

DISCOVERING OUR FAITH

Anniversary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh

A Bahá'í Holy Day Observed between sundown on 11th November and sundown on 12th November Work should be suspended

Mírzá Husayn 'Ali, Bahá'u'lláh, was born in Tehran, Persia, in 1817. His birth signalled the dawning of the Day of God on earth and the appearance of the Greatest Name of God. Shoghi Effendi explained, "By Greatest Name is meant that Bahá'u'lláh has appeared in God's Greatest Name, in other words, that He is the Supreme Manifestation of God." (1)

"We should feel deeply gratified and thankful to God that at a time when all humanity seems to be struggling in despair we can come together and, with great assurance, feast and be merry over the dawn of a new day; that in the darkness which envelops the world we see the approach of a new light and the breaking of a new era. This is a true blessing and a bounty from God to those who believe in Him and accept His Revelation." (2)

Further study: Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*.

1. *Letters of the Guardian to Australia and New Zealand*, p41
2. Shoghi Effendi, *Light of Divine Guidance Vol.1*, p45

Anniversary of the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

A Bahá'í Holy Day Observed on 28th November at 1am Work is not suspended

"It is clear how that most dire of calamities, that most great disaster which was the ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, may our souls be sacrificed for His meekness, has set our hearts on fire and dissolved our very limbs and members in grief. Darkness settled on our souls, of blood were our tears. Even the essences of sanctity cried out in fear, and the gems of holiness moaned and lamented, while our own inner selves fell to ashes, and there was no peace left in the soul, no patience in the heart.

No more does the ardent nightingale carol its joyous songs, and the sweet and holy melodies of the immortal dove are hushed. That gleaming Moon is hidden now behind the clouds of everlasting life, that Orb of the high heavens sank down at the setting point of glory and rose into the skies of the world that we see not, and above the realm of the placeless He is casting forth His rays."(1)

"The Day of the Covenant 26th November, and the Day of the Ascension, 28th November, anniversaries of the birth and the Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá must be observed by the friends coming together, but work is not prohibited. In other words the friends must regard observance of these two anniversaries as obligatory but suspension of work not to be regarded as obligatory." (2)

Further study: 'Abdu'l-Bahá by HM Balyuzi; Bahíyyih Khánum: *The Greatest Holy Leaf*, a compilation by the Bahá'í World Centre.

1. Shoghi Effendi, *Bahíyyih Khánum*, pp. 148-149
2. Shoghi Effendi, *Letters of the Guardian to Australia and New Zealand*, p. 89

Day of the Covenant

26th November

"Abdu'l-Bahá told the Bahá'ís that this day [May 23] was not, under any circumstances, to be celebrated as His day of birth. It was the day of the Declaration of the Báb, exclusively associated with Him. But as the Bahá'ís begged for a day to be celebrated as His, He gave them November 26th, to be observed as the day of the appointment of the Centre of the Covenant. It was known as Jashn-i-A'zam (The Greatest Festival), because He was Ghusn-i-A'zam the Greatest Branch. In the West it is known as the Day of the Covenant." (1)

1. HM Balyuzi, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p523

Some significant dates in Bahá'í history

November

November 1909: The first Bahá'í teaching trip to circle the globe was embarked on by two US believers, Charles Mason Remey and Howard Struven. The teachers went to Hawaii, Japan, Singapore, Burma, India and Akká before returning.

November 1944: *God Passes By* was published. Chronicling the first century of the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths, it is the only full-size book written by Shoghi Effendi.

4th November 1957: Shoghi Effendi died while in London, after nearly 35 years as Guardian. His funeral was Nov. 9 in London. The Hands of the Cause of God, after thoroughly inspecting the contents of his safe and desk on Nov. 19, declared that he had left no will naming any successor as Guardian. These events began the ministry of the Hands of the Cause as chief custodians of the Bahá'í Faith until election of the Universal House of Justice in 1963.

"To whatever place We may be banished, however great the tribulation We may suffer, they who are the people of God must, with fixed resolve and perfect confidence, keep their eyes directed towards the Day Spring of Glory, and be busied in whatever may be conducive to the betterment of the world and the education of its peoples."

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, CXXVI

The information on this page was first published in "The American Bahá'í". Facts found in the "Some significant dates" section compiled from "A Basic Bahá'í Chronology".