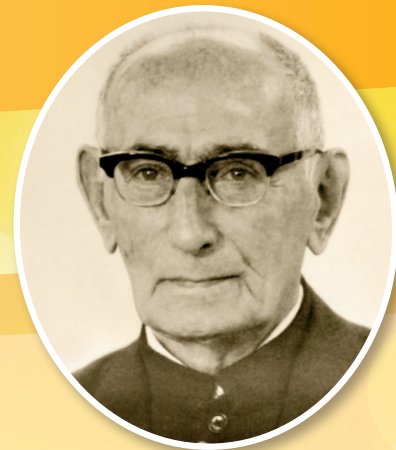


SHINING LAMP

A Bahá'í who served humanity with radiance

Tarázu'lláh Samandarí (1874–1968)



Imagine being one of the last living Bahá'ís to have met Bahá'u'lláh in person! Tarázu'lláh Samandarí had that honor, and he spent much of his life traveling and sharing his stories.

Born into a Bahá'í family in Qazvín, Persia (now Iran), in 1874, Tarázu'lláh was given his name, meaning “Ornament of God,” by Bahá'u'lláh. As a child, he studied Persian, Arabic, math, and calligraphy. At age 12, it made him “extremely joyful” to get up four hours before dawn to practice copying the Bahá'í prayers and writings. He later became one of the most famous calligraphers in Persia. From the age of 13, he also worked for his father, who was a merchant.

As a youth in 1891, Tarázu'lláh made the long, difficult journey to what is now Israel with his aunt and sister. The reward was wonderful—Tarázu'lláh got to spend six months close to Bahá'u'lláh.

Witnessing Revelation

The first time Tarázu'lláh met Bahá'u'lláh, he said he was “carried away with fear and excitement.” He trembled so much that he could barely hold his cup of tea. Bahá'u'lláh gently encouraged him to drink it, but he couldn't. “In spite of His utmost kindness,” Tarázu'lláh wrote, “I was so overwhelmed by His glory, His greatness, and His power that I was unable to raise my eyes to see His peerless face.”

Twice Tarázu'lláh had the bounty of seeing Bahá'u'lláh reveal sacred writings. These moments were impossible to describe, he said. “Power filled the room. The messages came like torrential rain,

leaving no doubt that it was a manifestation of God.”

Tarázu'lláh was one of the Bahá'ís that Bahá'u'lláh called to His bedside during His final days on Earth in May 1892. After Bahá'u'lláh's passing, Tarázu'lláh was also there when His written will was read. In it, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'u'lláh's son, was appointed to lead the Faith. Tarázu'lláh turned to 'Abdu'l-Bahá for guidance.

Traveling and Teaching

'Abdu'l-Bahá urged Tarázu'lláh to dedicate his life to serving the Bahá'í Faith. He fully embraced this mission. He produced a Bahá'í newsletter that was sent all over Persia. He copied and compiled 18 volumes of sacred writings. In 1928, he traveled with his wife and their two sons to Ádhirbayján to share the Faith. For the next 40 years, Tarázu'lláh continuously traveled and taught the Faith around the world. Shoghi Effendi, who led the Bahá'ís after 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing, called Tarázu'lláh “the shining lamp among Bahá'í teachers.” He named him a Hand of the Cause of God in 1951.*

At age 92, Tarázu'lláh visited the U.S. and Canada. Though in delicate health, he met thousands of Bahá'ís and gave many interviews to the media.

In 1968, Tarázu'lláh died in Israel at the age of 94. Nearly a thousand people attended his funeral. The Universal House of Justice—the governing body of the international Bahá'í community—praised his “SELFLESS DEVOTED SERVICE” as a “DEARLY LOVED” Bahá'í who was “FAITHFUL” to his “LAST BREATH.”