



Stories for children classes Gr 1

New edition 2017





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This book contains 24 educational illustrated stories from
Ruhi Book for Children's Classes Grade 1
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Graphic conception by Baha'i window



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Twenty four years of patience



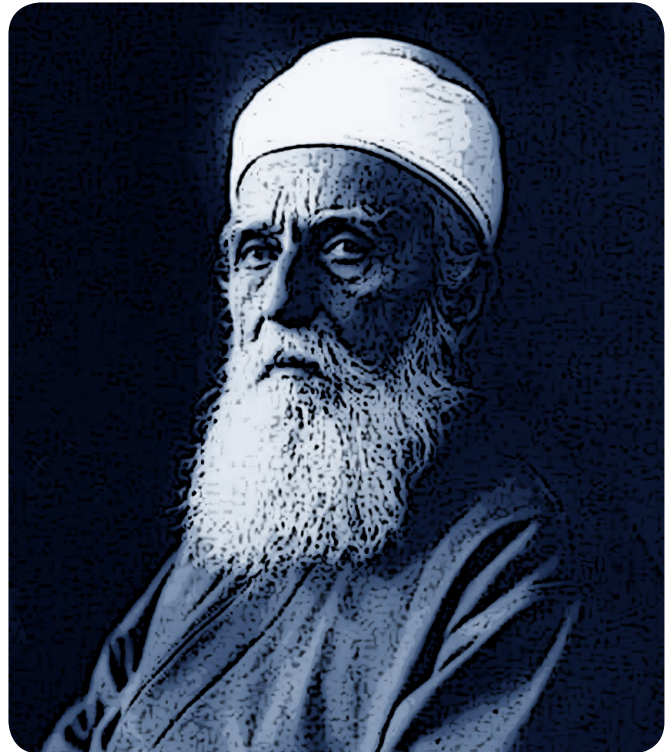
While Abdu'l-Bahá was a prisoner in Akká there was a man in that city who hated Abdu'l-Bahá very much. He behaved very badly towards Abdu'l-Bahá. He was not kind to Abdu'l-Bahá and said bad things about Him. When he passed by Abdu'l-Bahá he would be so rude and unkind that he would cover his own face so that he would not see Abdu'l-Bahá's face.

He was a poor man. In spite of what he had done to Abdu'l-Bahá, Abdu'l-Bahá would still send him food and clothes. Once, he fell sick. Abdu'l-Bahá sent a doctor to help him and even paid for his medicine and gave him some money. Yet he was very ungrateful. He took the gifts and did not even thank Abdu'l-Bahá. So ungrateful was he that he would give one hand to the doctor to check his pulse and use his other hand to cover his face so that he would not see Abdu'l-Bahá's face.

This went on for many years. Abdu'l-Bahá continued to be kind. Then one day, he went to Abdu'l-Bahá, fell at Abdu'l-Bahá's feet and cried, "Forgive me, Sir! For twenty-four years I have done evil to you. For twenty-four years, you have shown only goodness to me. Now I know that I have been wrong. Please forgive me."

"Dear children, you see, love is greater than hate and forgiveness is a virtue."

A glass of water



Abdu'l-Bahá could always tell what was in a person's heart.

Once, there was a lady who was Abdu'l-Bahá guest at dinner.

As she was listening to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's wise words and looking at a glass of water in front of her, she thought...

"Oh! If only Abdu'l-Bahá would take my heart and empty it of every desire and then refill it with divine love and understanding, just as you would do with this glass of water."

Abdu'l-Bahá knew what was in the lady's heart. He called for a servant and said a few words to him. This servant quietly went to the lady's place, took her glass, emptied it and put it back in front of her.

Shortly after, Abdu'l-Bahá, while continuing His talk, took a pitcher of water and in the most natural way, slowly refilled the lady's empty glass.

The lady was filled with joy. She was so happy that Abdu'l-Bahá had answered her heart's desire.

An inexpensive seat in a regular coach



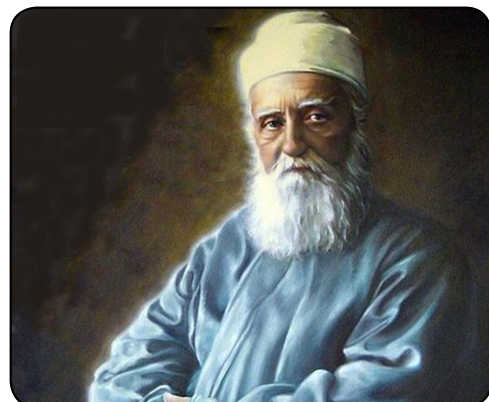
One day, Abdu'l-Bahá wanted to go from 'Akká to Haifa. He went to take an inexpensive seat in a regular coach.

The driver was surprised and must have asked himself why Abdu'l-Bahá was so frugal as to ride in this cheap coach.

“Surely, Your Excellency would prefer to travel in a private carriage,” he exclaimed.

“No,” replied the Master, and He traveled in the crowded coach all the way to Haifa. As He stepped down from the coach in Haifa, a distressed fisher woman came to Him and asked for His help. All day she had caught nothing and now had to return to her hungry family.

Abdu'l-Bahá gave her a good sum of money, turned to the driver and said, “Why should I ride in luxury while so many are starving?”





Story of the shepherd

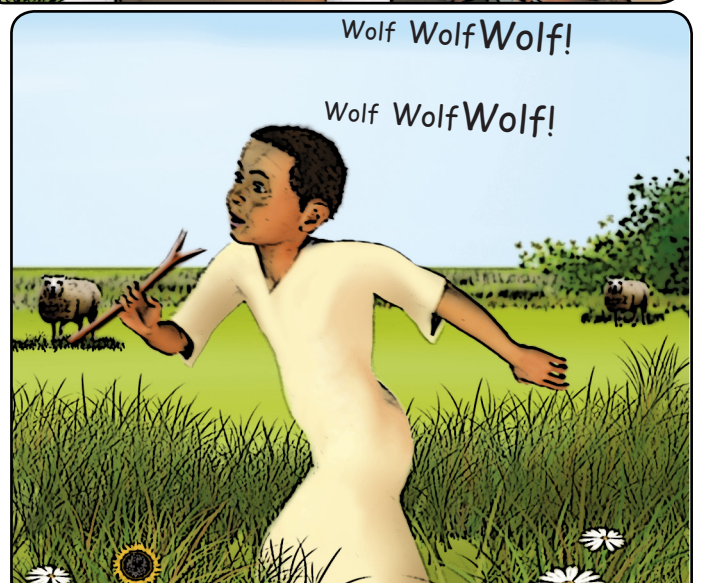
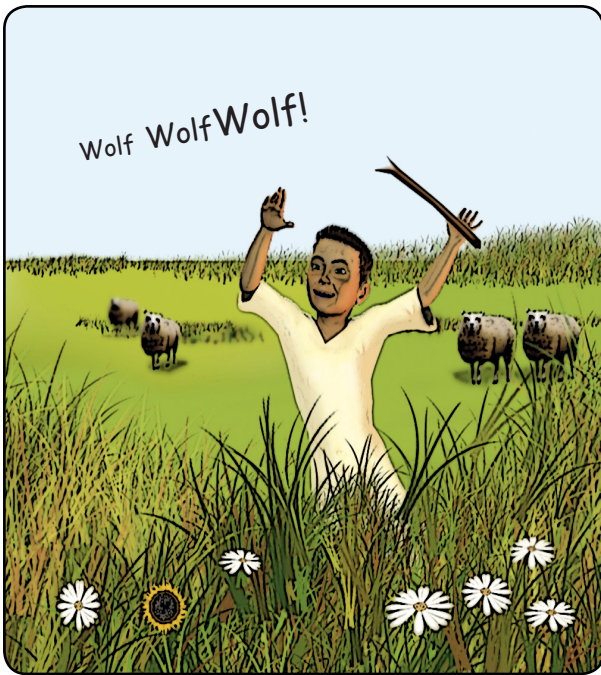


One upon time, in a nice peaceful village, a young shepherd was taking care of his family's sheep

