

TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE  
AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
THE EXPERIENCE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
LOVE, COURAGE, DETACHMENT, FAITH, STEADFASTNESS

One night, in a dream, these exalted words were heard on every side: “Verily, We shall render Thee victorious by Thyself and by Thy Pen. Grieve Thou not for that which hath befallen Thee, neither be Thou afraid, for Thou art in safety. Erelong will God raise up the treasures of the earth - men who will aid Thee through Thyself and through Thy Name, wherewith God hath revived the hearts of such as have recognized Him.”

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 21

During the days I lay in the prison of Tihrán, though the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep, still in those infrequent moments of slumber I felt as if something flowed from the crown of My head over My breast, even as a mighty torrent that precipitateth itself upon the earth from the summit of a lofty mountain. Every limb of My body would, as a result, be set afire. At such moments My tongue recited what no man could bear to hear.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 22

## TOPIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



#### KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know the circumstances under which Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned in the SÍYÁH-Chál
- To know the conditions of His confinement in the SÍYÁH-Chál
- To know that Bahá'u'lláh received the Revelation of His Divine Mission while imprisoned in the SÍYÁH-Chál

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Explain to the students the reasons for which Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned in Tíhrán.
- Explore with the students the meaning of “SÍYÁH-Chál,” the designation of the prison in which He was confined.
- Recount to the learners the conditions of Bahá'u'lláh's imprisonment in the SÍYÁH-Chál.
- Retell for the students the story of how Bahá'u'lláh's Divine Mission was revealed to Him in the SÍYÁH-Chál, *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*, pp. 81-85, 89-94.
- Provide the learners with a sensorial experience of the conditions in the SÍYÁH-Chál.
- Allow the learners to read Bahá'u'lláh's Own description of the conditions of His imprisonment and of the Revelation of His Mission while in prison.



#### WISDOM OBJECTIVE

- To understand the significance of Bahá'u'lláh's experience while imprisoned in the SÍYÁH-Chál

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Allow the students to role play being members of Bahá'u'lláh's Household when He was imprisoned in the SÍYÁH-Chál—being among the believers and inmates who shared His imprisonment.
- Provide various art media with which the learners can create depictions of the SÍYÁH-Chál.
- Encourage the learners to identify and explore the symbols in Bahá'u'lláh's description of His Experience, and use art to represent these symbols.
- Have students write poetry or prose based on their reflections on Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation in the SÍYÁH-Chál.

## TOPIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL

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### SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE

- To relate the suffering of Bahá'u'lláh to one's own personal daily struggles and to derive hope and inspiration from this connection

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Compare the joyful attitude of Bahá'u'lláh and His companions in the Síyáh-Chál to our own attitudes during difficult and unpleasant times.
- Teach the learners to sing the verse, “God is sufficient unto me...” Recount the story of the verse's origin.
- Have the learners ponder difficulties or conditions in their own lives which can be offered up to Bahá'u'lláh with radiant acquiescence.
- Have students in pairs or small groups find examples of difficult and unpleasant experiences in their own lives and consult on positive joyful ways of encountering them. Help them see every cup half full rather than half empty.



### ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE

- To describe to others the circumstances of Bahá'u'lláh's imprisonment in the Síyáh-Chál

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- On the anniversary of Bahá'u'lláh's imprisonment in Síyáh-Chál, have students recreate the conditions of the Síyáh-Chál, guiding others on an experiential tour.
- Prepare an eloquent delivery of Bahá'u'lláh's words regarding His revelation, then present it at Feast or a Holy Day observance.
- Present a choral rendition of “God Is Sufficient unto Me...”
- Display their artwork on this historical event.

**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

## **TOPIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL**

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### **Sample Activities**

#### **ACTIVITY: BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S EXPERIENCE IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES:** To know the circumstances under which Bahá'u'lláh was imprisoned in the Síyáh-Chál; To know the conditions of His confinement in the Síyáh-Chál; To know that Bahá'u'lláh received the Revelation of His Divine Mission while imprisoned in the Síyáh-Chál

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Education toward recognition of God;  
Use of questioning

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*
- Photograph of dungeon, p. 57 of this Lesson Planning Guide
- copies of Resource Page 58

1. See *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*, “Birth of the Bahá'í Revelation,” or the List of Additional Resources for sources of stories to read or tell about this period including:
  - Bahá'u'lláh's Arrest
  - Conditions of the Síyáh-Chál, and incidents therein
  - Bahá'u'lláh's dream and vision as He received His Divine Mission
  - His release from the dungeon.
2. Enhance the stories with illustrations from the storybook, or photographs of the dungeon from published histories of the Faith, such as Bahá'í History Calendar 1992, or use the photograph reproduced on p. 57.
3. Pause often while telling the stories to discuss how it must have felt, the mood of the fellow-prisoners, the significance of Bahá'u'lláh's vision, etc.
4. Teach the song, “God is Sufficient,” the same song that Bahá'u'lláh taught the prisoners in the Síyáh-Chál, Resource Page 58.

## TOPIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL

### ACTIVITY: CONDITIONS IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the significance of Bahá'u'lláh's experience while imprisoned in the Síyáh-Chál

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of Sacred Writings; Engaging mind and heart; Use of questioning; Use of peer teaching; Use of consultation; Use of the power of reasoning; Use of arts; Use of music; Use of reflection; Use of manipulatives

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 35 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- short lengths of heavy chain
- words to “God is sufficient unto me...”

1. Ask the learners if they have ever been in a dark, smelly basement or cellar, or another dark place. How did it feel to be there? How would it feel to be there for days and days?
2. Remind the students that Bahá'u'lláh and other Bábís spent many days in the Síyáh-Chál, the “Black Pit.”
3. Show the students the heavy chain. Allow them to hold it. Invite them, if they wish, to drape it over their shoulders. As they do this, tell them that Bahá'u'lláh and His companions in the Síyáh-Chál were chained with heavy chains, so heavy that the marks from those chains remained on the neck of Bahá'u'lláh for the rest of His earthly life.
4. Inform the students that, despite these terrible conditions, the Bábís were happy to be there.
5. Read “The story of ‘Abdu'l-Vahháb” from *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*, pp. 86-87 and discuss the reasons why these prisoners could be so happy that they sang.
6. Maintaining a reverent mood, invite the students to use art supplies to create their impression of the Síyáh-Chál—remind them that they may not portray Bahá'u'lláh. Play music while they work, such as “God is Sufficient” from the *Music of the Bahá'í World Congress*.
7. Invite the students to share the feelings they had while discussing the prison conditions. This may occur while talking about their artistic depiction.
8. Talk about times any of them may have suffered for Bahá'u'lláh: been taunted for being Bahá'í, had to attend a Bahá'í function rather than play with friends, endured hardships for a teaching trip, or other tests and difficulties in life.
9. Discuss what greater sacrifices each would be willing to undergo for Bahá'u'lláh.

