

SHINING LAMP

A Bahá'í who served humanity with radiance

Abu'l-Qásim Faizi (c. 1906–1980): Noble Teacher

With much dread, Abu'l-Qásim Faizi walked to school every day. It was the early 1900s, and his one-room school in Qum, Iran, was an awful place. The harsh teachers whipped students on the soles of their feet as punishment.

Fortunately, Faizi—as he became known—had a happy home. Around his teens, his life changed when his family moved to Tihrán. He went to Tarbíyat Bahá'í School, where the teachers inspired him, and he became a Bahá'í.

Faizi attended the American University of Beirut, Lebanon. He traveled to Haifa, Israel, several times to visit Shoghi Effendi, who led the Bahá'í Faith at the time. Shoghi Effendi welcomed Faizi like a brother. He urged Faizi to be different from others and not become attached to material things. Faizi loved those visits and once wrote, “I cannot tear myself away from here.”

Teaching with Love

Faizi earned his degree in education in 1933, and he hoped to teach at the Tarbíyat School. But due to religious prejudice, the Muslim government closed all of Iran's Bahá'í schools. Faizi got a high-paying job with an oil company, but he longed to be of greater service to humanity. He quit his job and moved to Najafábád, Iran, to teach about 400 Bahá'í children. He set up classes in homes and went from house to house, teaching students with encouragement and enthusiasm.

Faizi lived simply and spent his money on school supplies. He bought blank booklets, and in each one, he wrote a prayer in beautiful calligraphy.



“He was just like a fireplace, you could get nice and warm by the spirit of Faizi,” said Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, the wife of Shoghi Effendi.

Bahá'ís were not allowed to publish Bahá'í books, so older students made handwritten copies. Faizi stayed in Najafábád for over four years, training kids and teachers. He said they were “years full of spiritual upliftment, discipline and benefit.” In 1939, he married Gloria ‘Alá'í, whom he had met in Beirut.

“Shining Example”

When Shoghi Effendi asked Bahá'ís to leave Iran to share the Bahá'í teachings, Faizi and Gloria moved to the small island nation of Bahrain. Faizi worked as a teacher. They were the only Bahá'ís for years, until more moved there. Faizi guided the community with loving kindness as it grew. In 1957, Shoghi Effendi honored him as a Hand of the Cause of God. In this role, Faizi encouraged Bahá'ís and helped to teach and protect the Bahá'í Faith.

When Shoghi Effendi passed away soon afterward, Faizi moved to Haifa to help guide the global Bahá'í community. He served as a Persian and English translator and wrote books and articles about the Faith, as well as novels. Gloria and their two children joined him later.

The Universal House of Justice—the governing body of the international Bahá'í community—was elected in 1963. Faizi traveled to dozens of countries at its request, giving talks and advising the Bahá'ís. He said, “Servitude is the only path of success we can ever tread . . . The path of servitude gives us a way to explore our own hearts and souls . . .”

On November 19, 1980, Faizi passed away in Haifa. The House of Justice praised his “SHINING EXAMPLE” and assured prayers for “HIS NOBLE RADIANT SOUL.”