



Some Turn to the Light

Dawn-Breakers Chapters 8-9

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Glimmerings notes are a companion to study of the Dawn-Breakers

Prologue

Change is hard, very hard. History records that every time a new Messenger from God appears in a land, most of the people in that land oppose Him and in fact actively persecute and try to destroy Him.

The irony is twofold: first, these same people claim to be actively waiting for that Messenger of God and to be most diligently following the teachings of God. Second, those who lead this opposition are primarily the clergy who are meant to guide the people to the Truth. The clergy's desire to remain in power blinds their spiritual sight, while the masses choose to remain in the comfort zone of their blind beliefs and just follow the clergy.

In the chapters that follow, we will see this age-old pattern of resistance to change repeat itself at the appearance of the Báb. At the same time, we will see that not all souls are the same. As always, there are some souls who arise and break the inner chains that bind the minds and hearts; chains that others cannot break. These individuals are able to free their souls. Like phoenixes, they rise from the ashes of their former selves. These we call the Dawn-Breakers.

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Section One: The First to be Persecuted on Persian Soil

Quddús comes to Shíráz

It is early 1845. Following the Báb's instructions, Quddús leaves Búshih^r and comes to Shíráz. He is carrying the Báb's letter to His middle uncle, Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí . The Báb has also given Quddús a copy of one of His latest Writings – the *Khasá'il-i-Sab'ih*  [The Seven Qualifications] – a treatise in which the Báb sets out the essential requirements needed from those who have attained and accepted this new Revelation. He asks Quddús to share this together with the Báb's loving embrace with the souls who accept His Message.

Middle Uncle of the Báb Recognizes the Station of his Nephew

Of His three uncles,¹ the Báb was closest to his middle uncle, Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí , because he had taken care of the Báb after the Báb's father's passing. This middle uncle had always sensed there was something special about his Nephew but did not know exactly what. Arriving in Shíráz, Quddús arranges a visit with him and delivers the letter and greetings from the Báb. Quddús finds the uncle is eager to learn more about what has been happening with the Báb and receptive to learn the truth about his Nephew. Quddús therefore lays out the Báb's claim to being the *Qá'im*  and the bearer of a new Revelation from God. These conversations with Quddús lead to the middle uncle's acceptance of his Nephew's Message and Station, making him the first person in Shíráz after the Letters of the Living to accept the Revelation of the Báb. It is June 1846.² This uncle will now consecrate his whole life to defending the Cause of the Báb, to shielding His Person, and will eventually lay down his life as one of the Seven Martyrs of Tihrán.³

Mullá Sádiq changes the *Adhán*

The next person Quddús meets in Shíráz is Mullá Sádiq , who had been taught by Mullá Husayn in Isfáhán.⁴ As soon as he learned about the Báb, Mullá Sádiq had left

¹ For some details on the Báb's family tree see [The Afnán Family – Some Biographical Notes by Ahang Rabbani](#)

² See [The Afnán Family – Some Biographical Notes by Ahang Rabbani](#)

³ See [DB 21, Section 4](#)

⁴ See [DB 4-7, Section 1](#)

Isfáhán and headed to Shíráz to meet the Báb. But by the time he got to Shíráz, the Báb had already left to go on *Hajj*. So Mullá Sádiq just waited in Shíráz for the Báb's return and now met Quddús. Quddús conveyed to Mullá Sádiq the message the Báb had asked to be shared with all his new followers. Quddús also shared with Mullá Sádiq, a copy of the newly revealed '*Khasá'il-i-Sab'ih*' [The Seven Qualifications]. One of the provisions in that work is that a believer in this new Revelation should insert certain words into the *adhán*. The *adhán* is the Islamic call to prayer, which is chanted five times a day from the minaret of every mosque.¹ The words to be inserted were: "I bear witness that He whose name is '*Alí-qabl-i-Muhammad*' is the servant of the *Baqíyyatu'llah*"². The *adhán* is of course considered to be sacrosanct by all Muslims and absolutely no change can be tolerated.

1 The *adhán* [Arabic word meaning to listen] is raised five times a day at these times: *Fajr* [dawn], *Dhuhr* [noon], *Asr* [afternoon], *Maghrib* [sunset], and *Isha* [evening]. The call is to the believers to say the *namáz* [the daily obligatory prayer]. The one who raises the call is called a *muadhhdhin* [pronounced muezzin]. [Example of an *adhán* chant](#). The words of the *adhán* include the wording of the *shaháda* [means witnessing] which is the declaration of Faith in Islam:

lá iláha illá'lláh [There is no god but God], *muhammadan rasúl alláh* [Muhammad is the Messenger of God].

The words of the *adhán* are below. The number of repetitions of each phrase and the English translation are also indicated alongside each phrase

<i>alláh u akbar</i>	x4	God is the greatest
<i>ashhadu an lá iláha illá'lláh</i>	x2	I testify that there is no god but God
<i>ashhadu anna muhammad ar-rasúl alláh</i>	x2	I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of God
<i>hayya 'al as-salát</i>	x2	Come to prayer
<i>hayya 'al al-faláh</i>	x2	Come to prosperity
[#]		
<i>alláh u akbar</i>	x2	God is the greatest
<i>lá iláha illá'lláh</i>	x1*	There is no god but God

Notes on some differences between Shia & Sunni *adhán*:

[#] <i>hayya 'alá khayr al-'amal</i>	x2	Come to the best of actions [Shi'a's add this to all 5 of the <i>adhán</i>]
[#] <i>as-salátu khayrum men an-nawm</i>	x2	Prayer is better than sleep [Sunni's add this to the dawn <i>adhán</i>]
*	x2	[Shias repeat this phrase one extra time]

The Shi'a also commend adding "I bear witness that 'Alí is the *walí alláh*' [Guardian of God]" after testifying Muhammad is the Messenger of God [i.e. added after line 3 of the *adhán*].

2 '*Alí-qabl-i-Muhammad*' means "Ali before Muhammad", and is a reference to the Báb's name which was 'Alí Muhammad, while *Baqíyyatu'llah* means "Remnant of God" and is a reference to the *Qá'im* [as it is one of the titles of the *Qá'im*].

Mullá Sádiq was a very learned and well respected mullá, and so it wasn't unusual for him to lead the congregation in prayer at one of the local mosques. Shortly after Mullá Sádiq reads the *Khasá'il-i-Sab'ih*, one day as he is chanting the *adhán* at the Masjid-i-Naw [mosque of Naw], he adds the new words in. Once the gathering in the mosque realize what happened, there is pandemonium in the entire congregation. As the word spreads, Mullá Sádiq and Quddús begin teaching the Cause of the Báb. However, most of the listeners find what Mullá Sádiq and Quddús are teaching to be shocking. The mullás [meaning the clergy; the correct term is *'ulamá* which means the learned ones] now raise a clamour that this is heresy and the pure Faith of Islam had been despoiled. The populace re-echo the protestations of these mullás. As time goes by, the word spreads further throughout Shíráz such that even public order is threatened and the governor of the province¹ hears about this and gets involved. This governor's name is Husayn Khán 🗣️, who is a tyrant. The local mullás convey to Husayn Khán that a disciple [meaning Quddús] of a young man from Shíráz named Siyyid-i-Báb 🗣️ who is in Búshihr right now, has come to Shíráz and is spreading the teachings of his Master. This disciple teaches that his Master is the author of a new Revelation and revealer of a new Book that is divinely inspired. Mullá Sádiq, in spite of his age and learning, has also accepted this faith and is now spreading it. All this heresy is destroying the purity of Islam and misleading the people and has to be stopped at all costs. When Husayn Khán hears all this, he orders the arrest of Quddús and Mullá Sádiq.

Mullá Sádiq and Quddús: The First to be Persecuted for the Cause of God on Persian Soil

Both Quddús and Mullá Sádiq are brought to the governor handcuffed. When the officers had gone to arrest Mullá Sádiq, they had found him reading aloud passages from the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá* 🗣️² to an excited congregation, so they also brought a copy of that book for the governor. Quddús, owing to his young age and unconventional clothing, is ignored by Husayn Khán, who directs his remarks to the more dignified and elderly Mullá Sádiq.

¹ Province of Fárs [the province in which Shíráz lies].

² *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'* (literal translation: the Self-Subsisting of the [Divine] Names) is the title commonly used for this work of the Báb. As it is framed as a commentary on the Quran's twelfth *súra* [chapter], the *Súra* of *Yúsuf* [Joseph], it is sometimes also called *Tafsír-i-sūrih-i-Yúsuf* [commentary on the *Súra* of Joseph]. It consists of 111 chapters, and the first chapter called the *Súra* of Mulk was revealed in its entirety on this first evening. The remainder of the work was revealed over the next forty days. The entire work is in Arabic. It was one of the main texts that the Bábís eventually used in their teaching work. Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* calls it "the first, the greatest and mightiest of all books". For an analysis of structure and certain interpretations of the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'* see Saiedi *Gate of the Heart*, chapters 4-5, p11-159.

The governor angrily asks Mullá Sádiq:

Tell me, if you are aware that the opening passage of this book addresses the rulers and kings of the earth saying: "Divest yourselves of the robe of sovereignty, for He who is the King in truth, hath been made manifest! The Kingdom is God's, the Most Exalted. Thus hath the Pen of the Most High decreed!" If this be true, it must necessarily apply to my sovereign, Muhammad Sháh, whom I represent as the chief magistrate of this province. Must Muhammad Sháh, according to this behest, lay down his crown and abandon his sovereignty? Must I, too, abdicate my power and relinquish my position?"¹

Mulla Sádiq unhesitatingly replies:

If these words be the Word of God, the abdication of Muhammad Sháh and his like can matter but little. It can in no wise turn aside the Divine purpose, nor alter the sovereignty of the Almighty and Eternal King.²

Husayn Khán is outraged at Mullá Sádiq's answer. He orders his attendants to strip him of his garments and to scourge him with a thousand lashes. He then commands that the beards of both Quddús and Mullá Sádiq. should be burned, their noses be pierced, that through this incision a cord should be passed, and with this halter they should be led through the streets of the city. Husayn Khán added:

It will be an object lesson to the people of Shiraz, who will know what the penalty of heresy will be.

To all this, Mulla Sádiq, calm and self-possessed and with eyes upraised to heaven, is heard reciting this verse of the *Qúr'án*:

O Lord, our God! We have indeed heard the voice of One that called. He called us to the Faith "Believe ye on the Lord your God!" and we have believed. O God, our God! Forgive us, then, our sins, and hide away from us our evil deeds, and cause us to die with the righteous.³

With magnificent fortitude Quddús and Mullá Sádiq resigned themselves to their fate. None intervened on behalf of these sufferers, none was inclined to plead their cause. Soon after this tortuous treatment, they were both expelled from Shiraz,

1 *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p146

2 *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p146

3 *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p146; *Qúr'án* 3: 193.

with the warning that if they ever attempted to return to this city, they would both be crucified.

