

DAYS PRING



A Bahá'í Magazine for Children
Issue 84

Dayspring
**Produced under the auspices of the National Spiritual Assembly
of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom**

Dayspring is produced three times a year on an educational non-profit basis and seeks to nurture a love for God and all mankind in the hearts of the children. Contributions by children and adults of suitable stories, plays, poems, artwork and news are warmly welcomed.

Note: Under the terms of the Child Protection Act regarding the publishing of images of children, permission must be given in writing or by email from the child's parent or guardian.

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- The Miller of Dee story on pp. 6-7 is from <www.readbookonline.net/readOnline/9331>
- Poems by Pauline Oliver on pp. 9 and 19 are from <www.happinesspages.com/happiness-poems.html>
- "The Little Brown Cat" story on p. 5 is from "Abdul-Bahá's Cat" in *Three Gifts of Love* by J.M., illustrated by Lisa Jackson, published by Brilliant Books, Belgium. The source of this story can be found in *He Loved and Served—The Story of Curtis Kelsey* by Nathan Rutstein.
- For the source of the story on p. 27, see *Memorials of the Faithful* by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, p. 39.

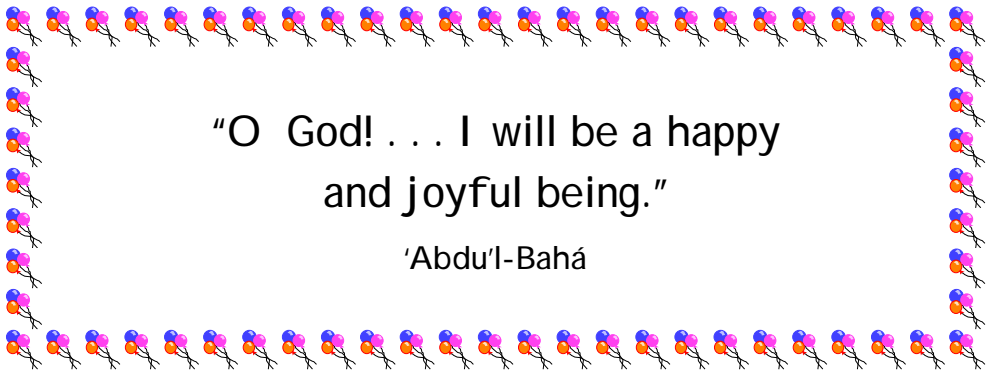
Corrections

Issue 82, p. 27. The collage was done by Trudy Pearce. A corrected version is on the *Dayspring* website.

Issue 81, p. 5. Lua met the Sháh in Paris (not in Tíhrán), and it was the Prime Minister's son who was ill (not the Sháh's). For the source of the revised story see *A Love Which Does Not Wait* by Janet Ruhe-Schoen (Palabra Publications, 1998). A corrected version is on the *Dayspring* website.

March – June 2013

Issue 84



"O God! . . . I will be a happy
and joyful being."

'Abdu'l-Bahá

The theme of this issue is happiness

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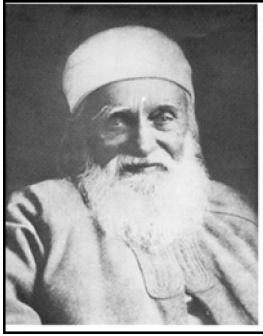
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Try it out!

‘Abdu’l-Baha says:

“I want you to be happy . . . ,
to laugh, smile and rejoice
in order that others may be
made happy by you.”





Meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá

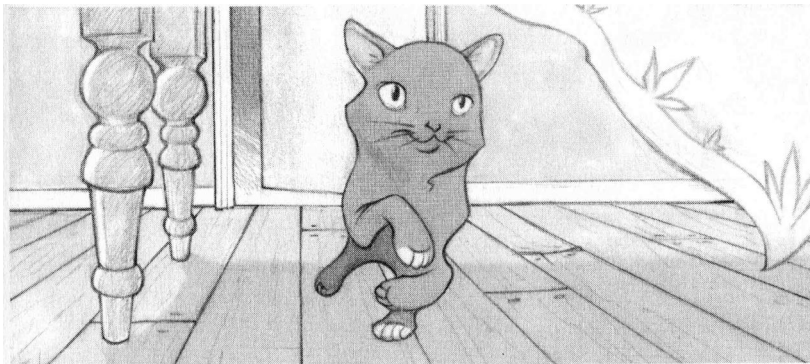
"The Little Brown Cat"

'Abdu'l-Bahá had a little brown cat. One of the duties of Fugita, who served in the House of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was to look after it.

At mealtimes, Fugita would shut the cat in the kitchen. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá would always know. He would wait until the end of the meal, then say to Fugita, "Let the cat out!" And Fugita would jump up with a laugh and open the kitchen door.

The cat would be waiting. As soon as the door opened, she would race like a streak of lightning across the room to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who would laugh with delight and bend down to stroke her. Then he would give her something tasty to eat.

When the cat had eaten her food, she would rub herself against 'Abdu'l-Bahá's feet and purr a deep purr of happiness!



THE MILLER OF THE DEE

Retold by Arthur Baldwin

Once upon a time there lived on the banks of the River Dee a miller who was the happiest man in England. He was always busy from morning till night, and he was always singing as merrily as any lark. He was so cheerful that he made everybody else cheerful; and people all over the land liked to talk about his pleasant ways. At last the king heard about him.

"I will go down and talk with this wonderful miller," he said. "Perhaps he can tell me how to be happy."

As soon as he stepped inside of the mill, he heard the miller singing:

"I envy nobody — no, not I!
For I am as happy as I can be;
And nobody envies me."

"You're wrong, my friend," said the king. "You're wrong as wrong can be. I envy you; and I would gladly change places with you if I could only be as light-hearted as you are."

