The Covenant



Level Two

TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT BETWEEN THE MANIFESTATION AND HIS FOLLOWERS TO ACCEPT THE NEXT MANIFESTATION IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC: HOPE, EAGERNESS, JOY

Abraham, on Him be Peace, made a covenant concerning Moses and gave the glad-tidings of His coming. Moses made a covenant concerning the promised Christ, and announced the good news of His advent to the world. Christ made a covenant concerning the Paraclete and gave the tidings of His coming. The Prophet Muhammad made a covenant concerning the Báb, and the Báb was the One promised by Muhammad, for Muhammad gave the tidings of His coming. The Báb made a covenant concerning the Blessed Beauty, Bahá'u'lláh, and gave the glad-tidings of His coming for the Blessed Beauty was the One promised by the Báb.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Compilation of Compilations, vol. 1, p. 114

In this day there is nothing more important than the instruction and study of clear proofs and convincing, heavenly arguments, for therein lie the source of life and the path of salvation.

> 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in The Importance of Deepening our Knowledge and Understanding of the Faith, p. 9, no. 31

Learning Objectives and Suggested Activities

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

• To know that the Báb prepared the way for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Teach the students a song about the Báb.
- Invite students to draw a picture or make a crayon rubbing of a gate, symbolizing the Báb's role in preparing the way for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Memorize quotations from the Bahá'í writings that refer to the Báb's Station and His references to the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Memorize a short piece of the Báb's writings about the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Use art and drama to demonstrate the analogy of spring showers preparing the way for flowers, just as the Báb and all the early martyrs prepared the way for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.

WISDOM OBJECTIVES

- To understand the Dispensation of the Báb as a transition period which brought the ancient Covenant from the Cycle of Prophecy to the Cycle of Fulfillment
- To understand the meaning of the Báb's title, "the Gate," in relation to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh
- To appreciate the effectiveness of the Báb's Covenant in preparing His followers to recognize Bahá'u'lláh

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Look up the meanings of prophecy and fulfillment as they apply to the Cycle of Prophecy and the Cycle of Fulfillment.
- Using colorful construction paper or other art paper, create circles representing the Cycles of Prophecy and Fulfillment and a small loop that connects the two circles to represent the Báb.
- As a class, prepare a list of all the places to which a gate might lead. Note that it is usually special places which have a fence and gate around them. Relate this to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Read stories about the Báb's followers who recognize that Bahá'u'lláh is the One foretold by the Báb.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

• To perceive the importance and significance of the Covenant of the Báb to the manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Invite students to share about times when they had to get ready for something special or new, and who helped them to prepare.
 Compare this to the Báb's role in helping us prepare for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Provide opportunity for the students to reflect on how we can continue to use the writings of the Báb to better prepare ourselves for understanding what
- Bahá'u'lláh wants us to know. Invite the students to prepare themselves for a special message from Bahá'u'lláh; then bring to the students a copy of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. Share together passages from Bahá'u'lláh.
- Discuss how it felt to anticipate and how important the preparations were.

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

• To explain the unique position of the Báb between the Cycle of Prophecy and the Cycle of Fulfillment

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Using the drawing or rubbing of the gate, provide opportunities for the students to explain the Báb's role in preparing mankind for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Share a song about the Báb with other members of the community.
- Prepare and perform a drama or mime that illustrates the ending of the Cycle of Prophecy and the beginning of the Cycle of Fulfillment.

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY 1: THE BÁB'S ROLE WITHIN THE GREATER COVENANT

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know that the Báb prepared the way for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh **WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the Dispensation of the Báb as the transition period which brought the ancient Covenant from the Cycle of Prophecy to the Cycle of Fulfillment

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of nature; Use of the arts

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Musical instruments, preferably horns, which could be party horns, kazoos, etc., or students could use their voices
 as trumpets
- Copy of Resource Page 26
- · Colored paper, scissors, glue, and tape or string
- Twigs
- Lumps of clay

- Pot with soil
- Whole fruit with seeds
- Table knife

Advance Preparation:

Select five interesting twigs to represent fruit trees that grow in your area. Select several pieces of fruit with seeds, ideally fruit that grows in your area. In advance remove five seeds from a piece of fruit. Leave other pieces of fruit whole. You may also consider using ears of corn and corn stalks or other plants to represent the fruit and tree, depending on the fruits of your region.

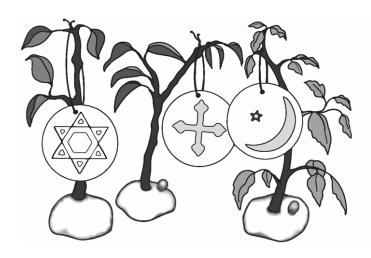
Photocopy the symbols on Resource Page 26. Color them, cut them out, and glue them to circles of colored paper to represent fruit. Attach one seed from your selected fruit to each paper "fruit." Tape or tie each symbol to one of the twigs. Place each twig in a ball of clay or use other means to make it able to stand. Keep the twigs hidden until needed for the demonstration. You will display them one at a time as you read the quotation on Resource Page 25. Practice this demonstration before class.

You may reuse the clay or twigs for Activity 3.

- 1. Welcome students with warmth and enthusiasm! Explain how happy you are to see them and that you knew they would come, because in a certain sense the day of Bahá'í class is a "promised" day. Encourage students to introduce themselves and each share one positive quality (such as kindness, courtesy, friendliness, truthfulness, etc.) that they would like to offer the class. Acknowledge all.
- 2. Encourage students to reflect on other promises in their lives: Does a grandparent or other special person promise to visit at certain times? Do parents or other caregivers promise to be home at certain times? Does the principal of a school promise that there will be a teacher for every class? How do they feel when these promises are kept?

- 3. Exclaim with excited anticipation that God also keeps His promises: The Promised One has come!
- 4. Organize the class into 2 groups:
 - Invite some students to role-play the people of the world who are as fast asleep, unaware that this is the Promised Day of God. Encourage the sleepers to listen carefully to the words of the Báb and decide when to arise. Encourage them to remember these words.
 - Invite other students, using musical instruments or their voices, to "summon" those who sleep to this new Day. Encourage summoners to blow their horns briefly during each pause as you read the Báb's announcement.

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB





- 5. Read aloud, dramatically, the passage from Selections from the writings of the Báb on Resource Page 24. Pause as indicated for the summoners to blow their horns and awaken the sleepers. Invite the sleepers to share the words of the Báb that inspired them to arise.
- 6. Repeat this activity, so that the sleepers and the summoners experience both roles.
- 7. Then collect the instruments and gather the class as a whole group. Invite students to describe the Báb's statements in their own words. Reread the quotation, without horns and sleepers.
- 8. Explain that the Báb proclaimed the promised Day of God, the time of fulfillment for the promises of all the religions of the past. Briefly discuss: What are some of the promises that God has made about this time of fulfillment? What do we think Jesus Christ meant in His prayer, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"? What do we think the Báb meant when He said that these are "the days of the advent of divine justice"? Acknowledge all responses.
- Explain that the Báb also called this Promised Day the Day of Resurrection. Briefly discuss: What is the meaning of the word "resurrection"?¹

- 10. Carry out a demonstration using the materials described in Advance Preparation. Explain that the Báb's description of the Day of Resurrection begins by recalling the time of Moses. Slowly and carefully read the first paragraph of the quotation on Resource Page 25. As you read, stand the twig with fruit labeled "Moses" where students can see it. As you complete the paragraph, remove the seed from the paper, then carefully move the twig to a side location.
- 11. Read the second paragraph. As you read, bring out the twig with fruit labeled "Jesus Christ" and place the seed from the first twig in the clay of the second twig. Then place this second twig in an upright position. As you finish reading the second paragraph, remove the seed, and then move second twig to the side. Place this second seed in the clay holding the third twig labeled "Muhammad," and then place that twig in an upright position.

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¹ Resurrection: returning to life, rebirth, coming back into practice

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

- 12. Read the third paragraph, then remove the third seed and place it in the clay holding the twig labeled "The Báb" as you move the third twig to the side. After completing the fourth paragraph, remove the seed from the "fruit" labeled "The Báb" but do not remove that twig. Place that seed in the clay holding the twig labeled "Bahá'u'lláh" and read the final paragraph with both of these two twigs in a central position.
- 13. As you complete the quotation, retain the twigs labeled "The Báb" and "Bahá'u'lláh." Explain that all of the Prophets of the past anticipated this Promised Day, this Day of Fulfillment, when we are blessed with Twin Manifestations of God. Display luscious whole fruit. Cut the fruit to show its seeds. Explain that each Manifestation of God brings the pure teachings of God that are like the seeds for a new civilization. Plant some of the seeds in the pot of soil as you explain that in the early days of the Manifestations there are few believers. As the seeds grow into trees, the trees produce wonderful fruit.
- 14. Serve the fruit to the students as you discuss: Jesus Christ said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." What are some of the "fruits" of true religion? What do we think it means when the Bahá'u'lláh says, "This is the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future"? How can this be the "changeless Faith of God" and also the promised Day of God? What are some of the ways that we can show the "fruits" of our love for God in this Promised Day?

- 15. Optional step: If your class has new students or is beginning a new term, discuss the ways that the class can show the fruit of faith while gathered each week in Bahá'í class. Invite students to create a list of classroom standards for the class. Record this list on chart paper. Invite all students to discuss and agree to these standards. Keep this chart in the classroom and refer to it during future classes as desired.
- 16. Encourage all students to select one action—one fruit of their love for God in this Promised Day—to complete at home or at school over the coming week. Encourage them to imagine themselves successfully completing this action. Invite them to share their plans in the whole group. Acknowledge all and conclude the activity with prayers.



² Matthew 7:20

³ Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, paragraph 182

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

ACTIVITY 2: THE GREATNESS OF THIS REVELATION

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know that the Báb prepared the way for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive the importance and significance of the Covenant of the Báb to the manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of the arts; Use of independent investigation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of Resource Page 27
- Highlighter pens
- Chart paper and markers
- Sheet of chart paper or newsprint
- Chalk board, butcher paper, or bed sheet
- Magazine pictures of nature, geometric designs, etc.
- Scissors, glue sticks, pencils, tape
- Chalk and playground area (optional)

Advance Preparation:

Cut the chart paper or newsprint in half vertically to make a sheet of paper approximately 15 x 36 inches. Identify a chalkboard, butcher paper, or sheets of newsprint taped together to have a surface for sketching the very large hand described in step 7 below. Alternatively, consider using a bed sheet to fold into a hand large enough for the ring.

- 1. Welcome students. Invite them to share the "fruit" of their efforts to show their love of God through action. Acknowledge all. Briefly discuss: What are some good deeds that we've seen in others since the last class? Acknowledge
- Provide students with copies of Resource Page 27. Slowly and carefully read aloud the quotations on the Resource Page, in which Shoghi Effendi describes the Báb's exalted station as a Manifestation of God. As you read encourage students to mark phrases that describe the greatness of the Báb's Revelation. Invite students to share the phrases they marked. Record these phrases on chart paper.
- 3. Invite students to work together to create a collage using magazine pictures of nature to represent these statements about the Báb's Station.
- 4. Then encourage students to incorporate the phrases they highlighted into the artwork.

- 5. Display the completed collage where all can appreciate it. Play quiet background music as you encourage students to reflect on the greatness of the Báb's Revelation as they view the words and images on the collage. Encourage them to continue these reflections as they listen to you read aloud the following words of the Blessed Báb:
 - ... The Point of the Bayán Himself [the Báb] hath believed in Him Whom God shall make manifest [Bahá'u'lláh], before all things were created. Therein, verily, do I glory before all who are in the kingdom of heaven and earth . . . For all that hath been exalted in the Bayán [the Báb's Holy Book] is but as a ring upon My hand, and I Myself am, verily, but a ring upon the hand of Him Whom God shall make manifest—glorified be His mention! He turneth it as He pleaseth, for whatsoever He pleaseth, and through whatsoever He pleaseth. He, verily, is the Help in Peril, the Most High.

