



## Port Alberni Nuggets

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### Baha'i Quote of the Month

*Fasting and obligatory prayer are as two wings to man's life. Blessed be the one who soareth with their aid in the heaven of the love of God, the Lord of all worlds.*

Bahá'u'lláh



Baha'i Writings

### Baha'i Stories:

#### Ayyam-i-Ha

*In the spring season Bahá'u'lláh used to stay at Mazra'ih for some time. [Bahá'u'lláh did not live at Mazra'ih or Bahji all the time. He used to go and stay in 'Akká sometimes] Mazra'ih is situated at a distance of about two farsangs [about 12 kilometers] from the city of 'Akká. To attain His presence I used to go to Mazra'ih in the daytime and at night I stayed at the Pilgrim House.*

*On the first day of the Ayyam-i-Há [Intercalary days] one of the pilgrims had invited Bahá'u'lláh and all the believers in 'Akká to lunch. I too went to Mazra'ih. Early in the morning a large tent was pitched in front of the entrance to the garden on a delightful open space. That morning all the believers, numbering almost two hundred, consisting of those who were living in the Holy Land and the pilgrims, came to Mazra'ih.*

*Around the time of noon, the Blessed Beauty came down from the Mansion and majestically entered the tent. All the believers were standing in front of the tent. Then Mirza Aqa Jan, standing in the presence of Bahá'u'lláh chanted a dawn prayer for fasting which had been revealed on that day. When the prayer was finished the Blessed Beauty instructed all to be seated. Every person sat down in the place where he was standing. His blessed Person spoke to us and after His utterances were ended He asked, 'What happened to the Feast, is it really going to happen?' Thereupon a few friends hurried away and soon lunch was brought in. They placed a low table in the middle of the tent. His blessed person and all the Aghsan[The male descendants of Bahá'u'lláh] sat around the table and since there was more room, He called some by name to join Him. Among these my name was called; He said, 'Aqa Tahir, come and sit.' So I went in and sat at the table in His presence.*

*At some point Bahá'u'lláh said, 'We have become tired of eating. Those who have had enough may leave.' I immediately arose and His blessed Person left. At first the food which was left over on His plate was divided among the friends, and then group after group entered the tent and had their meal. Everyone at this feast partook of both physical and spiritual food. I got the prayer of fasting from Mirza Aqa Jan and copied it for myself. Then in the evening all the friends returned to 'Akká. But the Master was not present that day.*

*-Adib Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, vol. 4, p. 8*

## **News and events:**

### **Bahá'í World News Service**

## **Ground broken for first local Bahá'í temple in India**



*A scale model of the design for the temple and surrounding facilities*

*HARGAWAN, India — Ground was broken today for the first local Bahá'í House of Worship in India—an edifice from which will emanate the spirit of worship and service that has been fostered over decades in the local area, known as Bihar Sharif. The groundbreaking ceremony marked the start of construction of this edifice, which is among the seven Bahá'í temples announced in 2012.*

*The ceremony brought together local dignitaries, representatives of the Bahá'í community and residents of the area. The occasion began with prayers and deep prajwalan—the Indian custom of lighting a lamp to signify the attainment of knowledge, purity, and connection with the divine. Children and youth played a special role in the program, contributing to the devotional atmosphere through songs and musical drama.*

*In his comments at the ceremony, Amod Kumar, the head of the Panchayat (a local civic body) of Hargawan, Bihar Sharif, spoke about his hopes for the temple. “Today our society is divided by caste, religion, and generation. The Bahá'í teachings have contributed to unifying people here, especially children and young people participating in the Bahá'í community's moral education programs. Now this area has received the House of Worship as a divine gift, and it is hoped that the community here will benefit from this gift and continue to achieve progress and prosperity.”*

*Naznene Rowhani, Secretary of the Bahá'í National Spiritual Assembly of India said, “Unity and harmony in our diverse society has been expressed through India's proud Vedic tradition of vasudhaiva kutumbakam—the world is one family. ... [The temple] will be a shining symbol of vasudhaiva kutumbakam in action—where everybody, regardless of community, caste, colour or creed will be welcome to commune with their Creator. This tradition is affirmed and manifested in Bahá'u'lláh's words ‘Regard ye not one other as strangers. Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch. So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth.’”*

*The groundbreaking ceremony culminated with the placing of soil collected from villages across the state of Bihar at the temple site. This gesture was evocative of the connection between the thousands of residents of these villages and the House of Worship.*

*“When hundreds of people—young and old, women and men, farmers, laborers, students, doctors, businessmen—eventually gather together daily in the House of Worship and turn to the Almighty, this further strengthen the bonds of unity that have formed in this community,” said Rahul Kumar, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Asia.*

*In her remarks at the ceremony, Ms. Rowhani explained how the temple will belong to all people of Bihar Sharif. “It is the fervent hope of the Bahá'í community of India that this beautiful edifice will be a place where humanity will enter and find harmony, peace, and spirituality.”*

*The groundbreaking comes after the unveiling of the design for the House of Worship, which took place last April.*

