

Descendants of Áqá Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad

Note: The generation number (1st, 2nd, etc.) is given first, followed with the individual designation number given in pointed brackets, . If the spouse was also a member of the Afnán family, then their designation number follows "m", as in, m.

1 Áqá Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad

..... 2 Mírzá 'Ábid

..... 3 Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí

..... 4 Hájí Mírzá Abu'l-Qásim

..... 5 Maryam-Sultán-Bagum m

..... 6 Mírzá Habíbu'lláh Afnán
m

..... 7 Firdaws Afnán

..... 7 Abú'l-Qásim
Afnán

..... 7 Tayyibih Afnán

..... 7 Nayyirih Afnán

..... 7 Amínu'lláh Afnán

..... 7 Hasan Afnán

..... 6 Mírzá Díyá'u'lláh m

..... 7 Mírzá Siyyid
Muhammad

..... 7 Mírzá Bahá'í

..... 7 Mírzá 'Abbás

..... 7 Farahangíz m

..... 7 Thurayyá m

..... 7 Nuri'd-Dín

..... 6 Hájíyyih Túbá

..... 6 Áqá Siyyid Áqá

..... 7 Mírzá Fathu'lláh

..... 7 Mírzá
Faraju'lláh

..... 7 Dr. Nasru'lláh
Badrí m

.....	7 Muzaffar Khán m
.....	7 Ridván
.....	7 Safá
.....	7 Áqá Siyyid Hádí
.....	7 Siyyid Mihdí m
.....	6 Mírzá Jalál
.....	7 Mírzá 'Alí
.....	7 Gawhar
.....	7 Bihjat m
.....	7 Mírzá
'Abdu'l-Husayn	
.....	7 Mírzá Fadlu'lláh
.....	7 'Aliyyih Khánúm
.....	7 Mírzá
Ahmadu'd-Dín	
.....	7 Akbar Áqá m
.....	6 Mírzá Buzurg
.....	5 Siyyid Muhammad-Husayn
.....	6 Qudsiyyih Khánúm m
.....	6 Áqá Siyyid Mihdí
.....	6 Mírzá Rahím
.....	6 Rubábih
.....	6 Mírzá Hádí Shírází
.....	7 Shoghi Effendi
Rabbání	
.....	7 Rúhangíz
Rabbání m	
.....	7 Mihrangíz
Rabbání m	
.....	7 Husayn Effendi
Rabbání	
.....	7 Riyád Effendi
Rabbání	
.....	5 Mírzá Abu'l-Hasan m

..... 6 Munavvar Khánum m

..... 5 Mírzá Mahmúd m

..... 6 Aghá Bagum m

..... 5 Mírzá 'Alí

..... 5 Mírzá Ibráhím

..... 5 Fátimih-Sultán Bagum

..... 6 Mírzá 'Alí-Muhammad Khán
m

..... 7 Husayn Balyuzi

..... 7 'Abbás Balyuzi

..... 7 Hasan Muvaqqar
Balyuzi

..... 7 'Abdu'lláh Balyuzi

..... 6 Ahmad Áqá

..... 7 'Abdu'l-Husayn

..... 7 'Abdu'l-'Alí

..... 6 Muníriyh

..... 5 Sárá-Sultán Bagum m

..... 6 Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Husayn

..... 6 Bagum Aghá

..... 6 Aghá Bagum m

..... 7 Mírzá
Díyá'u'lláh m

..... 8 Husayn
Áqá

..... 8 Mahmúd
Áqá

..... 8 Hasan
Áqá

..... 8 Thurayyá

..... 7 Mírzá
Habíbu'lláh m

..... 8 Mahvash

..... 8 Súfiyyih

.....	8	Firishtih
.....	7	Mírzá
Badí'u'lláh m		
.....	8	Nádir
.....	8	Shukúh
.....	8	Parívash
.....	7	Fúrúghíyyih m
.....	6	Mírzá Amínu'lláh
.....	6	Mírzá Habíbu'lláh
.....	4	Khadíjih Bagum m
.....	5	Ahmad
.....	4	Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Hasan m
.....	5	Hájí Siyyid Mírzá m
.....	5	Siyyid Ahmad m
.....	5	Hájí Siyyid Muhammad m
.....	6	Rúhangíz m
.....	6	'Aliyyih
.....	5	Hájí Siyyid 'Alí Afnán
.....	6	Nayyir Afnán m
.....	6	Husayn Afnán
.....	7	Furúghíyyih
Afnán		
.....	6	Faydí Afnán m
.....	6	Hasan Afnán m
.....	5	Mírzá Muhsin
.....	6	Rúhí Effendi Afnán
.....	6	Suhayl Afnán
.....	6	Fu'ád Afnán
.....	6	Thurayyá Afnán m
.....	5	Sáhib-Sultán Bagum m
.....	6	'Alíyyih m
.....	7	Mírzá

Habíbu'lláh m

..... 7 Rúhangíz Mahdavi
m

..... 7 Múnirih Mahdavi m

..... 8 Táhiri

..... 5 Fátimih-Sultán-Bagum m

..... 5 Shams-Sultán Bagum m

..... 5 Siyyid Husayn

..... 5 Bíbí-Sakínih m

..... 6 Farhangíz m

..... 6 Díyá'iyih m

..... 5 Tayyibih Khánum

..... 4 Zahrá-Bagum

..... 5 Áqá Mírzá Áqá Núri'd-Dín m

..... 3 Mírzá Muhammad-Husayn

..... 4 Fátimih-Bagum

..... 5 'Alí-Muhammad (the Báb) m

..... 4 Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad

..... 5 Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-Taquí m

..... 6 Hájí Mírzá Mahmúd m

..... 6 Hájí Mírzá Siyyid

Muhammad m

..... 6 Siyyid Áqá

..... 6 Bagum-Sáhib m

..... 6 Fátimih-Bagum m

..... 7 Mírzá

'Abdu'l-Vahháb m

..... 7 Khánum Haya m

..... 7 Muníri

..... 7 Munavvar m

..... 8 Muníb

..... 8 Ahmad

Aqá

.....	8 Khánum
Málik	
.....	8 Khánum
Díyá'	
.....	8 Firdaws
.....	8 Farídih
.....	7 Hawiyyih m
.....	7 Agha Bagum m
.....	7 Mírzá
Muhammad-'Alí	
.....	6 Bíbí-Sultán-Bagum m
.....	7 Mírzá
Muhammad-'Alí Fallah	
.....	7 Afsar m
.....	6 Khánum-Liqá m
.....	7 Rahmáníyyih
.....	7 Farhangíz
.....	7 Muhammad-Husayn
Mahdavi m	
.....	7 Mírzá
'Abdu'l-Latíf m	
.....	6 Maryam-Bagum m
.....	7 Dr. Mihdí Mahdavi
.....	7 Rúhá m
.....	5 Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí
.....	6 Mírzá Áqá Taryakí m
.....	5 Hájí Mírzá Buzurg
.....	5 Bíbí-Ján-Ján Bagum m
.....	5 Khadíjih-Sultán-Bagum m
.....	6 Mírzá 'Alí Taryaki
.....	7 Fátimih
.....	4 Hájí Mírzá Hasan-'Alí
.....	5 Bíbí-Zahrá Bagum m

.....	5 Hájí Mírzá Áqá
.....	6 Mírzá Muhammad-Báqir m
.....	6 Mírzá Jalál
.....	6 Mírzá 'Alí
.....	6 Mírzá Javád m
.....	7 Mulúk
.....	7 Díyá'
.....	7 Furúgh
.....	7 Mírzá
'Azízu'lláh m	
.....	6 Mírzá Abu'l-Qásim
.....	7 (son)
.....	7 (daughter)
.....	7 (daughter)
.....	5 Hájí Siyyid Mihdí
.....	6 Siyyid Mírzá m
.....	6 Mírzá Buzurg m
.....	6 Siyyid Muhammad m m
.....	6 Siyyid 'Alí m
.....	6 Safá'íyyih m
.....	6 Vafá'íyyih m
.....	5 Hájí Siyyid Husayn m
.....	5 Hájí Siyyid Ja'far m
.....	4 Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí
.....	5 Mírzá Javád m

The following is a brief biographical sketch of the consanguineous members of the Afnán family who are mentioned in this volume or are of some other historical interest.[4] The notes are in numerical order and use the same numbering system as the genealogy chart.

Mírzá 'Abid: A son of Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad. He was known as Mírzá Zaynu'l-'Abidín.

Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad Husayn: The Báb's maternal grandfather.

Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí: He was a wholesale merchant involved in importing

and exporting through Shíráz and its port of Búshihir. He was married to Hájíyyih Bībí.

Fátimih Bagum: The mother of the Báb. She came from a well-known and highly respected cloth merchant family in Shíráz that traced its ancestry to Imám Husayn. She married Siyyid Muhammad-Ridá, a member of another merchant family from Shíráz. They had several children who did not survive. The only child to live to adulthood was Siyyid 'Alí-Muhammad, the Báb, who was born on 20 October 1819. When Fátimih Bagum's husband died a few years later, she went to live in the house of her brother, Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí, who acted as her Son's guardian. In 1842, she arranged for the marriage of her Son to Khadíjih Bagum and lived with them in their House.

When the Báb first put forward His claim in 1844, Fátimih Bagum did not immediately become a believer, although her brother, Hájí Siyyid Mírzá Muhammad, influenced her to hold a sympathetic view of the movement.[5] She was greatly distressed by the way Husayn Khán, the governor of Shíráz, treated her Son and by the raid that officials made on their House. When the Báb left Shíráz for Isfahán in October 1846, the people and government officials of the city continued to harass the family.

According to Nabíl A'zam, before the Báb left Shíráz, He prepared His will and bequeathed the estate to His mother and His wife, with the whole reverting to His wife, Khadíjih Bagum, when His mother died.[6]

News of her Son reached Fátimih Bagum only sporadically. When He was executed in Tabríz in 1850, the family kept the news from her for more than a year. The grief of the news and the hostility of friends and some family members finally caused her to move to Karbalá in Rabí'u'l-Avval AH 1268 [December 1851]. She took with her: Hájí Mubáarak, the Ethiopian servant of the Báb purchased in Búshihir; Bībí Gawhar, aunt of the Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih; and her own mother.[7] Later, Hájí 'Abdu'l-Majíd and his wife, who were both Bábís, joined her. During this period, the family worried about her living in the 'Atabát and, on at least one occasion, Khajídih Bagum considered visiting her. When she consulted Bahá'u'lláh about this, He said: "In response to your note stating that the mother of the Exalted One, may the spirit of all be a sacrifice to Him, wants you to travel to that land [Karbalá], know that this is most pleasing. Should you undertake this journey, it will assuredly be a source of happiness for her." [8]

Up to this time, Fátimih Bagum was not a Bábí. Mírzá Habíbu'lláh reports Bahá'u'lláh's stating that Mírzá Yahyá Azal's action in marrying the Báb's second wife drove Fátimih Bagum away from accepting the Faith. While Bahá'u'lláh was in Baghdad, He arranged for the wife of Hájí 'Abdu'l-Majíd and for Hájí Siyyid Javád Karbalá'í, an old friend of Fátimih Bagum's family, to speak to her about the Faith.[9] Eventually, she became a believer. She continued to live in Karbalá until her death in about 1881.

In the Qayyumu'l-Asmá', Surih 28, the Báb refers to Fátimih Bagum as Ummu'l-Mu'minin [mother of the believers] and Ummu'dh-Dhikr [mother of the

Remembrance]. Bahá'u'lláh refers to her as Khayru'n-Nisa [the best of women] and forbids all others, except Khadíjih Bagum, from adopting this title.[10]

One of the objectives of the Ten Year Crusade was to locate the grave of Fátimih Bagum. Thus far, the Iraq Bahá'ís have not been able to do so.

Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad: The oldest of the Báb's maternal uncles and the recipient of the Kitáb-i Íqán. He was also known as Khál Akbar [great uncle].

Khál Akbar was born in 1798 and was a merchant. His wife, Hájíyyih Bíbí Fátimih-Sáhib, was a daughter of Hájí Muhammad-Muhsin and a member of another prominent merchant family trading in Shíráz and Búshihir. Khál Akbar ran the family office in Búshihir. The Báb was closely associated with him during the first four years He worked as a merchant there.

Several years before the Báb's declaration, Khál Akbar was concerned that the Báb's preoccupation with religious matters would create problems. Later, he met Mullá 'Alí Bastámí, whom the Báb had sent as a messenger, and began to have a change of heart. The Báb stayed with him when He passed through Búshihir on His pilgrimage journey. On His return, the Báb stayed with him once more, arriving on 15 May 1845 and staying for 10 days before leaving for Shíráz. It seems that during this time the uncle recognized in the Báb unrivalled spiritual powers. When Khál Akbar returned to Shíráz, he fell under the suspicion attached to all members of the Báb's family, despite his outward protestations of orthodoxy.

In the late 1850s, the young Áqá Mírzá Áqá began urging Khál Akbar to renew his commitment to the Bábí Faith and accept the Báb as the promised Qá'im. Since his sister, the Báb's mother, was living in Karbalá, he agreed to visit Bahá'u'lláh while passing through Baghdad. He was received by Bahá'u'lláh in early January 1861. At Bahá'u'lláh's request, he wrote out the questions that disturbed him about why the Báb had not literally fulfilled Islamic prophecies.[11] Over the next two days and nights, Bahá'u'lláh revealed the Kitáb-i Íqán in reply. After this, Khál Akbar became fully aware of the Báb's station.

He became a Bahá'í in 1867 when Nabíl came to Shíráz with news of Bahá'u'lláh's claim to be "Him Whom God will make manifest." He passed away in Shíráz in 1876 and was immortalized with a Tablet of Visitation revealed by Bahá'u'lláh.[12]

Hájí Mírzá Hasan-'Alí: The youngest of the Báb's maternal uncles. He was known as Khál Asghar [youngest uncle]. He lived in Yazd and traded on the family's behalf in eastern Iran. He married Hájíyyih Bíbí Gawhar, the daughter of Hájí 'Abdu'r-Rasul Shírází,[13] another Shíráz merchant.

He remained unsympathetic to his Nephew's movement for many years. Although he accompanied his brother to Iraq, he refused to meet Bahá'u'lláh. He was finally converted in the late 1860s through the concerted efforts of several famous Bahá'í teachers: Muhammad-Ibráhím Muballigh, Nabíl Akbar, and

Mullá Sádiq Khurásání. He died in Yazd but was buried in Karbalá. The location of his grave is not known.

Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí: The second of the Báb's maternal uncles. He was born at the turn of the 19th century. Although in terms of age he was the second of the maternal uncles, he was referred to as Khál A'zam [most great uncle]. This was because of his devotion to the Báb and spiritual attainments. He is best known for being the Báb's guardian and one of the Seven Martyrs of Tihrán.

