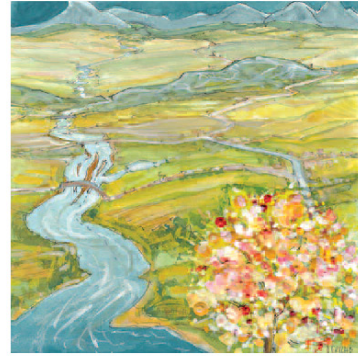


The following story is from the book

*The Central Figures*

# *Bahá'u'lláh*

*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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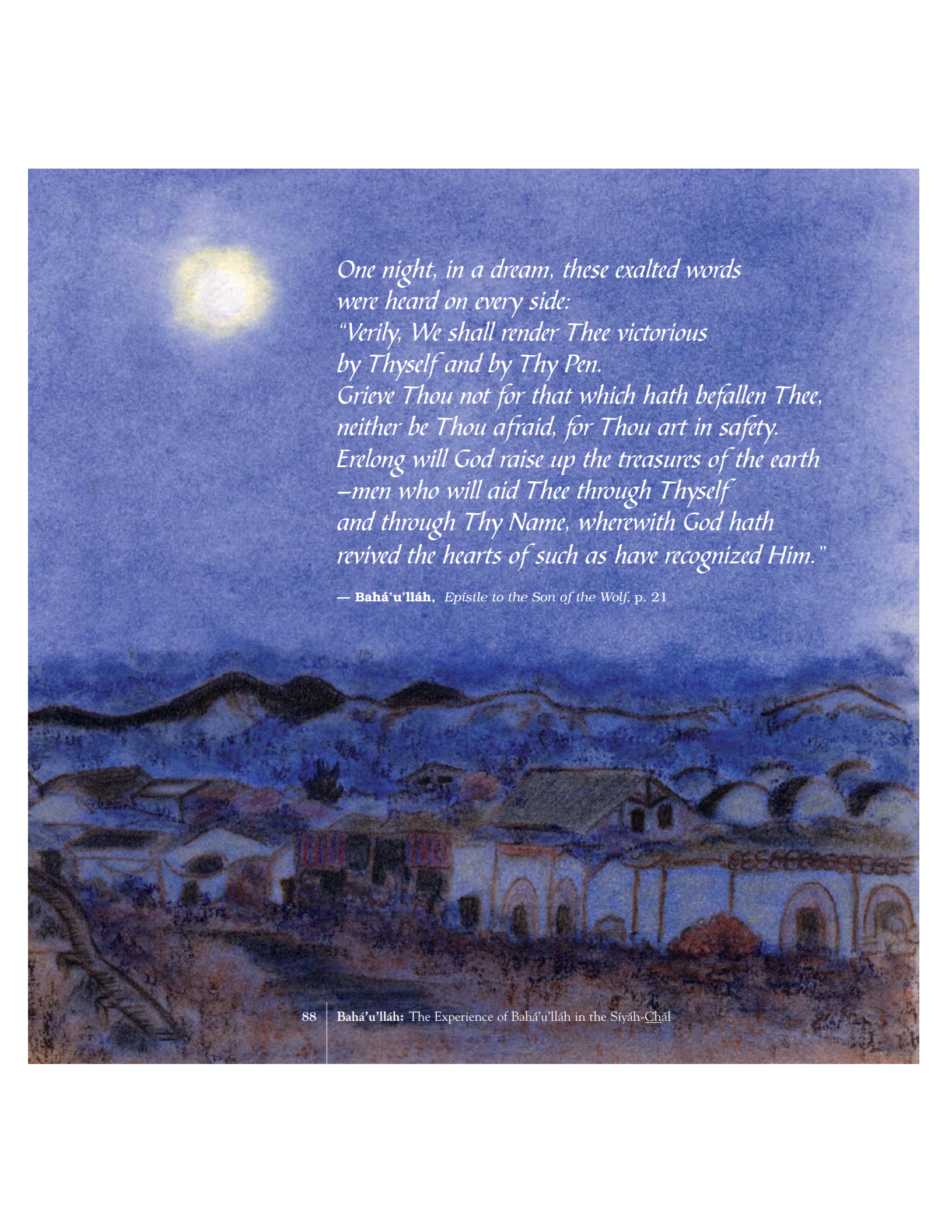
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A painting of a village at night under a full moon. The scene is rendered in a dark, moody palette of blues, purples, and browns. In the upper left, a bright, glowing full moon illuminates the dark sky. Below, a cluster of buildings with arched windows and doorways is visible, some with red and white striped awnings. The foreground is dark and textured, suggesting a dirt path or a field. The overall atmosphere is quiet and contemplative.

