

'Abdu'r-Rahím's Visit to 'Akká

*(Story adapted from 'The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh' by Adib Taherzadeh.
Illustrated by Malcolm Lee.)*



Before he became a Bahá'í 'Abdu'r-Rahím was very much against the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. He felt so strongly about it that one day he armed himself with a weapon and set out to murder one of the Bahá'ís. The person he picked on was an old man. When 'Abdu'r-Rahím threatened him, the old man, instead of being frightened, spoke to him with such love and tenderness that the heart of 'Abdu'r-Rahím was touched.

At this time Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned in the prison city of 'Akká, and anyone who was known to be His follower was in danger. The old man took 'Abdu'r-Rahím to a secret meeting of the believers. He was so fascinated by what he heard that the meeting lasted the whole of one day and one night!

At this meeting ‘Abdu’r-Rahím began to understand the greatness of Bahá’u’lláh, and when he discovered that this supreme Manifestation of God was even now alive on this earth, he could not bear to be apart from Him, and set off immediately to ‘Akká to meet Him face to face.

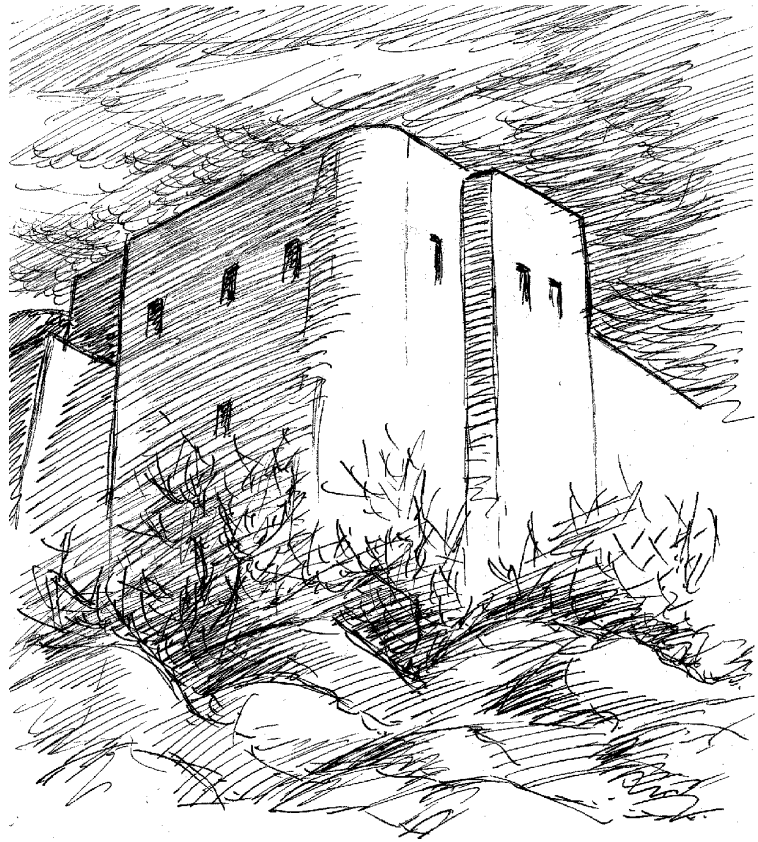
The journey, on foot, took six months, but eventually ‘Abdu’r-Rahím arrived at the Prison City. At this time Bahá’u’lláh was not allowed any visitors, and believers who came to see Him could only look at the distant

prison window from a long way off. Even after his long, exhausting journey, poor ‘Abdu’r-Rahím, like the other believers, was not allowed in. He decided to take the risk of walking all around the Prison. (This is called circumambulating, and is an act of great devotion.) Before he began this holy devotion, ‘Abdu’r-Rahím wanted to be clean. So he removed the clothes that he’d been walking in for six months, washed them in the sea and waited for them to dry. He was now clean, but he looked very odd because his clothes were badly torn and they had shrunk, so they were too small for him.

But ‘Abdu’r-Rahím’s heart was filled with love, and in pure devotion he began to circumambulate the Prison. Then, to his surprise, he noticed a hand beckoning to him from one of the Prison windows. He knew it was the hand of Bahá’u’lláh, calling him. ‘Abdu’r-Rahím rushed to the Prison gate, which was guarded by soldiers. But the soldiers were quite still, and seemed not to notice him. ‘Abdu’r-Rahím was able to walk right past them, and very soon he came to the room where Bahá’u’lláh was waiting for him. ‘Abdu’r-Rahím was completely overcome with his love for Bahá’u’lláh.

Bahá’u’lláh told him that He Himself had closed the eyes of the guards so that ‘Abdu’r-Rahím could walk past them.

When the time came for ‘Abdu’r-Rahím to leave, Bahá’u’lláh gave him some important letters to be delivered to believers in Persia.





While he was in Baghdad, on the journey home, ‘Abdu’r-Rahím was spotted by some of the guards, who began to follow him. Knowing that he would be arrested, and the precious letters taken from him, ‘Abdu’r-Rahím took a terrible risk. He put his trust in Bahá’u’lláh, and desperately threw the precious letters into a shop doorway as he hurried past. The guards did not see, and soon caught up with him and arrested him. He was put in prison and closely questioned, but when the guards could find nothing wrong, they decided to let him go.

As soon as he felt it was safe, ‘Abdu’r-Rahím risked going back to the shop, and to his amazement discovered that the owners were Bahá’ís. It was the only Bahá’í shop in the whole of the market! ‘Abdu’r-Rahím was overjoyed. He was able to continue his journey and eventually deliver the letters. He told everyone he met about his wonderful visit into the Presence of Bahá’u’lláh, and he was so radiant and joyful that everyone who saw him was astonished.