He was a well-traveled merchant, prominent in the business community, and respected for his piety. He and his two brothers carried on a business importing from and exporting to India. He was married to a maternal half-sister of Khadíjih Bagum, who was known in the family as 'Ammih Hájí.[14] When the Báb's father died, Khál A'zam assumed the guardianship of the Báb and His mother. He was very attached to his Nephew and reared Him in his own home with a great deal of attention. Seeing that his Nephew had no particular interest in formal studies, he put Him in charge of the family's trading office in Búshihir. He later traveled to Karbalá to try to persuade the Báb to return home.

Vakílu'd-Dawlih notes that around 1840, Siyyid 'Alí retired from the business world and joined the messianic rank of those who anticipated the appearance of the Qá'im. This may well have been due to his Shaykhí proclivities. However, there is also evidence that he continued his trading activities into 1845.

Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí became a Bábí in June 1845 through the efforts of Quddús, whom the Báb had sent ahead of Him to Shíráz after His pilgrimage. When the Báb returned to Shíráz under arrest, Khál A'zam approached the governor and stood as surety for the Báb to obtain His release. During the remainder of the Báb's stay in Shíráz, He sometimes lived in His uncle's house. When the Báb was arrested in October 1846, Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí was beaten so severely that he was bedridden for three months.

After the Báb left Shíráz, Khál A'zam tried to shield the Báb's wife and mother from the news of His imprisonment and sufferings. When he received news of the Báb's transfer to Chihríq and His trial and beating with the bastinado, he set out to see the Báb once more. He left in 1848, going first to Yazd, where he settled his business accounts with his brother, Hájí Mírzá Hasan-'Alí, and entrusted the Báb's business capital to him. He eventually reached Chihríq and stayed a short time with the Báb but was soon forced to leave. He went to Qazvín and then traveled to Mazandarán in order to join the Bábís at Shaykh Tabarsí.[15] However, the Tabarsí conflict had ended by the time he reached Bárfurúsh, so he went to Tihrán.

Khál A'zam lived in the capital for a time at the house of Muhammad Big Chápárchí. Muhammad Big had been the commander of the Báb's escort from Kulayn to Adharbayjan and had now become a believer. Khál A'zam associated freely with the Bábís of Tihrán. Bahá'u'lláh's brother, Mírzá Músá, warned him to leave in order to avoid arrest, but he made no attempt to avoid

the danger and was among the prominent Bábís arrested in February 1850.

Mírzá Taqí Khán, the prime minister, interrogated Siyyid 'Alí himself. Khál A'zam refused to recant, saying that he had seen the wonders of the Prophets of the past in his Nephew and was willing and eager to face martyrdom on His behalf. He also rejected other offers to save himself by recanting. Before his execution in the Sabzih-Maydán, he took God as his witness that he was to die only for his faith, not for having committed any transgression. He was beheaded before a large crowd and became the first of the Seven Martyrs of Tihrán to die that day. The burial site of the Seven Martyrs is known as Maydán Amínu's-Saltanih and is situated between the two gates of the city, 'Abdu'l-A'zím and Naw.

Khál A'zam's house in Shíráz was designated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá as a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár. It belonged to the Bahá'í community until Bahá'í properties were seized during the Iranian revolution of 1979.

Zahrá Bagum: Referred to in the Writings as 'Ukht Haram' [sister of the wife of the Báb]. In 1838–39, she married Áqá Mírzá Zaynu'l-'Abidín, a paternal cousin of the Báb. She became a Bábí in the 1850s, after the conversion of her son, Áqá Mírzá Áqá, and a Bahá'í about a decade later. She was very close to the wife of the Báb and was one of the few who dared to visit her during the difficult days after the Báb's arrest in 1846. During this time, she was known to dress as a beggar and visit her sister's House to lend her support. After her sister's death in 1882, she moved into the Báb's House in Shíráz and lived there until her own death in October 1889. On Bahá'u'lláh's instructions, the custodians of the House of the Báb are chosen from her descendants. She was buried near Khadíjih Bagum.

Zahrá Bagum received many Tablets from Bahá'u'lláh, two of which are quoted below.

Ukht Haram.

The Wondrous, the Most Great!

O leaf! God willing, through the bounties of the Lord of Creation, thou wilt be attached to the divine Lote-Tree in all the worlds. Heavenly favors have been decreed for each one of you and will continue to surround thee. Praise to the Lord of Eternity that thou hast attained the greatest bounty, the recognition of the Most Great Beauty. By God's leave, may thou always be engaged in praising the Merciful with the utmost spirit and joy....[16]

A second Tablet by Bahá'u'lláh in honor of Zahrá Bagum reads:

Sh[íráz]. The sacred leaf, the mother of the Afnán, upon her be the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

He is Governor over the Supreme Horizon!

O My leaf and mother of My Afnán, upon him rest forever the glory of God, and His bounty and His mercy, in both the heavens and the earth!

You have endured in the path of God that which hath caused the hearts of the denizens of the cities of justice and equity to be filled with sorrow. Yet, since all that occurred was sustained in the path of God, then it is very important and best to be patient and forbearing.

The exalted leaf[17]—upon her rest the glory of God, His mercy, and His bounties—and thine esteemed self, have always been in our thoughts and will always remain so. I swear by the supreme Day-Star, Which is evident and manifest over the horizon of the Most Great Prison, that what hath been ordained for the Afnáns is such that naught besides can compare with it.

The world testifies to its own evanescence. Every discerning person can readily and at all times see the world's impermanence, and every ear can hear its cry and lamentation.

The station that the Supreme Pen hath decreed for the Afnáns is the remembrance of God, His praise, and teaching of His Cause to a prescribed degree. No other station is greater than this. What hath been revealed in the Tablets is such that the entire world cannot be compared to one word of it....[18]

Khadíjih Bagum: The wife of the Báb. She is occasionally referred to as Khadíjih-Sultán Bagum.

Khadíjih Bagum was a cousin of the Báb's mother. Marriages to cousins are common in many Muslim countries because they are believed to strengthen family ties. Khadíjih Bagum's mother was Hájíyyih Bábí, a native of Jahrum. Her first marriage was to Áqá Muhammad-Taquí and, from this marriage she had a son named Muhammad-Mihdí Hijjab and a daughter named Hájíyyih Bábí Ján-Ján, who later married Khál A'zam. Khadíjih Bagum's father, Áqá Mírzá 'Alí, was a wholesale merchant involved in importing and exporting through Shíráz and its port of Búshih. His residence was located in the Bazaar Murgh quarter.[19]

As explained in previous chapters, Bahá'u'lláh bestowed the custodianship of the House of the Báb on Khadíjih Bagum:

Bahá'u'lláh.

In the Name of God, the Ruler, the Wise, the Ever-present Fashioner of the heavens and the earth.

O you the near ones in Sh[íráz]! Under all conditions, the Supreme Pen hath testified and always will: God is Single, the One, the Almighty, the All-powerful, the All-conquering, the Omnipotent. He doeth as He pleaseth and ordaineth whatever He willeth. He is the Compassionate, the Generous!

We have bestowed the custodianship of the Blessed House upon the exalted leaf, the wife of the Primal Point, and her sister, upon them rest the glory of God and His mercy and His favor. God hath granted the custodianship for this House. Verily, He is adorned with the robe of generosity and hath fixed His seal on this command, for He is the Almighty, the Beloved. From her Lord, the Merciful,

this honor and benevolence hath been bestowed upon the sister and her descendants. He is the Munificent and the Compassionate, and He is the Generous and the Bounteous.[20]

A Tablet was revealed shortly after the passing of Khadíjih Bagum.[21] It is dated 17 Muharram AH 1300 (28 November 1882) and is addressed to Núri'd-Dín.[22] It indicates that while Khadíjih Bagum was sending her final letter to Bahá'u'lláh, the Supreme Pen was in spiritual commune with her and was responding to her message:

...I beseech Thee, O Possessor of all names and Creator of the heavens, to ordain for Thy Afnán[23] that which will protect him from all else besides Thee, and to bestow upon him a measure of Thy patience and to enable him to attain that which is worthy of Thy Days. Thou art the All-mighty, the All-knowing, the All-informed.

Even though the calamitous news of her passing hath set every limb and organ aflame, yet these days are the Days of the Manifestation, and patience must be observed in all situations. This hath been revealed by the One Who is to be obeyed. May the Almighty God adorn all with the robe of His patience. He is sufficient unto all creation.

Praise be to God! Several months ago, a special Tablet was revealed from the heaven of the divine will in honor of the exalted leaf, the most esteemed lady and the most melodious song.[24] This servant [Mírzá Áqá Ján] was lost in thought over what was revealed, yet asked no questions because of His manifest might and sovereignty. A while ago, instructions were issued for a clean copy of that sacred and most holy Tablet to be prepared and sent. Now, considering the content of her letter, it hath become clear that at the same time as she was writing her letter, a response was being revealed from the heaven of divine favor.

Bahá'u'lláh was greatly disappointed about what had led to Khadíjih Bagum's untimely death. He revealed the following for Núri'd-Dín on 4 Rabí'u'l-Avval AH 1301 (3 January 1884):

The honored Afnáns,[25] upon them rest all My glory, the Most Glorious, arrived in Beirut and, afterwards, by Our leave, gradually and individually arrived here. Having entered the canopy of Our favors and might, one by one they returned. Regarding what had happened, they stated that their plan was that, after arriving in Beirut, Siyyid 'Alí would return to Sh[íráz] to accompany the exalted leaf to this land of God. They stated that they had designed the plan in this way because they feared going to Sh[íráz] any earlier might provoke the foes and enemies to act and prevent all from attaining Our presence. It was even asserted that, despite such caution, the enemies caused disturbances along the way; but creation, protection, and liberty are all in the hands of God, and He is the All-bountiful, the All-generous. In short, such excuses were heard from one after another. But the Lord hath knowledge of all things; He is the All-knowing, the All-informed.

Nevertheless, it would have been best [if they had] carried out the wishes of the illustrious exalted leaf, as this was most pleasing and acceptable to God; but it was otherwise ordained. The One True God is My witness! Our heart hath melted in agony that she was deprived of this pilgrimage, and all the dwellers under the tabernacle of purity and might are most sorrowful and despondent. At one point, the Tongue of Grandeur spoke these exalted words: "O 'Abd-i Hadir![ever-present servant] The effect of what hath happened may well appear on earth." More recently, this utterance was spoken by His blessed Tongue: "Write to My Afnán [who had promised to escort the Báb's wife] that we agreed and consented to the exalted leaf's request. Currently, the honored persons continue to stand ready and prepared to fulfil that promise, though they have not spoken of it." He further stated, "Write of this matter to the Afnán, upon him be the glory of God, as he was well aware of such a promise beforehand. We desired to fulfil what We had assured the exalted leaf." [26]

It seems that there was considerable interest among certain Bahá'ís of Shíráz to serve as custodian of the resting-place of Khadíjih Bagum. In a Tablet dated 4 Rabí'u'l-Avval AH 1301 (3 January 1884), Bahá'u'lláh informs Núri'd-Dín that a letter was recently received from Hájí Mírzá Haydar-'Alí containing several requests that were all replied to. Bahá'u'lláh then states:

Further, he [27] requested that the custodianship of the blessed shrine of the exalted leaf and the resting-place of the illustrious Afnán Kabír—that is, the celebrated Khál [28]—be given to Hájí Mírzá Fadlu'lláh. Hájí Mírzá Fadlu'lláh hath also petitioned for this, as have a few other near ones. After he attained Our presence and made the same request, the Tongue of the King of Creation uttered these sacred words: "All matters relating to the sacred leaf are to be referred to the honored Áqá Mírzá Áqá Afnán."

In the following Tablet, the Master issued instructions about the sacredness of the resting-place of Khadíjih Bagum:

He is God.

Sh[íráz]. The illustrious Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree planted on Sinai, upon him be the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

O Afnán of the Tree beyond which there is no passing and of the friends of the Blessed Beauty! The sacred House [of the Báb] and the point of adoration of the denizens of the Concourse on High must be protected and preserved with the greatest wisdom and looked after and cared for with exhaustive effort. This Servant is but one of the attendants of that Threshold. Therefore, consider how truly precious that pinnacle of divine veneration is in the Abhá Kingdom. All the inhabitants of Fars dwell under the shadow of that sanctified altar.

Concerning the sacred, fragrant, and resplendent sepulcher of the illustrious wife [of the Báb]—My spirit yearns to inhale the holy scent of that dust—you must protect it with the greatest care until the time when her shrine is built. On behalf of this Servant, the Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree

must circumambulate that sacred ground, where the spirit of the Sacred Ones circle in adoration, and visit that perfumed and sanctified resting-place.

'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás.[29]

When Khadíjih Bagum died, Bahá'u'lláh instructed Zahrá Bagum to live in the House of the Báb.

Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Hasan: Commonly known as Afnán Kabír. Although he was a merchant by profession, he spent some time as a theology student in Shíráz and Isfahán and, throughout his life, retained an interest in theology and the exact sciences. It is reported that he taught medicine and had many students.[30] He built an observatory in his house in Yazd to pursue his interest in astronomy. There is some evidence that he was hostile to the Báb at first,[31] although 'Abdu'l-Bahá credits him with having been a believer in the time of the Báb.[32] In any case, he played no active role until he accepted Bahá'u'lláh some years later. Towards the latter part of his life, he lived in Beirut, where he and his sons ran one of the branches of the Afnán's trading company. He was married to Bībí-Ján-Ján Bagum and they had 11 children. Two of his sons married into Bahá'u'lláh's family. In his final years, he retired to 'Akká, where Professor Edward G. Browne met him in 1890.[33] He died at the age of 85, a few months[34] after Bahá'u'lláh, and was buried in Manshiyih cemetery near Bahjí.[35]

Hájí Mírzá Abú'l-Qásim: An older brother to Khadíjih Bagum. He was born in 1811 and was known as Saqqá-Khánih because he had once built a public fountain across from his office. His wife was Sáhíb-Sultán Bagum of Jahrum. He carried on his father's extensive trading activities and became a very affluent merchant. In the early 1840s, he had business connections with the Báb. Many years later, he became a Bahá'í. Throughout his life, he was the main source of support for his younger sister, Khadíjih Bagum, and saw to her comfort. He passed away in Shíráz in 1887 and was buried near his sister.[36] Subsequently, Bahá'u'lláh revealed the following Tablet in honor of his son, Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan:

...O My Afnán, O Abú'l-Hasan! Upon thee rest My glory! Harken to the call of this Wronged One and, through the pure water of divine remembrance, sanctify your heart from the dust of sorrow that hath beclouded thee. Although what happened was indeed a great calamity, yet patience and forbearance are particularly worthy qualities in the sight of God. He is the Patient One and commands all His servants to act with dignified forbearance....

