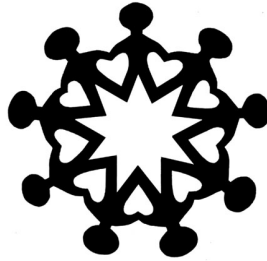


*Oneness*

# *The Oneness of Religion*



*Level Two*



# TO KNOW THAT THERE IS ONE GOD, WHO SENDS TEACHERS TO HUMANITY AT EVERY AGE TO BE A TRUE SEEKER

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
FAITH, DETACHMENT, LOVE**

That which is of paramount importance for the children, that which must precede all else, is to teach them the oneness of God and the Laws of God.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Bahá'í Education*, #14, p. 3

When delivering the glad tidings, speak out and say: the Promised One of all the world's peoples hath now been made manifest. For each and every people, and every religion, await a Promised One, and Bahá'u'lláh is that One Who is awaited by all; and therefore the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh will bring about the oneness of mankind. . . .

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections From the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p.107

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

### **KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

- To know that Bahá'u'lláh described the steps leading to the knowledge of God in the Tablet to a True Seeker
- To become familiar with the main themes of this Tablet
- To become familiar with the talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá about the importance of independent investigation of the truth

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Share the story of Bahá'u'lláh's revelation of the Kitáb-i-Íqán (and especially the Tablet to a True Seeker) to the uncle of the Báb.
- Prepare booklets of the Tablet to a True Seeker with only a few passages per page to facilitate study.
- Encourage older students to work in groups to identify the major themes.
- Encourage peer questioning and the use of dictionaries in defining unfamiliar words.

### **WISDOM OBJECTIVES**

- To understand the importance of investigating religious truth
- To understand the spiritual qualities necessary for a true seeker
- To gain insight into the meaning and importance of detachment and of purifying one's heart to become a seeker of truth
- To gain insight into the meaning of the metaphors and mysteries in Bahá'u'lláh's analogy of the City of the Word of God in the Tablet of the True Seeker

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Share stories from Native American and older cultures that introduce the idea of a spiritual quest.
- Use the story of Badí‘ as an example of detachment and purification.
- Create skits that demonstrate the opposite consequences of investigation and blind imitation.
- Invite students to work in groups to create an art montage based on the spiritual qualities described in this tablet.
- Research the Kitáb-i-Íqán for Bahá'u'lláh's explanation of the City of the Word of God (see: Certitude, City of).



## **SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES**

- To discern how both love and hate can prevent one from gaining spiritual knowledge
- To discern the outcomes promised by Bahá'u'lláh to those who earnestly seek after truth
- To perceive how religious differences occur when one does not investigate reality
- To perceive that the task of becoming a true seeker is a life-long endeavor

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Create an interpretive dance that demonstrates how love and hate prevent the attainment of truth.
- Provide opportunities for meditation on the promised outcomes resulting from earnest seeking after truth.
- Encourage selection of a verse from this Tablet to memorize and recite as a daily reminder of the need for continual spiritual growth.
- Play a variation of the game Telephone in which the starting player reads something silently and then passes it on. Use as an analogy for the distortions arising when reality is not independently investigated.



## **ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES**

- To share with others one's personal understanding of the meaning of being a true seeker
- To demonstrate commitment to the life of a true seeker by setting personal goals and developing the habit of regular self-evaluation and the identification of next steps in spiritual development

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Prepare and present a fireside talk about being a true seeker.
- Provide opportunities for group sharing and consultation on the challenges and victories involved in developing the qualities of a true seeker in everyday life.

**Sample Activities**

**ACTIVITY: INVESTIGATING TRUTH**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To become familiar with the talks of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá about the importance of independent investigation of the truth

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of science; Direct use of the Bahá’í sacred writings; Use of manipulatives; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of peer teaching; Use of questioning

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of Resource Page 13
- Metal coat hanger for each 2 or 3 students
- 1-meter- or 1-yard-long piece of thread for each hanger
- Chalkboard or chart paper and markers
- A large piece of paper for each 2 or 3 students
- Art supplies

1. Display the coat hangers and thread. Invite the students to predict the sorts of sounds that these materials will produce. List their responses.
2. Discuss briefly: How can we discover the truth?
3. Invite the students to work in teams of two or three. Provide each team with a coat hanger and a 1 meter (or 1 yard) length of thread. Encourage them to tie the middle of the piece of thread to the hook of the hanger, to wrap the ends of the thread around the middle finger of each hand, and bump the hanger against a rigid object. Notice the results!
4. Discuss: What sorts of sounds did we hear? Did we accurately predict the truth? Why is it important for us to investigate the truth for ourselves, rather than rely on our own opinions or the opinions of others?
5. Distribute copies of Resource Page 13. Encourage the students to read the quotation silently to themselves and then to read it aloud in their small teams. Invite them to discuss the meaning of the quotation, sentence by sentence. Circulate among the students to assure that each team understands the meaning of these words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.
6. Encourage each team to create one short statement about the importance of investigating the truth. Invite each team to carefully record their statement on a large piece of paper and decorate it using the materials provided. Display these statements in your classroom.
7. Invite the students to consider these statements as slogans for the class. Encourage them to agree that while we’re in this class, we’ll all respect the views of others and look for the truth for ourselves.
8. Encourage the students to share the importance of individual investigation of truth with at least one other person before the next class. Remember to invite the students to describe their experiences in sharing these ideas with others, as well as looking for truth themselves, at the beginning of the next class.

**ACTIVITY: SEEING WITH YOUR OWN EYES**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the importance of investigating religious truth

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of reflection; Use of questioning; Use of memorization and recitation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 40 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- 2 copies of Resource Page 14 for each student, one on nice paper
- Pencils, chart paper, markers

1. Invite the students to reflect on the importance of individual investigation of truth: What are some tools that we can use to investigate the truth? Why is it important to search for the truth? Record student responses on chart paper.
2. Explain that in the same way that it is important to use our own eyes and ears, our own hearts and minds, to search for the truth in everyday affairs, it is also very important to search for the truth in spiritual matters. Briefly discuss: What are some spiritual matters? Why is it important to search for truth in spiritual matters? What is an example of investigating religious truth?
3. Explain that Bahá'u'lláh offers some advice on some ways that we can investigate religious truth. Provide each student with a copy of Resource Page 14.
4. Encourage each student to read it twice silently.
5. Then invite three volunteers to read the Resource Page aloud. Explain that the meaning sinks into our hearts deeper and deeper as we read it again and again.
6. Then read the first phrase of this Hidden Word (to the semicolon ;) and invite students to discuss the meaning of the phrase. Continue this process until the Hidden Word is completed.
7. Explain that this Hidden Word, like the statement of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, gives us a method to learn the truth for ourselves. Explain that together we will memorize the Hidden Word. Describe two or three methods for memorizing a passage, such as:
  - reciting the passage in unison until it is memorized,
  - setting the words to a simple melody and singing it,
  - creating visual aids or identifying movements to help us remember the words.
8. Invite the students to select one of these methods to memorize the Hidden Word.
8. Once all students have memorized the passage, give them copies of the passage on nice paper as an acknowledgement of their effort.
9. Invite the students to think about this Hidden Word as they reflect on the following question: Why is it important to investigate religious truth?
10. List their responses on chart paper.
11. Explain that all humanity is in search of religious truth and encourage them to recite this Hidden Word with at least one other person before the next class. Explain that in the next activity the class will explore more deeply the qualities of a true seeker of spiritual truth.

## **TOPIC: TO BE A TRUE SEEKER**

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### **ACTIVITY: A TRUE SEEKER**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know that Bahá'u'lláh describes the steps leading to the knowledge of God in the Tablet of the True Seeker

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the necessary spiritual qualities of a true seeker

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of storytelling; Use of consultation; Use of peer teaching; Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 40 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of Resource Pages 15-16
- A copy of The Kitáb-i-Iqán
- *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 2
- Pencils

1. Show the copy of the Kitáb-i-Íqán. Read aloud one of the stories telling the circumstances of how and why Bahá'u'lláh wrote the Kitáb-i-Íqán to the Báb's uncle, Hájí Mírzá Siyyid Muhammad, in *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 2: "The Letter of Certainty" (pp. 136-9) or "The Letter from Baghdad" (pp. 141-6). Alternately, you may refer to the Kitáb-i-Íqán, pp. x-xi.
2. Explain that in this epistle there are passages known as the Tablet of the True Seeker. Explain that in this Tablet we can find the necessary spiritual qualities for a true seeker after truth.
3. Distribute a nicely printed copy of selections from the Tablet, Resource Pages 15-16.
4. Invite the students to work in teams of two to read the first page of selections (p. 15) from this important Tablet and underline the spiritual qualities mentioned. Encourage the students to notice that the first page lists some spiritual qualities needed in the search for truth.
5. In turn, invite each team of students to state one of the spiritual qualities they underlined until the entire selection has been covered. List these qualities on chart paper.
6. Read aloud the second page (p. 16) while the students read along. Encourage the students to underline the gifts that we are given when we reach the City of God. Discuss: What does Bahá'u'lláh say this City is? How is it possible that these Holy Books can give us these gifts? Who is "He whom God will make manifest"? Explain that during this unit of study, we will have the bounty of studying selections from many of these Holy Books.
7. Invite the students to turn to their partner for this activity and discuss: What is one of the qualities that you'd most like to develop? Why? What are some ways to develop spiritual qualities? Encourage them to share this hope with at least one other person and to carry out at least one action to express this quality before the next class.



**ACTIVITY: SPIRITUAL QUALITIES OF A TRUE SEEKER**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the spiritual qualities of a true seeker

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To perceive that the task of becoming a true seeker is a life-long endeavor

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of peer teaching; Use of consultation; Use of art; Use of reasoning; Use of reflection; Use of memorization

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of Resource Pages 15-16
- Butcher paper or other large sheets of paper
- Markers
- Tissue paper in several bright colors
- Glue
- Pencils
- Scissors

1. Invite the students to work in teams of two—boys with boys and girls with girls. Review the spiritual qualities they found in the Tablet to the True Seeker.
2. Provide each team with two student-sized sheets of paper. Encourage the team members to take turns tracing the body of the other member on these large sheets of paper.
3. After both body outlines have been drawn, encourage the students to use dark-colored markers to write onto the body in their best handwriting the spiritual qualities they identified.
4. Invite the students to carefully cover these body outlines with glue, tear good-sized strips of tissue paper, and place them onto the body outlines, so that the handwriting shows through the tissue paper. Explain that these beautiful colors can represent the beauty of the spiritual qualities we all hope to develop.
5. Invite each student to reflect on these qualities, and to select one quality to develop. In the copy of the Tablet to the True Seeker, invite each student to underline the passage that addresses the quality selected.
6. Encourage the students to find a way to use markers or tissue paper to highlight that quality on their body outline.
7. Post all the body outlines and invite the class to walk with you around the room to admire each person's work. Share with students that our task of becoming a true seeker—a spiritualized being—is life long.
8. For extended study, encourage the students to memorize the passage that addresses their selected quality. Encourage them to recite and meditate on the passage daily to support their further development of this quality.

**GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THERE IS ONE GOD, WHO SENDS TEACHERS TO HUMANITY AT EVERY AGE**

## **TOPIC: TO BE A TRUE SEEKER**

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### **ACTIVITY: THE PRESENTATION**

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To share with others one's personal understanding of the meaning of being a true seeker

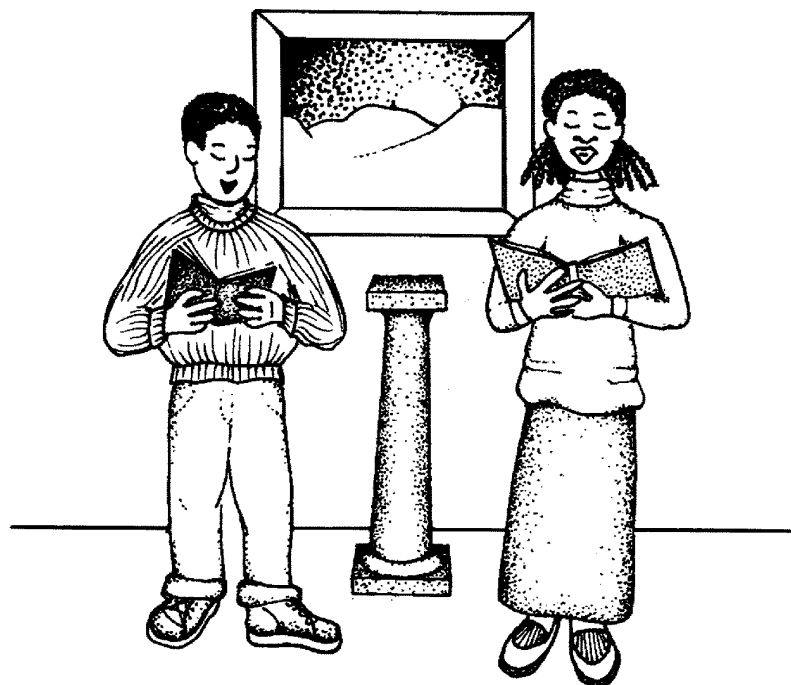
**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of peer teaching; Use of consultation; Use of art; Use of reasoning; Use of reflection

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

**Materials Needed:**

- To be determined by students

1. Encourage the students to organize themselves into teams of two.
2. Invite each team to prepare a presentation for the class on the topic of becoming a true seeker. The presentation should include excerpts from the Writings as well as a visual representation to illustrate at least one point of their presentation. The presentation should be three to five minutes in length.
3. Allow time for each team to consult on, develop, and practice their presentations and then present them to the class as a whole.
4. After each team has shared its presentations, discuss: When, where, and how could we share these presentations with others? Could we share them at a community devotional gathering, a Nineteen Day Feast, another Bahá'í class, or could we share these ideas with our friends? What would be our next steps?
5. After planning to share the presentations with others, encourage students to follow through with their plans. Remember to discuss the results of these presentations in the next class.



