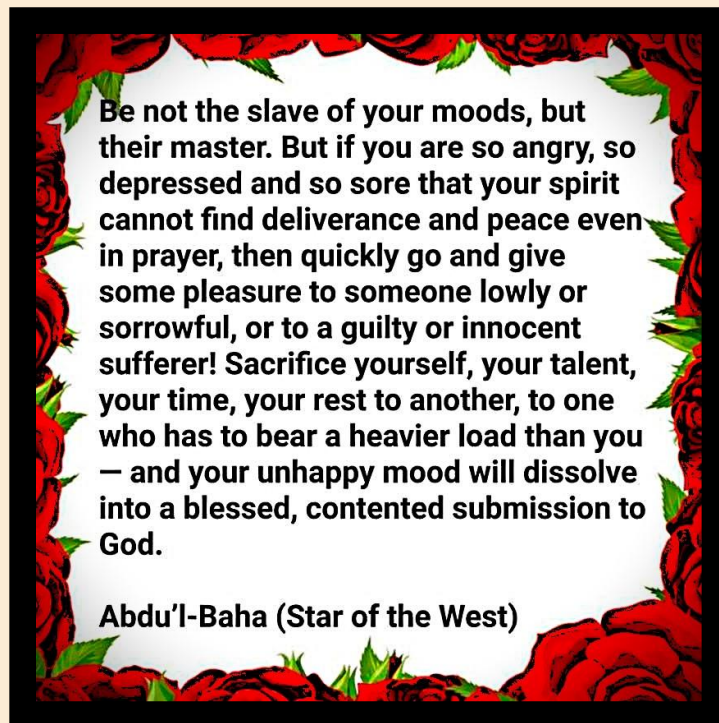




# The Nuggets

Volume 4, Issue No.13



## Baha'i Stories

### Generosity

*Another instance of His generosity concerned a rug, which was among 'the most exquisite' ever created in Persia. Woven of 'purest silk, patterned as a rose garden and bordered with heavy twisted cord of real gold', it was bought from merchants to Haifa by way of Afghanistan and India, due to transportation and travel problems. When the generous pilgrim arrived after tiring weeks of travel, he took the rug to the Pilgrim House adjacent to the Shrine of the Báb and spread it out on the floor. 'Abdu'l-Bahá arrived and 'immediately inquired of the caretaker whose carpet that was, and upon being told, He said that so valuable a work of art should not be on the floor where it might become soiled and He gave instructions for it to be rolled up and put away. The pilgrim then told 'Abdu'l-Bahá*

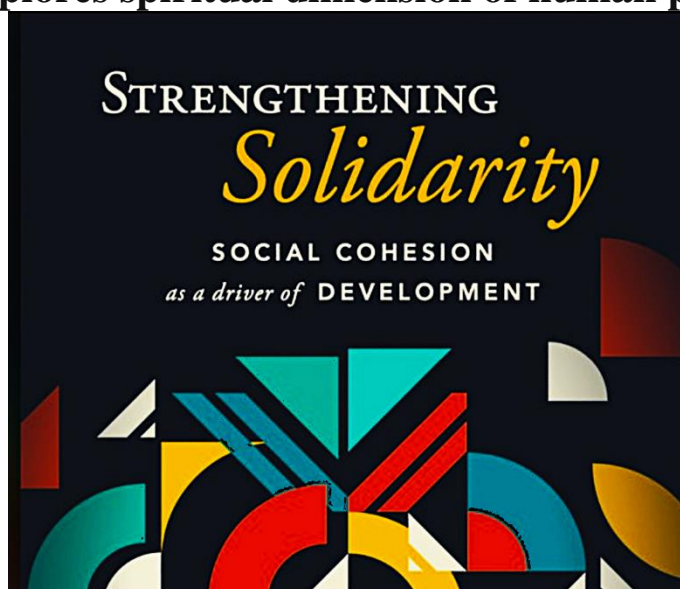
that the carpet had been brought for Him and He replied that so beautiful a gift should be placed in the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh, and that He would place it there Himself.' Within a few days resident believers and pilgrims went with 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Bahji. They boarded a train in Haifa for 'Akka. From 'Akka a carriage took the older friends to Bahji. The Master rode His now-famous white donkey, the younger ones walked. The pilgrim from the East 'offered the Master some chocolate and this He shared with some others.' He related that 'we asked permission of the Master to sing and when He graciously permitted us, we began to sing. I do not remember what the songs were, whether they were our chants or other songs, but I know that I never felt so happy in my life as then when singing in the presence of the Master, and I am sure all the others felt the same way. After we reached Bahji we had dinner and then 'Abdu'l-Bahá spread the carpet in the Holy Shrine and thus my hope was realized.'

