



# Contents

	<u>Page</u>
<i>Information for Teachers</i>	1
 <u>Basic Beliefs</u>	
Introduction	B1
Oneness of Religion	B2
Religion Through Time	B3
World Unity	B4
Holy Books	B5
Symbols	B6
What is God Like?	B7
 <i>Useful Websites</i>	 Appendix 1
<i>Leaflets available</i>	Appendix 2
<i>Some Useful Books</i>	Appendix 3



# Information for Teachers

The Bahá'í Faith is the world's seventh largest religion. The Bahá'í House of Worship in New Delhi (the "Lotus Temple") is currently the world's most visited building and the striking Bahá'í gardens on the slopes of Mount Carmel are becoming more well-known. These worksheets give basic information about the history, beliefs and practices of the Bahá'í Faith. The Bahá'í emphasis on the oneness of humanity, and its acceptance of the divine origin of the world's major religions, may make it a useful topic for pupils to study as part of their Religious Education programme.

This series of photocopiable masters sets out to provide teachers of secondary schools with accessible materials which can readily be adapted and built upon. The simple publication format allows the teacher to store his or her additional material alongside these printed pages.

These worksheets are mainly intended for Key Stage 3 but some teachers may find them suitable for certain purposes within Key Stage 4.

The Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop allows the photocopying of pages marked "copiable page" for educational use within the educational establishment which has purchased or downloaded this copy. (In the case of purchase or download by a local Bahá'í community for its own use, the pages may be copied for use by all the classes which are run by that Bahá'í community.)

Photographs are reprinted with permission of the Bahá'í International Community and have been reproduced from <http://media.bahai.org>.  
The website of the Bahá'í International Community is at [www.bahai.org](http://www.bahai.org).

Information and resources designed specifically for use in UK schools can be accessed at <http://re.bahai.org.uk>. General information about the Bahá'í Faith can be viewed at [www.bahai.org.uk](http://www.bahai.org.uk).

See Appendix 1 for a list of websites which provide further information on the Bahá'í Faith.

See Appendix 2 for details of leaflets available.

See Appendix 3 for books for children published by the Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop. A wide range of books about the Bahá'í Faith can be ordered from [www.bahaibooks.org.uk](http://www.bahaibooks.org.uk).

**Published by the Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop,  
The Haven, 6 Welsh Road West, Southam, Warwickshire, CV47 0JN.  
[www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk](http://www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk)**

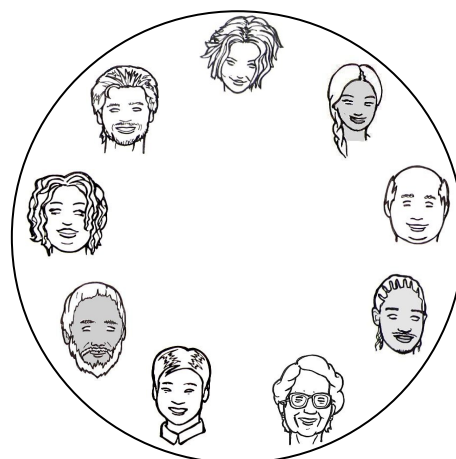


# The Bahá'í Faith - an Introduction

The Bahá'í Faith is the youngest in the family of world religions. It began in 1844 in Iran when a young man known as the Báb said that a new Messenger was to come to unite the whole world. In 1863 Bahá'u'lláh announced that He was that Messenger. A Bahá'í is a follower of Bahá'u'lláh.

The Bahá'í Faith is followed by several million people, spread all over the world, and it is now the seventh biggest religion.

One God  
One Religion  
One Human Race



The Bahá'í Faith teaches that there is only one God, that all the main religions come from God and they have the same spiritual aims. It also teaches peace and the oneness of humanity. A Bahá'í believes that it is time for the world to be united so the most important belief is in "Unity". Bahá'ís believe that all human beings should be like one family. This means that loyalty to humanity is more important than the loyalty to tribes and nations which causes so much trouble in the world. Bahá'ís therefore think that it is important for everyone to be united. We must lose all our prejudices of race and religion, and treat everyone with love and kindness. We must never say bad things about anyone. Bahá'u'lláh said:-

"This handful of dust, this earth, let it be in unity."

