

The Life of the Báb

The highlighted area marks the time in which this story takes place.

1819 October 20

Birth of the Báb in Shíráz, Iran

1842 August

Marries Khadíjih Bagum

1843

Birth of their son, Ahmad, who soon dies

1844 May 23

Declares Divine Mission as Prophet-Founder of the Bábí Faith

1844 December

Announces His station while on pilgrimage in Mecca, Saudi Arabia

1847 July

Imprisonment in the fortress of Máh-Kú (The Open Mountain)

1848 April 10

Transfer to the fortress of Chihriq (The Grievous Mountain)

1848 July

Declares His mission to leaders in Tabríz, Iran, and is punished with the bastinado

1850 July 9

The Báb is martyred in Tabríz, Iran.

In 1844 in Persia (now Iran), 18 people made an amazing discovery. They were the first to believe in the Messenger of God known as the Báb (“the Gate” in Arabic). The Báb called them the Letters of the Living. Each was mysteriously inspired to find Him through prayer, meditation, or dreams. The last one, Quddús, recognized Him at first sight, saying no one else could radiate such “power and majesty.”

The Báb urged these followers to travel and tell others that a new Messenger of God had appeared. He asked Quddús to join Him on pilgrimage to the Islamic holy cities of Mecca and Medina (now in Saudi Arabia). There He would announce that He was the Qá’im, the Promised One of Islam and the Messenger of a new faith.

They boarded a ship and endured a difficult journey for almost two months. Storms rocked the overcrowded boat, but the Báb and Quddús remained calm as they prayed and the Báb revealed holy writings.

The other passengers grew tired and unhappy from the harsh conditions. One man argued with everyone and refused to share water, though others had none. His behavior was so terrible that the captain ordered his crew to throw the man overboard! The Báb threw Himself onto the man and urged the captain to change his mind and be forgiving. Moved by the Báb’s kindness, the captain agreed.

In Mecca, the Báb followed the rituals of pilgrimage with dignity and reverence. A central focus of pilgrimage



Historical engraving of the Kaaba in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, where the Báb announced His station as the Promised One. Muslims face the Kaaba during prayer.

is the Kaaba, the holiest shrine in Islam, believed to have been built by Abraham, a Messenger of God, and His son.

Wearing His robe and green turban, the Báb circled the Kaaba in the sweltering heat. Pilgrims filled the courtyard as He approached the Kaaba. Then He held the iron ring on its door. In a loud, clear voice, He announced three times, “I am that Qá’im Whose advent you have been awaiting.” Silence and wonder fell over the crowd.

The Báb’s announcement marked the start of a new era. He taught that another Messenger of God would soon appear.

When the Báb and Quddús returned home, Persia was alive with news of the Báb’s message, igniting the fire of love in many hearts. The Báb and the Letters of the Living continued to share His teachings and prepare people for the coming of Bahá’u’lláh.