
The Bahá'í festival of Ridván

is celebrated from sunset to sunset.

Bidding Prayer

During the festival of Ridván, which celebrates the founding of the Bahá'í faith, we pray for the Bahá'ís in our town/region [to see which applies check <http://www.bahai.org.uk/Links/localbahaicommun.html>]. We also pray for everyone suffering from prejudice and discrimination. May it be universally recognised that the connection between all people, created by the same God, is stronger than any division.

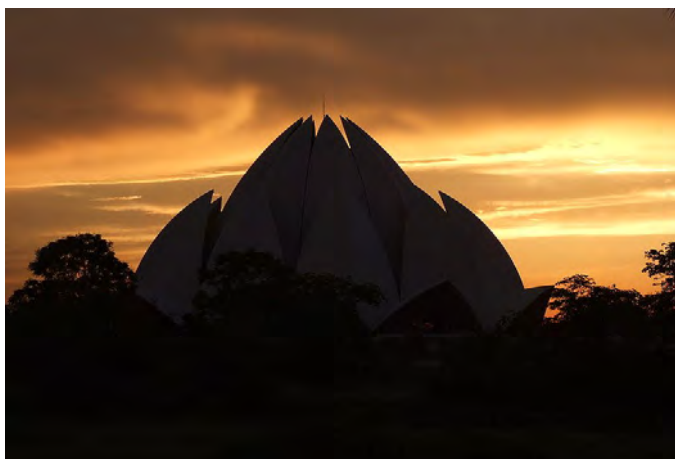
For the newsletter

Bahá'ís believe in one God revealed throughout history, by figures such as Jesus, Mohammad and Moses. Ridván celebrates the Bahá'u'lláh's (pronounced Ba-haa-ol-laa) announcement of his prophethood in 1863. During his stay in a garden outside Bagdad, which Ridván also commemorates, he preached the core values in which Bahá'ís believe: the unity of mankind and justice for all.

Background

Followers of the Bahá'í faith believe that Bahá'u'lláh (pronounced Ba-haa-ol-laa) was the latest in a line of successive manifestations of God throughout history – among them Jesus, Mohammad and Moses. His teaching centres on the unity of mankind and on justice for all, and Bahá'ís work towards this goal, organising themselves into local spiritual assemblies, and electing national and international representatives democratically. The festival of Ridván celebrates Bahá'u'lláh's announcement of his prophethood – Bahá'u'lláh literally means “Glory of God”.

The twelve days of Ridván mirror the twelve days that Bahá'u'lláh spent in a garden before his departure from Baghdad in 1863, receiving visitors while preparations for his exile in Constantinople were being made. The name that he gave the garden, and that in turn gave its name to the festival, means “paradise”. For Bahá'ís, Bahá'u'lláh's revelation of himself as a prophet fulfils the promise made by Siyyid `Alí Muḥammad Shírází, the Báb (“Gate”), in 1844 that the arrival of God's messenger was imminent, and that he himself had come to prepare the world for his arrival. The first, ninth and twelfth days of Ridván mark Bahá'u'lláh's entrance into the garden, the day his family joined him, and the day that he left the garden, and Bahá'ís will normally mark them with days of rest and celebration.



Spiritual Riches: Bidding prayers for non-Christian religions on their major festivals (1)



**A resource produced by
the Catholic Bishops'
Conference of England
and Wales**

These leaflets offer suggestions for bidding prayers at the major festivals of non-Christian religions, along with a short text of explanation for use in parish newsletters, and some background information. In acknowledging these festivals, and praying for those who celebrate them, Catholics can express their connectedness to all people of faith, as well as the respect which the Church holds for their spiritual wealth. For further information and resources on interreligious dialogue, as well as electronic copies of these leaflets, go to <http://www.cbcew.org.uk/page.aspx?pid=458> or have a look at the Bishops' Conference blog at <http://bit.ly/PIpU4e>.



Festivals and religions

Please note that these festivals fall on different days in the Western calendar every year – they are in the order in which they occurred in 2012. For current dates go to: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar>.

- ◇ Jamsheedi Nowruz, Zoroastrian New Year
- ◇ Mahavir Jayantii, Jain celebration of Mahavir's birth anniversary
- ◇ Ridvan, Baha'i New Year
- ◇ Vesakh, Buddhist celebration of Buddha's birth
- ◇ Eid al-Fitr, Muslim festival at the end of Ramadan
- ◇ High Holy Days, Jewish period of atonement
- ◇ Diwali, Hindu festival of light
- ◇ Guru Nanak Gurpurak, birth anniversary of Sikhism's first guru

The Zoroastrian festival of Jamsheedi Nowruz

celebrates spring, and the New Year.

Bidding Prayer

We pray for the Zoroastrian community in our country as they celebrate Jamsheedi Nowruz (pronounced Jaam-sheed-e No-Rooz). We ask that they may be filled with hope and joy at the beginning of spring, and of their new year, and pray for all who are facing new beginnings this week.

For the newsletter

The core tenant of the ancient religion of Zoroastrianism, which originated in Persia in 1500 BC, is that everyone is capable of contributing to the victory of good over evil by “good thoughts, good words, good deeds”. Zoroastrians believe in one God, Ahura Mazda, who created all that is good in the world.

Background

The Zoroastrian religion is an ancient one, and many of the terms that we know from the Bible originate from Persia, where Zoroaster founded the religion around 1500 BC. Zoroastrians believe that, by “good thoughts, good words, good deeds”, they contribute to the eventual victory of good over evil. There are around 5,000 Zoroastrians in the UK. The majority have roots in Iran and India. At the spring equinox, Nowruz (literally, “new day”) is a celebration which was established by King Jamsheed, marking the beginning of the new year in the Persian calendar, which is welcomed by a spring clean, wearing new clothes, painting eggs, and visiting friends and family.

The Jain festival of Mahavira Jayantii

is a celebration of the life of the most recent teacher of Jainism, Mahavira.

Bidding Prayer

We pray for all Jains on the festival of Mahavira Jayantii (pronounced Ma-ha-weir-ah ya-yan-tea), the birth anniversary of the most recent teacher of Jainism. As Jains celebrate his message of non-violence, we also pray for all who are working and yearning for peace.

Newsletter

Jainism is a religion that focuses on non-violence as its core value. Overcoming earthly desires and attachments is highly valued, and believed to lead to an unselfish life-style that does as little harm as possible. This is reflected in the teachings of Lord Mahavir, which are followed by the 25,000 Jains in Great Britain.

Background

Lord Mahavir, whom Jains revere as the 24th and last Thirthankara of this era, lived in the 6th century BC. The Thirtankaras are teachers of the Jain faith (or dharma, way of life) who are venerated for having overcome earthly desires and attachments. Jains believe that every person has the potential to achieve such freedom, and aim to end the cycle of rebirth they believe every being undergoes. As Jains believe that every being has a soul, including animals and plants, Jainism's central principle is non-violence, which includes strict vegetarianism. In addition to this principle, Jains follow the principles of truthfulness, of taking nothing that is not freely given, of chastity, and of not being dominated by material desires (non-attachment). More resources and information on Jainism are available on the following website: <http://beta.jainpedia.org/>.

