**Grade 2 Lesson 6: When We are Faithful to God’s Laws, We Draw Closer to Him**

Slightly modified from Ruhi Material

## 4-4:10:

**Opening Prayers:**

To begin the class, you and a few children recite some prayers.

**Practice previous quotes and prayers:** As a first activity, the children can spend some time learning further the prayer introduced previously. Next time we meet we will be learning a new prayer, so please try to memorize this one if you haven’t already!

Prayer being memorized (CAN PLAY SONG) **“O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy great purpose. May they follow Thy commandments and abide in Thy law. Help them, O God, in their endeavor, and grant them strength to serve Thee. O God! Leave them not to themselves, but guide their steps by the light of Thy knowledge, and cheer their hearts by Thy love. Verily, Thou art their Helper and their Lord.”**

## 4:10-4:25:

**Intro. To Lesson**

You may present today's quotation by putting the following ideas into your own words:

By following God’s commandments, we show our FAITHFULNESS to Him, that we desire only that which He desires for us. In our daily lives and through our interactions with others, we strive our utmost to put into action His teachings.

To pray daily is one of the commandments of God, and we observe it under all conditions, even, for example, if we are tired. We are told that we should not speak ill of others, that backbiting is not acceptable. So if people around us are gossiping, we do not take part in such conversations. To treat animals with kindness, to be courteous and hospitable at all times, and to engage in a worthy profession or trade are also commandments of God. We are exhorted to think each day about what we have done and consider what more we can do so that our actions increasingly come to reflect the teachings of God (rose, thorn and bud example- rose: what did I do well or feel good about, thorn- what did I feel badly about, how will I do it differently tomorrow, bud- what am I looking forward to doing tomorrow). There are, of course, so many other commandments that have to do with the material and spiritual life of the individual, as well as those pertaining to the life of the community, for example, marriage, education, and burial of the dead.

**(show picture of Abdu’l-Baha)** Abdu’l-Baha dedicated His life to serving the Cause of God and to carrying out His commands. Patiently, He showed us the way. When asked by one of the friends how to put into practice the teachings of God and acquire spiritual qualities, Abdu’l-Baha lovingly replied, “kam, kam, ruz beh ruz”, which means “little by little, day by day”. He told us not to look at our weaknesses and shortcomings but encouraged us instead to turn towards God and rely on His mercy and assistance.

**Have PEACOCK PUPPET out** (PEACOCK Story: One day at luncheon 'Abdu'l-Bahá asked the pilgrims who had come from America to Akka, if we were glad to be at 'Akká and if we were happy. They answered that they were very happy to be there with Him but that when they thought of their our faults they were unhappy. Abdul-Baha replied emphatically, "Think not of yourselves, but think of the Bounty of God. This will always make you happy." Then He smilingly referred to the Arabic saying regarding the peacock, that "He is contented because he never looks at his feet -- which are very ugly -- but always at his plumage which is very beautiful." *from Diarys, Goodall - Cooper -- Daily Lessons Received at 'Akka January 1908, p. 64*)

**Memorization:** To help us to remember to make every effort to follow God’s teachings every day, let us memorize the following words of Baha’u’llah:

**HAND OUT QUOTE:**

**“O Son of Man! Neglect not My commandments if thou lovest My beauty, and forget not My counsels if thou wouldst attain My good pleasure.” --- Baha'u'llah**

Below are a few sentences that will help you to explain the meaning of some of the words in the above quotation, which the children may find difficult.

**Neglect**

1. Krista has a beautiful plant, which she looks after. If she does not water it and put it in the sun, it will not grow anymore. Krista knows that is she neglects the plant, it will die.
2. Ho crossed the street without looking to see whether any cars were coming and almost got hit. Ho neglected to look before crossing the street.

**If we love God’s beauty, what are we NOT supposed to neglect- what must we pay attention to? (His commandments)**

**Commandments**

1. Samuel says his prayers every day at morning and at night. Praying daily is one of the commandments of God. By praying Samuel is following God's commandment.

2. Teresa never tells lies. She obeys God's commandment to be truthful.

**Counsels**

1. One day Gerard and Mary were coloring some drawings. Gerard needed the yellow crayon, but Mary did not want to give it to him. The teacher told Mary that she should share. The teacher gave Mary good counsel.
2. Patricia has to decide whether to spend her money on cookies or on a storybook. Her parents advise her to buy the storybook. Her parents give Patricia good counsel.

