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Bahá’í

Holy Places

at the World Centre

Bahá’í World Centre

Haifa

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# Preface

The observances to commemorate the centenary of Bahá’u’lláh’s voyage on the Mediterranean Sea to His final imprisonment and exile in the Holy Land provide a befitting occasion for the publication of this book in durable form. It originally comprised mimeographed sheets, clipped together in a folder, for the use of Bahá’í pilgrims visiting the Holy Places of their Faith at its World Centre. Enlarged, and with illustrations it is now offered for general use as a source of Bahá’í study and interest.

Historically the Holy Land has exercised an influence in human affairs beyond all proportion to its size and will continue to do so in the future. Now that we are approaching world order—the purpose of the Bahá’í Faith—it becomes of supreme interest that this world religion has established in that land both its spiritual and administrative centres. To ‘Akká, “the silver city”, and to Mount Carmel, the mountain of God and their environs comes an ever-increasing stream of pilgrims and visitors. It is hoped that this book will be of use and interest to them.

Haifa,

August 1968

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# Stages of Bahá’u’lláh’s journey to and sojourn in the Holy Land

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The journey of Bahá’u’lláh and His companions from Gallipoli to Haifa lasted (from 21 August 1868 to 31 August 1868) | 11 days |
| Bahá’u’lláh and His party were then transferred from the steamer carrying them to Haifa, to a sailing vessel, which arrived in ‘Akká on the afternoon of 31 August 1868. The time spent in Haifa was | a few hours |
| The total period of the sojourn of Bahá’u’lláh in the Holy Land was (from 31 August 1868 to 29 May 1892) | 24 years |

The buildings and houses occupied by Bahá’u’lláh during this period were as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. The Barracks, ‘Akká | 2 years, 2 months and 5 days |
| 2. Houses of Málik, Khavvám and  Rabí’ih | About 10 months |
| 3. House of ‘Abbúd[[1]](#footnote-1) | Approximately 7 years |
| 4. Ridván Garden | Occasional visits |
| 5. Mazra’ih Mansion | Approximately 2 years |
| 6. Bahjí Mansion | Approximately[[2]](#footnote-2) 12 years |
| Total | 24 years |

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# Chapter 1 The banishments of Bahá’u’lláh

“The Sháh’s edict, equivalent to an order for the immediate expulsion of Bahá’u’lláh from Persian territory, opens a new and glorious chapter in the history of the first Bahá’í century … The process which it set in motion … carried Him as far as the shores of the Holy Land, thereby fulfilling the prophecies recorded in both the Old and the New Testaments, redeeming the pledge enshrined in various traditions attributed to the Apostle of God and the Imáms who succeeded Him, and ushering in the long-awaited restoration of Israel to the ancient cradle of its Faith.

“This enforced and hurried departure of Bahá’u’lláh from His native land, accompanied by some of His relatives, recalls in some of its aspects, the precipitate flight of the Holy Family into Egypt; the sudden migration of Muhammad, soon after His assumption of the prophetic office, from Mecca to Medina; the exodus of Moses, His brother and His followers from the land of their birth, in response to the Divine summons, and above all the banishment of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees to the

Promised Land—a banishment which, in the multitudinous benefits it conferred upon so many divers peoples, faiths and nations, constitutes the nearest historical approach to the incalculable blessings destined to be vouchsafed, in this day, and in future ages, to the whole human race, in direct consequence of the exile suffered by Him Whose Cause is the flower and fruit of all previous Revelations.

“‘Abdu’l-Bahá, after enumerating in His *Some Answered Questions* the far-reaching consequences of Abraham’s banishment, significantly affirms that *‘since the exile of Abraham from Ur to Aleppo in Syria produced this result, we must consider what will be the effect of the exile of Bahá’u’lláh in His several removes from Tihrán to Baghdád, from thence to Constantinople, to Rumelia[[3]](#footnote-3) and to the Holy Land.’*” (*God Passes By*, pp. 1o6–108)

“… an indestructible Faith … in this very hour reached its meridian glory through the proclamation of the Mission of Bahá’u’lláh to the kings, the rulers and ecclesiastical leaders of the world in both the East and the West. Close on the heels of this unprecedented victory had followed the climax of His sufferings, a banishment to the penal colony of ‘Akká, decreed by Sultán ‘Abdu’l-‘Azíz. This had been hailed by vigilant enemies as the

signal for the final extermination of a much feared and hated adversary, and it had heaped upon that Faith in this fortress-town, designated by Bahá’u’lláh as His *‘Most Great Prison*,’ calamities from both within and without, such as it had never before experienced.” (*God Passes By*, p. 404)

“The fateful decision was eventually arrived at to banish Bahá’u’lláh to the penal colony of ‘Akká …

“On the morning of the 2nd of Jamádíyu’l-Avval a.h. 1285 (21 August 1868) they all embarked[[4]](#footnote-4) in an Austrian-Lloyd steamer for Alexandria, touching at Madellí, and stopping for two days at Smyrna, where Jináb-i-Munír, surnamed Ismu’lláhu’l-Muníb, became gravely ill, and had, to his great distress, to be left behind in a hospital where he soon after died. In Alexandria they transhipped into a steamer of the same company, bound for Haifa, where, after brief stops at Port Said and Jaffa, they landed, setting out, a few hours later, in a sailing vessel, for ‘Akká, where they disembarked, in the course of the afternoon of the 12th of Jamádiyu’l-Avval a.h. 1285 (August 31, 1868).” (*God Passes By*, pp. 179, 182)

“The banishment, lasting no less than twenty-four years, to which two Oriental despots had, in their implacable enmity and shortsightedness, combined to condemn Bahá’u’lláh, will go down in history as a period which witnessed a miraculous and truly revolutionizing change in the circumstances attending the life and activities of the Exile Himself, will be chiefly remembered for the widespread recrudescence of persecution, intermittent but singularly cruel, throughout His native country and the simultaneous increase in the number of His followers, and, lastly, for an enormous extension in the range and volume of His writings.” (*God Passes By*, p. 185)

“The arrival of Bahá’u’lláh in ‘Akká marks the opening of the last phase of His forty-year long ministry, the final stage, and indeed the climax, of the banishment in which the whole of that ministry was spent.” (*God Passes By*, p. 183)

# Chapter 2 Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

“… it was during that period[[5]](#footnote-5) that the first pilgrimages were made to the residence of One Who was now the visible Centre of a newly-established Faith—pilgrimages which by reason of their number and nature an alarmed government in Persia was first impelled to restrict, and later to prohibit, but which were the precursors of the converging streams of pilgrims who, from East and West, at first under perilous and arduous circumstances, were to direct their steps towards the prison fortress of ‘Akká—pilgrimages which were to culminate in the historic arrival of a royal convert at the foot of Mt. Carmel who, at the very threshold of a longed-for and much advertised pilgrimage, was so cruelly thwarted from achieving her purpose.” (*God Passes By*, p. 177)

“During the imprisonment[[6]](#footnote-6) in the barracks, visitors were rigidly excluded. Several of the Bahá’ís of Írán came all the way on foot for the purpose of seeing their

beloved leader, but were refused admittance within the city walls. They used to go to a place on the plain outside the third moat, from which they could see the windows of Bahá’u’lláh’s quarters. He would show Himself to them at one of the windows and after gazing on Him from afar, they would weep and return to their homes, fired with new zeal for sacrifice and service.” (*Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era*, p. 43)

“… And finally, we can even bear witness to the marked improvement in the conditions surrounding the pilgrimages performed by its devoted adherents to its consecrated shrines at its world centre—pilgrimages originally arduous, perilous, tediously long, often made on foot, at times ending in disappointment, and confined to a handful of harassed Oriental followers, gradually attracting, under steadily improving circumstances of security and comfort, an ever swelling number of new converts converging from the four corners of the globe, and culminating in the widely publicized yet sadly frustrated visit of a noble Queen, who, at the very threshold of the city of her heart’s desire, was compelled, according to her own written testimony, to divert her steps, and forego the privilege of so priceless a benefit.” (*God Passes By*, xvii–xviii)

“… in the Holy Land itself, the heart and nerve-centre of a world-embracing Faith, the fires of … a conflagration that gravely interferes … with that flow of pilgrims that constitutes the life-blood of that centre …” (*The Advent of Divine Justice*, pp. 3–4)

“hail success enterprise[[7]](#footnote-7) presaging day destined witness as envisaged by ‘abdu’l-bahá pilgrim kings ascending this route pay humble tribute martyr herald faith bahá’u’lláh.” (From cablegram of Shoghi Effendi, dated 2 April 1951)

# Chapter 3 The Holy Land

“… the Holy Land—the Land promised by God to Abraham, sanctified by the Revelation of Moses, honoured by the lives and labours of the Hebrew patriarchs, judges, kings and prophets, revered as the cradle of Christianity, and as the place where Zoroaster, according to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s testimony, had *‘held converse with some of the Prophets of Israel,’* and associated by Islám with the Apostle’s night-journey, through the seven heavens, to the throne of the Almighty. Within the confines of this holy and enviable country, *‘the nest of all the Prophets of God,’* *‘the Vale of God’s unsearchable Decree, the snow-white Spot, the Land of unfading splendour’* was the Exile of Baghdád, of Constantinople and Adrianople condemned to spend no less than a third of the allotted span of His life, and over half of the total period of His Mission. *‘It is difficult,’* declares ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *‘to understand how Bahá’u’lláh could have been obliged to leave Persia, and to pitch His tent in this Holy Land, but for the persecution of His enemies, His banishment and exile.’*

“Indeed such a consummation, He assures us, had been actually prophesied *‘through the tongue of the Pro-*

phets two or three thousand years before.’ God, ‘faithful to His promise,’ had, ‘to some of the Prophets’ ‘revealed and given the good news that the Lord of Hosts should be manifested in the Holy Land.’ Isaiah had, in this connection, announced in his Book: *‘Get thee up into the high mountain, O Zion that bringest good tidings; lift up thy voice with strength, O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings. Lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah: ‘Behold your God! Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him.’* David, in his Psalms, had predicted: *‘Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors—and the King of Glory shall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory.’ ‘Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence.’* Amos had, likewise, foretold His coming: *‘The Lord will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn, and tile top of Carmel shall wither.’”* (*God Passes By*, pp. 183–184)

# Chapter 4 ‘Akká

“‘Akká, itself; flanked by the *‘glory of Lebanon,’* and lying in full view of the *‘splendour of Carmel,’* at the foot of the hills which enclose the home of Jesus Christ Himself, had been described by David as *‘the strong City,’* designated by Hosea as *‘a door of hope,’* and alluded to by Ezekiel as *‘the gate that looketh towards the East,’* whereunto *‘the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East,’* His voice *‘like a noise of many waters.’* To it the Arabian Prophet had referred as *‘a city in Syria to which God hath shown His special mercy,’* situated *‘betwixt two mountains … in the middle of a meadow,’* *‘by the shore of the sea … suspended beneath the Throne,’* *‘white, whose whiteness is pleasing unto God.’ ‘Blessed the man,’* He, moreover, as confirmed by Bahá’u’lláh, had declared, *‘that hath visited ‘Akká’, and blessed he that hath visited the visitor of ‘Akká.’*  Furthermore, *‘He that raiseth therein the call to prayer, his voice will be lifted up unto Paradise.’* And again: *‘The poor of ‘Akká are the kings of Paradise and the princes thereof. A month in ‘Akká is better than a thousand years elsewhere.’* Moreover, in a remarkable tradition, which is contained in Shaykh Ibnu’l-’Arabí’s

work, entitled *‘Futúhát-i-Makkíyyih,* and which is recognized as an authentic utterance of Muhammad, and is quoted by Mírzá Abu’l-Fadl in his *Fará’id*, this significant prediction has been made: *‘All of them* (the companions of the Qá’im) *shall be slain except One Who shall reach the plain of ‘Akká’, the Banquet-Hall of God.’*

“Bahá’u’lláh Himself; as attested by Nabíl in his narrative, had, as far back as the first years of His banishment to Adrianople, alluded to that same city in His Lawh-i-Sayyáh, designating it as the ‘Vale of Nabíl,’ the word Nabíl being equal in numerical value to that of ‘Akká. *‘Upon Our arrival,’* that Tablet had predicted, *‘We were welcomed with banners of light, whereupon the Voice of the Spirit cried out saying: “Soon will all that dwell on earth be enlisted under these banners.”’”* (*God Passes By*, p. 184)

