

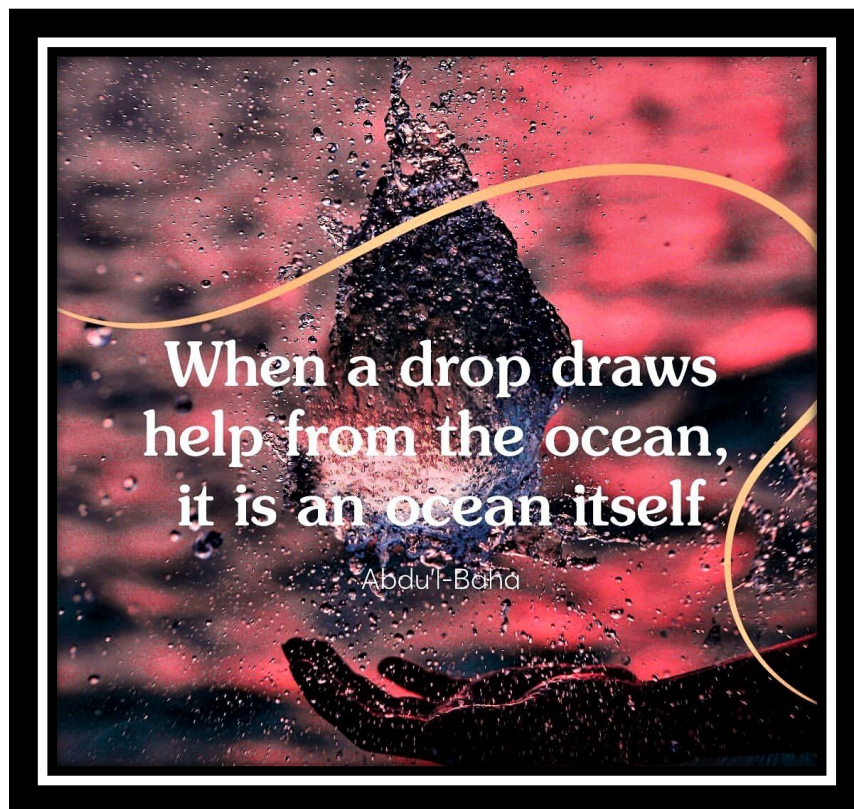


Port Alberni Nuggets

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Baha'i Quote of the Month



Baha'i Stories:

Ego

The local Opera House had been rented for Abu'l-Fadl's talks and it was packed. Probably more than a thousand people had come. And, before this crowd Abu'l-Fadl rose to speak. For a moment, he stood there, his eyes roving over all the lifted, waiting faces, and suddenly he thought 'This trip is proving very successful! I am doing very well, this is a cause for great pride and satisfaction and when I return to Acca the Master will be well pleased with me. Truly I am doing well.' And, with this thought, the mind of

Abu'l-Fadl went completely blank. He did not know who he was or why he was standing on this platform with all these people looking at him or what he was supposed to say. Then, instantly he realized what had happened. He had taken it upon himself to feel that it was HE who had accomplished this success; it was HIS words that would reach the hearts; it was HE - HE - HE - who had been proud. And, as he realized this he turned, in abject shame, to Bahá'u'lláh, imploring His forgiveness and begging Him to fill his heart once more with His Light to move his lips again with His Word. And immediately Abu'l-Fadl's prayer was answered, and the talk went forward. Later, Abu'l-Fadl asked Dr. Khan how long it had been that he stood there tongue-tied and blank - for it had seemed to Abu'l-Fadl that he must have disgraced himself before that great audience. But Khan assured him that it had been no time at all that there had been no break in the discourse. But it is to be noted that - many years afterward - 'Abdu'l-Bahá particularly praised Abu'l-Fadl for being one of the very rare souls who never used the pronouns 'I' or 'me' or 'mine.' ~Reginald Grant Barrow, Mother's Stories: Stories of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Early Believers told by Muriel Ives Barrow Newhall to her son.

News and Events:

News from Port Alberni

Sadly, we lost one of our LSA members Jodi Rocke.