The miller smiled and bowed to the king.

"I am sure I could not think of changing places with you, sir," he said.

"Now tell me," said the king, "what makes you so cheerful and glad here in your dusty mill, while I, who am king, am sad and have so many things to worry me every day?"

The miller smiled again, and said, "I do not know why you are sad, but I can easily tell why I am glad.

"I earn my own bread; I love my wife and my children; I love my friends, and they love me; and I owe not a penny to any man. Why should I not be happy? For here is the River Dee, and every day it turns my mill; and the mill grinds the corn to make into bread that feeds my wife, my babes, and me."



The miller was not rich like the king, so why was he the happiest man in the land?

An Easy Word Search

Words go across and down.

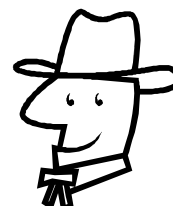
The Miller of Dee was content and grateful to God for the simple things in life and he was never jealous or envious of other people — not even of the king — and this is why he was so happy.



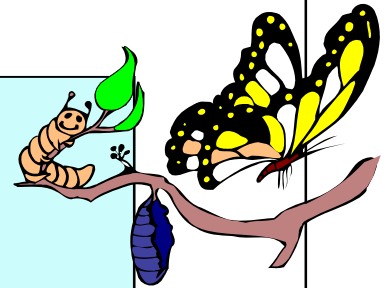
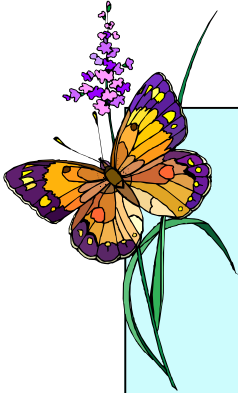
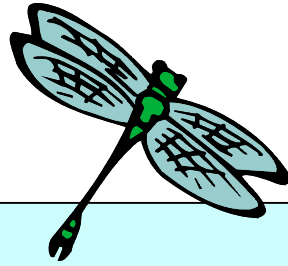
Find the following words:

**wife babes children friends river Dee mill king bread
kind grateful loving honest content wise thankful**

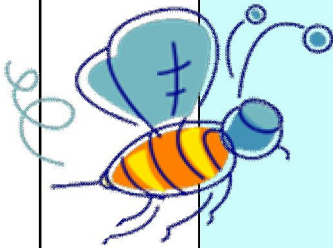
q	p	r	v	z	f	u	t	x
c	h	i	l	d	r	e	n	g
o	o	v	y	w	i	b	f	r
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t	e	r	k	f	n	e	m	t
e	s	d	s	e	d	a	i	e
n	t	b	d	e	s	d	l	f
t	h	a	n	k	f	u	l	u
k	m	b	k	i	n	d	n	l
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l	o	v	i	n	g	z	j	q



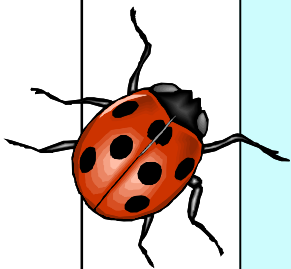
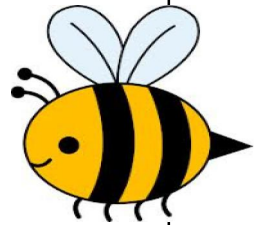
HAPPINESS



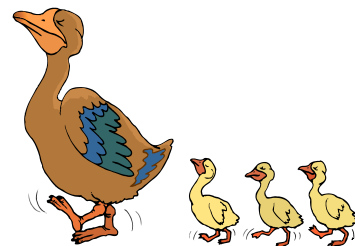
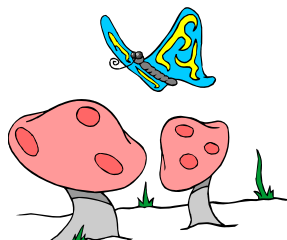
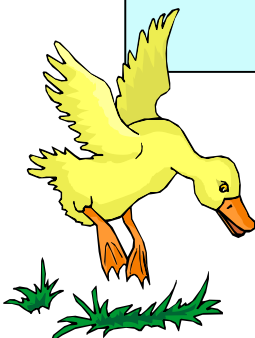
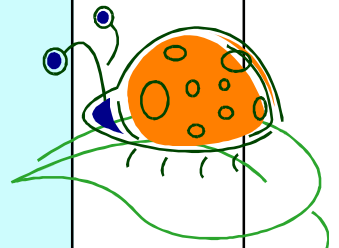
**Happiness is a butterfly
A sit and watch it flutterby
A catch it if you can-a-fly
An off into the sky-a-fly**



**Happiness is a bumble bee
A buzz around and wait and see
A visit all the flowers with glee
A buzz away, its honey for tea!**



**Happiness is a ladybird
A crawl upon your hand-a-bird
A hold your breath, say not a word
A 'fly away home' song you've heard**



The Wonder of Laughter

by Kiser Barnes

Illustrations by Malcolm Lee

As soon as the reflection meeting ended, the brothers, Folami, 8, Makinwa, 6, and other children rushed for the food tables. Piercing whoops, amusing little jumps, hops, comical dances, swirls, cartwheels and high leaps into the sunny afternoon showed how much everyone in the village loved humour. The grown-ups, youth and children knew how to be serious. But they felt laughter was a wonder. It rejoiced the soul. The children also knew when someone said something good in a funny way, the laughter meant hearts had *eaten* (accepted) the spiritual values expressed.

Eating pineapple slices, Folami and Makinwa kept glancing at their aunt, Bolaji. She was fifteen and was telling her



friends funny stories.

Because she was older, she wielded tremendous power over younger boys and girls. Folami and Makinwa loved her.