Nabíl records what an eyewitness of this episode, an unbeliever residing in Shiraz, related to him:

I was present when Mullá Sádiq was being scourged. I watched his persecutors each in turn apply the lash to his bleeding shoulders and continue the strokes until they became exhausted. No one believed that Mulla Sádiq, so advanced in age and so frail in body, could possibly survive even fifty such savage strokes. We marvelled at his fortitude when we found that, although the number of the strokes of the scourge he had received had already exceeded nine hundred, his face still retained its original serenity and calm. A smile was upon his face, as he held his hand before his mouth. He seemed utterly indifferent to the blows that were being showered upon him. When he was being expelled from the city, I succeeded in approaching him, and asked him why he held his hand before his mouth. I expressed surprise at the smile upon his countenance. He replied: "The first seven strokes were severely painful; to the rest I seemed to have grown indifferent. I was wondering whether the strokes that followed were being actually applied to my own body. A feeling of joyous exultation had invaded my soul. I was trying to repress my feelings and to restrain my laughter. I can now realise how the almighty Deliverer is able, in the twinkling of an eye, to turn pain into ease, and sorrow into gladness. Immensely exalted is His power above and beyond the idle fancy of His mortal creatures."¹

Nabíl then adds:

Mullá Sádiq, whom I met years after, confirmed every detail of this moving episode.²

As foretold by the Báb³, Mullá 'Alí-i-Bástámí, had been the first Bábí to suffer for the Cause of the Báb, but he underwent his persecution in Iraq [it was in the Ottoman empire], and not Persia.⁴ It was Quddús, Mullá Sádiq and Mullá 'Alí-Akbar-

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p147-148.

² *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p148.

³ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 3, p87

⁴ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p147: Mullá 'Alí-i-Bástámí was the first to suffer in any way for the Cause of the Báb. He got his first beating just outside Shíráz, shortly after leaving while on his way to Najaf and Karbalá'. This was by 'Abdu'l-Vahháb-i-Shírází's father, when the father found out that his young son had run off and joined Mullá 'Alí-i-Bástámí [see [Portrait of Mullá 'Alí-i-Bástámí](#)]. However, this is not counted as "persecution" on Persian

i-Ardistání who was with them in Shíráz,¹ who became the first to be persecuted on Persian soil.

We will soon see this dark ignorant side of humanity emerge again and again and attempt to put out the light of the Dawn across the land.

* * * * *

soil, and that title of being the first to be “persecuted on Persian soil” goes to Quddús, Mullá Sádiq and Mullá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Ardistání. Mullá ‘Alí-i-Bástámí has the honour of being the first to be persecuted anywhere and also the first to be martyred for the Cause of the Báb, with both of these happening outside Persian soil – he was imprisoned in Iráq and eventually died in Constantinople [all in the then Ottoman empire].

¹ This incident in Shíráz as related in *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p144-147, only describes involvement of Quddús and Mullá Sádiq. However later in *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 20, p415, Mullá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Ardistání is listed together with Quddús and Mullá Sádiq as together being “the first to suffer persecution on Persian soil for the sake of the Cause of God”. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in the *Traveller’s Narrative* [p 6] states that Mullá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Ardistání was, together with Quddús and Mullá Sádiq in Shíráz and subjected to the same persecution. This part from the *Traveller’s Narrative* is also noted in *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p146 footnote 3. The Guardian in *God Passes By* Chapter 1, p11 writes: “The villainous Husayn Khán, the Nizámu’d-Dawlih, the governor of Fárs, who had read the challenge thrown out in the *Qayyúmu’l-Asmá’*, having ordered that Mullá Sádiqs together with Quddús and another believer be summarily and publicly punished, caused their beards to be burned, their noses pierced, and threaded with halters; then, having been led through the streets in this disgraceful condition, they were expelled from the city.”

Section Two: The Báb Returns to Shíráz

A historical analysis of what happened in Shíráz at that time notes:

The people of Shíráz were by that time wild with excitement. A violent controversy was raging in the masjids [mosques], the madrisihs [schools], the bazaars, and other public places. ... Fearful, envious, thoroughly angered, the mullás were beginning to perceive the seriousness of [this challenge to] their position.¹

The governor, Husayn Khán, therefore now directed his attention against the person of the Báb. He dispatched to Búshihr a mounted escort of his own most trusted guards, with emphatic instructions to arrest the Báb and to bring Him in chains to Shíráz.

“Never will I turn My face away from the decree of God.”

The leader of that escort was a devout man, and a member of a branch of Shí'a Islam known as 'Alíyu'lláhí' ². Nabíl relates that he gave this account of what happened:

Having completed the third stage of our journey to Búshihr, we encountered, in the midst of the wilderness a Youth who wore a green sash and a small turban after the manner of the siyyids who are in the trading profession. He was on horseback, and was followed by an Ethiopian servant who was in charge of his belongings. As we approached Him, He saluted us and enquired as to our destination. I thought it best to conceal from Him the truth, and replied that in this vicinity we had been commanded by the governor of Fárs to conduct a certain enquiry. He smilingly observed: "The governor has sent you to arrest Me. Here am I; do with Me as you please. By coming out to meet you, I have curtailed the length of your march, and have made it easier for you to find Me."

I was startled by His remarks and marvelled at His candour and straightforwardness. I could not explain, however, His readiness to subject

¹ *God Passes By*, p11

² Also known as the Alawites or Nusaryites [group was founded by ibn Nusayr during the 9th century]. They have an exaggerated veneration of Imám 'Alí whom they consider to be manifestation of divinity. They are usually considered to be extremists and not accepted by mainstream Shí'a.

Himself, of His own accord, to the severe discipline of government officials, and to risk thereby His own life and safety. I tried to ignore Him, and was preparing to leave, when He approached me and said: "I swear by the righteousness of Him who created man, distinguished him from among the rest of His creatures, and caused his heart to be made the seat of His sovereignty and knowledge, that all My life I have uttered no word but the truth, and had no other desire except the welfare and advancement of My fellow-men. I have disdained My own ease and have avoided being the cause of pain or sorrow to anyone. I know that you are seeking Me. I prefer to deliver Myself into your hands, rather than subject you and your companions to unnecessary annoyance for My sake."

These words moved me profoundly. I instinctively dismounted from my horse, and, kissing His stirrups, addressed Him in these words: "O light of the eyes of the Prophet of God! I adjure You, by Him who has created You and endowed You with such loftiness and power, to grant my request and to answer my prayer. I beseech you to escape from this place and to flee from before the face of Husayn Khán, the ruthless and despicable governor of this province. I dread his machinations against You; I rebel at the idea of being made the instrument of his malignant designs against so innocent and noble a descendant of the Prophet of God. My companions are all honourable men. Their word is their bond. They will pledge themselves not to betray Your flight. I pray You, betake Yourself to the city of Mashhad in Khurásán, and avoid falling a victim to the brutality of this remorseless wolf."

To my earnest entreaty He gave this answer: "May the Lord your God requite you for your magnanimity and noble intention. No one knows the mystery of My Cause; no one can fathom its secrets. Never will I turn My face away from the decree of God. He alone is My sure Stronghold, My Stay and My Refuge. Until My last hour is at hand, none dare assail Me, none can frustrate the plan of the Almighty. And when My hour is come, how great will be My joy to quaff the cup of martyrdom in His name! Here am I; deliver Me into the hands of your master. Be not afraid, for no one will blame you."

I bowed my consent and carried out His desire. ¹

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p148-150.

So violent was the blow, that the Báb's turban fell to the ground

And so, the guards began their journey back to Shíráz with the Báb, who was meant to be their prisoner but instead rode free ahead of the escort, who followed Him in an attitude of respectful devotion. Reaching the city, they proceeded directly to the seat of the government. Whoever observed the cavalcade marching through the streets could not help but marvel at this most unusual spectacle.

As soon as Husayn Khán was informed of the arrival of the Bab, he summoned Him to his presence. He received Him with the utmost insolence and bade Him occupy a seat facing him in the centre of the room. He publicly rebuked Him, and in abusive language denounced His conduct, saying:

Do you realise, what a great mischief you have kindled? Are you aware what a disgrace you have become to the holy Faith of Islam and to the august person of our sovereign? Are you not the man who claims to be the author of a new revelation which annuls the sacred precepts of the *Qur'án*? ¹

The Báb calmly replied, with this verse of the *Qur'án*:

If any bad man come unto you with news, clear up the matter at once, lest through ignorance ye harm others, and be speedily constrained to repent of what ye have done. ²

These words inflamed the wrath of Husayn Khán. "What!" he exclaimed. "Dare you ascribe to us evil, ignorance, and folly?" Turning to his attendant, he bade him strike the Báb in the face. So violent was the blow, that the Bab's turban fell to the ground. ³

Present at that meeting was Shaykh Abú-Turáb , the *Imám-Jumih* ⁴ of Shíráz. He was a reasonable man and a close friend of the Báb's uncles. He knew the Báb, and had even presided over the Báb's wedding at the Báb's middle uncle's house some years earlier. ⁵ He immediately intervened and tried to defuse the situation and somehow get the Báb out. He told Husayn Khán that the governor had misunderstood the context of the verse of the *Qur'án* the Báb had quoted and that

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p150.

² *Qur'án* 49:6; *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p150.

³ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p150.

⁴ The word *Imám* means leader and *jumih* means Friday. The title *Imám-Jumih* therefore means the senior mullá who heads the Friday congregational prayers at the mosque.

⁵ Balyuzi *Khadíjah Bagum* p5.