Honnold, Annamarie, *Vignettes from the Life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*

## Events and News

### **Bahá'í World News Service**

#### **New statement explores spiritual dimension of human prosperity**



**BIC NEW YORK** — Human prosperity depends as much on social, moral, and relational factors as on technological, material, and financial ones, says the Bahá'í International Community (BIC) in a statement released ahead of the upcoming 63rd session of the Commission for Social Development, which will be held in February at the United Nations headquarters in New York City.

The statement, titled “Strengthening Solidarity: Social Cohesion as a Driver of Development,” emphasizes how the roots of numerous global challenges lie in how human beings view, value, respond to, and relate to one another.

“At the heart of addressing these challenges is the recognition of humanity’s shared identity and essential oneness,” says Cecilia Schirmeister, a representative of the BIC’s New York Office.

*Drawing on experiences of Bahá'í communities worldwide, the statement explores how qualities such as trustworthiness, honesty, generosity, and cooperation serve as building blocks for creating more cohesive and prosperous communities.*

*“The statement highlights that meaningful social development is ultimately impossible without cultivating spiritual qualities that strengthen the social fabric and without developing a sense of responsibility for the collective well-being,” says Ms. Schirmeister.*

*She adds: “When we look at places where Bahá'í community-building activities have taken root, we see how these qualities are contributing to establishing constructive patterns of individual and collective life that support both material and spiritual progress.”*

*Ms. Schirmeister explains that, over time, new patterns of interaction emerge, including greater collaboration between youth and older generations, more pronounced expressions of gender equality, and an enhanced ability for constructive dialogue and consultation. All this strengthens bonds of unity and builds trust and confidence among diverse groups of people.*

*The statement draws attention to experiences that demonstrate how communities can, through their own efforts, become more cohesive and inclusive.*

*“What we are learning,” explains Ms. Schirmeister, “is that when spiritual principles permeate social interactions, communities not only become more integrated but also develop greater capacity to advance their own social and economic development aims and attain higher levels of prosperity.”*

*The statement, which can be viewed [here](#), is part of the BIC's ongoing contribution to the discourse on social development and the advancement of human prosperity in its fullest sense.*

## **News from the Twin Community of Jaipur**

*Here is a sample of activities in pictures of many junior youth groups, Ruhi study groups, children's classes, home visits and devotional and prayer meetings in different parts of Jaipur and Rajasthan. Annual planning for 2025-2026 was held on 25 & 26 January.*

*Annual Planning for 2025-26*



*25th & 26th January 2025 (Rajasthan)*



# *Food for the Mind, Heart and Soul*

## The amazing story of boy's recovery from gun shot



*A boy who nearly died after he was shot in the head as a baby is now set to walk a 5k for the hospital that saved him.*

*Harry Studley was just 18-months-old when a 24-year-old neighbor was cleaning his air rifle in 2016 and aimed it at the crying toddler, saying he thought it was unloaded. The pellet lodged in Harry's brain causing a displaced skull fracture, as well as swelling and bleeding on the brain.*

*Harry was given a one percent chance of survival, but pulled through. He was left with serious conditions, though, and still suffers epilepsy, partial blindness, weakness, and some cognitive issues.*

*Now nine, Harry and his dad Ed will take part in the Grand Walk for the Grand Appeal on Sunday, September 15th, raising money for Bristol Royal Hospital for Children in England.*

