

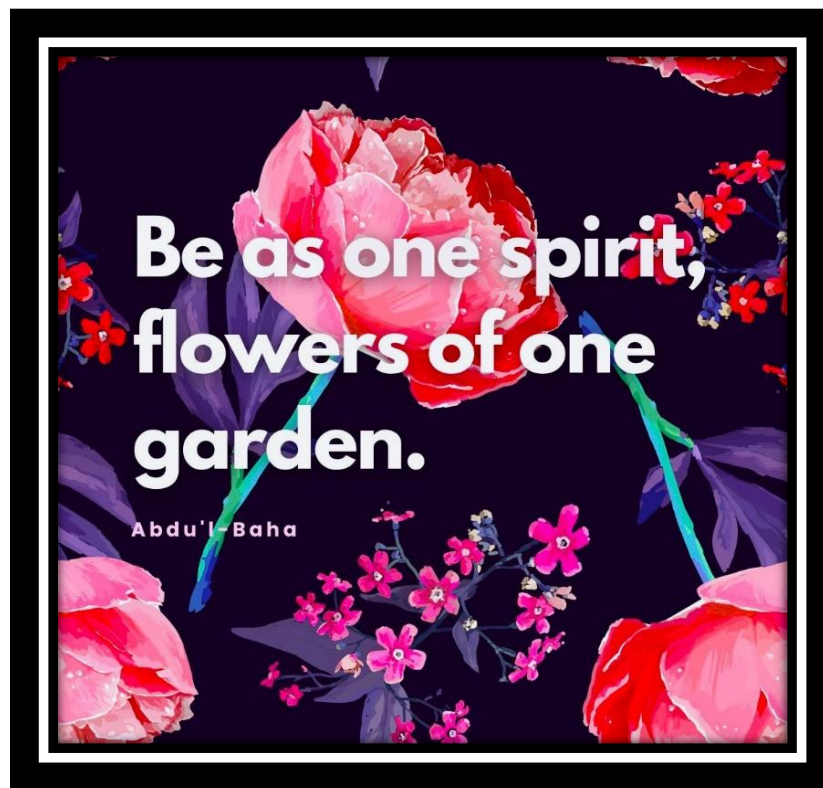


Port Alberni Nuggets

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Baha'i Quote of the Month



Baha'i Stories:

Weddings

QUITE an oriental note was struck toward the end of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's London visit, by the marriage of a young Persian couple who had sought his presence for the ceremony, the bride journeying from Baghdad accompanied by her uncle in order to meet her fiance here and be married before 'Abdu'l-Bahá's departure. The bride's father and grandfather had been followers of Bahá'u'lláh during the time of his banishment.

We hesitate to alter the bridegroom's description of the service and therefore print it in his own simple and beautiful language. It will serve to show a side not touched on elsewhere, and without which no idea of his visit is complete. We refer to the attitude of reverence with which people from the East who came to see 'Abdu'l-Bahá regard their great teacher. They invariably rise and stand with bowed heads whenever he enters the room.

Mirza Dawud writes: --

On Sunday morning, the 1st of October, 1911, A.D., equal to the 9th Tishi 5972 (Hebrew Era), Regina Nur Mahal Khánum, and Mirza Yuhanna Dawud were admitted into the holy presence of 'Abdu'l-Bahá: may my life be a sacrifice to Him!

After receiving us, 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, "You are very welcome and it makes me happy to see you here in London."

Looking at me he said, "Never have I united anyone in marriage before, except my own daughters, but as I love you much, and you have rendered a great service to the Kingdom of Abhá, both in this country and in other lands, I will perform your marriage ceremony today. It is my hope that you may both continue in the blessed path of service."

Then, first, 'Abdu'l-Bahá took Nur Mahal Khánum into the next room and said to her, "Do you love Mirza Yuhanna Dawud with all your heart and soul?" She answered, "Yes, I do."

Then 'Abdu'l-Bahá called me to him and put a similar question, that is to say, "Do you love Nur Mahal Khánum with all your heart and soul?" I answered "Yes, I do." We re-entered the room together and 'Abdu'l-Bahá took the right hand of the bride and gave it into that of the bridegroom and asked us to say after him, "We do all to please God."

We all sat down and 'Abdu'l-Bahá continued; "Marriage is a holy institution and much encouraged in this blessed cause. Now you two are no longer two, but one. Bahá'u'lláh's wish is that all men be of one mind and consider themselves of one great household, that the mind of mankind be not divided against itself.