## Activity

1. What would the world be like if no-one ever said anything bad about anyone?
2. Imagine you are a reporter for a magazine. Draw up a list of questions you would like to ask a Bahá'í about their religion.



# Oneness of Religion

Bahá'ís believe that the universe was created by just one God, and that all the religions have been sent by this same God. We should stop arguing about different names for God, and about which religion is best.

## Activity

Find out which religion each symbol represents, and whether each religion has special colours. Write the name of the religion under its symbol and colour the symbol in the right colour. If the religion does not have a special colour, you can use any colour you wish.

Buddhism

Judaism

Taoism

Islam

Christianity

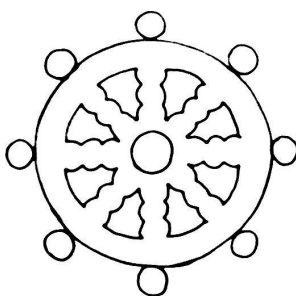
Bahá'í Faith

Sikhism

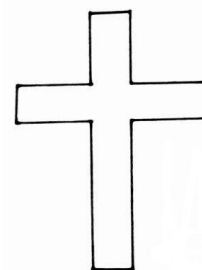
Hinduism



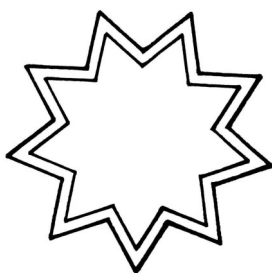
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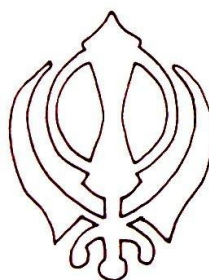
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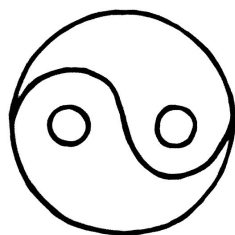
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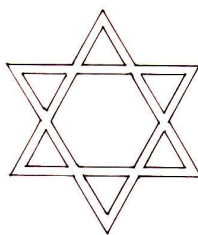
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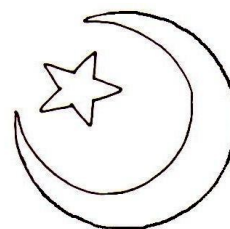
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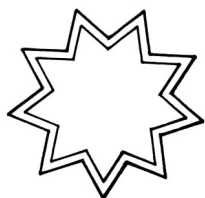
# Religion Through Time

Bahá'ís believe that at different times and in different parts of the world God has sent religions to guide mankind's behaviour. Each religion builds on the one before it, and the Messenger teaches the people as much as they are ready for. Bahá'u'lláh is simply the latest Messenger, but He promises that He is not the last.

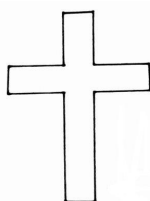
It is like the classes in a school—as each class of children goes up the school, each new teacher tells them something new which is based on what they already know. For example, in the first class the children might learn the sounds of the letters and in the next class they might learn how to read, using those letters. As they go up the school, they will learn to read harder and harder words. In the same way, we learn how to behave better and better by following each new Messenger. In the early days we may have been told how to keep peace within our families, but now we need to keep peace with everyone in the world.

## Activity

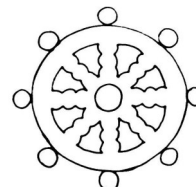
- Using a long strip of paper, make a timeline from 2000BC to 2000AD. Mark on the approximate dates of the six Messengers listed here, using their names and the symbols of their religions.



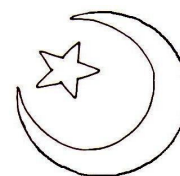
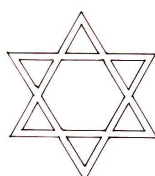
Jesus  
Muhammad  
Moses  
Buddha  
Krishna  
Bahá'u'lláh



Palestine  
Arabia  
Egypt  
Nepal/India  
India  
Iran



30 AD  
622 AD  
1300 BC  
500 BC  
900BC  
1863AD





# World Unity

Bahá'ís believe that all human beings are one family and that the world should be run as if it were one country. Bahá'u'lláh said:

“The earth is but one country and mankind its citizens.”

Bahá'ís believe that we need a world government which would make sure that everyone is treated fairly.

