

# Visiting the Bahá'í Holy Land



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(The contents of this material are taken from the Baha'i World Centre's website on Baha'i Pilgrimage at <<https://bahai.bwc.org>> pilgrimage except for *The Tablet of Carmel* and Excerpts from *The Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*)

The first and supreme obligation of all Bahá'ís who visit the Holy Land is to pray and meditate in the Sacred Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh, the Báb and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. To receive this bounty of visiting the Holy Places at the Bahá'í World Centre is an inestimable privilege, infinitely precious to every Bahá'í pilgrim.

Holy places are undoubtedly centres of the outpouring of Divine grace, because on entering the illumined sites associated with martyrs and holy souls, and by observing reverence, both physical and spiritual, one's heart is moved with great tenderness. (From a Tablet revealed by 'Abdu'l-Baha)

O thou herald of the Kingdom! Render thanks unto God that thou didst come to the Blessed Spot, didst lay thy head upon the Threshold of the Sacred Shrine, and didst make pilgrimage to the hallowed sanctuary round which circle in adoration the intimates of the spiritual realm. Thou didst gain admittance into the assemblage of the Merciful and didst enjoy communion with 'Abdu'l-Baha. Thou didst pass thy days in perfect fellowship and happiness, and thereafter wast thou granted permission to return, that... thou mightiest engage in service to the Kingdom, lead the people to the unity of heaven, and guide them to the Lord of Hosts. (From a Tablet revealed by 'Abdu'l-Baha)

O thou pilgrim of the Sacred Dust! Render great tanks to God, the Most Glorious, the Lord Who hath guided thee unto this path and caused thee to enter the sanctuary of the All-Knowing. Render thanks unto Him for having enabled thee to take shelter beneath His bountiful favour and attain that which is the hope and aspiration of the chosen ones of God. (From a Tablet revealed by 'Abdu'l-Baha)

I wish you from all my heart the fullest success in your efforts to teach and spread our beloved Cause, and trust that you may some day undertake the pilgrimage to the Holy Land and visit the Baha'i sacred Shrines and thus obtain a clearer vision of the mission and significance of the Faith (From the postscript to a letter in the handwriting of Shoghi Effendi)

Assemblies get a new life and spirt when they come in touch with a pilgrim newly coming from a visit to the Sacred Shrines. The pilgrim can impart to those he meets some of the spirit he has obtained himself while kneeling in absorbed meditation and prayer at the Thresholds. (From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi)

He instructed me to write that your visit and companionship with you in the vicinity of the illumined Holy Shrines were a cause of exceeding joy. There is no doubt that after this pilgrimage and your prayers for aid and grace at the sacred Threshold of the Abha Beauty—the Point round which the concourse on high revolved—and the Shrines of the Bab, and of Abdu'l-Baha, you will be privileged to render greater and more

glorious services. (From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi)

## *Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh*



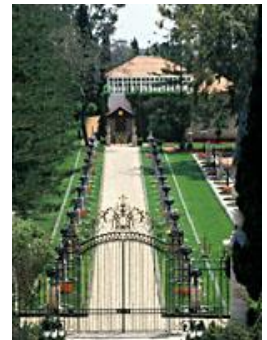
“The light that is shed from the heaven of bounty, and the benediction that shineth from the dawning-place of the will of God, the Lord of the Kingdom of Names, rest upon Him Who is the Supreme Mediator, the Most Exalted Pen, Him Whom God hath made the Dawning-Place of His most excellent names and the Dayspring of His most exalted attributes.” Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 2001), pp. 1–2.

“Public access to the heart of the Qiblih of the Bahá'í World is now made possible through traversing the sacred precincts leading successively to the Holy Court, the outer and inner sanctuaries, the Blessed Threshold and the Holy of Holies.” Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World, 1950–1957* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1999), p. 30.



“The ‘sacred precincts’ referred to in this message are the properties of the Faith in Bahjí, including the Mansion of Bahá'u'lláh to the east of the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and the gardens and landscaping surrounding the Shrine.

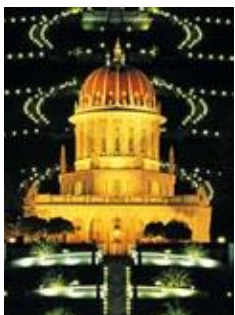
“The ‘Holy Court’ is the Haram-i-Aqdas, which consists of the landscaping and formal gardens providing a befitting approach to the Shrine as well as to the Mansion. This is sometimes referred to in the writings of the Guardian as the outer sanctuary of the Shrine. . . .