"It is my wish and hope that you may be blessed in your life. May God help you to render great service to the kingdom of Abhá and may you become a means of its advancement.

"May joy be increased to you as the years go by, and may you become thriving trees bearing delicious and fragrant fruits which are the blessings in the path of service."

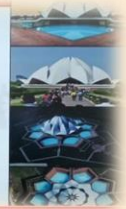
When we came out, all the assembled friends both of Persia and London congratulated us on the great honour that had been bestowed upon us, and we were invited to dine by the kind hostess.

- 'Abdu'l-Bahá, 'Abdu'l-Bahá in London

News and Events:

News from our twin community of Jaipur, India

Here is a sample of activities in pictures of many junior youth groups, Ruhi study groups, children's classes, and devotional and prayer meetings in different parts of Rajasthan.



The Bahá'í World News Service

Building a More Caring World: Implications for the Family and the Community



INDORE, India — A confluence of global crises—including the global health pandemic, economic downturns, and environmental disasters—has renewed a willingness in public consciousness to explore paths to building social, economic, and political structures grounded in a culture of care.

In response to this growing interest, the Bahá'í Chair for Studies in Development at Devi Ahilya University, Indore, has initiated a discussion series titled “Building a More Caring World: Implications for the Family, the Community, and the Market.”

The gatherings, two of which have already taken place, focused on the spheres of the family and community. These sessions brought together academics and representatives of civil society, delving into

the implications of fostering care within these spheres. Future discussions will expand on the implications for the market.

Challenging assumptions about human nature

In a document prepared by the Bahá'í Chair for the discussions, a deep-rooted concern is raised: generations have faced societal systems—whether social, economic, or political—that minimize or neglect the essential, life-sustaining role of care.

*The document emphasizes that addressing this challenge necessitates a reevaluation of dominant conceptions of human nature. Models that depict humans as largely self-interested, such as *Homo economicus* or *Homo politicus*, have deeply influenced our societal structures. These views champion self-centered and competitive behaviors and obscure the vital roles of altruism, cooperation, and community-minded actions.*

The value of care

Arash Fazli, Assistant Professor and Head of the Bahá'í Chair, spoke about the devaluation of care in society, stating: “Although we constantly depend on the nurturing, companionship, and support of others in our environment, the true value of care in sustaining life and fostering human capabilities often remains unrecognized.”

He noted: “Care work, often associated with the household, has traditionally been seen as part of the feminine private domain, contrasting with the masculine public domain where work is more widely recognized and valued.”

This devaluation, said Dr. Fazli, has profound implications for expectations that are placed on women in society, impacting their personal and professional trajectories. “In patriarchal orders, where achievement, autonomy, and independence are valued in men, there is often an expectation of women to be selfless and prioritize family devotion.”

He added that these societal perceptions and expectations can create challenges and barriers for those seeking opportunities in higher education and participation in the workforce.

Sudeshna Sengupta, an independent researcher and consultant, explored this idea further, saying that many societies operate on the assumption that a “caregiver, typically the mother, will be present at home.” This often results in limited services and support structures that are available to families with children under the age of three.

Ms. Sengupta pointed out that certain welfare policies may inadvertently place the responsibility on women to fill care provision gaps. This can pose challenges, especially for economically underprivileged women who are expected to tend to familial care needs while also engaging in part-time work.

Mubashira Zaidi, from the Institute of Social Studies Trust in New Delhi, added that these challenges are further compounded because of care needs that extend beyond children to the elderly and people with disabilities.

Fostering equality through moral education

Drawing from the Bahá'í teachings on the equality of women and men, Dr. Fazli emphasized the family's role as fundamental to societal transformation. He stated, "The surest way to replace oppressive gender norms is by addressing the concepts and practices instilled in young minds from their earliest years within the family setting." This environment primarily shapes perceptions of masculinity and femininity.

Dr. Fazli emphasized the broader challenge at hand. Beyond sharing domestic responsibilities, there is a need to "raise boys and girls who aspire to build their capabilities in service to humanity and our planet."

Bhavana Issar, Founder & CEO of Caregiver Saathi Foundation, underscored the profound influence of family dynamics, stating that the family's nurturing environment significantly "shapes the values we carry, not only within our families but also in our interactions with the world."

The paper prepared by the Bahá'í Chair for these gatherings elaborates on the broader implications of care, stating that when we view humanity through a lens of care, we recognize all people as part of a single "human family... with each individual possessing an innate moral worth," and each demanding treatment with dignity and respect.

