

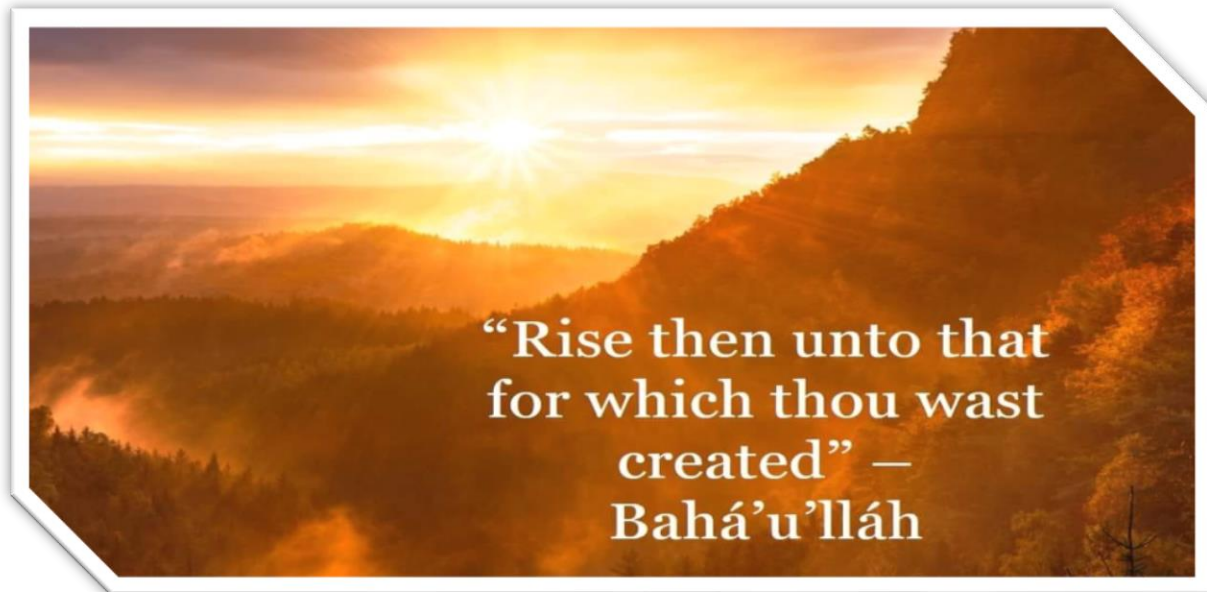


Port Alberní Nuggets

Volume 1, Issue No. 18

(Nur, Light), 177, B.Æ

Bahá’i Quote of the Month



Bahá’i Stories:

Abdu’l-Bahá’s Travels

After arriving in Port Said, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had initially planned to continue immediately to Europe, but His poor health forced him to stay in Port Said it for a month. While there, he asked Siyyid Asadu’llah-i-Qumi: Do you realize now the meaning of my statement when I was telling the friends that there was a wisdom in my indisposition? The wisdom was that I must always move according to the requirements of the Cause. After the month in Port Said, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, as He had in Haifa, suddenly and without warning, boarded a ship bound for Europe. His cruise, however, was very short because His health forced him back on shore at Alexandria, on the other side of the Nile Delta.

-Earl Redman, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst, p. 8

Leaving Buffalo, the train passed Niagara Falls and went through green fields and forested hills, but by noon the train was becoming crowded and very hot. The heat made ‘Abdu’l-Bahá very weary; He said, "The friends in America expect Me to visit each city. How would this be possible? It is impossible to sit in the train every day from morning until afternoon; the body cannot stand it."

-Earl Redman, ‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Their Midst, p. 190

News and events:

Bahá’i World News Service

Podcast series in Ireland invites grassroots conversation.



Comhrá, meaning friendly conversation in Irish, is a podcast by the Bahá’is of Ireland providing a window into grassroots responses to issues facing society.

