

would go to the city of Isfahán, and deliver a message to a great man there named Hájí Siyyid Muhammad Báqir. If one of you can get him to support our teachings, it will greatly help to spread our Cause". Many times Siyyid Kázim repeated this request, but no one offered to make the journey.

At this time Mullá Husayn was only twenty-two years old. He was one of the youngest of Siyyid Kázim's students, but certainly one of his best. He sat in Siyyid Kázim's classes quietly and humbly. He was always the last one to arrive before each lecture, and the first one to leave after it was finished. He never stayed after the lecture to ask questions or argue as did many of the others. Ever since childhood he had studied to gain more knowledge--especially about religion and the subject of law.

One day, in 1840, Siyyid Kázim again repeated the question to his students: "Will someone arise and take this Message to Hájí Siyyid Muhammad Báqir in Isfahán?" Still, nobody offered to go, except a man whom Siyyid Kázim did not consider intelligent enough to do it properly. At that moment he turned to Mullá Husayn and said, "You are the one I have chosen. Arise and carry out this mission. With the help of God you will succeed."

Mullá Husayn was filled with joy! He had been too humble to offer himself, but when he was called upon to serve God in this way, he jumped to his feet, kissed the hem of Siyyid Kázim's coat, and immediately left on his journey to Isfahán.

In a few day' time, Siyyid Kázim received a letter from Mullá Husayn containing the Hájí's declaration of support. When the letter was handed to him, he was lecturing to his followers. However, he read the letter and the declaration to all the men present. He immediately wrote an answer to Mullá Husayn, and also read that to his students. In this letter he praised Mullá Husayn so highly for his service that a few of Siyyid Kázim's followers thought that Mullá Husayn must be the Promised One. The letter was written with such love and tenderness that it was clear that Siyyid Kázim was saying goodbye to Mullá Husayn. He knew that he would never see him again on this

earth. Siyyid

Kázim died on the 31st of December 1843.

It was on the 22nd of January 1844, twenty-two days after the death of Siyyid Kázim, that Mullá Husayn returned to Karbilá. For three days he received visitors at

his home, all of whom expressed their sorrow because of the passing of Siyyid Kázim.

After listening to their cries he invited the most trusted and outstanding ones to tell

him what Siyyid Kázim had told them to do before he died. They told him that Siyyid

Kázim had said over and over, "You must leave your homes, travel far and wide, purify your hearts, and search for the Promised One. The only way you can find Him is to

search. You must pray to make your hearts pure---and search."

When Mullá Husayn heard these words he said, "Then why are you still here in Karbilá? Why have you not scattered all over the land? Why have you not followed Siyyid Kázim's wish?"

They answered: "It is true we have failed. But, we look to your greatness. We have such confidence in you that if you were to tell us that you are the Promised One yourself, we would believe it and obey you in anything you told us to do."

"God forbid!" said Mullá Husayn. "I am just dust compared to the Promised One, the Lord of Lords. If you had really understood the message of Siyyid Kázim, you would never have spoken such words! No! What you must do--- and what I must do-- is to arise immediately to carry out Siyyid Kázim's message."

Suiting his action to his words, Mullá Husayn immediately stood up and went to deliver this message to other well-known followers of Siyyid Kázim. Some of them made excuses that they could not leave Karbilá at this time, and few accepted Mullá Husayn's words as the truth.

Mullá Husayn, himself, wasted no time. Together with his brother, Muhammad-Hasan, and his brother's son, Muhammad-Báqir, he set out for Najaf. On the way to Najaf they stopped at a place for forty days to fast and pray and purify themselves for their search for the Báb. Then they went on to Búshihir, on the Persian Gulf.

Chapter Two

While Mullá Husayn was in Búshihir he seemed to be drawn as if by a magnet to the north, and so he moved on to Shíráz. As he reached the gate of the city of Shíráz, he sent his two companions ahead to a certain mosque telling them to stay there until he joined them later. "God willing," he said, "I will join you there for the evening prayer."

A short time later, while walking outside the gate of Shíráz, Mullá Husayn suddenly saw a beautiful Youth, who wore a green turban, coming toward him. The Young Man greeted Mullá Husayn with a smile of loving welcome. He took Mullá Husayn into his arms as though he had been a lifelong friend.

At first, Mullá Husayn thought this Person was a follower of Siyyid Kázim who had come out from Shíráz to meet him. But then the Youth invited Mullá Husayn to His home to rest and refresh himself after his journey. Mullá Husayn tried to excuse himself saying he had two friends waiting for him and he must go to meet them. But the Youth said, "Commit them to the care of God. He will surely protect and watch over them."

Mullá Husayn could not say "no" to this Young Man, and so he followed Him to the gate of His simple house. The door to the house was soon opened by an Ethiopian servant, and the Youth said, "Enter therein in peace, secure." This is a sentence from the blessed Qur'án, a saying of the Prophet Muhammad. Mullá Husayn thought it was a good sign to hear those words in the first house he entered in Shíráz, so he was filled with joy and happiness to be there.

As soon as Mullá Husayn was seated, the servant brought a jug of water, and the Youth invited Mullá Husayn to wash his hands and feet so he would feel refreshed. Mullá Husayn asked if he could go into another room to wash himself, but the Young Man refused, and instead He poured the water over Mullá Husayn's hands Himself. Then, He gave Mullá Husayn a cool drink and made some tea.

After finishing the tea, Mullá Husayn stood up and said, "The time for evening prayer is approaching. I have promised my friends to join them at that hour at the

mosque."

The Youth was very calm and courteous, but told Mullá Husayn he must have told his friends he would join them, God willing, but that it seemed as if God had other plans

for him. He told Mullá Husayn not to worry about keeping his promise. These words made

Mullá Husayn calm and happy, so he prepared for prayer.

Mullá Husayn and the Young Man stood side by side as they prayed. This was Mullá

Husayn's prayer: "I have tried with all my soul, O my God, and until now I have failed to find Thy promised Messenger. I know that Thy word will not fail, and that Thy

promise is sure."

After the prayers were finished, the youth asked Mullá Husayn whom he regarded as

his new leader now that Siyyid Kázim had passed away.

Mullá Husayn said, "Siyyid Kázim told all his followers to leave their homes and travel everywhere and look for the Promised One."

The Youth then asked Mullá Husayn if his teacher had given him any signs by which

he would know the Promised One.

Mullá Husayn answered, "Yes, Siyyid Kázim said that the Promised One would be a pure descendant of the Prophet Muhammad, and of the family of Fátimih. He would be

more than twenty and less than thirty years old. He would have knowledge without having

studied. He would be of medium height, would not smoke, and would be physically perfect."

There was a silence for a while, and then the Young Man said with a strong voice:

"Behold, all those signs are manifest in Me!" He then repeated each of these signs of the Promised One, and showed how each one was true about Himself. But

Mullá

Husayn did not at first believe. He remembered what Siyyid Kázim had told him, that the

Promised One would be a very holy man, very wise, with more knowledge than any other

person on earth. He told the Young Man what Siyyid Kázim said, but as soon as he said it,

he became very sorry and very afraid. However, Mullá Husayn had decided when he started

his search, that he would test the Promised One in two ways: the Promised One must reveal

an explanation of part of the Qur'án known as the Súrih of Joseph without being asked to do so, and must explain a book which Mullá Husayn had written.

