



Port Alberni Nuggets

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Kamal/Perfection, 180, BE

Baha'i Quote of the Month



Baha'i Stories:

Contentment

The Master sometimes made His points through telling stories. Julia Grundy recorded the following story of His: 'A master had a slave who was completely devoted to him. One day he gave the slave a melon which when cut open looked most ripe and delicious. The slave ate one piece, then another and another with great relish (the day being warm) until nearly the whole melon had disappeared. The master, picking up the last slice, tasted it and found it exceedingly bitter and unpalatable. "Why, it is bitter! Did you not find it so?" he asked the servant. "Yes, my Master," the slave replied, "it was bitter and unpleasant, but I have tasted so much sweetness from thy hand that one bitter melon was not worth mentioning."'-Honnold, Annamarie, Vignettes from the Life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

News and Events:

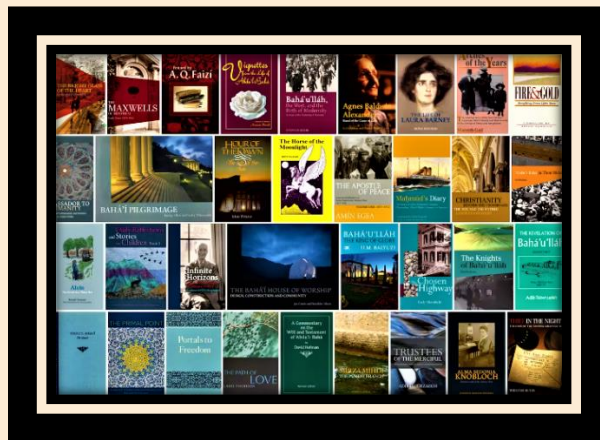
News from our twin community of Jaipur, India

Sadly, Mrs. Gulshan, one of the oldest servants of Baha'u'llah in Jaipur, passed away. I have fond memories of serving with her on the LSA. Besides the ongoing JY groups, devotionals and children's classes, a study circle was organized in Sri Ram's Nangal, after which a Service project was launched. Various classes are held, including the Dawn Breaker class every Sunday. The State Bahai Council invited all the Local Spiritual Assemblies of Rajasthan to consult on the duties and responsibilities of LSA's.



The Bahá'í World News Service

United Kingdom: George Ronald Publisher marks 80th anniversary



***OXFORD, United Kingdom** — In 1943, amid the upheaval of a global conflict, a new chapter began in the life of actor David Hofman. Known for his work on the stage, Mr. Hofman found his love for storytelling moving in a direction that resonated deeply with his convictions. Alongside him in this journey was his wife, Marion Hofman, whose efforts played a vital role in the realization of their shared aspirations.*

Inspired by Bahá'u'lláh's vision of a peaceful world, Mr. Hofman turned to literature, dedicating his creative energy to publishing books that made that vision available to many people. This decision led to the establishment of George Ronald Publisher—an endeavor committed to enriching the growing body of Bahá'í literature. When Mr. Hofman was elected to the Universal House of Justice in 1963, Marion Hofman took the helm of the publishing house, continuing the important work they had begun together.

Eighty years later, a vibrant gathering of authors from around the world, members of the publishing industry, and representatives from Bahá'í institutions gathered in Arcott, Oxfordshire, to mark George Ronald's 80th-anniversary.

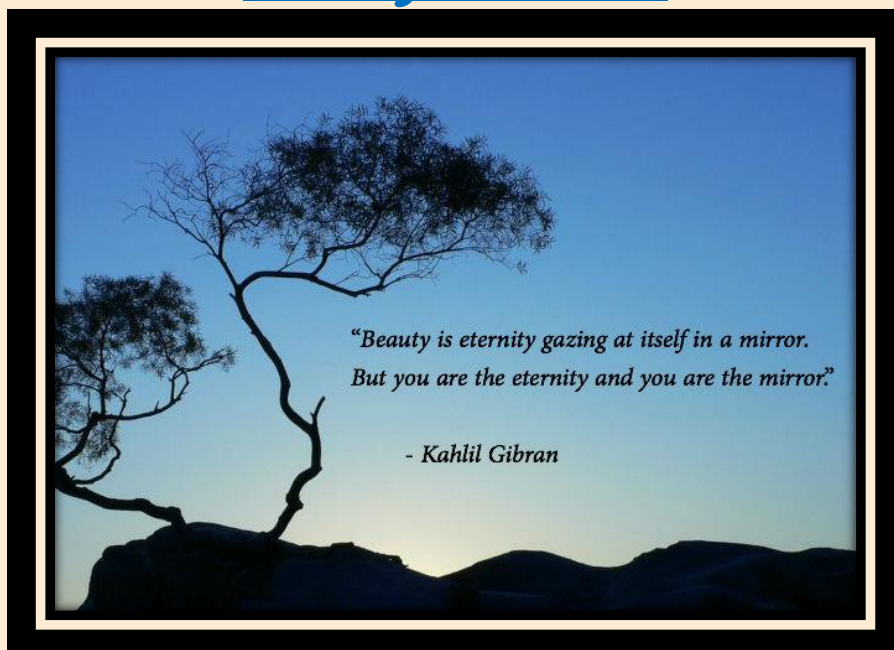
May Hofman recalls a pivotal moment in her father's life when he sought guidance from Shoghi Effendi about pursuing a new path in life, stating: "Shoghi Effendi's encouragement saw this dream flourish into the reality that we are celebrating today."

