**Ruhi Grade 1**

**Lesson 24: Steadfastness**

*Material slightly modified from Ruhi Grade 1 content*

**PRAYERS**

**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 memorize 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.”**

Can have other quotes on wall:

**Judaism:**He only is my Rock and my Salvation; He is my Defense and my Fortress, I shall not be moved. Psalms 62:6

**Christianity:**Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58

**Islam:**And seek aid in steadfast patience and prayer: and this, indeed, is a hard thing for all but the humble in spirit, Quran 2:45 (Asad)

**Baha'i Faith**: Supremely lofty will be thy station, if thou remainest steadfast in the Cause of thy Lord. Baha'u'llah

Today is the day for steadfastness and constancy. Blessed are they that stand firm and immovable as the rock. Abdu'l-Baha]

**Songs:** Tell story about Siyyah-Chal and the steadfastness of the believers there.

**God is sufficient**

God is sufficient unto me. He (verily) is the All Sufficing. (In Him) let the trusting trust (Him).”

**Steadfastness Song by MJ Cyr**

As for you, O ye lovers of God,

make firm your steps in His Cause,

with such resolve that ye shall not be shaken

though the direst of calamities assail the world.

By nothing, under no conditions, be ye perturbed.

Be ye anchored fast as the high mountains,

Be stars that dawn over the horizon of life,

Be bright lamps in the gatherings of unity,

Be souls humble and lowly in the presence of the friends x 3

Be innocent in heart

Be ye symbols of guidance and lights of godliness,

Severed from the world,

clinging to handhold that is sure and strong,

spreading abroad the spirit of life, riding the Ark of salvation

Be souls humble and lowly in the presence of the friends x 3

Be innocent in heart x 3

Be ye daysprings of generosity,

dawning-points of the mysteries of existence

Be souls humble and lowly in the presence of the friends…

Be innocent in heart….

Can also take a couple song requests from songbook

**Story**

Perhaps you know that Bahíyyih Khánum was the younger sister of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá. She was only six years old when their beloved Father, Bahá’u’lláh, was arrested and sent to prison by an unjust government, that was fearful of the truth of the divine message He proclaimed. Her family had been one of the wealthiest in the city. Now all of their possessions were taken away. At times she had only a handful of flour to eat in place of bread.

When her Father was released at last and forced by the government to leave their homeland, Bahíyyih Khánum and her family set out on mules for the city of Baghdád, in a neighboring country. The journey took three months in the bitter cold of winter. Never again would she return to the land of her birth.

For ten years, the family remained in Baghdád, where Bahíyyih Khánum passed the rest of her childhood. Then, suddenly, her Father was ordered by the authorities, still threatened by His growing influence, to leave Baghdád, and Bahíyyih Khánum, now a young woman, went with her family, first to far off Constantinople and then to Adrianople. Danger was at its height. Opposition to her Father grew, and eventually an attempt was made on His precious life.

After almost five years in Adrianople, living under such stress and strain, dear Bahíyyih Khánum was uprooted once again when the government banished her Father to the prison-city of ‘Akká. For some forty years, that gentle soul lived with her family as a prisoner among the worst of criminals within the walls of the desolate city.

During that time the Father she so loved departed this world, and with His passing, it now became Bahíyyih

Khánum’s duty to support her beloved Brother, Who had been appointed the Head of His Father’s Faith. Many of their friends and relatives, jealous of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, turned against Him. But Bahíyyih Khánum faced each blow with quiet patience and fortitude.

And when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá passed into the next world many years later, Bahíyyih Khánum became the greatest supporter and staunchest defender of His grandson, young Shoghi Effendi, as he took over the duties that fell on him as his Grandfather’s successor. Bahíyyih Khánum was now an old woman, some seventy years of age. Her life had been filled with turmoil and upheaval. It moved from adversity to adversity, from calamity to calamity. But her spirit remained constant, and her heart always filled with the love of God. She was steadfast and firm. The dignity and joy, the kindness and grace, that were hers as a child stayed with her until the final days of her life.

