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THE CARAVAN



BAHA'I ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

THEIR PRIORITIES, FUNDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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PRAYERS

I AM AWARE, O LORD...

I am aware, O Lord, that my trespasses have covered my face with shame in Thy presence, and have burdened my back before Thee, have intervened between me and Thy beauteous countenance, have compassed me from every direction and have hindered me on all sides from gaining access unto the revelations of Thy celestial power.

O Lord! If Thou forgivest me not, who is there then to grant pardon, and if Thou hast no mercy upon me who is capable of showing compassion? Glory be unto Thee, Thou didst create me when I was non-existent and Thou didst nourish me while I was devoid of any understanding. Praise be unto Thee, every evidence of bounty proceedeth from Thee and every token of grace emanateth from the treasuries of Thy decree.

- The Bab





Foreword

“Since all men have issued forth from the shadow of the signs of His Divinity and Lordship, they always tend to take a path, lofty and high. And because they are bereft of a discerning eye to recognize their Beloved, they fall short of their duty to manifest meekness and humility towards Him. Nevertheless, from the beginning of their lives till the end thereof, in conformity with the laws established in the previous religion, they worship God, piously adore Him, bow themselves before His divine Reality and show submissiveness toward His exalted Essence. At the hour of His manifestation, however, they all turn their gaze toward their own selves and are thus shut out from Him, inasmuch as they fancifully regard Him as one like unto themselves. Far from the glory of God is such a comparison. Indeed that august Being resembleth the physical sun, His verses are like its rays, and all believers, should they truly believe in Him, are as mirrors wherein the sun is reflected. Their light is thus a mere reflection.”

- The Bab

Allah'u'Abha,

Dear friends and seekers of truth,

As we enter the Baha'i month of Kalimat (Words), we are reminded that throughout history, the Word of God has been the force that awakens hearts, transforms societies, and renews the spiritual life of humanity. It is therefore fitting that this special edition of The Caravan is dedicated to the memory of the Bab, whose martyrdom we commemorate on the ninth day of July.

The life of the Bab was brief, yet its impact upon human history was immeasurable. At a time when religious thought had become stagnant and spiritual expectations had faded into ritual and tradition, the Bab arose to proclaim a new Revelation from God. His message called upon humanity to awaken from heedlessness, to seek truth independently, and to prepare itself for the coming of "Him Whom God shall make manifest" — Baha'u'llah.

The Bab's ministry lasted only six years, yet in that short period He transformed countless lives. Men and women from every walk of life abandoned comfort, wealth, position, and security in their search for truth. They were drawn not by organization, authority, or worldly influence, but by the power of His words and the purity of His message. Even in the face of imprisonment, persecution, and death, the Bab remained steadfast in His mission until His martyrdom in Tabriz on 9 July 1850.

More than a historical event, the martyrdom of the Bab stands as a testimony to the price that has often accompanied truth throughout the ages. It reminds us that every generation is called upon to distinguish between inherited beliefs and genuine conviction, between institutional authority and spiritual reality, between tradition and truth.

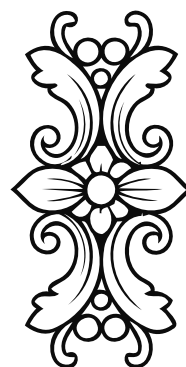
Throughout this issue, we reflect on the life, teachings, and legacy of the Bab. Our Guest Article explores themes relevant to the condition of the Faith today. In Some Questions Answered, we address questions submitted by readers seeking clarity on matters of history, practice, and principle. Our Did You Know? section highlights lesser-known facts that deserve thoughtful consideration, while our continuing features seek to shed light on historical events and sources often overlooked in mainstream discussions.

The Bab repeatedly emphasized the importance of seeking truth with one's own eyes and not through the eyes of others. That principle remains as relevant today as it was in nineteenth-century Persia. In a world increasingly shaped by institutions, opinions, and competing narratives, the call to independent investigation remains one of the most powerful and liberating teachings ever given to humanity.

As we remember the Bab during this sacred season, may we not only honor His sacrifice but also strive to embody the courage, sincerity, and spiritual independence that characterized His life. May His example inspire us to search honestly, think deeply, and remain faithful to truth wherever it may lead.

With love and steadfast hope,

The Free Baha'is Team



HISTORICAL TRUTHS



1819: Room where the Bab was born, Shiraz

FAITH

*I want to write about faith,
about the way the moon rises
over cold snow, night after night,*

*faithful even as it fades from fullness,
slowly becoming that last curving and impossible
sliver of light before the final darkness.*

*But I have no faith myself
I refuse it even the smallest entry.*

*Let this then, my small poem,
like a new moon, slender and barely open,
be the first prayer that opens me to faith.*

- from Where Many Rivers Meet

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THE MOST HOLY LAWS

In the name of Him who is the Ruler (al-hakim) over what was and what will be.

We have made it lawful to you to listen to (singing) voices and to songs. Beware lest listening take you beyond the bounds of good breeding and dignity. Rejoice in the joy of My Greatest Name, with which hearts are entranced and the minds of those brought near (to God) are attracted. We have made (music) a ladder for the ascent of spirits to the highest Horizon. Do not make it a wing (janah) of the self and passion. I dislike that you be among the ignorant.

