



Bah'ai

The Baha'i Faith is an independent world religion with its own laws and ordinances which originated in Iran in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Founder is Baha'ullah (Glory of God), who was exiled and persecuted, and finally sent to Akka in the Holy Land, where he died in 1892. The spiritual and administrative centre of the Faith is thus in the Holy Land.

Baha'is believe in the oneness of mankind, and in one God, who has revealed His purpose progressively to mankind. There are followers in over 112,000 centres in the world and over 170 national bodies. Baha'is come from many diverse nationalities, cultures and backgrounds. Baha'is accept the validity of all religions and believe it is the individual's responsibility to investigate the truth in all matters. Women and men are equal in the sight of God.

Baha'is are required to say an obligatory prayer each day and read from the scriptures of the faith each morning and evening. In illness, they are exempted from obligatory prayer.

Baha'is have a great respect for life. They believe each person has a soul, which comes into being at conception and which progresses after death. A child before birth has a soul; therefore, abortion is strongly discouraged

The Baha'i Faith has its own calendar consisting of 19 months, each having 19 days, plus a number of "Intercalary Days" to complete a full solar year. Holy Days and other events are celebrated on the same Gregorian date each year.

Ascension of Abdu'l Baha: recalls the son of the Founder of the Bah'ai Faith, Abdul 'Baha, ascending to heaven on 28th November 1921 in Haifa, Israel. <http://www.geocities.com/~quddus/feast/fhd10.html>

Ascension of Baha'u'llah: commemorates the death and ascension of Mirza Husayn Ali on 29th May 1892, at Bahji, near Acre (now in Israel), following Baha'u'llah's exile and imprisonment to this region. It is observed by prayers and readings and work is suspended.

Ayyam-I-Ha: celebration observed by hospitality and acts of charity that marks the beginning of a series of special days (Intercalary Days) that balance out the calendar.

Birth of the Bab: celebration of the birth of the herald of the faith, Mirza' Ali Muhammed, in on 20th October, 1819 in Shiraz.

Birth of Baha'u'llah: celebration of the birth of their teacher and Messiah. On this day Bah'ais refrain from work. <http://birth-of-baha-u-llah.123holiday.net/>

Day of the Covenant: this day, first celebrated on 26th November, 1901 is the celebration of the covenant given in the last will and testament of Baha'u'llah that appointed Abdu'l Baha as his successor.

Declaration of the Bab: 'The Bab' means 'the gate'. This festival recognises the declaration on 23rd May 1844 by Ali Muhammed, the Bab, in Shiraz, Iran, that he was the anticipated "Coming One" of all religions. Work is suspended.

Martyrdom of the Bab: Bahai-Ali Muhammed was executed by firing squad on 9th July 1850 by Persian political and religious powers at a barracks in Tabriz, Iran. The day is observed by abstaining from commerce and work.

Nineteen Day Fast: A fast observed by Bah'ai adults in good health from sunrise to sundown when they take no food or drink.

Ridvan: Ridvan means Paradise. During a 12 day period from 21st April to 2nd May Bah'ai's commemorate the time in 1863 when Baha'u'llah declared that he was God's messenger for this age. Work is suspended on days 1, 9, and 12 of the festival. The election of Baha'i Assemblies takes place on the 1st day of Ridvan.