



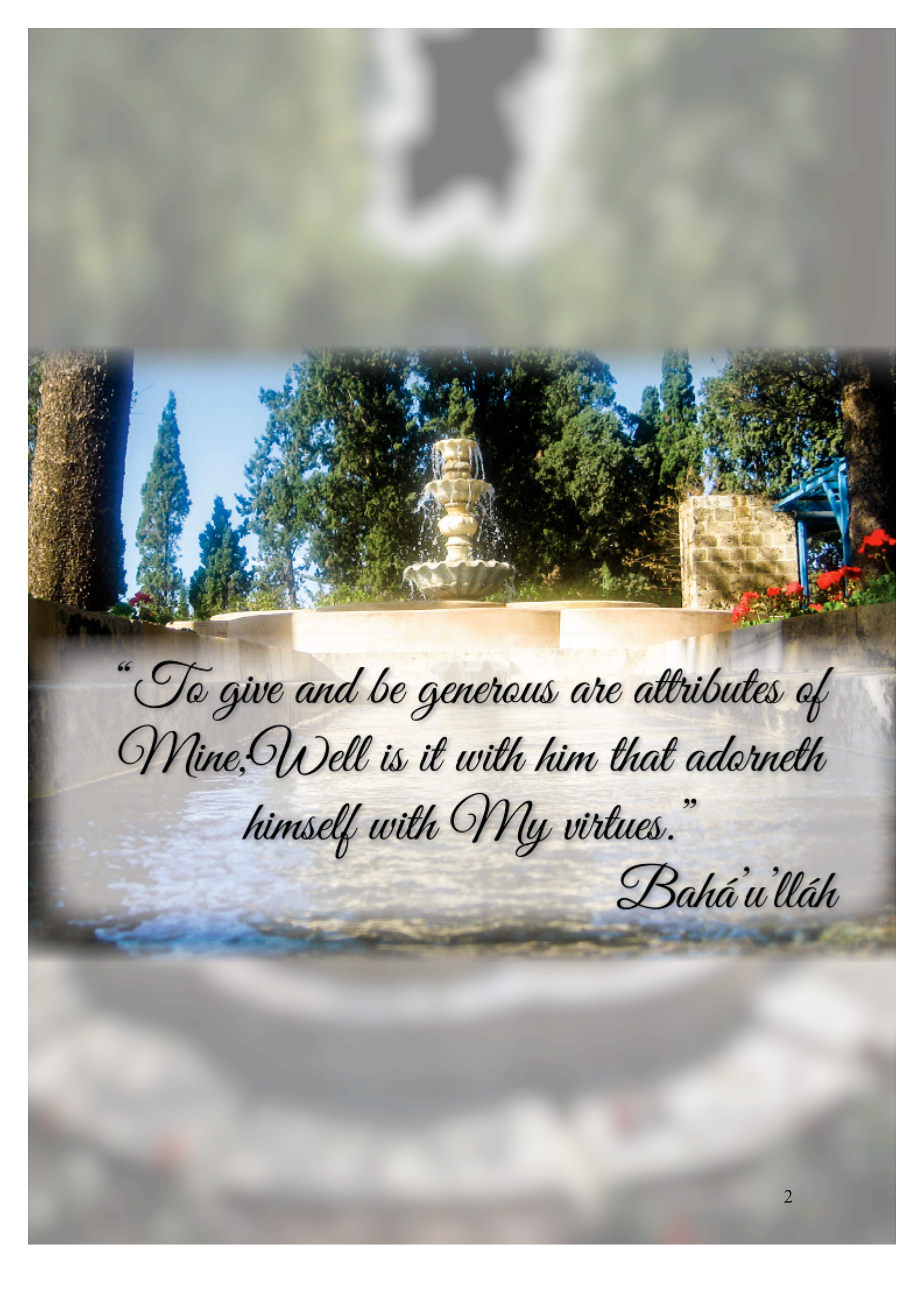
Hiru no

Hoshi

No. 258

Contents

- 2..... Words of 'Abdu'l-Baha
- 3..... Generosity
- 7..... Quiz
- 8..... Lattice Cages
- 9..... Dot to Dot
- 10..... Photos
- 11..... Parents' Page



“To give and be generous are attributes of Mine; Well is it with him that adorneth himself with My virtues.”

