

The Spread of the Bahá'í Faith around the World

'Abdu'l-Baha's Ministry 1892-1921

Bahá'í Geography 2
Teaching the Bahá'í Faith

'Abdu'l-Baha's Ministry 1892-1921

During the time when 'Abdu'l-Bahá was the head of the Bahá'í Faith after the passing of his father in 1892, it spread much further. It was first mentioned in America by a Protestant Missionary from Syria at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893. By 1900 there were a few believers in America, with Thornton Chase the first, and a small group in Paris around May Bolles (Maxwell). Agnes Alexander responded to the Master's request to return to Hawai'i in 1901.

Thornton Chase
first
American Bahá'í





Paris group 1901

First Bahá'ís
in Switzerland
1900

Edith McKay
(later de Bons)
right

and

May Bolles
(later Maxwell)





Agnes Alexander in Hawai'i 1909

'Abdu'l-Baha's Ministry 1892-1921

When 'Abdu'l-Bahá was finally released from 40 years in prison by the Young Turk's revolution of 1908, visits to him in Palestine became easier, and he was able to travel to Egypt, Europe and America in 1911-1913, so the Faith spread to 20 more countries by his passing in 1921.

Countries opened to the Faith

'Abdu'l-Baha's Ministry 1892-1921

Australia

Great Britain

Jordan

Austria

Hawaiian Islands

Russia

Brazil

Hijaz (part of Saudi
Arabia)

South Africa

Canada

Holland (Netherlands)

Switzerland

China

Hungary

Tunisia

France

Italy

United States of America

Germany

Japan

Tablets of the Divine Plan

During World War I (1914-1918) when Palestine under Turkish rule was inaccessible, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote the *Tablets of the Divine Plan* in 1916-17, addressed to the Bahá'ís in the United States and Canada. This was his plan for teaching the Bahá'í Faith in all the states and provinces, and all around the world. In these tablets, he lists all the American states and all the Canadian Provinces, as well as all the countries and islands that must receive the Divine message.

Tablets of the Divine Plan

The first five tablets addressed to states and provinces were sent as postcards (because of postal censorship), in the original and as English translations, and published in *Star of the West* in 1916. They listed all the US states and Canadian provinces. The remaining nine Tablets were locked in a vault in the Shrine of the Bab, and only sent to America to be read out by children at the Bahá'í convention in New York in 1919. These listed all the countries and islands of the world where the Bahá'í Faith should be taught.

No. 1

forth. This means: the
 souls of humanity belong-
 ing to the world of nature
 are black like unto the soil.
 But when the heavenly
 outpourings descend and the
 radiant effulgence appears, the
 hearts are resuscitated, are liberated
 from the darkness of nature and
 the flowers of divine mysteries
 grow and become luxuriant. Con-
 sequently man must become
 the cause of the illumination
 of the world of humanity and
 propagate the holy teachings re-
 vealed in the sacred books through
 divine inspiration. This is
 stated in the blessed gospel.



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باري محلي

ADRESSE DU DESTINATAIRE.

مرسل اليه اسم و اقامته كما هي

First Tablets
of the
Divine Plan

No 2

who has made the
drop to find the
expression of the sea
and the atom the importance
of the Sun.

Upon ye be greeting
and praise.

(Sgt) Abdul Baha Abbas
Translated by M. Ahmad Sohrab

~~Handwritten signature~~



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First Tablets
of the
Divine Plan

906

throughout those states
 or choose others and
 send them, ~~so~~ that they may
 teach the souls. For
 the present those states like
 unto the dead bodies; they must
 breathe in them the breath of life
 and bestow of on them heavenly
 spirit. Light unto the stars that
 never shine in that horizon,
 then the rays of the Sun of Reality
 may also illumine those
 states. God says in the great
 Koran: Verily, God is the
 Helper of those who have believed.
 He will lead them from darkness



