

TO KNOW THE PROOFS AND EVIDENCES OF THE STATION OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:
DETACHMENT, TOLERANCE, REVERENCE**

The door of the knowledge of the Ancient of Days being thus closed in the face of all beings, the Source of infinite grace, ...hath caused those luminous Gems of Holiness to appear out of the realm of the spirit, in the noble form of the human temple, and be made manifest unto all men....

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Iqán*, p. 99

These attributes of God are not and have never been vouchsafed specially unto certain Prophets, and withheld from others. Nay, all the Prophets of God, His well-favoured, His holy, and chosen Messengers, are, without exception, the bearers of His names, and the embodiments of His attributes. They only differ in the intensity of their revelation, and the comparative potency of their light.

Bahá'u'lláh: *The Kitáb-i-Iqán*, pp. 103-04

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know the term “Progressive Revelation” as described by Bahá’u’lláh and explained by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
- To know the basic facts of previous religions within the Adamic/Prophetic Cycle
- To know that Bahá’u’lláh discusses this topic and the religions of the past in the Kitáb-i-Iqán

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Use the visual arts to familiarize learners with ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s analogies of progressive revelation.
- Make use of sequential, visual materials to demonstrate the place of each previous religion in the Adamic Cycle.
- Have the students work in groups to research the basic facts of each religion.
- Use *The Central Figures: Bahá’u’lláh, Vol. Two* or books such as *The Story As Told* or *Remember the Rainbow* to teach the principle of progressive revelation.
- Through games, help students learn the Holy Books and teachings of previous Manifestations.
- Read passages from *The Kitáb-i-Íqán* and describe the general content and topic of the book. Have students memorize short passages.



WISDOM OBJECTIVE

- To understand that Bahá’u’lláh’s explanation of Progressive Revelation is the way to comprehend the interrelationship among all the world’s Divinely revealed Religions

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Enact role playing to demonstrate the interconnectedness of all religions.
- Teach songs to demonstrate the interconnection of all the Manifestations.
- Have the students do research, then use peer questioning and teaching to discover the unifying threads woven among and connecting all religions.
- Share excerpts from the sacred Scriptures of each religion.
- Share some of the prayers, practices, and symbols of the previous religions. Present them as parts of their own heritage.



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To perceive that the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is God's guidance for this Day
- To perceive the importance of this Day and understand one's role in the fulfillment of God's Plan

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Use visual, sequential materials to illustrate the Day in which we live within the context of progressive revelation.
- Share passages from the Writings regarding the blessedness and greatness of this Day. Provide an opportunity to reflect and meditate on this theme. Have students memorize these passages.
- Ask learners to consult on the blessings and responsibilities one has in this Day of Days.
- Have learners ponder and respond to the statement of Bahá'u'lláh that the Prophets of the past have yearned to live at this time. Why?
- Have a presentation about other religions by leaders of those faiths in the community. Have students prepare questions for the presenters ahead of time. Process each presentation from a Bahá'í perspective after the presenter leaves.



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE

- To explain the concept of Progressive Revelation to others as proof and evidence of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Provide opportunities for the learners to utilize hands-on, visual materials for making a presentation of progressive revelation for a fireside.
- Have students prepare a summary of their research and compare all the religions in a talk.
- Assist learners to prepare a teaching aid for telling others about progressive revelation and the Bahá'í Faith.

TOPIC: PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: THE CHAIN OF SUCCESSIVE REVELATION

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To be familiar with the term 'Progressive Revelation' as described by Bahá'u'lláh

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 35 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- 9 strips of colored paper, 12" long