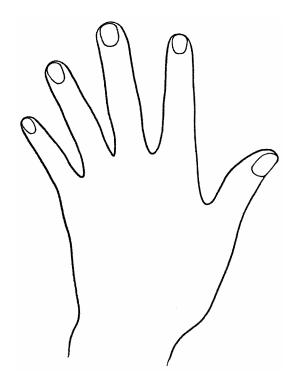
The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 168

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TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

- Expressively read aloud the quotation a second time.
- 6. Invite students to help you imagine those relationships by carefully rolling their collage into a large ring and taping it closed. Briefly discuss:
 - If this collage that represents "all that hath been exalted in the Bayán" were a ring upon someone's hand, how large would that hand be?
- 7. Sketch the shape of a hand large enough to have fingers to wear the ring-collage on the chalk board, butcher paper, or many sheet of newsprint taped together. Alternatively, fold a bed sheet into a "hand" of the appropriate size.
- 8. Then encourage students to imagine the size of a person with a hand of this size! Consider pacing out the size of such a person, or sketching an enormous human figure with chalk on the playground, with the hand appropriately placed.



- 9. Imagine the next step: What if that imaginary person were simply a ring upon the hand of someone else, as the Báb compares Himself to Bahá'u'lláh? Pace off or choose visual landmarks to approximate the proportions of such an imaginary person. Briefly discuss: Is a Manifestation of God really a very, very large person or is it the teachings of God that are so large? Why do we think the Báb might have chosen this analogy?
- 10. Encourage students to recall the collage they created, inspired by the greatness of the Báb's Revelation. Read again the phrases that extol the Station of the Báb. Then discuss: How does the Báb teach us about the relationship between the Cycle of Prophecy and the Cycle of Fulfillment? How does He teach us to love Bahá'u'lláh?
- 11. Invite students to silently reflect: How can we help our friends learn about this great Day of God? Encourage students to nod their head when they have an idea. After all students have an idea to share, encourage them to share their ideas with each other in pairs. Then invite them to share their ideas in the whole group. Record student ideas on chart paper.
- 12. Request that students select one idea from their list to carry into action over the coming week. Encourage them also to invite new friends to join them in Bahá'í class. Conclude the activity with prayers.

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

ACTIVITY 3: HIM WHOM GOD SHALL MAKE MANIFEST

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know that the Báb prepared the way for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh **WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To appreciate the power of the Covenant of the Báb in preparing His followers to recognize Bahá'u'lláh

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive the importance and significance of the Covenant of the Báb to the manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Engage the mind and heart; Use of reasoning; Use of peer teaching; Use of science; Use of memorization; Involve service and teaching

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

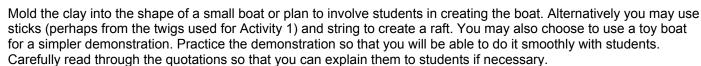
- Copy of Resource Pages 28-29
- Red clay, if possible, or other clay (*not* play dough)
- · Paper clips
- Bowl or basin of water
- · Student journals or plain paper

Advance Preparation:

Make a photocopy of Resource Pages 28–29. Cut out each Promise and its Fulfillment, with a jagged line between them, so that each Promise can be matched with its Fulfillment. Note that the Promise statements about "The Name of Bahá'u'lláh" may be interchanged with their Fulfillment statements. Fold or roll these small papers and distribute them around the classroom so that students will be able to

search and find them. Consider tying them with ribbons to accentuate their importance.

If your class is large, make more than one copy of Resource Pages 28–29 so that there will be enough paper for all students to find at least one.



- 1. Welcome students. Invite them to share their efforts to serve the people around them and to tell people about this Promised Day of God. Acknowledge all. Briefly discuss: How can we encourage each other as we strive to do our part in this Day of God?
- 2. Remind students that a covenant is a promise in which each person agrees to do certain things. In the religious sense, the Covenant is a promise from God or the Manifestation of God to guide and protect humanity. Our part of the Covenant is to recognize the Manifestation of God and follow His teachings.

Remind students that each Manifestation of God prepares the way for His followers to recognize the next Manifestation of God, so that we're never without God's guidance. Explain that the Covenant of the Báb was very, very strong—so strong that 99% of Bábís became Bahá'ís within about 2 or 3 years after Bahá'u'lláh revealed Himself as "Him Whom God shall make manifest." Briefly discuss: How do we think the Báb might have done this?

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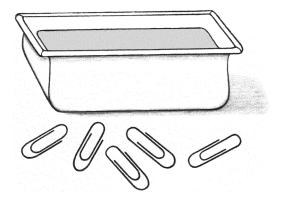
—The Covenant

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¹ Adib Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, vol. 2, p. 75

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

- 3. Listen carefully to students' responses. Then invite them to search and find the clues on small pieces of paper hidden throughout the room. As we match these clues with the actions that really happened, we will better understand how the Báb prepared His followers to recognize Bahá'u'lláh. Some of these papers show the Báb's promises about "Him Whom God shall make manifest." Other papers show how these promises are fulfilled. Encourage students to search and then to work together to match the Báb's promises with the facts that fulfill those promises.
- 4. After students have found and matched their sets of paper, invite volunteers to read the papers aloud in the whole group. Discuss the meaning of these promises and their fulfillment to assure that all understand how Bahá'u'lláh fulfills the promises of the Báb.
- 5. In the whole group, remind students that human happiness comes from fulfilling our part of the covenant—to recognize the Manifestation of God and obey His teachings. Briefly discuss: What are some examples of times when we can tell that our obedience to the teachings of God makes us happy? Acknowledge all.



- Reaffirm the words of the Báb that recognizing the Manifestation of God for this age and following His teachings provide us with the source of happiness. Display the basin of water. Explain that we can compare the journey of life to crossing the water from one side of the basin to another. Show the paper clips. Place them in the water as if you imagine they could float. Naturally they will sink. Explain that just as these paper clips need some means of support to get from one side of the basin to the next, we need the guidance of the Manifestation of God to make the journey of our lives. Suggest that the clay could be shaped into a boat or an ark to carry the paper clips. If you are using the same clay (or twigs) from Activity 1 that represented the teachings of God from one age to the next, you may point out that the writings of the Bahá'í Faith use many metaphors to explain these important concepts—another example of unity in diversity!
- 7. Carefully read aloud twice the following words of the Báb.
 - "... God hath provided Arks of ruby, tender, crimson-colored, wherein none shall sail but the people of Bahá, by the leave of God, the Most Exalted; and verily He is the All-Glorious, the All-Wise."

The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 58

8. Explain that the people of Bahá are the people who follow Bahá'u'lláh. Explain that the word "ark" has two meanings. In the Bible, the ark is the ship that God told Noah to build to protect human, animal, and plant life during the great flood. Also in the Bible, the Ark of the Covenant is the chest or box built during Moses's time to hold the Tablets of the Law of God. The Ark is a symbol of the Covenant of God and the Laws of God in every age. Briefly discuss: What are some of life's hazards that could prevent us from making our life journey safely?

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

- 9. Invite students to mold the boat and then to use the paper clips to hold the matched papers together. Roll or fold the paper around the paper clips so that they can be floated in your "Ark." Note that when we recognize Bahá'u'lláh as the Manifestation of God for this age and follow His teachings, we enter the Ark of salvation—safety from the many tests and difficulties of the world. When we help other people recognize Bahá'u'lláh and follow His teachings, we help make the world a better place. Read the quotation again. Carefully place the paper clips—representing the Bábís that recognized Bahá'u'lláh and also representing us!—in the ark and guide it safely across the water. Applaud all!
- 10. Encourage students to recall one important way that Bahá'u'lláh fulfills the promises of the Báb and then to share these important points in pairs. Invite students to think of another way that Bahá'u'lláh fulfills the Báb's promises and to once again share these points in pairs. Briefly discuss: Why is it important for each one of us to be able to tell others about the way that Bahá'u'lláh fulfills the promises of the Báb?

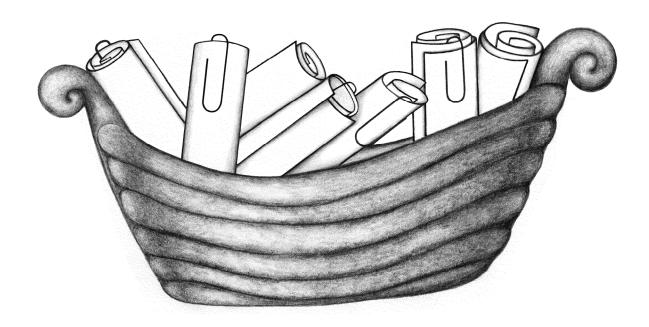
11. Explain that Bahá'u'lláh says:

To assist Me is to teach My Cause.

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 196

Explain that one of the ways that we're faithful to the Covenant is to teach the Cause of God. Encourage students to repeat this short sentence again and again until all have memorized it. Applaud all!

12. Encourage students to tell at least one other person about the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh before the next class. Encourage them also to invite a new person to join this class. Do they want to promise themselves to do so? What other promises would students like to make to themselves? Provide students with journals or plain paper and encourage them to write or draw their promises to themselves. Conclude the activity with prayers for teaching, firmness in the Covenant, and assistance.



TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

ACTIVITY 4: THE GATE TO HIM WHOM GOD SHALL MAKE MANIFEST

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know that the Báb prepared the way for the coming of Bahá'u'lláh **WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand the meaning of the Báb's title, "the Gate," in relation to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive the importance and significance of the Covenant of the Báb to the manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of stories; Use of the arts; Use of reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of Resource Page 30
- Copies of Resource Pages 31–32 on cardstock or heavy paper, or plan to glue these pages to lightweight cardboard (such as from cereal boxes)
- Core Curriculum storybooks: The Báb, vol. 2, or Bahá'u'lláh, vol. 2, if available
- Art materials such as markers, colored pencils, glitter, aluminum foil, gold foil paper, ribbon, cinnamon sticks, straight twigs, dried flowers, etc.
- Glue, double-sided tape, and/or craft glue
- Scissors

Advance Preparation:

Select one or more of the following stories from the Core Curriculum storybooks to read aloud to the students: Bahá'u'lláh, vol. 2

- "The Mysterious Visit," pp. 53–60
- "Sacred Moments on Grandpa's Lap," pp. 47–51

The Báb, vol. 2

- "On the Road to Tihran," pp. 57-60
- "The Twice-Blessed Scribe," pp. 45-45

Create a sample gate so students can see the structure of the gate and that it is possible to look through the gate to see the beauty of the Báb's words about Bahá'u'lláh. If you use cinnamon sticks or twigs to form the gate, you will need hot glue or strong craft glue and you may need to counter-balance the weight of the gate by also gluing one or more cinnamon sticks or twigs at the base of the back of Resource page 31. If you use aluminum foil or gold foil paper to cover the bars of the gate, this paper may be carefully scored with a pencil to add additional ornamentation to the gate. Use tape, glue, ribbon, or string to connect Resource Pages 31 and 32, making a hinge for the gate.

1. Warmly welcome new and returning students. Invite them to reflect and then to share what happened where they initiated conversations about the Ark, the Covenant, the Báb, and Bahá'u'lláh. Listen respectfully and acknowledge all. Invite students to share what they remember about the way that Bahá'u'lláh fulfills the promises of the Báb. Applaud all!

2. Read aloud the following words of the Báb about Bahá'u'lláh:

"Were He to appear this very moment, I would be the first to adore Him, and the first to bow down before Him."

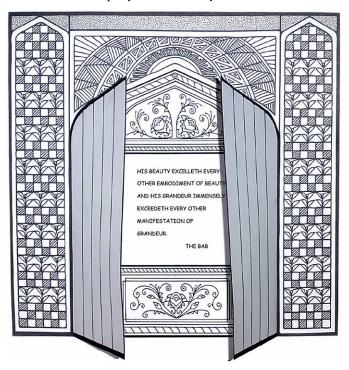
The Báb, quoted by Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, pp. 29–30

Briefly discuss: How do we know this is true?