Al-Kitab Al-Aqdas by Baha'u'llah, Translated from Arabic by Earl Elder & William Miller



CLERGY IN THE BAHÁ'Í CAUSE

In answer to a question as to whether or not there would be any clergy in the Baha'i Cause?



“No. In this movement there will never be any paid ministers, no appointed clergy, no bishops, no cardinals, no popes, no ceremonies. A clergyman, assuming that he is ordained to his ministry, may think that he knows more about God than anyone else, whereas the humble man in his congregation may know more about God than he does. The sacerdotal and theological position makes a clergyman proud and haughty. But there is one thing in this Cause; some people may become greater than the rest, not through appointment, but through the purity of their hearts, their unselfish deeds, their heroic sacrifices, and their knowledge of God. Such illumined souls, like

kind fathers or teachers, will guide and teach those less fortunate. They are the elder brothers of the members of the community. They do not arrogate to themselves any title or position. You will know them by their humility, their sincerity, their deeds, their severance, their knowledge, their spirituality, and their attraction.”

Abdu'l Baha

Diary of Ahmad Sohrab, March 21, 1913

QUOTATION

"The most acceptable prayer is the one offered with the utmost spirituality and radiance; its prolongation hath not been and is not beloved by God. The more detached and the purer the prayer, the more acceptable is it in the presence of God."

The Bab

"Behold how in this Dispensation the worthless and foolish have fondly imagined that by such instruments as massacre, plunder and banishment they can extinguish the Lamp which the Hand of Divine power hath lit, or eclipse the Daystar of everlasting splendor. How utterly unaware they seem to be of the truth that such adversity is the oil that feedeth the flame of this Lamp! Such is God's transforming power. He changeth whatsoever He willeth; He verily hath power over all things...."

Baha'u'llah



"Now the new age is here and creation is reborn. Humanity hath taken on new life. The autumn hath gone by, and the reviving spring is here. All things are now made new. Arts and industries have been reborn, there are new discoveries in science, and there are new inventions; even the details of human affairs, such as dress and personal effects—even weapons—all these have likewise been renewed. The laws and procedures of every government have been revised. Renewal is the order of the day.

And all this newness hath its source in the fresh outpourings of wondrous grace and favor from the Lord of the Kingdom, which have renewed the world. The people, therefore, must be set completely free from their old patterns of thought, that all their attention may be focused upon these new principles, for these are the light of this time and the very spirit of this age."