But they didn't like the way she treated them. She was always so bossy. She commanded them all day long, ordering them to bring her things and sending them running on errands. Her behaviour was wrong, the boys felt, even if it was often amusing.



There was, for instance, the way she always pretended she was fainting from heat exhaustion before sending them running to the market. "By racing around for me," she jested, fanning herself hard, "you stir up fresh breezes that cool the village." Another way she showed how wonderful it was for them to please her went like this: "Fetching things for me makes your little legs super strong. When you

become Olympic champions, tell everyone that running errands for me made you such fast runners.”

Her amusing antics often made Folami and Makinwa laugh. But they wished something funny would happen someday that would make Bolaji change.

Suddenly Bolaji scooped up all the tasty, leaf-wrapped *moin-moin* her hands could hold. She hadn't eaten yet. And she loved those mounds of steamed, grounded-melon-seeds. For her, it was the world's most delicious food, soft and mellow in the mouth and smooth on the tongue.

“Folami! Makinwa!” she called, in a loud, ringing voice.

The brothers dashed over to her.

“Go to the house and fetch my bag so I can carry these *moin-moin* home. Hurry!”

She bellowed the command so energetically that two *moin-moin* fell to the ground. With her hands stretched wide under the others, she couldn't pick them up.

“Folami, Makinwa, quick. Pick up those *moin-moin*! Don't you see those big red ants racing for them?”

“Makinwa, who is that calling us?” asked Folami, just like that, without any thought.

“Me!” answered Bolaji, frowning. “Can't you hear? Pick up those *moin-moin*. Hurry!” A look of puzzlement came into her eyes.

Whispering and giggling, the crowd surrounding Bolaji, Folami and Makinwa sensed something amusing was building up.

“Aunty Bolaji, you sent us on an urgent errand down the hill for your bag. We must do that first,” answered Folami, alert, like Makinwa was, that a chance had



finally come.

“I told you to do that. Now I tell you, pick up my *moin-moin*. The hungry ants!”

“Politely, child, politely,” said Makinwa, at once. “Say it politely, child, in the way you know from the teachings of our religion, so our hearts can hear you.”

“Yes, explain it politely, child, politely, in the way of our cultural traditions,” pleaded Folami, smiling brightly.

The children looking on thought Folami and Makinwa had lost their minds calling Bolaji “child”. No child ever fooled with her. Were they committing the great folly of rudeness to someone older? Would Bolaji tolerate a merriment of which she was at the centre? Even with these wonderments, the children laughed a little.

“Your commands don’t sound the same,” said Makinwa, shaking his head. “The Bolaji we know gives one command at a time. And she expects us to obey only that one. Are you sure you’re Bolaji? I’ll tickle you. Then we’ll see if you’re the real Bolaji.”

“Don’t you dare!” cried Bolaji, trying to hold her hands stiffly.

“If we save your delicious *moin-moin* from those hungry ants will it end your bossing us?” asked Folami. He licked his lips at the delicacies. “Will you continue behaving in a way that spoils our relationship with you? Will that be wise for a girl who believes that laughing shows insight and understanding? We thought wisdom went with seniority.”

“*Moderation in all things* —like the writings say? Hmm. I’ll think about it,” cried Bolaji. “Maybe my heart is eating your funny complaint. Now, hurry! The ants are almost there!” Her voice was so lacking in command, so full of tenderness and love.

“Now we know you are the thoughtful Bolaji. Our mother, your big sister, said one day you would grow up and stop treating us like we’re your personal servant boys. But are you sure you’ve grown up enough to conduct yourself properly as an elder?” asked Folami.



Suddenly Bolaji broke into laughter, a stiff kind, which, under the circumstances, an amused mummy might have expressed. But Folami’s and Makinwa’s mouths opened

wide with laughing. It was contagious. Soon everyone was laughing, holding their bellies and bending over.

And somehow Balaji's laughter was the loudest. Everyone knew it had lifted her embarrassment.

"So you lovers of humour are helping your aunty learn. Ehn? It may take some time. But I'll watch my manners."

She was satisfied that Folami and Makinwa were helping her improve her character, so their kinship would keep blooming like flowers over the fields.

The boys felt a wonderful joy. They were glad laughter had increased her care for their feelings. They loved her more than ever

for letting them draw her into the amusement.

They had talked and laughed with her as though they were her equal. But they knew, with childish discernment, that such a luxury could not be

over-indulged in.

Makinwa picked up the *moin-moin*. Folami dashed away for Bolaji's bag.



Make Me Laugh Games



It's fun to try to make someone else laugh. The following games can be played with children and adults sitting in a circle, or two people sitting across from each other:

Pass the Laugh:

The first person says, "Ha" with a straight face, the next person says, "Ha, Ha" with a straight face. You keep adding another "Ha" until someone laughs. That person is out of the game.

Pass the Face:

In this game follow the same directions as above but you take turns making funny faces until someone laughs.

Staring Contest:

Have a staring contest. You stare at each other with no expression until someone starts to laugh.

Tied in Knots

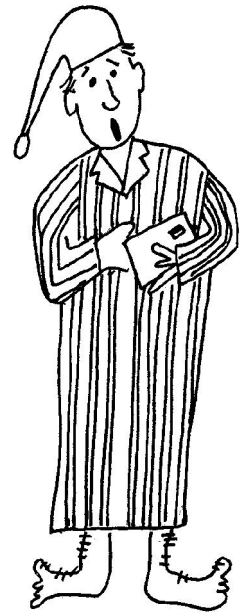
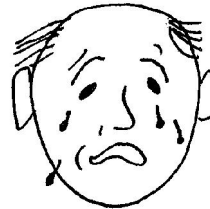
1. Stand in a circle. This works best if there are no more than 5 people in one circle.
2. Reach out with your left hand and hold someone else's left hand.
3. Reach out with your right hand and hold someone else's right hand. Each player must be holding hands with two different people.
4. Now undo yourselves, without letting go of each other's hands, so everyone ends up in a proper circle.
5. Don't worry if it doesn't work the first time—you will still have a good laugh trying!



