

QUDDÚS: Hero of Faith

What if you and your friends were attacked because of your religion? How would you find the strength to keep sharing your beliefs?

Around 1822 in Persia (now Iran), a boy was born who would courageously sacrifice everything for his faith. His name was Muhammad-'Alí, but he became known as Quddús. He was quiet, modest, and a good student.

Quddús learned from his religious teacher that a new Messenger of God would soon appear. When he was 22, Quddús went to the city of Shíráz in search of the Messenger. He saw the Báb ("the Gate" in Arabic), and instantly recognized Him as a Prophet of God. He said, "None other can manifest the power and majesty that radiate from His holy person." The Báb taught that another new Messenger of God would soon come. Quddús became one of the Báb's first followers.

Pilgrimage and Persecution

The Báb invited Quddús to join Him on a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, in what is now Saudi Arabia. On the way, Quddús documented the Báb's sacred writings.

The Bábí Faith spread quickly, and the Muslim authorities persecuted the Báb and His followers. The Báb told Quddús



Bahá'u'lláh gave Muhammad-'Alí the title "Quddús," meaning "the Most Holy" in Arabic. There are no known photographs of Quddús. This is an artist's rendering of him. PAINTING BY IVAN LLOYD

that he would suffer for his faith. But the Báb also promised, "The hosts of the Unseen will hasten forth to assist you, and will proclaim to all the world your heroism and glory."

Despite the dangers, Quddús remained faithful. He was arrested with another Bábí in Shíráz. Their beards were burned, and they were led through the streets with a rope strung through holes pierced in their noses.

After his release, Quddús continued to share the Báb's teachings. He also met Bahá'u'lláh, Who was a leader among the Bábís and would later reveal that He was the Messenger promised by the Báb.

Heroism and Sacrifice

Persecution of the Bábís intensified. For protection, they built Fort Tabarsí, where over 300 Bábís took shelter. Quddús inspired them with his talks and writings.

The government's army attacked the Bábís repeatedly, and many battles took place. The Bábís were greatly outnumbered, and some lost their lives. But they defended themselves heroically. After about seven months, a truce was offered. The Bábís were promised that they could safely leave the fort, and they agreed. But in a cruel betrayal, almost all were killed.

Quddús was taken prisoner. On May 16, 1849, when he was about 27, he was led through the streets, unclothed and in chains, as the crowd attacked him with knives and axes. All the while, Quddús whispered, "Forgive, O my God, the trespasses of this people . . . Show them, O God, the way of Truth, and turn their ignorance into faith." Finally, his body was thrown into a fire.

When the Báb heard of Quddús's brutal martyrdom, He was so grieved He did not write for six months. The following year, the Báb Himself was martyred in Tabríz. Bahá'u'lláh later honored Quddús with a spiritual station second only to the Báb Himself.