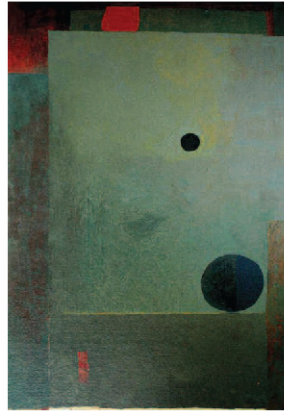


The following story is from the book

The Central Figures
The Báb
Volume Two



These stories are lovingly provided to download as a convenience to teachers or communities otherwise unable to acquire the book. Each book in this storybook series also includes an appendix with questions for discussion and reflection, a glossary of words and phrases used in the stories, a bibliography, and an index.

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The Best-Loved LETTER

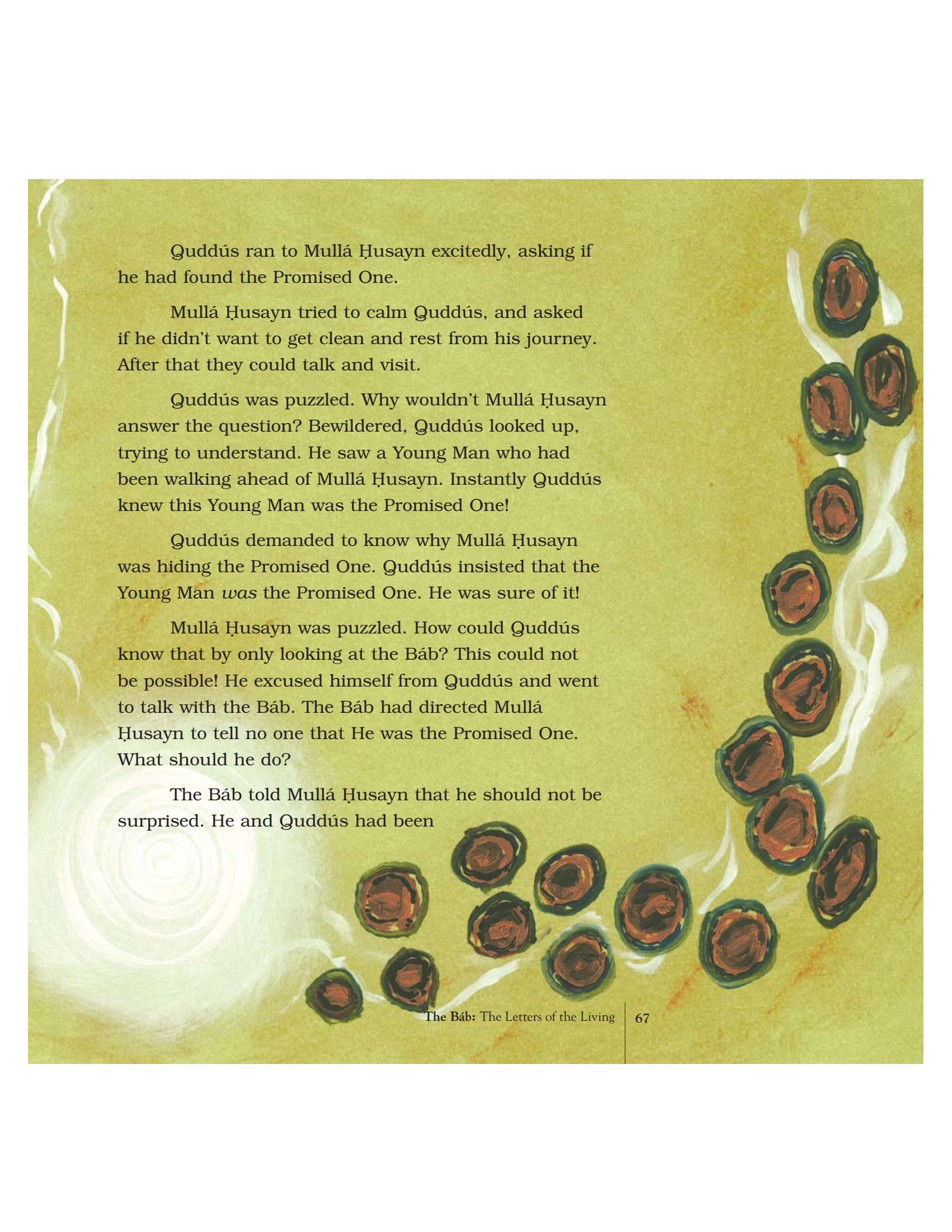
Written by Duane L. Herrmann • Illustrated by Carrie Kneisler