The ethos of George Ronald was already clear from its earliest years when the publisher made an indelible contribution to Bahá'í literature by providing books to the German Bahá'í community to replace those lost during the Second World War.

The 80th-anniversary celebration not only highlighted the journey of George Ronald Publisher but also recognized the contributions of its authors worldwide whose works span a broad range of themes including the application of Bahá'í principles to social progress, fundamental Bahá'í beliefs and practices, comprehensive introductions to the Central Figures of the Bahá'í Faith, and in-depth explorations of Bahá'í community life. Today, George Ronald collaborates with over 170 authors and has over 300 books in print.

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom, in a message to the publisher on its anniversary, stated: "Countless souls worldwide have cherished your publications, books that have... cultivated the intellectual life of the Bahá'í community, and preserved priceless works of scholarship."

Poem of the month



From the pages of history

Visit of Quddus to the Bab's maternal uncle in Shiraz

Quddus, with feelings of unshakable determination to carry out the expressed wishes of his Master, set out from Bushihr. Arriving at Shiraz, he was affectionately welcomed by Haji Mirza Siyyid Ali, who received him in his own home and eagerly enquired after the health and doings of his beloved Kinsman. Finding him receptive to the call of the new Message, Quddus acquainted him with the nature of the Revelation with which that Youth had already fired his soul. The Bab's maternal uncle, as a result of the endeavours exerted by Quddus, was the first, after the Letters of the Living, to embrace the Cause in Shiraz. As the full significance of the new-born Faith had remained as yet undivulged, he was unaware of the full extent of its implications and glory. His conversation with Quddus, however, removed the veil from his eyes. So steadfast became his faith, and so profound grew his love for the Bab, that he consecrated his whole life to His service. With unrelaxing vigilance he arose to defend His Cause and to shield His person. In his sustained endeavours, he scorned fatigue and was disdainful of death. Though recognised as an outstanding figure among the business men of that city, he never allowed material considerations to interfere with his spiritual responsibility of safeguarding the person, and advancing the Cause, of his beloved Kinsman. He persevered in his task until the hour when, joining the company of the Seven Martyrs of Tihran, he, in circumstances of exceptional heroism, laid down his life for Him.

The next person whom Quddus met in Shiraz was Ismu'llahu'l-Asdaq, Mulla Sadiq-i-Khurasani, to whom he entrusted the copy of the Khasa'il-i-Sab'ih, and stressed the necessity of putting into effect immediately all its provisions. Among its precepts was the emphatic injunction of the Bab to every loyal believer to add the following words to the traditional formula of the adhan.⁽¹⁾ "I bear witness that He whose name is Ali-Qabl-i-Muhammad⁽²⁾ is the servant of the Baqiyyatu'-

illah." Mulla Sadiq, who in those days had been extolling from the pulpit-top to large audiences the virtues of the imams of the Faith, was so enraptured by the theme and language of that treatise that he unhesitatingly resolved to carry out all the observances it ordained. Driven by the impelling force inherent in that Tablet, he, one day as he was leading his congregation in prayer in the Masjid-i-Naw, suddenly proclaimed, as he was sounding the adhan, the additional words prescribed by the Bab. The multitude that

