

bahai9.com

An organized repository of quotations on the Bahá'í Faith

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Bahai9 Presentation Overview

1. **Type of content and site features**
2. **How a wiki is navigated** (by users, editors, or administrators)
3. **General guiding goals, inspiration, and justification**
4. **Contrast with other presentations, works or institutions**
5. **Whirlwind tour: samples** along with illustrating **goals, site policies, interesting points**
6. Site **financing, governance, origins, and change of goals over time**
7. How the **site is being used**
8. Use with **other tools**
9. Project **successes, challenges, shortcomings, general to-dos, and anticipated future**

Type of content and Site features

1. **General type of site content** (cf. *Lights of Guidance*)*
2. Brief **sampling** by*
 1. Main dimensions of categorization
 2. Other dimensions of categorization
3. Key **features / benefits***

Type of content and Site features

General type of content

1. Organized **repository** of quotations & **compendium** of materials closely derived from the Writings
2. Like *Lights of Guidance* but:
 1. **Collaborative**
 2. **Expandable content**
 1. Includes *Lights of Guidance* and other sources
 2. Adds updated sources like Universal House of Justice messages
 3. Adds new **topics**
 4. Adds new **ways or organizing**

Type of content and Site features

Brief sampling by: Main dimensions for categorization

1. **Subject** (Fields of study)

1. Material (Body)

2. "Human" (Mind)

3. Spiritual (Spirit)

2. **Protagonist** (people) / **Entity** (noun) / **Part of speech**

3. **Time-order**

1. Timelines

2. Sequences

3. Patterns and ranks

4. **Types of material / Writings**

Type of content and Site features

Brief sampling by: Other dimensions of categorization

5. Alphabetical / Quick Index

6. Other categorization schemes

1. Grouping that is suggested by **part of speech**

1. Entities (nouns / pronouns)
2. By relationship (conjunction or preposition)
3. By action (verb)
4. By description (adjective or adverb)
5. By emotion (interjection)

2. **All categories**

3. **Browse by category**

Type of content and Site features

Key features / benefits

1. Information tool with **little filtering** of the actual teachings of the Faith
2. Real **opportunities for exploration** beyond search alone
3. Access to **diversity of official or semi-official sources** not readily quoted elsewhere (e.g., quotations from *Star of the West* or *Mahmúd's Diary*).
4. **Interesting** and **subtle topics** via community-expansion

How a wiki is navigated (by users, editors, or administrators)

By type of page:

1. **Basic** (view, edit, upload, permanent link)*
2. **Changes** (page history, diffs, user and site changes, watchlist, RSS)*
3. **Navigation/Interconnections** (categories and what links here)*
4. **Communication** (article talk, user talk)*
5. **Administrator** (delete, redirect, move, protect, block)*

How a wiki is navigated (by users, editors, or administrators)

By type of page: Basic

1. **View**
2. **Edit**
 1. Ways of triggering
 1. **Directly typing** the title in the URL
 2. Clicking the **edit link** on an existing (non-protected) page
 3. Visiting an **orange-colored link**
3. **Upload** (images, sounds, videos)
4. **Permanant link** (if you don't want View page's changeability)

How a wiki is navigated (by users, editors, or administrators)

By type of page: Changes

- 1. Page history (by page)**
 - 1. Diffs (by revision)**
- 2. Related changes (by link)**
- 3. User contributions (by user)**
- 4. Special:RecentChanges (by site)**
- 5. Watchlist (by interest)**
- 6. Atom/RSS**

How a wiki is navigated (by users, editors, or administrators)

By type of page: Navigation/Interconnections

1. Categories

1. Advantages

- 1. Auto-alphabetizing**
- 2. Pages can self-add category**
- 3. Not distracted with other info**

2. Disadvantages

- 1. Harder to notice becoming unwieldy**
- 2. Missing context**
- 3. No control of order**

2. What links here

How a wiki is navigated (by users, editors, or administrators)

By type of page: Communication

- 1. (Article) Talk/Discussion pages**
- 2. User/user talk pages**

How a wiki is navigated (by users, editors, or administrators)

