CHAPTER FOUR

RETURN OF THE BÁB TO SHÍRÁZ

Return from Búshihr

The time was nigh for the arrival of His Holiness in Shíráz. Shaykh Abú-Háshim, [brother of Imám-Jumʿih,] wrote a most provocative account to Shíráz, promoting mischief and raising the cry, “Our religion is lost!” A great excitement was caused when his letter reached Shíráz. A contingent of the ʿuláma, such as Shaykh Husayn Zalim [the tyrant], known as the Názimuʿsh-Shariʿah; Akhúnd Mullá Muhammad-ʿAlí Mahallátí; Shaykh Mahdí Kajawví; and a score of others went before Husayn Khán, who was at that time the governor-general of Shíráz. They complained, “The Siyyid Who publicly claimed [the station of] the Qáʾimiyyat and the Bábíyyat in Mecca will shortly arrive [in Shíráz], and you must join with the adherents of Islam in quenching this fire and silencing this Call, so it is kept under control.” Husayn Khán gave in to the flattery of the clerics. When the Báb arrived at Búshihr, Husayn Khán sent a mounted escort of several men to Búshihr to arrest His Holiness and to return Him to Shíráz.

Late one afternoon, His Holiness was standing on an elevation by the village of Dálakí, a distance of two days’ journey to Búshihr, when the troops passed through that location. His Holiness instructed Hájí

83 The Báb gives the following chronology of His travels in a Khutbih [Sermon] (Ishráq-Khávari, Kitáb Muhádirát, pp. 729–31):

- Left Shíráz 10 September 1844
- Arrived Búshihr 19 September 1844
- Left the port 2 October 1844
- Reached Mecca 12 December 1844
- Hajj Completed 24 December 1844
- Left Mecca 7 January 1845
- Arrived Medina 16 January 1845
- Left Medina 12 February 1845
- Arrived Jiddah 24 February 1845
- Embarked on ship 27 February 1845
- Sailed for Iran 4 March 1845

84 Meaning, claims to be the Promised One and to be the gate of communication with the Imáms.

85 About five miles south of Burázján.
Mubárak, “Go quickly and ask the soldiers where they are going and what their mission is.” In accordance with His command, Hájí Mubárak approached the soldiers and asked where they were going. The soldiers, being argumentative, said, “Where we are going and what we are doing is none of your business, black man!” Hájí Mubárak returned to His presence and informed Him, “The horsemen refused to say what their mission is.” The Báb said, “Go and tell them to come to Me.” Hájí Mubárak went to the soldiers and said, “My Master asked that you should be so kind as to come, so that we can make your acquaintance.”

A certain Aslán Khán, who was older and wiser than the rest, came back with Hájí Mubárak and attained His blessed presence. He was asked, “Where are you going and what mission have you been given?” The soldier again refused to divulge their orders. The Báb said, “No reason to conceal it: your mission is to take the Siyyid-i Báb to Shíráz. Do not trouble yourselves. I stand ready. If you went on to Búshihr according to your orders and passed this village by, you would not accomplish your mission.” The official looked closely at His Countenance and noted all the signs that he had been given in Shíráz to identify Him and realized that this was the Siyyid in person. He returned to his companions and reported what had transpired, which caused them all to exclaim with wonder, “If a man is sought by the government or the people, it is only natural for him to flee the officers sent to take him under guard from one place to another. How is it then that with the utmost courage and firmness this Personage has come forward, informing us that He is undoubtedly the object of our quest? Of a certainty He must be of the true!”

The valor of the Báb awakened the consciousness of the men. They attained His blessed presence, and His Holiness showered upon them His immense kindness and benevolence. He instructed Hájí Mubárak to serve them the supper he had prepared, as these men had been traveling and were hungry and tired. Hájí Mubárak served the same quantity of food that he had prepared for two persons and brought it. The men saw that there was very little food and that it would not even suffice one of them, but they sat to dine and ate their fill. This experience deepened their wonder. In the course of the journey they witnessed many such miracles.86

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86 In a Tablet dated 24 Jamádíy’th-Thání AH 1261/30 June 1845 to His uncle, Hájí Mírzá Siyyid ’Ali, the Báb mentions the esteem that the horsemen showed Him during this journey (A.Q. Afnán, private communications, August 1993).