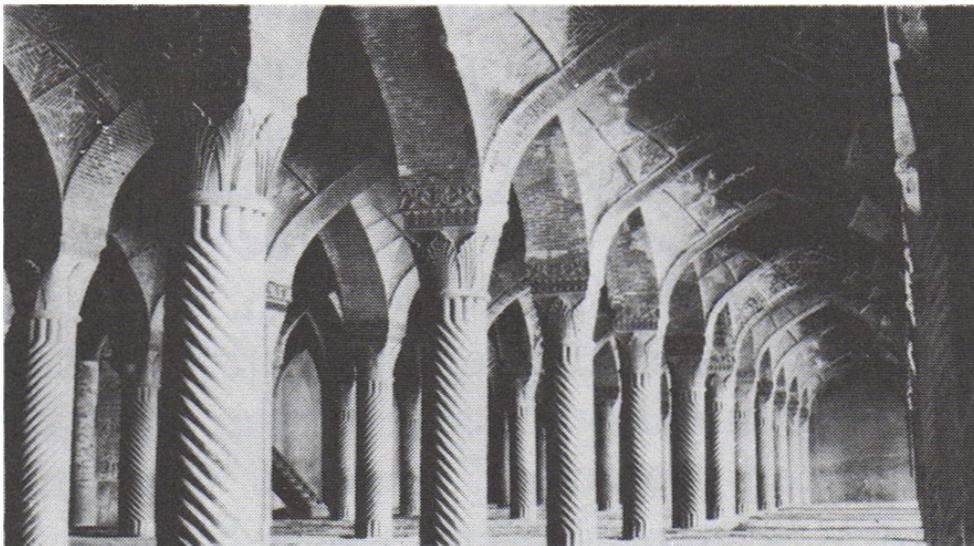
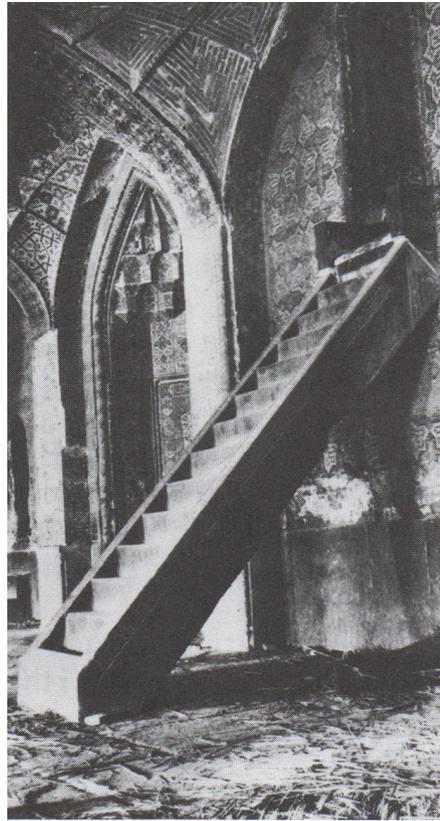
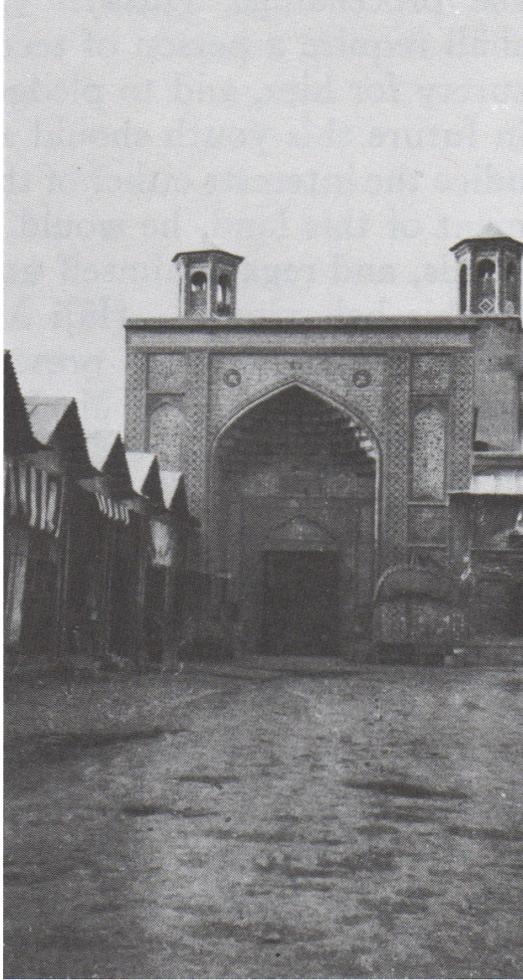
they should question the Báb using the approach of the *Qur'án* itself. Husayn Khán consented, and Shaykh Abú-Turáb questioned the Báb regarding the nature of His claims. The Báb denied the claim of being the representative of the promised *Qá'im* or the intermediary between Him and the faithful. Shaykh Abú-Turáb seized on this and said: "We are completely satisfied. We shall request you to present yourself on Friday in the Masjid-i-Vakíl ﴿﴾ [mosque of Vakíl] and to proclaim this publicly." With this he got up to leave, but Husayn Khán intervened and demanded someone stand as a guarantor and give surety regarding the Báb's behaviour in the future. To this, the Báb's middle uncle, who was present at the meeting, immediately consented. And so, the Báb was released into the hands of His middle uncle, who conducted Him to His own house to His wife and His mother's care.

"The condemnation of God be upon him who regards Me either as a representative of the Imám or the gate thereof."

Shaykh Abú-Turáb, the *Imám-Jumih* of Shíráz, never became a believer, but he always acted justly towards the Báb, and seemed to be the instrument of the invisible Hand appointed to protect both the person and the Mission of the Báb. He initially tried to avoid bringing the Báb to the congregation at Masjid-i-Vakíl as promised to Husayn Khán. Shaykh Abú-Turáb knew that many in his congregation were ignorant and hateful, and that most of the other mullás wished to keep their power and stranglehold on the populace and would therefore go against anything that might threaten their power. But he eventually gave into the pressure from the members of his congregation and arranged for the Báb to come to the Masjid-i-Vakíl on a certain Friday. Shaykh Abú-Turáb stood at the top of the steps of the pulpit, and he invited the Báb to ascend the pulpit, which He did to the half-way point. Shaykh Abú-Turáb then whispered to the Báb that He should be brief. The Báb, standing on the steps of the pulpit, declared:

Praise be to God, who hath in truth created the heavens and the earth. ... The condemnation of God be upon him who regards me either as a representative of the Imám or the gate thereof. The condemnation of God be also upon whosoever imputes to me the charge of having denied the unity of God, of having repudiated the prophethood of Muhammad, the Seal of the Prophets, of having rejected the truth of any of the messengers of old, or of having refused to recognise the guardianship of 'Alí, the Commander of the Faithful, or of any of the Imáms who have succeeded him.¹

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p153-154



Views of Masjid-i-Vakíl in Shíráz: Entrance [top left]; pulpit from which the Báb addressed the congregation [top right]; section of the interior [bottom]. Archival photos.¹

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p152

The Báb then ascended to the top of the staircase, embraced Shaykh Abú-Turáb, and, descending to the floor of the masjid, joined the congregation for the observance of the Friday prayer. Shaykh Abú-Turáb however was concerned about certain fanatical ill-wishers in the crowd, and quietly requested the Báb to retire and offer His prayers at home, which He did accompanied by His middle uncle who also was present.

Spiritually receptive souls

The Báb had made it clear at the Masjid-i-Vakíl that He was not a representative of the *Qáim* or the gate to such a person, and that He did not reject the Prophet Muhammad or the station of Imám 'Alí. He knew that the people were not receptive and therefore had not said anything else. Most of these people were so spiritually blind and fanatical, that they could not even conceive that the Báb was actually saying that He far above being a representative of the *Qáim*. He was the *Qáim* and a new independent Messenger of God ushering in a new Dispensation.

However, for all the multitudes of the spiritually blind and deaf, there are always those exceptional souls who are spiritually alert. This was exemplified by a handful present at that memorable Friday at the Masjid-i-Vakíl. Nabíl recounts the story of six individuals, one of whom is the young nephew of Shaykh Abú-Turáb. who were present that Friday, and even with this very brief public encounter with the Báb, realized that He represented something special, and with further investigation came to full recognition of the Báb's Station and Message.¹ These souls call to mind these words:

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p155-156

The six individuals listed by Nabíl as among those who were present that Friday in the mosque and hearing the Báb that day led them to eventually recognize and accept Him were:

- Shaykh 'Alí Mírzá  [nephew of the Imám-Jum'ih Shaykh Abú-Turáb], who became a staunch believer and later met Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdád which redoubled his faith. He was so sincere and capable, that even though everyone knew he was a Bábí, he was able to get a position in the upper government circles and distinguished himself by the service he gave to the people.
- Muhammad-Karím  who became a staunch believer and later met Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdád which confirmed his faith. He was asked by Bahá'u'lláh to go back and teach in Shíráz, which he did faithfully until the end of his life.
- Mírzá Áqáy-i-Rikáb-Sáz  who became a staunch believer and later met Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdád which further ignited his faith. In answer to his questions, Bahá'u'lláh revealed the *Lawh-i-Áyiy-i-Núr*  [Tablet of the Verse of Light], sometimes also known as *Tafsír-i-Hurúfát-i-Muqatta'ih*  [Interpretation of the

O servants! Eyes are needed if one is to see, and ears, if one is to hear. Whoso in this blessed Day hath not heard the divine call hath indeed no ear. By this is not meant that bodily ear that is perceived by the eye. Open your inner eye, that ye may behold the celestial Fire, and listen with the ear of inner understanding, that ye may hear the delightful words of the Beloved.¹

* * * * *

Disconnected Letters] [see Taherzadeh's *Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh* vol 1, p125-128]. Mírzá Áqá was eventually martyred.

- Mírzá Rahím-i-Khabbáz  who became a staunch believer until his death.
- Hájí Abu'l-Hasan-i-Bazzáz , who had been in the same *Hajj* group as the Báb and at that time had only dimly recognized the station of the Báb, but on that Friday in Shíráz, he was profoundly transformed. He and his two sons became staunch believers serving the Faith to the end of their days.
- Hájí Muhammad-Bisát , a learned man well-versed in the metaphysical teachings of Islam and an admirer of both Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kázim, who became a devoted believer.

¹ Bahá'u'lláh *Tabernacle of Unity*, Section 4.3, p67-68

Section Three: They Trickle into Shíráz

Following the incident at the Masjid-i-Vakíl, the Báb's next few months were a life of comparative tranquility spent with his family and kinsmen, with visits from certain of His followers. He celebrated the first *Naw-Rúz* ﴿﴾¹ since He had declared His Mission in the calm of His own home in Shíráz. It is March 1845.

Karbalá': The Bridge of Sirát has many crossings

Before setting off on His pilgrimage towards the end of 1844, the Báb had instructed many of His followers [now known as Bábís ﴿﴾] to gather in Karbalá', with the promise that He would join them there after His pilgrimage. His followers expected the fulfillment of one of the *hadíth* ﴿﴾² which prophecies that the *Qá'im* would appear in Kúfa ﴿﴾ [which is besides Najaf and about 45 miles south of Karbalá']. Their expectation was that from there, together with the Báb as their leader, they would initiate an uprising and conquer the world.³

However, shortly after Naw-Rúz 1845, an epistle from the Báb reached the Bábís gathered in Karbalá' saying that there was a change in His plan, and He would not be coming. Instead, He directed them to go to Isfáhán and remain there until receipt of further instructions. This change in the plans of the Báb created a big stir among His followers and tested their faith. Some faltered and could not make this new crossing of the metaphoric Bridge of Sirát ﴿﴾, but others remained firm in their faith. However, the crossings of this Bridge are many. And perhaps the most difficult crossing is the test of other people who profess to believe but have other agendas. These are people who have fallen off the Bridge and as they fall, they try to pull others down with themselves. The first group of the Bábís who traveled from Karbalá' to Isfáhán was a mixture of these.

¹ Fársí, means New Day. It is the Persian New Year believed to be first celebrated in Persepolis in the days of the ancient Persian civilization [the Achaemenid Empire 550-330 B.C.]. It marks the day of the Spring Equinox in the Northern hemisphere. It always falls sometime between March 19 – 22.

² Also called Traditions, the *hadíth* are oral sayings attributed to the Prophet Mohammad and the Imáms and given very high importance – second only to the Qur'án. For more details on *hadíth* see [Resources: Brief Background on Shí'a Islam](#).

³ These messianic expectations remind us of the similar messianic expectations of the Jews at the time of Jesus. The Jews, based on the prophecies of the Hebrew Bible, expected that the Messiah would come wielding a mighty sword, be seated on the throne of David and as a mighty King free the Jews from bondage. As we know, Christ fulfilled these prophecies metaphorically and not literally.

On their way to Isfáhán, this Karbalá' Bábí group meet Mullá Husayn, his brother and his nephew, who were on their way to Karbalá'. Being made aware of the new instructions from the Báb, Mullá Husayn and his companions now turned and began to travel to Isfáhán. The Karbalá' Bábí group asked Mullá Husayn if they could follow him. The love and respect that the group showed towards Mullá Husayn fanned the flame of envy in the heart of some of the group, who considered themselves highly learned and wished for leadership. Nabíl records that some of these power-seeking individuals tried to poison the minds of the other believers towards Mullá Husayn, by using carefully worded but disparaging remarks about him. This upset the faithful believers, who reported these incidents to Mullá Husayn, who then counselled them to show forbearance towards these lost souls. Nabíl records: "Mulla Husayn's association with the loyal companions¹ of the Báb greatly added to their zeal and enthusiasm. They were edified by his example and were lost in admiration for the brilliant qualities of mind and heart which distinguished so eminent a fellow-disciple."² The journey to Isfáhán continued.