The Day Mr Grump Smiled

This story about Mr Grump shows that a smile can make all the difference.

Mr Grump was an old misery!
He never smiled at anyone.



He never said 'Hello' to anyone.

So no-one ever smiled back or said 'Hello' to him.

Mr Grump became even more grumpy than before, and very sad.



And then, one day, a strange thing happened.
Mr Grump got up as usual and went out to post
his letters.

But he forgot to get dressed. He went out in
the street in his nightshirt!

That day, everyone Mr Grump
met smiled at him. He was surprised
and very pleased.

Next time someone smiled at him, he
was so pleased he even said 'Hello'.

And everyone he spoke to smiled and
said 'Hello' back.

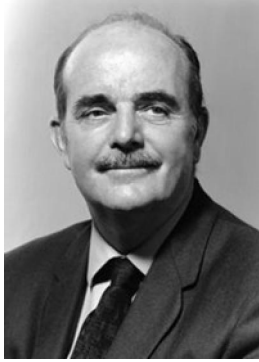
Mr Grump was the happiest he'd
been for years. 'I must smile more
often,' he thought.

Hello!

Hello Mr
Grump!

Hello!
Hi. How are you?





Hands of the Cause of God

William Sears

(1911-1992)

William Sear's childhood was full of fun. He was very imaginative and had a wonderful sense of humour. He also had a warm and loving nature. He was curious about everything. When he was very young, one thing in particular puzzled him, and that was how his mother always knew when he was doing something naughty even when she wasn't watching him!

She used to say, " I've got eyes in the back of my head!"

Bill was intrigued and thought he would like to see them. So one day when his mother was having a nap in an armchair, he crept up behind her, reached up, and gently cut off a lock of her hair from the back of her head, hoping to find these mysterious eyes of hers underneath! To his disappointment he didn't find any. However, he said that when his mother woke up and discovered what he had done, she had two very amazed eyes in the front!

Bill's curiosity often got him into trouble, but it also made him wonder about things, especially about God. When he was older, he began reading the Bible under the bedcovers at night, using a torch to see by because he was supposed to be asleep. He became fascinated by all the stories he found there and talked about them with his



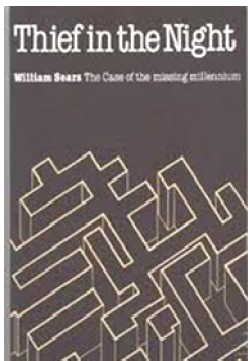
grandfather, who was a very good listener and also very wise. His grandfather told him that the important things in life were not being rich and having lots of things, but being kind and gentle and truthful and generous and brave. These qualities, he said, were what made people love you.

It was around this time that Bill had a dream, not once but several times. And each time it was exactly the same. Bill told his grandfather that the dream was of a shiny man who told him to search and to "be like Peter". Peter was one of the first disciples of Jesus.

As Bill grew older, the more he read and thought about things the more he realised that the Bible was full of clues about the coming of another great Teacher from God. Sometimes this was described as the Return of Christ, which meant the return of the Holy Spirit of God that had shone through Jesus and the other Great Messengers of God down the ages. Bill was very excited and discovered that some learned scholars had even worked out the date, which was around 1844, the year the Báb declared His Mission.

Bill had been brought up believing in Jesus, and when he eventually heard about the coming of the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh and their message to bring peace and justice and unity to the world, he knew They were the ones the prophecies were talking about.

He became a Bahá'í and wrote a book about the fulfilment of these



prophecies. Many people have become Bahá'ís through

reading it. It is called "Thief in the Night" because this is how Jesus described His return as the Holy Spirit to the world — He said He would return like a thief in the night.

This did not mean anything bad, but was just a way of saying that most people would be *spiritually* asleep when He came so they would not notice. Only those who were spiritually awake would know.

Well, Bill was certainly awake—in fact, he had been searching for a long time for a new Messenger of God to come. He had known it was time. He had heard about the Faith from a Bahá'í called Marguerite, who later became his wife. When she had shown him a photograph of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, he'd said, "That is the shiny man I saw in my dream!"

Bill was at the height of his fame and success in America because of his popular Radio and Television shows, and he won many awards. But he and Marguerite decided to leave it all behind to pioneer to South Africa to help the friends there to tell people about Bahá'u'lláh's message of love for all mankind.

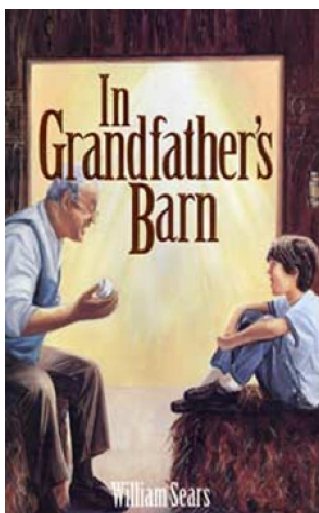
Despite often being ill, being nearly killed by snakes, and facing many other difficulties, Bill loved being in Africa. For 50 years he also travelled to other parts of the world to tell people about Bahá'u'lláh. And he made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and met the beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, who held out his arms and warmly embraced him. Bill said it was like coming home.

One day, in October 1957, Shoghi Effendi sent a message to say that William Sears had been made a Hand of the Cause of God. He couldn't believe it at first because he did not think he was good enough. But, of course, he was!

