



## *Port Alberni Nuggets*

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### *Baha'i Quote of the Month*



### *Baha'i Stories:*

#### **Abdu'l-Bahá - portrait**

*Mrs. Gibbons, a Bahá'í, had written the Master before His coming to the United States, requesting that her own daughter be allowed to paint His portrait. In His reply, He consented to this request and added,*

according to Mrs. Gibbons, that Juliet Thompson would paint a portrait of Him. Juliet Thompson had long dreamed that she would paint the face of Christ.

During the month of June, 'Abdu'l-Bahá allowed Juliet Thompson to paint His portrait, telling her to paint His "Servitude to God." She completed it over the course of six sittings which took place over multiple days in different rooms. Juliet remembered that fourth sitting on June 19th because of an extraordinary experience she and Lua Getsinger had on that day.

As the Master prepared to sit for the portrait, He turned to Lua Getsinger who was also in the room and told her in Persian that these sittings made Him sleepy. He sat down and closed His eyes. Juliet studied Him but found that she could not begin painting because 'Abdu'l-Bahá's countenance reflected the dignity and peace of the Divine Realm.

Then, as though awakened by the Holy Spirit, 'Abdu'l-Bahá opened His eyes and with great power said:

"I appoint you, Lua, the Herald of the Covenant. And I AM THE COVENANT, appointed by Bahá'u'lláh. And no one can refute His Word. This is the Testament of Bahá'u'lláh. You will find it in the Holy Book of Aqdas. Go forth and proclaim, 'This is THE COVENANT OF GOD in your midst.'"

A great joy seemed to fill Lua while Juliet wept at witnessing this extraordinary moment of spiritual force flowing through the Master. Then 'Abdu'l-Bahá became quiet again. The Holy Spirit receded, and 'Abdu'l-Bahá the man re-emerged. He smiled at Juliet and told her that she must stop crying since she would not be able to paint through tears.

In the afternoon of that same day, He sent Lua Getsinger downstairs to speak about the Covenant to the visitors waiting there. When He went down later, He read from Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet of the Branch and spoke with great power on the Covenant. 'Abdu'l-Bahá designated New York City, the "City of the Covenant." -The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Malaysia, Feast of Kamal 2012

## News and events:

*Bahá'í World News Service*

**"A significant experience in our country": Faith leaders in the UAE foster coexistence, build unified vision**



A unique forum initiated by the Bahá'ís of the UAE is bringing together religious leaders for profound discussions about the role of religion in society. Representatives of Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish Muslim, Sikh, Bahá'í communities of the UAE to explore profound concepts and themes related to social transformation, such as the equality of women and men.

*ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates — A unique forum initiated by the Bahá'ís of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is allowing religious leaders of the country to go beyond building mutual respect to fostering coexistence and unity of vision on questions of common concern.*

*The forum was established at the outset of the pandemic as a space for representatives of the diverse religious communities of the UAE to pray for the well-being of the people of their country, but quickly evolved to become a means for religious leaders to explore the role of religion in contributing to the material and spiritual progress of society in tangible terms.*

*“What has made these gatherings remarkable is that participants consult together about how they can stimulate further discussions within their faith communities to build unity of thought and to support collective endeavors that contribute to the betterment of our society,” says Roeia Thabet, representative of the Bahá'ís of the country.*

*She continues: “We also explore profound concepts and themes related to social transformation and reflect on how religion can inspire action among larger groups of people.”*

*At a recent gathering focused on the Bahá'í principle of the equality of women and men, a participant stated: “All of us, as religious leaders, have a significant role in shaping the culture of true understanding of equality between men and women.”*

*In a paper prepared for the discussion and distributed to participants, the Bahá'ís of the UAE highlighted that equality between women and men is an aspect of human reality and not just a condition to be achieved for the common good.*

*The paper reads in part: “The search for meaning, for purpose, for community; the capacity to love, to create, to persevere, has no gender. Such an assertion has profound implications for the organization of every aspect of human society. That which makes human beings human—their inherent dignity and nobility—is neither male nor female.”*

*This and other themes examined over the past year are part of an overarching conversation on coexistence in Emirati society, a discourse that has gained significant prominence in recent years not only in the UAE but in the whole Arab region.*

*“This group has raised the bar on coexistence and tolerance by bringing everyone of different religions together and commencing valuable discussions,” says Ashis Barua, representative of the country's Buddhist community. Referring to the unified spirit of the gatherings, Mr. Barua continues: “It is truly rare... in our lifetime.”*

