

# *The Merchant of Akká*

Story adapted from Ruhi Book 3



In the time of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, many people in 'Akká had been told that Bahá'ís were bad. Some of the people of 'Akká felt it was good to be unkind towards them. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá's love and patience changed the hearts of many people.

In 'Akká, there was a Christian merchant who did not like the Bahá'ís. One day, outside the gates of the city, the merchant saw a camel carrying charcoal. The charcoal belonged to the Bahá'ís. He stopped the driver and said, "this is better charcoal than I can get!" Without asking or paying any money, the merchant took the charcoal for himself.

When 'Abdu'l-Bahá heard what had happened, He went to the merchant's shop. 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked him to return the charcoal. At first the merchant did not give Him any attention. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá sat and waited patiently. Finally, after three hours, the merchant turned to Him and asked coldly, "Are you one of the prisoners?" "What have you done that you were imprisoned?" 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied that His crime was the same as the one for which Christ was persecuted. The merchant was surprised by this answer. "What do you know about Christ?" he asked. 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke to him about how the love of Christ was the same as the love taught by Bahá'u'lláh. As 'Abdu'l-Bahá spoke, the merchant's heart began to melt. His pride and arrogance disappeared. Finally, he said to 'Abdu'l-Bahá that unfortunately the charcoal was gone, but he would gladly pay for it. Then 'Abdu'l-Bahá rose to leave. The merchant also arose and walked with Him into the street, treating Him with great respect and honour.



*What caused the merchant's heart to change?*

*How did 'Abdu'l-Bahá act towards the merchant?*