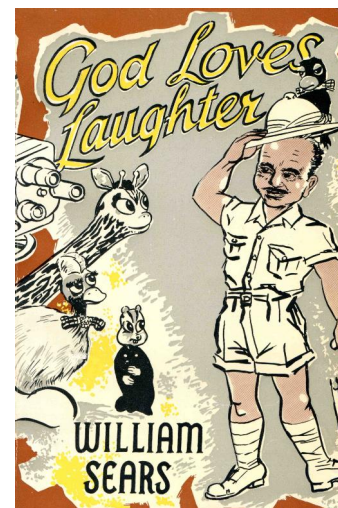
William Sears' love and energy warmed the hearts of everyone who met him. Even when he became old and frail he never gave up. In the last few months of his life, when he was nearly blind and couldn't walk any more, he went from city to city to meet with the friends to encourage and inspire them to do as much as they could to spread the healing message of Bahá'u'lláh.

As well as writing "Thief in the Night", he wrote many other books. One of them is about when he was a child and the conversations he had with his wise grandfather. He also wrote a book called "God Loves Laughter", which is very funny and includes the story about him trying to find the eyes in the back of his mother's head when he was a little boy!

When William Sears died and his soul went to the next world, the Universal House of Justice wrote a beautiful tribute to him. Among the many things they praised him for were:

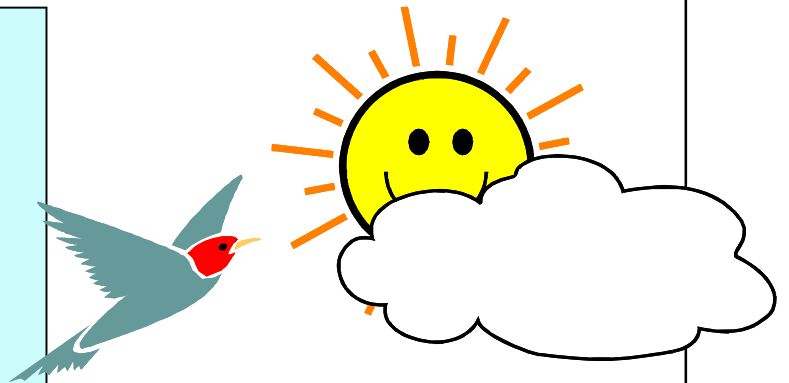


★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
★ his "enthusiasm for teaching"
★ "his humour"
★ and his
★ "special love for children"
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



HAPPINESS

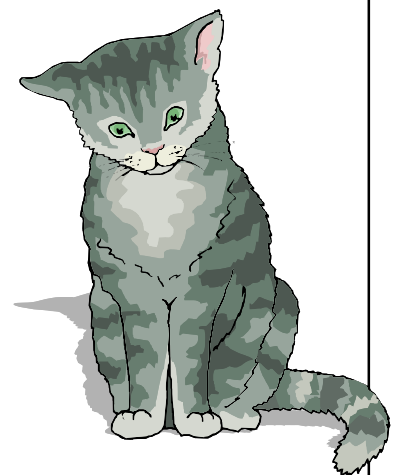
**Be alert
Be vigilant
Be thankful
And be wise
Happiness is there
Before your eyes**



**'Tis
The daintiest dance
The merest glimmer
A chink of light
A lustrous shimmer
A soulful note
The faintest cry
A song of love
A sweet reply**

**A tug on heartstrings
The utmost longing
A sigh of relief
A sense of belonging
The tiniest moment
The sweetest thought
A smile in your heart
Tis happiness caught!**

Pauline Oliver



A decorative border with a repeating pattern of stylized green leaves and small purple and orange flowers, framing the central text.

**Happiness consists of two kinds;
physical and spiritual.**

**The physical happiness is limited;
its utmost duration is one day,
one month, one year.
It hath no result.**

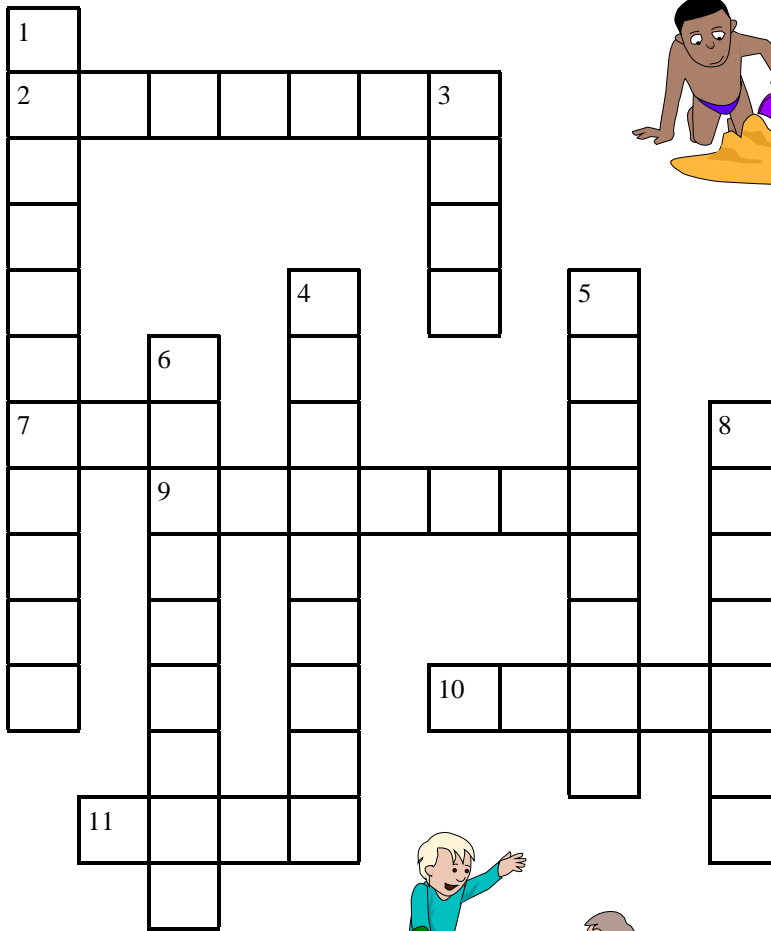
**Spiritual happiness is eternal
and unfathomable.**

**This kind of happiness appeareth
in one's soul with the love of God
and suffereth one to attain
to the virtues and perfections
of the world of humanity.**

**Therefore, endeavour
as much as thou art able
in order to illuminate
the lamp of thy heart
by the light of love.**

Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of Abdu'l-Bahá

Use the missing words to fill in the crossword.



