

Some notes on Bahá'í proofs based on the Bible

*“Come ye Beloved of my Father, inherit the Kingdom
prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.”*

(Matthew 25:34)

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The true meaning of the prophecies concerning the coming of Christ

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In the Bible there are prophecies of the coming of Christ. The Jews still await the coming of the Messiah, and pray to God day and night to hasten His advent.

When Christ came they denounced and slew Him, saying: 'This is not the One for whom we wait. Behold when the Messiah shall come, signs and wonders shall testify that He is in truth the Christ. We know the signs and conditions, and they have not appeared. The Messiah will arise out of an unknown city. He shall sit upon the throne of David, and behold, He shall come with a sword of steel, and with a sceptre of iron shall He rule! He shall fulfil the law of the Prophets, He shall conquer the East and the West, and shall glorify His chosen people the Jews. He shall bring with Him a reign of peace, during which even the animals shall cease to be at enmity with man. For behold the wolf and the lamb shall drink from the same spring, and the lion and the doe shall lie down in the same pasture, the serpent and the mouse shall share the same nest, and all God's creatures shall be at rest'.

According to the Jews, Jesus the Christ fulfilled none of these conditions, for their eyes were holden and they could not see.

He came from Nazareth, no unknown place. He carried no sword in His hand, nor even a stick. He did not sit upon the Throne of David, He was a poor man. He reformed the Law of Moses, and broke the Sabbath Day. He did not conquer the East and the West, but was Himself subject to the Roman Law. He did not exalt the Jews, but taught equality and brotherhood, and rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees. He brought in no reign of peace, for during His lifetime injustice and cruelty reached such a height that even He Himself fell a victim to it, and died a shameful death upon the cross.

Thus the Jews thought and spoke, for they did not understand the Scriptures nor the glorious truths that were contained in them. The letter they knew by heart, but of the life-giving spirit they understood not a word.

Hearken, and I will show you the meaning thereof. Although He came from Nazareth, which was a known place, He also came from Heaven. His body was born of Mary, but His Spirit came from Heaven. The sword He carried was the sword of His tongue, with which He divided the good from the evil, the true from the false, the faithful from the unfaithful, and the light from the darkness. His Word was indeed a sharp sword! The Throne upon which He sat is the Eternal Throne from which Christ reigns for ever, a heavenly throne,

not an earthly one, for the things of earth pass away but heavenly things pass not away. He re-interpreted and completed the Law of Moses and fulfilled the Law of the Prophets. His word conquered the East and the West. His Kingdom is everlasting. He exalted those Jews who recognized Him. They were men and women of humble birth, but contact with Him made them great and gave them everlasting dignity. The animals who were to live with one another signified the different sects and races, who, once having been at war, were now to dwell in love and charity, drinking together the water of life from Christ the Eternal Spring.

Thus, all the spiritual prophecies concerning the coming of Christ were fulfilled, but the Jews shut their eyes that they should not see, and their ears that they should not hear, and the Divine Reality of Christ passed through their midst unheard, unloved and unrecognized.

It is easy to read the Holy Scriptures, but it is only with a clean heart and a pure mind that one may understand their true meaning. Let us ask God's help to enable us to understand the Holy Books. Let us pray for eyes to see and ears to hear, and for hearts that long for peace.

God's eternal Mercy is immeasurable. He has always chosen certain souls upon whom He has shed the Divine Bounty of His heart, whose minds He has illumined with celestial light, to whom He has revealed the sacred mysteries, and kept clear before their sight the Mirror of Truth. These are the disciples of God, and His goodness has no bounds. You who are servants of the Most High may be disciples also. The treasures of God are limitless.

The Spirit breathing through the Holy Scriptures is food for all who hunger. God Who has given the revelation to His Prophets will surely give of His abundance daily bread to all those who ask Him faithfully.¹

"... COME, YE BLESSED OF MY FATHER, INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD."

(Matthew 25:34)

1. When studying the Bible we must:
 - a) use our reason

I Thessalonians 5:20–21 Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

¹ 'Abdu'l-Bahá: Paris Talks, pp. 54–57.

I Peter 1:13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

I Peter 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in you hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

Isaiah 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Isaiah 41:21 Produce your cause, saith the lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob.

Acts 17:2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures.

II Timothy 1:6–7 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

b) interpret the Bible spiritually not literally

II Corinthians 3:6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

2. Christ repeatedly said that He would come again at the time of the end. He told His followers to wait and pray, to prepare and watch for His Second Coming. Certain signs have been given in the Bible for that great Day. Let us study these signs, and let us not make the same mistake as the Jews in not discerning the signs of the times at His first coming:

Matthew 16:3 And in the morning, it will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can yet not discern the signs of the times?

