



OCT. 2023

# THE UNITARIAN BAHA'I NEWSLETTER

WE WELCOME ALL...WE SHUN NONE!

*Verily God hath ordained the station of the Greater Branch (maqām al-Ghuṣn al-Akbar) [Muḥammad-'Alī] to be beneath that of the Most Great Branch ['Abdu'l-Bahā].*

*He is in truth the Ordainer, the All-Wise. We have chosen 'the Greater' after 'the Most Great' (al-Akbar ba'd al-A'zam), as decreed by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.*

## KITAB-E-AHDI

### Foundational Principles of the Baha'I Faith: Promoting Unity, Equality, and Harmony

"Say: all things are of God." This exalted utterance is like unto water for quenching the fire of hate and enmity which smouldereth within the hearts and breasts of men. By this single utterance contending peoples

and kindreds will attain the light of true unity.  
- Baha'u'llah, The Book of My Covenant

Baha'is holds a set of fundamental principles, all of which revolve around promoting unity, equality, and harmony among humanity. These principles include:

**Oneness and Singleness of God:** Baha'is firmly believes in the concept of a singular and all-powerful God, emphasizing the unity of the divine.

**Oneness of Mankind:** Within Baha'is, the oneness of mankind is a central tenet. It underscores that all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds, are equal in the eyes of God.

**Equality of Races:** Baha'is promotes racial equality, emphasizing that no race is superior to another and that all races are equal in the





sight of God.

**Equality of Men and Women:**

This principle highlights the equality of men and women in all aspects of life, including spiritual, social, and economic.

**Harmony of Science and Religion:**

Baha'is encourages the integration of scientific knowledge and religious belief, emphasizing that science and religion should complement and reinforce each other.

**Religion without Clergy:**

In this belief system, there is no need for a formal clergy. The teachings and principles of Baha'is are accessible to all individuals, and there is no hierarchical religious authority.

**Universal Language:**

Baha'is may advocate for the use of a universal language to facilitate communication and understanding among people of different linguistic backgrounds.

**Universal Tribunal:**

This principle may imply the establishment of a universal system of justice or conflict resolution that transcends national boundaries and promotes fairness and equity.

**Universal Peace:**

Baha'is is dedicated to the promotion of

world peace and the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means, in alignment with the broader goal of unity among all people.

On the other hand, the Unitarian Baha'is perspective is focused on the concept of "Bab" as a forerunner of "He whom God shall manifest," with "Baha'u'llah" being considered the Fulfiller or Manifestation. This appears to be a specific belief system within the context of Unitarian Baha'is teachings. In this context:

Bab is seen as a precursor or herald, paving the way for the arrival of a significant figure referred to as "He whom God shall manifest." This suggests a prophetic lineage or succession.

Baha'u'llah is regarded as the Fulfiller or Manifestation, indicating a central and pivotal figure in this belief system. It's noteworthy that in the will of Baha'u'llah (Kitab-i-Ahdi), two Guardians out of his four sons were appointed to safeguard and propagate the faith globally. This appointment of Guardians suggests a structured leadership system within this particular interpretation of Unitarian Baha'is teachings.

Overall, these beliefs appear to encompass a unique interpretation of religious principles and succession, emphasizing the roles of specific figures in the continuation and dissemination of the faith. It's important to note that these beliefs are specific to Unitarian Baha'is teachings and may not be representative of broader religious traditions or belief systems

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## A Family Legacy Unveiled: Baha'u'llah's Unique Approach - Appointing Both Sons as Successors

Succession is a tricky issue. Succession of important people more so. There has been a special emphasis on achieving a successful transition after the passing of important personalities since ancient times because the successor not only takes over the existing

domain created by the leader passed, but is also responsible for continuing and expanding the said domain.

At the same time, issues over succession have led to the downfall of many a great empire spiritual or temporal. Understanding this, it is always one of the final priorities of the any leader to have proper succession in place. A plan which is fool proof and contains backups and redundancies taking into account various scenarios post passing.

So far, all of this is relevant in the context of mere mortals. Mortals make mistakes, mortals may make plans which err or which might be incomplete. However, in context of the succession of the very Manifestation of God, these is absolutely no scope for mistakes, errors and omissions. After all to doubt the



Manifestation of God would tantamount to doubting god, which in simple words is apostasy.

To understand the precise nature of the succession planning of Baháullah we have to first read the Kitab-i-Ahd. Here under we quote the relevant passages from the Kitab-i-Ahd

The Will of the divine Testator is this: **It is incumbent upon the Aghsán, the Afnán and My Kindred to turn, one and all, their faces towards the Most Mighty Branch.** Consider that which We have revealed in Our Most Holy Book: 'When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root.' The object of this sacred verse is none other except the Most Mighty Branch [Abbas Effendi]. Thus have We graciously revealed unto you Our potent Will, and I am verily the Gracious, the All-Powerful. Verily **God hath ordained the station of the Greater Branch [Muḥammad 'Alí] to be beneath that of the Most Great Branch [Abbas Effendi].** He is in truth the Ordainer, the All-Wise.

**We have chosen 'the Greater' after 'the Most Great',** as decreed by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

It is **enjoined upon everyone to manifest love towards the Aghsán,** but God hath not granted them any right to the property of others.

As can be clearly seen from the above relevant passages from the Kitab-i-Ahd, the Divine Beauty has laid out 3 fundamental points in His will and testament

1. The Believers should turn to Abbas Effendi after the Ascension of Baháullah
2. While the Station of Muhammad Ali is below that of Abbas, the believers should turn to Muhammad Ali after Abbas
3. The believers should Manifest love towards the Aghsan

These points raise a few very important questions which we are going to answer in the upcoming articles in this newsletter which shall try to explain in simple terms the unique aspects of Baháullah's succession planning. We shall place some of the questions for you, our dear reader as points to ponder upon – until the next issue

**Question 1:-** Why did Baháullah Appoint 2 successors to his legacy and clarify their order of precedence?

**Question 2:-** Can an interpreter, by virtue of his claimed position to interpret, abrogate or make changes to divine laws?

**Question 3:-** What should be a believer's manifestation of Love for the Aghsan?

Stay Tuned !!