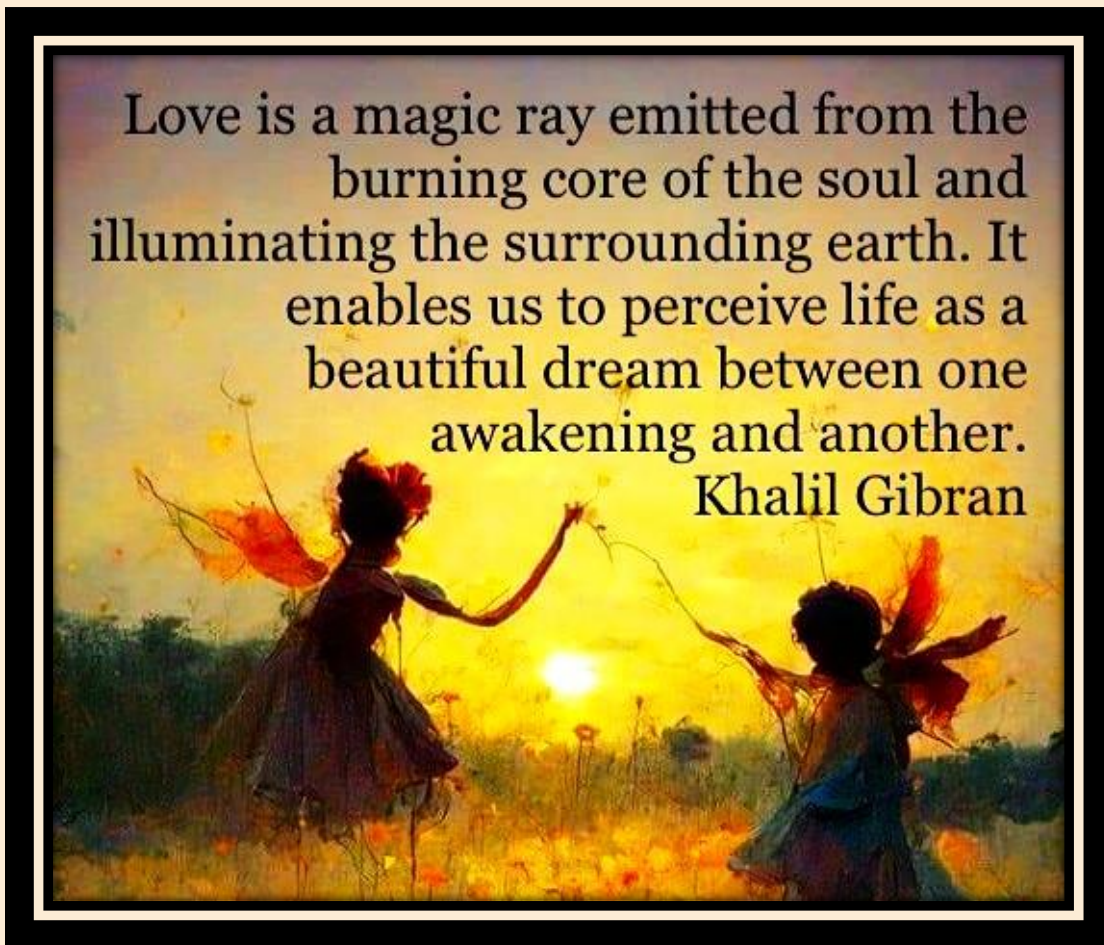
*His family has set up a [JustGiving fundraising page](#) for people to donate.*

*“Five kilometers may not seem like a lot to some, but for Harry it’s a huge challenge as he still struggles with his mobility and gets very tired.*

*“The Bluebell Ward at Bristol Children’s Hospital is a neurosurgery unit. Without the amazing care and hard work by the staff on that ward, Harry wouldn’t be here today.*

*“In 2016, Bluebell was our home for 4 months after Harry was shot in the head with a air rifle. He was given a one percent chance of survival, but with the determination of our family and the great work and care from the Bluebell staff Harry survived.*

**By Khalil Gibran:**



## *Social Action*

**Transforming economic structures to build a more caring society**



**INDORE, India** — *How can economic structures be transformed to better reflect humanity’s inherent interdependence and capacity for cooperation rather than competition? This question animated discussions at a recent symposium organized by the Bahá’i Chair for Studies in Development at Devi Ahilya University.*

*“A truly caring economy must recognize that human beings are not just material creatures with physical needs, but spiritual beings capable of developing noble qualities through service to others,” said Arash Fazli, Head of the Bahá’i Chair, in his opening remarks at the discussion forum titled “Transforming Economic Structures to Build a More Caring India”.*

