**Modified Version of Ruhi G3 Lesson 4**

*This lesson is long, and you may have to pick and choose which to include, or make two lessons out of it. The story can be divided into two lessons as well.*

**Opening Prayers- Prayer Sharers**

**Review quotes-** anyone who has memorized can share

(“The purpose of these Educators…” and “The Tongue of My power hath…”)

**Review prayer** that they have been learning

**“O my God, my Lord and my Master! I have detached myself from my kindred and have sought through Thee to become independent of all that dwell on earth and ever ready to receive that which is praiseworthy in Thy sight. Bestow on me such good as will make me independent of aught else but Thee, and grant me an ampler share of Thy boundless favours. Verily Thou art the Lord of grace abounding.”**

-The Bab

Movements to prayer are on [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under this lesson- or earlier lesson on Abraham

**Memorization of New Prayer:**

You can begin to teach a new prayer, if you feel they are ready. It should be possible for the children to learn this new prayer by heart in four class periods.

(See [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) for a 4 x 6 copy of this prayer that can be put in a prayer book for each child):

**“Glory be to Thee, O Lord my God! Make manifest the rivers of Thy sovereign might, that the waters of Thy Unity may flow through the inmost realities of all things, in such wise that the banner of Thine unfailing guidance may be raised aloft in the kingdom of Thy command and the stars of Thy divine splendor may shine brightly in the heaven of Thy majesty.**

**Potent art Thou to do what pleaseth Thee. Thou, verily, art the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.”** –Baha’u’llah

See movements at [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under this lesson

**Fact Card Catch-up:**

If you haven’t already, you can do the Fact Cards Game, where you divide up the fact cards from the life of Abraham/Moses (or both one after the other (not at the same time as it would be too confusing) and have the kids find their pairs and then share the fact with the group.

**Intro to Lesson:**

*This lesson seeks to reinforce your students’ understanding that* ***God’s Manifestations appear from age to age when there is a decline in religion and hearts have turned away from their Creator.*** *The children will learn about the life and teachings of Krishna to help them see that* ***the appearance of God’s Manifestation enables people to draw closer to His Divine Presence.*** *The lesson will also reinforce in the childrens’ minds that* ***the universe is in a constant state of motion, that nothing is stationary,*** *a concept so important for them to grasp, if they are to develop a strong sense of purpose as they grow into young adults, capable of contributing to the betterment of the world. You may wish to draw on the following ideas in presenting the theme of today’s lesson to your students:*

**I will be asking you some questions based on what I am about to share with you, so please pay close attention.**

We know that God’s laws and teachings are like a light that guides humanity on the straight path. Every Manifestation of God has laid down certain laws and heavenly principles for the guidance of His people. As they followed His teachings, fairness and justice, tranquility and peace, brightened the world. But, over time, people would begin to add their own vain imaginings into the laws and teachings brought by the Manifestation of God. Truth would be obscured, and the light of Divine guidance would dim; many would stray off the straight path. Left alone in the darkness, they would forget the love of God, and their hearts would become cold, allowing seeds of hatred and bitterness, cruelty and jealousy, ignorance and prejudice to grow. Suffering would intensify, wars increase, and everywhere injustice could be found. People would live in suspicion and fear. But, whenever the light of God’s teachings become obscured and darkness spreads, He sends one of His Manifestations to guide people back to the straight path. His Manifestation revives and quickens them, restoring order in society and tranquility to human hearts. He breaths fresh life into the world of creation.

Krishna was a Manifestation of God Who appeared a few thousand years ago in a land ruled by corrupt and contentious leaders. The lights of justice and fairness had long been darkened, and people clung to superstitious beliefs. Krishna’s message of universal love helped His followers draw near to God, and His teachings re-established order in the land. Like all Manifestations, He assured the people that God would never leave them alone and promised to return when darkness again overtook the land. We know that, by His return, He was referring to the appearance of another Manifestation, and Krishna made mention of One Who would come after Him, calling Him the “Most Great Spirit” and the “Immaculate Manifestation of Krishna”.