“‘Akká, the ancient Ptolemais, the St. Jean d’Acre of the Crusaders, that had successfully defied the siege of Napoleon, had sunk, under the Turks, to the level of a penal colony to which murderers, highway robbers and political agitators were consigned from all parts of the Turkish empire. It was girt about by a double system of ramparts; was inhabited by a people whom Bahá’u’lláh stigmatized as *‘the generation of vipers’*; was devoid of any source of water within its gates; was flea-infested, damp and honey-combed with gloomy, filthy and tortuous

lanes. *‘According to what they say,’* the Supreme Pen has recorded in the *Lawh-i-Sultán*, *‘it is the most desolate of the cities of the world, the most unsightly of them in appearance, the most detestable in climate, and the foulest in water. It is as though it were the metropolis of the owl.’* So putrid was its air that, according to a proverb, a bird when flying over it would drop dead.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 185—186)

“His arrival at the penal colony of ‘Akká, far from proving the end of His afflictions, was but the beginning of a major crisis, characterized by bitter suffering, severe restrictions, and intense turmoil, which, in its gravity, surpassed even the agonies of the Síyáh-Chál of Tihrán, and to which no other event, in the history of the entire century can compare, except the internal convulsion that rocked the Faith in Adrianople. *‘Know thou,’* Bahá’u’lláh, wishing to emphasize the criticalness of the first nine years of His banishment to that prison-city, has written, *‘that upon Our arrival at this Spot, We chose to designate it as the “Most Great Prison.” Though previously subjected in another land* (Tihrán) *to chains and fetters, We yet refused to call it by that name. Say: Ponder thereon, O ye endued with understanding!”* (*God Passes By*, p. 185)

“Explicit orders had been issued by the Sultán and his ministers to subject the exiles, who were accused of hav-

ing grievously erred and led others far astray, to the strictest confinement. Hopes were confidently expressed that the sentence of life-long imprisonment pronounced against them would lead to their eventual extermination. The farmán of Sultán ‘Abdu’l-’Azíz, dated the fifth of Rabí’u’th-Thání a.h. 1285 (26 July 1868), not only condemned them to perpetual banishment, but stipulated their strict incarceration, and forbade them to associate either with each other or with the local inhabitants. The text of the farmán itself was read publicly, soon after the arrival of the exiles, in the principal mosque of the city as a warning to the population.” (*God Passes By*, p. 186)

*“‘His enemies,’* ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, referring to this same theme, has written, *‘intended that His imprisonment should completely destroy and annihilate the blessed Cause, but this prison was, in reality, of the greatest assistance, and became the means of its development.’* ‘… This illustrious Being,’ He, moreover has affirmed, *‘uplifted His Cause in the Most Great Prison. From this Prison His light was shed abroad; His fame conquered the world, and the proclamation of His glory reached the East and the West.’ ‘His light at first had been a star; now it became a mighty sun.’ ‘Until our time,’* He, moreover has affirmed, *‘no such thing has ever occurred.*

“Little wonder that, in view of so remarkable a reversal in the circumstances attending the twenty-four years of His banishment to ‘Akká, Bahá’u’lláh Himself should have penned these weighty words: ‘The Almighty … hath transformed this Prison-House into the Most Exalted Paradise, the Heaven of Heavens.’” (*God Passes By*, p. 196)

## The barracks

“Having, after a miserable voyage, disembarked at ‘Akká, all the exiles, men, women and children, were, under the eyes of a curious and callous population that had assembled at the port to behold the ‘God of the Persians,’ conducted to the army barracks,[[8]](#footnote-8) where they were locked in, and sentinels detailed to guard them. *‘The first night,’* Bahá’u’lláh testifies in the *Lawh-i-Ra’ís*, *‘all were deprived of either food or drink … They even begged for water, and were refused.’* So filthy and brackish was the water in the pool of the courtyard that no one could drink it. Three loaves of black and salty bread were assigned to each, which they were later permitted to exchange, when escorted by guards to the market, for two of better quality. Subsequently they were allowed a

mere pittance as substitute for the allotted dole of bread. All fell sick, except two, shortly after their arrival. Malaria, dysentery, combined with the sultry heat, added to their miseries. Three succumbed, among them two brothers, who died the same night, ‘*locked*,’ as testified by Bahá’u’lláh, *‘in each other’s arms.’* The carpet used by Him He gave to be sold in order to provide for their winding-sheets and burial. The paltry sum obtained after it had been auctioned was delivered to the guards, who had refused to bury them without first being paid the necessary expenses. Later, it was learned that, unwashed and unshrouded, they had buried them, without coffins, in the clothes they wore, though, as affirmed by Bahá’u’lláh, they were given twice the amount required for their burial. *‘None,’* He Himself has written, *‘knoweth what befell Us, except God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing … From the foundation of the world until the present day a cruelty such as this hath neither been seen nor heard of.’ ‘He hath, during the greater part of His life,*’ He, referring to Himself, has, moreover, recorded, *‘been sore-tried in the clutches of His enemies. His sufferings have now reached their culmination in this afflictive Prison, into which His oppressors have so unjustly thrown Him.’*”

“The few pilgrims who, despite the ban that had been so rigidly imposed, managed to reach the gates of the Prison—some of whom had journeyed the entire distance from Persia on foot—had to content themselves

with a fleeting glimpse of the face of the Prisoner, as they stood, beyond the second moat, facing the window of His Prison. The very few who succeeded in penetrating into the city had, to their great distress, to retrace their steps without even beholding His countenance. The first among them, the self-denying Hájí Abu’l-Hasan-i-Ardikání, surnamed Amím-i-Iláhí (Trusted of God), to enter His presence was only able to do so in a public bath where it had been arranged that he should see Bahá’u’lláh without approaching Him or giving any sign of recognition. Another pilgrim, Ustád Ismá’íl-i-Káshí, arriving from Mosul, posted himself on the far side of the moat, and, gazing for hours, in rapt adoration, at the window of his Beloved, failed in the end, owing to the feebleness of his sight, to discern His face, and had to turn back to the cave which served as his dwelling—place on Mt. Carmel—an episode that moved to tears the Holy Family who had been anxiously watching from afar the frustration of his hopes. Nabíl himself had to precipitately flee the city, where he had been recognized, had to satisfy himself with a brief glimpse of Bahá’u’lláh from across that same moat, and continued to roam the countryside around Nazareth, Haifa, Jerusalem and Hebron, until the gradual relaxation of restrictions enabled him to join the exiles.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 186–188)

## The House of ‘Abbúd

What is known as the House of ‘Abbúd in ‘Akká is in two parts: the eastern part which was known as “the house of ‘Údí Khammár”, and the western part, which was the house of ‘Abbúd.

The eastern section was so insufficient to the needs of Bahá’u’lláh and His family that no less than thirteen persons of both sexes had to accommodate themselves in one of its rooms.

Bahá’u’lláh had one room of the eastern section to Himself, and it was there that He revealed His Book of Laws, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (circa 1873). At the time of the wedding of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá one room, which is now situated between the two sections of the House, was built by ‘Abbúd, and the wedding took place there. Subsequently, ‘Abbúd turned over the western part to Bahá’u’lláh. Bahá’u’lláh then gave His room in the eastern part to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and occupied one of the rooms of the western section, which pilgrims are now able to visit.

It was during the period of Bahá’u’lláh’s stay in the House of ’Údí Khammár that a group of Bahá’ís, defying Bahá’u’lláh’s specific command, murdered three Azalís who had been sent to ‘Akká with Bahá’u’lláh. The animosity and slander against the exiles after this incident reached such a pitch that the children of the exiles were stoned on sight, while ‘Abbúd himself, whose residence was next door to that of Bahá’u’lláh, was so in-

fluenced by what he heard against his now suspected Neighbour, that he reinforced the partition that separated his house from the dwelling of Bahá’u’lláh.

Bahá’u’lláh stayed in this house, in both parts, for seven years. During the latter years of His life, He also occasionally visited this house.

After the Ascension of Bahá’u’lláh, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá continued to stay in that house, and it was while He was there that the rebellion of the Arch-Breaker of His Father’s Covenant began.

The Guardian refers to this house as “the scene of prolonged afflictions sustained by Founder of Faith, as well as supreme crisis suffered by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá at hands of Covenant-breakers.”

“Revealed soon after Bahá’u’lláh had been transferred to the house of ’Údí Khammár (circa 1873), at a time when He was still encompassed by the tribulations that had afflicted Him, through the acts committed by His enemies and the professed adherents of His Faith, this Book,[[9]](#footnote-9) this treasury enshrining the priceless gems of His Revelation, stands out, by virtue of the principles it inculcates, the administrative institutions it ordains and the function with which it invests the appointed Successor of its Author, unique and incomparable among

the world’s sacred Scriptures.” (*God Passes By*, p. 213)

## Khán-i-‘Avámid

At the time of the transfer of Bahá’u’lláh, of His family and of His companions from the barracks to make room for the Turkish troops, most of His companions were consigned to a caravansarai, named the Khán-i-’Avámíd (Inn of the Pillars).[[10]](#footnote-10) The Bahá’ís lived mostly in the western and southern wings of the caravansarai on the top floor. One of the rooms was occupied by the Master. He entertained guests and pilgrims in that room where He also made them ready before attaining the presence of Bahá’u’lláh.

As the companions took up residence in other houses, the Khán-i-’Avámíd became the first Bahá’í Pilgrim House of the Holy Land. Such eminent early believers as Mishkín-Qalam, Jináb-i-Zayn, and Hájí Mírzá Haydar-‘Alí have stayed in and lived in this caravansarai. The means of comfort were so limited, and food was so scarce that each loaf of Arab bread, normally adequate for one meal for one person, had to be divided into four portions, for the four periods of the day. All other food had to be strictly divided and assigned. When beans were served, the seeds were counted and a share allotted to each person.

## The Ridván Garden

“Shaykh ‘Alíy-i-Mírí, the Muftí of ‘Akká, had even, at the suggestion of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, to plead insistently that He might permit the termination of His nine-year confinement within the walls of the prison-city, before He would consent to leave its gates. The garden of Na’mayn,[[11]](#footnote-11) a small island, situated in the middle of a river to the east of the city, honoured with the appellation of Ridván, and designated by Him the *‘New Jerusalem’* and *‘Our Verdant Isle’*, had, together with the residence of ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá—rented and prepared for Him by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and situated a few miles north of ‘Akká—become by now the favourite retreats of One Who, for almost a decade, had not set foot beyond the city walls, and Whose sole exercise had been to pace, in monotonous repetition, the floor of His bed-chamber.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 192–193)

## ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s life in ‘Akká after renewal of incarceration, 1901–1908

“It was in 1901, on the fifth day of the month of Jamádiyu’l-Avval a.h. 1319 (20 August) that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, upon His return from Bahjí where He had participated in the celebration of the anniversary of the Báb’s

Declaration, was informed, in the course of an interview with the governor of ‘Akká, of Sultan ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd’s instructions ordering that the restrictions which had been gradually relaxed should be reimposed, and that He and His brothers should be strictly confined within the walls of that city. The Sultán’s edict was at first rigidly enforced, the freedom of the exiled community was severely curtailed, while ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had to submit, alone and unaided, to the prolonged interrogation of judges and officials, who required His presence for several consecutive days at government headquarters for the purpose of their investigations. One of His first acts was to intercede on behalf of His brothers, who had been peremptorily summoned and informed by the governor of the orders of the sovereign, an act which failed to soften their hostility or lessen their malevolent activities. Subsequently, through His intervention with the civil and military authorities, He succeeded in obtaining the freedom of His followers who resided in ‘Akká, and in enabling them to continue to earn, without interference, the means of livelihood.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 264–265)

