

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH – AN OVERVIEW

The Bahá'í Faith is the newest of the world religions. Only recently has the public come to recognize that it is, in fact, a major world religion – one worthy of study and reflection.

The Bahá'í Faith began in Persia (now Iran) in the middle of the nineteenth century. It was directly preceded by the Bábí Faith, founded in 1844 by the Báb, whose name means "Gate" or "Door." He foretold the coming of a new Prophet of God, just as John the Baptist had foretold the coming of Christ. In 1863, a distinguished Persian nobleman announced that He was not only the One promised by the Báb, but also the Promised One of all the world's religions, Who would usher in an age of peace for all humankind. His name was Bahá'u'lláh, which means "the Glory of God."

Bahá'u'lláh called upon women and men to give up their prejudices and to recognize the brotherhood of all mankind as children of one, loving God. He said the time had come for humanity to unite under a common faith. He revealed a plan for world civilization to be built on a foundation of love and justice.

Among the most fundamental of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings are these:

- * There is only one God.
- * All religions share a common foundation.
- * Mankind is one. People of all races, nations, economic groups and religious backgrounds are equal in the sight of God.
- * Individuals are responsible for investigating truth for themselves.
- * Science and religion both reveal truth. Science without religion is materialism – religion without science is superstition.
- * Men and women are equal, like the two wings of one bird.
- * Each child is entitled to a sound, basic education.
- * The solution to economic problems is spiritual.
- * The world needs an international, auxiliary language.
- * A universal peace must be established, protected by a world commonwealth.

People of all backgrounds, as Baha'is, are striving to rise above the division and prejudice of the world to become lovers of mankind.

Heart to Heart

Outline/ Table of Contents



"This mystery of inner meaning may be whispered only from heart to heart." – Bahá'u'lláh

This booklet contains the complete outline and table of contents of *Heart to Heart*, a 700-page educational slide show about the Bahá'í Faith.

Page numbers appear first, followed by the question or topic addressed by the content of the slide itself.

The booklet also contains simplified instructions on how to navigate the Heart to Heart PDF file using the free Adobe Reader software, and a brief overview of the Bahá'í Faith.

Navigating *Heart to Heart* Inside back cover

The Bahá'í Faith – An Overview Outside back cover

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NAVIGATING HEART TO HEART

Heart to Heart is a Portable Document Format (PDF) file, to be viewed or shown using the free Adobe Reader software. You can always download the latest version from www.adobe.com. (Reader is available for Windows, Macintosh, and Linux.)

For ease of use, we recommend you first change one Adobe default setting: From the Reader menu, select **Edit>Preferences>**. Then, under “General”, place a check mark in the box labeled “Use single-key accelerators to access tools”. (This will enable you – especially when working in full-screen mode – to instantly select the tool you need.)

FULL SCREEN MODE: When showing *Heart to Heart* (with or without a projector), we suggest using full-screen mode. You can enter this mode by pressing **<Ctrl>L** on the keyboard. The active slide will then fill the display, leaving no menus, toolbars, or other visual distractions. Pressing **<Esc>** (or **<Ctrl>L** a second time) will return to normal mode.

ZOOMING and PANNING: You can easily zoom in on any portion of a *Heart to Heart* slide (such as a block of text), then move around (pan) over the page. To select the right tool, just press **Z** (for zoom) or **H** (for hand). The Zoom cursor is a magnifying glass; the Hand cursor, a small hand.

To zoom in: Using the mouse, left-drag the Zoom cursor over an area you want to enlarge. While dragging, you will see a “marquee” box. When you release the left mouse button, your selected area will expand to fill the screen. (There are other ways to zoom, but this seems simplest.)

To zoom out: Pressing **<Ctrl>0** returns the display to a no-zoom state. (That’s Control-Zero, not Control-Oh!) You can now choose another spot to zoom in on, or proceed to a new slide.

To pan around: To move around a slide while zoomed in, you can press **H** to select the Hand tool. Using the mouse, you now can left-drag to move the image at will. (Or just leave the Zoom tool selected and pan using your arrow keys.)

MOVING PAGE TO PAGE: While in an unzoomed state, pressing **<PgDn>** (page-down) will move to the next page; **<PgUp>** (page-up) to the previous page. Clicking any link in the Contents or Index will jump to that page. Often, however, you will want to jump directly to a predetermined slide some distance from the one you are on.

