**Ruhi Grade 2 Lesson 17**

**Theme: Devoting One’s Life to Service**

**Working Hard for the Benefit of All**

*Slightly modified from Ruhi Grade 2 Children’s Class Material*

**Reciting and memorizing prayers**

Following opening devotions, you can help the children continue memorizing the prayer introduced in the last lesson.

**Memorizing quotations**

The ideas below will assist you in explaining to the children the quotation they will learn today:

If we are to serve God and humanity, effort is required. We must be diligent and hard working. Like trees that give forth goodly and wondrous fruits for the benefit and enjoyment of all, we make effort and work for the good of those around us. And we know that God promises to assist our efforts. So we rise every day, turn our hearts to Him in prayer, and then set out, confident that His love surrounds us and eager to do what little we each can to make this world an earthly paradise. And at the end of each day, we think about what we have done and thank God for His aid and assistance, knowing that we will try even harder the next day. How sad if we waste the time we have been given in this world, and all the talents and capacities with which we each have been blessed, and do not use them in service to God's loved ones.

Throughout His life, 'Abdu'l-Baha was constantly active, working for the good of all. Early each morning He would make His round of visits to the inhabitants of 'Akka. He would visit the elderly, the sick, and the suffering, seeing to their needs and offering them comfort and assistance. During the rest of the day, He would tend to the affairs of the Baha'i community. He would direct various projects, dictate letters, write, and receive visitors. People from all walks of life would bring their problems and concerns to Him, seeking His guidance and counsel. He would give them encouragement and advice and would help to ease their difficulties. Those who worked for the Master had difficulty keeping up with the fast pace of His busy life, but they were assisted and strengthened by His great spirit and words of encouragement. And we strive to follow 'Abdu'l-Baha's example and spend our time in active service to others.:,

To help us remember to always be working hard for the benefit of all, let us memorize the following quotation:

**"Waste not your time in idleness and sloth. Occupy yourselves with that which profiteth yourselves and others."**

*Idleness*

1. When Furio came home from school, he did his homework, then helped his mother and assisted his younger brothers and sisters with their studies. Furio did not rest for a single moment. He was never idle.
2. An old steam train ran through the town for many years but now it is no longer in use and sits idle by the side of the tracks.

*Profit*

1. Fei Li was very gifted at making crafts, which she had learned from her grandmother. Fei Liwanted to teach crafts to others so they could also develop the ability to make beautiful things. Fei Liwanted her talents to profit others.
2. The doctor looked at the old woman. He could see she was not well and told her that her health would improve if she spent more time in the sunshine. She would profit, he said, from taking a long walk outdoors every day.

**Songs**

**Here are a few suggestions, feel free to choose any songs you feel support the main theme of this lesson…**

Please see [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under this lesson for some of the songs and lyrics.

* Busy Hands by Mary Davis and Wilford Johnson
* Strive by Tim Urbonya
* Hands of Service
* Work Done in the Spirit of Service (see recording under this lesson at [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org))
* Service by Virtues in Us, School-Age CD (<https://www.amazon.com/Childrens-Virtues-Songs-Us/dp/7889290853>)
* Kindness Song by Red Grammer
* Love, Service, Joy and Gentleness by Virtues in Us, Preschool CD (<https://store.cdbaby.com/cd/virtuesinus3>)

**Story**

With His heart filled with the love of God, 'Abdu'l-Baha spent every moment in service to humanity, and you may wish to remind the children that He was the perfect Example of how we should serve before telling them the following story:

There once was a very proud man who did not understand the Station of 'Abdu '/-Baha. One day, he approached the Master in the street and said, "So, You are called the Servant of God." 'Abdu 'l-Baha replied that, indeed, that was His name. You know, of course, that the name 'Abdu 'l-Baha means " Servant of Baha" or Servant of God.

"Well," said the man proudly, "I am Moses." Now, the man was referring to the Prophet of God, Moses, and it was not really his name at all. We will learn more about Moses in a later class, but for today you need to know that Moses was one of the Messengers of God that came long before Baha'u'llah. The man was trying to annoy 'Abdu 'l-Baha, but the Master did not respond to his jest. Instead, He told the man to meet Him the next morning at the same spot on the street, and they would go together and serve the people like the great Moses had done.

The man agreed, and the next day from morning to evening he accompanied the Master as He visited the sick and the suffering, served the needy and met with the people who were thirsty to receive His love and His wise counsel. By evening, the man who called himself Moses was extremely tired. Yet, he would not let go of his pride, and when 'Abdu'l-Baha asked him to accompany Him the next day, he accepted.

Again by the evening of the second day the man was exhausted, but he accepted to accompany 'Abdu 'l-Baha for yet another day. On the third day when they returned from their arduous work, the man could not bear the thought of working so hard, not even for another minute. He had learned his lesson and had caught a glimpse of 'Abdu 'l-Baha's greatness. So as they went to part ways, and before 'Abdu 'l-Baha could invite him for another day of work, the man said with great humility: " 'Abdu 'l-Baha, tomorrow morning I will no longer be Moses. “

**Drama**

After the usual warm-up exercise, carry out one or two activities with the children that will strengthen their skills and abilities related to creative drama. They can then improvise in pairs a short scene that will help them gain further understanding of the theme of this lesson, working hard for the benefit of others. While all the children are seated, take them through the following scene, encouraging them to embellish it with their imaginations by asking them questions such as, "What do the characters look like?", "What actions are they carrying out?", and "What expressions are on their faces?". In this way, you will assist them in working out the details of the scene before they begin their improvisations.

A king is traveling through the countryside and sees a very old man working in a field. The king is surprised to see such an old man so hard at work and asks the man what he is doing. The old man explains that he is planting fruit trees. The king inquires how long it will take for the trees to bear fruit. The old man tells him it will take a very long time, indeed, and that he will not live to taste the fruit from the trees he is planting. The king is confused. He wants to know why the old man is using his energy to grow fruit that he will never be able to eat. The old man smiles and explains that, in his life, he has eaten fruit from many trees that were planted by others and that he wanted to plant trees for the benefit of those who will come after him. The king is pleased with this answer and gives the old man a gold coin. The old man smiles and tells the king that the trees did not take so long to bear fruit after all. He has hardly finished planting them and already they have brought him a reward from the king.

**Drawing**

Today you may wish to have your students draw a picture of the king, the old man and the fruit trees.

**Review**

It is suggested that you review with the children the quotation they memorized from today's lesson, after which you can help them recite the following quotations that they learned in Grade 1 about faithfulness and truthfulness:

**"Happy is the faithful one who is attired with the vesture of high endeavor and hath arisen to serve this Cause."**

**"Truthfulness is the foundation of all human virtues."**

**Closing prayers**