“The gravity of the situation confronting ‘Abdu’l-Bahá; the rumours that were being set afloat by a population that anticipated the gravest developments; the

hints and allusions to the dangers threatening Him contained in newspapers published in Egypt and Syria; the aggressive attitude which His enemies increasingly assumed; the provocative behaviour of some of the inhabitants of ‘Akká and Haifa who had been emboldened by the predictions and fabrications of these enemies regarding the fate awaiting a suspected community and its Leader, led Him to reduce the number of pilgrims, and even to suspend, for a time, their visits, and to issue special instructions that His mail be handled through an agent in Egypt rather than in Haifa; for a time He ordered that it should be held there pending further advice from Him. He, moreover, directed the believers, as well as His own secretaries, to collect and remove to a place of safety all the Bahá’í writings in their possession, and, urging them to transfer their residence to Egypt, went so far as to forbid their gathering, as was their wont, in His house. Even His numerous friends and admirers refrained, during the most turbulent days of this period, from calling upon Him, for fear of being implicated and of incurring the suspicion of the authorities. On certain days and nights, when the outlook was at its darkest, the house in which He was living, and which had for many years been a focus of activity, was completely deserted. Spies, secretly and openly, kept watch around it, observing His every movement and restricting the freedom of His family.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 266–267)

“At His[[12]](#footnote-12) table, in those days, whenever there was a lull in the storm raging about Him, there would gather pilgrims, friends and inquirers from most of the aforementioned countries, representative of the Christian, the Muslim, the Jewish, the Zoroastrian, the Hindu and Buddhist Faiths. To the needy thronging His doors and filling the courtyard of His house every Friday morning, in spite of the perils that environed Him, He would distribute alms with His own hands, with a regularity and generosity that won Him the title of ‘Father of the Poor.’ Nothing in those tempestuous days could shake His confidence, nothing would be allowed to interfere with His ministrations to the destitute, the orphan, the sick, and the down-trodden, nothing could prevent Him from calling in person upon those who were either incapacitated, or ashamed to solicit His aid. Adamant in His determination to follow the example of both the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh, nothing would induce Him to flee from His enemies, or escape from imprisonment, neither the advice tendered Him by the leading members of the exiled community in ‘Akká, nor the insistent picas of the Spanish Consul—a kinsman of the agent of an Italian steamship company—who, in his love for ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and his anxiety to avert the threatening danger, had gone so far as to place at His disposal an Italian freighter, ready to provide

Him a safe passage to any foreign port He might name.

“So imperturbable was ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s equanimity that, while rumours were being bruited about that He might be cast into the sea, or exiled to Fízán in Tripolitania, or hanged on the gallows, He, to the amazement of His friends and the amusement of His enemies, was to be seen planting trees and vines in the garden of His house, whose fruits when the storm had blown over, He would bid His faithful gardener, Ismá’íl Áqá, pluck and present to those same friends and enemies on the occasion of their visits to Him.

“In the early part of the winter of 1907 another Commission of four officers, headed by ‘Árif Bey, and invested with plenary powers, was suddenly dispatched to ‘Akká by order of the Sultán. A few days before its arrival ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had a dream, which He recounted to the believers, in which He saw a ship cast anchor off ‘Akká, from which flew a few birds, resembling sticks of dynamite, and which, circling about His head, as He stood in the midst of a multitude of the frightened inhabitants of the city, returned without exploding to the ship.

“No sooner had the members of the Commission landed than they placed under their direct and exclusive control both the Telegraph and Postal services in ‘Akká; arbitrarily dismissed officials suspected of being friendly to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, including the governor of the city;

established direct and secret contact with the government in Constantinople; took up their residence in the home of the neighbours and intimate associates of the Covenant-breakers; set guards over the house of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to prevent any one from seeing Him; and started the strange procedure of calling up as witnesses the very people, among whom were Christians and Muslims, Orientals and westerners, who had previously signed the documents forwarded to Constantinople, and which they had brought with them for the purpose of their investigations.

“The activities of the Covenant-breakers, and particularly of Mírzá Muhammad-’Alí, now jubilant and full of hope, rose in this hour of extreme crisis, to the highest pitch. Visits, interviews and entertainments multiplied, in an atmosphere of fervid expectation, now that the victory was seen to be at hand. Not a few among the lower elements of the population were led to believe that their acquisition of the property which would be left behind by the deported exiles was imminent. Insults and calumnies markedly increased. Even some of the poor, so long and so bountifully succoured by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, forsook Him for fear of reprisals.

“‘Abdu’l-Bahá, while the members of the Commission were carrying on their so-called investigations, and throughout their stay of about one month in ‘Akká, consistently refused to meet or have any dealings with

any of them, in spite of the veiled threats and warnings conveyed by them to Him through a messenger, an attitude which greatly surprised them and served to inflame their animosity and reinforce their determination to execute their evil designs. Though the perils and tribulations which had encompassed Him were now at their thickest, though the ship on which He was supposed to embark with the members of the Commission was waiting in readiness, at times in ‘Akká, at times in Haifa, and the wildest rumours were being spread about Him, the serenity He had invariably maintained, ever since His incarceration had been reimposed, remained unclouded, and His confidence unshaken. *‘The meaning of the dream I dreamt,’* He, at that time, told the believers who still remained in ‘Akká, *‘is now clear and evident. Please God this dynamite will not explode.’*

“Meanwhile the members of the Commission had, on a certain Friday, gone to Haifa and inspected the Báb’s sepulchre, the construction of which had been proceeding without any interruption on Mt. Carmel. Impressed by its solidity and dimensions, they had inquired of one of the attendants as to the number of vaults that had been built beneath that massive structure.

“Shortly after the inspection had been made it was suddenly observed, one day at about sunset, that the ship, which had been lying off Haifa, had weighed anchor, and was heading towards ‘Akká. The news spread

rapidly among an excited population that the members of the Commission had embarked upon it. It was anticipated that it would stop long enough at ‘Akká to take ‘Abdu’l-Bahá on board, and then proceed to its destination. Consternation and anguish seized the members of His family when informed of the approach of the ship. The few believers who were left wept with grief at their impending separation from their Master. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá could be seen, at that tragic hour, pacing, alone and silent, the courtyard of His house.

“As dusk fell, however, it was suddenly noticed that the lights of the ship had swung round, and the vessel had changed her course. It now became evident that she was sailing direct for Constantinople. The intelligence was instantly communicated to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Who, in the gathering darkness, was still pacing His courtyard. Some of the believers who had posted themselves at different points to watch the progress of the ship hurried to confirm the joyful tidings. One of the direst perils that had ever threatened ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s precious life was, on that historic day, suddenly, providentially and definitely averted.

“Soon after the precipitate and wholly unexpected sailing of that ship news was received that a bomb had exploded in the path of the Sultán while he was returning to his palace from the mosque where he had been offering his Friday prayers.

“A few days after this attempt on his life the Commission submitted its report to him; but he and his government were too preoccupied to consider the matter. The case was laid aside, and when, some months later, it was again brought forward it was abruptly closed forever by an event which, once and for all, placed the Prisoner of ‘Akká beyond the power of His royal enemy. The ‘Young Turk’ Revolution, breaking out swiftly and decisively in 1908, forced a reluctant despot to promulgate the constitution which he had suspended, and to release all religious and political prisoners held under the old régime. Even then a telegram had to be sent to Constantinople to inquire specifically whether ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was included in the category of these prisoners, to which an affirmative reply was promptly received.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 269–272)

# Chapter 5 Mazra’ih

*“Bahá’u’lláh loved the beauty and verdure of the country. One day He passed the remark: ‘I have not gazed on verdure for nine years. The country is the world of the soul, the city is the world of bodies.’ When I heard indirectly of this saying I realized that He was longing for the country, and I was sure that whatever I could do towards the carrying out of His wish would be successful. There was in ‘Akká at that time a man called Muhammad Páshá Safwat, who was very much opposed to us. He had a palace called Mazra’ih, about four miles north of the city, a lovely place, surrounded by gardens and with a stream of running water. I went and called on this Páshá at his home. I said: ‘Páshá, you have left the palace empty, and are living in Akká.’ He replied: ‘I am an invalid and cannot leave the city. If I go there it is lonely and I am cut off from my friends.’ I said: ‘While you are not living there and the place is empty, let it to us.’ He was amazed at the proposal, but soon consented. I got the house at a very low rent, about five pounds per annum, paid him for five years and made a contract. I sent labourers to repair the place and put the garden in order and had a bath built. I also had a carriage prepared for the use of the Blessed Beauty.*

*One day I determined to go and see the place for myself Notwithstanding the repeated injunctions given in successive firmáns that we were on no account to pass the limits of the city walls, I walked out through the city gate. Gendarmes were on guard, but they made no objection, so I proceeded straight to the palace. The next day I again went out, with some friends and officials, unmolested and unopposed, although the guards and sentinels stood on both sides of the City Gates. Another day I arranged a banquet, spread a table under the pine trees of Bahjí, and gathered round it the notables and officials of the town. In the evening we all returned to the town together.*

*“One day I went to the Holy Presence of the Blessed Beauty and said: ‘The palace at Mazra’ih is ready for you, and a carriage to drive you there.’ (At that time there were no carriages in ‘Akká or Haifa.) He refused to go, saying: ‘I am a prisoner’. Later I requested Him again, but got the same answer. I went so far as to ask Him a third time, but he still said ‘No!’ and I did not dare to insist further. There was, however, in ‘Akká a certain Muslim Shaykh, a well-known man with considerable influence, who loved Bahá’u’lláh and was greatly favoured by Him. I called this Shaykh and explained the position to him. I said, ‘You are daring. Go tonight to His Holy Presence, fall on your knees before Him, take hold of His hands and do not let go until He promises to leave the city!’ He was an Arab. … He went directly to Bahá’u’lláh and sat down close to His knees. He took hold of the hands of the Blessed Beauty and kissed them and asked: ‘Why do you not*

*leave the city?’ He said: ‘I am a prisoner.’ The Shaykh replied: ‘God forbid! Who has the power to make you a prisoner? You have kept yourself in prison. It was your own will to be imprisoned, and now I beg you to come out and go to the palace. It is beautiful and verdant. The trees are lovely, and the oranges like balls of fire!’ As often as the Blessed Beauty said: ‘I am a prisoner, it cannot be,’ the Shaykh took His hands and kissed them. For a whole hour he kept on pleading. At last Bahá’u’lláh said, ‘Khaylí khub (very good)’ and the Shaykh’s patience and persistence were rewarded. He came to me with great joy to give the glad news of His Holiness’s consent. In spite of the strict firmán of ‘Abdu’l-’Azí z which prohibited my meeting or having any intercourse with the Blessed Perfection, I took the carriage the next day and drove with Him to the palace. No one made any objection. I left Him there and returned myself to the city.”* (Words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá quoted in *Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era*, pp. 44–46)

(The following two extracts are from an article entitled *Treasured Memories*, published in *World Order Magazine*, iv, 10, written by Mrs Lilian McNeill, who was a personal childhood friend of Queen Marie of Rumania. The McNeills lived in the Mansion of Mazra’ih for a number of years.)

“It was in May, 1931 when my husband retired from Government service that we took a lease of this house and it was our great privilege to be able to restore it, and

make a garden—a proper setting for a dwelling with such sacred associations. Although we found it a good deal altered on the second floor from the time when Bahá’u’lláh lived there, the main features are unchanged, the vaulted rooms on the ground floor particularly.

“There is a rough cement floor in the room downstairs which was Bahá’u’lláh’s own special room. This remains as I found it, in the belief that His feet may have trodden it …”

announce friends delivery after more than fifty years keys qasr mazra’ih by israel authorities stop historic dwelling place bahá’u’lláh after leaving prison city ‘akká now being furnished anticipation opening door pilgrimage.” (Cablegram from Shoghi Effendi dated 15 December 1950.)

