

Nayríz : Siyyid Ja'far-i-Yazdí & Hájí Muhammad-Taquí

Siyyid Ja'far-i-Yazdí and Hájí Muhammad-Taquí were both taught the Cause of the Báb by Vahíd and both were devoted to serving their Faith. In the 1850 upheaval in Nayríz both were severely tortured but both survived. In time both recognized Bahá'u'lláh as the One promised by the Báb, both separately walked to Baghdád and met Bahá'u'lláh. Each was honoured with having a tablet revealed in his name. Both remained steadfast and devoted servants of the Cause to the end of their lives.

Here is a brief portrait of each:

Siyyid Ja'far-i-Yazdí

Siyyid Ja'far was highly learned and one of the distinguished *'ulamá* of Yazd. He resided in Yazd and had been taught the Faith by Vahíd. When the upheaval in Yazd occurred, Siyyid Ja'far followed Vahíd and came to Nayríz. Siyyid Ja'far with his learning and eloquence, had joined Vahíd in the teaching activities in Nayríz which led to conversion of many in Nayríz. He was therefore well-known, and it is recorded that he was so highly respected that the governor Zaynu'l-'Ábidín gave him precedence over himself at gatherings during those early days. But light or darkness reside in the heart and not related to outer forms and customs. This same governor Zaynu'l-'Ábidín, showed his true colours when he ordered the attack on the Bábís. When Siyyid Ja'far was captured, Zaynu'l-'Ábidín

“gave orders that the turban of that same man [Siyyid Ja'far] be befouled and flung into the fire. Shorn of the emblem of his lineage, he was exposed to the eyes of the public, who marched before him and overwhelmed him with abuse and ridicule.”¹

The many troops that had been brought into Nayríz to attack the Bábís had drained the resources of the town, such that there was near famine conditions. The greedy governor Zaynu'l-'Ábidín had hoarded a large stock of corn which he began to sell to the public first at an inflated price and then with the worsening situation on the basis of rationing. It is recorded:

When the ration was given out, Siyyid Ja'far would be brought from the dungeon and posted at the entrance to the barn. The Governor's orders were that all those who wished to obtain corn must first spit on Siyyid Ja'far's face. Failure to do this would deprive them of their ration.

For hours this champion of the Cause of God, this once revered man of learning, stood by the door of the barn while hundreds of men and women spat upon his

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 22, p496-498

blessed face as they filed through that door, looking at him with bitter hate and prejudice. In the face of this dire humiliation, Áqá¹ Siyyid Ja'far's feelings were not those of disgust, intolerance or indignation. On the contrary, he remained calm and resigned throughout his ordeal and manifested a spirit of sublime joy and love and thankfulness towards those who offended him.

Once during the ordeal, ... he noticed several people who hesitated to come forward for their share. Apparently, the ghastly deed of spitting upon his face kept them away. With a face beaming with heavenly joy, he beckoned them and said: "You had better come and get your share before it is too late; it won't matter if you spit upon my face; I'll wipe it off with my handkerchief ..."

... This monstrous treatment meted out to Áqá Siyyid Ja'far was but a prelude to a period of agonizing tortures for himself as well as his illustrious companion [Hájí Muhammad-Taquí, see story below]. Among other things, the ruthless Governor ordered that the bastinado be inflicted on Áqá Siyyid Ja'far in public. Each day he was conducted from the dungeon to the gate of the house of a well-to-do citizen where this heart-rending scene was staged. There he was beaten until, as was the fashion, the occupants of the house as well as passers-by would secure the victim's temporary release by offering money to the torturers as a ransom. Then, the next day, the scene would be shifted to another point along the street. After a while, as a result of the daily torture, Áqá Siyyid Ja'far's legs and feet became so horribly sore and swollen that they could no longer support his body.²

Siyyid Ja'far's story is continued later below.³

Hájí Muhammad-Taquí

Hájí Muhammad-Taquí was a native of Nayríz. "He was a man of great wealth and culture, highly respected by his fellow citizens, who reposed such trust in him that they would deposit their savings with him and often exchange his receipts instead of money."

⁴ Taught about the Cause of the Báb by Vahíd, he became one of its foremost disciples in Nayríz. He put his wealth at the disposal of Vahíd for propagation of the Faith, and later it was his fortune that supported the defence of Fort Khájih, and food and other

¹ Áqá means mister or master. It is added to as an honorific when referring to males.