Some of you did not get the chance to see her since she had been sick the past few years, but along with her daughter Roxanne, they were the mainstay in our community. Her house was a common place for holding the feast, and she loved having friends in her house. She was a poetess and wrote poems (a sample is below).

Please pray for the progress of her soul in the Abha Kingdom.



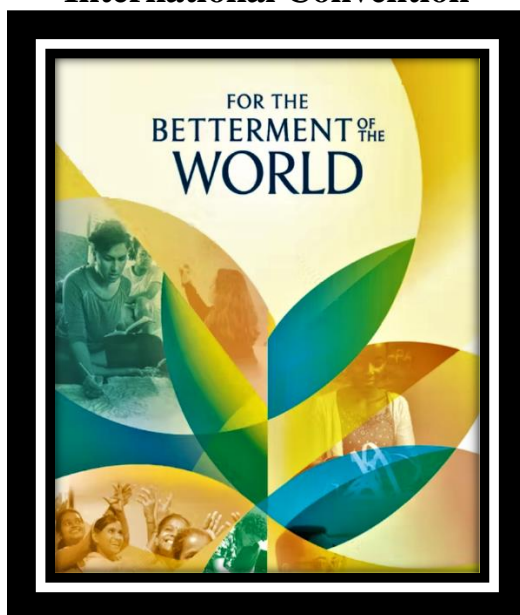
News from our twin community of Jaipur, India

1st, 9th and 12th days of Ridvan were celebrated in many communities, including Jaipur. A summer Campaign started in the Todabhim cluster of Rajasthan, which will continue from 10th May to 19th May 2023. Activities such as devotionals, children's classes and Junior Youth Groups continue as usual.



The Bahá'í World News Service

“For the Betterment of the World”: Publication sees release of new edition at International Convention



BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE — A new edition of the publication titled *For the Betterment of the World* has been released, casting light on the efforts of the Bahá'í community, together with social actors from all walks of life, to contribute to material and social progress.

This publication, prepared by the Bahá'í International Development Organization at the Bahá'í World Centre, provides an illustration of how Bahá'í social and economic development is being carried out.

An essential feature of this enterprise, states the publication, is an evolving framework for collective learning, rooted in spiritual principles from the Bahá'í teachings and the conviction that all human beings “have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization.” The publication explores some key elements of this framework, providing examples of efforts from all parts of the world.

Principles and approaches

Over the decades, development has come to be recognized as a complex process that cannot be solved by materialistic approaches alone, states the publication. Policymakers and practitioners have become increasingly interested in learning about the role of spirituality and religion in enhancing development practice.

For the Betterment of the World examines this idea, exploring several concepts and principles that are essential to the pursuit of Bahá'í efforts in social action, including: oneness and justice, calling for a reconceptualization of the relationships that sustain society; harmony of science and religion, highlighting that “religion without science soon degenerates into superstition and fanaticism, while science without religion becomes merely the instrument of crude materialism”; and universal participation, requiring the widest participation of every member of the human family from all backgrounds.

Closely related to the aim of universal participation is the concept of capacity building at all levels of society, which views people, communities, and institutions as protagonists in marking their own path of development.

An implication of this principle highlighted in the publication is that social change is not a project that one group carries out for the benefit of another. Rather, in recognizing that no nation or people have achieved a state of true peace and prosperity that can serve as a model for others to follow, what is required is a process of learning in every social and cultural context about the meaning and implications of development in all its dimensions—material, spiritual, and social.

Areas of action and spectrum of activities

The publication explores a wide array of Bahá'í development efforts, from small-scale grassroots projects to complex development programs implemented by Bahá'í-inspired organizations.

These endeavors represent responses to local needs and are related to one or more areas, including education, agriculture, the environment, arts and media, health, the local economy, the advancement of women, and humanitarian relief. The examples span a range of social and cultural settings on every continent, illustrating that for the Bahá'í community, development is a process that necessarily involves community building and local action in every part of the world.