Convey the greetings of this Wronged One to all your kindred and counsel them to be resigned and forbearing. Today is a day for praise, glorification, and service to the Cause. The chosen ones, particularly the Afnán, must be engaged at all times in teaching and promoting the Faith. The Supreme Pen hath revealed for the Afnán what will endure for as long as the names and attributes of God will endure. You must make an effort to maintain this exalted station....[37]

Siyyid 'Alí-Muhammad, the Báb

Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-Taqí: He is famous for building the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in the Bahá'í world. He was born in 1830 in Shíráz. After completing his studies at age 15, he went to Búshíhr where he succeeded the Báb in his father's firm. He was in Búshíhr when the Báb returned from his pilgrimage in 1845. In about 1854, he moved to Yazd where he married Bíbí Zahrá Bagum and sometime later married a second wife who brought a daughter named Maryam Bagum to the marriage.

In Yazd, his business prospered and reached as far as Hong Kong. As a leading merchant in town, he was appointed the consular agent for Russia, a position that afforded some protection from extortion by the Iranian officials. He was given the title Vakílu'd-Dawlih [agent of the state], but 'Abdu'l-Bahá named him Vakílu'l-Haqq [agent of God]. His cheerful and generous character won the respect of many, even though he was well known as a Bahá'í. He was on good terms with all the governors of Yazd, many of whom consulted him about their affairs. The following is recorded by Muhammad-Táhir Malmírí, who was a close associate of the Vakílu'd-Dawlih:

One of the divine blessings bestowed upon the friends in Yazd was that a large number of the illustrious Afnáns of the sacred Lote-Tree lived in that city. It is beyond the ability of my pen and tongue to recount their qualities. Even though outwardly these sanctified beings did not teach the Faith to others, yet they conducted themselves in Yazd with such goodly character and impressive behavior that, truly, this ephemeral servant cannot describe their vast influence. This luminous company and divine symbol of guidance was the cause of recognition for large numbers in Yazd. High and low have testified that these blessed persons were the effulgent signs, radiant proofs, and sanctified emblems of the Cause. They were the essence of chastity, faithfulness, and wisdom; and, even though they would not openly speak of the Faith or admit affiliation with the Cause, all the inhabitants of Yazd were certain that they were among the Bahá'ís and the Afnán of the sacred and divine Tree, and none dared be presumptuous towards them.

All the Afnáns had offices in the Saray-i Khajih and controlled the city's commerce. However, they conducted themselves in such a way that learned and unlettered, peasants and noblemen, young and old would freely say, "These men are indeed heavenly angels. They are worthy of their station as descendants of the Prophet of Islam. We are not concerned with their [current] beliefs because of their holy lineage."

The honored Hájí Mírzá Hasan-'Alí, who was an uncle of the Báb, would frequently attend the mosque and offer [Muslim] prayers. His three sons, Hájí Mírzá Áqá, Hájí Siyyid Mihdí, and Hájí Siyyid Husayn, each had a magnificent office, were pillars of commerce and employed a large staff of secretaries, accountants, attendants, and others. Despite their immense wealth and attainments, they were nevertheless very lowly and humble. It was truly astonishing and bewildering.

One of them was the honored Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-Taqí, the

Vakílu'd-Dawlih, the official representative of the Russian government. He had won a special medal and displayed a flag over his house. Indeed, he was more accomplished than the others. He conducted himself with such tranquility, courtesy, humility, and selflessness, and dealt with people with such compassion, love, and equity, that when he passed through the streets, all the pedestrians would pause and, with great respect, defer to him, often bowing low before him. When a dispute took place between the merchants, they invariably would consider his word the final say and deciding factor. The day that he received a large golden emblem from the Russian government, several of the principal merchants happened to be his guests in his office. For two hours he wore that emblem, but never again. In His Tablets, Bahá'u'lláh has addressed him as, "O essence of respect!" In some other Tablets, he is addressed, "O essence of meekness!"[38]

'Abdu'l-Bahá put Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-Taquí in charge of building the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in 'Ishqábád. Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-Taquí closed his business in Yazd and set out on 4 April 1900 for Russia. When he arrived in Mashhad en route, the authorities and prominent citizens warmly welcomed him. In their company, he went on pilgrimage to the shrine of the eighth Imám. For some time, people came to visit him, and this aroused the jealousy of the divines. They schemed to prevent him from entering the shrine for a second visit. However, on the appointed day, the custodian of the shrine, Nasiru'l-Mulk Shírází, was also going for a visit. He was an old friend of the Vakílu'd-Dawlih, and, when he saw his friend, he deferred to him and showed him great consideration. Through this incident, not only were the opponents frustrated but also was the Nasiru'l-Mulk able to renew his friendship. Over the course of several meetings with the Vakílu'd-Dawlih, he became a believer. When the Vakílu'd-Dawlih arrived in 'Ishqábád, he supervised the construction of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, using the plans and instructions sent by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and paying much of the cost himself. By 1906, the building was almost complete.[39]

In mid-1900, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote to him confidentially about the troubles that surrounded Him in the Holy Land and instructed him to form the Universal House of Justice in the event of His slaying:

As to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, He is now in very great danger, beset by countless grave perils. Therefore, you must arise with the greatest strength and steadfastness and gather the Afnán of the divine Lote-Tree together. By this is meant that you must unite them in spirit and purpose, and let them join in harmony and concord with the Hands of the Cause, so that the Universal House of Justice may be formed as far as this is practicable and the provisions of the Will and Testament can be implemented when this is necessary. It is incumbent upon the Afnán of the holy Tree to stand in the forefront and to shield and protect the mighty stronghold of the Cause of God. In this way, they will become the recipients of such favors as will benefit the station that has been graciously conferred upon them.[40]

Some time later, Vakílu'd-Dawlih settled in Haifa. 'Abdu'l-Bahá remembered

him as "an uncommonly happy man"[41] and ranked him as one of the 24 elders mentioned in the Book of Revelation.[42] He passed away in Haifa on 30 August 1911 at the age of 81 and was the first to be buried in the Haifa Bahá'í cemetery.[43] 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed two Tablets of Visitation in his honor.[44]

Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí: Born in 1824, he was the oldest son of the Khál Akbar. He was a successful, wealthy merchant who extended the family's trading links to China. He lived there for some time, having his home and office in Hong Kong and a warehouse in Shanghai.[45] He also visited India often.[46]

While on pilgrimage to Mecca in 1859, Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí, his brother Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-Taqí, and his cousin Hájí Siyyid Mihdí visited Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdad, the first of the Afnáns to do so. It appears that they became believers at this time. In 1887, Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí returned from seven years in Hong Kong and visited Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká. At Bahá'u'lláh's request, he went to Russia, where he bought several parcels of land in 'Ishqábád and the nearby town of Firuzih. One parcel, named A'zam, was to serve as the site for the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the new Bahá'í community in 'Ishqábád. The others were to be endowments providing income to support it.

When Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí died in Bombay in 1896, the Muslims refused to allow his body to be buried there, threatening to burn it. His body was brought to Karachi and then to Búshíhr, where the Iranians would not let it land. Eventually, and after an enormous ordeal, it was buried at Ctesiphon, near Baghdad.[47] In May 1959, as one of the objectives of the Ten Year Crusade, it was reinterred in the Bahá'í cemetery in Baghdad.[48] On Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí's passing, 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed several Tablets extolling his virtues and composed two Tablets of Visitation.[49]

Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí was married to a maternal cousin, who was a daughter of Hájí 'Abdu'l-Husayn, a renowned Shírází merchant and a brother of Hájí Muhammad Khálili. The two brothers were not believers.

Hájí Mírzá Buzurg: A brother to the Vakílu'd-Dawlih. He had no descendants.

Bíbí Ján Bagum: She was married to the Afnán Kabír.

Khadíjih-Sultán Bagum: In 1849, she was married at the age of nine to Mírzá Javád. Four months after the marriage, her husband died on the hajj journey. He was 18 years old. She subsequently married Áqá Mírzá Ibráhím Khurásání and had a son named 'Alí. She passed away at the age of 71.

Bíbí Zahrá Bagum: The wife of the Vakílu'd-Dawlih. On her passing, she was honored with a moving Tablet of Visitation.[50]

Hájí Mírzá Áqá: A merchant in Yazd. He married Khadíjih-Sultán, a daughter of Hájí Abú'l-Qásim Tabrizí.

Hájí Siyyid Mihdí: A son of the Khál Akbar. He was a merchant in Yazd who

converted through a dream. When Bahá'u'lláh lived in Baghdad, Hájí Siyyid Mihdí attained His sacred presence with his brothers, Hájí Muhammad-'Alí and Hájí Muhammad-Taquí. He married his maternal cousin, Bíbí Ruquyyih, a daughter of Hájíyyih Fátimih Bíbí. Throughout his life, he served with great distinction and suffered bitterly at the hands of the Bahá'í Faith's enemies. He established the village of Mihdí-Ábád, which became a center of Bahá'í activities. During the 1903 pogrom of the Bahá'í community, he greatly assisted the families of the persecuted believers. For many years afterwards, these families continued to receive his aid, often without knowing the source of the aid. He passed away at the age of 84. 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed a Tablet of Visitation for him.[51]

Hájí Siyyid Ja'far: A merchant of great influence in Yazd. He went to Bombay for commerce and was in partnership with Hájí Mírzá Buzurg and Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí. He was deeply devoted to the Bahá'í Faith and rendered many services. In Baghdad, he attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. When he returned to Shíráz, he passed away a year before his father. Subsequently, his remains, together with his father's, were carried to Karbalá and buried. The location of the grave is not currently known. He married Sáhíb Sultán Bagum, the daughter of Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Hasan and Bíbí Ján Bagum.

Hájí Siyyid Husayn: A merchant who lived in Yazd. He married Aghá Bagum and they had four children.

Mírzá Javád: Because of the troubles in Shíráz that followed the martyrdom of the Báb, Mírzá Javád and Hájí Mírzá Abú'l-Qásim left for pilgrimage to Mecca. Mírzá Javád passed away in Jeddah en route. He was 18 years old and was married to Khadíjih-Sultán Bagum.

Áqá Mírzá Áqá: Born in 1842, he was the only surviving child of Zahrá Bagum. From childhood, he was known as Siyyid Muhammad, but as a sign of respect for the Prophet Muhammad, the family called him Áqá Mírzá Áqá. Later, Bahá'u'lláh gave him the title Núri'd-Dín. He was the only member of the Afnán family to be related to the Báb on both his father's side and mother's side, and was the third member of the Báb's family to openly become a Bábí. Áqá Mírzá Áqá became a believer at the age of 13 through his aunt, Khadíjih Bagum, to whom he was very attached. Through him, both his parents became Bábís, and, soon after, so did Khál Akbar. Núri'd-Dín received many Tablets from Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdad and throughout His life. When Nabíl Zarandí came to Shíráz in 1867 carrying word of Bahá'u'lláh's claim to be the Promised One of the Báb, Núri'd-Dín was one of those who believed.

Áqá Mírzá Áqá was a merchant, trading in partnership with other members of the Afnán family. Though he was well known as a Bábí and Bahá'í, the family trading business prospered. In March 1879, two prominent Bahá'í merchants in Isfahán were martyred. As Núri'd-Dín had close contacts with them, the elders of the nascent Bahá'í community feared for his safety and

sent him away the next day. He lived in Bombay from 1880 to 1889. He then went to Port Said where he traded under the name Núri'd-Dín Hasan and organized the Rúhaniyyih Company. In July 1891 at Bahá'u'lláh's invitation, he and his family came to the Holy Land, where they stayed for nine months. During this period, Bahá'u'lláh revealed the Tablet of the World in his honor. It states:

O Afnán, O thou that has branched from Mine ancient Stock! My glory and My loving-kindness rest upon thee.

How vast is the tabernacle of the Cause of God! It hath overshadowed all the peoples and kindreds of the earth, and will, ere long, gather together the whole of mankind beneath its shelter. Thy day of service is now come. Countless Tablets bear the testimony of the bounties vouchsafed unto you. Arise for the triumph of My Cause and, through the power of thine utterance, subdue the hearts of men. Thou must show forth that which will ensure the peace and the well-being of the miserable and the downtrodden. Gird up the loins of thine endeavor, that perchance thou mayest release the captive from his chains, and enable him to attain unto true liberty.[52]

A little more than a year after Áqá Mírzá Áqá returned to Egypt, 'Abdu'l-Bahá instructed him to go to Shíráz to defend the Bahá'í Faith against the Covenant-breakers there. He went to Yazd with the Vakílu'd-Dawlih in order to curtail the growing influence of the Covenant-breakers in that region. In 1895, he escaped arrest by the Imám-Jum'ih of Ábádih and Hishmat-Nizám, the commander of a regiment traveling from Tihrán to Shíráz. Later, he returned to Port Said to resume his business. At about this time, 'Abdu'l-Bahá informed him confidentially that He had begun the construction of the Shrine of the Báb, explaining the events leading to this historic undertaking:

He is God.

Port Said. The illustrious Afnán of the sacred Tree, the honored Áqá Mírzá Áqá, upon him be the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

Confidential good news.

He is the Most Glorious!

O thou distinguished branch of the blessed and sacred Lote-Tree! When the Ancient Beauty and Most Great Name, may My spirit be a sacrifice for His friends, was staying in Haifa, He often praised a certain site on Mount Carmel and said it was a very pleasant and agreeable spot, with a splendid view and an uplifting quality. His blessed, cherished wish was to buy that site, and He directed that the land be bought in whatever way possible. Through great effort, the ground was bought four years ago and prepared with some minor work.

After that, special instructions were sent to Rangoon, numerous Tablets penned, and a design prepared and issued for a sarcophagus made of the region's marble, which is renowned in every way. With great difficulty, it was carved and embossed in one piece. Eventually, it reached here [after traveling] through

several towns. Of course, thou hast heard what happened in some cities along the way. In short, it arrived not long ago, along with a casket made from the finest Indian wood.

A year ago, the honored Áqá Mírzá Asadu'lláh [Isfahání][53] was specially sent from here to Iran to bring, with the utmost humility, respect, and reverence, the sanctified remains and blessed temple of that majestic Being, may My spirit be a sacrifice unto His dust. Through the efforts of several other believers, it was transported and brought to the Holy Land. Currently, we are busy building the promised sacred edifice on Mount Carmel. God willing, we will call on thee to come and share in our endeavor constructing this hallowed and blessed Shrine. In this way, thou wilt receive everlasting confirmations and attain this most mighty honor. This good news stands supreme over the sovereignty of the earth and the heavens.

