



Port Alberni Nuggets

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Baha'i Quote of the Month



Baha'i Stories:

Ridvan - first day

The Governor of Baghdad at this time was a relative of my father, but his enemy on account of differences in religious opinion and family misunderstandings. This man, rendered

uncomfortable by the sight of my father's increasing fame and influence, exerted himself to effect his removal from Baghdad. He caused representations to be made to the Shah of Persia that, whereas Beha Ullah had been driven out of Persia because of the harm threatened by his presence to the Mohammedan religion in that country, now he was injuring the religion even more in Baghdad, and still exerting his evil influence in Persia; and that therefore he ought to be removed to a place at a greater distance from that country, and one where he could do less harm.

These representations and suggestions he sent repeatedly to the Court of Persia, until at length the Shah was moved to use his influence with the Sultan of Turkey to have the Bábís transferred from Baghdad to Constantinople. An order to this effect was at length made by the Sultan.

When this news came to us, from which we inferred that my father would again be made a prisoner, we were thrown into consternation, fearing another separation. He was summoned before the magistrates. My brother imperiously declared that he would go in his stead; but this our father overruled, and went himself. Great numbers of his followers had assembled about our house, and these witnessed his departure with many demonstrations of grief, feeling that it was possible that he might not return,

The magistrates expressed great sorrow to my father; they said that they respected and loved him, that they had not instigated the order, but that they were powerless to suspend or modify it, and must proceed with its execution. My father remained in conference with them nearly all day, but could do nothing to avert the catastrophe. When he returned, he told us that we must prepare to set out for Constantinople in two weeks.

This report was like a death-knell to his followers, who were still gathered about the house. Many of them were Arabs; their fierce natures rebelled and they gave way to violent remonstrances. They implored the Blessed Perfection not to desert them. 'You are our shepherd,' they said; 'without you we must die.'

The next day they so overran the house that we could not prepare for the journey. Then the Blessed Perfection proposed to go with Abbas Effendi to the garden of one of our friends and live there in a tent till the time of departure, that the family might be able to proceed with the packing. This remark was repeated and misunderstood, and the rumour circulated among the believers that the Blessed Perfection was to be taken away alone. Then they came pouring in by hundreds, so wild with grief that they could not be pacified; and when my father started to leave the house with my brother they threw themselves upon the ground before him. One man who had an only child, which had come to him late in his life, stripped the clothes from the child's body and placing it at my father's feet cried, 'Naked I give you my child, my precious child, to do with as you will; only promise not to leave us in distress. Without you we cannot live.'

Then, as the only way in which to soothe his followers, the Blessed Perfection took all his family to the garden, leaving to friends the preparation of his household goods for the journey. Here we pitched tents and lived in them for two weeks. The tents made, as it were, a little village, that of my father, which he occupied alone, in the centre. -Myron Henry Phelps and Bahiyyih Khánúm, Life and Teachings of Abbas Effendi, p. 27-31

News and events:

Bahá'í World News Service Broadcast in Chile sparks dialogue on service and prayer



A program prepared by the Bahá'ís of Chile and broadcast on a national media network explores experiences in responding to the health crisis.

SANTIAGO, Chile — An audience of some 50,000 across Chile tuned in last week to watch a program that offered perspectives of the country's Bahá'í community on how people can remain hopeful and respond constructively to the health crisis.

The 40-minute program was broadcast online by EMOL TV—one of Chile's leading news outlets—in collaboration with the Chilean Association for Interreligious Dialogue (ADIR). The program is part of a series that began in April 2020 as the pandemic hit and provides the country's faith communities an opportunity to offer messages of hope.

“Through this and an earlier broadcast last August,” says Luis Sandoval of Chile's Bahá'í Office of External Affairs, “the Bahá'í community has tried to impart the same spirit that people feel when they pray together, whether in their homes, online with friends and neighbors, or with their compatriots under the roof of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Santiago.”