Although Mullá Husayn was very afraid, he asked the Young Man to read his book and explain it to him. The Young Man happily looked at parts of the book, closed it, and then spoke to Mullá Husayn. Within a few minutes, he had explained all the ideas and answered all the questions in it. Then, before Mullá Husayn could answer, the Young Man said, "Now is the time to reveal the commentary on the Súrih of Joseph."

Mullá Husayn needed no further proof. He just sat there before the Young Man watching Him write His explanation, and listening to His beautiful words. When the Young Man had finished, He told Mullá Husayn that it is for God to test His servants and not for His servants to judge God by their own poor standards. He told Mullá Husayn that if he had not been His guest, he would have been in great danger, but the grace of God had saved him. He went on to say that in this Day, all the peoples and nations of the earth, both in the East and the West, should hurry to His door and ask for help from God, the Merciful. Whoever hesitated would be lost. Then the Young Man said that everyone should arise sincerely and of their own accord as Mullá Husayn had done, to go out and look for their promised Beloved with determination.

Mullá Husayn's head was going round and round from all he had heard. He felt he had to rise, and he begged to leave. But the Young Man smiled and told him that if he left then, whoever saw him would say, "This poor youth has lost his mind."

At that moment the clock showed two hours and eleven minutes after sunset, on the evening of the 22nd of May 1844. The Young Man turned to Mullá Husayn and said, "This night, this very hour will, in the days to come, be celebrated as one of the greatest and most significant of all festivals. Render thanks to God for having graciously assisted you to attain your heart's desire, . . ."

About forty-five minutes later, the Young Man ordered dinner to be served. The

holy food refreshed Mullá Husayn's body, and his soul as well. During the meal and after it, the Young Man continued to talk. Mullá Husayn sat and listened, completely forgetting the time. Suddenly he heard the call to morning prayer, and Mullá Husayn realized that they had talked the whole night long without stopping. They had not become tired. For the first time, Mullá Husayn knew what it was to have peace. He only thought, "Peace! Peace! Glory be to Thee, O God! Peace! Praise be to God, Lord of all creatures!"

Then the Young Man spoke these words to Mullá Husayn: O thou who art the first to believe in Me! verily, I say, I am the Báb, the Gate of God, and thou art the Bábu'l-Báb, the gate of that gate. Eighteen souls must, in the beginning, spontaneously and of their own accord, accept Me and recognize the truth of My Revelation. Unwarned and uninvited, each of these must seek independently to find Me. And when their number is complete, one of them must needs be chosen to accompany Me on My pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. There I shall deliver the Message of God to the Sharíf of Mecca."*

The Báb then told Mullá Husayn not to tell any of his friends what he had seen and heard that night, that he must go to the mosque and pray, that the Báb would join him for prayers later, and that Mullá Husayn must pretend not to know Him. He must keep his experience a secret until they leave the city. Then the Báb said, "Ere we depart, we shall appoint unto each of the eighteen souls his special mission, and shall send them forth to accomplish their task. We shall instruct them to teach the Word of God and to quicken the souls of men."

When the Báb had finished this speech, He asked Mullá Husayn to leave, and He entrusted him to the care of God.

* The Sharíf of Mecca was the keeper of the Most Holy House of the Muslim Religion.

Chapter Three

Have you ever wondered what it must have been like to be the first believer in a new religion? This is what Mullá Husayn felt. He

said:

"This Message, which was given to me so suddenly and without any preparation, came like a clap of thunder. For a while I could neither see, nor feel, nor hear. It was too great to be true. I could not realize what had happened. I became excited and happy. Before, I had been weak and powerless. I became glad and strong. I felt that I had so much courage and power that, even if all the world were to rise up against me, I would be able to meet any attack or difficulty. The world and all things seemed like a handful of dust in my grasp." Mullá Husayn seemed to be like the voice of the angel Gabriel, calling all mankind to awake, because the morning light had broken, and telling them to arise, because His cause was made clear, and the gate of God's grace was wide open. Mullá Husayn seemed to be saying, "enter therein, O peoples of the world! For He who is your Promised One is come!"

This is the way Mullá Husayn felt when he left the home of the Báb on that wonderful day. It was in this condition that he joined his brother and his nephew at the mosque. A large number of people had gathered there to greet him, he obeyed the Báb's command and did not tell anyone of his experiences. Instead, he said his prayers and began to organize classes as he was told to do.

More and more people started to come to Mullá Husayn's classes. He did not tell them about the Báb, but he did tell them many other things to awaken their hearts. So beautifully did he speak that even the religious leaders and city officials came to hear him. He had never spoken so well. His speeches were filled with the new spirit which the Báb had given him.

During those days the Báb invited him to come and visit Him several times. The Báb would send His servant to the mosque with a loving message of welcome, and each time Mullá Husayn would spend the rest of the night with the Báb. While Mullá Husayn listened, the hours would fly by without notice, and daylight would come too soon.

On one of these nightly visits, the Báb said, "Tomorrow thirteen of your companions will arrive. To each of them extend the utmost loving-kindness. Leave them not to themselves, for they have dedicated their lives to the quest of their Beloved. Pray to God that He may graciously enable them to walk securely in that path which is finer than a hair and keener than a sword. Certain ones among them will be accounted, in the sight of God, as His chosen and favoured disciples. As to others, they will tread the middle way. The fate of the rest will remain undeclared until the hour when all that is hidden shall be made manifest."

On that same morning, at sunrise, soon after Mullá Husayn had arrived at the mosque, thirteen men came, as the Báb had promised.

One night a few days later, Mullá 'Alí, the leader of the group, could not keep quiet any longer. He said to Mullá Husayn, "You know how much we trust you. If you were to say that you were the Promised One yourself, we would certainly believe you. Because of you, we have left our homes in search of the beloved. You have set the example. We have followed in your footsteps. We have followed you to this place, and we are ready to accept whomever you accept as the Promised One, and we are ready for all the troubles it may bring to us. Now we are here with you, and we see you teaching the people and saying your prayers in perfect peace, and you do not seem to be looking for the Promised One any longer. Please tell us why, so that we may understand."

Mullá Husayn spoke to him gently, because he knew what was in their hearts. "Your friends," he said, "probably feel that I am at peace because I have become well known and successful in this city. The truth is far from that. Success in this world is of no interest to me. Mullá Husayn is only interested in his beloved. Ever since the beginning of my search, I have promised God that I would give my life for His cause. Not until I shed my blood for His name will the fire that is within me be stopped. I pray to God that you will live to see that day. I wonder if your friends have not thought that

perhaps God has opened the gate for Mullá Husayn, and because he is not able to tell anyone, he prays and holds classes."

These last words awakened the soul of Mullá 'Alí. He knew what they meant immediately. Tears filled his eyes, and he begged Mullá Husayn to tell him who the Promised One was. But Mullá Husayn said to him, "Please, you must not ask me this question. Let your trust be in God, for he will surely guide your steps, and satisfy the excitement in your heart."

Mullá 'Alí hurried to his friends and told them about his conversation with Mullá Husayn. The news set their hearts on fire, and they immediately went to their rooms to fast and pray, so that they could be able to recognize their beloved.