6.

Resource Pages



## Investigating Truth

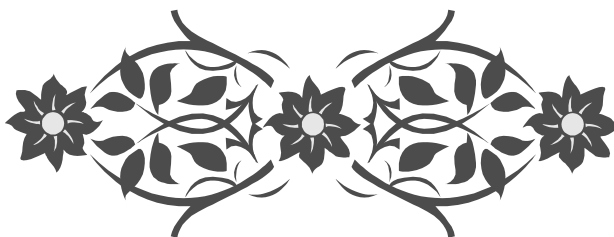
God has given man the eye of investigation by which he may see and recognize truth. He has endowed man with ears that he may hear the message of reality and conferred upon him the gift of reason by which he may discover things for himself. This is his endowment and equipment for the investigation of reality. Man is not intended to see through the eyes of another, hear through another's ears nor comprehend with another's brain. Each human creature has individual endowment, power and responsibility in the creative plan of God. Therefore, depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of your own investigation; otherwise, you will be utterly submerged in the sea of ignorance and deprived of all the bounties of God. Turn to God, supplicate humbly at His threshold, seeking assistance and confirmation, that God may rend asunder the veils that obscure your vision. Then will your eyes be filled with illumination, face to face you will behold the reality of God and your heart become completely purified from the dross of ignorance, reflecting the glories and bounties of the Kingdom.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 293

O SON OF SPIRIT!

The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbor. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behooveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes.

Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Words, Arabic No. 2





### The True Seeker

But, O my brother, when a true seeker determineth to take the step of search in the path leading to the knowledge of the Ancient of Days, he must, before all else, cleanse and purify his heart, which is the seat of the revelation of the inner mysteries of God, from the obscuring dust of all acquired knowledge, and the allusions of the embodiments of satanic fancy. . . .

He must so cleanse his heart that no remnant of either love or hate may linger therein, lest that love blindly incline him to error, or that hate repel him away from the truth. . . .

He must never seek to exalt himself above any one, must wash away from the tablet of his heart every trace of pride and vainglory, must cling unto patience and resignation, observe silence, and refrain from idle talk. . . .

That seeker should also regard backbiting as grievous error, and keep himself aloof from its dominion, inasmuch as backbiting quencheth the light of the heart, and extinguisheth the life of the soul.

He should be content with little, and be freed from all inordinate desire.

He should treasure the companionship of those that have renounced the world, and regard avoidance of boastful and worldly people a precious benefit.

At the dawn of every day he should commune with God, and with all his soul persevere in the quest of his Beloved.

He should consume every wayward thought with the flame of His loving mention, and, with the swiftness of lightning, pass by all else save Him.

He should succour the dispossessed, and never withhold his favour from the destitute.

He should show kindness to animals, how much more unto his fellow-man, to him who is endowed with the power of utterance.

He should not hesitate to offer up his life for his Beloved, nor allow the censure of the people to turn him away from the Truth.

He should not wish for others that which he doth not wish for himself, nor promise that which he doth not fulfill.

With all his heart should the seeker avoid fellowship with evil doers, and pray for the remission of their sins.

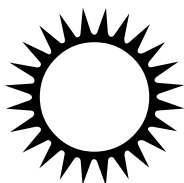
He should forgive the sinful, and never despise his low estate, for none knoweth what his own end shall be. . . .

Our purpose in revealing these convincing and weighty utterances is to impress upon the seeker that he should regard all else beside God as transient, and count all things save Him, Who is the Object of all adoration, as utter nothingness. . . .

Only when the lamp of search, of earnest striving, of longing desire, of passionate devotion, of fervid love, of rapture, and ecstasy, is kindled within the seeker's heart, and the breeze of His loving-kindness is wafted upon his soul, will the darkness of error be dispelled, the mists of doubts and misgivings be dissipated, and the lights of knowledge and certitude envelop his being. At that hour will the mystic Herald, bearing the joyful tidings of the Spirit, shine forth from the City of God resplendent as the morn, and, through the trumpet-blast of knowledge, will awaken the heart, the soul, and the spirit from the slumber of negligence. Then will the manifold favours and outpouring grace of the holy and everlasting Spirit confer such new life upon the seeker that he will find himself endowed with a new eye, a new ear, a new heart, and a new mind. He will contemplate the manifest signs of the universe, and will penetrate the hidden mysteries of the soul. Gazing with the eye of God, he will perceive within every atom a door that leadeth him to the stations of absolute certitude. He will discover in all things the mysteries of divine Revelation and the evidences of an everlasting manifestation.

That city is none other than the Word of God revealed in every age and dispensation. In the days of Moses it was the Pentateuch; in the days of Jesus the Gospel; in the days of Muhammad the Messenger of God the Qur'án; in this day the Bayán; and in the dispensation of Him Whom God will make manifest His own Book—the Book unto which all the Books of former Dispensations must needs be referred, the Book which standeth amongst them all transcendent and supreme.

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, pp. 192-200



Note: This Tablet has been formatted for study purposes.

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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**Stories and Articles:**

*Brilliant Star*, "The Mysteries of Dreams" MJ 93  
"Four Ways of Knowing" JA 96  
"The Truth is Out There" JF 99  
"Is there a God?" SO 99  
"A Book of Treasures" MA 02  
Sasso, Sandy Eisenberg, *In God's Name*

**Worksheets and Coloring Pages:**

*Brilliant Star*, "A Family Fireside" JA 95  
"The Light" JA 96  
"Roots" 97

**Activities:**

*Brilliant Star*, "Discovering Faith," "In A Single Breath" JF 01

**Music:**

Shropshire, Lucy, *This is Faith*, "This is Faith"  
Various, *Flight*, "Seek Out the Light"

**Poetry:**

*Brilliant Star*, "Roots" JA 97

**Other favorite resources:**

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 135-137  
'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 291-4, 312-3, 443-6  
'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 38-9, 45-6  
Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words*  
LeTord, Bijou, *Peace on Earth, A Book of Prayers from Around the World*  
Motlagh, Hushidar, *Search for Truth*

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





# TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST

## THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
LOVE, SERVICE, REVERENCE, COURTESY, DETACHMENT**

Beware, O believers in the Unity of God, lest ye be tempted to make any distinction between any of the Manifestations of His Cause, or to discriminate against the signs that have accompanied and proclaimed their Revelation. This indeed is the true meaning of Divine Unity, if ye be of them that apprehend and believe this truth. Be ye assured, moreover, that the works and acts of each and every one of these Manifestations of God, nay whatever pertaineth unto them, and whatsoever they may manifest in the future, are all ordained by God, and are a reflection of His Will and Purpose.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Babá'u'lláh*, p. 59

The method of instruction which ye have established, beginning with proofs of the existence of God and the oneness of God, the mission of the Prophets and Messengers and Their teachings, and the wonders of the universe, is highly suitable.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Compilation of Compilations vol. I*, p. 195

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES**



### **KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

- To know that the purpose of the Manifestation is to educate and spiritualize humanity

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Invite students to choose a verse from the Bahá'í writings to copy, illuminate, and memorize.
- Create a visual aid illustrating the analogy of the divine manifestations as successive Teachers in a school.



### **WISDOM OBJECTIVES**

- To gain insight from study of the Bahá'í writings into the role and importance of the Manifestations
- To understand the short and long term influence of the Manifestations on the ongoing advancement of civilization
- To understand the connection between the mission of the Manifestations of God and the Greater Covenant

#### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Encourage students to create artwork symbolizing the various analogies 'Abdu'l-Bahá uses for the Manifestations of God.
- Share stories from the lives of the Manifestations that indicate how Their new teachings and laws, revoking the laws of former dispensations, created upheaval and alarm in Their societies.
- Create dioramas depicting typical social conditions at the time of each Manifestation's appearance. Compare to dioramas depicting conditions at the height of each religion.
- Create an interpretive dance to demonstrate each dispensation tearing down the previous structure and building ever-greater circles of unity in the inexorable plan of God.



## SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To perceive the beauty of each of the world's religions as evidence of God's Manifestation to humanity, despite the evidence of the disintegration of its communities
- To discern the twofold purpose for learning about the mission of previous Manifestations of God: First, to consort with the followers of other faiths in a spirit of love and unity. Second, to expand one's own understanding of Bahá'u'lláh's Revelation by learning about the religions of the past
- To connect the understanding of the mission of the Manifestation with the personal recognition that those members of other faiths in one's neighborhood and community are part of the unfolding religious history of the world

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Create a sensory-rich environment, representing each of the world's religions, for sharing some of the religion's prayers and writings. Include music, flowers, candles, incense, and other furnishings associated with that religion. Choose a reverent position for prayer that is associated with that religion.
- Clip stories from newspapers and magazines depicting the disintegration of the world's religions: wars and strife, terrorism, sects and cults, etc. Contrast these with the beauty of the religion's pure teachings. Consult about the cause of this collapse.
- Create a time-line of social advancements following the rise of each of the world's religions. Illustrate advances in art, music, architecture, science, invention, medicine, etc.
- Research the writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá for passages related to the mission of previous Manifestations. Working in groups, glean the two-fold purpose for learning about them.
- Visit places of worship of religions in one's own community, connecting them to the time-line and/or sensory environment.



## ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To demonstrate understanding of the mission of the Manifestations by seeking out and desiring association and friendship with members of other faiths
- To recite passages from the Bahá'í writings regarding the mission of the Manifestations
- To articulate and teach others about the mission of the Manifestations

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Participate in festivals and celebrations of other faiths.
- Invite a children's class or youth group of another religion to join the Bahá'í children or youth in a community service project.
- Prepare and present a group fireside talk that introduces seekers to Bahá'u'lláh's and 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words regarding the mission of the previous Manifestations.

## **TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS**

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### **Sample Activities**

#### **ACTIVITY: THE TRUE TEACHER OF HUMANITY**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know that the purpose of the Manifestation is to educate and spiritualize humanity

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of reasoning; Use of analogies; Use of peer teaching; Use of the arts; Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Education directed towards God

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Copies of Resource Page 30

1. Invite the students to work in small teams of two or three students.
2. While the students are seated in these small teams, invite the students to think about their best teacher. Encourage them to think about the words and actions of that teacher. What does best teacher do?
3. After a brief period of reflection and then discussion within the teams, invite the teams to share with the class their description of their best teacher.
4. Record these comments on chart paper, then encourage the class to develop a job description for a teacher. Record this description on chart paper.
5. With students still working in their teams, distribute copies of Resource Page 30. Read it aloud and assist the class to understand the meaning of the words in the quotation. Encourage the members of each team to share with each other the meaning of the quotation in their own words.
6. Invite each team to come up with a human sculpture, creating a pose of their bodies to illustrate humanity's response to these great Teachers from God. Remind them that they may not portray the Manifestations of God in their sculptures, as a sign of their respect for these Manifestations.
7. Invite the teams to show their sculptures to the class. Applaud all efforts.

**ACTIVITY: ANALOGIES DESCRIBING THE ROLE OF THE MANIFESTATIONS**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To gain insight from study of the Bahá'í writings into the role and importance of the Manifestations

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of questioning; Use of peer teaching; Use of analogies; Use of art; Use of memorization; Education directed toward God

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

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of selected analogies from Resource Page 31 for each member of the group
- Chart paper
- Markers
- Art supplies, pencil, paper

**Advance Preparation:** Write on chart paper and display in the classroom the following quotation:

The purpose of the Manifestation of God and the dawning of the limitless lights of the Invisible is to educate the souls of men, and refine the character of every living man. . . .

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 13*

1. Read aloud the posted quotation about the purpose of the Manifestation of God. Encourage the students to explain the meaning of this quotation in their own words and then discuss: What is the purpose of the Manifestation of God? How is the Manifestation of God like a teacher? How can we tell that a person is responding to the Teachings of God?
2. Invite the students to think of examples of people they know who show in their lives the spiritual qualities that are taught by the Manifestations of God. Encourage several students to share these examples in the whole group. Discuss: How do the lives of these people help us understand the role of the Manifestations of God?
3. Explain that many analogies in the Bahá'í writings help us gain a greater understanding of the role of the Manifestations of God.
4. Invite the class to work in small groups. Provide the members of each small group with copies of one of the quotations from Resource Page 31 that uses an analogy to illustrate the role of the Manifestations of God. Encourage each group to read aloud their quotation at least twice and discuss the meaning of the analogy. How does this analogy help us understand the role of the Manifestations of God?
5. Encourage the groups to use the art supplies provided to create a visual image of the analogy.
6. Encourage each group to memorize all or part of the quotation that explains their analogy.
7. Invite each group to share their art, recite the quotation, and explain their art to the entire class. Applaud all efforts.
8. Encourage the students to share their explanation of the role of the Manifestations of God with a friend or family member before the next class. Remember to invite students to share the results of their conversations at the beginning of the next class.

## **TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS**

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### **ACTIVITY: THE MISSION OF THE MANIFESTATIONS**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the short- and long-term influence of the Manifestations on the ongoing advancement of civilization

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of peer teaching; Use of consultation; Use of reasoning; Use of science

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of Resource Pages 32-5
- Cord or string, 10 meters (or 10 yards) long
- Cord or string, 1 meter (or 1 yard) long
- Ruler, meter stick, or yardstick
- Masking tape
- Paper
- Index cards
- Paper clips
- Markers

1. Read aloud slowly and carefully the following passage from ‘Abdu’l-Bahá that explains the mission of the Manifestations of God. Allow a brief period of silence and then read it again. Briefly discuss the meaning of this passage:

Life on this earth is very ancient. It is not one hundred thousand, or two hundred thousand, or one million or two million years old; it is very ancient, and the ancient records and traces are entirely obliterated.

Each of the Divine Manifestations has likewise a cycle, and during the cycle His laws and commandments prevail and are performed. When His cycle is completed by the appearance of a new Manifestation, a new cycle begins. In this way cycles begin, end and are renewed. . . .

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 160

2. Explain that this class will consider the most recent part of human history, the last 100,000 years! Show the cord and suggest that if this cord represented the history of earth or even all of human history, it would need to be much, much longer.