**Questions:**

* To what can we liken the laws and teachings brought by God’s Manifestations? (like a light that guides humanity on the straight path)
* When people follow God’s laws and teachings, what kinds of qualities brighten the world? (fairness, justice, tranquility and peace)
* Over time, what have people in the past added to the laws and teachings brought by God’s Manifestations that darkened the light of Divine guidance? (They added their own vain imaginings to the laws and teachings brought by the Manifestations of God)
* Can you give some examples of “vain imaginings”? Is the belief that idols have powers a vain imagining? (I’m right and everyone else is wrong; you have to do this, and this, and this, to be forgiven…, etc.) (Yes)
* Who has God always sent to the world of humanity whenever the lights of Divine guidance have dimmed and corruption and discord spread? (He sends one of His Manifestations to guide people back to the straight path. His Manifestation revives and quickens them, restoring order in society and tranquility to human hearts)
* What do God’s Manifestations breathe into the world of creation? (They breathe a fresh life into the world of creation)
* Who was Krishna? (Krishna was a Manifestation of God Who appeared a few thousand years ago)
* Who did Krishna promise would come after? (the “Most Great Spirit” and the “Immaculate Manifestation of Krishna”)

**(You may want to tell part of the story of Krishna here, in order to break up the long story a little bit)**

**Memorization:**

**Throughout history, Manifestations of God have appeared in this world to remind humanity of His love and to draw people nearer to Him**. The following quotation from the Writings of Baha’u’llah makes clear that **the Mission of every Manifestation of God is to connect the human heart to its Creator.** (see [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under this lesson for movements to the quote)

**“We summon you to God, We remind you of His Day, We announce unto you tidings of your reunion with Him, We draw you nigh unto His court, and send down upon you tokens of His wondrous wisdom…”**

**Summon:** To authoritatively or urgently call someone to be present

The king summoned his servant to his throne.

**Tidings:** Announcement, piece of news

Jason’s Mom shared with him the good tidings that they would all be going to visit his grandparents soon in Houston.

**Draw You Nigh:** To bring you closer

**His court:** The court of the king is the extended household and all those who regularly attend on the King.

**Token:** An outward sign or expression of something

As a token of his love, her father gave his daughter a beautiful bracelet to wear on her wrist.

**Wisdom:** The quality of having experience, knowledge and good judgment

God’s wisdom is far greater than ours. He is the Knower of things unseen.

**Songs:** (see [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) for lyrics and some music)

* **Make Firm Our Steps** by Joe Crone
* **Lovers of Light Song**
* **Work Done in the Spirit of Service**
* **Any requests from Songbook**

**Cooperative Games:**

* **Balloon Bucket (Collective Hoops)** from Cooperative Games and Sports (Second Edition) by Terry Orlick

Equipment: one balloon or beach ball and one hula hoop for each pair of children

Description:

1. Spread the hula hoops on the floor around the playing area.
2. Partners tap a balloon back and forth to each other in a nonstop fashion as they attempt to get a hoop, pick it up, tap their balloon through it, and replace it on the floor. Partners must keep moving in the direction of different hula hoops while continuing to tap their balloon back and forth.
3. The objective of the game is for the entire group to collectively score as many hoops as possible in a certain time period (i.e. 5 minutes)
4. Players can run, but they cannot run while holding a balloon, and they cannot tap the balloon twice in succession. It must be hit by one partner and then the other. They must continue to move from hoop to hoop and can return to the same hoop only after they have their balloon through all the other hoops. Each set of partners keeps track of their own score (how many hoops they have scored), and the collective group score is added up at the end.

\*This totally active game requires total involvement and a great deal of cooperation. It can be played with groups of any size merely by adjusting the number of hoops that are put out. It can also be played in teams of three rather than in pairs. TO ADD A LITTLE MORE CHALLENGE, see if the players can get themselves and their balloon through each hoop.

**Peluca**

* Get into a circle with one person in the center. This person will then call out elephant, bull, or rabbit. The person that is pointed out, as well as the person on each side of him/her, will have to coordinate their actions and make each animal as described.