1. Read aloud from *Gleanings*, p. 74:

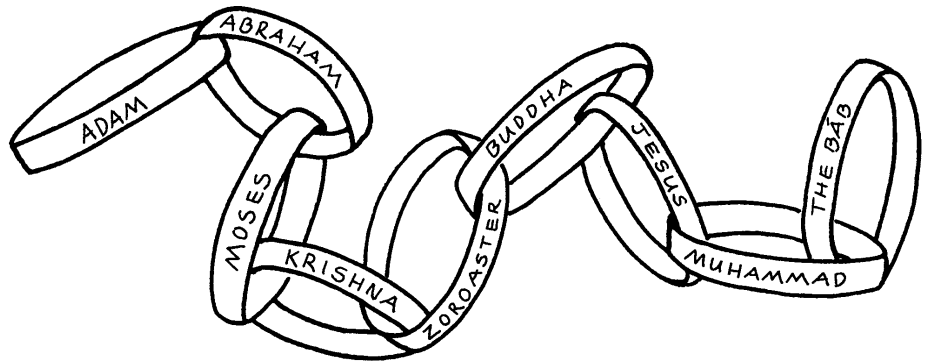
Contemplate with thine inward eye the chain of successive revelations that hath linked the Manifestations of Adam with that of the Báb.

2. Prepare in advance 9 strips of colored paper (12" long), each with the name of one of the Manifestations. You may wish to coordinate the colors of the strips so that they follow a succession, such as the colors in a rainbow:

Adam (brown/tan)
Abraham (yellow)
Moses (orange)
Krishna (red)
Zoroaster (purple)
Buddha (dark blue)
Jesus Christ (light blue)
Muhammad (light green)
the Báb (dark green)

3. Construct the chain, beginning with Adam. Bring the ends of the strip together, creating a loop, with the name on the outside. Tape or staple the ends to hold it together. Thread an end of the next strip labeled through the first loop, and connect its ends. Then thread the strip for Moses through the Abraham loop, and connect its ends. Continue with each Manifestation's strip, in order.

4. Discuss, as the chain is constructed, how these Manifestations and Their Revelations were successive. Also discuss how each is directly linked with the One before and after.
5. When the chain is completed, allow learners to feel it, saying the Names of the Prophets aloud, seeing how the Revelation of Adam is linked via all the Manifestations, with that of the Báb.
6. Re-read the quotation provided on this page.



ACTIVITY: THE MESSAGE AND THE BOOK

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know the basic facts of previous religions within the Adamic/Prophetic Cycle

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To understand Bahá'u'lláh's explanation of Progressive Revelation as the way to comprehend the inter-relationship among all the world's Divinely revealed Religions

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engaging mind and heart; Education directed toward recognition of God; Direct use of Sacred Writings; Use of power of reasoning; Use of questioning

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 35 MIN.

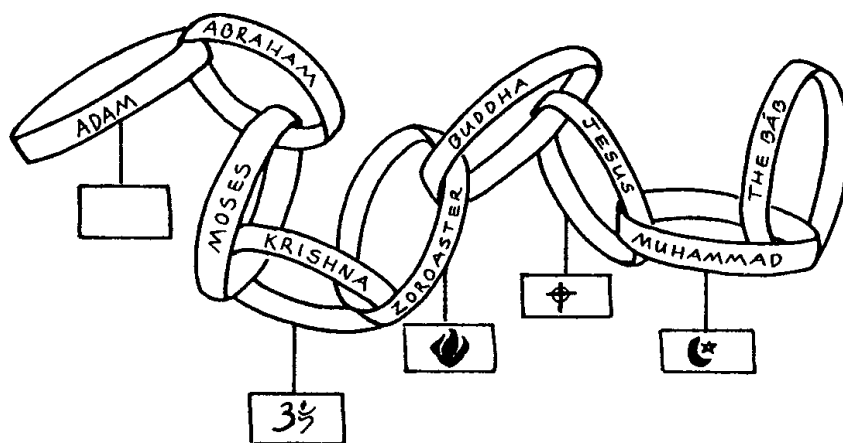
Materials Needed:

- small cards

1. Read aloud the next line of the quotation from *Gleanings*, p. 74:

I testify before God that each one of these Manifestations hath been sent down through the operation of the Divine Will and Purpose, that each hath been entrusted with a divinely-revealed Book and been commissioned to unravel the mysteries of a mighty Tablet.