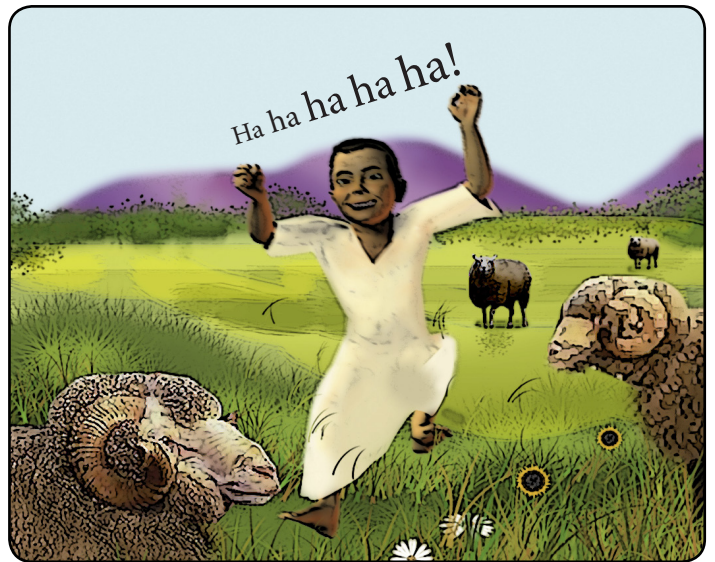


One day he was bored and decided to play a trick on his neighbours.

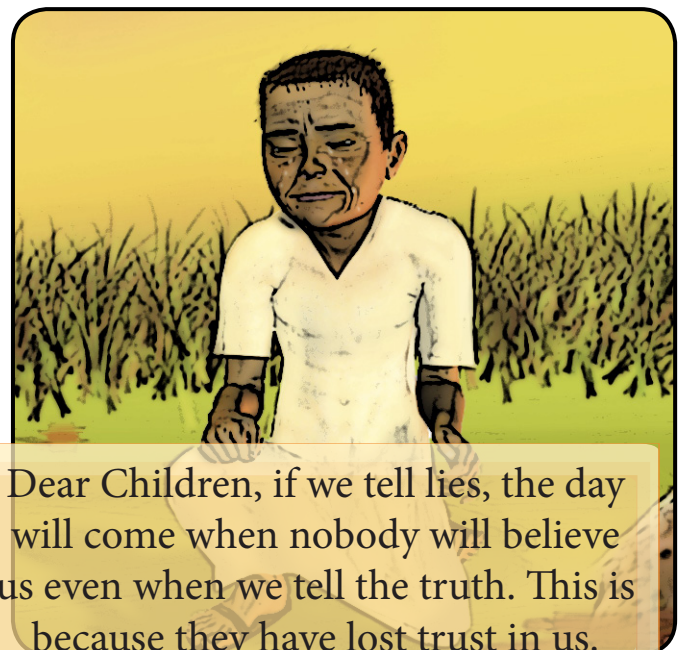




The following day, the boy again cried out, "Wolf, Wolf! Help me! Help me!" Some came to help him only to find out he has played a trick on them again.



On the third day, the neighbors again heard him shouting, Wolf! Wolf! The wolf is eating the sheep! Please come, help! No one paid attention as they thought he was playing a trick again. But this time, he was not playing a trick. The wolf did come and ate the sheep. He lost his sheep and his friends because he had lied.



Simple coats



Abdu'l-Bahá



Munira Khanum

Abdu'l-Bahá was going to entertain the Governor of Akká. Before the day arrived, his wife went to the tailor and ordered a fine coat for Him.

When the day came, His wife laid out the new coat for Abdu'l-Bahá but He asked for His old coat. He could not accept the new coat that His wife had ordered for Him. He said there was no reason to spend so much money on a coat just for Him. He said with the money He could buy five simple ones like the one He normally wore. Then He would have a new coat and still have four coats to give to others.

Dear Children, Abdu'l-Bahá was always thinking of others. He was a selfless man indeed



The generosity of Abdu'l Baha



One day, Bahá'u'lláh asked Abdu'l-Bahá to inspect the work of the shepherds who were taking care of His sheep. Abdu'l-Bahá was very young then. When the inspection was over and as Abdu'l-Bahá was about to leave, the man who had accompanied Him said,

“It is your father’s custom to leave a gift for each shepherd.”

Abdu'l-Bahá was quiet for a while, because He did not have anything to give them. Then He had an idea! He would give the shepherds the sheep they were taking care of!

When Baha'u'llah heard about Abdu'l-Bahá actions, He was very pleased that Abdu'l-Bahá had such generous thoughts. He jokingly remarked that everyone had better take good care of Abdu'l-Bahá because someday He would give Himself away.

And this was true! Abdu'l-Bahá spent His entire life giving His time and His service to humanity.

Dear Children, let us always be as generous and giving as Abdu'l-Bahá.

Leroy Ioas and Abdu'l Baha



Leroy Ioas(1896 –1965)

Leroy Ioas was an outstanding Baha'i who was named a Hand of the Cause of God by the Guardian in 1951. He was a young boy in 1912 when the Master visited the city of Chicago. Can you imagine the excitement of this spiritual child at having the opportunity to be in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Baha? One day, as he and his father were on their way to the hotel where the Master was staying, Leroy had an idea: He decided that he wanted to take 'Abdu'l-Baha some flowers. With the little money he had, he managed to buy a beautiful bouquet of white carnations. But by the time they reached the hotel, he had changed his mind.

He decided that he did not want to give anything material to the Master, not even beautiful flowers. He would offer Him his heart. That was the most important thing he had to offer. So, Leroy's father presented the flowers to 'Abdu'l-Baha without mentioning who had brought them. Abdu'l-Baha then gave a talk to all the friends who had gathered at the hotel to meet Him. During His talk, Leroy sat quietly at His feet and listened to His wise and loving words. Afterwards, the Master stood up and shook hands with the guests, giving each one a white carnation as a token of His love. Leroy was now standing behind the Master.





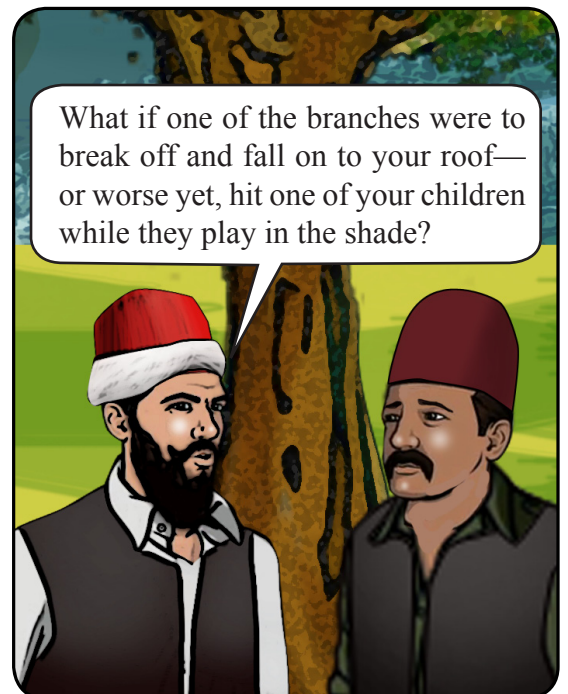
“Oh! I wish He would turn around and give me one of those flowers,” thought the young boy. Maybe, secretly in his heart, he wanted the Master to know who had really brought Him the beautiful flowers. But, one by one, the white carnations were being given to other people, and it seemed unlikely that Leroy was going to get one. Then, suddenly, the Master turned around and fixed His gaze on Leroy. His face radiated love and His eyes were full of kindness. And did He hand him a white carnation? No. ‘Abdu’l-Baha gave Leroy something even more precious. He was wearing a beautiful red rose on His coat. He pulled it off and presented it to the young boy. Leroy’s heart leaped with joy. The Master did know who had brought Him the white carnations after all.



