

## Revelation and Reason, IV

### الوحي والعقل

#### Abstract

A Baha'i exploration of the doctrines of **Revelation** (الوحي) and **Reason** (العقل) will proceed in an undetermined number of installments, with the fourth installment exploring the relationship between human knowledge and the Holy Spirit.

*Baha'u'llah promises His followers that they can be divinely inspired and protected from error in a variety of ways, and that they are not abandoned to their ignorance:*

**Know thou that the term "Infallibility" hath numerous meanings and divers stations. In one sense it is applicable to the One Whom God hath made immune from error. Similarly it is applied to every soul whom God hath guarded against sin, transgression, rebellion, impiety, disbelief and the like.** (Ishraqat, in Tablets of Baha'u'llah)

Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha indicate that Baha'is engaged in at least TEN activities are assured of divine inspiration if they engage in these activities in the right manner - one is through supplication to God:

Confirm me with the Holy Spirit, so that I may call in Thy Name amongst the nations and give the glad tidings of the manifestation of Thy kingdom amongst mankind. (Baha'i Prayers, p. 186)

Only when the lamp of search, of earnest striving, of longing desire, of passionate devotion, of fervid love, of rapture, and ecstasy, is kindled within the seeker's heart, and the breeze of His loving-kindness is wafted upon his soul, will the darkness of error be dispelled, the mists of doubts and misgivings be dissipated, and the lights of knowledge and certitude envelop his being. At that hour will the mystic Herald, bearing the joyful tidings of the Spirit, shine forth from the City of God resplendent as the morn, and, through the trumpet-blast of knowledge, will awaken the heart, the soul, and the spirit from the slumber of negligence. Then will the manifold favours and outpouring grace of the holy and everlasting Spirit confer such new life upon the seeker that he will find himself endowed with a new eye, a new ear, a new heart, and a new mind. He will contemplate the manifest signs of the universe, and will penetrate the hidden mysteries of the soul. Gazing with the eye of God, he will perceive within every atom a door that leadeth him to the stations of absolute certitude. He will discover in all things the mysteries of divine Revelation and the evidences of an everlasting manifestation. (Baha'u'llah, The Kitab-i-Iqan, p. 195)

We testify that thou hast set thy face towards God and traveled far until thou didst attain His presence and gavest ear unto the Voice of this Wronged One, Who hath been cast into prison through the misdeeds of those who have disbelieved in the signs and testimonies of God and have denied this

heavenly grace through which the whole world hath been made to shine. Blessed thy face, for it hath turned unto Him, and thine ear, for it hath heard His Voice, and thy tongue, for it hath celebrated the praise of God, the Lord of lords. We pray God to graciously aid thee to become a standard for the promotion of His Cause and to enable thee to draw nigh unto Him at all times and under all conditions. (Baha'u'llah, Tajalliyat, Tablets of Baha'u'llah revealed after the Kitab-i-Aqdas)

Thou seest, O my God, how the eyes of these poor creatures are bent upon the horizon of Thy riches, how the hearts of these helpless ones are set in the direction of Thy might... They are sore pressed with cares, O my Lord, and are encompassed about by the wicked. Send down, therefore, from the heaven of Thy behest Thine invisible hosts, that, holding aloft the ensigns of Thy victory, they may help them in Thy land, and may shield them against their adversaries. (Baha'u'llah, Prayers and Meditations, LXX)

Another is through firmness in the Covenant:

Star of the West XI:14, 23 November 1920, page 240, Tablet of 'Abdu'l-Baha to Mr and Mrs Howard MacNutt

To their honours Mr and Mrs Howard MacNutt, Brooklyn, N.Y.-Upon them be Bahá'u'l-Abhá!

HE IS GOD!

O ye two blessed souls!

Your letter was received. Praise be to God! ye are glad, ye are full of joy and fragrance, and are safe and protected under the shelter of the Merciful One. **Today those who are firm in the Covenant are soaring by the Bounties of the Holy Spirit in lofty regions, while the wavering ones are depressed, dejected and afflicted with a thousand pains and calamities. This is because the confirmations of the Abhá Kingdom have been cut off from them. They have been deprived of the Light of the Sun of Truth and have had no share from the breezes of the Holy Spirit.**

Another is through teaching the Faith in accordance with His guidelines:

Verily, We behold you from Our realm of glory, and shall aid whosoever will arise for the triumph of Our Cause with the hosts of the Concourse on high and a company of Our favored angels. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, LXXII, p. 139)

