

Ridván

God has revealed himself to many different people in many different ways, through special Messengers whose teachings help us. They teach us and give us a foundation for belief systems. These Messengers have included Abraham, Krishna, Zoroaster, Moses, Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad.

Bahá'u'lláh, the latest of these Messengers, brought new spiritual and social teachings for us to follow. His message is of unity. He taught the oneness of God, the oneness of the human family, and the oneness of religion. The Ridván Festival is celebrated from sunset on 21 April to sunset 2 May. Ridván means Paradise.



- ① Sit down with the children and show them the series of pictures overleaf. You may wish to lay the sheets out either on a table or the floor, and then read the story.
- ② Ask the children the following questions and discuss them:-
 - What part of the story did you like?*
 - What part of the story didn't you like?*
 - What do you like to look at in a garden?*
 - What do you notice in the garden during Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter?*
 - Apart from flowers, what else do you see in gardens?*
- ③ Draw some pictures of flowers you would like to see in your garden.
- ④ Visit a local garden centre and see what they do.

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Bahá'u'lláh spent time in the garden of Ridván in 1863.

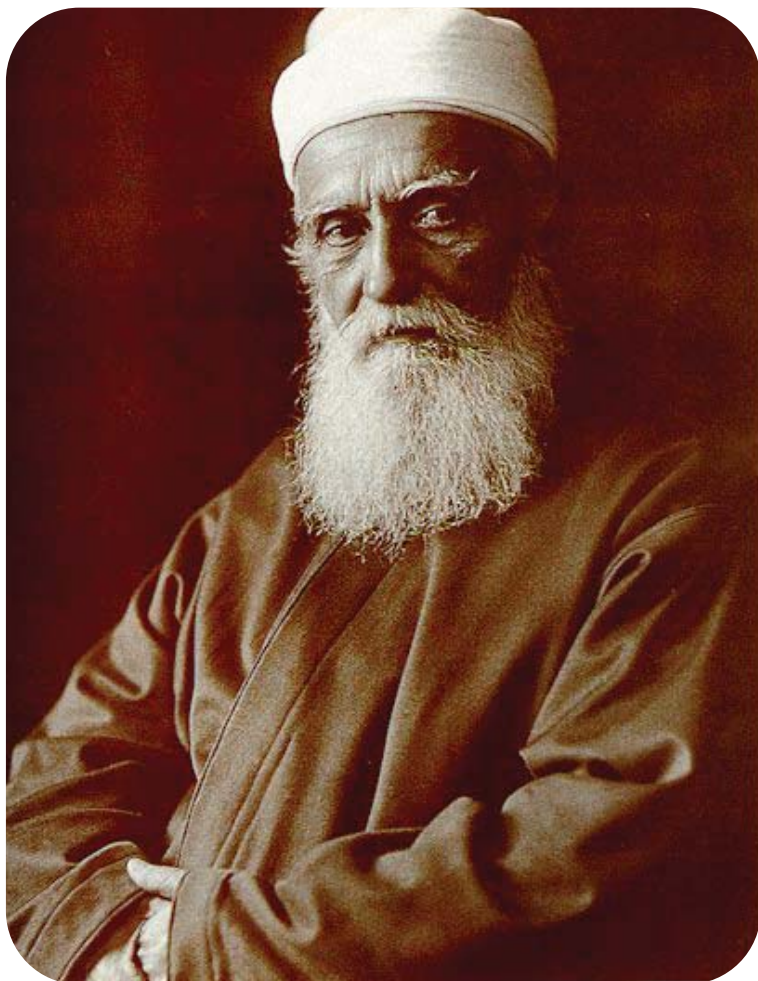
The festival of Ridván marks the time he spent in the garden and the announcement that he was the prophet (a person chosen to speak for God). Bahá'u'lláh asked this festival to be known as 'Most Great Festival'.

This picture shows the entrance to Ridván Garden.



When He entered the garden, Bahá'u'lláh proclaimed the Festival of Ridván and made three announcements;

- **He forbade His followers to fight to advance or defend the Faith (religious war had been permitted under past religions);**
- **He declared there would not be another prophet for another 1,000 years; and**
- **He proclaimed that all the names of God were inherent in all things at that moment.**



Bahá'u'lláh's arrival in Ridván and his announcement of the Festival of Ridván mark the moment when the essence of the Bahá'í Faith was expressed.