Appearances can indeed sometimes be deceiving



For many years a large tree stood behind a house that belonged to a husband and wife with several children. As the tree grew, its branches reached up and out, shading the back of the family's home. One winter morning, the father was passing under the tree when he met a neighbor. They spoke briefly of the comings and goings in the village. After a while, the neighbor, taking notice of the large tree, said to the man :



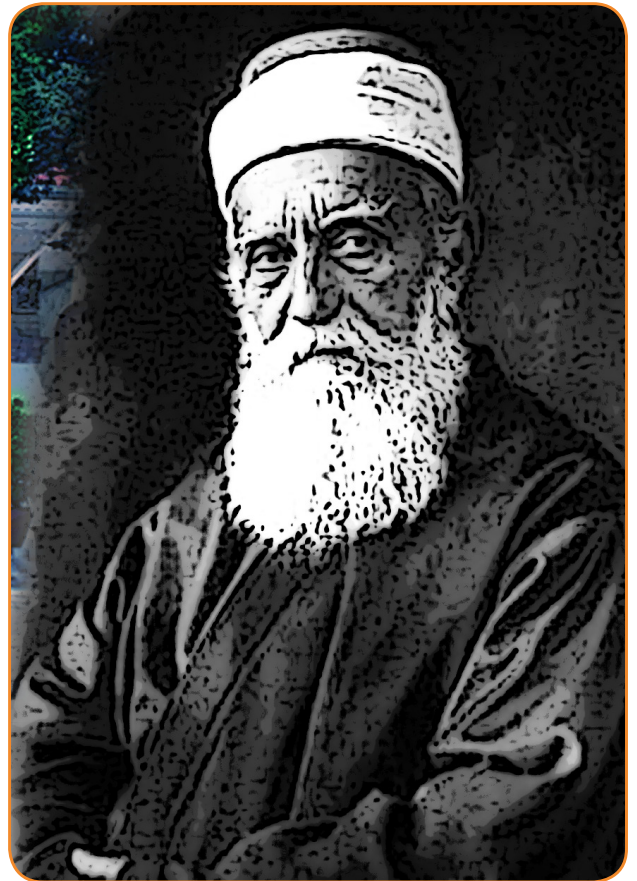
When the two had parted, the man considered his neighbor's advice. The tree had stood in this place since before he could remember, and no harm had come of it. It gave good shade in the summer and shielded the house from the bitter winds of winter. It seemed sturdy and strong. "Still, perhaps my neighbor has a point," the man said to himself. "Appearances can sometimes be deceiving. What if the tree is not as sturdy as it seems?" And so he decided to cut it down.



It was a difficult job, for the tree was very big, indeed, and had many limbs and branches, some of them quite high. Just as the man finished, his neighbor returned, this time accompanied by his two sons and a cart. “I see you decided to take down the tree,” the neighbor said, looking at the many stacks of wood. “I suppose you’ll need someone to take those piles away. Perhaps we can help you. I have brought my cart and my two sons, and we will be happy to remove all this from your yard.” Without waiting for an answer, the sons began loading the wood into the waiting cart. As they pulled away, the man sat down on the stump of the tree that had sheltered his home for so long. It was then that he realized that his neighbor had not been concerned for his family’s safety after all, but for the supply of firewood that would keep him warm through the winter months.



Abdu'l-Baha was a humble man



Abdu'l-Bahá was a humble man. Friends wanted to give him great titles but he only wanted to be called Abdu'l-Bahá which means 'Servant of the Glory'.

One day, some rich friends who respected Abdu'l-Bahá very much arranged for a specially dressed boy to carry a fancy bowl with crystal water and a perfumed towel for Abdu'l-Bahá to wash His hands before a meal.

Abdu'l-Bahá understood that they wanted to do it for Him. He quickly washed His hands with some water nearby and dried them with a piece of cloth (which a gardener had). With a radiant face, He turned to meet His guests and invited them to use the crystal water and perfumed towel to wash their hands.

Dear Children, Abdu'l-Baha was a very humble man.



Maya the thankful girl



There was once a girl called Maya, who lived in a place that was very cold in the winter.

Maya had used the same coat every winter for many years, and it was worn out and too small. Everyone could see that Maya needed a new coat before the winter came again, but her family did not have enough money to buy one.



A farmer who lived down the road from Maya's home told her she could have some wool from his sheep to make a new coat. He said she would have to wait until the spring when the wool would be thick and ready to shear. Maya wanted to show her thankfulness, so, as she waited for the spring, she helped the farmer by happily tending the sheep for a while each day. She fed them hay and fruits, patted them and even sang to them!



In the spring, the farmer sheared the wool and gave it to Maya. He showed her how to make it smooth and ready for spinning. Maya thanked him and began to walk home. An old woman who lived next door saw Maya with the wool and offered to spin it into thread for her. Maya was very grateful and wanted to find a way to thank the old woman. She could see many vegetables growing in the old woman's garden, so all through the summer, she picked the vegetables and washed them and made them ready for the old woman to cook.



When the thread was ready, Maya picked some red berries and dyed it all red. Then she visited the weaver and explained that she needed help to make the thread into cloth. The kind weaver was happy to make the cloth. To show her thankfulness, while the weaver was busy making a lovely red cloth from the thread, each afternoon Maya cleaned and tidied the weaver's workshop.





When the cloth was ready, Maya visited the tailor, and explained that winter was coming and she needed a new coat. She showed him the cloth, and he said he would make it into a coat for her. Maya wanted to thank him, so every day while he worked she swept the autumn leaves from the path to his shop. The tailor measured, cut, pinned and sewed until the coat was done. Maya was very pleased. She thanked the tailor and put on the coat – it was perfect!



When Maya arrived home, her family was as pleased as she was with her new coat. They decided to invite all the people who had helped to make it to share a simple meal with them. So the farmer, the old woman, the weaver and the tailor all came to Maya's home. They were all happy to know that Maya had the new coat she needed for the winter.

But Maya's 'thank yous' were still not finished. The next morning, Maya put on her coat and went to visit the sheep.



Abdu'l Baha and the unjust governor of Akka



During the days the Master lived in 'Akka, there was a governor who, time and time again, tried to harm the Baha'is. On one occasion he came up with a plan to destroy their means of livelihood: he ordered his guards to close down the shops of all the Baha'is and to bring him the keys. But 'Abdu'l-Baha learned of the governor's plan and advised the friends not to open their shops the next day. He told them to wait and see what God would ordain.