The publication affirms that by learning to combine the perspectives of religion and science in these efforts, new insights and pathways for the betterment of the human condition can emerge.

Ongoing process of learning

For the Betterment of the World highlights learning as a central theme and mode of operation in Bahá'í social action endeavors. This involves ongoing study, consultation, action, and reflection, all carried out in light of insights from science and religion. This process is supported by evolving arrangements and structures at all levels, from the local to the international, to facilitate learning about development. Through this learning process, insights from neighborhoods and villages are connected to a broader body of knowledge by regional and national Bahá'í institutions, and the Bahá'í International Development Organization serves as a learning entity dedicated to synthesizing worldwide experiences in development.

The systematization of learning enables communities worldwide to benefit from the growing body of knowledge about development and contribute to it.

Poem of the month



From the pages of history

Arrival at Jaddih, and an incident on the way to Mecca

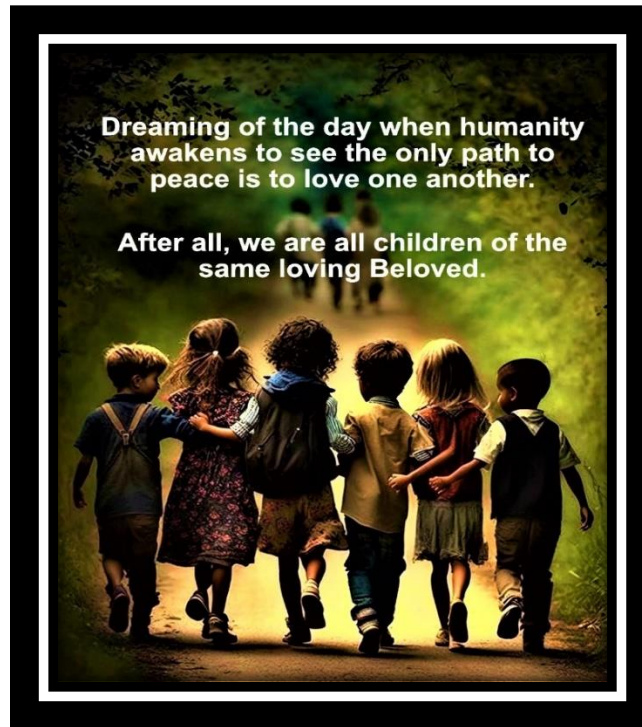
Upon His arrival in Jaddih, the Bab donned the pilgrim's garb, mounted a camel, and set out on His journey to Mecca. Quddus, however, notwithstanding the repeatedly expressed desire of his Master, preferred to accompany Him on foot all the way from Jaddih to that holy city. Holding in his hand the bridle of the camel upon which the Bab was riding, he walked along joyously and prayerfully, ministering to his Master's needs, wholly indifferent to the fatigues of his arduous march. Every night, from eventide until the break of day, Quddus, sacrificing comfort and sleep, would continue with

unrelaxing vigilance to watch beside his Beloved, ready to provide for His wants and to ensure the means of His protection and safety.

One day, when the Bab had dismounted close to a well in order to offer His morning prayer, a roving Bedouin suddenly appeared on the horizon, drew near to Him, and, snatching the saddlebag that had been lying on the ground beside Him, and which contained His writings and papers, vanished into the unknown desert. His Ethiopian servant set out to pursue him, but was prevented by his Master, who, as He was praying, motioned to him with His hand to give up his pursuit. "Had I allowed you," the Bab later on affectionately assured him, "you would surely have overtaken and punished him. But this was not to be. The papers and writings which that bag contained are destined to reach, through the instrumentality of this Arab, such places as we could never have succeeded in attaining. Grieve not, therefore, at his action, for this was decreed by God, the Ordainer, the Almighty." Many a time afterwards did the Bab on similar occasions seek to comfort His friends by such reflections. By words such as these He turned the bitterness of regret and of resentment into radiant acquiescence in the Divine purpose and into joyous submission to God's will. -THE DAWN-BREAKERS & NABIL'S NARRATIVE