By type of page: Administrator

- 1. Deleting**
- 2. Redirecting and Moving**
- 3. Protecting**
- 4. Blocking**

General guiding goals, inspiration, and justification

- 1. Need of Bahá'í involvement on the Internet***
- 2. Need of use of quotations***
- 3. Need of organization of quotations***
- 4. Need of mutual assistance***

General guiding goals, inspiration, and justification

Need of Bahá'í involvement on the Internet

1. "...the House of Justice will continue to encourage use of the **greatly expanded opportunities for the discussion of Bahá'í concepts and ideals, which Internet communication so marvellously provides.**"

(On behalf of the Universal House of Justice, letter dated 20 July 1997, *Issues Related to the Study of the Bahá'í Faith*, sel. 9, emphasis added)

2. "...there are many knowledgeable **Bahá'ís involved with the discussion groups who help provide accurate information about the Faith** as well as thoughtful ideas."

(The International Teaching Centre, bahai-library.com/uhj_monitoring_internet , emphasis added)

General guiding goals, inspiration, and justification

Need of use of quotations

1. “The friends should read the Writings and **be able to quote from the Tablets when discussing subjects pertaining to the Faith.**”

(On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 9 May 1932, *Importance of Deepening Our Knowledge and Understanding of the Faith*, no. 105, emphasis added)

2. “**Surely the ideal way of teaching is to prove our points by constant reference to the actual words of Bahá’u’lláh and the Master.** This will save the Cause from being misinterpreted by individuals. It is what these divine Lights say that is truth and therefore They should be the authorities of our statements. This, however, does not mean that our freedom of expression is limited. We can always find new ways of approach to that truth or explain how they influence our life and condition. The more deep our studies the more we can understand the significance of the teachings. In the Cause we cannot divorce the letter from the spirit of the words. As Bahá’u’lláh says we should take the outward significance and super-impose upon it the inner. Either without the other is wrong and defective.”

(From a letter dated 16 February 1932 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, *Importance of Deepening Our Knowledge and Understanding of the Faith*, no. 103, emphasis added)

3. “The ease and relative impersonality of the electronic medium require in some ways an even higher level of self-discipline than is the case in situations where a spirit of unity is reinforced by the opportunity for direct personal contact and social interaction. In the pursuit of such a spirit of unity, **Baha'is will, without doubt, wish to assist the consultative processes by sharing and discussing relevant Baha'i texts. This will itself have the further effect of drawing attention back to the framework of Baha'i belief.**”

(On behalf of the Universal House of Justice, bahai-library.com/uwj_character_internet_postings , emphasis added)

General guiding goals, inspiration, and justification

Need of organization of quotations

1. Inspiration based on **quote about the Archives:**

1. "Spiritual souls will assuredly emerge from behind the veil of divine protection who will **gather together the tokens and verses of God and put them into the most excellent order.**"

(Bahá'u'lláh, cited in Shoghi Effendi's 1954 Naw-Ruz Message to the Baha'is of the East, translated from the Persian; quoted in Lights of Guidance, no. 327, emphasis added)

2. **Revelation not (all) pre-ordered:**

1. "All Divine Revelation seems to have been thrown out in **flashes**. The Prophets never composed treatises. That is why in the Qur'án and our own Writings different subjects are so often included in one Tablet. It pulsates, so to speak. That is why it is "Revelation"."

(On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, *Unfolding Destiny*, p. 454, emphasis added)

2. "The Hidden Words have **no sequence**. They are jewel-like thoughts sent out of the mind of the Manifestation of God to admonish and counsel men."

(On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, *Unfolding Destiny*, p. 456, emphasis added)

3. "**These proofs ought to be collected and memorized.** As soon as someone will ask you-What are your proofs?-you may cry out at the top of your voice and say: "Here they are!""