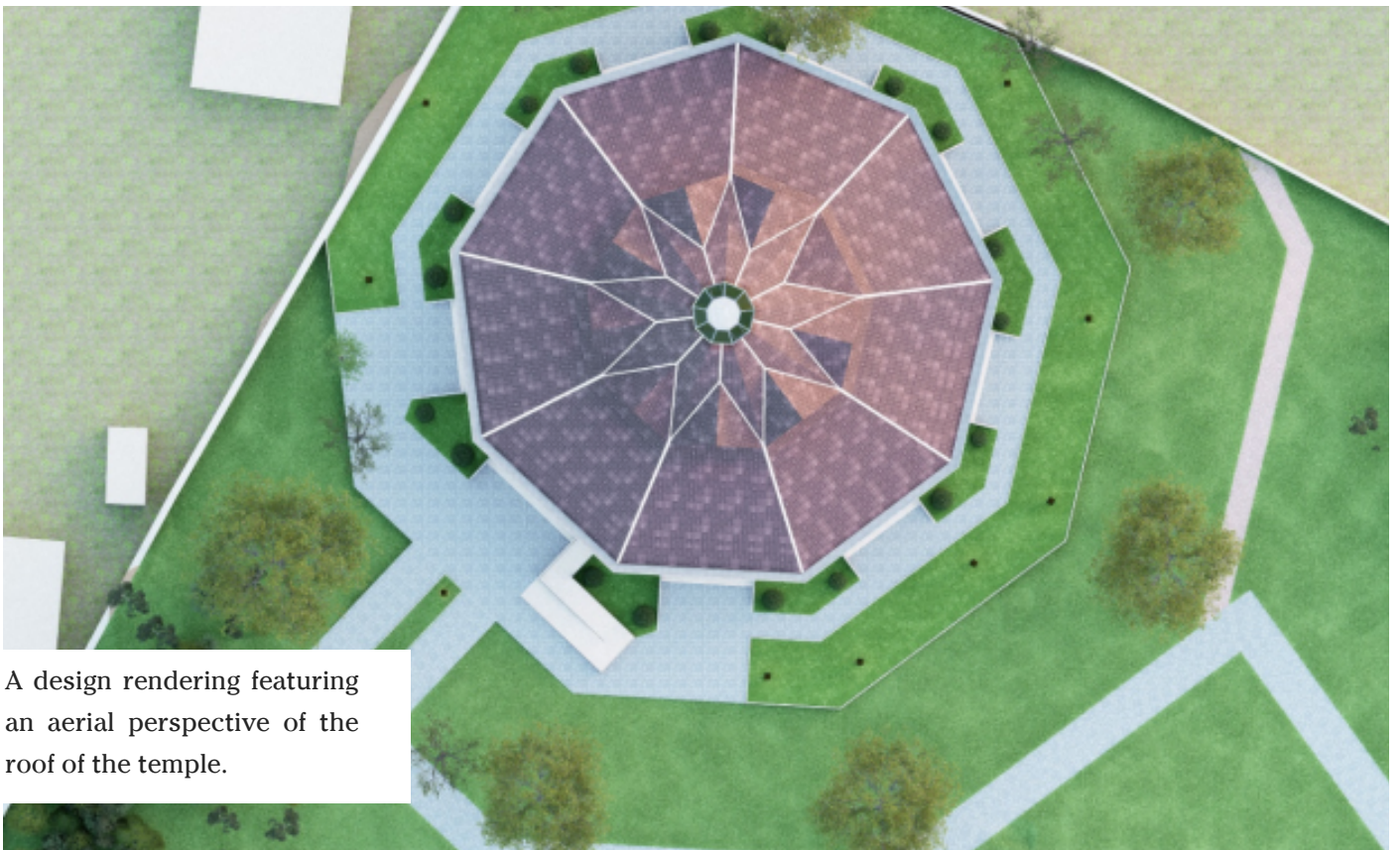
Abdu'l Baha

THROWBACK



The House of the Bab, where the Báb declared His mission on 23 May 1844 in Shiraz, Iran, before its destruction in 1979

BAHA'I ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM - THEIR PRIORITIES, FUNDS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY



A design rendering featuring an aerial perspective of the roof of the temple.

At the core of the teachings of Baha'u'llah is a consistent emphasis on the elevation of humanity - justice, unity, and the transformation of society. Worship, in that framework, is not separated from service; it is meant to generate social progress rather than exist as an end in itself. The writings of the Master further reinforce the idea that religion must produce tangible improvement in human conditions, not only symbolic or architectural expression.

Against that backdrop, the construction of **Mashriqu'l-Adhkar** buildings in places such as Nepal and

Cameroon raises a legitimate question of priority: at what point does building symbolic centers of worship align with the broader principle of human upliftment, and when does it risk becoming disconnected from it?

The official framing of these temples is that they serve both spiritual and social functions, intended as centers of devotion and service to the wider community. However, critics argue that the practical reality in regions like Nepal and Cameroon is more complex. There are a lot of problems that the people

of those countries face, and building another temple is definitely not going to solve those problems. When the local Baha'i population numbers only about 1,200 in Nepal and roughly 400 in Cameroon, while countless human needs remain unmet, it is fair to ask whether another temple is the priority - or whether those resources could have been directed toward more immediate and meaningful forms of service.

This leads to a second and more pressing issue: **financial transparency.**

The Baha'i administrative system, developed historically through the framework established under Shoghi Effendi, relies on a global network of contributions, including **Huquq'ullah**, national funds, temple funds, and project-specific appeals. In principle, these contributions are voluntary and spiritually motivated. In practice, they form a continuous financial system supported by believers across countries.

What remains largely inaccessible to most contributors is a consolidated and detailed public accounting of how these funds are collected, allocated, and spent across global projects. While periodic reports and updates do exist, they do not typically provide a full, independently auditable global breakdown of inflows, expenditures, and remaining balances across all major initiatives. Given the intensity with which meetings are organized, contributors are encouraged to give, reminders are sent through WhatsApp groups, and individuals are personally contacted to encourage donations across various funds, the same level of effort is not consistently reflected in providing comprehensive updates on the total funds collected after each drive. Nor are detailed follow-up reports regularly shared showing how those funds were ultimately spent.

This creates a structural gap: millions contribute overtime, but only those in the Administration have access to a complete financial picture of how those contributions are distributed across projects.

In modern organizational governance, religious or otherwise, this raises a straightforward standard of

accountability. When financial systems are global, transparency must also be global. Without it, trust becomes the primary mechanism of accountability rather than verification.

Over time, the financial structure within the community has also become increasingly layered. Beyond Huququllah and temple funds, additional designated contributions are regularly introduced for specific projects or institutional needs. While each fund is presented as voluntary, the lived experience in many communities is that financial participation becomes a frequent and recurring expectation within community life.

This raises further concern about engagement within the community. Attendance at monthly NDFs and other meetings and events appears to be declining, with noticeably lower participation from younger members. In many places, gatherings are increasingly attended by older members, while a significant portion of the younger generation seems absent or disengaged.

This situation raises a difficult question: whether the focus has shifted too heavily toward financial contributions and reporting structures, while broader spiritual development and meaningful engagement are becoming less central in practice.

Some Baha'is have expressed concern time and again that meetings, gatherings, and administrative communications often place strong emphasis on financial contributions. Whether intended or not, this creates a perception that financial participation is closely tied to active religious engagement. When that perception grows, it risks shifting the internal culture from one centered on spiritual development to one where organizational sustainability and fundraising occupy significant space.

This is not unique to any one religious system. Large global institutions often face similar tensions. But it becomes more sensitive in systems where financial contributions are framed as spiritually significant acts rather than purely administrative support.