“The ‘outer sanctuary’ more specifically also refers to the small court with a small gate, a portico and a few steps leading to the entrance door of the inner sanctuary of the Shrine. . . . *Bahá'í News*, Published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, January 1966, no. 418, p. 4.

“The ‘inner sanctuary’ is the roofed area consisting of a beautiful central garden, the surrounding paths of which are covered with rugs, and where the privileged pilgrims and visitors stand in prayer and view the ‘Blessed Threshold’ and ‘the Holy of Holies,’ where lies interred, in the words of the Guardian, ‘the holiest dust the earth ever received into its bosom.’ ” *Bahá'í News*, Published by the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States, January 1966, no. 418, p. 4.

## *Shrine of the Báb*



“The most joyful tiding is this, . . . 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.’”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, quoted by Shoghi Effendi in *God Passes By* (Wilmette: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 2004), p. 276.



“I cannot at this juncture overemphasize the sacredness of that holy dust embosomed in the heart of the Vineyard of God, or overrate the unimaginable potencies of this mighty institution founded sixty years ago, through the operation of the Will of, and the definite selection made by, the Founder of our Faith, on the occasion of His historic visit to that holy mountain, nor can I lay



too much stress on the role which this institution, to which the construction of the superstructure of this edifice is bound to lend an unprecedented impetus, is destined to play in the unfoldment of the World Administrative Centre of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh and in the efflorescence of its highest institutions constituting the embryo of its future World Order.” Shoghi Effendi, *Citadel of Faith: Messages to America, 1947–1957* (Wilmette: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1999), p. 95.

## *The Barracks*



“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!’” Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 185.

“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, 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.’ ” Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 186–187.

## *House of ‘Abbúd*



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

“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). During the period of His stay in the House of ‘Údí Khammár, a group of Bahá’ís, defying Bahá’u’lláh’s specific command, murdered three Azalí Covenant-breakers who had been sent to ‘Akká with the exiles. The animosity and slander against the Bahá’ís after this incident reached such a pitch that their children were stoned on sight, while ‘Abbúd himself, whose residence was next door to that of Bahá’u’lláh, was so influenced by what he heard against his now suspected Neighbour, that he reinforced the partition that separated the two dwellings.



“At a later date, when the animosity of ‘Abbúd towards the Bahá’ís had been overcome, he learned that the wedding of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was being delayed because of lack of accommodation. He therefore provided a room, situated between the two sections of the house, for the marriage of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and Munírih Khánúm. Subsequently, ‘Abbúd turned over the western part of the house to the Bahá’ís. 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 now visit.



“Bahá’u’lláh stayed in both parts of this house and in nearby houses for approximately seven years. During the latter years of His life, He also occasionally visited this house.” *Visiting Bahá’í Holy Places*, (Haifa: Bahá’í World Centre, 2003), p. 11.

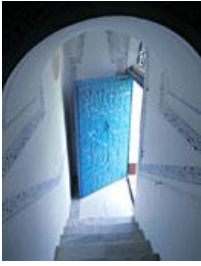
## *Ridván Garden*



“Shaykh ‘Alíy-i-Mírí, the Muftí of ‘Akká, had even, at the suggestion of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, to plead insistently that He [Bahá’u’lláh] 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, 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.” Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 192-193.

## *Mansion of Mazra‘ih*

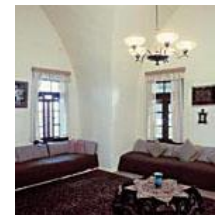
“Bahá’u’lláh loved the beauty and verdure of the country. One day He passed the remark: ‘I have not gazed on verdure for nine years. The country is the world of the soul, the city is the



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 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. . . .” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, quoted by J. E. Esslemont in *Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era* (Wilmette: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1998), p. 35.



## *Mansion of Bahjí*



“ ‘Greetings and salutations rest upon this mansion which increaseth in splendour through the passage of time. Manifold wonders and marvels are found therein, and pens are baffled in attempting to describe them.’ (The dedicatory statement of ‘Údí Khammár placed over the



lintel upon completion of the mansion in 1870)

“This large and imposing building, which covers an area of over 740 square metres, was built about 1870 (over an old one-story structure built many years previously) as a summer palace for ‘Údí Khammár, a prosperous merchant of ‘Akká and the original owner of the eastern half of what is now known as the House of ‘Abbúd. The owners fled during an epidemic, and in 1879 the Mansion was rented and later purchased as a residence for Bahá’u’lláh.



“It was situated on a piece of elevated land crossed by the aqueduct which brought water from the springs at Kabrí to ‘Akká. ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá, the governor of ‘Akká, had a mansion immediately to the south, now known as the Baydún mansion. The whole area was known as ‘Al-Bahjá’, or ‘Place of Delight’.”

