent splendor...to transform us through Thy bounty into that which Thou Thyself dost possess and enable us to become fountains of Thy light, and graciously vouchsafe unto us that which beseemeth the majesty of Thy transcendent dominion.

For unto Thee have I raised my hands, O Lord, and in Thee have I found sheltering support, O Lord, and unto Thee have I resigned myself, O Lord, and upon Thee have I placed my whole reliance, O Lord, and by Thee am I strengthened, O Lord.

Verily there is no power nor strength except in Thee.¹⁰



Suffer me not, O my Lord, to be deprived of the knowledge of Thee in Thy days, and divest me not of the robe of Thy guidance. Give me to drink of the river that is life indeed...that mine eyes may be opened, and my face be illumined, and my heart be assured, and my soul be enlightened, and my steps be made firm.¹¹



Magnified be Thy name, O Lord my God! Thou art He Whom all things worship and Who worshipeth no one...I implore Thee...to enable me to drink deep of the living waters through which Thou hast vivified the hearts of Thy chosen ones and quickened the souls of them that love Thee, that I may, at all times and under all conditions, turn my face wholly towards Thee.

Thou art the God of power, of glory and bounty. No God is there beside Thee, the Supreme Ruler, the All-Glorious, the Omniscient.¹²



I beseech Thee, O my Lord...to rend asunder the veils that have hindered me from appearing before the throne of Thy majesty, and from standing at the door of Thy gate. Do Thou ordain for me, O my Lord, every good thing Thou didst send

down in Thy Book, and suffer me not to be far removed from the shelter of Thy mercy.

Powerful art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou art, verily, the All-Powerful, the Most Generous.¹³



I beseech Thee, O Thou Who art my Companion in my lowliness, to rain down upon Thy loved ones from the clouds of Thy mercy that which will cause them to be satisfied with Thy pleasure, and will enable them to turn unto Thee and to be detached from all else except Thee. Ordain, then, for them every good conceived by Thee and predestined in Thy Book. Thou art, verily, the All-Powerful, He Whom nothing whatsoever can frustrate.¹⁴



Since Thou hast revealed Thy grace, O my God, deter not Thy servants from directing their eyes towards it. Consider not, O my God, their estate, and their concerns and their works. Consider the greatness of Thy glory, and the plenteousness of Thy gifts, and the power of Thy might, and the excellence of Thy favors. I swear by Thy glory! Wert Thou to look upon them with the eye of justice, all would deserve Thy wrath and the rod of Thine anger. Hold Thou Thy creatures, O my God, with the hands of Thy grace, and make Thou known unto them what is best for them of all the things that have been created in the kingdom of Thine invention.¹⁵



Blessed is he that hath set himself towards Thee...Blessed is he who with all his affections hath turned to the Dawning-Place of Thy Revelation and the Fountain-Head of Thine

inspiration. Blessed is he that hath expended in Thy path what Thou didst bestow upon him through Thy bounty and favor. Blessed is he who, in his sore longing after Thee, hath cast away all else except Thyself. Blessed is he who hath enjoyed intimate communion with Thee, and rid himself of all attachment to any one save Thee.¹⁶



Lauded be Thy name, O my God! I entreat Thee...to blot out from my heart all idle fancies and vain imaginings, that with all my affections I may turn unto Thee, O Thou Lord of all mankind!

I am Thy servant...O my God! I have laid hold on the handle of Thy grace, and clung to the cord of Thy tender mercy. Ordain for me the good things that are with Thee, and nourish me from the Table Thou didst send down out of the clouds of Thy bounty and the heaven of Thy favor.

Thou, in very truth, art the Lord of the worlds, and the God of all that are in heaven and all that are on earth.¹⁷



Happy is the man who hath recognized Thee, and discovered the sweetness of Thy fragrance, and set himself towards Thy kingdom...Great is the blessedness of him who hath acknowledged Thy most excellent majesty, and whom the veils that have shut out the nations from Thee have not hindered from directing his eyes towards Thee, O Thou Who art the King of eternity...Blessed, moreover, be the man that hath turned unto Thee, and woe betide him that hath turned his back upon Thee.

Praised be Thou, the Lord of the worlds!¹⁸



I have laid hold, O my Lord, on the handle of Thy bounty, and clung steadfastly to the hem of the robe of Thy favor. Send down, then, upon me, out of the clouds of Thy generosity, what will purge out from me the remembrance of any one except Thee, and make me able to turn unto Him Who is the Object of the adoration of all mankind...¹⁹



Suffer me, O my God, to draw nigh unto Thee, and to abide within the precincts of Thy court, for remoteness from Thee hath well-nigh consumed me. Cause me to rest under the shadow of the wings of Thy grace, for the flame of my separation from Thee hath melted my heart within me. Draw me nearer unto the river that is life indeed, for my soul burneth with thirst in its ceaseless search after Thee. My sighs, O my God, proclaim the bitterness of mine anguish, and the tears I shed attest my love for Thee.²⁰



I beseech Thee...to grant that we may be numbered among them that have recognized Thee and acknowledged Thy sovereignty in Thy days. Help us then to quaff, O my God, from the fingers of mercy the living waters of Thy loving-kindness, that we may utterly forget all else except Thee, and be occupied only with Thy Self. Powerful art Thou to do what Thou willest. No God is there beside Thee, the Mighty, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

Glorified be Thy name, O Thou Who art the King of all Kings!²¹



Cast me not out, I implore Thee, of the presence of Thy grace, neither do Thou withhold from me the outpourings of Thy generosity and bounty. Ordain for me, O my Lord, what Thou hast ordained for them that love Thee, and write down for me what Thou hast written down for Thy chosen ones. My gaze hath, at all times, been fixed on the horizon of Thy gracious providence, and mine eyes bent upon the court of Thy tender mercies. Do with me as beseemeth Thee. No God is there but Thee, the God of power, the God of glory, Whose help is implored by all men.²²



Deny me not, O my Lord, what is with Thee, and suffer me not to be forgetful of what Thou didst desire in Thy days. Thou art, verily, the Almighty, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious, the All-Wise.²³



Hold Thou the hand of this seeker who hath set his face towards Thee, O my Lord, and draw him out of the depths of his vain imaginations, that the light of certainty may shine brightly above the horizon of his heart...²⁴



Praise be to Thee, O Lord my God!...I beseech Thee, by Him Who is the Fountain-Head of Thy Revelation and the Day-Spring of Thy signs, to make my heart to be a receptacle of Thy love and of remembrance of Thee. Knit it, then, to Thy most great Ocean, that from it may flow out the living waters of Thy wisdom and the crystal streams of Thy glorification and praise.²⁵



