**New Ruhi G3 Lesson 1**

**Theme:** God’s Manifestations are the Source of our knowledge of that which is good, for these special Beings reflect, to the utmost perfection, all of His names and attributes

*Slightly modified from the Ruhi Grade 3 curriculum*

**Opening Prayers**

*The opening devotions will set the tone for the time you will spend together with your students and will serve as spiritual preparation for learning. By the third grade, the children will be eager to organize this portion of the class themselves, so, after the first session for the year, you could ask a few students to plan the opening devotions for each of the subsequent class periods.*

**Memorization of Prayer** (over the next few lessons)

**“O Thou Whose face is the object of my adoration, Whose beauty is my sanctuary, Whose habitation is my goal, Whose praise is my hope, Whose providence is my companion, Whose love is the cause of my being, Whose mention is my solace, Whose nearness is my desire, Whose presence is my dearest wish and highest aspiration, I entreat Thee not to withhold from me the things Thou didst ordain for the chosen ones among Thy servants. Supply me, then, with the good of this world and of the next. Thou, truly, art the King of all men. There is no God but Thee, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous.”** –Baha’u’llah

See [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under this lesson for a 4 x 6 quote card of this prayer.

**Introducing the Principal Theme**

*As already mentioned, the aim of the three lessons in this set is to impress upon the children that seeking knowledge of God should be the central concern of their lives and that His Manifestations shine the light of His knowledge on the world of humanity, guiding it and helping it to advance, materially and spiritually. This first lesson should enhance the children’s understanding of the truth that* ***God’s Manifestations are the source of our knowledge of that which is good, for these special Beings reflect, to the utmost perfection, all of His names and attributes.***

*Since this is the first lesson of the third grade, it would be natural to dedicate some time during the initial class period to reminding the children of what they have done and learned together over the last two years. This is an opportunity for you to express great joy at noting the progress they have made. You can shower them with praise, which will in no way be empty, for they have surely advanced well in their efforts to acquire spiritual qualities and develop a character befitting their nobility. You could then ask them to name as many qualities as they are able, encouraging them to think of all their friends in the class and seeing how the qualities of love, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and so forth are reflected in them and in their actions.*

*This review should prepare the way for you to pose a question that will introduce the children not only to this first set of lessons but to all three sets in this grade:*

“How do we know about all these wonderful qualities we should develop? How did we learn, for example, that we must be truthful, loving and kind?”

*You could guide the conversation that ensues along these lines:*

“It is correct to say that we have learned about these fundamental truths from our parents and our teachers. But who taught them? And who taught the ones that taught them? If we keep asking this questions, we finally see that in every region of the world people heard about these truths from the Manifestations of God. In the same way that we have studied quotations from the Writings of Baha’u’llah, the Manifestation of God for today, people throughout time have read and heard the words of earlier Manifestations of God. The names of some of these Manifestations may be familiar to you. Abraham is one. Can you name some others?”

*You could help your students to mention Moses, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus, and Muhammad, as well as the Bab.*

(See [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under this lesson for a sheet showing the Manifestations of God in chronological order with sun image for God)

*Now you could move the conversation towards the theme of this lesson by sharing the following:*

“The Manifestations of God teach us about Him and about His names and attributes. Just as God is all-loving, for example, His Manifestations teach us what it means to be loving. Just as God is all-merciful, His Manifestations teach us what it means to be forgiving. To help us think about the Manifestations of God and their teachings, let us consider the sun. We know that the rays of the sun bring its light and warmth to earth, giving life to all created things. So it is that we see the effects of the ray of the sun all around us, although the sun itself does not descend to the earth. In a similar way, the signs of God, our Creator, are everywhere around us. But, just as with the sun, He does not descend to the earth. Now, what happens if we take a polished mirror and point it toward the sun. The image of the sun and its light are perfectly reflected in it, are they not? God’s Manifestations are like perfect Mirrors that reflect the light of God. All the perfection, the bounty, and the splendor that come from God are visible in His Manifestations, like the sun is resplendent in a clear polished mirror.”

**Memorizing Quotations**

*In the quotation below, Baha’u’llah tells us about the Manifestations of God. He explains to us that the Manifestations of God reflect nothing but God’s attributes. You should help the children memorize it, remembering to explain any difficult or unfamiliar words to them through concrete examples.*

**“These Prophets and chosen Ones of God are the recipients and revealers of all the unchangeable attributes and names of God. They are the mirrors that truly and faithfully reflect the light of God.”** –Baha’u’llah

**Songs**

*From the songbook you are compiling as a children’s class teacher and from other sources available to you, choose a few songs that you feel will reinforce the concepts being taught in the lesson and sing them with the children. You may also wish to include songs from previous grades which your students could choose.*

Some options are:

-God is One

-Be Free by Tim Urbonya (lyrics under this lesson at [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org))

-Thou Art My Lamp (video of song is under this lesson at [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org))

