

## **BREAKING NEWS: CHRIST RETURNS!**

You thought it was a prank, but wherever you turned the headline was the same: *Christ Returned to Earth!*

News crews film Christ as He consoles the poor. Thousands are crowded around Him crying, singing, screaming with joy. They hold up babies to be blessed, and their sick and maimed are touched and healed. Millions more are on their way to even catch a glimpse. They travel by car, boat, jet. The highways and ports are congested, airports are in disarray. Multitudes from every nation are making pilgrimages on foot with nothing more than the clothes on their backs.

What if that was true? ... Amazingly, millions across the globe believe the Promised One already returned!

Christians long anticipated the place He would come from, and a special place He would visit. Bible scholars refer to the place He comes from as the Biblical East that includes today's Iran and Iraq. And that special place He'd visit as the "mountain of the Lord," Mt. Carmel. Nobody claimed to know the exact day or time, but early 19<sup>th</sup> Century scholars believed the year to be 1844 AD.

They cautioned the Promised One would not be known by the same name but by a new name. Christ told His followers not to believe anyone that says "Christ" returned, and that He would return in the "Glory of the Father (God)."

Baha'is believe this long-awaited Christ Spirit already returned with that new name, "Baha'u'llah." In Arabic, the language closest to Christ's own, Baha'u'llah means "the Glory of God".

Baha'u'llah was born in Persia, today's Iran, of the Biblical East and commenced His ministry in today's neighboring Iraq. The Baha'i calendar starts in 1844 AD, the exact year of Christ's anticipated

return. Today, the Baha'i World Center prophetically sits atop the "Mountain of the Lord," Mt. Carmel, in what is now Haifa, Israel.

Throughout religious history all Prophets promised that other future Prophets would bring additional guidance and God would never abandon us. They left us clues to help us recognize these Promised Ones, and perhaps to inspire us to search deeper into their Words. Most religious leaders understood the Words and signs literally, delved no deeper, and banned their adherents from accepting other Prophets. These Prophets included Krishna, Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, the Bab, and the most recent, Baha'u'llah.

They were all rejected and persecuted, mostly by the most religious and learned of each age. But starting with a small core of faithful, each Prophet was recognized not by those demanding literal signs and miracles, but those who were fortunate to recognize God's Spirit of love in a new human Vessel.

We continue to clash over literal misinterpretations. But in every age, some recognize the Light of these Torchbearers regardless of name or language. Today, His new name is Baha'u'llah. You may call him by the name of any previous Prophet and essentially not be wrong – so long as you identify the Light as the same that has always guided us. Tomorrow's sun is the same as today's and yesterday's, although we refer to each day by a different name.

*Please see References*