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Press Release

Astonishing Founder—Not History—the Focus of a
New Book on the Bahá'í Religion

Did Another Messenger of God Appear 160 Years Ago?

Wilmette, IL, March 29, 2004: Over the years many books have been written introducing the Bahá'í religion, or the Bahá'í Faith, as it is widely know around the world, but ***God Speaks Again: An Introduction to the Bahá'í Faith*** (Bahá'í Publishing, \$16.95, soft cover, ISBN 1-931847-12-6), by Kenneth E. Bowers, is the first to place the founder of the religion—a nineteenth century Persian named Bahá'u'lláh—at the very heart of the story. And what a compelling story it is.

Born to Persian nobility in the early nineteenth century, Bahá'u'lláh (1817-1892) seemed destined for a life of wealth and ease. Yet from an early age he showed little interest in courtly privileges, preferring to minister to the less fortunate of his native Tehran. Later, he cast aside all considerations of future material comfort by declaring his recognition of the Báb, a young man from Shíráz who claimed to be a Messenger sent by God to transform the spiritual life of humanity and to prepare the way for one who would bring an even greater revelation. His support of the Báb resulted in the loss of virtually all his worldly possessions and imprisonment in Tehran's notorious Black Pit, where he was expected to perish amidst the appalling conditions. Instead, he received a powerful revelation from God that, together with future revelations meticulously recorded by secretaries and later authenticated by Bahá'u'lláh himself, would become Bahá'í scripture and form the basis for a world religion.

After surviving the Black Pit, Bahá'u'lláh was sentenced to a series of increasingly harsh and remote exiles spanning forty years. The first exile was to Baghdad, where, in 1863, he announced that he was that Promised One foretold by the Báb and, in fact, by all the world's religions. Accordingly, then as now, Bahá'ís of Christian background believe that Bahá'u'lláh fulfills the promise of Christ's return. For Bahá'ís of Jewish background, Bahá'u'lláh, a

descendant of Abraham, is the appearance of the promised “Lord of Hosts.” For Bahá’ís of Muslim background, Bahá’u’lláh fulfills the promise of the Qur’án for the “Day of God” and the “Great Announcement.”

This explains the book’s title, ***God Speaks Again***. Members of the Bahá’í religion believe that periodically throughout history, God has revealed Himself to humanity through Divine Messengers—among them Abraham, Zoroaster, Moses, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad—each offering fresh spiritual teachings suited for the age in which they appear. Bowers quotes extensively from Bahá’u’lláh’s own writings, which Bahá’ís regard as the most recent Divine Revelation for humankind, providing a welcome glimpse into its power and majesty. In placing the life of Bahá’u’lláh at the center of the story, he reveals an authentically inspiring figure and the inseparable connection between a new religion and an extraordinary human being touched by his Creator.

From Baghdad, Bahá’u’lláh was sent to Constantinople, then Adrianople, and finally to ‘Akká, a remote outpost of the Ottoman Empire. Each exile was intended to strip him of his influence and exterminate the young religion, yet each move had the opposite effect. His teachings about the underlying unity of the world’s religions and the inevitable emergence of a unified global civilization attracted thousands to investigate further. Today, the Bahá’í Faith is the second most widespread of the world’s religions after Christianity, with a growing membership numbering some five million.

To receive a review copy of ***God Speaks Again*** or to schedule an interview or author event with Kenneth E. Bowers, please contact Tim Moore, Bahá’í Publishing sales and marketing manager, at 847-425-7964. E-mail: tmoore@usbnc.org.