

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace

The Tablet to the Sháh

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.

As king of Persia (now Iran), Násiri'd-Dín Sháh had incredible power. He ruled through fear. When he entered a city, his messenger called, "Everyone die! Everyone go blind!" People would freeze and gaze at the ground until the sháh passed.

Under the sháh's reign, Bahá'u'lláh was persecuted severely. He was thrown into a terrible prison known as the Black Pit. He was banished from His home in Persia and exiled four times, forced to undergo long, hazardous journeys.

Bahá'u'lláh faced each torment with patience and resilience. But He also spoke up against the injustices. From Adrianople (now Edirne, Turkey), He wrote to world leaders. He called on them to recognize the truth of His mission and to champion peace and justice.

The longest of these tablets He addressed to Násiri'd-Dín Sháh. In it, Bahá'u'lláh recalls the hardships He endured, saying, "Mine eyes have rained down tears until My bed is drenched." Yet He praises and trusts in God: "With Thy love in My heart nothing can ever alarm Me, and . . . all the world's afflictions can in no wise dismay Me."

In verses of both Persian and Arabic, He encourages the sháh to rule fairly and treat his citizens with kindness. He reminds the sháh that the riches of this world will pass away, and true honor will come from good deeds. Bahá'u'lláh states, "This Youth . . . hath had no desire except to draw thee nigh unto the seat of grace, and to turn

thee toward the right hand of justice."

At that time, letters had to be delivered by hand. If anyone was found carrying Bahá'í writings, their life would be in danger. This tablet was so important that Bahá'u'lláh waited for the right moment to send it.

In 1868, He was exiled to 'Akká (now in Israel). Soon a young Bahá'í named Badi'* came to meet Him. Badi' begged for the honor of delivering the

tablet to the sháh. He knew of the sháh's cruelty and understood that he would probably sacrifice his life on this mission.

At age 17, Badi' walked over 900 miles (1,448 km) to Persia and courageously handed the tablet to the sháh. The sháh had him tortured and killed. For three years afterward, Bahá'u'lláh honored Badi' in nearly every tablet, praising his unshakeable faith. He called Badi' the "Pride of Martyrs."

Bahá'u'lláh said that the tablet delivered so bravely to the sháh introduced the Bahá'í Faith to all the people of Persia. It enabled them to seek the truth of His teachings for themselves. In time, His Faith would reach nearly every country of the world.



The king of Persia from 1848–1896



Reed pens used by a secretary of Bahá'u'lláh

“Look upon this Youth, O King, with the eyes of justice; judge thou, then, with truth concerning what hath befallen Him.” —Bahá’u’lláh

Use the key to decode a quote from Bahá’u’lláh’s Tablet to the Sháh, written in American Sign Language Finger Spelling.

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