² Taherzadeh *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* Volume 1, Chapter 9, p139-140

³ Siyyid Ja'far is the great great-grandfather of Adib Taherzadeh [Taherzadeh *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* Volume 1, Chapter 9, p138 footnote *].

⁴ Taherzadeh *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* Volume 1, Chapter 16, p263-264

necessities for the Bábís in it. Without his material assistance, the Bábís would not have been able to defend themselves against the army. ¹

The greedy and cruel governor Zaynu'l-Ábidín, knowing the role that Hájí Muhammad-Taquí played in spreading the Cause of the Báb, confiscated all his properties and ordered him to be tortured daily. It was the depth of winter, and each day, being stripped of his clothes, he was thrown into a pond and lashed severely.² One historian records:

Daily, he [Hájí Muhammad-Taquí] was conducted to the Governor's mansion where, stripped of his clothes, he was flung into the pool. A number of men, placed around and armed with long sticks, would administer severe blows upon his body. The standing order was that the beating should be continued until the water around him turned reddish with blood. ³

Fate of Siyyid Ja'far-i-Yazdí and Hájí Muhammad-Taquí

The torture of Siyyid Ja'far and Hájí Muhammad-Taquí continued until there were both close to death. One night the Governor's wife had a dream, the details of which are not known, but it led her to work to free these victims. One historian records what happened thus:

She approached her husband with an earnest appeal to release these unfortunate victims, but her intercession proved of no avail. Moreover, she was rebuked for being too soft and sentimental. Undismayed by her husband's ruthless attitude, she decided to work secretly towards that end.

With the goodwill and support of a few trusted persons at her disposal, she worked out a plan and made the necessary arrangements with utmost caution. Then, late one evening the prison door was opened and the pitiable figures of Hájí Muhammad-Taquí and Áqá Siyyid Ja'far were taken out, propped on donkeys and entrusted to a muleteer with the express order to carry them at full speed to Harát – a small town beyond the area of jurisdiction of the Governor of Nayríz.

Eventually, when these oppressed souls reached Harát they were utterly exhausted. The sight of their appalling condition presented a study in grief and aroused the sympathy of the headman of the village who received them with the utmost kindness.

¹ Taherzadeh *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* Volume 1, Chapter 16, p268

² *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 22, p498

³ Taherzadeh *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* Volume 1, Chapter 9, p140

They remained in Harát for a number of months to recuperate and heal their terrible wounds. Afterwards they travelled to Yazd.¹

Hájí Muhammad-Taquí and Áqá Siyyid Ja'far both survived the upheaval in Nayríz. They both came to recognize Bahá'u'lláh as the One promised by the Báb. When Bahá'u'lláh was in Baghdád, both of them separately walked the near 1600 kilometers [1000 miles] to Baghdád. Each was honoured by having a tablet revealed in their name by Bahá'u'lláh. The *Súrih-i-Nush* [Súra of Nektar or Nourishing/sweet drink] was revealed in honour of Áqá Siyyid Ja'far, and the *Súrih-i-Sabr* [Súra of Patience; also known as *Lawh-i-Ayyúb*, Tablet of Job] was revealed in honour of Hájí Muhammad-Taquí.²

The story of how Hájí Muhammad-Taquí got to Baghdád is told in the untranslated portion of Nabíl's writings (quoted in *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh*, by 'Alí-Akbar Furútan, p16-17). After the first upheaval against the Bábís in Nayríz in 1850, in spite of all that was done to him, Hájí Muhammad-Taquí had returned to Nayríz. He was there when the second upheaval against the Bábís occurred (1853). This time, he was again so badly beaten and tortured that he could scarcely move. Somehow, he managed to drag himself to the outskirts of Nayríz before dropping to the ground like a lifeless body, where he fell asleep. He then described for Nabíl what happened:

While sleeping, I dreamed about the Ancient Beauty. Even though I had never seen Him, yet I was certain that this was He, and that He was in Baghdád. He addressed these words to me: 'Despite the injuries heaped upon you, We extended Our protection that you might remain alive. Be not grieved, and come to Me in Baghdád.'

'But I have no money, I replied, 'nor am I able to stand on my feet.'

'You do rely upon God?' were His next words, to which I replied, 'I have always relied upon God.'