**Stories**

*As explained in the preparatory sections for teachers, you are provided in each lesson with a few stories and written accounts from the annals of the Faith that are much like the ones you narrated to the children in the first and second grades. Whether you share all of them with your students, or only one or tow, will depend on the circumstances of your class. For this particular lesson, several vignettes from the lives of Baha’u’llah and the Bab have been selected which offer some insight into its principal theme: that the Manifestations of God, like perfect Mirrors, reflect His attributes and shed His light on humanity.*

Vignette 1: The Story of the Honest Merchant

You know that every Manifestation of God exhorts us to be truthful and honest. We are to be fair and just in all of our dealings with one another; the Manifestations of God themselves reflect these qualities to the utmost perfection in what they do and what they say. Even before He declared His Mission, the Bab had become widely known for His undeviating fairness. At the age of around fifteen, He had left His home in Shiraz and joined His uncle in business in Bushihr. His uncle was a merchant, and the Bab soon took over the complete management of the trading-house in Bushihr. Often those who were closely associated with Him in those days testified to the purity of His character, to the charm of His manners, and to His high integrity. A certain man once gave Him some goods to sell on his behalf. When the man received the funds for the goods, he was surprised to find that the sum was much greater than what he had expected. He immediately wrote to the Bab, requesting Him to explain the reason and offering to return some of the amount. But the Bab refused to accept it! “What I have sent you is entirely your due,” the Bab replied. You see, there had been a time when the price of the goods had been higher than what the Bab had finally sold them for. So, the Bab, setting the highest standard of honesty and justice, had added some of His own money and sent the man the amount he would have received if the goods had been sold at the peak price.

Vignette 2: The Jealous Passenger and the Power of Forgiveness

Forgiveness is an attribute of God, and just as God is patient and merciful with each one of us, we are to forgive one another and overlook the faults of others. In the lives of God’s Manifestations we see how they looked upon all with the eyes of forgiveness, even those who were cruel and unkind to them. Not long after the Bab declared His Mission, He set out for pilgrimage to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina with His companion Quddus. In another lesson, when we study the life of the Bab, we will learn about this pilgrimage. For now, you need to know that He and Quddus embarked on a vessel that took about two months to reach its destination. Also on board the vessel were two brothers from Shiraz. One of them was captivated by the charm and the sublime bearing of the Bab. The other brother, however, was extremely jealous of the Bab because he was treated with such respect by all those who met Him. Day by day this man became more arrogant and rude, not only towards the Bab but towards other passengers as well. At one point the captain of the vessel became so angry that he ordered the man to be seized and thrown into the sea. The Bab stepped forward and encouraged the captain to be patient. But the captain as beside himself and determined to get rid of the troublesome passenger. When the Bab noticed that the sailors were actually about to throw him overboard, He caught hold of him and earnestly requested the captain to pardon the wrongdoer. The captain was astonished. It was, after all, the Bab Who had suffered the most from the cruelty of this rude man. Yet the Bab explained that, since people who behaved in such a manner harmed only themselves, one should be tolerant and forgiving towards them.

Vignette 3: The Essence of Kindness and the Boy Who Liked Sweets

Baha’u’llah was the essence of kindness. In even the smallest of gestures He reflected the infinite love that God has for every one of His creatures. Perhaps you know that, in the later years of Baha’u’llah’s life, His beloved Son Abdu’l-Baha rented the Mansion of Bahji for His Father. Now, every Friday the believers would gather there to attain the presence of Baha’u’llah. They would stay all day, using the lower rooms of the house, while Baha’u’llah’s family occupied the upper floor. One of the believers, only a boy of four or five at the time, had a very special encounter there, indeed. At noon, when all the grown-ups were resting during the midday heat, he happened to wander off by himself, making his way to the upper floor of the Mansion, where he entered a large hall. Ambling about, he eventually came to a room in which food was stored. What do you think he saw there? A bag filled with sugar cubes. Without thinking, he took a few and put them in his mouth. Then he took some more and left the storeroom. Back in the hall, he suddenly froze in his tracks. There was Baha’u’llah pacing back and forth. He slowly approached the little boy and looked at his hands. And how do you think He treated this boy who had done something naughty? He led the boy towards a large table in the middle of the hall, picked up a plate of candies, and offered him one. “It seems you like sweets,” Baha’u’llah said. “Enjoy! Goodbye. And may God protect you.”

Vignette 4: The Unfair Tax Collector and the Justice of Baha’u’llah

In this world where there is so much corruption and greed, where so many people want to take all for themselves, the Manifestations of God have come to establish justice. Justice is most pleasing in the sight of God, and His Manifestations tell us that we should not take what rightfully belongs to others. Even as a youth, Baha’u’llah displayed unmatched courage in standing up for what was right. At that time in Persia, taxes were not regulated by law according to each person’s earnings. Corrupt officials, princes and, sometimes, even the king took advantage of people and forced them to pay more than what was fair. Now, one such tax collector, who did not walk in the ways of honesty and justice, came to see Baha’u’llah’s father and demanded that he pay a certain amount. The first time this happened, His father paid the official without any protest. But then the tax collector came back a second time, asking for more money, and a third time, asking for still more. Baha’u’llah carefully observed the situation and decided to do something about the unfair behavior of the tax collector. Although he was very young, He rode His horse for two days until He arrived at the capital city, Tihran. There, he went to see the highest officials in the court and presented His father’s case. His presentation was so convincing, His words and arguments so eloquent, that an order was issued to dismiss the unjust tax collector. Everyone was astonished by the fact that, at such a tender age, Baha’u’llah was already so tireless a champion of justice.