## **Sharing:**

### **Laurand' sharing:**

*The article I sent you from "Vignettes from the Life of Abdu'l-Baha" really touched my heart. Abdu'l-Baha has been held in the highest esteem in my mind as He has in many others.*



*The article contains many great attributes to a man who spent His life helping others at a great expense to Himself. The deeper I read this article the more I could understand the words of the song "Be as I am", a beautiful tribute to Abdu'l-Baha. No words of mine could convey adequately the esteem gained by Abdu'l-Baha through His self sacrifice.*

*An atheist went to a church to hear Him speak and later eagerly sought Him at His house. When this atheist was asked: "Did you feel the greatness of 'Abdu'l-Bahá?" he indignantly replied: "Would you feel the greatness of Niagara?" '*

*Those who met Him perceived no more than their capacity could register. A society woman exclaimed: "Such beauty – the beauty of strength! And such charm! Why, He is a perfect man of the world!" And another society woman who had talked at length with Him: "You can hide nothing from Him! He looked into my heart and discovered all its secrets." 'A woman in sorrow, passing through a cruel experience, said: "He took all the bitterness out of my heart." A famous playwright, when he came from the room of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, declared: "I have been in the presence of God!" '*

*And Lee McClung, then Treasurer of the United States, after his meeting with the Master, groping for words to describe the experience, said: "I felt as if I were in the presence of a great Prophet – Isaiah – Elijah – no, that is not it. The presence of Christ – no. I felt as if I were in the presence of my Divine Father." '*

*The Turkish ambassador, Zia Pasha, a devout Muhammadan, when told of the advent of Bahá'u'lláh, had scoffed at the thought of a new Prophet. But while 'Abdu'l-Bahá was in Washington Zia Pasha met Him at the Persian Embassy, invited by His Excellency Ali-Kuli Khan, and Madame Khan, and immediately arranged a dinner to be given in His honor at the Turkish Embassy. At this dinner the ambassador rose and, facing 'Abdu'l-Bahá with tears in his eyes, toasted Him as "The Light of the age, Who has come to spread His glory and perfection among us." '*

*At one time a Syrian woman in Boston pushed aside the crowd which had gathered around the Master, fell to His feet and exclaimed, 'I confess that in Thee I have recognized the Spirit of God and Jesus Christ Himself'.*

*Lady Blomfield reported, 'A doctor, who had been in Alexandria, where he saw 'Abdu'l-Bahá and witnessed His Christ-like life, told me that for the first time he was able to understand what the Lord Christ must have been like. "Now I am able to believe," he said.'*

## **Daryl's sharing:**

### **Securing Inspiration**

*Achieving a true sense of security does not require our achieving greater knowledge. Rather our true security and influence are very much already with us through the spirit only clouded by doubt. We are literally most often buried deep in a perceptive hole that requires our shedding of false interpretation feeding the separation we feel is so real.*

*It's only an assumption that we are not an integral part of the oneness of spirit and not quite powerful enough. Perhaps we need to be more than we are at present that causes us to form negative conclusions preventing us from realizing our true fullness of being.*

*We could all really benefit from knowing we are already everything we need to be during these trying times. The suspicious bumbling mind is the machine that confounds and defies our achieving a realization of our perfection. Our doubt about our being whole misperceived within time-bound awareness to me is our greatest pitfall.*

*The ego's sacrifice allows an elevated resource of pure inspiration, as does our denying this world and all its fearful trappings assumed through time-bound illusion. We are perfect until we think within limitations and become consciously infected with negative endorsement. We can be genuinely great creators if only we could believe it is within our reach.*

*Our sanctuary rests in our positive endorsement of; "**God sufficeth all things above all things,**" not just above a few we might think is possible. In acquiring true oneness living with an undisciplined mind and negative thought process needs to be challenged within every consideration we form.*

*For our entire lives, we have been trained to doubt the wholeness of our spiritual perfection. We have been prevented from reaching the conscious point of our true inspiration, the reversing of which requires we step away from all manner of doubt and contradiction about the immeasurable power and presence of God in our immediate and present world.*

*There is no other better time, and there is nothing else we need but to openly trust we are already all we need to be whole.*

