

the formed." (Udana, v.81) Bahá'u'lláh described God in this way: The birds of men's hearts, however high they soar, can never hope to attain the heights of His unknowable Essence. It is He Who hath called into being the whole of creation, Who hath caused every created thing to spring forth at His behest ... Far be it from His glory that human pen or tongue should hint at His mystery, or that human heart conceive His Essence." In one of His books, "The Seven Valleys", Bahá'u'lláh described the seventh valley as "true poverty and absolute nothingness". This, the ultimate goal of life, is explained as "the dying from self and the living in God."

The Basic Truths

Although the basic truths taught by Gautama Buddha remain the same, they are expanded and made more explicit, in accordance with the needs of this age. The Buddha taught The Middle Way, between materialism and extreme asceticism. This approach is reaffirmed by Bahá'u'lláh: "In all matters moderation is desirable. If a thing is carried to excess, it will prove a source of evil." The Buddha presented the Noble Eightfold Path as a guide to living. As promised by the Buddha, Bahá'u'lláh taught these same noble ideals. Below are some examples of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings under the individual headings of the Eightfold Path: Right Understanding

"Man should know his own self, and know those things which lead to loftiness or baseness, to shame or to honour..."

Right Resolve

"He is my true follower who, if he come to a valley of pure gold will pass straight through it aloof as a cloud, and will neither turn back, nor pause."

Right Speech

"Verily I say, the tongue is for mentioning what is good, defile it not with unseemly talk."

Right Conduct

"They that follow their lusts and corrupt inclinations have erred and dissipated their efforts. They indeed are of the lost."

Right Livelihood

"It is made incumbent on every one of you to engage in some one occupation, such as arts, trades, and the like. We have made this -- your occupation -- identical with the worship of God, the True One."

Right Effort

"All efforts and exertion put forth by man from the fullness of his heart is worship, if it is prompted by the highest motives and the will to do service to humanity."

Right Mindfulness

"The station of absolute self-surrender transcendeth, and will ever remain exalted above every other station."

Right Contemplation

"The meditative faculty is akin to the mirror; if you put it before earthly objects it will reflect them? But if you turn the mirror of your spirits heavenwards? the virtues of the Kingdom will be obtained."

Progressive Revelation

Bahá'u'lláh taught the idea of progressive revelation. The Founders of the religions of the world, in every age, reaffirm the universal spiritual truths, but also reveal new teachings appropriate to the conditions of the time: "Every Prophet Whom the almighty and peerless Creator hath purposed to send to the peoples of the earth hath been entrusted with a Message, and charged to act in a manner that would best meet the requirements of the age in which He appeared." Bahá'ís believe that the new Teaching (Dharma) specifically for this age is the recognition of the oneness of religion and the oneness of mankind. Bahá'u'lláh introduced teachings designed to bring about this universal fellowship.

These teachings include: Equality of women with men.

Independent investigation of truth.

Elimination of poverty.

Relinquishing prejudice of all kinds.

A world federation.

A society based on spiritual values.

These teachings will bring about the Golden Age of mankind, prophesied by the Buddha as "the world system of the Lord Amitabha", the "Pure Land". The Bahá'í writings describe it like this: "The gift of God to this enlightened age is the knowledge of the oneness of mankind and of the fundamental oneness of religion. War shall cease between nations, and by the will of God the Most Great Peace shall come; the world will be seen as a new world, and all men will live as brothers."

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METADATA

Views10968 views since posted 2010-07-07; last edit 2026-04-18 15:23 UTC;

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