*The symposium, the third in a series examining some of the implications of building a more caring world, was held by the Bahá’i Chair in collaboration with the University’s School of Economics. The forum brought together economists, academics, and development practitioners to examine how economic systems can better recognize and value care work while fostering spiritual capacities essential for social transformation.*

*In a paper distributed to participants, the Bahá’i Chair explored how current economic structures, by emphasizing competition and self-interest, often work against the fundamental principle of the oneness of humankind.*

*While current economic structures may be efficient at distributing goods and services, they frequently undervalue care work—labor that is vital for sustaining human life and developing human potential. This devaluation perpetuates conditions where caring work, predominantly performed by women and economically disadvantaged groups, becomes a source of social and economic inequality.*

*The paper emphasizes that transforming these structures requires recognizing the spiritual dimension of human life and the essential role of qualities such as love, reciprocity, and trustworthiness in economic life.*

*“Care opens a new vista on human nature,” the paper reads. “When viewed through the lens of care, people are seen to belong to one human family bound by bonds of interdependence, and yet unique in themselves, with each individual possessing an inalienable moral worth that requires that she or he be treated with dignity and respect.”*

*Naresh Singh, Professor and Executive Dean at the Jindal School of Government and Public Policy, highlighted the importance of expanding conceptions of development beyond material measures. “We need to move away from a narrow view of individuals as profit-maximizing to a broader view of material and spiritual prosperity,” he said.*

*Dr. Fazli echoed this sentiment, observing how the structures of society and its institutions can promote or inhibit certain values. “What we value in society is very much shaped by the structures of our society. If a structure is built on the assumption that human beings are utility-maximizing, profit-seeking, and self-interested, then that structure shapes people to behave like that.*

*“Development should be seen as distinct from pure economic growth,” he noted. “We need to foster both spiritual and material prosperity, recognizing that human beings have the capacity to transcend purely material considerations.”*

*In reflecting on the symposium’s discussions, Dr. Fazli pointed to examples from Bahá’í community-building initiatives across India where new patterns of economic life are emerging.*

*“In villages and neighborhoods, we see how Bahá’í community-building endeavors and social action initiatives—such as collective agricultural projects and other income generating undertakings—that bring people together from different backgrounds and create spaces where caring capabilities are nurtured,” he explained.*

*“These efforts provide insight into how service to one’s fellow human beings can foster economic relationships based on cooperation rather than competition, and service to others rather than narrow self-interest.”*

## *From the Pages of History*

### **Reference to Tahirih**

*These all, with the single exception of Tahirih, attained the presence of the Bab, and were personally invested by Him with the distinction of this rank. It was she who, having learned of the intended departure of her sister’s husband, Mirza Muhammad-'Ali, from Qazvin, entrusted him with a sealed letter, requesting that he deliver it to that promised One whom she said he was sure to meet in the course of his journey. “Say to Him, from me,” she added, “The effulgence of Thy face flashed forth, and the rays of Thy visage arose on high. Then speak the word, “Am I not your Lord?” and “Thou art, Thou art!” we will all reply.’*

*Mirza Muhammad-'Ali eventually met and recognised the Bab and conveyed to Him both the*