DUBLIN — Comhrá, meaning ‘conversation’ in Irish, is a recently launched podcast by the Bahá’is of Ireland that provides a window into uplifting discussions among friends on themes central to the life of society.

“We want to engage in social discourses at a level that is not usually seen and to hear from people who are not always heard,” says Patricia Rainsford of the Irish Bahá’i community’s Office of External Affairs.

“There is a place for high-level discussions of policy, but the conversations in this podcast look at an essential component of social change that is found at the grassroots—addressing ideas that listeners might see reflected in their own lives.”

In one episode, sociologist Iarfhlaith Watson and his friend and colleague Brendan McNamara discuss the role of identity in contributing to greater unity in a diverse society. “The Bahá’i Faith teaches about the oneness of humanity,” says Dr. Watson.

“What we need to understand,” he continues, “is how a sense of identity that brings people together can be maintained while overcoming the tendencies to exclude others. ... Maybe people in their local community will realize that if it’s not happening globally, then in our own locality we have to work

together to create a better sense of community. From those grassroots will grow local, national, and then finally international cooperation.”

In another episode, Frank Kennedy, a Bahá’í from the city of Waterford, speaks about an initiative to create a supportive space for newly arrived migrants to Ireland.

In this conversation, Mr. Kennedy describes how people of diverse faiths engaged in the initiative were able to overcome their differences by focusing on the principles of forgiveness, love and hope that are common to all religions.

Speaking about the future of the podcast, Ms. Rainsford states: “The pandemic and circumstances outside our control can leave each of us feeling powerless and hopeless. The idea of the opening series, called Sparks of Hope, is that positive acts are hopeful, no matter how tiny—like sparks that have the potential to light up a dark and difficult time.”

Published today, the latest episode titled “Everyone’s here for a reason” explores issues of disability and inclusion. Upcoming conversations of the podcast will look at a constructive conception of justice in responses to racial prejudice and violence.

Youth Corner:

The Baha’i community of Port Albemni requests all the friends on the Island to encourage the young people to send their stories, artworks, and news to Port Albemni Nuggets. We do not have children or youth in our community, but we would love to be of service to them and provide a platform for encouraging their efforts.

Sharing:

Lesley’s sharing:

DETACHMENT



The lotus blossom is a symbol of detachment. It has roots in the mud of the pond from which it grows and obtains nutrients. It is always unsullied as it floats on the water. Any water that touches it immediately slides off. If it bobs under the water, it reemerges with perfect shape. It is flawless, pure and detached from the world. It is the sacred symbol of detachment in Hinduism.

“Those whose minds are thoroughly practiced in the factors of enlightenment, who find delight in freedom from attachment in the renunciation of clinging, free from the inflow of thoughts, they are like shining lights, having reached final liberation in the world.” (Buddha)

“The light of truth hath made thine eyes to see, the voice of God hath made thine ears to hear and the lights emanating from the beauty of the Light of the World hath made thine heart attracted and astonished. I hope that thou wilt cut thyself from all that is in this world; wilt sever thyself from all desires of this transitory world, wilt attach thy heart entirely to the light of truth and wilt, at all times, rise in the service of truth in the rose-garden of God.” (Abdu'l-Baha)

...”know thou that the True One possesseth invisible worlds which human meditation is unable to comprehend and the intellect of man hath no power to imagine. When thou wilt purify and clarify thy spiritual; nostrils from every worldly moisture, then thou wilt inhale the holy fragrances diffusing from the merciful gardens of these worlds.” (Abdu'l-Baha)

Badi's sharing:

Shoghi Effendi's *compassion and sensitivity*



The great kindness that was such a prominent feature of Shoghi Effendi's character is shown in the manner in which he conveyed to Khánúm the news of the death of her beloved mother, May Maxwell: The devastating news of May Maxwell's passing in Argentina was a terrible shock to Rúhíyyih Khánúm. She often repeated the story of how she received this sad news from the Guardian. Four cables had arrived that day, and she took them to Shoghi Effendi in his study. He opened each one and then looked up at Rúhíyyih Khánúm with a mixture of shock, love and compassion on his face. She said the look frightened her, and she started backing away until she reached the wall. She said she wanted to sink into the wall, so deep was the fear engendered in her by that look. Shoghi Effendi went over to her, held her in his arms and broke the news to her with great tenderness. He told her, 'Now I will be your mother.' Then he spoke of the high station of May Maxwell in the Abhá Kingdom, of her joy in at long last having reached her heart's desire, of her nearness to her beloved Lord and Master, 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Then gently, in order to dispel her shaking grief, he began to talk to Amatu'l-Bahá in a lighter mood, to

describe her mother's activities in the next world, where she was going and what she was doing in that sublime company. She would have been ushered immediately into the presence of Bahá'u'lláh first, of course, he assured her. And no sooner had she come there than she naturally asked permission to tell Him about her precious daughter. But she talked so much that Bahá'u'lláh had finally become tired and had passed her on to 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Here again, she did nothing but talk about her beautiful daughter until, at length, exhausted, 'Abdu'l-Bahá passed her on to the Greatest Holy Leaf. And there she is still, said Shoghi Effendi laughing, there she is still talking about her beloved daughter, stopping every passing member of the Concourse with her opening lines, 'Do let me tell you about my daughter ... !' By the time he reached this point in his narrative, Rúhíyyih Khánum was laughing through her tears. And so, with infinite compassion and patience, he comforted her. -Violette Nakhjavání, A Tribute to Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, p. 37-38

Poem sent by Jodi:

The Story of God's Cause

When man was new
and lived in a cave.
He hadn't a clue
how to behave.

He clubbed his neighbour
and killed the deer,
He knew not God,
and lived in fear.

Then he discovered
Fire and Light,
the beauty of day,
the terror of night.

The struggle with nature,
had just begun.
He looked to the sky
and worshipped the sun.

but God far away,
in limitless space,
turned upon man
a merciful face.

He sent His spirit
down upon earth.
His word to one,
of human birth.

So here and there,
all over the world,
the scroll of God's law
was slowly unfurled.

As each was forgotten,
another came,
teaching mankind,
In God's Holy Name.

Gradually, Painfully,
throughout the ages,
man learned, in slowly
advancing stages.

The plains of India,
Krishna trod,
teaching that all things
come from God.

Abraham left
the land of his birth
to teach "There's but one God,
for all of the earth."

And over the golden
land of Iran,
Zoroaster gave more of
God's Law to man.

The Israelite, slave
of Egypt, we see,
till God sent Moses
to set them all free.

And over the desert,
the tribes to lead.
To the land promised,
to Abraham's seed.

In the east, the Buddha,
a Royal Prince He
found enlightenment,
under an old fig-tree.

Seeking to heal
mankind from pain,
He taught them to turn,
to heaven again.

Meanwhile the Jews,
their faith grown cold,
no longer heeded,
the Prophets of old.

So Jesus came
and brought from above,
beautiful teachings,
of Mercy and Love.

And during three years
of infinite labour,
He taught man how to,
live with his neighbour.

He taught man to follow,
the path that He trod.
Of detachment from all,
in the path of his God.

But the people were,
full of hatred and pride,
so they Him led away
to be crucified.

For God's prophet is
never welcome at dawn.
Men hate Him and fear Him,
and treat Him with scorn.

But men can do nothing,
God's Will must be done.
The Prophet is killed,
but His teaching lives on.

The faith of Christ
began to divide
into East and West,
with sects on each side.

So over the sandy
Arabian plain,
the voice of God
was heard again.

The call was heard
on the desert wind,
"There is but one God,
for all of mankind."

And so, Mohammed,
Great be His fame,
created a nation,
in God's Holy Name.

The faith of Islam
westward spread,
and the Light of learning,
on Europe was shed.