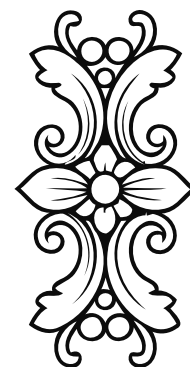
Design rendering of site of the local Baha'i House of Worship to be built in Kanchanpur, Nepal.

In that context, concerns about priorities and transparency are not marginal, they go to the core of institutional credibility. If contributors are repeatedly asked to support global projects, it is reasonable for them to ask for clear, consolidated, and accessible reporting on how those resources are used.

Ultimately, the issue is not whether temples in Nepal or Cameroon should exist. The deeper question is whether the current balance between symbolic construction, financial expansion, and spiritual development reflects the original emphasis on human transformation found in the teachings that inspired the system itself.

When a religious system grows its financial demands and institutional projects faster than it grows transparency and real participation, trust starts replacing visibility, and participation starts feeling procedural instead of spiritual.

At that point the question becomes unavoidable: is the system still serving spiritual transformation, or has it turned into something primarily administrative and financial?



THROWBACK



View of the front door of the
House of the Bab, Shiraz

WANT TO BE A CONTRIBUTOR FOR THE CARAVAN?

**WE WELCOME
THOUGHTFUL
VOICES AND
FRESH
PERSPECTIVES.**



Interested in contributing to the Caravan Magazine by writing a guest article? Kindly send us your article at thecaravan@freebahais.org and if we find your article unique, knowledgeable, and interesting enough for our readers, we will surely publish it in our upcoming issue. If you have any other queries, you can write to us at info@freebahais.org Thank you!

FREE BAHAI ACTIVITIES

“As this physical frame is the throne of the inner temple, whatever occurs to the former is felt by the latter. In reality that which takes delight in joy or is saddened by pain is the inner temple of the body, not the body itself. Since this physical body is the throne whereon the inner temple is established, God hath ordained that the body be preserved to the extent possible, so that nothing that causeth repugnance may be experienced. The inner temple beholdeth its physical frame, which is its throne. Thus, if the latter is accorded respect, it is as if the former is the recipient. The converse is likewise true. Therefore, it hath been ordained that the dead body should be treated with the utmost honor and respect.”

- Abdu'l Baha

As we commemorate the Martyrdom of the Bab and dedicate this issue to His memory, Free Baha'is across the world continue to draw inspiration from His courage, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment to truth. The Bab transformed the spiritual landscape of His age not through institutions or authority, but through the power of His words and the sincerity of His followers. Today, believers in many countries are striving to follow that same spirit by sharing the teachings of the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and Abdu'l Baha in their communities.

Across the United States and Canada, Free Baha'is have continued to host neighbourhood devotional gatherings, study circles, and fireside discussions focused on the original Writings. Several communities have dedicated recent gatherings to reading passages from Selections from the Writings of the Bab and discussing the significance of independent investigation of truth.



Many believers have reported increased interest from former Baha'is and seekers who are looking beyond administrative narratives and seeking a deeper understanding of the teachings themselves. Informal gatherings in homes continue to provide a welcoming environment where questions can be asked freely and respectfully.

In the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Switzerland, and other European countries, small groups of Free

Baha'is have continued meeting regularly to study the Writings directly. Particular attention has been given to historical sources, early Baha'i history, and the lives of the Bab and the Letters of the Living.

Several communities have organized reading sessions dedicated to the Heroic Age of the Faith, exploring the courage displayed by the Bab's followers and reflecting on how those examples remain relevant today.

Encouraging developments continue to emerge from Africa, particularly in Kenya, where increasing numbers of believers are expressing interest in the original teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha. Discussions centered on independent investigation, spiritual freedom, and the importance of returning to the primary texts have attracted considerable attention.

A particularly exciting development has been the launch of a Free Baha'i blog initiative in Kenya. The purpose of the project is to share local perspectives, community activities, historical research, and reflections on the teachings. Friends there hope that this platform will serve both as a source of learning and as a means of connecting seekers throughout East Africa.

In other parts of the continent, believers continue to organize children's gatherings, youth discussions, and devotional meetings that emphasize service, honesty, and unity.

In India and some parts of Pakistan, Free Baha'is continue to focus on community-building activities centered on prayer, study, and service. Home gatherings remain the primary means through which believers share the teachings and support one another.

Several communities have reported increased participation from youth and young adults who are eager to explore the Faith directly through the Writings rather than through secondary materials. Children's activities, storytelling sessions based on the lives of the Bab and Baha'u'llah, and family

devotional gatherings have become increasingly popular.

In Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore, young believers continue to play an important role in community activities. Many have taken the lead in organizing study groups, service projects, and discussions on the life and mission of the Bab.

Particularly encouraging has been the participation of young men and women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one who have demonstrated remarkable initiative in bringing together their peers for meaningful conversations about spirituality, social responsibility, and service to humanity.

In Panama, Argentina, Brazil, and other parts of Latin America, Spanish-speaking believers have continued their efforts to make Free Baha'i materials more widely available. Translation projects, online discussions, and study gatherings have helped introduce many seekers to perspectives rarely encountered elsewhere.