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 ADRRESSI DI DESTINATARI

First Tablets
 of the
 Divine Plan

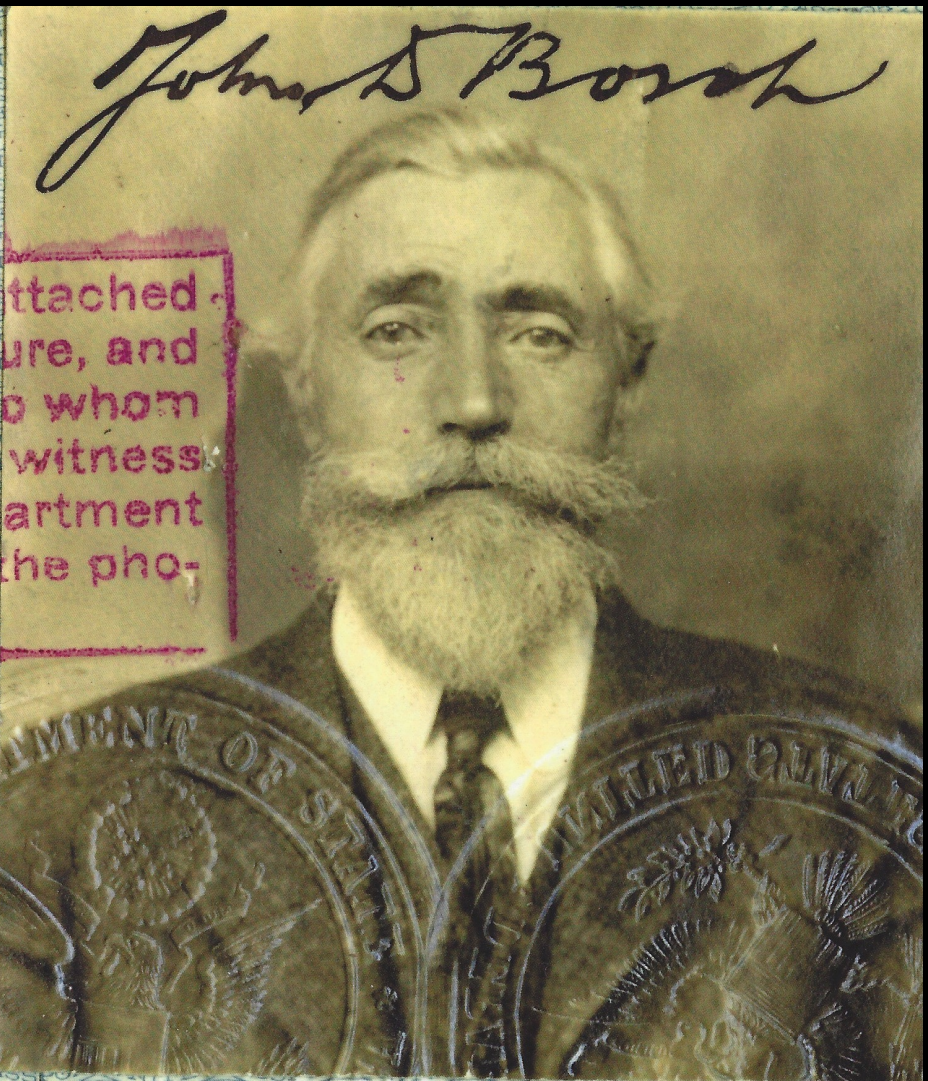
The call of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

The moment this divine Message is carried forward by the American believers from the shores of America and is propagated through the continents of Europe, of Asia, of Africa and of Australasia, and as far as the islands of the Pacific, this community will find itself securely established upon the throne of an everlasting dominion. Then will all the peoples of the world witness that this community is spiritually illumined and divinely guided. Then will the whole earth resound with the praises of its majesty and greatness.

(Abdu'l-Bahá, *Tablets of the Divine Plan*. Tablet to the Bahá'ís of the United States and Canada, 11 April 1916)

Response to the call

Some Bahá'ís arose immediately to obey this call. John and Louise Bosch, in California, travelled to Tahiti in 1920 and were able to stay six months. They found one receptive soul, Ariane Drollet, whose daughter later married Knight of Bahá'u'lláh Jean Sevin when he went to the Tuamotu Archipelago in 1953.



Louise Bosch
in Tahiti

John Bosch





John and Louise Bosch in Tahiti with Drollet family 1920

Teaching

Now is the time for you to divest yourselves of the garment of attachment to this world that perisheth, to be wholly severed from the physical world, become heavenly angels, and travel to these countries....

(Tablets of the Divine Plan Revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the North American Bahá'ís, rev. ed. (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980), p. 34)

Teaching

With hearts overflowing with the love of God, with tongues commemorating the mention of God, with eyes turned to the Kingdom of God, they must deliver the Glad Tidings of the manifestation of the Lord of Hosts to all the people. Know ye of a certainty that whatever gathering ye enter, the waves of the Holy Spirit are surging over it, and the heavenly grace of the Blessed Beauty encompasseth that gathering.

(Tablets of the Divine Plan Revealed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the North American Bahá'ís, rev. ed. (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980), p. 38-39)