Centuries passed
in a world grown old,
the hearts of men grew
hard and cold.

They turned from God
and His holy cause,
lived for themselves
and forgot His Laws.

Hindu and Christian,
Muslim and Jew,
awaited One
to make all things new.

And once again,
it was from Iran,
that God sent His Prophet
to speak to man.

From Shiraz, the Báb
renewed God's cause.
He made a new calendar
and some new Laws.

He said that He came,
to prepare the way.
He was but a Herald,
of the new day.

The Báb was shot,
and when He died,
His followers were
taken on every side.

Thousand the path
of martyrdom trod,
with joy in their hearts,
giving praise to God.

And now He comes,
when Prophets of old,
whose words of wonder,
had long foretold.

Under Whose rule
all wars must cease,
the wonderful Counsellor,
Prince of Peace.

He smiths the Kings,
with the sword of His pen,
for their injustice
to ordinary men.

All men are brothers,
near and far.
For this is the Law
of Bahá'u-llah.

What a day of joy
and exaltation,
when all the earth,
becomes one Nation.

When the flags of peace
are all unfurled,
for the first Parliament
of the World.

The Spirit of Christ
has come again,
and shed its Radiance
on all of men.

Mankind has reached,
it's coming of age,
and Bahá'u-llah is
Lord of the age.

Jodi Locke

From the editor's desk:

Study of the Bahá'í Writings on Economics

TAXATION

“We see you adding every year unto your expenditures and laying the burden thereof on the people whom ye rule; this verily is naught but grievous injustice. Fear the sighs and tears of this Wronged One, and burden not your peoples beyond that which they can endure.” – Bahá'u'lláh, The World Order of Baha'u'llah, p.40

“Each person in the community whose need is equal to his individual producing capacity shall be exempt from taxation. But if his income is greater than his needs, he must pay a tax until an adjustment is effected. That is to say, man's capacity for production and his needs will be equalized and reconciled through taxation. If his production exceeds, he will pay a tax; if his necessities exceed his production he shall receive an amount sufficient to equalize or adjust. Therefore taxation will be proportionate to capacity and production, and there will be no poor in the community.” – Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p.217

Taxation is one of the fundamental principles of any economic system. Abdu'l-Baha has proposed graduated taxes which means that the more one makes, the more taxes he pays. Taxes have to be fair and they are levied only after someone has paid all of his expenses and has money left over. This method doesn't compromise with the quality of life of the individual and monies collected from the taxes are spent on the poor and underprivileged, reducing the number of those who are in need in the community.

HUQÚQU'LLÁH (Right of God)

“The minimum amount subject to Huqúqu'lláh is reached when one's possessions are worth the number of Vahid (19); that is, whenever one owneth 19 mithqals of gold, or acquireth possessions attaining this value, after having deducted therefrom the yearly expenses, the Huqúq becometh applicable and its payment is obligatory.” – Bahá'u'lláh, The Compilation of Compilations, Vol. 1, p.493; Huququ'llah-The Right of God, #6

In addition to taxation, Baha'u'llah has devised another means to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. It is the Right of God which is given voluntarily when an individual earns more than all his needs. At that point he gives a voluntary set percentage of his assets. It is important to note that taxes collected, added to money given to charity, as well as giving to the Baha'i fund with money given as the Right of God can really bridge the gap between the two extremes.

