



Port Alberni Nuggets

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Baha'i Quote of the Month



Baha'i Stories:

Marriage - Interracial

On March 25, 1911, at the behest of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Louis Gregory sailed from New York through Europe to Egypt and Palestine to go on pilgrimage. In Palestine, Gregory met with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi and visited the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh and the Shrine of the Báb. After he had returned to Egypt from Palestine, the discussion of race unity in the United States came about with 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the other pilgrims. 'Abdu'l-Bahá stated that there was no distinction between the races, and then gave blackberries to each of the pilgrims, which Gregory interpreted as the symbolic sharing of black-coloured fruit. 'Abdu'l-Bahá encouraged the marriage of Gregory and a white English Bahá'í, Louisa

(Louise) A. M. Mathew, whose pilgrimage in 1911 had coincided with Gregory's and who had traveled to America with 'Abdu'l-Bahá at His invitation. Although 'Abdu'l-Bahá had raised the topic of intermarriage during their visit to Egypt, telling Gregory, "If you have any influence to get the races to intermarry, it will be very valuable,"¹⁶ at first they thought of each other only as friends. When they met again in America, 'Abdu'l-Bahá urged them to consider their relationship in a new light. Only then did the potential attachment He had sensed between them blossom into love. They were married in a quiet ceremony in New York City on 27 September 1912, becoming the first interracial Bahá'í couple at a time when intermarriage in the United States defied popular scientific theories about the baneful effects of "race mixing," flouted the customary dictates of a divided society, and was a criminal offense in much of the nation. 'Abdu'l-Bahá described the Gregorys as "an introduction to the accomplishment" of fellowship between the races.¹⁸ Although the couple had no children of their own, they enriched the lives of many young people and, over the years, became a particular source of strength to a growing number of interracially married couples among the American Bahá'ís. -from articles culled on the internet

News and Events:

News from our twin community of Jaipur, India

The Training Institute Rajasthan is organizing a seven-day winter campaign from 25-31 December at Bapu Nagar Bahai House, where about 50-70 youths are likely to participate. Ruhi book number 1,3,5 and other books will be studied during this time. Below are some pictures of some of the activities and celebrations, including the ascension of Abdu'l-Baha.



Zambia: Group of villages awoken to possibilities for raising local educational system



KATUYOLA, Zambia — What began as a gathering of residents from Katuyola—a group of neighboring villages in the North-Western Province of Zambia—to reflect on the development of local Bahá'í educational programs may well be a defining moment for their communities.

Discussions at the gathering of some 200 people have led to the realization that after many decades of experience with efforts for spiritual and moral empowerment, academic education, and programs related to social and economic development, there is now increased capacity to offer a seamless educational experience, from childhood into adulthood.

Musonda Kapusa-Linsel, a member of the Continental Board of Counsellors in Africa, says that this vision first emerged from a pivotal [national gathering](#) of Bahá'í educational agencies in Zambia. Mrs. Kapusa-Linsel explains: “What drives this vision is the conviction among a growing number of people, traditional leaders, and governing institutions in Katuyola that education is central to social progress.”

Steering the course of their own development

Hamed Javaheri, another Counsellor from Zambia, explains that the discussion has enabled the inhabitants of Katuyola, its leaders, and institutions to reflect on the strengths of the full range of

educational efforts—whether offered by the Bahá’í community or the wider society—to arrive at a common vision about their future.

Mr. Javaheri highlighted the unifying effect of the gathering, stating: “Diverse segments of Katuyola’s inhabitants are working alongside Bahá’í agencies to learn about how the various efforts already under way can be viewed as parts of an overall system of education.”

As a result of these discussions, the educational agencies involved have already begun to work more closely together and formed a ‘village educational team’ that will be responsible for maintaining synergies between all of the educational endeavors in Katuyola.

In comments shared with the News Service, Patrick Nshindi, one of the traditional leaders in the area, explains that this burgeoning educational system in Katuyola is enabling the community to chart a path for its own progress. “These programs are different in their approach because they provide our children with both material and spiritual education. And at the center of it all is service to the community,” he says.