Clues Across:

2. Spiritual happiness is e_____.
7. There are t_____ Kinds of happiness.
9. Spiritual happiness helps us attain v_____.
10. It illuminates the lamp of your h_____.
11. Spiritual happiness appears in your s_____.

Clues Down:

1. Spiritual happiness helps us attain virtues and p_____.
3. Try to illuminate the l_____ of thy heart.
4. S_____ happiness is eternal and unfathomable.
5. The two kinds of happiness are spiritual and p_____.
6. Spiritual happiness appears in the soul with the l___ o_ G___. (3 words)
8. Physical happiness is l_____.

Draw lines to show which activities bring physical happiness, and which bring spiritual happiness. Very lightly colour in the boxes so you can still read the words: light green for physical happiness, light blue for spiritual happiness.

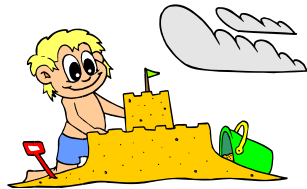


Being kind to someone who's unhappy



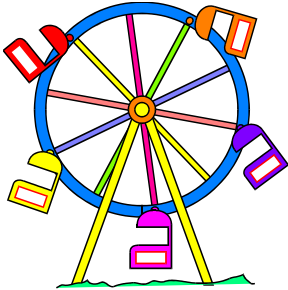
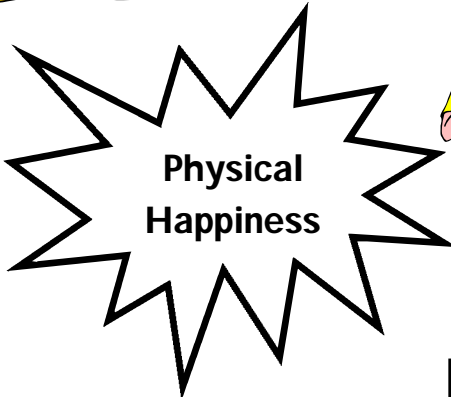
Telling the truth even if it gets you in trouble

Winning A football game



Going on rides at a theme park

Unwrapping your birthday presents



Watching your favourite TV programme

Saying prayers at bedtime

Singing at a devotional meeting



Giving someone a present

Being friendly to all the children in the playground, as well as your own friends