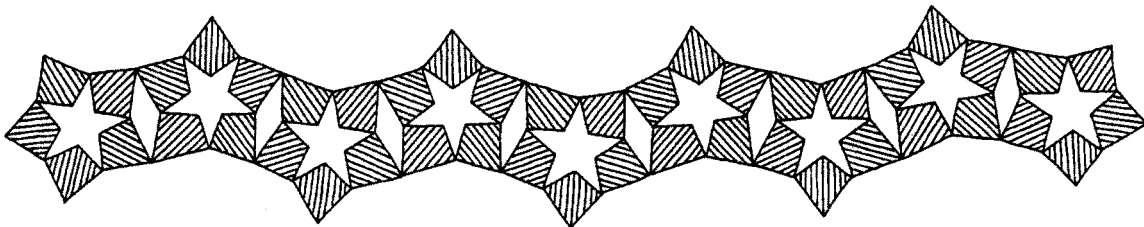
3. Distribute copies of Resource Page 32, History of Human Spiritual Life. Read it aloud together and briefly discuss the relationship between this chart and the words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.
4. Divide the students to work in two groups.
5. Encourage one group to work together to create 2 timelines by measuring and carefully cutting 2 lengths of cord: one 10 meters long and one 1 meter long. Using masking tape, display both cords on the wall or floor. Mark the 10-meter cord so that each 10 centimeters (4 inches) represents 10,000 years. Label this cord: History of Human Spiritual Life. Mark the 1-meter cord so that each 10 centimeters (4 inches) represent 1000 years. Label this cord: The Mission of the Manifestations.

Encourage the other group to create index cards by labeling and creating visual symbols for the major milestones on Resource Page 32 and then attaching them to the 10-meter timeline.

**TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS**

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6. When both groups have completed their tasks, distribute copies of Resource Pages 33–5, Spiritual Evolution of Humanity. Review the timeline and study the quotations with the class.
7. Remind them that the Manifestations of God bring higher and higher levels of unity to human civilization. Each of the great Prophets of God prepares the way for the coming of the succeeding ones. We do not know the names of all the Manifestations of God because some of Them came in ancient times before there were written records.
8. Then invite the students to label and decorate cards for the Manifestations of God who have brought higher and higher levels of unity to humanity. Place these cards on the timeline labeled: The Mission of the Manifestations.
9. Discuss: Why is it important for us to know something about very ancient times in human history? Why should we know about as many Manifestations of God as we can?
10. Invite the students to take turns explaining the two timelines and their relationship to human history. Encourage them to invite their parents or members of other classes to view these timelines at the end of the class or at the beginning of the next class. Also encourage them to share these ideas with at least one other person before the next class. Remember to invite them to share the results of these conversations at the beginning of the next class.
11. Consider displaying these timelines through your study of the Oneness of Religion.



## **TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS**

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### **ACTIVITY: FINDING SACRED PLACES**

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To perceive the beauty of each of the world's religions as evidence of God's Manifestation to humanity, despite the evidence of the disintegration of its communities

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Education directed toward God; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of reasoning; Use of reflection

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

**Materials Needed:**

- Writing paper and pencils
- Reference materials about your local community such as: telephone books, newspapers listing worship services, travel guides, community directory of organizations, etc.
- Chart paper and markers
- Map of your locality
- Star-shaped stickers or other means to mark the map

1. Invite the students to recall the mission of the Manifestations of God in human history and to share the analogies that they have studied about the role of the Manifestations. Encourage them to recite or re-read several of the brief quotations that illustrate the role or mission of the Manifestations. Discuss briefly: How do people respond to the teachings of the Manifestations of God? Assist the class to acknowledge both individual and collective responses to the Manifestations, including the building of houses of worship.
2. Distribute the maps, travel guides, telephone books, and other resources collected about your city, town, or neighborhood. Encourage the students to discover and discuss the variety of spiritually significant places that exist in your locality, such as:
  - churches, mosques, synagogues, temples and other houses of worship
  - shrines, memorials, monuments, and other sites dedicated to cultural or religious memory
  - aboriginal sites which recognize the spiritual heritage of the first peoples to live in your area



- cemeteries which commemorate the lives of friends, loved ones, or people who have sacrificed for others
  - museums, historic homes, or other public places where religious art is shown
  - especially peaceful or beautiful natural places where people go to reflect or experience a feeling of connection with Creation
  - NOTE: the memory of spiritually significant ideas and concepts is sometimes carried forward in place names or street names, even if the site itself no longer exists
3. Identify the various types of spiritually significant sites. Discuss: What kinds of diversity are present? How many Manifestations of God can we find acknowledged in our area? Are different types of spiritual attributes expressed by different places? Why do you think this might be the case?



**TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS**

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4. Brainstorm with the class a list of positive spiritual influences that these spiritually significant places might have in the community. Record the responses on chart paper.
5. Remind the students that people connected with these sites may participate in their communities in many different ways. Encourage them to check the yellow pages of the phone book or the religion section of a newspaper, for example, to see some of the worship, service, and fellowship activities different places offer. Remember that some organizations also sponsor educational, philanthropic, artistic, recreational, and international service programs. Challenge the students to reflect deeply on the ways these places contribute to the community. Record these additional responses on the chart paper.
6. Help the class to realize that the diversity of sites, taken as a whole, offer the community much more spiritual richness and diversity of opportunities than is available if we consider only one such site.
7. Using the map of your city or neighborhood, invite students to locate and mark all the spiritually significant sites you have discovered.
8. In consultation with the class, plan a mini-tour of some of the spiritually significant places you have discovered. Depending on the time the class is able to devote to this exploration, it could take several class sessions.
9. As a class, list potential observations to record at each site. Decide if all students will record the same observations or if different students will focus on different sorts of observations. Some possible questions include:
  - How is the site arranged? What is the balance between nature and human construction?
  - Do different types of spiritual groups build in different characteristic styles? If you notice this kind of variation, why do you think it occurs?
  - Do different places seem to be more for individuals or groups? Is it a small meditation room or a huge worship center? What elements suggest that it is for one or for many?
  - Do different types of spiritual places inspire different expressions of beauty? What similarities and differences do you notice? Do you notice different modes, styles, shapes, colors, moods, etc.?
  - How does each place reflect the beauty of each of the religions of God? What is the role of music, words, or other sounds in this place?
  - Which places give you the most “spiritual” feeling—however you define spiritual? Why do you think that place affects you in this way?
  - Is the site visited by lots of people? Why or why not?
  - How does the place interact with the world around it? Specifically, what service does it offer to the community?



10. Consider visiting some houses of worship during their regularly scheduled worship services.
11. Encourage students to write notes to their parents (or other caregivers) requesting their permission and inviting their help to arrange transportation to these sites.

## **TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS**

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### **ACTIVITY: VISITING SACRED PLACES**

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To connect the understanding of the mission of the Manifestation with the personal recognition that those members of other faiths in one's neighborhood and community are part of the unfolding religious history of the world

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To demonstrate understanding of the mission of the Manifestations by seeking out and desiring association and friendship with members of other faiths

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of travel; Engaging the mind and heart; Education directed towards God; Use of reasoning; Use of reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: APPROXIMATELY 60 MINUTES PER VISIT

**Materials Needed:**

- A way to transport students
- Parental permission for the field trip
- Writing paper, drawing paper, or journal and pencil for each student
- Camera, if available



1. Carry out your field trip to some of the spiritually significant places in your community. Place special emphasis on visiting diverse places of great beauty.
2. As you travel, remind the students that the purpose of the visit is to note the beauty of each of the religions of God. Explain the importance of showing reverence to all the Manifestations of God and courtesy and respect to members of other faiths. Discuss practical ways to show this reverence, courtesy, and respect.
3. Remind them to pay close attention to music, language, environment, prayers, reverent positions, beauty in the service, and devotion of the members.
4. Encourage the students to document their tour by:
  - Collecting free brochures, printed programs, or other information, and if appropriate, perhaps also flower petals, small stones, or other items
  - Taking photographs (if permitted) or drawing quick sketches of elements that are beautiful or inspiring spiritual feelings
  - Recording their observations, impressions, and feelings
  - Seeking information about community service offered
5. Whether one or several field trips are planned, encourage the students to share highlights of their trip with friends and family members before the next class, drawing attention to the beauty of God represented in each faith.
6. Once each trip is completed, encourage the students to record their reflections about the visit and share them with the entire class during the next class session.

**TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS**

7. Save photographs, sketches, notes, and printed materials that record the diverse types of beauty and community service that you discovered on the tour. These items will be incorporated in future projects related to the oneness of religion.
8. Encourage the students to create a beautiful display of these materials for your classroom to share with others at your Bahá'í school.



**ACTIVITY: WHAT IS A BAHÁ'Í?**

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To articulate and teach others about the mission of the Manifestations

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of memorization; Engaging the mind and heart; Use of music

**SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY:** 20 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of Resource Page 36

1. Explain that individuals may ask them about the purpose of their visit during these field trips. Invite students to practice giving brief explanations that include their understanding of the mission of the Manifestations of God.
2. Explain that they may also be asked to respond to the question: What is a Bahá'í? Share the following short explanation provided by 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

When asked on one occasion: "What is a Bahá'í?" 'Abdu'l-Bahá replied: "To be a Bahá'í simply means to love all the world; to love humanity and try to serve it; to work for universal peace and universal brotherhood."

J.E. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p. 71

3. Distribute copies of Resource Page 36 and memorize this short response by learning the song.
4. Encourage students to practice using this response with their families and to share with the class when they're able to use it with others.

Resource Pages

**The True Teacher of Humanity**

Although the stars are scintillating and brilliant,  
the sun is superior to them in luminous  
effulgence. Similarly these holy divine  
Manifestations are and must always be  
distinguished above all other beings in every  
attribute of glory and perfection, in order that it  
may be proven that the Manifestation is the true  
teacher and real trainer; that he is the Sun of  
Truth endowed with a supreme splendor and  
reflecting the beauty of God.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 112

## Analogies Describing the Role of the Manifestations

### Rose

In the Rose Garden of changeless splendor a Flower hath begun to bloom, compared to which every other flower is but a thorn, and before the brightness of Whose glory the very essence of beauty must pale and wither.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, pp. 320-1

### Nightingale

It is obvious and manifest that the true meaning of the utterances of the Birds of Eternity is revealed to none except those that manifest the Eternal Being, and the melodies of the Nightingale of Holiness can reach no ear save that of the denizens of the everlasting realm.

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Íqán*, p. 17

### Mirror

A Divine Manifestation is as a mirror reflecting the light of the Sun. The light is the same and yet the mirror is not the Sun. All the Manifestations of God bring the same Light; they only differ in degree, not in reality.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London*, pp. 66-7

### Sun

In like manner, when the Holy Manifestation of God, Who is the sun of the world of His creation, shines upon the worlds of spirits, of thoughts and of hearts, then the spiritual spring and new life appear, the power of the wonderful springtime becomes visible, and marvelous benefits are apparent.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 163

### Springtime

It is the same with the spiritual cycles of the Prophets—that is to say, the day of the appearance of the Holy Manifestations is the spiritual springtime; it is the divine splendor; it is the heavenly bounty, the breeze of life, the rising of the Sun of Reality.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 74

### Rain

The testament of Bahá'u'lláh is a Rain of Goodness, a Sun of Truth, Water of Life, the Holy Spirit.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 182

### Gems

The door of the knowledge of the Ancient of Days being thus closed in the face of all beings, the Source of infinite grace, according to His saying: "His grace hath transcended all things; My grace hath encompassed them all" 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, that they may impart unto the world the mysteries of the unchangeable Being, and tell of the subtleties of His imperishable Essence.

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

### Tree

Verily, this Tree . . . calleth aloud and summoneth all men unto the Sadratu'l-Muntaha\* and the Supreme Horizon. Blessed is the soul that hath gazed on the Most Mighty Sign, and the ear that hath heard His most sweet Voice, and woe to whosoever hath turned aside and done wickedly.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 84

\*Sadratu'l-Muntaha: The Sacred Lote-Tree, the Tree beyond which there is no passing (See Qur'án 53:8-18). A symbol of the Manifestation of God. (See *God Passes By* p. 94.)

**TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS**

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**HISTORY OF HUMAN SPIRITUAL LIFE**

The dates given are ranges based on current research. The dates change as further evidence is discovered, so if you have a research-loving class, a good assignment would be to find the most current research.

- Earliest evidence of religious activity
  - 100,000 years ago—*careful burial of the dead*
  - 8,000 years ago—*evidence of systematic religious belief*
- Earliest evidence of written language
  - 5,000 years ago—*Middle East and North Africa, clear language*
  - 7,000 years ago—*South Asia, possible writing*
- Earliest evidence of art
  - 400,000-350,000 years ago—*Africa, pigment making*
  - 42,000 years ago—*Europe, cave paintings*
  - 30,000 years ago—*Africa, Asia, cave paintings*
- Earliest evidence of scientific observation
  - 30,000 years ago—*Europe, record phases of the moon on carved animal bone*
- Human immigrants settle throughout the Earth
  - 1 million years—*Mid-East, earliest evidence of hominid ancestors outside Africa*
  - 60,000 to 50,000 years ago—*modern humans settle North Africa, South Asia, and Oceania*
  - 40,000 years ago—*modern humans settle Europe, Central Asia, and China*
  - 30,000 years ago—*modern humans settle Siberia, Japan, and Sub-Saharan Africa*
  - 20,000 to 12,000 years ago—*modern humans settle North America and South America*
  - 6,000 years ago—*modern humans settle islands throughout Pacific. Last major immigrant move . . . into Greenland.*
- Century of Light
  - 1900 to 2001—*the foundations of world civilization are laid, rapid technological, economic and scientific development, global issues come to the forefront of human concern*



### Timeline—Spiritual Evolution of Humanity

While not exact, these dates provide a general sense of time placement for known spiritual traditions mentioned in the Bahá'í writings. BCE means "Before the Common Era." CE means "Common Era." These are the Gregorian dates in common use today.

