**Grade 4 Lesson 3**

**Baha’u’llah is the Promised One of All Ages, Who has Come to Establish the Unity of Humankind**

*Slightly modified from Ruhi Grade 4 Book*

**Opening Prayers**

As always, the class opens with the recitation of prayers. All the children should be able to finish memorizing the prayer introduced in Lesson 1 during this lesson.

**“Glorified art Thou, O God of all names and Creator of the heavens! I render Thee thanks that Thou hast made known unto Thy servants this Day whereon the river that is life indeed hath flowed forth from the fingers of Thy bounty, and the springtime of Thy revelation and Thy presence hath appeared through Thy manifestation unto all who are in Thy heaven and all who are on Thy earth.”**

–Baha’u’llah

See [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under Grade 4 Lesson 1 for this prayer in a 4 x 6 format.

**Introduction to the Lesson:**

\*\*If you can have a vase of diverse flowers on the table, that will be a nice visual to reinforce the point of the lesson\*\*

*Although your students already have some understanding of what it means that Baha’u’llah is the Promised One of All Ages, Who has come to establish the unity of humankind, it is hoped that today’s lesson will help them acquire a deeper appreciation of this concept. You can begin by introducing the following ideas to them:* Please pay close attention as I will be asking you some questions on what I share with you afterwards.

All the great religions of the past speak of a time when God would send to humanity a Manifestation Who would establish peace and harmony on earth. Injustice, hatred and war would disappear, and the nations of the world would live together in friendship. For centuries, people everywhere have anxiously awaited this Promised Day of God. We are fortunate to live in this Day. Baha’u’llah is the Promised One of All Ages, and His teachings will enable humanity to do away with war and establish lasting peace. He has come to unite the peoples of the world into one family.

Baha’u’llah tells us that peace will not be established on earth until humanity is united. His teachings create love in our hearts for everyone. We see other people not as strangers, but as friends. Think of the flowers of a garden. Each kind of flower has a different color, fragrance and texture. These differences make the garden beautiful. Although in appearance we are different from one another, we are all the children of one God Who loves us, cares for us and wishes us to grow together in harmony. We are indeed brothers and sisters, and if we remember the love that God has for each one of us, we will do everything possible to live in unity. Baha’u’llah wishes His followers to show love and goodwill towards all of humanity- every race, every nationality and every religion.

**Questions:**

* Who is the Promised One of All Ages?
* What has Baha’u’llah come to accomplish?
* What should we have in our hearts for one another?
* What is the result of the diversity of flowers in a garden?
* What should be the result of the diversity of the human race?
* If we remember the love that God has for each one of us, how will we deal with one another?
* What does Baha’u’llah want His followers to show towards every race, nationality and religion?

**Memorization of Quotation:**

***All the peoples of the world want to live in peace and harmony, but they have allowed differences to come between them****. According to the quotation below from the Writings of Baha’u’llah, which the children will memorize today,* ***the time has come for people to put aside such differences, to live in peace and to work for the good of everyone.***

**“It is incumbent upon all the peoples of the world to reconcile their differences, and, with perfect unity and peace, abide beneath the shadow of the Tree of His care and loving-kindness. It behooveth them to cleave to whatsoever will, in this Day, be conducive to the exaltation of their stations, and to the promotion of their best interests.”**

–Baha’u’llah

**Songs:** Here are some options…

* **Unite and Bind Together the Hearts** by Ali Youssefi<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfPzUZ_25yw>
* **Be Hopeful**
* **In the Garden of Ridvan** by Leslie Garrett
* **In This Day** by Frederick Ward
* **The Singing Wind** by Phyllis Day
* **There’s a New Wind Blowin** by Phil Lucas and Russ Garcia
* **Nightingale of Paradise** by Gina and Russ Garcia
* **So So Powerful**
* **One Light, One Sun** by Raffi
* **We Are Drops**

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

**Historical Episode:**

*As you know, the period of Baha’u’llah’s stay in Baghdad culminated in the declaration of His Mission in the Garden of Ridvan. Today you will relate the events surrounding His declaration to the children. In doing so, you will* ***enhance their understanding that Baha’u’llah is the Promised One of All Ages, Who has come to unify all people in one universal Cause.***

You know that during His stay in Baghdad, Baha’u’llah revived the fortunes of the Babi community through His love and wisdom, and the power of His Words. The hearts of those near to Him were afire with the love of God, and His companions felt as if they had entered paradise. But the joy of those days was not to last. The enemies of the Cause did not give up their schemings against Baha’u’llah, and eventually they achieved their aim.

About ten years had passed since His arrival in Baghdad , and Baha’u’llah began to speak of the tests and difficulties that lay ahead. A dream He once related to the friends caused them great distress. “I saw,” He wrote in a Tablet, “the Prophets and the Messengers gather and seat themselves around Me, moaning, weeping and loudly lamenting. Amazed, I inquired of them the reason, whereupon their lamentation and weeping waxed greater, and they said unto me: ‘We weep for Thee, O Most Great Mystery, O Tabernacle of Immortality!’ They wept with such a weeping that I too wept with them. Thereupon the Concourse on high addressed Me saying: ‘…Erelong shalt Thou behold with Thine own eyes what no Prophet hath beheld…Be patient, be patient.’ …They continued addressing Me the whole night until the approach of dawn.”