3. One of the signs of His Second Coming is wickedness prevailing in the world:

II Timothy 3:1–7 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3. Without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4. *Traitors, heady, high-minded,—lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;*

5. *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.*

6. *For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,*

7. *Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

Is not wickedness now prevalent in the world? Where is Christ then? Has He forgotten His promise?

4. Another sign of His coming is the preaching of the Gospel in the world:

Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

The Gospel has already been taken to all the nations. Where is Christ? Could He have forgotten His Promise?

5. A third sign is the establishment of the Jews in Palestine (Israel):

Isaiah 11:11–12 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Jeremiah 23:3–8 And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.

4. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the lord.

5. Behold, the days come, saith the lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgement and justice in the earth.

6. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, the lord our righteousness.

7. *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the lord, that they shall no more say, The lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;*

8. *But, The lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.*

Amos 9:14–15 And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.

15. *And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the lord thy God.*

Ezekiel 37:21–23 And say unto them, Thus saith the lord god; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:

22. *And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all:*

23. *Neither shall they defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.*

Luke 21:24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 21:27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

Acts 1:6–7 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, will thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7. *And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

Romans 11:25–27 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own

conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.

26. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

27. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

This sign has also been already fulfilled, as the Jews are gathered and established in Israel. Where is Christ, then?

6. A fourth sign is material progress, increase in knowledge, much travelling and scientific development:

Daniel 12:4 But thou; O Daniel, shut up the words, and seat the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

Nahum 2:4 (cars) The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.

Jeremiah 4:13 (aeroplanes) Behold, he shall come up as clouds, and his chariots shall be as a whirlwind: his horses are swifter than eagles. Woe unto us! for we are spoiled.

These have also been fulfilled. If this is the time of the end, then, where is Christ?

7. The only answer to all these is that Christ must have come already. Why doesn't everybody know this? It is because He Himself says that He shall come as a thief:

I Thessalonians 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

Luke 12:35–40 Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning;

36. And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their LORD, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37. Blessed are those servants, whom the LORD when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

38. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39. *And this know, that if the goodman of the house, had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.*

40. *Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*

Revelation 3:3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

He also says that He will come when mankind is unaware (knew not):

Matthew 24:37–39 But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38. *For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark,*

39. *And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

Note that not only is He to *come* as a thief that is unexpectedly, but He is also to *operate* as a thief (“house to be broken through”).

8. The current concept of Christ’s coming from heaven as the *physical* sky, and all eyes *physically* to see Him, should be understood spiritually not literally. The earth is round and rotating and therefore the sky is changeable. Furthermore, Christ said He also came the first time from heaven, although He was born of Mary:

John 6:38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but will of him that sent me.

By “all eyes shall see Him”, spiritual perception is meant, (“They have eyes but they see not”). We have here the assurance that at His Second Coming the world will accept Him.

9. Let us now study the parable of the Vineyard:

Luke 20:9–16 Then began he to speak to the people this parable; A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

10. *And at the season he sent a servant to the husband-men, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husband-men beat him, and sent him away empty.*

11. *And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated him shamefully, and sent him away empty.*

12. *And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast him out.*

13. *Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: It may be they will reverence him when they see him.*

14. *But when the husband-men saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.*

15. *So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?*

16. *He shall come and destroy these husband-men, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard it, they said, God forbid.*

The symbols are as follows: The Lord of the Vineyard is the Father; His Son is Christ; The servants are the prophets before Christ; the husband-men are religious leaders; and the Vineyard is the earth.

10. The above parable indicates that after the “beloved Son”, the “Lord” or “Father” is to come. This point is further confirmed by *Matthew*:

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Matthew 23:39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Hence the Second Advent is the return of Christ not as the “Son”, but “in the glory of the Father”—“the Glory of God”. Hence the name: “Bahá’u’lláh”, the founder of the Baha’i Faith, which means “Glory of God”.

11. Such a spiritual return is best illustrated in the return of the Prophet Elias in the person of John the Baptist:

Matthew 17:10–13 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

11. *And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.*

12. *But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.*

13. *Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.*

John the Baptist was not the return of Elias in the flesh, but He was the return of the spirit of Elias. Let us learn from this lesson of Christ to understand His own return, and not make the mistake of the Jews.