Hinduism	2,500 BCE (Indus Valley Civilization) 1,500 BCE (Vedas) 400 BCE (Bhagavad-Gita)
Judaism	2,000 BCE (Abraham) 1,500 BCE (Moses)
Zoroastrianism	1,500 BCE (Zoroaster)
Confucianism	500 BCE (Confucius)
Buddhism	500 BCE (Buddha)
Christianity	30 CE (Jesus)
Islám	600 CE (Muhammad)
Bábí Faith	1844 CE (The Báb)
Bahá'í Faith	1853 CE (Bahá'u'lláh)

## **TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS**

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### **Founders of World Religions are Sources of Unity**

The holy Manifestations Who have been the Sources or Founders of the various religious systems were united and agreed in purpose and teaching. Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh are one in spirit and reality. Moreover, each Prophet fulfilled the promise of the One Who came before Him and, likewise, Each announced the One Who would follow.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 197

### **PRE-HISTORIC PROPHETS EXISTED, BUT ARE UNKNOWN**

And now regarding thy question, ‘How is it that no records are to be found concerning the Prophets that have preceded Adam, the Father of Mankind, or of the Kings that lived in the days of those Prophets?’ Know thou that the absence of any reference to them is no proof that they did not actually exist. That no records concerning them are now available, should be attributed to their extreme remoteness, as well as to the vast changes which the earth hath undergone since their time.

Universal House of Justice to an individual believer, March 13, 1986, *Lights of Guidance*, p. 500

The only reason there is not more mention of the Asiatic prophets is because their names seem to be lost in the mists of ancient history. . . . We are taught there always have been Manifestations of God, but we do not have any record of their names.

Shoghi Effendi, October 4, 1950, to an individual believer, *Lights of Guidance*, p. 503

### **BLESSED SOULS BROUGHT ILLUMINATION TO THE WORLD**

Blessed souls—whether Moses, Jesus, Zoroaster, Krishna, Buddha, Confucius or Muhammad—were the cause of the illumination of the world of humanity.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 346

### **ABRAHAM ESTABLISHES BELIEF IN THE UNITY OF GOD**

Abraham then came into the region of the Holy Land. His enemies considered that His exile would lead to His destruction and ruin, as it seemed impossible that a man banished from His native land, deprived of His rights and oppressed on all sides—even though He were a king—could escape extermination. But Abraham stood fast and showed forth extraordinary firmness—and God made this exile to be to His eternal honor—until He established the Unity of God in the midst of a polytheistic generation.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 12-3

### **MOSES ESTABLISHES UNITY IN THE LAWS OF GOD**

Moses tried to unite the people by sound laws. . . .

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 181

This people from the depths of degradation were lifted up to the height of glory. They were captive; they became free. They were the most ignorant of peoples; they became the most wise. As the result of the institutions that Moses gave them, they attained a position which entitled them to honor among all nations, and their fame spread to all lands, to such a degree indeed that among surrounding nations if one wished to praise a man one said, “Surely he is an Israelite.” Moses established laws and ordinances; these gave life to the people of Israel, and led them to the highest possible degree of civilization at that period.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, p. 14



### **CHRIST ESTABLISHES UNITY OF LOVE**

When the Messianic star of Jesus Christ dawned, he declared he had come to gather together the lost tribes or scattered sheep of Moses. He not only shepherded the flock of Israel, but brought together people of Chaldea, Egypt, Syria, ancient Assyria and Phoenicia. These people were in a state of utmost hostility, thirsting for the blood of each other with the ferocity of animals; but His Holiness Jesus Christ brought them together, cemented and united them in his cause and established such a bond of love among them that enmity and warfare were abandoned.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Foundations of World Unity*, p. 22

### **MUHAMMAD ESTABLISHES UNITY OF NATION**

Muhammad appeared at a time when the peoples and tribes of Arabia were divergent and in a state of continual warfare. They killed each other, pillaged and took captive wives and children. Muhammad united these fierce tribes, established a foundation of fellowship among them so that they gave up warring against each other absolutely and established communities. The result was that the Arabian tribes freed themselves from the Persian yoke and Roman control, established an independent sovereignty which rose to a high degree of civilization, advanced in sciences and arts, extended the Saracen dominion as far west as Spain and Andalusia and became famous throughout the world.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 128

### **BAHÁ’U’LLÁH ESTABLISHES UNITY OF HUMANKIND**

In the Orient the various peoples and nations were in a state of antagonism and strife, manifesting the utmost enmity and hatred toward each other. Darkness encompassed the world of mankind. At such a time as this Bahá’u’lláh appeared. He removed all the imitations and prejudices which had caused separation and misunderstanding and laid the foundation of the one religion of God. When this was accomplished, Muslims, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, Buddhists all were united in actual fellowship and love. The souls who followed Bahá’u’lláh from every nation have become as one family living in agreement and accord, willing to sacrifice life for each other. The Muslim will give his life for the Christian, the Christian for the Jew and all of them for the Zoroastrian. They live together in love, fellowship and unity. They have attained to the condition of rebirth in the Spirit of God. They have become revived and regenerated through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Praise be to God! This light has come forth from the East, and eventually there shall be no discord or enmity in the Orient. Through the power of Bahá’u’lláh all will be united.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 202

TOPIC: THE MISSION OF THE PROPHETS

### To Be a Bahá'í

WORDS: Bahá'í writings, 'Abdu'l-Baha

MUSIC: Bob Simms

To be a Ba-ha'i \_\_\_\_\_ sim-ply

means \_\_\_\_\_ to love \_\_\_\_\_ all \_\_\_\_\_ the world \_\_\_\_\_ to

love \_\_\_\_\_ hu-man-i-ty \_\_\_\_\_ and try to serve

it. \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ work \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ peace \_\_\_\_\_ and

un-i-ver-sal bro-ther-hood \_\_\_\_\_ to be a Ba-ha'i \_\_\_\_\_

sim-ply \_\_\_\_\_ means \_\_\_\_\_ to love, \_\_\_\_\_ love all the world \_\_\_\_\_

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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**Stories and Articles:**

- Brilliant Star*, “The Holy Book of God” SE 93  
“Source of Inspiration” ND 97  
“What Day Is It?” ND 99  
“I Was But a Man . . .” MA 01  
“What Do Bahá’ís Believe?” JF 02  
Faizi, A.Q., *The Wonder Lamp*  
*Herald of the South*, Jul 1989, “Honey and Poison, the Story of Moses”; Oct 1988, “Zoroaster”  
Sasso, Sandy Eisenberg, *God in Between*  
Wolcott, Cynthia, *The Gift*

**Worksheets and Coloring Pages:**

- Brilliant Star*, “Noah’s Ark” JA 91  
“The Holy, Heavenly Manifestations” JA 98  
Oldziey, Peter, *Garden of Bahá’u’lláh*, New Delhi: Bahá’í Publishing Trust, 1988

**Music:**

- Lenz, Jack and Ron Allen, *The Messengers*  
Levine, Matthew, *A Sacrifice to Thee*, “The Man Upstairs,” “Forever Will Stand”  
Price, Tom, with various artists, *Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, Vol. 1*, “God is One”  
Price, Tom, with various artists, *Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, Vol. 3*, “Blessed is the Spot”  
Sears, William, with various artists, *Happy Ayyám-i-Há*, “Blessed is the Spot”  
Various artists, *Fruits of the Spirit*, “Glory Be To My Lond,” “Paradise of the Placeless”  
Voices of Bahá Chorale, *Songs of the Ancient Beauty*, “Blessed is the Spot”

**Games:**

- Brilliant Star*, “Bahá’í Dominoes” JA 92

**Other favorite resources:**

- ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 102-106, 119-120, 171-172  
‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 5-7, 10-2, 40-1, 330-1, 340-1, 401-2, 465-6  
‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 7-11, 145, 168, 236-7  
Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 49-55, 79-81 Hofman, David, *God and His Messengers*  
Kay, C.M., *A Story of Stories, World Religions for Children*  
Mahmoudi, Jalil, *The Story As Told*  
Matthews, Gary L., *Muhammad: Defender of Christians*  
Matthews, Gary L., *Afraid to Speak Against Moses*  
Sours, Michael, *Jesus in Sacred Bahá’í Literature: A Compilation with Introductory Observations*  
Townshend, George, *Christianity and the Bahá’í Faith*  
Townshend, George, *The Heart of the Gospel: The Bible and the Bahá’í Faith*

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



**TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR  
RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**

**THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF  
MAJOR RELIGIONS**

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
LOVE, REVERENCE, COURTESY, DETACHMENT**

Every Prophet Whom the Almighty and Peerless Creator hath purposed to send to the peoples of the earth hath been entrusted with a Message, and charged to act in a manner that would best meet the requirements of the age in which He appeared.

*Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 80*

Such stories regarding the life of different Prophets together with Their sayings will also be useful to better understand the literature of the Cause for there is constant reference to them.

*Shoghi Effendi, Bahá'í Education, #130, p. 53*

## TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF MAJOR RELIGIONS

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



#### KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To become familiar with the life history of the Founders of the world's religions: know some of the proofs and evidences for the appearance of the Manifestations
- To know the main events in the life of each Manifestation: childhood, ministry, death
- To be familiar with each major Book and its spiritual and social teachings and laws
- To become familiar with the events occurring after the passing of each Manifestation including the succession to the Manifestation
- To become familiar with the proofs and evidences given by each Manifestation regarding the coming of Bahá'u'lláh

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Participate in a jigsaw cooperative learning process with each group performing research and becoming experts on the life history of one of the Founders of the world's religions.
- Play card games that match the founders of the world's religions with their books, teachings, life events, etc.
- Create a picture book covering for each Manifestation the points listed in the learning objectives.
- Study the proofs and evidences presented by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in *Some Answered Questions* regarding each Manifestation's prophecies about the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.



#### WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To understand the social and cultural circumstances at the time of the appearance of each Manifestation
- To study the prophecies and proofs that indicated the appearance of each Manifestation, and the statements attributed to each Manifestation that indicated the coming of future Manifestations

#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Use guided imagery to help students imagine the life of someone their age living in the place and time of the appearance of each Manifestation.
- Invite students to work in groups to research the various proofs and prophecies of the appearance of each Manifestation (suggested resource: *The Story as Told* by Mahmoudi) and create a quiz game from the results of their work.

**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**  
**TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS**  
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## **SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES**

- To discern the beneficial influence of the followers of each of the Manifestations in one's own community and in the world at large
- To perceive the connection between one's own spiritual development today and that of one's forebears who were adherents of other faiths by discovering one's own religious heritage

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Encourage students to work in groups to compile lists of charitable works, outreach programs, and other service projects of various community religious organizations. Use the religion pages in the newspaper as well as direct inquiry. Consult on the findings.
- Create a family tree, going back as far as necessary to locate forebears who were followers of one of the previous Manifestations. Interview this person or other family members to discover how their religious beliefs affected their lives. Reflect on these stories to find virtues and teachings that have affected one's own life.



## **ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES**

- To be able to offer clear and convincing proofs regarding the validity of each of the Manifestations of God
- To demonstrate openness to the perspectives of the followers of other religions
- To be able to formulate questions to members of other faiths about the history, laws, and teachings of the Founders of the world's faiths

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Hold a mock panel discussion in which students represent various religions. Students present proofs of the validity of that Manifestation, and are quizzed by attendants.
- Schedule tours of the place of worship of major religions with guides of those faiths who can present their beliefs and answer the students' questions on the history, laws and teachings of their Founder.

**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**

## **TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF MAJOR RELIGIONS**

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### **Sample Activities**

#### **ACTIVITY: PROPHETS OF GOD REVEAL THE GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know some of the proofs and evidences for the appearance of the Manifestation

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of reasoning; Use of questions; Education directed toward God

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of Resource Page 48

1. Share with the students the following words of Bahá'u'lláh, reading them aloud carefully at least twice. Invite the students to express the meaning of this quotation in their own words.

Beware, O believers in the Unity of God, lest ye be tempted to make any distinction between any of the Manifestations of His Cause, or to discriminate against the signs that have accompanied and proclaimed their Revelation. This indeed is the true meaning of Divine Unity, if ye be of them that apprehend and believe this truth. Be ye assured, moreover, that the works and acts of each and every one of these Manifestations of God, nay whatever pertaineth unto them, and whatsoever they may manifest in the future, are all ordained by God, and are a reflection of His Will and Purpose.

*Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 59*

2. Then discuss the questions: Who are the Manifestations of God? How do we know Their names? How can we learn about Them?
3. Distribute copies of Resource Page 48. Invite students to read aloud the quotations. Discuss the meaning of these passages to assure understanding. Then considering these quotations and the chart, discuss the following questions: How can we know if a great spiritual teacher is a Manifestation of God? How many Manifestations of God are there? Name some of the Manifestations of God mentioned in the Bahá'í writings. How many of these religions are practiced in our community? How can we know?
4. Encourage the students to think of all the people they know whose lives express their faiths. Invite them to select one of these individuals and encourage them to invite that person to describe her or his faith in a conversation with the student before the next class. Remember to invite the students to describe these conversations at the beginning of the next class.