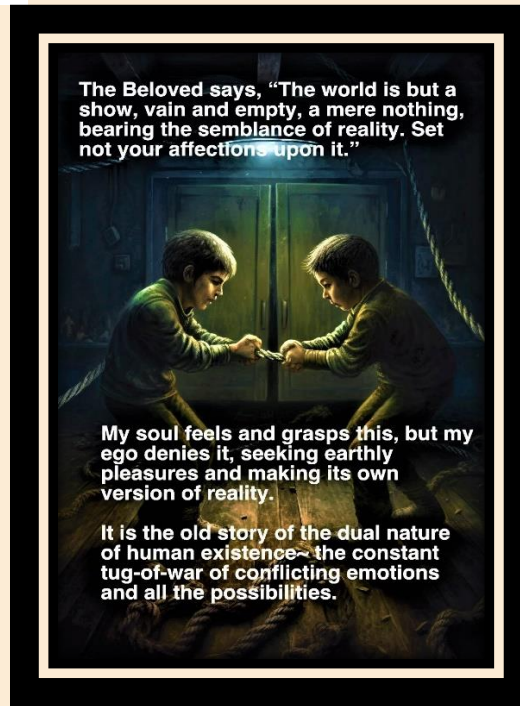
heard him was astounded by his cry. Dismay and consternation seized the entire congregation. The distinguished divines, who occupied the front seats and who were greatly revered for their pious orthodoxy, raised a clamour, loudly protesting: "Woe betide us, the guardians and protectors of the Faith of God! Behold, this man has hoisted the standard of heresy. Down with this infamous traitor! He has spoken blasphemy. Arrest him, for he is a disgrace to our Faith." "Who," they angrily exclaimed, "dared authorised such grave departure from the established precepts of Islam? Who has presumed to arrogate to himself this supreme prerogative?"

The populace re-echoed the protestations of these divines, and arose to reinforce their clamour. The whole city had been aroused, and public order was, as a result, seriously threatened. The governor of the province of Fars, Husayn Khan-i-Iravani, surnamed Ajudan-Bashi, and generally designated in those days as Sahib-Ikhtiyar,⁽¹⁾ found it necessary to intervene and to enquire into the cause of this sudden commotion. He was informed that a disciple of a young man named Siyyid-i-Bab, who had just returned from His pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina and was now living in Bushihr, had arrived in Shiraz and was propagating the teachings of his Master. "This disciple," Husayn Khan was further informed, "claims that his teacher is the author of a new revelation and is the revealer of a book which

he asserts is divinely inspired. Mulla Sadiq-i-Khurasani has embraced that faith, and is fearlessly summoning the multitude to the acceptance of that message. He declares its recognition to be the first obligation of every loyal and pious follower of shi'ah Islam." -THE DAWN-BREAKERS & NABIL'S NARRATIVE

Sharing

Douglas' art with Badi's words:



News and Nuggets from Other Religions and Communities

An Introduction to Islam



Page from a Manuscript of the Koran, approx. 1330-1340.

Islam is one of the world's major religions. It shares with Judaism and Christianity a belief in a single god. The Arabic name for God is Allah. The word Islam means "surrender (to God)." The followers of Islam are called Muslims, which in Arabic means "one who surrenders to God."

While Islam is mainly associated with the Middle East, its roughly one billion followers are found throughout the world. The largest Islamic communities exist in the nations of Indonesia, Pakistan and Bangladesh. There are also sizeable communities throughout West Africa, India, and in parts of China.

Central to the beliefs of Islam is the idea of one, omnipotent God who transcends class, race, and national differences. Muslims believe in the word of God contained in the holy book called the Koran (sometimes spelled Qur'an or Kur'an), as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad by the angel Gabriel between 610–623 CE in Arabia. They also follow practices known as the "Five Pillars of Islam."

The Five Pillars of Islam

Central to the Islamic faith are the essential duties and practices known as the Five Pillars of Islam. These are:

- 1. The profession of faith or shahada*
- 2. The duty to perform five daily prayers or salat*
- 3. The obligation to provide alms or zakat*
- 4. Fasting during the month of Ramadan (the ninth month of the Islamic calendar)*
- 5. Pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj)*

Profession of faith (shahada)

The profession of faith is known as the shahada. It is the prerequisite for membership in the Muslim community, and an affirmation of the faith. Muslims are required to declare this profession in public at least once in their lifetime, but most Muslims recite it daily as part of their prayers. In Arabic, the shahada is as follows: "Ashhadu al-la ilaha illa-llah was ashhadu anna Muhammadar rasulu-llah" translated as "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Messenger" or more simply, "There is no god but God and Muhammad is His Messenger."

The profession of faith is designed not only for public affirmation, but also to encourage true conviction and sincerity of mind on the part of the worshipper. The phrase is absolutely central to the practice of Islam. Muhammad is reported to have said, "These few words are equal to one third of the Koran."

