

Amazing Stories from *The Dawn-Breakers*

Adapted by Jackie Mehrabi and illustrated by Malcolm Lee

(*The story so far...* A shepherd boy called Nabíl became a follower of the Báb. At the time, the believers were having the most amazing adventures and Nabíl began to write these down so we would know what had happened all that time ago. The first person he told us about was Shaykh Ahmad.)

Shaykh Ahmad's Journeys

It was around the year 1783 and a dignified man called Shaykh Ahmad was walking down the road towards the pier. Although it was very hot, he was wearing a long cloak, almost to his ankles, and on his head was a large, white turban.

Shaykh Ahmad was a respected and wise religious leader, and by reading a lot and thinking a lot he had discovered something very important. He was leaving the island of Bahrayn where he had lived all his life and was setting off to the mainland to tell people what he had found.

When he arrived at the pier, sailors lifted his bags onto a boat and he climbed aboard with the other passengers. The mooring rope was untied and the boat sailed out to sea.



Shaykh Ahmad gave one last look at his island home. He felt sad because he was leaving his family and friends, but he also felt excited because of what he had discovered. He knew it was time for a new Messenger to come on earth. He also knew that he must tell as

many people as possible. Shaykh Ahmad's mission was to explain the true meaning of the prophecies and teachings of Muhammad so that people would be able to recognise the Promised One when He came. If their heads were full of superstitious ideas, or their hearts were full of prejudice, they would never be able to recognise Him.

Shaykh Ahmad was like a gardener who clears the ground of stones and weeds and rubbish so that beautiful flowers can grow. He was going to help people get rid of their wrong ideas and wrong feelings so good ones could grow in their place.

It was not just in Muslim countries that people were expecting the Promised One. In different parts of the world other people were also expecting a new Manifestation of God. Christians, Buddhists, Jews, Hindus and Zoroastrians were all waiting. The Founders of all their religions had told them to watch and not miss the return of the Holy Spirit of God. But they did not know exactly how it would happen, or where. Some people left their homes in Germany and sailed to Mount Carmel in the Holy Land. Others waited all night on a mountain in America expecting the Holy One to come down out of the sky. But Shaykh Ahmad knew the Promised One would appear in Persia.



First of all, Shaykh Ahmad went to the holy cities in Iráq because this was where Muhammad was buried and many learned people gathered to talk about God. Here he soon became known as one of the most learned and most wise teachers of religion. Everywhere he went, he explained how the Words of God often have an inner, spiritual meaning. The inner meanings, he said, were mysteries that had not always been properly understood before.

One of the things Shaykh Ahmad told people was that it is our souls, not our bodies, that go to heaven when we die. They did not know that before, and some people became angry because they wanted to hold on to their old ideas and were frightened of listening to anything new. But others flocked to hear Shaykh Ahmad and believed what he said.

After some time, Shaykh Ahmad left Iráq and went to Persia. He arrived in the town of Shíráz and told the people who lived there how wonderful it was, especially the mosque.

They were surprised. They loved their town, but why was Shaykh Ahmad praising the mosque so much?



“Wonder not,” he told them, “for before long the secret of my words will be made clear to you. Some of you will live to see the glory of a Day which the Prophets of old have longed to witness.”

Shaykh Ahmad knew from reading the prophecies that the Báb would be born in Shíráz and that He would one day speak in that very same mosque. But at the time, he did not tell anyone. He kept this a secret in his heart until he found someone who would be able to understand.

The old men raised their eyebrows in wonder, and the learned priests admitted that Shaykh Ahmad seemed to know far more than they did.

Shaykh Ahmad then left Shíráz and travelled to Yazd.

While he was in Yazd, Shaykh Ahmad wrote nearly one hundred books explaining the teachings of Muhammad and helping people to understand the prophecies about the Promised One. He became so famous that even the King of Persia wrote asking questions that the greatest religious teachers in the land had been unable to answer. Shaykh Ahmad wrote such good answers that the King was impressed and invited him to visit him in his palace in Tihrán.

By now Shaykh Ahmad was feeling tired. It had been many years since he had left his home in Bahrayn and he was over seventy years old. He decided it was time to find a young disciple who could continue his work after him.

(to be continued)