**Game:**

**Frozen Tag**- from page 79- Cooperative Games and Sports Book by Terry Orlick (second edition)

1. A few children are designated “freezers”. While the rest of the children scatter in all directions, the freezers count to 10, then take off after the runners.
2. When a child is tagged, he freezes in a stride position with a hand extended out front. To unfreeze him, another child must either pass under his legs or shake his hand.
3. The number of freezers can be adjusted to keep the game moving.
4. When the children are tired or ready to play something else, the leader can end the game by asking the children, “How many of you unfroze your classmates?” “How many people did you unfreeze?”

**Hula Hoop and Ball Game**- Another game that can be played is with hula hoops- where one child holds the hoop and the other child throws a ball through the hoop and they count how many balls they get as a team- those are added to the whole class count and the class tries to beat their whole class score.

**Coloring Sheet from Ruhi Grade 1 material**

**Alternative: rock painting** (if haven’t done that in previous class)



**What is Steadfastness?**

Steadfastness is being steady and dependable, sticking with something no matter what. Do you know the story about the tortoise and the hare? Even though the tortoise was very slow compared to the rabbit, he won the race by being steadfast.  He kept on going.

Steadfastness is being faithful and purposeful.  Steadfastness is remaining true to someone or something in spite of any tests or obstacles that appear to stop you.  When you are steadfast, you commit yourself to something for however long it may take.

**Why Practice Steadfastness?**

Without steadfastness, people waver.  They can be enthusiastic one minute and doubtful the next.  They may finish something they agreed to do or they may forget about it.  It depends how many doubts they have or how hard it becomes to keep their commitments.  You never know what you can count on with someone who is not practising steadfastness.

When we are steadfast, even when we have doubts, in our hearts we remain committed.  When we are steadfast, we can shrug off the doubts because down deep we know where we stand and are committed for the long run.  Others are reassured by the strength and dependability of our commitment.   With steadfastness we keep moving forward.

**How Do You Practice It?**

You practice steadfastness by being committed.  You need to decide if something is worthy of your commitment.  Think about it and then decide.  You need to know before you start that you are in this until it is finished.

Then pace yourself.  When you practice steadfastness, you keep a steady pace, and remain constant no matter what.  If you are doing a job, keep at it without going too fast to tire yourself out, or too slow to get it done on time.  Just put one foot in front of the other and keep on going.  If you are steadfast in learning something new, you stick with it even when you wonder if you will ever understand.  Get whatever help you need to keep going.

If you are a steadfast friend, you stick by your friends even when they aren't much fun, they need a lot of attention, or they are going through a hard time.

When you find yourself wondering, "Can I really do this?" or "Is it really worth all this effort?" , steadfastness helps you to accept your doubts and do it anyway.

You are like a strong ship in the storm.  You don't let yourself become battered or blown off course.  You just ride the waves.

**What would steadfastness look like if...**

* You have been friends with someone for a long time and you begin to feel bored?
* You are in the middle of a hard job and start feeling tired?
* You have spent a lot of time practising a sport, dance or art and begin to wonder if you can really succeed?
* Your family is hiking to the top of a mountain and you don't think you can make it?
* You have a new chore and are afraid you will forget to do it?
* Your best friend moves away and you don't want to forget her

**Signs of Success**

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| --- | --- |
| **Congratulations! You are practising steadfastness when you...*** Think about whether you really want to commit to something or someone
* Pace yourself, go at a rate you can maintain
* Take it one step at a time, remaining steady
* Don't let doubts or tests blow you off course
* Stand by your friends and loved ones
* Ask God to help you keep steadfast
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**AFFIRMATION**

I am steadfast.  I keep a steady pace in what I choose to do.  I keep on keeping on.  I am a loyal and committed friend.

From the Family Virtues Guide by Linda Kavelin Popov