**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

## **TOPIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL**

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### **ACTIVITY: EVENTS OF THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL**

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To describe to others the circumstances of Bahá'u'lláh's imprisonment in the Síyáh-Chál

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of Sacred Writings; Engaging mind and heart; Use of questioning; Use of peer teaching; Use of consultation; Use of the power of reasoning; Use of arts; Use of creativity; Use of drama

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- one copy of the following books: *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, (pp. 19-22, 95; also provided on pp. 59-60 of this Lesson Planning Guide), *God Passes By*, (pp. 71-72, 92, 100-04).
- one page of excerpts for each student
- pencils, art supplies

1. Practice a dramatic reading of the actual text from *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 19-22 and p. 95 (prayer), and from *God Passes By* pp. 71-72, p. 92, pp. 100-04. You may use the selections provided in this Lesson Planning Guide or add the additional passages from *God Passes By*.
2. Select one or more students as the narrators, who will read Bahá'u'lláh's Words separate from the other readers.
3. Other children may pose as Bábí prisoners, prison guards, and the Sháh.
4. Consider including the song, "God is Sufficient," in the program.
5. Following the narration of Bahá'u'lláh's vision of the Maid of Heaven, consider playing appropriate music, such as Handel's "Messiah" or "Call Out to Zion" by Parrish and Toppano, *Shores of This Great Ocean*.
6. Involve the learners in designing costumes, props, lighting, etc.
7. Use the prayer on p. 95 of *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* as a meditation on the sacredness of the events in the Síyáh-Chál.
8. Encourage students to present this dramatic reading as a devotional meeting to proclaim Bahá'u'lláh's Station—invite seekers, guests and the media to attend.

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Resource Pages

ENTRANCE TO THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL



from Bahá'í History Calendar, 1992  
© 1991 The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Hawaiian Islands  
photo courtesy of Zabine Linkins

## God Is Sufficient

Words: Bahá'u'lláh  
*Bahá'u'lláh, The King of Glory*, p. 88  
Music: Susan Engle

May be sung as a round



©1997, Susan Engle

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TOPIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL

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EXCERPT FROM *EPISTLE TO THE SON OF THE WOLF*

We deem it advisable, in this connection, to recount briefly some past events, that perchance they may be the means of vindicating the cause of equity and justice. At the time when His Majesty the *Sháh*, may God, his Lord, the Most Merciful, aid him through His strengthening grace, was planning a journey to Isfáhán, this Wronged One, having obtained his permission, visited the holy and luminous resting-places of the Imams, may the blessings of God be upon them! Upon Our return, We proceeded to Lavasan on account of the excessive heat prevailing in the capital. Following Our departure, there occurred the attempt upon the life of His Majesty, may God, exalted and glorified be He, assist him. Those days were troublous days, and the fires of hatred burned high. Many were arrested, among them this Wronged One. By the righteousness of God! We were in no wise connected with that evil deed, and Our innocence was indisputably established by the tribunals. Nevertheless, they apprehended Us, and from Niyavaran, which was then the residence of His Majesty, conducted Us, on foot and in chains, with bared head and bare feet, to the dungeon of Tíhrán. A brutal man, accompanying Us on horseback, snatched off Our hat, whilst We were being hurried along by a troop of executioners and officials. We were consigned for four months to a place foul beyond comparison. As to the dungeon in which this Wronged One and others similarly wronged were confined, a dark and narrow pit were preferable. Upon Our arrival We were first conducted along a pitch-black corridor, from whence We descended three steep flights of stairs to the place of confinement assigned to Us. The dungeon was wrapped in thick darkness, and Our fellow-prisoners numbered nearly a hundred and fifty souls: thieves, assassins and highwaymen. Though crowded, it had no other outlet than the passage by which We entered. No pen can depict that place, nor any tongue describe its loathsome smell. Most of these men had neither clothes nor bedding to lie on. God alone knoweth what befell Us in that most foul-smelling and gloomy place!

Day and night, while confined in that dungeon, We meditated upon the deeds, the condition, and the conduct of the Bábís, wondering what could have led a people so high-minded, so noble, and of such intelligence, to perpetrate such an audacious and outrageous act against the person of His Majesty. This Wronged One, thereupon, decided to arise, after His release from prison, and undertake, with the utmost vigor, the task of regenerating this people.

One night, in a dream, these exalted words were heard on every side: “Verily, We shall render Thee victorious by Thyself and by Thy Pen. Grieve Thou not for that which hath befallen Thee, neither be Thou afraid, for Thou art in safety. Erelong will God raise up the treasures of the earth - men who will aid Thee through Thyself and through Thy Name, wherewith God hath revived the hearts of such as have recognized Him.”

And when this Wronged One went forth out of His prison, We journeyed, in pursuance of the order of His Majesty the *Sháh* - may God, exalted be He, protect him - to Iraq, escorted by officers in the service of the esteemed and honored governments of Persia and Russia. After Our arrival, We revealed, as a copious rain, by the aid of God and His Divine Grace and mercy, Our verses, and sent them to various parts of the world. We exhorted all men, and particularly this people, through Our wise counsels and loving admonitions, and forbade them to engage in sedition, quarrels, disputes and conflict. As a result of this, and by the grace of God, waywardness and folly were changed into piety and understanding, and weapons converted into instruments of peace.

During the days I lay in the prison of Tíhrán, though the galling weight of the chains and the stench-filled air allowed Me but little sleep, still in those infrequent moments of slumber I felt as if something flowed from the crown of My head over My breast, even as a mighty torrent that precipitateth itself upon the earth from the summit of a lofty mountain. Every limb of My body would, as a result, be set afire. At such moments My tongue recited what no man could bear to hear.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, pp. 19-22

TOPIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL

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PRAYER FROM *EPISTLE TO THE SON OF THE WOLF*

Glory to Thee, O my God! But for the tribulations which are sustained in Thy path, how could Thy true lovers be recognized; and were it not for the trials which are borne for love of Thee, how could the station of such as yearn for Thee be revealed? Thy might beareth Me witness! The companions of all who adore Thee are the tears they shed, and the comforters of such as seek Thee are the groans they utter, and the food of them who haste to meet Thee is the fragments of their broken hearts. How sweet to my taste is the bitterness of death suffered in Thy path, and how precious in my estimation are the shafts of Thine enemies when encountered for the sake of the exaltation of Thy Word! Let me quaff in Thy Cause, O my God and my Master, whatsoever Thou didst desire, and send down upon me in Thy love all Thou didst ordain. By Thy glory! I wish only what Thou wishest, and cherish what Thou cherishest. In Thee have I, at all times, placed My whole trust and confidence. Thou art verily the All-Possessing, the Most High. Raise up, I implore Thee, O my God, as helpers to this Revelation such as shall be counted worthy of Thy Name and of Thy sovereignty, that they may remember Thee among Thy creatures, and hoist the ensigns of Thy victory in Thy land, and adorn them with Thy virtues and Thy commandments. No God is there but Thee, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 95

**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**  
**TOPIC: THE EXPERIENCE OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**  
**IN THE SÍYÁH-CHÁL**

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**LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

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**Stories & Articles:**

*Brilliant Star:*

- “Who Is Bahá'u'lláh?” Jan/Feb 02
- “Singing in the SÍYÁH-CHÁL” Nov/Dec 97
- “Chains in the SÍYÁH-CHÁL,” SpEd 91
- “Trumpet Flower,” Nov/Dec 84

*The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two:* “The Maiden of Heaven,” “the Story of ‘Abdu'l-Vahháb,” “The Birth of the Bahá'í Revelation”

Ashin, Mahnaz, *The Blessed Beauty*, “The Beginning of Tests and Difficulties,” “The Dungeon of Tehran,” “The Wonderful Dream,” “Bahá'u'lláh's Secret Revelation”

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Fruits of One Tree*, pp. 55-56

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Story of Bahá'u'lláh*, “The Beginning of Tests and Difficulties:

Firman, Mary, *Journey Into Exile*, pp. 6-8

Furutan, ‘Ali-Akbar, *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 10-14, 63, 108

Garst, Hitjo, *From Mountain to Mountain*, “Bahá'u'lláh in the SÍYÁH-CHÁL I, II,” p. 29

Meyer, Zoe, *Children's Stories from the Dawn Breakers*, pp. 63-64

Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 24-27

Reed, Betty, *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh As Told By Pokka*, p. 4

Wittman, Debbie D., *The Birth of the Bahá'í Faith*, p. 13

**Worksheets and Coloring Pages:**

Firman, Mary, *Journey Into Exile*, pp. 6-8

Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 25, 27

**Activities:**

*Brilliant Star:*

- “God's Treasure” SpEd 91
- “Beauty Box,” SpEd 91

**Music:**

*Brilliant Star:* “Singing in the SÍYÁH-CHÁL” Nov/Dec 97

*Music of the Bahá'í World Congress*, “Maid of Heaven,” “Ghol-Allah-o-Yakfi (God is Sufficient)”

*The Bahá'í Songbook*, “Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God”

**List other favorite resources:**

If you find any additional resources, please notify the National Teacher Training Center, or submit your findings to the Educational Materials web site.



**TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE  
AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

**THE BANISHMENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO IRAQ**

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
COURAGE, STEADFASTNESS, DETACHMENT, HUMILITY, LOVE**

The days of tests are now come. Oceans of dissension and tribulation are surging, and the Banners of Doubt are, in every nook and corner, occupied in stirring up mischief and in leading men to perdition. ...Suffer not the voice of some of the soldiers of negation to cast doubt into your midst, neither allow yourselves to become heedless of Him Who is the Truth, inasmuch as in every Dispensation such contentions have been raised. God, however, will establish His Faith, and manifest His light albeit the stirrers of sedition abhor it.

Bahá'u'lláh, quoted by Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, p. 115

Since the exile of Abraham from Ur to Aleppo in Syria produced this result, we must consider what will be the effect of the exile of Bahá'u'lláh in His several removes from Tihrán to Baghdad, from thence to Constantinople, to Rumelia and to the Holy Land.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 13

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



### KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know the geography of the Middle East and the key features of the politics of the time
- To know the circumstances of Bahá'u'lláh's banishment to Iraq, and the harsh conditions of His journey
- To know about Bahá'u'lláh's withdrawal to the mountains of Sulaymáníyyih
- To know which of Bahá'u'lláh's works were revealed during His banishment in Iraq

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Use maps, globes, and various art media to help the students become familiar with the geography of the Middle East and the routes taken by Bahá'u'lláh during His exiles.
- Relate stories telling why Bahá'u'lláh was banished, and about the conditions of the terrible journey.
- Read Bahá'u'lláh's Own words in the Kitáb-i-Iqán that describe and explain His withdrawal to the mountains of Sulaymáníyyih.
- Share copies of The Hidden Words and the Kitáb-i-Iqán. Tell the stories about how they were revealed. Allow the students to reverently handle the books.
- Have the students memorize passages from The Hidden Words and the Kitáb-i-Iqán, *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*, p. 96 and p. 106.



### WISDOM OBJECTIVE

- To understand that Bahá'u'lláh, His Family, and other companions suffered terribly during the harsh journey to Iraq.

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Demonstrate the power of attraction with magnets, as an analogy for the effect of Bahá'u'lláh's Presence on others.
- Relate the story of the Muslim priests' request for a miracle. Consult on this sign of the power of Bahá'u'lláh, *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*, pp. 107-12.
- Have the learners research the histories of Bahá'u'lláh's exiles and imprisonment for incidents of His transforming and attracting influence on others. Consult on the findings.
- Use guided imagery to assist learners in visualizing the harsh conditions of the winter journey.
- Encourage the use of art media to depict the journey to Baghdád.

**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**  
**TOPIC: THE BANISHMENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO 'IRÁQ**

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## **SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES**

- To perceive the events during Bahá'u'lláh's banishment in Baghdád as a time of transformation for the members of His Family and the Bábí community
- To relate the suffering endured by Bahá'u'lláh and His companions during His banishment to one's own service to His Cause
- To relate the feelings of loss experienced by the Family of Bahá'u'lláh as He left for the mountains of Sulaymáníyyih to one's own experiences of loss

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Create an environment in which the learners may contemplate the hardships endured by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Bahíyyih Khánum as children on the journey of banishment with their Father. Have the learners compare them with any hardships in their own lives.
- Have the learners reflect on Bahá'u'lláh's withdrawal to the mountains and His return. Explore what His Family might have experienced at that time. Imagine being in that Family.
- Use analogies from nature to illustrate the concept that truth endures and creates unity, while falsehood comes to naught. Compare the results of falsehood with the efforts of Mírzá Yahyá and others to be "leaders" of the Bábí community.



## **ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE**

- To demonstrate understanding of the events in Iraq and the transformation of the Bábí community

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Have students plan and prepare an event on the anniversary of Bahá'u'lláh's arrival in Baghdád, and in this event...
- Encourage the children to create, write and present an ode of love to Bahá'u'lláh (poetry, song, essay, etc.) that expresses their new levels of love for Him as a result of learning about these events in His life.
- Have the students prepare and present a dramatic interpretation of what occurred within the Bábí community during this period.
- Assist the learners to plan and execute a personal deepening schedule with the goal of continually becoming more and more attracted to, in love with, and transformed by Bahá'u'lláh.

**TOPIC: THE BANISHMENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO 'IRÁQ**

**Sample Activities**

**ACTIVITY: THE JOURNEY**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES:** To know the geography of the Middle East and the key features of the politics of the time; To know the circumstances of Bahá'u'lláh's banishment to Iraq, and the harsh conditions of His journey

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that Bahá'u'lláh, His family, and other companions suffered terribly during their harsh journey to Iraq

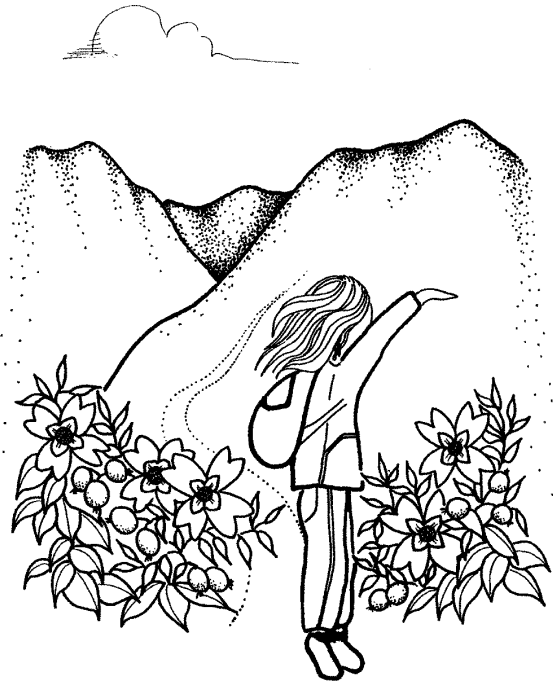
**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Education directed toward recognition of God; Use of questioning; Use of manipulatives; Use of stories

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Persian music
- bags, snacks, water, jackets
- 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 1 cup water
- bowl

1. Employ dramatic story-telling to describe the politics of 19th Century Persia, and why Bahá'u'lláh was banished following His release from the *Síyáh-Chál*, p. 69 of this Lesson Planning Guide. Play music in the background as you tell this story.
2. Pack backpacks or tote bags with jackets, snacks and water for the “journey.”
3. Say imaginary farewells to friends and home - remind the children that nine-year old ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and His seven-year old sister Bahíyyih went on the trip, but that going over the mountains in winter would have been too hard on two-year old Mihdí, who had to stay behind with his grandmother. Allow learners to ponder the sadness of this separation, not knowing if they’d ever see little Mihdí again.
4. Guide the children on a pre-determined route. If no steep hills are available, create a “mountain pass” out of crates or blocks for climbing over and through.
5. Talk about the extreme cold as you go. Shiver and stamp your feet “to keep warm.”