Sharing

Douglas and Badi's sharing (Artwork by Douglas and words by Badi):



News and Nuggets from Other Religions and Communities



SERVING THE ONE IN ALL
SIKH DHARMA
INTERNATIONAL

Sikhs Practices (Part Two)



Seva – Selfless Service

The practice of “Seva” must have originated with our most ancient human ancestors in their earliest acts of compassion, simply helping someone without regard for any compensation. This virtue has been embraced at the heart of Sikh Dharma as the highest expression of worship – serving the God within each human. It is the doing of the service that is important, not merely the feeling of compassion or empathy. In each moment of doing seva, a Sikh holds an inner intention of prayerful connection to the Divine – connection to the Divine present in the person who is being served; but also the connection to the Divine in all materials involved in the seva, like the food one may be distributing or the water being used to clean.

In gurdwaras around the world, seva is pervasive in all activities. From the sweeping of floors, to the cooking of the langar, to the leading of the kirtan, Sikhs are encouraged and expected to participate in serving the needs of the gurdwara. But this expectation of serving extends beyond the needs of the congregation, into the surrounding community. At all times, the food prepared in the gurdwara kitchens is offered freely to anyone, Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike. At the most sacred of gurdwaras, the Harimandir Sahib (the Golden Temple) in Amritsar, India, over 100,000 people are served food every day. During times of natural disaster and suffering, Sikhs can often be seen at the forefront of relief efforts.

Simran – Repeated Remembering of the Divine

Perhaps one of Guru Nanak’s most important teachings was to use the power of Simran to transform and elevate consciousness. When we repeat a mantra or some lines of Gurbani, we are practicing Simran. Sometimes referred to as “Naam Simran” or “Naam Jappo”, this technology has its roots in ancient yogic teachings. It is a meditative practice that creates a powerful vibration or wave of sound or “Naad”. As we practice Simran, the “Naad” we are repeating overwhelms our inner dialog, which then brings a stillness (shuniya) to our mind. Practiced either aloud or silently, Simran shifts the mind away from negative thoughts and habits. When practiced deeply, Simran creates a feeling of majesty and divine alignment.

Wearing of the 5 K's (Kara, Kesh, Kirpan, Kacheras, Kanga)

At the first Amrit ceremony, Guru Gobind Singh gave the Rehit, or self-discipline, which was recorded and passed down through the generations: The Rehit includes wearing the Five Kakar’s (5 K’s)

Kesh: uncut hair. A Khalsa does not cut or trim their hair. The hair is given by the Divine for a purpose so you keep it as it has been given to you.

Kangha: a wooden comb worn in the hair under the turban. It is worn as part of a commitment to keeping yourself and your physical world graceful and clean.

Kirpan: literally means “kindness.” The kirpan is a small sword. It is to be used only in self-defense or to protect those who are unable to defend themselves.

Kara: a steel or iron bangle worn on the left wrist for women and the right wrist for men. The Kara shows that you live as a slave to the Divine.

Kachhera: cotton shorts worn as a reminder and aid to keep the creative sexual energy in balance.

Gurdwara – place of worship and protocols

The Gurdwara is “The Door to the Guru,” or “The Guru’s Gate.”

When we enter Gurdwara, we are in the actual Presence of our living Guru, the Siri Guru Granth Sahib. Siri Guru Granth Sahib is the embodiment of the Word, the Shabads, the Songs of worship and prayer of the Gurus. Guru Nanak, the first of the Sikh Gurus, received the Guruship from the Word of God, and transmitted It to all mankind. The Mantle of Guruship passed through ten bodies, until Guru Gobind Singh, the Tenth Master, compiled these sacred teachings into their present form, and gave the Guruship back to the Word of God, where it now resides, and will for all time. When we enter the Presence of the Guru, we do so with ultimate respect and humility. All that we think and say and do in the Presence of the Guru should reflect this attitude of gratitude and humility.

The key to all behavior in Gurdwara is grace. Whatever you do, maintain your grace. Gurdwara is a group meditation – please respect the devotion and the love of the other members of the Sadh Sangat, the Company of the Holy. They are in Gurdwara to experience the Guru, to receive His Blessing, and grow in consciousness.