Mr. Nshindi adds: “These initiatives are helping everyone to better appreciate the significant role of education in social transformation and in equipping the younger generations to combat the negative forces they face.”

Vahid, a youth from Katuyola, emphasized this idea, explaining that Bahá’í educational programs help young people to navigate the complexities of life.

“The youth in these programs are far less likely to give in to the social pressures around them, because they are developing spiritual qualities through serving the needs of their communities,” he says.

Violet, another young person from Katuyola, explains how her experience with serving as a teacher of children’s moral education classes has profoundly shaped her thinking about the future. “Serving as a teacher has inspired me to think of my career path in a way that will allow me to continue to serve my community.”

Another traditional leader, the senior traditional leader of Mundundu, Milton Kakolu, states: “These moral education programs will help many populations in Katuyola to advance further. They have already helped our communities to reduce the rate of crime and address other challenges.”

Addressing the education of women

The local gathering in Katuyola has stimulated further community-wide discussions, most recently on the role of women in contributing to social transformation.

Mrs. Kapusa-Linsel explains that in exploring the complexities of raising an educational system, the residents of Katuyola also see a need to address cultural attitudes that act as barriers to formal education for women.

This and other issues were examined by 120 women at the gathering, including how they can support the education of their children, especially when many have not received formal education themselves.

Ireen, a mother attending the discussion, said: “It’s difficult for some of us women to see the importance of education as we ourselves have not been educated. This has prevented parents from effectively assisting their children with school.”

She added: “This was the first time that I’ve attended such a discussion. It has helped me to see the role that parents can play in fully supporting the education of their children.”

Another mother, Juliet, added that even when parents prioritize education, the discussions have highlighted ways that they can support their children’s educational needs.

“My role as a mother is to be involved in the progress of my children. I will have conversations with them about the importance of education and visit their teachers so that I know how they are performing,” she said.

Fruits of consultations from recent gatherings

Following the women’s gathering, participants decided to form literacy classes which will be conducted by the graduates of the Bahá’i-inspired educational program called Preparation for Social Action (PSA).

Another outcome of that gathering is a new initiative for women to earn income from cultivating home gardens. This effort, which will be supported by a PSA team specializing in agriculture, will also aim to start a community savings bank to assist the women with better supporting the educational needs of their children.

In reflecting on the recent local gatherings, Friday Pindalu, member of the Bahá’i Local Spiritual Assembly of Katuyola, says: “We were able to see that previously we were working in isolation, but after these meetings, we see that all these activities are meant to serve the same purpose to contribute to the material and spiritual growth of Katuyola.”

Those gathered decided that they would establish a center of learning in the village, where many classes and activities for all ages could take place, including academic tutorials for those in secondary school. The Bahá’i Centre in the nearby village of Mundundu will serve this purpose until a permanent location can be found elsewhere in Katuyola.