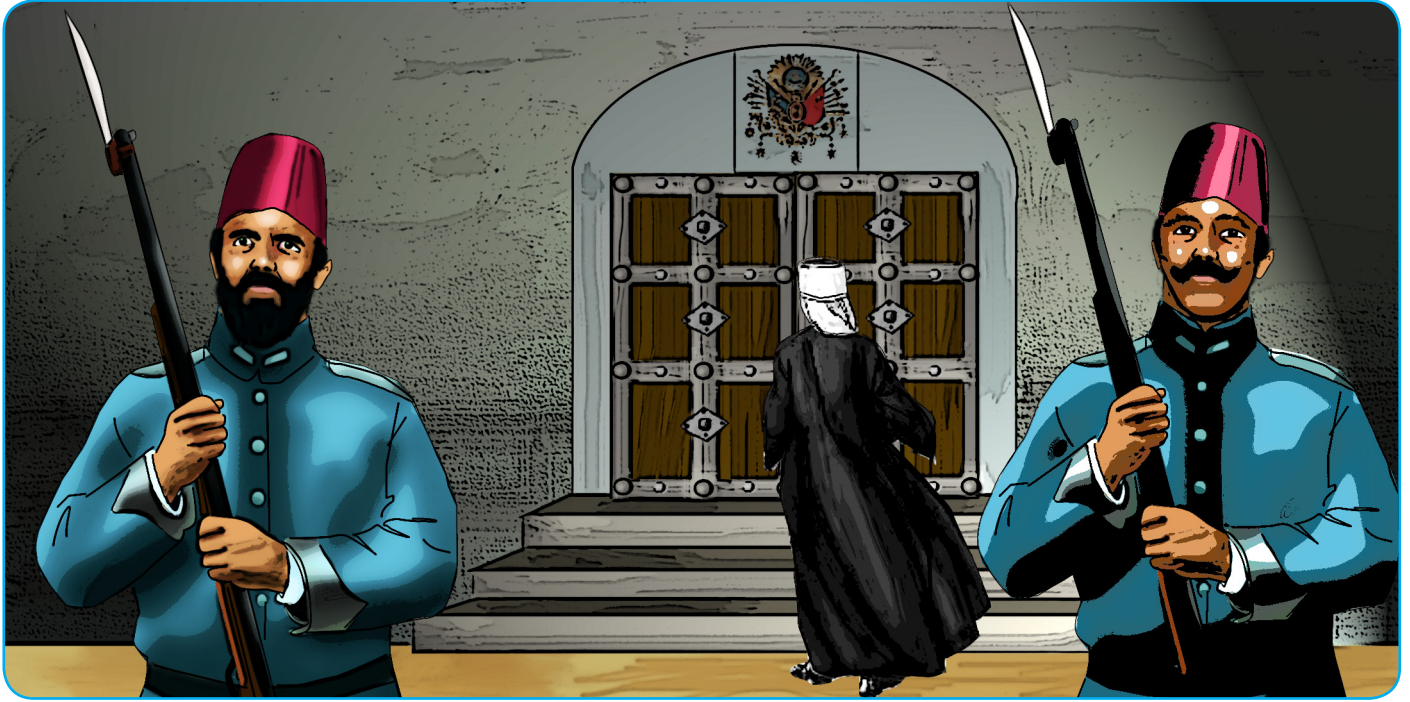




Imagine the governor's surprise when he heard that his guards could not bring him the keys because the shops had not been opened. But before he could think of what to do next, something unexpected happened.



A telegram arrived from his superiors dismissing him from his post as governor of the city. And so the shops of the Baha'is were saved. The ex-governor was ordered to leave 'Akk. and go to another city called Damascus. He did not know what to do. He had to leave quickly and alone. What would happen to his family? Who would help someone who had lost the favor of the government?



The Master heard the news and went to see him. He showered the unhappy man with great kindness, as if he had never been an enemy of the Faith. Not once did He mention his past wrongdoings. Instead, He offered to help him in whatever way possible.



The ex-governor was worried about leaving his wife and children behind. ‘Abdu’l-Baha assured him that He would take care of the matter. Later He arranged for a comfortable trip, provided someone reliable to accompany the wife and children, paid for all the expenses, and sent the family on its way to Damascus.



When the ex-governor was reunited with his family, he rejoiced. With a heart filled with gratitude, he turned to the man who had traveled with his family and asked him about the cost of the journey. The man explained that it had been paid by ‘Abdu’l-Baha. Then the ex-governor offered him a present for his kindness and diligence during the journey. But he would not accept the present; he said that he was merely obeying ‘Abdu’l-Baha and did not wish to receive anything for his services. The ex-governor then asked the man to stay the night as a guest in his home. He said, however, that he was eager to follow the instructions of the Master, Who had told him to return to ‘Akka without delay.

The ex-governor asked the man to wait at least long enough for him to write a letter to ‘Abdu’l-Baha. This he accepted and upon his return to ‘Akka delivered the letter to the Master. The letter read: *“O ‘Abdu’l-Baha, I pray you pardon me. I did not understand. I did not know you. I have wrought you great evil. You have rewarded me with great good.”*





Bahram the trusted man



Mullá Bahram was very sad one day because his cousin's small child had died. The child was given a Bahá'í burial. This made some people angry and they put his cousin in jail. These people did this because they did not understand and did not agree with the Bahá'í Teachings..



Mullá Bahram tried to save his cousin. He went to seek the help of a high government official.



When Bahram got to the house of the official, he found many guests of high society. Many guests didn't like the modest look of Bahram, so one of them wanted to have him thrown out of the house. But, the owner of the house saw Bahram and invited him with respect. After that, the official took Bahram to his office and asked him about his problem. Bahram told him about the story of his innocent cousin.



Many guests were surprised by this situation and asked about the secret of the friendship between the high official and a poor modest man.

The official explained how he knew Mullá Bahram was an honest man.



One day, I had a debt but I didn't have enough money to pay it off! So I agreed with my creditor to give him one of my properties..



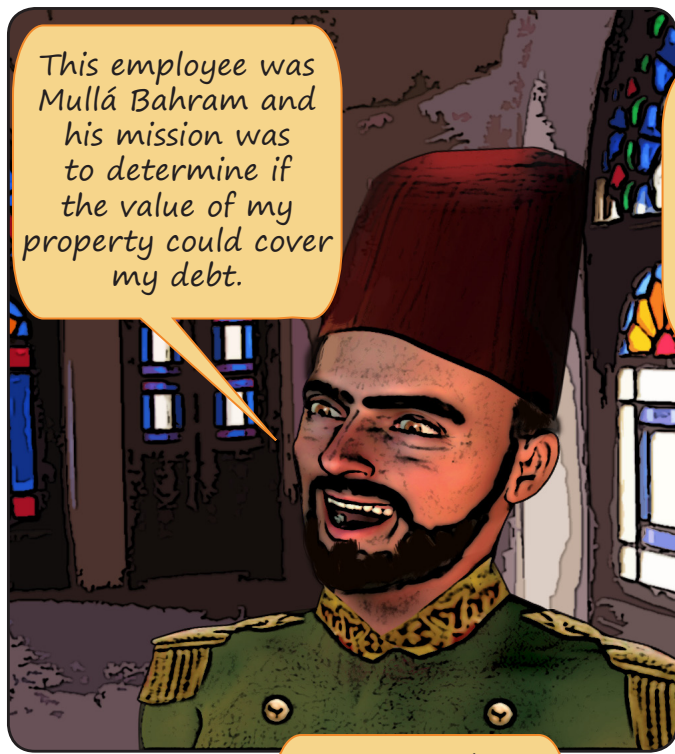
But neither of us trusted the other to determine the exact value of my property.



After a long discussion, we decided to choose a good commercial expert to ask him about the exact value.



After this agreement, we asked a shopkeeper to send one of his employees to see my property.

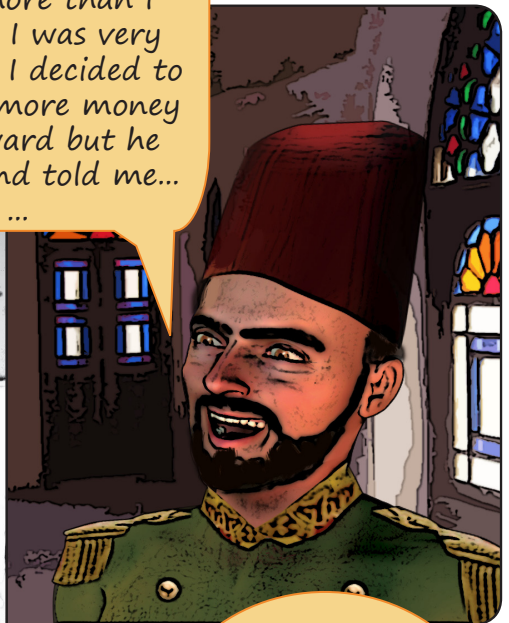


This employee was Mullá Bahram and his mission was to determine if the value of my property could cover my debt.



The day before his mission, I offered him a bag of money that was worth more than six years of his small salary to make sure that he would rule in my favor.

Finally, Mullá Bahram determined that the value of my property much more than I thought. I was very happy so I decided to give him more money as a reward but he refused and told me...



I think, it's better for you to wait until I determine the exact value of your property.



Don't give me any rewards. this is my job that i earn my life by it. The value that i said was the really value of your property. thank you Sir.



Now you see why I respect him! If everyone was as honest as Mullá Bahram, the world would be a better place!

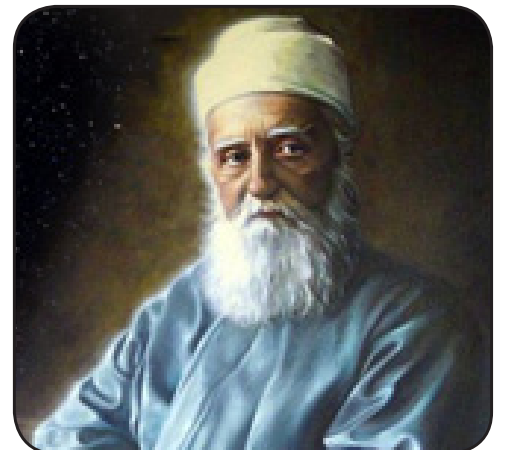
A heart has been hurt



When ‘Abdu’l-Baha traveled to the West, in every city He visited, many people came to see Him and listen to His encouraging words. Day and night He met with people of all kinds—the young and the old, the wealthy and the poor, officials and ordinary citizens. Some came out of their great love for the Master, and others came because they were curious about what He had to say. One day a woman arrived at the home where the Master was staying and knocked on the door.