To jump to a new slide: Press **<Shift><Ctrl>N**, then type in the page number of the slide you want. Pressing **<Enter>** will take you there. With a bit of practice, you can enter these keystrokes almost instantly. This makes it easy to step through a series of predetermined slides for a customized fireside, devotional, or study program.

AUTOMATIC SEARCH: To start the Reader “search” function, type **<Shift><Ctrl>F**. This activates a search pane with various functions. Study the labels or the Reader Help file for details. Or – when *not* in full-screen mode – simply type **<Ctrl>F** for the simpler “find” option. Enter your search term and press **<Enter>** to locate the next occurrence.

For more tips and shortcuts, see Adobe Reader Help by pressing <F1>.

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- 251. Can a lower plane of existence ever comprehend a higher?
- 252. Why is the journey of the soul necessary and how does the Word of God and the Holy Spirit help us?
- 253. Do man's mind and spirit appear due to evolution and maturity?
- 254. What are some of the soul's properties?

255. Catching the spark of faith
256. How does Revelation enable the soul to draw nearer to God?
257. How are our mental faculties connected with our bodies?
258. What is the connection between soul / mind / spirit?
259. What are the stages of the spiritual journey?
260. What are the characteristics of the beginning of our search for divine truth?
261. What are the characteristics of the journey of Love?
262. What are the characteristics of the journey of Knowledge?
263. What are the characteristics of the journey of Unity?
264. What are the characteristics of the journey of Contentment?
265. What are the characteristics of the journey of Wonderment?
266. The journey of True Poverty and Absolute Nothingness
267. Why do Bahá'í teachings say that human understanding of truth and reality is relative?
268. Is communion of minds in the next world possible?
269. Can spirits materialize?
270. Can a soul be possessed by an evil spirit?
271. Can evil from the next world influence us?
272. Can anyone else read or affect my mind through psychic powers?
273. What do the Bahá'í teachings say about astrology and séances?
274. How do people become brutal and corrupt?
275. What can heal the illnesses of human society?

Tests and difficulties

280. What is the source of happiness?
281. What is Faith?
282. How can I get to know myself better?
283. How can I experience transformation?
284. Why should I turn over my life to the will of God?
285. Can prayer help me with tests and difficulties?
286. Why should I bring myself to account each day?
287. How might I pray to God to remove my faults?
288. How might I pray when life becomes unmanageable and I feel overwhelmed?
289. Who can restore our sanity and how?
290. Does everything happen for a reason?
291. Are some sins worse than others?
292. Can I ask Bahá'u'lláh for a miracle?
293. Can a homosexual person become a Bahá'í?
294. Should we try to correct the faults of others by pointing them out?
295. What must we do to overcome our weaknesses and limitations?
296. Do the Bahá'í teachings encourage community support?
297. What are the Bahá'í teachings on the use of alcohol and drugs?
298. Is the AA 12-Step Program in harmony with the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith?
299. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity

477. What is the destiny of the indigenous population of America?
478. Minorities are favored and accorded priority
479. Who is often filled with more prejudice?
480. We should meet each other as equals
481. As the notes which blend to make beautiful musical chord...
482. Hasten towards a bright and happy future
483. The light of the spirit shineth in the black pupil of the eye
484. The lights of love of God
485. The Bahá'í Faith transcends all racial limitations and differences
486. The white people must make a supreme effort
487. What can a black person do to help bring about racial harmony?
488. Does the Bahá'í Faith encourage marriage between black and white in America?
489. The union of the white and the black is very important
490. Our first and inescapable obligation is to nurture, encourage, and safeguard every minority
491. What do the Bahá'í teachings say about the role of skin color in the eyes of God?
492. How can a Bahá'í distinguish himself on the matter of race?
493. What is the fundamental purpose of the Bahá'í Faith?
494. We must be patient with each other
495. A warning not to get involved in political agendas of race
496. Racism is a negation of faith
497. What is the Bahá'í perspective on Socialism?
498. Do Bahá'ís believe in capital punishment?
499. Do Bahá'í teachings allow gambling and participation in lotteries?