# Chapter 6 Bahjí

## The Mansion

*“For two years He remained in that charming and lovely spot.*[[13]](#footnote-13) *Then it was decided to remove to another place, at Bahjí. It so happened that an epidemic disease had broken out at Bahjí, and the proprietor of the house fled away in distress, with all his family, ready to offer the house free of charge to any applicant. We took the house at a very low rent, and there the doors of majesty and true sovereignty were flung wide open.”* (Words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá quoted in *Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era*, pp. 44–46)

“Two years later the palace of ‘Údí Khammár, on the construction of which so much wealth had been lavished, while Bahá’u’lláh lay imprisoned in the barracks,[[14]](#footnote-14) and which its owner had precipitately abandoned with his family owing to the outbreak of an epidemic disease, was rented and later purchased for Him—a dwelling—place which He characterized as the *‘lofty*

*mansion,’* the spot which *‘God hath ordained as the most sublime vision of mankind.’*” (*God Passes By*, p. 193)

“It was in that same mansion that the distinguished Orientalist, Prof. E. G. Browne of Cambridge, was granted his four successive interviews with Bahá’u’lláh, during the five days he was His guest at Bahjí (15–20 April 1890), interviews immortalized by the Exile’s historic declaration that *‘these fruitless strifes, these ruinous wars shall pass away and tile “Most Great Peace” shall come.’* ‘The face of Him on Whom I gazed,’ is the interviewer’s memorable testimony for posterity, ‘I can never forget, though I cannot describe it. Those piercing eyes seemed to read one’s very soul; power and authority sat on that ample brow. … No need to ask in whose presence I stood, as I bowed myself before one who is the object of a devotion and love which kings might envy and emperors sigh for in vain.’ ‘Here,’ the visitor himself has testified, ‘did I spend five most memorable days, during which I enjoyed unparalleled and unhoped-for opportunities of holding intercourse with those who are the fountainheads of that mighty and wondrous spirit, which works with invisible but ever-increasing force for the transformation and quickening of a people who slumber in a sleep like unto death.” (*God Passes By*, p. 194)

“Six days before He passed away He summoned to His presence … the entire company of believers, including several pilgrims … for what proved to be their last audience with Him. *‘I am well pleased with you all,’* He gently and affectionately addressed the weeping crowd that gathered about Him. *‘Ye have rendered many services, and been very assiduous in your labours. Ye have come here every morning and every evening. May God assist you to remain united. May He aid you to exalt the Cause of the Lord of being.’*” (*God Passes By*, p. 222)

“Forsaken, betrayed, assaulted by almost the entire body of His relatives, now congregated in the Mansion and the neighbouring houses clustering around the most Holy Tomb, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, already bereft of both His mother and His sons, and without any support at all save that of an unmarried sister, His four unmarried daughters, His wife and His uncle (a half-brother of Bahá’u’lláh), was left alone to bear, in the face of a multitude of enemies arrayed against Him from within and from without, the full brunt of the terrific responsibilities which His exalted office had laid upon Him.” (*God Passes By*, p. 247)

“A further blow has been struck at the remnants of the implacable enemies of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the breakers of

His Father’s Covenant, still living in the immediate vicinity of the holiest Shrine of the Bahá’í World, through the destruction of a row of ruinous sheds which had been under their control, through orders issued by the Municipal Authorities of ‘Akká. And, lastly, an expropriation order has been published in the Israel Official Gazette by the Treasury Department of Israel related to buildings enclosed within the Haram-i-Aqdas, aiming at the eviction of these same enemies from the outer Sanctuary of Bahá’u’lláh’s Sepulchre, following upon the evacuation by them of the Mansion at Bahjí after two score years of occupancy, and which, when carried out, will mark the final cleansing, after more than sixty–five years of the immediate surroundings of the holiest Spot in the Bahá’í world.” (*Messages to the Bahá’í World*, 1950–1957, pp. 108–109)

“The evacuation of the Mansion of Bahá’u’lláh by these Covenant-breakers, after their unchallenged occupancy of it since His ascension, a Mansion which, through their gross neglect, had fallen into a sad state of disrepair; its subsequent complete restoration, fulfilling a long cherished desire of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá; its illumination through an electric plant installed by an American believer for that purpose; the refurnishing of all its rooms after it had been completely denuded by its former oc-

cupants of all the precious relics it contained, with the exception of a single candlestick in the room where Bahá’u’lláh had ascended; the collection within its walls of Bahá’í historic documents, of relics and of over five thousand volumes of Bahá’í literature, in no less than forty languages; the extension to it of the exemption from government taxes, already granted to other Bahá’í institutions and properties in ‘Akká and on Mt. Carmel; and finally, its conversion from a private residence to a centre of pilgrimage visited by Bahá’ís and non-Bahá’ís alike—these served to further dash the hopes of those who were still desperately striving to extinguish the light of the Covenant of Bahá’u’lláh.” (*God Passes By*, p. 356)

## The Shrine of Bahá’u’lláh

“The news of His ascension was instantly communicated to Sultán ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd in a telegram which began with the words ‘the Sun of Bahá has set’ and in which the monarch was advised of the intention of interring the sacred remains within the precincts of the Mansion, an arrangement to which he readily assented. Bahá’u’lláh was accordingly laid to rest in the northernmost room of the house which served as a dwelling-place for His son-in-law, the most northerly of the three houses lying to the west of, and adjacent to, the Man-

sion. His interment took place shortly after sunset, on the very day of His ascension.” (*God Passes By*, p. 222)

“In the Holy Land, the world seat of this System, where its heart pulsates, where the dust of its Founders reposes, where the processes disclosing its purposes, energizing its life and shaping its destiny all originate, there fell, at the very hour of its inception, the first blow which served to proclaim to high and low alike the solidity of the foundations on which it has been established. The Covenant-breakers, now dwindled to a mere handful, instigated by Mírzá Muhammad-’Alí, the Arch-rebel, whose dormant hopes had been awakened by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s sudden ascension, and headed by the arrogant Mírzá Badí’u’lláh, seized forcibly the keys of the Tomb of Bahá’u’lláh, expelled its keeper, the brave-souled Abu’l-Qásim-i-Khurásání, and demanded that their chief be recognized by the authorities as the legal custodian of that Shrine. Unadmonished by their abject failure, as witnessed by the firm action of the Palestine authorities, who, after prolonged investigations, instructed the British officer in ‘Akká to deliver the keys into the hands of that same keeper, they resorted to other methods in the hope of creating a cleavage in the ranks of the bereaved yet resolute disciples of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and of ultimately undermining the foundations of

the institutions His followers were labouring to erect.” (*God Passes By*, p. 355)

“signal success removal ruins immediately followed landscaping approaches shrine erection gate embellishment surroundings tomb bahá’u’lláh long denied befitting entrance through deliberate obstruction enemies faith stop public access heart qiblih bahá’í world now made possible through traversing sacred precincts leading successively holy court outer inner sanctuaries blessed threshold holy holies stop recent events prelude acquisition development over thirty acres property surrounding bahá’u’lláh’s resting place paving way erection course future decades be fitting mausoleum destined enshrine dust founder god’s most holy faith.” (From cablegram of Shoghi Effendi, dated 11 June 1952)

“announce bahá’í communities east west joyous occasion hundred thirty–fifth anniversary bahá’u’lláh’s birthday successful termination protracted negotiations initiated two years ago culminating signature contract providing eventual formal transfer by development authority state

israel to palestine branch american national spiritual assembly extensive long desired vitally needed property surrounding safeguarding for posterity most holy tomb founder faith as well as adjoining mansion stop acquired area raising bahá’í holdings holy plain akká from four thousand to one hundred and fifty–five thousand square metres exchanged against property donated by children zikru lláh grandchildren mírzá muhammad qulí bahá’u’lláh’s faithful half brother companion exile stop spontaneous offer contrasts shameful action family sale to non-bahá’ís property neighbourhood jordan valley purchased instrumentality ‘abdu’l-bahá during bahá’u’lláh’s lifetime pursuant his instructions alluded his writings stop forty acre property acquired single transaction almost equals entire bahá’í international endowments purchased course sixty years vicinity báb’s sepulchre slope mount carmel stop exchange said property including land houses made possible precipitate flight former arab owners traditional supporters old covenant breakers descendants notorious enemy ‘abdu’l-bahá who placed residence disposal committee investigation stop signature agreement signalized commencement large scale landscaping aiming beautification immediate precincts holiest

spot entire bahá’í world itself prelude eventual erection as happened case báb’s sepulchre befitting mausoleum enshrining precious dust most great name stop.” (From cablegram of Shoghi Effendi dated 12 November 1952)

# Chapter 7 Haifa

## Mount Carmel

“In that same year[[15]](#footnote-15) Bahá’u’lláh’s tent, the *‘Tabernacle of Glory’*, was raised on Mt. Carmel, *‘the Hill of God and His Vineyard,’* the home of Elijah, extolled by Isaiah as the *‘mountain of the Lord,’* to which *‘all nations shall flow.’* Four times He visited Haifa, His last visit being no less than three months long. In the course of one of these visits, when His tent was pitched in the vicinity of the Carmelite Monastery, He, the *‘Lord of the Vineyard,’* revealed the *Tablet of Carmel*, remarkable for its allusions and prophecies. On another occasion He pointed out Himself to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, as He stood on the slopes of that mountain, the site which was to serve as the permanent resting-place of the Báb, and on which a befitting mausoleum was later to be erected.” (*God Passes By*, p. 194)

*“‘Haste thee, O Carmel.’* Bahá’u’lláh, significantly addressing that holy mountain, has written, *‘for lo, the*

*light of the Countenance of God … hath been lifted upon thee … Rejoice, for God hath, in this Day, established upon thee His throne, hath made thee the dawning-place of His signs and the dayspring of the evidences of His Revelation. Well is it with him that circleth around thee, that proclaimeth the revelation of thy glory, and recounteth that which the bounty of the Lord thy God hath showered upon thee.’ ‘Call out to Zion, O Carmel!’* He, furthermore, has revealed in that same Tablet, *‘and announce the joyful tidings: He that was hidden from mortal eyes is come! His all-conquering sovereignty is manifest; His all-encompassing splendour is revealed. Beware lest thou hesitate or halt. Hasten forth and circumambulate the City of God that hath descended from heaven, the celestial Kaaba round which have circled in adoration the favoured of God, the pure in heart, and the company of the most exalted angels.’*” (*God Passes By*, pp. 277–278)

“The splendour of the institutions which that triumphant Faith must erect on the slopes of a mountain, destined to be so linked with the city of ‘Akká that a single grand metropolis will be formed to enshrine the spiritual as well as the administrative seats of the future Bahá’í Commonwealth.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 315–316)

*“The view from the Pilgrim House is very attractive, especially as it faces the Blessed Tomb of Bahá’u’lláh. In the future the distance between ‘Akká and Haifa will be built up, and the two cities will join and clasp hands, becoming the two terminal sections of one mighty metropolis. As I look now over this scene, I see so clearly that it will become one of the first emporiums of the world. This great semi-circular bay will be transformed into the finest harbour, wherein the ships of all nations will seek shelter and refuge. The great vessels of all peoples will come to this port, bringing on their decks thousands and thousands of men and women from every part of the globe. The mountain and the plain will be dotted with the most modern buildings and palaces. Industries will be established and various institutions of philanthropic nature will be founded. The flowers of civilization and culture from all nations will be brought here to blend their fragrances together and blaze the way for the brotherhood of man. Wonderful gardens, orchards, groves and parks will be laid out on all sides. At night the great city will be lighted by electricity. The entire harbour from ‘Akká to Haifa will be one path of illumination. Powerful searchlights will be placed on both sides of Mount Cannel to guide the steamers. Mount Carmel itself, from top to bottom, will be submerged in a sea of lights. A person standing on the summit of Mount Carmel, and the passengers of the steamers coming to it, will look upon the most sublime and majestic spectacle of the whole world.*

*“From every part of the mountain the symphony of’Yá*

*Bahá’u’l-Abhá will be raised, and before the daybreak soul-entrancing music accompanied by melodious voices will be uplifted towards the throne of the Almighty.”* (Words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá quoted in *Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era*, pp. 303–304)

## The Shrine of the Báb

“In the same year[[16]](#footnote-16) that this precious Trust reached the shores of the Holy Land and was delivered into the hands of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, He, … drove to the recently purchased site which had been blessed and selected by Bahá’u’lláh on Mt. Carmel, and there laid, with His own hands, the foundation-stone of the edifice, the construction of which He, a few months later, was to commence. About that same time, the marble sarcophagus, designed to receive the body of the Báb, an offering of love from the Bahá’ís of Rangoon, had, at ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s suggestion, been completed and shipped to Haifa.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 274–275)

“Within a few months of the historic decree which set Him free, in the very year that witnessed the downfall of Sultán ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd,[[17]](#footnote-17) that same power from on high which had enabled ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to preserve in

violate the rights divinely conferred on Him, to establish His Father’s Faith in the North American continent, and to triumph over His royal oppressor, enabled Him to achieve one of the most signal acts of His ministry: the removal of the Báb’s remains from their place of concealment in Tihrán to Mt. Carmel. He Himself testified, on more than one occasion, that the safe transfer of these remains, the construction of a befitting mausoleum to receive them, and their final interment with His own hands in their permanent resting-place constituted one of the three principal objectives which, ever since the inception of His mission, He had conceived it His paramount duty to achieve. This act indeed deserves to rank as one of the outstanding events in the first Bahá’í century.” (*God Passes By*, p. 273)

“The long-drawn out negotiations with the shrewd and calculating owner of the building-site of the holy Edifice, who, under the influence of the Covenant-breakers, refused for a long time to sell; the exorbitant price at first demanded for the opening of a road leading to that site and indispensable to the work of construction; the interminable objections raised by officials, high and low, whose easily aroused suspicions had to be allayed by repeated explanations and assurances given by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Himself; the dangerous situation

created by the monstrous accusations brought by Mírzá Muhammad-’Alí and his associates regarding the character and purpose of that building; the delays and complications caused by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s prolonged and enforced absence from Haifa, and His consequent inability to supervise in person the vast undertaking He had initiated—all these were among the principal obstacles which He, at so critical a period in His ministry, had to face and surmount ere He could execute in its entirety the Plan, the outline of which Bahá’u’lláh had communicated to Him on the occasion of one of His visits to Mt. Carmel.

