

NO PROPHET IS GREATER THAN ANOTHER

Some Christians believe Christ is superior to all other Prophets: "God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name" (Philippians 2:9), and there's "no other name" to save us (Acts 4:12).

Similarly, some Baha'is believe Baha'u'llah is the "greatest" of all Prophets (Manifestations). They point to Baha'i Scripture that refers to Baha'u'llah as "Supreme Manifestation." But that was written by His son, who was mistakenly regarded by many as a Prophet too! The son was emphasizing Baha'u'llah's greatness over 'himself,' not over the actual Divine Prophets!

Baha'i scripture stresses the equality of all Prophets: "To prefer one in honor to another, to exalt certain ones above the rest, is in no wise to be permitted." And when the son wrote of the Prophets plurally, the same designation was used: "Supreme Manifestations."

Similar misunderstandings are also found in other religions. For every exclusive text, others emphasize universality. Christ is not only the savior for Christians, "but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). Baha'u'llah is referred to as the "Most Great Name," but Baha'i scripture also addresses Christ as the "Most Great Name".

Outward contradictions are most pronounced when read too literally. The Bible instructs Christians to "understand with their hearts" (Acts 28:27) because the Word of God is "discerned only through the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 2:14). Absolutely nowhere in the Bible does it say to understand each word "literally". On the contrary, it urges the faithful to seek out and discover much deeper meanings.

Baha'i scripture specifically instructs us to read in context and cautions against literalism. It acknowledges using hyperbole, exaggeration, and other literary devices to emphasize certain truths. If we read seemingly exclusive scripture in context and less literally, we can more easily grasp the common religious themes of universal love and inclusivity.

I believe Baha'u'llah did not just inaugurate the Baha'i 'religion,' but like all previous Prophets He revolutionized all of Religion, and all of humanity. No individual or religion remained the same after Baha'u'llah, or after any other Manifestation of God. Baha'u'llah taught that even prior Prophets continue to, "manifest in the future" and they, "are all ordained by God, and are a reflection of His Will and Purpose."

If God is love, the greatest religion is the one that puts you most in touch with your heart.

Please see References