In truth, such joy and excitement have surrounded Me that it is indescribable, for the hands of the transgressors treated those sacred remains with great indignity. Praise be to God, through the aid and favors of the Ancient Beauty, everything has been arranged so perfectly that it will cause everyone to be filled with wonder.

The glory of God rest upon the Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree.

'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás.[54]

In 1901, 'Abdu'l-Bahá told Núri'd-Dín to return to Shíráz in order to restore the House of the Báb. Núri'd-Dín had been its custodian since the death of his mother in 1889. At the time of his passing on 15 November 1903, the work was nearly completed. His son, Mírzá Habíbu'lláh, succeeded him as custodian.

Núri'd-Dín left behind a valuable daily journal, a page of which is translated below:

Tonight is the eve of 27 Ramadán AH 1286 [31 December 1869], and the friends came to meet with Áqá Mírzá Mihdí Rashtí. He came some time ago to teach the Faith but, because of troubles and fear of harassment, was unable to meet with the believers. We came together to spend the whole evening in fellowship, discussion, and prayer.

As I write these lines, it is now midnight, and, because of the uproars [against the Bahá'í Faith], there is no hope that any of us will see daybreak. However, we are immersed in such warm love and spirituality that [my] pen is unable to describe it.

These trials and tribulations will strengthen the resolve of the friends. Soon, the believers will be seen to organize, unhindered, meetings where chanting of the divine verses will be raised and His praise and acclaim heard uninterrupted. However, will those future believers know the same spirituality that we felt? By God, never! This ethereal spirituality is born from the fire of persecution and is the result of enduring anguish and harm in His path.

Hájí Siyyid Mírzá: Initially based in Yazd and later in India, he engaged in trade extending from China to Europe and amassed a considerable fortune. During the days of Bahá'u'lláh, he carried out many services, such as acting as contact with the Holy Land, and was deeply respected by the believers. When Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí raised his rebellion and was joined by Siyyid 'Alí in opposition to the Center of the Covenant, Siyyid Mírzá threw in his lot with them. He decided to journey to 'Ishqábád to stir the believers against 'Abdu'l-Bahá, but his brother, Siyyid Ahmad, prevented him. During this period, Siyyid Mírzá's children severed relations with him. The painful decision to make this separation was spearheaded by Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Husayn, who even separated his business dealings from his father's. In no time, Siyyid Mírzá's vast fortune was completely depleted. Through the effort of the Vakílu'd-Dawlih, Siyyid Mírzá soon realized the error of his ways and was deeply repentant. He asked for 'Abdu'l-Bahá's forgiveness and was pardoned. He rose fearlessly to champion the Bahá'í Faith and to promote unity among the believers. In particular, during the 1903 pogrom of the Bahá'ís in Yazd, he was a pillar of faith for the community and greatly assisted the believers that suffered through that ordeal. He passed away as a steadfast Bahá'í in Yazd a year later. Hájí Siyyid Mírzá had married Sárá-Sultán Bagum and they had five children.

Siyyid Ahmad: A brother to Hájí Siyyid Mírzá. Siyyid Ahmad was a merchant, living for a while in Yazd and then in 'Ishqábád, busied with commerce.

He was a deeply devoted believer who traveled to 'Akká to see Bahá'u'lláh. While there, he learned that he was being accused of theft in Istanbul. He hurried to that city and suffered bitterly at the hands of the foes, including an enemy of the Bahá'í Faith by the name of Muhammad-'Alí Isfahání. However, he was able to prove his innocence and establish their slander.[55] In one of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets, He says about this event, "There were several tormentors in Istanbul who perpetrated great harm on the honored Afnán, Áqá Siyyid Ahmad. Since the honored Afnán was meek and gentle, these men manifested the greatest oppression, spoke disreputable slanders, and incited other lowlifes and ruffians against him." [56]

After this incident, Siyyid Ahmad again attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh in 'Akká and stayed until after His ascension. Subsequently, he traveled to promote the Bahá'í Faith and once more returned to 'Akká, where the Master showered His favors on him.

In 1899, he went to 'Ishqábád and from there to Yazd, where he established the first Spiritual Assembly of that city.[57] He eventually moved to Shíráz, where he was the victim of a night burglary and killed. On hearing the news, 'Abdu'l-Bahá was deeply grieved and conferred upon him the rank of martyr.[58] The Master revealed two Tablets and a Tablet of Visitation to mark Siyyid Ahmad's passing.[59] Siyyid Ahmad left no descendants.

Hájí Siyyid Muhammad: For many years, he was a merchant in Bombay where, in collaboration with his brothers, Siyyid Mírzá and Siyyid 'Alí, he spread

polemical papers against 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He died and was buried in Bombay.[60] Two daughters survived him, both of whom remained faithful to 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Siiyyid 'Alí: A merchant in Yazd. On 13 Sha'bán AH 1303 (17 May 1886), he married Furúghiyih, a daughter of Bahá'u'lláh.[61] After the ascension of the Blessed Perfection, Siiyyid 'Alí joined ranks with Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí and rose in opposition to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. For this reason, the Master has referred to him as the 'Siiyyid Mutimarid' [rebellious Siiyyid].[62] He fought constantly with his brother Mírzá Muhsin over a parcel of land, trying to defraud him of the proceeds. During this family feud, he made the most vulgar accusations against 'Abdu'l-Bahá. For a period of time, he repented of his deeds but soon returned to his old comrades in opposition to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. He died in 'Akká in 1916.[63] His children eventually broke the Covenant as well.

Mírzá Muhsin: A devoted believer. He went to 'Akká in 1899 and married Tubá Khánum, a daughter of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Shoghi Effendi participated in his funeral in Haifa in 1923.[64] All his children were eventually expelled from the community.

Sábih-Sultán Bagum: A daughter of the Afnán Kabír. She was married to Hájí Siiyyid Ja'far.

Fátimih-Sultán Bagum: Married to Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan. She had three daughters and a son, of whom only a daughter, Munavvar, survived. She accompanied her husband, Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan, to Haifa. Because of an accident in which she sustained severe burns, she passed away in 1921, a few months before her husband. She was buried in the Bahá'í cemetery in Haifa.

Shams-Sultán Bagum: A daughter of the Afnán Kabír. She was married to Mírzá Mahmúd.

Siiyyid Husayn: A son of Afnán Kabír. He passed away at age 16 in Yazd and was the first believer buried in the Bahá'í cemetery of that city. On the occasion of his passing, Bahá'u'lláh revealed five Tablets in the name of various family members, consoling them for their loss.[65]

Bíbí-Sakínih Bagum: Married to Hájí Siiyyid Muhammad. She survived her husband and returned to Shíráz, where she lived in the house of the Khál Akbar. She passed away in her 90s on 4 February 1954 and was buried in the Bahá'í cemetery in Shíráz.

Tayyibih: A sister to Siiyyid 'Alí. She accompanied her parents to the Holy Land for the marriage of Siiyyid 'Alí to Bahá'u'lláh's daughter. She joined Siiyyid 'Alí in breaking the Covenant and opposing 'Abdu'l-Bahá. She died in 'Akká, having never married.

Maryam-Sultán Bagum: She married Áqá Mírzá Áqá Núri'd-Dín and received many favors and Tablets from Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá.[66] She passed away in February 1939[67] in Shíráz.

Siiyyid Muhammad-Husayn: A son of Hájí Mírzá Abú'l-Qásim and the paternal grandfather of Shoghi Effendi. He converted to the Bábí movement as a result

of the efforts of Núri'd-Dín and Nabíl Zarandí. He was a merchant in Shíráz and married Zívar-Sultán Bagum, commonly referred to as Khánum Hájiyyih. She was the only child of Háji Muhammad-Báqir, a renowned merchant. When Háji Muhammad-Báqir died, his trustee, Háji Mírzá Abú'l-Qásim, married Khánum Hájiyyih to his own son.[68] Siyyid Muhammad-Husayn had a second wife by the name of 'Ismat Khánum, who passed away in 1951 in Shíráz. From this second marriage, he fathered a son and a daughter, named Siyyid Mihdí and Qudsiyyih respectively. Siyyid Muhammad-Husayn passed away in 1930.

Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan: A son of Háji Mírzá Abú'l-Qásim, and a merchant in Shíráz. At Bahá'u'lláh's instructions, he journeyed to the Holy Land where he remained for a while. When he was leaving, the Master revealed the following Tablet for him:

Haifa. The illustrious Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree, the honored Áqá Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan, upon him rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

He is God!

O thou compassionate twig of the blessed Tree! Praise be to God that thou possessest such character that both the Blessed Beauty and the Exalted One, may My spirit be a sacrifice for Their dust, are pleased with thee. The friends are thankful to thee, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá thinks of thee with confidence and joy. In the midwatches of the night, when I get up to pray, I always remember the friends, particularly the distinguished twig, the illustrious Afnán[69] resident by the Shrine of the Báb, and your good self. Of course, the esteemed Afnán and yourself also remember this desolate and grieved One in your prayers by the Shrine of the Báb.

Praise be to God that the fragrances of holiness are spread to all corners and the deeds of the friends who are firm in the Covenant are a clear sign throughout the realm. All are partners and companions of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in servitude, humility and reverence to the threshold.

Upon you rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

'A 'A.[70]

Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan returned to Shíráz. He resumed his trading, married Fátimih-Sultán Bagum, and had four children, of whom only a daughter, Khadíjih,[71] survived.

During the latter part of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's ministry, 'Abdu'l-Bahá invited Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan to live in Haifa again. While there, Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan organized a memorial meeting on 19 November 1921 in honor of his son-in-law, the Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih. At this gathering, 'Abdu'l-Bahá privately informed him of His premonition that His passing was near. This news overwhelmed Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan with sorrow and he did not want to live in this world after his beloved Master. That very night he walked to the sea and drowned himself. The next day, his body was retrieved. At the funeral, 'Abdu'l-Bahá acted as one of

the pallbearers for the procession to the cemetery. Mírzá Abú'l-Hasan is buried in the Baní Salih cemetery in 'Akká.

Mírzá Mahmúd: A farmer in the regions surrounding Shíráz. He was married to Shams-Sultán Bagum and they had daughter, Aghá Bagum. He passed away in 1888 at a relatively young age. He is buried in Sháh-Chiráq.

Mírzá 'Alí: His base of commerce was in the port city of Bandar 'Abbás, where he passed away in 1887. He never married.

Mírzá Ibráhím: A merchant in China. He returned to Shíráz in 1893, where he passed away. He never married.

Fátimih-Sultán Bagum: She married Áqá Muhammad-Hasan, a merchant from Búshihir. He was related to her maternal grandmother and was a son of Hájí 'Abbás Tájjir.

Sara-Sultán Bagum: A daughter of Hájí Mírzá Abú'l-Qásim. She was married to Hájí Siyyid Mírzá.

Ahmad: The Báb's only child, who died at birth in 1843. Initially, he was buried under a pine tree in the shrine of Bíbí-Dukhtarán. In the opening days of 1955, the Shíráz municipality decided to construct a school there, which would have destroyed the gravesite. The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Shíráz refused to act to arrange an alternative burial site.

Unsatisfied with this decision, Abú'l-Qásim Afnán immediately informed Shoghi Effendi.[72] The Guardian cabled his authorization of the transfer: "Guardian approves transfer remains Primal Point's Son Gulistán Jávíd.

Ensure befitting burial."[73] The Spiritual Assembly arranged for the remains to be exhumed, laid in a silk container, and placed in a cement coffin. For three months, the coffin was kept in the western part of the local

Hadiratu'l-Quds. On 21 April 1955, which coincided with the day of the Báb's martyrdom reckoned by the lunar calendar, a special ceremony for the

reinterment was held. It was the largest Bahá'í gathering in Shíráz in the history of the Bahá'í Faith. Multitudes of believers from all parts of the

country participated in the historic event. In a prayerful atmosphere, the remains were reinterred in the Bahá'í cemetery of Shíráz. The Guardian

heard the details and, on 24 April, cabled his joy: "SHIRAZ ASSEMBLY CARE

KHADEM TEHERAN. OVERJOYED HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT CONGRATULATE VALIANT FRIENDS

LOVING REMEMBRANCE SHRINES SUPPLICATING BOUNTIFUL BLESSINGS. SHOGHI.."[74]

In the first báb of the fifth vahíd of the Persian Bayán, the Báb asks for a befitting structure to be built over the resting-place of Ahmad for the faithful to worship God.

Hájí Mírzá Mahmúd: A son of Vakílu'd-Dawlih. He was very charitable and selfless in his services to the Bahá'í Faith. He established his home as the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of Yazd, where the friends would gather each morning for devotional prayers. During the 1903 pogrom of the Yazd Bahá'í community, his home became a haven for the believers. After a while, however, he became a target for the enemies, and he had to retire to the village of Marvast.[75]

After Yazd, he took up residence in 'Ishqábád and, with great zeal and diligence, completed the construction work on the temple begun by his father. The following is one of the Tablets revealed in his honor by 'Abdu'l-Bahá during this period:

He is God.

O My Mahmúd! O offshoot of the blessed Tree! Indeed, thou art worthy to be an Afnán and deserve what hath been bestowed on you. For a while now, the offshoot of the divine Tree, thine illustrious father, hath been a companion of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in this land. At a time of sorrow, he was a source of fellowship, love, and comfort. From the beginning of his life until the present day, he hath achieved all that is becoming of one who hath branched from the sanctified Tree. He was confirmed in rendering a great service by establishing the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, and in this field he hath exceeded all others. He hath brought joy to 'Abdu'l-Bahá for the rest of eternity. Now he liveth close to the sacred Threshold and protects that hallowed ground. He is blessed now and will be until his end.

Praise be to God that thou art engaged in service in his place. This too is a great blessing that cannot be calculated.

The honored Áqá Mírzá Áqá is on his way to 'Ishqábád. Show him every assistance and consideration. Try to find employment for him that he might be engaged in an occupation and pass his days in tranquility and happiness.

Upon thee rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

'A 'A.[76]

Hájí Mírzá Mahmúd passed away in 1918 at the age of 64, after returning to Yazd. His funeral was widely attended, and it is reported that the city mourned his passing. He was married to 'Alíyih.

Hájí Siyyid Muhammad: Known as Hájí Mírzá Buzurg. Initially, he was a merchant and a farmer in Yazd; then he transferred his residence to Tihrán where he spent the rest of his life. He donated a large number of properties outside Shimrán Gate as endowments for the maintenance of the House of the Báb and other needs of the Bahá'í Faith. He died in December 1949 when he was in his 70s. Shoghi Effendi cabled his sympathies and his assurance of prayers.

Siyyid Áqá: His given name was Áqá Mírzá Husayn-'Alí. He passed away at a young age in 'Ishqábád.[77] He never married.