Vignette 5: Guidance from Baha’u’llah

All the believers who lived while Baha’u’llah walked on this earth yearned to meet Him. And there are so many accounts of those who were fortunate enough to enter His presence. One such person has related the following: “The very first time I was privileged to attain the presence of the Blessed Beauty, He was residing in Akka. I was overcome with excitement and timidity when an attendant directed me to enter. At that moment I heard the voice of Baha’u’llah bidding me to come. With a profound sense of humility, I went into His presence; after expressing my utter servitude at His threshold, I seated myself. At His request I was served tea. He then recited some of the sacred writings, after which He stated: ‘Let your acts be a guide until all mankind, that from your behavior and conduct they may be enabled to recognize the signs and commandments of God.’”

**Cooperative Games**

*We suggest that, in this part of class, you go back to the cooperative games the children learned in Grade 1, select a few, and repeat them. Of course, you may know some other suitable cooperative games or may wish to devise a new one for your students to play together.*

Here are some ideas…

*Get to Know You Game: (Material: slips of paper with words (pairs), white board and markers, pencils and paper)*

Have each child pick out of a bowl a slip of paper that has a word on it. Once everyone has picked one out, they need to walk around the room and find their pair (ex. Shampoo goes with conditioner, macaroni goes with cheese, etc.). Once they have found their match, they are going to spend two minutes asking them questions (sample questions can be written out on a white board- such as: What is something that you love doing with your family? Where were you born? What is one of your favorite memories from growing up? When you are older, what career are you interested in pursuing that will be of service to humanity? Etc.) Then they switch the interviewer/interviewee so that each person in the pair gets a chance to learn about the other. After 5 minutes in total, you ask them to come back to the group and they each introduce their partner to the class (each has 30 seconds to introduce their partner). (can have some paper and pencils for those who want to write down the answers to the questions they ask their partner; may also want a bell to ring at the 2 min. mark and at the end when it is time to gather back together)

*Balloon Bop*: (*Material: a few blown up balloons)*

Students begin by standing in a circle, holding hands. The teacher drops one balloon into the circle. The goal is for students to see how many times they can tap the balloon into the air (they can tap with hands, arms, heads, shoulder, chest or knees-No feet.), keeping it up in the air, without losing connection (all students must continue holding hands.) In order for this to work effectively, students have to work cooperatively, each of them making sure they are not letting go of their neighbor, hand. They will soon figure out that they must all move together, as a circle, so to make sure they do not lose connection. If the balloon falls to the ground or a student taps the balloon with their feet, the count begins again. Depending on grade level; you can add more balloons to make it more challenging! Before playing: teacher can model how to tap the balloon lightly in order to keep it up in the air.

*Great Wind Blows: (Material: None)*

Arrange chairs/carpet squares to form a circle (If using chairs, facing inward toward the middle). One player starts in the middle, standing up. He or she begins the round by standing in the middle starts by saying “Great wind blows for everyone who…” and then says any characteristic that is true for that person. For example, if the person has been to Canada before, he or she can say, “Great wind blows for everyone who has been to Canada.” All players who have been to Canada before must stand and quickly find a new seat that is more than 2 chairs away from them. If the player is not able to find a vacant seat, he or she is the new person who is in the middle.

**Narration**

*The narration of stories from the annals of the Faith is a wonderful aspect of the culture of the Bahai community. No doubt, a number of the children in your class will be ready to begin to develop the skills required, and the vignettes in this set may serve as a starting point for them. You will not, of course, hold unrealistic expectations of your students. Some will demonstrate more aptitude for this activity than others. There are those who will be able to recall a sequence of events with greater ease and who possess a higher level of language proficiency. But many, with your loving assistance, should be able to advance in their ability to narrate a simple story, which they can then strengthen as they grow.*

Make time to do this with your students in your class.

**Drawing**

*It is suggested that you ask the children to depict some kind of image or scene that will reinforce the ideas you are trying to teach. You could, for example, have the children draw or paint a large sun, whose rays are being reflected in a mirror, which, in turn, is giving light to all of its surroundings.*

**Review**

*You should find some suitable time, perhaps at the end of every class period, to help the children review the passage that they are learning by heart in this lesson and one that they memorized in Grade 2:*

**“The purpose of God in creating man hath been, and will every be, to enable him to know his Creator and to attain His Presence.”** –Baha’u’llah

**Closing Prayers**