

# BAHA'I

(from *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest House, 1999)

## INFO AT A GLANCE

**Purpose:** To unite the entire world in one common faith.

**Founders:** "The Bab" (Syid, or Mirza, Ali Muhammed); Baha'u'llah. (In Baha'ism, the words "Syid" and "Mizra" are designations of spiritual authority.)

**Source of authority:** The writings of Baha'u'llah.

**Revealed teachings:** Yes.

**Claim:** To be the fulfillment of all world religions and prophecies.

**Occult dynamics:** Mystical practices influenced by Shiite Islam.

**Examples of key literature:** *The Al-Kitab Al-Aqdas (The Most Holy Book)*, *The Kitab-I-Iqan (The Book of Certitude)*, *Gleanings From the Writings of Baha'u'llah*; *Baha'i World Faith*.

**Attitude toward Christianity:** Rejecting.

## Quotes:

"The Cause of Baha'u'llah is the same as the Cause of Christ. It is the same Temple and the same Foundation."<sup>1</sup> ('Abdu'l-Baha the infallible interpreter of Baha'u'llah)

"Verily if he declares the right to be left, or the south to be north, it is true and there is no doubt therein."<sup>2</sup> (Baha'u'llah on himself)

"There are some people who, even if all the proofs in the world would be adduced before them, still will not judge justly."<sup>3</sup> ('Abdu'l-Baha)

"He (Baha'u'llah) sets forth a new principle for this day in the announcement that religion must be the cause of unity, harmony and agreement among mankind." "All these [religions] divisions we see on all sides, all these disputes and opposition, are caused because men cling to ritual and outward observances, and forget the simple, underlying truth. It is the outward practices of religion that are so different, and it is they that cause disputes and enmity—while the [doctrinal] reality is always the same, and one. The Reality is the Truth, and truth has no division."<sup>4</sup> (Baha'i World Faith website)

## DOCTRINAL SUMMARY

**God:** Unknowable, except through His or Its historic Manifestations.

**Jesus:** A Prophet; a Manifestation of God (one of nine or more); never God-incarnate.

**Holy Spirit:** The "impersonal" active force of God.

**Trinity:** An irrational concept reinterpreted in light of Baha'i teachings, esp. by Baha'u'llah.

**Salvation:** By belief in the Manifestations of God and good works.

**Man:** A son of God.

**Satan:** A Christian myth.

**Second coming:** Baha'u'llah represents the Second Coming of Christ

**Bible:** One of many divine scriptures.

**Death:** Generally, death brings an improved state of existence.

**Heaven and Hell:** Conditions, not places.

## NOTES

1. 'Abdu'l-Baha, *Baha'i World Faith* (Wilmette, IL: Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1976), p. 400.

2. Baha'u'llah, ed. H. Hollay, *The Baha'i Scriptures* (New York: Brentane's, 1925), p. 245, cited in Miller, *The Baha'i Faith*, p. 140.

3. 'Abdu'l-Baha, *Some Answered Questions* (Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1950), p. 44, cited in Francis Beckwith, *Baha'i* (Bethany, 1985), p. 28.

4. Baha'i World Faith website at: <http://oneworld.wa.com/bahai/srb-faq.html>.