*“‘Every stone of that building, every stone of the road leading to it,’* He, many a time was heard to remark, *‘I have with infinite tears and at tremendous cost, raised and placed in position.’ ‘One night,’* He, according to an eye-witness, once observed, *‘I was so hemmed in by My anxieties that I had no other recourse than to recite and repeat over and over again a prayer of the Báb which I had in My possession, the recital of which greatly calmed Me. The next morning the owner of the plot himself came to Me, apologized and begged Me to purchase his property.*’

“Finally, in the very year His royal adversary lost his throne, and at the time of the opening of the first American Bahá’í Convention, convened in Chicago for the purpose of creating a permanent national organization for the construction of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár, ‘Abdu’l-

Bahá brought His undertaking to a successful conclusion, in spite of the incessant machinations of enemies both within and without. On the 28th of the month of Safar a.h. 1327, the day of the first Naw-Rúz (1909), which He celebrated after His release from His confinement, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had the marble sarcophagus transported with great labour to the vault prepared for it, and in the evening, by the light of a single lamp, He laid within it, with His own hands—in the presence of believers from the East and from the West and in circumstances at once solemn and moving—the wooden casket containing the sacred remains of the Báb and His companion.

“When all was finished, and the earthly remains of the Martyr-Prophet of Shíráz were, at long last, safely deposited for their everlasting rest in the bosom of God’s holy mountain, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Who had cast aside His turban, removed His shoes and thrown off His cloak, bent low over the still open sarcophagus, His silver hair waving about His head and His face transfigured and luminous, rested His forehead on the border of the wooden casket, and, sobbing aloud, wept with such a weeping that all those who were present wept with Him. That night He could not sleep, so overwhelmed was He with emotion.

*“‘The most joyful tidings is this,’* He wrote later in a Tablet announcing to His followers the news of this glorious victory, *‘that the holy, the luminous body of the*

*Báb … after having for sixty years been transferred from place to place, by reason of the ascendancy of the enemy, and from fear of the malevolent, and having known neither rest nor tranquillity has, through the mercy of the Abhá Beauty, been ceremoniously deposited, on the day of Naw-Rúz, within the sacred casket, in the exalted Shrine on Mt. Carmel … By a strange coincidence, on that same day of Naw-Rúz, a cablegram was received from Chicago, announcing that the believers in each of the American centres had elected a delegate and sent to that city … and definitely decided on the site and construction of the Mashriqu’l-Adhkár.’*

“With the transference of the remains of the Báb—Whose advent marks the return of the Prophet Elijah—to Mt. Carmel, and their interment in that holy mountain, not far from the cave of that Prophet Himself, the Plan so gloriously envisaged by Bahá’u’lláh, in the evening of His life, had been at last executed, and the arduous labours associated with the early and tumultuous years of the ministry of the appointed Centre of His Covenant crowned with immortal success. A focal centre of Divine illumination and power, the very dust of which ‘Abdu’l-Bahá averred had inspired Him, yielding in sacredness to no other shrine throughout the Bahá’í world except the Sepulchre of the Author of the Bahá’í Revelation Himself, had been permanently established on that mountain, regarded from time immemorial as sacred. A structure, at once massive, simple

and imposing; nestling in the heart of Carmel, the ‘Vineyard of God’; flanked by the Cave of Elijah on the west, and by the hills of Galilee on the east; backed by the plain of Sharon, and facing the silver-city of ‘Akká, and beyond it the Most Holy Tomb, the Heart and Qiblih of the Bahá’í world; overshadowing the colony of German Templars who, in anticipation of the ‘coming of the Lord,’ had forsaken their homes and foregathered at the foot of that mountain, in the very year of Bahá’u’lláh’s Declaration in Baghdád (1863), the mausoleum of the Báb had now, with heroic effort and in impregnable strength been established as *‘the Spot round which the Concourse on high circle in adoration.’* Events have already demonstrated through the extension of the Edifice itself, through the embellishment of its surroundings, through the acquisition of extensive endowments in its neighbourhood, and through its proximity to the resting-places of the wife, the son and daughter of Bahá’u’lláh Himself, that it was destined to acquire with the passing of the years a measure of fame and glory commensurate with the high purpose that had prompted its founding. Nor will it, as the years go by, and the institutions revolving around the World Administrative Centre of the future Bahá’í Commonwealth are gradually established, cease to manifest the latent potentialities with which that same immutable purpose has endowed it. Resistlessly will this Divine institution flour-

ish and expand, however fierce the animosity which its future enemies may evince, until the full measure of its splendour will have been disclosed before the eyes of all mankind.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 275–277)

“The opening of a series of terraces which, as designed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, are to provide a direct approach to the Báb’s Tomb from the city lying under its shadow; the beautification of its precincts through the laying out of parks and gardens, open daily to the public, and attracting tourists and residents alike to its gates—these may be regarded as the initial evidences of the marvellous expansion of the international institutions and endowments of the Faith at its world centre.” (*God Passes By*, p. 346)

“The outermost circle in this vast system, the visible counterpart of the pivotal position conferred on the Herald of our Faith, is none other than the entire planet. Within the heart of this planet lies the ‘Most Holy Land,’ acclaimed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as ‘the Nest of the Prophets’ and which must be regarded as the centre of the world and the Qiblih of the nations. Within this Most Holy Land rises the Mountain of God of immemorial sanctity, the Vineyard of the Lord, the Retreat of Elijah, Whose Return the Báb Himself symbolizes. Reposing

on the breast of this Holy Mountain are the extensive properties permanently dedicated to, and constituting the sacred precincts of the Báb’s holy Sepulchre. In the midst of these properties, recognized as the international endowments of the Faith, is situated the Most Holy Court, an enclosure comprising gardens and terraces which at once embellish, and lend a peculiar charm to, these Sacred Precincts. Embosomed in these lovely and verdant surroundings stands in all its exquisite beauty the Mausoleum of the Báb, the Shell designed to preserve and adorn the original structure raised by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá as the Tomb of the Martyr-Herald of our Faith. Within this Shell is enshrined that Pearl of Great Price, the Holy of Holies, those chambers which constitute the Tomb itself, and which were constructed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Within the heart of this Holy of Holies is the Tabernacle, the Vault wherein reposes the Most Holy Casket. Within this Vault rests the alabaster Sarcophagus in which is deposited that inestimable Jewel, the Báb’s Holy Dust. So precious is this Dust that the very earth surrounding the Edifice enshrining this Dust has been extolled by the Centre of Bahá’u’lláh’s Covenant, in one of His Tablets in which He named the five doors belonging to the six chambers which He originally erected after five of the believers associated with the construction of the Shrine, as being endowed with such potency as to have inspired Him in bestowing these

names, whilst the Tomb itself housing this Dust He acclaimed as the Spot round which the Concourse on high circle in adoration.” (Bahá’í World, Vol. xii, pp. 349–350)

## The Shrine of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

“As to the funeral itself, which took place on Tuesday morning—a funeral the like of which Palestine had never seen—no less than ten thousand people participated representing every class, religion and race in that country.

“The coffin containing the remains of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was borne to its last resting-place on the shoulders of His loved ones.

“Close to the eastern entrance of the Shrine, the sacred casket was placed upon a plain table, and, in the presence of that vast concourse, nine speakers, who represented the Muslim, the Jewish and Christian Faiths, and who included the Muftí of Haifa, delivered their several funeral orations. These concluded, the High Commissioner drew close to the casket, and, with bowed head fronting the Shrine, paid his last homage of farewell to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: the other officials of the Government followed his example. The coffin was then removed to one of the chambers of the Shrine, and there lowered, sadly and reverently, to its last resting-place in

a vault adjoining that in which were laid the remains of the Báb.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 312–313)

“The interment of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Himself within a vault of the Báb’s mausoleum, enhancing still further the sacredness of that mountain; the instalment of an electric plant, the first of its kind established in the city of Haifa, flooding with illumination the Grave of One Who, in His own words, had been denied even ‘a lighted lamp’ in His fortress-prison in Ádhirbáyján; the construction of three additional chambers adjoining His sepulchre, thereby completing ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s plan for the first unit of that Edifice; the vast extension, despite the machinations of the Covenant-breakers, of the properties surrounding that resting-place, sweeping from the ridge of Carmel down to the Templar colony nestling at its foot. …” (*God Passes By*, p. 346)

## The House of the Master

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Who was eager to complete the construction of the Shrine of the Báb, felt He should personally supervise the erection of the building to expedite the work. He therefore considered the possibility of establishing a house in Haifa where He could be near the building project.

He was delighted when the maidservant of God, Mrs Jackson, a Western believer, volunteered funds for its construction. A plot of land was purchased and the Master designed the plan.

Immediately after the completion of the House, He moved a part of the family, including Shoghi Effendi who was then a young boy, from ‘Akká to the new home in Haifa. The Master’s sister also joined Him there.

When in September 1910, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá left the Holy Land and embarked upon His world travels, His family continued to live in this House. It was here that Shoghi Effendi grew up as an adolescent. It was this House which became ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s official residence after His return to the Holy Land in 1913. It was here that He received the pilgrims, from East and West. It was here, after the war, that Shoghi Effendi served as his Grandfather’s secretary. It is touching to recall that during this time the beloved Master often went to Shoghi Effendi’s room at midnight and urged him to stop writing and rest.

As one enters the House, the room on the right is the one where ‘Abdu’l-Bahá took His flight to the Abhá Kingdom. After he was appointed Guardian of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi continued the Master’s practice of receiving guests in the room on the left, and holding weekly meetings there.

The large central hail of the building is of special sig-

nificance in that it was the venue of the gathering which heard the public reading of the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá announcing the exalted office occupied by Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Faith, and also because it was the place where the first International Convention in 1963 elected the Universal House of Justice.

At the south-western end of the garden adjoining this House, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá built a small structure, and He had the inner walls, the ceiling and the floor of one of its upper rooms covered with wood, as a protection against humidity. It was in this room that He slept at nights during the period immediately before His passing.

“… the Master came in from the solitary room in the garden, which He had occupied of late, and said:

*“‘I dreamed a dream and behold the Blessed Beauty (Bahá’u’lláh) came and said unto me, “Destroy this room.’”*

“The family, who had been wishing that He would come and sleep in the house, not being happy that He should be alone at night exclaimed, ‘Yes Master, we think your dream means that you should leave that room and come into the house.’ When He heard this from us, He smiled meaningly as though not agreeing with our interpretation. Afterwards we understood that by the ‘room’ was meant the temple of His body.