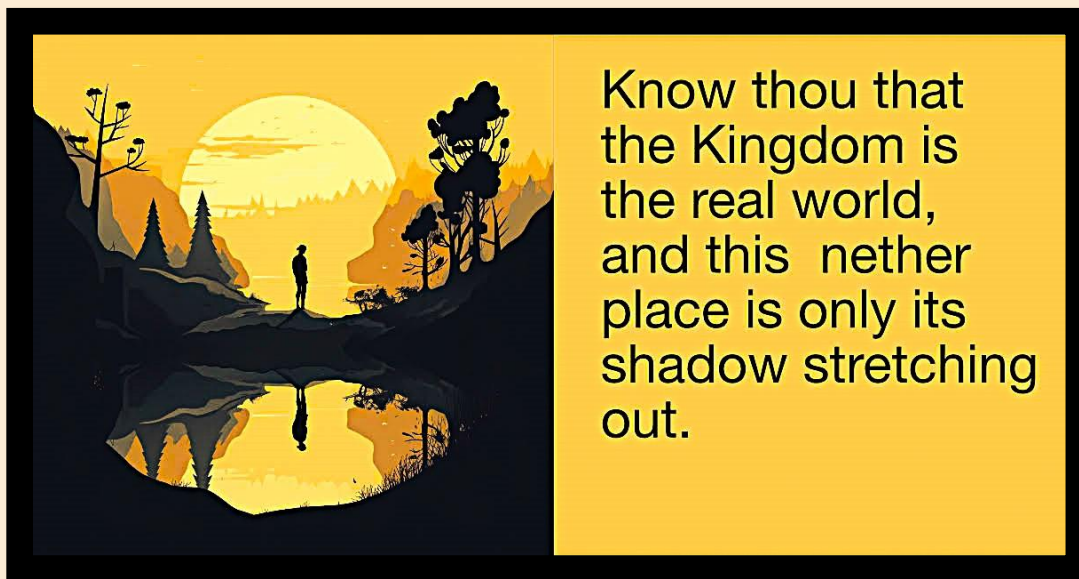
letter and the message of Tahirih. The Bab forthwith declared her one of the Letters of the Living. Her father, Haji Mulla Salih-i-Qazvini, and his brother, Mulla Taqi, were both mujtahids of great renown,<sup>(2)</sup> were skilled in the traditions of Muslim law, and were universally respected by the people of Tihran, Qazvin, and other leading cities of Persia. She was married to Mulla Muhammad, son of Mulla Taqi, her uncle, whom the shi'ahs styled Shahid-i-Thalith.

Although her family belonged to the Bala-Sari, Tahirih alone showed, from the very beginning, a marked sympathy and devotion to Siyyid Kazim. As an evidence of her personal admiration for him, she wrote an apology in defence and justification of the teachings of Shaykh Ahmad and presented it to him. To this she soon received a reply, couched in the most affectionate terms, in the opening passages of which the Siyyid thus addressed her: "O thou who art the solace of mine eyes ( Ya Qurrat-i-'Ayni!), and the joy of my heart!" Ever since that time she has been known as Qurratu'l-'Ayn. After the historic gathering of Badasht, a number of those who attended were so amazed at the fearlessness and outspoken language of that heroine, that they felt it their duty to acquaint the Bab with the character of her startling and unprecedented behaviour.

They strove to tarnish the purity of her name. To their accusations the Bab replied: "What am I to say regarding her whom the Tongue of Power and Glory has named Tahirih [the Pure One]?" These words proved sufficient to silence those who had endeavoured to undermine her position. From that time onwards she was designated by the believers as Tahirih. ~ The Dawn Breakers & Nabil's Narrative

## Sharing

**Douglas Wilson's sharing:**



## History, News and Nuggets from Other Religions and Communities



## REMEMBERING GURU GOBIND SINGH'S BIRTHDAY



### He acted like a god through the self-creativity

*The dream which Guru Gobind Singh had, to establish a brotherhood has many dimensions.*

*My personal feeling is that God had to prepare for a long time to saturate and soak into him the human values, to take a form such as Guru Gobind Singh. If it is true that a man is created in the image of God, then let us go deeply into the facet of the man. If it is true, that man represents God and this shall never be denied.*

*When we talk of Guru Gobind Singh on this day, which is his birthday, we can think how much God might have prepared Himself to appear on earth in the form of such a man! If it is not true that it took a great preparation to create a man like Guru Gobind Singh, then all human beings should have had a minimum standard like Guru Gobind Singh. Our minimum standard of human behavior, attachment and sacrifice, should be that of Gobind Singh, the Guru. But it is not, which shows that God must have prepared His own image for a long time to manifest a leader for humanity.*

*Through this time of over 300 years, we can sit back and we have the absolute right to see who was this Gobind Rai who became Guru Gobind Singh. Your Guru was Gobind Rai. When Guru Gobind Singh was given the Guruship, he was known as Gobind Rai. Guru Gobind Rai is one of the ten masters who became a disciple of the Guru Gobind Singh to be. And it was thus that he became Guru Gobind Singh. He acted like a god through the self-creativity, which you will not find in the history of any other prophet. This nine-year old Gobind Rai, the Tenth Guru of the Sikhs, became the Guru Gobind Singh of the Khalsa on Baisakhi Day (in 1699), after himself being initiated by the Five Beloved Ones.*