At this point I awoke, and to my great amazement saw that a caravan had set up camp on the banks of the very river beside which I had been sleeping. It turned out that they were pilgrims travelling to Karbilá, many of whom had come on foot from Kirmán. Someone emerged from a tent and, to my great surprise, came straight over to me and asked me to follow him. Overcome with astonishment, I remained rooted to the spot. He repeated his words. I followed him and we entered the tent. There I saw that several people were attending a man of striking appearance who, as a sign of respect to me, arose and then seated me next to himself. 'During the night,' he told me, 'I dreamed that the Imám Husayn had entrusted to my care a person with the same appearance and features which I

¹ Taherzadeh *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* Volume 1, Chapter 9, p141

² Taherzadeh *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* Volume 1: *Súrih-i-Nush* Chapter 9, p137-147; *Lawh-i-Ayyúb* Chapter 16, p263-273.

behold in you, and he told me, "This Hájí is my guest. He should accompany you to Karbilá." So, you are my guest as far as Karbilá?'

And so, without the usual formalities of introduction, this distinguished gentleman took me with him, and he would often remark: 'The Imám has guided you to me, and has emphasized that you be shown the utmost hospitality?'

When we reached Baghdád I told him, 'This is where we part.' He replied that I was to accompany him as far as Karbilá, but I explained that 'the same blessed Personage Who entrusted me to your care also came to me in a dream and invited me to come to Baghdád. Therefore, I shall remain here, and will not continue the journey to Karbilá.'

My host paled as he heard these words, and in a very apologetic manner replied: 'To be truthful, the Imám Husayn had directed me to take you as far as Baghdád.' And, with the utmost kindness, he bade me farewell.

When I came into the presence of the Blessed Beauty, I recognized Him as that same holy Personage Whom I had seen in my dream, and I was favoured with His limitless grace.¹

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Súrih-i-Nush

This Arabic tablet was revealed in Baghdád in honour of Siyyid Ja'far-i-Yazdí. It was revealed prior to Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration, however, in its language Bahá'u'lláh leaves no room for doubt about His own Station. Throughout the tablet He identifies Himself with God and speaks as His Mouthpiece. In this tablet, Bahá'u'lláh describes the appearance of the Prophets of God from Adam to the Báb, proclaims their Divine origin, their mission and how each was opposed by the religious leaders of their time. He also refers to the enemies of the Faith at that time. And He also anticipates His own Declaration and urges the learned men of the Bábí community not to rely on just their knowledge but cleanse their hearts so that they would recognize the Promised One when He manifests Himself.²

A provisional translation of *Súrih-i-Nush* is available on [Bahá'í Library Online: Surih of Admonition \(Suratu'l-Nush\)](#).

Lawh-i-Ayyúb [also known as Súrih-i-Sabr]

This Arabic tablet was revealed in Baghdád in honour of Hájí Muhammad-Taquí on the eve of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration in the Garden of Ridván [21 April – 2 May 1863]. The believers at that occasion were ecstatically joyful with the open Declaration by

¹ 'Alí-Akbar Furútan *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh* p16-17.

² Taherzadeh *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* Volume 1: *Súrih-i-Nush* Chapter 9, p137-147.

Bahá'u'lláh of His Station and Mission which had just occurred. But with the joyful Declaration, Bahá'u'lláh also turned His attention to the sacrificial events of a decade before in Nayríz. Through this tablet, Bahá'u'lláh gave Hájí Muhammad-Taquí the title of *Ayyúb* [Job, one of the prophets of Israel whose life was filled with incredible suffering and who remained patient and steadfast throughout] and in it Bahá'u'lláh extols Vahíd and the heroism and sacrifices of the Bábís of Nayríz. The *Lawh-i-Ayyúb* is a lengthy tablet, about one-quarter of the length of the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*. It touches on many principles including the quality of patience, the principle of continuity of Divine Revelation, the Seal of the Prophets, the blindness of the learned clergy of Islam, the greatness of this Day of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration and His Revelation, and the future.¹

A provisional translation of *Lawh-i-Ayyúb* / *Súrih-i-Sabr* is available on [Bahá'í Library Online: Tablet of Patience, or Tablet of Job \(Súrih-i-Sabr or Lawh-i-Ayyúb\)](#).

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For a detailed account of history of Vahíd and the events at Nayríz in 1850, 1853 and 1909 see [Ahdieh and Chapman, *Awakening – A History of the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths in Nayríz*, 2013 Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette.](#)

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¹ Taherzadeh *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* Volume 1: *Lawh-i-Ayyúb* Chapter 16, p263-273.