By the righteousness of God! Whoso openeth his lips in this Day and maketh mention of the name of his Lord, the hosts of Divine inspiration shall descend upon him from the heaven of My name, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. On him shall also descend the Concourse on high, each bearing aloft a chalice of pure light. Thus hath it been foreordained in the realm of God's Revelation, by the behest of Him Who is the All-Glorious, the Most Powerful. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, CXXIX, p. 280)

O ye servants of the Blessed Beauty!... It is clear that in this day, confirmations from the unseen world are encompassing all those who deliver the divine Message. Should the work of teaching lapse, these confirmations would be entirely cut off, since it is impossible for the loved ones of God to receive assistance unless they teach. (Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, #209, pp. 264-265)

I beg of God through the confirmation and assistance of the True One thou mayest show the utmost eloquence, fluency, ability and skill in teaching the real significances of the Bible. Turn toward the

Kingdom of ABHA and seek the bounty of the Holy Spirit. Loosen the tongue and the confirmation of the Spirit shall reach thee. (Abdu'l-Baha, Tablets of Abdu'l-Baha v2, p. 243)

Another is through writing in response to attacks upon the Faith:

If any man were to arise to defend, in his writings, the Cause of God against its assailants, such a man, however inconsiderable his share, shall be so honored in the world to come that the Concourse on high would envy his glory. No pen can depict the loftiness of his station, neither can any tongue describe its splendor. For whosoever standeth firm and steadfast in this holy, this glorious, and exalted Revelation, such power shall be given him as to enable him to face and withstand all that is in heaven and on earth. Of this God is Himself a witness. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, CLIV, p. 329)

Another is for pure and high-minded individuals to take part in assemblies of consultation together for the benefit of the people:

The Shah has certainly done his part, and the execution of the proposed beneficial measures is now in the hands of persons functioning in assemblies of consultation. If these individuals prove to be pure and high-minded, if they remain free from the taint of corruption, **the confirmations of God will make them a never-failing source of bounty to mankind.** He will cause to issue from their lips and their pens what will bless the people, so that every corner of this noble country of Iran will be illumined with their justice and integrity and the rays of that light will encompass the whole earth. "Neither will this be difficult with God." [Qur'án 14:23; 35:18.] (Abdu'l-Baha, The Secret of Divine Civilization, pp. 16-17)

Another is the governance of the sovereign executive, in particular the reigning monarch:

Shouldst thou [Sultan 'Abdu'l-Aziz] cause rivers of justice to spread their waters amongst thy subjects, **God would surely aid thee with the hosts of the unseen and of the seen, and would strengthen thee in thine affairs.** No God is there but Him. All creation and its empire are His. Unto Him return the works of the faithful. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings, CXIV)

O thou servant of the Sacred Threshold! **The stability of every throne and the security of the seat of every sovereign are dependent upon the grace of God and based upon the power of Divine assistance.** All the Chiefs and Rulers of the West, Emperors and Kings, that they may establish firmly their rule and dominion over their peoples, proclaim and hold fast unto this saying of Peter, the Apostle: "In truth, all authority is of God,"# that is to say every sovereignty is established and exercised in accordance with the Divine Purpose. By this means, they assure the sanctity of their throne and proclaim the sacredness of their sovereignty. And now, consider and reflect! How often are rulers and governments praised and extolled in the Holy Writ of Baha'u'llah and how frequently allegiance and loyalty to Kings and Monarchs are enjoined upon everyone! Ponder in your hearts and realize what the result will be in future! Gracious God! They that are in authority are as yet unaware of this most great bounty bestowed upon them and know not what a rich blessing the Lord hath vouchsafed unto the rulers and governors of the world. At this hour, in the uttermost parts of the earth, even in the continent of America, peoples are praying on behalf of the Chief and Ruler of Persia and praise and glorify his name. Ere long, ye shall see how the government of Baha'u'llah's native land will have become the most advanced country in all the regions of

the world. This indeed is supreme bounty and a warning unto every beholder! (Signed), Abdu'l-Baha 'Abbas. Translated by Shoghi Effendi. ('Abdu'l-Baha, in Star of the West, XIV:8, November 1923, p. 245)

Another is the appearance of arts and sciences:

