

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace

The Seven Valleys

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.

Imagine you're hiking through the mountains. The air is crisp, and the birds chirp as they fly through the trees. It's a long, challenging trek, but everything is green and full of life, and there's so much to explore along the way. You reach the first peak and look down at the panorama of hills and valleys. You pull out your map and see that you have seven valleys to cross before you reach your destination.

Like a trip in the mountains, our souls are on a journey as well. We are born into this physical world, and our spirits and virtues continue to grow and develop. Bahá'u'lláh describes this spiritual journey in a holy book called *The Seven Valleys*.

From 1854–1856, Bahá'u'lláh spent about two years praying and meditating in the mountains of Kurdistán. When He returned to His home in Baghdád, Iraq, He found the Bábí community disheartened and weak. Bahá'u'lláh urged them to build the strength of their characters. He had not yet announced that He was a Messenger of God, but He revealed holy writings that helped guide the community.

During this time, a man named *Shaykh* Muhyid-Dín wrote to Bahá'u'lláh with questions. The *shaykh* followed a form of Islam called Sufism. But he admired Bahá'u'lláh and His spiritual insight. Bahá'u'lláh answered his questions in *The Seven Valleys*.

In this book, Bahá'u'lláh describes the seven stages, or valleys, that the soul passes through on its journey toward God. These stages were already



Bahá'u'lláh retired to a cave in the Zagros Mountains for nearly two years. The mountain range extends across western Iran, northern Iraq, and eastern Turkey.

known in Sufism, and Bahá'u'lláh shed new light on their profound meaning. Many years later, Bahá'u'lláh's great-grandson, Shoghi Effendi, said that *The Seven Valleys* "may well be regarded as His greatest mystical composition."

In *The Seven Valleys*, the soul's journey begins in the Valley of Search. The search for God requires a pure heart, ardor, and zeal. Bahá'u'lláh writes that our hearts are "the wellspring of divine treasures," and need to be clean and pure in order to search for Him. He reveals that without patience, we "will reach nowhere and attain no goal."

Bahá'u'lláh tells us to never be discouraged, even if we search for "a hundred thousand years," because as soon as we find a trace of Him, we will immediately enter the Valley of Love.

The fire of this love purifies our spirits so we can enter the Valley of Knowledge. In this stage, our "inner eyes will open," and we gain true understanding, seeing God's wisdom everywhere.

“The stages that mark the wayfarer’s journey from the abode of dust to the heavenly homeland are said to be seven.” —Bahá’u’lláh

The journey continues through the Valley of Unity, where we see “all things with the eye of oneness,” and find some attributes of God reflected in every created thing.

Seeing with the light of unity helps us be detached from everything except God, and we can then enter the Valley of Contentment. Here, we experience true inner happiness and joy, no matter what happens in our outer lives.

Next, we come to the Valley of Wonderment, where we are struck “with the beauty of the All-Glorious.” At every moment we see “a wondrous world” and are “lost in awe.”

The last stage is the Valley of True Poverty and Absolute Nothingness. This is “being poor in the



This decorated pen case belonged to Bahá’u’lláh. He revealed the equivalent of 100 books during His lifetime.

things of the created world,” yet “rich in the things of God’s world.” In this valley, we detach from the material world to focus only on God and the spiritual realm.

Find 19 words from The Seven Valleys related to the soul’s journey.
Search forward, backward, up, down, and diagonally.

ARDOR
CONTENTMENT
HEART
JOURNEY
KNOWLEDGE
LOVE
NEARNESS
NOTHINGNESS
MYSTIC
ONENESS

J	V	L	X	Y	F	T	C	S	K	Z	O	P	N	E
U	M	I	D	Y	R	H	Q	N	E	J	B	O	Y	L
Z	E	P	E	A	C	E	O	A	M	N	W	V	B	O
M	X	C	E	J	Z	W	L	Y	R	R	O	E	K	V
N	G	H	N	B	L	E	S	E	H	F	N	R	G	E
C	O	N	T	E	N	T	M	E	N	T	D	T	Q	H
O	I	T	D	Y	I	Y	T	J	R	R	E	Y	V	L
M	N	G	H	C	E	T	V	O	O	E	R	V	U	W
Y	E	E	J	I	C	L	A	F	D	R	M	O	B	X
I	T	D	N	U	N	U	L	P	R	A	E	R	Y	D
K	J	P	C	E	N	G	W	A	A	F	N	Y	Y	B
H	C	R	A	E	S	I	N	P	V	Y	T	N	O	P
X	X	P	A	J	N	S	T	E	W	A	I	F	V	M
S	S	E	N	R	A	E	N	Y	S	W	W	U	V	N
J	O	U	R	N	E	Y	W	Q	B	S	C	O	K	I

PATIENCE
PEACE
SEARCH
POVERTY
UNITY
VALLEY
WAYFARER
WONDERMENT
ZEAL