Elephant: center will stick both hands in front of their nose in a cylinder to form a trunk. On each side of them they will form the ears by leaning over placing one hand cupped by the person’s ear.

Bull: center person will put their arms out in front of them, with elbows bent, and have their hands in fists, like hooves. The outside people will put their thumbs out with the rest of the fingers closed (looks like a horn on either side).

Rabbit: center places their hands in front of them with their wrists bent, and their front teeth over their closed lips (like bunny teeth) while the outside two put their elbow on either shoulder of the person in the middle and flop their wrist over like bunny ears.

If they do not get into this position by the count of 5 by the pointer then the last to get into position will become the center person, after dancing a funny dance called the peluca while everyone chants- “We all want (name of child) to dance the peluca. X 2 Peluca por aqui, peluca for aya, peluca por delante, peluca por atras.”

**Story**

**Props:** princess crown and prince crown, handcuffs, cow herder picture, large snake, thunder maker, a box with rice in it- wrapped as a gift, picture of a chariot/charioteer, the Bhagavad-Gita, Words of Krishna from the Bhagavad-Gita on a poster

*Today’s historical account focuses on the life of Krishna. When speaking to the children about His life, you will want to underscore how His teachings helped people to grow closer to God, particularly through prayer, contemplation and selfless service. In this respect, the children should understand that Krishna appeared in a land ruled by corrupt princes and kings and that He revived the hearts of the people through His message of universal love and restored peace and justice through His teachings. In this context, you will note that His teachings make reference to a choice between “good” and “evil”. Of course, the term “evil” helped the people in that age to recognize that which is good. But you know from the Bahai Writings that evil does not exist in creation but is, rather, the absence of good, and you will want to bear this point in mind in addressing any questions, should they arise.*

Krishna was born in India a few thousand years ago. (can show on map where India is) His mother, Devaki, was a princess and His father, Vasudeva, was a prince. They live in one of the small kingdoms in the north of India. But at the time of His birth, Krishna’s parents did not live in a palace. Far from it. Devaki’s brother was the Crown Prince of the land, a cruel man, hungry for power. He had imprisoned his own father, the king, and had seized the throne for himself. Now, the Crown Prince was worried that if his sister were to have a son, the child might one day take the kingdom away from him. Determined to protect his throne, the Crown Prince had Vasudeva and Devaki, who was soon to give birth, locked in a prison cave, with guards posted outside to watch them.

Then at midnight on evening, when people were sleeping, Krishna was born. His parents were in utter despair. Knowing His life was in danger from the Crown Prince, Krishna’s parents turned to God for assistance. So it was that they knew they must take the Newborn to safety in the village across the river. His tiny Son wrapped in a blanket in his arms, Vasudeva suddenly found the prison doors unlocked and the guards fast asleep, enabling him to escape undetected and cross the river. There, in the village, he exchanged Krishna for a baby girl who had just been born to his good friend, and he returned to the prison with her in his arms. As soon as he entered, the doors locked behind him, and the infant started to cry. The guards awoke and alerted the Crown Prince that his sister Devaki had given birth to a daughter. Concerned the child might threaten his power, he had the little girl brought before him at once. But, though the Crown Prince tried, he was not able to carry out his plan to kill the baby, and meanwhile Krishna was safe in the village. Of course, in truth, no plan devised by any man, however ingenious, can frustrate the Will of God, and no matter how many guards the Crown Prince had placed at the entrance of the cave, no matter how many locks he had put on the door, Krishna would have been protected.

Krishna’s birth occurred at the precise moment that ancient prophecies had foretold, and a herald appeared to wise men and shepherds alike, telling them of the birth of a Savior. The next day they came from all directions to see the Child and offer Him gifts. It was this procession of wise men who gave Him the name Krishna, which is a title that means “Redeemer of the world.”

