

The Day of the Covenant

The Day of the Covenant falls on 4 Qawl¹² each year and commemorates Bahá'u'lláh's appointment of His eldest son, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, as the protector of the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh.

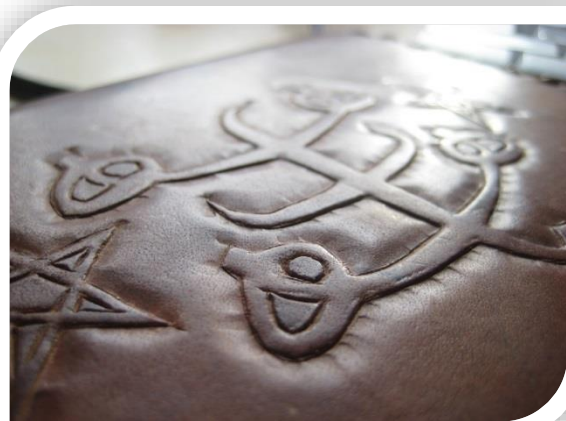
With the passing of Bahá'u'lláh in Bahá'í year 49, 1892 in the Gregorian calendar, the safeguarding of this Covenant was entrusted to 'Abdu'l-Bahá as set out by Bahá'u'lláh in His will and testament, the Kitab-i-'Ahd ('Book of the Covenant').

The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh mandates the succession of authority in relation to the interpretation of the sacred texts and the administration of the Bahá'í Faith. It is unique in religious history. 'Abdu'l-Bahá writes: 'Were it not for the protecting power of the Covenant to guard the impregnable fort of the Cause of God, there would arise among the Bahá'ís, in one day, a thousand different sects as was the case in former ages.'

In His humility, 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructed the Bahá'ís not to observe His birthday; He writes 'No one must mention that day... except as the Day of the Declaration of His Highness the Báb.' So to provide the Bahá'ís with a day of remembrance, 'Abdu'l-Bahá instead chose a day that fell six months after the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, and dedicated it to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh.



Portrait of 'Abdu'l-Bahá



Unlike the nine major Holy Days associated with the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, on the Day of the Covenant (and similarly on the Day of Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá) Bahá'ís have no obligation to cease work, but the days should still 'be observed by the friends coming together'.

¹² 25 November when Naw-Rúz is 20 March and 26 November when Naw-Rúz is 21 March.