Bagum Sáhib: She was the daughter of Hájí Muhammad-Taquí and Bíbí Zahrá Bagum. She married Siyyid Ahmad.

Fátimih Bagum: She was the daughter of Hájí Muhammad-Taquí and Bíbí Zahrá Bagum. She married Mírzá Áqá Taryakí.

Bíbí Sultán Bagum: A daughters of the Vakílu'l-Haqq. She married Mírzá Muhammad-Báqir.

Khánum Liqá: She drowned in the 1955 Yazd flood.

Maryam Bagum: A daughter of the Vakílu'l-Haqq by his second wife. She married Siyyid Muhammad and they had two children.

Mírzá Áqá Taryakí: His given name was Muhammad. He was known among the family as Áqá Mírzá Áqá Kúchak [the junior]. He engaged in a business trading in opium with China.

Mírzá 'Alí Taryakí: As his trade was mostly in opium, he was known as Hájí Taryakí. In the latter part of his life, he attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh in Haifa.

Mírzá Muhammad-Báqir: A merchant and farmer in Yazd. During the decade of 1900 to 1909, when 'Abdu'l-Bahá was constructing the Shrine of the Báb, Mírzá Muhammad-Báqir contributed generously to this project. As such, the Shrine's water reservoir was named after him.[78] He passed away in 1941 in Tihrán and was buried in Imámzádi Ma'sum, although the exact burial site is not known.

Mírzá Jalál: He was killed at a young age by thieves in Marvist, a village of Yazd. He was not married.

Áqá Mírzá 'Alí: A merchant in 'Ishqábád. Late in life, he returned to Yazd, where he passed away. He never married.

Hájí Mírzá Javád: A farmer in Yazd.

Hájí Mírzá Abú'l-Qásim: He was a resident of Yazd and had two daughters and one son.

Siyyid Mírzá: A merchant in Yazd. He was deeply devoted to the Bahá'í Faith. When he died, 'Abdu'l-Bahá honored him with a Tablet of Visitation.[79]

Mírzá Buzurg: His given name was Mírzá Hasan-'Alí.

Siyyid Muhammad: A merchant who lived all his life in Yazd. From his first marriage with Maryam Bagum, he had two children. His daughter by a second marriage was named Táhirih.

Siyyid 'Alí: He did not have any children.

Safa'iyih: She was the daughter of Hájí Siyyid Mihdí and Bíbí Ruqyiyih. She was married to Hájí Mírzá Javád. They had four children.

Vafa'iyih: She was the daughter of Hájí Siyyid Mihdí and Bíbí Ruqyiyih. She was married to Mírzá Díyá'u'lláh. They had four children: Husayn Áqá, Mahmúd Áqá, Hasan Áqá, and Thurayyá.

'Aliyyih: At a young age, she attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh. He revealed a special prayer for her marriage to Hájí Mírzá Mahmúd.

Mírzá Díyá'u'lláh: A son of Hájí Siyyid Husayn. He married Vafa'iyih and they had four children (named above).

Mírzá Habíbu'lláh: Two sons of Hájí Siyyid Husayn. Mírzá Habíbu'lláh married Rúhangíz and they had three children: Mahvash, Súfiyyih, and Firishtih.

Mírzá Badí'u'lláh: Originally from Yazd, he pioneered with his family. When he returned, he was caught up in the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Yazd. In 1911, he was imprisoned for three years with other members of the Spiritual Assembly. He then settled in Tihrán, where he continued to serve the Bahá'í Faith. He was married to Afsar and they had three children: Nádír, Shukúh, and Parívash.

Furúghiyih: A daughter of Hájí Siyyid Husayn and Aghá Bagum. She was married to Mírzá Habíbu'lláh, a farmer from Yazd.

Mírzá Habíbu'lláh: The author of the narratives that form the basis of this book. He corresponded extensively with 'Abdu'l-Bahá. For example, in 1897, two Tablets were revealed for him and his brother, Mírzá Buzurg, after they returned to Egypt from pilgrimage. The Tablet for Mírzá Habíbu'lláh is quoted below:

The illustrious Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree, the honored Mírzá Habíbu'lláh, upon him rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

He is God.

O offshoot of the sacred Tree! From the day thou didst leave, my thoughts have been with thee. During thy journey, I pondered the fact that I could not associate with thee even though at every moment thou wert in my thoughts and, with every breath, my close companion. This land is tumultuous, and this Servant remains in the grasp of many difficulties brought about by mischief-makers hidden and manifest. For this reason, I was unable to outwardly converse and associate with thee. The sudden onslaught of these various troubles, such as the one thou didst witness during the commemoration of the Day of Ascension, meant that thou wert sent away. Rest assured, however, that thou remainest in our hearts and will never be forgotten.

I cherish the hope that, through the bounties of the Ancient Beauty and the Most Great Name, may my spirit be a sacrifice for His servants, thou wilt remain protected and safeguarded under the canopy of His favors, and that day and night thou wilt progress rapidly in spiritual perfection.

O devoted offshoot! The obligations of this Day are great, very great! Thou must arise to dedicated service. Day after day, make mighty advances in the path of recognition so that out of the favors and protection of the One Who Arose, thou wilt shine out like a brilliant lamp over the horizon of the world of humanity.

His glory rest upon thee and upon all that remain steadfast.

'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás.

Mírzá Habíbu'lláh married Aghá Bagum and they had six children: Firdaws,

Abú'l-Qásim, Tayyibih, Nayyirih, Amínu'lláh, and Hasan.

Hájí Mírzá Diyá'u'lláh: A brother of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh. He accompanied his father and brother to the Holy Land. For two years after that, he lived in Egypt.[80] In Shíráz, he carried out civil services for the administration of the Sahamu'd-Dawlih and was a confidant of the city's governors. He married Aghá Bagum and they had six children: Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad, Mírzá Bahá'í, Mírzá 'Abbás, Farahangíz, Thurayyá, Nuri'd-Dín. Mírzá Diyá'u'lláh passed away in 1942 at the age of 61.

Hájíyyih Túbá: The sister of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh. Modeling her life on that of the Greatest Holy Leaf, she never married and devoted her life to spreading the Bahá'í Faith and serving the Bahá'í women on pilgrimage to the House of the Báb. She was two years older than her brother. She passed away on 21 January 1953.[81]

Áqá Siyyid Áqá: The oldest son of Núri'd-Dín and the brother of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh. To my knowledge, he is the only member of the Afnán family elevated by Bahá'u'lláh to the rank of Hand of the Cause.

He was born in Shíráz in 1869 and was reared by Khadíjih Bagum. His given name was Ahmad-'Alí. At the age of seven, he began attending the classes of Shaykh Muhammad-Husayn. From childhood, he was endowed with great wisdom, unusual courage, and an unrivaled memory. His devotion to serving others was admired by everyone. When his father left for Bombay in 1879, he instructed Áqá Siyyid Áqá to continue organizing weekly gatherings in their home, which were led by Mullá 'Abdu'lláh Fádil. He also asked his son to look after the needs of the believers from the surrounding regions who visited Shíráz. Once a year, he was to visit all the Bahá'í communities in the province and support their activities and cheer their hearts. From his teens, Áqá Siyyid Áqá was constantly traveling on behalf of the Bahá'í Faith. He sent reports of his activities to Bahá'u'lláh, Who sent encouragement in numerous Tablets. One Tablet reads:[82]

He is the Revealer, the Wise.

The Tongue of the Merciful saith: O My friend and son of My Afnán! The robe of honor hath been cut and prepared for thy temple. The Supreme Pen hath revealed for thee that to which no created thing can be compared. Wherefore, render thanks unto thy Lord that thou hast branched from God and are known by His name at the beginning of thy life. In these days, abasement in His Cause is indeed the source of honor and the dawning-place of divine favor.

In truth, ere long the Almighty, the Fashioner of both worlds, will make manifest such matters that, were others to be apprised of them, they would verily circumambulate around thee. Soon, they will realize what they have lost, on the Day when people will arise for their Lord, the Creator of the Worlds.

Fleeting, temporal things are not worthy of consideration. Ears were not made to hear them, nor eyes meant to look upon them. By God, they are in evident loss.

The Perspicuous Book stands evident, and the Mother Book has been made manifest! Yet all have remained deprived and heedless, except those whom God hath chosen. Thou art blessed and favored, as are thy brothers and them that are with thee and love thee for the sake of God, the Almighty, the All-praised.

The glory that hath dawned from the horizon of My favors rest upon thee and thy kindred and My Afnán! For they have truly drunk the choice wine of utterance[83] from My generous hands. Know of a certainty that they are among those that have attained unto the Most Mighty Book.[84]

In 1884, Áqá Siyyid Áqá went to Bombay to be reunited with his father. At about the same time, the Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih, who was about the same age as Áqá Siyyid Áqá, also arrived in the city. Together they worked to improve their command of English and Urdu.

After five years, Áqá Siyyid Áqá left for Egypt with his father. There, they established the Rúhaniyyih Company offices in Port Said, Alexandria, and Cairo. On 20 December 1889, they both attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh at the Mansion of Bahjí, and Bahá'u'lláh gave Áqá Siyyid Áqá a finely embellished 'abá.[85] Again in July 1891, Áqá Siyyid Áqá attained Bahá'u'lláh's presence, together with other family members, and remained in the Holy Land for a month. On his return, his father traveled to the Holy Land, and the Blessed Perfection revealed the following Tablet, elevating Áqá Siyyid Áqá to the rank of Hand of the Cause:

Afnán. The honored Áqá Siyyid Áqá.

He is God, the Forgiver, the Generous.

The honored Afnán[86]—upon him be the peace of the Merciful—hath repeatedly attained Our presence. Praised be God that he is mentioned by this Wronged One and hath received Our special favors. With the greatest determination, he must arise to guide the people and conquer the world's inhabitants by the Most Great Name. Verily, this cannot be achieved unless it is ordained by God, the Omnipotent. The ranks of the oppressors and the cry of the evildoers have somewhat discouraged the friends of God. We cherish the hope that, through the light of the manifestation of the Speaker on Sinai and the fire of the sacred Bush, the world will glow radiantly.

O My Afnán, upon thee rest My glory! Thy station is that of guiding the servants, so that the sincere may drink their fill from the generous Hand of the everlasting Kawthar, and revive the world with a portion thereof. By the mercy of God, thou art reckoned and mentioned in the Book as the Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree and as a Hand of the Cause.

The blood of the martyrs in the Land of Ya [Yazd] will speak to the world and its inhabitants. By God, none can measure its effect and its value as a proof, and pen and ink cannot describe its potency. I beseech the sanctified and exalted God to make the oppressors aware of what their deeds have wrought in this ephemeral plane and to give them the everlasting divine chastisement ordained for them.

We mention all the friends in that land and implore God to enable each to manifest meritorious deeds and a goodly character.

You mentioned the honored Muhammad. Praise be to God that he hath attained certitude and is illumined by the light of recognition. We beseech God to ordain for him what will enable him to sing His praises, arise to serve Him, and remain turned to His horizon. He is the hearer and answerer. My glory and light be upon his father for having attained Our presence numerous times, and upon every faithful and righteous believer.

Praise be to God, the Lord of both worlds.[87]

In 1894, Áqá Siyyid Áqá attained the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. At that time, the whispers of the Covenant-breakers were reaching Fars. Therefore, 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked Áqá Siyyid Áqá and his father to go to Shíráz to try to protect the community. Two years later, Áqá Siyyid Áqá married Ághá Bíbí of Ábádih and became the head of the post office in Yazd. From this marriage, he had six children: Faraju'lláh (who died in infancy), Fathu'lláh, Nasru'lláh, Muzaffar, Ridván, and Safá. In Yazd, he married Zahrá Bagum, who bore him two children. Áqá Siyyid Áqá remained in Yazd until 1909 and then returned to Shíráz. There, he devoted all his time to serving the Bahá'í Faith, starting up the first Bahá'í printing press in that city. While in Búshihir he passed away in August 1929 at the age of 62.

Mírzá Jalál: A son of Núri'd-Dín. He lived all his life in Shíráz and worked in the post office. As noted in chapter 1 of these memoirs, Mírzá Jalál acted as the custodian of the Blessed House during his father's absence. Because of this important service, he received several Tablets, one of which is quoted below:[88]

Sh[íráz]. To the attention of the illustrious Afnán, the honored Mírzá Jalál, upon him be the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

He is the Most Glorious.

O servant of the divine Threshold! Numerous Tablets have been revealed and dispatched to thee. These reveal the never-ending and ever-present favors and munificence granted to thine honored self. If thou wilt fully consider the sanctity of the Threshold that thou guardest and the sacredness of the Court that thou dost serve, thou wouldst know of a certainty that thou wearest the crown of glory, are attired with the celestial robe of honor, and are seated upon the throne of sovereignty. This is because thou dost serve a Court that hath been the abode of the King of the Kingdom of Names and Attributes, and thou art servant before a Threshold set apart for them that longed to behold the Lord of Proof and His manifest signs—may My spirit, My essence, My whole being, and My reality be a sacrifice to Him.

Therefore, render thanks to the one true God that thou art favored with such a bounty and the grace of such beneficence. Shaybih was a servant to the Ka'bih and, at his time, was looked upon as a lowly servant. But now, each of his descendants is situated upon the throne of glory and honor, and prideth himself

in the name of his esteemed ancestor.

The glory of God rest upon thee and upon all the pilgrims to that Spot.

'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás.[89]

Mírzá Jalál's profession required him to travel extensively. When he was away, he would leave the affairs of the House of the Báb in the hands of a maid. This caused complications with the community, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá received complaints. Eventually, He wrote to Núri'd-Dín in Port Said and asked for another of his children to take on custodial duties:

...With regard to the Sacred House in Fars, the believers in Shíráz have made a loud protest. About two months ago, they wrote collectively asking for [me to] intervene in the affairs of the Blessed House. Had I sent that request to thine honored self, it would have caused deep sorrow. Therefore, I spared thee. However, thine eminence must try to do what thou canst about this, as all things relating to the House are of great importance, and, indeed, of such great moment that they cannot be allowed to drift.

Therefore, it is essential that thine own esteemed self or one of thy children maintain a presence at the House. Such a critical matter cannot be entrusted to a maidservant, even though she will do her best to protect the House. In short, the friends have complained in such a way that this Servant hath been left with no other option. In whatever way this can be arranged, kindly send to Fars one of the illustrious Afnáns who are currently with thee that they can actively attend to the affairs of the House. Take action on this matter immediately; no delay is allowed.