(Abdu'l-Bahá, *Star of the West*, 3, no.11 [27 Sept. 1912], 4, *Importance of Deepening Our Knowledge and Understanding of the Faith*, no. 64, emphasis added)

General guiding goals, inspiration, and justification

Need of mutual assistance

1. **"Help along one another's projects and plans."**

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from a Tablet, Consultation (compilation), no. 19, emphasis added)

2. "It is by strengthening their dynamic relationships with one another that their powers are combined and multiplied. 'Abdu'l-Bahá explains that **the more the qualities of cooperation and mutual assistance are manifested by a people, "the more will human society advance in progress and prosperity";...**"

(Universal House of Justice, to the Conference of the Continental Boards of Counsellors, 30 December 2021, pp. 1-2, emphasis added)

Contrast with other presentations, works or institutions

- 1. Searches**
- 2. Writings in raw, non-compiled form***
- 3. Writings in Bahá'í World Centre compilations**
- 4. *Lights of Guidance***
- 5. Institutional or scholarly body hosting**

Contrast with other presentations, works or institutions

Writings in raw, non-compiled form

1. "Although he strongly feels that the Master's writings, the revealed Word of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb, and his own writings should, out of respect for the difference in their relative stations, be published whenever possible in separate volumes, **this must not be fanatically adhered to where an educative compilation on a certain subject is conceived.**"

(On behalf of Shoghi Effendi, *Unfolding Destiny*, pp. 224-225, emphasis added)

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: goals

- 1. Unity and love**
- 2. Focus on the Writings**
- 3. Meta-information on quotes (degree of authenticity)**
- 4. Openness to topics and drawing out more from quotes***
- 5. Useful cross-reference info and other exploration opportunities***
- 6. Applying to daily life**

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: goals: Openness to topics and drawing out more from quotes

1. **No topic is too simple or complicated** to include if addressed in the Writings
2. Consideration of the **commonplace details of life** from a spiritual lens can be useful
3. Settling **detail-oriented questions**
4. Highlighting **topics** or **teachings** that might have come to be **misunderstood**
5. **Neglected points** that may be **missed from a familiar list of quotations**
6. **Unique and focused ways of browsing** to facilitate study

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: goals Useful cross-reference info and other **exploration opportunities**

1. Table of Contents
2. Sortable tables
3. Cross-reference tables
4. By paragraph/page Writings-annotated sections
5. Links to and from the Writings
6. Persian/Arabic sources
7. Browsing by topic
8. Cross-links with Ruhi books
9. Cross-links to (or from) Bahaipedia and Wikipedia
10. Redirects for original language/scholarly/scientific terminology
11. Redirects for hot-button issues (but distinguishing from political claims)

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: site policies

- 1. Bahá'í Point of View**
- 2. Escalation/appeals**
- 3. Copyleft/copyleft/copyright licenses (and signing over)**
- 4. Courtesy vs. innovation**
- 5. Important mechanics on content***
- 6. Choosing suitable quotes***
- 7. Organizing quotes within the page***
- 8. Contemplate who may need to know***
- 9. Balancing gradualism and comprehensiveness***
- 10. (Re: study outlines, provisional translations, scholarship, pilgrim's notes)**

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: site policies: Important mechanics on content

- 1. Page naming**
- 2. Linking**
- 3. Formatting/Plurals**

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: site policies: Choosing suitable quotes

- 1. Explicitly relevant**
 - 1. Question marks**
- 2. Closely derivative works**
- 3. See also sections**
- 4. Shared category**
- 5. Only as much context as relevant**
- 6. Weigh significance**

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: site policies: Organizing quotes within the page

- 1. Nested headings**
- 2. Reasonable ordering**
- 3. Use multiple quotes with ellipses or bullets**
- 4. Ideally group by figure**

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: site policies: Contemplate who may need to know

- 1. Must be a need to know**
- 2. Asking who needs to know**
- 3. Asking meaning of quote in negative terms can be helpful**

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: site policies: Balancing gradualism and comprehensiveness

- 1. Is a work in progress**
- 2. Try not to fundamentally fail to represent the topic**
- 3. Approaches for work in progress nature:**
 - 1. Stubs**
 - 2. To-dos section (and their benefits)**

Whirlwind tour: samples along with...