*One night, in a dream, these exalted words  
were heard on every side:  
“Verily, We shall render Thee victorious  
by Thyself and by Thy Pen.  
Grieve Thou not for that which hath befallen Thee,  
neither be Thou afraid, for Thou art in safety.  
Erelong will God raise up the treasures of the earth  
—men who will aid Thee through Thyself  
and through Thy Name, wherewith God hath  
revived the hearts of such as have recognized Him.”*

— Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 21




# The Birth of the Bahá'í Revelation

Bahá'ís believe that Bahá'u'lláh is a Prophet of God, and Bahá'ís accept Bahá'u'lláh's teachings as the teachings of God for today. All of the Manifestations of God have come at different times and to different places—Moses, Jesus, Buddha, Muḥammad, and many others. Each brought the religion that was needed for His time. Bahá'u'lláh has brought us the Word of God for today.

Bahá'ís believe that the Báb was a Prophet of God Who came right before Bahá'u'lláh. The Báb came to Iran over one-hundred fifty years ago to bring a new Message from God. In 1844, He declared His Mission and established a new religion. That was the beginning of Bahá'í history.

*Written by Anthony A. Lee  
Illustrated by Beth Fleming*





The Báb's new religion grew very rapidly in Iran. Thousands of people from all over the country believed in Him and accepted His new Message. They were called Bábís. The Báb told the Bábís that they should soon expect the coming of a new and greater Prophet, a new Manifestation of God. He called this new Prophet "He Whom God will make manifest." He said that all Bábís should expect Him to come at any time.

Bahá'u'lláh heard the Message of the Báb and became one of the Bábís. He too was expecting the coming of "He Whom God will make manifest."

Unfortunately, governors and magistrates, leaders of religion, and powerful people all over Iran tried to stop the spread of the Báb's religion. Bábís were attacked and their property was stolen. The Báb's books were banned. The clergy preached that the Bábís were the enemies of religion and should be wiped out. Finally, the Báb Himself was arrested, imprisoned, and then killed in 1850.

Bahá'u'lláh was born in a wealthy and important family. His father had held an important government position and Bahá'u'lláh was known as a good and generous man. For a time, the high position of the family protected Bahá'u'lláh from attack. But eventually, Bahá'u'lláh was also swept up by the wave of hatred and destruction that was directed against the followers of the Báb.

In 1852, Bahá'u'lláh was arrested by government soldiers because He was a Bábí. He was forced to walk, barefoot and with no hat, in the burning heat of the midday sun, all the way from the village of Niyáraván to Tíhrán, the capital city, a distance of about 15 miles. He was led in chains through the streets of Tíhrán to be put in prison. His treatment was brutal. The soldiers beat Him. A crowd formed, and the soldiers encouraged the mob to attack Him. The people threw stones, and sticks, and whatever else they could find. The mob spat on Him, insulted Him, and cursed Him as an enemy of their religion.

