

## FRANCIS BECKWITH REFUTES BAHAI FAITH

Francis Beckwith published a courteous Christian booklet simply called Baha'i which is recommended for further study.

She points out that the Bab implemented many social reforms in the Islamic society into which he was born. He forbade the study of logic and philosophy and endorsed religious persecution for all who did not agree with him (page 6). I would imagine the purpose of the anti-intellectualism was to prevent honest examination of his claim that he was an imam and a special prophet of God.

The Baha'is do not know of his dark side and they do not regard his message as relevant for apparently the teaching of each manifestation of God only holds true until the next manifestation comes (page 6).

Baha'u'llah declared that God was unknowable and too different from us for us to know anything about him (page 9). The problem with this is how they can know he exists if he is so bizarre. They say that we get a vague idea of what God is like through the manifestations. This is the only way these glimpses of God can be obtained.

The problem is that anybody who is popular can falsely claim to be a manifestation and get away with it. The Baha'i faith makes this easy by saying that the manifestations can change what the previous manifestations taught and move with the times. Some of the previous manifestations proclaimed evil doctrines so presumably the excuse is that they saw a good reason to do this. For example, Moses had gays stoned to death and said God authorised this. So the Baha'i faith claims that truth is relative – what is morally good or bad changes according to the circumstances (page 10,20).

Bahai's see manifestations not as incarnations of God but as reflections of God (page 13). They argue that the manifestations never sin even though Muhammad admitted to being a sinner and they have tried to twist the statements of the manifestations who did the same to make it appear they never claimed to be sinners (page 19).

It is outrageous to exalt manifestations over Jesus Christ who claimed to have risen from the dead according to the earliest records proving that he was the supreme prophet if it really happened. But that is what they do. They say they obey the manifestations and honour them but then they just pick and choose what they want to believe out of their teaching and the history.

Abdu'l-Baha dishonestly said that any scripture that says that the blind were made able to see and the dead were raised is talking symbolically. The blind seeing means seeing the truth and the raising just means not that the dead come back to life but that they have gone to Heaven (page 25).

Then the booklet notes how the sect has argued that Daniel 8 gives a number of years in symbolic form to the coming of one who will put God's religion in order (page 28). Abdu'l argued that it gives the year of the coming of Baha'u'llah which was 1844. He claimed that Daniel was counting from 456 BC and that the 2300 evenings and mornings he mentioned are years so you add on the years to 456 BC and you get 1844. But the number of days is literal (page 30) and was not intended to be a prophecy of the far distant future. It fits what we know about Judas Maccabeus cleansing the Temple so that is what it refers to. The mornings and evenings refer to the morning and evening sacrifices in the Temple but there was no Temple in 1844.

We will pass over the vague Isaiah 11 which Abdu'l also said referred to Baha'u'llah ignoring the fact that Jesus said it applied to himself.

There is no evidence in support of the Baha'i claim that Jesus spoke of Baha'u'llah in John 16.

Abdu'l made a false prophecy in 1923 that was in his book, Baha'u'llah and the New Era which was partly dropped from and rewritten for the 1970 edition for it had proved false (page 37-38). The prophecy had argued from the Bible that in 1957 the Baha'i faith would be universal and would be accompanied by universal peace.

### FURTHER READING

Baha' i, Francis Beckwith, Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1985

Baha'u'llah and the New Era, J.E. Esslemont, Baha'i Publishing Trust, London, 1974

Christ and Baha'u'llah, George Townsend, George Ronald, Oxford, 1983

Concise Guide to Today's Religions, Josh Mc Dowell and Don Stewart, Scripture Press, Bucks, 1988

The History and Doctrines of the Baha'i Faith, Jim McCormick, Great Joy Publications, Belfast

The Light Shineth in Darkness, Udo Schaefer, George Ronald, Oxford, 1979