2. Have children research the Message and the Book of each of the Manifestations. Resources could include: *The Story as Told* by Mahmoudi, *God and His Messengers* by Hofman, *A Story of Stories* by Kay, or books from your public library. Remind them that not much is known about the earliest Prophets.



3. Have learners summarize their findings onto small cards, which can then be hung from that Manifestation's link, creating a linear mobile.
4. Alternatively, learners could use cards from *Brilliant Star*, reproduced on pp. 94-95 of this Lesson Planning Guide. In this case, they will need to create a card for Adam.

TOPIC: PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

ACTIVITY: 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S COMPARISON OF THE MANIFESTATIONS TO TEACHERS IN SCHOOL

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To be familiar with the term "Progressive Revelation" ...as explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 15 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- paper chain, scissors
- quotation of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

1. Create a smaller paper chain, on whose links the grades of school are written: K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.
2. Read 'Abdu'l-Bahá's analogy of the Manifestations as Teachers:

The world is a school in which there must be Teachers of the Word of God. The evidence of the ability of these Teachers is efficient education of the graduating classes.

Promulgation of Universal Peace, p.341.

3. Ask learners to share their thoughts, comparing the two paper chains.
4. Discuss what it would have been like to never progress beyond first or second grade or if they were never moved ahead to the next grade.

5. Ask if all of the grades—all of the links on the chain—are important. Cut one in half with scissors to see the results. Can the two pieces of the chain be connected without the cut one? Repair it, and the chain, with tape. Connect these discussions with the Revelation chain.
6. Discuss what school is preparing one for; compare this to the Divine Teachers preparing mankind for the age of its maturity. Compare graduating from all the grades at school with humanity 'graduating' to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, the Message of God that this is the Day of the oneness of all humankind.

TOPIC: PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

ACTIVITY: THE CULMINATION OF THE PROPHETIC CYCLE

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES: To perceive that the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh is God's guidance for this day; To perceive the importance of this Day and understand one's role in the fulfillment of God's Plan

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 15 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- paper chain of previous Manifestations of God from earlier activity
 - gold paper strip with name of Bahá'u'lláh written on it
 - quotation of *Gleanings* (see resources on following pages)
1. Show a paper strip with Bahá'u'lláh's Name written on it; this one should be larger, brighter—on gold paper to demonstrate the Golden Age.
 2. Connect the this strip to that of the Báb. Present it as the culmination, the goal of the other Revelations—to reach Bahá'u'lláh and this long-promised day of peace.
 3. Read the passages *Gleanings* and *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh* reproduced on p. 93 of this Lesson Planning Guide. Discuss: What is unique in Bahá'u'lláh's teachings?
 4. Allow time for the students to reflect on the importance of all religionists attaining the Revelation for today. Compare it with moving ahead in school while maintaining the spirit of unity in the class. Do not allow Bahá'í students to feel superior to others. Bahá'u'lláh's Message is for all.

ACTIVITY: STORIES ABOUT PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know that Bahá'u'lláh discusses this topic and the religions of the past in the *Kitáb-i-Iqán*

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To understand Bahá'u'lláh's explanation of Progressive Revelation as the way to comprehend the inter-relationship among all the world's Divinely revealed Religions

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

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

1. Read the three stories in *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*:
“A Never-ending Stack of Lego Bricks,”
“The Letter of Certainty,” and
“A Letter from Baghdád.”
2. Discuss the questions on p. 175 of the storybook.
3. Then discuss how these stories can assist us to explain Progressive Revelation to our friends.

GOAL: To Know the Proofs and Evidences of the Station of Bahá'u'lláh

TOPIC: PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

ACTIVITY: PREPARE A FIRESIDE PRESENTATION UTILIZING THE COMPLETED REVELATION CHAIN, RESEARCH FINDINGS AND QUOTATIONS SHARED

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To communicate the concept of Progressive Revelation to others as proof and evidence of Bahá'u'lláh's Mission.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Service to humanity; Use of creativity.

