

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace

Art Is Worship

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), Türkiye. 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.

“The true worth of artists and craftsmen should be appreciated,” said Bahá'u'lláh, “for they advance the affairs of mankind.”

Bahá'ís believe that practicing an art is a form of worship. Poetry, music, drama, visual arts, and other creative work can lift people's spirits and share spiritual truths.

In one verse, Bahá'u'lláh said that when a faithful soul passes on to the next world, they provide power “through which the arts and wonders of the world are made manifest . . .” Just as yeast makes bread rise, these souls help to inspire the arts on Earth.

While Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned for His faith in the cold and filthy “Black Pit” of Tíhrán, weighed down by massive chains, He revealed a joyful poem praising God.

Some time later, He was released and exiled to Baghdád, in what is now Iraq. Scholars asked Him to reveal a poem with a specific rhyme and meter they admired. Bahá'u'lláh dictated 2,000 verses and let the scholars keep 127 of them. The men agreed that Bahá'u'lláh's poem was magnificent.

Many early followers of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh were gifted artists. Bahá'u'lláh gave a devoted female poet the name Táhirih (“the Pure One”). At a conference



These verses from the Hidden Words are in Bahá'u'lláh's own handwriting. The decorative designs were added later.

of Bábís, He supported her when she bravely defied tradition by removing her veil and speaking out for equality.

Nabíl-i-A'zam was another excellent poet. He gave the Bahá'ís a priceless gift by writing a history of the Faith's early days called *The Dawn-Breakers*. Bahá'u'lláh reviewed and approved Nabíl's work.

Bahá'u'lláh's teachings attracted a calligrapher named Mishkín-Qalam. This brilliant artist was a private tutor to the Crown Prince of Persia (now Iran).

Mishkín-Qalam left that position to be near Bahá'u'lláh. He spent many hours transcribing Bahá'u'lláh's words in splendid calligraphy.

Celebration of the arts continued after the ascension of Bahá'u'lláh in 1892. His son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, said kids should “share in every new and rare and wondrous craft and art.” When 'Abdu'l-Bahá's grandson Shoghi Effendi led the Faith, he told Bahá'ís to share inspiring stories and other arts.

Today, the Universal House of Justice, the international governing body of the Faith, urges Bahá'ís to use the arts in community building. The House of Justice says, “When the sublime teachings of the Faith are reflected in artistic work, the hearts of people, including artists, will be touched.”

“Arts, crafts and sciences uplift the world of being, and are conducive to its exaltation.” —Bahá’u’lláh

Try expressing virtues through the arts. Scan the QR codes or visit our website for instructions.*

Gratitude: Sweet Superheroes

Who’s a person you’re grateful for? Create a thank-you gift for a teacher, parent, or another superhero in your community. To start, you need a candy or granola bar, decorative paper, construction paper, yarn, and a pipe cleaner.



Prayer: Folding Book with Pockets

Invite friends to a prayer party at a home, park, or community center. Make this book to help you memorize or share a prayer. You need eight envelopes and some ribbon to get started.



Friendliness: Origami Friend-Ship

Friends really help you go with the flow and stay afloat in stormy seas. Make this cute origami boat for a friend. Start with paper, twine, a toothpick, and ring-shaped candy.



Equality: Bird Puppet

When females and males are equally strong, we all fly higher. Make a fun bird puppet with flapping wings. You’ll need paper, card stock, two straws, and the pattern on our website to help.**



*See brilliantstarmagazine.org

**See brilliantstarmagazine.org/uploads/characters/birdpattern.pdf