



*The Four
Valleys
of the
Mind*

The Four Valleys of the Mind

*Are You Egg-Minded
Chicken-Minded,
Eagle-Minded, or
Spiritual-Minded?*

Preface

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

Proverbs 23:7

Thoughts are not to be taken lightly. We are what we think. If we change the way we think, we change the way we are.

What are thoughts made of? They are made of words. The Words of God are the thoughts of God. One difference between His Words and ours is that His Words often have multiple layers of meanings. If we are surface-thinkers, we may miss the inner, and sometimes the real, meanings of His words. To unveil the pearls hidden in His Words, we must break the shell. To discover the hidden treasures, we must dig. The more we dig, the richer our thoughts, and the richer our thoughts, the richer our lives.

The purpose of this book is to help us look at four basic levels of thinking, and then learn to raise our habitual ways of thinking higher and still higher until we pass the clouds and float and fly through the heavens.

In The Hidden Words, Bahá'u'lláh removed some of the outer layers of spiritual and ethical Virtues to help us see them in a new light:

The mystic and wondrous Bride, hidden ere this beneath the veiling of utterance, hath now, by the grace of God and His divine favor, been made manifest even as the resplendent light shed by the beauty of the Beloved. I bear witness, O friends! that the favor is complete, the argument fulfilled, the proof manifest and the evidence established. Let it now be seen what your endeavors in the path of detachment will reveal. In this wise hath the divine favor been fully vouchsafed unto you and unto them that are in heaven and on earth. All praise to God, the Lord of all Worlds.¹

Bahá'u'lláh

Let us now examine the four levels of thinking and then later learn how we can use this knowledge to improve every facet of our lives.

1

Level 1: Egg-Minded Thinkers

Our brains are wired from early childhood in many ways. Much of the conflict between married couples and even between nations and religions arise from poor wiring. Knowing why people think the way they do, advances our understanding of human behavior. This knowledge helps us make better choices, such as choosing a spouse for life or understanding and being tolerant of a spouse who may be wired to think and behave on a more primitive level.

What is the purpose of the mind? To think, to reason, and to understand. The lowest level of using the mind is not using it! It is abandoning the most distinct sign of being human.

Egg-minded people remain out of touch with reality. Their reality is their unfounded assumptions and illusions:

In sacred Scriptures we can find hundreds of references to words, such as illusions and idle-fancies:

Arise, O people, and, by the power of God's might, resolve to gain the victory over your own selves, that haply the whole earth may be freed and sanctified from its servitude to the gods of its idle fancies—gods that have inflicted such loss upon, and are responsible for the misery of, their wretched worshipers. These idols form the obstacle that impedeth man in his efforts to advance in the path of perfection. We cherish the hope that the Hand of Divine power may lend its assistance to mankind, and deliver it from its state of grievous abasement.²

Bahá'u'lláh

By the righteousness of God! Idle fancies have debarred men from the Horizon of Certitude, and vain imaginings withheld them from the Choice Sealed Wine.^{‡3} Bahá'u'lláh

Blessed is he that perceiveth, and speaketh the pure truth. Well is it with him who, aided by the living waters of the utterance of Him Who is the Desire of all men, hath purified himself from idle fancies and vain imaginings...⁴ Bahá'u'lláh

Sacred Scriptures repeatedly refer to those who fail to use their mind. In these Scriptures, the “eye and ear” symbolize the instruments of the mind:

... those who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf. Isaiah 43:8

But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. Christ (Matthew 13:16)

Consider the story of a poor Bedouin who could afford to buy only dates for his dinner. To save money, he would eat his dinner—the dates—in darkness. But one day he lighted a candle to see and enjoy his dinner. When he picked a piece of date, he noticed a few worms crawling on it. He threw it away. He picked a second and a third and a fourth piece of date. Each time he encountered the same scene: worms relaxing or crawling on the dates. The software in his operating system—his mind—came to his aid. After doing some search, it arrived at this solution and this command: “Blow out the candle immediately!” The man obeyed the command of his mind and started once again to enjoy his dinner! The little light of the candle had disturbed his little piece of mind!

What did Jesus mean by asking His followers to avoid falling into the trap of drunkenness?

But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on

[‡] *Sealed Wine*: the mysteries contained in the Word of God.

all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man. *Christ (Luke 21:34-36)*

Bahá'u'lláh has made similar statements:

We see men drunken in this Day...⁵ ***Bahá'u'lláh***

Have you ever looked at the eyes of drunk people? Are their eyes awake? Do their souls look out through those tiny windows, or are they absent?