Bahá'u'lláh said that we also need the following:

- ♦ A world language so that we can understand one another—every child would only need to learn one language at school
- ♦ A world police force instead of every country having big armies
- ♦ A world currency so we could buy and sell things easily
- ♦ A worldwide system of weights and measures to make things simpler
- ♦ A world system of law and justice so criminals cannot escape
- ♦ Religion and science should work together—for example, science should be guided by religious values so that money goes into research into health instead of making weapons

Bahá'u'lláh said that people should be treated equally and fairly. Here are some of the things that He said should happen:

- ♦ Women and men should both be valued equally
- ♦ We should not have prejudice of any sort
- ♦ Every person should search for truth for themselves
- ♦ Every child should be able to go to school
- ♦ There should be a minimum and maximum wage so that no-one is starving and no-one is burdened by too much money

If all of these things are done we should have a lasting peace in the world.

## Activity

1. Which of these teachings do you think is most important? Why?
2. Are there any you disagree with?
3. Can you think of anything else the world needs to make it a better place?



# Holy Books

Only books which were written by The Báb, Bahá'u'lláh or Abdu'l-Baha count as Bahá'í Scripture. Bahá'u'lláh wrote a huge number of books and letters, and some of the most important are mentioned below:

## **The Kitáb-i-Aqdas**

This translates as “The Most Holy Book”, and includes laws about prayer, fasting, marriage, burial and many other aspects of human life.

“Marriage is dependent on the consent of both parties.”

*(from the Kitáb-i-Aqdas)*

## **The Kitáb-i-Íqán**

This translates as “The Book of Certitude”, and is an explanation of the symbolism in all religious books. It explains how the religions are connected.

“All the Prophets of God have invariably foretold the coming of yet another Prophet after them.”

*(from the Kitáb-i-Íqán)*

## **The Hidden Words**

This book contains ideas about how human beings should behave, and their relationship with God.

“How couldst thou forget thine own faults and busy thyself with the faults of others?”

*(from the Hidden Words)*

## **Summons of the Lord of Hosts**

This book contains the letters which Bahá'u'lláh wrote to the kings and rulers of the world, including Queen Victoria, explaining how wars should be stopped by everyone working together.

“Should anyone amongst you take up arms against another, rise ye all against him.”

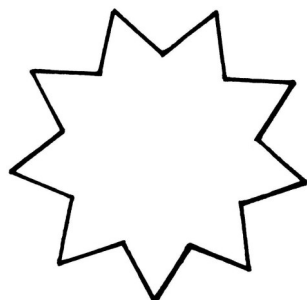
*(from Summons of the Lord of Hosts)*

## Activity

- What reasons can you think of to explain why Bahá'u'lláh wrote several books and not just one?



# Symbols

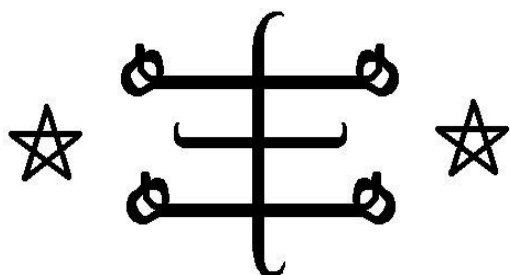


## A Nine Pointed Star

Bahá'ís often use a nine-pointed star as a symbol of their religion. Nine is the biggest single digit, and some people refer to it as the number of unity. Sometimes people design their own flower with nine petals, or make a nine-sided geometric design. At the top of this page you will see a version of the nine-pointed star with the earth in the centre and a circle outside.

## The “Greatest Name”

This is an artistic arrangement of Arabic letters, using the art form known as calligraphy. This symbol is often seen in a Bahá'í home, and is addressing God as “The Glory of the Most Glorious”. It will be high up on a wall.



## The “Ringstone Symbol”

This is most often found on Bahá'í rings. The top line represents God, the bottom line is mankind and the line in the middle is the Messengers of God. The same line goes down through all of them to show

that The Messengers join God and man together. The straight lines are the Arabic letter ‘B’ and the loops at the end are the letter ‘H’. These are the main letters in Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.

### Activity

- Using the English letters, make a design with 2 ‘B’s and 2 ‘H’s and 2 stars. You can use up to 3 ‘A’s as well if you wish.