12. In *Acts* I:II we read "... this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." The ascension of Christ to heaven, and His return becomes clear only when we read in *John* 3:13, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven." The body of Christ did not come from heaven, but was born of Mary. It was His spirit which came down from heaven, ascended to heaven, and is to have its second return.
13. That the return of Christ should be through normal birth is further confirmed by repeated warnings of Christ on false prophets. If the true Christ is to come in a way different from other men, why does Jesus warn us about false prophets?
14. There is still a further indication that the promised Christ of the time of the end should be born:

Isaiah 9:6–7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

John 5:47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

He disclaimed being the "Father," when He said "My Father is greater than I".

John 14:28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said I go into the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

He disclaimed being the "Prince of Peace" when He said "I came not to send peace, but a sword."

Matthew 10:34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

And He disclaimed bearing "the government upon His shoulder" when He said "My kingdom is not of this world":

John 18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

This prophecy of *Isaiah* refers to none other but to the Coming of Christ, at His *second* Advent, as we find Him revealed in the Glory of God, Bahá'u'lláh.

15. There is another point in the parable of the vineyard referred to above, namely that the world (vineyard) shall not be destroyed. The current concept, however, of church-goers today is that through the fall of stars the world would be destroyed. Stars are spiritual stars. They are the spiritual leaders and churches.

Revelation 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are angels of the seven churches: and the seven candle sticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

Their fall is their spiritual downfall, their loss of spiritual light, power and popularity, which we see today.

16. There is yet another point of interest in the parable of the Vineyard. "The Husband-men" (priests and leaders) will be destroyed by the Promised Lord taking away the responsibility of the Vineyard from them and giving it to "others". This has been fulfilled by Bahá'u'lláh abolishing the institution of the priesthood and the clergy, and giving authority instead to assemblies and bodies elected by and from the people themselves in every locality.
17. We read that the Day of Judgement could be even a thousand years.

II Peter 3:7-8 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

The word 'day' does not mean just 24 hours, but a period of time. For example: Christ said: "Abraham rejoiced to see my day."

John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

The events associated with the day of judgement, therefore, are not only to occur spiritually, but also gradually.

18. On that day, we are told, the sun will lose its light. Light and darkness are spiritual, not physical:

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

II Corinthians 4:6 For God, commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Darkness, therefore, would be wickedness and unbelief, as we see and witness around us today.

19. There is confusion in what the churches teach about the resurrection to take place on the Day of Judgement when Christ returns, and the individual resurrection of each person right after his death, which is our life in the next world.

20. Let us first take individual resurrection. This shall be of a spiritual nature, not physical:

I Corinthians 15:36–44 Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

37. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

38. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

39. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

40. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

41. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

42. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

43. It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

44. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

It shall happen immediately after death:

I Corinthians 15:50–52 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

51. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Luke 23:39–43 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40. But the other answering rebuked him, saying Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41. And we indeed justly: for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Notice the word “To day”. Our life in this world is like the life of the embryo in the womb of the mother. As our embryonic life is a preparation for this life, so is life a preparation for the next.

21. As to the dead rising at the time of the Return of Christ, this means that the people at the time of His return would pass from unbelief, which is spiritual death, to faith, which is spiritual life.

Matthew 8:21–22 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

22. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.

John 5:24 Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

22. Some churches even teach that everything dead will physically rise on the Day of Judgement. Reason proves this to be untrue.
23. The meaning of the prophecies and mysteries of the Bible were sealed up until the time of the end:

Isaiah 29:10–12 For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

11. *And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:*

12. *And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned,*

Daniel 12:4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

Daniel 12:9 And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end.

I Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

How can the churches today, while teaching that the time of the end has not come, yet claim that they have found out and know the true meanings of the Bible?

24. A new name has also been promised

Isaiah 62:2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the lord shall name.

Isaiah 65:15 And ye shall leave your name for a curse unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall slay thee, and call his servants by another name:

Revelation 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

And in Zecharaiah 14:9 we read: “in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one.”

Zecharaiah 14:9 And the lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one lord and his name one.

That name is “Baha’i”: It is the same in all languages; and so is the name of “Bahá’u’lláh”.

Additional points related to Bahá’í history

1. The Baha’i Faith started in Persia. Its Founder, Bahá’u’lláh, and His Herald, the Báb (meaning gate) are both Persians.

Jeremiah 49:38 And I will set my throne in Elam, and will destroy from thence the king and the princes, saith the lord.

In *Jeremiah* we read that the throne of God would be established in “Elam”. Elam is the old name for Persia.