On the third night of his prayers, Mullá 'Alí had a vision. Before his eyes came a light, and the light moved off ahead of him. As the light moved forward, he followed it, and in his dream he came to the arms of his promised Beloved. He awoke in the middle of the night from his dream, radiant with joy and gladness. He hurried to the room of Mullá Husayn and threw himself into his arms. Mullá Husayn lovingly embraced him and said: "Praise be to God Who hath guided us here. If God had not guided us, we would not have been guided."

At the break of day, Mullá Husayn and Mullá 'Alí hurried to the home of the Báb. The door of His house was already open, and the Báb's servant was there to greet them. He recognized them immediately and said, "Before the break of day, my Master told me to open the door of the house and stand ready at the entrance. 'Two guests', He said, 'are to arrive early this morning. Extend to them in My name a loving welcome. Say to them from Me: "Enter therein in the name of God." ' ' "

Mullá 'Alí was then brought into the presence of his beloved Báb for the first time, and his happiness and joy was as Mullá Husayn's had been a few days before. Everything in the room seemed to say, "Verily, verily, the dawn of a new Day has

broken."

During the next few days each of the twelve companions of Mullá 'Alí looked for and found his Beloved. Some had experiences while asleep, some while awake, a few whilst in prayer, and others while in deep thought. Each in his own way was led to recognize the power of God's glory. Each of them came to Mullá Husayn with great joy and happiness, and he led them to the presence of the Báb.

Chapter Four

One night while the Báb was talking to Mullá Husayn, He said: "Seventeen Letters have thus far enlisted under the standard of the Faith of God. There remains one more to complete the number. These Letters of the Living shall arise to proclaim My cause and to establish My Faith. Tomorrow night the remaining Letter will arrive and will complete the number of My chosen disciples."

The next day, in the evening, Muhammad-'Alí, later named Quddús, became the last Letter of the Living by recognizing the Báb as He walked with Mullá Husayn outside the gate of the city of Shíráz *

One of the chosen Eighteen Letters of the Living was a woman named Táhirih. She never met the Báb, but she recognized Him in a dream and sent Him a letter which proved to Him that she was worthy to be considered a Letter of the Living.**

After the Eighteen Letters of the Living had found the Báb, he Himself became the Nineteenth. He then called them into His presence, and gave each of them a special command and a special duty. He spoke some inspiring words to them before parting. Mullá Husayn had thought that he would be the one chosen by the Báb to go with Him on His pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, but the Báb chose Quddús instead. Mullá Husayn was disappointed, but the Báb had saved Mullá Husayn for another purpose.

The Báb told Mullá Husayn not to be unhappy because he wasn't chosen to go on pilgrimage with Him. Instead, he was to go to the city which held a Mystery more holy than

anything in Hijáz or Shíráz. His task would be to open the eyes of non-believers and, with the help of God, to make their minds clean. The Báb promised that he would be given great power and that God's angels would protect him. God's almighty arms would surround him and His unfailing spirit would guide him. Finally, the Báb said: "He that loves you, loves God; and whoever opposes you, has opposed God. Who befriends you, him will God befriend; and whoso rejects you, him will God reject."

With those wonderful words in his ears Mullá Husayn started on his special task. Wherever he went, to whatever group of people he talked, he told the great Message of the Promised One without fear. When he spoke to the people he told them that a great new religious teacher had appeared, and that He had written a book which was very much like the Holy Qur'án. When the people said that that was not such a wonderful thing, he said, "Show me another man who can do the same, if you are men who speak the truth. The day is soon coming when this whole city will accept His Cause."

When the Muslim clergy in the city of Isfahán heard these sayings of Mullá Husayn, they immediately became angry and afraid. They did not believe that anyone could ever be as great as Muhammad, nor that any book could ever be as great as the Holy Qur'án. They were angry because Mullá Husayn had said this, and they were afraid because many people might believe Mullá Husayn and leave the Muslim Faith. Therefore, the clergy went to the government officials and told them lies, and tried to have Mullá Husayn stopped from teaching.

At first, the officials of the city paid no attention to the clergy. Instead, they told them to be wise and listen to Mullá Husayn; perhaps what he said was true. Mullá Husayn, therefore, was able to teach his new Faith for a long time without being stopped. However, in the whole city of Isfahán, only one man was found who recognized the Truth at once. He was a simple sifter of wheat. (A few years later, when he heard the

news about

the battle of Shaykh Tabarsí, he ran to join the men in the Fort. As he ran through the city of Isfahán, he carried his sieve. People tried to stop him, and asked,

"Why are yo in such a hurry?" An he said, "I hurry to help the Bábís defend themselves at the Fort Shaykh Tabarsí. I carry this sieve with me to sift the people in each city through which I pass. Whosever I find ready to join me in this Faith, I will invite them to hurry with me to the field of martyrdom.") So glorious was the action of this young man, a sifter, that the Báb wrote about him in His Holy Book, the Bayán.

* The story of Quddús is told in another booklet of the "Golden Crowns" series.

** The story of Táhirih is another story told in the "Golden Crown" series.

Chapter Five

It was in Tihrán that Mullá Husayn discovered the "Mystery which is more holy than anything in Hijáz or Shíráz." This is the way it happened:

One day, while Mullá Husayn was talking to a great teacher of the Qur'án, one of his students overheard the conversation and came to see Mullá Husayn in his room in the middle of the night. Mullá Husayn asked the man, "What is your name, and which city is your home?"

"My name", he said. "is Mullá Muhammad, and my surname is Mu'allim. My home is Núr, in the province of Mázindarán."

"Tell me," said Mullá Husayn, "does the family of Mírzá Buzurg live there? And does any member of his family have as fine a character, intelligence, and charm as his late father?"

"Yes," said Mullá Muhammad, "among his sons now living there is One Who is very much like His father. He lives a beautiful life filled with love and kindness. He is generous and highly intelligent."

"What is His occupation?" asked Mullá Husayn.

"He makes sad people happy and feeds the hungry," was the answer.

"What about His rank or position?"

"He has none," said the student. "He only helps the poor and makes

friends with the stranger."

"What is His name?"

"His name is Husayn-'Alí."

"How does he spend His time?" asked Mullá Husayn.

"He walks in the woods, and enjoys the beauty of the countryside."

"What is His age?"

"Twenty-eight."

During this conversation, Mullá Husayn became more and more excited. Soon you will see the reason why. Before Mullá Muhammad left, Mullá Husayn asked, "I suppose you often see Him?"

"Yes," he answered, "I often visit His home."

"Then, will you deliver into His hands a parcel from me?"

"I would be happy to," he said.

Mullá Husayn then took some of the Báb's Writings which were rolled up in a piece of cloth. He asked Mullá Muhammad to give it to Husayn-'Alí in person at the hour of dawn. If Husayn-'Alí wanted to send a message back, Mullá Muhammad must bring it to him.

Of course, you know who Husayn-'Alí was. He was later known as Bahá'u'lláh. When Mullá Muhammad delivered the parcel to Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'u'lláh read the Báb's Writings, and turning to His brother, Mírzá Músá, said:

"Verily, I say, whoso believes in the Qur'án and recognizes its Divine origin, and

yet hesitates, though it be for a moment, to admit that these soul-stirring words are

endowed with the same regenerating power, has most assuredly erred in his judgement and

has strayed far from the path of justice." He said no more. But He sent Mullá Husayn

a gift of a loaf of Russian sugar and a package of tea and a message of love and thanks.