Omar Cortes of ADIR says, “In their contributions, the Bahá'í community has always left a very positive impression on the editors and audience of EMOL TV. This last broadcast by the Bahá'í community was appreciated for its attentive reflections, touching on the health and social crisis with wisdom.”

The most recent program, which has stimulated dialogue on spiritual themes among the many viewers, featured reflections from people across the country who are engaged in Bahá'í community-building endeavors.

Appearing in the broadcast, Veronica Oré, director of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Santiago, commented on the budding cooperation and mutual support among citizens, saying, "Rather than looking with sadness and hopelessness at what is happening, we can see a great opportunity emerging to better understand what it means for all segments of humanity to act as one."

"The world is but one country," she adds, referring to a well-known teaching of Bahá'u'lláh which continues, stating: "and mankind its citizens."

Luis Sandoval of Chile's Bahá'í Office of External Affairs says that in the broadcast, "the Bahá'í community has tried to impart the same spirit that people feel when they pray together, whether in their homes, online with friends and neighbors, or with their compatriots under the roof of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Santiago."

Another speaker, a young person from Santiago, called on her fellow youth to arise and support one another, whether friends or strangers, in a unified response to the needs of society. Others shared insights from conversations in spaces created by the Office of External Affairs in which participants explore issues such as the extremes of wealth and poverty, equality between men and women, the protection of nature, and the economy.

Speaking about the series of broadcasts, Mr. Cortes of ADIR says, "We are grateful to EMOL TV because, as a secular media organization, it dared to venture into this type of broadcast."

Mr. Sandoval comments further on the important role of the media in fostering a public dialogue on religion's capacity to inspire hope. "Transmitting a potent message related to the reality of the country and the principles that show new ways of living, of organizing ourselves, and of relating to each other can contribute to the transformation of society for the welfare of all."

Sharing:

Daryl's sharing:

Just a thought

That which we were is not what we are or will become. We are all on a journey to becoming whole in knowledge and whole in acceptance of the true reality of our eternal spiritual being. I have come to know this much for our greatest progress. We must relinquish the feeling that our full capacity is based on our past accomplishments.