## **Anne's sharing:**

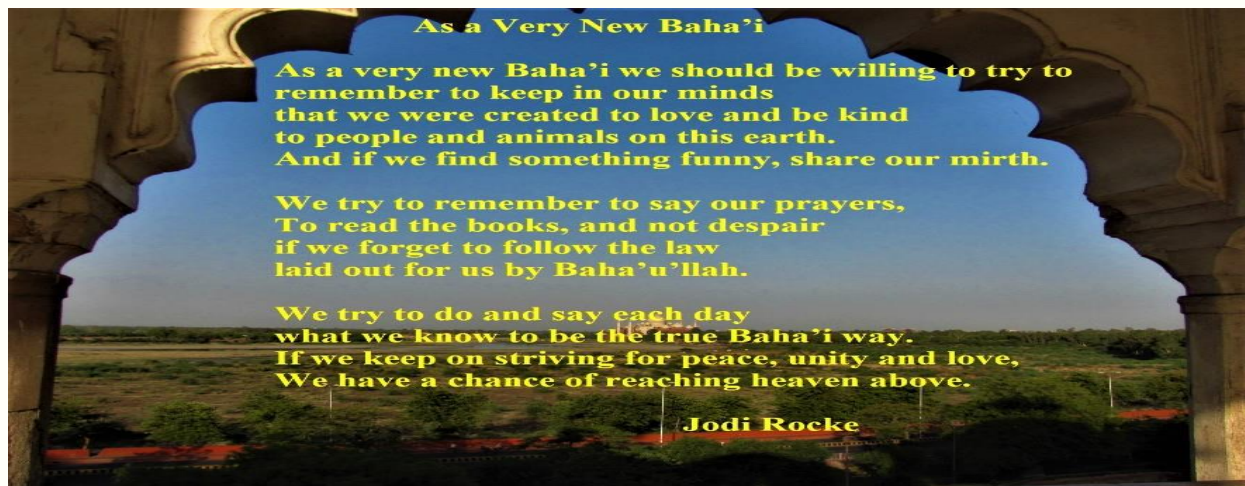
*Say prayers for our children! Keep them in your hearts and hold them dear.*



Thou kind Lord! These lovely children are the handiwork of the fingers of Thy might and the wondrous signs of Thy greatness. O God! Protect these children, graciously assist them to be educated and enable them to render service to the world of humanity. O God! These children are pearls, cause them to be nurtured within the shell of Thy loving-kindness.

Thou art the Bountiful, the All-Loving.

### Jodi's poem:



### From the editor's desk:

## Fasting, the Time of Spiritual House Cleaning

*Baha'i fasting is both a physical and spiritual exercise, and that is the main reason why I am so attracted to it. The Baha'i teachings explain that fasting:*

*...is the cause of awakening man. The heart becomes tender, and the spirituality of man increases. This is produced by the fact that man's thoughts will be confined to the*

***commemoration of God, and through this awakening and stimulation surely ideal advancements follow. – Abdu'l-Baha, Star of the West***

*I love fasting because I know as a human being during my daily life, I unknowingly subject my soul to many impurities, and with this awareness, fasting has become my annual “House Cleaning.”*

*In the same way that people clean their houses in the West before Christmas or in Iran before the New Year (Naw-Ruz), I do the cleaning with my soul.*

*Fasting has been part of coming-of-age preparations for adulthood. Boys from native cultures in North America would fast in the wilderness, seeking a vision of a guardian spirit. Hindus have some a form of fasting, which is an avoidance of a particular food. Generally, the ladies fast for the sake of their husbands. The Sadhus of India and Sufis fast and meditate for enlightenment. Modern Jews fast for 24 hours as a penance.*

*Fasting is also very much part of the life of priests — holy men of various societies would fast in preparation for particular rituals. In most mystical and monastic traditions, fasting is practiced as a means of purification. Roman Catholics traditionally abstain from meat on days associated with the passion of Christ. Added to that list are the Manifestations of God who fasted and meditated to commune with God.*

*Islam is one religion that strictly tries to observe the law of fasting. In addition to obligatory prayer, fasting is the essential ritual obligation of the Muslim; it is one of the five pillars of Islam. Fasting in Islam consists of deliberately abstaining from all food, drink, and sexual relations from the time of the first light before dawn until the last light after sunset. The Qur'an explicitly states that fasting is an obligation and has been central to earlier religions.*

*It is important to remember that the essence of fasting is the spiritual part of fasting. If depriving oneself of food was a sign of spirituality, then all the food insecure people in the world would be holy men and saints.*

***For this material fast is an outer token of the spiritual fast; it is a symbol of self-restraint, the withholding of oneself from all appetites of the self, taking on the characteristics of the spirit, being carried away by the breathings of heaven and catching fire from the love of God. – Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha***

*I believe that all the spiritual laws of God are for the benefit of humanity, and the direct gain is for the individual who obeys them and follows them.*

*Science has now found that intermittent fasting is very beneficial for our bodies. It maintains that by not eating for a length of time, the body gets to direct its energies towards repairs. This does not surprise me at all because I am discovering the wisdom and physical benefits of it. I am waiting for the day when humankind gets the chance to experience the sublime feeling of detachment from the body's need for food and focuses on cleansing the spiritual aspect of their lives so that we can start the process of the unification of humanity.*

*It may look strange to connect fasting with unity, but if we think deeply, we realize that most conflicts and problems are caused by the lack of a spiritual approach to the issues. That makes fasting and praying the most effective tools. Souls are linked together with a string of divinity.*

*The Baha'i Writings tell us:*

*The Fast is essentially a period of meditation and prayer, of spiritual recuperation, during which the believer must strive to make the necessary readjustments in his inner life, and to refresh and reinvigorate the spiritual forces latent in his soul. – Directives from the Guardian*

**Famous quotes:**

**One does not walk into the forest and accuse the trees of being off-center, Nor do they visit the shore and call the waves imperfect. So why do we look at ourselves this way?  
(Tao Te Ching)**



**Upcoming Events:**

**Coming feast: Alá' (Loftiness), 28 February 2021**

**Next feast: Baha Glory), 19 March 2021**

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