

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace

Answering Questions

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

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.

In 1844, something incredible happened. In Persia (now Iran), a young man named Siyyid 'Alí Muhammad made a monumental announcement. He declared that He was a Messenger of God, and the Promised One expected by many followers of Islam. He took the name "the Báb," which means "the Gate" in Arabic. He told His followers—called Bábís—that He had come to prepare the way for another Messenger of God Who would unite the world.

Thousands of people embraced the Báb's message and accepted Him as a Messenger of God. But some Muslim leaders felt threatened by the popularity of the new Faith. The Báb was imprisoned. In 1850, He was killed by a firing squad. Still, the Bábí Faith survived.

One man who didn't believe the Báb's claim was His own uncle, Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad. He had supported his nephew, but was unconvinced that He was the Promised One, or Qá'im. A passionate Bábí friend tried to explain the truth of the Báb's station, but the Hájí remained doubtful.

"Are you really saying that my nephew is the promised Qá'im?" he asked. His friend laughed and told him that his response was the same as the Prophet Muhammad's uncle's response to Muhammad's claim. He reminded him that it was his duty to investigate the truth thoroughly.

So the Hájí went to Iraq in 1862. In Baghdád, He visited Bahá'u'lláh, Who was a leader among the Bábís.

When the Hájí met with Bahá'u'lláh, he was uplifted and overwhelmed. The



Bahá'u'lláh lived in Baghdád, Iraq, on the banks of the Tigris River, from 1853–1863. During this time, He said, He revealed a "copious rain" of divine verses and "sent them to various parts of the world."

Hájí later wrote of that meeting, "He treated me with the utmost affection and favor . . . It is an absolute truth that deprivation from His bounteous presence is a grievous loss."

The Hájí asked Bahá'u'lláh to explain the prophecies that he felt had not been fulfilled by his nephew. Bahá'u'lláh told him to make a list of his questions.

The next day, Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad gave Bahá'u'lláh a two-page list of questions. Within two days, Bahá'u'lláh responded with a detailed reply—200 pages! This book became known as the Kitáb-i-Íqán, or The Book of Certitude.

In the Kitáb-i-Íqán, Bahá'u'lláh clearly explained the oneness of God, the station and role of all of the Messengers of God, and how religion unfolds over time. He addressed specific holy scriptures and explained parts of religious history. He outlined the qualities one must have when seeking truth.

The Hájí finally became convinced that his nephew really was Who He had claimed to be.

“Shouldst thou ponder these words in thine heart, thou wilt of a certainty find the doors of divine wisdom and infinite knowledge flung open before thy face.” —Bahá’u’lláh

The following year, in 1863, Bahá’u’lláh announced that He was the Messenger of God Whom the Báb had foretold. Those who accepted His Faith, including the Báb’s uncle, were called Bahá’ís. Today, Bahá’ís study the Kitáb-i-Íqán as one of the most important books of Bahá’u’lláh’s revelation.

The Báb, whose message inspired the Kitáb-i-Íqán, is honored with a magnificent shrine on Mount Carmel in Haifa, Israel. Bahá’u’lláh Himself selected the spot for the shrine, which Bahá’ís consider one of the holiest places on the planet.



The Shrine of the Báb is surrounded by illuminated garden terraces at night. This majestic global landmark is visited by about one million people each year.

Use the key to decode Bahá’u’lláh’s words from the Kitáb-i-Íqán about searching for God.

“Lea e e in t e ar so e

ni t ... an e ra e t e

a nin lit of i ine i an e.”

