

The following story is from the book

The Central Figures

The Báb

Volume One



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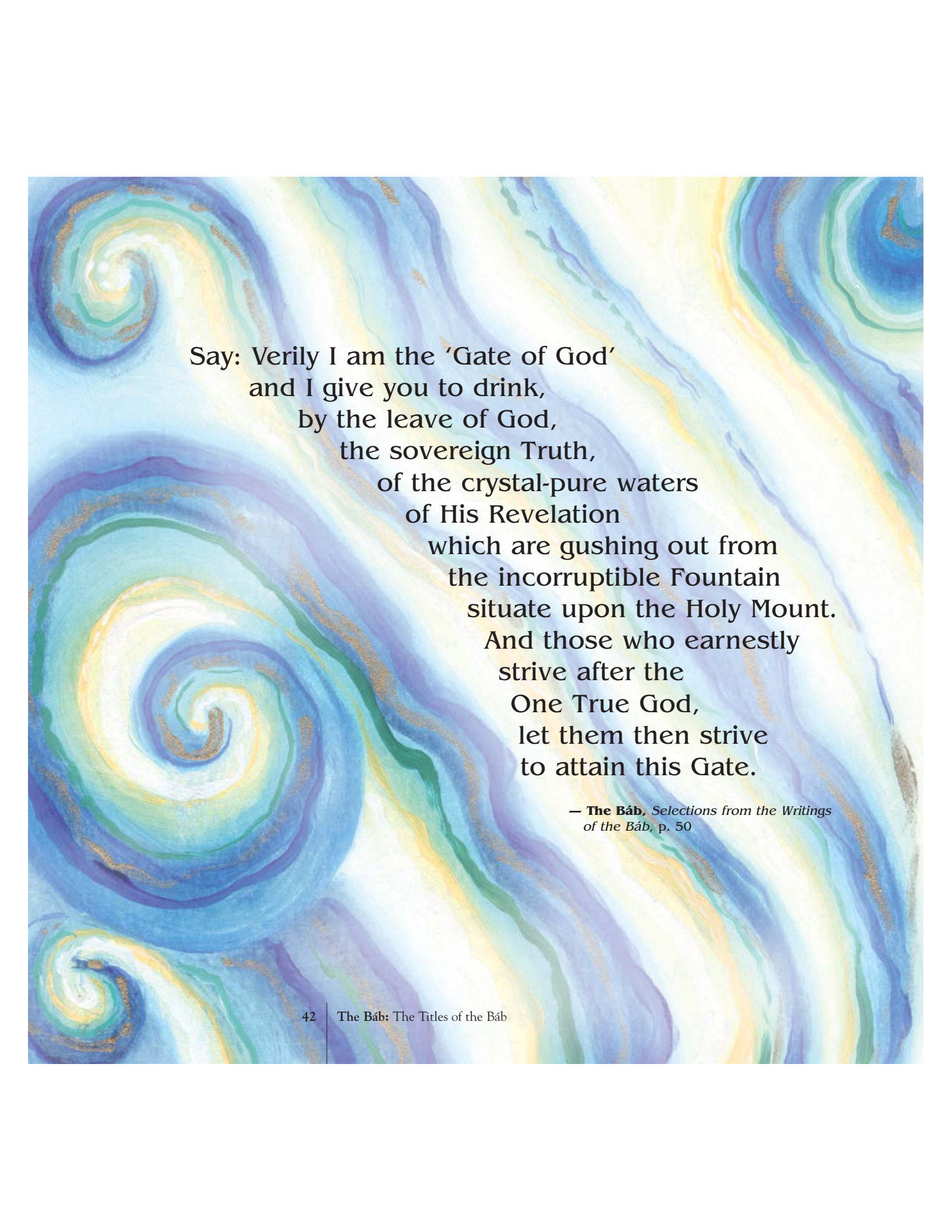
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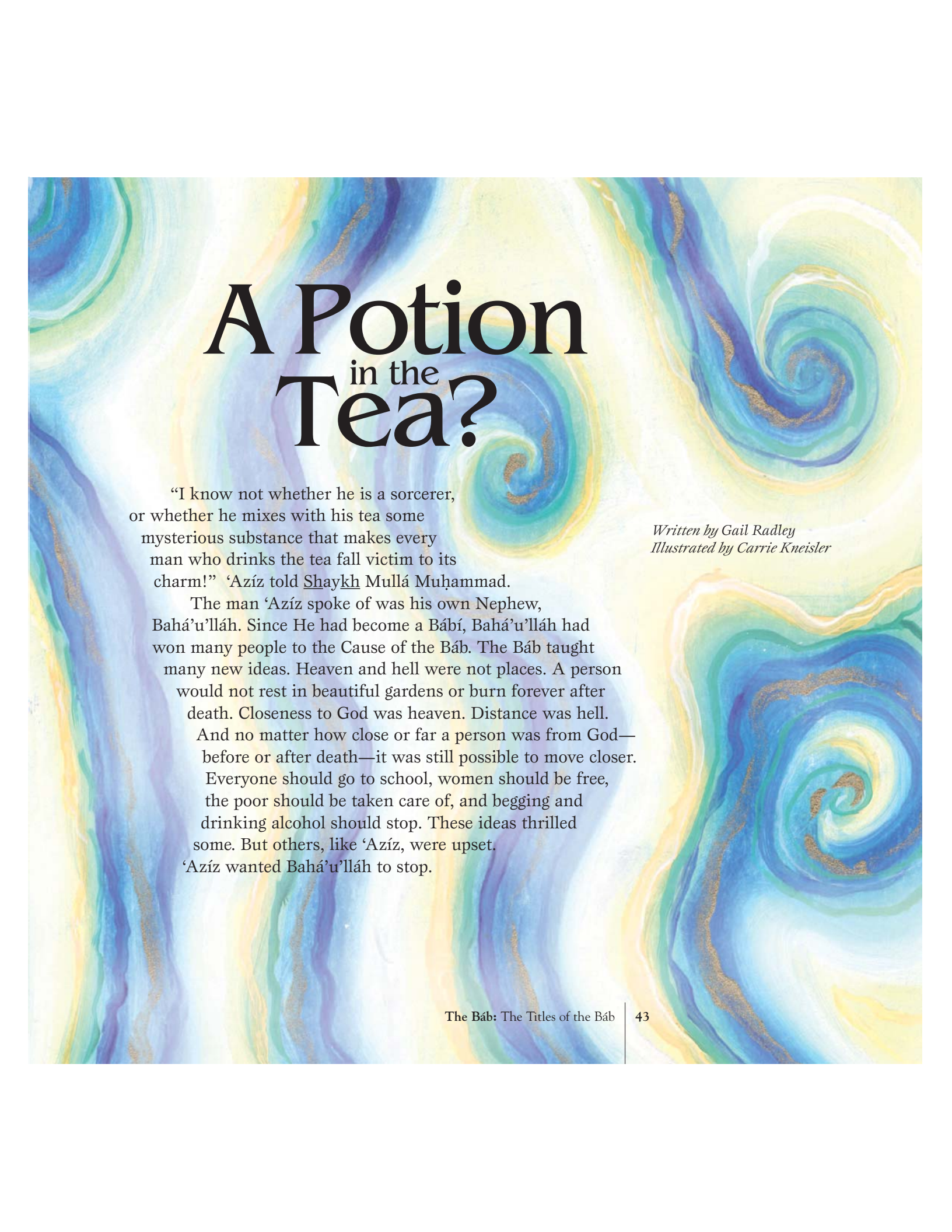
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Say: Verily I am the 'Gate of God'
and I give you to drink,
by the leave of God,
the sovereign Truth,
of the crystal-pure waters
of His Revelation
which are gushing out from
the incorruptible Fountain
situate upon the Holy Mount.
And those who earnestly
strive after the
One True God,
let them then strive
to attain this Gate.