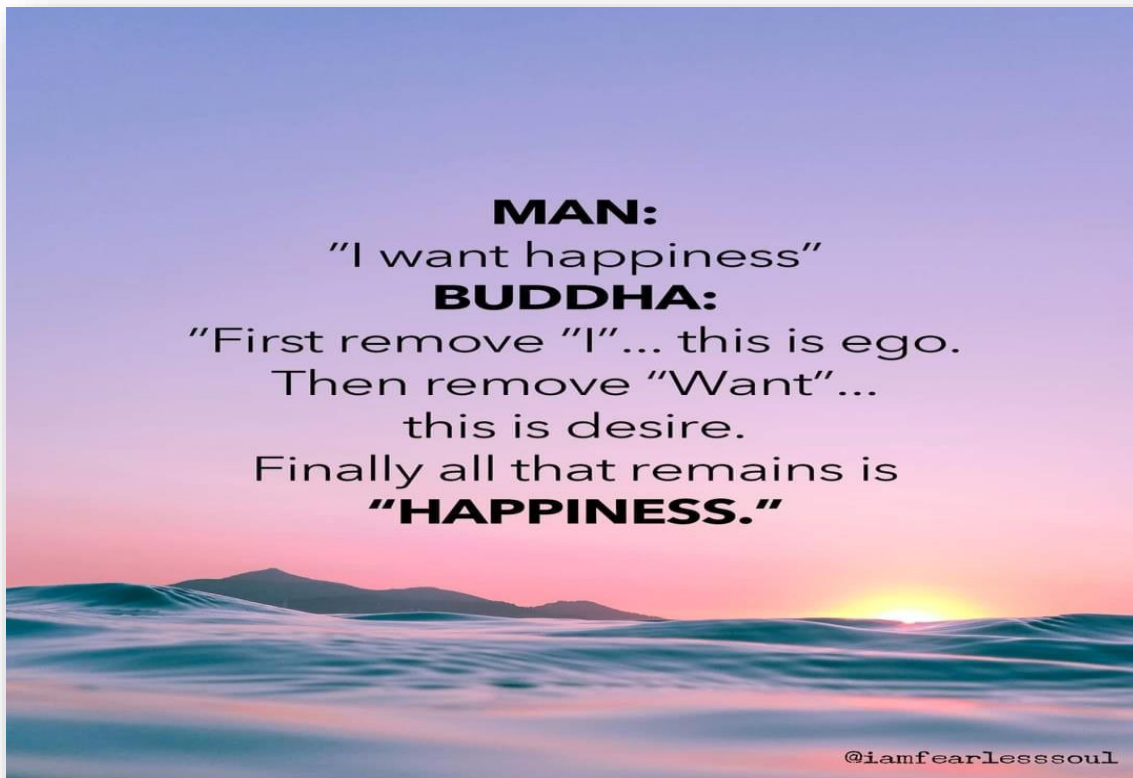
RATE OF INTEREST

“Therefore as a token of favor towards men We have prescribed that interest on money should be treated like other business transactions that are current amongst men. Thus, now that this lucid commandment hath descended from the heaven of the Will of God, it is lawful and proper to charge interest on money, that the people of the world may, in a spirit of amity and fellowship and with joy and gladness, devotedly engage themselves in magnifying the Name of Him Who is the Well-Beloved of all mankind. Verily, He ordaineth according to His Own choosing. He hath now made interest on

money lawful, even as He had made it unlawful in the past.” – Bahá’u’lláh, Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh, pp.133-134

In this quotation “the past” refers to Islam in which interest was forbidden. It is very difficult to run a banking system without interest. But in many societies, the rate of interest is extremely high, on credit cards and student loans, for example. High interest on a student loan is unfair because students charged with this interest do not have jobs to pay the loan or the interest and need to keep paying it for many years once they enter the workforce. That puts a heavy burden on the economic life of the individual which, in turn, diminishes his quality of life. Baha’u’llah emphasized the concept of a good loan, meaning that the rate of interest had to be such that it did not burden the borrower and that it benefited everyone. The person or firm lending the money gets an adequate amount of interest and the person borrowing is happy because he can afford to pay it. A good loan is basically a rate of interest that is fair and reasonable, using the principle of moderation.

Famous quotes:



Upcoming Events:

Coming feast: Nur, Light, June 4, 2021, at 7 PM

Next feast: Rahmat, Mercy, June 22, 2021

Contact us at bshams@telus.net