

# MESSAGE OF LOVE

“The essential foundations of the divine religions are unity and love.”  
—Bahá’í Writings



**HINDUISM**  
2000 BCE



**JUDAISM**  
1250 BCE



**BUDDHISM**  
528 BCE

**H**induism is one of the world’s oldest faiths, emerging in India around 2000 BCE. Hindus honor many gods and goddesses, who are often considered to be aspects of one God, or Brahman.



Krishna is one of the most widely known Hindu deities. He is sometimes portrayed as a child, a flute player, or a wise warrior. In a book called the Bhagavad-Gita, Krishna shares moral teachings.



Hindus see good deeds as bringing happiness in this life and the next. After death, they believe a person’s soul is reincarnated—it returns to Earth in another form. Hindus seek *moksha*, or freedom from the cycle of death and rebirth. Such actions as following laws, study and meditation, or worship can lead to moksha.



Varanasi, a sacred city to Hindus, is on the banks of the holy Ganges River.

**J**udaism is based on the teachings of Abraham and Moses, Messengers of God from the Middle East. Abraham, born about 1800 BCE, taught that there is one God.

Moses was born around 1400 BCE. When the Jewish people were slaves of the Egyptian pharaoh, Moses led them out of Egypt.



The Western Wall in Jerusalem, Israel, is one of the holiest places in Judaism.

Moses revealed many Jewish laws—613 in all. Among them are basic moral laws, sometimes called the Ten Commandments, which are part of many faiths. They include not harming others and having respect for your parents.



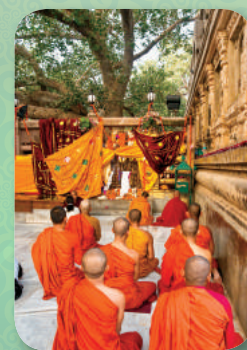
Jewish people gather to worship in synagogues, and services are often led by a rabbi. They believe that a wise leader called the Messiah will one day bring peace to the world.

**T**he Founder of Buddhism was a Hindu prince known as Siddhartha Gautama, Who lived around 563–483

BCE in India and what is now Nepal. He attained divine knowledge around 528 BCE and became known as Buddha (“Enlightened One”).

Buddha’s main teachings are called the *dharma*. He taught that human suffering is caused by our desire for material and temporary things. Suffering can be overcome by following the Eightfold Path, which includes kindness, honesty, effort, mindfulness, and meditation.

Buddhists seek *nirvana*—freedom from suffering and from the cycle of ongoing reincarnation of the soul.



Buddhist monks at the Bodhi tree, the site of Buddha’s enlightenment, at the Mohabodhi Temple, Bodhi Gaya, India.

**W**hat is the purpose of religion? Why are there so many different faiths? How can we all get along? The world's major religions have different names. But Bahá'ís believe that they all come from one God, Who sends Messengers through the ages to help humanity. These divine Educators all teach key truths of peace and unity. They encourage us to treat others with kindness and to be of service to the world. When we focus on our shared beliefs, we can build friendship and respect. Here are some of the faiths that guide humanity, as part of God's unfolding message of love.

## CHRISTIANITY 26 CE

**C**hristianity was founded by Jesus, Who was born into a Jewish family. He lived in the Middle East about 2,000 years ago, known as the start of the Common Era. He was about 30 years old when He began to preach. He taught that God is the Heavenly Father, and we are all His children. He urged us to show love, mercy, and compassion to one another. Because of His teachings, authorities executed Jesus by hanging Him on a cross.



St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City is one of the most important churches in Christianity.

Jesus was known as "Christ," which is Greek for "Messiah." Christians believe that Jesus was the Messiah expected by the Jews. Many also believe that Jesus will return one day and establish a peaceful kingdom on Earth.

## ISLAM 622 CE

**M**uhammad, the Prophet of Islam, lived in what is now Saudi Arabia from about 570–632 CE. He began to proclaim His faith when He was about 40. In 622 CE, He moved from Mecca to Medina, and the Muslim community grew.



Muhammad taught that God, or Allah, is the All-Powerful Creator. He urged people to treat others with kindness. Muslims believe the holy book, the Qur'án, contains the words Allah revealed to Muhammad. Muslims also recognize Prophets such as Abraham, Moses, and Jesus.

Five duties, known as the pillars of Islam, are important for Muslims: stating their faith in God and Muhammad, praying five times daily, giving to the poor, fasting, and pilgrimage.



Pilgrims at the Kaaba in Saudi Arabia

## BAHÁ'Í FAITH 1844 CE

**I**n 1844, in what is now Iran, a Messenger of God known as the Báb ("the Gate") announced that a new Messenger would follow Him. Soon, Bahá'u'lláh ("Glory of God")



The Shrine of the Báb in Haifa, Israel

founded the Bahá'í Faith and taught that all major religions are part of one eternal faith from God. Bahá'ís believe that Bahá'u'lláh is the Promised One foretold by the Messengers of God through time.

Bahá'u'lláh lived from 1817–1892. He was imprisoned and exiled because of His Faith. He taught that we are all part of one human family. He urged us to build peace and justice and to be of service to others. His teachings also include the equality of women and men, the end of poverty and prejudice, and education for all. He envisioned a glorious future for humanity when the "Most Great Peace" will be established on Earth.