Swimming in the warm sea

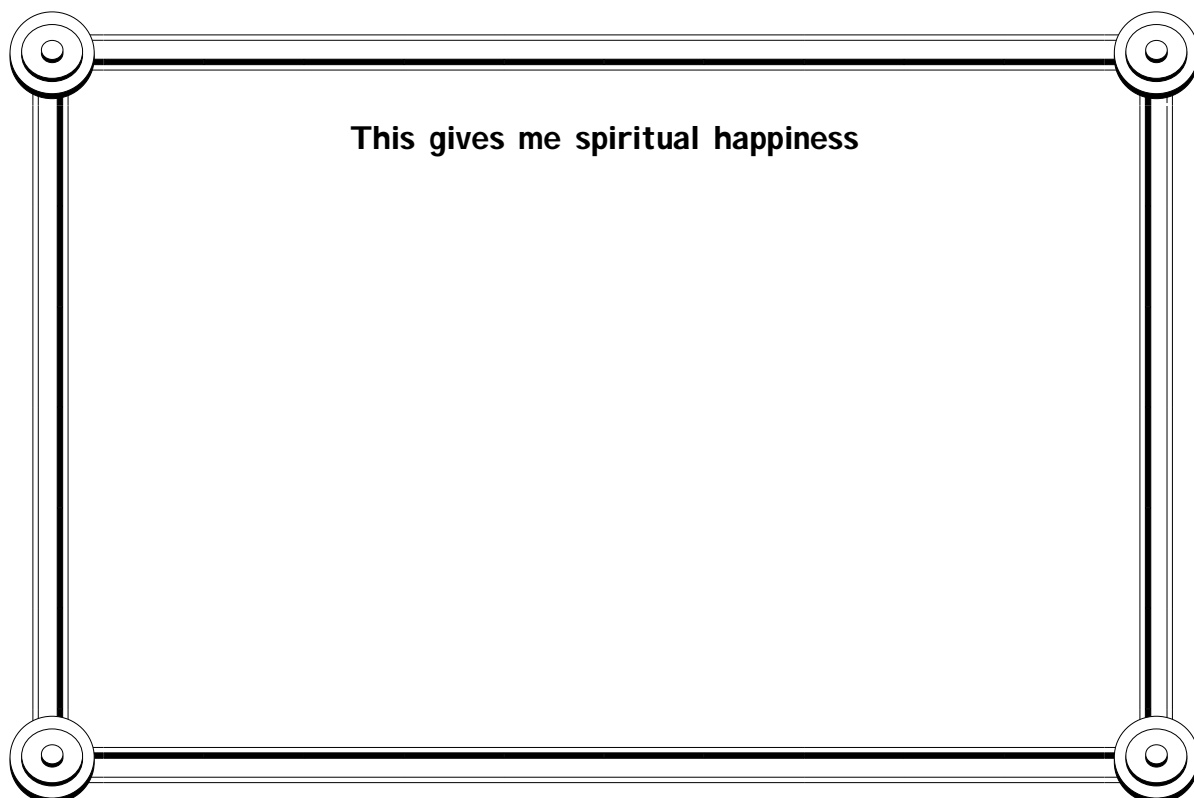
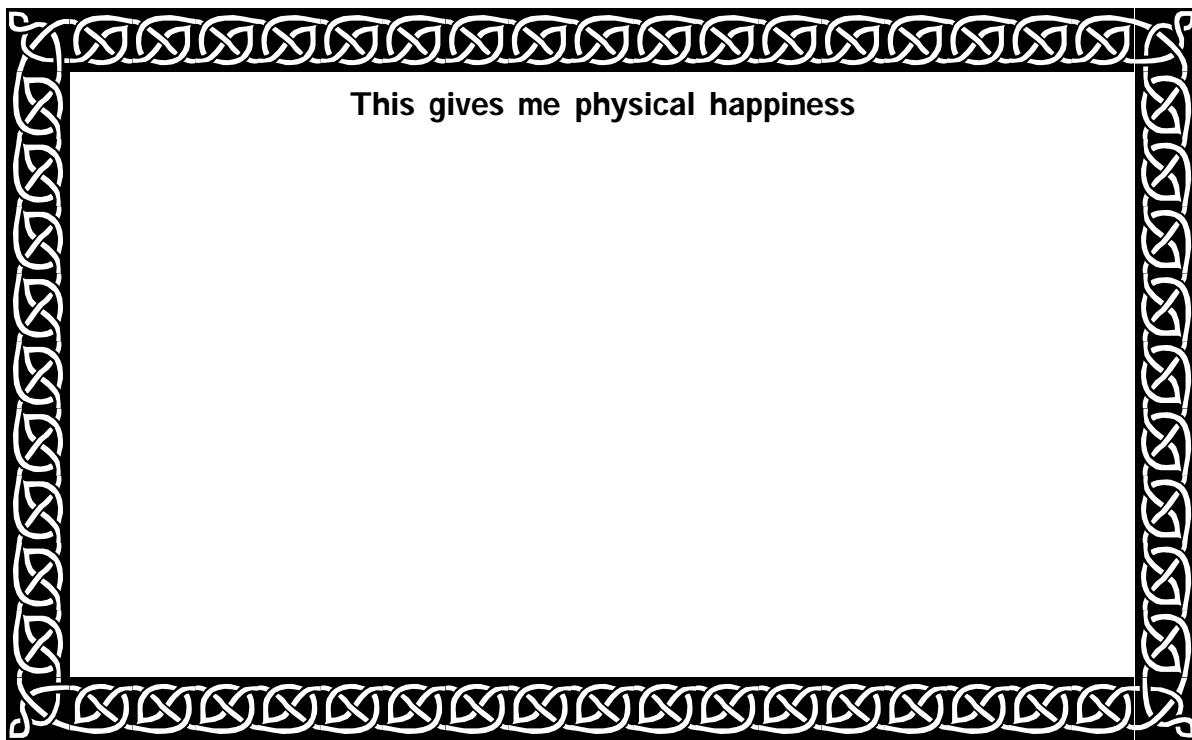


Visiting someone who's ill

Eating a delicious meal



Draw two pictures to show things that make you happy.



JOKES

What goes zzub, zzub?



A bee flying backwards!



What kind of ship never sinks?

Friendship!

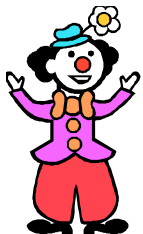


What begins with a P and ends with an E and has a million letters in it?

Post Office!

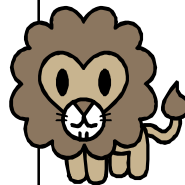
What goes over the water, under the water, on the water, and yet never touches the water?

An egg in a duck's tummy!



Why did the lion refuse to eat the clown?

Because he tasted funny!



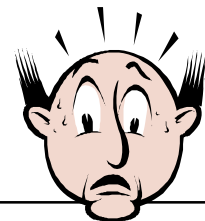
What gives you an electric shock?

A currant bun!



How can you stop an elephant smelling?

Tie a knot in its trunk!



Amazing Stories from the Dawn-Breakers

*Stories from The Dawn-Breakers adapted by Jacqueline Mehrabi and illustrated by Malcolm Lee,
(Published by the Bahá'í Publishing Trust of India)*

(The story so far: *Táhirih and Quddús are at a conference in the village of Badasht with some 80 other believers. The Bab is still in prison in the north of the country but Bahá'u'lláh is there and day by day He reveals new laws for the friends to follow. Then Táhirih appears without her veil, saying that this is the great Day promised in all the religions of the past. Some of the believers are shocked but others are filled with awe and wonder.*)

Part 28

After the Conference of Badasht

(July 1848)

After the Conference of Badasht, the believers left to return to their homes. On the way, Bahá'u'lláh, Quddús, Táhirih and some other believers stopped to rest at the foot of a mountain. Early next morning they were woken by rocks being thrown down at them by villagers from the top of the mountain! The villagers who lived nearby had heard false reports about the conference and thought something bad had happened.



Everyone fled as the villagers swarmed down the mountain and stole everything that had been left behind. But afterwards

Bahá'u'lláh went to see the villagers to explain what the new Faith was all about, and they apologised and returned everything they had stolen.

Quddús returned to his home in Barfurush. By the time he arrived, news of the conference had already reached the town and the religious leaders were waiting to arrest him. He was imprisoned for three months in a house

belonging to one of the priests.

Táhirih was also arrested and then taken to Tihrán. She was kept a prisoner in the house of the mayor for four years.