She was an ordinary person who longed in her heart to spend a few moments with ‘Abdu’l-Baha. “Do you have an appointment to see the Master?” asked the man who opened the door. She said that she did not. In that case, she was told, it would not be possible for her to see ‘Abdu’l-Baha as He was meeting with some very important people.

She turned away sadly and started walking down the steps in front of the house. What disappointment filled her heart! But suddenly a messenger from ‘Abdu’l-Bah. appeared, asking her to return. The Master wished to see her. His voice was heard saying with power and authority, *“A heart has been hurt. Hasten, hasten, bring her to me!”*



Story of Ayaz and king Mahmud



One day King Mahmud decided to go on a royal tour of his kingdom. Preparations began immediately and within a few days the magnificent procession was ready to leave. Ministers, ambassadors, and a great many people of prominence, all wearing their finest clothes, set out with the King, together with his guards and attendants. The King's faithful servant Ayaz rode by his side, at the very front of the procession



Each evening the splendid party made camp and the wonderful imperial tent was set up for the King. This tent was the most beautiful tent that anyone had ever seen. Woven from silk of the highest quality, it was decorated with hundreds of jewels and precious stones, which sparkled so brightly in the lamp-light that the light of the moon and stars paled in comparison. Each night the King and his companions feasted and sang. Each morning when the tent was taken down, the jewels were collected and put in a box in the King's carriage. And so the royal procession went on its way, the King looking contentedly over his peaceful and prosperous kingdom, his companions happily riding and talking during the day, and feasting and singing at night.



One afternoon the King and his entourage were passing through some especially beautiful countryside. So beautiful was it that the King was overcome with a feeling of generosity. He took the jewels from the box and scattered them on the roadside for his companions. As he continued on his way, they all scrambled in great confusion, forgetful of their duties, trying to gather up the precious stones—all that is, except Ayaz.

Look at Ayaz He is so proud and arrogant. He cannot even be bothered to pick up any of the jewels that the King has tossed on the roadside

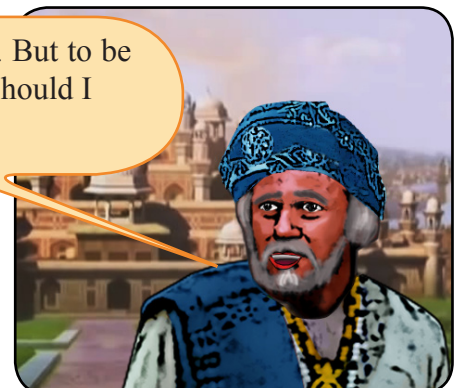
How is it, Ayaz that you do not join the others to gather up my jewels? Are they not precious? Do you not value the things that were mine?



Oh, My King I have always valued the very least thing that is yours. But to be near you and gaze on your face is more than sufficient for me. Why should I leave your side to scramble for that which you have thrown away?



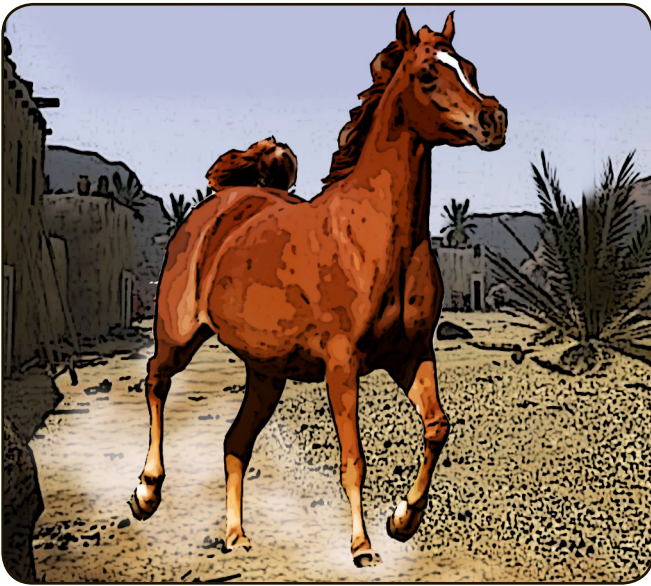
And the loyal and steadfast Ayaz rode on by the side of his grateful master, ever vigilant in serving his beloved King.



This could be a blessing and This could be a misfortune



Once upon a time in a far away country, there lived a farmer with his wife and son. They all worked together, taking care of their land and animals. Their farm was near the border with another country, which, unfortunately, was constantly at war with theirs.

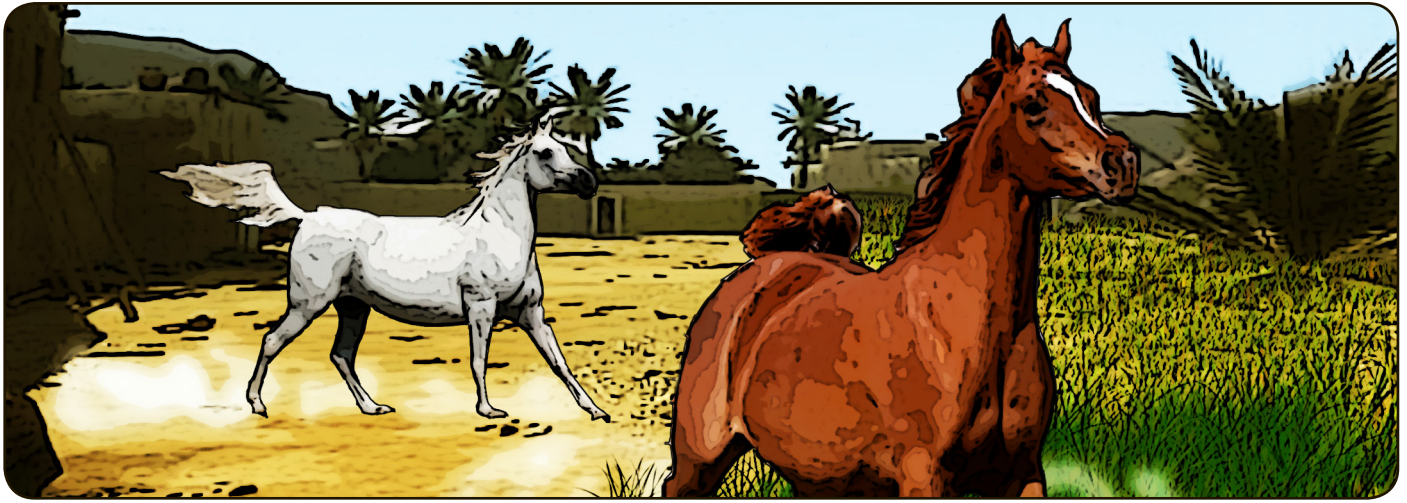


One day the family's mare did not return to the stable, and it was soon discovered that it had strayed into enemy territory. Some of the villagers came to the farmer, gave him the bad news and tried to console him. But the farmer did not seem to mind what had happened to his mare. He simply told them,



This could be a blessing





Several months later, the mare returned, not alone but with a fine steed of the breed for which the neighboring country was famous. On hearing the news, the villagers came to see the farmer and congratulate him for becoming the owner of such a wonderful horse. But the farmer was not excited; he observed



The farmer's son wanted to ride the new steed, and so he did. But the animal turned out to be wild and threw the young man violently to the ground. His hipbone was broken and for a long time he was unable to walk. Visitors came again to console the family for this tragic accident. But the farmer, as usual, remained calm and repeated the remark, "This could be a blessing



A few months went by. The enemy tribes invaded the country and the government recruited all the young able-bodied men into the army



By the end of the war, many of the young men in the village had been killed. The young man of our story, because of his broken hip, was not taken into the army, so he survived.



A misfortune had turned into a blessing, then into a misfortune, and finally into a blessing again.