“His good and faithful servant, Ismá’íl Áqá, related the following:

“‘Some time, about twenty days before my Master passed away I was near the garden when I heard him summon an old believer saying:

*“‘Come with me that we may admire together the beauty of the garden. Behold, what the spirit of devotion is able to achieve! This flourishing place was, a few years ago, but a heap of stones, and now it is verdant with foliage and flowers. My desire is that after I am gone the loved ones may all arise to serve the Divine Cause and, please God, so it shall be. Ere long men will arise who shall bring life to the world.’”* (The Passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, pp. 4 and 6)

## The International Archives Building

“The ownership of this plot will now enable us to locate the site, excavate the foundations, and erect the structure, of the International Bahá’í Archives, … which will serve as the permanent and befitting repository for the priceless and numerous relics associated with the Twin Founders of the Faith, with the Perfect Exemplar of its teachings and with its heroes, saints and martyrs, and the building of which constitutes one of the foremost objectives of the Ten-Year Plan.” (Messages to the Bahá’í World, p. 74)

“The design of the International Bahá’í Archives, the first stately Edifice destined to usher in the establishment of the World Administrative Centre of the Faith on Mt. Carmel—the Ark referred to by Bahá’u’lláh in the closing passages of His *Tablet of Carmel*—has been completed, and plans and drawings forwarded to Italy for the purpose of securing bids for its construction immediately after the conclusion of the necessary preliminary steps taken in the Holy Land for its forthcoming erection.” (*Messages to the Bahá’í World*, p. 64)

“Following the expropriation by the Israeli Finance Minister, on the recommendation of the Mayor of the City of Haifa, of the plot adjoining the site of the future International Bahá’í Archives on Mt. Carmel, the fixing of the position of the far-flung arc, around which the edifices constituting the Seat of the World Bahá’í Administrative Order are to be built, the location of the site of the building and the preparations for the excavation of its foundations, an hundred and twelve thousand dollar contract has been signed in Rome for the quarrying, the dressing and carving of the stones and the fifty–two columns of the building which will amount in weight to over nine hundred tons and are to be shipped within less than two years to the Holy Land.” (*Messages to the Bahá’í World*, p. 79)

“… the erection and completion, in the Holy Land itself at the cost of over a quarter of a million dollars, of the Bahá’í International Archives, heralding the emergence, in its plenitude, of the seat of the embryonic World Order of Bahá’u’lláh on the slopes of Mt. Carmel and facing the Qiblih of the Bahá’í world.” (*Messages to the Bahá’í World*, p. 126)

“These treasures include portraits of both the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh; personal relics such as the hair, the dust and garments of the Báb; the locks and blood of Bahá’u’lláh and such articles as His pen-case, His garments, His brocaded tájes (head dresses), the kashkúl of His Sulaymáníyyih days, His watch and His Qur’án; manuscripts and Tablets of inestimable value, some of them illuminated, such as part of *The Hidden Words* written in Bahá’u’lláh’s own hand, the *Persian Bayán*, in the handwriting of Siyyid Husayn, the Báb’s amanuensis, the original Tablets to the Letters of the Living penned by the Báb, and the manuscript of *Some Answered Questions*. This precious collection, moreover, includes objects and effects associated with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá; the blood-stained garment of the Purest Branch, the ring of Quddús, the sword of Mullá Husayn, the seals of the Vazír, the father of Bahá’u’lláh, the brooch presented by the Queen of Rumania to Martha Root, the originals of the

Queen’s letters to her and to others, and of her tributes to the Faith, as well as no less than twenty volumes of prayers and Tablets revealed by the Founders of the Faith, authenticated and transcribed by Bahá’í Assemblies throughout the Orient, and supplementing the vast collection of their published writings.” (*God Passes By*, p. 347)

## The Monument Gardens

“The Purest Branch, the martyred son, the companion, and amanuensis of Bahá’u’lláh, that pious and holy youth, who in the darkest days of Bahá’u’lláh’s incarceration in the barracks of ‘Akká entreated, on his death-bed, his Father to accept him as a ransom for those of His loved ones who yearned for, but were unable to attain, His presence, and the saintly mother of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, surnamed Navváb by Bahá’u’lláh, and the first recipient of the honoured and familiar title of ‘the Most Exalted Leaf,’ separated in death above half-a-century, and forced to suffer the humiliation of an alien burial-ground, are now at long last reunited with the Greatest Holy Leaf with whom they had so abundantly shared the tribulations of one of the most distressing episodes of the Heroic Age of the Faith ofBahá’u’lláh.” (*Messages to America 1932–1946*, p. 31)

“The conjunction of these three resting-places, under the shadow of the Báb’s own Tomb, embosomed in the heart of Carmel, facing the snow-white city across the bay of ‘Akká, the Qiblih of the Bahá’í world, set in a garden of exquisite beauty, reinforces, if we would correctly estimate its significance, the spiritual potencies of a spot, designated by Bahá’u’lláh Himself the seat of God’s throne. It marks, too, a further milestone in the road leading eventually to the establishment of that permanent world Administrative Centre of the future Bahá’í Commonwealth, destined never to be separated from, and to function in the proximity of; the Spiritual Centre of that Faith, in a land already revered and held sacred alike by the adherents of three of the world’s outstanding religious systems.” (*God Passes By*, p. 348)

“For such as might undertake, in the days to come, the meritorious and highly enviable pilgrimage to these blessed shrines, as well as for the benefit of the less privileged who, aware of the greatness of their virtue and the pre-eminence of their lineage, desire to commune with their spirits, and to strive to acquire an added insight into the glory of their position, and to follow in their footsteps, let these testimonies[[18]](#footnote-18) written by Bahá’u’lláh and

‘Abdu’l-Bahá be their inspiration and guidance in their noble quest.” (*Guidance for Today and Tomorrow*, p. 72)

## The Greatest Holy Leaf

“… His[[19]](#footnote-19) seven-year old sister, known in later years by the same title as that of her illustrious mother, and whose services until the ripe old age of four-score-years-and-six, no less than her exalted parentage, entitle her to the distinction of ranking as the outstanding heroine of the Bahá’í Dispensation.” (*God Passes By*, p. 108)

“greatest holy leaf’s immortal spirit winged its flight great beyond stop countless lovers her saintly life in east and west seized with pangs of anguish plunged unutterable sorrow humanity shall erelong recognize its irreparable loss stop our beloved faith well nigh crushed by devastating blow of ‘abdu’l-bahá’s unexpected ascension now laments passing last remnant of bahá’u’lláh its most exalted member stop holy family cruelly divested its most precious great adorning stop i for my part bewail sudden removal my sole earthly sustainer the joy and solace of my life stop remains will repose vicinity holy shrines stop so grievous

a bereavement necessitates suspension for nine months throughout bahá’í world every manner religious festivity stop inform local assemblies and groups hold befitting manner memorial gatherings extol a life so laden sacred experiences so rich imperishable memories stop advise holding additional commemoration service of strictly devotional character auditorium mashriqu’l-adhkár.” (From a cablegram of Shoghi Effendi, dated 15 July 1932)

“It would take me too long to make even a brief allusion to those incidents of her life, each of which eloquently proclaims her as a daughter worthy to inherit that priceless heritage bequeathed to her by Bahá’u’lláh. A purity of life that reflected itself in even the minutest details of her daily occupations and activities; a tenderness of heart that obliterated every distinction of creed, class, and colour; a resignation and serenity that evoked to the mind the calm and heroic fortitude of the Báb; a natural fondness for flowers and children that was so characteristic of Bahá’u’lláh; an unaffected simplicity of manners; an extreme sociability which made her accessible to all; a generosity, a love, at once disinterested and undiscriminating, that reflected so clearly the attributes of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s character; a sweetness of temper; a cheerfulness that no amount of sorrow could becloud; a

quiet and unassuming disposition that served to enhance a thousandfold the prestige of her exalted rank; a forgiving nature that instantly disarmed the most unyielding enemy—these rank among the outstanding attributes of a saintly life which history will acknowledge as having been endowed with a celestial potency that few of the heroes of the past possessed.

“No wonder that in Tablets, which stand as eternal testimonies to the beauty of her character, Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá have paid touching tributes to those things that testify to her exalted position among the members of their Family, that proclaim her as an example to their followers, and as an object worthy of the admiration of all mankind.” (*Guidance for Today and Tomorrow*, p. 68–69)

“Moreover, as a further testimony to the majestic unfoldment and progressive consolidation of the stupendous undertaking launched by Bahá’u’lláh on that holy mountain, may be mentioned the selection of a portion of the school property situated in the precincts of the Shrine of the Báb as a permanent resting-place for the Greatest Holy Leaf; the *‘well-beloved’* sister of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, the *‘Leaf that hath sprung’* from the *‘Pre-existent Root,’* the *‘fragrance’* of Bahá’u’lláh’s *‘shining robe’*, elevated by Him to a *‘station such as none other woman hath*

*surpassed,’* and comparable in rank to those immortal heroines such as Sarah, ‘Asíyih, the Virgin Mary, Fátimih and Táhirih, each of whom has outshone every member of her sex in previous Dispensations. (*God Passes By*, p. 347)

## Passages from Tablets revealed by Bahá’u’lláh

*He is the Eternal! This is My testimony for her who hath heard My voice and drawn nigh unto Me. Verily, she is a leaf that hath sprung from this pre-existent Root. She hath revealed herself in My name and tasted of the sweet savours of My holy, My wondrous pleasure. At one time We gave her to drink from My honeyed Mouth, at another caused her to partake of My mighty, My luminous Kawthar. Upon her rest the glory of My name and the fragrance of My shining robe.*

*Let these exalted words be thy love-song on the tree of Bahá, O thou most holy and resplendent Leaf: ‘God, besides Whom is none other God, the Lord of this world and the next!’ Verily, We have elevated thee to the rank of one of the most distinguished among thy sex, and granted thee, in My court, a station such as none other woman hath surpassed. Thus have We preferred thee and raised thee above the rest, as a sign of grace from Him Who is the Lord of the throne on high and earth below. We have created thine eyes to behold the*

*light of My countenance, thine ears to hearken unto the melody of My words, thy body to pay homage before My throne. Do thou render thanks unto God, thy Lord, the Lord of all the world.*

*How high is the testimony of the Sadratu’l-Muntahá for its leaf; how exalted the witness of the Tree of Life unto its fruit! Through My remembrance of her a fragrance laden with the perfume of musk hath been diffused; well is it with him that hath inhaled it and exclaimed: ‘All praise be to Thee, O God, my Lord the most glorious!’ How sweet thy presence before Me; how sweet to gaze upon thy face to bestow upon thee My loving-kindness, to favour thee with My tender care, to make mention of thee in this, My Tablet—a Tablet which I have ordained as a token of My hidden and manifest grace unto thee.*

## Passages from Tablets revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

*O my well-beloved, deeply spiritual sister! Day and night thou livest in my memory. Whenever I remember thee my heart swelleth with sadness and my regret groweth more intense. Grieve not, for I am thy true, thy unfailing comforter. Let neither despondency nor despair becloud the serenity of thy life or restrain thy freedom. These days shall pass away. We will, please God, in the ‘Abhá Kingdom and beneath the*

*sheltering shadow of the Blessed Beauty, forget all these our earthly cares and will find each one of these base calumnies amply compensated by His expressions of praise and favour. From the beginning of time sorrow and anxiety, regret and tribulation, have always been the lot of every loyal servant of God. Ponder this in thine heart and consider how very true it is. Therefore, set thine heart on the tender mercies of the Ancient Beauty and be thou filled with abiding joy and intense gladness. …*

*O thou my affectionate sister! In the day-time and in the night-season my thoughts ever turn to thee. Not for one moment do I cease to remember thee. My sorrow and regret concern not myself; they centre around thee. Whenever I recall thine afflictions, tears that I cannot repress rain down from mine eyes. …*

*Dear and deeply spiritual sister! At morn and eventide, with the utmost ardour and humility, I supplicate at the Divine Threshold, and offer this, my prayer:*

*‘Grant, O Thou my God, the Compassionate, that that pure and blessed Leaf may be comforted by Thy sweet savours of holiness and sustained by the reviving breeze of Thy loving care and mercy. Reinforce her spirit with the signs of Thy Kingdom, and glad-*