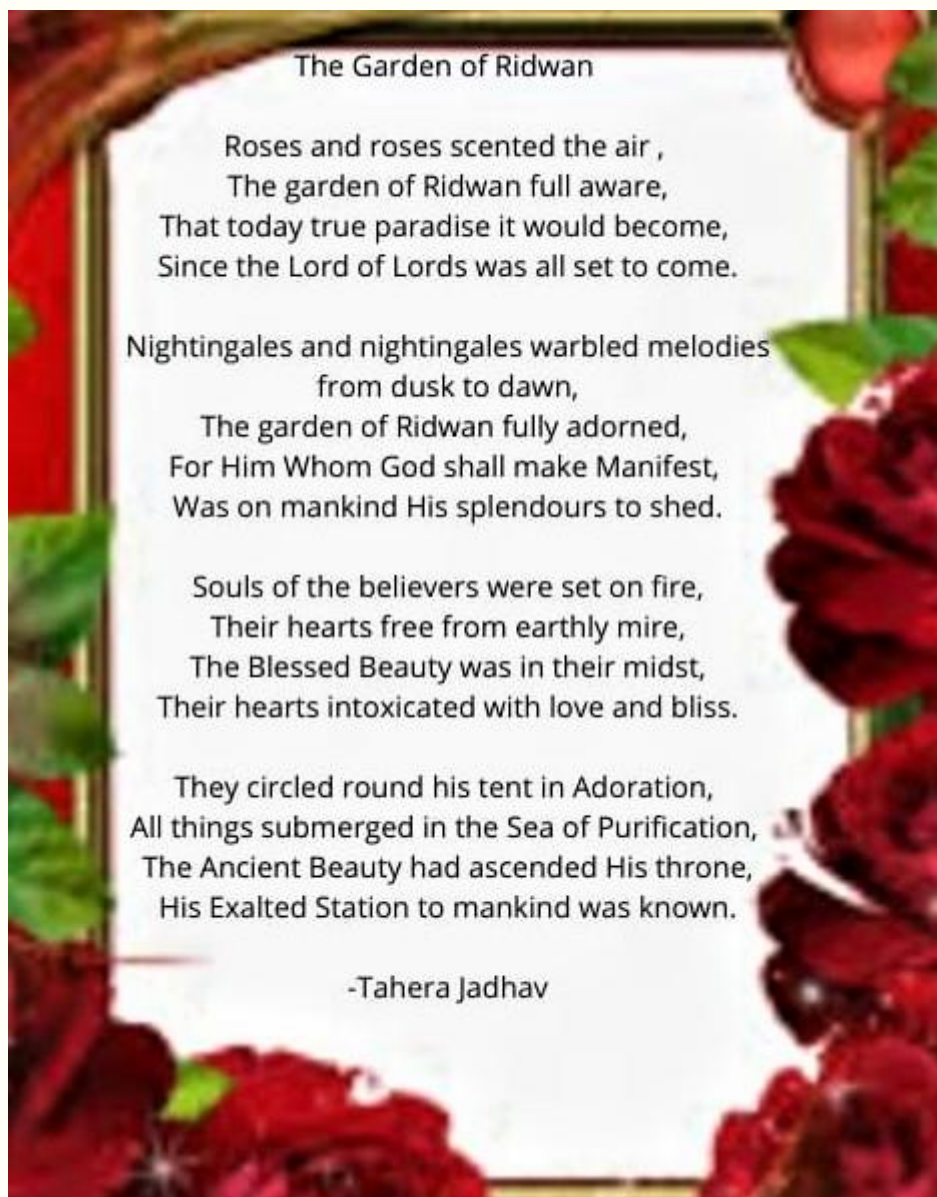
How inaccurate it would be to measure the capacity of, for example, a small fruitless tree as all it can or will be based on what we presently see when in time it will become a fruit-filled giant in comparison.

*The issue at hand isn't the problem at present; the problem at present stems from the **way** we think about the issue at hand, wherein lies the solution. As we should know by now, the battle we fight is not a physical one alone; it's a spiritual one and a matter of trusting in God first.*

By trusting first I mean to say if we had complete faith and trust in God to such an extent that we could solely depend consciously on the infinite source of all solutions, we could see through our problems to find they are only conscious challenges to which we have a spiritual solution.

I am, O my God, but a tiny seed which Thou hast sown in the soil of Thy love, and caused to spring forth by the hand of Thy bounty. This seed craveth, therefore, in its inmost being, for the waters of Thy mercy and the living fountain of Thy grace. Send down upon it, from the heaven of Thy loving-kindness, that which will enable it to flourish beneath Thy shadow and within the borders of Thy court. Thou art He Who watereth the hearts of all that have recognized Thee from Thy plenteous stream and the fountain of Thy living waters. Praised be God, the Lord of the worlds. -Bahá'u'lláh

Tahera's poem (from India)



From the editor's desk:

Study of the Bahá'í Writings on Economics

WEALTH

“O Son of being!

Busy not thyself with this world, for with fire We test the gold, and with gold We test Our servants.” – Bah'á'u'lláh, *Hidden Words, Arabic*, #55

“ ... wealth is most commendable, provided the entire population is wealthy. If, however, a few have inordinate riches while the rest are impoverished, and no fruit or benefit accrues from that wealth, then it is only a liability to its possessor.” – Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, #.24

“O son of man!

