

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace

A Change of Heart

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 Tihrán, Iran

1844

Recognizes the Báb as a new Messenger of God

1852

Imprisonment in the "Black Pit" of Tihrán

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-Founder 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.



Mahmúd was a 10-year-old boy who lived in 'Akká, Israel, long ago. One day, a wise old man told Mahmúd about a vision he'd had. The man said that the next Messenger of God would come to 'Akká when Mahmúd was an adult. The Messenger would speak Persian, and He would live in a room at the top of a long flight of stairs.

When Mahmúd grew up, he became respected in the community as a religious leader.

One day, Mahmúd learned that a prisoner, Bahá'u'lláh, had arrived in 'Akká. Though Bahá'u'lláh had done nothing wrong, the authorities wanted to stop His Bahá'í teachings, and they convinced people that He was evil. Mahmúd was angry that Bahá'u'lláh had been sent to his city. Hatred poisoned his heart. He wanted so desperately to rid 'Akká of a person he considered "evil" that he decided to kill Bahá'u'lláh.

One day, Mahmúd hid a weapon under his cloak and went to the prison where

Bahá'u'lláh was held. But when the guard announced Mahmúd, Bahá'u'lláh said, "Tell him to cast away the weapon and then he may come in." Mahmúd was stunned. He was sure no one had seen his weapon. He turned and left, confused.

Shaken, but still determined, Mahmúd returned to the prison empty-handed. He was strong, and he decided he could kill Bahá'u'lláh with his bare hands. Once again, the guard announced his visit. This time, Bahá'u'lláh replied, "Tell him to purify his heart first and then he may come in." Mahmúd was so perplexed that he left without seeing Bahá'u'lláh.

Later, Mahmúd had a dream about the old man he had met as a child. He remembered the man's mysterious vision. After his dream, Mahmúd returned to

the prison. He met with Bahá'u'lláh's son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, whose words changed him. This time Mahmúd was brought to Bahá'u'lláh's cell at the top of a long flight of stairs. Overwhelmed by Bahá'u'lláh's presence, Mahmúd fell to his knees. He became a devoted Bahá'í for the rest of his life. He helped Bahá'ís enter and leave 'Akká

to visit Bahá'u'lláh.

Mahmúd was one of many people who approached Bahá'u'lláh as an enemy, but then grew to admire Him. Though authorities tried to stop His influence, no one could prevent Bahá'u'lláh's love and wisdom from changing people's hearts.