Krishna passed His childhood and youth among the villagers, most of whom were cow herders that spent their says in the open countryside. He was known for His kindness, His wisdom, and the beauty of His spirit. He was gentle, loving and humble. He served others and was loved by all. He defended those who were weak and always sought to bring peace when any dispute arose. There are many stories of Krishna’s childhood that tell of His extraordinary knowledge and powers. It is said that, on one occasion, a serpent was infesting the river near His village, and Krishna tamed the snake and saved all the villagers and their herds from the poisoned waters. On another, He saw the villagers, fearful of a coming storm, praying to the god of thunder. Krishna turned to them and asked them why they prayed to such a god, for what was the use of praying to a minor spirit. He told them to be devoted to the Supreme God and to see His presence in all human beings. He encouraged them to engage in service to others, to feed the poor, and to give to those in need. You see, in India at that time, most people worshipped spirits in nature, like thunder, and these stories tell us that, from a young age, Krishna began to teach them about the oneness of God and guide them in His ways, encouraging them to tame their earthly desires and recognize their higher nature.

**--(the part above could be shared first- after the intro to the lesson- if you wish to break it up)--**

During His childhood, Krishna became friends with a milkmaid of His own age, named Radha. It is said that Radha was filled with the love of God and was Krishna’s faithful companion, His most trusted friend throughout His life. Krishna knew, of course, while still a youth, that He would not remain among the villagers, bthat He had a greater duty to the people of India. Injustice, cruelty and evil had taken over the land. People’s hearts were no longer close to God. Wars broke out between kings of different kingdoms; suffering was everywhere.

The first task before Krishna was to restore the rule of justice to His native city, which was still controlled by His cruel uncle, the Crown Prince, while the rightful king, His grandfather, remained in prison. Krishna had attracted a large number of followers even before entering the city, and once He arrived there, many more were drawn to His pure spirit and majesty. Together with His followers, He made His way to the palace, and there a battle took place between the Crown Prince’s army and the growing number of Krishna’s supporters. The unjust Prince was killed, and the throne was offered to Krishna who was not entitled to become king. But He was not interested in worldly power. He chose, instead, to reinstate His grandfather, who had been wrongly overthrown, and helped him to restore justice and peace in the realm.

Krishna was a young man at the time, and His parents wanted Him to complete His education. Of course, like all the Manifestations of God, Krishna was endowed with innate knowledge and was not in need of schooling, but in obedience to His parents, He went to study under the guidance of Sandipani, a teacher known for his wisdom. While a student, Krishna became close friends with a young man named Sudama. Though the two led very different lives after completing their studies, they never forgot their friendship. Many years after they had gone their separate ways, Sudama fell on hard times. He knew that Krishna could help him, but he did not want to take his troubles to his old Friend. Sudama’s wife, thinking of the well-being of their family, encouraged her husband to visit Krishna, even if only to lift his spirits. So Sudama went to see Krishna, bringing as a gift a little bit of powa, a food made of rice that he remembered was a favorite of Krishna. When Sudama arrived, Krishna embraced him with joy. He relished the gift Sudama had brought and they spent long hours talking in friendship. As Sudama returned home, he was filled with happiness at having seen his Friend once again. And when he arrived, though he had said nothing to Krishna of his difficulties, he found that his family had everything they needed to live in comfort.

Krishna was often asked to intervene in battles between the still-warring kings in the land. He tried at all times to resolve conflict using peaceful means. The last of the battles in which He was involved was between two factions of the same royal family, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, all of whom were His cousins. Both sides called on Krishna for help, for He was well respected and highly trusted. Using every means at His disposal, he tried His utmost to settle the dispute so that violence between the two sides would not ensue. Yet, when it became clear that nothing could be done to create a just and peaceful settlement, Krishna put forward to both sides a most interesting proposal. He asked them each to make a choice: They could be assisted either by His army, in its entirety but without Him to command it, or by His Person alone, on the condition that He would not raise a single weapon. The Kauravas chose to be assisted by Krishna’s army, and the Pandavas chose to have the help of Krishna alone. Krishna agreed to act as the charioteer for the Pandava Prince Arjuna, since, in this position, He would not need to make use of any weapons. You realize, of course, that by making this choice, Arjuna showed that he had justice on his side.