*den her soul with the testimonies of Thy everlasting dominion. Comfort, O my God, her sorrowful heart with the remembrance of Thy face, initiate her into Thy hidden mysteries, and inspire her with the revealed splendours of Thy heavenly light. Manifold are her sorrows, and infinitely grievous her distress. Bestow continually upon her the favour of Thy sustaining grace and, with every fleeting breath, grant her the blessing of Thy bounty. Her hopes and expectations are centred in Thee; open Thou to her face the portals of Thy tender mercies and lead her into the ways of Thy wondrous benevolence. Thou art the Generous, the All-loving, the Sustainer, the All-bountiful.’ …*

*Dear sister, beloved of my heart and soul! The news of thy safe arrival and pleasant stay in the land of Egypt has reached me and filled my heart with exceeding gladness. I am thankful to Bahá’u’lláh for the good health thou dost enjoy and for the happiness He hath imparted to the hearts of the loved ones in that land. Shouldst thou wish to know of the condition of this servant of the Threshold of the Abhá Beauty, praise be to Him for having enabled me to inhale the fragrance of His tender mercy and partake of the delights of His loving-kindness and blessings, I am being continually reinforced by the energizing rays of His grace, and feel upheld by the uninterrupted aid of the victorious hosts of His Kingdom. My physical health is also improving. God be praised that from every quarter I*

*receive the glad-tidings of the growing ascendancy of the Cause of God, and can witness evidences of the increasing influence of its spread. ….*

*My sister and beloved of my soul! I can never, never forget thee. However great the distance that separates us, we still feel as though we were seated under the same roof, in one and the same gathering, for are we not all under the shadow of the Tabernacle of God and beneath the canopy of His infinite grace and mercy? …*

*O thou my loving, my deeply spiritual sister! I trust that by the grace and loving-kindness of the one true God thou art, and wilt be, kept safe and secure beneath the sheltering shadow of the Blessed Beauty. Night and day thy countenance appeareth before mine eyes, and in my mind are engraved the traits of thy character. …*

(From a Tablet addressed to the Holy Mother): *To my honoured and distinguished sister do thou convey the expression of my heartfelt, my intense longing. Day and night she liveth in my remembrance. I dare make no mention of the feelings which separation from her has aroused in mine heart; for whatever I should attempt to express in writing will assuredly*

*be effaced by the tears which such sentiments must bring to mine eyes. …*

(From a Tablet addressed to His daughter): *O Diyá! It is incumbent upon thee, throughout the journey, to be a close, a constant and cheerful companion to my honoured and distinguished sister. Unceasingly, with the utmost vigour and devotion, exert thyself, by day and night, to gladden her blessed heart; for all her days she was denied a moment of tranquillity. She was astir and restless every hour of her life. Moth-like she circled in adoration round the undying flame of the Divine Candle, her spirit ablaze and her heart consumed by the fire of His love …*

## The Purest Branch

“To the galling weight of these tribulations was now added the bitter grief of a sudden tragedy—the premature loss of the noble, the pious Mírzá Mihdí, the Purest Branch, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s twenty–two year old brother, an amanuensis of Bahá’u’lláh and a companion of His exile from the days when, as a child, he was brought from Tihrán to Baghdád to join His father after His return from Sulaymáníyyih. He was pacing the roof of the barracks in the twilight, one evening, wrapped in his customary devotions, when he fell through the un-

guarded skylight onto a wooden crate, standing on the floor beneath, which pierced his ribs, and caused, twenty–two hours later, his death, on the 23rd of Rabí’-u’l-Avval A.H. 1287 (23 June 1870). His dying supplication to a grieving Father was that his life might be accepted as a ransom for those who were prevented from attaining the presence of their Beloved.

“In a highly significant prayer, revealed by Baha’u’lláh in memory of His son—a prayer that exalts his death to the rank of those great acts of atonement associated with Abraham’s intended sacrifice of His son, with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and the martyrdom of the Imám Husayn—we read the following: *‘I have, O my Lord, offered up that which Thou hast given Me, that Thy servants may be quickened, and all that dwell on earth be united.’* And, likewise, these prophetic words, addressed to His martyred son: *‘Thou art the Trust of God and His Treasure in this Land. Ere long will God reveal through thee that which He hath desired.’*

“After he had been washed in the presence of Bahá’u’lláh, he *‘that was created of the light of Bahá,’* to whose *‘meekness’* the Supreme Pen had testified, and of the *‘mysteries’* of whose ascension that same Pen had made mention, was borne forth, escorted by the fortress guards, and laid to rest, beyond the city walls, in a spot adjacent to the shrine of Nabí Sálih, from whence, seventy years later, his remains, simultaneously with

those of his illustrious mother, were to be translated to the slopes of Mt. Carmel, in the precincts of the grave of his sister, and under the shadow of the Báb’s holy sepulchre.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 188–189)

“And lastly, there should be mentioned, as a further evidence of the blessings flowing from the Divine Plan, the transfer, a few years later, to that same hallowed spot, after a separation in death of above half a century, and notwithstanding the protests voiced by the brother and lieutenant of the arch-breaker of Bahá’u’lláh’s Covenant, of the remains of the Purest Branch, the Martyred son of Bahá’u’lláh, *‘created of the light of Bahá,’* the *‘Trust of God’* and His *‘Treasure’* in the Holy Land, and offered up by his Father as a *‘ransom’* for the regeneration of the world and the unification of its peoples.” (*God Passes By*, pp. 347–348)

*“‘At this very moment,’* Bahá’u’lláh testifies, *‘My son is being washed before My face, after Our having sacrificed him in the Most Great Prison. Thereat have the dwellers of the Abhá Tabernacle wept with a great weeping, and such as have suffered imprisonment with this Youth in the path of God, the Lord of the promised Day, lamented. Under such conditions My Pen hath not been prevented from remembering its Lord,*

*the Lord of all nations. It summoneth the people unto God, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful. This is the day whereon he that was created of the light of Bahá has suffered martyrdom, at a time when he lay imprisoned at the hands of his enemies.’*

*“‘Upon thee, O Branch of God!’* He solemnly and most touchingly, in that same Tablet, bestows upon him His benediction, *‘be the remembrance of God and His praise, and the praise of all that dwell in the Realms of Immortality and of all the denizens of the Kingdom of Names. Happy art thou in that thou hast been faithful to the Covenant of God and His Testament, until Thou didst sacrifice thyself before the face of thy Lord, the Almighty, the Unconstrained. Thou, in truth, hast been wronged, and to this test if eth the Beauty of Him, the Self-Subsisting. Thou didst, in the first days of thy life, bear that which hath caused all things to groan, and made every pillar to tremble. Happy is the one that remembereth thee, and draweth nigh, through thee, unto God, the Creator of the Morn.’*

*“‘Glorifed art Thou, O Lord my God!’* He, in a prayer, astoundingly proclaims, *‘Thou seest me in the hands of Mine enemies, and My son blood-stained before Thy face, O Thou in Whose hands is the kingdom of all names. I have, O my Lord, offered up that which Thou hast given Me, that Thy servants may be quickened and all that dwell on earth be united.’*

*“‘Blessed art thou,’* He, in another Tablet affirms, *‘and*

*blessed he that turneth unto thee, and visiteth thy grave, and draweth nigh, through thee, unto God, the Lord of all that was and shall be … I testify that thou didst return in meekness unto thine abode. Great is thy blessedness and the blessedness of them that hold fast unto the hem of thy outspread robe … Thou art, verily, the trust of God and His treasure in this land. Ere long will God reveal through thee that which He hath desired. He, verily, is the Truth, the Knower of things unseen. When thou wast laid to rest in the earth, the earth itself trembled in its longing to meet thee. Thus hath it been decreed, and yet the people perceive not … Were We to recount the mysteries of thine ascension, they that are asleep would awaken, and all beings would be set ablaze with the fire of the remembrance of My Name, the Mighty, the Loving.’”* (*Guidance for Today and Tomorrow*, pp. 72–74)

## Navváb

“Among those who shared His exile was His wife, the saintly Navváb, entitled by Him the ‘Most Exalted Leaf,’ who, during almost forty years, continued to evince a fortitude, a piety, a devotion and a nobility of soul which earned her from the pen of her Lord the posthumous and unrivalled tribute of having been made His *‘perpetual consort in all the worlds of God.’* “(*God Passes By*, p. 108)

“To this same burial ground, and on the same day the remains of the Purest Branch were interred, was transferred the body of his mother, the saintly Navváb, she to whose dire afflictions, as attested by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in a Tablet, the 54th chapter of the Book of Isaiah has, in its entirety, borne witness, whose *‘Husband,’* in the words of that Prophet, is *‘the Lord of Hosts,’* whose *‘seed shall inherit the Gentiles,’* and whom Bahá’u’lláh in His Tablet, has destined to be *‘His consort in every one of His worlds.’”* (*God Passes By*, p. 348)

“Concerning the Most Exalted Leaf, the mother of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Bahá’u’lláh has written: *‘The first Spirit through which all spirits were revealed, and the first Light by which all lights shone forth, rest upon thee, O Most Exalted Leaf, thou who hast been mentioned in the Crimson Book! Thou art the one whom God created to arise and serve His own Self, and the Manifestation of His Cause, and the Dayspring of His Revelation, and the Dawning-Place of His signs, and the Source of His commandments: and Who so aided thee that thou didst turn with thy whole being unto Him, at a time when His servants and handmaidens had turned away from His face … Happy art thou, O my handmaiden, and My leaf, and the one mentioned in My Book, and inscribed by My Pen of Glory in My Scrolls and Tablets … Rejoice thou, at this moment, in the most exalted Station and the*

*All-highest Paradise, and the Abhá Horizon, inasmuch as He Who is the Lord of Names hath remembered thee. We bear witness that thou didst attain unto all good, and that God hath so exalted thee, that all honour and glory circled around thee.’*

*“‘O Navváb!’* He thus, in another Tablet, addresses her, *‘O Leaf that hath sprung from My Tree, and been My companion! My glory be upon thee, and My loving-kindness and My mercy that hath surpassed all beings. We announce unto thee that which will gladden thine eye, and assure thy soul, and rejoice thine heart. Verily, thy Lord is the Compassionate, the All-Bountiful. God hath been and will be pleased with thee, and hath singled thee out for His own Self, and chosen thee from among His hand-maidens to serve Him, and hath made thee the companion of His Person in the day-time and in the night-season.’*

*“‘Hear thou Me once again,’* He reassures her, *‘God is well-pleased with thee, as a token of His grace and a sign of His mercy. He hath made thee to be His companion in every one of His worlds and hath nourished thee with His meeting and presence, so long as His Name, and His Remembrance, and His Kingdom, and His Empire shall endure. Happy is the handmaid that hath mentioned thee, and sought thy good pleasure, and humbled herself before thee, and held fast unto the cord of thy love. Woe betide him that denieth thy exalted station, and things ordained for thee from God, the Lord of all names, and him that hath turned away from thee,*

*and rejected thy station before God, the Lord of the mighty throne.’*

*“‘O faithful ones!’* Bahá’u’lláh specifically enjoins, *‘Should ye visit the resting-place of the Most Exalted Leaf, who hath ascended unto the Glorious Companion, stand ye and say: “Salutation and blessing and glory upon thee, O Holy Leaf that hath sprung from the Divine Lote-Tree! I bear witness that thou hast believed in God and in His signs, and answered His Call, and turned unto Him, and held fast unto His cord, and clung to the hem of His grace, and fled thy home in His path, and chosen to live as a stranger, out of love for His presence and in thy longing to serve Him. May God have mercy upon him that draweth nigh unto thee, and remembereth thee through the things which My Pen hath voiced in this, the most great station. We pray God that He may forgive us, and forgive them that have turned unto thee, and grant their desires, and bestow upon them, through His wondrous grace, whatever be their wish. He, verily, is the Bountiful, the Generous. Praise be to God, He Who is the Desire of all worlds, and the Beloved of all who recognize Him.”’*

“And finally, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Himself in one of His remarkably significant Tablets, has borne witness not only to the exalted station of one whose *‘seed shall inherit the Gentiles’*, whose Husband is the Lord of Hosts, but also the sufferings endured by her who was His beloved mother. *‘As to thy question concerning the 54th chapter of Isaiah,’* He writes, *‘This chapter refers to the Most Exalted*