Bahá'u'lláh

The five little children were with their parents at a beautiful Okinawan beach. Mother was sitting on the beach watching little Anisa play in the sand, while Father and the other children swam and played in the waves.



Riaz came running back to where Mother sat with everyone's things. Mother was surprised to hear Shahla scream, "Nooooo!" as she came chasing after him.

"You have two! Let me use one!!" shouted Riaz.

"NO! You can't use it! Can he, Mom?" responded Shahla.

"What are you two talking about?" asked Mother.

"My goggles! They are mine, and I said NO!" Shahla shouted, stomping her foot.

"MOM! She has two! And mine broke...I want to use one of hers! That's fair, right?" Riaz said almost at the same time.

"Ok, sit down, calm down, and let's talk about this." Mother said as she handed each a towel.

Mother began... "Hmmm I am thinking about two things..."

"MY TWO GOGGLES" "THE TWO GOGGLES!" Shouted Shahla and Riaz together.

Mother smiled and continued. "The first one is Baha'u'llah said, to *"refuse, though they be dying of hunger, to stretch their hands and seize unlawfully the property of their neighbor...."*

"*"...however vile and worthless he may be,"*" put in Asma as he ran up to them dripping from his swim.

"Hey, I am not *'vile and worthless,'*" shouted Shahla as she stood up and faced Asma, snarling!

"So Riaz, what does that quotation mean?"

"Never take something that doesn't belong to you without permission," said Riaz, begrudgingly.

"So you should not touch anything that does not belong to you...no matter what!" Mother said, "and the second thing is," she continued, "Baha'u'llah also said, to *'be generous in prosperity...'*"

"*"...and thankful in adversity!"*" put in little Anisa. Everyone looked at her in surprise and started laughing.



Yes, said Mother, that's what I was going to say. That means when you have a lot of something, share. When you don't have the things you want, (adversity) -- be thankful for what you do have.

'Abdu'l-Baha teaches us how to be generous, because He was always generous to everyone, friends and strangers alike. Who remembers an example of 'Abdu'l-Baha's generosity?"

"I remember when He was a little boy and was sent to check on His father's sheep," said Shahla.

"Yeah," put in Riaz. "They told 'Abdu'l-Baha He was supposed to give a present to the shepherds, and He didn't have anything to give them."

"So He gave away all His father's sheep!" Shahla finished.

"And His father, Bahah'u'llah, said that everyone had to take very good care of 'Abdu'l-Baha because one day He might give Himself away...and that is just what He did his whole life!" Riaz finished.

"Anyone else have a story about 'Abdu'l-Baha's generosity?"

By then Father and Mona had also come back from their swim, and had been listening. As everyone dried off Mother handed out sandwiches and onigiri*, when Mona put in,

"I remember that it was not just His extra stuff that He gave away. He gave away stuff that most people would think was necessary. Like the time He and His family were eating dinner and someone came in and said how a family nearby didn't have any food to eat. So before anyone could start eating, 'Abdu'l-Baha told His family to pack up everything and take it to the family without any food, saying that they would eat tomorrow so it was ok if they went without food tonight, but that was all that other family had at all."

"Wow!" said Riaz. "Can you imagine giving away your whole dinner and going hungry, for someone else??? Look how hungry we are now...can you imagine giving away all our food because another family on the beach had no food???"

"That's like the time in America," Shahla put in, getting into the spirit of the conversation. "When 'Abdu'l-Baha saw a really poor homeless man whose trousers were all falling apart, and 'Abdu'l-Baha stepped into the bushes, took off His own trousers and after wrapping His coat around Himself gave His trousers to the homeless man!"

"Yeah, that's something you really need, your trousers!" Anisa said with such a serious face that it made everyone laugh.

"'Abdu'l-Baha always traveled as cheaply as He could, and never spent any money when He didn't have to, so He could give all the extra to the poor people that needed it, didn't He, Mom?" said Asma who was always good at being thrifty himself.