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

- 3. If available, read aloud one or more of the stories from the Core Curriculum storybooks, *Bahá'u'lláh*, vol. 2, or *The Báh*, vol. 2. Consider discussing the questions provided at the back of the storybook that relate to that topic.
- 4. Explain that the Báb's writings not only told people how to recognize Him Whom God shall make manifest—Bahá'u'lláh—but they also praised Him again and again. Distribute copies of Resource Page 30 and invite students to work with you to study this example of the Báb's praise for Bahá'u'lláh. Read the passage aloud, stopping after each sentence to clarify the meaning of that sentence. It is not necessary to spend a great deal of time on each sentence, the goal is that the students understand some of the ways that the Báb praised Bahá'u'lláh.
- 5. After reading this passage together, invite students to select a favorite phrase or sentence from this passage. After all have selected a favorite phrase or sentence, encourage students to read these aloud in the whole group. Briefly discuss: How does this praise show us the Báb's love for Bahá'u'lláh? How does it show He was like a "gate" to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh?
- 6. Encourage students to create their own symbolic gate, to remind them of the Covenant of the Báb. Encourage them to:
 - Use their best handwriting to copy a favorite phrase or sentence from Resource Page 30 in the box on Resource Page 31.
 - Use markers, colored pencils, glitter, or other means to decorate the border of Resource Page 31.
 - Cut out the outline of the gate on Resource Page 32 and use the materials provided to make this gate very, very beautiful to symbolize the Báb and His Covenant.
 - Use tape, ribbon, or other means to connect the gate to the decorated quotation.

- 7. As some students complete their work, you may invite them to read aloud additional stories from the list above as other students continue their work. Those who finish early may also help begin to put away art supplies and tidy the classroom.
- 8. As students complete their gates, invite them to display the gates in an area of the classroom where students pray. Invite them to select a prayer written by the Báb to read aloud, then to open their gates, read aloud the quotation, and then read a prayer written by Bahá'u'lláh.



- 9. Encourage students to place their gate in a place at their homes where they like to pray and meditate. They may also choose to recite a prayer by the Báb, then open the gate and recite a prayer revealed by Bahá'u'lláh.
- 10. Encourage students to continue to tell others about the glory of Bahá'u'lláh. Remind them to share the results of these conversations at the beginning of the next class.

GOAL: To Know that the Greater Covenant Is Repeated in Every Dispensation $TOPIC: THE\ COVENANT\ OF\ THE\ B\'AB$

Resource Pages

Activity 1: The Báb's Role within the Greater Covenant

"Summon" those who are "asleep" with horns, at the end of each phrase:

Thy Lord hath never raised up a prophet in the past who failed to summon the people to His Lord,	(HORNS)
and today is truly similar to the times of old, were ye to ponder over the verses revealed by God.	(HORNS)
When God sent forth His Prophet Muhammad,	(HORNS
on that day the termination of the prophetic cycle was foreordained in the knowledge of God.	(HORNS)
Yea, that promise hath indeed come true and the decree of God hath been accomplished as He hath ordained.	(HORNS)
Assuredly we are today living in the Days of God.	(HORNS)
These are the glorious days on the like of which the sun hath never risen in the past.	(HORNS)
These are the days which the people in bygone times eagerly expected.	(HORNS)
What hath then befallen you that ye are fast asleep?	(HORNS)
These are the days wherein God hath caused the Day-Star of Truth to shine resplendent.	(HORNS)
What hath then caused you to keep your silence?	(HORNS)
These are the appointed days which ye have been yearningly awaiting in the past—the days of the advent of divine justice.	(HORNS)
Render ye thanks unto God, O ye concourse of believers.	(HORNS)

The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 161

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

Activity 1: The Báb's Role within the Greater Covenant

The Day of Resurrection

What is meant by the Day of Resurrection is this, that from the time of the appearance of Him Who is the Tree of divine Reality, at whatever period and under whatever name, until the moment of His disappearance, is the Day of Resurrection.

For example, from the inception of the mission of Jesus—may peace be upon Him—till the day of His ascension was the Resurrection of Moses. For during that period the Revelation of God shone forth through the appearance of that divine Reality, Who rewarded by His Word everyone who believed in Moses. . . . God's Testimony for that Day was that which He had solemnly affirmed in the Gospel.

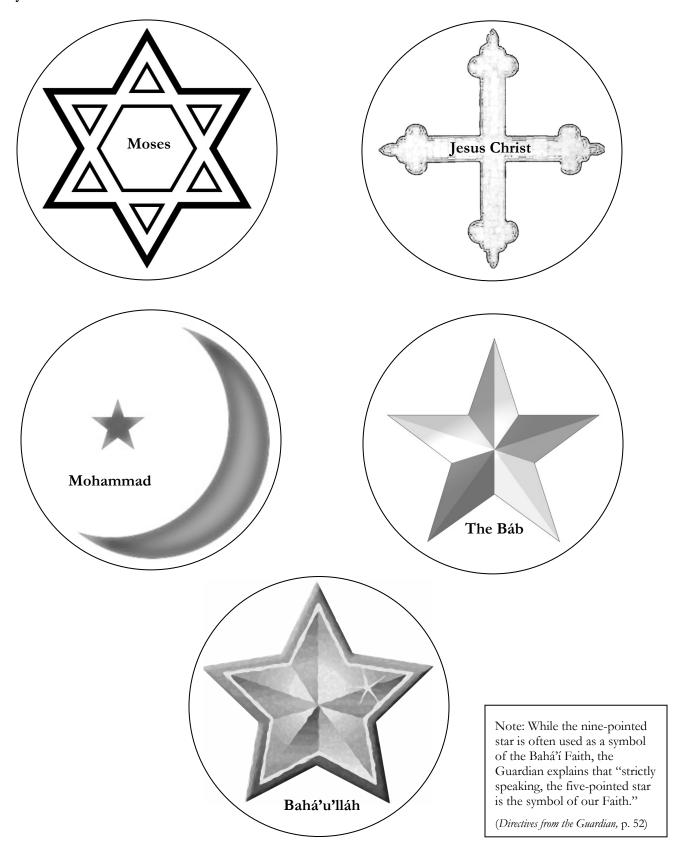
And from the inception of the Revelation of the Apostle of God [Muhammad]—may the blessings of God be upon Him—till the day of His ascension was the Resurrection of Jesus—peace be upon Him—wherein the Tree of divine Reality appeared in the person of Muhammad, rewarding by His Word everyone who was a believer in Jesus. . . .

And from the moment when the Tree of the Bayán [the Báb] appeared until it disappeareth is the Resurrection of the Apostle of God, as is divinely foretold in the Qur'án. . . . The perfection of the religion of Islam was consummated at the beginning of this Revelation; and from the rise of this Revelation until its setting, the fruits of the Tree of Islam, whatever they are, will become apparent.

The Resurrection of the Bayán will occur at the time of the appearance of Him Whom God shall make manifest [Bahá'u'lláh]. For today the Bayán is in the stage of seed; at the beginning of the manifestation of Him Whom God shall make manifest its ultimate perfection will become apparent. He is made manifest in order to gather the fruits of the trees He hath planted.

The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, pp. 106-08

Activity 1: The Báb's Role within the Greater Covenant



Activity 2: The Greatness of This Revelation

The Báb, acclaimed by Bahá'u'lláh as the "Essence of Essences," the "Sea of Seas," the "Point round Whom the realities of the Prophets and Messengers revolve," "from Whom God hath caused to proceed the knowledge of all that was and shall be," Whose "rank excelleth that of all the Prophets," and Whose "Revelation transcendeth the comprehension and understanding of all their chosen ones," had delivered His Message and discharged His mission. He Who was, in the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the "Morn of Truth" and "Harbinger of the Most Great Light," Whose advent at once signalized the termination of the "Prophetic Cycle" and the inception of the "Cycle of Fulfillment," had simultaneously through His Revelation banished the shades of night that had descended upon His country, and proclaimed the impending rise of that Incomparable Orb Whose radiance was to envelop the whole of mankind. He, as affirmed by Himself, "the Primal Point from which have been generated all created things," "one of the sustaining pillars of the Primal Word of God," the "Mystic Fane," the "Great Announcement," the "Flame of that supernal Light that glowed upon Sinai," the "Remembrance of God" concerning Whom "a separate Covenant hath been established with each and every Prophet" had, through His advent, at once fulfilled the promise of all ages and ushered in the consummation of all Revelations.

Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p. 57

PROMISE	FULFILLMENT
The Year Nine In the year nine ye shall attain unto all good. In the year nine, ye will attain unto the presence of God.	Bahá'u'lláh received the first intimations of His mission while He was imprisoned in the black pit, the Siyáh-Chál, in 1852–53. This is nine years after the Báb declared His mission in 1844.
The Year Nineteen The Lord of the Day of Reckoning will be manifested at the end of Vahíd (19) The Báb, quoted by Shoghi Effendi, God Passes By, p. 29	After Bahá'u'lláh was released from the Síyáh- <u>Ch</u> ál, He and His family were exiled to Baghdad. Bahá'u'lláh continued to reveal Holy Verses, including the Hidden Words and the Kitáb-i-Íqán without disclosing His station as a Manifestation of God. Bahá'u'lláh began to reveal His station in the Garden of Ridván in 1863, nineteen years after the Declaration of the Báb in 1844.
The Name of Bahá'u'lláh When the Day-Star of Bahá will shine resplendent above the horizon of eternity it is incumbent upon you to present yourselves before His Throne. The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 164	Bahá'u'lláh began to use the title "Bahá" at the Conference of Badasht in 1848. The Báb referred to the Promised One as "Bahá" in His writings both before and after the Conference of Badasht. After that conference, the Báb wrote to Bahá'u'lláh and addressed Him by this title. Before the Báb's Martyrdom, He sent His writings, His pen-case, His ring, and a letter to Bahá'u'lláh that was 360 beautifully hand-written derivations of the name "Bahá" in white ink on blue paper.

PROMISE

The Name of Bahá'u'lláh

Do ye know Bahá'u'lláh or not? For He is the Glory of Him Whom God shall make manifest.

The Báb, quoted by Adib Taherzadeh, The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 44

FULFILLMENT

After Bahá'u'lláh's declaration, a man named Ahmad told his friends that "the Báb had specifically mentioned that 'Him Whom God shall make manifest' would appear by the name of Bahá. They promised to accept the claims of Bahá'u'lláh should I be able to verify my statement. I asked them to bring the Writings of the Báb to me. . . . As soon as I opened one of them, we found a passage which indicated that 'He Whom God shall make manifest' would bear the name of Bahá. They happily embraced the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh and I left them and traveled to other towns."

Ahmad, in Adib Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Bahá'w'lláh, vol. 2, pp. 114–15

manifest, he said, "With the perusal of each verse, I felt as if a

world of exultation, of certitude and insight was created

within me....

which He declares His station as Him Whom God shall make

When a follower of the Báb first saw Bahá'u'lláh's writings in

Holy Verses

Recognize Him by His verses.

The Báb, quoted by Adib Taherzadeh, The Covenant of Baha'u'llah, p. 46

There is no paradise more wondrous for any soul than to be exposed to God's Manifestation in His Day,

to hear His verses and believe in them...

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

Beginning in 1864, through the writings of Bahá'u'lláh and the wise service of some outstanding teachers of the Faith,

about 99% of the Bábís became Bahá'is within 2-3 years.

Mirza Haydar-'Ali, in Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Bahá'u lláh, vol. 2, pp. 72–73

my feelings on that day, I find myself filled with such joy that

pass into a state of intoxication and bewilderment."

I was enraptured and set aglow. . . . It affected me so deeply hat even now . . . whenever I read this Tablet or remember

The Báb prepares His followers to serve the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh

... The Bayán and such as bear allegiance to it are but a present from me unto Thee. ...

The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 6

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF THE BÁB

Activity 4: The Gate to Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest

Select quotations for the gate activity from the following sentences:

The glory of Him Whom God shall make manifest is immeasurably above every other glory, and His majesty is far above every other majesty.

His beauty excelleth every other embodiment of beauty, and His grandeur immensely exceedeth every other manifestation of grandeur.

Every light paleth before the radiance of His light, and every other exponent of mercy falleth short before the tokens of His mercy.

Every other perfection is as naught in face of his consummate perfection, and every other display of might is as nothing before His absolute might.

His names are superior to all other names.

His good-pleasure taketh precedence over any other expression of good-pleasure.

His pre-eminent exaltation is far above the reach of every other symbol of exaltation.

The splendor of His appearance far surpasseth that of any other appearance.

His divine concealment is far more profound than any other concealment.

His loftiness is immeasurably above every other loftiness.

His gracious favor is unequalled by any other evidence of favor.

His power transcendeth every power.