From the editor’s desk:

We Grow When We're Uncomfortable

I always thought that life has to be without difficulties and full of happiness because God wanted it that way. I also observed in my dealings with friends and family, and later on, in my involvement with the education system, that we have imparted this expectation to the next generation.

In schools, we would be alarmed if we saw the sign of unhappiness and would start making arrangements to remedy this condition and, in some cases, use the aids of professionals and medications, which of course, are essential in severe and chronic cases. In most cases, it was an interruption of the process of the individuals finding in a hard way their place in the universe trying to figure a course of action.

I was not sure that our interference and interrupting were the right thing to do. Knowing how the difficulties, such as facing religious prejudice, racial prejudice, health issues, poverty, and being a refugee for a long time, helped me be the person who I am today. Those experiences purified my soul and toughened my ability to deal with unexpected events and happenings.

I am so grateful for those difficult times and happy that nothing interrupted that process even though I hoped it would end.

So the question is if this has been so good for me and how it has made me more reliant on a higher power than relying on my parents, family, and friends, then should I not share it? I am so thankful to have experienced them, and I wish that I could impart that feeling to others and explain the benefits of hardships and tests in life. That would be my gift to the next generation.

The cause of most of the problems in our life is our mistakes, but if we were not allowed to make mistakes, why would God give us the free will knowing full well that we will not listen to His teachings and guidance, which He has sent through His Manifestations?

I believe that there is a pearl of wisdom and blessing in tests and difficulties, and there are many writings from all religions that support this.

Industrialization brought freedom from the physical world, and humanity started to master the elements with the help of inventions. With the invention of the steam engine, the process of conquering the forces of nature accelerated. It led to the construction and improvement of roads, railways, ships, airplanes, and other means of comfort.

The sciences opened up new opportunities to improve humanity's quality of physical life, which was extremely hard until then. These processes stepped up after the second war. Humanity was intoxicated with a great desire to have more of whatever made life more comfortable. Movies — Hollywood in particular — newspapers, television, radio and other mass media promoted this trend. The education system became a path to achieving money to live a life without discomfort since money could supposedly solve all problems.

Every generation wants the best for the next and tries to make it as easy for them as possible, believing that it is the best way to raise children or educate them, and they go to great lengths and put so much energy into making things easy for their kids. Parents use their influence and wealth to get them to where they want them to go, living a life of ease and comfort so that they can live happily ever after.

The Baha'i writings remind me of the crucial elements of educating the children, and one of the factors is to "accustom them to hardship."

"While the children are yet in their infancy feed them from the breast of heavenly grace, foster them in the cradle of all excellence, rear them in the embrace of bounty. Give them the advantage of every useful kind of knowledge. Let them share in every new and rare and wondrous craft and art. Bring them up to work and strive, and accustom them to hardship. Teach them to dedicate their lives to matters of great import, and inspire them to undertake studies that will benefit mankind." -Abdu'l-Baha

Going through challenges and overcoming them gives young people self-esteem and confidence, which is essential for their growth. These difficult times are tough and rough on the outside but have a precious gift inside them.

Overcoming challenges are a learning process in the classroom of life. The ignored point is that obstacles, setbacks, sadness, illness, losses, and many more things are essential for understanding ourselves and our role in this world.

I have not yet heard anyone complaining or questioning why everything is going so right for them. No one goes to a doctor or other professionals to get rid of the extreme feeling of happiness. We have been taught that life has to be a bed of roses, so it is natural to be happy. We have not been taught that difficult times are also crucial and vital for our growth.

We can change our mindset. All religions and great minds have taught us that life is a series of tests and difficulties. The creator designs them to test our physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of life to find out and realize how we have done at the end of our lives. The price of failing and the reward of overcoming them are too high.

Famous quotes:



Upcoming Events:

Coming feast, Azamat/Grandeur, May 17, 2023

Next feast, Nur/Light, June 5, 2023

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