**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**  
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**ACTIVITY: SOME MAJOR RELIGIONS**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES:** To become familiar with the life history of the Founders of the world's religions; To know some of the proofs and evidences for the appearance of each Manifestation; To know the main events in the life of each Manifestation: the childhood, ministry, death; To be familiar with each major Book and its spiritual and social teachings and laws

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that the education and training of a people is the primary proof of a Manifestation of God

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of reasoning; Use of questions; Use of arts; Use of independent investigation; Education directed toward God

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of Resource Pages 49-59, as described below
- Additional reference information, if desired, such as books on the various religions, encyclopedias, and computer access for Internet research
- Art supplies

1. Invite the students to work in groups of two or three. Provide members of each group with one of the Resource Pages on the Manifestations of God as well as additional resource materials, if desired. Note that many religions honor the same Prophets. For example, Christianity recognizes the Prophets of the Jewish Faith, Islam recognizes the Prophets of the Jewish and Christian Faiths, and the Bahá'í Faith honors the Prophets of all Faiths.
2. Invite each group to carefully read the Resource Page and respond to the following questions:
  - Where and when did this Manifestation live?
  - What do you admire about the Life and Teachings of this Manifestation?
  - What additional questions do you have about this Manifestation of God?Encourage the students to use Resource Page 49 as a worksheet for recording their answers to these questions.
3. After this period of study, encourage the groups to prepare a five to ten minute creative presentation to share the story of each Manifestation during the next class session. This presentation should include a quotation from one of the Holy Books; responses to the questions listed above; and artistic expression such as music, visual art, or drama. Remind the students that they may not portray, or draw images of, the Manifestations of God Themselves.

**Extended Study:** Students may research answers to their additional questions about the Manifestations of God.

**Please note** that if the class is very small, you may wish to repeat this activity, to introduce students to more of the divine religions of God.
4. Encourage the students to share some of the information they learn with at least one other person before the next class.

**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**

## **TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF MAJOR RELIGIONS**

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### **ACTIVITY: THE MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that the education and training of a people is the primary proof of a Manifestation of God

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To be able to offer clear and convincing proofs regarding the validity of the Manifestations of God

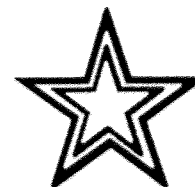
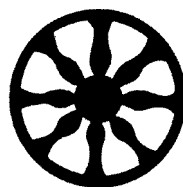
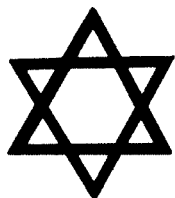
**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Engage the mind and heart; Education directed toward God; Use of peer teaching; Use of the arts

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Presentations prepared in the previous activity
- Copies of Resource Page 49 or writing paper and pens

1. Invite the students to share the presentations prepared in the previous activity. Provide the other students in the class with copies of Resource Page 49 or writing paper and pens. Encourage them to take notes on each presentation and to praise their favorite parts of each presentation.
2. After all presentations have been made, encourage the students to discuss: Why is it important for us to learn about all the Manifestations of God? How can we tell that They each educated a people? What are some of the enduring contributions of each religion?
3. Encourage the students to share one new fact with another person before the next class. Remember to invite the students to share the results of these conversations at the beginning of the next class.



**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**  
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**ACTIVITY: INVITING GUEST SPEAKERS**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the social and cultural circumstances at the time of the appearance of each Manifestation

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES:** To demonstrate openness to the perspectives of the followers of other religions; To be able to formulate questions to members of other faiths about the history, laws and teachings of the Founders of the world's faiths

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of reasoning; Use of questions; Education directed toward God; Engaging the mind and heart

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Paper and pencils
- Chart paper and markers

1. In consultation with the class, develop a list of representatives of different religious faiths to invite to your class, each to make a ten to fifteen minute presentation about their faith. Try to get the greatest diversity of faiths possible. They do not need to be clergy—it might even be most interesting to use everyday people who are committed to their faith. For example, your class might consider inviting representatives of the Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian faiths for one session, and American Indian, Jewish, and Muslim guests for another session, for a total of two sessions with the class.
2. Discuss: How will we show courtesy, hospitality, and genuine interest in the religious perspectives of our guests? How will we greet them? Could we serve refreshments? How will we beautify the room? Would we like to use an appreciative theme such as “Fragrances of the Spirit,” based on the following quotation?

Consider the rose: whether it blossometh in the East or in the West, it is none the less a rose. For what mattereth in this respect is not the outward shape and form of the rose, but rather the smell and fragrance which it doth impart.

*Bahá'u'lláh, The Kitáb-i-Íqán, p. 159*

How will we invite the guests—with written invitations expressing the theme, telephone calls, or personal visits? Who will invite the guests? How will we let them know our interest in unity in diversity in religious faith, and that we're especially interested in learning about shared spiritual principles as they are uniquely expressed in each faith?

3. Encourage the students to think of at least two questions regarding the social and cultural circumstances at the time of the appearance of the Manifestation and at least two other questions about the beliefs, practices, history, laws, or teachings of that faith.

Write out these questions to be able to share them with the guests before the class, so that they have time to prepare their answers.

4. Invite your guests to bring a page of quotations from their own Holy Books to illustrate the essential moral teachings of their faith, such as love for God and humanity, good character, or service to others. Invite them to share information about service that their faith offers to the community at large, especially in your local area.
5. Invite the guests and prepare the room and refreshments before the next class.

**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**

## **TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF MAJOR RELIGIONS**

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### **ACTIVITY: GUEST SPEAKERS**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the social and cultural circumstances at the time of the appearance of each Manifestation

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES:** To demonstrate openness to the perspectives of the followers of other religions; To be able to formulate questions to members of other faiths about the history, laws and teachings of the Founders of the world's faiths

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of reasoning; Use of questions; Education directed toward God; Engaging the mind and heart

**SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY:** 60 MINUTES FOR EACH SESSION

**Materials Needed:**

- Paper and pencils
- Nicely decorated room
- Refreshments

**Advance Preparation:** Carry out the preparations planned in the previous class.

1. Encourage the students to welcome the guest speakers, show them courtesy and respect, listen attentively to their short presentations, ask any additional questions, serve refreshments to their guests, and thank them for coming, as planned in the previous session. Encourage them to take notes during these presentations.
2. After the guests have departed, discuss similarities and differences in the presentations. How are love, good character, service to others, etc. expressed in each faith?
3. Encourage the students to tell at least one other person about these presentations before the next class.



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**ACTIVITY: IDENTIFYING FAITH-BASED SERVICE**

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To discern the beneficial influence of the followers of each of the Manifestations in one's own community and the world at large

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of consultation; Use of reasoning; Use of reflection; Education directed towards God

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Reference materials such as local newspapers, phone books, and community directories
- Chart paper and markers
- Paper and pencils

**Advance Preparation:** Write the following quotation on chart paper and display in the classroom:

Service to the friends is service to the Kingdom of God, and consideration shown to the poor is one of the greatest teachings of God.

*Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 30*

1. Invite several students to read aloud the posted quotation slowly and eloquently. Encourage students to state the meaning of the quotation in their own words.
2. Memorize this quotation.
3. Invite the students to recall examples of faith-based service that they may have discovered through visits to places of worship, guest speakers, or other sources. List these examples on chart paper.
4. Invite the class to compile a booklet that identifies charitable activities, outreach programs, and service projects of religious (and other) organizations in the community.
5. Encourage student groups to research the public service of specific religious groups by looking in the religious pages of newspapers and the white and yellow pages of the phone book, as well as by using direct inquiry and notes from previous activities related to this topic. Invite students also to research the service offered by other community organizations.
6. Encourage the students to create a reference page for each organization by listing:
  - Name of the religion or organization
  - Address of the religion or organization
  - Contact information
  - Description of the service, including a schedule, if known
  - How others could get involved
7. After completing this research, invite the work groups to share what they learned with the whole class.
8. Invite students to collect the completed reference pages and organize them in a binder or folder to share with the community at an upcoming Nineteen Day Feast, cluster gathering, or other appropriate occasion. Students and others may refer to this book when planning service to the community at large.
9. Invite students to reflect on and write in their journal about the beneficial influences that the various members of these religions have on the community and the world at large.

# TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF MAJOR RELIGIONS

## Resource Pages

### PROPHETS OF GOD REVEAL THE GREAT RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

#### The Prophets Reveal the One Reality

From time immemorial the divine teachings have been successively revealed, and the bounties of the Holy Spirit have ever been emanating. All the teachings are one reality, for reality is single and does not admit multiplicity. Therefore, the divine Prophets are one, inasmuch as They reveal the one reality, the Word of God.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 313

#### God Has Always Sent His Prophets; the Names of Some Have Been Lost

The Manifestations of His Divine glory and the Day Springs of eternal holiness have been sent down from time immemorial, and been commissioned to summon mankind to the one true God. That the names of some of them are forgotten and the records of their lives lost is to be attributed to the disturbances and changes that have overtaken the world.

Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 174

We are taught there always have been Manifestations of God, but we do not have any record of their names.

Shoghi Effendi, *Lights of Guidance*, p. 503

#### The Prophets Found Religions

The holy Manifestations Who have been the Sources or Founders of the various religious systems were united and agreed in purpose and teaching. Abraham, Moses, Zoroaster, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh are one in spirit and reality.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 197

The nine religions to which you have referred include both the Bábí and the Bahá’í Dispensations, Bahá’u’lláh being the ninth Prophet in the series. The other Prophets included are Zoroaster, Krishna, Moses, the Christ, Muhammad, Buddha, the Prophet of the Sabaeans Whose name is unrecorded, the Báb and Bahá’u’lláh....

Shoghi Effendi, *The Compilation of Compilations vol. I*, p. 20

	Indigenous Religions	Hinduism	Judaism	Zoroastrianism	Buddhism	Christianity	Islam	Bahá’í
Place of Origin	World-wide	India	Palestine	Persia	India	Palestine	Arabia	Persia
Prophet-Founder	Many and Varied	Krishna	Abraham & Moses	Zoroaster (Zarathustra)	Buddha	Jesus	Muhammad	Báb and Bahá’u’lláh
Time of Origin	Since Ancient Times	4000-2500 BCE	2000 BCE	1000-750 BCE	500-600 BCE	30 CE	622 CE	1844 CE

#### A Note on Sources:

Information about world religions is widely available. One general source is: *The Usborne Internet-linked Encyclopedia of World Religions*. Libraries and the Internet provide many other sources.

World religions often have many sub-groups, sects, and denominations. The beliefs of different people within the same world religion can vary greatly. These activities do not rely on a single source of information. Elements that express shared beliefs within an overall religion are highlighted.

**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**

**TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS  
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**SOME MAJOR RELIGIONS: A WORKSHEET**

Name of the Religion:

Name of the Manifestation of God:

Where and when did the Manifestation live?

What about the Life and Teachings of the Manifestation do you admire?

Life History (if known)

Childhood

Ministry

Death

Proofs and Evidences for this Manifestation of God (if known)

Major Book

Spiritual Teaching

Social Teaching

Laws

What additional questions do you have about this Manifestation of God?

## TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF MAJOR RELIGIONS

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### SOME GREAT TEACHERS IN THE AMERICAS

#### God Has Sent Many Prophets to Humanity

God hath raised up Prophets and revealed Books as numerous as the creatures of the world. . . .

*The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 125*

#### The Proof of a Prophet Is the Training of a Nation or People

If we wish to discover whether any one of these great Souls or Messengers was in reality a Prophet of God, we must investigate the facts surrounding His life and history, and the first point of our investigation will be the education He bestowed upon mankind. If He has been an Educator, if He has really trained a nation or people, causing it to rise from the lowest depths of ignorance to the highest station of knowledge, then we are sure that He was a Prophet. This is a plain and clear method of procedure, proof that is irrefutable. We do not need to seek after other proofs.

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 364*

Only a few of the Prophets of God are mentioned specifically in the Bahá’í writings. The Bahá’í writings also make it clear that Messengers of God were sent to all peoples. Prophets have raised the Call of God throughout the world.

Some Prophets of God have not been specifically identified in the Bahá’í writings. It is obvious that many spiritual teachers made great contributions to their people. Some great spiritual teachers created patterns of belief and civilization. They trained and educated entire nations and peoples. A few examples of such great spiritual teachers in the Americas are:

**Quetzalcoatl** is honored in practically all of the cultures of Pre-Columbian Mexico. All describe Quetzalcoatl in the same way, with only small variations. Quetzalcoatl was a political ruler who also was worshiped as a god. He proclaimed the existence of One Supreme God. He is honored as the god of learning. He also introduced corn and agriculture to the people.

**White Buffalo Calf Woman** was sent to the Lakota people by the Creator. They believe that White Buffalo Calf Woman gave them their spiritual beliefs, ceremonies and values. She brought her message to the Lakota some nineteen generations ago.

**Deganawida** is revered as the “Heavenly Messenger” said to have established the Great League of Peace among the Iroquois. Iroquois tradition says that he buried weapons of war beneath the roots of the Tree of Peace. He founded the Five Nations Confederacy. This great system of federated peoples impressed Benjamin Franklin. He referred to it as a model when the United States Constitution was written.



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**KRISHNA: MANIFESTATION OF THE HINDU FAITH**

The Message of Krishna is the message of love. All God's prophets have brought the message of love.  
*'Abdu'l-Bahá, Paris Talks, p. 35*

Krishna is believed to be the author of the Bhagavad-Gita, one of the most sacred Hindu books.

**A beautiful passage from the Bhagavad-Gita about Krishna's Love:**

Because I love thee well, I will speak to thee words of salvation. Give thy mind to me,  
and give me thy heart, and thy sacrifice, and thy adoration. This is my Word of promise:  
thou shalt in truth come to me, for thou art dear to me.

*Bhagavad-Gita, 18:64, 65*

Hinduism began in India more than 5000 years ago. Hinduism already existed before Krishna was born. However, Hindus believe that Krishna is God in human form. For Hindus, Krishna embodies all the qualities of God.

Many people say that Hindus worship many gods. However, Hindus believe in a Supreme God called Brahman. Lesser gods are all expressions of the One Supreme Creator. The purpose of life is to realize that we are part of God. This is called enlightenment. Enlightenment allows us to leave the material world and rejoin God. Enlightenment requires repeated cycles of birth, life and death. All of one's good and bad deeds determine the next life cycle.

When Krishna was born, everywhere there was peace and happiness. Beautiful stars were visible in the sky. Everywhere there were other signs of good fortune. The rivers flowed full. Beautiful flowers bloomed.

Pictures of Krishna often show Him holding a flute. Hindus say that Krishna always carried this flute. The flute symbolizes Krishna's love. The beautiful music of the flute (love) draws people to His Teachings. The music of Krishna's flute has no limits; just as love has no limits.