The purpose underlying Their revelation hath been to educate all men, that they may, at the hour of death, ascend, in the utmost purity and sanctity and with absolute detachment, to the throne of the Most High. **The light which these souls radiate is responsible for the progress of the world and the advancement of its peoples. They are like unto leaven which leaveneth the world of being, and constitute the animating force through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest.** Through them the clouds rain their bounty upon men, and the earth bringeth forth its fruits. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, LXXXI, p. 157)

The soul that hath remained faithful to the Cause of God, and stood unwaveringly firm in His Path shall, after his ascension, be possessed of such power that all the worlds which the Almighty hath created can benefit through him. **Such a soul provideth, at the bidding of the Ideal King and Divine Educator, the pure leaven that leaveneth the world of being, and furnisheth the power through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest.** Consider how meal needeth leaven to be leavened with. Those souls that are the symbols of detachment are the leaven of the world. Meditate on this, and be of the thankful. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, LXXXII, p. 161)

In the treasuries of the knowledge of God there lieth concealed a knowledge which, when applied, will largely, though not wholly, eliminate fear. This knowledge, however, should be taught from childhood, as it will greatly aid in its elimination. Whatever decreaseth fear increaseth courage. **Should the Will of God assist Us, there would flow out from the Pen of the Divine Expounder a lengthy exposition of that which hath been mentioned, and there would be revealed, in the field of arts and sciences, what would renew the world and the nations.** A word hath, likewise, been written down and recorded by the Pen of the Most High in the Crimson Book which is capable of fully disclosing that force which is hid in men, nay of redoubling its potency. We implore God -- exalted and glorified be He -- to graciously assist His servants to do that which is pleasing and acceptable unto Him. (Baha'u'llah, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 32)

Another assures divine inspiration when we take action to befriend and assist the poor and abased among humanity:

If ye meet the abased or the down-trodden, turn not away disdainfully from them, for the King of Glory ever watcheth over them and surroundeth them with such tenderness as none can fathom except them that have suffered their wishes and desires to be merged in the Will of your Lord, the Gracious, the All-Wise. O ye rich ones of the earth! Flee not from [page 315] the face of the poor that lieth in the dust, nay rather befriend him and suffer him to recount the tale of the woes with which God's inscrutable Decree hath caused him to be afflicted. By the righteousness of God! **Whilst ye consort with him, the Concourse on high will be looking upon you, will be interceding for you, will be extolling your names and glorifying your action.** Blessed are the learned that pride not themselves on their attainments; and well is it with the righteous that mock not the sinful, but rather conceal their misdeeds, so that their own shortcomings may remain veiled to men's eyes. (Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, CXLV, pp. 314-315)

Another indicates that one can receive the blessings of the Holy Spirit at any time he makes himself receptive:

"Once a learned man journeyed to see me to receive my blessing, saying he knew and comprehended the Bahá'í teachings. When I told him that **he could receive the blessings of the Holy Spirit at any time when he put himself in a receptive attitude to accept them**, he said he was always in a receptive attitude.

"What would you do,' I asked 'if I were to suddenly turn and strike you?' He instantly flared with indignation and strode angrily about the room.

"After a little I went over and took his arm, saying, '**But you must return good for evil. Whether I honoured you or despised you, you should follow the teachings; now you merely read them.** Remember the words of Jesus who said, 'The first shall be last, and the last first.' The man turned, shook my hand and departed, and I have since heard of many kind acts he has done."

(Abdu'l-Baha, 'Abdu'l-Baha in London, pp. 108-109)

Another are the answers that Baha'i scholars will be inspired with which will not be derived from the revealed Writings:

We must turn aside from these vain imaginings and suppositions and philosophizings of the world, and fix our eyes upon the clear stream of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh. Out of these teachings, and the society which they will create on this planet, will come a solution to all of the problems of men. **Gradually, greater scholars, more deeply spiritual thinkers, will be able to answer from a Bahá'í standpoint many of these questions. It is not necessary that they should be in the divine text; they can be studied and learned in the future;** but at present we have not had time to evolve the Bahá'í scholars who can deal with these subjects in detail, and take upon themselves to answer the abstruse points and the many unfounded doctrines which are advanced by modern philosophers. (From a letter written on behalf of the Guardian to an individual believer, April 22, 1954; in Lights of Guidance, #1823, p. 537; in Compilation on Scholarship of the Research Department, published in 1999)

Another is the gathering of the believers in remembrance of God:

It befitteth the friends to hold a gathering, a meeting, where they shall glorify God and fix their hearts upon Him, and read and recite the Holy Writings of the Blessed Beauty -- may my soul be the ransom of His lovers! The lights of the All-Glorious Realm, the rays of the Supreme Horizon, will be cast upon such bright assemblages, for these are none other than the Mashriqu'l-Adhkars, the Dawning-Points of God's Remembrance, which must, at the direction of the Most Exalted Pen, be established in every hamlet and city... **These spiritual gatherings must be held with the utmost purity and consecration, so that from the site itself, and its earth and the air about it, one will inhale the fragrant breathings of the Holy Spirit.** (Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha, #55, pp. 93-94)

Whensoever a company of people shall gather in a meeting place, shall engage in glorifying God, and shall speak with one another of the mysteries of God, **beyond any doubt the breathings of the Holy Spirit will blow gently over them, and each shall receive a share thereof.** (Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha, #56, p. 94)

Another is seeking understanding by turning to the Holy Spirit:

Inasmuch as it hath been clearly shown that **only those who are initiated into the divine mysteries can comprehend the melodies uttered by the Bird of Heaven**, it is therefore incumbent upon every one to seek enlightenment from the illumined in heart and from the Treasuries of divine mysteries regarding the intricacies of God's Faith and the abstruse allusions in the utterances of the Daysprings of Holiness. Thus will these mysteries be unraveled, not by the aid of acquired learning, but solely through the assistance of God and the outpourings of His grace. "Ask ye, therefore, of them that have the custody of the Scriptures, if ye know it not." [Qur'an 16:43] (Kitab-i-Iqan)

Know verily that Knowledge is of two kinds: **Divine and Satanic. The one welletth out from the fountain of divine inspiration**; the other is but a reflection of vain and obscure thoughts. **The source of the former is God Himself**; the motive-force of the latter the whisperings of selfish desire. **The one is guided by the principle: "Fear ye God; God will teach you";**<sup>22</sup> the other is but a confirmation of the truth: "Knowledge is the most grievous veil between man and his Creator." **The former bringeth forth the fruit of patience, of longing desire, of true understanding, and love**; whilst the latter can yield naught but arrogance, vainglory and conceit. From the sayings of those Masters of holy utterance, Who have expounded the meaning of true knowledge, the odor of these dark teachings, which have obscured the world, can in no wise be detected. The tree of such teachings can yield no result except iniquity and rebellion, and beareth no fruit but hatred and envy. Its fruit is deadly poison; its shadow a consuming fire. How well hath it been said: "Cling unto the robe of the Desire of thy heart, and put thou away all shame; bid the worldly wise be gone, however great their name."

The heart must needs therefore be cleansed from the idle sayings of men, and sanctified from every earthly affection, **so that it may discover the hidden meaning of divine inspiration, and become the treasury of the mysteries of divine knowledge**. Thus hath it been said: "He that treadeth the snow-white Path, and followeth in the footsteps of the Crimson Pillar, shall never attain unto his abode unless his hands are empty of those worldly things cherished by men." This is the prime requisite of whosoever treadeth this path. Ponder thereon, that, with eyes unveiled, thou mayest perceive the truth of these words. (Kitab-i-Iqan)

Another is the consultation carried out by the Houses of Justice (currently denominated Local and National Spiritual Assembly) according to Baha'u'llah's guidelines:

The prime requisites for them that take counsel together are purity of motive, radiance of spirit, detachment from all else save God, attraction to His Divine Fragrances, humility and lowliness amongst His loved ones, patience and long-suffering in difficulties and servitude to His exalted Threshold. Should they be graciously aided to acquire these attributes, **victory from the unseen Kingdom of Baha shall be vouchsafed to them**. In this day, assemblies of consultation are of the greatest importance and a vital necessity. Obedience unto them is essential and obligatory. The members thereof must take counsel together in such wise that no occasion for ill-feeling or discord may arise. This can be attained when every member expresseth with absolute freedom his own opinion and setteth forth his argument. Should any one oppose, he must on no account feel hurt for not until matters are fully discussed can the right way be revealed. The shining spark of truth cometh forth only after the clash of differing opinions. If after discussion, a <sup>22</sup> decision be carried unanimously, well and good; but if, the Lord forbid, differences of opinion should arise, a majority of voices must prevail. ('Abdu'l-Baha in Shoghi Effendi, Baha'i Administration, pp. 21-22)