The mind of those on level 1 can be compared to an egg. An egg is a closed system—one that does not allow anything to enter. It feeds on itself and spoils from within. The souls who choose to remain on this level, live in total spiritual darkness. The window to their mind remains completely closed.

2

Level 2: Chicken-Minded Thinkers

Unlike egg-minded thinkers, chicken-minded (or little-minded) thinkers do not totally close their mind. They allow a narrow stream of light to reach their soul. Like a person who steps out of a dark room into sunshine, they become blinded by the intense light of new knowledge. A large portion of chicken-minded people are religious.

Thinking is a habit that must be cultivated from childhood. Instead of thinking for themselves, chicken-minded believers learn to depend on authority figures—a rabbi, a pastor, or a mulla—to tell them what to believe and how to behave. And if they are a religious leader with authority, they search for the highest authority to justify their thoughts, beliefs, and actions. Who qualifies as the unquestioned authority? Who else but God? Since God is silent, they claim that their will is a reflection of His Will, that He is the source of their illusions.

A religious leader who recently ordered the execution of thousands of innocent people, once said: “If a fly comes to my room, I try to catch it and set it free. But if it is for God’s sake, I will not hesitate to order the execution of thousands of people.” Chicken-minded and mean-minded people like him feel proud to serve as members of God’s firing squads.

Chicken-minded believers choose from the sacred Scriptures whatever passage that serves their purpose. Then they distort its message, and pretend to depend on God’s authority to take action.

We should note that here we are speaking mainly about the mind, not the heart. Those on level 2 may be so self-righteous that they may even sacrifice their lives for a cause, and yet they suffer from and stand at the service of a primitive and distorted mind—a mind that can be programmed to devise and carry out the most hideous acts of cruelty.

Since chicken-minded believers play a critical role in the drama of human destiny, it is essential that we should try to know them. We should dissect their personality and expose it to the light of knowledge. The following is a brief profile of such believers:

- They are rigid in their ways, and show little if any creativity.
- They are fanatical and zealous.
- They accept and follow blindly the religion of their ancestors.
- They are literal-minded and because of this serious handicap, they cannot delve into the inner metaphoric meanings of sacred Scriptures.
- They prefer to listen and believe what the man on the pulpit tells them.
- They readily justify and engage in religious wars and acts of violence.
- They dislike complexity and prefer to engage in simplistic thinking. Their favorite color is “black and white”, their least favorite is gray.

3

Level 3: Eagle-Minded Thinkers

Those on level 3 have an open mind and have a global view of life. Their global vision allows them to see a greater segment of reality. Their mind works like an eagle in search of prey. They are independent thinkers—the ones who question their parents, priests, ministers, and mullas. They detect the hypocrisy in the system and often rebel against it. Many of those who become Bahá'ís come from this segment of society.

Every culture has its share of global thinkers. The following are a few groups of such thinkers in American society:

- Peace Corp volunteers
- Environmentalists
- Unitarians
- Federalists
- Doctors without borders

Many people are attracted to the social teachings of the Bahá'í Faith. They don't care what the Bible or the Qur'án says about Bahá'u'lláh. They are called “social activists”—the ones who work against prejudice, poverty, and injustice. Since such thinkers are attracted to like-minded Bahá'ís, they can lose their enthusiasm, and sometimes their faith, if they face tests and trials, if they confront even a single believer from level 1. Many of those who leave the Bahá'í Faith belong to this group. To remain firm, they must rise to level 4.

4

Level 4: Phoenix-Minded Thinkers

Phoenix-minded thinkers, who can also be called spiritual-minded are in command of a broad and a penetrating vision. They can see not only the vast ocean but the pearls within the ocean, not only the globe but also the treasures within the globe. Their mind works like the Hubble Spacecraft—a satellite with multiple mirrors stationed in space to pierce through the heavens and bring enchanting images to the earth.

Bahá'u'lláh refers to God both as “the most visible, and the most invisible”. How can this be? How can our Creator be both visible and invisible? It all depends on us—the viewers. To those on level 1, God remains concealed behind the clouds; to those on level 4, He shines as brightly as the sun.

When Jesus called His disciples the salt of the earth, He was referring to those on level 4. These souls are undiscovered believers. Spiritually, they are already in tune with Bahá'u'lláh. No wonder 'Abdu'l-Bahá states that a person may be a Bahá'í without ever hearing that word. The spiritual-minded souls are God's undiscovered treasures. If we fail to search for them, we contribute to the “great tribulation”.