The battle that followed came to be known as Kuraksetra, and it has long been remembered by the people of India. According to historical accounts, it was on the eve of that famous battle that Krishna conversed with Arjuna and revealed to him the teachings of God for a new stage in the life of the people of India. He made His Station known to Arjuna, who recognized in His Person the glory of all God’s perfections. Krishna spoke, as well, about the battle into which Arjuna would enter the next day. The human soul, He explained, is connected to God and is eternal; we are to work for that which is good and shun all that is evil. Though Arjuna was reluctant to engage in warfare, Krishna taught him the importance of standing firm in the face of injustice and cruelty and to champion the cause of righteousness and justice. In the end, Arjuna’s side was victorious.

Using the imagery of battle, Krishna helped people to see that, in their everyday lives, too, they had to make choices between good and evil. He taught them to center their thoughts on God and to strive to draw nearer to Him. He told His followers to love and worship God and to show their devotion through prayer and contemplation. He encouraged them to serve humanity selflessly, entirely for the sake of God, without hope of reward, or attachment to the outcome of their efforts, but with the sole purpose of educating others and contributing to the welfare of society. He made clear that work is holy when the heart of a person is fixed on God, when preoccupation with the outcome abandoned and replaced by trust in God. He gave the example of a farmer who is responsible for working his land but who has no control over the harvest- he must work hard without knowing what result he will obtain, relying instead on the bounties of God.

Through the power of His teachings, Krishna educated the people of India about their true nature and helped them to draw nearer to God. The teachings of Krishna are recorded in a Holy Book known as the Bhagavad-Gita, which means the “Song of God”. In that great Book, Krishna speaks of humanity’s need for a Divine Being to appear from age to age to restore peace and justice. Let us end the account of His life with His Words. (have the following words on a poster)

**“When Righteousness**

**Declines,…when Wickedness**

**Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take**

**Visible shape, and move a man with men,**

**Succoring the good, thrusting the evil back,**

**And setting Virtue on her seat again.”**

**Facts:**

*You may wish to include the following information in the games you are devising to help the children retain important facts.*

(see [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) for the fact cards for this lesson; they can be used in the way described in Lesson 2)

* Krishna was a Manifestation of God born…in India a few thousand years ago.
* Krishna’s parents saved Him when He was born by…taking Him to a village where He grew up among cow herders.
* Krishna revealed the teachings for a new age…in a conversation with Arjuna.
* Krishna tried at all time…to resolve conflict by peaceful means.
* Krishna used the imagery of battle to help the people understand…that effort is needed to acquire heavenly perfections.
* Krishna taught people to grow closer to God through…prayer and contemplation and by leading lives of selfless service to others.
* The Bhagavad-Gita is a Holy Book…that contains the teachings of Krishna.

**Drama:** During the period of the class, the children could enact the circumstances associated with Krishna’s birth. In that case, you would need to assign the roles of Devaki, Vasudeva, the Crown Prince, and the guards at the prison cave. It would, of course, be inappropriate for any object to be used to represent the infant Krishna, so you could ask the children playing the roles of Krishna’s parents to cradle their arms as if holding a baby.

**Art/Drawing:** Today you could ask the children to draw examples of ways the Manifestations have taught us to grow closer to God. For example, the children may wish to draw a person in prayer or contemplation or selflessly serving others. Alternatively, you could ask them to do a drawing in two parts: one side darkened to show the state of the world before the appearance of God’s Manifestation and the other bright with light, shimmering and fair.

**Review:** It is suggested that you review with the children the following passage they learned in Grade 2, after they have recited once again the one they learned by heart today.

**“Intone, O My servant, the verses of God that have been received by thee, as intoned by them who have drawn night unto Him, that the sweetness of thy melody may kindle thine own soul, and attract the hearts of all men.”**

–Baha’u’llah

(see [www.supportingthecoreactivities.org](http://www.supportingthecoreactivities.org) under this lesson for this quote put to music)

**Closing Prayer**