Isfáhán to Shíráz

At the outskirts of Isfáhán, Mullá Husayn made the Bábí group break up and enter the city in small numbers, so as not to attract the attention of the public. A few days after their arrival in Isfáhán, word reached the group of the incident of the Báb and the governor in Shíráz, and that all manner of interaction with the Báb had been forbidden. The situation in Shíráz was seen as being quite dangerous for the followers of the Báb. Mullá Husayn, however, was quite undaunted by this news. He set aside his mullá robes and turban and put on the clothes of horsemen from a particular region of Khurásán  [his home province], and together with his brother and nephew set out secretly for Shíráz. Only a few of the Bábís gathered in Isfáhán knew about this.

When Mullá Husayn and his two companions arrived at the gate of the city of Shíráz, he instructed his brother to quietly, in the middle of the night, go to the house of the middle uncle of the Báb [Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí] and request him to inform the Báb of their arrival. The next day, Mullá Husayn received the welcome

¹ These loyal companions included two of the Nahrí brothers from Isfáhán [Muhammad 'Alí and Hádí; see [DB 10-12, Section 2](#)]. It also included some who later joined the struggle at Fort Shaykh Tarbarsí. *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p159.

² *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p160

news that the uncle would himself meet Mullá Husayn just outside the gate of the city after sunset. That evening, Mullá Husayn met up with the Báb's uncle and went to the uncle's residence. During that night, the Báb came to the residence where Mullá Husayn was able to converse and remain in His presence until the break of day.

The First Group to come to Shíráz: The three who make it

Soon after Mullá Husayn's arrival, the Báb gave permission to the Bábís who had gathered in Isfáhán, to leave gradually for Shíráz, and there to wait until it should be feasible for Him to meet them. He cautioned them to exercise the utmost vigilance and not draw attention to themselves. He instructed them to enter the gate of the city only a few at a time and to disperse immediately upon their arrival into such quarters as were reserved for travelers. He also instructed them to accept whatever employment they could find.

The first group of these followers from Isfáhán to come to Shíráz, a short while after Mullá Husayn were six individuals who will eventually have different fates. Three of them will be steadfast believers and make it over all the crossings of the Bridge. Three of them will not.¹

The three of the group who make it through all the crossings of the Bridge, were Muhammad-'Alíy-i-Nahrí (ﷺ), one of his brothers Mírzá Hádí (ﷺ), and Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím (ﷺ) of Qazvín. The first two were taught by Mullá Husayn on his first visit to Isfáhán [more about them later, [DB 10-12, Section 2](#)]. Nabíl relates that one evening these three had a meeting with the Báb in the house of the Báb's middle uncle [Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí]. At one point during this meeting, the Báb, suddenly but with extreme calm and gentleness, turned to Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím and said: "Abdu'l-Karím, are you seeking the Manifestation?"²

Much to everyone's surprise, these simple words had a startling effect on Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím, who burst into tears and threw himself at the feet of the Báb. The Báb took him lovingly in His arms, kissed his forehead, and invited him to be seated by His side. Later, when they had left the presence of the Báb, Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím told his companions the history behind this. Years ago, Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím and his brother had become ardent disciples of Siyyid Kazim and had moved to Karbalá' to

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p161

² *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p162

be with Siyyid Kazim. After some time, Siyyid Kazim had told 'Abdu'l-Karím to leave Karbalá' and go back to his hometown of Qazvín and stay there until he heard news of the Promised One. Siyyid Kazim's parting words to him had been: "Rest assured, O 'Abdu'l-Karím, you are of those who, in the Day of His Revelation, will arise for the triumph of His Cause. You will, I hope remember me on that blessed Day."¹ So 'Abdu'l-Karím and his brother² returned to Qazvín. On the eve of the day of 'Arafih of 1255 AH [eve of 13 February 1840] while in deep prayer, 'Abdu'l-Karím had a vision:

There appeared before me a bird, white as the snow, which hovered above my head and alighted upon the twig of a tree beside me. In accents of indescribable sweetness, that bird voiced these words: "Are you seeking the Manifestation, O Abdu'l-Karim? Lo, the year '60."³ Immediately after, the bird flew away and vanished.

'Abdu'l-Karím adds:

The mystery of those words greatly agitated me. The memory of the beauty of that vision lingered long in my mind. I seemed to have tasted all the delights of Paradise. My joy was irrepressible. The mystic message of that bird had penetrated my soul and was continually on my lips. I revolved it constantly in my mind. I shared it with no one, fearing lest its sweetness forsake me.⁴

Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím's faith was fully confirmed by the actualization of his remarkable vision that evening in Shíráz with the Báb. Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím will remain in Shíráz and become a transcriber of the Writings of the Báb for Him. He will accompany the Báb as one of His three amanuenses [secretaries] in several places.⁵ He will become Nabíl's close friend in the future,⁶ be named Mírzá Ahmad

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p166

² The brother, 'Abdu'l-Hamíd, also becomes a follower of the Báb and is eventually martyred in Tihrán. *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p 166

³ Reference to 1260 AH [1844 AD] the year of the Declaration of the Báb.

⁴ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p167

⁵ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 8, p168; Chapter 9, p176 and p192; Chapter 10, p212; Chapter 12, 228; and Chapter 22, p505.

⁶ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 21, p439-440; Chapter 22, p505

by Bahá'u'lláh,¹ and remain steadfast and firm to the end of his days, when he is martyred in Tíhrán.²

The First Group to come to Shíráz: The three who don't make it

To return to the three of this first group who don't make it through all the crossings of the Bridge, they were: Mullá Javád of Baraghán ^{﴿﴾}, Mírzá Ibráhím of Shíráz ^{﴿﴾} and Mullá 'Abdu'l-'Alí of Harát ^{﴿﴾}. The last one was a very well-known highly learned Islamic jurist. He had learned about the Báb during Mullá Husayn's first visit to Isfáhán after the Declaration of the Báb³. After this meeting with the Báb in Shíráz, he meets the Báb later again in Isfáhán and expresses incredible praise for the Báb⁴, but eventually turns away. All three in later years join hands with Karím Khán⁵ the self-appointed leader of the Shaykhí's and engage in vehemently denouncing the Báb. Soon after this their first meeting with the Báb in Shíráz, the path these three are taking emerges. During their stay in Shíráz, they start planting seeds of doubt in the mind of the other Bábí's in particular about Mullá Husayn. Their spreading of lies and rumours is in all matters, such that even the non-Bábí's in the city get upset with them, and eventually all three are expelled from the city of Shíráz by the civil authorities. Such acts unfortunately added to the suspicion and fears of the local population against the Bábí's.

A Small but Regular Stream

After Mullá Husayn and the first Karbalá' Bábí group arrive, a small but regular stream of individuals from other provinces who had been taught by the Letters of the Living or heard about the Báb and His claims through other sources begin to flow into Shíráz. Either individually or in groups of two or three they met the Báb. They were all transformed. Many of these individuals will end up playing significant roles in various ways in the future in spreading the Cause of not just the Báb but also that of Bahá'u'lláh. Several of these individuals were among the most learned of the religious scholars of their respective provinces, if not the land. Nabíl tells the

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 21, p439; which is why he is also sometimes known as Mírzá Ahmad-i-Kátib [Mírzá Ahmad the scribe].

² Balyuzi *Bahá'u'lláh King of Glory* Chapter 17, p87. See [Portrait Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím-i-Qazvíní](#).

³ See [DB 4-7, Section 1](#)

⁴ See [10-12, Section 2](#)

⁵ See [DB 1-2, Section 3](#)

stories of several of them.¹ In the next section, we will tell the story of one of them, who will end up with the title of Vahíd.

They are dispersed from Shíráz

As time passed, the presence and teaching work of Mullá Husayn and the other Bábís in Shíráz caused concern in the ignorant fanatical population of the city. And as always, the power-hungry clergy felt threatened and therefore rose up against the Bábís in general and Mullá Husayn in particular. The situation became menacing, so the Báb instructed Mullá Husayn to go back to his native province of Khurásán through the city of Yazd. After this separation, Mullá Husayn will meet the Báb only once more² before Mullá Husayn's martyrdom at Fort Shaykh Tabarsí.³

The Báb also dismissed the rest of the Bábís who had come to Shíráz and sent them back mainly to Isfáhán. He only retained Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím and Shaykh Hasan-i-Zunúzí as His amanuenses [they were assigned the duty of transcribing His Writings]. It is now summer of 1846.

* * * * *

¹ Nabíl's descriptions of those who came to Shíráz and met the Báb [and in later years play important roles in the Faith] include:

- Hájí Siyyid Javád-i-Karbilá'í  who meets the Báb in Shíráz and is praised by the Báb in a tablet addressed to him and Vahíd, in which the Báb extols the firmness of their faith. Siyyid Javád was so kind, forebearing and venerable that he was generally called Siyyid-i-Núr  [radiant Siyyid]. Even the Sháh was impressed by him when they once met by chance. Siyyid Javád later meets Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdad and recognizes Bahá'u'lláh's Station. Many years later he is sent by Bahá'u'lláh to teach the Báb's mother [*Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p188, 189 & 191].
- Shaykh Sultán-i- Karbilá'í  - one of the leading ulamas of Karbalá' - whom the Báb visits one night in Shíráz because he is sick, whose daughter eventually marries Áqáy-i-Kalím, and years later is the one who goes to search for Bahá'u'lláh in Sulaymáníyyih  [*Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p189-190].
- Shaykh Hasan-i-Zunúzí , who comes to Shíráz together with Shaykh Sultán-i- Karbilá'í. Shaykh Hasan is given the task of transcribing the Writings of the Báb in collaboration with Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím. [*Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p189 & p192]. He will become one of the three main amanuenses of the Báb. See [Portrait: Shaykh Hasan-i-Zunúzí](#).
- Siyyid Husayn-i-Yazdí  who had recently come back to Shíráz and is asked by the Báb to go to Isfáhán and wait there for Him. [*Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p192-193]. Siyyid Husayn-i-Yazdí is one of the Letters of the Living. He will become one of the Báb's three main amanuenses, accompany the Báb through His imprisonment in Máh-Kú and Chihríq up to the Báb's martyrdom in Tabríz, and himself be eventually martyred in Tihrán]. See [Portrait: Siyyid Husayn-i-Yazdí](#).