The day was hot. The road was long and dusty. Quddús was tired. He had traveled a long way to Shíráz. His teacher, Siyyid Kázim, had urged all his students to search for the Promised One.

Siyyid Kázim had died, and his students had scattered to all parts of Persia in search of a “radiant youth without blemish.” Quddús had walked a long way, and he was tired.

He was just 22. Through his mother, he was a descendent of the Prophet Muḥammad. Both his parents had died while he was growing up. He was very smart and did well in school. He was a quiet student and did not brag about what he knew.

In Shíráz, Quddús began to look closely at all the people he saw. None of them appeared to have the qualities he was looking for. Much to his surprise, he saw Mullá Ḥusayn in the street. The mullá had also been a student of Siyyid Kázim.



Quddús ran to Mullá Ḥusayn excitedly, asking if he had found the Promised One.


Mullá Ḥusayn tried to calm Quddús, and asked if he didn't want to get clean and rest from his journey. After that they could talk and visit.

Quddús was puzzled. Why wouldn't Mullá Ḥusayn answer the question? Bewildered, Quddús looked up, trying to understand. He saw a Young Man who had been walking ahead of Mullá Ḥusayn. Instantly Quddús knew this Young Man was the Promised One!

Quddús demanded to know why Mullá Ḥusayn was hiding the Promised One. Quddús insisted that the Young Man *was* the Promised One. He was sure of it!

Mullá Ḥusayn was puzzled. How could Quddús know that by only looking at the Báb? This could not be possible! He excused himself from Quddús and went to talk with the Báb. The Báb had directed Mullá Ḥusayn to tell no one that He was the Promised One. What should he do?