Some of the new believers say: “The Bahá'í Faith is so reasonable, so obvious, why didn't I recognize it earlier?” They may also say: “I was a Bahá'í in my heart. I just didn't know it”. The spiritual-minded seekers are ripe for recognizing Bahá'u'lláh. We should always be searching for them. They are also searching for us, but cannot find us:

What “oppression” is more grievous than that a soul seeking the truth, and wishing to attain unto the knowledge of God, should know not where to go for it and from whom to seek it?⁶
Bahá’u’lláh

To discover and recognize Bahá’u’lláh, the spiritual-minded seekers must pay close attention. They must take the News of the Advent seriously. To help such Christians recognize Him at His second Advent, Jesus offered certain instructions. Perhaps the most significant of all those instructions are these:

- Like a thief
- Watch

Let us now review and compare the four levels of thinking:

- The spiritual-minded person—the one in the position of the Hubble Spacecraft—can see the presence of God in the universe and His everlasting mansions in heaven as clearly as he can see his own image in a mirror.
- The egg-minded person—the one at the other extreme of the continuum—is completely closed. He is “robed in the clouds”. He can see nothing but his own illusions and idle-fancies.
- The chicken-minded person can see only what he has been programmed to see: only a narrow and predetermined stream of light. Most of the so called “fundamentalist-zealous” believers—whether they are Jew, Christians, or Muslims—fall into this category.

Trying to teach the Bahá’í message to a person who thinks at level 1 or level 2 is quite challenging. It is like trying to teach 4th grade science to a first grader. Just as a color-blind person cannot see colors, an individual at level 1 cannot recognize the existence of God. Similarly a Christian on level 2 cannot understand that “you cannot come to the Father except through Me” has a much broader meaning than he assumes. He cannot recognize that the same Spirit that appeared in Jesus can also appear in another Being called Bahá’u’lláh, the Glory of God. Similarly, a Jew on level 2 cannot

recognize that Jesus was and will forever be the King promised in the Hebrew Scriptures. The letters K,I,N,G bind and control his mind as a train is bound to its tracks.

- The global-minded person has the capacity to see the vast surface, but not the depths. He can see the globe, but not the vast treasures hidden in the globe. These thinkers are attracted to the social teachings of the Bahá'í Faith. They will remain firm as long as they have not faced tests and trials.
- Those who think on level 4, cannot reject the Bahá'í Faith, even if they try! They do not simply know Bahá'u'lláh, they have seen Him. How can the one who has seen the sun, deny the sun?

5

Little-Minded People Are Also Law-Minded

Those who think on level 2 are also law-minded. Their lives revolve around the *letter* of the law, rather than the *spirit* of the law. Many devout Jews observed the dietary laws of their faith to the letter. Their mind was so fixated on the law, they failed to discern the spirit of their Scriptures. Muslims who persecuted the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh were often strict observers of the Islamic laws. They loved and adored the law, but imprisoned, insulted, and executed the Law-Giver!

What type of people have divided the past religions? Once again, they have come mostly from the ranks of shallow thinkers—the ones who can see only the surface of the sacred Word. Who divided Christianity into 20,000 denominations? Were they not mostly chicken-minded and rule-minded believers? Trivial issues such as how a believer should be baptized produced new denominations. Questions like “should a believer be sprinkled, or otherwise be immersed from head to toe, or from waist to toe?” divided the believers.

Muslims, especially the Shi'ites, have carried the concept of codes of laws to the extreme. Each mujtahid has his own “book of laws” which dictates how a Muslim should behave from dawn to dusk. These books present the most specific details and rituals about the way a Muslim should manage his daily life. They have become both a source of embarrassment to spiritual-minded believers and a handbook for those who wish to disgrace religion in general, and Islam in particular.

Since literal-minded believers are also law-minded, they use their judgment of the laws as a weapon of denial. Consider these examples:

- Some Jews objected to Jesus because He did not observe the Sabbath their way.
- Christians object to the strict laws of the Qur'án. Muslims remind Christians of the strict law of divorce as stated by Jesus, that only adultery justifies divorce. They wonder why incompatibility, even abuse, cannot serve as a justified reason for divorce. They also refer to some of the strict laws of Moses.
- Similarly, some people reject the Bahá'í Faith because they do not like some of its laws. When I was in Canada, I heard about a couple who were quite active in the Bahá'í Faith—that is until they learned that a corpse should not be carried more than an hour's distance. They left the Bahá'í Faith, and offered a letter of resignation, for this reason alone! They had purchased two plots in a local cemetery. Since they were traveling during their retirement years, they did not want to miss their favorite and personally owned grave plots!