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN.

1. Convene a consultation to discuss the practical aspects of sharing these teachings with others:
 - Is it possible for the students to host individual firesides for their friends or is it better to plan family-to-family firesides?
 - How will the invitation be given? Who will you invite?
 - How will you show hospitality? Will you greet the guests at the door? Will you serve refreshments?
 - How will you include your family in this project?
2. Remember to encourage the students to share their successes and challenges with this fireside in subsequent classes.

Resource Pages

The Revelation which, from time immemorial, hath been acclaimed as the Purpose and Promise of all the Prophets of God, and the most cherished Desire of His Messengers, hath now, by virtue of the pervasive Will of the Almighty and at His irresistible bidding, been revealed unto men. The advent of such a Revelation hath been heralded in all the sacred Scriptures.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleaning from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 5

Glorified be God! All the heavenly Scriptures of the past attest to the greatness of this Day, the greatness of this Manifestation, the greatness of His signs, the greatness of His Word, the greatness of His constancy, the greatness of His pre-eminent station. Yet despite all this the people have remained heedless and are shut out as by a veil. Indeed all the Prophets have yearned to attain this Day.

Bahá'u'lláh: Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 258-59

The Holy Book of God

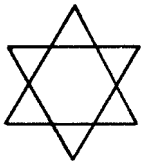
an activity by Pepper P. Oldziej

reproduced from *Brilliant Star*, Special Edition 1993

God sent us many Messengers. We call them Manifestations. Each one of God's Manifestations brought us the Word of God in a Holy Book or collection of Tablets. The Word of God is one long Message from God. Each Holy Book is really a chapter or section of the one great Holy Book of God.

Each Manifestation brings us a new chapter of this Holy Book.

You can make a book about the Word of God with a page for each Manifestation. Cut out the boxes below and paste each one on a piece of paper. Put the pages together to make a book. Add a cover.



Abraham
Genesis



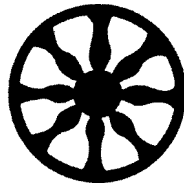
Moses
Torah



Krishna
Mahabharata



Zoroaster
Avesta



Buddha
Tripitaka



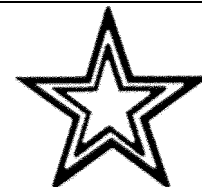
Christ
Bible



Muhammad
Qur'án



the Báb
Bayán



Bahá'u'lláh
Kitáb-i-Aqdas

There is a story about how each Messenger of God revealed His Revelation. The story of each of the Holy Books is written on this side of the page.

Each of these works is considered the Word of God. They were revealed at different times in different places. Long ago the stories were kept as oral tradition, and written down long after the death of the Manifestation.

Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb were the first to write Revelation Themselves. As you put together your book, learn the stories of each One.

You may want to photocopy this side of each card and paste it beside the Name and symbol in your book. You can also cut out these boxes and make them into cards. Cover them with clear adhesive paper. Make up a card game that will help you remember all the chapters of the one Holy Book of God. You can make a mobile, too.

Krishna

Krishna's life is largely unknown because he lived so long ago. Legends about Him were made into poems and collected together as the *Mahabharata*. An important section is called the *Bhagavad-Gita*, in which Krishna answers many questions about the purpose of life and devotions to God.

Moses

He lived about 1250 B.C. His laws and teachings helped slaves escape Egypt and become a united, proud people. The story of Moses is found in the *Torah*, the first five books of the *Bible*.

Abraham

He probably lived about 2000 B.C. The story of His life can be found in *Genesis*, the first book of the *Bible*. Genesis has very little of Abraham's teachings because most of them have been lost.

Christ

Jesus lived 2000 years ago in Palestine. He called the people to turn to God, love their neighbors, and seek to enter God's kingdom. After His death, the stories about His miracles and parables were collected together and published as the *Gospels*, the first four books of the *New Testament*.