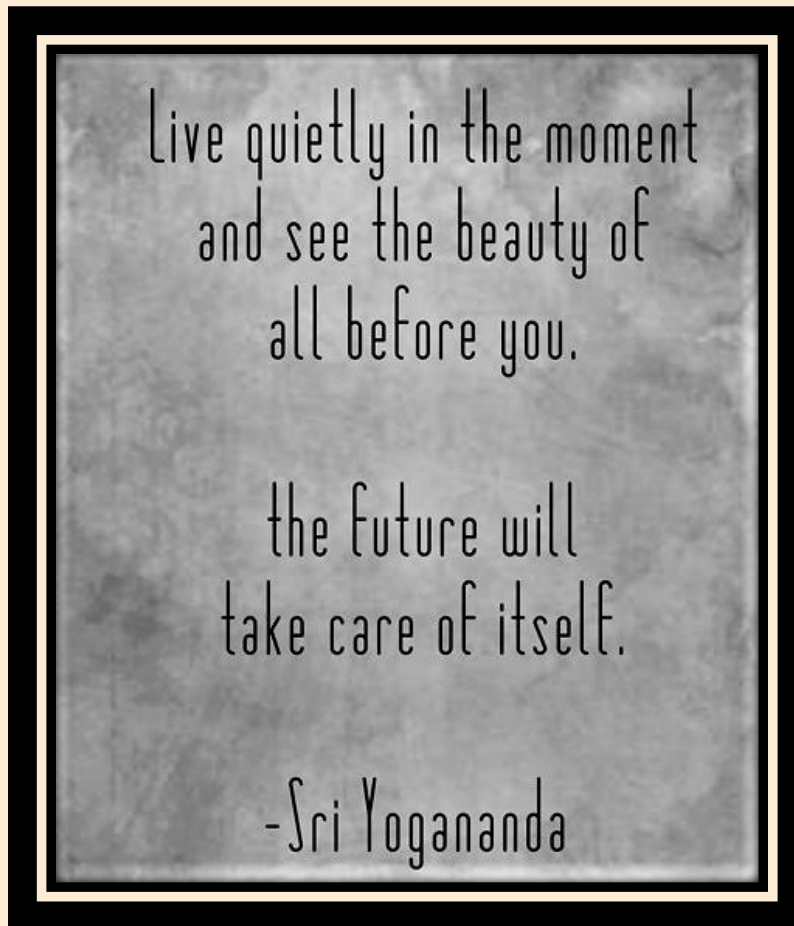
Mr. Nshindi says that the gatherings have inspired the village leaders to assist with the growing educational movement in Katuyola, for example, by providing resources for developing a local secondary school.

“We have agreed to give the land where a secondary school can be built, and we are ready to support it as a community,” he says.

This would alleviate the need for some youth to attend secondary school away from home, ensuring that they can remain in their communities, with their families and a support structure that would allow them to channel their energies to addressing the needs of their community.

These discussions will intensify in the coming weeks and months, addressing various educational needs of the people of Katuyola.

Poem of the month



From the pages of history

Some years later *the Bab was united in wedlock with the sister of Mirza Siyyid Hasan and Mirza Abu'l-Qasim. The child which resulted from this union, He named Ahmad. He died in the year 1259 A.D., the year preceding the declaration of the Faith by the Bab. The Father did not lament his loss. He consecrated his death by words such as these:*

"O God, my God! Would that a thousand Ishmaels were given Me, this Abraham of Thine, that I might have offered them, each and all, as a loving sacrifice unto Thee. O my Beloved, my heart's Desire! The sacrifice of this Ahmad whom Thy servant Ali-Muhammad hath offered up on the altar of Thy love can never suffice to quench the flame of longing in His heart. Not until He immolates His own heart at Thy feet, not until His whole body falls a victim to the cruelest tyranny in Thy path, not until His breast is made a target for countless

darts for Thy sake, will the tumult of His soul be stilled. O my God, my only Desire! Grant that the sacrifice of My son, My only son, may be acceptable unto Thee. Grant that it be a prelude to the sacrifice of My own, My entire self, in the path of Thy good pleasure. Endue with Thy grace My life-blood which I yearn to shed in Thy path. Cause it to water and nourish the seed of Thy Faith. Endow it with Thy celestial potency, that this infant seed of God may soon germinate in the hearts of men, that it may thrive and prosper, that it may grow to become a mighty tree, beneath the shadow of which all the peoples and kindreds of the earth may gather. Answer Thou My prayer, O God, and fulfil My most cherished desire. Thou art, verily, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful." -THE DAWN-BREAKERS & NABIL'S NARRATIVE

News and Nuggets from other communities



SERVING THE ONE IN ALL
SIKH DHARMA
INTERNATIONAL

Guru Nanak & The True Prayer of God **Sikh History**



Guru Nanak was a grown up man now, and he had begun to travel and teach. He walked everywhere on foot with his friends and wherever they went, they sang. His friends were Mardana, who was a Muslim, and Bala, who was a Hindu. Those were the two main religions in India during that time.