We should note that people have always disagreed and will continue to disagree about laws. Perhaps the best example is this: members of the United States Supreme Court are the highest authority in the land, and supposedly the wisest and the most knowledgeable about laws. Yet seldom, if ever, they cast a unanimous vote! If the best experts disagree, what can be expected from the rest of us? If we try to judge a religion by its laws, we can never arrive at a sound judgment. Laws have always been and will always remain controversial. In judging the divine laws, humility requires that we should submerge and dissolve our tiny drop of wisdom in God's ocean of Wisdom.

6

A Code of Laws or Choice wine

What should control us and our beliefs the most? “A code of laws” or “the choice wine”? The following statement by Bahá’u’lláh is the key that unlocks many mysteries, that resolves many questions:

Think not that We have revealed unto you a mere code of laws. Nay, rather, We have unsealed the choice Wine with the fingers of might and power.⁷

The preceding statement is so rich in meaning, it may contain the purpose and the essence of all divine teachings. Whatever the question, the answer can be found in the light of the preceding statement. What does Bahá’u’lláh mean by saying that He has not come to bring a code of laws, but to unseal the choice wine? What is the difference between those who love to be directed by the “codes of laws” and those who love to drink “the choice wine”? Some people need to be told exactly what to do. Others know by spiritual instinct what to do. The first group are outer-directed; the second, inner-directed. Most people function within the first level: they are outer-directed. Bahá’u’lláh declares that He has come to elevate us to the second level: to make us inner-directed.

Consider the example of driving. If you think on level 1 or 2 (egg or chicken-minded) you observe the speed limit because you respect the law and fear the consequences of breaking it. If you think on level 3 or 4 (global or spiritual-minded) not only you respect the law, but also respect and obey your conscience. The speed limit is only a guide that helps you know human limitations,

but not to limit your judgment. Even if there were no speed limits and no fines, you would still drive the same way.

Bahá'u'lláh has come to liberate us from our bondage to the law and make the law a bonds slave to us. He has come to help us manifest the hidden potentials within our soul, to make us self-directed rather than law-directed.

When people were in a primitive stage of social and spiritual evolution, they needed to be told: “Thou shalt not steal! Thou shalt not lie or commit adultery!” Is that not the way we speak to children? What do we mean when we say that children need discipline? Do we not mean to say that they must be guided by rules? A spiritually advanced soul, does not need to be told “Thou shalt not!” That soul has already mastered its self and cannot break the laws even if he tires! Can a true saint commit a crime?

Bondage to the law is not enjoyable; it can be even painful. A person who thinks on level 1 or 2 may be tempted to break the rules—like someone who is always on a diet and suffers from seeing junk foods he cannot eat. A person on level 3 or 4 is not controlled by his taste buds, but inspired by the joy of knowing that he is a soul and his body is merely a vehicle he needs to attain his destination, and should be kept in good shape. Such an individual does not miss junk foods; he may even suffer from seeing others feasting on them!

By the way, we are told that in the future we will treat disease by food. Today we are doing just the opposite: we are creating disease by food!

Bahá'u'lláh's statement in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* about “choice Wine” has many broad implications. One of them is this: those who think on levels 1 and 2 focus their attention on the literal meaning and implications of the laws in their **own lives**. Those who think on level 3 focus their thoughts on the **social** implications of the laws. And those who think on level 4, focus their mind on the **spiritual** meaning and implications of the laws. Individuals who object to the laws of God belong primarily to levels 1 and 2.

7

The Prime Reason People Reject the New Messengers

Let us now apply our knowledge of “little-minded people” to the mystery of knowing new Messengers from God. Throughout history two opposite forces—positive and negative—have played the greatest role in shaping the destiny of humankind. Who have contributed most to the advancement of human life? God’s great Messengers. What type of people have played the negative role? The narrow-minded believers fixated on the second level of thinking. They are the ones who have rejected and persecuted God’s great Messengers. These believers command a narrow mind—one that can move only on the surface of a small circle! They are handicapped both in terms of seeing the big picture and digging deep to discover inner meanings in the Word of God. Sacred Scriptures call them “literal-minded”. The best way to know their mind is by example, by studying their beliefs, and the reasons they have used to reject their Saviors—the Ones who have come to save them from their ignorance:

- The Jews rejected Jesus by relying on the literal meaning of the word “king”. How amazing! One word clouded their mind and concealed from their soul the spiritual splendor of their Savior.
- Christians are following the same example: They are relying on the literal meaning of “sky”. They think Jesus will come from above. Once again, literal thinking, like a cloud, is concealing from their soul, the glory and grandeur of God.

