

THE BAHAI FAITH

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Founder and important people

1. Bab: (gate) Actual name, Mirza Ali Muhammed (1819-1850)
2. Baha'u'llah: (glory of God) Actual name, Mirza Husayn Ali, the founder of Bahaiism (1817-1892)
3. Abdul'Baha: (servant of God) Actual name, Abbas Effendi, the son of Baha'u'llah (1884-1921)
4. Shoghi Effendi: Eldest grandson of Abdul'Baha
5. Name: Baha'i- Name means follower of Baha'u'llah.
6. Date of actual start: 1844
7. World Headquarters: Haifa, Israel
8. Other Headquarters: Frankfurt, Germany; Sydney, Australia; Kampala, Uganda; Panama City, Panama; Wilmette; Illinois.

Books and Writings (Baha'u'llah's 200 books are called "Books of Laws")

1. The Star of the West (the official book in the U.S.)
2. Baha'i World Faith
3. The Book of Certitude
4. The Hidden Words
5. Prayer and Meditations
6. All Things Made New
7. Baha'u'llah and the New Era

There is today a general excitement about anything ecumenical. The shift and large influence of advocates of a one world church and one world government have served to advance the idea that denominations are sinful and the only hope of the world is a unified world church. Because of the philosophy, (The Bahai Faith aims for the whole world.), and ecumenical spirit of Baha'i it has been termed by the second "world's fastest growing religion."

Their work in the United States is largely concentrated on college campuses and in minority areas. The growth in the U.S. has been extremely great in certain areas; California, Chicago, New York, and the deep south. They have four schools in the U.S.; Colorado Springs, Colorado; Geyersville, California; Davidson, Michigan; and Elliot, Maine. It is, therefore, the largest and most widespread religion, or better, cult, in the world.

Studies of the Early Leaders

Ali Muhammed: A young Persian businessman, who had a great religious zeal to better the country he lived in, felt he was "divinely" commissioned to find a Messiah, even though he was a member of a Muslim sect called the Shaykibs. At the time he lived the Persian government was corrupt, there was religious hatred, wide-spread immorality and national poverty when he met a young man whom he told about his quest for the Messiah. After hearing the description of the new Messiah the young man told Mulla Hasaya, he was the Messiah he was looking for; this was in 1844. The young man said that the Lord showed him he was the "Bab" (The gate). Bab soon felt he was to herald a greater Messiah to come. He said that his ministry was to prepare the way for "the promised one. He who God will manifest." In some of his teaching he declared: *al religions are equal in authority, they just have different paths to go to the Lord, they all teach the truth.* As he spoke and travelled, a great persecution followed him and his converts. Many were tortured and put to death, yet the religion grew until Bab himself was sentenced to death in 1850.

According to the Bahai's, a regiment of 750 soldiers shot their rifles at Bab and missed. Thinking this was a miracle, the soldiers left, but another regiment riddled his body with bullets. Before his death, Bab had sent his signet ring and writings

to one of his most ardent supporters, Mirza Husayn Ali; later Baha'u'llah. The death of Bab did not stop the new cult as he told of a "promised one" to come who would unify all and was a manifestation of the only true God.

Baha'u'llah: A wealthy nobleman named Mirza Husayn Ali, was told by an angel while in a dungeon that he was the "promised one" as was spoken by Bab. After being released from prison and exiled to Baghdad, he devoted his time to writing Bahai scriptures, but still kept his identity secret. Finally in 1863, it was released that Baha'u'llah was to be taken to Constantinople and it was at this time that he made himself known as the "promised one." He also gave two titles to himself: "The Lord of all the ages" and "The king manifestation."

Most who accepted "the bab" accepted his doctrine too, and it is extremely important to say that those who did not accept this doctrine were killed, but even if he declared he was against this acts, he never tried to stop them.

He also said he was not just a teacher and a voice, he was God himself. He was almighty and all dependent on him, and all the keys of heaven and earth belonged to him. Quoting John 16:12-13, when Jesus was talking about the ministry of the Holy Spirit, he said that the verse talks about the Jehovah of the Old Testament, Jesus, and so he was just the manifestation of Jesus' second coming, "the comforter."

Baha'u'llah's brother renounced him and fought against him but to no avail. As a result of this war between the brothers, Baha'u'llah was sent to Acre in Palestine. Here Baha'u'llah spent the rest of his life in prison. From him, the Bahai faith grew and continued to grow. Baha'u'llah died in prison in 1892, despite his claim to immortality.

Abdul'Baha: This is the eldest son of Baha'u'llah who was to be the interpreter of his teaching and the Exemplar of Faith. He made no claims for himself since Baha'u'llah declared no more manifestations of deity would appear for 1,000 years. He was brought to the United States in 1912 after having spread the faith worldwide. He was in the U.S. for eight months, during which time he laid the cornerstone for the temple in Wilmette, Illinois. He continued writing many Bahai books, about 200, until his death in 1921.



The Temple at Wilmette, Illinois: This is a beautiful structure on the shore of Lake Michigan, which is their national headquarters, through which 100,000 plus people pass each year. Baha'u'llah wrote that every community should have a beautiful temple to worship in for all men and women to come and meditate and pray.

The Wilmette temple is unique in that the numerical nine, the number of perfection in Baha'i, is readily seen. There are nine entrances to the inner sanctuary, an entrance for each major religion that is a vehicle to God, and its leader; Moses, Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster, Christ, Mohammed, Krishna, Abraham, Baha'u'llah. There are nine pillars, nine arches, and the temple is in park with nine sides, avenues, gateways and fountains. The architecture is a combination of the nine religions; synagogue, mosque, cathedral, etc. At a cost of \$3,000,000 and almost 23

years of building, this beautiful shrine was completed in 1953.