The growing interest from Spanish-speaking friends demonstrates that the desire to understand the teachings directly is not limited to one region but is emerging across many cultures and backgrounds.

One trend that continues to gain momentum across all regions is the renewed emphasis on reading directly from the original Writings of the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and Abdu'l Baha. During Nineteen Day gatherings and informal study circles, believers are increasingly choosing to focus on the sacred texts themselves rather than relying exclusively on summaries, courses, or administrative materials.

Many have expressed that this return to the original sources has deepened their understanding of the Faith and strengthened their personal relationship with the teachings.

As communities around the world prepare to commemorate the Martyrdom of the Bab on 9 July, special devotional programs, readings, and discussions are being organized in homes and small

gatherings. Friends will reflect upon the Bab's extraordinary sacrifice, His unwavering faith, and the profound impact of His mission upon world history.

The story of the Bab continues to inspire believers everywhere to remain steadfast in their search for truth and courageous in their commitment to principle.

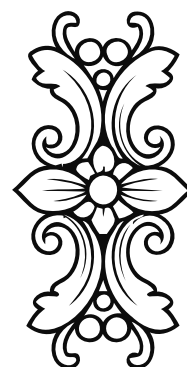
The Free Baha'i movement continues to grow quietly but steadily across many parts of the world. More believers are discovering historical sources, exploring original texts, and engaging in thoughtful discussions about the future of the Faith.

While challenges remain, there is a growing sense of optimism that greater awareness, deeper study, and sincere dialogue will help many rediscover the spirit that animated the early believers. Inspired by the examples of the Bab, Baha'u'llah, and Abdu'l Baha, Free Baha'is remain committed to building communities founded upon truth, unity, service, and spiritual freedom.

As we remember the Bab during this sacred season, we pray that His example will continue to illuminate hearts around the world and inspire a new generation of seekers to pursue truth with courage and sincerity.

With steadfast love,

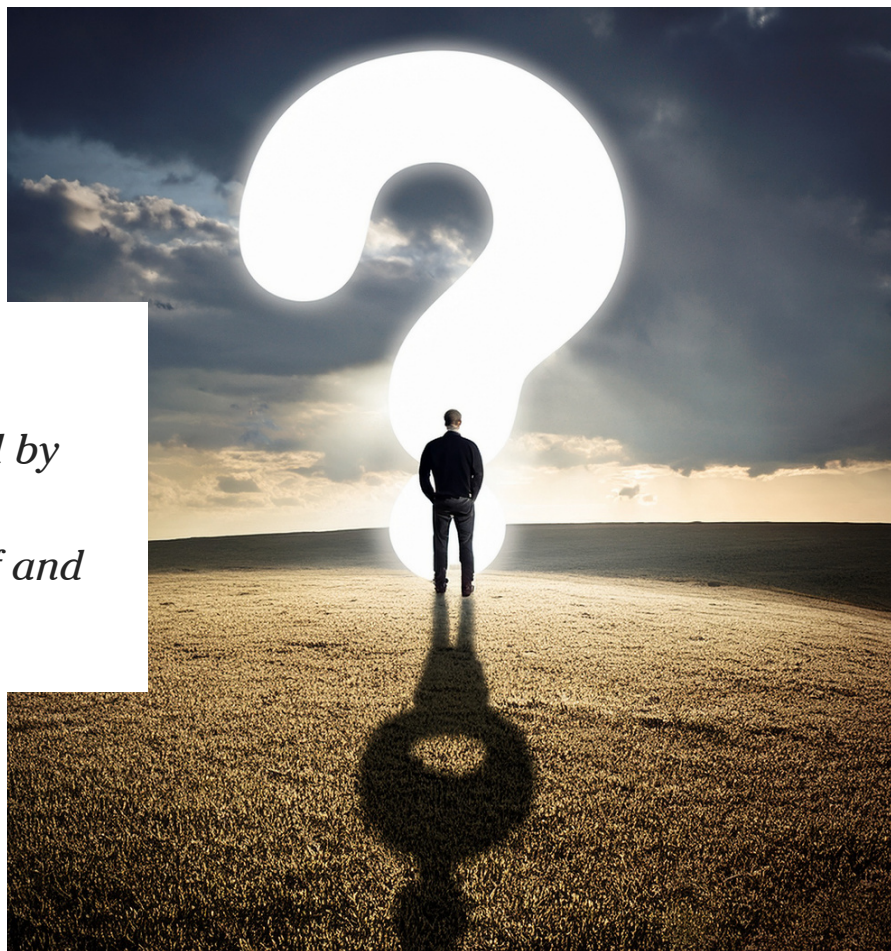
The Caravan Team, Free Baha'is



SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Here we address a few questions frequently raised by readers.

Our aim is to provide brief and thoughtful clarifications.



