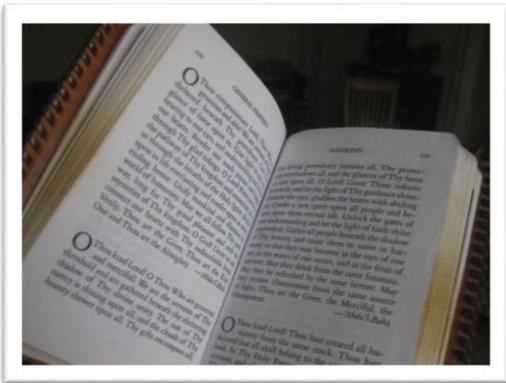


The Birth of the Báb



Bahá'ís around the world celebrate the Birth of the Báb between the months of Qudrat and 'Ilm.¹¹ The Birth of Báb is always followed by the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh and these two days are known as the Twin Holy Days.

The Báb, whose given name was Siyyid 'Alí-Muhammad, was born in the Persian city of Shiráz in 1819. He later adopted the title of the Báb, or 'the Gate'. He was the herald of the Bahá'í Faith and, in year 1 of the Bahá'í era, 1844, proclaimed Himself to be the bearer of a divine message. His mission, He

said, was to prepare the way for the imminent coming of an even greater divine messenger, 'Him whom God shall make manifest'. It was in the Bahá'í year 20, in 1863, that Bahá'u'lláh announced He was the one foreshadowed by the Báb.

The Birth of the Báb is one of nine Holy Days on which Bahá'ís suspend work. There is no prescribed ceremony for celebrating the anniversary, but Bahá'ís often gather together on this day for devotional meetings and musical programmes and recall stories from His early life.

As a child, the Báb displayed unusual wisdom and intelligence. He was raised by an uncle who sent Him to school. On the first day the teacher asked Him a question about the meaning of a verse from the Qur'án. Astonished by the clarity and insight of the Báb's answer, the teacher returned the child to His uncle and stated that he had nothing to teach such a gifted student. The uncle ordered the Báb to return to the class and observe silence and listen to the teacher. Nevertheless, the signs of the Báb's innate and splendid qualities were already being manifested from such a young age and were a prelude to His greater mission in life.

¹¹ The Gregorian date shifts in accordance with the timing of Naw-Rúz and falls between 20 October and 13 November, depending on the year. A full list of corresponding solar dates for the birthdays of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb over the next fifty years is available.



Shrine of the Báb