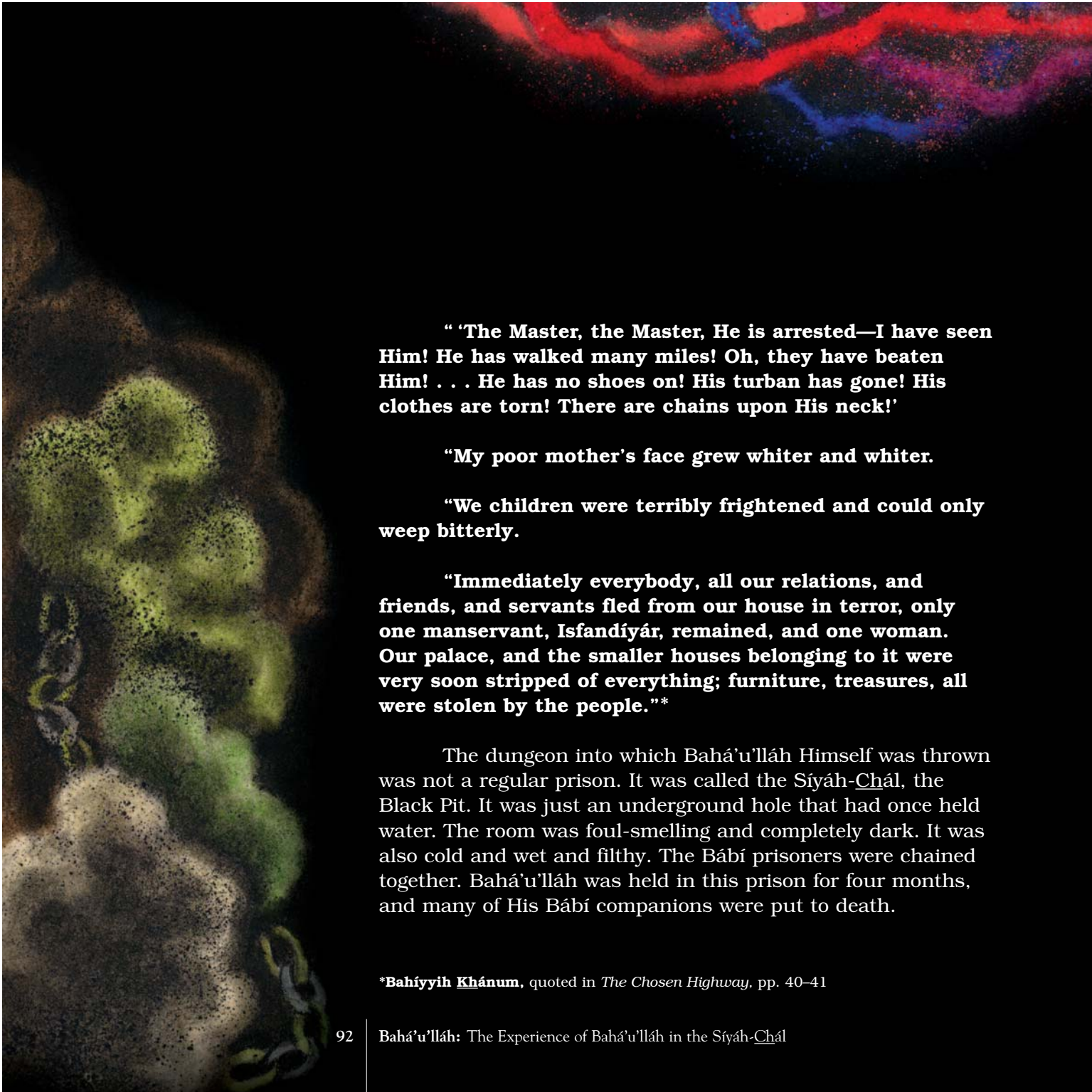
Bahá'u'lláh's house and property were also attacked by a mob and looted. His family was forced to run away and go into hiding. Bahá'u'lláh's daughter, Bahíyyih Khánum, the Greatest Holy Leaf, was a child at this time. She remembered these horrible events many years later and gave us this account:

**“One day I remember very well, though I was only six years old at the time. . . . My father [Bahá'u'lláh] was away at His country house in the village of Niyávarán, which was His property, the villagers of which were all and individually cared for by him.**

**“Suddenly and hurriedly a servant came rushing in great distress to my mother.**







**“The Master, the Master, He is arrested—I have seen Him! He has walked many miles! Oh, they have beaten Him! . . . He has no shoes on! His turban has gone! His clothes are torn! There are chains upon His neck!”**

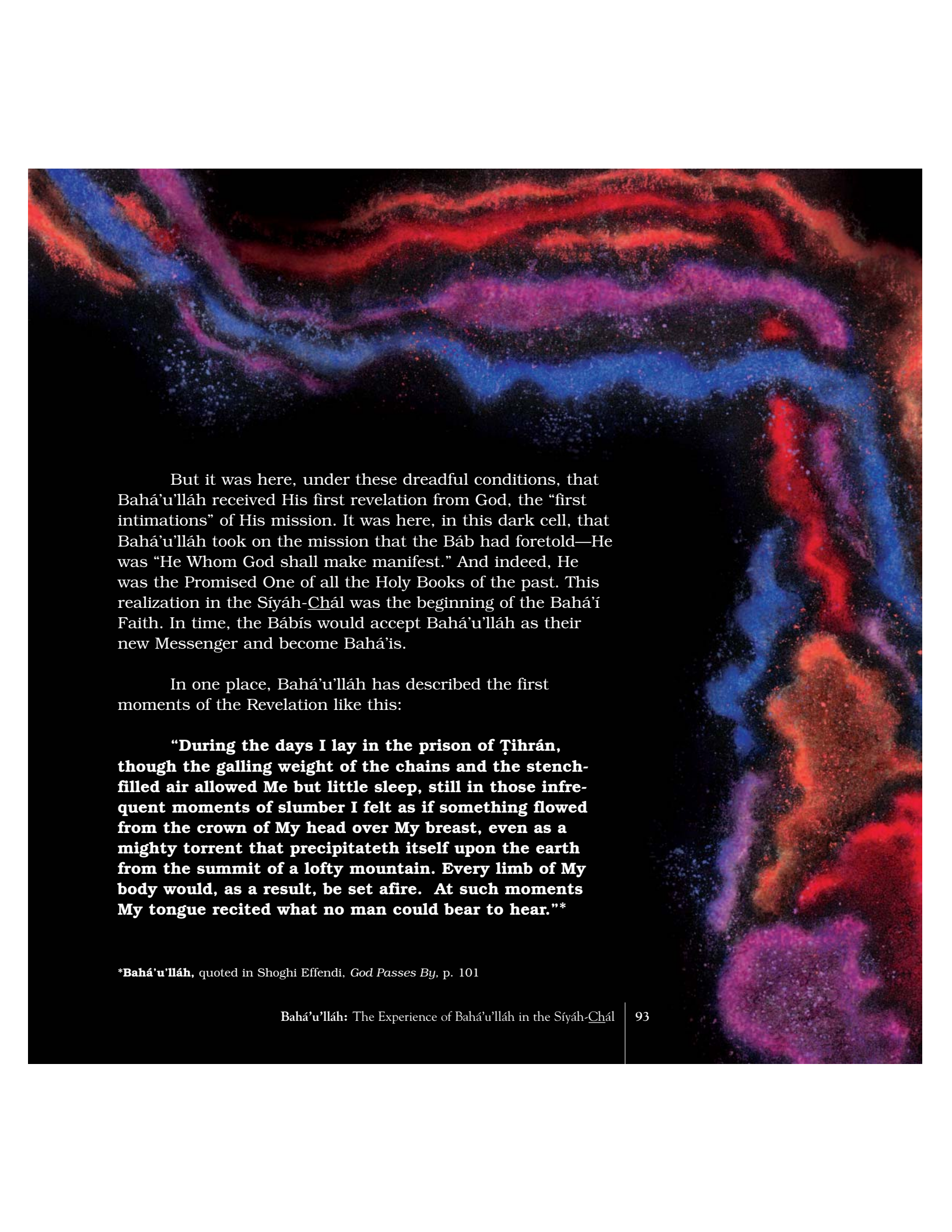
**“My poor mother’s face grew whiter and whiter.**