The spring of 1863 had just opened when one day a messenger delivered to Baha’u’llah a communication requesting an interview between Him and the governor of Baghdad. On the following day, Baha’u’llah was presented with a letter from the Prime Minister of the Ottoman Empire to the governor, worded in a courteous manner, inviting Baha’u’llah to travel to the Ottoman capital, Constantinople. (you can show a map) A mounted escort was ordered to accompany Him for His protection. Baha’u’llah agreed to the request at once but refused to accept the money that the government was offering for His travels. The governor’s representative insisted, saying that the authorities would be offended if He did not accept the money. So Baha’u’llah took the sum and immediately distributed it among the poor of the city.

News of Baha’u’llah’s exile from Baghdad shook the Babi community. The friends were overwhelmed with sadness, and at first, no one was able to eat or sleep. Gradually, however, they were calmed through Baha’u’llah’s kind and comforting words. As a sign of His love, He wrote in His own handwriting a Tablet for each of the friends who lives in the city- every man, woman and child.

Close to Baghdad there was a beautiful garden known today as the Garden of Ridvan. On the afternoon of April 22, 1863, Baha’u’llah left the city and entered the garden. This was to be the first stage of the journey that would carry Him to Constantinople. The Babi community was grief stricken. What would be the future of this young religion now that Baha’u’llah was being exiled once again? The heartbroken Babis who gathered to bid Baha’u’llah farewell did not know what happiness God actually had in store for them.

Baha’u’llah stayed in the garden for twelve days. His enemies had tried to strike a fatal blow at the Cause by separating Him from the majority of the believers. God, however, turned the farewell into an occasion of immense gladness. During those memorable days, Baha’u’llah proclaimed to those present that He was the One promised by the Bab, that He was the Promised One of All Ages. The banner of the oneness of humankind was now being raised for everyone to see.

The declaration of His Mission created new life in the souls of His companions. This was the Day of Days for which the Bab had prepared them. Baha’u’llah Himself has said that on that Day “all created things were immersed in the sea of purification”.

Unfortunately there is little known of the details of the conversations Baha’u’llah held with the many visitors He received in the Garden of Ridvan. The following words of the historian Nabil give us only a glimpse of the glory of those days:

“Every day ere the hour of dawn, the gardeners would pick the roses which lines the four avenues of the garden, and would pile them in the center of the floor of His blessed tent. So great would be the heap that when His companions gathered to drink their morning tea in His presence, they would be unable to see each other across it. All these roses Baha’u’llah would, with His own hands, entrust to those whom He dismissed from His presence every morning to be delivered, on His behalf, to His Arab and Persian friends in the city…One night, the ninth night of the waxing moon, I happened to be one of those who watched beside His blessed tent. As the hour of midnight approached, I saw Him issue from His tent, pass by the places where some of His companions were sleeping, and begin to pace up and down the moonlit, flower-bordered avenues of the garden. So loud was the singing of the nightingales on every side that only those who were near Him could hear distinctly His voice. He continued to walk until, pausing the midst of one of these avenues, He observed: ‘Consider these nightingales. So great is their love for these roses, that sleepless from dusk till dawn, they warble their melodies and commune with burning passion with the object of their adoration. How then can those who claim to be afire with the rose-like beauty of the Beloved choose to sleep? For three successive nights I watched and circled round His blessed tent. Every time I passed by the couch where one He lay, I would find Him wakeful, and every day, from morn till eventide, I would see Him ceaselessly engaged in conversing with the stream of visitors who kept flowing in from Baghdad.”

Today, the Bahais of the world celebrate the twelve days from April 21-May 2 as the Festival of Ridvan, the holiest and most significant of all Bahai festivals.

\*If Ridvan is near, you can engage the children in planning an appropriate celebration of this holiest of festivals!\*

**Facts:**

* Baha’u’llah was exiled to Constantinople, after…staying in Baghdad for 10 years.
* Before departing for Constantinople, Baha’u’llah…spent 12 days in the Garden of Ridvan.
* The Garden of Ridvan was…located outside the city of Baghdad.
* In the Garden of Ridvan…Baha’u’llah declared His Mission.
* The period of April 21-May 2 is celebrated by Bahais every year as… the Festival of Ridvan.
* The Festival of Ridvan is…the holiest and most significant Bahai festival.

**Drama:**

You could consider having the children reenact two scenes related to the historical episode in this lesson. They might first improvise a scene of a group of believers in Baghdad who have just received news of Baha’u’llah’s impending departure from the city. Before they begin, ask them to think about the sadness that must have filled their hearts at the thought of separation from Baha’u’llah. Afterwards, have them pretend they are now in the Garden of Ridvan and are sharing the joy of having learned Baha’u’llah’s declaration and are discussing the significance of such an event.

**Drawing:**

It is suggested that you ask the children to draw a picture of a garden to reinforce the ideas you conveyed in your introduction to the class about the unity of humankind. You could remind them that the diversity of the flowers makes the garden beautiful.

Alternative: You could do Ridvan-related crafts

(see [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under this lesson for some examples)

**\*If the Festival of Ridvan is being celebrated near the time of this lesson, you could display these crafts on tables at the celebration (or save them for that time)**

**Review:**

**“The time foreordained unto the peoples and kindreds of the earth is now come. The promises of God, as recorded in the holy Scriptures, have all been fulfilled.”**

-Baha’u’llah

**Closing Prayers**