I beg of Thee, O my God, by Thy most exalted Word...to ordain that my choice be conformed to Thy choice and my wish to Thy wish, that I may be entirely content with that which Thou didst desire, and be wholly satisfied with what Thou didst destine for me by Thy bounteousness and favor. Potent art Thou to do as Thou willest. Thou, in very truth, art the All-Glorious, the All-Wise.²⁶



I implore Thee, by Thy name which Thou hast raised up above every other name, and hast caused to overshadow all that are in heaven and all that are on earth, to cast not away him that hath turned towards Thee, and to deny him not the wonders of Thy grace and the hidden evidences of Thy mercy. Let the hands of Thine omnipotence kindle in his heart a lamp that will enable him to shine brightly in Thy days...that Thou mayest behold him sanctified as Thou wishest and as beseemeth Thy majesty and glory.²⁷



Lauded be Thy name, O my God and the God of all things, my Glory and the Glory of all things, my Desire and the Desire of all things, my Strength and the Strength of all things, my King and the King of all things, my Possessor and the Possessor of all things, my Aim and the Aim of all things, my Mover and the Mover of all things! Suffer me not, I implore Thee, to be kept back from the ocean of Thy tender mercies, nor to be far removed from the shores of nearness to Thee.²⁸



O God!...the remembrance of Thee is a healing medicine to the hearts of such as have drawn nigh unto Thy court;

nearness to Thee is the true life of them who are Thy lovers; Thy presence is the ardent desire of such as yearn to behold Thy face; remoteness from Thee is a torment to those that have acknowledged Thy oneness, and separation from Thee is death unto them that have recognized Thy truth!²⁹



Glory be to Thee, O my God! Thou hearest Thine ardent lovers lamenting in their separation from Thee... Open Thou outwardly to their faces, O my Lord, the gates of Thy grace, that they may enter them by Thy leave and in conformity with Thy will, and may stand before the throne of Thy majesty, and catch the accents of Thy voice, and be illumined with the splendors of the light of Thy face.

Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. None can withstand the power of Thy sovereign might.³⁰



Have mercy, then, upon Thy servants by Thy grace and bounty, and suffer them not to be kept back from the shores of the ocean of Thy nearness. If Thou abandonest them, who is there to befriend them; and if Thou puttest them far from Thee, who is he that can favor them? They have none other Lord beside Thee, none to adore except Thyself. Deal Thou generously with them by Thy bountiful grace.

Thou, in truth, art the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Compassionate.³¹



I pray Thee, O Thou Who causeth the dawn to appear... that Thou wilt grant that we may draw near unto what Thou didst destine for us by Thy favor and bounty, and to be far

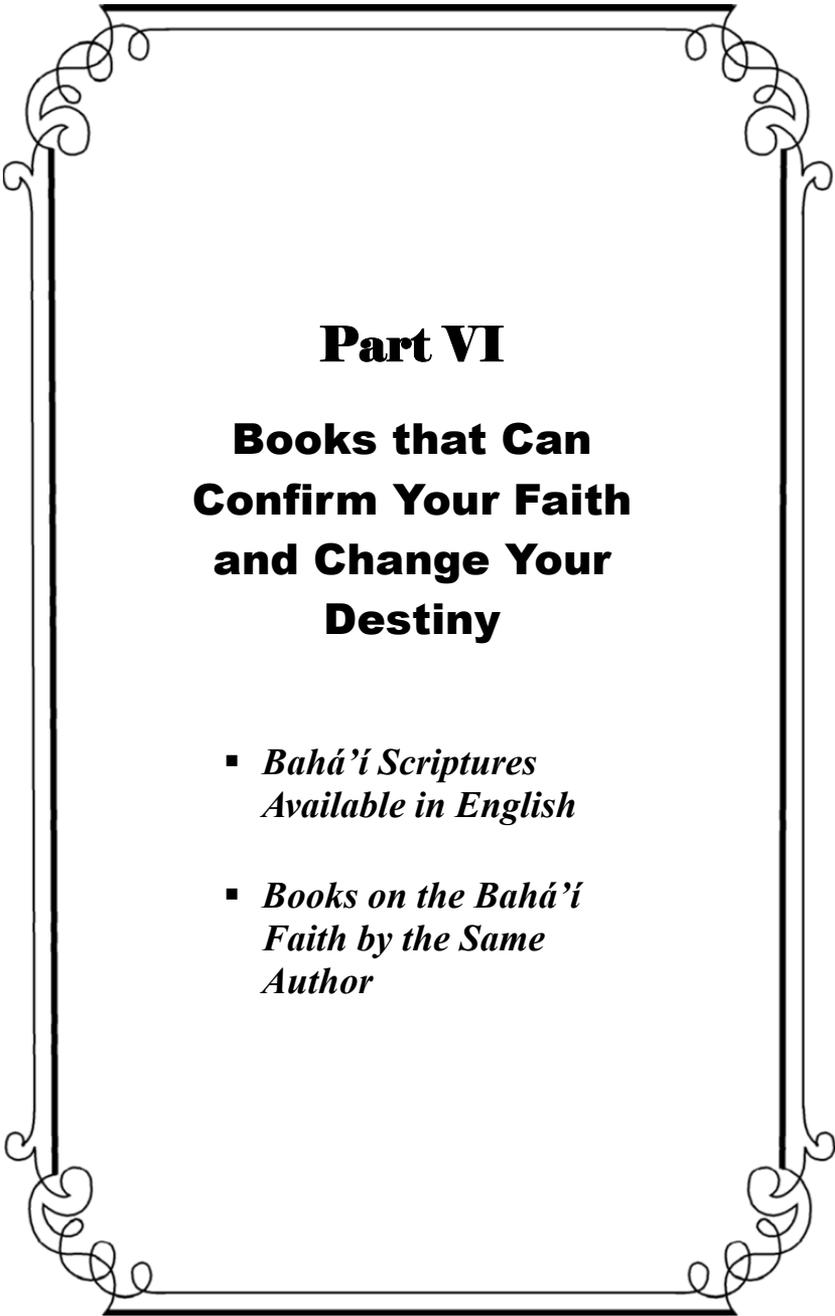
removed from whatsoever may be repugnant unto Thee. Give us, then, to drink from the hands of Thy grace every day and every moment of our lives of the waters that are life indeed, O Thou Who art the Most Merciful!³²



I am he who is sore athirst, O my Lord! Give me to drink of the living waters of Thy grace. I am but a poor creature; reveal unto me the tokens of Thy riches...