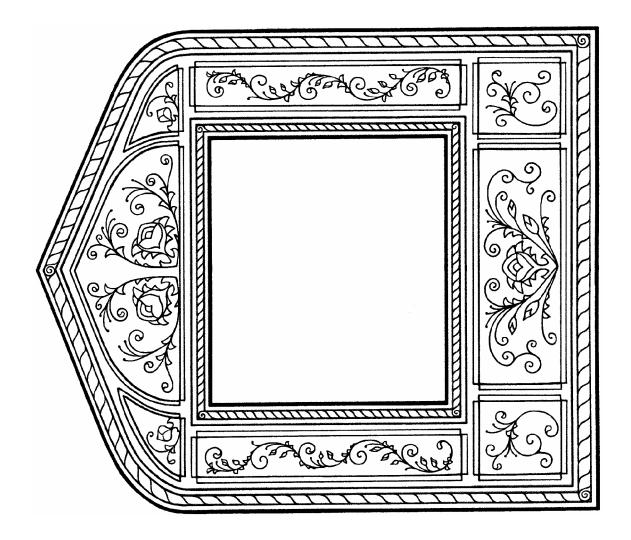
His sovereignty is invincible in the face of every other sovereignty.

His celestial dominion is exalted far above every other dominion.

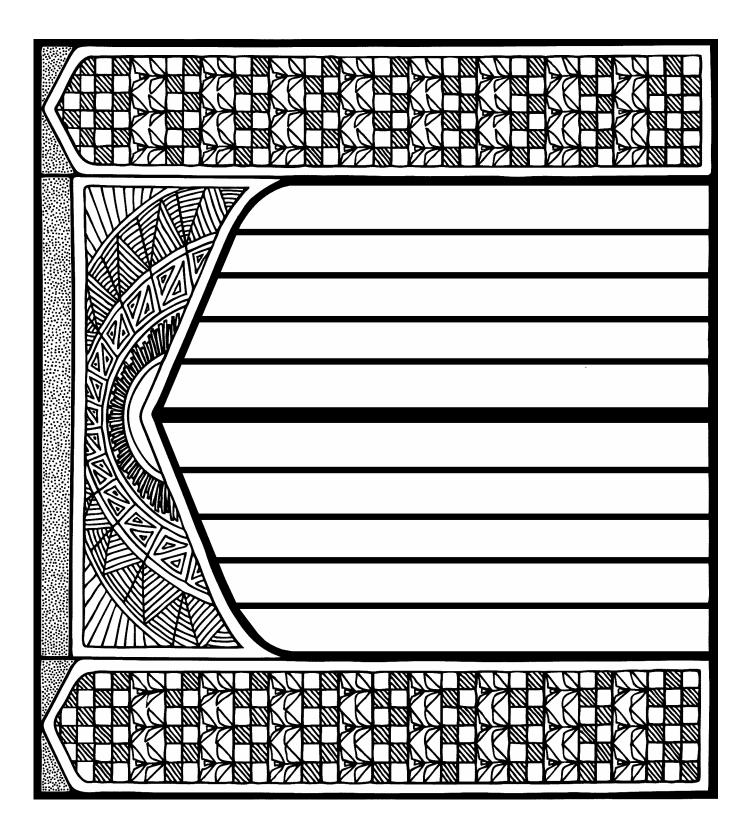
His knowledge pervadeth all created things, and His consummate power extendeth over all beings.

The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, pp. 156–57

Activity 4: The Gate to Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest



Activity 4: The Gate to Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest



LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories, Books, and Articles:

Brilliant Star magazine:

"Primal Point" Jul/Aug 1994

"Glimpses of the Báb" Sep/Oct 1999

"An Amazing Treasure Hunt" May/Jun 2001

"Journey of Faiths" Nov/Dec 2006

The Báb, Sue Davis

The Covenant for Young People, Enoch Tanyi

The Eternal Covenant, Lowell Johnson, pp. 217–18

Hour of the Dawn: The Life of the Báb, Mary Perkins

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Brilliant Star magazine:

"Faithful to the Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

"Remover of Difficulties," Jul/Aug 1994

Activities:

Brilliant Star magazine:

"May Activities," Mar/Apr 1992

"The Greater Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

" Make a Bead Chain of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

"Signs of the Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

"My Part of the Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

"Decorate a Gate . . ." May/Jun 1994

"A Gift from the Báb," Jul/Aug 1994

Music:

Lote Tree, "The Báb"

Encore, Jack Lenz and others, "I Want to Be with Him Today"

Нарру Аууа́т-і-На́, "The Báb"

Mystical Realities: The Báb, Minnesota Bahá'í Institute

The Messngers, Ron Allen and Jack Lenz "The Báb"

A Page from the History of Eternity

Special Times, Susan Engle, "Song for the Báb"

Brilliant Star magazine:

"The Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

"Protect Us!" Jul/Aug 1994

"O God, My God," Jul/Aug 1995

"The Báb," Sep/Oct 2004

"The Spirit's the Same," Nov/Dec 2006

Poetry:

Video:

Other Favorite Resources:

Selections from the Writings of the Báb

If you find any additional resources, please notify the Office of Education and Schools at the Bahá'í National Center, or submit your findings to the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org.

TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT BETWEEN THE MANIFESTATION AND HIS FOLLOWERS TO ACCEPT THE NEXT MANIFESTATION IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'II'LLÁH

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC: JOY, FRIENDLINESS, INITIATIVE

Bahá'u'lláh made a covenant concerning a Promised One Who will become manifest after one thousand or thousands of years. That Manifestation is Bahá'u'lláh's Promised One and will appear after a thousand or thousands of years. He, moreover, with His Supreme Pen, entered into a great Covenant and Testament with all the Bahá'ís whereby they were all commanded to follow the Center of the Covenant after His ascension, and depart, not even to a hair's breadth, from obeying Him.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Compilation of Compilations, vol. 1, p. 114

The deepening and enrichment of the spiritual life of the individual believer, his increasing comprehension of the essential verities underlying his Faith, his training in its administrative processes, his understanding of the fundamentals of the Covenants established by its Author and the authorized Interpreter of its teachings should be made the supreme objective of the national representatives responsible for the edification, the progress and consolidation of these communities.

Shoghi Effendi, The Importance of Deepening our Knowledge and Understanding of the Faith, p. 25, no. 86

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Learning Objectives and Suggested Activities

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

- To know that Bahá'u'lláh is the Promised One of all ages, and therefore the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Adamic Cycle
- To know that while Bahá'u'lláh is the first Manifestation of the Cycle of Fulfillment, He clearly foretold the coming of other Manifestations in the future

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Discuss what it means to make a "promise." Share quotations from the Bahá'í writings that refer to Bahá'u'lláh as the Promised One.
- Share quotations from the writings of Bahá'u'lláh that refer to the coming of other Manifestations in the future.
- Provide opportunities for the students to recognize the various titles given to Bahá'u'lláh. Create artwork representing these titles.
- Learn songs about the greatness of this time.

Wisdom Objectives

• To appreciate the significance of the Manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh, and His station as the Inaugurator of the Cycle of Fulfillment

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Teach the students the meaning of Bahá'u'lláh's Name.
- Help them decorate a special reproduction of His Name (e.g., place rose petals or potpourri around it).
- Discuss quotations from the Bahá'í
 writings that refer to the significance of
 the manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh, for
 example, The Advent of Divine Justice, pp.
 64–67.
- Discuss how each of the titles of Bahá'u'lláh fulfills a promise.
- In small groups, list all the wonderful things that have happened in the world since the coming of Bahá'u'lláh as the Promised One. Then list wishes for the future that will come true as more people will recognize Bahá'u'lláh in the next several centuries. (You can do a drama of the future unfoldment of Bahá'u'lláh's fulfillment).

GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Spiritual Perception Objectives

• To perceive the uniqueness of the time in which we are living, the period that opens the divine Cycle of Fulfillment

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Talk about what it means to be fulfilled.
 Encourage students to relate times when they have felt fulfilled.
- Create a role-play with students of taking a long walk to a beautiful garden or other favorite place, comparing the walk to the Cycle of Prophecy and the arrival as the beginning of the Cycle of Fulfillment.
- Provide time for reflection on how we might better find divine fulfillment, i.e., by following laws, prayer, obeying parents, reading the Bahá'í writings, etc.
- Encourage students to explore what it means to them to be alive during the Cycle of Fulfillment.

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

• To articulate to others our enthusiasm and enkindlement, which are inspired by our awareness of the great bounty of having the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh to guide and protect us during this time in history

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Share with the community and explain the timeline of the Manifestations of God.
- Memorize and recite prayers of praise and gratitude.
- Share the reproductions of Bahá'u'lláh's Name with family members, and explain the significance of His Station.
- Perform a song about the greatness of this time.
- At a fireside or other community activity, display the list of all that has happened so far and share a vision is of what will happen in centuries to come.
- Practice sharing with friends the simple great truth of this Day of God.

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY 1: IMAGES OF THE PROMISED DAY

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know that Bahá'u'lláh is the Promised One of all ages, and therefore the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Adamic Cycle

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To appreciate the significance of the Manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh, and His station as the Inaugurator of the Cycle of Fulfillment.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive the uniqueness of this time in which we are living: the period that opens the divine Cycle of Fulfillment.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of music; Use of meditation; Use of consultation; Use of art

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Recorded soft music or nature sounds
- Pillows or cushions for the floor, if desired
- White paper

- Black construction paper
- Small pieces of colored tissue paper
- Recorded upbeat music for group artwork

Advance Preparation:

Learn the song "Great Day" from Resource Page 44, the Core Curriculum CD *Teaching Songs to Children*, vol. 1, or the Core Curriculum website www.core-curriculum.org, to be able to teach it to your students.

Practice reading aloud the guided meditation script on Resource Pages 45–46. Your focused attention will assist the students to focus their attention.

Consider preparing sample artwork.

- 1. Welcome students. Invite them to reflect on their experiences over the past week: What positive words or actions did we notice from the people around us since the last class? How can we encourage these positive words and actions in the people around us? What else would we like to share about the past week?
- 2. Set the tone by singing "Great Day," or another song on the theme of this Day of God. This song is available on the Core Curriculum CD *Teaching Songs to Children and Youth,* volume 1, or on the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org. Briefly discuss: "What is the Great Day mentioned in this song?
- 3. Explain that the followers of all religions have been expecting a great day for thousands of years. This Day has been promised by all the prophets of God. This long Prophetic Cycle has prepared humanity for this Great Day of God.

- 4. Explain that we will use the power of our minds to go on an imaginary journey through the Prophetic Cycle until it is fulfilled in this Great Day.
- 5. Encourage students to find a comfortable, relaxed, and quiet position where they can listen to with full attention and not feel distracted. Dim the lights, play soft music or recorded nature sounds, and allow students to lie down if they wish.
- 6. After students are comfortably positioned and quiet, invite them to relax, close their eyes, and let their imaginations take them on a journey through time. Read aloud the guided imagery on Resource Pages 45–46 in slow measured tones, pausing each time you see an ellipsis. . . . Let your calm quiet voice focus your students attention as they listen. . . . Encourage them to take a couple of slow deep breaths and to let their imaginations take them on a journey.

GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

- 7. Allow time for a pause, then discuss the questions:
 - What did you see at the beginning of your journey? Did the path stretch on forever? Was it a wide or narrow path?
 - How many of us felt the sunshine?
 - When the path became steeper, did it also become narrower? There were rocks to climb over; what kind of rocks were they large, small, rough, smooth?
 - How many of us actually heard the stream? Were we thirsty?
 - What about the thorns? Did anyone actually feel a scratch? Did anyone get tired?
 - How did we feel when we heard the voice of our Guide? Did you recognize some of the words of the Guide?
 - How did we feel when we knew we were getting close to the journey's end?
 - Who did we see on the Promised Day? What kind of a flower opened for us? What was the city like? Who did you see? What were your favorite Words about that Day? What was the most beautiful image in your mind's eye?
- 8. Explain that this journey is the journey of humanity from the earliest days of human history until the present and that the Guide's voice is that of the Prophets of God, one after another, all leading us to this Great Day of God, the day of the "ingathering of all mankind." Briefly discuss: How is this journey also like the journey of each individual soul? What is our role in this Great Day of God?