Have true love for everyone, Hindus believe, and the world will be attracted to you. Just like when Krishna played enchanting tunes on his flute!

**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**

# **TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF MAJOR RELIGIONS**

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## **ABRAHAM: ANCIENT MANIFESTATION OF THE JEWISH FAITH**

The Founder of monotheism was Abraham; it is to Him that this concept can be traced, and the belief was current among the Children of Israel, even in the days of Socrates.

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 55*

Abraham is generally recognized as the founder of Judaism. He also is recognized as a Prophet by Christianity, Islám, and the Bábi and Bahá'í Faiths. God commanded Abraham to go to the land of Canaan. He promised to bless Abraham and His family. God promised Abraham that He would always provide His guidance to humanity.

### **Some beautiful passages from the Bible— The Establishment of God's Covenant with Abraham**

Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; Walk before Me, and be blameless.

"I will establish My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly."

Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations.

"No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

"I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you.

"I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you."

Genesis, 17:1-7

Jews believe in one God who is the Creator. They believe that God has a special relationship with the Jewish people. If they live by God's laws, He promises them a place in a perfect future world.

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**MOSES: MANIFESTATION OF THE JEWISH FAITH**

Moses . . . was sent forth to man and He established a Law, and the Children of Israel, through that Mosaic Law, were delivered out of their ignorance and came into the light; they were lifted up from their abjectness and attained to a glory that fadeth not.

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, p. 56*

When the Jewish people were slaves in Egypt, God spoke to Moses and through Him led the Jewish people out of slavery in Egypt. God also delivered the Ten Commandments to Moses.

**Some Beautiful Passages from the Bible—  
Moses Receives the Ten Commandments**

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me.

“You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. . . .

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

“You shall not kill.

“You shall not commit adultery.

“You shall not steal.

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

*Exodus, 20:1-17*

The Laws of Moses (the Torah) form the basis of Judaism. In the centuries after Abraham, the descendants of Abraham became slaves in Egypt. They suffered greatly under the oppression of the pharaohs. Under the leadership of Moses, God freed the Jews from slavery. Moses led the Jews on a long journey through the wilderness. At Mount Sinai God revealed Himself to Moses. God told Moses that He was the same God that had spoken to Abraham. He said that He remembered the covenant He had made with Abraham: “I will take you for my people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God.”

**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR RELIGIONS OF THE PAST**

## **TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF MAJOR RELIGIONS**

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### **ZOROASTER: MANIFESTATION OF THE ZOROASTRIAN FAITH**

Regarding the beginning of the Zoroastrian era, in one of His Tablets 'Abdu'l-Bahá states that Zoroaster lived about 750 years after Moses, in a letter to an individual believer the Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf: 'Zoroaster lived about a thousand years before Christ. There is no exact date in the teachings regarding the beginning of His Dispensation.'

Shoghi Effendi, *Lights of Guidance*, p. 502

Zoroaster lived at a time and place where people worshipped many gods and goddesses. Zoroaster taught that there was only one God, called Ahura Mazda. He taught the people that God was the Supreme Creator. He said that God would reward kindness and punish wrongdoing. Zoroaster taught that humans were created by God to fight against evil. Zoroaster said that people had the power to choose whether they will do good or evil. He told the people that God would judge them according to their choices.

The collection of Zoroastrian texts, known as the Avesta, tells of God's revelation to Zoroaster. It also records some of the Teachings of Zoroaster.

#### **A beautiful passage from the Avesta, Prayer Hymn of Zoroaster:**

This do I ask Thee, O Ahura and wish you to tell me truly. Who created in us the faith in God and the power to serve our brothers? Who made the son dutiful to his father, and placed the love and respect of father in the hearts of children. I shall try, O Mazda, to recognize Thee as Lord Supreme through the holy spirit.

Avesta, Y44.7

Very little is known about the life of Zoroaster. Much of what is known is in the nature of legends. In Zoroastrian traditions, the life of the Prophet abounds with miracles. A story is told, for example, that when Zoroaster was born, He laughed instead of crying. He glowed so brightly that people were frightened and tried to kill him. All attempts to destroy Zoroaster failed, however. Fire would not burn him. Animals could not crush him in stampedes. A mother wolf in the wilderness cared for him.

Apparently, Zoroaster left home as a young man. He spent years wandering in the wilderness communing with God. Later he had his first great vision. God came to him in the form of a huge angel. After this vision, Zoroaster had others. He began preaching His new religion. A great turning point came when Zoroaster preached to a king. Zoroaster gave His Teachings to the king. He also healed the king's favorite horse with a miracle. This convinced the king to accept the new religion. He made it the official religion of his kingdom.

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**BUDDHA: MANIFESTATION OF THE BUDDHIST FAITH**

The Buddha was a Manifestation of God, like Christ, but His followers do not possess His authentic Writings.

Shoghi Effendi, *Lights of Guidance*, p. 501

**A beautiful saying of the Buddha on Love and Hate**

We are what we think.  
All that we are arises with our thoughts.  
With our thoughts we make the world.  
Speak or act with an impure mind  
And trouble will follow you  
As the wheel follows the ox that draws the cart.

We are what we think.  
All that we are arises with our thoughts.  
With our thoughts we make the world.  
Speak or act with a pure mind  
And happiness will follow you  
As your shadow, unshakable.

"Look how he abused me and beat me,  
How he threw me down and robbed me."  
Live with such thoughts and you live in hate.

"Look how he abused me and beat me,  
How he threw me down and robbed me."  
Abandon such thoughts, and live in love.  
In this world hate never yet dispelled hate.  
Only love dispels hate.  
This is the law, Ancient and inexhaustible.

Dhammapada, 3

Gautama Siddhartha was born into a noble family. A wise man predicted that He would grow up to be a holy man. Gautama Siddhartha's father did not want this. He wanted his Son to follow him as ruler. He kept the young prince busy with a life of luxury. He kept Him in the royal palace, ignorant of the world outside.

In his 29<sup>th</sup> year, the prince grew troubled in spirit. He decided to leave the palace to see the flowers outside. Outside the palace, He saw pain and misery. He saw an old, suffering man. He saw terrible disease. He saw a weeping crowd mourning a death. Finally He met a monk, and resolved to follow the holy man's example.

Now fully aware of the sorrow in the world outside the sheltered life of the palace, Gautama Siddhartha resolved to abandon His life of ease. He vowed to seek a way to relieve the sufferings of humanity. From this point on He became known as the Buddha, and His Teachings spread widely.

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# **TOPIC: THE HISTORY, LAWS, AND TEACHINGS OF MAJOR RELIGIONS**

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## **JESUS: MANIFESTATION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH**

Jesus Christ gave His life upon the cross for the unity of mankind. Those who believed in Him likewise sacrificed life, honor, possessions, family, everything, that this human world might be released from the hell of discord, enmity and strife. His foundation was the oneness of humanity.

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 5*

Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God. They believe He was sent to save humanity from its sins. Many of Jesus’s miracles and teachings are recorded in the Bible. Jesus said that God’s greatest commandment is that we should love one another.

### **A beautiful passage from the Bible: Jesus Teaches How to Pray**

Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.  
Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.  
And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Bible, Matthew 6:9-13

Jesus gave many of His teachings in the form of stories and parables. Not everyone liked the teachings of Jesus. Such huge crowds came to hear Him that His enemies decided to kill Him. He was nailed to a cross and left to die. Christians believe that three days after He died, Jesus rose from the dead. Christians believe that Jesus made it possible through His sacrifice for anyone who believes in Him to have eternal life. Jesus promised His followers that He would one day return. He said that He would create the Kingdom of God on earth when He returned.

His followers asked Jesus many questions. They wanted to know when He would come back. How would they know when He was coming? What would the Kingdom of God be like? Jesus told a story to answer their questions. He said that His coming would be like this. Imagine a man goes on a journey. He asks his servants to watch his property while he was gone. When the man comes back, he finds that one of his servants had been trustworthy, and that the other had not been. The man is happy with the trustworthy servant, praises him, and gives him a reward. But he scolds and punishes the servant who was not trustworthy. That is how it would be when He returned, Jesus said.

Jesus said that people would know that He had returned when they treated the hungry, or the sick, or a stranger in just the same way they would treat Him! He told them that when they gave food to those who were hungry, just like they would give food to Him, He was there with them! When they gave a drink to those who were thirsty, or welcomed a stranger or visited the sick, with exactly the same spirit of love as if they were doing it to Jesus, then it would be doing it to Him! “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me.”

Many Christians believe that Jesus was God in human form. They believe that because Jesus is both human and divine, He has the power to assure that God will forgive everyone their sins. Christians believe that Jesus will welcome His followers in heaven after they die if they follow His Teachings.

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**MUHAMMAD: MANIFESTATION OF THE ISLÁMIC (MUSLIM) FAITH**

Muhammad appeared at a time when the peoples and tribes of Arabia were divergent and in a state of continual warfare. They killed each other, pillaged and took captive wives and children. Muhammad united these fierce tribes, established a foundation of fellowship among them so that they gave up warring against each other absolutely and established communities.

*‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 128*

God revealed the Qur’án, the Holy Book of Islám, to Muhammad. Muslims also study the Hadíth, Bahá’í a collection of Muhammad’s sayings.

**A beautiful passage from the Qur’án: Muhammad Defines Righteousness**

It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces to the East and the West; but righteous is he who believeth in Allah and the Last Day and the angels and the Scripture and the prophets; and giveth wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and to those who ask, and to set slaves free; and observeth proper worship and payeth the poor-due. And those who keep their treaty when they make one, and the patient in tribulation and adversity and time of stress. Such are they who are sincere. Such are the God-fearing.

*Qur’án, Sura 2 - The Cow*

Muhammad said that He taught the same faith as Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Followers of Muhammad are called Muslims. They believe that Muhammad is the last Prophet Whom God will send to humanity. All Muslims have a definite set of religious duties, known as the Five Pillars of Islám. Muslims must believe that Muhammad is God’s Messenger. They must also pray each day, care for the poor, fast during a certain time of the year, and make a pilgrimage.

Muhammad taught His faith among the tribes of Arabia. At that time they were very disunified. The tribes were often at war with each other. They also made different shapes out of pieces of wood and worshipped them. These wooden shapes were called idols. Muhammad taught that the people must stop fighting and become united. He told them that they must worship God and not idols. He taught them to believe in Abraham, Moses and Jesus, because they came from the one true God. He said that God had also sent Him. He taught that “There is only one God and Muhammad is His Prophet.”

At first, the people did not want to listen to Muhammad. But Muhammad was serious about what He said. He took a big axe and smashed the idols they worshipped. This made the people very angry. They tried to kill Muhammad. But God protected Him. The people looked for Muhammad to kill Him. They found a spider’s web across the entrance to the cave where Muhammad was. The people saw the spider’s web and thought that Muhammad was not in the cave. So they went away. In this way, God protected Muhammad.

After this, Muhammad had to fight against many other enemies. Because of the terrible times in which He taught His faith, Muhammad had to fight battles with armies. He protected His faith from those who wanted to destroy it. It took many years of fighting for Muhammad’s faith to be accepted. The Muslims had a black flag, called the Black Standard, which they carried into battle. They called on the name of God, which in their language was Alláh. At last the people accepted Muhammad. His teachings unified them and inspired them to build a great civilization.

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**THE BÁB AND BAHÁ'U'LLÁH: MANIFESTATIONS OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH**

The appearance of the Báb was the early light of the true morn, whereas the manifestation of the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh, was the shining forth of the sun.

‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 138

The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh . . . proclaimed the glad tidings of universal peace. The Báb was martyred in the Cause of God. Bahá'u'lláh suffered forty years as a prisoner and exile in order that the Kingdom of love might be established in the East and West. He has made it possible for us to meet here in love and unity. Because He suffered imprisonment, we are free to proclaim the oneness of the world of humanity for which He stood so long and faithfully. He was chained in dungeons, He was without food, His companions were thieves and criminals, He was subjected to every kind of abuse and infliction, but throughout it all He never ceased to proclaim the reality of the Word of God and the oneness of humanity.

‘Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 6-7

The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh are the Twin Prophets of the Bahá'í Faith. Bahá'ís believe that the Báb was sent by God to prepare the way for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh. The Báb and Bahá'u'lláh wrote hundreds of volumes. Bahá'ís believe that all these Holy Writings were revealed directly by God.

**Some beautiful passages from the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh:  
The Path to Guidance**

It is better to guide one soul than to possess all that is on earth, for as long as that guided soul is under the shadow of the Tree of Divine Unity, he and the one who hath guided him will both be recipients of God's tender mercy, whereas possession of earthly things will cease at the time of death. The path to guidance is one of love and compassion, not of force and coercion. This hath been God's method in the past, and shall continue to be in the future!

The Báb, *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 77

**Counsels of Bahá'u'lláh to the Rulers of the Earth**

Lay not aside the fear of God, O kings of the earth, and beware that ye transgress not the bounds which the Almighty hath fixed. Observe the injunctions laid upon you in His Book, and take good heed not to overstep their limits. Be vigilant, that ye may not do injustice to anyone, be it to the extent of a grain of mustard seed. Tread ye the path of justice, for this, verily, is the straight path.

Compose your differences, and reduce your armaments, that the burden of your expenditures may be lightened, and that your minds and hearts may be tranquillized. Heal the dissensions that divide you, and ye will no longer be in need of any armaments except what the protection of your cities and territories demandeth. Fear ye God, and take heed not to outstrip the bounds of moderation, and be numbered among the extravagant.

We have learned that you are increasing your outlay every year, and are laying the burden thereof on your subjects. This, verily, is more than they can bear, and is a grievous injustice. Decide justly



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between men, and be ye the emblems of justice amongst them. This, if ye judge fairly, is the thing that behoveth you, and beseemeth your station.