I beseech Thee, O my Lord, by Thy mercy that hath surpassed the entire creation, and Thy generosity that hath embraced all created things, to cause me to turn my face wholly towards Thee, and to seek Thy shelter, and to be steadfast in my love for Thee. Write down, then, for me what Thou didst ordain for them who love Thee. Powerful art Thou to do what Thou pleasest. No God is there beside Thee, the Ever-Forgiving, the All-Bountiful.

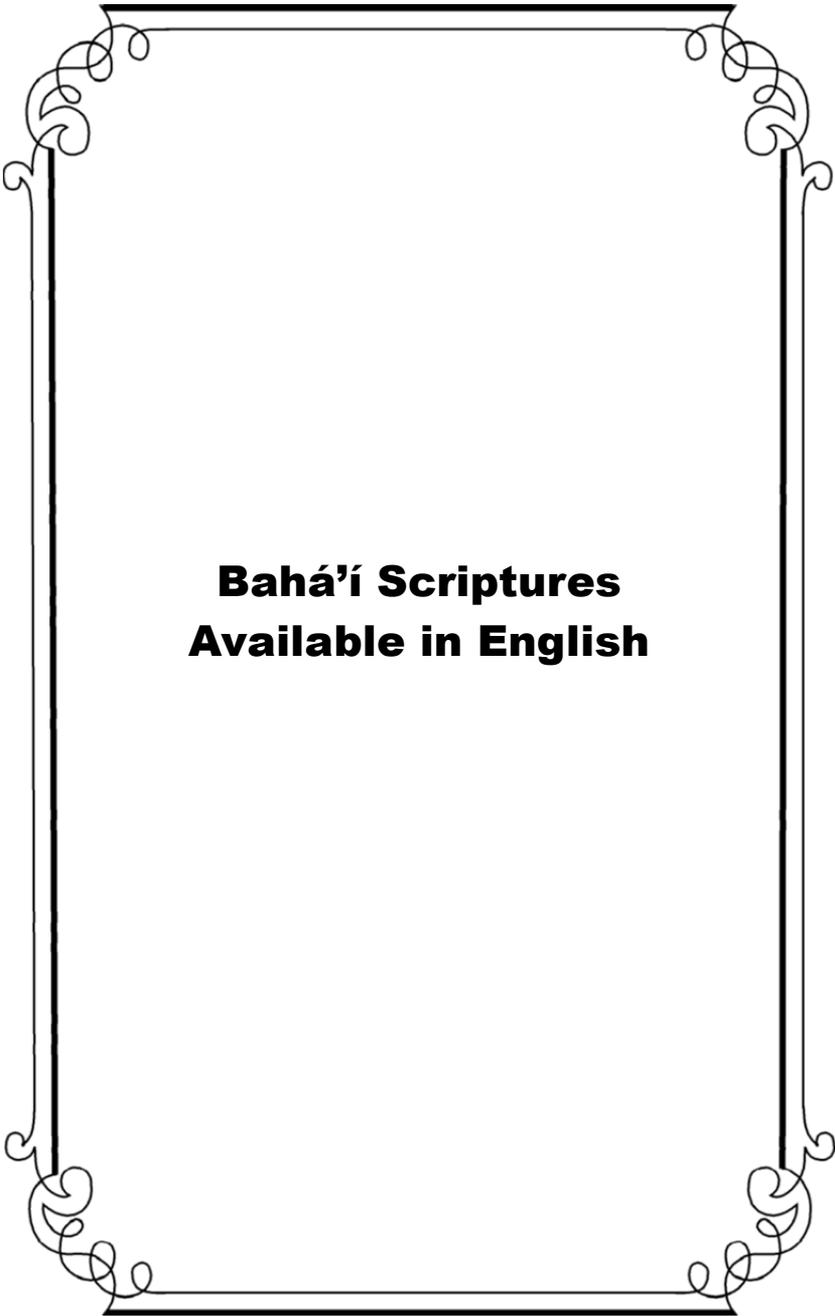
Praised be God, the Lord of the worlds!³³



Part VI

**Books that Can
Confirm Your Faith
and Change Your
Destiny**

- *Bahá'í Scriptures
Available in English*
- *Books on the Bahá'í
Faith by the Same
Author*



**Bahá'í Scriptures
Available in English**

Bahá'u'lláh's Works

Seek ye out the book of Jehovah and read...

Isaiah 34:16

Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

The most complete and comprehensive reference on Bahá'u'lláh's Works available in English. This book, which is a compilation from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, covers a wide spectrum of precepts ranging from the purpose of man's creation, his duty and destiny, to the manifold mysteries of divine Wisdom.

Prayers and Meditations By Bahá'u'lláh

Bahá'u'lláh has left a rich repository of prayers pertaining to every human hope and aspiration, dream or desire. Thus, in this dispensation, the seekers of serenity, guidance, and inspiration can select and recite prayers and meditations revealed and blessed by the Pen of the Redeemer of the age, the revealer of divine Purpose.

Bahá'u'lláh has also written many prayers expressing His own supplication and servitude before God. Such prayers offer an intimate knowledge of Bahá'u'lláh's own self—His indomitable spirit, His unswerving love for the Creator and for humanity, His steadfastness in His claim, His determination before the onrush of adversities, His absolute trust in God, and His loving counsel to all those athirst for truth.

The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh

No other of Bahá'u'lláh's works so succinctly offers the reader as complete and as representative a sample of the ethical fruits of the new Revelation as *The Hidden Words*. It is a small book filled with gems, a treasure-house of celestial Wisdom, a divine guide to the unfoldment and ennoblement of the human spirit.

All the requirements for attaining purity and self-fulfillment are stated in the most exquisite and lofty language. Everything that the soul must seek or surrender, everything that a spiritual seeker must know or must do to direct the course of his or her spiritual destiny is concisely and clearly revealed and set forth by the pen of the Supreme Messenger—the Revealer of hidden wisdom and divine mysteries.

The Seven Valleys and the Four Valleys

Perhaps the most mystical of Bahá'u'lláh's works available in English. It unfolds and enumerates the stages of seeker's journey towards God; revealing, in a language at once poetic and perplexing, his potential for attaining perfection and nobility, and his sublime and celestial destiny, if he but turns to the light instead of darkness, seeks the gems of divine wisdom instead of the perishable joys of flesh, and undertakes to tread the long but wondrous and enchanting path of purification and illumination.

