

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace

Seeing with Your Own Eyes

A Brief Timeline

The Life of Bahá'u'lláh

The highlighted area marks the time in which this story takes place.

1817 November 12

Birth of Bahá'u'lláh in Tíhrán, Iran

1844

Recognizes the Báb as a new Messenger of God

1852

Imprisonment in the Black Pit of Tíhrán

1853–1863

Exile in Baghdád, Iraq. From 1854–1856, He goes into the mountains to pray in solitude.

1863 April 22

Declares Divine Mission as Prophet-Faith of the Bahá'í Faith

1863–1868

Exile in Constantinople (Istanbul), then Adrianople (Edirne), Turkey. Begins writing letters to kings and rulers in 1867, urging world unity

1868

Last exile, to prison-city of 'Akká, Israel

1877

Finally free to live in countryside homes of Mazra'ih and then Bahjí, outside 'Akká

1892 May 29

Bahá'u'lláh passes away at Bahjí.

Backbiting and gossip can spread like wildfire and be just as destructive. Like smoke from a fire, rumors can cloud your vision. How do you clear the air to see the truth for yourself?

In 1868, Bahá'u'lláh encountered vicious rumors when He and nearly 70 of His family and followers were sent to the prison-city of 'Akká, in what is now Israel. Bahá'u'lláh, a Messenger of God, and His followers, called Bahá'ís, had done nothing wrong. But some government and religious leaders wanted to stop Bahá'u'lláh's teachings of peace. Rumors raged among the citizens of 'Akká that the Bahá'ís were terrible criminals. Because of these rumors, most people in 'Akká treated the Bahá'ís with suspicion and hate. When they arrived, a crowd gathered to jeer and mock them.

After being imprisoned for over two years, Bahá'u'lláh and most of His family were moved to different houses, then finally crowded into a house too small for them.

Soon after, a conflict erupted among some of the exiles who did not follow Bahá'u'lláh's teachings. This intensified hostility from the people of 'Akká. Ilyás 'Abbúd, whose house was attached to Bahá'u'lláh's, barricaded the walls that separated the homes. Bahá'í children were chased and pelted with stones.

Some of the Bahá'ís were imprisoned at an inn in the city. Soldiers who kept guard over them treated them harshly. However, the gentle and patient character of the Bahá'ís began to change the guards' hearts.



Bahá'u'lláh was in this prison in 'Akká for over two years. The two windows at the right look out from His cell.

They admitted that they had been prejudiced by the rumors. The guards became friendlier, and the Bahá'ís even had them in for tea. The soldiers soon believed that the authorities were unfair for imprisoning the Bahá'ís. Finally, they boldly refused to stand guard over people they saw as peaceful.

Ilyás 'Abbúd also had a big change of heart after living next to the Bahá'ís and seeing their behavior. He tore down his barricades, and he even offered his own home to Bahá'u'lláh and His family!

Over time, others in 'Akká began to see with their own eyes that the rumors about the Bahá'ís were false. A new governor came to 'Akká who treated the Bahá'ís with



Soldiers guard the prison in 'Akká, where Bahá'u'lláh, His family, and about 70 Bahá'ís were confined.

kindness. He admired Bahá'u'lláh's son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, so much that he removed his shoes in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's presence out of respect. He even sent his own son to be taught by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Life in 'Akká had started out terribly for the Bahá'ís. But after the conflicts, rumors, and lies settled, many saw the true nature of Bahá'u'lláh and His teachings.