Community as a pillar of care

While families provide a foundation for fostering caring societies, it is within communities that broader patterns of interaction, cooperation, and resilience are established and reinforced.

Dr. Fazli noted that communities offer a "natural setting for cultivating caring relationships."

Martha Moghbelpour, member of the Bahá'í Office of Social Action in India, highlighted the transformative power of education in nurturing caring communities. Using an analogy from the Bahá'í teachings, she described individuals as mines rich in gems of infinite value, suggesting that every person has untapped potential, which education can release. She emphasized that through education, people can develop their ability to foster unity, understanding, and cooperation within their communities.

Elaborating further, Ms. Moghbelpour shared stories of a culture of care that has been fostered by young people engaged in Bahá'í educational endeavors throughout India. The pandemic, she noted, brought to the fore the essence of community resilience, with many instances when youth "arose selflessly and volunteered to assist one another even in the most frightening circumstances."

The bonds of friendship that these youth had nurtured through Bahá'í educational programs underscore the significance of service to society in building caring and resilient communities, she said.

Ms. Issar added that "in caring for someone else we actually live a purposeful life.

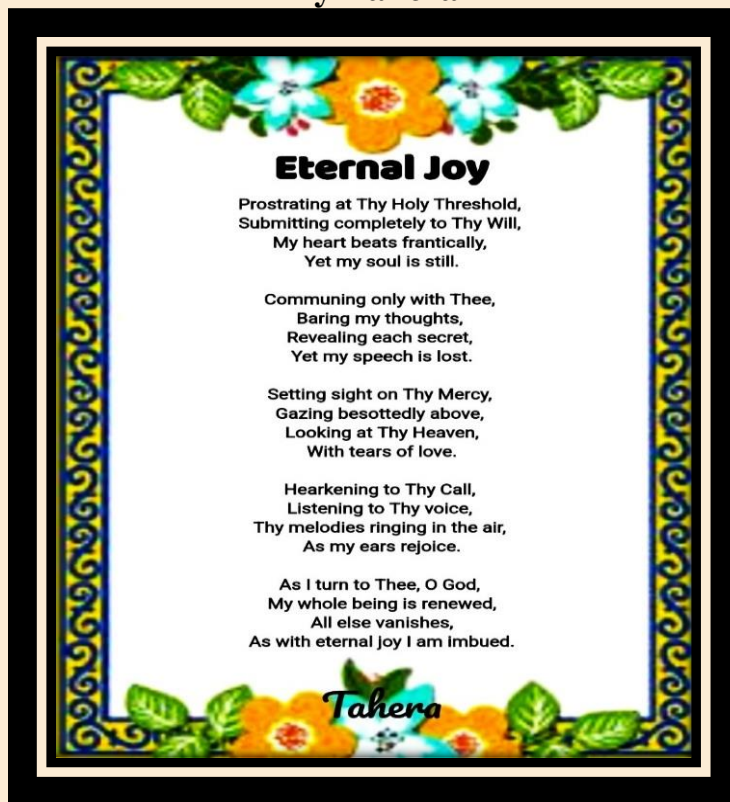
"This is," she said, "the very essence of being a human being."

In his concluding remarks, Dr. Fazli emphasized, "To achieve social and economic justice, we must first acknowledge prevailing injustices." He highlighted the need for a reexamination of societal values, envisioning a future where care is placed at the forefront and recognized in all its manifestations.

The Chair's next gathering in this discussion series will focus on the implications of new conceptions of a more caring world on "the market."

Poem of the month:

By Tahera



From the pages of history

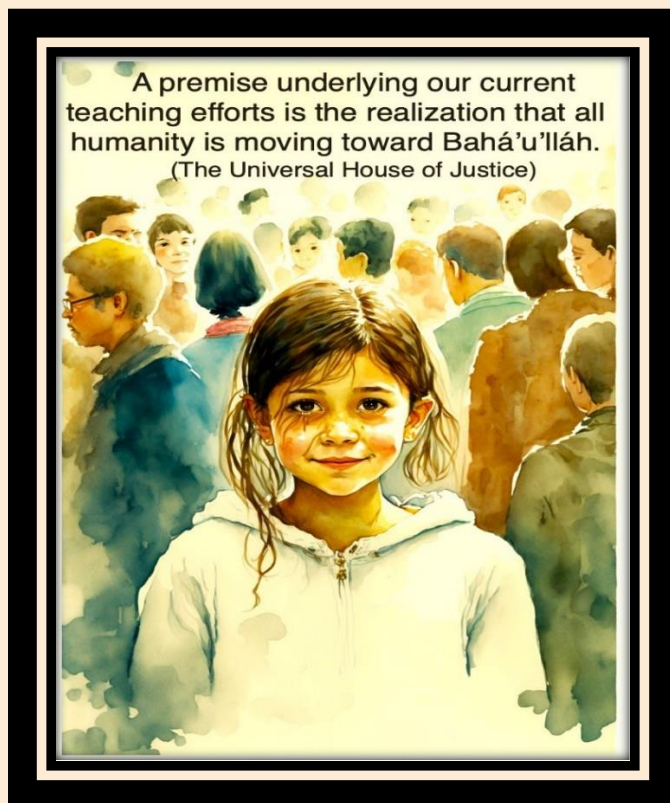
Incident related by leader of the Bab's escort