² When Mullá Husayn visits the Báb when the Báb is in the prison of Máh-Kú – see [DB 13-16, Section 1](#)

³ See [DB 19-20 Part A, Section 3](#)

Section Four: The Message Spreads

The precautionary measures the Báb undertook to send away His followers who had come to Shíráz, relieved Him from the immediate danger of violence from the fanatics of that city. At the same time, it lent a fresh impetus to the propagation of His Faith already ongoing through the Letters of the Living who had, by this time, spread through much of the country. Let us look at some of that initial wave of teaching. We know about some of the travels of Mullá Husayn and their results¹. What about the others? Before we discuss these, we should briefly touch on the political environment of Persia at this time: Muhammad Sháh  is the reigning Qájár king.² The Grand Vazír is Hájí Mírzá Áqásí , who holds great sway over him and virtually rules the land. Hájí Mírzá Áqásí was Muhammad Shah's tutor and



Muhammad Sháh [reign 1835 – 1848 AD]³



Hájí Mírzá Áqásí [Grand Vazír 1835-1848 AD]⁴

¹ See [DB 4-7, Sections 1 & 2; DB 8-9, Section 3](#)

² For more information see [Resources: Qájár Dynasty & Key Bábí/Bahá'í Events](#)

³ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 12, p229

⁴ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 12, p233

idolized by him. Neither the Sháh nor his Grand Vazír are just or moral individuals. Muhammad Sháh is described as “bigoted”, “sickly” and “vacillating”, while Áqásí is stated as being “a vulgar, false-hearted and fickle-minded schemer”¹. We will see Hájí Mírzá Áqásí’s immense fear of the Bábí movement and his unrelenting efforts and scheming to kill it and silence the Báb. He succeeds in causing much suffering to the Báb and greatly fuels the fire of opposition towards the Bábís, but in the end [after Muhammad Sháh’s death in 1848] loses all his power and amassed wealth, and dies in poverty and disgrace.²

Quddús spreads the Message

Before the Báb had returned to Shíráz, Quddús and Mullá Sádiq had both been tortured and then expelled from that city by the command of the rapacious governor Husayn Khán.³ For a few days they continued to journey together, after which they separated. Quddús headed to Kirmán. His main aim in that city was to give a last chance to Hájí Muhammad-Karím Khán,⁴ the self-appointed leader of the Shaykhí’s, to learn about and recognize the Báb’s Manifestation. Quddús’ efforts were to no avail. Karím Khán remained adamantly entrenched on his lost path of seeking power and vehement opposition to the Báb. Over the years that followed, Karím Khán and his followers are the cause of much suffering to the followers of the Báb.

And as always, for every adamantly lost soul, there also appear radiant ones. While in Kirmán, Quddús was hosted by the highly learned Hájí Siyyid Javád of Kirman , at whose home he stayed. Siyyid Javád recognized the Message of the Báb and the station of Quddús. It is reported that at all the gatherings held in his home while Quddús was visiting, Siyyid Javád always accorded the young Quddús the seat of honour and treated him with extreme deference and courtesy. This aroused the wonder and jealousy of many of the others present and, in particular, that of Karím Khán. Karím Khán went to the governor of the city and demanded that Siyyid Javád be asked to get rid of Quddús. Siyyid Javád, who held a much higher position than Karím Khán, told the governor: “How often have I advised you, to ignore the whisperings of this evil plotter! My forbearance has emboldened him. Let him

¹ *God Passes By*, Chapter I, p4

² See [DB 17-18, Section 3](#)

³ See [DB 8-9, Section 1](#)

⁴ See [DB 1-2, Section 3](#)

beware lest he overstep his bounds. ... He gives himself the liberty of committing the foulest deeds, and refuses to allow me to receive and honour in my own home a man of such integrity, such learning and nobleness. Should he refuse to desist from this practice, let him be warned that the worst elements of the city will, at my instigation, expel him from Kirman.”¹ This stopped the efforts of Karím Khán against Quddús. In the privacy of his own home, Siyyid Javád had already declared his faith in the Báb to Quddús, but said he was going to conceal his belief, in the hope of being able to guard more effectively the interests of the newly established community. And this is what Siyyid Javád did to the last of his earthly days. If it wasn't for his restraining influence, the harm that Karím Khán and his followers would have been able to inflict on the Bábí community would have been incalculable over the years. What made Karím Khán's influence so particularly pernicious was that he subverted Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kázim's message. The very teachings whose goal was to prepare the people for the coming of the Promised One were subverted and now used to oppose and persecute the Promised One. Karím Khán was seen by the Bábí's as the *Dajjál* ﴿﴾² foretold to come and oppose the Promised One.

From Kirmán, Quddús set out on a long teaching trip through many towns and cities. His main stops after Kirmán were Yazd ﴿﴾, Ardikán ﴿﴾, Náyin ﴿﴾, Ardistán ﴿﴾, Isfáhán ﴿﴾, Káshán ﴿﴾, Qum ﴿﴾, Tihrán ﴿﴾ and eventually his hometown of Bárfurúsh ﴿﴾ [see map below].³ At every stop, regardless of the obstacles facing him, Quddús succeeded in awakening souls to the message of the Báb.

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p180-181

² *al-dajjál* ﴿﴾ [Arabic] means The Deceiver, translated as “anti-Christ”. According to *hadíth* he is one-eyed, lying imposter who will arise on the Day of Judgement and fight the Mahdí and Jesus Christ. Karím Khán-i-Kirmání was one-eyed [Dawn-Breakers Chapter 2, p39] and was referred to as the anti-Christ of the new Revelation by Siyyid Kázim [Dawn-Breakers Chapter 2, p40 and p46 footnote #2].

³ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p182-183



Quddús' route from Shiráz to Bárfurúsh. Route outlined is an approximation as details of all stops are not known. His main stops were: Shiráz to Kirmán, Yazd, Ardikán, Náyin, Ardistán, Isfahán, Káshán, Qum, Tihrán and eventually to his hometown of Bárfurúsh [nowadays called Bábol]. ¹

In Tihrán, Quddús was admitted into the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. We don't have a record of the meeting with Bahá'u'lláh, but Mírzá Músá,² the younger brother of Bahá'u'lláh, describes his own meeting with Quddús in Tihrán like this:

The charm of his person, his extreme affability, combined with a dignity of bearing, appealed to even the most careless observer. Whoever was intimately associated with him was seized with an insatiable admiration for the charm of that youth. We watched him one day perform his ablutions,³ and were struck by the gracefulness which distinguished him from the rest of

¹ Map from Balyuzi *Eminent Bahá'ís In the Time of Bahá'u'lláh*, prologue p5. Map has been modified with route, compass and highlighting added.

² He is known by the title Áqáy-i-Kalím [see [DB 4-7, Sections 2 & 3](#)]

³ Washing of hands and face in preparation to say the obligatory prayer.

the worshippers in the performance of so ordinary a rite. He seemed, in our eyes, to be the very incarnation of purity and grace. ¹

Quddús prophecies his own death

After Tihrán, Quddus traveled north to his hometown of Bárfurúsh, to the simple home of his father [who was a rice cultivator], where he stayed for the next two years and was actively engaged in teaching the Cause of the Báb.



¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p183



Views of Quddús' father's house in Bárfurúsh. Archival photos.¹

His father had remarried, after the death of Quddús' mother. Nabíl records that Quddús' step-mother loved him dearly:

[She] treated Quddús with a kindness and care that no mother could have hoped to surpass. She longed to witness his wedding, and was often heard to express her fears lest she should have to carry with her to the grave the "supreme joy of her heart." "The day of my wedding," Quddús observed, "is not yet come. That day will be unspeakably glorious. Not within the confines of this house, but out in the open air, under the vault of heaven, in the midst of the Sabzih-Maydán ﴿﴾, before the gaze of the multitude, there shall I celebrate my nuptials and witness the consummation of my hopes." Three years later, when that lady learned of the circumstances attending the martyrdom of Quddus in the Sabzih-Maydán, she recalled his prophetic words and understood their meaning.²

Quddús remained in Bárfurúsh until the time [1848] when he was joined by Mullá Husayn after the latter's return from his visit to the Báb in the castle of Máh-Kú ﴿﴾. From Bárfurúsh they set out for Mashhad in the province of Khurásán. Eventually both will return to Mázindarán ﴿﴾, and render deeds so heroic that none of their

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p182. Bárfurúsh is nowadays called Bábol.

² *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p183

countrymen could hope to rival them. This is the episode at Fort Shaykh Tabarsí in which both are martyred. More on this later [DB 19 and DB 19-20 Parts A & B].

Mullá Sádiq spreads the Message

After being tortured and expelled from Shíráz with Quddús,¹ Mullá Sádiq headed to the city of Yazd. The foremost *mujtahid* ^{﴿﴾} of that city was the learned Siyyid Husayn of Azghand ^{﴿﴾}² who was a good and just man. He was the maternal uncle of a person we have met before, Mírzá Ahmad of Azghand. When Mullá Husayn had gone to Mashhad on his first trip, the first person to accept the message of the Báb in that city was this Mírzá Ahmad of Azghand.³ Mírzá Ahmad was an exceptionally learned and eminent Shaykhí leader. His uncle, Siyyid Husayn had asked him to come from Mashhad to Yazd to support him in combatting the pernicious influence of the self-proclaimed Shaykhí leader Hájí Muhammad-Karím Khán.⁴ Karím Khán had established his base in the city of Kirmán, which is not far south-east of Yazd, and was actively trying to expand his influence and followers in other areas. Mírzá Ahmad's real intention for coming to Yazd was to go to Shíráz to see the Báb [Yazd is enroute between Mashhad and Shíráz], but he didn't tell his uncle this.⁵

Azghand, the hometown of Mírzá Ahmad is in the province of Khurásán, and Mullá Sádiq was also from Khurásán. They knew each other well and were close trusted friends. Knowing that his friend was in Yazd, Mullá Sádiq upon arriving went straight to the *masjid* [mosque] in which the uncle Siyyid Husayn was leading the congregational prayer and Mírzá Ahmad was to deliver the sermon. Nabíl records what happened:

Taking his seat in the first row among the worshippers, he [Mullá Sádiq] joined them in prayer, after which he went straight to Siyyid Husayn and publicly embraced him. Uninvited, he immediately afterwards ascended the

¹ See **DB 8-9, Section 1**

² Usually written as Siyyid Husayn-i-Azghandí

³ See **DB 4-7, Section 2**. Note: Bushrúyih [Mullá Husayn's hometown], Azghand and Mashhad are all in the province of Khurásán. Mashhad is in the northern part of the province, with Azghand about 130 miles south-east of Mashhad and Bushrúyih about 140 miles further south-east of Azghand.

⁴ See **DB 1-2, Section 3; DB 8-9, Section 1**

⁵ Nabíl records that Mírzá Ahmad had painstakingly compiled a book of over 12,000 traditions about the coming of the Promised One, which he circulated amongst the Bábís to use for teaching the Cause of the Báb. One day in Yazd, a certain newly arrived mujtahid from Najaf, pretending to be interested in the Cause of the Báb, asked to borrow that book. He however took it and never returned and destroyed it. *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p184-185. The eminence and work of Mírzá Ahmad is also recorded in *God Passes By* p12-13.

pulpit and prepared to address the faithful. Siyyid Husayn, though at first startled, preferred to raise no objection, being curious to discover the motive, and ascertain the degree of the learning, of this sudden intruder. He motioned to his nephew to refrain from opposing him.

Mullá Sádiq prefaced his discourse with one of the best-known and most exquisitely written homilies of the Báb, after which he addressed the congregation in these terms: "Render thanks to God, O people of learning, for, behold, the Gate of Divine Knowledge, which you deem to have been closed, is now wide open. The River of everlasting life has streamed forth from the city of Shíráz, and is conferring untold blessings upon the people of this land. Whoever has partaken of one drop from this Ocean of heavenly grace, no matter how humble and unlettered, has discovered in himself the power to unravel the profoundest mysteries, And whoever, though he be the most learned expounder of the Faith of Islam, has chosen to rely upon his own competence and power and has disdained the Message of God, has condemned himself to irretrievable degradation and loss."