Illustrating: interesting pages/points

- 1. (Not introduced in this presentation)**

Site financing, governance, origins, and change of goals over time

Site financing and governance

1. Domain ownership and hosting
2. Sustainability
3. Additional potential costs

Site financing, governance, origins, and change of goals over time

Origins

1. Bahá'í College Club handbook
2. Attempt for national College Club handbook
3. Shift to generic planning and knowledge tool
4. Applicability of the wiki approach
5. The chain of wikis used to publish the contents

Site financing, governance, origins, and change of goals over time

Changes of goals over time

1. Shift from compendium more to quote compilation
 1. Scholarship
 2. Provisional translations
 3. Q & A
 4. Alternative interpretations
2. Development of Informal wiki chat group (and Bahá'í developers)

How the site is being used

1. Logs
2. Page counts
3. Alexa rankings*
4. Inadequacy of feedback in general or for scholarship (and non-desire to invade privacy)

How the site is being used

Alexa Rankings

	(Average daily visitors to this site and pageviews on this site over the past 3 months)	2019 world website ranking (obtained from webrate.org)
<u>bahai.org</u>	185,577	120,072
<u>bahai.us</u>	871 ,769	496,503
<u>bahaipedia.org</u>	1 ,960,990	1,736,324
<u>bahai-library.com</u>	800,380	276,399
bahai.media	8 ,571,312	(N/A)
bahai.works	3,420,908	(N/A)
<u>bahai9.com</u>	N/A	2,297,748

Use with other tools

1. Shortcuts video
2. Bahaiwritings (and video) with links to B9
3. Discord Bot
4. MapText
5. Open wiki edit page add-on
6. jump-to-anchor
7. append-to-clipboard
8. Bahá'í Reference Library Wiki Overlay
9. Indexes project

Project successes, challenges, shortcomings, major to-dos, and anticipated future

Successes, challenges

1. Successes

1. Ability to return to site and use it
2. Wikipedia citing from it
3. Positive personal feedback

2. Challenges

1. Lack of support
2. Mistrust
3. Lack of awareness of importance and use
4. Spam
5. Personal health

Project successes, challenges, shortcomings, major to-dos, and anticipated future

Shortcomings, to-dos

1. Weaknesses relative to Bahaipedia*
2. Deficiencies
 1. Pages still under construction
 2. Unneeded pages
 3. Need for greater diversity of thought (editor types)
 4. Lop-sided or missing content
3. General to-dos

Project successes, challenges, shortcomings, major to-dos, and anticipated future

Shortcomings, to-dos: Weaknesses relative to Bahaipedia

1. Additional contributors
2. Appealing images
3. SEO
4. Server issues and performance
5. Catchy name
6. Encyclopedic with prose vs. quotations?

Project successes, challenges, shortcomings, major to-dos, and anticipated future

Shortcomings, to-dos: General to-dos

1. Expand participation
2. Add content
 1. Phelps subjects
 2. Developing Distinctive Bahá'í Communities
 3. House messages regarding the Plans
 4. bahaiquotes.com
 5. Ensuring good source material is available from which to quote/link: better copies of Messages of Shoghi Effendi to the Indian Subcontinent, Messages of the House of Justice 1963-86, Star of the West
3. Add more formal categories
4. Use of Mediawiki Bot
5. Use of templates (embedding quotes, fuller citations, custom web protocols, automated cross-links)
6. Use templates for TextBrowser
7. Redirects (of Writings, and to Reflib IDs)
8. Aligning cross-wiki/cross-site categories (by rename/redirect or bahaidata.org type solution)

Project successes, challenges, shortcomings, major to-dos, and anticipated future

Anticipated future

1. Avoid wrangling editors
2. Avoid practice of casual deleting by users
3. Avoid backlog of untrained contributors
4. Avoid too much growth of uncategorized messages
5. AI/Chatbots
6. Transclusion of quotations
7. Original language materials in text form
8. Using materials for online university type focus
9. Improving wiki ecosystem with other wikis: dictionary, science/history, pilgrim's notes, commentaries, Q&A, News, Study materials, Planning
10. RDF and OWL
11. Schema-builder
12. TEI