The Bab straightway resumed His journey to Shiraz. Free and unfettered, He went before His escort, which followed Him in an attitude of respectful devotion. By the magic of His words, He had disarmed the hostility of His guards and transmuted their proud arrogance into humility and love. Reaching the city, they proceeded directly to the seat of the government. Whosoever observed the cavalcade marching through the streets could not help but marvel at this most unusual spectacle. Immediately Husayn Khan was informed of the arrival of the Bab, he summoned Him to his presence. He received Him with the utmost insolence and bade Him occupy a seat facing him in the centre of the room. He publicly rebuked Him, and in abusive language denounced His conduct. "Do you realise," he angrily protested, "what a great mischief you have kindled? Are you aware what a disgrace you have become to the holy Faith of Islam and to the august person of our sovereign? Are you not the man who claims to be the author of a new revelation which annuls the sacred precepts of the Qur'an?" The Bab calmly replied: "If any bad man come unto you with news, clear up the matter at once, lest through ignorance ye harm others, and be speedily constrained to repent of what ye have done."⁽¹⁾ These words inflamed the wrath of Husayn Khan. "What!" he exclaimed. "Dare you ascribe to us evil, ignorance, and folly?" Turning to his attendant, he bade him strike the Bab in the face. So violent was the blow, that the Bab's turban fell to

the ground. Shaykh Abu-Turab, the Imam-Jum'ih of Shiraz, who was present at that meeting and who strongly disapproved of the conduct of Husayn Khan, ordered that the Bab's turban be replaced upon His head, and invited Him to be seated by his side. Turning to the governor, the Imam-Jum'ih explained to him the circumstances connected with the revelation of the verse of the Qur'an which the Bab had quoted, and sought by this means to calm his fury. "This verse which this youth has quoted," he told him, "has made a profound impression upon me. The wise course, I feel, is to enquire into this matter with great care, and to judge him according to the precepts of the holy Book." Husayn Khan readily consented; whereupon Shaykh Abu-Turab questioned the Bab regarding the nature and character of His Revelation. The Bab denied the claim of being either the representative of the promised Qa'im or the intermediary between Him and the faithful. "We are completely satisfied," replied the Imam-Jum'ih; "we shall request you to present yourself on Friday in the Masjid-i-Vakil, and to proclaim publicly your denial." As Shaykh Abu-Turab arose to depart in the hope of terminating the proceedings, Husayn Khan intervened and said: "We shall require a person of recognised standing to give bail and surety for him, and to pledge his word in writing that if ever in future this youth should attempt by word or deed to prejudice the interests either of the Faith of Islam or of the government of this land, he would straightway deliver him into our hands, and regard himself under all circumstances responsible for his behaviour." Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali, the Bab's maternal uncle, who was present at that meeting, consented to act as the sponsor of his Nephew. In his own handwriting he wrote the pledge, affixed to it his seal, confirmed it by the signature of a number of witnesses, and delivered it to the governor; whereupon Husayn Khan ordered that the Bab be entrusted to the care of His uncle, with the condition that at whatever time the governor should deem it advisable, Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali would at once deliver the Bab into his hands. -THE DAWN-BREAKERS & NABIL'S NARRATIVE

Sharing

Douglas's sharing:



News and Nuggets from Other Religions and Communities



The Quran: A Message of Peace and Guidance from God

*Muslims also believe that God sent revealed books as guidance to humanity through His prophets. These include the Torah given to Moses, the Gospel conferred upon Jesus, and the Quran received by Muhammad (peace be upon him). The **Quran** is the last revelation from God, consisting of God's literal speech. It confirms truths from the previous scriptures and maintains the same core message of worshipping God and living righteously. God has ensured that the Quran is protected from corruption, safeguarding it for all of humanity to benefit from until the end of time. It is the only holy book that has been meticulously preserved in its original text. (Click here to find out more about the Quran.)*

Purpose of Life

Islam clearly addresses one of the most central and challenging questions in human history: "What is the purpose of life?" God declares in the Quran, "And I did not create ... mankind except to worship Me." (51:56) For Muslims, the purpose of life is to worship God, the Creator of all things. Worship in Islam is a comprehensive concept that urges people to be conscious of God throughout their daily lives and provides a framework to help people live a balanced and virtuous life.