A wave of indignation and dismay swept over the entire congregation as these words of Mulla Sádiq pealed out this momentous announcement. The masjid rang with cries of "Blasphemy!" "Descend from the pulpit," rose the voice of Siyyid Husayn amid the clamour and tumult of the people, as he motioned to Mulla Sádiq to hold his peace and to retire. No sooner had he regained the floor of the masjid than the whole company of the assembled worshippers rushed upon him and overwhelmed him with blows.

Siyyid Husayn immediately intervened, vigorously dispersed the crowd, and, seizing the hand of Mulla Sádiq, forcibly drew him to his side. "Withhold your hands," he appealed to the multitude; "leave him in my custody. I will take him to my home, and will closely investigate the matter. A sudden fit of madness may have caused him to utter these words. I will myself examine him. If I find that his utterances are premeditated and that he himself firmly believes in the things which he has declared, I will, with my own hands, inflict upon him the punishment imposed by the law of Islam."

By this solemn assurance, Mulla Sádiq was delivered from the savage attacks of his assailants. Divested of his *'abá* [cloak] and turban, deprived of his sandals and staff, bruised and shaken by the injuries he had received, he was entrusted to the care of Siyyid Husayn's attendants, who, as they forced their

passage among the crowd, succeeded eventually in conducting him to the home of their master.¹

Mullá Sádiq was not the only one who was beaten by the crowds in the days surrounding this episode. Nabíl records other Bábí teachers in Yazd who around that time were persecuted even more fiercely.² But for the intervention of Mírzá Ahmad and his uncle, they would all have been killed. However, in due time, we will see that no amount of protection from these few good people is sufficient and many Bábís will be killed not only in Yazd but throughout the land.

Hujjat-i-Zanjání

Hujjat was born in 1812/1813 to an esteemed family in Zanján ﴿﴾, a town in the northwestern region of Írán.³ His given name was Mullá Muhammad-'Alí ﴿﴾, but he is known as Hujjat because the Báb later entitled him *Hujjat* ﴿﴾ [means Proof/Testimony].

Hujjat's father⁴ was one of the leading *mujtahids* ﴿﴾ [a person learned in Islamic law]⁵ of Zanján, highly respected for his learning, his piety and force of character. Hujjat had taken after his father, who recognized the abilities of his son from his earliest days and sent him to Najaf to study Islamic law.⁶ While Hujjat's keen intelligence and strength of character earned the admiration of his friends, his outspokenness and fiery ardor also made many adversaries. Because of this, Hujjat's father advised him not to return to Zanján, where his enemies were conspiring against him. Following his father's advice, Hujjat established his residence in Hamadán ﴿﴾, where he married and lived for a few years. However,

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p185-187

² Such as Mullá Yúsuf-i-Ardibíli. *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p187

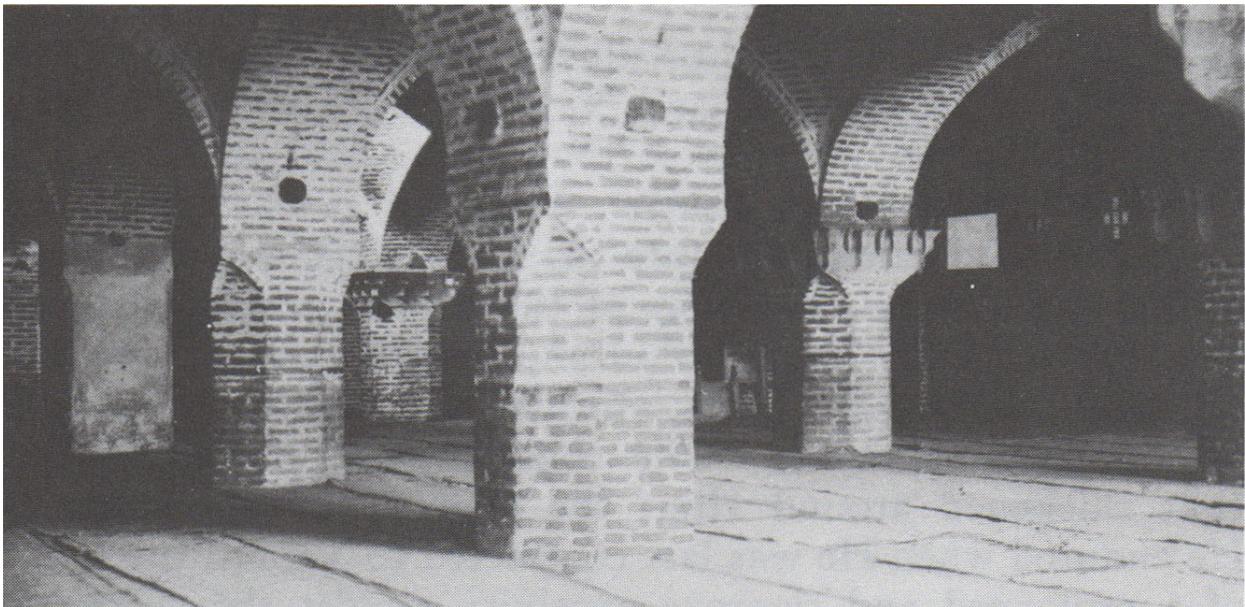
³ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 24, p529. However, note that *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 24, p529 footnote 2 quotes Comte de Gobineau *Les Religions et les Philosophies dan l'Asie Centrale* p191-192 "he [Hujjat] was a native of Mázindarân".

⁴ Mullá Rahím-i-Zanjání. *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 24, p529

⁵ *Mujtahid* means someone who is learned in Islamic law. To become a mujtahid, one has to study Islamic law under other senior learned mujtahids [studies can take many years]. The person is eventually granted the status of a mujtahid allowing them to be an authority to practice Islamic law. A mujtahid can issue *fatwas* [authorized legal opinions]. They further can take on and train other students, preach in the mosques and head congregations.

⁶ Hujjat studied in Najaf and Karbalá' under the celebrated mujtahid Sharífu'l-'Ulamáy-i-Mázindarání. *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 24, p529 footnote 4.

when the news of his father's death reached him, he decided to return to his hometown, Zanján. From the very first day of his return, Hujjat received vast support from the general population, and this aroused the jealousy of the other *'ulamá* [learned clergy]. This was particularly heightened, because Hujjat not only taught and exhorted the people to follow the teachings of the Qur'án but embodied these high principles in his own life. He called out the many forms of decadence and corruption which were rampant amongst the other *'ulamá*, His independence of thought and outspokenness was a big thorn in their side. Hujjat taught in this fashion for the next seventeen years. His teaching was so effective that he gathered a large following who built a *masjid* [mosque] in Zanján just for him to teach in. His disciples soon surpassed in knowledge and understanding the other leading *'ulamá* of Zanján. All this earned him the highly esteemed title of *Hujjat'ul-Islam* [Proof/Testimony of Islam] throughout the land, but also deep enmity in particular of the other *'ulamá* of Zanján.¹



Interior view of the *masjid* in Zanján built for Hujjat by his followers where he taught. Archival photo.²

Hujjat's recognition of the Message of the Báb

Nabíl describes how Hujjat learned about the message of the Báb:

¹ See *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p177-178 and Chapter 24, p529-530 including footnotes

² *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 24, p528

As soon as the Call from Shíráz reached his ears, Hujjat deputed one of his disciples, Mullá Iskandar, in whom he reposed the fullest confidence, to enquire into the whole matter and to report to him the result of his investigations. Utterly indifferent to the praise and censure of his countrymen, whose integrity he suspected and whose judgment he disdained, he sent his delegate to Shíráz with explicit instructions to conduct a minute and independent enquiry. Mullá Iskandar attained the presence of the Báb and felt immediately the regenerating power of His influence. He tarried forty days in Shíráz, during which time he imbibed the principles of the Faith and acquired, according to his capacity, a knowledge of the measure of its glory.

With the approval of the Báb, he returned to Zanján. He arrived at a time when all the leading *'ulamá* of the city had assembled in the presence of Hujjat. As soon as he appeared, Hujjat enquired whether he believed in, or rejected, the new Revelation. Mullá Iskandar submitted the writings of the Báb which he had brought with him, and asserted that whatever should be the verdict of his master, the same would he deem it his obligation to follow. "What!" angrily exclaimed Hujjat. "But for the presence of this distinguished company; I would have chastised you severely. How dare you consider matters of belief to be dependent upon the approbation or rejection of others?" Receiving from the hand of his messenger the copy of the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'*¹, he, as soon as he had perused a page of that book, fell prostrate upon the ground and exclaimed "I bear witness that these words which I have read proceed from the same Source as that of the *Qur'án*. Whoso has recognised the truth of that sacred Book must needs testify to the Divine origin of these words, and must needs submit to the precepts inculcated by their Author. I take you, members of this assembly, as my witnesses: I pledge such allegiance to the Author of this Revelation that should He ever pronounce the night to be the day, and declare the sun to be a shadow, I would unreservedly submit to His judgment, and would regard His verdict as the voice of Truth. Whoso denies Him, him will I regard as the

¹ *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'* (literal translation: the Self-Subsisting of the [Divine] Names) is the title commonly used for this work of the Báb. As it is framed as a commentary on the Quran's twelfth *súra* [chapter], the *Súra* of *Yúsuf* [Joseph], it is sometimes also called *Tafsír-i-sūrih-i-Yúsuf* [commentary on the *Súra* of Joseph]. It consists of 111 chapters, and the first chapter called the *Súra* of Mulk was revealed in its entirety on this first evening. The remainder of the work was revealed over the next forty days. The entire work is in Arabic. It was one of the main texts that the Bábís eventually used in their teaching work. Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* calls it "the first, the greatest and mightiest of all books". For an analysis of structure and certain interpretations of the *Qayyúmu'l-Asmá'* see Saiedi *Gate of the Heart*, chapters 4-5, p11-159.

repudiator of God Himself." With these words he terminated the proceedings of that gathering.¹

One historian records how Hujjat described his own self and his recognition of the Báb:

I was a mullá, so proud and masterful that I would abase myself to no one, not even the late Hájí Siyyid Báqir of Rasht,² who was regarded as the 'Proof of Islam' and the most learned of doctors. My doctrines being after the Akhbári³ school, I differed in certain questions with the mass of the clergy. People complained of me, and Muhammad Sháh summoned me to Tihrán. I came, and he perused my books and informed himself of their purport. I asked him to summon the siyyid [i.e. Siyyid Báqir of Rasht] also, that we might dispute. At first he intended to do so, but afterwards, having considered the mischief which might result, suspended the proposed discussion. To be brief, notwithstanding all this self-sufficiency, as soon as news of the Manifestation of His Holiness reached me, and I had perused a small page of the verses of that Point of the *Furqán* ⁴, I became as one beside himself, and involuntarily, yet with full option, confessed the truth of His claim, and became His devoted slave; for I beheld in Him the most noble of the Prophet's miracles, and, had I rejected it, I should have rejected the truth of the religion of Islam.⁵

As we will see Hujjat becomes an incredible proponent of the Báb, heads the Bábí upheaval in Zanján, and with many others there, gives his life for the Divine Beloved [DB 24].⁶ Hujjat was about seven years older than the Báb.⁷

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p178-179

² This is the same famous Hájí Siyyid Báqir residing in Isfáhán whom Mullá Husayn visited and won over to the teachings of Siyyid Kázim [DB 1-2, Section 3]

³ Shí'a Islam jurisprudence has two main schools: Usúlí and Akhbári. They often disagreed strongly with each other. The Usúlí school was the more dominant school of practice in Persia. Hujjat was a proponent of the Akhbári school of Islamic law.