People wondered, "Well, his friends are odd, one is a Hindu and one is a Muslim, but he looks a little different. Is he a Hindu? Is he a Muslim? What is he?" They asked Guru Nanak, "Are you a Hindu or

are you a Muslim?” He told them, “Well, you know there is no Hindu and there is no Muslim.” They said, “What?! What?! What do You mean by that?”

Someone went and told the Governor of the town, “This man Nanak, he says there are no Muslims!!” The Governor was alarmed when he heard this. He thought, “Well he can say what he wants about the Hindus, but he can’t say there’s no Muslims because I am a Muslim.” So, he said, “Go and bring Nanak here!” The messenger said, “Okay, I’ll get him, and I’ll bring him here.”

He was going to go over to Guru Nanak and be very forceful and say, “Hey, you must come with me. The Governor wants to see you right now!” When the messenger got to Guru Nanak though, his mind suddenly changed. He saw how beautiful and saintly the Guru was and he was very polite and said “Sir, the Governor would like to see you. Would you please come with me?”

So Guru Nanak went to the royal court of the Governor and the Governor asked him, “Why did You say there’s no Muslim and there’s no Hindu? What are you talking about?” Nanak said, “Well, you have forgotten. You have forgotten that if you can’t see God in ALL, you can’t see God at all. You have your rules about this and that and the other, but the same light is inside of everyone.”

The Governor said, “Well, alright, maybe you’re right about that. But if you don’t think that you’re a Muslim or a Hindu, all of us here are going to say our Muslim prayers, will you pray with us?” Nanak said, “Yes, I would love to. If you will lead the prayers, I will pray with you.”

So they began their prayers. They put down their prayer rugs and they all got on their knees and started bowing, but Guru Nanak stayed standing up. Instead of getting on his knees and bowing, he stood up with his eyes open. They were continuing their prayers and the Guru was just looking around. That made the Governor very mad, and afterwards, he said, “What were you doing? You weren’t praying at all! We were all bowing and doing the proper prayers. You look like a saintly person but you didn’t keep your word! You said you were going to pray with us but you didn’t. You weren’t doing anything!”

The Guru said, “Well, I said I would pray with you if you would lead it, but you weren’t leading the prayer at all.” He turned to the Quazi, who was the Muslim priest, and said, “You were thinking about the new little baby horse, the foal, that was just born at your farm. You were worried it might fall in the well in the courtyard.”

The Qazi thought, “That’s right, that was what was I was thinking.” The Guru turned to the Governor and said, “And you were thinking about all the horses you are going to sell and how much money you are going to make when you sell them. The Governor thought, “Oh wow, that’s amazing! He’s right, that’s true, I was thinking about that.”

They realized how even though they were bowing and looking as though they were praying, they really weren’t praying and that even though Nanak wasn’t bowing he was really praying... for them!

Then they asked him, “Well how can we really pray?”

Nanak said, “You have to calm your mind, and you have to pray from inside your heart, not from your mind, and you have to let the Light of God shine into your heart.”

From the editor’s desk:

Generation Gap Can Be Overcome Through Respect

In most societies, it's common for older people not to trust the judgement of younger people. The reason usually given is that youth lack experience. And this is true — young people don't have the same amount of experience. But this reasoning never satisfies me because it ignores some of the insight and courage of younger generations.

Working with young people most of my professional life, I've observed an increase in criticism of millennials and the generation after them, Generation Z. I see this on social media and hear it in my conversations, and I feel this attitude has become more extreme.

In recent years as the confusion and problems of the world have increased, younger generations are getting more than their share of criticism. Many Baby Boomers wonder if there will be enough workers to take care of them when they have to depend on the services that should see them throughout their lives. At the same time, millennials and Generation Z wonder if there will be any future at all for them.

I think millennials are not following in the footsteps of older generations because the world's problems have led them to believe that they alone understand the gravity of the situation. After all, it directly affects them. They are the ones who have to solve it. In that way, I say, thank God they are not like my generation.