- Muslims are walking the same path: Most of them have rejected the Bahá'í Faith by relying on the distorted meaning of one word: “seal”. For an extensive examination of this topic, please read: *Prophecy: the Obstacle that Prevents People from Knowing Their Redeemer*.

Sometimes we meet people who seem to have a wonderful character, and yet they fail to recognize Bahá'u'lláh. We are totally puzzled. We say to ourselves: “This lady is such a wonderful Christian. Why doesn't she recognize Bahá'u'lláh?” In this case, the mystery can be revealed not by focusing on her character, but by examining her mind. This lady may be blessed with the best character, but be handicapped by a mind that is programmed to function on level 2. To become receptive, she must move her mind upward. To recognize and appreciate simply the fruits of the Bahá'í Faith, she must advance one level. To see the Glory of God in Bahá'u'lláh, as it is manifest in Jesus, she must advance two levels, from level 2 to level 4.

How do we choose our destiny? By our mind, by our heart, or by both of them? Sacred Scriptures show that they both play a critical role, for they are closely linked to each other. A diseased heart (selfish, fearful, egotistical) prevents the mind from seeing the big picture, from witnessing the Glory of God in Bahá'u'lláh. A diseased mind (programmed, primitive, distorted) can prevent the heart from experiencing the joy of attaining the Knowledge of God in Bahá'u'lláh.

If we reduce a human being to a motor vehicle, we can make the following comparisons:

- Knowledge is the ignition key.
- The mind is the ignition system.
- The heart is the engine.

To move a vehicle, at least the following requirements must be satisfied:

- The key must be turned.
- The ignition system must work.

- The engine must move.

Let us now see how this wonderful lady may also have some undetected heart problems. The first question to ask is this: Are we sure that this lady has true faith in Jesus? Going to a church and singing in the choir is not necessary a sign of being a “good” Christian. Consider this analogy: How would you feel if you lived in a chaotic country, where you did not have faith in its police force? Would you readily open the door to a stranger? Would you not live in fear? Would you not imprison yourself within a small space? The same holds true with believers who do not fully trust their Lord and Savior. They call Him a Savior, but do not believe that He will save them from the deceivers.

How can the heart gain control of the mind? The heart wants to be secure. New Messages threaten that security. When a fearful believer hears a new Message, the heart sends a distress call. It says: “Freeze! There is danger!” The mind responds: “I will! You have taken away my rights and made me your slave. How can I disobey you?”

Emotions can gain enormous powers. Even a little fear can limit the range of thinking. It can prevent the mind from doing its work. It can serve as a veil or a cloud.

What parable did Jesus utter to warn Christians of the dangers of unjustified fear? He offered the following parable as a guide to help His followers to know Him at His Second Advent.

For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, "Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I

have gained five more talents besides them.” His lord said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.” He also who had received two talents came and said, “Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.” His lord said to him, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.” Then he who had received the one talent came and said, “Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.” But his lord answered and said to him, “You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Christ (Matt. 25:14-30)

Who was the one-talent man? The believer with little faith in Jesus. What quality prevented him from investing his talent? Fear, fear of losing his faith, fear of being deceived. What was his fault? Failure to investigate the news of the Return of his Lord. Only one critical link in the chain that binds us with God, can break that bond.

As the parable teaches, those who have a little faith in Jesus, by their failure to investigate the news of His coming, will lose the little faith they have. Those who have more faith, will be doubly rewarded. Not only they will keep the reward of their faith in Jesus, they will double that reward by accepting Jesus at His second Advent.

The severe punishment meted out to one-talent (fearful) servant (everlasting presence in hell) should awaken every Christian whose prime purpose in life is to be saved, yet fails to use his God-given talent to investigate the News of the Return of his Lord.