— **The Báb**, *Selections from the Writings
of the Báb*, p. 50

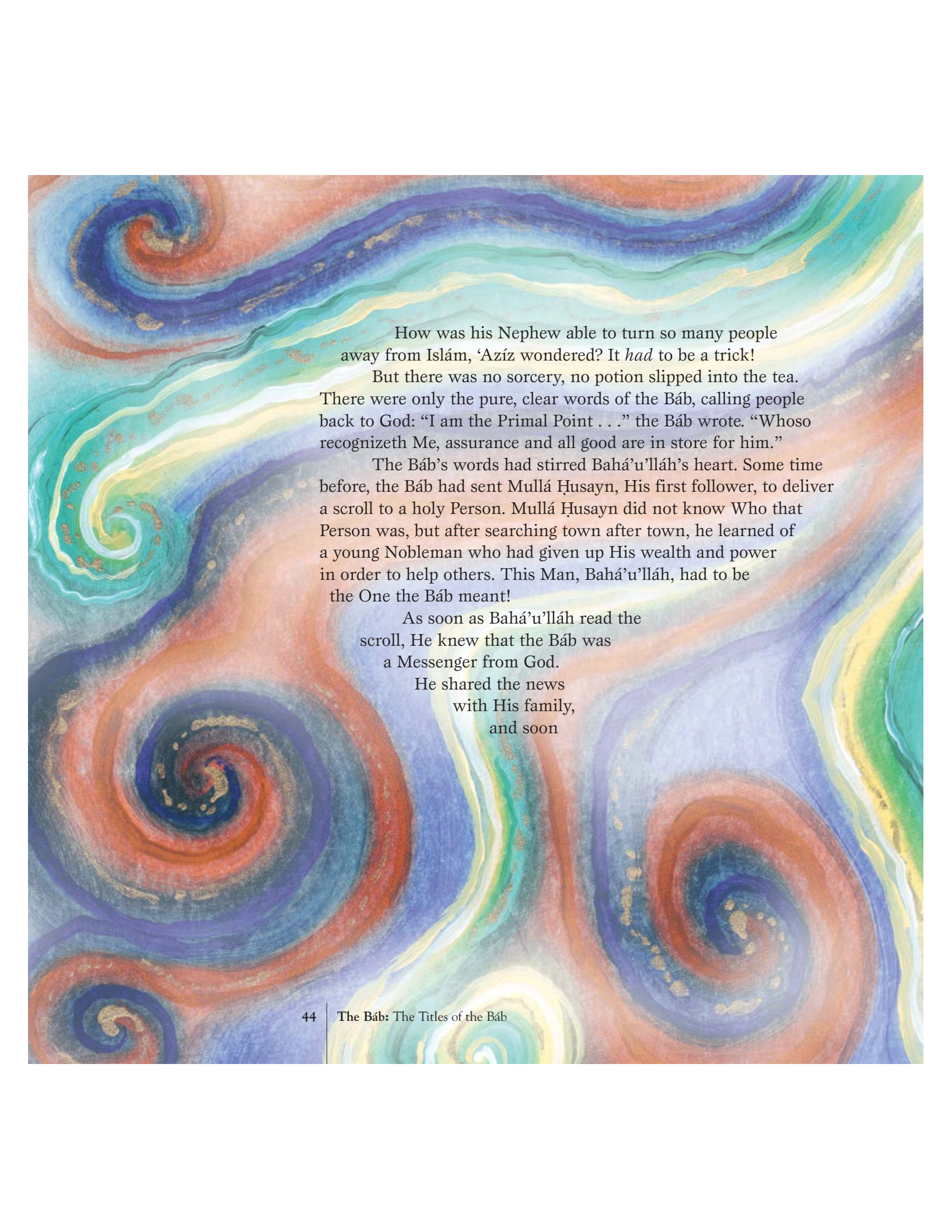


A Potion in the Tea?

“I know not whether he is a sorcerer, or whether he mixes with his tea some mysterious substance that makes every man who drinks the tea fall victim to its charm!” ‘Azíz told Shaykh Mullá Muḥammad.