Islam: A Way of Life That Promotes Strong Moral Character and Just Societies

This way of life promotes strong moral character, good relations with people, and just and harmonious societies. Devoting one's self to a life of submission to God is the key to attaining a true sense of peace because it produces a balance of spiritual needs with worldly affairs. It also lends special meaning to the concept of living one's life responsibly, aware of the accountability to come in the hereafter.

Belief in the Day of Judgment is extremely important in Islam. This event will signal the transition between the temporary life of this world to the eternal life in the hereafter. On that day, people will be resurrected and held accountable for their deeds in life, which will determine their eternal destination in Heaven or Hell. Many verses in the Quran describe the events on the Day of Judgment in great detail and give a description of Heaven and Hell.

From the editor's desk

Gross National Happiness & Other Alternative Economic Approaches

We live in an age in which new ideas are born each day in every field of learning. I find the many alternative ideas and theories suggesting new ways of solving our economic problems quite interesting. As a member of the Baha'i Faith, I like to examine these theories from a religious point of view.

Of all the new concepts, I am especially attracted to Gross National Happiness and barefoot economics.

Gross National Happiness

As you probably know, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)—the total production of a given country—is the yardstick typically used to measure the economic progress or growth of a nation. A higher GDP means more production and more growth in a given country. However, the GDP's effectiveness has been challenged by other concepts, such as Gross National Happiness (GNH).

A system introduced by the king of Bhutan in 1972, GNH is calculated by an index that measures the collective happiness and well-being of a population. GNH is the goal of the government of Bhutan, as stated in its constitution, enacted on 18 July 2008. The Bhutan GNH Index was first published in 2012.

GNH values collective happiness as the goal of governance by emphasizing harmony with nature and traditional values, as expressed in nine domains of happiness and four pillars of GNH. The four pillars are:

1. Sustainable and equitable socio-economic development
2. Environmental conservation
3. Preservation and promotion of culture
4. Good governance

The nine domains of GNH are psychological well-being, health, time use, education, cultural diversity and resilience, good governance, community vitality, ecological diversity, and living standards.

Barefoot Economics

Acclaimed Chilean economist Manfred Max-Neef introduced the concept of "barefoot economics" in the 1980s. He explained, "The point is, you know, that economists study and analyze poverty in their nice offices, have all the statistics, make all the models, and are convinced that they know everything that you can know about poverty. But they don't understand poverty."

He believes we must look at economics with a new approach and change it fundamentally—or else humanity will have a disastrous future. He says a good economic system has to be desirable to everyone since it is supposed to be designed and implemented for everyone. He is disappointed that most governments and economists in the world failed to learn from the financial crisis of 2008.

Max-Neef suggests we build a new economic system based on five postulates and one fundamental value. The five postulates are:

1. The economy exists to serve the people rather than the people existing to serve the economy
2. Development is about people and not about objects
3. Growth is not the same as development, and development does not necessarily require growth
4. No economy is possible in the absence of ecosystem services
5. The economy is a subsystem of a larger finite system, the biosphere, and so permanent growth is impossible

The fundamental value for sustaining a new economy should be that economic interest will never be allowed, under any circumstances, to be valued above the reverence of life.

The central themes of GNH and barefoot economics—humanity’s happiness and respect for nature.

It’s exciting to me that so many people with great awareness are looking at the economic problems of the world and offering remedies for their ills. I believe some of these wonderful ideas offered by so many amazing people will be considered for and incorporated into future economic systems. For now, let us look for new ideas to solve our economic problems.

Famous quotes:



Holy Writings to Ponder and Practice

“O SON OF MAN! For everything there is a sign. The sign of love is fortitude under My decree and patience under My trials.” -Bahá’u’lláh

Upcoming Events:

Coming feast, Mashiyat/Will, September 27, 2023

Next feast, Ilm/Knowledge, October 16, 2023

Birthday of the Bab, October 16, 2023

Birthday of Baha'u'llah, October 17, 2023

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