6. At one stop, a “caravanserai,” along your route, enact how Ásíyih Khánum would wash their clothes on the journey. Each student can scrub a small towel or shirt in a basin, then walk with it hung over their outstretched arms to dry, for the next portion of the “journey.”
7. At another “caravanserai,” enact how Ásíyih Khánum tried to make a cake for Bahá'u'lláh and the Family, but in the dark mistook salt for sugar! Place pre-measured ingredients in unmarked containers: 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, and water. Have children mix them to make dough. Encourage children to taste the salty dough. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá later said that his mouth burned all that night from eating the cake His Mother made.



**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**  
**TOPIC: THE BANISHMENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO 'IRÁQ**

**ACTIVITY: HARDSHIPS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S BANISHMENT**

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To relate the suffering endured by Bahá'u'lláh and His companions during His banishment to one's own service to His Cause

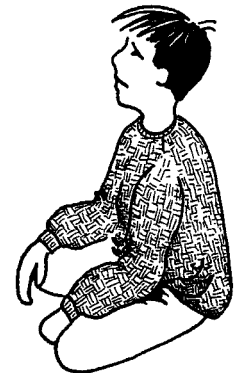
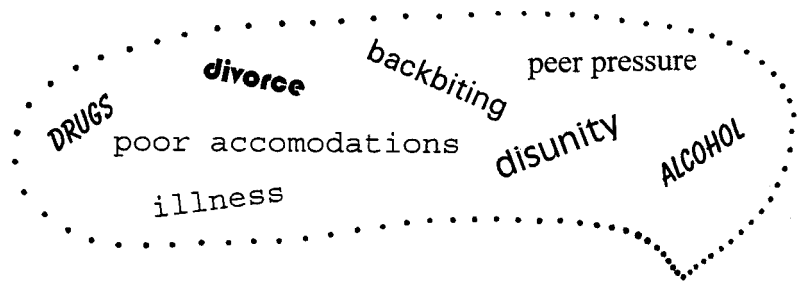
**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Engaging mind and heart; Education directed toward recognition of God; Use of questioning; Use of consultation; Use of the power of reasoning; Use of reflection

**SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY:** 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- paper and pencils or pens
- copies of Resource Page 70, "Trust in God"

1. When you have reached the end of your "journey," in "Baghdad," recount the hardships that were endured by Bahá'u'lláh and the Holy Family, as enacted on your "journey."
2. Invite personal accounts of real-life hardships that the learners have experienced themselves, or by people that they know. These could include teaching trips, pioneering, peer pressure, or other tests and difficulties.
3. Compare these hardships with the ordeals experienced on the journey to Baghdad.



4. Play or sing a song about love for Bahá'u'lláh, for example, "O Bahá'u'lláh!" from the World Congress *Lasting Remembrances* video.
5. Invite students to express their love for Bahá'u'lláh and a testimony of what difficulties they would be willing to endure for Him, in an original poem.
6. Teach the song, "Trust in God," Resource Page 70. Baha'u'llah revealed this prayer while in Baghdad. It is repeated 19 times.

**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

## **TOPIC: THE BANISHMENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO 'IRÁQ**

### **ACTIVITY: THE EFFECT ON THE BÁBÍ COMMUNITY**

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To demonstrate understanding of the events in Iraq and the transformation of the Bábí community

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Education directed toward recognition of God; Use of questioning; Use of arts; Use of creativity; Use of stories

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*

1. Have students prepare a community gathering where they can share the stories of Bahá'u'lláh's banishment to Iraq.
2. In small groups assign to each group one of the following stories from *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*:  
"Bahá'u'lláh's Secret," pp. 97-101  
"Stranger in the Mountain," pp. 102-05  
"Hatred and Miracles," pp. 107-12
3. One group may research the transformation of the Bábí community, using p. 71 of this Lesson Planning Guide.
4. Encourage each group to consult on how to tell their story or report the results of their research, remembering that no one may portray members of the Holy Family.
5. Plan for the learners to invite the community to their presentation of these stories and the poems created in the previous activity. The presentation may be scheduled at an upcoming Nineteen Day Feast, devotional gathering, or fireside.



**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**  
**TOPIC: THE BANISHMENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO 'IRÁQ**

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**Resource Pages**

**EXCERPT FROM *GOD PASSES BY***

BY SHOGHI EFFENDI

**CHAPTER VII**

**BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S BANISHMENT TO IRAQ**

The attempt on the life of Násirí'd-Din Sháh, as stated in a previous chapter, was made on ... the 15th of August, 1852. Immediately after, Bahá'u'lláh was arrested in Niyavaran, was conducted with the greatest ignominy to Tíhrán and cast into the Sáyáh-Chál. His imprisonment lasted for a period of no less than four months, in the middle of which the “year nine” (1269), anticipated in such glowing terms by the Báb, ... was ushered in, endowing with undreamt-of potentialities the whole world. Two months after that year was born, Bahá'u'lláh, the purpose of His imprisonment now accomplished, was released from His confinement, and set out, a month later, for Baghdad, on the first stage of a memorable and life-long exile which was to carry Him, in the course of years, as far as Adrianople in European Turkey, and which was to end with His twenty-four years' incarceration in Akká.

...the Grand Vizier, after having secured the reluctant consent of his sovereign to set free his Captive, was now in a position to dispatch his trusted representative, Hájí 'Alí, to the Sáyáh-Chál, instructing him to deliver to Bahá'u'lláh the order for His release. The sight which that emissary beheld upon his arrival evoked in him such anger that he cursed his master for the shameful treatment of a man of such high position and stainless renown. Removing his mantle from his shoulders he presented it to Bahá'u'lláh, entreating Him to wear it when in the presence of the Minister and his counsellors, a request which He emphatically refused, preferring to appear, attired in the garb of a prisoner, before the members of the Imperial government.

No sooner had He presented Himself before them than the Grand Vizier addressed Him saying: “Had you chosen to take my advice, and had you dissociated yourself from the Faith of the Siyyid-i-Báb, you would never have suffered the pains and indignities that have been heaped upon you.” “Had you, in your turn,” Bahá'u'lláh retorted, “followed My counsels, the affairs of the government would not have reached so critical a stage.” Mírzá Áqá Khán was thereupon reminded of the conversation he had had with Him on the occasion of the Báb's martyrdom, when he had been warned that “the flame that has been kindled will blaze forth more fiercely than ever.” “What is it that you advise me now to do?” he inquired from Bahá'u'lláh. “Command the governors of the realm,” was the instant reply, “to cease shedding the blood of the innocent, to cease plundering their property, to cease dishonoring their women, and injuring their children.” That same day the Grand Vizier acted on the advice thus given him; but any effect it had, as the course of subsequent events amply demonstrated, proved to be momentary and negligible.

The relative peace and tranquillity accorded Bahá'u'lláh after His tragic and cruel imprisonment was destined, by the dictates of an unerring Wisdom, to be of an extremely short duration. He had hardly rejoined His family and kindred when a decree from Násirí'd-Din Sháh was communicated to Him, bidding Him leave the territory of Persia, fixing a time-limit of one month for His departure and allowing Him the right to choose the land of His exile.

The Russian Minister, as soon as he was informed of the Imperial decision, expressed the desire to take Bahá'u'lláh under the protection of his government, and offered to extend every facility for His removal to Russia. This invitation, so spontaneously extended, Bahá'u'lláh declined, preferring, in pursuance of an unerring instinct, to establish His abode in Turkish territory, in the city of Baghdád. ...

The Sháh's edict, equivalent to an order for the immediate expulsion of Bahá'u'lláh from Persian territory, opens a new and glorious chapter in the history of the first Bahá'í century. ...