Epistle to the Son of the Wolf

Addressed to a cruel and cunning Muslim clergyman who, along with his father, inflicted death, distress, and torment on some of Bahá'u'lláh's most beloved and most distinguished disciples. Though addressed to a symbol of denial, it is a call to humanity as a whole. This weighty volume covers and clarifies many illuminating and inspiring arrays of precepts.

The Summons of the Lord of Hosts

Contains some of Bahá'u'lláh's Epistles or Tablets addressed to the kings and rulers of the world, to its religious leaders, and to humanity in general. These Tablets comprise Bahá'u'lláh's most emphatic words on His claim and on His station as the supreme Savior of humankind, the King of Kings, the Glory of the Lord, the Desire of the Nations, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, the Lord of the Vineyard, Christ returned in the Glory of the Father, the Inaugurator of the Cycle of Fulfillment, and the Promised One of all ages and religions.

The Book of Certitude*

This book responds to questions raised by a seeker of truth. It unseals “the sealed Wine of mysteries,” and unveils the symbolism and the essence of all the scriptures of the past, indicates how the seeker of truth can rise above the prevailing perplexity and confusion, how he or she can move from doubt to certitude, and from unbelief to belief.

It offers proofs of divine Revelation, portrays in a moving language man's refusal to accept and acknowledge, in every age, the gift of divine Guidance, and conveys in a unique tone and style the dramatic story of the unfoldment of the perennial Faith of God, the unveiling of the eternal Truth.

* Also known as *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*.

***Other Bahá'í Writings
Available in English***

By Bahá'u'lláh:

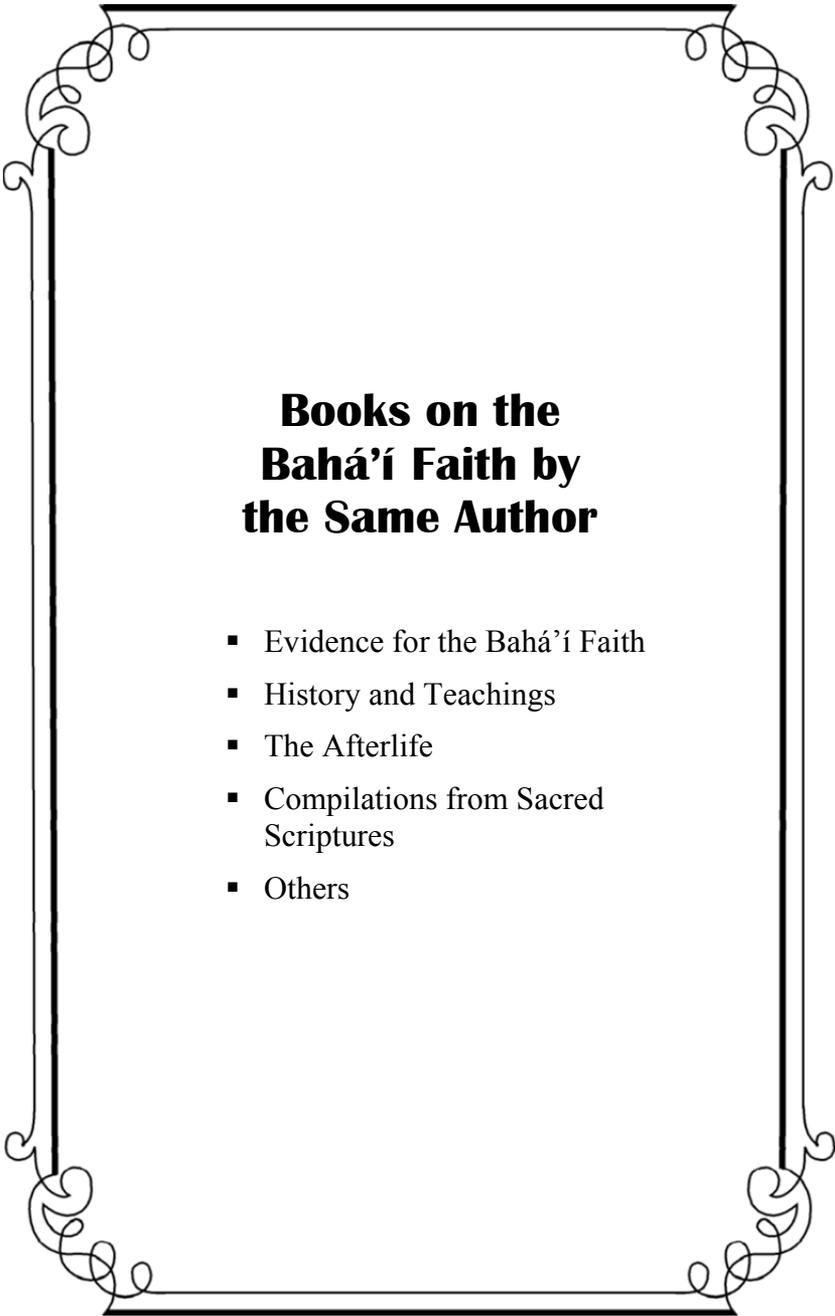
The Most Holy Book
Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh
Gems of Divine Mysteries
Tabernacle of Unity

By the Báb:

Selections from the Writings of the Báb

By 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

Some Answered Questions
Foundations of World Unity
The Secret of Divine Civilization
Paris Talks
Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá
The Promulgation of Universal Peace
A Traveller's Narrative



Books on the Bahá'í Faith by the Same Author

- Evidence for the Bahá'í Faith
- History and Teachings
- The Afterlife
- Compilations from Sacred Scriptures
- Others

Evidence for the Bahá'í Faith



I Shall Come Again

522 Pages
Volume I

*That is the day when I come like a thief.
Happy the man who stays awake.
Christ (Rev. 16:15)*

*Do not let Him find you sleeping.
What I say to you, I say to everyone: "Watch!"
Christ (Mark 13:36)*

Did you know that the Bible contains 16 time prophecies concerning the year of the Second Advent? No wonder so many scholars discovered the same date. Did you also know that all those 16 prophecies point to the same year: 1844? ***Bahá'ís believe that the promise of the Second Advent has already been fulfilled, precisely as predicted.*** Christ did return in 1844, "like a thief," in a way that ***the News of His coming did not draw much attention.*** And as the Book of Revelation predicts, God gave Him a new name: ***Bahá'u'lláh***, meaning ***the Glory of God.***

Obviously ***we expect you to be very skeptical,*** but we invite you ***to stay spiritually awake, to "watch," to pay close attention, and to investigate this most glorious News.*** How can you do this? Start your search by examining the evidence presented in ***I Shall Come Again,*** the first of a six-volume series on the fulfillment of biblical prophecies by ***Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God.***

I Shall Come Again, written after three decades of research, takes you step by step through 16 prophecies that point to 1844, and hundreds of other prophecies, concerning the return of Christ. It proves how these prophecies, without exception, were fulfilled by ***Bahá'u'lláh (the Glory of God)*** and His martyred Herald, ***the Báb (the Gate)***, who appeared in 1844. ***I Shall Come Again*** is one of the most fascinating books of our time. If you have faith in God's promises and a desire to know the truth, you will receive incomparable joy and hope from reading it.