- Invite students to express the beautiful images that they saw in their mind's eye by overlaying and gluing scraps of colored tissue on white paper. They may choose to cover all the white paper with tissue or leave some of the white paper as background. They may choose realistic or abstract images to convey the beauty of this Promised Day. Demonstrate how the tissue can be torn into different shapes to suggest the images of their imagination. Demonstrate how the torn tissue can be layered to show depth or to create a wider range of colors. Demonstrate how overlapping layers of green could indicate a forest or meadow; layers of blue could indicate water; layers of yellow and gold could suggest sunshine.
- 10. Consider playing background music while students work. As students complete their work, encourage them to mount their beautiful images on larger pieces of black construction paper. Consider displaying student artwork in the classroom for the next several weeks as students continue studying this important topic.
- 11. Conclude the activity by discussing: How can our actions show our friends the beauty of this Day? How can our words also help our friends understand the beauty of this Day of God?
- 12. Encourage students to imagine themselves reaching out in friendship to a new person this week and to be prepared to share the results of their actions at the beginning of the next class. Conclude the activity by again singing "Great Day."

^{1 &#}x27;Abdu'l-Bahá', Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 260

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

ACTIVITY 2: THE PROMISED ONE

WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To appreciate the significance of the manifestation of Bahá'u'lláh, and His station as the Inaugurator of the Cycle of Fulfillment

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To articulate to others our enthusiasm and enkindlement, which are inspired by our awareness of the great bounty of having the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh to guide and protect us during this time in history

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of music; Use of stories; Use of reflection; Use of memorization; Involve service and teaching

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 50 MIN.

Materials Needed:

• Videotape of the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress (optional)

Advance Preparation:

Learn the song "Bahá'u'lláh" using Resource Page 47, the CD *Teaching Songs to Children and Youth,* vol. 1, or the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org, to be able to teach it to your students.

- 1. Welcome students. Invite them to share the results of their efforts to reach out in friendship to a new person over the past week. Whom did they meet? How did they show friendship? How else were they able to show the greatness of this Day of God through their words and actions?
- 2. Teach the song "Bahá'u'lláh" to the class, using Resource Page 47, the CD *Teaching Songs to Children and Youth*, volume 1, or the Core Curriculum website. If available, you may also choose to show a clip from the 1992 World Congress videotape of friends from the Seychelles Islands singing this song.
- 3. Explain that the Message of God for this Day is the message of the oneness and wholeness of the human race, with unity in diversity as our watchword. Bahá'u'lláh's title, the Glory of God, can remind us of the greatness of His Message. Briefly discuss: How can this title help us remember Bahá'u'lláh's Message?
- 4. Explain that this Revelation from God is so great that there will not be another Manifestation from God for at least a full thousand years, and that this Cycle of Fulfillment will last at least 500,000 years. This is the age of unity, which will be established through the Message of Bahá'u'lláh. Once united, humanity will continue to develop throughout "the cycle of the Blessed Beauty, which . . . will extend over many ages into the unborn reaches of time."



^{1 &#}x27;Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 67

GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Explain that in addition to this Most Great Name, Bahá'u'lláh is known as the Blessed Beauty, the Most Great Beauty, and as:

The Everlasting Father, the Lord of Hosts, the Most Great Name, and Preserved Treasure, the Most Great Light, the Most Great Ocean, the Supreme Heaven, the Pre-existent Root, the Day Star of the Universe, the Judge, the Law-giver, the Redeemer of all mankind, the Organizer of the entire planet, the Unifier of the children of men, the Inaugurator of the long-awaited millennium, the Creator of a new World Order, the Establisher of the Most Great Peace, the Fountain of the Most Great Justice, the Proclaimer of the coming of age of the entire human race, the Inspirer and Founder of a world civilization.²

Briefly discuss: Which of these titles are your favorites? How do Bahá'u'lláh's titles help us remember His Message? How do they help us remember that this Day of God begins a long, long cycle of fulfillment—at least 500,000 years!—starting with us and our role to help all people know that we are truly one human family?

5. Explain that while there are many, many proofs that Bahá'u'lláh is the Manifestation of God for this Great Day, He explains that the most powerful proofs are His own Self and His sacred writings:

Say: The first and foremost testimony establishing His truth is His own Self. Next to this testimony is His Revelation. For whoso faileth to recognize either the one or the other He hath established the words He hath revealed as proof of His reality and truth. This is, verily, an evidence of His tender mercy unto men. He hath endowed every soul with the capacity to recognize the signs of God.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 105

Briefly discuss: What do you think it might have been like to meet Bahá'u'lláh?

- 6. Explain that some of the people who met Bahá'u'lláh recorded their experiences. Share some or all of these recollections on Resource Page 48. Discuss again: After hearing these descriptions of people meeting Bahá'u'lláh, what do you imagine it might have been like?
- 7. Remind students that while we don't have the privilege of meeting Bahá'u'lláh face to face in this world, we all have access to his words, "the words He hath revealed as proof of His reality and truth." And He tells us that every one of us is endowed with the capacity to recognize the signs of God. Briefly discuss: How do our hearts help us to recognize truth when we hear it?
- 8. Read aloud the following words of Bahá'u'lláh:

So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole earth.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 288

Discuss: What is Bahá'u'lláh telling us? How do we know these words are true?

- 9. Work together to identify simple dignified movements to express the meaning of these words. Then practice eloquently reciting the words over and over with these dignified movements until the class has memorized this short quotation.
- 10. Discuss: Let's imagine our friends hearing these words and responding to their truth. When and where do we think we could share these beautiful words with our friends? How might they respond? How could we encourage them and show them kindness?
- 11. Encourage students to share these words with at least one other person before the next class. Teachers should also do this. Conclude the activity by singing again the song, "Bahá'u'lláh."

—The Covenant 41

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² Shoghi Effendi, quoted by Rúhíyyih <u>Kh</u>ánum, *The Priceless Pearl*, p. 200

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

ACTIVITY 3: MY ROLE IN THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive the uniqueness of this time in which we are living: the period that opens the divine Cycle of Fulfillment

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To articulate to others our enthusiasm and enkindlement, which are inspired by our awareness of the great bounty of having the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh to guide and protect us during this time in history

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of Consultation; Use of reflection; Use of drama

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- · Copy of Resource Page 49, cut into strips
- Small basket or dish to hold rolled strips
- Background music
- Prayer books

Advance Preparation:

Make a copy of Resource Page 49; cut the role-play suggestions into strips; roll or fold them; and place them in a dish or basket so that student teams can draw them one at a time.

Think of one or more local teaching stories—possibly including a story involving a young person—to share with enthusiasm during Step 4 of the activity.

- 12. Welcome students. Invite them to share the results of their efforts to share Bahá'u'lláh's Message of unity with others. Encourage them also to share their efforts to promote unity in their families, at school, and with their friends. Acknowledge all.
- 13. Remind students that the Covenant is an agreement in which God promises certain blessings and we promise to strive to follow His teachings. Bahá'u'lláh's writings tell us what we should strive to do. In the Hidden Words, we learn:

Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My love can in no wise reach thee. Know this, O servant.

Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, Arabic no. 5

Briefly discuss: How do we think that our love for God helps us feel God's love for us? And how does our love for God help us want to serve Him? What are some ways that we can fulfill our part of the Covenant? 14. Affirm student comments and explain that when we read or recite the Word of God it is like eating spiritual food. Service to the Cause of God uses that spiritual energy to build a better world. Sharing the Message from God is one of the most important ways to make a better world because then more and more people want to work for unity and peace. Read aloud the following quotation:

Say: Teach ye the Cause of God, O people of Bahá, for God hath prescribed unto every one the duty of proclaiming His Message, and regardeth it as the most meritorious of all deeds.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, CXXX, p. 278

Briefly discuss: Why do we think teaching is the most meritorious of all deeds? What are some ways that we can teach the Cause of God? What can we say? What can we do?

GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

- 15. Listen carefully to student responses, then explain that teaching can include making friends with many people, showing our love for God through our actions, inviting our friend to Bahá'í class, and telling people about Bahá'u'lláh and His Message from God. Share one or more local teaching stories.
- 16. Encourage students to work in teams of two to role-play some of these actions. Invite each team to draw one of the slips of paper and plan a way to show the actions suggested.
- 17. After a short time for preparation, invite teams to share their role-plays in the whole group. Repeat steps 5 and 6 as desired. Applaud all!
- 18. Provide students with journals or plain paper. Play quiet background music and encourage them to select one idea that they saw portrayed during the role-plays to carry out over the coming week. Encourage them to write their plans on the paper and to share their idea with the person sitting beside them. Teachers should also plan to carry out one or more of these ideas over the coming week.
- 19. Conclude the activity with prayers of praise and thanksgiving, prayers for teaching, and prayers for aid and assistance.

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Resource Pages

Activity 1: Images of the Promised Day



GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Activity 1: Images of the Promised Day

Today we are going on a journey . . . a long, long journey . . . a journey to a glorious Promised Day . . . a day of happiness and fulfillment . . . And for each step of the journey, we have a wonderful Guide . . . We begin the journey with these words in our hearts, "When there is decay of righteousness . . . I myself come forth for protection of the good I am born from age to age." . . .

It is a warm sunny day . . . You feel a gentle breeze and smell the freshness of the air . . . You look around and see trees, flowers, plants . . . What sorts of trees do you see? Can you smell the flowers? . . . You keep walking and your anticipation grows . . . Our Guide tells us more about the Promised Day, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." ". . . And they shall beat their swords into plowshares."

As you walk, the path becomes steeper and steeper . . . You climb over rocks . . . The sun is getting hotter . . . You begin to feel thirst . . . And then you see cool shade ahead . . . Your Guide says, " . . . A descendant of Iranian Kings will be raised up as a Prophet." . . .

You walk toward the shade . . . As you walk you begin to hear a burbling stream . . . Can you hear it now? . . . You walk toward the stream and you hear, "In due time another Buddha will arise in the world, a Holy One, a supremely enlightened One, an incomparable leader of men." 5 . . .

With these words in your heart you keep walking . . . The path becomes thorny . . . There are many twists and turns . . . At times it is hard even to see the path . . . But your Guide says, "I have yet many things to say unto you. . . . When he, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you unto all truth." ". . . Know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand." . . .

You keep walking, always with the promised glory of that Day in your heart . . . You know that your long journey is nearing its end when you hear, "And thy Lord shall come with angels, rank on rank." 8 . . .

You know that this journey leads to a great day for all people . . . A day that is the Day of Him Whom God shall make manifest . . . "The glory of Him Whom God shall make manifest is immeasurably above every other glory, and His majesty is far above every other majesty." . . .

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ➤

¹ Bhagavad-Gita, chapter 4 (4th discourse)

² Isaiah 9:6

³ Isaiah 2:4

⁴ From the Denkart

⁵ The Mahaparinirvana Sutra, chapter 5, verses 1–14

⁶ John 16:12-13

⁷ Luke 21:31

⁸ Qurán, Súrih 89:22

⁹ The Báb, Selections from the Writings of the Báb, p. 156

GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

You begin to imagine the glory of that day . . . Your anticipation grows . . . You begin to hear the most delightful music . . . What are you hearing? . . . You begin to see joy on the faces of people around you . . . You see more and more people . . . your dearest friends . . . your family . . . Who do you see? . . . You see the most beautiful City . . . What is it like? . . . You see the most beautiful gardens . . . A flower near you opens and begins to release its fragrance . . .

You see that your path is one of many paths and that people are entering this garden from all directions . . . You see people from all parts of the earth—Africans, Asians, Americans, Europeans, and many, many others . . . You see more and more people coming to celebrate this Promised Day . . . And then you hear, "This is the Day in which God's most excellent favors have been poured out upon men."¹⁰

"... this most holy Day, the Day known as the Day of God... the Day which all the Prophets, and the Chosen Ones, and the holy ones, have wished to witness." ¹¹

"The Day of the Promise is come."12

"Great indeed is this Day! . . . The soul of every Prophet of God, of every Divine Messenger, hath thirsted for this wondrous Day." ¹³

"This Day a door is opened wider than both heaven and earth."14

"The universe is wrapt in an ecstasy of joy and gladness." ¹⁵

"This is the King of Days, the Day that hath seen the coming of the Best Beloved, He Who through all eternity hath been acclaimed the Desire of the world." ¹⁶

"O ye beloved of the Lord! This day is the day of union, the day of the ingathering of all mankind."¹⁷

You listen in wonder and know that your joy will only grow . . . You experience joy upon joy as you share the news of this Great Day with others . . . As all people serve all people . . . As you welcome more and more souls to this great Day of God . . . Look around you . . . How bright the sunshine . . . How beautiful the flowers . . . How luscious the fruits . . . How happy the faces of the people . . . A Day to keep in your heart forever . . .

Now slowly, when you are ready, bring your attention back to this classroom . . . When you are truly ready, when you know you have this Day in your heart forever, open your eyes.