Christ and Bahá'u'lláh

503. What is the Bahá'í attitude toward Christ and Christianity?
504. Do Bahá'ís accept the divine authority of Jesus Christ?
505. Do Bahá'ís recognize Jesus Christ as both human and divine?
506. Is Christ's living Spirit still with us today?
507. Did Jesus Christ refer to Himself as the Son of God?
508. Do Bahá'u'lláh and His Successors also refer to Christ as the Son of God?
509. How do Bahá'ís interpret the expression "Son of God"?
510. Do Bahá'ís accept the Virgin Birth of Jesus?
511. Do Bahá'ís consider the Virgin Birth a miracle?
512. In what sense is Jesus Christ born ("begotten") of God?
513. Does "only begotten" refer to Christ's human nature or to His divine nature?
514. Do Bahá'ís recognize Jesus Christ as God's Word in human form?
515. What is the divine Word through whom "all things were made"?
516. What are some other names for the divine Word or Christ Spirit?
517. Is the Primal Word (Primal Will) identical with God?
518. Is the Primal Word a blind force or a conscious power?
519. How does the human Jesus embody the Primal Word?
520. Does the divine Christ Spirit (the Primal Word) reappear from age to age?

428. Are miracles compatible with science?
 429. What type of knowledge are Bahá'ís encouraged to study?

Peace and Justice

435. What is the purpose of religion?
 436. What is the Most Great Peace?
 437. How can lasting peace be established in a World Commonwealth?
 438. What is the Lesser Peace?
 439. How will the Lesser Peace come about?
 440. What is the two-fold process that is driving world events?
 441. Will this new system of governance be built around nation states?
 442. What is the call of Bahá'u'lláh to mankind?
 443. Do Bahá'ís support the United Nations?
 444. What is the station of the continent of America?
 445. What is the station of the American nation?
 446. What is the purpose of the Bahá'í Houses of Worship?
 447. What is the role of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh?
 448. Will nation building always exist?
 449. What is the Bahá'í position on wealth and money?
 450. What are some thoughts on Capitalism and profit-sharing?
 451. What is the Bahá'í attitude regarding work?
 452. What are the rewards for a teacher?
 453. What is the station of the farmer?
 454. Women and world peace?
 455. What will some of the changes in social values be?
 456. What is the Bahá'í position on labor strikes?
 457. Do Bahá'ís vote?
 458. Can Bahá'ís run for or hold a political office?
 459. What does the Bahá'í Faith say about hunting and fishing?
 460. What does Bahá'u'lláh say about bearing firearms?
 461. Can a Bahá'í in the United States own a gun?
 462. Did Bahá'u'lláh bring a new economic system?
 463. What does 'Abdu'l-Bahá say about food and wages?
 464. What is the Bahá'í view on taxes and the elimination of extremes of wealth and poverty?
 465. Do Bahá'ís serve in the military?
 466. Are Kings still part of this New World Order?
 467. What is the Bahá'í perspective on Theocracy?
 468. Can the Bahá'í Administrative Order be a model for future world governance?
 469. What is the Bahá'í perspective on countries adopting Bahá'í laws?
 470. What is the Bahá'í perspective on entanglements in politics?
 471. What is the Baha'i path to reform society?
 472. What is the purpose of the Bahá'í teachings regarding mankind?
 473. What is the first and inescapable obligation of every Bahá'í community?
 474. What about rights of individuals?
 475. What are some of our most challenging social issues today?
 476. Native Americans will become great standard bearers

300. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him
 301. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves
 302. We admitted to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs
 303. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character
 304. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings
 305. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all
 306. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others
 307. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it
 308. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and for the power to carry that out
 309. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs

Health and Healing

313. What is the relationship between our minds and our bodies?
 314. What happens to someone's soul when the body is damaged?
 315. How are our mental faculties (mind) connected to the soul?
 316. How can we overcome grief, sorrow and depression?
 317. Is the soul affected by physical illness?
 318. Do Bahá'ís believe in using doctors?
 319. Do Bahá'ís believe in psychiatrists?
 320. How will medicinal treatment improve in the future?
 321. What will be will be our food in the future?
 322. What is the role of food in causing and curing disease?
 323. Do Bahá'ís eat meat?
 324. Are Bahá'ís allowed to smoke or use tobacco?
 325. Can suffering in life be helpful for me?
 326. How can a physician best facilitate healing?
 327. What shall I do in times of physical pain?
 328. How could doctors be more effective healers?
 329. Do Bahá'ís believe in organ transplantation?
 330. How important is it to visit the sick?
 331. Is a doctor allowed to hide the severity of an illness from a patient?
 332. How can I help someone who is diagnosed as terminally ill?
 333. What does the Bahá'í Faith say about euthanasia?
 334. Can a prayer from a different part of the world help with the healing of a sick patient?
 335. Can I be a spiritual healer?
 336. Does the Greatest Name exercise influence over physical matters?
 337. Do Bahá'ís have a defined idea about food and exercise?
 338. Should you try new and untried methods of medicine?

