

# Life of the Báb: Transforming Máh-Kú

## 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 Shiráz, 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 Tabriz, Iran, and is punished with the bastinado

### 1850 July 9

The Báb is martyred in Tabriz, Iran.

In the rugged, remote mountains of northwestern Persia (now Iran), the Báb was imprisoned in the castle of Máh-Kú with two companions. His cell had mud walls, and He had no lamp at night. He wasn't allowed to have visitors.

The sháh's prime minister had convinced him to send the Báb to this isolated spot, hoping to stop the spread of His faith. But the castle guards were immediately touched by the Báb's extraordinary character. They told nearby villagers about His loving and gentle manner. People began to gather beneath the castle every day to catch a glimpse of Him and ask for His blessings.

'Alí Khán, the officer in charge of the castle, tried to follow the prime minister's orders to keep everyone away from the Báb. Then he had a profound experience that changed everything.

One morning, 'Alí Khán was riding toward town when he saw the Báb praying by the river. He decided to scold Him for leaving His prison, but was suddenly seized with fear of interrupting His prayers. Instead, 'Alí Khán rode to the castle to yell at the guards for letting Him out. But when he arrived, the castle gates were locked and the Báb was in His cell!

'Alí Khán was bewildered and trembling as he approached the Báb. The Báb explained that 'Alí Khán's vision was a divine gift. "What you have witnessed is true and undeniable . . ." He said. "God . . . has willed to reveal to your eyes the Truth."

From that moment on, 'Alí Khán was devoted to the Báb. He allowed



On the outskirts of the village of Máh-Kú, the castle where the Báb was imprisoned stood beneath a rocky overhang, which blocked it from starlight.

visitors to meet with Him, and brought Him the best fruits he could find. In His nine months at Máh-Kú, the Báb revealed about 8,000 holy verses. As He dictated His writings, His voice rang out, echoing through the mountains and touching the hearts of the townspeople.

In the summer and fall of 1847, a steady stream of the Báb's followers, known as Bábís, came to Máh-Kú to see Him. But the winter brought such cold that when He washed His face, water droplets turned to ice on His skin.

The prime minister had spies in the area. They reported the Báb's many visitors and 'Alí Khán's devotion to Him. In response, the prime minister ordered the Báb to be sent to an even more remote prison called Chihriq.

By the time the Báb left in April 1848, the people of Máh-Kú had been transformed. Though the Báb was in prison for the rest of His life, nothing could stop the irresistible power of His spirit and His Bábí Faith.