Good morning, there are many serious discussions on the internet with comments that women must be members of any true Universal House of Justice because the Baha'i Faith teaches that women and men are equal. One writer mentioned the fact that when Adam was created, the word for man was Ish, and the word for woman was Isha, which means a female man. He presented the fact that Almighty God is not a man, however, yes, a woman is a man, a female man, and when Holy Scripture speaks of the "men of the House of Justice", women are included from Almighty God's viewpoint and that every true Universal House of Justice MUST have women members. Also, Baha'u'llah wrote: "Arise and cause My Cause to triumph, and by the strength of your word subdue the hearts of men." Baha'u'llah, PEB, page 60. Does He also mean the "hearts" of women?? Of course He does!! Of course He does!! Also, Bahá'u'lláh wrote: "We desire but the good of the world and the happiness of the nations, ... that all nations should become one in faith and all men as brothers; that the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men should be strengthened; that diversity of religion should cease, and differences of race be annulled." Does "all men as brothers" include "all women"? Yes!-with total certainty! Does "unity between the sons of men" include the "daughters of men"? Yes, with total certainty! Many people are involved in this discussion, and the reason for the current error of practice was exposed as failure by many women and men to believe what 'Abdu'l-Baha wrote concerning Shoghi Effendi that Shoghi Effendi was under the "...unerring

guidance of His Holiness the Exalted One", because by that same "unerring guidance" Shoghi Effendi wrote concerning enactments by the Universal House of Justice and the Guardian of the Cause of God: "He...is bound to insist upon a reconsideration by them of any enactment he conscientiously believes to conflict with the meaning and to depart from the spirit of Baha'u'llah's revealed utterances." The point was made that if a woman or a man does not believe what 'Abdu'l-Baha' wrote about Shoghi Effendi's infallibility and also does not believe what Shoghi Effendi wrote that the Guardian must review enactments of the Universal House of Justice with authority, then that woman or man will not understand that every true Universal House of Justice MUST have women members also. Many vital statements from Shoghi Effendi are also appearing on the internet, such as his statement concerning how to recognize and to identify a true Baha'i which Shoghi Effendi wrote in his Oct. 24, 1925 Message to the N.S.A. of the U.S.A. and Canada, in which definition of a true Baha'i Shoghi Effendi included: "Loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of our Beloved's sacred Will." (The Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha') Shoghi Effendi also spoke of that same identifying factor of a true Baha'i when a prominent pilgrim asked him how to identify a true Baha'i. One of the comments concerning the necessity for every true Universal House of Justice to have also women members mentioned that all of the women and men around the Earth who are currently living their daily lives in obedience to that "Loyalty to every clause of our Beloved's sacred Will" definition of a true Baha'i all acknowledge that every true Universal House of Justice MUST have women members also. Baha'is need to find these vital discussions on the internet so that they can include their comments on the internet. It is important for all of the friends all around the Earth to share in these discussions in harmony with the Baha'i Principle: "unfettered, independent investigation of Truth". I also would like you to send your comments to me personally: rwa357campbell@gmail.com Cordially, Ross

Hello Ross,

Allah'u'Abha!

Thank you for your email. The question you have raised is valid and reflects a wider confusion that many are grappling with today.

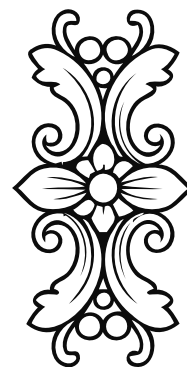
However, this confusion did not arise in a vacuum. The responsibility ultimately rests with the Universal House of Justice, as it is the body claiming authority over these matters. When an institution holds that position, it must also be prepared to clearly address the contradictions and concerns that emerge from its own framework and practice.

For that reason, this is not something that can or should be settled through personal interpretations or internet discussions alone. If a clear and authoritative answer is required, it must come directly from them.

We would strongly encourage you to formally present your question to the Universal House of Justice and request a direct response.

Warmth and peace,

Team Free Baha'is



Why would Shoghi name his book, The World Order of Bahauallah, when it gives it the essence of being political? Could this be why Russia destroyed the Temple in Russia and Iran thinks Bahais are spying on them?

Seems that from Shoghi going forward it becomes a cult rather than a true World Religion.

Also it seems declaring one's faith would be a step below signing a declaration because Abdulbaha says we are known as true Bahais only by our actions versus our words or declarations as being a true follower.

I was wondering also why we are not able to connect with others because of possible persecution when we are asked to be a martyr, so to speak and when we are stronger together. It is difficult to teach singularly when seen as a lone wolf in search of their prey?

If there are others in the Colorado, N.M, and Arizona area that would like to connect then I give permission to be contacted by my email address given.

Thank you for your efforts in bringing our community back together!

EB

Hi Elizabeth,

Allah'u'Abha!

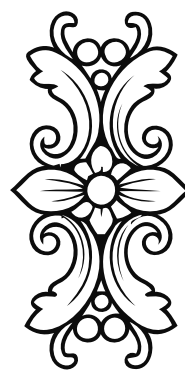
Your questions about The World Order and the difficulties with government recognition are very deep, and you are touching on core issues that lead many to the Free Baha'i path.

Regarding connection: The fear of persecution is real, and it's why many Free Baha'is must remain cautious about public affiliation. We are not asked to seek martyrdom, but to uphold truth freely. We will pass your contact info to others in your area who have also given permission to connect. They might reach out via email.

If you have any questions, or need any help, please let me know. We're happy to help you, always!