*It was the extreme super-creativity of the self into the Self and the sharing of the self with the entire congregation, which has never happened before. There is not a single example in the religious history of the world, where a man who is enthroned, loved, worshiped and revered as a Guru, comes down on his knees and asks to be baptized. Then he smartly takes up the same position as before and directs his men.*

*If you research through the known and written entire human history, which has a record of over 20,000 years, you will be surprised to see that not a single incident can match this.*

### **He was a defender, a defender of the innocent and the weak.**

*The finite consciousness of this man was beyond infinity. He was a poet and a philosopher. To call him a warrior is a simple expression of our ignorance. He was a defender, a defender of the innocent and the weak. His criteria of life can be observed through his action, for he never waged a war for territory, and in spite of the fact that he won wars, he never claimed the territory. This shows totally and completely the intention to defend.*

*It is surprising to look at the history of this man and to understand his different facets of life. God is the Creator, but to create His image, like Gobind Singh, God might have to work through many, many centuries more. By looking at the life and history of Gobind Singh, one can look at the life and creative style of God. However humble we are, but we are still the creative action of the Almighty Creator. And we know that there is a great gap in the normal standard of behavior, of the Guru, and that of us. Thousands and hundreds of years, humanity prays, it does “Jap” for thousands of years. I am talking of humanity, not of a sect or a fad. Those who belong to the lifestyle which Guru Gobind Singh laid must know what they belong to. They belong to the longing of hundreds and thousands of years of prayer. It is not a miracle of the moment! And we in the West, through the grace of none other than Guru Gobind Singh, have the experience of the fulfillment of this prayer. It is a written record how much Guru Gobind Singh must have prayed and sacrificed so that the Khalsa should survive.*

### **“The pure one is me, and I live in the pure one”**

*In this land, seeing a beautiful plant flowering in the image of Guru Gobind Singh is the most excellent and auspicious sign. Here, where today his sangat, in his name can sit, can appreciate and can live up to his teachings: “I love the prescribed way of living of the Sikh, not the Sikh.” “The pure one is me, and I live in the pure one.” One Guru gave the Guruship to the other. Guru Gobind Singh, as one facet of the human being, gave the Guruship to the entire Khalsa. He gave it individually, precisely, definitely and truthfully. And today when a Sikh does not live to this form and standard, he separates himself from Guru Gobind Singh. Because when you say you are as Guru Gobind Singh is, then you have to live up to his practical line of action and follow the path which he laid down.*

*Now, becoming cowardly, what we have done is the same as the Christians – who have put Jesus Christ as the only son of God. We are all sons and daughters of God. When a Sikh cannot live to be a Khalsa, he refuses to be as Guru Gobind Singh lived. He wants to live other than Guru Gobind Singh, and this is enough to prove the degradation which is taking place.*

### **Guru Gobind Singh was able to create the Khalsa in his own image**

*Today is the day to remember the one who was the outcome, in the human form, of millions of years of the human prayers of this earth. He was an embodiment of the fullness of all facets of the human scale, skill, intelligence, intellect and the power and still he was a Saint, detached, selfless and humble. At the age of nine he took over the Guruship and at the age of forty-two, he left it. But he left behind such a permanent image of his that he proved to God that he can be equaled, that he could create in his own image the Khalsa. This is one thought which I want to bring to your notice today – that a man was created in God’s own image and thousands of years of God’s preparation could create Guru Gobind Singh, and in a few years, Guru Gobind Singh was able to create the Khalsa in his own image. If anybody knows the simple science of mathematics, then it is a proven fact, beyond doubt, that Khalsa*

*was created in the image of God, Himself. In the saying of Guru Gobind Singh, he testified to this truth: "God ordered me, gave me the permission. Only then could I start this path of life, this way of life."*

*If this is the purpose of human life, that man has to work to walk on the path of God, then there is a page of history, excellent, beyond excellent and proving beyond any proof, that man can exceed the boundary of the physical limits. As the history has recorded the excellences of action, of thought and behavior of a human being, it is honestly and truthfully felt that God Himself must have meditated for thousands of years, and the humanity must have gone into prayer for millions of years, to bring to the earth the defender of the faith, the messenger of the Truth and a living and loving Guru, Guru Gobind Singh.*