The illustrious Afnán of the sacred Tree, Áqá Mírzá Jalál, hath an occupation that requires him to travel each day in a different direction. These things are not under his control. Thou must cable him and chose one of his brothers to travel at once to that place. This way, all the believers will know that this Afnán is in Fars to manage the House and hath no other occupation or distraction...[90]

Mírzá Jalál married three times. The first marriage was to Mah-Tal'at, a niece of Muhammad-Qásim Khán Baydá'yí. The children of this marriage—Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Husayn, Mírzá Fadlu'lláh, Mírzá 'Alí, and 'Aliyyih Khánum—all died at a young age. Mírzá Jalál's second marriage was with Ághá Bábí, a daughter of Áqá 'Alí of Ábádih. This marriage produced two sons, Mírzá 'Amadu'd-Dín and Akbar Áqá (known as Núri'd-Dín), and one daughter, Bihjat. With a third wife, Ján-Ján Bagum, Mírzá Jalál had a daughter known as Gawhar Khánum, who married Mahmúd Samimí.

Hájí Mírzá Buzurg: A brother of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh. His given name was Muhammad-Husayn, and he was occasionally referred to as Hájí Mírzá Zaynu'l-'Abidín. He was a companion of his brother throughout his life and rendered great services to the Bahá'í Faith in Egypt and Shíráz. Bahá'u'lláh revealed several Tablets in his honor, including the following:

Afnán. The honored Mírzá Buzurg, upon him rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

He is the Sustainer of Truth and the Upholder of Justice.

O Afnán, My glory and My favor rest upon thee! Your letter arrived and was read before the sovereign throne of the Speaker on Sinai. Praise be to God that the fragrance of the dwellers of the Crimson Ark was inhaled from it and its perfumed scent testified to thine steadfastness, devotion, and belief. Thou hast been surrounded by divine grace and will continue to be so favored. Let nothing grieve thee. All that has been revealed especially for thee by the Supreme Pen will assuredly come to pass. Under all conditions, this Wronged One remembereth His Afnán and hath decreed for them what no one can imagine or any mind fathom.

The All-knowing, the Wise, hath revealed these words: 'The deeds of the servants will not alter the divine Will, nor will they reduce the potency of the exalted Word. That which hath been uttered by My Tongue will appear word-by-word on earth. The revolution of the world and its events will not affect what hath been decreed, nor erase a jot of it.' Thus hath it been ordained by the Pen of Firmness, and no part of it may be erased by the passage of time. This is what the Tongue of the Wronged One spoke on this resplendent station.

On behalf of this Wronged One, greet the leaf of My divine Tree and the entire household. Remind them of what hath been revealed.

My glory rest upon thee and upon them that love thee and have heard thine utterances on the Cause of God, the Lord of all Creation.[91]

'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed numerous Tablets for Mírzá Buzurg. The following one was written in the summer of 1897, after Mírzá Buzurg returned to Egypt from his pilgrimage to the Holy Land:

Egypt. The illustrious Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree, the honored Mírzá Buzurg, upon him rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

He is God.

O wondrous offshoot of the sacred Lote-Tree! I am very sorry and sad that, during thy journey, it was not possible to provide appropriate hospitality for that twig of the Lote-Tree. I certainly regret this. However, over this time, various troubles, numerous difficulties, and the onslaught of a number of injustices, from both within and without, robbed me completely of the opportunity to suitably serve the friends or lovingly associate with them. As thou didst thyself perceive, various difficulties had to be suddenly resolved. Therefore, it was considered better for thee to leave.

However, at all times, I am concerned as to how such a foreign land is treating thee. Be sure to write about the details of thy situation.

'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás.[92]

In another Tablet addressed to Mírzá Buzurg in Shíráz, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote:

...On the day of the martyrdom of the Báb, may My life be a sacrifice to His dust, circumambulate the sanctified Haram [the House of the Báb] on My behalf and, with the greatest reverence and fervor, beg for confirmations and divine assistance for 'Abdu'l-Bahá. This is because the attack of the hordes of Covenant-breakers and infidels is unceasing. This Servant grieveth over the harm [done] to the Cause of God; otherwise, I have earnestly longed for trials. From childhood, I have implored the Almighty for scores of trials and every kind of calamity and affliction in the path of Bahá. Praise be to God that I was granted this chalice and have drunk my fill from it.[93]

In 1903, during the construction of the House of the Báb, 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote to Mírzá Buzurg about the need to maintain the original design:

Shíráz. The illustrious Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree, the honored Áqá Mírzá Buzurg and the honored Áqá Mírzá Habíb, upon both rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

He is God.

O twin offshoots of the sanctified Tree! Your letters arrived, but a response was delayed due to a serious illness that prevented all correspondence. I am sure that ye will forgive the delay. The equivalent of 100 French lire was sent a month ago for the purpose of restoring the House. Also, about the receipts ye had asked for, they were sent earlier but apparently were lost in the post, and so a second copy is enclosed.

Ye asked a number of questions about the House. Know that these are all unnecessary. Follow [the instructions] that have already been sent, and do not deviate at all from the original design. The purpose is not decoration but to maintain the identical form and condition the Blessed House had in the days of the Exalted Beauty, the Primal Point—may My spirit be a sacrifice to Him. This is critical. Otherwise, to do a befitting job, it would be necessary to build it out of bricks of gold and silver and from the finest jewels; nay, it is worth far in excess of this! Ye must keep this in mind. The intention is that the architecture remains as before, and the same applies to the paint, the doors, and other details....[94]

About the same time, Mírzá Buzurg received another Tablet from 'Abdu'l-Bahá on a similar theme:

Shíráz. The illustrious Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree, the honored Áqá Mírzá Buzurg, upon him be the glory of God.

He is God.

O twig of the Tree of Eternity! Through thee, the honored Áqá Mahmúd 'Assár sent a letter and, in it, asked for permission to visit the Blessed House. He is allowed.

The news of the illness of the illustrious Afnán of the Tree of Holiness

caused great sorrow and sadness. I beseech God that we attain to what is pleasing to our divine Beloved and long for the chalice of sacrifice in His path, walk the path of righteousness, seek His union, speak of His praise, and in whichever direction we turn, fix our gaze upon Him.

The news of the construction of the Blessed House, where the world's inhabitants will circumambulate in adoration, caused great joy and happiness. Despite this, hearing about the illustrious Afnán's illness was a source of sorrow. I cherish the hope that this sadness will turn to bliss.

Praise and salutations be unto thee.

'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás.[95]

Hájí Mírzá Buzurg never married and passed away in October 1941.

Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Husayn: A merchant who lived in Yazd. He was a firm and profoundly devoted believer, who spent his days in service to the Bahá'í Faith. He received numerous Tablets from 'Abdu'l-Bahá praising his singular devotion to the Bahá'í Faith.[96] At the turn of the century, about the time that 'Abdu'l-Bahá confidentially informed Núrí'd-Dín about the construction of the Shrine of the Báb, He also wrote the following Tablet to Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Husayn:

He is the Most Glorious!

Yazd. The illustrious Afnán of the sacred Tree, the honored Áqá Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Husayn, upon him rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious!

He is the Most Luminous!

O sweet branch of the sanctified and divine Lote-Tree! Give thanks to the one true Lord that He has enabled thee to attain the greatest of all heavenly blessings. Nothing has been denied to thee, and no barriers have prevented thee from the most important bounty; that is, steadfastness in, and faithfulness to, the Covenant of God. If, like billowing waves, thou wert to give thanks with every breath for this favor, thou wouldst certainly not have rendered it justice.

Now I will give thee glad tidings that shall light up thine eyes and exhilarate thy being. And that news is this: the Blessed Beauty repeatedly commanded that a particular location on Mount Carmel in Haifa [be used] for the Shrine of the Primal Point. It was located on the choicest spot and was preeminent in its splendor and magnificence, and peerless throughout the world. In short, four years ago, that land was purchased for the resting-place of the Exalted One, may My spirit, reality, essence, and being be a sacrifice for His dust. I then wrote to Rangoon to have a sarcophagus prepared and engraved with great care in one piece of marble, and also a casket of the finest Indian wood, and to be sent here.

Six months ago, the two caskets arrived in Haifa after enormous difficulties. No one knew their real purpose; everyone thought they were intended for the

Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.

After that, I sent Mírzá Asadu'lláh, with several others, to bring the sacred and sanctified remains of the Báb—may My spirit and essence be a sacrifice to His dust—with the greatest care, humility, and reverence. Of them, only Mírzá Asadu'lláh knew the real purpose of the mission. The others thought they were transporting [packages of] Writings. That sacred trust arrived in Damascus and was taken to the Holy Land by carriage. It must be obvious what immense joy and spirituality resulted from this event.

Currently, the land that was bought on Mount Carmel is being prepared. The Ancient Beauty, may My spirit be a sacrifice to His friends, always praised that spot and instructed that it be bought. In all their books, the Messengers of God have spoken of that location and given clear prophecies [about it].

We are now busy raising that sacred Shrine and abide by the Will of God. Therefore, thou too must join us by offering thy labor to build and construct this Shrine. Hasten here by any means possible and obtain this most resplendent bounty. This favor is greater than all worship!

Pass on my warmest Bahá'í greetings to the holy leaf, thy grandmother, and to the sacred leaf, thy mother, and to the other leaves of the Afnán.

Upon thee be glory, O thou who hast remained firm in the Covenant!

'A 'A.[97]

Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Husayn never married and passed away in Tehran as a result of an accident. His resting-place is not currently known. The Master wrote the following Tablet in his honor:

He is God!

To the attention of the illustrious twig of the divine Tree, the honored Áqá Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Husayn, upon him rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

O thou wondrous branch of the sanctified Tree! Some time ago, Hájí Siyyid Javád met with Me on thy behalf. He is currently conveying thy warm greetings. However, at the same time, he states, "The illustrious Afnán will not accept my bearing and conveying greetings on his behalf, unless Thou liftest up the pen and write a tablet for him." And since he is determined in his purpose like a tax-collector during Fath-'Alí Shah's era and asking with great sincerity, I picked up the pen and am remembering the Afnáns of the Tree beyond which there is no passing. In so doing, I was rejuvenated and renewed and wish to write: "O thou verdant and flourishing branch of the Tree of Reality! It is time to be luscious and fruitful and to display divine delicacy and beauty. While there is time, blossom and perfume all nostrils."

'A 'A.[98]

Bagum Ághá: She did not marry and passed away in Yazd.

Ághá Bagum: A daughter of Hájí Siyyid Mírzá and Sarah Sultán Bagum. She

was married to Hájí Siyyid Husayn, and they had four children.

Mírzá Amínu'lláh: He did not marry and died with no descendants.

Mírzá Habíbu'lláh: He did not marry and died with no descendants.

Rúhangíz: She was the daughter of Hájí Siyyid Muhammad and Khánum Haya. She married Mírzá Habíbu'lláh. She and her sister, 'Aliyyih, remained faithful to the Covenant despite their father's opposition to 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

'Aliyyih: a daughter of Hájí Siyyid Muhammad and Khánum Haya.

Nayyir Afnán: Son of 'Alí Afnán and Furúghiyyih. He was married to Rúhangiz Rabbání and they had at least one daughter, Bahíyyih (who married Hasan Shahíd). He and his family were expelled from the Faith. In 1948 they fled to Lebanon, where he passed away.

Husayn Afnán: Son of 'Alí Afnán and Furúghiyyih. He was married to Badí'ah and they had one daughter, Furúghiyyih Afnán. He was expelled from the Faith.

Faydí Afnán: Son of 'Alí Afnán and Furúghiyyih. He was married to Thurayyá Afnán. He was expelled from the Faith in 1941.

Hasan Afnán: Son of Hájí Mírzá Siyyid 'Alí and Furúghiyyih, a daughter of Bahá'u'lláh. He married Mehrangiz Rabbání. He was expelled from the Faith in 1941.

Rúhí Afnán: He served as a secretary of the Guardian for many years. He supported the marriage of his sister, Thurayyá, to an excommunicated family member, Faydí Afnán, and was expelled in 1941. He married his cousin, Zahrá Shahíd, the youngest daughter of Rúhá Khánum, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's third daughter. He moved with the rest of his family to Lebanon in 1948, where he passed away some years later.

Suhayl Afnán: He was a son of Muhsin Afnán and Túbá Khánum.

Fu'ád Afnán: He was a son of Muhsin Afnán and Túbá Khánum. He was born in 1917 and died as a result of injuries sustained in an air raid in London on 11 May 1941. In 1943 the Guardian gave permission to the British Bahá'ís to build his grave.[99]

Thurayyá Afnán: Married Faydí Afnán.

Qudsiyyih Khánum: A daughter of Siyyid Muhammad-Husayn and his second wife, 'Ismat Khánum. She married Siyyid Mihdí.

Áqá Siyyid Mihdí: He studied in Beirut for a few years. When he returned to Shíráz, he worked in different professions and married Irán Khánum, a daughter of the Bahá'í poet 'Andalíb.

Mírzá Rahím[100]: A devoted believer. He lived in Shíráz, working in the postal services and passed away in 1943. He never married.

Rubabih: A daughter of Siyyid Muhammad-Husayn and his first wife, Khánum Hájíyyih.

Mírzá Hádí: Born in 1873 in Shíráz, he was a well-to-do merchant in Shíráz and lived and worked in Bombay for a while. In 1896, he and his parents attained the presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Some time during 1895-86 he married 'Abdu'l-Bahá's oldest daughter, Diyá'iyih Khánum (d. 1951). He was the father of Shoghi Effendi, Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith. He died in 1955 and is buried in the Haifa Bahá'í cemetery.

Munavvar: Her given name was Khadíjih, but as a sign of respect for her namesake, the wife of the Báb, she was called Munavvar. She married Mírzá 'Alí-Muhammad Khán, the Muvaqqari'd-Dawlih.

Ághá Bagum: Married to Hájí Mírzá Diyá'u'lláh, a brother of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh, and they had six children.

'Alí-Muhammad Kh---án: He -was a namesake of the Báb and so the family called him 'Alí Áqá. From early youth, he was a Bahá'í and served in the Foreign Ministry. He advanced in rank and was given the title of the Balyúz and the Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih. Bahá'u'lláh was very pleased with him and revealed several Tablets in his honor.[101] Two of his sons, Husayn and 'Abbás, died at a young age. Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih passed away in mid-1921 and was buried in Tihrán at the shrine of Sháh 'Abdu'l-A'zím, next to the room of Maju'd-Dawlih. A commemorative meeting was held for him in Haifa some 10 days before 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing. It was at this meeting that the Master is reported to have alluded to His own imminent passing.[102]

As a sign of His particular affinity for the Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih, 'Abdu'l-Bahá revealed the following memorial Tablet about him, which includes a Tablet of Visitation.[103]

He is God!