**If we want to attain the good pleasure of God, what should we NOT forget- what must we remember? (God’s counsels)**

4:25-4:35 **Songs**

Sing a few songs with the children, including at least one you have chosen to reinforce the theme of this lesson.

* **Look at Me, Follow Me**
* **Kam Kam Song (Little by little, day by day)**
* **Strive**
* Ask the children which song they would like to sing.

## 4:35-4:45: **Story**

Today you can tell the children the following story, which will reinforce in their minds the importance of OBSERVING GOD’S COMMANDMENTS AT ALL TIMES:

You remember the story of Haji Muhammad from our last lesson, how obedient he was to Baha’u’llah and what strength he drew from trust in God. But Haji Muhammad had not always been so quick to obey. Perhaps you know that he was an excellent hunter and marksman, which means his bullets never missed their targets. He could even hit a small bird in full flight while he was galloping on horseback. One day, with his rifle on his shoulder, he came upon a group of Baha’is who were on an outing with Baha’u’llah and decided to join them.

When Baha’u’llah saw that Haji Muhammad was going to use his rifle, He told him not to kill innocent birds. Haji Muhammad did not pay any attention to what Baha’u’llah said because his mind was on hunting, which he loved very much. So, he continued shooting at every bird he saw. But he was quite surprised to find that none of his bullets hit. He shot once, he shot twice, he shot many times- but did not bring down even one bird. He shot at big birds and at little birds, without ANY success!

The group was returning from the outing when a large, beautiful, white bird caught Haji Muhammad’s eye. It was so big that it could not fly quickly, and Haji Muhammad thought that surely it would be easy to hit this one. His first shot missed. Then he fired four more times, but he missed EVERY TIME! In a panic, the frightened bird flew near them. Haji Muhammad thought that now he could not POSSIBLY miss! He fired two more shots, but the bird ESCAPED!

Haji Muhammad was ASTONISHED and he began to think about the whole incident. All of a sudden, he understood something VERY IMPORTANT. He realized that Baha’u’llah had given him a clear command, but in his preoccupation with his own wishes and desires, he had ignored Baha’u’llah! That day Haji Muhammad made a firm decision to obey the commandments of God AT ALL TIMES.

## 4:45-5:00:

**Drama**

The activities that follow will help the children continue developing the skills and abilities of creative drama.

1. Ask your students to stand in their imaginary squares. As you did in the previous lesson, have the children stand about 5 feet apart and imagine that they are in their own squares. Ask them to walk along the border of his/her imaginary aquare.

Ask children to: raise up your arms and stretching from the tips of your toes to the tips of your fingers, reach towards the sky. Now you are going to relax and let your arms and head hang freely. *Repeat this several times.*

1. Now explain to your students that for the next activity, they are going to communicate using ONLY THE MOVEMENTS OF THEIR BODIES. To begin, ask them to say “Stop!” with their hands. Then ask them to do the following:
* “Yes” with your head
* “I don’t understand” with your eyes
* “I hear something” with your ears
* “I’m surprised” with your jaw
* “I smell fresh bread” with your nose
* “Come here!” with your finger
* “I’m running” with your arms
* “I bump into a wall” with your shoulder
* “I’m slipping” with your legs
* “I’m tired” with your whole body
* “I’m waiting” with your whole body
* “I’m looking for someone” with your whole body
1. Now we are going to divide into groups of 5. The children in each group need to stand in a row, front to back, with their hands on the shoulders of the child in front of them. All the children should close their eyes EXCEPT the child at the very END of each row. This child is the driver and the others are the bus. When I say “Go” all the buses should start moving forward and the driver will steer the bus to the right or to the left by gently pushing on the shoulders of the person in front of him/her, who does the same to the next child, and so on. To stop the bus, the driver gently pulls on both shoulders. WHAT GUIDELINES DO WE NEED TO SET UP SO THAT WE CAN DO THIS SAFELY?
2. For this next activity, it is important for you to know that there is a difference between doing something with diligence (care, and thoughtfulness) and doing something without proper care and effort. We are going to do an improvisation today in pairs that will show us this. You are going to divide into pairs- which means 2 people in each group, and then I would like you to sit down and listen quietly so I can describe the scene that you are going to act out. *Read it one time to them and then read it again slowly with time to act out each part.*
* I would like you to imagine that you are living in the mountains, in a small place this is far from the local market. One day, your mother asks you to go to the market to buy some vegetables and return home RIGHT AWAY. Soon after setting out, you encounter a herd of sheep blocking the road. Rather than waiting for the sheep to move, you gently steer your way through the herd. Next, you come to a river, where you must get into a boat and row your way across. If you stop rowing even for a moment, you will start to go downstream. Finally, you make it to the other side of the river and continue your journey. As you are walking, you meet some friends who ask you to join in a game of football. At first you think about stopping to play, but then you remember your promise to your mother to buy vegetables and come home right away. One your return from the market, you think about taking a different path, one that is more beautiful, with flowers to pick along the way. The other path is much shorter, but not as pretty. You decide to take the shorter path and soon reach home with the vegetables requested by your Mother.

