

Order of Service

Opening Prayer

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Christianity, Matthew 6:9

First Reading

And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them,

Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Christianity, Luke 2:1

Music

Second Reading

Remember when the angel said, “O Mary! Verily God announceth to thee the Word from Him: His name shall be Messiah Jesus the son of Mary, illustrious in this world and the next, and one of those who have near access to God; “And He shall speak to men alike when in the cradle and when grown up; And he shall be one of the just.”

She said, “How, O my Lord! Shall I have a son, when man hath not touched me?” He said, “Thus: God will create what He will; When He decreeth a thing, He only saith, ‘Be’ and it is” And He will teach Him the Book, and the Wisdom, and the Law, and the Evangel; and He shall be an Apostle to the children of Israel. “Now have I come,” He will say, “to you with a sign from your Lord: Out of clay will I make for you, as it were, the figure of a bird: and I will breathe into it, and it shall become, by God’s leave, a bird. And I will heal the blind, and the leper; and by God’s leave will I quicken the dead; and I will tell you what ye eat, and what ye store up in your houses! Truly in this will be a sign for you, if ye are believers.

Islam, Quran Sura 3:40

Thus Jesus, Son of Mary, whilst seated one day and speaking in the strain of the Holy spirit, uttered words such as these: “O people! My food is the grass of the field, wherewith I satisfy my hunger. My bed is the dust, my lamp in the night the light of the moon, and my steed my own feet. Behold, who on earth is richer than I?” By the righteousness of God! Thousands of treasures circle round this poverty, and a myriad kingdoms of glory yearn for such abasement! Shouldst thou attain to a drop of the ocean of the inner meaning of these words, thou wouldst surely forsake the world and all that is therein, and, as the Phoenix wouldst consume thyself in the flames of the undying Fire.

Bahá’í Faith, Bahá’u’lláh

Music

Third Reading

Blessed are the poor in spirit: For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: For they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: For they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: For they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: For they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: For they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: For they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Christianity, Matthew 5:3

It is clear and evident to thee that all the Prophets are the Temples of the Cause of God. Who have appeared clothed in divers attire. If thou wilt observe with discriminating eyes, thou wilt behold Them all abiding in the same tabernacle, soaring in the same heaven, seated upon the same throne, uttering the same speech, and proclaiming the same Faith. Such is the unity of those Essences of Being, those Luminaries of infinite and immeasurable splendor! Wherefore, should one of these Manifestations of Holiness proclaim saying: "I am the return of all the Prophets," He, verily, speaketh the truth. In like manner, in every subsequent Revelation, the return of the former Revelation is a fact, the truth of which is firmly established.

The other station is the station of distinction and pertaineth to the world of creation, and to the limitations thereof. In this respect, each Manifestation of God hath a distinct individuality, a definitely prescribed mission, a predestined revelation, and specially designated limitations. Each one of them is known by a different name, is characterized by a special attribute, fulfils a definite mission, and is entrusted with a particular Revelation. Even as He saith: "Some of the Apostles We have caused to excel the others. To some God hath spoken, some he Hath raised and exalted. And to Jesus, Son of Mary, We gave manifest signs, and We strengthened Him with the Holy Spirit."

Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh

Music

Open Prayers

Music

Fourth Reading

Say, O followers of the Son (Jesus)! Have ye shut out yourselves from Me by reason of My Name? Wherefore ponder ye not in your hearts? Day and night ye have been calling upon your Lord, the Omnipotent, but when He came from the heaven of eternity in His great glory, ye turned aside from Him and remained sunk in heedlessness.

Consider those who rejected the Spirit (Jesus) when He came unto them with manifest dominion. How numerous the Pharisees who had secluded themselves in synagogues in His name, lamenting over their separation from Him, and yet when the portals of reunion were flung open and the divine Luminary shone resplendent from the Dayspring of Beauty, they disbelieved in God, the Exalted, the Mighty. They failed to attain His presence, notwithstanding that His advent had been promised to them in the Book of Isaiah as well as in the Books of the Prophets and the Messengers. No one from among them turned his face towards the Dayspring of divine bounty except such as were destitute of any power amongst men. And yet, today, every man endowed with power and invested with sovereignty prideth himself on His Name. Moreover, call thou to mind the one who sentenced Jesus to death. He was the most learned of His age in His own country, whilst he who was only a fisherman believed in Him. Take good heed and be of them that observe the warning.

Bahá'í Faith, Bahá'u'lláh

Closing Prayer

O Lord! Enable all the peoples of the earth to gain admittance into the Paradise of thy Faith, so that no created being may remain beyond the bounds of Thy good-pleasure.

From time immemorial Thou hast been potent to do what pleaseth thee and transcendent above whatsoever thou desirest.

Bahá'í Faith, The Báb