Leaf, the mother of ‘Abdu’l-Baha’. As a proof to this it is said: “For more are the children of the desolate, than the children of the married wife.” Reflect upon this statement and then upon the following: “And thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.” And truly the humiliation and reproach which she suffered in the path of God is a fact which no one can refute. For the calamities and afflictions mentioned in the whole chapter are such afflictions which she suffered in the path of God, all of which she endured with patience and thanked God therefor and praised Him, because He had enabled her to endure afflictions for the sake of Bahá. During all this time, the men and women (Covenant-breakers) persecuted her in an incomparable manner, while she was patient, God-fearing, calm, humble, and contented through the favour of her Lord and by tile bounty of her Creator.’ (*Guidance for Today and Tomorrow*, pp. 74–76)

## Munírih Khánum

“holy mother munírih khánum ascended abhá kingdom stop with sorrowful hearts bahá’ís world over recall divers phases her rich eventful life marked by unique services which by virtue her exalted position she rendered during darkest days ‘abdu’l-bahá’s life …” (From cablegram of Shoghi Effendi, dated 30 April 1938)

## The Arc and the World Administrative Centre

“blessed remains purest branch and master’s mother safely transferred hallowed precincts shrines mount carmel … cherished wish greatest holy leaf fulfilled stop sister, brother, mother, wife ‘abdu’l-bahá reunited one spot designed constitute focal centre bahá’í administrative institutions at faith’s world centre …” (From cablegram of Shoghi Effendi, dated 5 December 1939)

“It must be clearly understood, nor can it be sufficiently emphasized, that the conjunction of the resting-place of the Greatest Holy Leaf with those of her brother and mother incalculably reinforces the spiritual potencies of that consecrated Spot, which under the wings of the Báb’s overshadowing Sepulchre, and in the vicinity of the future Mashriqu’l-Adhkár which will be reared on its flank, is destined to evolve into the focal centre of those world-shaking, world-embracing, world-directing administrative institutions, ordained by Bahá’u’lláh and anticipated by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. Then, and then only, will this momentous prophecy which illuminates the concluding passages of the *Tablet of Carmel* be fulfilled: *‘Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee* (Carmel)*, and*

*will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.’*

“To attempt to visualize, even in its barest outline, the glory that must envelop these institutions, to essay even a tentative and partial description of their character or the manner of their operation, or to trace however inadequately the course of events leading to their rise and eventual establishment is far beyond my own capacity and power. Suffice it to say that at this troubled stage in world history the association of these three incomparably precious souls who, next to the three Central Figures of our Faith, tower in rank above the vast multitude of the heroes, Letters, martyrs, Hands, teachers, and administrators of the Cause of Bahá’u’lláh, in such a potentially powerful spiritual and administrative Centre, is in itself an event which will release forces that are bound to hasten the emergence in a land which, geographically, spiritually, and administratively, constitutes the heart of the entire planet, of some of the brightest gems of that World Order now shaping in the womb of this travailing age.” (*Guidance for Today and Tomorrow*, pp. 71–72)

“In this great Tablet (of Carmel) which unveils divine mysteries and heralds the establishment of two mighty, majestic and momentous undertakings—one

of which is spiritual and the other administrative, both at the World Centre of the Faith—Bahá’u’lláh refers to an ‘Ark’, whose dwellers are the men of the Supreme House of Justice, which, in conformity with the exact provisions of the Will and Testament of the Centre of the Mighty Covenant is the Body which should legislate on laws not explicitly revealed in the Text. In this Dispensation, these laws are destined to flow from this Holy Mountain, even as in the Mosaic Dispensation, the law of God was promulgated from Zion. The ‘sailing of the Ark’ of His laws is a reference to the establishment of the Universal House of Justice …” (Translated from the Guardian’s letter written in Persian to the Bahá’ís of the East—dated Naw-Rúz 111—1955)

“Moreover, steps are now being taken for the purchase of several properties, valued at approximately one hundred and forty thousand dollars, the acquisition of which is essential for the safeguarding of the area in the close vicinity of the Báb’s Sepulchre, as well as for the future extension of the arc around which the edifices, destined to serve as the seat of the future Bahá’í World Commonwealth, are to be erected.” (*Messages to the Bahá’í World, 1950–1957*, p. 79)

“These Edifices will, in the shape of a far-flung arc, and following a harmonizing style of architecture, surround the resting-places of the Greatest Holy Leaf, ranking as foremost among the members of her sex in the Bahá’í Dispensation, of her brother, offered up as a ransom by Bahá’u’lláh for the quickening of the world and its unification, and of their mother, proclaimed by Him to be His chosen *‘consort in all the worlds of God’*. The ultimate completion of this stupendous undertaking will mark the culmination of the development of a world-wide divinely-appointed Administrative Order whose beginnings may be traced as far back as the concluding years of the Heroic Age of the Faith.

“This vast and irresistible process, unexampled in the spiritual history of mankind, and which will synchronize with two no less significant developments—the establishment of the Lesser Peace and the evolution of Bahá’í national and local institutions—the one outside and the other within the Bahá’í world—will attain its final consummation, in the Golden Age of the Faith, through the raising of the standard of the Most Great Peace, and the emergence, in the plenitude of its power and glory, of the focal Centre of the agencies constituting the World Order of Bahá’u’lláh. The final establishment of this seat of the future Bahá’í World Commonwealth will signalize at once the proclamation of the sovereignty of the Founder of our Faith and the advent

of the Kingdom of the Father repeatedly lauded and promised by Jesus Christ.” (*Messages to the Bahá’í World, 1950–1957*, pp. 74–75)

## The Temple Site

“Four times He[[20]](#footnote-20) visited Haifa, His last visit being no less than three months long. In the course of one of these visits, when His tent was pitched in the vicinity of the Carmelite Monastery, He, the *‘Lord of the Vineyard’*, revealed the Tablet of Carmel, remarkable for its allusions and prophecies.” (*God Passes By*, p. 194)

“The site for the first Mashriqu’l-Adhkár of the Holy Land has been selected … situated at the head of the Mountain of God, in close proximity to the Spot hallowed by the footsteps of Bahá’u’lláh, near the time-honoured Cave of Elijah, and associated with the revelation of the Tablet of Carmel, the Charter of the World Spiritual and Administrative Centres of the Faith on that mountain. Funds totalling one hundred thousand dollars have, moreover, been contributed by one of the Hands of the Cause, residing in the Holy Land, and negotiations have been initiated with the Israel Authorities for the purpose of effecting the immediate purchase

of the selected site.” (*Messages to the Bahá’í World, 1950–1957*, p. 63)

“The international Bahá’í endowments on Mt. Carmel have been greatly enhanced by the signature of a contract with the Israeli Authorities for the acquisition of an area of thirty–six thousand square metres, situated on the promontory of Mt. Carmel, overlooking the Cave of Elijah, as well as the spot sanctified by the footsteps of Bahá’u’lláh and associated with the revelation of the Tablet of Carmel, for the price of one hundred-and-eight thousand dollars, to serve as the site for the first Mashriqu’l-Adhkár of the Holy Land, the entire having been donated by Amelia Collins, Hand of the Cause and outstanding benefactress of the Faith.” (*Messages to the Bahá’í World, 1950–1957*, pp. 78–79)

# Chapter 8 Miscellaneous

## The Pilgrim House, Haifa

Soon after the entombment of the remains of the Báb, one of the believers from ‘Ishqábád, Mírzá Ja’far Rahmání, begged ‘Abdu’l-Bahá to allow him to build a Pilgrim House in the precincts of the Shrine for the convenience of visiting pilgrims. The request was granted, and this believer personally supervised the construction work, and paid for all expenses.

Even before the Pilgrim House was completed, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave a sumptuous banquet for the friends and pilgrims from East and West. When the construction was finished and the beloved Master entered the new building, Mírzá Ja’far Rahmání devotedly threw himself at His feet, drowned in tears of joy. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá lovingly lifted him, and asked him to express any wish he had. Mírzá Ja’far did not reply, for his sole desire was to see his Master happy. However, one of the attendants of the Master, Hájí Mírzá Haydar ‘Alí, surnamed “Angel of Carmel” by the Master Himself, stepped forward and suggested that in acknowledge-

ment of Mírzá Ja’far’s services, the Master might permit an inscription to be incorporated in the building in his honour, and if He accepted the suggestion, would He write the words. The Master graciously agreed, and with paper and pen hastily supplied, He wrote the words, in Persian, which now appear engraved on a stone above the entrance of the Pilgrim House. The translation is: “This is a spiritual Hostel for Pilgrims, and its founder is Mírzá Ja’far Rahmání a.h. 1327 (a.d. 1909).

During the ministry of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá many meetings were held here in His Presence with the pilgrims and members of the local community. Later, when Shoghi Effendi became Guardian, he too met the assembled friends and talked to them in this Pilgrim House before leading them in prayer when visiting the Shrines of the Báb and of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

## The office of the Universal House of Justice

“The site for a Western Pilgrim House was acquired in the neighbourhood of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s residence, and the building was erected soon after His passing by American believers.” (*God Passes By*, p. 307)

The increasing number of Bahá’í pilgrims coming to the Holy Land from Western countries following the end of the first World War created a need for larger and more adequate accommodations than those available at that time. One of the Persian friends had offered a piece of land to ‘Abdu’l-Bahá located in the vicinity of the Master’s House, and an American believer, Mr William H. Randall, when in Haifa as a pilgrim asked if he might have the privilege of contributing a sum of money for the construction of a pilgrim house for the Western believers.

Both these offers were accepted and drawings were prepared under the Master’s direction. Sketches for several possible designs were submitted, and one was chosen by Him as the most suited to the existing needs and climatic conditions. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá Himself suggested certain changes in the arrangement of the proposed structure, and another sketch was prepared and presented to Him for further corrections and alterations. This process was continued until the final design was evolved and approved by the Master.

Subsequently construction of the building in accordance with this plan was begun, but the funds available proved insufficient and work on it was suspended until 1923, when the late Hand of the Cause Mrs Amelia Collins came to the Holy Land as a pilgrim with her husband. The sight of the unfinished building led her to

offer the funds necessary for its completion. This gift to the Faith was accepted by the beloved Guardian and the structure, when finished a few years later, became the Western Pilgrim House. It was used for this purpose until 1963, when the Universal House of Justice established its offices there.

## The aqueduct

With the arrival of the “sagacious and humane governor” Ahmad Big Tawfíq to ‘Akká and the devotion kindled in his heart through association with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and his perusal of the literature of the Faith, a new phase set in.

“It was on the occasion of a long-sought audience with Bahá’u’lláh that, in response to a request for permission to render Him some service, the suggestion was made to him[[21]](#footnote-21) to restore the aqueduct[[22]](#footnote-22) which for thirty years had been allowed to fall into disuse[[23]](#footnote-23)—a suggestion which he immediately arose to carry out.” (*God Passes By*, p. 192)

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1. From the prison, Bahá’u’lláh was transferred directly to the House of Málik, thence to the Houses of Khavvám and Rabí’ih and finally to the House of ‘Abbúd. We own and visit only the House of ‘Abbúd, the most important of them. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Towards the end of this period Bahá’u’lláh visited Haifa four times. His last visit to Haifa lasted three months. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Adrianople. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. At Gallipoli. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Bahá’u’lláh’s exile in Adrianople. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. of Bahá’u’lláh. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The construction of nine terraces on Mount Carmel. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This main edifice, or citadel, where Bahá’u’lláh was confined had been erected during the period of Turkish rule in the Holy Land. Its construction was completed at the end of the eighteenth century on foundations dating back to the time of the Crusades. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas.* [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Built in 1785. The Turkish tower at the entrance of the inn was built in 1906 to commemorate the jubilee of Sultán ‘Abdu’l-Hamíd. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Na’mayn means: “two yeses”. There is a tradition in Islám that on the last Day in response to the Divine Call, “Am I not your Lord?” two yeses will be heard. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Mazra’ih. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. An inscription appears above the main entrance door of the Mansion indicating that the structure was completed in 1870. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. 1890. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. 1899. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. 1909. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. These testimonies will be found in the sections relating to the resting places of each of these holy souls. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Bahá’u’lláh. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. i.e. Ahmad Big Tawfíq. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Built about a.d. 1780. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. It must be remembered that ‘Akká at this time was devoid of any source of water within its own walls. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)