⁴ Arabic, means criterion / evidence / proof / affirmation. It is also another title for the *Qur'án*.

⁵ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p179 footnote 1

⁶ Hujjat is martyred in Zanján on 8 January 1851, six months after the martyrdom of the Báb [9 July 1850] in Tabríz.

⁷ Events of life of Hujjat are described in *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p177-179 and Chapter 24, p527-581.

Vahíd-i-Dárábí

His given name was Yahyá ﴿﴾ [Arabic for John] when he was born in 1811. He was a descendant of the Prophet [i.e. a Siyyid] and came from the village of Dáráb.¹ He was therefore generally known during his lifetime as Siyyid Yahyáy-i-Dárábí ﴿﴾, although history will know him as Vahíd [meaning unique or peerless], the title given to him by the Báb.²

By 1845, the news of the Báb and His Message had reached the ears of even those who held the highest seats of authority in Persia. Muhammad Sháh himself was moved to enquire into this. He chose Siyyid Yahyáy-i-Dárábí for this task. Siyyid Yahyá was considered to be one of the most learned, wise and impartial of the religious scholars of that land at that time. He was also the son of Siyyid Ja'far, surnamed Kashfí ﴿﴾,³ who in his time had been considered as one of the greatest and most celebrated '*ulamá* of that period. Here was a celebrated son of a celebrated father.

Siyyid Yahyá was residing in Tihrán as the honoured guest of the Sháh at the home of the court's Master of Ceremonies, Mírzá Lutf-'Alí ﴿﴾. The Sháh sent a confidential command through Lutf-'Alí to him:

Tell him from us, that inasmuch as we repose the utmost confidence in his integrity, and admire his moral and intellectual standards, and regard him as the most suitable among the divines of our realm, we expect him to proceed to Shíráz, to enquire thoroughly into the episode of the Siyyid-i-Báb, and to inform us of the results of his investigations; We shall then know what measures it behooves us to take. ⁴

Siyyid Yahyá himself had wanted to meet and investigate the Báb, so he eagerly took up this command and set out for Shíráz. On his way, he conceived the various questions with which he thought he would test the Báb. Upon arriving in Shíráz, Siyyid Yahyá being an honoured representative of the Sháh was duly housed at the

¹ Dáráb is in the province of Fárs and about 150 miles/ 250 kilometers southeast of Shíráz.

² In historical records he is commonly referred to as Siyyid Yahyáy-i-Dárábí. The Báb gave him the title of *Vahíd-i-Akbar* [the Greatest Vahíd], although in Bahá'í literature he is generally referred to simply as Vahíd. Vahíd means unique or peerless. For a summary of life of Vahíd see [Baháipedia article on Vahíd](#).

³ means "the discloser" because of his skill in interpretation of the Qur'án and the visions he claimed to have [*Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p171 footnote #2 and p177 footnote #2].

⁴ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p172

residence of the governor Husayn Khán. Husayn Khán was not eager about Siyyid Yahyá meeting the Báb. Soon after arriving, Siyyid Yahyá also learned that the clergy of Shíráz intended to have the Báb executed in the near future.¹ By chance, Siyyid Yahyá connected with an old friend surnamed 'Azím² from Khurásán who had also come to Shíráz. 'Azím had been taught by Mullá Husayn and had come to Shíráz and met the Báb. Siyyid Yahyá asked 'Azím to arrange for a meeting with the Báb. Siyyid Yahyá also asked 'Azím what he thought of the Báb. 'Azím's response was that he should meet the Báb and judge for himself. 'Azím, himself being a learned *mujtahid*, was aware of the risk of pride in the highly learned and acclaimed Siyyid Yahyá. He cautioned Siyyid Yahyá: "As a friend, I would advise you to exercise the utmost consideration in your conversations with Him, lest you, too, in the end should be obliged to deplore any act of discourtesy towards Him."³

Siyyid Yahyá, we will call him Vahíd from now on, had three meetings one after the other with the Báb. Records indicate that Vahíd's meetings with the Báb were in April/May 1846.⁴ Nabíl has recorded what happened at these three meetings as follows:

Vahíd's First Meeting with the Báb

Siyyid Yahyá met the Bab at the home of Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí [the middle uncle of the Báb], ... For about two hours he directed the attention of the Báb to the most abstruse and bewildering themes in the metaphysical teachings of Islam, to the obscurest passages of the *Qur'án*, and to the mysterious traditions and prophecies of the imams of the Faith. The Báb at first listened to his learned references to the law and prophecies of Islam, noted all his questions, and began to give to each a brief but persuasive reply. The conciseness and lucidity of His answers excited the wonder and admiration of Siyyid Yahyá. He was overpowered by a sense of humiliation at his own presumptuousness and pride. His sense of superiority completely vanished. As he arose to depart, he addressed the Báb in these words: "Please God, I shall, in the course of my next audience with You, submit the rest of my questions and with them shall conclude my enquiry." As soon as he retired,

¹ See [Bahaipedia article on Vahíd](#)

² Mullá Shaykh 'Alí of Khurásán surnamed 'Azím by the Báb. He was taught by Mullá Husayn on his first trip to Khurásán after the Declaration of the Báb [see [DB 4-7, Section 2](#)].

³ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p172-173

⁴ [Bahaipedia article on Vahíd](#)

he joined 'Azím, to whom he related the account of his interview. "I have in His presence," he told him, "expatiated unduly upon my own learning. He was able in a few words to answer my questions and to resolve my perplexities. I felt so abased before Him that I hurriedly begged leave to retire." 'Azím reminded him of his counsel, and begged him not to forget this time the advice he had given him. ¹

Vahíd's Second Meeting with the Báb

In the course of his second interview, Siyyid Yahyá, to his amazement, discovered that all the questions which he had intended to submit to the Báb had vanished from his memory. He contented himself with matters that seemed irrelevant to the object of his enquiry. He soon found, to his still greater surprise, that the Báb was answering, with the same lucidity and conciseness that had characterised His previous replies, those same questions which he had momentarily forgotten. "I seemed to have fallen fast asleep," he later observed. "His words, His answers to questions which I had forgotten to ask, reawakened me. A voice still kept whispering in my ear: "Might not this, after all, have been an accidental coincidence?" I was too agitated to collect my thoughts. I again begged leave to retire.

'Azím, whom I subsequently met, received me with cold indifference, and sternly remarked: "Would that schools had been utterly abolished, and that neither of us had entered one! Through our little-mindedness and conceit, we are withholding from ourselves the redeeming grace of God, and are causing pain to Him who is the Fountain thereof. Will you not this time beseech God to grant that you may be enabled to attain His presence with becoming humility and detachment, that perchance He may graciously relieve you from the oppression of uncertainty and doubt?" ²

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p173

² *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p173-174

Vahíd's Third Meeting with the Báb: Commentary on the *Súrih* of *Kawthar*

I resolved that in my third interview with the Báb I would in my inmost heart request Him to reveal for me a commentary on the *Súrih*¹ of *Kawthar* [Chapter of Abundance].² I determined not to breathe that request in His presence. Should he, unasked by me, reveal this commentary in a manner that would immediately distinguish it in my eyes from the prevailing standards current among the commentators on the *Qur'án*, I then would be convinced of the Divine character of His Mission, and would readily embrace His Cause. If not, I would refuse to acknowledge Him. As soon as I was ushered into His presence, a sense of fear, for which I could not account, suddenly seized me. My limbs quivered as I beheld His face. I, who on repeated occasions had been introduced into the presence of the Shah and had never discovered the slightest trace of timidity in myself, was now so awed and shaken that I could not remain standing on my feet. The Báb, beholding my plight, arose from His seat, advanced towards me, and, taking hold of my hand, seated me beside Him. "Seek from Me," He said, "whatever is your heart's desire. I will readily reveal it to you." I was speechless with wonder. Like a babe that can neither understand nor speak, I felt powerless to respond. He smiled as He gazed at me and said: "Were I to reveal for you the commentary on the *Súrih* of *Kawthar*, would you acknowledge that My words are born of the Spirit of God? Would you recognise that My utterance can in no wise be associated with sorcery or magic?" Tears flowed from my eyes as I heard Him speak these words. All I was able to utter was this verse of the *Qur'an*: "O our Lord, with ourselves have we dealt unjustly: if Thou forgive us not and have not pity on us, we shall surely be of those who perish."

It was still early in the afternoon when the Bab requested Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí to bring His pen-case and some paper. He then started to reveal His commentary on the *Súrih* of *Kawthar*. How am I to describe this scene of inexpressible majesty? Verses streamed from His pen with a rapidity that was truly astounding. The incredible swiftness of His writing, the soft and gentle murmur of His voice, and the stupendous force of His style, amazed and bewildered me. He continued in this manner until the approach of sunset. He

¹ *súra* is the Arabic transliteration and *súrih* is the Farsí transliteration of the same originally Arabic word meaning chapter. In the *Dawn-Breakers*, the Farsí transliteration is used. Nowadays, the Arabic transliteration *súra* is used almost universally. The *Qur'án* is divided into 116 *súwar* [the Arabic plural for *súra*].

² *Qur'án Súra* 108. *Kawthar* means abundance or plenty. This *súra* is one of the very short *súras* of the *Qur'án* and consists of only three verses..

did not pause until the entire commentary of the *súrih* was completed. He then laid down His pen and asked for tea. Soon after, He began to read it aloud in my presence. My heart leaped madly as I heard Him pour out, in accents of unutterable sweetness, those treasures enshrined in that sublime commentary. I was so entranced by its beauty that three times over I was on the verge of fainting. He sought to revive my failing strength with a few drops of rose-water which He caused to be sprinkled on my face. This restored my vigour and enabled me to follow His reading to the end.

When He had completed His recital, the Báb arose to depart. He entrusted me, as He left, to the care of His maternal uncle. "He is to be your guest," He told him, "until the time when he, in collaboration with Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím, shall have finished transcribing this newly revealed commentary, and shall have verified the correctness of the transcribed copy." Mullá 'Abdu'l-Karím and I devoted three days and three nights to this work. We would in turn read aloud to each other a portion of the commentary until the whole of it had been transcribed. We verified all the traditions in the text and found them to be entirely accurate. Such was the state of certitude to which I had attained that if all the powers of the earth were to be leagued against me they would be powerless to shake my confidence in the greatness of His Cause.¹

Right after the third meeting with the Báb, Vahíd remained several days at the house of the uncle of the Báb. He did eventually return to the governor Husayn Khán's residence, who had started to suspect that something had happened.