History shows that no false prophet has ever been able to prove his claim by the evidence of fulfilled prophecies. Christian scholars often regard Hebrew prophecies as the most conclusive and convincing evidence of Jesus' divine Mission.

Let us consider a statement from Dr. Norman Geisler, president of Southern Evangelical Seminary, "who has published countless articles in academic journals and has authored over fifty books, including *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*." Dr. Geisler makes the following statement concerning the prophecies that point to the First Advent of Jesus:

Some have suggested...that the prophecies were accidentally fulfilled in Jesus. In other words, he happened to be in the right place at the right time...If there is a God who is in control of the universe, as we have said, then chance is ruled out. Furthermore, it is unlikely that these events would have converged in the life of one man. Mathematicians have calculated the probability of 16 predictions being fulfilled in one man at 1 in 10⁴⁵...

But it is not just a logical improbability that rules out this theory [of chance]; it is the moral implausibility of an all-powerful and all-knowing God letting things get out of control so that all his plans for prophetic fulfillment are ruined by someone who just happened to be in the right place at the right time. God cannot lie, nor can he break a promise

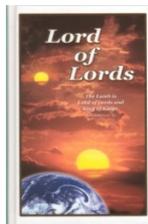
(Heb. 6:18). So we must conclude that he did not allow his prophetic promises to be thwarted by chance. All the evidence points to Jesus as the divinely appointed fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies. He was God’s man confirmed by God’s signs. In brief, if God made the predictions to be fulfilled in the life of Christ, then he would not allow them to be fulfilled in the life of any other. The God of truth would not allow a lie to be confirmed as true.

Imagine if the News of the Return of Jesus is true and you choose not to investigate and not to know Him! Imagine also if the News of His Return is true and your investigation leads you to recognize Him!

I shall come again and receive you to myself, so that where I am you may be also. *Christ (John 14:3)*

“He, verily, is come with His Kingdom, and all the atoms cry aloud: ‘Lo! The Lord is come in His great majesty!’”
“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?”

Bahá’u’lláh (the Glory of God)



**Lord of
Lords**

634 Pages
Volume II

This volume presents hundreds of biblical prophecies concerning the Central Figures of the Bahá’í Faith—the Báb, Bahá’u’lláh, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá—as well as Shoghi Effendi (the Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith), the Universal House of Justice (the supreme administrative body in the Bahá’í Faith), the

Bahá'ís (the followers of Bahá'u'lláh), the Bahá'í teachings, and the Book of Bahá'í Laws (*The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*).

Lord of Lords presents six fulfillments for Daniel's prophecy of 1335, and shows their connection to the Bahá'í Faith. The book also presents **86 similarities between Jesus and the Báb**, who is called "**One like a Son of Man.**"

Christian scholars often apply the statistical laws to the prophecies of Hebrew Scriptures to prove the divine station of Jesus. *Lord of Lords* applies the same laws to the prophecies of both Hebrew and Christian Scriptures to prove the divine station of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

Lord of Lords shows that the probability of biblical prophecies coming true in the Bahá'í Faith by chance alone is about 1 in 10^{80} . The number 10^{80} is equal to the number of atoms in the known universe! What does this evidence indicate? ***It indicates that if anyone could pick a specific atom in the universe by chance, he could then claim that the biblical prophecies fulfilled in the Bahá'í Faith also happened by chance!*** The proof presented in this volume is so compelling it can convince even the most skeptic seeker!

...the desire of all nations shall come... Haggai 2:7

He who is the Desired One is come in His transcendent majesty...Better is this for you than all ye possess.

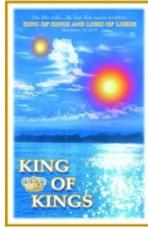
Bahá'u'lláh (the Glory of God)

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father...

Christ (Matt. 16:27)

I have come in the shadows of the clouds of glory, and am invested by God with invincible sovereignty.

Bahá'u'lláh (the Glory of God)



King of Kings

510 Pages
Volume III

This is the third of the six-volume series. This volume also presents hundreds of biblical prophecies concerning the advent of the Bahá'í Faith. Four of its chapters show that, contrary to what most people—both Christians and Jews—believe, *the Bible predicts suffering and severe persecution for the Redeemer of our time. King of Kings* also presents many prophecies, in the course of two chapters, to show that according to both Testaments, the title of the Redeemer of our age (known to Christians as the Second Coming of Christ and to the Jews as the Messiah) is “*the Glory of God,*” the English translation of the original title “*Bahá'u'lláh.*”

A chapter discusses the many reasons why people deny and persecute their promised Messenger and Redeemer in every age, and then later claim that if they had lived at the time of His Advent they would not be among the deniers!

Many Christians expect the coming of the Antichrist. *King of Kings* presents two chapters to show the fulfillment of this expectation by two deceptive figures who opposed *Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God*, with all their might, and tried in vain to destroy Him and establish themselves as the Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith.

I Shall Come Again, Lord of Lords, and *King of Kings* prove that once again God has spoken to humanity, that He has fulfilled His promises, and has manifested His great glory and power by sending two supreme Messengers and Redeemers—*Bahá'u'lláh, and His martyred Herald, the Báb*—to guide our bewildered world to unity, peace, and justice, and to lead our

wandering souls to His heavenly Mansions. Not investigating this Message of hope and fulfillment is to deprive yourself of the very source of all wisdom and the very purpose of coming to this world.

I have come down from heaven... Christ (John 6:38)

Say, God is my witness! The Promised One Himself [Bahá'u'lláh] hath come down from heaven...with the hosts of revelation on His right, and the angels of inspiration on His left... Bahá'u'lláh (the Glory of God)

Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake... Christ (Rev. 16:15)

Blessed the slumberer who is awakened... Blessed the ear that hath heard, and the eye that hath seen, and the heart that hath turned unto Him... Bahá'u'lláh (the Glory of God)



What do others say about:

I Shall Come Again, Lord of Lords,
King of Kings?

A scholarly work of meticulous research. Appealing to reason and applying the scientific method to prophetic scripture, it demonstrates that God has once again revealed Himself to humankind and has provided hope for unity and peace on this planet.