Sacred Scriptures compare the people who fail to think, who prevent their mind from doing its work, to animals, such as donkeys, dogs, and monkeys. Based on those comparisons, let us look at a few animals and then ask a question. In this age we have many pet lovers, who adore their little puppy, kitty, or birdy. Most animals are so nice, they put their lives in danger to save their babies. Recently, a rich lady loved her little dog so much that she left over 16 million dollars for her. The dog is being protected by several professional guards, because her life has been threatened by several human beings. They are simply jealous of her! The cost of protecting and feeding this dog is over \$300,000 a year. Many people love their pets and describe their pets by such traits as: nice, friendly, cute, and loyal. Question: What is the difference between a nice man who fails to use his mind and a nice puppy?

8

Understanding the Sacred Writings

More Thinking, Less Questioning

A distinct mark of the human mind is to discover mysteries, to resolve questions, and to create. The ever-advancing civilization is a manifestation of this gift. The mind is designed not only to discover material mysteries, but also spiritual. As the earthly civilization advances, so will the heavenly, so will our understanding of the Word of God.

This is the age of maturity. Should we not learn to become independent thinkers? Instead of consistently asking others, should we not try to use our own mind, our own gift of understanding? In the past, people allowed others to think for them. They depended on priests, rabbis, or mullas. In this age, we have ample Writings to depend on: over 100 volumes of Scriptures. Do they not provide sufficient knowledge to guide us to our divine destiny?

The essential requirement for self-direction and independent thinking is humility. The moment we say to someone: “I am right! You are wrong!” we fall to levels 1 and 2. The moment we begin to argue with someone, we begin to descend.

A spiritual mind does not need to prove itself. It spreads knowledge flavored with love, tolerance, and humility. A big ego is a distinct sign of a small mind, and a small ego a distinct sign of a great mind. A big ego is like inflated balloon. It fears the smallest

needle. A small ego is like a tire. It can withstand a rough surface. It can travel under much pressure with high speed without bursting. Traveling through life with a big ego is unsafe on any surface and at any speed.

Those who love to argue belong to lower levels. The lower the level of thinking, the greater their desire to argue. Forbidding arguments is one of the greatest means of preserving the unity of the Bahá'í Faith. This teaching disarms all those with little minds and big egos who love to divide the Bahá'í community to become leaders. God loves diversity, provided it does not cause disunity. Learning to respect one another despite our diverse views is perhaps the most significant step in the growth of the Bahá'í community. The beauty of a diamond lies in this: it reflects light from many little mirrors, but it remains one piece. A broken piece of diamond loses much of its value.

Have you ever wondered why Bahá'u'lláh did *not* give the House of Justice the responsibility to interpret His Writings? Could He not inspire them to do so? Consider the following reasons as a possibility:

- Imagine the never-ending and ever-increasing stream of questions that would flow from the minds of countless believers toward the House of Justice—an institution designed to serve as a focus of unity for humankind. Would there ever be an end to the flow of questions, including trivial ones, from the minds of billions of believers toward that divine Institution for ages to come?
- Further, by allowing us to be self-directed and independent thinkers, each of us can constantly discover ever-flowing facets of celestial truths rather than be fixated on one rigid response produced by one mind. This is one more example of unity in diversity: remaining the followers of one Faith with a diverse and an ever-advancing knowledge of divine mysteries.

We must remain unified in the direction we advance. The direction is determined by the House of Justice. That Institution is the center

of the circle. Without that center, we would be moving in many directions. That is the way the world is moving today.

The study of the four levels of thinking helps us to become aware:

- That by rising to the spiritual level, we can express many shades of thoughts, and discover many gems of mysteries.
- That we can always rise to higher and higher levels of thinking. Even if we are on the spiritual level, we can still grow within that level. For there is no end to spiritual growth. The greatest gain, however, comes to those who think on lower levels. For instance, those on lower levels of thinking can think of only one correct answer. When they become aware that there may be many answers to the same question, they learn to become more tolerant. There will be less arguing or disagreement among the believers.

This most significant lesson is expressed in one of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets. In that Tablet Bahá'u'lláh narrates the ways various people have defined or described the word "hikmat", an Arabic word similar in meaning to "wisdom". Then He states that all those definitions or descriptions can be correct. (See the Appendix for a provisional translation of that Tablet.) For instance, if we think on level 1 or 2, and then discover God thinks on level 4 by accepting different definitions, we will try to adapt our thoughts to His thoughts. Once our thoughts are closer to His thoughts, we can know Him better. That is the very reason God created us.

References

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4. *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 43.
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