# What is God Like?

We all know that we cannot see God. Bahá'u'lláh explains that God is not a person, God is something quite beyond the physical world:

“Regard thou the one true God as One Who is apart from, and immeasurably exalted above, all created things.”

If God created everything in the universe, all the billions of galaxies, He must be a far greater being than us. It is impossible to picture what God looks like because He must be a being outside our understanding. If we try, all we end up with is a picture from our own imagination:

“The highest praise which human tongue or pen can render are all the product of man’s finite mind.”

In the past, people used to picture God as a wise old man sitting on a cloud, because this was the highest thing they knew. Now we know about space and the other galaxies so we need a better understanding. God is a spiritual being not a physical one. God is the force behind the universe.

So if God is not a person, why do we refer to “Him” and “He”? The answer is in the English language, which does not like to call any intelligent being “It”. If we see a person in the distance, do we call them “It”? Likewise, we show the Creator respect by not using “It”.

So what is God like? God has absolute power but He also has absolute goodness. Every good quality we can think of, God has that quality to perfection: perfect love, perfect kindness, perfect generosity, etc. We can see these qualities reflected in the Messengers which God has sent to us and this is one way we can learn about what God is like.

Bahá'ís believe that each person has a soul, and it is this spiritual part of us that is attracted to this goodness and recognises that the universe has a spiritual dimension:

“Know verily that the soul is a sign of God... the first among all created things... to recognise His glory.”

And that is what life is for. This physical world is a matrix, and we have to use this matrix to learn the good qualities we need: to be kind, loving, honest, etc. When the soul leaves the matrix, it finds freedom and fulfilment in the spiritual world. Perhaps then we will understand more about God.

## Activity

1. Draw a picture to represent some of the galaxies in the universe. Then think hard about whether it makes sense to put God into your picture.
2. Write down five reasons why God cannot be a man sitting on a cloud.



# Appendix 1 - Useful Websites

The following websites provide further information on the Bahá'í Faith which may be of use to teachers of R.E.:

**<http://www.bahai.org>**

The official Web site of the Bahá'í International Community, offering information about the Bahá'í Faith and its worldwide community to the general public, as well as to journalists, academics, and researchers.

**<http://www.bahaullah.com>**

This contains details on the life of Bahá'u'lláh and of His Writings.

**<http://info.bahai.org>**

*Bahá'í Topics*, an information resource including a brief introduction to the Bahá'í Faith, its teachings, history, and community activities, in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Persian, and Arabic.

**<http://reference.bahai.org>**

The Bahá'í Reference Library, containing downloadable versions of all the authoritative texts of the Bahá'í Faith in English, Persian and Arabic.

**<http://news.bahai.org>**

The Bahá'í World News Service, reporting on news, activities, and developments around the world.

**<http://media.bahai.org>**

The Bahá'í Media Bank, a collection of more than 2,500 usable, high-resolution images of historical figures, holy places and buildings, and contemporary community activities. All photographs within this publication are from this website.

**<http://statements.bahai.org>**

A collection of statements offering the Bahá'í perspective on contemporary issues and themes, submitted by the Bahá'í International Community to United Nations agencies and conferences.

**<http://www.onecountry.org>**

*One Country* is the online newsletter of the Bahá'í International Community. The site contains numerous in-depth feature stories on the United Nations, noteworthy social and economic development projects, environmental efforts, and educational programmes.

**<http://terraces.bahai.org>**

The history and purpose of, and useful visitor information about the garden terraces at the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa.



# Appendix 2 - Leaflets

Page 1 of 2

The Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop produces a wide range of A4 3-fold leaflets, in a standardised two-colour format, many of which are suitable for classroom use. For the most part, these concentrate on one area of Bahá'í belief, ideals or practice. The price is 10p per leaflet, plus postage. The Bookshop will send out orders of any size, single or multiple copies. The list below indicates for which Key Stages each leaflet may be appropriate:

## **GENERAL (INTRODUCTORY)**

The Bahá'í Faith-What Is It?	2 3 4
The Bahá'í Faith-Being A Bahá'í	3 4
The Bahá'í Faith-How It Began	2 3 4
Cyflwyno'r Ffydd Bahá'í [ <i>Welsh</i> ]	2 3 4
The Bahá'í Faith – A New Religion for a New Age **	3 4
Bahá'u'lláh - The Promised One	4
Bahá'u'lláh - Messenger Of God	4
Bahá'u'lláh [ <i>simple text</i> ]	3 4
** full colour	