John Paul Vader, M.D.
Author of For the Good of Mankind

A book with a message of hope and fulfillment, a message that can transform our planet into a place of peace, into a kingdom that has been the dream and hope of humanity since the dawn of history...a scholarly, comprehensive, and fascinating work that has been long overdue. No wonder it

took over three decades to complete it. Hon. Dorothy W. Nelson
Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit

A story with an incredible ending that is made credible by the sheer weight of evidence. It is a must for anyone interested in the proofs of the advent of the Promised One of all ages.

John Huddleston

Former Chief of Budget and Planning
Division, International Monetary Fund,
Author of *The Earth Is But One Country*

...a treasure house of great value for both Bahá'ís and seekers.

Adib Taherzadeh
Author and Scholar

I am in awe at the extent of research you have undertaken!

Waldo Boyd
Writer and Editor

Your work never fails to astound me. The effort and breadth of your knowledge both of the Bible and other literature as well as the depth of your understanding of Bahá'í Scripture is truly amazing. Also, a hallmark of your work is your thoroughness. Anyone who believes in biblical prophecy, and reads these volumes with an open mind, cannot fail to be convinced.

Dr. Tom Rowe
Professor of Psychology

Your work is the best I've seen on biblical prophecies and proofs of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation. You offer so much information in relatively few pages. Your many references prove clearly the book's central claim. Your language is simple and exciting. You take the reader through a complete spiritual and prophetic adventure. Your approach is modest, yet dynamic. I pray it will excite all your readers as it has excited me.

Joe Killeen
Bible Scholar, with a Degree in
Eschatology and Soteriology

There are few works by a single author that can rival Dr. Motlagh's in their sheer scope, depth and thoroughness of

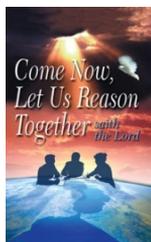
scholarship. Without doubt, future Bahá'ís will thank Dr. Motlagh for his achievements, that are, in my opinion, not only astonishing—they are heroic.

An important work that will be referenced by future Bahá'í scholars for millennia to come.

Robert F. Riggs
Aerospace and Marine Scientist, Inventor,
Author of The Apocalypse Unsealed

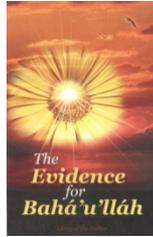
By writing these volumes Dr. Motlagh has made a momentous contribution to our understanding of biblical prophecy. As a former Baptist minister, I urge all Christians to investigate the news of the return of our Lord as presented in I Shall Come Again, Lord of Lords, and King of Kings. “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you” (Isa. 60:1).

Mel Campbell
Former Baptist Minister



**Come Now,
Let Us
Reason
Together**
286 Pages

This book is written in response to the objections raised by a pastor against the Bahá'í Faith. *It removes all the main obstacles that prevent Christians from recognizing the return of the Son in the glory of the Father*, from acknowledging the promised Redeemer of our time—*Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God*. Once you start reading this book, you will find it hard to put down.



***The Evidence
for Bahá'u'lláh:***

**The Glory of
the Father**
329 pages

One way to prove that Bahá'u'lláh fulfills the promise of the Second Advent is to compare Him with Jesus Christ. ***The Evidence for Bahá'u'lláh: The Glory of the Father***, does exactly that. It compares Jesus and Bahá'u'lláh in 35 different ways. A fair-minded, even a skeptical, reader cannot escape this conclusion: If Jesus is the One He claims to be, so must be Bahá'u'lláh. A sincere Christian cannot in good faith accept One and reject the other. It will be like having twin children, but loving only one of them!

In addition, ***The Evidence for Bahá'u'lláh*** offers a summary of some of the most significant prophecies presented in ***I Shall Come Again, Lord of Lords, and King of Kings***.



***History and
Teachings***



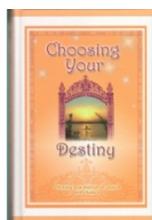
***On Wings of
Destiny***
274 Pages

On Wings of Destiny is based on a dialogue between two friends. Reading it is like joining a circle of friends and participating in a “fireside chat.”

The prime purpose of the book is to inspire you—and anyone else who values his soul and spiritual life—to recognize that ***in***

this world you have an awesome responsibility: you must choose your everlasting destiny. That choice has unimaginable consequences that will endure beyond death for all eternity. Failing to make a choice is also a choice. This book invites you to make every effort to discover God’s plan for you and to follow that plan.

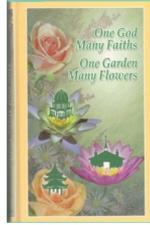
On Wings of Destiny shows that the only way you can attain true joy and happiness in all the worlds of God is to cultivate your spiritual potential and to draw nearer and nearer to God. If you value your soul and wish to choose your destiny in the light of knowledge and freedom, take the time to listen to this inspiring “fireside chat” to discover how the Bahá’í teachings can help you attain contentment, fulfill your life’s purpose, and discover your divine destiny: Heaven’s most glorious gift to you.



***Choosing
Your
Destiny***
375 Pages

Most people leave their destiny to “chance.” Whatever their parents happen to believe, they believe. This book shows that our “destiny” is God’s most precious gift to us. Should we throw this gift to the wind? Should we allow “chance” rather than “choice” determine our destiny?

The Bahá’í Faith has come to give us spiritual insight and to help us choose our destiny in the light of reason and true knowledge, rather than in the darkness of tradition and conformity. The knowledge contained in ***Choosing Your Destiny*** can liberate us from past prejudices and illusions and set our souls free. It can help us become spiritual by developing “the divine image” in our soul.



***One God, Many
Faiths; One
Garden,
Many Flowers***

290 Pages

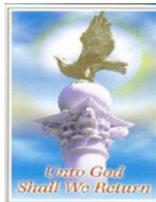
One God, Many Faiths; One Garden, Many Flowers shows that in God's garden there are many fragrant flowers, planted and nourished by the same Gardener. The Bahá'í Faith has come to help us recognize the beauty of the garden, the harmony of the flowers, and the oneness of the Gardener.

When we realize that we are all one people, on one planet, under one God, with one common destiny, the walls of prejudice that divide God's beautiful garden will crumble. Only true knowledge and love can reveal this beauty and bring about this wonder. The Bahá'í Faith is that knowledge and that love. It penetrates the hearts and souls of mankind to dispel all shadows of prejudice and separation. It connects our hearts and reveals the beauty and splendor of our souls in the light of oneness.

