

Baha'ism

1) Summary Information

- i) 1844 AD 5 mil. Worldwide, 150k in US.
 - (1) Youngest of world religions.
- ii) Offshoot of Islam and headquartered in Haifa, Israel.
- iii) Baha'i means – “the manifestation of the glory of Allah.”
- iv) Mirza Husayne Ali Nuri, the founder is considered the most recent prophet from Allah.
 - (1) He was put in a pit (jail) for his faith in Iran in 1852 where he birthed the Baha'i religion.
- v) A belief that all the worlds religions are progressive revelations from God, each designed for its own place in history.
 - (1) Baha'ism is therefore the current revelation from God for this day and time.
 - (2) Their temples are nine sided representing the nine major religions and the fact that all lead to the same god.
- vi) Their aims are the unification of all faiths into a common world brotherhood.
 - (1) Advocate a universal language and abolition of all forms of prejudice
 - (2) Further, they believe there will be one world government and Baha'i will be the state religion.
- vii) Religions truth is not absolute but relative based on the current generation.

2) Authority

- a) The founder, Ali Nuri, and his words are divine.
- b) Baha'u'llah, taught that he was the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as prophesized in the Bible.
- c) Old Testament references of two Messiahs refers to Jesus as the suffering and Baha'u'llah as the conquering one.
- d) Passages which can be twisted to support Baha'ism in the Bible are taken literally; those that can not are not taken literally.
 - i) They believe that the Biblical references to the Counselor (who Muslims think is Mohammad) are to Baha'u'llah.
- e) The sacred writings of all nine major religions are considered important for the Baha'is.
 - i) Any disagreements between the sacred writings is considered either misinterpretations or non-essential doctrine.
 - ii) The writings of Baha'u'llah are considered most sacred as they represent the most recent revelation from god.

3) Man

- a) Generally good and working to earn his divine potential.

4) God – God and the universe (which is part of God) are co-eternal.

- a) Allah - god is one supreme person and unknowable.
- b) Do not accept the Trinity. There is no Holy Spirit. Jesus was not a virgin born Son, not resurrected, no atonement no second coming and no deity.
- c) God manifested himself on earth as Adam, Abraham, Moses, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, Baha'u'llah and will continue to do so into the infinite future.
 - i) Each manifestation was correct for that period in history.

5) Salvation – Combination of grace and works.

- a) Without God allowing it, no one could obtain paradise.
- b) One must also follow the law and do good works for mankind.

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- c) One must seek enlightenment and a connection with god
- 6) **After Physical Death** – There is a final judgment but no one can know for sure what will happen to them at the point of death.
 - a) Baha'i's are not sure exactly what Heaven and Hell will be like.
 - i) Rather than geographical places, they are more like states of being (which can include our time on this earth).
 - ii) Heaven and hell represent the state of being near to god or being far from fellowship with him.