In those days, tea and sugar were very scarce in Êrán. In this way,

Bahá'u'lláh showed

Mullá Husayn how precious He considered the Message which He had received.

When Mullá Muhammad returned to Mullá Husayn with the tea and sugar, Mullá Husayn understood. He jumped to his feet, received the gift with his head bowed low, and

kissed it. Then, he took Mullá Muhammad into his arms, kissed his eyes, and

said,

"My dearly beloved friend! I pray that God will give you happiness forever, and fill your heart with a gladness that will never die."

A few days later Mullá Husayn left Tihrán for Khurásán. As he said goodbye to Mullá Muhammad, he said, "You must not tell anyone what you have seen and heard. let this be a secret in your heart. Do not tell anyone His name, because someone will try to hurt Him. When you are praying, pray that God will protect Him. Our duty is to tell everyone about this New day. Many people will die for this Cause in this very city. But that blood will water the Tree of God, will cause it to grow, and shelter all people in every part of the world."

Happy because of his experience with Bahá'u'lláh, Mullá Husayn taught the people of Khurásán even better than at any other time. He was such a strong teacher, that he even brought the chief of the Muslim religion in Khurásán into the Bábí Faith, as well as many, many others. for a while, it seemed as if the whole of Mashhad, the main city of Khurásán, would accept the Báb.

After a time, Mullá Husayn decided that it was time to send a message to the Báb telling Him everything that had happened on his first teaching trip for the Faith, and told the story about how the Message was delivered to Bahá'u'lláh.

When the Báb received the message from Mullá Husayn, it was one of the greatest holy days in the Muslim Faith. Only Quddús was with Him to share the news. Both Quddús and the Báb were filled with joy and happiness by the report. The Báb seemed to be the happiest Quddús had ever seen Him, and the reason was very clear. The Báb now felt sure that even if He were killed immediately, the Cause of God would continue and grow through the work of Bahá'u'lláh. From that moment on, the Báb was filled with a new sirit and new hope.

After receiving Mullá Husayn's letter, the Báb decided it was time for Him to make His pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. This was in September 1844.

Mullá Husayn continued his teaching in the city of Mashhad.

Chapter Six

Before the Báb had left on His pilgrimage, he had told his friends that He would return by way of 'Iráq, and would stop in the city of Karbilá. Therefore, as Naw-Rúz* of 1845 came near, many Bábís gathered in Karbilá to welcome Him. Soon after Naw-Rúz, however, they received a message from Him that he had had to change His plans. He had gone directly to His home in Shíráz. He asked all those who wished to see Him to travel to Isfahán, to the north of Shíráz, and wait there for further instructions. This the faithful ones did. On the way, they met Mullá Husayn, who travelled with them.

After a few days in Isfahán, the news came to them that Shíráz was greatly upset by the Báb's arrival, and it was dangerous for anyone to enter the city to see Him. When Mullá Husayn heard this, he was in no way put off. He quietly told a few of his companions what he was going to do. He took off his robes and his turban, and put on the clothes worn by people of a different part of êrán. Making himself look like a horseman, he and his brother and nephew set out at an unexpected hour for Shíráz.

As they came near to the gate of Shíráz, Mullá Husayn told his brother to enter the city in the dark of night and go straight to the Báb's uncle and ask him to tell the Báb that they had arrived. On the next day, Mullá Husayn received the happy news that the Báb's uncle would meet him outside the gate of the city an hour after sunset. That night the Báb's uncle met Mullá Husayn at the time arranged, and took him to his home safely. Several times, the Báb came at night to visit Mullá Husayn at his uncle's home. They stayed together the entire night and spoke of many things. In a few days' time, the Báb gave Mullá Husayn permission to invite the believers from Isfahán to come to Shíráz gradually, find places to live in the city as travellers, and take whatever jobs they could find.

Some of those who came to Shíráz to see the Báb were not very strong believers in His Faith. They thought that by becoming Bábís they would be

given special favours and power. When they saw that the Báb had chosen Mullá Husayn as His favourite disciple at that time, they became very jealous. They started to whisper things against Mullá Husayn to his companions. These whisperings did not effect Mullá Husayn's companions in any way, however, except to make them stay away from those who were trying to make the trouble. Little by little, the trouble-makers found that they were no longer part of the faithful group, so they pulled themselves away completely and joined the enemies of the Báb in Shíráz. They caused so much trouble in the city that in the end the city authorities forced them to leave. But this did not stop their jealousy or their plans.

Soon, the people of Shíráz began to protest because Mullá Husayn had come back, so much so, that the Báb finally had to ask all His followers except one to leave the city. When the believers left, the Báb had a quiet time for a while, and some wonderful souls became believers. But in time, many people began coming to the Báb again, and the clergy and the enemies convinced the Government of êrán that the Báb must either be put in prison or killed. The Government decided to put Him in the prison of Máh-Kú in the mountains of north-western êrán.

When the Báb sent His followers out of Shíráz, He told Mullá Husayn to go back to Khurásán to continue his teaching. Early in 1848, he decided he must visit the Báb in prison, so he left Mashhad and started to walk to Tihrán. Some of his friends tried to give him a horse and carriage to make the journey easier, but he said, "I have promised God that I would walk the whole distance which separates me from my Beloved." He even tried to get his servant, Qambar-'Alí, to return to Mashhad, but he refused. So, together they walked the entire distance of hundreds of kilometres.

On the way to Máh-Kú, Mullá Husayn went through many towns. In each town he was

greeted by the happy believers. When he reached Tihrán, he showed such a fine character and love for the Faith that people said that even if no one else were to help him, he would be able to establish the Faith in Irán by himself. The greatest thing which happened to Mullá Husayn in Tihrán was his meeting with Bahá'u'lláh. He was taken to visit Bahá'u'lláh very quietly, and nobody knows what Bahá'u'lláh told him in that interview.

From the meeting with Bahá'u'lláh, Mullá Husayn went on to the prison of Máh-Kú to see the Báb. He arrived there on the evening of the fourth Naw-Rúz after the declaration of the Báb. Mullá Husayn was met near the prison by 'Alí Khán, the prison-keeper. 'Alí Khán had brought a horse for Mullá Husayn to ride the rest of the way, but Mullá Husayn told him, "No, I have promised God that I would make the whole of my journey on foot." So, Mullá Husayn walked up the mountain to visit the holy Prisoner in His prison.

Until this time, the Báb had not been allowed to have any visitors spend the night with Him in the prison, but 'Alí Khán was so impressed with Mullá Husayn that he said to the Báb, "If it is Your wish to have Mullá Husayn stay with You this night, I am ready to let him stay, as I have no will of my own. No matter how long You want him to stay with you, I will carry out Your command." This is how the Báb was able to have Mullá Husayn with Him on the fourth Naw-Rúz after His declaration, and for nine days after that.