One God, Many Faiths, One Garden, Many Flowers offers you the knowledge that can change your destiny.



***Compilations from
Sacred Scriptures***

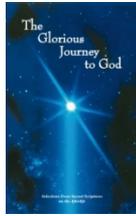


***Unto God
Shall We Return***

164 pages

This is a compilation from the Bahá'í Scriptures on the afterlife. It brings together the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the purpose of human life and the continuation

of that purpose into the mysterious realms beyond. ***Unto God Shall We Return*** is compiled and arranged to portray a clear vision of the meaning of life—both here and hereafter—and to offer guidance about how we can prepare our soul for God’s “many mansions in heaven.”



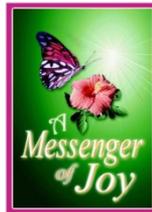
***The Glorious
Journey to
God***

256 Pages

The Glorious Journey to God contains quotations from the Bible, the Qur’án, and Bahá’í Scriptures on the Afterlife. The book shows a remarkable similarity between these sacred Scriptures.



The Afterlife



***A
Messenger
of Joy***

112 Pages

A Messenger of Joy is the most comforting and positive book ever written on death and the afterlife. In consoling and uplifting the souls of the grieving, it sets a standard that is not likely to be surpassed for a long time.

This book portrays death as a message of joy and hope, and not as the news of sorrow and despair. It lifts the veil to show that death is not the end of life, but the beginning of an everlasting and most glorious journey toward God.

A Glimpse of Paradise

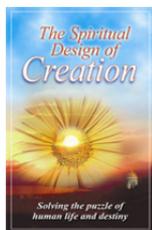
A Near-Death Vision of the Next Life

This DVD (also video) contains a talk given by Reinee Pasarow about one of her near death visions. This is a state in which the individual shows no vital signs of life, yet experiences life to its fullest. What makes this story unique is this: Reinee's vision guided her to become a Bahá'í. She was given several clues by a spiritual being about the Bahá'í Faith. For instance, one of the titles of Bahá'u'lláh—the Blessed Beauty—was revealed to her. She was also told the word “justice” and shown the seat of the Universal House of Justice, exactly as it is built. Reinee had many unusual dreams as a child, and three near death visions.

We have added an introduction and a conclusion to this DVD to make it more attractive and meaningful to all viewers, especially to seekers. The introduction and conclusion present Biblical and Bahá'í references to the many clues that Mrs. Pasarow received while in the presence of the Being of Light.



Knowing and Loving God



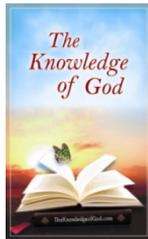
The Spiritual Design of Creation

This book is written to refresh the life of the soul. Its prime purpose is to advance the “knowledge of God,” so that we may know our Creator as He really is, not as we may wish Him to be!

A poet once said: “God is closer to me than I am to myself. Why, then, am I so far from Him?” How can this be possible? The distance between our spirit and the Spirit of God can be measured by the difference between God as He really is, and the God that we have created in our mind. The purpose of acquiring the “knowledge of God” is to diminish the distance. The more we know God as He really is, the closer we draw to Him.

Our purpose in coming to this world is spiritual transformation, which can be attained only by knowing and loving God. ***The Spiritual Design of Creation*** will help you attain this Most Glorious Purpose. It appeals both to the mind and to the heart. It satisfies the mind by presenting the latest scientific evidence for the existence of God and the afterlife. It inspires and transforms the heart by showing the everlasting honors and rewards in store for those who cultivate their spiritual potential and the unimaginable losses for those who fail in this endeavor.

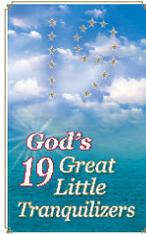
How would you feel if you traveled for 70 years toward a destination, and then at the end of this journey, you suddenly discovered that you had traveled in the wrong direction? This is the way many people squander the precious days of their lives. Imagine their disappointment at the end of their spiritual journey! Should we not then learn a lesson from their lives? Should we not take a little time for our soul while we still have a chance?



***The
Knowledge
of God***

This small book rests on this premise: We are spiritual beings created and designed in the most splendid Image, for a profound

purpose—to grow and advance spiritually by remaining in touch with our Designer. Our welfare and our destiny depend on harmonizing our life with what He has planned and has in store for us. Unless we accept and submit to His plan, we cannot manifest our full potential, nor can we enjoy the blessings in store for us. Instead of blooming into a beautiful flower, we will live and die as a seed, without fulfilling our mission—the very reason we came into this world.



**God's 19
Great Little
Tranquilizer
s**

62 Pages

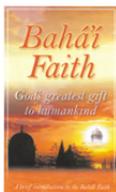
This is God's prescription for peaceful living. Without knowing, accepting, and living by these principles, no one can attain true happiness. This mini-book presents briefly the 19 most significant spiritual principles that bind us to our Creator.



**A Seven-Piece
Puzzle**

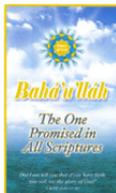
Each of the seven-volume series is like a piece of a single puzzle. To see the beautiful picture of human life and destiny—what God has planned for each of us here and hereafter—it is essential to study *all seven volumes, preferably in the following order:*

1. ***Bahá'í Faith:
God's Greatest
Gift to
Humankind***
160 pages



This volume describes briefly the teachings and history of the Bahá'í Faith. ***It displays the fruits of the Tree of Life.***

2. ***Bahá'u'lláh:
The One
Promised in
All Scriptures***
235 pages



This volume describes the life and Mission of the One who established the Bahá'í Faith. ***This is the root of the Tree of life, and the most significant volume in this series.*** Reading it is a must for every seeker of truth.

3. ***Bahá'í Proofs***



The One who has sent Messengers to us has also given us clear and definitive standards by which they can be recognized. This book applies those standards to Bahá'u'lláh and proves that He has fulfilled every one of them on a scale never seen before.

4. ***The Greatest
News:***
The News Everyone
Should Hear
166 pages



This book is addressed primarily to Christians. It proves that ***Bahá'u'lláh—the Glory of God—fulfills the promise of the second coming of Christ.***

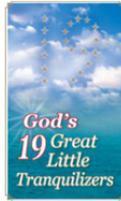
5. ***Death: the
Door to
Heaven***
182 pages



This volume describes the mysteries of the afterlife as revealed by Bahá'u'lláh. ***It explains the meaning of hell and heaven and shows how we can attain our divine destiny, how we can prepare our soul for God's***

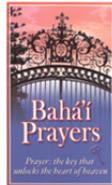
“many Mansions in heaven”
(John 14:2). Without gaining a glimpse of the afterlife, this life has no meaning.