On the first day of the month of Rabi'u'th-Thani, of the year 1269 A.H., (January 12, 1853), nine months after His return from Karbila, Bahá'u'lláh, together with some of the members of His family, and escorted by an officer of the Imperial body-guard and an official representing the Russian Legation, set out on His three months' journey to Baghdád.

Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 104-08

# Trust in God

Words: Baha'u'llah  
Baha'u'llah, The King of Glory, p. 139  
Music: Susan Engle

## Part 1

He who puts his trust in God, God will suf - fice him. He who

## Part II

fears God, God, will send him re - lief. He who puts his trust in God, God

will suf - fice him. He who fears God, God will send him re lief.

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**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**  
**TOPIC: THE BANISHMENT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH TO 'IRÁQ**

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**EXCERPT FROM *GOD PASSES BY***

BY SHOGHI EFFENDI

**BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S RETURN FROM SULAYMÁNÍYYIH**

The Faith of the Báb, as already observed, had, in consequence of the successive and formidable blows it had received, reached the verge of extinction. Nor was the momentous Revelation vouchsafed to Bahá'u'lláh in the Síyáh-Chál productive at once of any tangible results of a nature that would exercise a stabilizing influence on a well-nigh disrupted community. Bahá'u'lláh's unexpected banishment had been a further blow to its members, who had learned to place their reliance upon Him. Mirza Yahyá seclusion and inactivity further accelerated the process of disintegration that had set in. Bahá'u'lláh's prolonged retirement to Kurdistan seemed to have set the seal on its complete dissolution.

Now, however, the tide that had ebbed in so alarming a measure was turning, bearing with it, as it rose to flood point, those inestimable benefits that were to herald the announcement of the Revelation already secretly disclosed to Bahá'u'lláh.

During the seven years that elapsed between the resumption of His labors and the declaration of His prophetic mission - years to which we now direct our attention - it would be no exaggeration to say that the Bahá'í community, under the name and in the shape of a re-arisen Bábí community was born and was slowly taking shape, though its Creator still appeared in the guise of, and continued to labor as, one of the foremost disciples of the Báb. It was a period during which the prestige of the community's nominal head steadily faded from the scene, paling before the rising splendor of Him Who was its actual Leader and Deliverer. It was a period in the course of which the first fruits of an exile, endowed with incalculable potentialities, ripened and were garnered. It was a period that will go down in history as one during which the prestige of a recreated community was immensely enhanced, its morals entirely reformed, its recognition of Him who rehabilitated its fortunes enthusiastically affirmed, its literature enormously enriched, and its victories over its new adversaries universally acknowledged.

The prestige of the community, and particularly that of Bahá'u'lláh, now began from its first inception in Kurdistan to mount in a steadily rising crescendo. Bahá'u'lláh had scarcely gathered up again the reins of the authority he had relinquished when the devout admirers He had left behind in Sulaymáníyyih started to flock to Baghdad, with the name of "Darvish Muhammad" on their lips, and the "house of Mirza Músá the Bábí" as their goal. Astonished at the sight of so many ulamas and Sufis of Kurdish origin... thronging the house of Bahá'u'lláh, ... the religious leaders of the city ... began to seek His presence, and, having obtained completely satisfying answers to their several queries, enrolled themselves among the band of His earliest admirers. The unqualified recognition by these outstanding leaders of those traits that distinguished the character and conduct of Bahá'u'lláh stimulated the curiosity, and later evoked the unstinted praise, of a great many observers of less conspicuous position, among whom figured poets, mystics and notables, who either resided in, or visited, the city. Government officials, foremost among whom were Abdu'llah Pasha and his lieutenant Mahmud Aqa, and Mulla Ali Mardan, a Kurd well-known in those circles, were gradually brought into contact with Him, and lent their share in noising abroad His fast-spreading fame. Nor could those distinguished Persians, who either lived in Baghdad and its environs or visited as pilgrims the holy places, remain impervious to the spell of His charm. Princes of the royal blood, amongst whom were such personages as the Na'ibu'l-Iyalih, the Shuja'u'd-Dawlih, the Sayfu'd-Dawlih, and Zaynu'l-Abidin Khan, the Fakhru'd-Dawlih, were, likewise, irresistibly drawn into the ever-widening circle of His associates and acquaintances.

Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 128-29

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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**Stories & Articles:**

*Brilliant Star:*

- “Who Is Bahá'u'lláh?” Jan/Feb 02
- “Homes of the Heart” Sept/Oct 01
- “Far Away from Home” May/Jun 01
- “Bahá'u'lláh's Return to Baghdad” SpEd 99
- “Navváb's Mistake,” SpEd 91
- “The Homeless,” Jan/Feb 89
- “A Plan Undone,” Jul/Aug 87
- “Salman: Courier for the King of Glory,” Jan/Feb 87

*The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two:* “Bahá'u'lláh's Secret,” “Stranger in the Mountains,” “Hatred and Miracles”

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Blessed Beauty*, “Journey to Baghdád,” “The Mountains of Sulaymáníyyih,” “The Flame of Devotion and Sacrifice,” “Memorable Incidents,” “The True Paradise,” “The Divine Protection,” “Man Cannot Test God”

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Fruits of One Tree*, pp. 57-60

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Story of Bahá'u'lláh*, “Journey to Baghdád,” “Kurdistan,” “Happy Days,” “The Divine Protection,” “Man Cannot Test God,” “Memorable Incidents”

Firman, Mary, *Journey Into Exile*, pp. 8-15

Furutan, 'Ali-Akbar, *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 14-30, 93-94

Garst, Hitjo, *From Mountain to Mountain*, “To Baghdád,” “Bahá'u'lláh's Sorrow,” “Alone in the Wilderness,” “Home Again at Last,” “The Great Change,” “The Enemies Have Their Way After All”

Johnson, Lowell, *Remember My Days, the Life Story of Bahá'u'lláh*

Meyer, Zoe, *Children's Stories from the Dawn Breakers*, p. 64

Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 28-29

Reed, Betty, *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh As Told By Pokka*, pp. 5-12

Taafaki, Irene, *Horse of the Moonlight*, pp. 7-14

Wittman, Debbie, *The Birth of the Bahá'í Faith*, pp. 13-14

**Worksheets and Coloring Pages:**

*Brilliant Star:*

- “Following their Footsteps” May/Jun 01
- “The Banishment,” Sep/Oct 84
- Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 29, 31
- Nathesan, S., *Bahá'í Activities for Children*, p. 25

**Activities:**

- Brilliant Star:* “Navváb's Mistake,” “World Travelers,” SpEd 91
- Firman, Mary, *Journey Into Exile*, pp 13-14

**Music:**

*The Bahá'í Songbook*, “Bahá'u'lláh, the Glory of God”

**Games:**

- Brilliant Star:* “Pilgrimage,” Mar/Apr 85
- Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Fruits of One Tree: Activity Book*, p. 14
- Firman, Mary, *Journey Into Exile*, p. 11
- Nathesan, S., *Bahá'í Activities for Children*, p. 25

**List other favorite resources:**

If you find any additional resources, please notify the National Teacher Training Center, or submit your findings to the Educational Materials web site.

**THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE  
AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

**THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN**

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
LOVE, JOYFULNESS, UNITY**

Arise, and proclaim unto the entire creation the tidings that He Who is the All-Merciful hath directed His steps towards the Ridván and entered it. Guide, then, the people unto the garden of delight which God hath made the Throne of His Paradise.

*Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 31*

Say: This is the Paradise on whose foliage the wine of utterance hath imprinted the testimony: “He that was hidden from the eyes of men is revealed, girded with sovereignty and power!” This is the Paradise, the rustling of whose leaves proclaims: “O ye that inhabit the heavens and the earth! There hath appeared what hath never previously appeared. He Who, from everlasting, had concealed His Face from the sight of creation is now come.” From the whispering breeze that wafteth amidst its branches there cometh the cry: “He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is made manifest. The Kingdom is God's,” while from its streaming waters can be heard the murmur: “All eyes are gladdened, for He Whom none hath beheld, Whose secret no one hath discovered, hath lifted the veil of glory, and uncovered the countenance of Beauty.”

*Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 31*

## TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



#### KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know the circumstances surrounding the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridván
- To know that this occasion is known as the “Most Great Festival” and as the “King of Festivals” and is celebrated from sunset on April 20 through sunset on May 2

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Tell the story of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridván.
- Explore the significance of the word “Ridván,” *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*, pp. 115-28.
- Use songs and music to relate the story of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh during the twelve days in the Garden of Ridván.
- Share passages from the Writings that proclaim the greatness of this Festival, *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*, pp. 122, 114).
- Locate and mark the period of the Ridván Festival on the calendar, specifically the three Holy Days.



#### WISDOM OBJECTIVE

- To understand the significance of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Use analogies (a hidden treasure, a wrapped gift) to demonstrate the importance of the unveiling of Bahá'u'lláh's Station.
- Have the learners consult together on the impact of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration on His Family, the Bábí community, the world at large. What changes occurred?
- Use art media to show the transformation of the name of God's Cause from Bábí to Bahá'í.
- Have the learners research the Writings of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh for passages that refer to a necessary time for the concealment of Bahá'u'lláh's Station (1853-1863).
- Have the students reflect on and share what is revealed in these passages.
- Have the students study the Tablet of the Holy Mariner and discuss the juxtaposition of the circumstances of Bahá'u'lláh's arrival in and departure from Baghdád.



**TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN**

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**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE**

- To discern the joy of this Most Great Festival and to acknowledge one's gratitude for Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration

**SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Prepare for the learners an experiential re-creation of the sweet sights, sounds and fragrances of the Ridván Garden.
- Teach non-competitive group games whose objectives are that everyone wins, in order to engender feelings of happiness and gladness that we are Bahá'ís.
- Encourage the learners to use art media to portray the scenes of the Ridván Garden, e.g., the faces of the companions of Bahá'u'lláh, the heap of roses in Bahá'u'lláh's tent, etc.
- Serve Persian sweets so the learners will know the kinds of goodies Bahá'u'lláh might have shared with His followers on that Holy Day. If possible have students make these sweets.
- Encourage learners to reflect on the sweetness of the occasion.
- Have students ponder and share the meaning of this event for their own lives and have them explain this memory through the arts.



**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES**

- To engage in events associated with Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration.

**SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Assist the students in preparing an experiential re-creation of the Ridván Garden as their community's commemoration of one of the Holy Days of this period.
- Have the learners prepare readings of Writings that refer to this Festival in Gleanings and God Passes By, as part of their community's Holy Day commemoration.
- Provide the materials to create greeting cards about the Ridván Festival for Bahá'í and other friends.
- Have students create personal activities as part of celebrating Ridván, e.g., start a new project, dress beautifully, share one's feeling of joy at this time with a seeker.

**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

# **TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN**

## **Sample Activities**

### **ACTIVITY: BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S DECLARATION**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the significance of Bahá'u'lláh's public Declaration

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Education directed toward recognition of God; Direct use of Sacred Writings; Use of questioning; Use of manipulatives; Use of stories

**SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY:** 60 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- date cards (20); event pages (4); reversible name cards (one per student)
- glitter/sequins/small gems
- treasure box
- excerpt from *God Passes By*, p. 79 of this Lesson Planning Guide

1. Prepare the following materials:

20 date cards, approximately 8-1/2" x 3", for the years 1844 to 1863. Use a different colored card or ink for the years 1844, 1853, and 1863 to show their importance.

Number cards, 2" x 3", numbered 1 to 19. Use different colored cards or ink for numbers 9 and 19 to show their importance.

4 EVENT PAGES, 8 1/2" x 11", one each for "Declaration of the Báb," "Martyrdom of the Báb," "Bahá'u'lláh Receives His Revelation" and "Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh." Decorate pages with bright colors, with name of event written prominently.

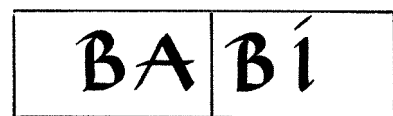
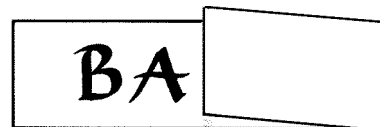
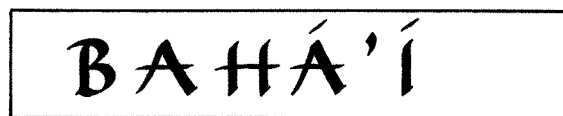
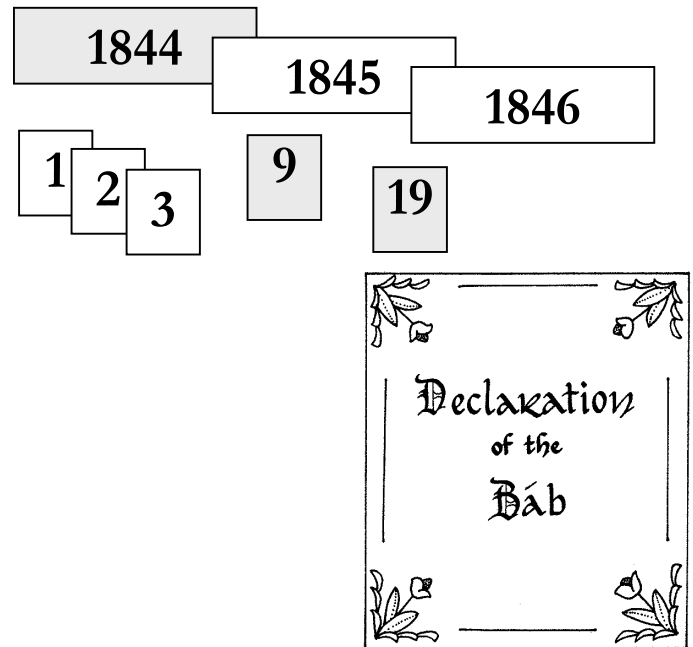
Reversible NAME CARDS, one for each child, created in the following manner:

Write "Bahá'í" on card;

Fold card back to cover all but "Ba;"

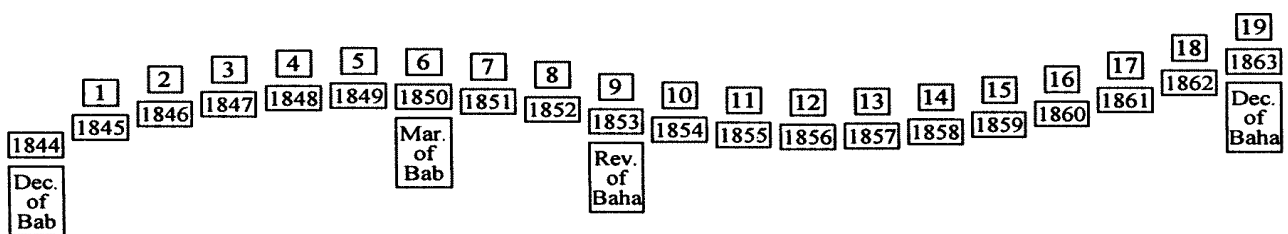
Write "bí" on the part folded over, so that the card now says "Bábí." Crease so card stays folded.