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¹⁰ Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 6, IV

¹¹ Bahá'u'lláh, quoted by Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*, p. 77

¹² Bahá'u'lláh, quoted by Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 78

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Bahá'u'lláh, quoted by Shoghi Effendi, The Advent of Divine Justice, p. 79

¹⁷ 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 260

Activity 2: The Promised One



GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Activity 2: The Promised One

Bahá'u'lláh's daughter, the Greatest Holy Leaf, was only six years old when Bahá'u'lláh was thrown into the Síyáh-<u>Ch</u>ál, that black pit. Remembering her feelings when He was finally released, Greatest Holy Leaf said:

[Bahá'u'lláh] had a marvelous divine experience whilst in that prison. We saw a new radiance seeming to enfold Him like a shining vesture, its significance we were to learn years later. At that time we were only aware of the wonder of it, without understanding, or even being told the details of the sacred event.

Lady Blomfield, The Chosen Highway, p. 45

Shaykh Hasan, who recognized Bahá'u'lláh even earlier, said:

... My eyes, for the first time, fell upon Bahá'u'lláh. What shall I recount regarding the countenance which I beheld! The beauty of that face, those exquisite features which no pen or brush dare describe, His penetrating glance, His kindly face, the majesty of His bearing, the sweetness of His smile, the luxuriance of His jet-black flowing locks, left an indelible impression upon my soul. . . . From that moment all my sorrows vanished. My soul was flooded with joy.

Quoted by Nabíl-i-A'zam, translated by Shoghi Effendi, The Dawn-Breakers, pp. 32-33

Hájí Mírzá Haydar-'Alí wrote:

His blessed person appeared in the form of a human being, but His very movements, His manners, His way of sitting or standing, eating or drinking, even His sleep or wakefulness, were each a miracle to me. Because His perfections, His exalted character, His beauty, His glory, His most excellent titles and most august attributes revealed to me that He was peerless and without parallel. . . . I saw a Person Who, from the human point of view, was like the rest of humanity. However, if one were to add the love, mercy and compassion of all the peoples of the world together, they would appear as a drop when compared with the ocean of His tender mercy and loving-kindness. I even seek God's forgiveness for making such a comparison. Similarly, if one brought together all the knowledge of science, crafts, philosophy, politics, natural history and divinity possessed by mankind, it would seem, in comparison with His knowledge and understanding, as an atom compared to the sun. If one weighed the might and power of kings, rulers, Prophets and Messengers against His omnipotence and sovereignty, His grandeur and glory, His majesty and dominion, they would be as insignificant as a touch of moisture compared with the waters of the sea.

Quoted by Adib Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, vol. 4, pp. 135–36

GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

Activity 3: My Role in the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh

I want to make a new friend at school. What should I say and do?

I want to invite a friend to come with me to Bahá'í class. What should I say and do?

I want to help a new person at Bahá'í class feel welcome. What should I say and do?

I want to tell my friend what I learned at Bahá'í class. What should I say and do?

My friend is spending the night. I'd like to invite my friend to say prayers with me before we go to bed. What should I say and do?

My friend asks me what church I attend. What should I say and do?

When I say my prayers, I feel that I want to tell my friend about Bahá'u'lláh. What should I say and do?

My friend asks me why people are always fighting. What should I say and do?

I want to tell my class about an upcoming Bahá'í Holy Day. What should I say and do?

My friend asks me about my religion. What should I say and do?

I want to tell my teacher why I don't come to school on the day we celebrate the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh. What should I say and do?

During the fasting period in March, my friend asks my why my parents or other adult friends aren't eating or drinking during the daytime. What should I say and do?

My neighbor gives me a Christmas present. I want to thank my neighbor. My mother says that I could also invite the neighbor to come to a short devotional meeting. What should I say and do?

GOAL: TO KNOW THAT THE GREATER COVENANT IS REPEATED IN EVERY DISPENSATION

TOPIC: THE COVENANT OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories, Books, and Articles:

The Advent of Divine Justice, Shoghi Effendi, pp. 65–67 Bahá'u'lláh: The Glory of God: A Complete Curriculum and Teacher's Guide, Randie Gottlieb

The Covenant, Its Meaning and Origin and Our Attitude Essence of the Covenant, Shahin Vafai

The Eternal Covenant, Lowell Johnson, pp. 30–45, 107–08, 219–21

Power of the Covenant, Part One, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, pp. 1–11 A Search for Peace on Our Fragile Planet (booklet) The Story of the Covenant (booklet)
Toward It, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of
the United States, pp. 25–34
Brilliant Star magazine:

"I Am Well Pleased," May/Jun 2001

"The Most Great Branch," May/Jun 2001

"A New Moon for Every Age," Sep/Oct 2003
"The First Written Covenant," Sep/Oct 2003

"Most Mighty Branch," Sep/Oct 2003

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Brilliant Star magazine, "Faithful to the Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

Activities:

Brilliant Star magazine:

"The Greater Covenant" Sp Ed 1992

"Make a Bead Chain of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

"Signs of the Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

"My Part of the Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

"Titles of Bahá'u'lláh," May/Jun 1997

"Mighty Covenant Training Camp," Sp Ed 1998

Music:

Encore, Jack Lenz, "Jubilation," "When Will It Be"

Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, vol. 1, Various Artists, "Have You Heard of Bahá'u'lláh," "God Is One," "The Prince of Peace" Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, vol. 2, Various Artists, "Bahá'u'lláh's Getting Us Ready for that Great Day," "We Will Have One World," "Proclaim the Greatest Name"

Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, vol. 3, Various Artists, "Bahá'u'lláh," "O Bahá'u'lláh"

The Messengers, Ron Allen and Jack Lenz, "Bahá'u'lláh"

Oratorio to Bahá'u'lláh (Second World Congress), "Expectations," "Glad Tidings," "O Bahá'u'lláh"

Sing, O Carmel, Grant Hindin Miller, "The Nightingale of Paradise"

Special Times, Susan Engle, "Center of the Covenant"

This is Faith, "Bahá'u'lláh"

To the Glory of God, Eric Dozier and Friends, "We are Building the Kingdom of God"

We Have Come to Sing Praises, Bahá'í Gospel Singers, "In This Day Bahá'u'lláh," "We Have Come to Sing Praises," "The Spirit of the Lord is Everywhere"

Brilliant Star magazine:

"The Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

"The Glory Man (In This Day Bahá'u'lláh)," May/Jun 1997

"Bahá'u'lláh, I Long to Praise Thee," Jan/Feb 1998

"The Center of the Covenant," Sep/Oct 2003

"The Spirit's the Same," Nov/Dec 2006

Video:

Kitáb-i-'Ahd: Book of the Covenant

If you find any additional resources, please notify the Office of Education and Schools at the Bahá'í National Center, or submit your findings to the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org.

THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC: GRATITUDE, FIRMNESS IN THE COVENANT

... In accordance with the explicit text of the Kitáb-i-Aqdas Bahá'u'lláh hath made the Center of the Covenant the Interpreter of His Word—a Covenant so firm and mighty that from the beginning of time until the present day no religious Dispensation hath produced its like.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 47

As to the most great characteristic of the revelation of Bahá'u'lláh, a specific teaching not given by any of the Prophets of the past: It is the ordination and appointment of the Center of the Covenant. By this appointment and provision He has safeguarded and protected the religion of God against differences and schisms, making it impossible for anyone to create a new sect or faction of belief.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, pp. 455-56

TOPIC: THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Learning Objectives and Suggested Activities

Knowledge Objectives

- To know that the Kitáb-i-'Ahd is the Will and Testament of Bahá'u'lláh
- To know that the Lesser Covenant is embodied in the Will and Testament of Bahá'u'lláh
- To know that Bahá'u'lláh appointed 'Abdu'l-Bahá as His Successor and the Sole Interpreter of His writings in the Kitáb-i-'Ahd

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Show the students a copy of the Kitáb-i-'Ahd and talk about what it means to write a Will.
- Read the part of the Kitáb-i-'Ahd that specifically appoints 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Interpreter of His writings.

WISDOM OBJECTIVES

• To understand that one of the unique features of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh is His provision in His Will and Testament for the Center of the Covenant, and for the continuation of divine guidance through the Universal House of Justice

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Make a chain or use other objects to show how the parts of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant are linked, and relate how each new link serves to continue and strengthen our connection with God through His Message.
- Teach the students that this is the first time a Manifestation has left a written Will and Testament.
- Discuss what happens sometimes when messages are given to us but are not written down. Reflect on what might have happened in the Faith if Bahá'u'lláh had not left His Will in writing.
- Play the telephone game—sending a message from ear to ear to see how it changes from the original message and illustrate the importance of a single interpreter.

Spiritual Perception Objectives

• To perceive the protection afforded each individual Bahá'í through the Lesser Covenant

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Compare the protection of an umbrella to the protection given us by the Covenant.
- Encourage students to recite prayers for firmness in the Covenant.
- Invite students to share how they and their families are protected by the Lesser Covenant.

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

• To be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the actual text of the Kitáb-i-'Ahd, the Book of the Covenant

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Invite students to read for their family or other community members the passages from the Kitáb-i-'Ahd where Bahá'u'lláh specifically appoints 'Abdu'l-Bahá to be His Successor.
- Demonstrate to the community the importance of the Will and Testament of Bahá'u'lláh and the unique station of 'Abdu'l-Bahá using some of the activities developed in their program.

TOPIC: THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY 1: PROTECTION AND UNIFYING POWER

- **KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES:** To know that the Lesser Covenant is embodied in the Will and Testament of Bahá'u'lláh; To know that Bahá'u'lláh appointed 'Abdu'l-Bahá as His Successor and the Sole Interpreter of His Writings in the Kitáb-i-'Ahd
- **WISDOM OBJECTIVE:** To understand that one of the unique features of the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh is His provision in His Will and Testament for the Center of the Covenant and for the continuation of divine guidance through the Universal House of Justice
- **SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE:** To perceive the protection afforded each individual Bahá'í through the Lesser Covenant
- **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS:** Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of manipulatives; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Bucket or other container with several hundred marbles, pebbles, beads, dried beans, or other small objects that will roll or bounce when dropped on the floor
- Photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, and the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, or copies of Resource Pages 60–62
- Copy of Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, with a ribbon or bookmark at the Kitáb-i-'Ahd
- · Large beautiful basket or bowl

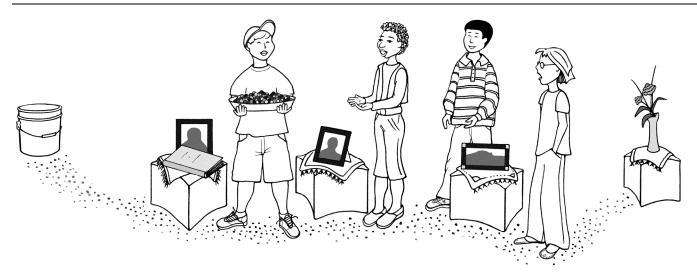
Advance Preparation:

Make copies of the photographs on Resource Pages 60–62 or use other photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, and the Seat of the Universal House of Justice and mount them or place them in frames so they may be displayed.

Set up the classroom so that there is a bucket of marbles or other small objects at one end of the room. Place a candle or vase of flowers at the other end of the room. About halfway across the room place a copy of Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh and a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. After a few more steps place a photograph of Shoghi Effendi; after a few more steps a photograph of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, still some distance from the far end of the room.

- 1. Welcome students. Briefly discuss: What are some ways that we were able to use our words and actions to share the news about this great Day of God? What else would we like to say about our adventures in the Cause of God? Acknowledge all.
- 2. Move toward the bucket of marbles placed at one end of the room. Scoop up as many marbles as you can possibly hold with your two hands together.
- 3. Step a few paces from the bucket with your hands full of marbles as you explain that the Manifestations of God, who bring us God's teachings in every age, hold and protect humanity, as your hands are cupped around

- these marbles. Their teachings help carry us forward to new understandings, new actions, and an ever-advancing civilization.
- 4. Invite students to imagine that the marbles in your hands are like the people who turned toward the Revelation of Moses. They became united and their civilization moved forward in response to God's teachings for that age. These teachings were recorded in the Old Testament in the Bible. Some of Moses' most important teachings are known as the Ten Commandments.



