

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace Gifts from the 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.

As a child, Bahá'u'lláh led a life of comfort and ease. His father was a nobleman in Persia (now Iran), and His family had great wealth. Bahá'u'lláh grew up accustomed to grand homes, expensive furnishings, and fine clothing.

You might think that someone who was raised in such luxury would struggle when faced with sudden poverty. But Bahá'u'lláh was never attached to earthly riches. When His father passed away, He was offered his prestigious position in the government, but He turned it down. Bahá'u'lláh had no desire for status. Instead, He spent His time and money helping those in need. As a young man, He became known as "Father of the Poor."

In 1852, things changed drastically for Bahá'u'lláh and His family. He was imprisoned in a terrible dungeon in Tihrán called the "Black Pit" for being a follower of the Báb—a Messenger of God who founded a new religion. The Báb's followers, called Bábis, were persecuted terribly by the government authorities, who felt threatened by the faith. Bahá'u'lláh's wife, Navváb, who also came from a wealthy family, had to leave their home and hide in the city with their children.

After Bahá'u'lláh was released, He was exiled from Iran. For the next 40 years, He lived a simple life, often with little food or clothing. But He was never sad that His valuables were gone. In fact, when He received gifts, He gave them



For over two years, Bahá'u'lláh was confined to this prison in 'Akká, Israel, along with about 70 family and followers. The two windows at top right gave Him His only view of the outside world.



away! At one time, His only luxury was a small prayer rug, but He sold it when His followers needed money. And when people came to visit, Bahá'u'lláh always shared whatever He had, such as oranges, roses, and delicious cups of tea.

Bahá'ís strive to follow Bahá'u'lláh's example, as well as His teachings, by being detached from material things. He taught that extremes of poverty and wealth should be avoided, and all members of our human family should be treated with compassion and justice. "They who are possessed of riches, however, must have the utmost regard for the poor . . ." He wrote, "and well is it with the rich who bestow their riches on the needy and prefer them before themselves."

