It is common to observe that people's behavior changes, especially when they sense they are approaching a critical turning point—or even danger. Many will adapt their appearance or behavior, pretending to be like others, in an attempt to navigate difficult situations safely and protect themselves spiritually.

We see this illustrated during the time of Esther, when the enemies of the Jews planned to annihilate them with King Ahasuerus' permission. Yet, when the decree was reversed and the king honored the Jews and even granted them authority to defend themselves against their enemies, the Bible tells us that many people of the land "pretended" to be Jews:

> *Esther 8:16-17 (ESV):*
> *"The Jews had light and gladness and joy and honor. In every province and in every city, wherever the king's command and his edict came, there was joy and gladness among the Jews, a feast and a holiday. And many of the people of the land became Jews, for fear of the Jews had fallen upon them."*

Notice here that fear and the recognition of God's favor caused

people to adjust their behavior to align with God’s people.

Another example comes from the Old Testament conflict between two tribes of Israel: Ephraim and Gilead. The cause of the battle was that the men of Gilead went to fight their enemies without inviting the men of Ephraim to join them. Feeling excluded, the Ephraimites became angry and decided to fight Gilead. However, the Gileadites prevailed.

In the aftermath, many Ephraimites tried to flee and blend in with the Gileadites. To cross the Jordan River safely, they assumed it would be easy—they thought they could simply pass without scrutiny. But the Gileadites had been informed of their plan. They stationed themselves at the river crossings and used language as a test to identify the intruders.

> *Judges 12:5-6 (ESV):*
> *“The Gileadites captured the fords of the Jordan against the Ephraimites. And when any of the fugitives of Ephraim said, ‘Let me cross over,’ the men of Gilead said to him, ‘Are you an Ephraimite?’ If he said, ‘No,’ then they said, ‘Say now Shibboleth.’ And he said, ‘Sibboleth,’ for he could not pronounce it right. Then they seized him and killed him at the*

> *fords of the Jordan. Forty-two thousand Ephraimites fell at that time."*

Here, the test was based on language. One's native tongue is deeply ingrained and cannot be perfectly mimicked. Even someone who studies a language for decades cannot replicate the accent or nuance of a native speaker. Similarly, our spiritual identity is deeply rooted and cannot be faked.

The Old Testament often foreshadows spiritual truths revealed in the New Testament. These historical accounts were not written merely to entertain or interest us—they carry profound spiritual lessons.

There will come a time when salvation will be tested. Those who oppose God will desperately seek access to His kingdom, pretending in various ways to gain entry. However, entry will not be easy, as they might assume. They will face significant trials to prove their hearts and intentions.

> *Luke 16:16 (ESV):*

> *“The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it.”*

Salvation will be measured not just by words—“I am saved,” “I was baptized,” or “I go to church”—but by the depth of personal experience and spiritual life. Are you living it as a natural part of your life, or is it just something learned?

Jesus illustrated this in the parable of the wedding feast, where a man attended the celebration but was not wearing the wedding garment. He had no invitation and was thrown out, illustrating that merely being present is insufficient without genuine preparation and righteousness:

> *Matthew 22:1-14 (ESV):*
> *“For many are called, but few are chosen.”*

Dear brothers and sisters, begin building your relationship with God today. Do not wait for a particular moment. Accept the

rebirth offered through salvation, learn the “language of heaven,” and prepare yourself spiritually. There will come a time when the door of grace will no longer remain open. These are the last days, and no one can afford to ignore this truth.

May God richly bless you.

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