Beware not to deal unjustly with any one that appealeth to you, and entereth beneath your shadow. Walk ye in the fear of God, and be ye of them that lead a godly life. Rest not on your power, your armies, and treasures. Put your whole trust and confidence in God, Who hath created you, and seek ye His help in all your affairs. Succor cometh from Him alone. He succoreth whom He will with the hosts of the heavens and of the earth.

Know ye that the poor are the trust of God in your midst. Watch that ye betray not His trust, that ye deal not unjustly with them and that ye walk not in the ways of the treacherous.

*Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 250-1*

Bahá'ís believe that there is a sequence in all things. Every spring is followed by summer and every autumn brings a winter. Every day is followed by night and every evening has a morning. In the same way, God's Manifestations bring light into the darkness. Thus, when the darkness of hatred was widespread in the world, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh arose like two bright stars. They gave new Teachings from God to abolish prejudice and conflict.

Bahá'ís try to investigate the truth for themselves. They believe that investigation shows that God is One, Religion is one, and Humanity is one. Investigation reveals that people have more things in common than differences. Unity in diversity is a basic Bahá'í teaching. Bahá'ís say humanity is like a beautiful flower garden. Many different types of people make humanity beautiful and interesting, like different flowers in a garden. How silly it would be to be prejudiced against a type of flower in the garden! Yet, humanity is often prejudiced to such an extent that wars and bloodshed result. If we are just, we strive to see things as they really are. Bahá'ís say we should look with our own eyes to see what is true. Bahá'u'lláh taught that justice is the basis of unity, and unity is the basis of peace.

Both the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh suffered imprisonment, torture, and exile to bring these beautiful teachings to humanity. Yet, wherever They went, even Their guards came to love Them and wish to bring Them joy. That is because They were so loving and kind to everyone.

A story about Bahá'u'lláh expresses the Bahá'í vision. Bahá'u'lláh was asked how humanity could overcome its conflict and disunity. He said that first, the nations of the world would build terrible weapons of war. Then they would attack each other. Humanity would fight like bloodthirsty beasts. There would be terrible wars. Finally, wise people would study the cause of the bloodshed. They would see that prejudices were the cause, especially religious prejudice. Then people would try to destroy prejudice by giving up religion. Later they would find that man could not live without religion. They would then study the teachings of all religions. They would try to find a religion that would help overcome prejudices. At that time, the Bahá'í Faith would become widely accepted.

Bahá'ís believe that the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh came to bring a universal religion based on Oneness.

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## **LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

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### **Stories and Articles:**

*Brilliant Star*, “The Greater Covenant” SE 02  
“The Holy Book of God” SE 93  
“What Day Is It?” ND 99  
“I Was But a Man . . .” MA 01  
“God’s Messengers” ND 02  
*Herald of the South*, Jan 1994, “Is the Bible Literally True?”;  
Oct 1988, “Zoroaster”; Apr 1990, “Testament and Qur’an,  
Islam”; Jul 1990, “Islam: Guidance for Living”

### **Worksheets and Coloring Pages:**

*Brilliant Star*, “Always With Us” MJ 97  
“Noah’s Ark” JA 91  
*The Light of a Good Character*, pp. 16, 54-69  
Oldziewy, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá’u’lláh* New Delhi,  
Bahá’í Publishing Trust of India, 1988.

### **Other favorite resources:**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 81-83  
‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp.4-5, 154, 200-02, 407-410, 413-414, 444-445  
‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 12-26, 83-135  
*A Concise Encyclopedia of Buddhism*  
*A Concise Encyclopedia of Christianity*  
*A Concise Encyclopedia of Hinduism*  
*A Concise Encyclopedia of Islám*  
*A Concise Encyclopedia of Judaism*  
Fozdar, Jamshed, *Buddha Maitrya-Amitabha Has Appeared*  
Hanna, Nabil I., *Bible Proofs: A Fireside Aid for Teaching Christians*  
Hofman, David, *God and His Messengers*  
Johnson and McGee, *How Different Religions View Death and Afterlife*  
Kay, C.M., *A Story of Stories, World Religions for Children*  
Ma’súmián, Farná, *Life After Death: A Study of the Afterlife in World Religions*  
Mahmoudi, Jalil, *The Story As Told*  
Matthews, Gary L., *Bahá’ís and the Bible* pamphlet  
Momen, Moojan, *Buddhism and the Bahá’í Faith*  
Momen, Moojan, *Hinduism and the Bahá’í Faith*  
Momen, Moojan, *Introduction to Shi’i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi’ism*  
Osborne, Mary Pope, *One World, Many Religions, The Ways We Worship*  
Savitt, George, *The Bible Revisited*  
Sours, Michael, *Understanding Biblical Evidence*  
Sours, Michael, *Understanding Biblical Prophecy*  
Sours, Michael, *Understanding Christian Beliefs*  
Various, *Bahá’í References to Judaism, Christianity and Islam*  
Various, *The Bahá’í Faith and Islam, Symposium Proceedings 1984*

### **Music:**

Bahá’í Chorale conducted by Tom Price, *Songs of the Ancient Beauty*, “The Lord’s Prayer”  
Bahá’í Chorale conducted by Tom Price, *Music of the Bahá’í World Congress*, “Expectation”  
Lenz, Jack, *We Are Bahá’ís*, “Song of the Prophets”  
Lenz, Jack, *Bridges*, “Expectation,” “Passing Through”  
Price, Tom, with various artists, *Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, Vol. 2*, “We May Never Pass This Way Again”  
Monro, Gordi, *The Gift*, “Amazing Grace”  
Ward, Nancy, *To the Planters of Trees*, “Bismi’llah”

### **Games:**

*Brilliant Star*, “Bahá’í Dominoes” JA 92

### **Videos:**

*Teaching Christians More Effectively*

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

**TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGION AS THE  
GREATEST MEANS FOR UNITY**

**THE ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION OF ALL  
RELIGIONS**

**SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:  
LOVE, SERVICE, REVERENCE, COURTESY, DETACHMENT**

Religion is verily the chief instrument for the establishment of order  
in the world and of tranquillity amongst its peoples.

*Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 63-4*

The Guardian feels that one of the chief instruments for promoting  
[greater unity among the friends] is to teach the Bahá'ís themselves, in  
classes and through precepts, that love of God, and consequently of  
men, is the essential foundation of every religion. . . .

*written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, Directives from the Guardian, p. 75*

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

### KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know from the Bahá'í writings that the foundation of all divinely revealed religions is essentially the same
- To know that the love of God and consequentially our love for each other is the essential foundation of all religions
- To become familiar with the term *divinely revealed* and understand its meaning
- To know that we should read the Holy Books and scriptures of the divinely revealed religions of the world to understand their essential oneness

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Sing songs about the oneness of God and of religion.
- Consult about the meaning of Bahá'u'lláh's statement, "This is the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future."
- Construct block towers, representing religions, with foundation pieces labeled "love of God" and "love of fellow men." Try removing foundation pieces!
- Use a dictionary to define the words *divinely* and *revealed*. Consult on their meanings.
- Share 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words (see *Paris Talks*, pp. 57, 1995 edition) on the earlier Holy Books. Provide copies of these books for reading and reverent treatment.

### WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To understand from studying and reflecting on the scriptures of the world's religions how love of God and love for others is the foundation of their teachings

### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Post quotations from all the world's scriptures about love of God and love for others.
- Invite students to work in groups, each researching the scripture of a different world religion, to find references to the love of God and love for others. Present the essence of the groups' findings in an interpretive dance.



## **SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES**

- To discern how understanding the essential foundation of all divinely revealed religions can engender feelings of oneness with the followers of other faiths
- To discern the common threads of eternal teachings taught by all the Manifestations of God

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- In group consultation, identify major themes of religion such as prayer, the “Golden Rule,” life after death, attaining virtues, sacrifice, etc. Through research and interviews, ascertain the pure teachings of each divinely revealed religion on these themes. Chart the results and find commonalities.
- At various times, set up the environment to replicate a place of worship of one of the world’s major religions. Share passages from that religion’s scriptures regarding love of God and love for others. Spend time meditating on how it might feel to be a member of that religion.



## **ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES**

- To discern the common threads of eternal teachings taught by all the Manifestations of God
- To demonstrate understanding of the oneness of religion in one’s daily interactions with the followers of all faiths
- To articulate learning about the essential oneness of religion

### **SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

- Create an interfaith calendar, featuring quotations from the sacred scriptures of all the major religions on love of God and love for others, and with art inspired by the passages.
- Prepare and deliver heartfelt speeches on the essential foundation of all religions for a community observance of World Religion Day.
- Establish an interfaith children’s or youth group in your community.

**Sample Activities**

**ACTIVITY: SING HIS PRAISES**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know from the Bahá'í writings that the foundation of all divinely revealed religions is essentially the same

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of consultation; Use of music; Engaging the mind and heart

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 40 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Chart paper and markers
- Copies of Resource Page 71, Come Ye Children, One and All
- Copies of Resource Page 72, Song of the Prophets
- Copies of Resource Page 73, Love Is Light

**Advance Preparation:** Write the following quotation on chart paper and post in the classroom:

This is the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future. Let him that seeketh, attain it; and as to him that hath refused to seek it—verily, God is Self-Sufficient, above any need of His creatures.

*Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 136*

1. Invite selected students to read aloud the posted quotation at least twice.
2. Encourage them to brainstorm a list of factual information that affirms the quotation.
3. Record their responses on chart paper.
4. Distribute copies of Resource Pages 71–3 and teach the songs “Love is Light,” “Song of the Prophets,” and “Come Ye Children, One and All.”
5. As a class, develop three more stanzas for “Come Ye Children, One and All” :a stanza dedicated to Zoroaster and Krishna, a stanza dedicated to Muhammad and the Buddha, and a stanza dedicated to the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh.
6. Add these additional stanzas to the song and enjoy singing about the Manifestations of God.



ACTIVITY: THE CHANGELESS FAITH OF GOD

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know from the Bahá'í writings that the foundation of all divinely revealed religions is essentially the same

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of consultation; Use of memorization; Use of the arts; Engaging the mind and heart

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

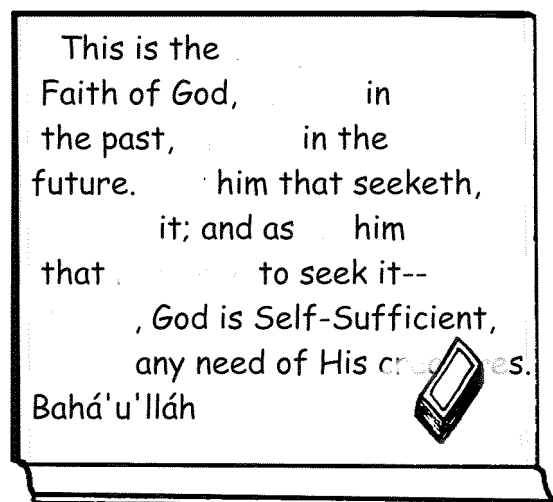
- Copies of Resource Page 74
- Chalkboard and chalk or whiteboard and markers
- Art supplies

**Advance Preparation:** Write the following quotation on the chalkboard, leaving room for simple drawings between the lines of text:

This is the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future. Let him that seeketh, attain it; and as to him that hath refused to seek it—verily, God is Self-Sufficient, above any need of His creatures.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 136

1. Invite three students to read aloud the quotation, recalling that they may have read the quotation before.
2. Encourage volunteers to share their understandings of the quotation.
3. Memorize the quotation by following these steps:
  - Add simple line drawings to represent key words.
  - As a class, read the quotation aloud over and over.
  - Gradually erase every 4<sup>th</sup> word while continuing to recite the words.
  - After all the words have been erased, the quotation should be memorized.
  - Encourage individuals to recite the memorized quotation if they wish.
4. Provide all students with a copy of Resource Page 74 and invite them to beautify or illuminate the quotation.
5. Encourage the students to think of a person to whom they could offer this illuminated quotation as a gift before the next class.
6. Remember to invite them to share the responses to their gifts at the next class.



**ACTIVITY: THE HOLY BOOKS**

**KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE:** To know that we should read the Holy Books and scriptures of the divinely revealed religions of the world to understand their essential oneness

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of manipulatives; Use of consultation; Use of memorization; Use of recitation, Use of games, Engaging the mind and heart

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Chart paper or chalk board
- Copies of Resource Page 75
- Copies of the Holy Books of several religions, if available
- Index cards, approximately 16 cards for every 2 students

**Advance preparation:** Prepare (or have your students prepare) Holy Books matching cards. Write the name of the Holy Book on one card and the name of the religion and its Manifestation on another card. Create additional cards if needed to represent additional religions common in your region. Prepare one set of cards for every two students in your class.

Torah (“Law”) or Pentateuch (first five books of the Bible)—Judaism: Moses

Vedas (“Knowledge”) and Bhagavad-Gita (Song of the Lord)—Hinduism: Krishna

Zend-Avesta (“Commentaries of Knowledge”)—Zoroastrianism: Zoroaster

Tripitakas (“Three Baskets”)—Buddhism: Gautama Buddha

Bible: New Testament—Christianity: Jesus Christ

Qur’án (“Recitation”)—Islam: Muhammad

Bayán (“Exposition”)—The Bábi Faith: The Báb

Kitáb-i-Aqdas (“Most Holy Book”)—The Bahá'í Faith: Bahá'u'lláh

1. Remind the students that the Manifestations of God bring Messages from God to humanity. These sacred messages are sometimes given orally and sometimes written. When a Message is written down, it becomes the Holy Book for that religion.
2. Invite the students to recall the names of some of the Holy Books. List these on chart paper. After the students have completed their list, you may add additional Books as listed above.
3. Reverently show copies of as many of these Holy Books as available. Invite the students to carefully touch these Books and look through them.
4. Explain that these Books teach the oneness of essential spiritual truth although it is described in different ways at different times.
5. Read aloud several quotations from Resource Page 75 and invite the students to guess from which Book each one comes.
6. Distribute copies of Resource Page 75 and invite the students to read the passages aloud, this time identifying the name of each religion and Holy Book.
7. Explain that we show respect for the Religion of God when we know the names of the religions, the names of the Holy Books, and the names of the Manifestations of God. Distribute one set of Holy Books matching cards for every two students.