## **SPIRITUAL SUBJECTS**

The Nature of God	4
Prayer and Meditation	3 4
The Life of the Soul	4
Why Are We Here?	3 4 5
The Meaning of Suffering	4 5
Words of Inspiration [ <i>quotations</i> ]	4 5
Good and Evil	3 4 5
Fasting and the Bahá'í Fast	3 4
Health & Healing - A Bahá'í View	4 5

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER RELIGIONS**

All Religions Are One	3 4 5
The Return of Christ	3 4
Hinduism and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Buddhism and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Sikhism and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Islam and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Judaism and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4
Christianity and the Bahá'í Faith	3 4

continued...



## Appendix 2 - Leaflets

Page 2 of 2

Continued...

### **MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS**

Bahá'í Marriage	3 4 5
Family Life	3 4 5
Food and Farming	3 4 5
Treatment of Animals	3 4 5
Caring for the Environment	4 5
Sustainable Development	5
Bahá'í Consultation	4 5
Bahá'í Administration	4 5
The New World Order	3 4 5
God's Promise To Humanity	4
The Importance of Religion	4 5
The Way to World Peace	3 4 5
Freedom From Terrorism	3 4 5
World Citizenship	3 4 5
The New Age	5
Space - The Final Frontier?	4 5
One Human Race [ <i>on racism</i> ]	3 4 5
The Status of Women	3 4 5
Religion and Science	3 4 5
Economics - A Bahá'í Approach	4 5
Bahá'í Education	4 5
Law and Order	3 4 5
Freedom Of Speech	4 5
'Abdu'l-Bahá in Britain	3 4
The Bahá'í Faith & Queen Victoria	2 3 4
The Future of Monarchy	3 4 5

### **'PRESENTATION' series**

#### **A6 single fold, 5p each:**

Bahá'í Prayers [ <i>9 short prayers</i> ]	2 3 4 5
Life after Death	3 4 5

The Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop can be contacted at:

The Haven, 6, Welsh Road West, Southam, Warwickshire, CV47 0JN,  
or by telephone on 01926 817291.

Orders and enquiries also via [www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk](http://www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk).

The text of these leaflets can also be viewed at [www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk](http://www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk).



## Appendix 3 - Some Useful Books

Although there is a wide range of Bahá'í literature available (e.g. [www.bahaibooks.org.uk](http://www.bahaibooks.org.uk)), the Warwick Bahá'í Bookshop specialises in producing simple materials, including small books. Teachers of Key Stage 3 may find the following of use:

### **“The Bahá'í Faith”**

by Patrick Vickers.

This is a simple introductory book based on a Bahá'í family. It has 64 pages, with full colour photographs on virtually every page, and has been written specifically for pupils of between 8 and 14 years. The subject matter has been tailored to the concerns and interests of this age group, and the vocabulary is not particularly challenging. Copies are available at a reduced price of £1.25 for schools, plus postage. A half class set (15 copies) would cost £18.75 plus postage (which is always charged at cost).

### **“The Life of the Báb”**

### **“The Life of Bahá'u'lláh”**

### **“The Life of `Abdu'l-Bahá”**

### **“The Life of the Guardian”**

by Helena Hastie.

These 32-page booklets each tell the life story of a central figure from early Bahá'í history. Written in a straightforward style, they are probably suitable for most KS3 students. They would also make excellent background reading for any teacher wishing to deepen their professional knowledge on the Bahá'í Faith. Each book costs £1.50, or £5.00 for the set of four, plus postage.

### **“My Book of Prayers – What can I say when...?”**

### **“My Book of Readings – What can I read when...?”**

produced in conjunction with Sapling Publications.

These two books, at just £1.00 each (plus postage), were produced for children from Bahá'í families rather than for teenagers, but they may be of use in the classroom as a source of Bahá'í prayers and writings on different subjects. They provide prayers or readings for e.g. “What can I say when someone is ill?” or “What can I read when I am upset about something?” In the context of the classroom, the books could also be used as a source of display material or as genuine Bahá'í “artefacts”. The prayers and readings could be used for individual pupils to read aloud to the class.

Sample pages from these books can be viewed on the Bookshop website:-

<http://www.warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk>

To order please contact [enquiries@warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@warwickbahaibookshop.co.uk).