

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace

A Heartfelt Transformation

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 the sun dipped below the horizon in 'Akká (now in Israel), a boy named Mahmúd and his family began eating dinner. Suddenly, a brilliant light illuminated the night sky. "The sun has come back!" Mahmúd cried.

The family was amazed to see light after sunset. No one had electricity. They asked a trusted advisor to explain. The light remained a mystery, but the wise man predicted that when Mahmúd was grown, the "Great One" would come to 'Akká. He told Mahmúd to welcome this spiritual teacher with love and devotion.

Many years passed, and the boy grew into a respected Muslim leader called Shaykh Mahmúd. When Bahá'u'lláh arrived in 'Akká as a prisoner, Shaykh Mahmúd was told that Bahá'u'lláh was evil and an enemy of Islam. This wasn't true, but many people believed terrible rumors that were spread about the Bahá'ís. They were prejudiced against them before they'd even seen them. Though he had never met Bahá'u'lláh, Shaykh Mahmúd's heart boiled with hate, and he decided to kill Him.

Shaykh Mahmúd tried twice to reach Bahá'u'lláh to fulfill his deadly mission. But both times, Bahá'u'lláh knew his intentions and refused to see him until his heart was freed from hatred. Astonished, Mahmúd returned home.

Then he had a dream that reminded him of the prophecy from his childhood. Shaykh Mahmúd was humbled. His anger began to fade. He returned to the prison, and this time, he spoke with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son. 'Abdu'l-Bahá's kind words and manner helped Shaykh



Bahá'ís traveled hundreds of miles on foot to be near Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká. Because He was imprisoned, they could only hope to see a glimpse of His hand waving from the window.

Mahmúd's prejudices melt away. He met Bahá'u'lláh face to face and came to love Him and His teachings.

Now, instead of hating the Bahá'ís, Shaykh Mahmúd began to assist them. At the time, guards and spies watched the city gates to stop Bahá'ís from leaving or entering 'Akká. Many Bahá'ís who had come to see Bahá'u'lláh were sent away. Shaykh Mahmúd risked his own safety to help them. He walked outside the city walls to meet Bahá'ís in secret. When the sun set, he gave them a lantern to carry so they could pretend to be a servant guiding their employer back to 'Akká. Other times, Shaykh Mahmúd even threw ropes over the walls so Bahá'ís could climb up and enter the city without using the gate.

Shaykh Mahmúd was one of many people who experienced the transforming power of Bahá'u'lláh's love. Today, Bahá'u'lláh's teachings continue to unite millions of people around the world and inspire them to work together to build peace.

“Through the spirit of oneness, they may heal the sickness of a divided humanity.” —Bahá’u’lláh

Try these activities with friends to explore how you can overcome prejudices and build unity.

Guiding Light

Mix 1 cup (240 mL) glue with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (80 mL) water. Paint mixture on outside of jar. Place colorful scraps of tissue paper on jar, then cover paper with mixture. Continue with more tissue paper.

When dry, use permanent marker to write a quote or some virtues that help build world unity. Place battery-operated candle in jar.



An Unfair Game

Each person crumples paper into a ball. Players toss ball toward laundry basket in middle of room. Each successful basket is a point. After each shot, get ball and return to your spot to shoot again. After two minutes, add all points together for group total.

In round one, players wearing green wait 45 seconds before playing. In round two, everyone with straight hair takes five steps back. In round three, everyone stands at same distance and plays for same time. Talk about what happened when you played with these different rules.



Know Your Neighbor

Players sit in circle with large bowl in center. Each person writes on slip of paper one fact they think no one knows about them and puts it in the bowl. Take turns pulling out someone else’s paper. Go around circle, and each person reads the paper out loud. Players write a person’s name for each fact. Player with the most correct names wins.



Hand in Hand

Each person traces their hand on white card stock. Use colorful markers to create a design that represents your unique, vibrant identity beyond your appearance. Cut out hands and assemble into a mural.