Prayer (salat)

Prayer is an essential duty of every Muslim, and the second Pillar of Islam. It is performed five times a day. These times are dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, and evening. Before prayer, there is ritual cleansing and purification. Typically this means washing one's hands, mouth, nose, face, ears, forearms, head, and feet three times with the right hand. If there is no water available, sand may be substituted. Prayer itself consists of three or four cycles of ritual bowing and prostration along with recitation of parts of the Koran and other prayers in Arabic. All end with the phrase, "May peace, mercy and blessings be upon you."

Muslims can perform prayer just about anywhere, but the most favored place is in the mosque. A crier (muezzin) calls the faithful to prayer (adhan). The holy day each week is Friday. The congregation of worshippers at the mosque is led by the religious leader or imam. Prayers, wherever they take place, must be performed in the direction of Mecca. This direction is indicated by the kiblah, a word meaning “direction of prayer.” It is indicated in a mosque by a wall (referred to as the kiblah wall) that is usually marked by a niche called the mihrab.

Almsgiving (zakat)

The third Pillar of Islam is a call to charity. There are two categories: compulsory and voluntary. Compulsory almsgiving resembles a tax for all Muslims, payable to either the community or state. It is calculated on the basis of one’s possessions and income, and usually equates to 2.5% of a person’s annually accumulated wealth. This system ensures that the poor will be at least partly provided for and encourages a sentiment of sharing among the various social classes. Almsgiving also has spiritual value, as a way of atoning for one’s sins and ensuring salvation in the afterlife.

Voluntary almsgiving (sadaqa) should be performed freely and spontaneously, with discretion and sincerity.

Fasting (sawm)

Fasting (sawm) is a ritual observance during the month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. Muslims are required to abstain from eating, drinking, and sexual activities between sunrise and sundown. Nursing and pregnant mothers, the sick, and children up to the age of puberty are permitted to break the fast. Ramadan is important, because it marks the time in the year when the Koran began to be revealed to Muhammad.

Pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj)

All Muslims who have the physical and materials means to do so are encouraged to visit Mecca at least once in their lifetimes. The pilgrimage occurs during part of the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar. Modern transportation allows millions of Muslims to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, where the focus is the structure known as the Ka’ba. Pilgrims wear white, symbolizing the equality of all Muslims before God.

Having arrived at Mecca, each pilgrim typically walks around the Ka’ba seven times. This is followed by a set of other ritual observances such as walking between the hills overlooking the Ka’ba, standing on Mt. Arafat, and traveling to nearby Minah, all sites that commemorate aspects of Islamic history and faith. Pilgrims also frequently visit the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina. Both the month of pilgrimage to Mecca and the month of Ramadan end in festive celebrations.

From the editor’s desk:

Simple Living a Solution in Times of Crisis

The events of the world in these recent times turn our attention again to what is essential for our existence and what are mere distractions and unnecessary.

When we face a situation where we have to decide what is necessary, we are surprised to see how simple our needs are. You can listen to the stories of people who have faced death or a deadly disease and realize how wealth and possessions lose their charms and don’t matter at all.

Throughout human history, we have examples of great people like the Sufis and the followers of other religions who practiced simplicity and advocated living a simple life and avoiding the complications that excess materialism brings with it. Manifestations of God like Jesus, Mohammad, Buddha, Moses, and Baha'u'llah, the Prophet-Founder of the Baha'i Faith, exemplified simple living.

However, we also have the example of other people who were regular people like you and me — such as Gandhi, who famously said:

“Live simply so that others may simply live.”

They showed us how simple living is made by practicing it.

Industrialization has brought with it the ability to have things that past generations could not dream of. It has led to us accumulating things that seemed necessary, and yet, in reality, we could easily do without them. This has brought us to where we are now. When a pandemic suddenly makes us think about what is essential and what is not. It teaches us what we can do with so little. Living a simple life brings peace of mind and removes some of the distractions of our life's journey. Many studies indicate that simplicity reduces stress in life and creates a sense of freedom from the burden of unnecessary possessions.

There is a movement called "voluntary simplicity" for those of us who prefer other ways than the religious approach of denouncing material possessions. There is a movement called "voluntary simplicity." It encourages people to live a simple life by downsizing their lives. This movement has been described as "an anti-consumerist way of life that opposes the high consumption lifestyles prevalent in consumer societies today and voluntarily embraces 'a simpler life' of reduced consumption."