Regards,

Team Free Baha'is



I recently came across a passage in the Kitab-i-Aqdas which stated that begging is not permissible. This left me confused. If begging is forbidden, why does the Baha'i administration constantly ask believers to contribute to various funds? We hear frequent appeals for the National Fund, Continental Fund, International Fund, Huququ'llah, teaching projects, temple projects, and many other financial campaigns.

If an individual in need is not permitted to ask others for money, how can institutions be permitted to repeatedly solicit funds from the entire Baha'i community? Is there not a contradiction here?

I am also confused about Huququ'llah. We are told that it is a sacred law and an obligation, yet believers are regularly encouraged and reminded to contribute. At what point does encouragement become solicitation?

Furthermore, many ordinary Baha'is donate significant amounts of money without ever seeing detailed public accounting of how those funds are spent. Shouldn't transparency and accountability accompany requests for financial contributions?

How do Free Baha'is understand the Aqdas prohibition on begging, and how does that understanding differ from the practices of the Haifan administration?

Hi Marjorie,

Allah'u'Abha!

The passage from the Kitab-i-Aqdas establishes an important spiritual and social principle: dignity through self-reliance. The passage in the Kitab-i-Aqdas states:

"It is not permissible to beg, and when one is asked (for money), it is forbidden for him to give. It has been ordained that everyone earns his living..."

Baha'u'llah condemns a culture of dependency in which people habitually seek support from others rather than earning their livelihood through honest effort. At the same time, He places responsibility upon society, the guardians, and the wealthy to care for those genuinely unable to provide for themselves.

The principle is therefore twofold: individuals should not make a practice of asking, and society should not abandon those in need.

The Free Baha'i understanding is that this principle

applies broadly. A community that continually conditions believers to respond to appeals, campaigns, drives, and financial solicitations risks creating a culture centered on fundraising rather than spiritual transformation.

The issue becomes even more striking when we consider Huququ'llah. In its original form, Huququ'llah was presented as a sacred right of God, not as a fundraising mechanism. It was intended to be a personal matter between the believer and the Manifestation of God or His legitimate successor. The spirit of the law was voluntary devotion arising from conscience and faith, not institutional pressure.

Yet many former and current Baha'is observe that modern administration places enormous emphasis on financial contributions. Appeals for various funds are constant, while detailed public scrutiny of expenditures remains limited. This naturally leads some believers to ask whether the original spirit of the Aqdas has been replaced by a system that depends heavily on recurring financial requests.

Free Baha'is do not object to voluntary giving. Every

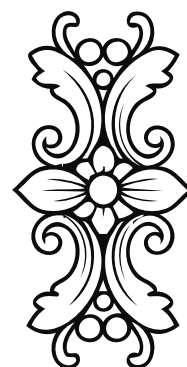
religious community requires resources to function. The real question is whether giving arises from the free and informed choice of believers or from a culture in which members are repeatedly encouraged, reminded, and measured according to their financial participation.

The Aqdas condemns begging because it undermines dignity and creates unhealthy dependency. The same principle should encourage religious institutions to exercise restraint in seeking funds and to maintain the highest standards of transparency and accountability. A believer should never feel pressured to give, nor should financial contribution become an informal measure of loyalty or devotion.

Ultimately, the spirit of Baha'u'llah's teaching is not the accumulation of money but the cultivation of integrity, self-sufficiency, trustworthiness, and service to humanity. Any institution claiming to represent His teachings should be judged by how faithfully it upholds those principles.

Regards,

Team Free Baha'is



WEBSPLORE

An organization for extracting money from old people (self.FreeSpeechBahai)

submitted 1 day ago by trident765

This is what the Bahai organization is designed to do. Old people are barely able to perceive the world for themselves anymore, so they rely on what people tell them. And the Bahai organization is constantly telling its members that they are saving the world, and that the world is becoming a better place because of them, or about to become a better place. So pure-hearted elderly Baha'is, who only want to do good before they die, pay their Huququ'llah to the Bahai organization, and leave their will to the Baha'i organization.

This is why Bahai youth are not a focus of the Bahai organization, because they are only an expense and not an income source. The focus neighborhood youth play some role in generating income, because their presence helps convince elderly Baha'is that the Bahai organization's efforts are "working" and hence worth donating to. But the Baha'i youth can basically go to hell as far as the Bahai organization is concerned. They don't help pay Ken Bowers' or Paul Lamples' paycheck - the elderly Baha'is do. So the elderly Baha'is are the focus of the Bahai administration. We don't like seeing an aging Bahai community, but those in the highest levels of Baha'i leadership wouldn't have it any other way.

Source:

https://old.reddit.com/r/FreeSpeechBahai/comments/1tqt9ml/an_organization_for_extracting_money_from_old/

BLAST FROM THE PAST

OUT OF THE MAIL BAG

- 3

Brawley, California: I am in receipt of your letter and the Junior Caravan. This appeals to me very strongly because of my love for Peace and my great desire to see the children of the world educated in the ways of peace. We have founded here the "School World Friendship League" and I enclose our folders on the different departments of our work. We have also made available a collection of "World Friendship Songs". These songs supply a need long felt for children's work everywhere.....It occurs to me as I have re-read the aims of the Junior Caravan that we might join our forces for the Cause of Peace. I am at present a teacher in the public schools of Brawley and all the work that I have done has been done as a teacher.