Vahíd's Conversion is reported to the Sháh

When Vahíd returned to the governor's residence, Husayn Khán quizzed him to see if he had fallen victim to the Báb's magic influence. Vahíd responded: "No one but God, who alone can change the hearts of men, is able to captivate the heart of Siyyid Yahyá. Whoso can ensnare his heart is of God, and His word unquestionably the voice of Truth." Vahíd's answer silenced the governor, but Husayn Khán realized what had happened. He wrote to the Sháh complaining: "Though nominally my guest, he frequently absents himself for a number of consecutive days and nights

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p174-176

from my house. That he has become a Babi, that he has been heart and soul enslaved by the will of the Siyyid-i-Báb, I have ceased to entertain any doubt.”¹

After his return to the governor’s residence, Vahíd wrote to his contacts including the Sháh’s Master of Ceremonies Mírzá Luft-’Alí, the person who had conveyed the Sháh’s order to Vahíd to go to Shíráz and investigate the Báb’s claims. Vahíd asked Mírzá Luft-’Alí to advise the Sháh that he had accepted the claims of the Báb and that he was not returning. It is reported that Muhammad Sháh at a state function had said to his Grand Vazír, Hájí Mírzá Áqásí: “We have been lately informed that Siyyid Yahyáy-i-Dárábí has become a Bábí. If this be true, it behooves us to cease belittling the cause of that siyyid.”²

Husayn Khan, on his part, who had been hoping to have the Sháh’s permission to censure Vahíd, received the following imperial command: “It is strictly forbidden to any one of our subjects to utter such words as would tend to detract from the exalted rank of Siyyid Yahyáy-i-Dárábí. He is of noble lineage, a man of great learning, of perfect and consummate virtue. He will under no circumstances incline his ear to any cause unless he believes it to be conducive to the advancement of the best interests of our realm and to the well-being of the Faith of Islam.”³

The above protected Vahíd for a little while, but behind the scenes Husayn Khán and others did everything they could to undermine Vahíd.

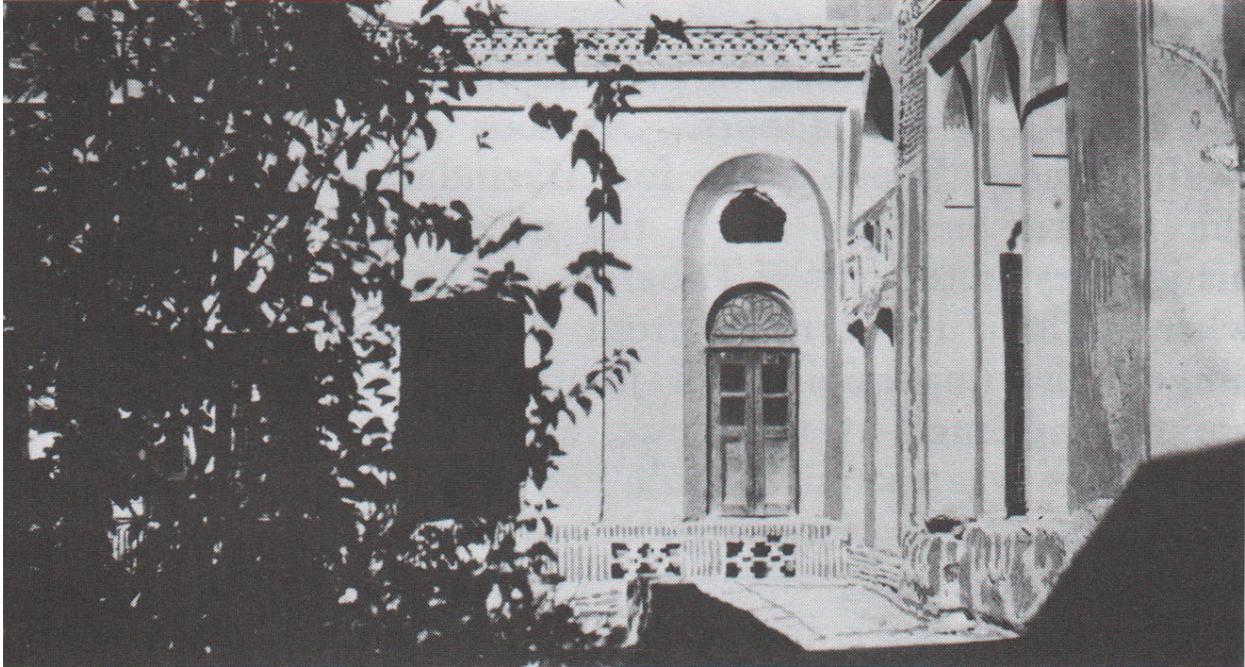
Vahíd’s Family and his Next Steps

When Vahíd met the Báb in Shíráz in 1846, he was not just celebrated for his learning throughout the land and had a large network of admirers, but already had established two family households. Vahíd had settled in Yazd in the 1830’s and married his first wife. In 1840, he had taken a second wife [very customary in that period] in Nayríz 🗣️. His second wife was the daughter of the pre-eminent religious scholar of Nayríz. So Vahíd had a strong base in Yazd as well as in Nayríz. Coming from Dáráb, Vahíd also had a home and strong following there. Vahíd had several well-to-do brothers, and his very famous father, although old, was still alive in 1846. Vahíd and his family therefore had wealth, learning and high social status.

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p176-177

² *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p177 and footnote 1 quoting *Traveller’s Narrative*, p8.

³ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p177



Vahid's house in Yazd. Archival photo.¹



Vahid's house in Nayriz. Archival photo.²

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 22, p466

² *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 22, p479

Vahíd's stay in Shíráz was relatively brief. The Báb instructed him to go to his father and give him the new Message. In the words of Vahíd: "He urged me to exercise towards him [Vahíd's father] the utmost forbearance and consideration." Vahíd does go to his eminent and highly learned father and tell him about the appearance of the Báb. In Vahíd's words: "From my confidential conversations with him I gathered that he was unwilling to repudiate the truth of the Message I had brought him. He preferred, however, to be left alone and to be allowed to pursue his own way."¹

In the years that follow, Vahíd travels through many towns and cities of the land proclaiming the Cause of the Báb.² We shall return to his story [DB 22]. Vahíd will eventually be martyred in Nayríz on 29 June 1850, ten days before the martyrdom of the Báb [9 July 1850 in Tabríz]. Their first meeting had been a little over four years earlier in April/May 1846 in Shíráz. At that first meeting, Vahíd was thirty-five years old, while the Báb was twenty-seven years old.³

"Amongst the proofs demonstrating the truth of this Revelation is this"

A Western historian's account of the time relates this about the Báb's followers:

It was a strange circumstance, that among those who adopted [the] Bab's doctrine there should have been a large number of mullas, and even mujtahids, who hold a high rank as expounders of the law in the Muhammadan church. Many of these men sealed their faith with their blood.⁴

Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*  [revealed in answer to the questions of the Báb's eldest uncle about the Báb's claims]⁵ refers to this topic of the learned becoming

¹ *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p177

² See [Bahaipedia article on Vahíd](#)

³ Events of life of Vahíd are described in *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p171-177 and Chapter 22, p465-499.

⁴ Sheil in "*Glimpses of Life and Manners in Persia*," pp. 178-9, in *Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 9, p176 footnote 1.

⁵ *Kitáb-i-Íqán* [The Book of Certitude]. The Báb's eldest uncle had found it difficult to understand and accept his Nephew's claims during the Báb's lifetime. In 1862 [twelve years after the Báb's martyrdom], the eldest uncle visited Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdad and in that meeting posed his dilemma to Bahá'u'lláh, who told him to write his questions down and He would answer them. The answer to this eldest uncle's questions is the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* which was revealed in two days and two nights period. The *Kitáb-i-Íqán* led the Báb's eldest uncle not only to recognize and accept the station of the Báb, but also that of Bahá'u'lláh as the one promised by the Báb. He became a firm believer for the remainder of his life.

followers of the Báb, as “amongst the proofs demonstrating the truth of this Revelation”. He then elaborates on this:

... in every age and Dispensation, whenever the invisible Essence was revealed in the person of His Manifestation, ... the divines of the age and those possessed of wealth would scorn and scoff ... They caviled at those holy Manifestations, and protested saying: “None hath followed you except the abject amongst us, those who are worthy of no attention.” Their aim was to show that no one amongst the learned, the wealthy, and the renowned believed in them. By this and similar proofs they sought to demonstrate the falsity of Him that speaketh naught but the truth.

In this most resplendent Dispensation, however, ... a number of illumined divines, of men of consummate learning, of doctors of mature wisdom, have attained unto His Court, drunk the cup of His divine Presence, and been invested with the honor of His most excellent favour. They have renounced, for the sake of the Beloved, the world and all that is therein. We will mention the names of some of them, that perchance it may strengthen the fainthearted, and encourage the timorous.¹

Bahá'u'lláh then lists, as examples, some of these names and includes Vahíd [whom He states was “that unique and peerless figure of his age”] and Hujjat². He then

Shoghi Effendi in *God Passes By* [p139] writing about the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* notes: ‘ ... this Book, setting forth in outline the Grand Redemptive Scheme of God, occupies a position unequalled by any work in the entire range of Bahá'í literature, except the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Bahá'u'lláh's Most Holy Book. Revealed on the eve of the declaration of His [Bahá'u'lláh] Mission, it proffered to mankind the “Choice Sealed Wine,” whose seal is of “musk,” and broke the “seals” of the “Book” referred to by Daniel, and disclosed the meaning of the “words” destined to remain “closed up” till the “time of the end.”’

¹ *Kitáb-i-Íqán* p221-223 [paragraph 247-249]

² The names Bahá'u'lláh lists are:

- Mullá Husayn  [the 1st Letter of the Living]
- Siyyid-Yahyá  [Vahíd]
- Mullá Muhammad 'Alí-i-Zanjání  [Hujjat]
- Mullá 'Alí-i-Bastámí  [the 2nd Letter of the Living]
- Mullá Sa'íd-i-Bárfurúshí 
- Mullá Ní'matu'lláh-i-Mázindarání 
- Mullá Yúsuf-i-Ardibílí  [Letter of the Living]
- Mullá Mihdíy-i-Khu'í  [Letter of the Living]
- Siyyid Husayn-i-Turshízí 
- Mullá Mihdíy-i-Kandí 

says that these most learned ones of the land who accepted this Revelation at its start, numbered well over four hundred, that their names are all inscribed upon the “Guarded Tablet” of God’, and that:

... such was their faith, that most of them renounced their substance and kindred, and cleaved to the good-pleasure of the All-Glorious. They laid down their lives for their Well-Beloved, and surrendered their all in His path. Their breasts were made targets for the darts of the enemy, and their heads adorned the spears of the infidel. No land remained which did not drink the blood of these embodiments of detachment, and no sword that did not bruise their necks. Their deeds, alone, testify to the truth of their words. ¹

And then Bahá’u’lláh asks:

Doth not the testimony of these holy souls, who have so gloriously risen to offer up their lives for their Beloved that the whole world marvelled at the manner of their sacrifice, suffice the people of this day? Is it not sufficient witness against ... those who ... bartered away immortality for that which perisheth, who ... have busied themselves with the vanities of the world, and have strayed far from Him Who is the Lord, the Most High. ²

In the stories that we will now tell, we will see this statement of Bahá’u’lláh played out. We will see the nobility and sacrifices of this heroic band of Dawn-Breakers, as well as the ignorance, malice and greed of the ones who try to put out their light.

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End of “DB 8-9: Some Turn to the Light”

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- Mullá Báqir  [Bahá’u’lláh does not specify which Mullá Báqir. It is probably Mullá Báqir-i-Qá’íní who was a learned mujtahid of Mashhad, who built the Bábíyyih and was martyred at Tabarsí].
 - Mullá ‘Abdu’l-Khálíq-i-Yazdí , and
 - Mullá ‘Alí-i-Baraqání 

¹ *Kitáb-i-Íqán* p223-224 [paragraph 250]

² *Kitáb-i-Íqán* p223-224; paragraph 250