They put a lot of emphasis in three main points:

1. One human family
2. One divine message
3. One supreme message

They also say that the earth is one country and mankind is its citizens. But if the Bahai's are so concerned with equality and welfare, why the great expense on a building?

The Baha'i Calendar

1. Nineteen months of nineteen days each
2. One month (the nineteenth) is a fast month
3. Each first day is a fast day
4. Nine Holy days to observe
5. New Year's Day is March 21
6. Baha'i day begins and ends at sunset
7. Every day every believer is to wash his hands, then his face

The Baha'i Universal House of Justice

Co-ordination and direction of international Baha'i activities are now directed by this body of nine members in residence in Haifa, Israel. Each is elected for five years. The group deals with administration, judicial, and matters not expressly revealed in the Baha'i writings.

The Baha'i Faith and Its Teachings

The faith of Baha'u'llah is called a world-faith for three basic reasons:

1. It is found in 300 countries and territories in the world with a "quoted" membership of over 7 millions. All faiths find a unity in Bahaism.
2. The faith develops world mindedness. No racial prejudice and a complete strive for equality in the entire world.
3. The Baha'i faith offers a clear pattern of world order. They want one common faith and one united people. Bahai's believe in only one God. They claim God reveals His word in each period of history through a chosen individual whom the Bahai's call the manifestation of God. This one restates in every age God's purpose and will. His teachings are a revelation from God, i.e. Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, Baha'u'llah. Since there is one God, these men have taught the same religious faith and have met the needs of the people for that period of history.

This is called *Progressive Revelation*:

1. Religious truth is not absolute but relative
2. Divine revelation is a continuous and progressive process
3. All great religions of the world are divine in origin
4. Their basic principles are in complete harmony
5. Their aims and purposes are one and the same
6. Their teachings are but facts of one truth
7. Their functions are complementary
8. They differ only in non-essential aspects of their doctrines
9. Their missions represent successive stages in the spiritual evolution of human society

Therefore, the basis of the Baha'i faith is one God has given man one faith throughout through progressive revelations of his will in each period of history and Baha'u'llah reveals God's will for this age. This basic belief enables Bahai's to work to unite all people of all backgrounds into one order. To do this Baha'u'llahs emphasizes these principles:

1. Man must seek truth in spite of custom, prejudices and tradition
2. Men and women must have total equality
3. An international language
4. All children must receive equal basic education
5. A total effort to wipe out all prejudices
6. Religion and science go hand in hand
7. Abolish extreme wealth and poverty
8. Strong marriages, no gambling, drugs, drinking, lodge membership, political involvement, or idleness

All world major religions are in harmony. Is that true?

Of course it is not. How can the major world religions possibly have harmony?

The chart below gives us an idea about that.

Leaders	Concept of God or gods
Abraham & Moses	God is person, strict, uncompromising, monotheism
Zoroaster	Dualism, two supreme and eternal beings – one good and one evil – who are forever at war with each other
Jesus Christ	God is personal, He is one, but exists eternally in three persons, Jesus Christ is His only begotten son

Buddha	God is not relevant; essentially agnostic worldview
Mohammed	God is personal but unknowable, He is one, but does not exist in three separate persons, nor he can beget a son
Krishna	Polytheistic, impersonal, and ultimately pantheistic
Confucius	Polytheistic; social concerns are more important than the worship of God or gods

The Baha'i faith affirms that Baha'u'llah is the ark of salvation, the fulfillment of all religions, the one who unify them and makes the 9, one. It is really incredible the explanation they give of Luke 6:31 and Romans 2:14-15.

They connect these two passages to the following historical facts:

- 1750 B.C. Abraham
- 1250 B.C. Moses
- 483 B.C. Zoroaster
- 30 A.D. Christ
- 483 Buddha
- 632 Mohammed
- 800 Krishna
- 1850 The Bab
- 1892 Baha'u'Llah

But the only purpose is to lead all religions to Baha'u'llah. Above that they declare that the Bible is corrupted and that teaching of the early Church has been lost, and only what they have now is the crystal truth. But, how can a powerful God that give His word to His prophets cannot be able to preserve it? We all know how much opposition the Gospel has had and still has, but God has preserved it from its enemies.

They also declare that **“it is a blasphemy to say that Jesus is the only way to God”**

They say that God can't be incarnate but the truth is that there is nothing too difficult for God Matthew 5:17-18; Psalm 119:89; 152, 160; Jeremiah 32:27; John 1:14; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Acts 1:9-11; 2 Peter 1:16, and many other verses confirms Jesus position on earth and heaven, his purpose, and God's plan for the salvation of human kind. The Bible teaches us that Jesus' is the only way to God, and obviously Romans 2:14-15, does not mean that all religions are from God. In fact in the Bah'i faith is to be achieved by practicing the principles of Baha'u'llah. They believe in paradise, resurrection and final judgment, and no one claim to deserve the paradise of God.

Things to Know in Talking to Bahai's:

1. Although Oriental in origin, Bahaim has been made one of our culture and has imitated Christianity whenever possible to attract the Western mind.
2. Bahaim is eager not to conflict with the gospel, but willingly allow the Christian to adhere to his belief just so they acknowledge Baha'u'llah and his teachings.
3. Bahaim tried to tone down any dogmatic Christian doctrine; there is no absolute truth.
4. Bahaim is not original, as it has borrowed from Islam and Christianity.
5. They use all religions to defend Baha'u'llah.
6. The basic Christian doctrines are denied. Christ is manifestation, not the only manifestation
7. Know their teachings and ideals to refute it in light of scripture.
8. Get them to agree that the Bible is the Word of God.

Most resources taken from the life program “Cult of Baha'i” by Dr Lindstrom at “World Radio”