*Visiting Bahá’í Holy Places*, pp. 18–19.

## *House of ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá*



“This building derives its name from the governor of ‘Akká who had occupied it in the early decades of the nineteenth century. It was the residence of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá for some thirteen years until he moved to Haifa, and it



was here that He received the first pilgrims from the West on 10 December 1898. In the pilgrims’ dining room in the House of ‘Abdu’lláh Páshá, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá gave the explanations which were compiled by Laura Dreyfus Barney during her pilgrimage from 1904 to 1906, and were later published as *Some Answered Questions*. The eastern end of the upper floor was the part of the house occupied by the members of the Holy Family. Off the large central hall of this wing is the room of Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf, where the remains of the Báb were kept secretly for many years prior to being transferred to Mount Carmel.”

*Visiting Bahá’í Holy Places*, p. 21.

## *Monument Gardens*



“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.” Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 348.

“In that same year 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.” Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 194.

“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.” ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, quoted in *Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era*, p. 251

## *International Archives Building*



“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

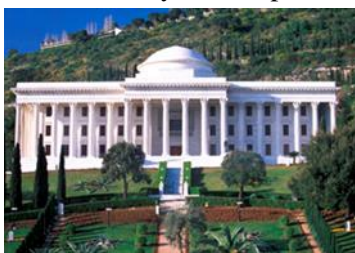


completed, . . .” Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá’í World, 1950–1957*, p. 64.

“On the occasion of the Naw-Rúz Festival . . . I joyfully announce the commencement of the excavation for the foundations of the International Archives heralding the rise of the first edifice destined to inaugurate the establishment of the seat of the World Bahá’í Administrative order in the Holy Land.” Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá’í World, 1950–1957*, p. 75.

## *Seat of the Universal House of Justice*

On 2 February 1983, upon the occasion of the occupation of this magnificent edifice, the Universal House of



Justice in a cabled message to the followers of Bahá’u’lláh in every land stated:

“THIS AUSPICIOUS EVENT SIGNALIZES ANOTHER PHASE IN PROCESS



FULFILMENT SAILING GOD’S ARK ON MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD AS ANTICIPATED IN TABLET CARMEL, WONDROUS CHARTER WORLD SPIRITUAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRES FAITH BAHÁ’U’LLÁH.” *The Bahá’í World*, (Haifa: World Centre Publications, 1994), vol. XIX, p. 23.

## Centre for the Study of the Texts



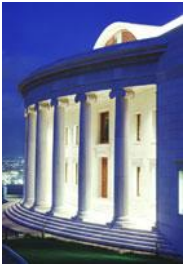
“The Centre for the Study of the Texts . . . will be the seat of an institution of Bahá’í scholars, the efflorescence of the present Research Department of the World Centre, which will assist the Universal House of Justice in consulting the Sacred Writings, and will prepare translations of and commentaries on the authoritative texts of the Faith.”

The Universal House of Justice, *A Wider Horizon: Selected Messages of the Universal House of Justice 1983–1992* (Riviera Beach: Palabra Publications, 1992), p. 52.



“The building was completed and occupied in 1999. It now houses the Research Department, and is the temporary home of the International Bahá’í Library and other offices.” *Visiting Bahá’í Holy Places*, p. 35.

## International Teaching Centre



“The International Teaching Centre will be the seat of that institution which is specifically invested with the twin functions of the protection and propagation of the Cause of God. The institution itself, referred to by the beloved Guardian in his writings, was established in June 1973, bringing to fruition the work of the Hands of the Cause of God residing in the Holy Land and providing for the extension into the future of functions with which that body had been endowed.” *The Universal House of Justice, A Wider Horizon: Selected Messages of the Universal House of Justice 1983–1992*, pp. 51-52.

“Special events were held in January 2001, during the conference of the Continental Counsellors, which Auxiliary Board members were, for the first time, invited to attend, to mark the occupation by the International Teaching Centre of its permanent seat on Mount Carmel. This coincided with the announcement by the Universal House of Justice of the beginning of the fifth epoch of the Formative Age of the Faith.” *Visiting Bahá’í Holy Places*, p. 36.



## Haifa Pilgrim House

“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.



“During the ministry of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, many meetings were held 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.” *Visiting Bahá’í Holy Places*, p. 37.

## *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....



“The large central hall of the building is of special significance 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.” *Visiting Bahá’í Holy Places*, p. 38



## *Resting Place of Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum*

“For all whose hearts she touched so deeply, the sorrow that this irreparable loss brings will, in God’s good time, be assuaged in awareness of the joy that is hers through her reunion with the Guardian and with the Master, Who had Himself prayed in the Most Holy Shrine that her parents be blessed with a child.