Voluntary simplicity counters the effects of collecting possessions and believing they are necessary for survival. In reality, possessions often complicate our lives by making us feel dependent on them. This way of thinking has led us to forget our spiritual destiny. The Baha'i Writings tell us:

“Consider to what a remarkable extent the spirituality of people has been overcome by materialism so that spiritual susceptibility seems to have vanished, divine civilization become decadent, and guidance and knowledge of God no longer remain. All are submerged in the sea of materialism”. – Abdu'l-Baha

It should be noted that voluntary simplicity does not mean living in poverty, becoming an ascetic monk, or indiscriminately renouncing all the advantages of science and technology. It does not involve regressing to a primitive state or becoming a self-righteous Puritan. And it is not some escapist fad reserved for saints, hippies, or eccentric outsiders. Instead, advocates of voluntary simplicity suggest that we examine our relationships with money, material possessions, the planet, ourselves, and each other. Voluntary simplicity is about discovering the freedom and contentment that comes with knowing how much consumption is enough.

This theme has something to say to everyone, especially those in consumer cultures who are bombarded daily with thousands of cultural and institutional messages insisting that more is always better. Voluntary simplicity is a philosophy of living that advocates a counter-cultural position based on notions of sufficiency and simplicity.

Voluntary simplicity can create a sense of peace of mind and free us to spend time on the goals that matter more in life. Some of the benefits of living this way are:

Conscious Consumption: *Living a simpler life isn't just about spending less — it's also about spending consciously. That means taking a careful look at every purchase and asking yourself whether it's worth the money you're spending and the hours you're spending to make that money.*

Fewer Belongings: *One side effect of consuming consciously is that you end up with fewer belongings.*

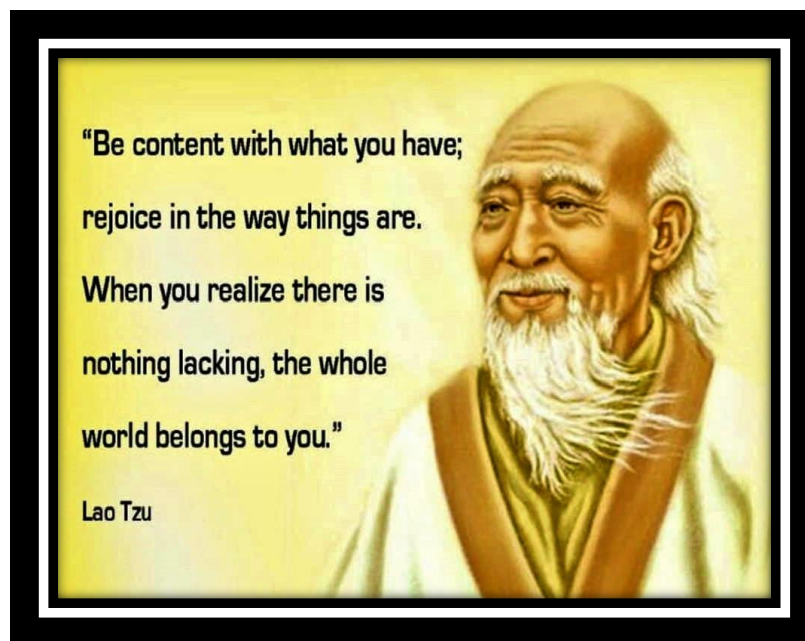
Smaller Homes: *Housing is the biggest expense in most families' budgets, accounting for 26% of total spending. So it makes sense that families that want to downshift their spending often start by downsizing their homes. Choosing a small house can also simplify a family's life by giving them less space to maintain and clean, as well as less room to accumulate more stuff.*

Lower Energy Use: *Another benefit of smaller homes is that they use less energy to heat and cool. By choosing to live small and cutting back on the number of electrical gadgets, people can reduce their electricity use to the point where they can power their homes with solar panels or other forms of renewable energy.*

Conscious Eating: *For most downshiftners, living simply also means eating simply: home-cooked meals made with whole, unprocessed foods.*

Shorter Work Hours: *Voluntary simplicity isn't just about spending less money. The main point for most downshiftners is that, by spending less, they can afford to work less. If we reconnect with what is vital in our lives and worthy of our attention — and what is not — we can simplify our lives. That, in turn, could lead to living a less complicated existence based on solid personal principles. Those principles are what can guide us through times of crisis without feeling any sense of panic and help us stay firmly focused on the things that matter to our individual and collective progress, both spiritually and materially.*

Famous quotes:



Holy Writings to Ponder and Practice

“Doing good to others is not a duty. It is a joy, for it increases your own health and happiness.” – Zoroaster

Upcoming Events:

Coming feast, Kamal/Perfection, August 1, 2023

Next feast, Asma/Names, August 20, 2023

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