During Mullá Husayn's stay with the Báb, more and more disciples began to arrive, and they were immediately brought to the Báb without any trouble. The Báb spoke many beautiful things to Mullá Husayn during those wonderful days, and Mullá Husayn was very happy again. He also received many instructions from the Báb, telling him all the things that were going to happen in the future. The last words the Báb said to Mullá Husayn were, "A few days after your departure from this place, they will transfer Us

to
another mountain. Ere you arrive at your destination, the news of Our departure
from
Máh-Kú will have reached you."

Mullá Husayn started on his journey to Mázindarán, as commanded by the Báb.

The words of the Báb about His transfer were true.

Someone from Máh-Kú sent a report to the Government telling them that 'Alí
Khán
was too friendly to the Báb, and that day and night more and more people were
coming to
visit Him. The report even said that 'Alí Khán wanted his daughter to marry
the
Báb, but the Báb had refused. Naturally, when Hájí Mírzá ʿqásí, the
Chief
Minister, heard this, he ordered the Báb to be sent to an even worse prison---
the Castle
of Chihríq.

On the way to Mázindarán, Mullá Husayn passed through many towns and
villages.
he stopped in every one of them, gathered the faithful believers together, gave
them the
Báb's love and greetings, and inspired them to increase their teaching and
remain strong
in His way. In Tihrán, Mullá Husayn again had the privilege of being with
Bahá'u'lláh
for a short time. From Bahá'u'lláh he received the courage and strength to
carry him
through the last difficult days of his life.

Chapter Seven

From Tihrán, Mullá Husayn went to Mázindarán where he was to have a promise
of
the Báb fulfilled. In the Prison at Máh-Kú, the Báb had told Mullá Husayn
that in
Mázindarán there was a hidden treasure which would become revealed to him and
would show
him what he was supposed to do to further the work of the Faith. In
Mázindarán, Mullá
Husayn visited Quddús in the town of Bárfurúsh. He was greeted lovingly by
Quddús, who did his best to make his guest comfortable. Quddús even washed
Mullá
Husayn's feet which were dusty and blistered from the journey. He gave Mullá
Husayn the
seat of honour at the table and introduced him with great reverence to each of
the

believers.

After dinner, when all the guests had left, Mullá Husayn and Quddús had a long talk. Mullá Husayn told Quddús all the wonderful things that had happened when he was with the Báb. Then he said, "But He gave me no definite directions about what I should do next to teach the cause. He told me that in Mázindarán a hidden treasure would be revealed to me, and I would know what to do. From His words, I understood that I would never see Him again, and that I would sacrifice my unworthy self in His path. He said to me, The Feast of Sacrifice is fast approaching. Arise and gird up the loins of endeavour, and let nothing detain you from achieving your destiny. Having attained your destination, prepare yourself to receive Us, for We too shall ere long follow you."

Quddús then showed Mullá Husayn some writing, and asked him to read it. Mullá Husayn read it, and said, "I realize that the Author of these words received them from God, and I accept their truth without any question whatever." He then looked at Quddús and knew that Quddús had written them himself. He immediately arose and stood before Quddús with bowed head and said, "Quddús is the hidden treasure which the Báb promised I would find. Although my Master is now in prison in the mountains of çdhirbayján, the reflection of His glory now stands before me." This is the way Mullá Husayn recognized in Quddús a sign of the Báb. And this is the way the Báb raised up his helpers, even while He was hundreds of kilometres away in prison. No power can stop the greatest power --- the Power of God.

Mullá Husayn was a very unusual young man. he was well educated, had a wide knowledge and a beautiful character. Many of the disciples of Shaykh Ahmad and Siyyid Kázim thought he was the person to become the Promised One. On the night that Mullá Husayn first met the Báb he thought that he was greater in education than the Báb. But he had such a pure heart and clear understanding that he was able to see the perfect beauty in the Báb, although the Báb was the son of a little-known

merchant of Shíráz.

Later, when many Bábís looked to Mullá Husayn as the most important person next to the

Báb, Mullá Husayn kept his purity and recognized in Quddús an even greater soul than

his own. How many of us would be able to do that?

When Mullá Husayn read the writings of Quddús he gave himself completely to the

service of Quddús. He promised Quddús that he would follow in his footsteps, obey his

commands, and in every way make him comfortable and keep him safe. And, until the hour of

his martyrdom, Mullá Husayn kept his promise.

Chapter Eight

The next morning when the visitors came to see Mullá Husayn, they were surprised

to find him waiting on Quddús. The night before when they had been there for dinner,

Mullá Husayn had been the guest of honour; he was served by Quddús. This morning Mullá

Husayn had given his seat of honour to Quddús and was only Quddús' servant.

When the

guests were all gathered together, the first words Quddús spoke to Mullá Husayn, so all

could hear, were: "Now, at this very hour, you should arise, go and speak to the

Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá', the chief Priest, and then go to Khurásán. In the town of Mashhad,

you should build a house in which we can live and receive guests at the same time. To this

house you will invite every pure soul, and we shall prepare them to join together and

teach the cause of God."

Mullá Husayn went to the Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá' and spoke to him in front of his pupils about the New Day. But the Priest was blind to the Truth and angry at

Mullá

Husayn.

Alone, and detached from everything but God, Mullá Husayn set out on his journey

to Mashhad. Mullá Husayn's only companion on this journey was the thought of carrying out the wishes of Quddús and fulfilling the promise he had made.

Immediately after he arrived in Mashhad, he bought a piece of land and

built the house Quddús had commanded him to build. He named the house the Bábíyyih,

after the Báb. Working as a team, Mullá Husayn and Quddús taught so many Bábís and sent them out to teach that great excitement filled the city of Mashhad. After a few months, Quddús left to take part in a conference at Badasht, leaving Mullá Husayn to carry on the teaching in Mashhad alone. So many people became followers of the Báb that the Government officials and the clergy became angry once again. Eventually, the number of Bábís in Mashhad became so great that Mullá Husayn was asked by the authorities to leave the city.

Before Mullá Husayn left Mashhad, hundreds of people came to the Bábíyyih to say goodbye. many of them begged him to let them go with him on his journey. Mothers brought their sons, and sisters their brothers. With tears in their eyes they asked him to take them along as a sacrifice to the Almighty. By the time he was ready to leave, two hundred and two men had joined him for the journey. Just before leaving Mashhad, a messenger came to Mullá Husayn from the Báb. The messenger carried two things, a letter and the turban of the Báb. He also carried the news that the Báb had given him a new name, Siyyid 'Alí. The message said that he should place upon his head the Báb's green turban, which was the sign of His family, and that he must carry the Black Standard (a black flag) in front of him, and hurry to give help to the Báb's beloved Quddús. Quddús, at this time, had been imprisoned in the home of a relative and was unable to teach.

As soon as the news reached him, Mullá Husayn gathered his two hundred and two companions together, raised the Black Standard, placed the Báb's green turban in his head, climbed on his horse, and gave the command to march. His men joyfully followed him. This took place on the 21st of July 1848.

Chapter Nine

As Mullá Husayn and his followers went through each town, they bravely told everyone about the New Day. They invited people to follow the Báb and join the march on the way to help Quddús. On the way, Mullá Husayn stopped for three days at a small town so that everyone could rest. On the third day, he said to his followers, "If

there is
anyone here who is not prepared to suffer greatly for this cause, he should now
turn back
and return to his home." he repeated these words several times. Finally, he
said,
"Soon I, together with seventy-two of you men, shall suffer death for the sake
of our
Beloved. If you are afraid to die for the cause, you must leave immediately.
Later, there
will be no chance to escape." So terrible did Mullá Husayn make the future
sound to
his men that twenty of them decided to return to their homes.