Down the centuries to come, the followers of Bahá’u’lláh will contemplate with wonder and gratitude the quality of the services—ardent, indomitable, resourceful—that she brought to the protection and promotion of the Cause.” From

## *10 Haparsim Street*

of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá’ís of the world, 19 January 2000.

“This structure was built on one of the sites where Bahá’u’lláh pitched His tent. The plans for this building were drawn up at the request of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and He modified them until they



a  
letter

suiting His requirements. The construction work began in His lifetime and finished at the time of the Guardian. Originally the building acted as the Western Pilgrim House and from 1951 housed the International Bahá'í Council as well. From 1963 to 1983 it served as the Seat of the Universal House of Justice. From 1983 to 2000 it was occupied by the International Teaching Centre. Currently the Bahá'í International Community Secretariat and related offices utilize the premises.” *Visiting Bahá'í Holy Places*, p. 39.



### *4 Haparsim Street*

“This building served as a pilgrim house for the Western believers in the years immediately following ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s return from travels in Europe and America. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá greeted the Western friends here. Amatu’l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum related to pilgrims that she and her mother stayed in this house during their pilgrimage shortly after the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. It was here that she first met the beloved Guardian.”

*Visiting Bahá'í Holy Places*, p. 39.

### *Site of the future Mashriq’l-Adhkár*

“The site for the first Mashriq’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.” Shoghi Effendi, *Messages to the Bahá'í World, 1950–1957*, p. 63.



## *LAWH-I-KÁRMIL (Tablet of Carmel)*

All glory be to this Day, the Day in which the fragrances of mercy have been wafted over all created things, a Day so blest that past ages and centuries can never hope to rival it, a Day in which the countenance of the Ancient of Days hath turned towards His holy seat. Thereupon the voices of all created things, and beyond them those of the Concourse on High, were heard calling aloud: 'Haste thee, O Carmel, for lo, the light of the countenance of God, the Ruler of the Kingdom of Names and Fashioner of the heavens, hath been lifted upon thee.'

Seized with transports of joy, and raising high her voice, she thus exclaimed: 'May my life be a sacrifice to Thee, inasmuch as Thou hast fixed Thy gaze upon me, hast bestowed upon me Thy bounty, and hast directed towards me Thy steps. Separation from Thee, O Thou Source of everlasting life, hath well nigh consumed me, and my remoteness from Thy presence hath burned away my soul. All praise be to Thee for having enabled me to hearken to Thy call, for having honoured me with Thy footsteps, and for having quickened my soul through the vitalizing fragrance of Thy Day and the shrilling voice of Thy Pen, a voice Thou didst ordain as Thy trumpet-call amidst Thy people. And when the hour at which Thy resistless Faith was to be made manifest did strike, Thou didst breathe a breath of Thy spirit into Thy Pen, and lo, the entire creation shook to its very foundations, unveiling to mankind such mysteries as lay hidden within the treasuries of Him Who is the Possessor of all created things.'

No sooner had her voice reached that most exalted Spot than We made reply: 'Render thanks unto thy Lord, O Carmel. The fire of thy separation from Me was fast consuming thee, when the ocean of My presence surged before thy face, cheering thine eyes and those of all creation, and filling with delight all things visible and invisible. 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. Seize thou the Chalice of Immortality in the name of thy Lord, the All-Glorious, and give thanks unto Him, inasmuch as He, in token of His mercy unto thee, hath turned thy sorrow into gladness, and transmuted thy grief into blissful joy. He, verily, loveth the spot which hath been made the seat of His throne, which His footsteps have trodden, which hath been honoured by His presence, from which He raised His call, and upon which He shed His tears.

'Call out to Zion, O Carmel, 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. Oh, how I long to announce unto every spot on the surface of the earth, and to carry to each one of its cities, the glad-tidings of this Revelation--a Revelation to which the heart of

Sinai hath been attracted, and in whose name the Burning Bush is calling: "Unto God, the Lord of Lords, belong the kingdoms of earth and heaven." Verily this is the Day in which both land and sea rejoice at this announcement, the Day for which have been laid up those things which God, through a bounty beyond the ken of mortal mind or heart, hath destined for revelation. Ere long will God sail His Ark upon thee, and will manifest the people of Bahá who have been mentioned in the Book of Names.'

Sanctified be the Lord of all mankind, at the mention of Whose name all the atoms of the earth have been made to vibrate, and the Tongue of Grandeur hath been moved to disclose that which had been wrapt in His knowledge and lay concealed within the treasury of His might. He, verily, through the potency of His name, the Mighty, the All-Powerful, the Most High, is the ruler of all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth.