## *From the Editor's Desk*

### **Butter Chicken and Oneness of Religions**

*I am very blessed to still be in touch with my ex-students. They are from all walks of life, and most of them now have children of their own. One of them is Derek, who has the purest heart and regularly visited me in my office during his school years, and we kept in touch after my retirement.*

*He has been to my house helping me with my garden work, and I have cooked food for him. He told me that he wanted to cook for me and bring it to my home.*

*I asked what he was planning to cook, and he said, "butter chicken." On my part, I told him that I would cook rice and make the salad.*

*On the appointed date, Derek called to say that his father had come to visit him from another town and asked if he could come too. I said that he was very welcome.*

*On that day, I had promised an Iranian Muslim lady that she could come to my house to pick some fruits and I invited her to eat with us also. She is new to town, and her work has brought her here.*

*After eating the food, we started to talk about the sad situation of the world and all the crises. Both the Muslim lady and Derek's father are strong in their beliefs.*

*The Iranian lady was furious at the situation in Iran and how the mullahs had lied to people and misled the public. She believed that they had done things that had damaged Islam.*

*Derek's father, a Catholic, was not happy about the role of the clergy in his church. He felt the same as the Iranian lady and said that he was disappointed with what had happened in the name of Christianity.*

*I mentioned that the Baha'is believe that all religions are fundamentally one and differ only in their social laws. I used the metaphor that religions are like pure healing water streaming down the mountain, and leaders use it as a political means, polluting the water.*

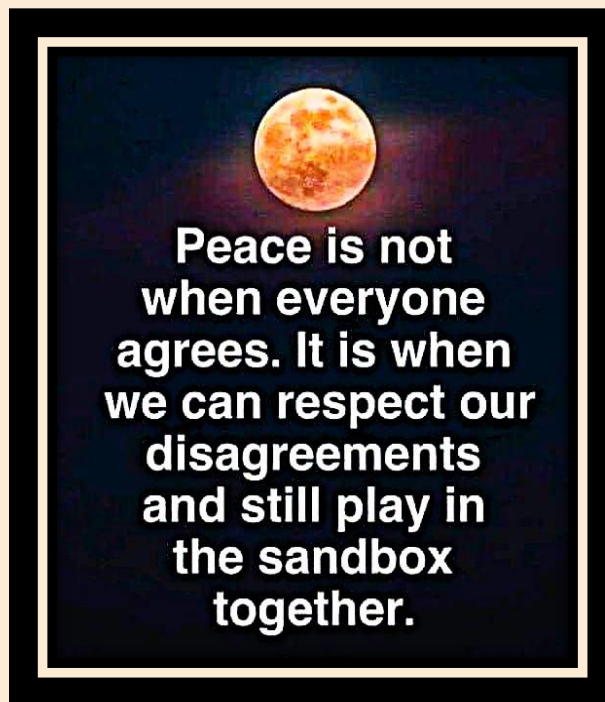
*At the end of our two-hour discussion and sharing our feelings and ideas, we agreed that the only solution to solving the world's problems is for all nations to become united in their efforts and find a religion that combines all the religions in one.*

*After they left, I realized what an amazing thing had happened. A Muslim, a Baha'i and a Christian of different ages agreed on the need for a universal and all-inclusive religion.*

*It was a miracle that three different people who did not know each other and with solid religious beliefs expressed views respectfully and lovingly. There was harmony and friendliness in the air.*

*What made all of us with different age groups and views experience this? As if a mysterious force took over the discussion and led us to that conclusion. Maybe it is because of helplessness felt worldwide due to overwhelming crises that highlighted the need for a solution. With all its unsolved issues and barely recovering from the pandemic, humanity has been forced to reflect and do some soul-searching to counter the dangers ahead. The spirit of unity and oneness is at work with full force. The unity of humankind is not an ideal or empty slogan anymore. It is the only way out left for the survival of wayward humanity.*

*Now I am left with the memory of that beautiful night when we relished our oneness and the delicious food – butter chicken for the body and the soul.*



## *Writings to Ponder and Practice*

**“Settle all things, both great and small, by consultation. Without prior consultation, take no important step in your own personal affairs. Concern yourselves with one another. Help along one another’s projects and plans. Grieve over one another ...” -Abdu’l-Baha**

**For sharing materials and questions, write to [bshams@telus.net](mailto:bshams@telus.net)**