The man ‘Azíz spoke of was his own Nephew, Bahá’u’lláh. Since He had become a Bábí, Bahá’u’lláh had won many people to the Cause of the Báb. The Báb taught many new ideas. Heaven and hell were not places. A person would not rest in beautiful gardens or burn forever after death. Closeness to God was heaven. Distance was hell. And no matter how close or far a person was from God—before or after death—it was still possible to move closer. Everyone should go to school, women should be free, the poor should be taken care of, and begging and drinking alcohol should stop. These ideas thrilled some. But others, like ‘Azíz, were upset. ‘Azíz wanted Bahá’u’lláh to stop.

*Written by Gail Radley
Illustrated by Carrie Kneisler*



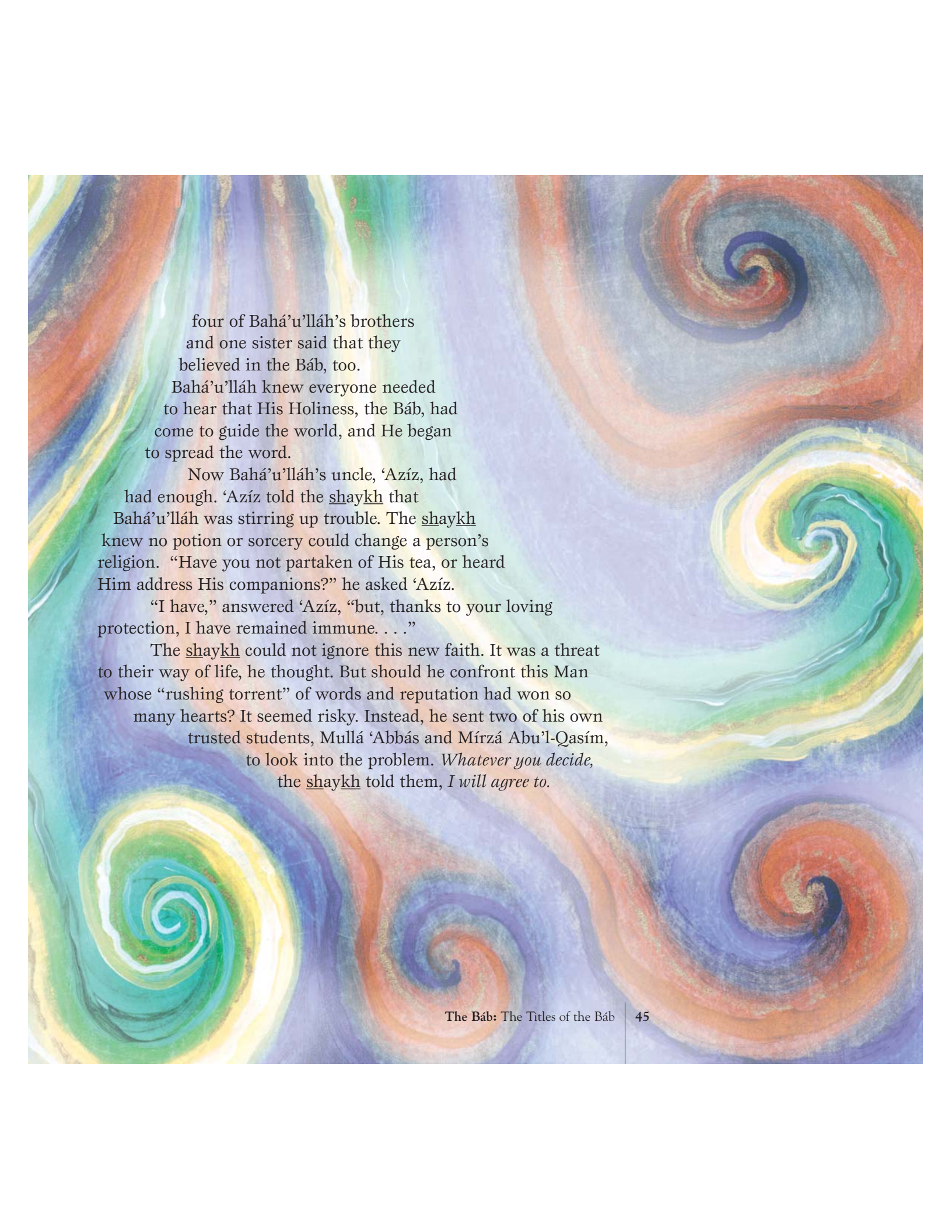
How was his Nephew able to turn so many people away from Islám, ‘Azíz wondered? It *had* to be a trick!