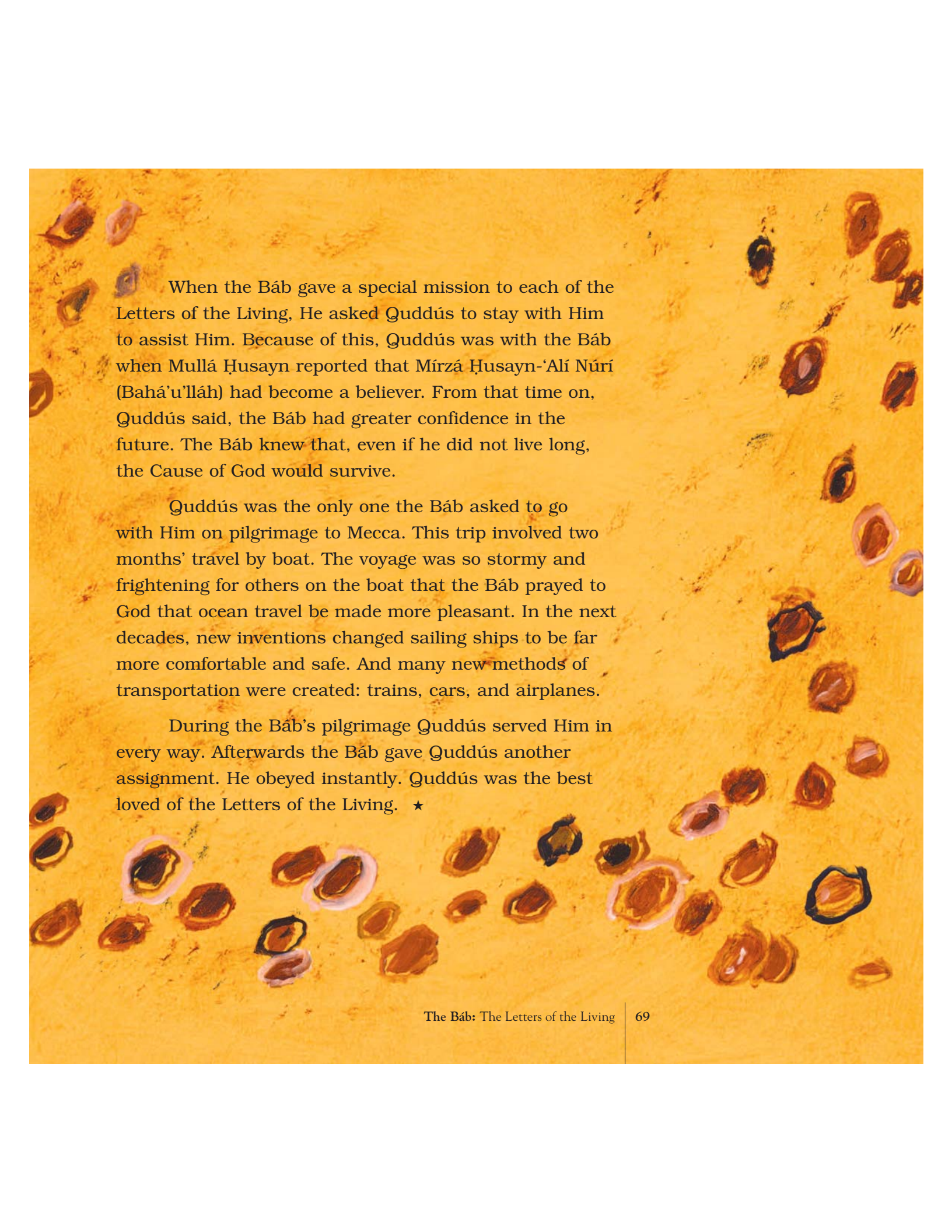
The Báb told Mullá Ḥusayn that he should not be surprised. He and Quddús had been



in contact in the spiritual world. In that place where people sometimes go when they dream, the Báb and Quddús had met and known each other. The Báb was not surprised at all. He knew Quddús would be coming and had been waiting for him.

Mullá Ḥusayn remembered the Muslim tradition which said that when the Promised One came, souls would find and talk with Him in the spiritual world without meeting face to face. Quddús was one of those souls, and now they *could* meet face to face. Mullá Ḥusayn also remembered that, just the day before, the Báb had told him that the eighteenth Letter of the Living would arrive today. Now he was here. The Báb invited Quddús to join them.

Quddús was the eighteenth person to recognize the Báb. He was the last one the Báb was waiting for. Now a total of 19 people, including the Báb, knew that God had begun a new Revelation to the human race. The first 18 people to recognize the Báb were called “Letters of the Living.” Quddús was the last of the 18, but he became the first in the eyes of the Báb.



When the Báb gave a special mission to each of the Letters of the Living, He asked Quddús to stay with Him to assist Him. Because of this, Quddús was with the Báb when Mullá Ḥusayn reported that Mírzá Ḥusayn-‘Alí Núrí (Bahá’u’lláh) had become a believer. From that time on, Quddús said, the Báb had greater confidence in the future. The Báb knew that, even if he did not live long, the Cause of God would survive.

Quddús was the only one the Báb asked to go with Him on pilgrimage to Mecca. This trip involved two months’ travel by boat. The voyage was so stormy and frightening for others on the boat that the Báb prayed to God that ocean travel be made more pleasant. In the next decades, new inventions changed sailing ships to be far more comfortable and safe. And many new methods of transportation were created: trains, cars, and airplanes.

During the Báb’s pilgrimage Quddús served Him in every way. Afterwards the Báb gave Quddús another assignment. He obeyed instantly. Quddús was the best loved of the Letters of the Living. ★