Guests in 'Akka



You know from some of our earlier stories that, when 'Abdu'l-Baha first arrived in 'Akka, many of the people treated Him badly. They were cruel to the Baha'is and did not want to speak to them. Soon, however, they came to see that the Baha'is were loving and kind, and slowly most of the townspeople began to show them kindness in return. But there were a few who clung to their anger and hatred.

Now, one day, a man who still carried much hatred in his heart towards 'Abdu'l-Baha heard others praising His greatness and goodness. The man became outraged. He would show them, he said with anger, that this Person they all revered was not so wonderful after all. And off he went, his heart burning with anger. He knew that 'Abdu'l-Baha could be found praying in the mosque at that hour, and he rushed there, ready to lay violent hands upon the beloved Master. But 'Abdu'l-Baha looked at the man with serenity and dignity. Lovingly, He reminded him of the teachings of God that we are to be generous to all guests, even those that are different from us. At this, the man realized that 'Abdu'l-Baha and the Baha'is were, indeed, like guests in 'Akka, his home. And, like a generous host, he should welcome them with love and treat them with kindness.



I shall tell the truth



'Ali-'Askar was a merchant in Persia. When he became a Bahai', he experienced much hardship at the hands of those who opposed the Faith. Within a short span of time, he had lost all he had. Even so, 'Ali-'Askar was not dispirited. Seeing that he would not be able to make a living in his homeland, he decided to move to Adrianople, a city in a neighboring country .



In Adrianople, though he still had little, he managed to acquire a small amount of merchandise. Before he was able to sell a single item, however, he was attacked by thieves who took everything he had in his possession, leaving him with nothing once again. Not long after, the thieves were arrested, and the great fortune they had acquired was seized.



One of the local authorities, dazzled by the riches, came up with an idea to keep the fortune for himself. He called 'Ali-'Askar to his office and explained.

These thieves are very rich. In my report to the Government, I wrote that the amount of the theft was great.

Therefore you must attend the trial and testify conformably to what I wrote."



This way, the official thought, all of the money would be returned to 'Ali-'Askar, and the two would split it between themselves. Ali-'Askar knew that he could never go along with such a plan



The official tried again to convince 'Ali-'Askar.



But 'Ali-'Askar again refused, saying



Now the official became angry. If ‘Ali-‘Askar did not go along with his scheme, all his planning would come to naught and he would lose the great fortune now within his grasp. And so he began to threaten ‘Ali-‘Askar, hoping he could frighten him into cooperating.



I will jail you. I will have you banished; there is not a torment I will spare you.



Then he told ‘Ali-‘Askar that, if he did not agree, he would send him back to Persia. ‘Ali-‘Askar only smiled:

Jinab-i-Khan do with me as you please



I will not turn my back on what is right..



His despair had been changed into hope



There was once a man with no home, who lived alone on the banks of the River Thames in London. He was very sad and had lost all hope for happiness in life. One day, he walked past a shop and a photograph in a newspaper caught his eye. It was the face of ‘Abdu’l-Bah.. The man stood frozen, staring at the face. He had never seen ‘Abdu’l-Bah. before and did not know who He was, but he was certain that he must meet Him.

The address of a house was given in the newspaper, so the man started walking, hoping to find Him there. It was a very long distance—thirty miles—but he kept walking until he reached the house.



The man was tired and hungry when at last he arrived, and the lady of the house kindly invited him in, gave him some food, and let him rest for a while. As he rested, he told his story to the woman and then asked her whether ‘Abdu’l-Baha was there. “Will He see me?” he asked. “Even me?”



Just as the woman replied that she was certain ‘Abdu’l-Baha would see him, the Master Himself appeared at the door. The man stood up, and ‘Abdu’l-Baha stretched out His arms to greet him. It was as though the man was an old friend whom ‘Abdu’l-Baha had long been expecting. He welcomed him with love and compassion and asked him to sit down next to Him.



Then ‘Abdu’l-Baha, who always knew how to bring lost joy back people’s hearts, began to speak to the man. He encouraged him to let go of his sadness, reminding him that he was rich in the Kingdom of God! As ‘Abdu’l-Baha showered the man with compassion, His comforting words began to heal his heart and give him strength. Little by little his sadness drifted away. Before he departed, the man told ‘Abdu’l-Bah. that he would not let his poverty bring him sadness anymore; instead he would find work in the fields and save his money so that he could buy a bit of land, on which he would grow violets to sell in the market. His despair had been changed into hope.

Siyyid Muhammad-Taqi Manshadi



Years ago, in the early days of the Faith, there were only a small number of Baha'is, spread out over several countries. They faced many challenges, and often wrote to Baha'u'llah, and later to 'Abdu'l-Bah., in the Holy Land, conveying news of the progress of the Faith and posing various questions. Their letters traveled over long distances before reaching their destination, and Bah.'u'll.h and 'Abdu'l-Baha would answer each one with great love and care. The beautiful verses that flowed from Their pens were as precious gifts to the believers that received them. Their words of encouragement strengthened those early Baha'is and cheered their hearts. And so it was crucial that this stream of communication not be disrupted.



During one of the darkest periods in the history of the Faith, its enemies rose up against ‘Abdu’l-Baha. Jealous of His growing influence, they hoped to bring about His exile, or worse still, His execution. Spies were planted all around His house, and He was kept under constant watch. How pleased His enemies would have been if they could have stopped the flow of correspondence and broken the link between ‘Abdu’l-Baha and the devoted friends; how much more if they could have stolen some document that could be used to mislead the authorities! ‘Abdu’l-Baha, however, was not deterred. He could often be seen late into the night, writing by the light of His lamp; for He had ensured a secure means for the receipt and dispatch of mail, a task that could only be given to the most trusted of believers.



There lived in the area a man named Siyyid Muhammad-Taqi Manshadi. He had come from Persia when he was fairly young and had established a small business in Haifa.

There, he welcomed to his home the many friends who visited the Holy Land. He helped them in making travel arrangements and became known for his unwavering reliability. So dependable was he that his home had become a center through which passed nearly all of the mail for the Baha'is in the Holy Land and the responses sent abroad. Everyone knew that he could be trusted to make sure each piece of mail was delivered promptly and securely.



Of course the enemies of the Faith knew this as well, and so Siyyid Muhammad-Taqi Manshadi was in great danger. 'Abdu'l-Baha could see that they would use every means possible to harm the Cause. They would no doubt try to intercept the mail, and Muhammad-Taqi would soon become the target of their schemings. So what do you think 'Abdu'l-Baha did? Such confidence did He have in Muhammad-Taqi that He did not want to let go of his valuable services. So He sent him to safety in nearby Port Said in Egypt and arranged for others, that His enemies would not suspect, to carry mail back and forth to him. And there, in Port Said, Muhammad-Taqi continued to dispatch and receive mail for Bah.'s in distant lands as he had always done, never faltering in the trust 'Abdu'l-Baha had placed in him. So it was that even in the darkest of times, the light of guidance that shone forth from the Holy Land continued to reach the friends in the most remote places.

Thomas Breakwell



Thomas Breakwell (1873_1902)



Thomas Breakwell with a baha'i group in Paris

Thomas Breakwell was a young Englishman who lived at the turn of the 19th century. He held an important position in a cotton mill in the southern United States and spent his vacations in Europe. On his way to Europe in the summer of 1901, he met a woman on a steamship and began talking with her about spiritual subjects. When they arrived in Paris, the woman took him along to meet a friend of hers who lived in an apartment in the city and who, she knew, had similar interests.

The young woman welcomed them, and the three talked for some time. Before leaving, Breakwell asked his hostess whether he might return to speak further. He was invited to come back the next morning.

