

# Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace

## The Greatest Holy Leaf

### 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 Tíhrán, Iran

#### 1844

Recognizes the Báb as a new Messenger of God

#### 1852

Imprisonment in the "Black Pit" of Tíhrán

#### 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.

It was a joyous day when Bahá'u'lláh and His wife, Navváb, welcomed their only daughter, Bahíyyih Khánum, in 1846. Born into one of the wealthiest families in Tíhrán, Persia (now Iran), Bahíyyih Khánum's earliest memories were happy. She lived with loving parents and a kind older brother, 'Abdu'l-Bahá. She enjoyed visits to her family's home in the country, playing in the garden among flowers and fruit trees. When she was about three years old, her brother, Mírzá Mihdí, was born.

Bahíyyih Khánum's life of ease disappeared overnight when she was six years old. Her father was unjustly arrested because of His religious beliefs. Bahá'u'lláh was placed in chains in the Black Pit, one of the worst dungeons in Tíhrán. The family was thrown out of their home, and their possessions were taken from them. They had little food. Bahíyyih Khánum was given a handful of flour to eat instead of bread.

The family was terrified for Bahá'u'lláh. While her mother and older brother went out to seek news about Him, Bahíyyih Khánum cared for her baby brother, holding him in her tired arms.

When Bahá'u'lláh was released from prison, He was exiled to Baghdád (now in Iraq). Bahíyyih Khánum joined her family on the terrible journey through



Bahíyyih Khánum wrote, "There is no greater work for one to do upon this earth than to try and unite the hearts of the people . . ."

the mountains in the bitterly cold winter. When they arrived in Baghdád, battered and worn down, her mother's health was poor. Eager to help, Bahíyyih Khánum learned to care for her family. She drew heavy buckets of water from the well and served tea to guests. Bahá'u'lláh sometimes worked alongside her, cooking meals for His family.

When Bahá'u'lláh retreated to pray in the wilderness for two years, Bahíyyih Khánum and her

mother sewed Him a beautiful coat with small pieces of fine red cloth. When He returned, she said, "Our joy cannot be described as we clung to him . . ."

As Bahíyyih Khánum grew, she embraced every chance to be of service. Bahá'u'lláh recognized His daughter's tremendous capacity and entrusted her with important tasks. Calm and forgiving, her kindness transformed people's hearts and deepened their love for Bahá'u'lláh. She revered the "sacred influence radiating from Him."

In 1873, Bahíyyih Khánum happily joined in celebrating the marriage of her beloved brother, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, to Munírih Khánum. She was overjoyed to have a "much-loved sister" and to see her family so happy.

The trials she faced in her early years shaped Bahíyyih Khánum's self-sacrificing

“How sweet thy presence before Me; how sweet to gaze upon thy face, to bestow upon thee My loving-kindness, to favor thee with My tender care . . .” —Bahá’u’lláh

nature and devotion to the Bahá’í Faith. She chose not to marry so she could devote her life to serving her loved ones. She nurtured her family through their exiles and searched for ways to ease their suffering.

Bahá’u’lláh gave her the title “the Greatest Holy

Leaf” and praised her unique role. In a tablet to her, He wrote, “We have elevated thee to the rank of one of the most distinguished among thy sex, and granted thee . . . a station such as none other woman hath surpassed.”

In this illustration of the resting place of Bahíyyih Khánúm, unscramble the letters to find 12 qualities she was known for.

