

End of a Journey



It is now the end of the journey. I can hardly believe that it is complete. And at the end of the journey the most delightful thing was to find myself in the company of so many Baha'is and friends who came together to celebrate this wonderful 200th anniversary together. To see that flame of love for Bahá'u'lláh in every face, and to see how much we all wanted, together, to show our love and gratitude for everything Bahá'u'lláh has done for us. To see the countless acts of love and devotion offered to Baha'u'llah to mark this bicentennial anniversary is inexpressably beautiful.

I didn't initially think of this project as a journey, but near its beginning, a friend compared it to the spiritual journeys people would undertake in the middle ages to a far away sacred place. It was a beautiful insight and captures something of the reality of the subjective personal experience. Although in one sense ordinary life continued much as before; in another, every day I was continuing on that journey passing through a spiritual world – whose doorway is Bahá'u'lláh's teachings. Almost, it was, as if I was existing in two parallel realities.

Another writer commented that I would gain much from the project and indeed if this project has had any benefit, it has been in the lifting of my own spiritual well-being. The process of daily intense reflection on the life and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh has been a wonderful part of my life. Our modern world is full of so many distractions and constant and often negative demands on our attention. The daily insanity of world events receded into a pale and distant noise, without the power to disturb my day and often my day was filled with the joy at some new beautiful discovery or re-discovery in Bahá'u'lláh's teachings or life. Or the delight of studying the moving life of a beautiful soul who has responded to Bahá'u'lláh's teachings.

I take away a strengthened faith and love for Bahá'u'lláh and a deepened sense of astonishment and awe at what he has achieved – the depth, complexity, interconnectedness and wisdom of his teachings. Virtually every article I wrote I felt barely touched the surface of what is a rich ocean.

As the articles proceeded I also became increasingly conscious that my own words have a very significant limitation. They are only one human being's response to Bahá'u'lláh's teachings. They are inevitably and severely limited in terms of perspective. They necessarily carry my conscious and unconscious biases of time, place and circumstance. They lack the richness that comes from the combination of many thoughts of many people. They lack the richness of insight that might be gleaned from the thoughts and views of many millions of people.

In this regard, it has been very moving to watch the movie [Light to the World](#), released to mark the 200th anniversary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh. Listening to the voices and thoughts of so many of my fellow human beings from around the world illuminates an understanding of Bahá'u'lláh in a way that no single voice can ever achieve. It is only such a collective understanding that can really offer the necessary insight on who Bahá'u'lláh is and the beauty and significance of his teachings.

I hope that the initial goals of this effort to provide another introduce Bahá'u'lláh and his teachings to people who might not otherwise have heard of him, might to some extent have been successful.

Thank you to everyone who has encouraged me in so many different ways along this journey. To those who offered words of support or shared or liked articles. To friends who offered helpful suggestions along the way – to Glen Little – who helped on so many occasions by alerting me to errors that I had made in this or that article. To Mehrdad Jafari who has devotedly undertaken

the work of preparing Farsi language translations which have progressively appeared on <http://www.noghtenazar.org/> and other sites. To Donya Eghrari who provided beautiful illustrations for two articles and to Kath Podget who provided many beautiful photos of sites in Haifa. And most of all to my dear wife Ranjana who has been with me throughout this journey. I have felt her encouragement and support every step of the way.

Now it is time to pause for a time, to restore a somewhat neglected physical health, and to reflect on what is next.

Of course the journey never really ends, we only reach a high point and see a new far horizon ahead. To paraphrase the beautiful words of [George Townsend](#):

And when ... the Goal is won ... what will remain for any servant of Thine, but to begin his journey again and travel on and on ...

This article is the 200th in a series of 200 articles written for the 200th anniversary of the birth of Bahá'u'lláh. The anniversary has been celebrated in commemorations around the world on 21 and 22 October 2017, The articles are simply my personal reflections on Bahá'u'lláh's life and work. Any errors or inadequacies in these articles are solely my responsibility.)