**6. God’s 19
Great Little
Tranquilizers**
62 pages



We have been created to know and love God. This small book presents the “**Knowledge of God.**” It sets forth what we need to know about our Creator to attain a state of utter joy and peace. It reveals the spiritual design of creation and presents 19 principles that lead us to a life of contentment and happiness.

**7. Bahá’í
Prayers**
230 pages



We are asked to recognize a tree by its fruits (Matthew 7:20). Prayers are the first fruits of religion—its heart and soul. They are the heavenly lights that guide us to the presence of God and manifest His glory and grandeur. The prayers offered in this book are a basketful of fruits from the Vineyard of **Bahá’u’lláh—the Glory of God.**

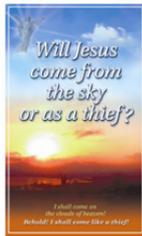
The prime purpose of this series is to unveil our **glorious destiny** and to demonstrate how the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh can help us:

- ✿ **To know God more truly**
- ✿ **To love Him more intimately**
- ✿ **To trust Him more genuinely, and**
- ✿ **To submit to His Will and His Wisdom more willingly.**

Reading the preceding volumes in the recommended order will lead you toward the discovery of the greatest mysteries of human life and destiny. It will help you resolve these puzzling and profound questions: *Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going? And how can we fulfill our divine destiny—attain the very purpose for which we have come into this world?* Are there, and will there ever be, any concerns and questions that are more urgent and of a greater consequence?



Others



*Will Jesus
Come from
the Sky or
as a Thief?*

Be always on the watch! Luke 21:36

*The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 1
Thess. 5:2*

In the mid-19th century many Christian scholars had discovered that, according to numerous biblical prophecies and promises, Christ would return in 1844. Thousands of Christians around the world expected His Return in that year. Why did so many discover the same date? And what piece of “the prophetic puzzle” did they miss? Let us explore this critical question.

Jesus declared that He would return “*like a thief*.” He also repeatedly warned us to “*Watch!*” How does a thief come? Secretly. A thief does not want to draw attention to himself. This is his foremost concern. How can we catch a thief? By being awake and “*watchful*,” by “*paying attention*” to his coming.

Jesus' warning that He would return "*like a thief*," and His recommended strategy for recognizing Him by staying *awake* and by "*watching*" for Him, are complementary:

The warning: I shall come like a thief!

The way to recognize me: Watch, pay close attention! Do not be complacent!

What, then, did Jesus mean by warning us repeatedly and emphatically to "*Watch!*"? He meant: "*Pay close attention to the news of My coming!*"

How did Jesus come the first time? Like a thief. He walked among the Jews. He knew every one of them, but with a few exceptions, they did not know Him. Jesus concealed His supreme glory from "the strangers," from all those who were unworthy of seeing the Spirit of God in Him (John 12:40), from all those who "*may look and look but see nothing*" (Mark 10:12). ***Only the spiritually-sighted paid close attention to Him***, only they "watched" with their hearts and souls, and only they saw the glory of God in Him. Jesus did not allow the spiritually blind to witness His divine glory.

By the vivid expression "*like a thief*" Jesus instructs us to expect a repetition of the way He came the first time. He further confirms this fact by predicting that ***people will respond to the News of His coming the same way that they responded to the News of the coming of Noah***. They will be complacent, non-attentive, negligent, and spiritually asleep!

What piece of "the prophetic puzzle" did Christians (who expected the Return of Christ in 1844) miss? The same "piece" that the Jews had missed 18 centuries earlier and are still missing! That piece is the word "***SPIRIT:***"

The “missing piece” for Jews:

He will come as a “*king*” means: “*His Spirit* will come as a king.”

The “missing piece” for Christians:

He will come from *heaven* means: “*His Spirit* will come from heaven.”

Jesus Himself decoded the word “sky” or “heaven” several times. Compare the following two verses, one from *Jesus Christ, the Anointed One of God*; the other from *Bahá’u’lláh, the Glory of God*:

I [the Spirit of God, Christ] have come down from heaven.
Christ (John 6:38)

He [the Spirit of God, Bahá’u’lláh], verily, hath again come down from heaven, even as He came down from it the first time.
Bahá’u’lláh (the Glory of God)

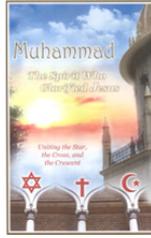


The Evidence for Jesus

The Glory of the Son

It is absolutely essential to know why we believe in Jesus. Where can we find the answer? Only in the Words of Jesus Himself. *The Evidence for Jesus* offers a brief summary of all the reasons Jesus—not His followers—gave to substantiate His claim. This is a book that every Christian should read. It will also be of great value to those of the Jewish faith who have a desire to know the evidence for their glorious King and Redeemer: Jesus Christ.





***Muhammad:
the Spirit Who
Glorified Jesus***

This book introduces Islám from a Bahá'í perspective. It demonstrates a remarkable harmony between the Bible and the Qur'án. It also responds to the objections raised against Islám.

References

Chapter 1

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2. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 141.
3. *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 42-43.
4. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 26.
5. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 82.
6. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 35.
7. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 92.
8. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, pp. 90-91.
9. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 105-106.
10. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 105.
11. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 106-107.
12. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 105.
13. *Bahá'í Prayers*, Wilmette, IL: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991 edition, p. 211.

Chapter 2

1. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 12.
2. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 101.
3. *The Proclamation of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 57.
4. *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* (Persian), no. 60.
5. *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh* (Persian), no. 59.
6. Christ (John 16:15).
7. Habakkuk 3:6.
8. *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 48.
9. John 8:57-58.
10. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 72.
11. Christ (Rev. 22:16).
12. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 4.

13. Christ (John 3:36).
14. *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 15.
15. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 50.
16. Christ (Rev. 16:15).
17. Christ (Matt. 19:28).
18. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 61.
19. Christ (John 14:2-3).
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21. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 145.
22. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 121.
23. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 158.
24. Isaiah 14:26-27.
25. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 33.
26. Christ (Rev. 12:10).
27. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 158.
28. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 73.
29. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 159.
30. Moses (Exodus 3:15).
31. Christ (John 8:28)
32. *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 12.
33. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 103.
34. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 12.
35. Christ (John 8:42).
36. *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 11.
37. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 57.
38. *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 100.
39. *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 70.
40. Christ (Rev. 1:6-7).
41. *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, p. 48.
42. Christ (Rev. 19:16).
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