But there was no sorcery, no potion slipped into the tea. There were only the pure, clear words of the Báb, calling people back to God: “I am the Primal Point . . .” the Báb wrote. “Whoso recognizeth Me, assurance and all good are in store for him.”

The Báb’s words had stirred Bahá’u’lláh’s heart. Some time before, the Báb had sent Mullá Ḥusayn, His first follower, to deliver a scroll to a holy Person. Mullá Ḥusayn did not know Who that Person was, but after searching town after town, he learned of a young Nobleman who had given up His wealth and power in order to help others. This Man, Bahá’u’lláh, had to be the One the Báb meant!

As soon as Bahá’u’lláh read the scroll, He knew that the Báb was a Messenger from God.

He shared the news
with His family,
and soon



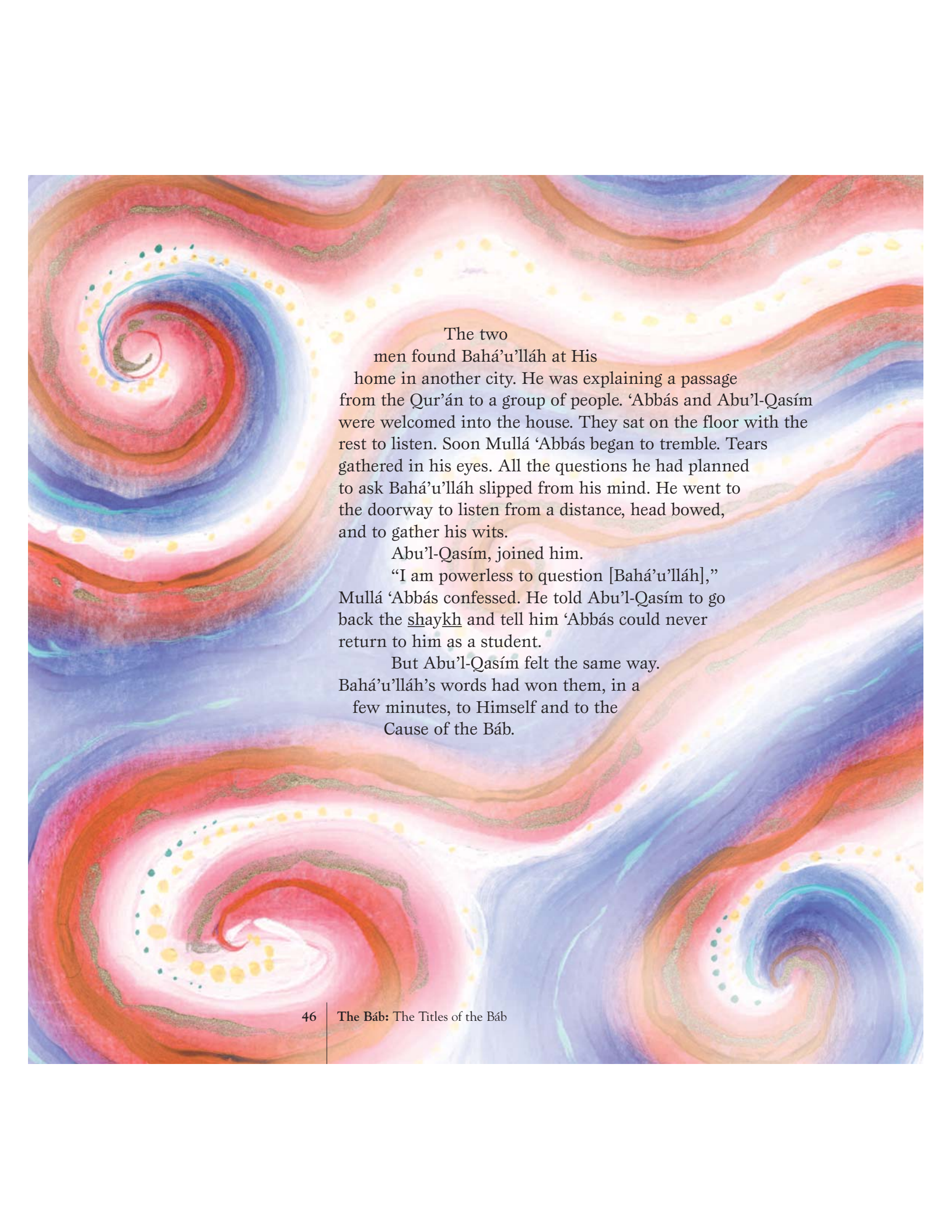
four of Bahá'u'lláh's brothers
and one sister said that they
believed in the Báb, too.