Buddha

He lived about 500 B.C. in northern India. He gave sermons and told parables. After His death His followers wrote them down on leaves and put the leaves in baskets. The result was the oldest Buddhist scripture called the *Tripitaka*, which means *The Three Baskets*.

Zoroaster

He lived in Iran about 1000 B.C. He gave people His Revelation in the form of hymns, so that they would remember it. After His death, His hymns and prayers were collected into a Holy Book called the *Avesta*.

Bahá'u'lláh

He lived from 1817 to 1892 and was the Promised One in the scriptures of all the Manifestations. He revealed over 15,000 tablets, some as long as books, with divine guidance on every subject. He wrote the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, which is His Most Holy Book of Laws.

the Báb

He lived from 1819 to 1850. He promised that soon God would send a greater Messenger to fulfill all the promises of the past scriptures. He recorded His revelation in hundreds of books and tablets. The most central of these books is named the *Bayán*.

Muhammad

He lived 600 years after Jesus. He called the people to reject worship of false gods and turn to the one true God. He led the Arab people and gave laws for a spiritual society. After He died, Muslim leaders put His Writings into one book, the *Qur'án* (*Recitation*).

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories & Articles:

The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two: “A Never-Ending Stack of Lego Bricks,” “The Letter of Certainty,” “A Letter from Baghdád”

Brilliant Star:

“What Do Bahá'is Believe?” Jan/Feb 02

“I Was but a Man Like Others” Mar/Apr 01

“What Day Is It?” Nov/Dec 99

“Which Religion is Right?,” “Moments in Time that Changed the World,” “Progressive Revelation,” Nov/Dec 90

“Literacy and God’s Word,” May/June 90

Afnan, Abbas, *An Anthology for Bahá'i Children*, pp. 8, 45-47

Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Fruits of One Tree*, pp. 5-6, 14-22, 35-43

Danesh, Hossein, *The Promise*, Vol. I, p. 10-15, Vol. II, p. 42-47

Faizi, A. Q., *The Wonder Lamp*

Furutan, ‘Ali-Akbar, *Stories of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 54, 79

Hofman, David, *God and His Messengers*

Mahmoudi, Jalil, *The Story As Told*

Mehrabi, Jacqueline, *Remember the Rainbow*

Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 2-19, 64-65

Wolcott, Cynthia K., *The Gift*

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Brilliant Star:

“Always with Us” May/June 97

“Puzzle Page,” Jul/Aug 84

Cox, Alice and Musacchia, Evelyn, *Bahá'i Teaching Guide for Children (Intermediate)*: “Moses,” “Krishna,” Muhammad,” “the Báb”

Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 65

Activities:

Brilliant Star:

“Teaching with ‘Little Ben’ Books” Jan/Feb 96

“The Holy Book of God,” SpEd 93

“The Greater Covenant,” SpEd 92

“Shiny Hangies for Ayyám-i-Há,” Jan/Feb 91

“Celebrate the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh,” Jan/Feb 85

Coleman, Alonzo and Sandra, and Petit, Diane Bogolub, *Hands On! Activities for the Education of Children*

Lesson Plans:

Cox, Alice and Musacchia, Evelyn, *Bahá'i Teaching Guide for Children (Intermediate)*: “Adam,” “Noah,” “Abraham,” “Joseph,” “Moses,” “Krishna,” “Zoroaster,” “Buddha,” “Jesus,” “Muhammad,” “the Báb,” “Bahá'u'lláh”

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.

Music:

Brilliant Star: “God Sent Mirrors,” Jan/Feb 85

Music of the Bahá'i World Congress, “Expectations”

Lenz, Jack, *The Messengers*

Lenz, Jack, *We Are Bahá'is*: “Song of the Prophets”

Games:

Brilliant Star: “ABCs of the Covenant” May/June 98,

“Bahá'i Dominoes,” Jul/Aug 92

“Progressive Revelation,” Nov/Dec 90

Drama:

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

“The Wonder Lamp,” pp. 18-20

Poetry:

Brilliant Star: “Prophets” Nov/Dec 90