*Dr. Thabet of the Bahá'í community describes the strong bonds of friendship that have been fostered among the participants: “We have become much closer through these gatherings, sitting together for hours with real focus on how to foster greater coexistence in society and promote the welfare of communities. This kind of dialogue among leaders of different faiths is a significant experience in our country.”*

## Youth Corner:

**The Baha'i community of Port Alberni requests all the friends on the Island to encourage the young people to send their stories, artworks, and news to Port Alberni 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:*

*Tidbits from Summer School:*

*I can't possibly share all the information and insights gleaned from the sessions I attended this year, but here are a few things that you might enjoy:*

*1. The Guardian refers to the establishment of the Faith in the Western Hemisphere as “the most outstanding achievement that will forever be associated with Abdu'l-Baha's ministry”. . . “He Who, in His own words, had entered prison as a youth and left it an old man, Who never in His life had faced a public audience, had attended no school, had never moved in Western circles, and was unfamiliar with Western customs and language” set out on an arduous voyage and we know the results of his travels. There are so many ways in which Abdu'l-Baha sets an example for us, but I had never considered this one – not be set in our own ways or to shrink from learning new things and, if necessary, beginning our own education all over again. We are agents of our own learning, and it becomes a pattern that helps us to live the life.*

*2. Nurturing our love for the Beloved: - being present in our prayers and being mindful all day of being in that prayerful state - demonstrating our gratitude daily - observing beautiful qualities in others - when someone passes away, to put the person's name in our prayer book and when we are ready to begin our prayers, put our finger on the list of names and invite that person to join us - take off the mask of perfection and reflect it in our relationships with others; it will also affect our relationship with God - be involved in service – it quells the ego and helps us to develop all our qualities and capacities - open the door and wait for Abdu'l-Baha to go through first*

*3. The Qu'ran The session, which was basically an introduction to the Holy Book of Islam, was probably the highlight of the summer school for me; to become more aware of its relevance to study of our own Writings; to become more aware of the fact that The Bab and Baha'u'llah were Muslims and grew up with the Qu'ran; how much The Bab treasured His copy of the Qu'ran; and that the Master asked one of the Muslims with a melodious voice to come to the house to chant verses of the Qu'ran for Shoghi Effendi To understand that the Qu'ran was not designed to be linear; that all Divine Revelation is thrown out in flashes and that's why different subjects are included in one tablet; that there are so many quotes from the Qu'ran in the Baha'i Writings with the aim of giving us perspective. I loved this:*

*“Everything in the Qu’ran is in the first Surah, everything in the first Surah is in the first verse, everything in the opening verse is in the first letter 'Ba,' and everything in the letter is in [one] point.”*

### ***Badi’s sharing:***

*My project of building a home for the elders in India, “Nazz Rest Home,” faced a small challenge. One side of the fence had to be moved since the neighbour had questioned if it was correct, so the government surveyor was called, and the fence was moved, and as a result, we gained a large amount of land (more than 3000 sq ft). God works in mysterious ways.*



### ***Mr. and Mrs. Mirani’s sharing:***

*Mr. Mrs. Mirani had many visitors to their beautiful garden this summer. Some of them were Iranian Muslim friends, some from Port Alberni and some visiting from other provinces. They came to enjoy the variety of foods and fruits that Mr. and Mrs. Mirani generously provide for their guests from the garden. They discussed the Faith, and one of them, when he came into their house, used the greeting of Allah 'u' Abha. That shows their level of comfort and respect for Mr. and Mrs. Mirani. Another friend from Vietnam also visited and decided to bring her boyfriend next time to the garden. Mr. and Mrs. Mirani have used their garden to teach the Faith. By generously offering fruit to eat and take away, they demonstrate the spirit of giving and unity with all people they come across.*

### ***From the editor’s desk:***

**Spirituality, Morality and Economics rely on each other**

*How does humanity and morality—spirituality, really—fit into an economic system? To most people, spirituality and economics are completely separate subjects.*

*It surprised me when I learned that the first book written by the 18th Century Scottish economist Adam Smith, widely considered the father of modern economics, was *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. It was published seven years before his magnum opus *The Wealth of Nations*, which founded modern economic theory and virtually invented the idea of the free market. It never occurred to me that morality might be part of his philosophy.*

*Every economist studies *The Wealth of Nations*, and most will tell you that Adam Smith’s work is all about the science of making wealth. His ideas have formed the guidelines for so many economists, and his words are still the accepted authority on the subject. His influence is still felt, and his assumptions are still the foundation of economics.*

*But Adam Smith certainly recognized the inherent danger of wealth, even as he provided ideas for generating it:*