My aim is not to discredit the Baby Boomers, my generation, or the generations that came before. We worked hard and attained some significant achievements, but sadly it often feels like those were mainly material achievements, and some of them came at a great price. The mistake that was made was an overemphasis on achieving wealth at any cost, believing that wealth signified progress.

What previous generations missed — and what we are still missing — are the spiritual and moral goals to offset the damage created by an excess of material progress.

“For man two wings are necessary. One wing is physical power and material civilization; the other is spiritual power and divine civilization. With one wing only, flight is impossible. Two wings are essential. Therefore, no matter how much material civilization advances, it cannot attain to perfection except through the uplift of spiritual civilization”. – Abdu'l-Baha

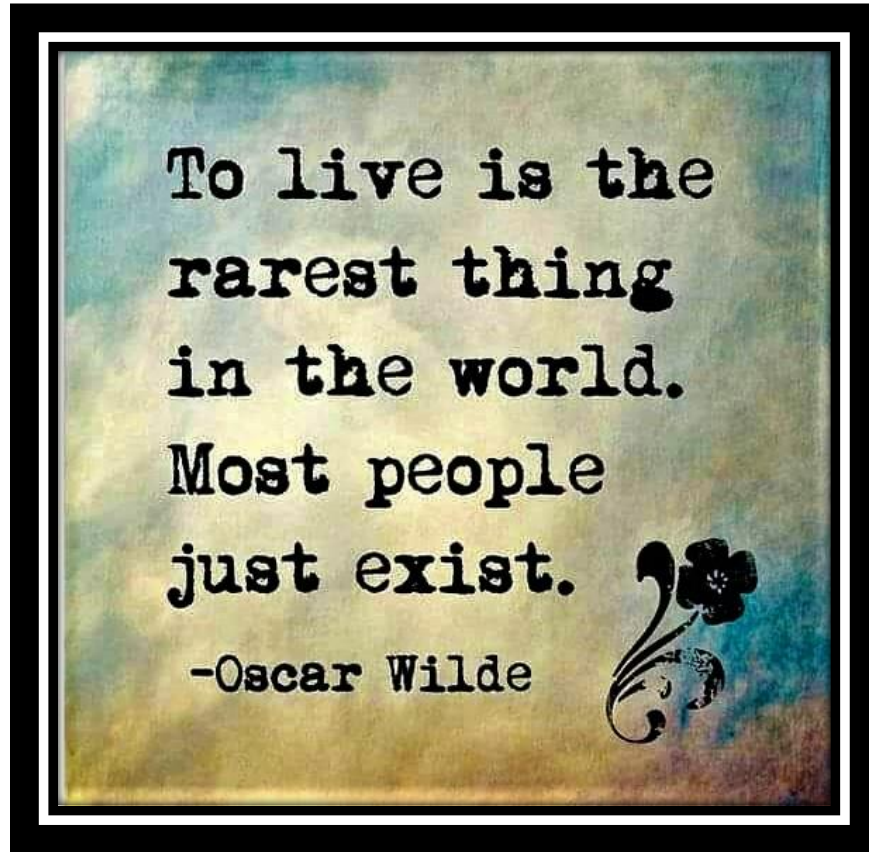
This lust for material progress has brought us to such a critical state that younger generations feel there will be no future left for them to enjoy. Their cries and protests can now be heard all over the world.

I am very clear about my attitudes towards young people and have devoted my energies to encourage and support them in any way possible.

The world's present problems are overwhelming and beyond our generation's capacity because our solutions are outdated and ineffective. The world is in need of a fresh and fundamental change in its outlook and approach to tackling the ever-increasing crises of the world.

I believe the recent challenges of our time have awakened the youth and have brought forward many individuals that have exemplified passion, wisdom and devotion to such an extent that they inspire admiration in all. Our future depends on the tender shoulders of the millennials and Generation Z. They can certainly use all the help and support they can get from my generation to undo the mistakes that we have made.

Famous quotes:



Upcoming Events:

Next feast, Sharaf/Honor, December 31, 2022

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