The first condition is absolute love and harmony amongst the members of the assembly. They must be wholly free from estrangement and must manifest in themselves the Unity of God, for they are the waves of one sea, the drops of one river, the stars of one heaven, the rays of one sun, the trees of one orchard, the flowers of one garden. Should harmony of thought and absolute unity be non-existent, that gathering shall be dispersed and that assembly be brought to naught. The second condition: -- They must when coming together turn their faces to the Kingdom on High and ask aid from the Realm of Glory. They must then proceed with the utmost devotion, courtesy, dignity, care and moderation to express their views. They must in every matter search out the truth and not insist upon their own opinion, for stubbornness and persistence in one's views will lead ultimately to discord and wrangling and the truth will remain hidden. The honored members must with all freedom express their own thoughts, and it is in no wise permissible for one to belittle the thought of another, nay, he must with moderation set forth the truth, and should differences of opinion arise a majority of voices must prevail, and all must obey and submit to the majority. It is again not permitted that any one of the honored members object to or censure, whether in or out of the meeting, any decision arrived at previously, though that decision be not right, for such criticism would prevent any decision from being enforced. In short, whatsoever thing is arranged in harmony and with love and purity of motive, its result is light, and should the least trace of estrangement prevail the result shall be darkness upon darkness.... If this be so regarded, that assembly shall be of God, but otherwise it shall lead to coolness and alienation that proceed from the Evil One. Discussions must all be confined to spiritual matters that pertain to the training of souls, the instruction of children, the relief of the poor, the help of the feeble throughout all classes in the world, kindness to all peoples, the diffusion of the fragrances of God and the exaltation of His Holy Word. **Should they endeavor to fulfill these conditions the Grace of the Holy Spirit shall be vouchsafed unto them, and that assembly shall become the center of the Divine blessings, the hosts of Divine confirmation shall come to their aid, and they shall day by day receive a new effusion of Spirit.** ('Abdu'l-Baha in Shoghi Effendi, Baha'i Administration, pp. 22-23)

Finally the consultations of the Universal House of Justice:

O people of God! That which traineth the world is Justice, for it is upheld by two pillars, reward and punishment. These two pillars are the sources of life to the world. Inasmuch as for each day there is a new problem and for every problem an expedient solution, such affairs should be referred to the House of Justice that the members thereof may act according to the needs and requirements of the time. **They that, for the sake of God, arise to serve His Cause, are the recipients of divine inspiration from the unseen Kingdom.** It is incumbent upon all to be obedient unto them. All matters of State should be referred to the House of Justice, but acts of worship must be observed according to that which God hath revealed in His Book. (Ishraqat and Bisharat, in Tablets of Baha'u'llah)

It is incumbent upon the Trustees of the House of Justice to take counsel together regarding those things which have not outwardly been revealed in the Book, and to enforce that which is agreeable to them. **God will verily inspire them with whatsoever He willeth, and He, verily, is the Provider, the Omniscient.** (Kalimat-i-Firdawsiyyih, in Tablets of Baha'u'llah)

To summarize, infallibility in essence is confined to the universal Manifestations of God, and infallibility as an attribute is conferred upon sanctified souls. **For instance, the Universal House of Justice, if it be established under the necessary conditions—that is, if it be elected by the entire community—that**

**House of Justice will be under the protection and unerring guidance of God. Should that House of Justice decide, either unanimously or by a majority, upon a matter that is not explicitly recorded in the Book, that decision and command will be guarded from error. Now, the members of the House of Justice are not essentially infallible as individuals, but the body of the House of Justice is under the protection and unerring guidance of God: This is called conferred infallibility. (Some Answered Questions, 45)**