In Bárfurúsh, the news was received that Mullá Husayn and his men were
coming near. The Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá' in that town had hated Mullá Husayn since
he had told
him of the Báb. as soon as he heard the news, he hurried to the mosque and
called all of
his followers to hear him. The Muslims of Bárfurúsh gathered at the Mosque,
and
when they were all together, they listened to their leader. The priest threw
his turban on
the ground, tore open the neck of his shirt, and started to speak.

"Awake!" he said. "The enemies of Muhammad are marching toward the
city. they will wipe out everything that we love about our holy Faith. We must
fight them.
if we do not fight, they will kill all of us. The man who is the head of these
killers,
Mullá Husayn, came one day to my class. He paid no attention to what I was
saying and he
insulted me in front of my own disciples. When I refused to agree with him, he
became angry
and said he would force me to accept his ideas in the future. Now he is coming.
His men
are near the gates of the city. It is the duty of all the people of
Bárfurúsh,
both young and old, both men and women, to collect every gun and knife, stick
and stone,
and fight against these dangerous men. Tomorrow, at the hour of dawn, you must
kill every
man in Mullá Husayn's company."

So afraid were the people of Bárfurúsh that they would be killed by
Mullá Husayn that they prepared to fight. They did not know that Mullá Husayn
and his
men wanted only to pass through their town peacefully and tell them about the
coming of

the Promised One. No! They believed their leader without thinking, and prepared themselves to kill.

Mullá Husayn knew what was going to happen next. he knew the Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá' in Bárfurúsh, and he knew that he was a troublemaker. This Muslim chief was still jealous of Mullá Husayn because Mullá Husayn was such an intelligent man and had proved to him that the Báb was the Promised One. But the Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá' was an ambitious and cruel man. He did not want to follow anyone. He only wanted to be a leader.

As they approached the town, Mullá Husayn told his companions that they must now throw away everything they owned, except their horses and their swords. He knew the people of Bárfurúsh were afraid he and his men would want to kill them and rob them. So he said: "Leave behind all your belongings, and be content with your horses and swords, so that all may see that you have no interest in earthly things, and that you have no desire to guard your own property, much less to covet the property of others!"

About five kilometres from the town, they were suddenly attacked. People with guns began to shoot at them. Six of Mullá Husayn's men were hit immediately. One of them called to Mullá Husayn, "Beloved leader, we have come with you for no other reason than to sacrifice ourselves for the Cause. But please, let us defend ourselves."

But Mullá Husayn said, "The time has not yet come. The number is not yet complete." at that moment a bullet hit Siyyid Ridá in the chest and killed him instantly. Siyyid Ridá was a man of pure and simple ways, a strong believer, and Mullá

Husayn's closest helper. Siyyid Ridá had walked all the way from Mashhad alongside

Mullá Husayn's horse so he would be ready to help him at a moment's notice. When Mullá

Husayn saw his dear companion fall, he raised his eyes to heaven and prayed: "Behold,

O God, my God, the trouble which we have come into, and see what kind of a welcome we have

received from these people. We have come for no other reason than to teach them the way of

Truth. You have always commanded us to protect our lives against the enemy. We

will now
follow Thy command, and fight to protect ourselves."

With these words, he took hold of his sword and began to defend himself. He rode into the middle of the enemy without fear. Mullá Husayn was a slender man, not very strong, whose hand even trembled when he wrote. But, on that day, he showed such strength that only God could have given it to him. He went after the man who had killed his beloved Siyyid Ridá. The soldier was running away to hide, but Mullá Husayn followed him on his horse. The soldier hid himself behind a tree, and also tried to protect himself with his gun. But, Mullá Husayn rushed forward, and with one stroke of the sword he cut through the trunk of the tree, the barrel of the soldier's gun, and through the body of the soldier himself. The tree, gun, and the body fell into six pieces. It seemed impossible to any man, but it was true.

When the men and women of Bárfurúsh saw Mullá Husayn's great strength and courage, they dropped their guns and ran for their lives. During all this confusion, Mullá Husayn had disappeared from sight. His men raced their horses toward Bárfurúsh to try to find him.

Mullá Husayn had ridden his horse into the town and straight to the house of the Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá'. Three times he rode his horse around the house, and as he did so, he called out to him saying, "Come out of your house, you coward. you have forced the people of this town to wage holy war against us, but you have hidden yourself in your own house. Don't you know that anyone who preaches holy war must himself ride in front of his followers so they can see how brave and strong he is? Come out!"

But the Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá' did not come out, and when Mullá Husayn's men arrived, they found him seated calmly on his horse, unhurt and waiting for them to come. So happy were his men to see him that each one of them kissed his feet while he sat on his horse.

As the people of Bárfurúsh came running back into town, they raised their voices in a call of "Peace! Peace!" On the evening of that day, Mullá Husayn spoke to a crowd of people. He said to them, "O followers of the Prophet Muhammad, why have you risen against us? Why do you try to spill our blood? Do you think that this is approved by God? Did we ever say that your Faith was not true? Is this the kindness which Muhammad has commanded you to show to believers and non-believers? What have we done, for you to try to kill us? Just think---I, with only my sword, was able to face thousands of bullets which you shot at me--- and yet I was not hit, nor was even my horse hit. I received only a slight scratch on my face. De you know what this means? It means that God was protecting me through everything, so that you would be able to see that our Faith is from God."

That evening, although the people of Bárfurúsh cried for peace, they would not give Mullá Husayn or his men either bread to eat or water to drink. When they were refused all help, Mullá Husayn and his men closed the gates of the yard where they were to sleep for the night and put themselves into the hands of God.

The hour had come for the evening prayer. As is the custom in Muslim countries, someone always gets onto a high place and calls the believers to prayer. Mullá Husayn asked that someone in his group climb onto the roof of the building and chant the evening prayer. Everyone present knew that if he climbed up on the roof he might lose his life, because someone in Bárfurúsh might shoot him down. But, so in love with the Faith were they, that several offered to do it. The first to start the prayer was a youth. As soon as he had said the first words, he was shot down. Mullá Husayn said, "Let another of you continue with the prayer." Another youg man climbed onto the roof and started the prayer where the boy had left off. He too was shot. Then another. Each person was killed while in prayer. When the third person had been killed, Mullá Husayn threw open the gate of the yard, jumped on his horse, called to his men, and they all rode out to attack the enemy. Within a few minutes the entire crowd was either killed, or they had

ran away. the street was filled with the dead people of Bárfurúsh, and God once again proved to them that He could win over His enemies.

To show how God punishes men who go against His Will, this is what later happened to the Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá', who was the cause of all this trouble. The Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá' became sick with a terrible disease. Although he wore heavy furs and kept a fire burning all the time in his room, he shivered with cold. At the same time, his fever was so high that he was always dry and could not stop his thirst. He soon died, and his house, which was very beautiful, was left with no one in it and no one to take care of it. It fell to pieces, and little by little the people of the town began to dump all their garbage and junk in the yards. So well known has become this story that even today, when people quarrel, they say to each other: "I hope the same thing happens to your house that happened to the house of the Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá'."