# Excerpts from *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*

## *Islamic Traditions regarding Akka*

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

The following hath been recorded concerning the merits of Akká, and of the sea, and of Aynu'l-Baqár (The Spring of the Cow) which is in Akká:

'Abdu'l-'Azíz, son of 'Abdu'-Salám, hath related unto us that the Prophet—may the blessings of God and His salutations be upon him—hath said: “Akká is a city in Syria to which God hath shown His special mercy.”

Ibn-i-Mas'úd—may God be pleased with him—hath stated: “The Prophet—may the blessings of God and His salutations be upon Him—hath said: ‘Of all shores the best is the shore of Askelon, and Akká is, verily, better than Askelon, and the merit of Akká above that of Askelon and all other shores is as the merit of Muḥammad above that of all other Prophets. I bring you tidings of a city betwixt two mountains in Syria, in the middle of a meadow, which is called Akká. Verily, he that entereth therein, longing for it and eager to visit it, God will forgive his sins, both of the past and of the future. And he that departeth from it, other than as a pilgrim, God will not bless his departure. In it is a spring called the Spring of the Cow. Whoso drinketh a draught therefrom, God will fill his heart with light, and will protect him from the most great terror on the Day of Resurrection.’”

Anas, son of Malík—may God be pleased with him—hath said: “The Apostle of God—may the blessings of God and His salutations be upon Him—hath said: ‘By the shore of the sea is a city, suspended beneath the Throne, and named Akká. He that dwelleth therein, firm and expecting a reward from God—exalted be He—God will write down for him, until the Day of Resurrection, the recompense of such as have been patient, and have stood up, and knelt down, and prostrated themselves, before Him.’”

And He—may the blessings of God and His salutations be upon Him—hath said: “I announce unto you a city, on the shores of the sea, white, whose whiteness is pleasing unto God—exalted be He! It is called Akká. He that hath been bitten by one of its fleas is better, in the estimation of God, than he who hath received a grievous blow in the path of God. And he that raiseth therein the call to prayer, his voice will be lifted up unto Paradise. And he that remaineth therein for seven days in the face of the enemy, God will gather him with Khidr—peace be upon Him—and God will protect him from the most great terror on the Day of Resurrection.” And He—may the blessings of God,—exalted be He—and His salutations be upon Him—hath said: “There are kings and princes in Paradise. The poor of Akká are the kings of Paradise and the princes thereof. A month in Akká is better than a thousand years elsewhere.”

The Apostle of God—may the blessings of God and His salutations be upon Him—is reported to have said: “Blessed the man that hath visited Akká, and blessed he that hath visited the visitor of Akká. Blessed the one

that hath drunk from the Spring of the Cow and washed in its waters, for the black-eyed damsels quaff the camphor in Paradise, which hath come from the Spring of the Cow, and from the Spring of Salván (Siloam), and the Well of Zamzam. Well is it with him that hath drunk from these springs, and washed in their waters, for God hath forbidden the fire of hell to touch him and his body on the Day of Resurrection.”

The Prophet—may the blessings of God and His salutations be upon Him—is stated to have said: “In Akká are works of supererogation and acts which are beneficial, which God vouchsafed specially unto whomsoever He pleaseth. And he that saith in Akká: ‘Glorified be God, and praise be unto God, and there is none other God but God, and most great is God, and there is no power nor strength except in God, the Exalted, the Mighty,’ God will write down for him a thousand good deeds, and blot out from him a thousand evil deeds, and will uplift him a thousand grades in Paradise, and will forgive him his transgressions. And whoso saith in Akká: ‘I beg forgiveness of God,’ God will forgive all his trespasses. And he that remembereth God in Akká at morn and at eventide, in the night-season and at dawn, is better in the sight of God than he who beareth swords, spears and arms in the path of God—exalted be He!”

The Apostle of God—may the blessings of God and His salutations be upon Him—hath also said: “He that looketh upon the sea at eventide, and saith: ‘God is Most Great!’ at sunset, God will forgive his sins, though they be heaped as piles of sand. And he that counteth forty waves, while repeating: ‘God is Most Great!’—exalted be He—God will forgive his sins, both past and future.”

The Apostle of God—may the blessings of God and His salutations be upon Him—hath said: “He that looketh upon the sea a full night is better than he who passeth two whole months betwixt the Rukn and the Maqám. And he that hath been brought up on the shores of the sea is better than he that hath been brought up elsewhere. And he that lieth on the shore is as he that standeth elsewhere.”

Verily, the Apostle of God—may the blessings of God, exalted be He, and His salutations be upon Him—hath spoken the truth.