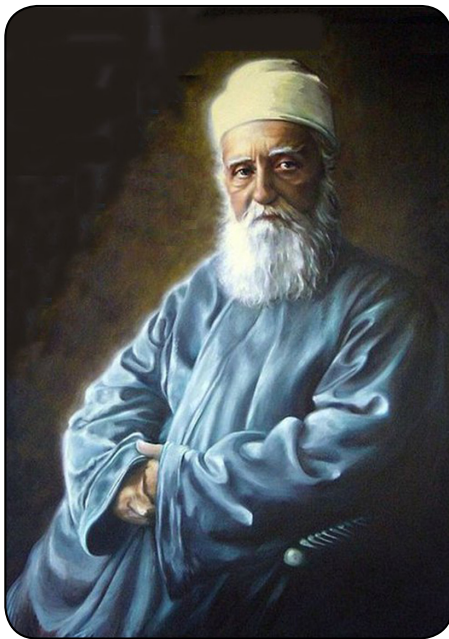
When he arrived, the young woman noticed that his eyes were shining brightly and his voice was full of emotion. She asked him to be seated. Breakwell looked at her intently for a moment, and then described for her a strange experience. After he had left her home the day before, he had walked along an avenue, alone, in the warm and heavy evening air. Not a leaf stirred around him. Then, all of a sudden, a great wind came up and he could hear in that wind a voice, sweet and powerful, speaking of the coming of a new message from God. The young woman urged him to be calm. You see, she knew of the message to which Breakwell referred. During the next three days, over the course of many hours, she told him everything she could about the Bahai Faith—its history and its teachings—and about ‘Abdu’l-Baha, the Perfect Exemplar of those teachings, who was living in the prison-city of ‘Akka, in the Holy Land.



By the end of three days, Breakwell's heart was so filled with joy and hope that he wanted nothing other than to travel to 'Akka and visit 'Abdu'l-Baha. It happened that there was another young man who had already made plans to go to the Holy Land for this very purpose and who was most pleased to have Breakwell accompany him. So, a message was sent to 'Abdu'l-Baha requesting permission for him to come and, in a short time, they were on their way.

When the two men arrived at 'Abdu'l-Baha's home, they were taken into a room where several other men were gathered. Looking around, Breakwell became deeply troubled.

There was no one in the room to whom his heart was drawn, and thinking that 'Abdu'l-Baha must be among those present, he feared that he had failed to recognize that Heavenly Being about whom he learned in Paris. He sat down in despair. At that moment, a door opened, and Breakwell looked up. He saw there a brilliant light, from which the figure of 'Abdu'l-Baha emerged. He immediately knew that his dearest wish had been fulfilled.



Breakwell spent two glorious days in the presence of 'Abdu'l-Baha, during which the fire that had been enkindled in his heart grew stronger and stronger. When Breakwell told 'Abdu'l-Baha about his job at the cotton mill, where children were used as workers, 'Abdu'l-Baha advised him to resign from his post, which he did without hesitation. At the end of his visit, he returned to Paris, his spirit ablaze. He no longer had income from his well-paying position in the cotton mill, and he suffered greatly from illness. But these things did not dim his joy in the least. He burned like a bright candle, sharing his light with everyone he met until at last, overcome by his illness, he died. Upon his passing, 'Abdu'l-Baha revealed a Tablet in his honor, which includes the following verse:

"O Breakwell, O my dear one! Thou hast lit a flame within the lamp of the Company on high, thou hast set foot in the Abha Paradise, thou hast found a shelter in the shadow of the Blessed Tree, thou hast attained His meeting in the haven of Heaven."

Dorothy Baker



Dorothy's grandmother, Ellen Beecher,



Dorothy Baker life (1898_1954)

Dorothy Baker was a noble and distinguished lady and one of the great figures of the Bahai Faith. When she was a young girl, she had the honor of meeting 'Abdu'l-Baha during His travels in the West. She was so drawn to His radiance and love that she longed to follow in His footsteps.

It was Dorothy's grandmother, Ellen Beecher, who took her to meet 'Abdu'l-Baha. Arriving at a house that she had never been to before, Dorothy entered a room in which many people were talking quietly and reverently while waiting for 'Abdu'l-Baha to speak.



Dorothy's father, Henry Beecher in 1933



Dorothy with her brother David in 1912



Dorothy was a very shy child. Without looking up from the floor, she carefully walked past the people who were sitting around Him to reach the footstool near His feet.

While 'Abdu'l-Baha spoke, she sat with her eyes down, staring at her black shoes. He did not look at her, and she did not have the courage to look at Him. Dorothy was nervous and continued looking down, afraid of the unknown. But gradually she relaxed, and soon her fear was gone. A feeling of deep longing had come over her. She was filled by a strong desire for her soul to be lost in the greatness of 'Abdu'l-Baha's love. She was touched by His radiance, wrapped in the warmth of His presence.

Dorothy's fear had been replaced by a greater force. She could not imagine being separated from 'Abdu'l-Baha for even one moment. His loving eyes seemed to speak to her, telling her of the spiritual worlds of God. His radiance was magnetic. Without even realizing that she had moved, Dorothy found herself turned in His direction, with her elbows on her knees and her chin in her hands, gazing at 'Abdu'l-Baha's luminous face.

Dorothy could not remember what 'Abdu'l-Bah. spoke about that day. All she could remember was His kind face, His melodious voice, and the warmth of His presence. The love she had in her heart was so strong that at last she decided to write a letter to 'Abdu'l-Bah.. In her letter, she begged Him to let her serve Him and the Cause of His Father, Baha'u'llah. In His answer to Dorothy, 'Abdu'l-Baha praised her goal, assured her of God's bounties, and expressed the hope that she would succeed in her desire. And, indeed, Dorothy dedicated her entire life to serving God and humanity.



Isfandeyar the servant of Baha'u'llah family



When 'Abdu'l-Baha was a young boy, His family, which was part of the nobility of Persia, had a servant by the name of Isfandeyar. He was very loyal to the family, and they trusted him a great deal. When the authorities, out of prejudice and ignorance, had 'Abdu'l-Baha's beloved Father, Baha'u'llah, arrested, all of the family's possessions were taken away. They were left with nothing, and anyone close to Baha'u'llah was in danger. Still, Isfandeyar continued to look after the family. Knowing that many officers would be looking for Isfandeyar, 'Abdu'l-Baha's mother urged him to leave the city. But I.fand.y.r would not leave. "I cannot go," he said, explaining that he owed money to many shopkeepers for items he had purchased. "How can I go?" he asked. "They will say that the servant of Baha'u'llah has bought and consumed the goods and supplies of the storekeepers without paying for them. Unless I pay all these obligations, I cannot go. But if they take me, never mind. If they punish me, there is no harm in that. If they kill me, do not be grieved. But to go away is impossible. I must remain until I pay all I owe."

For one month Isfandeyar went about in the streets and bazaars, selling small things he owed. When he had paid every last debt, he went to the family and said good-bye, for he knew he could stay with them no longer. A minister agreed to take him in and protect and shelter him during this dangerous time.





Many months later, Baha'u'llah was released from prison and He and His family were exiled from Persia by the authorities. They went to Baghdad, a city in the neighboring country. Isfandeyar, ever faithful to Baha'u'llah, journeyed to Baghdad to ask whether he could once again serve in His household. Baha'u'llah said to him, "When you left us, there was a Persian minister who gave you a place to stay when no one else could give you protection.

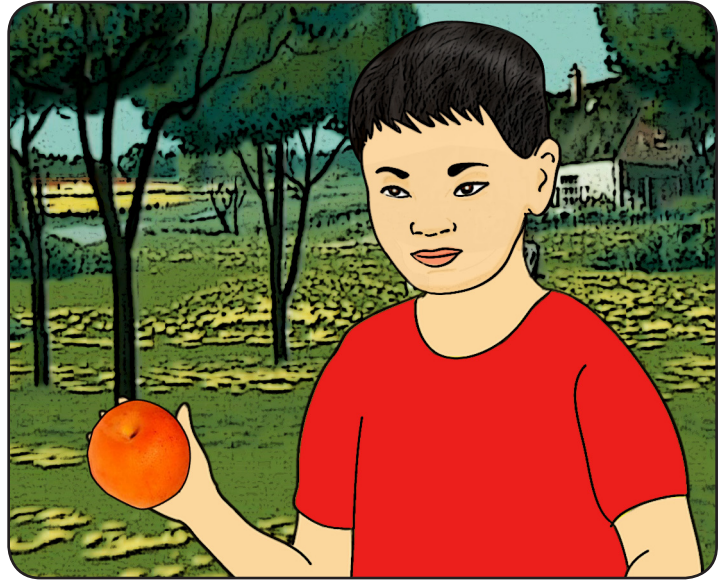
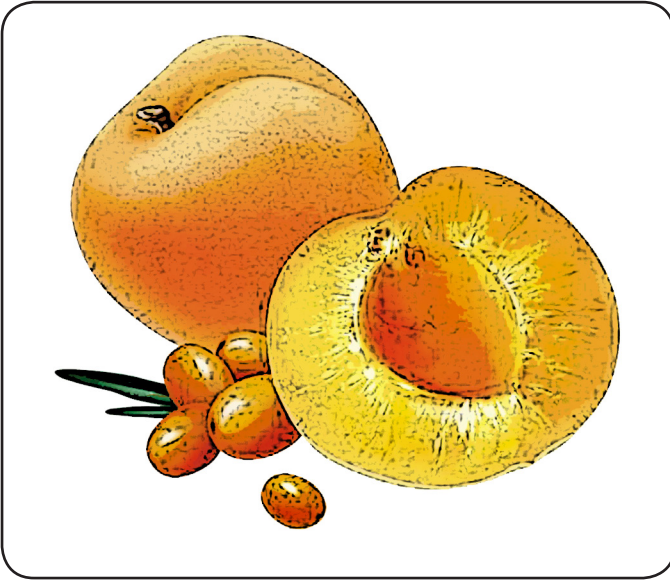
Because he gave you shelter and protected you, you must be faithful to him. If he is satisfied to have you go, then come to us; but if he does not want you to go, do not leave him."