2. God foretold to Abraham that the Prophetic succession was to run through him:

Genesis 12:1–3 Now the Lord had said unto Abraham, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee:

2. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Bahá’u’lláh was descended from Abraham by his wife Katurah, thus fulfilling the prophecy that through Abraham would all the families of the earth be blessed.

3. The Baha’i Faith started in the year 1844.
 - a) The preaching of the gospel to the nations, one of the signs of the time of the end was completed in 1844. The last region to receive it was East Africa and Tibet.
 - b) The late Archdeacon of Clonfert, Eire, George Townshend writes:

“The strict exclusion of the Jews from their own land was at last relaxed by the Edict of Toleration.”

This document, Townshend goes on to point out was issued by the governing authorities, the Ottoman Turks, in 1844. The establishment of the Jews in Israel was another sign of the times.
 - c) The Morse electric telegraph, a symbol of progress and unity in our world, was discovered in 1844. Another sign of the times!
 - d) In *Matthew* Christ refers us to *Daniel* for the date of the time of the end.

Matthew 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)

Daniel 8:13–14 Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of

desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

14. And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

In *Daniel* we are asked to count 2300 “days” (which means years—a day for a year—see *Numbers* and *Ezekiel*) from the date of the rebuilding of Jerusalem which was in 456 BC. (see *Ezra*) The date we get is again 1844!

Numbers 14:34 After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

Ezekiel 4:6 And when thou has accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.

Ezra 7:7 And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levities, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.

4. Bahá'u'lláh, not of His own free will but as an exile and prisoner, was banished by His enemies to ‘Akká, Palestine (now Israel).

The following prophecies thus came true:

Isaiah 59:20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 2:2–3 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Ezekiel 43:1–2 Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east:

2. And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

Ezekiel 43:4–5 And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.

5. *So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.*

Zechariah 2:10 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD.

Prophecies specifically regarding “Akká” (Achor):

Isaiah 65:10 And Sharon shall be a fold of flocks, and the valley of Achor a place for the herds to lie down in, for my people that have sought me.

Hosea 2:15 And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.

How to distinguish the false prophet from the true

1. Some churches teach that because of Christ’s warnings that false prophets can deceive, we should not listen even to any claim, and refuse to investigate. They quote for example:

Luke 17:23 They shall say to you (referring to Christ’s return) See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

Such an interpretation would be wrong, because it would contradict Christ’s other holy command to pray and “watch” for His Coming. Furthermore the verse quoted above is quoted only partly. It continues thus:

Luke 17:24 For as the lightening, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

Therefore, the verse in its full context reveals that the True Word of the True Christ, is not just an empty claim, but is like lightning, which would spread from East to West. Empty claims must of course be discounted. This is further confirmed by another verse:

Matthew 7:19 Every tree (prophet) that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

This means that the Faith of false prophets cannot spread or prosper. The Baha’i Faith is nearly 156 years old; it is established in over 190 countries of the world.² If it were false, God would have hewn it long ago!

2. In *Matthew 7:15–20* we are told that false prophets can be distinguished from the true by “their fruits”:

² As of 1999.

Matthew 7:15–20 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

A study of the life of Bahá’u’lláh, His ethics and social teachings, the influence for good that He has had on the hearts of men, the world community built in His name, knit together as one family, free from all racial, religious and class prejudices will reveal to any inquirer the fruits of Bahá’u’lláh.

3. In *Deuteronomy 18:21–22* we read that another criterion of the True Messenger of God is that His prophecies will come to pass:

Deuteronomy 18:21–22 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which, the Lord hath not spoken?

22. When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

A study of Baha’i history will reveal how all His prophecies to the rulers and Kings of the world, and all His warnings to them came true.

Progressive Revelation

Divine teachings are of two kinds—spiritual and social. The spiritual teachings constitute the essential part of religion. They deal with spiritual truths, such as the moral and ethical teachings of conduct. These teachings are eternal, unchangeable, everlasting. It is to this part of God’s religion that the Psalmist is referring when he says:

Psalms 33:11 The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

It was to this part of the Mosaic religion that Christ was referring when He said:

Matthew 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

It was again to this part of God's everlasting religion that He was referring when in anticipation of the future He said:

Luke 21:33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

The second part of divine teachings have a social or material aspect. They deal with such matters as marriage, divorce, inheritance; community life, the week and its day of rest, laws of punishment, forbidden meats, etc. These social laws, although, always divinely-ordained, yet are changeable. They are adapted by God's Messengers to the needs and conditions of each Age. For example: Abraham, God's prophet in His age (*Genesis 20:7*) allowed the marriage by man of one's half-sister, the daughter of one's father as recorded in *Genesis 20:12*.