Bahá'u'lláh knew everyone needed
to hear that His Holiness, the Báb, had
come to guide the world, and He began
to spread the word.

Now Bahá'u'lláh's uncle, 'Azíz, had
had enough. 'Azíz told the shaykh that
Bahá'u'lláh was stirring up trouble. The shaykh
knew no potion or sorcery could change a person's
religion. "Have you not partaken of His tea, or heard
Him address His companions?" he asked 'Azíz.

"I have," answered 'Azíz, "but, thanks to your loving
protection, I have remained immune. . . ."

The shaykh could not ignore this new faith. It was a threat
to their way of life, he thought. But should he confront this Man
whose "rushing torrent" of words and reputation had won so
many hearts? It seemed risky. Instead, he sent two of his own
trusted students, Mullá 'Abbás and Mírzá Abu'l-Qasím,
to look into the problem. *Whatever you decide,*
the shaykh told them, *I will agree to.*

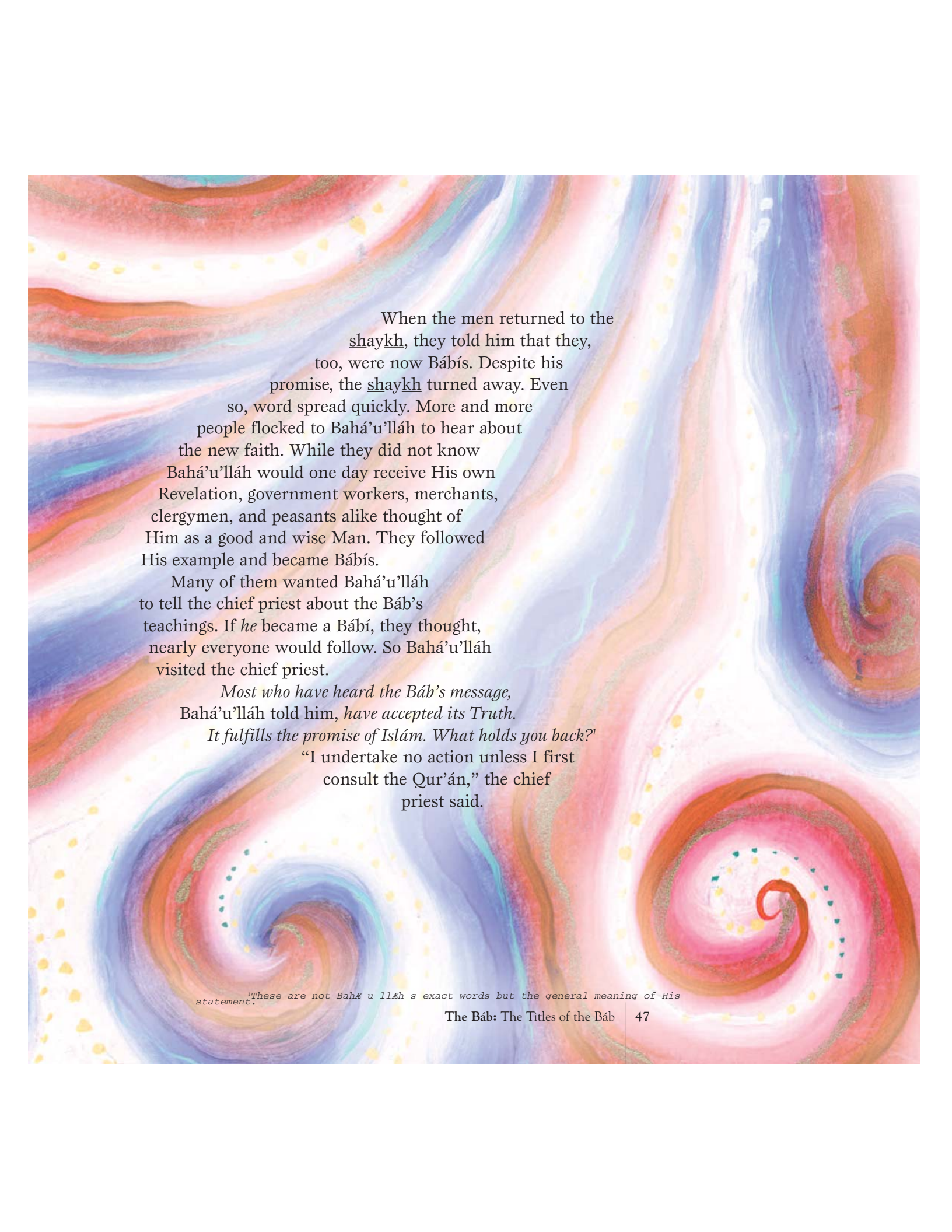


The two
men found Bahá'u'lláh at His
home in another city. He was explaining a passage
from the Qur'án to a group of people. 'Abbás and Abu'l-Qasím
were welcomed into the house. They sat on the floor with the
rest to listen. Soon Mullá 'Abbás began to tremble. Tears
gathered in his eyes. All the questions he had planned
to ask Bahá'u'lláh slipped from his mind. He went to
the doorway to listen from a distance, head bowed,
and to gather his wits.

Abu'l-Qasím, joined him.

"I am powerless to question [Bahá'u'lláh],"
Mullá 'Abbás confessed. He told Abu'l-Qasím to go
back the shaykh and tell him 'Abbás could never
return to him as a student.

But Abu'l-Qasím felt the same way.
Bahá'u'lláh's words had won them, in a
few minutes, to Himself and to the
Cause of the Báb.



When the men returned to the shaykh, they told him that they, too, were now Bábís. Despite his promise, the shaykh turned away. Even so, word spread quickly. More and more people flocked to Bahá'u'lláh to hear about the new faith. While they did not know Bahá'u'lláh would one day receive His own Revelation, government workers, merchants, clergymen, and peasants alike thought of Him as a good and wise Man. They followed His example and became Bábís.