- 5. Remind them that Moses promised that a Messiah, a Savior, would come, but when Moses left this world, there was no clear structure for His Faith—open your hands and let the marbles drop. In time, the tribes scattered, and there are many different divisions of the Jewish Faith today.
- 6. Explain that God sent the next Manifestation: Jesus Christ. Enlist the students' help in gathering up most (but not all) of the marbles from the floor. The marbles they pick up represent the souls that recognize Christ.
- 7. Hold the gathered marbles again cupped in your hands, and walk a few more paces. Encourage students to imagine that these marbles represent those who recognize the Revelation of Jesus Christ, Who guided humanity forward with a great Message of love. He said that we should love God above all, and that we should love our neighbors as we love ourselves. His teachings are recorded in the New Testament in the Bible. Invite students to bring more marbles from the bucket and add as many as possible to your cupped hands, representing the many people of non-Jewish background who also accepted Christ.
- 8. Remind students that Jesus said He would send the Comforter, Who would guide mankind to all truth. When Jesus was crucified and left this world, He did not put in place a specific plan for organizing His church. Open your hands and drop the marbles as you explain that Christianity now has over 22,000 different sects.¹
- Again enlist students in picking up most, but not all, of the scattered marbles. Again ask them to add as many new marbles as possible from the bucket to represent the people from all backgrounds who learned to recognize Muhammad. Carry the scooped-up marbles in your hands a few paces further, and ask students to imagine that next the Revelation of Muhammad gathered people together, and carried humanity forward. Tell your students that Muhammad did appoint, verbally, His Successor, but that His Words were not written down. Thus immediately after his death, there was disagreement and division, and so the Faith of Islam was still split! Pull your hands apart to show the division of Sunni and Shia Islam, and allow the marbles to again fall to the floor. Explain that different schools of thought arose within each branch, and today there are many Islamic sects in the world.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ▶

¹ 1999 Encyclopedia of Christianity, edited by E. Fahlbusch, et al., Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, vol. 1, p. 800.

TOPIC: THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

- 10. Remind students that Muhammad prophesied that One Who Arises would come to continue to guide humanity.
- 11. Encourage students to pick up most of the dropped marbles again, add additional marbles, and fill your hands. Walk a few paces and explain that the marbles now represent those who turned toward the Revelation of the Báb. His Teachings gathered together the followers of Islam and helped them to advance. Before the Báb was martyred, He told His followers to watch for Him Whom God shall make manifest; He said that this Promised One of all ages was already in the world.
- 12. Lower your hands to the floor, and carefully place the marbles down, in one group. Explain that the next Manifestation of God was already protecting the new Faith: Bahá'u'lláh was guiding the Bábís even before He declared Himself. Scoop up the marbles again, and this time ask the students to go pick up EVERY marble on the floor: Bahá'u'lláh fulfilled the promises of ALL the world's religions, and His Faith is for the whole world. Carefully add all the marbles from the bucket to this pile
- 13. Explain that, for the first time in the history of the world, God's Manifestation appointed, in writing, the One Who would be the Center of His Faith after His ascension to the next world. Inform students that Bahá'u'lláh, in His Will and Testament, the Kitáb-i-'Ahd, told His followers to turn to 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Center of His Covenant.

Display the Kitáb-i-'Ahd and a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá a few paces ahead. Invite students to work with you to carefully place all the marbles in a beautiful basket or bowl.

- 14. Encourage some of your students to stand near the copy of the Kitáb-i-'Ahd and to hold out their arms. Walk carefully with the basket of marbles and place it very, very carefully in the arms of your students, encouraging them all to work together to hold it up high. Explain that Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant preserved the unity of His Faith for all time, by giving us 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Center of His Covenant, and by describing in His writings the Administrative Order which would one day be established.
- 15. Invite your students to walk a few paces toward the photograph of Shoghi Effendi. Explain that 'Abdu'l-Bahá guided and protected the Bahá'is, preserving the Faith's unity. Explain that before 'Abdu'l-Bahá passed away He appointed His grandson, Shoghi Effendi, as the Guardian of the Faith. He instructed us in His Will and Testament to turn to Shoghi Effendi and described a process for electing the Universal House of Justice.

Carefully place the basket of marbles in the arms of another set of students, to represent leadership transferring from 'Abdu'l-Bahá to Shoghi Effendi.

Explain that the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, nurtured and protected the Faith. He preserved its unity, and helped it to grow so that there were enough National Spiritual Assemblies in the world that, after Shoghi Effendi left this world, the first Universal House of Justice could be elected!

16. Encourage students to carefully carry the basket of marbles toward the photograph of the Seat of the Universal House of Justice, a few paces away. Encourage students to transfer the basket to a new set of hands, to represent the Universal House of Justice as the Head of the Faith.

Explain that the Universal House of Justice is elected every 5 years by all the National Spiritual Assemblies throughout the world. Allow the basket of marbles to be passed from one set of hands to another, to represent the orderly election of the Universal House of Justice.

17. Briefly discuss: What will happen next? When do we expect the next Manifestation of God? Listen carefully, then read aloud these words from 'Abdu'l-Bahá:

It is possible . . . that after the completion of a full thousand years, certain Holy Beings will be empowered to deliver a Revelation. . . . Prior to the completion of a thousand years, no individual may presume to breathe a word. . . . As to the cycle of the Blessed Beauty—the times of the Greatest Name—this is not limited to a thousand or two thousand years. . . .

Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, no. 33, pp. 68-69

- 18. Encourage students to carry the basket of marbles across the room and place them in front of the candle or vase of flowers, to represent the protection of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh by His Lesser Covenant, and its safe delivery to the next Manifestation from God, after a thousand or thousands of years.
- 19. Gather students together for a discussion: In what ways is Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant unique in religious history? How is each individual protected by this Lesser Covenant? How can we show our gratitude for being part of this Covenant?
- 20. Encourage students to tell at least one other person, a friend or family member, about the unique nature of the Lesser Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh before the next class. Give each student two marbles: one to keep in their pocket or other favorite place to help them remember the power of the Covenant to keep us safe, and the other to give to the person they tell about the Covenant. Conclude the activity with prayers for firmness in the Covenant.

ACTIVITY 2: ALL THINGS ARE OF GOD

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive the uniqueness of this time in which we are living: the period that opens the divine Cycle of Fulfillment

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of music

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 15 MIN.

Materials Needed:

Copy of Resource Page 63, if desired

Advance Preparation:

Learn the Song "All Things Are of God," using the CD Teaching Songs to Children and Youth, Volume 2, or the CD All Things Are of God by A Family Affair.

- 1. Remind students that the Kitáb-i-'Ahd is the Word of God, and in it Bahá'u'lláh reminds us that "All things are of God." Briefly discuss: What do we think Bahá'u'lláh means by this?
- 2. Learn the song "All Things Are of God" using the CD of the same name, or one of the methods taught in Teacher Development Workshop 8, or a method of your choosing.

TOPIC: THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

ACTIVITY 3: THE KITÁB-I-'AHD

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES: To know that the Lesser Covenant is embodied in the Will and Testament of Bahá'u'lláh; To know that Bahá'u'lláh appointed 'Abdu'l-Bahá as His Successor and the Sole Interpreter of His Writings in the Kitáb-i-'Ahd

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the actual text of the Kitáb-i-'Ahd, the Book of the Covenant

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Direct use of Bahá'í sacred writings; Use of consultation; Use of the arts; Use of meditation and reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- Copy of Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, with a book mark at the Kitáb-i-'Ahd
- Nice cloth
- Sample completed book (see below)
- Copies of Resource Pages 64–67
- Lote Tree or other recorded music (see the List of Additional Resources)
- Dictionaries
- Construction or art paper

- Lined paper
- Art materials
- Pens, glue sticks, scissors
- Hole punch
- Fasteners, yarn, or ribbon
- Small photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, from Resource Page 68 or other source

Advance Preparation:

Prepare a sample book, described below, as a model for students.

Consider selecting Bahá'í music on the theme of the Covenant as background music while students work. For example:

- "In This Day, Bahá'u'lláh" by the Bahá'í Gospel Singers' We Have Come to Sing Praises CD
- "Glad Tidings" from the Music from the Bahá'í World Congress CD
- "Be Pure, O People of God" from the CD Singing with Ernestine
- If desired, you may call attention to the songs that celebrate the various links in the Covenant on the CD *Lote Tree*
- 1. Welcome students. Invite them to share their reflections on the Covenant: What happened as they shared the story of the Lesser Covenant with others? What happened as they reflected on the power of the Covenant in their own lives? What else would they like to share with the class?
- 2. Invite students to recall the power of the Covenant as demonstrated in the previous activities. If desired, sing the song once again, "All Things Are of God." Briefly discuss: Thinking about all those marbles as people, what difference does it make when a very clear and very strong Covenant is established? Listen carefully and then remind students that each step in humanity's spiritual evolution is
- necessary for the next. This Promised Day is the first time that humanity has developed enough to be ready for such a strong Covenant.
- 3. Lay out a nice cloth, and reverently place a copy of Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, open the Kitáb-i-'Ahd.
- 4. Explain that this Book of Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant, the Kitáb-i-'Ahd, is His Will and Testament. Bahá'u'lláh has enshrined His Lesser Covenant, through which He protects His Faith for all time, within these pages.
- 5. Invite the students to embark on a thorough study of the Kitáb-i-'Ahd, and to make a personalized copy of selections from this Book for themselves.'

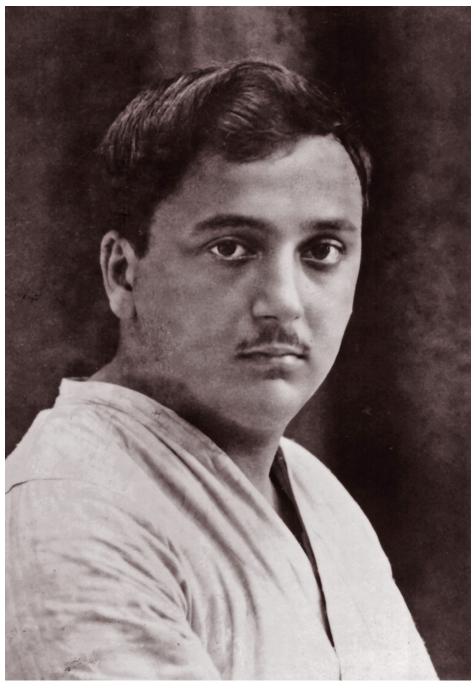
- Show them copies of Resource Pages 64–67, in which selections from the text have been placed on 4 pages so that they can study one selection at a time.
- 6. Use your sample to introduce the format of the book they will each make. Each book requires 6 pieces of construction or art paper:
 - Cover: Consider using special materials, such as glitter, glitter glue, puff paints, etc., to draw the title of the book.
 - Add 5 more pages after the cover, hole punch all pages, and connect them together with brass fasteners, yarn, or other means.
 - Show students that, after they have studied each section of the Kitáb-i-'Ahd, the text will be pasted on the left side of a 2-page spread, while the right side will be for their own words or drawings to summarize and illustrate their understanding of Bahá'u'lláh's Words.
 - The final 2-page spread will have a beautiful copy of the quotation from the Kitáb-i-Aqdas and a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the left side, and their own personal pledge on the right.
- 7. Invite students to make their cover pages, add the other 5 blank pages, and assemble these pages into books.
- 8. Distribute copies of the first section of the Kitáb-i-'Ahd. Encourage students to paste these on the back of the front cover. Read this page aloud in small groups, or in the whole group with teacher assistance, depending on the ages and abilities of your students. Distribute dictionaries, and encourage students to look up unfamiliar words, as desired.
 - Pause after each selection and discuss its overall meaning. Encourage students to restate their understanding of that selection. Consolidate and record students' statements on chart paper in the form of simple sentences.

- 9. Encourage students to copy these summary statements on the blank page opposite the first section of text, or to create their own summary sentences for that selection. Encourage students to illustrate their summaries with pictures or designs representing these themes.
- 10. Repeat this process of study, discussion, and written and artistic summary, for each selection on that page.
- 11. Repeat this process for the second, third, and fourth pages during this or subsequent classes, until all selections from the Kitáb-i-'Ahd have been studied, summarized, and illustrated.
- 12. Encourage students to copy the verse that Bahá'u'lláh quoted from His Kitáb-i-Aqdas on the left side of the final two-page spread:
 - When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed, and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this ancient root.
 - Encourage students to glue a small photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá near these words.
- 13. Use the right-hand side of this last section of the book as a personal pledge page. Encourage students to discuss again: What thoughts, words, and actions can we do to fulfill our part of the Covenant? How will these thoughts, words, and actions help us and help the world?
 - After this short discussion, encourage students to write and draw their own personal pledge of fulfillment to the Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh.
- 14. At an upcoming community gathering, arrange for an opportunity for all students to share their books with an adult or youth member of the community. Encourage them to read the Words of Bahá'u'lláh, the students' words about the text, and see what additional insights they gather. If desired, the teams may reconvene as a group to share these insights with the whole community. Acknowledge all.