The honored Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih was one of the twigs of the divine Lote-Tree and one that was related to the threshold of His Holiness, the Exalted One, may My life be a sacrifice to Him. From childhood, signs of great wisdom and intelligence and the hallmarks of discernment were evident in his radiant face. He was only a baby in the cradle when he showed lofty character and noble features. When he reached adolescence, his relatives and, indeed, all who knew him witnessed distinctive features in his blessed countenance and were amazed by his bearing. He made outstanding progress in all the realms of spiritual and physical perfection and, in the land of his birth, achieved exceptional literary honor. He had great wisdom, and when he reached maturity, his characteristic qualities shone even more brightly. He was supremely serene, remarkably composed and calm.

When he learned of the appearance of the Báb's holy revelation and the events of His holy life, he became enkindled with His love and ignited with the Báb's divine attraction. He found out about what had happened to that Manifestation of Grandeur and became aware of the mysteries of this Cause. Illumined with the light of divine guidance, he was receptive to the glad tidings of the advent of 'Him Whom God will make manifest' and was quick to respond to the Dawn of the

Sun of Truth. He was so immersed in the limitless ocean of grace and imbued with the effusions of the bounties of the Word of God that he nearly lost his self-control. He was intoxicated with the love of God, which surged in him like the turbulent sea. His inner ear was always attuned to the melodies of the Kingdom. He rose up and spoke with exceptional eloquence in praise of the Manifestation of the Light on Sinai, so that he burst into flame with the fire of the love of God. He was indeed a sign of the oneness of God and an ensign of the glorious Lord. In the school of exposition and eloquence, he was a worthy teacher. Those that heard him were left joyous and happy from the beauty of his expression and words.

Continuously, his letters reached the sacred Threshold, and the Blessed Beauty would say with great joy, "Read the letters of Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih!" Bahá'u'lláh would soon send replies. These were evidence that Bahá'u'lláh showed him great love and kindness. In fact, it could be said that Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih was present there in reality. Often, Bahá'u'lláh addressed him in this way, "O thou who hast branched from this holy Tree." Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih, in turn, always became exuberant and joyous from the glances of the loving kindness of the Speaker on Sinai. The news of his joy and excitement would always reach the Holy Land and make the servants of God happy.

[This continued] until the Sun of Truth set from this world and shone from the unseen world. The news of Bahá'u'lláh's ascension plunged the Afnán into such distress and anguish that he couldn't speak for a while, and the flow of his writing and exposition was stilled. Day and night, this companion was downcast; at dawn and in the night season, he was encompassed with sorrow and tears. I wrote to him and maintained contact with him until he was rekindled and became reinvigorated and eager to begin serving the Cause of God again.

For some time, he worked for the government on the coast of the Sea of Oman. His administration was based on justice and equity. All the towns and cities of the southern provinces appreciated his sagacious rule, and everyone lauded his efforts to improve their state affairs. It was universally said that his rule was without equal and his administration of justice without prejudice to anyone. During the days of his rule, his primary objective was to improve the living conditions of the people. At all times, his praise was widely sung in those areas, and all the friends would rejoice to hear news of him. After some time, he went to India, and in the years he lived there, friend and foe would proclaim, "Here is one who is the standard-bearer of justice and one of its shining lights." He was supremely serene and had an undisturbable, self-possessed calmness.

Although everyone knew that he was a Bahá'í and, indeed, was related to the holy Tree, the enemies of the Cause showed him great respect and consideration. All the great ones of Iran—traders, businessmen, and travelers—sought his company and showed him love and respect. He was indeed a great luminary. Some time later, they asked him to go to Tihrán, where he met the ministers of the Iranian government.

But the bird of his heart—the bird of the rose garden of divinity—always sought the everlasting Kingdom and was detached from the ephemeral world. And when the appointed time came, the nightingale of his soul ascended to the eternal and boundless world above. He soared from this nether world to the Concourse on High and sought a nest on the branches of the Tree of Eternity. This noble soul was indeed a sign of the Perspicuous Light, and, in the divine vineyard, he was a fruitful tree. Praise be to God that at the end of his earthly life, when he winged his flight to the Kingdom above, he was in a state of true servitude and steadfastness to the Cause of God. In such a state, he was attracted to the Kingdom of Beauty, asking for entry to the presence of his Lord, and seeking selflessness in the ocean of mysteries. Upon him be the glory of the Most Glorious God, upon him be the praise of the Primal Point, and upon him be the grace of God, the Almighty, the Ever-forgiving.

'A 'A.

A supplication for the progress of the soul of the Afnán of the sacred Lote-Tree, the illustrious Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih:

He is God!

O God, my God! How can I make mention of Thee and of the fire of longing that burns in the heart of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the flame of sorrow and loss that ignites His being because of the great affliction that has surrounded Thy sincere ones? O Thou the Lord of the heavens above!

Tears are pouring down, and our hearts are aflame because of the calamity that hath befallen us. On its account, the cry of lamentation and weeping hath been raised from the hearts of Thy loved ones and the breasts of Thy servants. O Lord! In Thy grace, Thou callest to Thy presence in the Kingdom above those that have achieved certitude and have believed in Thee. Thou biddest them to return to the Paradise that is their true home. But Thou hast forsaken me, alone and desolate in this world, broken-winged and bereft of hope, deep in the sea of sorrows, and languishing in deprivation on this earth.

O God, my God! How long wilt Thou leave me in this state of abject lowliness, burning with the fire of separation from Thee, whilst Thou ordainest for those that are nigh unto Thee ascension unto the highest summit?

O God, my God! My body is melting away, my hair is white, and I have grown old. I have no strength to arise and serve Thy loved ones, whom Thou hast singled out to raise Thy word and spread Thy fragrances.

O God, my God! Hasten my ascension to Thy sacred threshold and my arrival in the world above and the court of Thy grace. Hasten my admittance to Thy gift of forgiveness and pardon in Thine infinite Kingdom.

O my God! Thy meek and humble servant, who beseeched Thee—the twig that had branched from the holy Tree, named Múvaqqar—hath left this ephemeral world and is now pleading to return to the everlasting world. Lord, he hastened to Thee with a hopeful heart, throbbing in Thy love. His tears were overflowing,

and his patience had ended. He could no longer wait to meet Thee. He had believed in Thee and Thy verses. He had become attracted by Thy fragrances. He had become enkindled with the fire burning in the Tree of Thy unity. He had sought comfort in Thy remembrance. He was content with Thy providence and hath now hastened to Thy shelter.

O God! He was a bird warbling in Thy garden, a lion roaring in Thy forests, and a whale swimming in Thine ocean, until the world of existence became too narrow for him. So when the day of his destiny came, he returned to Thee with a heart attracted to Thee, his countenance radiant, tears of joy flowing from him, exulting in the knowledge of Thy forgiveness and pardon.

O Lord! Raise his station! Ordain all good for him and grant him the glances of Thy favor. Immerse him in the sea of mysteries in the Kingdom of Light, in that assembly where Thy Beauty is manifest. Thou art the Generous, the Exalted, and Thou art the Forgiving, the Compassionate, and the Merciful.

The night of 5 Dhi'l-Qa'dih [AH] 1339,[104] by the Shrine of the Báb.

'Abdu'l-Bahá 'Abbás.[105]

Ahmad Áqá: A younger brother of the Múvaqqari'd-Dawlih. After completing his studies, he worked for the government in the Foreign Ministry and was given the title Mas'udu's-Sultán. He was not a Bahá'í. He passed away in 1896 and was buried in Háfiziyyih of Shíráz.

Muníriyyih: She passed away at the age of 7 and was buried in the shrine of Sháh-Chiráq.

Mírzá Habíbu'lláh: A farmer, who lived in Yazd. He was survived by two sons, Drs. Mahmúd and Muhammad Afnán.

Ruhangíz Mahdavi: She passed away in Yazd, with no descendants.

Munírih Mahdavi: Her only child, a daughter by the name of Táhirih, drowned in Yazd in 1955.

Farhangíz: She was a daughter of Hájí Siyyid Muhammad and Bíbi-Sakinih Bagum. She married to Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Wahhab and they had four children.

Diyá'yyih Khánum: A daughter of Hájí Mírzá Muhammad . When her husband Mírzá Muhammad 'Alí, died, she settled in Shíráz. She passed away on 6 July 1965 and was buried in the Shíráz Bahá'í cemetery. One of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets revealed in her honor states:

The sacred leaf, Khánum Diyá', daughter of the illustrious Afnán of the sanctified Lote-Tree, the honored Hájí Mírzá Muhammad, upon her rest the glory of God, the Most Glorious.

He is God!

O thou sacred leaf! Render thanks unto God that thou belongest to the sanctified Tree, hast drunk from the breast of divine love, rested in the bosom of the recognition of the Lord, and been nurtured in the embrace of God's

bounties.

Now is the time to grow like a sapling in the paradise of divine guidance and become verdant and fruitful. Through the sprinkling of the cloud of bounty, become immensely exhilarated and rejuvenated, sing the praise of the blessed Tree, and speak out so that the birds of the meadow of reality are enchanted and enraptured.

Upon thee be greetings and praise.

'A 'A.

Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Wahhab: A farmer in Shíráz and Ábádih. He lived in Shíráz all his life and passed away in 1885. He was initially buried in Háfiziyyih, but was reinterred in the Bahá'í cemetery in 1899. He had four children: Mírzá Muhammad-Taqí, Túbá, Mahín, and Thurayyá.

Khánum Hayá: She was married to Hájí Siyyid Muhammad and they had two daughters.

Munríh Khánum: She married Hájí Mírzá Zaynu'l-'Abidín Khalílí, a well-known merchant of Shíráz. She had two children named Muhammad-Báqir and Afsar, and a third child whose name is not known.

Munavvar: She was married to Mírzá Buzurg.

Hawiyyih Khánum: Her given name was Múchúl Khánum. However, in a Tablet, 'Abdu'l-Bahá named her Hawiyyih.[106] She died in her 50s, in June 1959, and was buried in the Bahá'í cemetery in Shíráz.[107] Her two sons were Dr. 'Abbás Afnán[108] and Hasan Afnán.

Ághá Bagum: The wife of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh. She spent her life in service to the House of the Báb. In 1955, she met Shoghi Effendi, who showed her great favor. When she returned to Iran, she continued to serve the pilgrims and visitors to the House of the Báb with great distinction. She passed away in Shíráz in February 1965 and was buried in the Bahá'í cemetery.

Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí: He was known as Mírzá Kúchak [junior]. He was a farmer in the Bávanát region. He had six children: Muhammad-Husayn, Siyyid Muhammad, Furúghiyyih, Rúhá, Maryam, and Nigár.

Fátimih Bagum: She was born in Shíráz in AH 1297 (1879) and was reared by Khadíjih-Sultán Bagum. She married Hájí Mírzá Husayn-'Alí Yazdí, known as 'Ammu'í. Her husband attained the presence of Bahá'u'lláh and received numerous Tablets, in which Bahá'u'lláh addressed him as 'Sammy-Maqsúd'. 'Abdu'l-Bahá refers to him as 'Khusúsí' and 'Sammy-Hadrat Maqsúd'. [109]

Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí Falláh: He studied for some years at the American University in Beirut and then, at 'Abdu'l-Bahá's request, lived in the Holy Land for 10 years. Afterwards, he studied at Cambridge University in England for two years that coincided with the years that Shoghi Effendi studied at the nearby Oxford University. He returned to Haifa 20 days before 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing and was present during the subsequent commemorative meetings. When he

returned to Yazd, he took up farming and became a pillar of faith for the community. He and other members of the Yazd Spiritual Assembly were imprisoned from 1911 to 1914. He showed remarkable fidelity to the Covenant and was an example of patience and steadfastness for other believers. He married but had no children.

Afsar: The sister of Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí Falláh . With her brother, she studied in Beirut's American University and then spent 10 years in the Holy Land. Eventually, she went to Iran and settled with her family in Tehran.

to : Four children of Mírzá Javád.

to : Three children (two daughters and a son) of Mírzá Abú'l-Qásim.

Rahmaniyyih: She married 'Abdu'l-Husayn Tabarsí and had two sons and two daughters.

Farhangíz: She was born in 1915 and died in the 1955 Yazd flood. She did not marry.

Mírzá Muhammad-Husayn Mahdavi: A farmer in Yazd. He was survived by a son.

Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Latíf: He was a merchant in Yazd and had two sons.

to : Three children of Mírzá Buzurg and Munavvar.

Khánúm Diyá': She drowned in the Ábádán River and had no children.

and : Two children of Mírzá Buzurg.

Táhirih: She was a daughter of Siyyid Muhammad and Munirih Mahdavi. She died at a young age in the 1955 Yazd flood and left no descendants.

and : Two children of Siyyid Muhammad and his first wife, Maryam Bagum.

to : Four children of Mírzá Diyá'u'lláh and Vafa'iyyih.

to : Three children of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh and Rúhangiz.

to : Three children of Mírzá Badí'u'lláh and Afsar.

Firdaws: She helped her brother, Abú'l-Qásim Afnán, to carry out his services to the House of the Báb. She passed away in Oxford, England, in 1996, having never married.

Abú'l-Qásim Afnán: A hereditary custodian of the House of the Báb. He married Mínu Báyár, a daughter of Muhammad-Husayn Báyár, and had two daughters, Maryam and Lálih. He passed away in 2004 in England. He authored several important books, one of which is published under the title, 'Ahd-i A'lá.

Tayyibih: She married Mansur Nusrat and had two children, Goli and Hamíd.

Nayyirih: She married 'Abbás Majídí and had a son and two daughters, Sa'id, Taránih and Higámih.

Aminu'lláh Afnán: A long-time pioneer to Kuwait. He married Gawlnár

'Alá'í, daughter of Dr. Nasru'lláh Badrí. His two sons are: Mamdúh and Habíb.

Hasan Afnán: An agriculture engineer. He married Mahín Afnán, daughter of Mírzá Fathu'lláh and had two daughters, Ilhám and Nidá. He passed away in 2004 in San Diego, California.

Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad: A son of Mírzá Diyá'u'lláh, a brother of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh.

Mírzá Bahá'í: He married a daughter of Samimí and had three children: a son named Diyá', a daughter named Zhínús, and another daughter whose name is not known.

to : Four other children of Mírzá Diyá'u'lláh, a brother of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh. They are: Mírzá 'Abbás, Farahangíz, Thurayyá, and Nuri'd-Dín.

Mírzá Fathu'lláh A'lá'í: He married Afsar, a daughter of Mírzá Husayn of Ábádih, and had three children: Husayn, Mínú, and Mahín. Mínú married Ghulám-'Alí Dihqán, and Mahín married Hasan Afnán.

Mírzá Faraju'lláh: He passed away in infancy.

