Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace
Seasons of Spirit

A Brief Timeline

The highlighted area below marks the time in which this story takes place in the life of Bahá'u'lláh.

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 22
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.

After a long, cold winter, it's energizing to see the first buds of spring. They signal that new life is beginning. The scents of fresh green leaves and blooming flowers will soon fill the air.

A similar feeling of excitement and wonder flooded the world when God sent new Messengers, such as Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and Bahá'u'lláh. Over centuries, They have revealed God's teachings for humanity. The Bahá'í writings say that God's Messengers bring "the spiritual springtime . . . Spirits are quickened; hearts are refreshed and invigorated . . . human realities are gladdened, and grow and develop in good qualities and perfections." With each new Messenger, the religion of God grows and blooms, bringing joy and life.

But as time passes, the world changes. Problems such as war, poverty, and prejudice divide people. They grow cold toward each other, causing a spiritual winter in the world. Then God sends a new Messenger to guide humanity and renew peace and faith.

In 1863, in Baghdád, Iraq, Bahá'u'lláh declared that He was God's newest Messenger. He wrote, "The Divine Springtime is come . . . Bestir thyself, and magnify, before the entire creation, the name of God, and celebrate His praise, in such wise that all created things may beregenerated and made new."

Some divine teachings stay the same with each Messenger, and other teachings are new. Bahá'u'lláh taught some eternal truths brought by Jesus and other Messengers, such as having faith in God and treating others kindly. He also brought fresh guidance to help all humanity establish justice and live in peace, such as eliminating all prejudices and recognizing the equality of women and men. He taught that all people are one and all religions come from the same God.

Today, there are more than five million Bahá'ís around the world, from all backgrounds, living in nearly every country. The Bahá'í writings tell us that God will continue to send His Messengers to guide us. After at least one thousand years have passed, another Messenger will come to renew God's never-ending faith.

Like the seasons, humanity's spiritual life goes through cycles of light and darkness, warmth and coldness. No matter how dreary the winter may become, we can be confident that the warmer days of spring will always follow.

Tree illustration by Thomas Amby