*

Paris, France: Mlle. Remande, who has been in Alsace these past months, has arrived in Paris. It is with her that I am arranging the matter of the Junior Caravan and its announcement in "L'Enfant", monthly review. You did not know that I was already cooperating with this Magazine and knew its founder, Maître Henri Rollet, a great soul, who, for fifty years, devoted his life for the cause of the so-called "criminal childhood". It is in one of his institutions that I have gone for nearly two years, every Sunday, to play with those from 13 to 21 who were sentenced to various periods or taken away from irresponsible or difficult parents. At present, "L'Enfant" is just adding a section to its pages. This new section will be especially for children, while the rest of the journal will be for educators, teachers, parents and social welfare institutions interested in the care of childhood. The announcement of the Junior Caravan will be made in the January issue and we are expecting a permit from the Ministère de l'Education Nationale to introduce the magazine in the public schools of France. Such permit would be a great help to us and for the Junior Caravan. We intend to set aside a page every month for the publication of a letter to or from America written by a child or a class.

*

Brooklyn, New York: If the enthusiasm of my pupils over the letters from New Zealand could have been registered, it would have been heard around the world. They are wild about the idea and are sending the little New Zealanders stamps, postcards, photos of themselves, and when one boy suggested sending specimens of flowers, one of my funny fellows said, "Maybe you'd like to send them a cow!"

*

Wellington, New Zealand: I told the children, per medium of the local wireless station, of the "Caravan" of America and they were thrilled. The requests for "Caravan" Pen Friends has been enormous, as you can see from this bundle.

*

The Children's Caravan, January 1935

The Editor invites correspondence with the well-wishers of the "Children's Caravan" and will hold himself at their disposal at all times. He also asks that these friends support this publication with subscriptions and carry news of it in their circles and communities.

*

KNOW YOUR HERITAGE



The Bab's signet ring

DECLARATIONS IN THE CAUSE

We the Free Baha'is do not believe in declarations. We believe in spreading the true teachings of Baha'u'llah and don't work for numbers. A Free Baha'i should purify himself from greed of attaining positions, and start working out of love for humanity and world peace.

Our Master has clearly stated,

"There are no officers in this Cause. I do not and have not appointed any one to perform any special services, but I encourage everyone to engage in the service of the Kingdom. The foundation of this Cause is purely a democracy, and not a theocracy."

Star of the West, Vol. 8, pg. 116

These man-made assemblies and authoritative positions have pushed the Baha'is to work out of greed of acquiring positions which lead to fake reports and false statistics. But, if a person frees himself from administration, he will fulfil his duties towards Baha'u'llah and not for NSA or UHJ. Thus, he will be rewarded by Baha'u'llah for his efforts. For this reason, Free Baha'is do not believe in Officers or Office Bearers and one must be the Guardian of his own faith and action.

So, anyone who would wish to work for the faith should follow the teachings of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l Baha, serve the faith and promote world peace and harmony.

Why do you think the Baha'i Faith got split into various groups after the passing away of the Master? Don't you think the rule of the so-called guardian Shoghi Effendi and his Administration has played a very crucial role in the division and disunity of the Baha'is?

INVESTIGATION OF REALITY



Abdu'l Baha has said,

“God has given man the eye of investigation by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigation of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eyes of another, hear through another’s ears nor comprehend with another’s brain... Therefore, depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of your own investigation; otherwise, you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God.”

– Abdu'l Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, Volume 2, p. 287

DID YOU KNOW?



The Bab Refused to Remain Silent Before Religious Authority

One of the most remarkable episodes in the life of the Bab took place during the gathering of religious leaders and government officials in Tabriz in 1848. The Bab was brought before a tribunal of prominent clerics who sought to interrogate Him, discredit Him, and force Him to recant His claims.

The atmosphere was intimidating. The most influential religious authorities of the time were present. The Bab was a prisoner, deprived of freedom and facing the possibility of severe punishment. Yet, despite immense pressure, He refused to alter His message to satisfy those in power.

Historical accounts record that when questioned regarding His station, the Bab spoke openly and fearlessly. Rather than seeking the approval of the clergy, He remained faithful to the truth as He understood it, even though it would cost Him dearly. Within two years, He would be executed for His beliefs.

The story is significant because it highlights a principle that lies at the heart of the Baha'i teachings: truth should never be subordinated to authority. The Bab did not measure truth by the rank, title, or position of those opposing Him. He expected individuals to investigate reality for themselves.

Today, many Free Baha'is see a parallel in this episode. They argue that loyalty to truth sometimes requires questioning institutions, traditions, and leaders when actions appear to conflict with the spirit of the Faith. While administrative systems may claim authority, the example of the Bab reminds believers that conscience, independent investigation, and devotion to principle must never be surrendered to organizational pressure.

The courage displayed by the Bab in Tabriz continues to inspire those who believe that genuine faith is not blind obedience, but the willingness to stand for truth even when standing alone.



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