Of course, Isfandeyar was so upright, so trustworthy and loyal, that the minister did not want him to go. "O Isfandeyar!" he exclaimed, "I am not willing that you should go, yet, if you wish to go, let it be according to your own will."

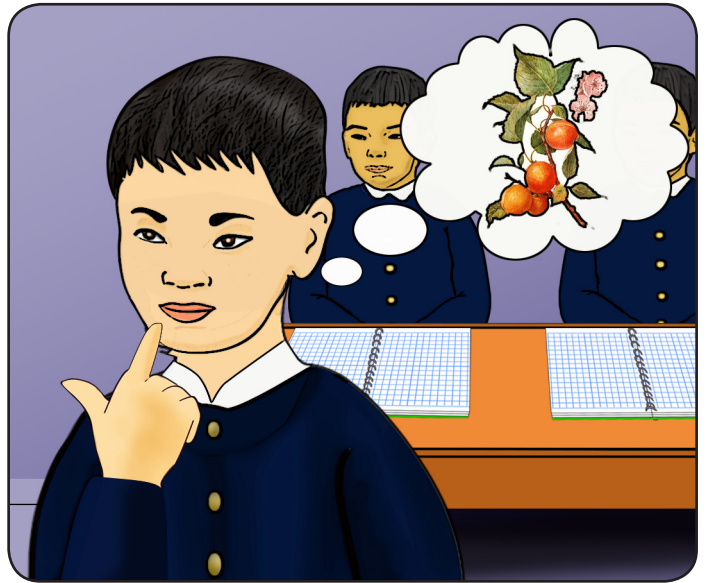


But Isfandeyar remembered Baha'u'llah's words. He remained in the minister's service until, some time later, the minister passed away and Isfandeyar once again returned to the family he so loved, serving 'Abdu'l-Baha to the end of his days.

Li Xin and peaches



Li Xin was very fond of peaches. They were one of his most favorite foods. Every day, he would bring a peach with him to school and eat it during his lunch break. He enjoyed every bite, but he always threw away the pit, with the seed inside.



One day, Li Xin's class was learning about seeds. This gave Li Xin an idea. He would plant a seed from his peach and help it grow into a tree! At lunchtime, he saved the pit from his peach and wrapped it in a piece of paper. When school ended, he raced home and asked his father to help him find a place to start growing his tree. His father reminded him that he would have to wait for the pit to dry before he could get the seed out. Still, Li Xin wanted to plant the pit right away. "Li Xin," said his father, "if you don't have the patience to dry the pit, how will you have the patience to wait for the seed to sprout?" So Li Xin set the pit out to dry.



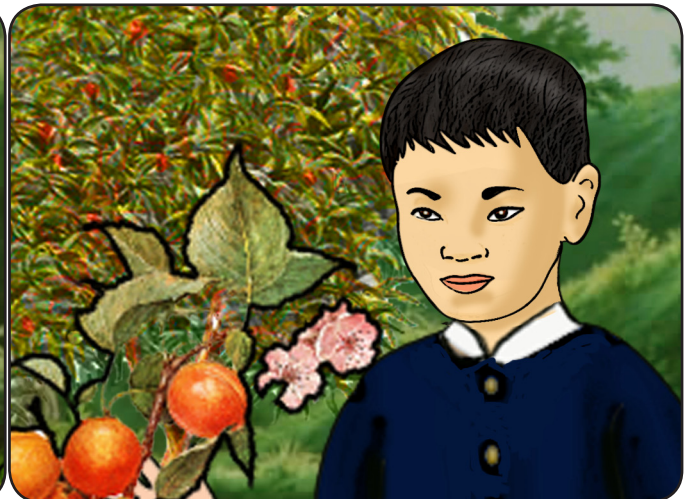
A few days later, Li Xin was finally able to crack the pit and pull out the seed. His mother showed him a corner of the yard where the tree could grow big and tall. Li Xin dug a small hole and dropped in the seed, then covered it with a mound of moist earth. He grinned with excitement. His tree was finally on its way!



Every day, Li Xin would visit the mound, hoping to see some sign that the seed had sprouted. But no sprout appeared for weeks, and Li Xin grew disheartened. Seeing Li Xin's concern, his mother asked him what was wrong. "My seed is not growing," Li Xin said. "I wonder if I will ever have a tree." "Well," said his mother, "this seed has a lot of growing to do. In that way it is very much like you. When you were born, you were just a tiny little thing and all you did was eat and sleep. And now look at you! You are a young boy, walking, talking, and thinking for yourself! This tree may take many years to grow, but, if you care for it well, then someday you will be able to sit in its shade and enjoy its fruit." Thinking of this, Li Xin grew hopeful again. He knew from his class that a seed had to go through many changes before it could even become a sprout.



Then, one spring day, Li Xin went out to visit the mound, as he always did, and to his great excitement he saw a tiny green sprout poking up through the earth! His tree was growing! He ran to his neighbor, who was a farmer, and told her the exciting news. She gave him advice on how to care for the tree while it was so young and vulnerable, and he listened to her every word, eager to nurture it as best he could. “Soon I will have many peaches to give you as thanks for your good advice,” said Li Xin. But the neighbor just smiled. “Li Xin, do you remember how you had to be patient while you waited for the pit to dry?” Li Xin nodded. “And do you remember how you needed even more patience while you waited for your seed to sprout?” Li Xin remembered this, too. “Well,” said the neighbor, “it will take even longer before your sapling becomes a tree and some time after that before it gives fruit. It could be years before the tree is ready to produce any peaches for you to enjoy.”



And so Li Xin cared for the tree and tended to its needs as it grew from a sprout to a sapling and from a sapling to a tree. Little by little, it grew taller and broader, just as he did. And then one day, as Li Xin returned from school, he saw the tree’s first peaches beginning to emerge where only blossoms had been before. Once again, he felt the joy that filled his heart when the seed had first sprouted. And once again he knew that he would have to exercise patience. For it would be some time still before the peaches would be ready to eat.

Baheyyih Khanum sister of Abdu'l Baha



Perhaps you know that Baheyyih Khanum was the younger sister of 'Abdu'l-Baha. She was only six years old when their beloved Father, Baha'u'llah, 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, Bah.yyih Khanum and her family set out on mules for the city of Baghdad, 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 Baghdad, where Baheyyih Khanum passed the rest of her childhood. Then, suddenly, her Father was ordered by the authorities, still threatened by His growing influence, to leave Baghdad, and Baheyyih Khanum, 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 Baheyyih Khanum was uprooted once again when the government banished her Father to the prison-city of 'Akka. 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 Bah.yyih Khanum'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-Baha, turned against Him. But Baheyyih Khanum faced each blow with quiet patience and fortitude.

And when 'Abdu'l-Baha passed into the next world many years later, Baheyyih Khanum 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. Baheyyih Khanum 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.



Illustrated Stories Ruhi for children classes Gr1



Graphic conception by baha'i window

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