"Yes, there are hundreds and thousands of those stories, because it was every day of 'Abdu'l-Baha's life," asserted Mother. "And we need to try to be generous, just like He



taught us, and always think of others as more important than ourselves -- not just our family, but everyone, even people that we don't know."

With their mouths full of food, the children were all relatively quiet, so Father took this chance to begin.

"You know, in the animal world the strong rule over the weak. Animals *take*! That is their nature. They *take* so that they, and their offspring, will survive to the next generation. They have no concept of giving to another, unrelated animal, just because that animal might need it. They are not being bad, it is how they were made by God to be.

God on the other hand only *gives*. God is the *Giver*. That is one of the names we know God by, or in other words, one of God's attributes. The *Giver*! God only *gives*. He gives all creation, including us, everything we need to grow and prosper.

Now, humans, -- our bodies are animal, our souls, divine. We can be like our animal side, and *take*, or we can be like our spiritual side, like God, and *give*. God tells us. '*To give and be generous are attributes of Mine; well is it with him that adorneth himself with My virtues.*'" 'Abdu'l-Baha showed us how to do that every day of His life.



The children thought about that for awhile and then Mona said, "I heard a Native American tale about how each of us have two wolves inside of us: The wolf that *takes* and is only selfish, and the wolf that *gives* and is selfless. And these two wolves are always fighting each other. The little Native American boy who was listening to his grandfather tell this story, asks him, 'Which wolf wins?' and the grandfather answers, 'the one we feed the most!'"

"So, if we feed our selfish wolf, our animal side, it grows big and strong, if we feed our *giving* wolf, then that one grows big and strong," explained Asma.



"OK, let's get back to Shahla and Riaz," said Mother.

"Yeah!" both children shouted with their mouths full, spraying food everywhere.

Mother frowned them, and continued. "Shahla, why don't you want to share your goggles?"

"I saved up my folding clothes money, and my washing dishes money, and bought those new goggles. I haven't even used them yet. I am saving them until these old ones break. Riaz is careless! He didn't work for his goggles. They are like my old ones that you gave each of us. He broke his and now he will use mine and break them!"

"Riaz, why do you think you should use her new goggles?" asked Mother.

...cause she wasn't using them. I just wanted to try them because they look much better than the ones you bought us."

"Anyone else have any other comments?" Mother asked, looking around the group. "You know Baha'u'llah said consultation is very important, and we should consult on every important decision we make."

"How about if Shahla lent Riaz her old goggles and she could use the new ones?" said Asma. Mona nodded in agreement.

"You can use my goggles, Riri! I don't use mine, hardly at all. I don't like putting my head in the water!" said little Anisa.

"That is very nice of you Anisa! I guess you are feeding the 'giving' wolf, like 'Abdu'l-Baha taught us!" said Mona.

Shahla looked down at her feet and said quietly. "I guess I can feed my 'giving' wolf, too. I can let Riaz use my old goggles, I really want to see what my new goggles are like, anyway."

"I would be happy if she let me use her old goggles, and she could use the new ones. But, I really would like to just try her new ones for a minute or two, just to see what they are like," said Riaz.

"Yeah, I guess you can try my new goggles too. I wish I could be like 'Abdu'l-Baha and give you my new goggles, but, I guess I am not quite there yet," said Shahla.

Mother laughed and said, "'Little by little, day by day'...that is what 'Abdu'l-Baha said. We get to be better people, not all at once become a saint, but 'little by little, day by day we get better and better.'"

"And Anisa, how about if Shahla, Riaz, Mona and I, take you out to practice how to use your goggles, and not be afraid to put your head in the water!" said Asma.

Little Anisa smiled and clapped her hands and all the children nodded in agreement.