TOPIC: THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

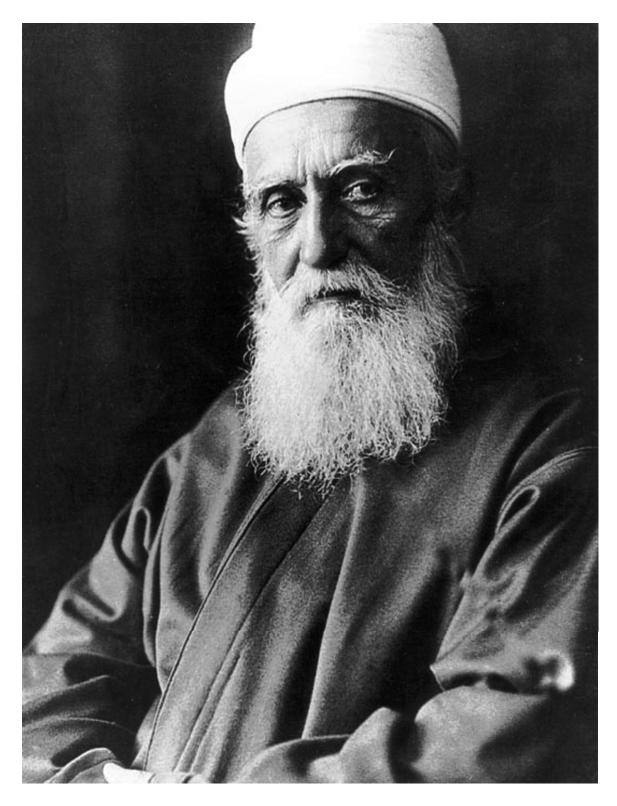
Resource Pages

Activity 1: Protection and Unifying Power



Source: Bahá'í photo library, www.bahai-biblio.org

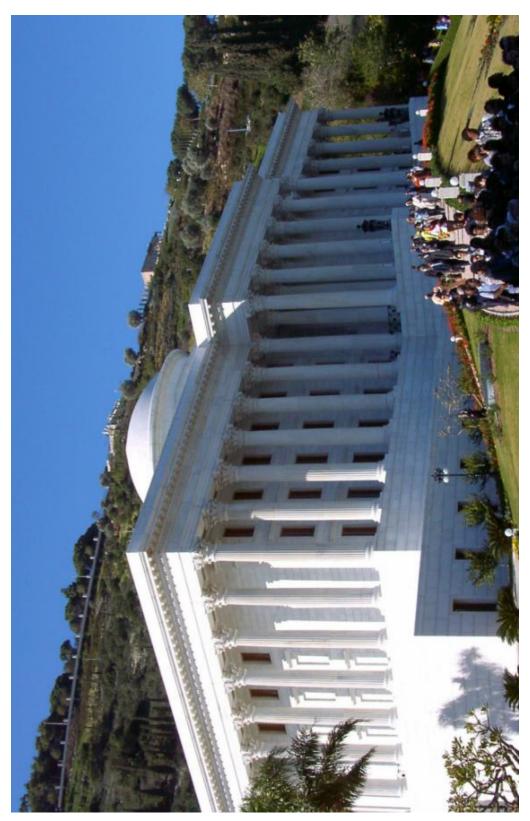
Activity 1: Protection and Unifying Power



Source: Bahá'í photo library, www.bahai-biblio.org

TOPIC: THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Activity 1: Protection and Unifying Power



Source: Bahá'í Media Bank, media.bahai.org; reprinted with permission of Bahá'í International Community

Activity 3

All Things Are of God

Chorus text: Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p 222 Verse 1 text: Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets Epistle to the Son of the Wolf,* p 14 Verse 2 text: 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá* p 244

Music: T. Ellis-Heath, W. Heath









Verse 2: The first remedy of all is to guide the people aright so that they will turn themselves unto God.

TOPIC: THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Activity 3

Selections from the Kitáb-i-'Ahd

Book of the Covenant

Part One

Although the Realm of Glory hath none of the vanities of the world, yet within the treasury of trust and resignation We have bequeathed to Our heirs an excellent and priceless heritage. Earthly treasures We have not bequeathed, nor have We added such cares as they entail.

The aim of this Wronged One in sustaining woes and tribulations, in revealing the Holy Verses and in demonstrating proofs hath been naught but to quench the flame of hate and enmity, that the horizon of the hearts of men may be illumined with the light of concord and attain real peace and tranquility.

We exhort you, O peoples of the world, to observe that which will elevate your station. Hold fast to the fear of God and firmly adhere to what is right. Verily I say, the tongue is for mentioning what is good, defile it not with unseemly talk.

Lofty is the station of man, were he to hold fast to righteousness and truth and to remain firm and steadfast in the Cause.

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 216-19

Activity 3

Selections from the Kitáb-i-'Ahd

Book of the Covenant

Part Two

O ye that dwell on earth! The religion of God is for love and unity; make it not the cause of enmity or dissension. In the eyes of men of insight and the beholders of the Most Sublime Vision, whatsoever are the effective means for safeguarding and promoting the happiness and welfare of the children of men have already been revealed by the Pen of Glory.

O ye the loved ones and the trustees of God! Kings are the manifestations of the power, and the daysprings of the might and riches, of God. Pray ye on their behalf. He hath invested them with the rulership of the earth and hath singled out the hearts of men as His Own domain.

Conflict and contention are categorically forbidden in His Book. This is a decree of God in this Most Great Revelation. It is divinely preserved from annulment and is invested by Him with the splendor of His confirmation. Verily He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 219-21

TOPIC: THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Activity 3

Selections from the Kitáb-i-'Ahd

Book of the Covenant

Part Three

It is incumbent upon everyone to aid those daysprings of authority and sources of command who are adorned with the ornament of equity and justice. Blessed are the rulers and the learned among the people of Bahá. They are My trustees among My servants and the manifestations of My commandments amidst My people.

The Will of the divine Testator is this: It is incumbent upon the Aghsán [the family of Bahá'u'lláh], the Afnán [the family of the Báb] and My Kindred to turn, one and all, their faces towards the Most Mighty Branch. Consider that which We have revealed in Our Most Holy Book: "When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root." The object of this sacred verse is none other except the Most Mighty Branch ['Abdu'l-Bahá].

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 221-23

Activity 3

Selections from the Kitáb-i-'Ahd

Book of the Covenant

Part Four

Verily I say, fear of God is the greatest commander that can render the Cause of God victorious, and the hosts which best befit this commander have ever been and are an upright character and pure and goodly deeds.

Say: O servants! Let not the means of order be made the cause of confusion and the instrument of union an occasion for discord. We fain would hope that the people of Bahá may be guided by the blessed words: 'Say: all things are of God.' This exalted utterance is like unto water for quenching the fire of hate and enmity which smoldereth within the hearts and breasts of men. By this single utterance contending peoples and kindreds will attain the light of true unity.

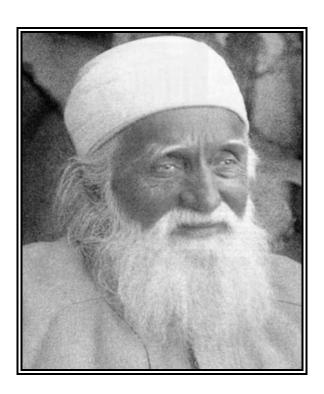
We further admonish you to serve all nations and to strive for the betterment of the world.

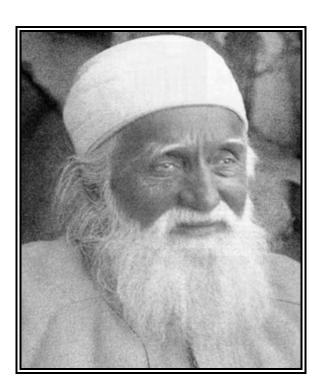
That which is conducive to the regeneration of the world and the salvation of the peoples and kindreds of the earth hath been sent down from the heaven of the utterance of Him Who is the Desire of the world. Give ye a hearing ear to the counsels of the Pen of Glory. Better is this for you than all that is on the earth. Unto this beareth witness My glorious and wondrous Book.

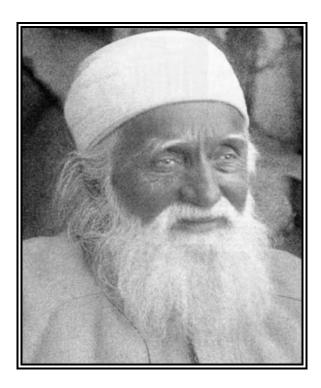
Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, pp. 223-24

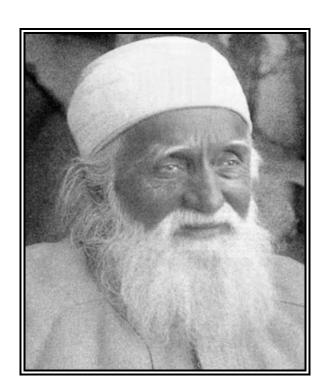
TOPIC: THE FIRST OF ITS KIND IN RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Activity 3: The Kitáb-i-'Ahd









Source: Bahá'í photo library, www.bahai-biblio.org

LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Stories, Books, and Articles:

Bahá'u'lláh: His Station and Mission, Kiser Barnes

Bahá'u'lláh: The Glory of God: A Complete Curriculum and Teacher's Guide, Randi Gottlieb

The Covenant: Its Meaning and Origin and Our Attitude Toward It, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, pp. 15–24

The Eternal Covenant, Lowell Johnson, pp. 41-44, 204-205

New Heaven, New Earth: The Divine Order of Bahá'u'lláh: Historical Evolution of the Bahá'í Faith and Its Covenant, Heidi Lakshman

Power of the Covenant, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Canada, pp. 2-4

The Story of the Covenant, pp. 2-4

Brilliant Star magazine:

"The First Written Covenant," Sep/Oct 2003

"Most Mighty Branch," Sep/Oct 2003

Activities:

Brilliant Star magazine: "Help the Institutions Grow!" Jan/Feb 1998

Music:

Encore, Jack Lenz, "Jubilation," "When Will It Be"

Fire and Steel, Grant Hindin Miller, "This Is the Day"

Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, vol. 1, Various Artists, "Have You Heard of Bahá'u'lláh," "God Is One," "The Prince of Peace"

Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, vol. 2, Various Artists, "Bahá'u'lláh's Getting Us Ready for that Great Day," "We Will Have One World," "Proclaim the Greatest Name"

Lift Up Your Voices and Sing, vol. 3, Various Artists, "Bahá'u'lláh," "O Bahá'u'lláh"

Lote Tree, "Garden of Ridván," "Abdu'l-Bahá," "Shoghi Effendi," "One Planet, One People," "Greatest Name"

The Messengers, Ron Allen and Jack Lenz, "Bahá'u'lláh"

Oratorio to Baha'u'llah (Second World Congress), "Expectations," "Glad Tidings," "O Bahá'u'lláh"

This is Faith, Lucy Shropshire, "Bahá'u'lláh"

To the Glory of God, Eric Dozier and Friends, "We Are Building the Kingdom of God"

We Have Come to Sing Praises, Bahá'í Gospel Singers, "In This Day Bahá'u'lláh," "We Have Come to Sing Praises," "The Spirit of the Lord is Everywhere"

Special Times, Susan Engle, "The World is Waiting"

Brilliant Star magazine:

"The Center of the Covenant" Sep/Oct 03

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

The Garden of Bahá'u'lláh, Peter Oldziev

Brilliant Star magazine, "Faithful to the Covenant," Sp Ed 1992

Other Favorite Resources:

If you find any additional resources, please notify the Office of Education and Schools at the Bahá'í National Center, or submit your findings to the Core Curriculum website, www.core-curriculum.org.