Thou dost wish for gold and I desire thy freedom from it. Thou thinkest thyself rich in its possession, and I recognize thy wealth in thy sanctity therefrom. By My life! This is my knowledge, and that is thy fancy; how can My way accord with thine?” – Baha'u'llah, *The Hidden Words, Persian*, #5

People tend to believe that wealth is good and always a relief. The Baha'i Teachings do not agree. There is nothing against getting rich as long as we are aware of the dangers that it can bring. There is no doubt that material possessions and wealth can be wonderful tools, but they can be extremely harmful too. Studies have shown that quality of life does not necessarily increase with an increase in wealth.

In many cases, it has been the reverse. Winning a lottery is not necessarily a blessing if we don't have the capacity to handle material wealth. Also, often people who have won a lottery or gained a fortune find themselves very isolated and lonely because they cannot trust other people to befriend them just for themselves; instead, people want to be close to them in order to gain some of their wealth. Many who gain wealth have more problems than they did before, and it often changes their character. Money is a test, and some pass, using it for charity and good causes, but some do not pass, spending it on harmful and excessive behaviour. Money does not guarantee happiness. We have to possess the spiritual capacity to handle the test.

MODERATION

“... In all matters moderation is desirable. If a thing is carried to excess, it will prove a source of evil...” – Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Baha'u'llah*, p.69

“Fear ye God, and take heed not to outstrip the bounds of moderation, and be numbered among the extravagant.” – Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah*, p.251

We live in an age of excess, and everything seems to be out of proportion. People don't seem to understand the concept of moderation in this materialistic society. The popular belief is that more is better and bigger is better. Excess causes a lifestyle of consumerism in which people

spend money on things that they really don't need while their fellow human beings are dying of starvation. If people spent some of their money on the poor instead of engaging in excessive spending, it would help to lessen the gap between the rich and poor. Materialism feeds our egos and has therefore caused so much harm to our souls. Moderation is in itself a blessing if one can practice it.

VOLUNTARY SHARING

“Man reacheth perfection through good deeds, voluntarily performed, not through good deeds the doing of which was forced upon him. And sharing is a personally chosen righteous act: that is, the rich should extend assistance to the poor, they should expend their substance for the poor, but of their own free will, and not because the poor have gained this end by force. For the harvest of force is turmoil and the ruin of the social order. On the other hand voluntary sharing, the freely-chosen expending of one's substance, leadeth to society's comfort and peace.” – Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 115

The concept of sharing is quite foreign in modern-day societies because there is a sense of entitlement – “I've earned this. I've got it, and it's mine. Why should I share it?” Many systems have been introduced, notably, communism, which promoted equality and sharing. But it was a sharing by force rather than voluntarily, and it didn't work. But when a man reaches a higher level of spirituality, he will realize the pleasure of sharing voluntarily. We are only beginning to see glimpses of this in our society. I believe in the future this will become common as people discover the pleasure and satisfaction in sharing and being generous, rather than hoarding something for only their use.