8. Encourage the students to place all the cards face down. Alternately, each student turns two cards face up and looks for a match. If the Holy Book and name of the religion match, this set is removed from play. If not, the other student takes a turn. The students take turns looking for matches until both students are successful matching Holy Books with the names of the corresponding religions.

**Extended Study:**

Encourage each student to memorize one of the passages from Resource Page 75 before the next class. Invite them to share these memorized passages at the beginning of the next class and to include recitation of these passages in an upcoming devotional meeting.

**ACTIVITY: RELIGIOUS SCRIPTURES—A COMMON THREAD**

**WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand from studying and reflecting on the scriptures of the world’s religions how love of God and love for others is the foundation of their teachings

**SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To discern the common threads of eternal teachings taught by all the Manifestations of God

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of reflection; Use of reasoning; Use of the arts; Direct use of the Bahá’í sacred writings

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- Copies of Resource Page 76
- One or more magnets
- Several small iron or steel objects
- Drawing paper
- Pens, pencils, and/or charcoal

1. Distribute copies of Resource Page 76. Encourage the students to read the quotations silently and discover the theme of these quotations.
2. Invite volunteers to share their understandings of this theme.
3. Acknowledge all responses and affirm that the theme is love, explaining that God’s love is the foundation of all religions and that our response to this love is to love Him and love one another.
4. Using magnets, demonstrate the power of attraction—the power of love. Invite students to experiment with these magnets to create additional demonstrations of the power of love.
5. Explain that love is a common thread that runs through all religions. Invite them to reflect on their study of the Manifestations of God and the religions of God. Discuss: What are some other themes of the “changeless Faith of God” taught by all the Manifestations of God?
6. Invite the students to select one of the quotations on Resource Page 76 to copy in their best handwriting on clean paper. Encourage the students to select different quotations, so that all the quotations are selected.

**Activity continues on next page** ➞

**TOPIC: THE ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION OF ALL RELIGIONS**

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7. After they have carefully written the words, encourage the students to illuminate or beautify the quotation, using the pens, pencils, or charcoal. As these pages will be reproduced, the design should be simple, beautiful, and reproducible. Encourage them to express the beauty of the teachings of God in their designs.
8. Collect these pages to be reproduced. They will be assembled into a gift book in the next activity.

**ACTIVITY: MAKING A GIFT BOOK**

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To articulate learning about the essential oneness of religion

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of the Bahá'í sacred writings; Education directed towards God; Engage the mind and heart; Use of art

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

**Materials Needed:**

- One or more sets of quotations for each student, reproduced from the previous activity
- Card stock or heavy paper to use as book covers
- Yarn, ribbon, or cord to bind the book
- Hole punch
- Art supplies

1. Distribute copies of the quotation pages to the students, explaining that the class will create gift books from these quotations.
2. Invite the students to read through the quotations and discuss the meaning of each one. Encourage them to share examples of the ways that people show their love for God and for humanity.
3. Explain that the gift of these books will be one way that we can show our love for God and for humanity. Discuss: Shall we give these gifts individually? Do we wish to give them during an upcoming devotional gathering, service project, or other occasion?
4. After creating the gift plan, invite the students to assemble the gift books, perhaps adding color to some of the quotation pages.
5. Encourage them to create beautiful covers for these books, add a title such as “Love Is Light” to the book cover, punch holes, and bind the book with ribbon, cord, or yarn.
6. Remind students that when giving the gift they may also share their reflections about the oneness of religion.

**ACTIVITY: WORLD RELIGION DAY OR DEVOTIONAL GATHERING**

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To articulate learning about the essential oneness of religion

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of sacred writings; Use of consultation, Use of music; Engage the mind and heart; Engaging in service and teaching

**SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY:** 60 MIN. PLUS DEVOTIONAL GATHERING

**Materials Needed:**

- Chart paper and markers
- Paper and pencils
- Art supplies
- Music, recorded or sung
- Musical instruments or CD player, if available

1. Explain to students that the class period will be used to plan a World Religion Day celebration or devotional meeting.
2. Brainstorm the tasks involved, considering such aspects as the program, room arrangements and clean up, invitations, location, time, place, etc.
3. Discuss: How will we build participation from the community at large? Do we want to invite honored guests from several religions? How will we show love, respect, and hospitality to our guests? List the students' responses. As a class, create an overall plan for this gathering.
4. Invite volunteers to work on different elements of the celebration.
5. Encourage the students to work in small groups to develop their plans and then share them with the whole group for feedback and support.
6. Encourage the program planners to involve all the students in the class in the presentation if possible. Encourage them to include music and to clearly express the principle of the oneness of religion. Rehearse the program or parts of the program, if desired.
7. Discuss the next steps to be completed before the event.
8. Carry out the World Religion Day celebration or devotional gathering.
9. After this celebration, encourage the class to identify successful elements to build on in the next event.

**ACTIVITY: THE SERVICE PROJECT**

**ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE:** To demonstrate understanding of the oneness of religion in one's daily interactions with members of other faiths

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Use of consultation; Use of travel; Service to humanity; Education directed towards God

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 20 MIN. PLUS COMMUNITY SERVICE

**Materials Needed:**

- List of community service options (consider using the booklet created in the activity "Identifying Faith-Based Service," p. 47 of this Lesson Planning Guide)
- Chart paper and markers
- Refreshments
- Gift quotation cards, if desired
- Transportation
- Tools or other resources necessary to complete selected project

**Advance Preparation:** Write the following quotation on chart paper and display it in the classroom:

Service to humanity is service to God.

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 8*

1. Invite the students to read aloud this short quotation. Discuss: How does service to others show our love for God?
2. Memorize this quotation.
3. Share the list of community service options. As a class, consult about these options and select a specific service to offer humanity. Discuss: Do we want to begin a long-term project? Do we prefer to select a project that can be completed in one day? Do we want to involve other community members in this service? What do we need to do to be ready to carry out this service? How can our attitudes, words, and actions make this service a true service to God, the Creator of us all?
4. Once a project has been selected, implement the class's plans.
5. Once the project is completed, celebrate with refreshments. Consider presenting all participants with a quotation beautifully printed on a nice card to acknowledge their service.

Resource Pages

Come Ye Children, One and All

12<sup>th</sup> C. Plain Chant  
Words: Marion Wilcox, Margaret Jensen  
& Laretta Haynes

Joyously

The musical score is written for piano accompaniment in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). It consists of three systems of music. The first system contains the first line of lyrics: 'Come ye chil - dren, one and all, Lis - ten to His'. The second system contains the second line: 'joy - ous call. Sing His prai - ses! Sing His prai - ses!'. The third system contains the third line: 'Bles - sed Lord, Ba - há - 'u' - lláh!'. The piano part features a simple harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines in both hands.

2. Sing His praises every day.  
Love your Lord in every way.  
Sing His praises, sing His praises,  
Blessed Lord, Bahá'u'lláh!
3. Boys and girls in all the lands,  
Raise your voices, clap your hands.  
Sing His praises, sing His praises,  
Blessed Lord, Bahá'u'lláh!
4. Moses came and Jesus, too.  
They each came with truth for you.  
Sing His praises, sing His praises,  
Blessed Lord, Bahá'u'lláh!
5. God created everything.  
Let our joyous praises ring.  
Sing His praises, sing His praises,  
Blessed Lord, Bahá'u'lláh!

reprinted from *Sing a New Song: Bahá'í Songs for Children*, p. 17  
Bahá'í Publishing Trust, United States. 1948, 1968

TOPIC: THE ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION OF ALL RELIGIONS

Song of the Prophets

Text and Music: Jack Lenz, ©1982

Capo 1st Fret

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of seven staves of music. Each staff includes a guitar chord diagram above the notes. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score includes a double bar line with repeat dots and a 'Fine' marking. The final instruction is 'D.C. al Fine'.

Chord diagrams shown: E (F), B (C), A (Bb), E (F), Bm (Cm), A (Bb), E (F), A/F# (Bb/G), B (C), A (Bb), B (C), E (F), E (F), A (Bb), B (C), E (F), A (Bb), B (C), B/C (C/C#), C#m (4fr. Dm), C#m/C (4fr. Dm/C#), C#m/B (4fr. Dm/C), C#m/A (4fr. Dm/Bb), A (Bb), A/G# (Bb/A), A/F# (Bb/G), A/E (Bb/F), B (C).

Lyrics:  
 No - ah, A - bra - ham, Krish - na\_\_\_, Mo - ses, Zo - ro - as - ter,  
 Boud - dha\_\_\_, Je - sus Christ and Mo - ham - med\_\_\_, the  
 Báb and Ba - há - 'u' - lláh. They are the waves of\_\_\_ one\_  
 \_\_\_ sea\_ ; They are the birds of\_\_\_ one\_\_\_ tree\_, sing - ing one song\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_, They are the lamps of one Light. Come and be their  
 lo - vers, be lo\_\_\_ vers, be lo\_\_\_ vers, be lo\_\_\_ vers of Light\_\_\_.

## LOVE IS LIGHT


Words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Music by Leah Barber and Joy Billington

guitar chords C

LOVE, LOVE, LOVE IS LIGHT — NO  
MATTER IN WHAT A — BODE IT DWELLETH  
HATE, HATE, HATE IS DARKNESS NO  
MATTER WHERE IT MAY MAKE ITS NEST.

reprinted from *Brilliant Star*, March/April 1990



*This is the changeless  
Faith of God,  
eternal in the past,  
eternal in the future.  
Let him that seeketh, attain it;  
and as to him that hath  
refused to seek it—  
verily, God is Self-Sufficient,  
above any need of His creatures.*

*Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 136*



## The Holy Books

### **Zoroastrianism**

This do I ask, O Lord, reveal unto me the truth!  
Who is the first begetter, father of the Cosmic Law?  
Who assigned orbit to the sun and the stars?  
Who causes the moon to wax and again to wane?  
Who other than thee?  
Avestra, Yasna 44.3-5

### **Hinduism**

Because thou art greatly loved by Me, therefore I shall tell thee what is good for thee.  
Bhagavad Gita 18.64

### **Buddhism**

Trust in the Lord and He will guide you aright. One who has this trust need fear nothing.  
He can be at perfect peace and happiness for he will be guided aright.  
Mahavagga 8

### **Judaism**

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make straight your paths.  
Proverbs 3.5-6

### **Christianity**

As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you; abide in My love.  
John 15.8

### **Islam**

We indeed created man; and We know what his soul whispers within him, and We are nearer to him than the jugular vein.  
Qur'an 50.16

### **Bahá'í Faith**

O Son of Being! Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My love can in no wise reach thee. Know this, O servant.  
Hidden Words, Arabic no. 5

## Religious Scriptures—A Common Thread

### Indigenous Americas

It makes no difference as to the name of the God, since love is the real God of all in the world. traditional Apache wisdom

### Hinduism

Only by love can men see me, and know me, and come unto me.  
Bhagavad Gita 11.54

### Buddhism

Conquer anger by love. . . .  
Dhammapada 17

### Judaism

I love them that love me; and those that seek me earnestly shall find me.  
Proverbs 8:17

### Christianity

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.  
1 John 4:7

### Islam

But love will the God of Mercy vouchsafe to those who believe and do the things that be right.  
Qur'an 19:90

### Sikhism

Sing, and listen, and let your mind be filled with love.  
Shri Guru Granth Sahib, Section 1—Jup

### Taoism

In the Way of Heaven, there is no partiality of love; it is always on the side of the good man.  
Tao Te Ching 79

### Bahá'í Faith

The greatest bestowal of God is love. Love is the source of all the bestowals of God. Until love takes possession of the heart, no other divine bounty can be revealed in it. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 15

**GOAL: TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGION AS THE GREATEST MEANS FOR UNITY**  
**TOPIC: THE ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION OF ALL RELIGIONS**

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**LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

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**Stories and Articles:**

*Brilliant Star*, "Shalton's Confirmation" JA 92  
"The Holy Book of God" SE 93  
"Sun Returns to Nightland" JF 95  
"Prayer Around the World" SO 98  
"Manifestations" MJ 97  
"What Do Bahá'is Believe?" JF 02  
"God's Messengers" ND 02  
Fletcher, Peggy, *A World of Faith*  
Hanson, Warren, *The Next Place*  
*Herald of the South*, Mar 1993, "Towards Greater Religious Tolerance"  
Universal House of Justice, *Message to the World's Religious Leaders*  
Weinberg, Arthur, *The Refuge and the Cave*  
Wood, Douglas, *Old Turtle*

**Worksheets and Coloring Pages:**

*Brilliant Star*, "Consort with the Followers . . ." SO 02  
*The Light of a Good Character*, p. 16  
Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh*

**Activities:**

*Brilliant Star*, "Stars! Stars! Stars!" JA 96

**Music:**

Grover, Dick, *Rise Up and Sing*, "The Spirit's the Same"  
Lenz, Cameron and Sheper, *We are Bahá'ís*, "Song of the Prophets"  
Price, Tom, *Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, Vol. 1*, "God Is One"  
Vander Stelt, Ruth, *O Be Joyful! A Bahá'í Songbook*, "God Is One"

**Games:**

*Brilliant Star*, "Bahá'í Dominoes" JA 92

**Drama:**

Furutan, A., *Bahá'í Education for Children, Book 2*, "Oneness of Religion," p. 16

**Other favorite resources:**

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Promulgation of Universal Peace*, pp. 62-3, 97-8, 168-9, 361, 365-6, 393-4, 403-5  
‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Some Answered Questions*, pp. 57-8, 74-7, 160-1, 164-6  
Forward, Martin, *Ultimate Visions: Reflections on the World's Religions*  
Motlagh, Hushidar, *One God Many Faiths: One Garden Many Flowers*  
*The Peace Bible*  
Rohani, M.K., *Accents of God*  
Website: <http://buckconner.tripod.com/indians.htm#WISDOM>

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