2. Take students on a narrative history of the Bahá'í Revelation, from the time of the Báb's Declaration, to the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh



**TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN**

3. Lay on the floor (or tape on the wall), the first DATE CARD: 1844. Below it, place the “event page” for “Declaration of the Báb.” Briefly discuss the significance of this event and give one child a “Bábí” name card to wear.
  4. Involve learners in putting the time-line together, as each of the next five DATE CARDS provide opportunities to give out more and more “Bábí” NAME CARDS, and talk about how the Báb’s religion spread, and how His Mission was to prepare the hearts for the Promised One of all ages.
  5. Place the “Martyrdom of the Báb” page below the date card “1850.” Continue placing date cards, explaining how the Báb’s message continued to spread (give out any remaining NAME CARDS), even following His death and the deaths of thousands of followers.
  6. Place “1853” with the page “Bahá’u’lláh’s Revelation in the Síyáh-Chál” below it. Remind students that Bahá’u’lláh, as a disciple of the Báb, was thrown into the Síyáh-Chál. It was there that He received the first intimations of His Mission, personated by a Maiden, *God Passes By*, p. 93-103. At this time Bahá’u’lláh did not tell anyone Who He was. Together, decorate the name, “Bahá’u’lláh,” using glitter, sequins or small gems. Remind the students that the Maiden of Heaven referred to Bahá’u’lláh as “God’s Treasure.” But it was a hidden treasure: place the beautiful Name in a “treasure box” and close it up.
  7. Encourage the students to count the years from the time of the Báb’s Declaration to the time of Bahá’u’lláh’s Revelation in the Síyáh-Chál, by placing the number cards above the dates.
- (Some learners may already know that the number nine has special significance in the Bahá’í Faith.)
8. Continue placing date cards in order, describing how Bahá’u’lláh came to be regarded more and more as a Leader among the Bábís, and how many people were amazed by His knowledge, but He still didn’t tell them that He was the Promised One they were watching for. Mention His banishment to Baghdad and His retreat to the mountains of Kurdistan as these dates are placed.
  9. As the last card, 1863, is placed, announce that the time had finally arrived for Bahá’u’lláh to announce Himself! Allow excitement and anticipation to build as the event page is placed. Now it is time to open the treasure box! Display the beautiful Name at the end of the time-line.
  10. Tell the students how happy this made all the Bábís: their Promised One was here, and now they were Bahá’ís! Show them how to open their NAME CARDS to now read “Bahá’í.”
  11. Encourage the students to count the years that had elapsed between the Báb’s Declaration and Bahá’u’lláh’s Declaration, using the number cards. (Again, some learners may recognize that the number 19 is special.)
  12. Share with the learners some of Bahá’u’lláh’s own words concerning this joyous occasion, from *God Passes By*, p. 79 of this Lesson Planning Guide.
  13. Your completed work should look something like this:



**GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH**

## **TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN**

### **ACTIVITY: STORY OF THE RIDVÁN GARDEN**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know that this occasion is known as the “Most Great Festival” and as the “King of Festivals;” To know the circumstances surrounding the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridván

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To discern the joy of this Most Great Festival and to acknowledge one's gratitude for Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Engaging mind and heart; Education directed toward recognition of God; Use of stories; Use of questioning; Use of reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*
- *Persian music; rose oil or rose water*
- *honey-sweetened treats*
- *copies of Resource Pages 82-83*

1. Set the mood with Persian music, rose oil, dates or honey-sweetened treats.
2. Read or tell one of the following stories from *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*: “The Garden of Paradise,” pp. 115-17; “The Garden of Ridván,” pp. 118-21; “For Those Who Go First,” pp. 123-28.
3. Ask the students to reflect on reasons that they are grateful for the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh, then to turn to the person next to them and share their reflections.
4. Teach the song “The Garden of Ridván, Resource Pages 80-81.

### **ACTIVITY: THE RIDVÁN FESTIVAL PLAY**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know that this occasion is celebrated from sunset on April 20 through sunset on May 2

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To apply one's gratitude and joy to active participation in events associated with Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Education directed toward recognition of God; Direct use of Sacred Writings; Use of stories; Use of questioning; Use of manipulatives; Use of arts; Use of creativity; Use of drama

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*
- art supplies; props

1. Assist learners to prepare a play for the Festival of Ridván where they can share one of the following stories of Bahá'u'lláh's declaration from *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*:  
“The Garden of Paradise,” pp. 115-17  
“The Garden of Ridván,” pp. 118-21  
“For Those Who Go First,” pp. 123-28
2. See p. 82 of this Lesson Planning Guide for suggestions for doing a Ridván play.  
Present the play as part of the community's celebration of the Ridván Festival. Learners may also make the invitations, prepare the readings, make and serve the refreshments!

TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN

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Resource Pages

EXCERPT FROM *GOD PASSES BY*

by Shoghi Effendi

As to the significance of that Declaration let Bahá'u'lláh Himself reveal to us its import. Acclaiming that historic occasion as the “Most Great Festival,” the “King of Festivals,” the “Festival of God,” He has, in His Kitáb-i-Aqdas, characterized it as the Day whereon “all created things were immersed in the sea of purification,” whilst in one of His specific Tablets, He has referred to it as the Day whereon “the breezes of forgiveness were wafted over the entire creation.” “Rejoice, with exceeding gladness, O people of Bahá!” He, in another Tablet, has written, “as ye call to remembrance the Day of supreme felicity, the Day whereon the Tongue of the Ancient of Days hath spoken, as He departed from His House proceeding to the Spot from which He shed upon the whole of creation the splendors of His Name, the All-Merciful... Were We to reveal the hidden secrets of that Day, all that dwell on earth and in the heavens would swoon away and die, except such as will be preserved by God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. Such is the inebriating effect of the words of God upon the Revealer of His undoubted proofs that His pen can move no longer.” And again: “The Divine Springtime is come, O Most Exalted Pen, for the Festival of the All-Merciful is fast approaching.... The Day-Star of Blissfulness shineth above the horizon of Our Name, the Blissful, inasmuch as the Kingdom of the Name of God hath been adorned with the ornament of the Name of Thy Lord, the Creator of the heavens.... Take heed lest anything deter Thee from extolling the greatness of this Day - the Day whereon the Finger of Majesty and Power hath opened the seal of the Wine of Reunion, and called all who are in the heavens and all who are on earth.... This is the Day whereon the unseen world crieth out: ‘Great is thy blessedness, O earth, for thou hast been made the footstool of thy God, and been chosen as the seat of His mighty throne’ ...Say ... He it is Who hath laid bare before you the hidden and treasured Gem, were ye to seek it. He it is who is the One Beloved of all things, whether of the past or of the future.” And yet again: “Arise, and proclaim unto the entire creation the tidings that He who is the All-Merciful hath directed His steps towards the Ridván and entered it. Guide, then, the people unto the Garden of Delight which God hath made the Throne of His Paradise... Within this Paradise, and from the heights of its loftiest chambers, the Maids of Heaven have cried out and shouted: ‘Rejoice, ye dwellers of the realms above, for the fingers of Him Who is the Ancient of Days are ringing, in the name of the All-Glorious, the Most Great Bell, in the midmost heart of the heavens. The hands of bounty have borne round the cups of everlasting life. Approach, and quaff your fill.’” And finally: “Forget the world of creation, O Pen, and turn Thou towards the face of Thy Lord, the Lord of all names. Adorn, then, the world with the ornament of the favors of Thy Lord, the King of everlasting days. For We perceive the fragrance of the Day whereon He Who is the Desire of all nations hath shed upon the kingdoms of the unseen and of the seen the splendors of the light of His most excellent names, and enveloped them with the radiance of the luminaries of His most gracious favors, favors which none can reckon except Him Who is the Omnipotent Protector of the entire creation.”