**What does this story that you just acted out have to do with aligning our will with a Higher Will?**

## 5:00-5:17:

**Drawing**

Today in your drawing journals, you can choose to draw a picture of someone following one of the commandments of God that we talked about at the beginning of the lesson, such as being kind to animals, praying each day, not backbiting, or doing their work in the spirit of service and worship. We will have a chance to share at the end of class, if you want to do so.

## 5:17-5:22:**Give children a chance to share their drawings with the group if they would like to share.**

## 5:22-5:27: **Review**

Repeat the quotations from today's lesson and help the children to recite the following quotations that they learned in Grade 1 about STEADFASTNESS and FAITHFULNESS:

**Intro to Virtue of STEADFASTNESS:** One of the most important qualities of a person who truly loves God is steadfastness.

Steadfastness is being faithful. It is remaining true to someone or something in spite of any tests or obstacles that appear to stop you.  When we are steadfast, no matter what happens in life, we always remember God and our love for Him. During life’s tests and difficulties, the steadfast believer is like a strong ship in the storm.  You don't let yourself become battered or blown off course.  You just ride the waves. Therefore, nothing that others can say or do to us can affect our faith in God. We love Him and obey His laws and teachings. In order to remember the importance of steadfastness, let us review the following quotation of Bahá’u’lláh:

**“Supremely lofty will be thy station, if thou remainest steadfast in the Cause of thy Lord.”**

**Supremely**

1. The gardens were supremely beautiful, more beautiful than any that had ever been seen.

2. Maria’s mother made a very special cake for the family. They ate it with great enjoyment and all said it was supremely delicious.

**Lofty**

1. Each night before she sleeps Martha prays and feels close to God. When she goes to sleep her spirit is in a lofty state.

2. At the meeting, Kevin is giving a talk about world peace and the goodness of humanity. Kevin is speaking of lofty things.

**Remain steadfast**

1. Her friend keeps telling Rosemary that stars are white spots painted on the sky, but Rosemary has learned that each star is really a far-away sun. Rosemary does not change her mind. She remains steadfast in what she knows to be true.

2. Someone told Mona that it is not important to pray every day, but she kept praying because she knew it was a law of God to pray. Mona remained steadfast in following the law of prayer.

Baha’u’llah says that we should “**become as steadfast and immovable as the mountain in His Cause.”**

**Intro to FAITHFULNESS:** A faithful soul never forgets its love for God. It is out of our faithfulness to Him that we always put forth effort to follow His teachings and obey His laws, even when it becomes difficult. So it is that we work hard to serve others and to do worthy deeds, with no other thought than attaining God’s good pleasure. For the faithful soul there is no greater joy than striving to please God. Let’s read together the following quotation of Bahá’u’lláh:

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

**Attired-** wear something (usually something special- like wearing your finest clothes)

**Vesture**

1. In some places, judges must wear a white wig and a long black robe in a court of law. They must wear the full vesture of judges.

2. Before leaving the palace, the prince puts on his sash and crown. He puts on his royal vesture.

**Endeavor**

1. The students decided to plant trees around the school. The community supported their endeavor by providing seedlings and soil.

2. Pierre and Arlene decided that they would climb to the top of the mountain. They knew that this would be a difficult endeavor, but they were determined to try.

**High endeavor- service to humanity!**

**Arisen to serve this Cause-** God’s Cause is the Cause of unity and peace among all humanity- we want to be peacemakers and builders of unity between people- by arising to serve this Cause- it means we are serving through our actions. We have to make that choice every day. **And we should make a joyous thing of the little services, because you can never tell which is little and which is big in God’s sight!**

## 5:27-5:30:

**Closing Prayers**

The class closes with a prayer or quotation recited in the usual manner. **BLESSED IS THE SPOT**