**The sacred and youthful branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God, as well as the Universal House of Justice, to be universally elected and established, are both under the care and protection of the Abhá Beauty, under the shelter and unerring guidance of the Exalted One (may my life be offered up for them both). Whatsoever they decide is of God. Whoso obeyeth him not, neither obeyeth them, hath not obeyed God; whoso rebelleth against him and against them hath rebelled against God; whoso opposeth him hath opposed God; whoso contendeth with them hath contended with God; whoso disputeth with him hath disputed with God; whoso denieth him hath denied God; whoso disbelieveth in him hath disbelieved in God; whoso deviateth, separateth himself and turneth aside from him hath in truth deviated, separated himself and turned aside from God. May the wrath, the fierce indignation, the vengeance of God rest upon him! The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the Guardian of the Cause of God. It is incumbent upon the members of the House of Justice, upon all the Aghsán, the Afnán, the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the Guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. He that opposeth him hath opposed the True One, will make a breach in the Cause of God, will subvert His Word and will become a manifestation of the Center of Sedition. Beware, beware, lest the days after the ascension (of Bahá'u'lláh) be repeated when the Center of Sedition waxed haughty and rebellious and with Divine Unity for his excuse deprived himself and perturbed and poisoned others. No doubt every vainglorious one that purposeth dissension and discord will not openly declare his evil purposes, nay rather, even as impure gold, will he seize upon divers measures and various pretexts that he may separate the gathering of the people of Bahá. My object is to show that the Hands of the Cause of God must be ever watchful and so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Bahá and in no wise accept any excuse from him. How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men! (Will & Testament)**

*To return to the theme of universal divine knowledge, we find that 'Abdu'l-Baha explained that human beings can be inspired with divine knowledge, divine intellect, divine wisdom, divine love and divine discernment of the Manifestation, as rays of light may reflect in a mirror, and be clearly discerned if the mirror is clean:*

**On that day will the weak of intellect draw on the bounty of the divine, Universal Mind, and they whose life is but abomination will seek out these cleansing, holy breaths. (SWAB, #218)**

**But infallibility as an attribute is not an essential requirement; rather, it is a ray of the gift of infallibility which shines from the Sun of Truth upon certain hearts and grants them a share and**

portion thereof. Although these souls are not essentially infallible, yet they are under the care, protection, and unerring guidance of God—which is to say, God guards them from error. Thus there have been many sanctified souls who were not themselves the Daysprings of the Most Great Infallibility, but who have nevertheless been guarded and preserved from error under the shadow of divine care and protection. For they were the channels of divine grace between God and man, and if God did not preserve them from error they would have led all the faithful to fall likewise into error, which would have wholly undermined the foundations of the religion of God and which would be unbefitting and unworthy of His exalted Reality. (“Some Answered Questions,” chapter 45)

Thus, the divinity of God, which is the totality of all perfections, reveals itself in the reality of man—that is, the divine Essence is the sum total of all perfections, and from this station it casts a ray of its splendour upon the human reality. (“Some Answered Questions”, Chapter 50)

This divine intellectual power is confined to the holy Manifestations and the Daysprings of prophethood. A ray of this light falls upon the mirrors of the hearts of the righteous, that they may also receive, through the holy Manifestations, a share and benefit of this power. (“Some Answered Questions,” chapter 58)

The light of this love is kindled, through the knowledge of God, in the lamp of the heart, and its spreading rays illumine the world and bestow upon man the life of the Kingdom...Indeed, love in the human world is a ray of the love of God and a reflection of the grace of His bounty. (“Some Answered Questions,” chapter 84)

*To sum up the Baha’i teaching, human reason is compatible, harmonious, and in agreement with divine revelation when the soul of the human being has been illumined with the divine revelation, by acquiring truth from the Manifestation of God, either in person or through His Book. Sometimes human reason can reflect divine truth without having been consciously engaged in studying it from a universally recognized source, such as a prophet of God, a follower of a prophet of God, or the Writings of a prophet of God. In one of His Tablets, ‘Abdu’l-Baha wrote the following about the influence of the Christian Revelation, which applies equally to the Baha’i Revelation and all other prophetic outpourings:*

**Thou hast written of a verse in the Gospels, asking if at the time of Christ all souls did hear His call. Know that faith is of two kinds. The first is objective faith that is expressed by the outer man, obedience of the limbs and senses. The other faith is subjective, and unconscious obedience to the will of God. There is no doubt that, in the day of a Manifestation such as Christ, all contingent beings possessed subjective faith and had unconscious obedience to His Holiness Christ.**

For all parts of the creational world are of one whole. Christ the Manifestor reflecting the divine Sun represented the whole. All the parts are subordinate and obedient to the whole. The contingent beings are the branches of the tree of life while the Messenger of God is the root of that tree. The branches, leaves and fruit are dependent for their existence upon the root of the tree of life. This

**condition of unconscious obedience constitutes subjective faith. But the discerning faith that consists of true knowledge of God and the comprehension of divine words, of such faith there is very little in any age. That is why His Holiness Christ said to His followers, "Many are called but few are chosen."**  
(Baha'i World Faith, p. 364)