Mullá Husayn and his companions left Bárfurúsh the next day and the day after that, at dawn, Mullá Husayn called all his companions together and told them that they were almost at the end of the journey. Noticing that some of the men were carrying some of the enemy's belongings, he ordered them to leave everything behind. He said, "It is necessary that you arrive at the end of this journey with nothing except your swords and your horses." He then walked ahead of his men until he came to a shine, a small building which contained the tomb of the Muslim saint, Shaykh Tabarsi.

Chapter Ten

The night before Mullá Husayn arrived at the Shrine of Shaykh Tabarsí, the guardian of the Shrine had a dream. He dreamt that the êmám Husayn, one of the êmáms descended from Muhammad, arrived at the Shrine with seventy-two soldiers and a large number of companions. He also dreamt that they stayed at this Shrine for some time, took part in many fights against their enemies, and won all those battles. One of the most important parts of the dream was that the Prophet of God Himself came to the

Shrine and
blessed the company. Later, all these things came true.

When Mullá Husayn arrived at the Shrine on the next day, the guardian immediately recognized him as the êmám Husayn whom he had seen in his dream. He threw himself at Mullá Husayn's feet and kissed them lovingly. He even joined Mullá Husayn's company, and was later killed by the enemy in one of the battles.

On the very same day that they arrived at the Shrine of Shaykh Tabarsí, Mullá Husayn decided he must build a fort around this shrine to protect his men from their enemies. He therefore gave the plans of the fort to Mírzá Muhammad-Báqir, who had built the Bábíyyih. He immediately started to gather the material to build the fort. But that evening, even before he had started to build, a large number of horsemen arrived to start a fight. The followers of Mullá Husayn wasted no time. They raised the cry of 'Ya Sáhibu'z-Zamán*' and in a few minutes they had driven the horsemen away.

Mullá Husayn then ordered that the fort should be built immediately. During the next few days, they were attacked again three times, but each time they drove the enemy away and went ahead with their work of building the fort. As soon as the fort was completed, Mullá Husayn received the news that Bahá'u'lláh had arrived in the nearby village. Bahá'u'lláh said that He was to visit them that afternoon, and then they were all to be His guests in the eveing.

Can you imagine what happiness must have filled the hearts of Mullá Husayn to have Bahá'u'lláh as his guest? And do you remember the dream which the guardian of the Shrine had? The Prophet of God had come to give His blessing to the Fort of Shaykh Tabarsí. nothng could now go wrong with the plan of God.

As soon as Mullá Husayn had learned that Bahá'u'lláh was coming, he set everyone to work to get the fort cleaned and ready. He himself joined them in sweeping the Shrine, and sprinkling water around the ground to keep down the dust. And when Bahá'u'lláh arrived, Mullá Husayn took Him into his arms with such love and

tenderness that everyone present wondered Who this man Bahá'u'lláh was, and why Mullá Husayn gave Him so much loving attention. You see, no one yet knew Who Bahá'u'lláh was. Their love was still for the Báb and none other. But as Bahá'u'lláh began to speak to them, they began to see how wonderful He was. However, none of the men realized that He was to be a Prophet of God.

While Bahá'u'lláh was visiting the fort, He inspected the work, said He was pleased with everything, and then explained some things to Mullá Husayn which would help to make the men more comfortable and safe. Then He said, "The one thing this fort and company require is the presence of Quddús." Bahá'u'lláh knew that if Quddús were there, everything would be perfect. So He told Mullá Husayn to send Mullá Mihdí and six men to the town of Sárí to demand the release of Quddús from the home of his relative where he was kept.

Before Bahá'u'lláh left the fort, He spoke to everyone assuring them that, no matter what happened at Shaykh Tabarsí, they must be patient and accept the will of the Almighty. "If it be His will," He added, "We shall once again visit you at this same spot, and shall lend you Our assistance. You have been chosen of God to be the vanguard of His host and the establishers of His Faith. His host verily will conquer. Whatever may befall, victory is yours, a victory which is complete and certain." With these words, he left the fort and returned to Tíhrán.

* O lord of the Age!

Chapter Eleven

Before Quddús arrived at the fort, Mullá Husayn called all his followers together and told them that Quddús was coming. He told them that the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh wanted Quddús to be there, and that they must behave toward Quddús as if he were the Báb Himself. 'As for myself,' he said, 'You must consider me his lowly servant. You must obey Quddús so completely that even if he were to tell you that you must all kill me, you must obey without hesitation. If you hesitate, you will be untrue to your faith. You must not talk to him unless he invites you to. You must give up your own wishes and desires, and follow his plans and his commands. You must act in such a way

that I will
be proud of you."

When a messenger brought word that Quddús was soon to arrive at the fort,
Mullá
Husayn jumped to his feet and took about a hundred of his companions to meet
him. He
placed two candles in the hands of each man, lighted them himself, and off they
went
marching into the night. In the forest, they met Quddús and lighted his way
back to the
fort, singing a hymn with the words, "Holy, Holy, the Lord our God, the Lord of
angels and the spirit!"

When Quddús arrived at the fort, his first words were a prophecy of the
Qur'án
about the Promised One. Straight after that, he mentioned Bahá'u'lláh, and
asked Mullá
Husayn about Him. Mullá Husayn told Quddús that Bahá'u'lláh would return to
the fort
at a later time, if God willed.

From this point on in the life of Mullá Husayn, he became the simple servant
of
Quddús. Whatever Quddús wanted him to do, he did with great joy and without
question.
Many a night, Mullá Husayn would walk around and around the place where
Quddús lay
asleep, and he chanted special prayers for him. On one of those nights he told
one of the
companions, who had been quietly praying, not to try to become a martyr. "Then
you
will be able to understand, when the year'80 comes, the secret of the things
which now lie
hidden from you," said Mullá Husayn. The year'80 was 1863,*the year when
Bahá'u'lláh made His declaration to the world. So great was Mullá
Husayn's spirit and knowledge that he immediately swept away everyone's fears.

there were many reasons during those next few weeks for the companions of
Mullá
Husayn and Quddús to be afraid and to doubt. Sa'ídu'l-'Ulamá' wanted all the
Bábís
killed, so most people living near the fort would not help them. A few people
did,
however, help, but when the Sháh sent soldiers, the bread supply to the fort
was
cut off, and later, the water supply too. Many times, the Bábís were
attacked, and many
men died while defending the fort.

Prince Mihdí-Qulí Mírzá came with an army to the fort. He sent a messenger to ask Mullá Husayn why they had built the Fort. Mullá Husayn told the Prince, We have no thought of fighting the Government. Our Cause is a religious one, and we are being attacked by people who are being led by the ministers of religion. We can prove to anyone that our Message is the Truth from God. If you want to know the Truth, bring the leaders of religion from the towns of Sári and Bárfurúsh to this fort. We will prove everything to you from the Qur'án. Let the Prince himself decide if our Cause is true or false."

(At a later time, Bahá'u'lláh taught that it is no longer permitted to use the sword as a means of settling religious disputes. In fact, Bahá'is do not use weapons at all unless the Government requires them to. But, during the time of the Báb, it was permitted to defend oneself with weapons.)