***“This disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and powerful, and to despise or, at least, neglect persons of poor and mean conditions, though necessary both to establish and to maintain the distinction of ranks and the order of society, is, at the same time, the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments.”***

*One of the most prevalent concepts in the economy, and one of Smith’s most significant assumptions, was the concept of the “Invisible Hand,” which brooked no interference from the government in the economic marketplace—because Smith’s invisible hand would solve the problems, balance supply and demand and also fix prices in an unregulated economy. Smith has thus been called the founder of “laissez-faire capitalism” and denigrated for his lack of a moral component in his economic theories. But if you combine this “invisible hand” idea with Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, where he says that human beings have a natural tendency to care about the well-being of others, you get a different picture of this conceptual framework:*

*Smith’s quotations indicate that he strongly believed in morality. He discussed the welfare of the individual, saying it depends on the welfare of all: “No society can surely be flourishing and happy,” he wrote in *Moral Sentiments*, “of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable.” The Universal House of Justice, the international governing body of the Bahá’ís, recently reminded us of the same important point:*

***“The welfare of any segment of humanity is inextricably bound up with the welfare of the whole. Humanity’s collective life suffers when any one group thinks of its own well-being in isolation from***

*that of its neighbours' or pursues economic gain without regard for how the natural environment, which provides sustenance for all, is affected."*

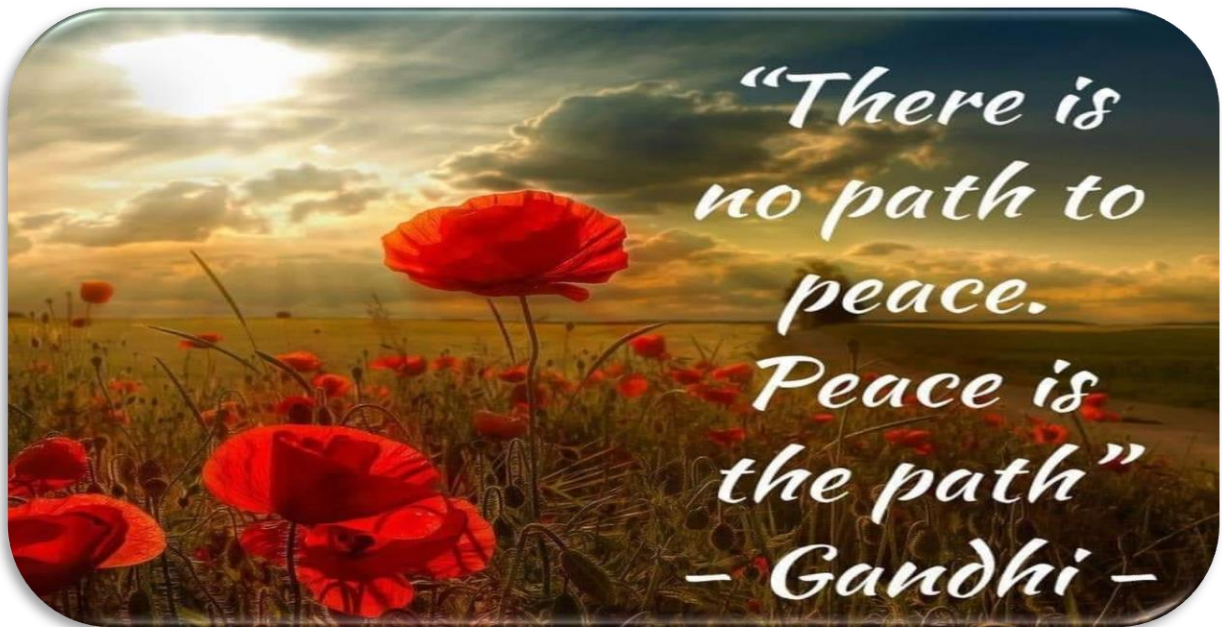
*Smith himself said:*

*"To feel much for others and little for ourselves; to restrain our selfishness and exercise our benevolent affections, constitute the perfection of human nature."*

*I am so grateful that I discovered the moral side of economics—and how I wish more economists would explore it too. We can talk about this in our universities and make it an essential part of economic studies to learn the relationship between morality and economics.*

*Morality and economics, to me, have to balance each other rather than competing for organizing and governing economics. They need each other to be complete.*

### *Famous quotes:*



### *Upcoming Events:*

**Coming feast: Kamal, Perfection, July 31, 2021, 7 PM**

**Next feast: Asma, Names, August 19, 2021, 7 PM**

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