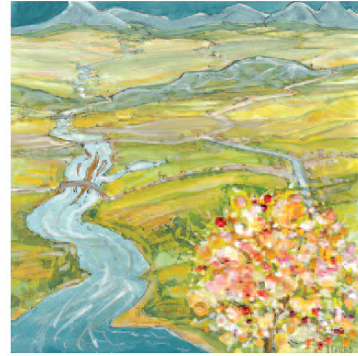


The following story is from the book

The Central Figures

Bahá'u'lláh

Volume Two



These stories are lovingly provided to download as a convenience to teachers or communities otherwise unable to acquire the book. Each book in this storybook series also includes an appendix with questions for discussion and reflection, a glossary of words and phrases used in the stories, a bibliography, and an index.

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The Divine Springtime is come,
O Most Exalted Pen,
for the Festival of the All-Merciful
is fast approaching.

— Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 27

Illustrated by Carl Cordini



The Garden of Paradise

This is a story about Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet and Founder of the Bahá'í Faith. Bahá'ís are followers of Bahá'u'lláh, and Bahá'ís believe that Bahá'u'lláh is the Prophet sent by God to bring us laws and teachings for today. Can you name some of the other Prophets of God that Bahá'ís believe in? Moses? Jesus? Muḥammad? The Buddha?

After Bahá'u'lláh was banished from Iran because of His belief in the Báb, He lived in Iraq for many years. He lived in the city of Baghdád. Bahá'u'lláh became very famous in Baghdád. Many people wanted to see Him and ask for His advice. They knew that He was a great and wise Man, but they didn't know that He was a Prophet of God. That was a secret! And, for many years, Bahá'u'lláh didn't tell anyone His secret.

One day, Bahá'u'lláh took some friends outside the city for a day in the country. Everyone was happy. They were glad to be with Bahá'u'lláh and to have a chance to hear His words.

*Written by Anthony A. Lee
Illustrated by Cindy Pacileo*



Unexpectedly, Bahá'u'lláh shared a new Tablet that He had just revealed. It was called the Tablet of the Holy Mariner.

This new Tablet told a very sad story. The story is about a maiden who comes from heaven to look for true believers in God. She cannot find even one, so she falls down and dies in the dust. Then, she is carried away back to heaven.

Bahá'u'lláh's companions were shocked to hear this story. Suddenly, they were sad and afraid. Then, Bahá'u'lláh told them all that it was time to go back to Baghdád. Somehow, they all knew that they would never return to that place again. Just then, a messenger came to Bahá'u'lláh from the Governor, and the news spread that Bahá'u'lláh was to be banished again, sent away from Baghdád. He was ordered to Constantinople, the capital city of the Ottoman Empire.

Hundreds of people came to Bahá'u'lláh's house in Baghdád in confusion and grief. His friends were crying. They were afraid that they would never see Bahá'u'lláh again. The crowds so overran the house that no one could make preparations for the journey. So, it was decided that Bahá'u'lláh should go with a few friends to a garden and live in a tent, so that the family could pack and make ready. The garden Bahá'u'lláh stayed in was called the Garden of Riḍván, which means the Garden of Paradise.

Bahá'u'lláh lived in the Garden of Riḍván for twelve days and nights. During this time, all of His friends in Baghdád came to see Him there to say good-bye. Bahá'u'lláh was very kind and loving to them. But, they were all very unhappy. They did not want Him to go away.

It was in this garden, the Garden of Riḍván, that Bahá'u'lláh first revealed His mission. He told His secret to a few of His followers. He told them that He as a Prophet of God, sent to bring new laws and teachings to all the people of the world. This was the greatest news that anyone had ever heard.

Now, Bahá'u'lláh's friends found that their sadness turned into joy. The roses that grew everywhere in the Garden of Riḍván seemed large and beautiful. The birds that sang in the garden at night seemed to be the nightingales of paradise. Those who had learned the secret were happier than they had ever been before.

After twelve days in the Garden of Riḍván, Bahá'u'lláh left Baghdád forever. He rode out of the city on a great horse whose dark red coat was sprinkled with white. Crowds of people came into the streets to see him off. Most of them still did not know His secret, and they were sad. But those who learned the secret had found a new faith.

No one ever forgot Bahá'u'lláh's days in the Garden of Riḍván. Every year we also remember them and celebrate them. Bahá'ís come together to say prayers and to remember Bahá'u'lláh's declaration of His mission to the first Bahá'ís. Bahá'u'lláh has called the celebration of these Holy Days the "Most Great Festival," the "King of Festivals," and the "Festival of God." ★