- 339. What did ‘Abdu’l-Bahá say about biochemical homeopathy?
- 340. Does the Bahá’í Faith have its own school of nutrition or medicine?
- 341. Does the Bahá’í Faith support recovery programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous?
- 342. Can a Bahá’í use alcohol as a home remedy for a common illness?
- 343. Can Bahá’ís serve alcohol to their houseguests if they are not Bahá’ís?
- 344. Can a Bahá’í doctor prescribe narcotics?
- 345. What is the Bahá’í perspective on marijuana and drugs?

Family and Marriage

- 349. What is the Bahá’í view towards marriage?
- 350. What are the bounties of true marriage?
- 351. How can I bring my marriage and family closer to God?
- 352. What about love and marriage?
- 353. What is a true Bahá’í marriage?
- 354. What are some procedures for a Bahá’í marriage?
- 355. What are the four kinds of love?
- 356. What is the Bahá’í view of the equality of women and men?
- 357. Can a Bahá’í cohabit and have sex before marriage?
- 358. Why should we show respect towards parents?
- 359. What is some of the guidance given to mothers?
- 360. How should parents discipline their children?
- 361. Who is the major provider in a Bahá’í marriage?
- 362. What are the primary responsibilities of a mother and a father?
- 363. What does the Bahá’í Faith say about education?
- 364. Is the education of daughters or sons more important?
- 365. How weighty is the responsibility of fathers in educating his children?
- 366. Can a Bahá’í couple practice birth control?
- 367. Can a Bahá’í consider permanent sterilization?
- 368. Does Bahá’u’lláh allow abortion under any circumstances?
- 369. Do Bahá’ís believe in artificial insemination?
- 370. Can a Bahá’í couple use in-vitro fertilization or surrogate mothers to have children?
- 371. Is it allowable to have a vasectomy in order to not have any more children?
- 372. What is the Bahá’í perspective on population explosion?
- 373. How do husband and wife come to a decision?
- 374. What are valid reasons to ask for a divorce?
- 375. Does the Bahá’í Faith allow one party to refuse request for divorce?

Creativity and the Arts

- 378. Who inspires creativity, understanding and insight?
- 379. What is the impact of music on the heart and soul?
- 380. Is creating art a worthy vocation?
- 381. When do arts, sciences and crafts become a form of worship?
- 382. What causes the reformation and revitalization of the arts?
- 383. How do the arts help the world advance spiritually?

- 384. Aside from spiritual benefits, why should artists and craftsmen be valued?
- 385. How important is musical education for children?
- 386. Are beautiful melodies more beneficial than other sounds?
- 387. Are there any arts that Bahá’ís should avoid?
- 388. Do Bahá’ís portray Prophets or Bahá’í Central Figures in dramas?
- 389. Is depicting a Prophet or Manifestation of God in human form allowed?
- 390. Is there a Bahá’í standard for writers?
- 391. Can novels written by Bahá’í authors portray Prophets or Manifestations of God?

Existence of God

- 394. Does God exist?
- 395. What is God’s purpose for creating man?
- 396. Why did God create mankind?
- 397. Can man ever comprehend God?
- 398. Can we know God’s essence?
- 399. How can we know God exists when we cannot see God?
- 400. Can we find God through faith and reason?
- 401. How can we know God?
- 402. What are some signs of God’s existence?
- 403. How can we understand God’s Word?
- 404. Can a scientist believe in God?
- 405. What are some of the many names of God?
- 406. God as Father
- 407. Do you know your Lord personally?
- 408. Some say that seeing is believing

Science and Religion

- 411. Can true religion and sound science complement each other?
- 412. Can science ever explore the essence of God?
- 413. How could I investigate reality and truth in my spiritual journey?
- 414. Did life appear as a result of blind forces?
- 415. Does mankind have a power which is beyond the limitations of nature?
- 416. Is scientific investigation connected to spiritual discovery?
- 417. Is humanity the only intelligent life in the universe?
- 418. Was there a beginning of creation?
- 419. What do Bahá’ís believe about creation and evolution?
- 420. Was man ever an ape?
- 421. Was there a time when humankind did not exist?
- 422. Are there forces that cannot be directly perceived?
- 423. Is the law of cause-and-effect compatible with an all-powerful, all-knowing God?
- 424. Can philosophy enable us to know God?
- 425. What is man’s destiny in using scientific research?
- 426. To what end shall we use our scientific discoveries?
- 427. What does the Bahá’í Faith say about the importance of miracles?