**“We children were terribly frightened and could only weep bitterly.**

**“Immediately everybody, all our relations, and friends, and servants fled from our house in terror, only one manservant, Isfandíyár, remained, and one woman. Our palace, and the smaller houses belonging to it were very soon stripped of everything; furniture, treasures, all were stolen by the people.”\***

The dungeon into which Bahá’u’lláh Himself was thrown was not a regular prison. It was called the Síyáh-Chál, the Black Pit. It was just an underground hole that had once held water. The room was foul-smelling and completely dark. It was also cold and wet and filthy. The Bábí prisoners were chained together. Bahá’u’lláh was held in this prison for four months, and many of His Bábí companions were put to death.

*\*Bahíyyih Khánum, quoted in The Chosen Highway, pp. 40–41*




But it was here, under these dreadful conditions, that Bahá'u'lláh received His first revelation from God, the “first intimations” of His mission. It was here, in this dark cell, that Bahá'u'lláh took on the mission that the Báb had foretold—He was “He Whom God shall make manifest.” And indeed, He was the Promised One of all the Holy Books of the past. This realization in the *Síyáh-Chál* was the beginning of the Bahá'í Faith. In time, the Bábís would accept Bahá'u'lláh as their new Messenger and become Bahá'ís.

In one place, Bahá'u'lláh has described the first moments of the Revelation like this:

**“During the days I lay in the prison of *Ṭíhrán*, though the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep, still in those infrequent moments of slumber I felt as if something flowed from the crown of My head over My breast, even as a mighty torrent that precipitateth itself upon the earth from the summit of a lofty mountain. Every limb of My body would, as a result, be set afire. At such moments My tongue recited what no man could bear to hear.”\***

\*Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 101





Bahá'u'lláh has given other descriptions of this same event. Perhaps the most beautiful description of Bahá'u'lláh's experience in the *Síyáh-Chál* is found in another passage where He recounts His encounter with the Maiden, who is a symbol for the Most Great Spirit.

**“While engulfed in tribulations I heard a most wondrous, a most sweet voice, calling above My head. Turning My face, I beheld a Maiden—the embodiment of the remembrance of the name of My Lord—suspended in the air before Me. So rejoiced was she in her very soul that her countenance shone with the ornament of the good-pleasure of God, and her cheeks glowed with the brightness of the All-Merciful. Betwixt earth and heaven she was raising a call which captivated the hearts and minds of men. She was imparting to both My inward and outer being tidings which rejoiced My soul, and the souls of God's honored servants. Pointing with her finger unto My head, she addressed all who are in heaven and all who are on earth, saying: ‘By God! This is the Best-Beloved of the worlds, and yet ye comprehend not. This is the Beauty of God amongst you, and the power of His sovereignty within you, could ye but understand. This is the Mystery of God and His Treasure, the Cause of God and His glory unto all who are in the kingdoms of Revelation and of creation, if ye be of them that perceive.’”\***

From this time forward, Bahá'u'lláh revealed more and more of God's Message for today. Today this Message is taught all over the world. ★

\*Bahá'u'lláh, quoted in *God Passes By*, pp. 101–102.