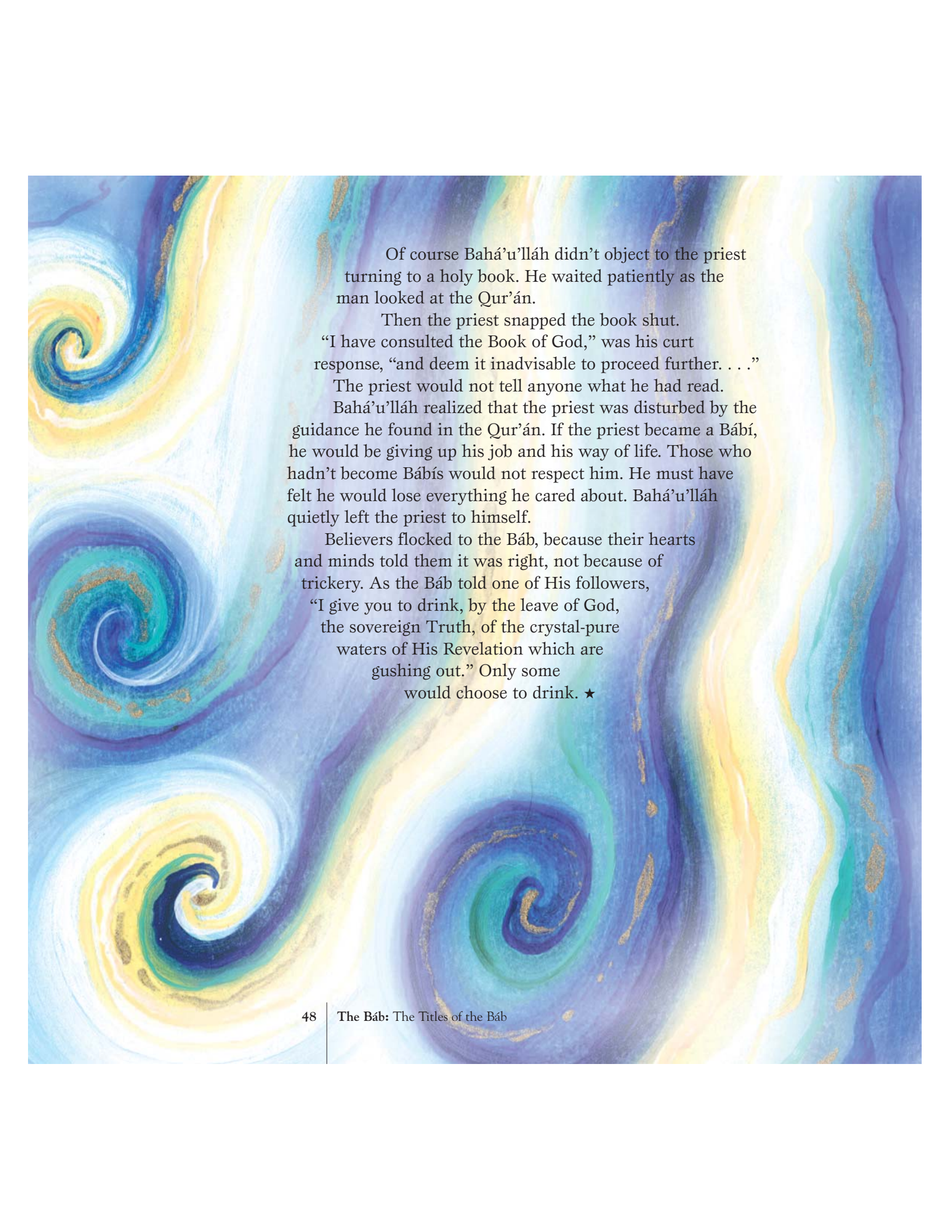
Many of them wanted Bahá'u'lláh to tell the chief priest about the Báb's teachings. If *he* became a Bábí, they thought, nearly everyone would follow. So Bahá'u'lláh visited the chief priest.

*Most who have heard the Báb's message,
Bahá'u'lláh told him, have accepted its Truth.*

It fulfills the promise of Islám. What holds you back?!

“I undertake no action unless I first consult the Qur'án,” the chief priest said.

¹These are not Bahá'u'lláh's exact words but the general meaning of His statement.



Of course Bahá'u'lláh didn't object to the priest turning to a holy book. He waited patiently as the man looked at the Qur'án.

Then the priest snapped the book shut. "I have consulted the Book of God," was his curt response, "and deem it inadvisable to proceed further. . . ."

The priest would not tell anyone what he had read.

Bahá'u'lláh realized that the priest was disturbed by the guidance he found in the Qur'án. If the priest became a Bábí, he would be giving up his job and his way of life. Those who hadn't become Bábís would not respect him. He must have felt he would lose everything he cared about. Bahá'u'lláh quietly left the priest to himself.

Believers flocked to the Báb, because their hearts and minds told them it was right, not because of trickery. As the Báb told one of His followers,

"I give you to drink, by the leave of God, the sovereign Truth, of the crystal-pure waters of His Revelation which are gushing out." Only some would choose to drink. ★