Dr. Nasru'lláh Badrí-A'lá'í: For many years, he was a pioneer to the Arabian region. He married Farahangíz and they had three children: Shamsu'd-Din, Gulnár, and Tahminfh.

Muzaffar Khán: He had married Bihjat. He passed away in 1912 and was buried in the Bahá'í cemetery in Shíráz. They had no descendants.

Ridván: She married Ghulám-'Alí Rijá'í and served as an international pioneer.

Safa: She married Rúhu'lláh Jalálí and passed away at a young age after having two children.

Áqá Siyyid Hádí: A son of Siyyid Áqá and his second wife, Zahrá Bagum.

Siyyid Mihdí: A son of Áqá Siyyid Áqá and his second wife, Zahrá Bagum. He married Qudsiyyih Khánum.

to : Seven children of Mírzá Jalál, a brother of Mírzá Habíbu'lláh. They are: Mírzá 'Alí, Gawhar, Bihjat, Mírzá 'Abdu'l-Husayn, Mírzá Fadlu'lláh, 'Aliyyih Khánum, and Mírzá Ahmadu'd-Dín.

Akbar Áqá: Another son of Mírzá Jalál, he was known as Núri'd-Dín and left no descendants. He married Thurayyá.

Furúghiyyih: A namesake of her grandmother, a daughter of Bahá'u'lláh.

Shoghi Effendi Rabbání: 'Abdu'l-Bahá's oldest grandson. He was born on 1 March 1897 and was reared in the house of 'Abdu'lláh Pashá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's house in 'Akká. He was sent to study at the American College in Beirut, where he gained a Bachelor of Arts degree, and later spent two years at Oxford

University, England. From December 1921 until his passing on 4 November 1957, he served as the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, presiding over the most spectacular era of the Bahá'í Faith's expansion and diffusion. Shoghi Effendi was married on 25 March 1937 to Mary Maxwell, known as, Ruhíyyih Khánum (b. 8 August 1910 in New York, d. 19 January 2000 in Haifa). They had no descendants. His resting-place is in London, England.[110]

to : Four other children of Mírzá Hádí and Diyá'íyyih Khánum, 'Abdu'l-Bahá's oldest daughter. Due to various factors, they were all expelled from the Faith by the Guardian of the Cause.

Husayn: He died 25 days after birth.

'Abbás: He died at age 8.

Hasan Múvaqqar Balyúzí: Born in 1908, he studied at the American College in Beirut and lived in England, where he served the Bahá'í Faith with great distinction. In 1957, he was elevated to the rank of Hand of the Cause of God. He is remembered best for his momentous scholarly works on the lives of the Central Figures. Hasan Balyúzí married Mary (Molly) Brown and they had 5 children: Hushang, Robert, Felix, Richard and Simeon. He passed away in 1980 in London.

Dr. 'Abdu'lláh Balyúzí: He carried out his medical studies at the American College in Beirut and returned to Shíráz to practice. A few years later, at the age of 30, he contracted typhoid fever and passed away in 1943. He had no descendants.

'Abdu'l-Husayn: He was not a Bahá'í.

'Abdu'l-'Alí: He was not a Bahá'í.

Notes

[1] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 10–11.

[2] Qur'án 55:46–47.

[3] For an example of a Tradition attributed to Imám Hasan, see Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 9.

[4] For a detailed discussion of the Afnán family, see Fayzí, Khándán Afnán and Mázandarání, Táríkh Zuhúru'l-Haqq, vol. 5, pp. 515–30.

[5] For letters written by Khál Akbar to his family members on this issue, see Rabbani, "Conversion of the Great-Uncle of the Báb," and appendix 4.

[6] Nabíl A'zam, The Dawn-Breakers, p. 190.

[7] Mázandarání, Táríkh Zuhúru'l-Haqq, vol. 5, p. 515, states that they were accompanied by Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad.

[8] INBMC 51:261, no. 265.

[9] Mázandarání, Táríkh Zuhúru'l-Haqq, vol. 5, pp. 515–16, reports: "In

accordance with His [Bahá'u'lláh's] instructions, the two of them spoke with her about the Cause. Expressing her deep regret, the Báb's mother alluded to the shameful act of Mírzá Yahyá Azal in marrying the wife of the Báb from Isfahán days and remarked, 'How is one to trust the faith of a people who marry His wife, while the blood of that Wronged One [the Báb] is still wet on the ground?!' On returning to the presence of the Blessed Beauty, Siyyid Javád conveyed her objections. Bahá'u'lláh was deeply saddened and responded, 'Henceforth, do not speak with the mother of the Báb about this Cause, as she is grieved over what has happened. Indeed, no excuse can be offered for the transgressions that she speaks of, and she is most assuredly correct about them.'"

[10] Bahá'u'lláh, *Kitáb-i Badi'*, p. 389.

[11] For a translation of this document, see appendix 4, or Rabbani, "Conversion of the Great-Uncle of the Báb."

[12] Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, pages prior to 43.

[13] Hájí 'Abdu'r-Rasul had three children: Hájí Muhammad-Ibráhím Muballigh, Hájíyyih Bíbí Gawhar, and Hájíyyih Fátimih Bíbí.

[14] Her name was Hájíyyih Bíbí Ján-Ján. She passed away in 1889 and was buried in Sháh-Chiráq.

[15] At the Báb's instruction, all believers were called on to go to Mazandarán to aid Quddús.

[16] Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, p. 198.

[17] Presumably, a reference to Khadíjih Bagum.

[18] Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, pp. 198–99.

[19] Some of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets to Khadíjih Bagum are quoted in Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, pp. 186–91.

[20] Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, p. 203.

[21] For details of the events leading up to the passing of Khadíjih Bagum, see chapter 9.

[22] Bahá'u'lláh, *Núri'd-Din Collection*, pp. 72–73.

[23] Presumably, a reference to Núri'd-Dín.

[24] A reference to Khadíjih Bagum.

[25] Afnán Kabír and his family.

[26] Bahá'u'lláh, *Núri'd-Dín Collection*, pp. 70–71.

[27] Hájí Mírzá Haydar-'Alí.

[28] Hájí Siyyid Mírzá Muhammad, known as Khál Akbar.

[29] INBMC 52:282, no. 333.

- [30] Mázandarání, Táríkh Zuhúru'l-Haqq, vol. 5, p. 529.
- [31] See Balyúzí, Khadíjih Bagum, p. 25, and Balyúzí, Eminent Bahá'ís in the Time of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 216.
- [32] See 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, p. 22.
- [33] See Browne, A Traveler's Narrative, pp. xxxvii-xxxviii.
- [34] Mázandarání, Táríkh Zuhúru'l-Haqq, vol. 5, p. 529 gives the date as 1894.
- [35] See Tablets of 'Abdu'l-Bahá quoted in Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 251–55.
- [36] For a brief biography of Mírzá Abú'l-Qásim, see Fasá'í, Fárshámih Násirí, vol. 2, p. 131.
- [37] Fayzí. Khándán Afnán, pp. 261–62.
- [38] Malmírí, Khátirát Malmírí, pp. 59–61.
- [39] One of the most detailed eyewitness accounts of this watershed event is in the unpublished memoir of Ustád 'Alí-Akbar Banná Yazdí, Táríkh 'Ishqábád, INBMC, vol. 94, 407 pages.
- [40] Bahá'í World Centre Research Department Memorandum, dated 31 October 1996.
- [41] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Memorials of the Faithful, p. 129.
- [42] 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablet to Nátiq Nísání, Ma'idih Asimání, vol. 9, p. 123, and Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 117. The other elders are the Báb and His circle of 18 Letters of the Living. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has further stated that the identity of the remaining four elders will be known in the future.
- [43] A short but important biography of the Vakílu'd-Dawlih was written by Charles Mason Remey, Star of the West, 7 February 1916.
- [44] See Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 118–25. One of the notebooks of the Vakílu'd-Dawlih's memoirs is kept at the Bahá'í World Centre Archives MR 1442/F.235. Several other memoirs are translated in Rabbani, "Conversion of the Great-Uncle of the Báb." Vakílu'd-Dawlih's correspondence with Siyyid Muhammad, a son of Mírzáy-i Shírází, is in the private hands of his descendants.
- [45] It is noted in his biography in Fasá'í, Fárshámih Násirí, vol. 2, p. 45, that, due to economic depression in Fárs and family bankruptcy, Hájí Mírzá Muhammad-'Alí went to China for 10 years. There, he became the main contact for the opium trade of the merchants of Isfahán, Yazd, and Fárs. In the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, he is referred to as "the Afnán in China." See Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet in Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 83.
- [46] He married his maternal cousin, daughter of Hájí 'Abdu'l-Husayn.

[47] See 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Memorials of the Faithful*, pp. 16–21.

[48] The news of this achievement was communicated on 15 June 1959 by the Hands of the Cause living in the Holy Land.

[49] See Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, pp. 88–93.

[50] The text is in Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, pp. 155–58.

[51] The text is in Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, pp. 146–47.

[52] Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 84.

[53] He was related to 'Abdu'l-Bahá through his marriage to Munírih Khánum's sister.

[54] INBMC 52:273–74, no. 323.

[55] Nabíl Zarandí refers to this incident on page 1012 of his unpublished manuscript and includes it as "among the recent occurrences." This suggests that it happened at the same time that Nabíl was concluding his narrative, namely, circa Rabí'u'l-Avval AH 1308 (October 1890). See Navvabzadeh-Ardíkani, *Matalibí dar bárih Táríkh Nabíl Zarandí*.

[56] Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, p. 64.

[57] Malmírí, *Khátirát Malmírí*, p. 61.

[58] Afrúkhtah, *Khátirát Nuh Sálah*, p. 403, and Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, p. 66.

[59] Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, pp. 66–73.

[60] Mázandarání, *Táríkh Zuhúru'l-Haqq*, vol. 5, p. 530, gives Shíráz as the place of his business and burial.

[61] Mázandarání, *Táríkh Zuhúru'l-Haqq*, vol. 5, p. 515.

[62] Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, p. 62.

[63] Mázandarání, *Táríkh Zuhúru'l-Haqq*, vol. 5, p. 530, states that he died in Beirut.

[64] Taherzadeh, *Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 360, gives his year of passing as 1927.

[65] Two of them are quoted in Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, pp. 57–59.

[66] Some of these Tablets are quoted in Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, pp. 217–19.

[67] Fayzí, *Khándán Afnán*, p. 219, gives the date of her passing as October 1939.

[68] She journeyed with Mírzá Habíbu'lláh and his family to the Holy Land in 1890. She remained there until some time after the ascension of Bahá'u'lláh. After her husband passed away in Shíráz, Shoghi Effendi urged

her to return to the Holy Land. She passed away there in her 70s and was buried in the Haifa Bahá'í cemetery. Some of Bahá'u'lláh's and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets for her are quoted in Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 279–83.

[69] Presumably, a reference to the Vakílu'd-Dawlih.

[70] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 275.

[71] As a sign of respect for the wife of the Báb, Khadíjih Bagum, this child was known as Munavvar.

[72] In his Naw-Rúz 113 BE letter to the Bahá'ís of the East, Shoghi Effendi recognized and praised Abú'l-Qásim Afnán for his initiative.

[73] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 195.

[74] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 195.

[75] Malmírí, Khátirát Malmírí, pp. 137–50, gives the details of the escape of the Afnán and Malmírí families from Yazd. It involved an armed struggle with the Muslims, and some of the opposition were killed.

[76] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 126–27. Another Tablet for him is in Khándán Afnán, pp. 127–28.

[77] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 130, states that he passed away in Yazd.

[78] For a translation of this Tablet, see Rabbani, *Eight Years Near 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, *Memoirs of Dr. Habíb Mu'ayyad*, chapter 9.

[79] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 148–50.

[80] Two of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets for Mírzá Diyá' are quoted in Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 239–40.

[81] For two of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets addressed to her, see Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 241–42.

[82] Some of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets to Áqá Siyyid Áqá are in INBMC 51:345–50.

[83] Literally, "bayán," a reference to the Báb's Revelation.

[84] INBMC 51:348, no. 354. Also quoted in Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 220–21.

[85] About this, Bahá'u'lláh notes, "Recently the Afnáns and Amín—upon them be My glory and loving kindness—attained Our presence and beheld Our countenance; likewise Nabíl, the son of Nabíl, and the son of Samandar—upon them rest the glory of God and His loving kindness—are present and have drunk the cup of reunion. We entreat God that He may graciously ordain for them the good of this world and of the next and that the outpouring of His blessings and grace may descend upon them from the heaven of His generosity and the clouds of His tender compassion" (Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 73–74). In addition to the two Afnáns, Bahá'u'lláh is referring to Hájí 'Abdu'l-Hasan Amín,

Shaykh Muhammad-'Alí Nabíl, and Áqá Shaykh Ahmad Nabílí of Qazvín.

[86] Presumably, a reference to Áqá Mírzá Áqá Núri'd-Dín.

[87] INBMC 51:348–49, no. 355; Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 221–22; and 'Alá'í, Mu'assasih Ayady-i Amru'lláh, pp. 810–11.

[88] One of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets is quoted in Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 225–26.

[89] INBMC 52:328–29, no. 367. Another Tablet in a similar vein is in INBMC 52:327–28, no. 366.

[90] INBMC 52:307, no. 347.

[91] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 228–29. Another of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets for Mírzá Buzurg is in Khándán Afnán, pp. 229–30.

[92] INBMC 52:335, no. 375.

[93] INBMC 52:332, no. 371.

[94] INBMC 52:360–61, no. 406.

[95] INBMC 52:370, no. 414.

[96] For some of the Tablets, see Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 75–80.

[97] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 77–79.

[98] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 75.

[99] Shoghi Effendi. *The Unfolding Destiny of British Bahá'í Community: The Messages from the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith to the Bahá'ís of the British Isles*, p. 159.

[100] Mázandarání, *Tárikh Zuhúru'l-Haqq*, vol. 5, p. 529, gives his name as Áqá Siyyid Muhammad-Rahím.

[101] For one example, see Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 263–64.

[102] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 266.

[103] 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Makátíb 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, vol. 3, pp. 238–43, and Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, pp. 267–73.

[104] 11 July 1921.

[105] Based on a previously unpublished translation by Hand of the Cause of God, Hasan Balyúzí, and shared through the kindness of A.Q. Afnán for this project (December 1995).

[106] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 98.

[107] One of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets for her is quoted in Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 98.

[108] He was brutally martyred during the Bahá'í persecutions of the Islamic

Republic in Iran.

[109] Fayzí, Khándán Afnán, p. 47. One of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets to him is quoted in Khándán Afnán, pp. 48–49.

[110] For a biography, see Ruhiyyih Rabbání, *The Priceless Pearl*, and Giachery, *Shoghi Effendi*.

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