Shoghi Effendi, *God Passes By*, pp. 153-55

TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN

The Garden of Ridván

Words: Jeffrey Gruber  
Music: Mildred McClellan

fresh - ness to \_\_\_\_\_ the air. Our eyes dance on the  
sea - pines \_\_\_\_\_ where spice and fra - gran - ces give \_\_\_\_\_ wings to our  
soul. Our ears ga - ther mel - o - dies from \_\_\_\_\_ the  
birds, \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ the birds. \_\_\_\_\_

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It consists of four systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: 'fresh - ness to \_\_\_\_\_ the air. Our eyes dance on the sea - pines \_\_\_\_\_ where spice and fra - gran - ces give \_\_\_\_\_ wings to our soul. Our ears ga - ther mel - o - dies from \_\_\_\_\_ the birds, \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ the birds. \_\_\_\_\_'. The piano accompaniment features flowing sixteenth-note patterns in the right hand and more rhythmic, often eighth-note patterns in the left hand.

GOAL: TO KNOW THE SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN

Our thir - ty hearts are glad - dened in the ver - nal green of the  
gar - den. Here a - bides the spring - time of our  
spi - rit. A foun - tain lends its

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of four systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 2/4. The lyrics are: "Our thir - ty hearts are glad - dened in the ver - nal green of the gar - den. Here a - bides the spring - time of our spi - rit. A foun - tain lends its". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line with occasional chords and melodic fragments in the right hand.

reprinted from *Sing a New Song*, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States

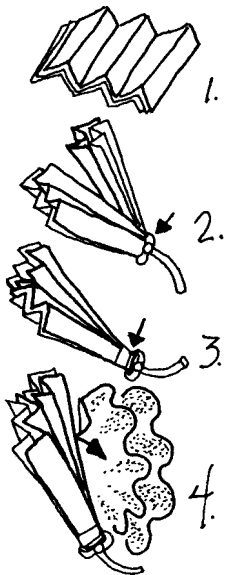
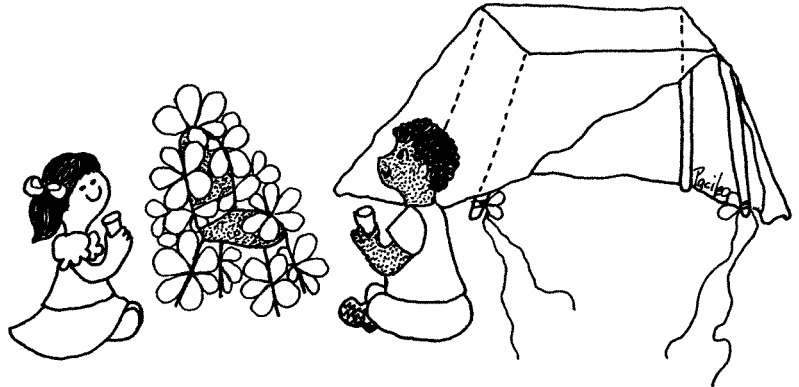
## TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN

### HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR DOING A RIDVÁN PLAY:

adapted from *Brilliant Star*, March/April 1991

Written and illustrated by Cindy Pacileo.

1. Have the children be Bahá'u'lláh's companions. No one should play the part of Bahá'u'lláh.
2. Start with Bahá'u'lláh's companions hearing about the letter from the grand vizier of Turkey asking Bahá'u'lláh to leave Baghdád. Then His companions leave Bahá'u'lláh's house and row across the Tigris river to the Garden of Ridván.
3. The children can carry Bahá'u'lláh's tent (a card table with two 4-foot lengths of yarn tied to each leg and a full-size white bed sheet) across the river with them.
4. The children gather the twelve large paper roses you or they have already made (instructions below) and tie the pipe cleaner stems all over a folding chair to make the morning pile of roses. They can have juice while sitting around this pile.
5. Act out the wind storm with the companions sitting on the tent ropes all night.
6. Then row back across the river to get Bahá'u'lláh's family on the ninth day.
7. Stand in two lines to wave good-bye to Bahá'u'lláh as He leaves the Garden of Ridván riding on His horse. You might want to sing "Oh Bahá'u'lláh" as He rides away.



### TO MAKE A TISSUE PAPER ROSE:

1. Fold six to eight full sheets of colored or white tissue paper accordion style in 1 to 5 inch (2.5-5 cm) pleats. (Coloring the edges of white tissue paper with a marker before you fold it makes a pretty and inexpensive flower.)
2. Fold pleated tissue paper in half. Insert pipe cleaner through the fold and twist together to make as long a stem as possible.
3. Tape the two flower halves together just above the pipe cleaner.
4. Carefully pull each sheet of tissue paper down and out to make a big flower. The more sheets of tissue you use, the fluffier the flower.



TOPIC: THE DECLARATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH  
IN THE GARDEN OF RIDVÁN

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LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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**Stories & Articles:**

*Brilliant Star:*

“Who is Bahá'u'lláh?” Jan/Feb 02

“Ridván, the Most Great Festival” Mar/Apr 01

*The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two:* “The Garden of Paradise,” “The Garden of Ridván,” “For Those Who Go First”

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Blessed Beauty*, “Bahá'u'lláh's Open Declaration”

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Fruits of One Tree*, p. 59

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Story of Bahá'u'lláh*, “Bahá'u'lláh's Open Declaration”

Firman, Mary, *Journey Into Exile*, p.16

Garst, Hitjo, *From Mountain to Mountain*, “In the Garden of Ridván”

Johnson, Lowell, *Remember My Days, the Life Story of Bahá'u'lláh*

Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 28-29

Reed, Betty, *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh As Told By Pokka*, pp. 14-22

Wittman, Debbie, *The Birth of the Bahá'í Faith*, p. 15

**Worksheets and Coloring Pages:**

*Brilliant Star:*

“Color and Memorize” Mar/Apr 01

“Ridvan Gift Game” Mar/Apr 96

“Hidden Message,” SpEd 91

“Dream Remembered” (frontispiece), Nov/Dec 84

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Fruits of One Tree: Activity Book*, p. 15

Cox, Alice and Musacchia, Evelyn, *Bahá'í Teaching Guide for Children (Intermediate)*: “Calendar Lessons,”

“Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridván”

Firman, Mary, *Journey Into Exile*, p.16

Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 29

**Activities:**

*Brilliant Star:*

“What's On the Blue Bench?” SpEd 98

“The King of Festivals,” “Ridván Centerpiece” Mar/Apr 97

“Shadow Box Gardens” May/June 92

“My Ridván Calendar,” “To Make a Tissue Paper Rose”

Mar/Apr 91

Firman, Mary, *Journey Into Exile*, p. 17

**Music:**

*Brilliant Star:* “Dream Remembered,” Nov/Dec 84

*Music of the Bahá'í World Congress*, “Garden of Ridván”

*Sing a New Song*, “The Garden of Ridván”

Sears, Hand of the Cause William, narrated by, with various artists, *Lote Tree*, “Garden of Ridván”

**Drama:**

*Brilliant Star:* “Some Suggestions for Doing a Ridván Play” Mar/Apr 91

**Lesson Plans:**

Cox, Alice and Musacchia, Evelyn, *Bahá'í Teaching Guide for Children (Intermediate)*: “Calendar Lessons: Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridván”

**List other favorite resources:**

If you find any additional resources, please notify the National Teacher Training Center, or submit your findings to the Educational Materials web site.