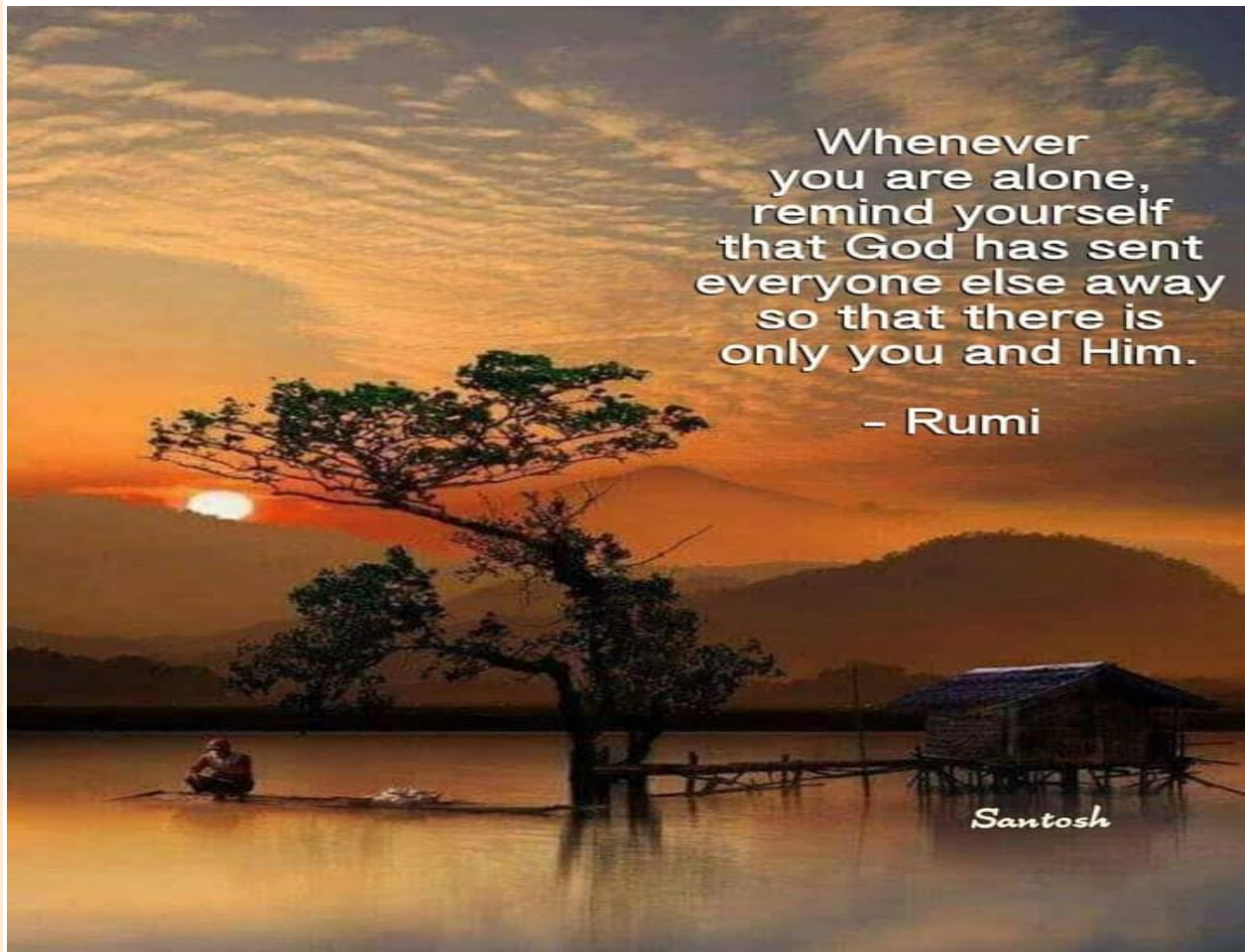
EQUALITY

“Social inequality is the inevitable outcome of the natural inequality of man. Human beings are different in ability and should, therefore, be different in their social and economic standing. Extremes of wealth and poverty should, however, be abolished.” – Shoghi Effendi, *Directives from the Guardian*, p.20

“For the community needs financier, farmer, merchant and labourer just as an army must be composed of commander, officers and privates. All cannot be commanders; all cannot be officers or privates. Each in his station in the social fabric must be competent – each in his function according to ability but with justness of opportunity for all.”– Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 216

Equality does not mean that everybody is paid the same amount or that everyone does the same thing (as in communism) because, by creation, we are not equal. Every person is unique with his own talents. But extremes of wealth need to be limited so that everyone is given the opportunity to live a comfortable life. In society, all cannot be engineers, all cannot be farmers, all cannot be army personnel, and all cannot be teachers. There are different roles for everyone, and everyone is equal in terms of opportunities, not necessarily salaries.

Famous quotes:



Whenever
you are alone,
remind yourself
that God has sent
everyone else away
so that there is
only you and Him.

- Rumi

Upcoming Events:

Coming feast: **Jalal, Glory, April 8, 2021, 7PM on Zoom**

Next feast: **Jamal, Beauty, April 27, 2021**

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