As for Bahá'u'lláh, He continued His journey to His home in Núr, but on the way He, too, was arrested and taken to Tihrán. A man who worked for the Russian government, and who admired Bahá'u'lláh very much, offered to help Him escape by boat to Russia. Bahá'u'lláh thanked the man but did not accept his kind offer. After a few days He was set free. At least, for the moment.

(To be continued)



The Kitáb-i-Aqdas ~ The Most Holy Book

Lesson Twenty-One

Bahá'u'lláh says in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas (verse 70)

“Live ye one with another,
O people,
in radiance and joy.
By My life!
All that are on earth
shall pass away,
while good deeds alone
shall endure....”

The answers to the following questions are in the quotation opposite:

1. How should we live with one another?
2. What shall pass away?
3. What will endure? (that is, what will last?)

The Cooks Who Made Everyone Happy

When Bahá'u'lláh and the believers were travelling from Baghdád to Constantinople everyone helped by doing different jobs. There were many people to be fed and two of the friends were responsible for doing the cooking. Their names were Ridá and Mahmúd.

At the end of each day everyone would be exhausted and fall asleep as soon as they had eaten. But Ridá and Mahmúd could not go to sleep immediately as they had to wash the pots and pans and dishes. Sometimes this took them so long they did not get enough sleep before they had to set off on their journey again. However, they never minded because they loved to do things for others. And one day something comical happened.

The cooks were so tired they fell asleep as they were walking. They continued to walk in a daze but did not know where they were going. Every now and then they imagined in their dreams that they had come to a small stream, and they would leap into the air to jump over it, but there was never anything there! They looked so funny, everyone was laughing.

Ridá and Mahmúd were greatly loved by Bahá'u'lláh. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said "They were trustworthy, loyal, true ", and that "they made every one of the friends happy."

Tales from the Holy Land

“Bahá’u’lláh Arrives in ‘Akká”

by Leslie Tehrazadeh O’Mara

Bahá’u’lláh brought the most wonderful message of love and hope for all the people in the world. He brought a vision of how the world can function in a totally new and wonderful way. He brought this message from God.

Many people in the world were not comfortable with a new Message – they did not



The prison in ‘Akká

understand that this Message was from God. They sent Bahá’u’lláh from country to country in the hope that people would not hear His Message if He was a prisoner and an exile.

The last prison Bahá’u’lláh was sent to was the worst. It was in ‘Akká in the Holy Land. Bahá’u’lláh called ‘Akká the “Most Great Prison”. Akká was a very small city, with narrow winding streets. At that time it was a dirty place and many thieves and dangerous

prisoners were held there.

It was on the last day of August that they took Bahá’u’lláh to that terrible place by boat, across the bay from Haifa. It is very hot in that part of the world in August and we know that on that very day there was no breeze and it took about eight hours for the small sailing boat to make the short journey.

Bahá’u’llah and His companions were sitting on the deck of the boat with no shelter from the blazing sun. It was an extremely difficult journey, and of course the prisoners did not know what the prison city would be like and what sort of conditions they would have to live in.

When the boat finally arrived at Akká, it anchored near the high walls of the city.



Boats anchored at the wall of the prison-city

Then the believers saw that they had to wade through the water to enter the sea gate.



Of course ‘Abdu’l-Bahá was there – He was always close to Bahá’u’lláh, ready to do everything He possibly could to make things even just a little easier for Bahá’u’lláh and His companions. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s greatest joy was to serve Bahá’u’lláh and so He found a chair and arranged for Bahá’u’lláh and the women in the group to be carried over the water so that they could arrive in a more dignified manner.

That first day, as the prisoners were taken through the little alleyways of ‘Akká, people were crowding around, some even on the rooftops, trying to



A lane in ‘Akká

catch a glimpse of them. Many of them came to shout and jeer. This is the way Bahá’u’lláh entered that horrible prison. After nine years He was allowed to live outside the prison-city, although He was still a prisoner until the end of His life.

This was a Messenger of God who was entering the city; this was not an ordinary prisoner they were seeing. In this world, the arrival of the

believers was very difficult in every way. It was hot and sticky, awful smells hung over the city, there was no running water and the people were unfriendly. The prisoners were exhausted and no doubt hungry and thirsty after their difficult travels, and they must have been horrified by the conditions they were coming to live in.

However, in the world of the Spirit the situation was very different! Bahá’u’lláh said “We were welcomed with banners of light . . .” Can you imagine banners of light? This sounds like a moment of triumph, not at all like everyone was experiencing!

Bahá’u’lláh said more – He said, “soon will all that dwell on earth be enlisted under these banners.” He had the vision of all the people in the world living in peace because of His teachings. He



A view from inside one of the prison cells



Modern-day pilgrims in ‘Akká

knew that eventually everything would change – those banners of light that He mentioned were celebrating His spiritual majesty and His power to change the world.

Among those people who were so aggressive and who did not understand the spiritual greatness of Bahá'u'lláh, there were some who knew. One old and respected man who lived in 'Akká said that he could see signs of greatness and majesty and truthfulness in the face of Bahá'u'lláh. He told people that they should rejoice and thank God that such a noble being had come to their part of the world. He said that this would bring blessings to them all.

Bahá'u'lláh Himself always radiated joy and happiness. A pure-hearted man, who lived in a street close to the sea gate where the prisoners entered 'Akká, recognized at once the radiance of Bahá'u'lláh, and was so attracted by Him that he became a Bahá'í.

It is so joyous to know that however difficult the situation was, those believers who were with Bahá'u'lláh would not wish to be anywhere else on earth. They rejoiced every minute that they had the good fortune to be in the presence of the Manifestation of God. They were truly happy and they would often make each other laugh about the events of the day.

~ ~ ~



A group of Bahá'ís in national dress on Mount Carmel, across the bay from 'Akká.



"O my God . . .
From the fragrant breezes
of Thy joy
let a breath pass over me . . ."

Bahá'u'lláh