But instead of bringing the religious leaders, the Prince attacked the fort.

With the signal "Mount your steeds, O heroes of God!," Quddús, followed by Mullá Husayn, led two hundred and two of their men into the fight. They rode in the direction of Vás-Kas, where the Prince was quartered. Although the enemy tried to stop them, the Bábís rode as though there were no one in the way. Mullá Husayn led the way, and rode right through the gate and into the private rooms of the Prince. The Prince was so afraid that he jumped out the back window and ran away without shoes! His men ran away, also, and two other princes were killed in the fighting. The Bábís found containers full of gold and silver, but did not touch them. All they took was a pot of gunpowder and the Prince's favourite sword. This was given to Mullá Husayn.

While the Bábís were reorganizing themselves on the field, Mullá Husayn watched the enemy in case of another attack. Suddenly, the enemy came riding toward them again.

The men raised the cry of "Yá Sáhibu'z-Zamán!" and Mullá Husayn rode in one direction while Quddús and his companions rode in another. So well known was Mullá Husayn for his strength and courage in using the sword that the enemy turned

from him and
went to Quddús instead. All at once they fired a thousand bullets, and Quddús
was hit in
the mouth by one of them. As soon as Mullá Husayn heard the sound of the guns,
he turned
his horse in the direction of Quddús to help him. When Mullá Husayn saw that
Quddús had
been hurt and the blood was dripping from his mouth, he raised his hands and
was about to
beat himself, when Quddús made him stop. Then Mullá Husayn, filled with more
strength
than he had ever felt before, took the sword of Quddús in one hand and the
sword of the
Prince in the other. With a hundred and ten men behind him, he went into the
battle
swinging both swords. He fought so hard and so well that within thirty minutes,
the entire
army of the Prince was beaten and ran away.

The Sháh was surprised by the news that the Prince had lost the fight, and
so he sent another army to help him. This army built seven walls around the
Fort of Shaykh
Tabarsí. As the Bábís were running out of water, Mullá Husayn gave the
order to dig a
well. One the day they were to finish the well, Mullá Husayn said: "Today we
shall
all have enough water for a bath. We must make ourselves clean, because soon we
shall
taste the cup of martyrdom. All of you who are willing to die for the Almighty
must now
prepare yourselves and wait for the hour of attack. This night, before the hour
of dawn,
all those who wish may join me and rush forward to meet the enemy, and to
return forever
to our Beloved."

That afternoon, Mullá Husayn washed himself, put on new cloths, wrapped the
Báb's green turban around his head, and waited for the final hour. He was
completely
happy, and spent the time with his companions giving them joy and courage. He
spent some
time alone with Quddús, and told Quddús all the things that were in his
heart. Then,
soon after midnight, as soon as he saw the morning star, he jumped to his feet,
climbed on
his horse, and gave the signal to open the gates of the fort. Behind him three
hundred and
thirteen men rushed out to meet the enemy. Once again, the cry of "Yá

Sáhibu'z-Zamán!" filled the forest around them.

Mullá Husayn rushed forward and within a short time he and his men had ruined all seven of the walls built by the enemy. The three armies of the Sháh--- one led by the Prince and another by 'Abbás-Qulí Khán--- were both suprised and overcome.

But 'Abbás-Qulí Khán had climbed a tree, and was waiting for his chance to kill whoever came near. He could see Mullá Husayn and the Bábís fighting because of the light which came from their guns. But no one could see 'Abbás-Qulí Khán in the tree because it was dark. Suddenly, the horse which Mullá Husayn was riding got caught up in the rope of a tent, and before the horse was able to get away, 'Abbás-Qulí Khán shot a bullet at Mullá Husayn's chest. Although 'Abbás-Qulí Khán did not know who he had shot, he was successful. Mullá Husayn got off his horse bleeding, tried to walk a few steps, but fell to the ground. Two of his companions saw him fall and carried him back to the Fort. he seemed to be unconscious.

As soon a Mullá Husayn was brought into the Fort, Quddús gave orders to be left alone with him. Everyone left Mullá Husayn and Quddús alone in his room, but they stood outside the door and waited. Soon they were suprised to hear Mullá Husayn answering questions asked by Quddús. One of the men had been looking through a crack in the door and saw Quddús call to Mullá Husayn. A soon as his name was called, Mullá Husayn rose up, and then sat himself on his knees in fron of Quddús as he usually did. With his head bowed and his eyes down, he listened to everything Quddús said. One of the bits of conversation which was overheard was this: Quddús said to Mullá Husayn, "You have hurried to leave this world, and you are leaving me alone against the enemy. If it pleases God, I will join you in a short time, and I shall also taste the sweetness of being in heaven." All that could be heard of Mullá Husayn's answer was: "May my life be given for you. Are you well pleased with me?"

For two hours, Mullá Husayn and Quddús conversed with each other, but no one knows what they said. After a long time, Quddús opened the door to his companions and said, "I have said my last goodbye to Mullá Husayn. I have told him many things which I could not tell him before." When they went to where Mullá Husayn lay, he was dead, but there was a little smile still on his face, and he looked so peaceful it seemed as though he had only fallen asleep.

Quddús himself took care of Mullá Husayn's body. He put his own shirt on Mullá Husayn and gave the order for him to be buried to the south of, and next to, the Shrine of Shaykh Tabarsí. Quddús' last words to Mullá Husayn before he was buried were: "Well is it with you to have remained faithful to the Covenant of God to your last hour. I pray God that there will never be a division between you and me." He then kissed the eyes and forehead of Mullá Husayn, and laid the body in the grave himself. The seven believers standing near were so moved that they wept. He told everyone there that they must keep secret the place where Mullá Husayn was buried. He then commanded that the thirty-six men who had been martyred that day be buried on the north side of the Shrine--all in one grave. And his final word to them was: "Let the loved ones of God learn from the example of these martyrs of our Faith. Let them be and remain as united in life as these are now in death."

* The year 1280 ('80 for short) in the Muslim calendar is the year 1863-64 in the Christian calendar.

Epilogue

The time from the day when Mullá Husayn was first attacked by his enemies to the day of his martyrdom was one hundred and sixteen days. The number of martyrs killed during those one hundred and sixteen days was seventy-two. In four different battles, Mullá Husayn had shown such courage and power that it could have only come from God. He was thirty-six years old when he died. At the age of eighteen, he first met Siyyid

Kázim. For
nine years he studied under him. The other nine years of his life were spent in
teaching
and protecting the Faith of God against its enemies.

When the Báb learned of Mullá Husayn's death, he wrote praises and prayers
for
him which would equal three times the length of the Qu'án. In one of His
Tablets, the
Báb wrote that the very dust where the body of Mullá Husayn lies buried can
bring
happiness to the down-hearted and healing to the sick. In the Kitáb-i-Iqán,
Bahá'u'lláh pays him the highest tribute. He wrote: "But for him, God would
not have been established upon the seat of His mercy, nor have ascended the
throne of
eternal glory!"

Mullá Husayn is one of the greatest men in the history of the Bahá'i Faith
and
his memory lives today and will live for hundreds of years as an inspiration
and an
example for all who walk in the path of God.

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