Genesis 20:7 Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.

Genesis 20:12 And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.

Conditions in the time of Moses, however, had changed. By divine authority he repealed the above law, as allowed by Abraham, as recorded in:

Leviticus 18:9 The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness thou shalt not uncover.

Furthermore, we see how Moses allowed divorce.

Deuteronomy 24:1 When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house.

However, Jesus condemned it:

Mark 10:9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Likewise we see Moses instituting and emphasizing the Sabbath:

Exodus 31:16–17 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

17. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.

But Jesus teaching a more liberal attitude about it (*Luke 6:1–9*) to the extent that He was breaking it (*John 5:18*).

Luke 6:1–9 And it came to pass on the second Sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.

2. And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day?

3. And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did when himself was an hungered, and they which were with him;

4. How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the showbread, and gave also to them that were with him; which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

5. And he said unto them, That the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

6. And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered.

7. And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him.

8. But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had a withered hand, rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth.

9. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the Sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?

John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

Every successive manifestation of God confirms and amplifies the spiritual teachings of the former Manifestation to make them suit man's growing capacity. He also changes, with divine authority, the

social laws adapting them to the changing needs of the times. That is why Christ taught:

John 16:12–13 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and He will show you things to come.

The spirit of Truth is Bahá'u'lláh. Jesus could not teach those around him principles of World Order, as all the world had not even yet been discovered. World unity was not possible in past ages, but it is possible now.

Other teachings of the new age—as promised

The oneness of mankind

Isaiah 11:6–9 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

7. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den.

9. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Micah 4:2–3 And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

3. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

World peace

Isaiah 2:4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares; and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Micah 4:4–5 But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.

5. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.

Isaiah 35:1–2 The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

2. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

Joel 3:18 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim.

Unity of religions

Zechariah 14:9 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

Habakuk 2:14 For the earth shall be filled with knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Universal language

Zephaniah 3:9 For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.

Baptism and communion

Baptism: Baptism, like circumcision in the law of Moses, is a physical symbol and pail of the changeable part of God's Religion. As circumcision was superseded by the Gospel (*Acts 15; Galatians 5:2*), so is the physical baptism by water superseded by God's Faith in this Day.

Acts 15:24 For as much as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

Acts 15:28–29 For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

29. *That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.*

Galatians 5:2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

As circumcision was to be taken “in the spirit” (*Philippians 3:3*), so is baptism today to be taken in the spirit, through the recognition of Bahá’u’lláh and declaration of faith in Him.

Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

It is interesting that *Matthew 28:19* and *Mark 16:16* indicate that baptism is possible only if a person is taught and believes, therefore he must be an adult.

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Mark 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Mary Magdalene was not baptized (*Luke 7 50*) nor was the good thief baptized (*Luke 23:39–43*) yet both were saved. Physical water does not save.

Luke 7:50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Luke 23:39–43 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40. *But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Does not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?*

41. *And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.*

42. *And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*

43. *And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*

Communion: In *Matthew 26:26–29* we read that the Communion established by Christ is to last only until His return in his “Father’s Kingdom”.

Matthew 26:26–29 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

28. For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

29. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Baha'is firmly believe He has now come. The “new drink” that He has promised, is the same “spiritual drink” of *I Corinthians 10:4*. It symbolizes God's holy teachings for this Day.

I Corinthians 10:4. And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

“Followers of the Gospel, behold the gates of heaven are flung open. He that had ascended unto it is now come. Give ear to His voice calling aloud over land and sea, announcing to all mankind the advent of this Revelation—a Revelation through the agency of which the Tongue of Grandeur is now proclaiming: ‘Lo, the sacred Pledge hath been fulfilled, for He, the Promised One, is come!’” “The voice of the Son of Man is calling aloud from the sacred vale: ‘Here am I, here am I, O God my God!’ ... whilst from the Burning Bush breaketh forth the cry: ‘Lo, the Desire of the world is made manifest in His transcendent glory!’ The Father hath come. That which ye were promised in the Kingdom of God is fulfilled. This is the Word which the Son veiled when He said to those around Him that at that time they could not bear it ... Verily the Spirit of Truth is come to guide you unto all truth ... He is the One Who glorified the Son and exalted His Cause ...” “The Comforter Whose advent all the scriptures have promised is now come that He may reveal unto you all knowledge and wisdom. Seek Him over the entire surface of the earth, haply ye may find Him.”³

³ Bahá'u'lláh cited by Shoghi Effendi: *World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 104–105.