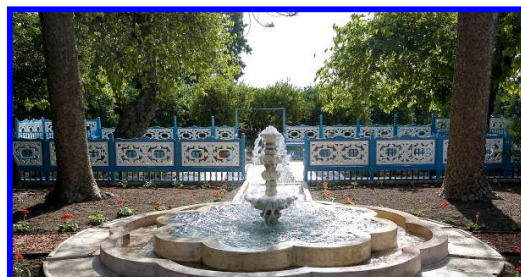
They all jumped up and started for the shore holding Anisa's hand and talking to her at once.

Mother called out. "Stay near the shore, don't go anywhere above your waist, you all just ate remember!"

The children laughed and waved. Mother gave Father a look, he nodded and sighing, stood up, and followed the children out to teach Anisa how to swim.

"We must be like the fountain or spring that is continually emptying itself of all that it has and is continually being refilled from an invisible source. To be continually giving out for the good of our fellows undeterred by fear of poverty and reliant on the unfailing bounty of the Source of all wealth and all good—this is the secret of right living."

Shoghi Effendi



Quiz

1. Where were the five little children playing?

2. Which two children were fighting?

3. What quotation did Mother give first about not taking something that isn't yours?

4. What quotation did she give next about being generous?

5. What story did the children tell about 'Abdu'l-Baha when He was a little boy?

6. What did 'Abdu'l-Baha ask His family to do with their dinner when He heard about the hungry family that lived near them?

7. What did Father say about the way animals act and what God does?

8. Which way do humans act, like animals or like God?

9. What was the story that the Native American man told his grandson?

10. Which wolf are you going to try and feed?

How did you do? Did you get them all right?



The answers are on the Parents' Page.

Lattice Cages

Materials

- *Tiny balloons
- *Crochet yarn, different colors
- *White glue
- * Glitter glue
- *Scissors
- *Clothes pins or clips
- *String to hang wet balloons from
- *Pipe cleaner yarn to hang cage when complete.
- *Small plastic or paper flowers.

Method

- *Blow up balloons.
- *Cut yarn into long pieces.
- *Mix a little water with the white glue in a bowl.
- *Put a piece at a time of crochet yarn into the glue mixture.
- *Wind the yarn around the balloon to make a cage.
- *Using clothes pins, hang balloons up to dry along the string.
- *When completely dry, add glitter glue on top of the yarn
- * Pop the balloon.
- *Tie a bit of yarn or pipe cleaner to hang up the cage.
- *Put plastic flowers or a little bird or an LED light in the cage.



Follow the dots...

And what do you see?





Photos



Parent's Page

When our children were young and we would give them a gift, for birthdays or Ayyami-ha, we would always say that if the gift had their name on it, it meant that they were responsible for that toy...it was for everyone to play with. The other children had to check with the child who had received the gift, to see if it was their turn to play with it. The child whose name was on the gift was also responsible to make sure that the toy was treated well, and that it was put away in the proper place after it was played with. In other words ...all toys were for everyone to play with, but the child receiving the gift was responsible for it. This is how we tried to teach our children generosity. That everything on this earth came from God for us to use temporarily, nothing really belongs to us.

Here are the quotations we used in this issue. Please take time to read and discuss them with your children...and perhaps memorize them together.

“They who dwell within the Tabernacle of God, and are established upon the seats of everlasting glory, will refuse, though they be dying of hunger, to stretch their hands and seize unlawfully the property of their neighbor, however vile and worthless he may be.”

Baha'u'llah

“Be generous in prosperity and thankful in adversity.” *Baha'u'llah*

“To give and be generous are attributes of Mine; well is it with him that adorneth himself with My virtues.” *Baha'u'llah*

“We must be like the fountain or spring that is continually emptying itself of all that it has and is continually being refilled from an invisible source. To be continually giving out for the good of our fellows undeterred by fear of poverty and reliant on the unfailing bounty of the Source of all wealth and all good—this is the secret of right living.”

Shoghi Effendi, Directives from the Guardian,



Answers to the Quiz;

- 1) At the beach in Okinawa. 2) Riaz and Shahla. 3) *“...they would refuse, though they be dying of hunger to stretch their hand and seize unlawfully the property of their neighbor; no matter how vile and worthless he may be.”* 4) *“Be generous in prosperity and thankful in adversity.”* 5) ‘Abdu’l-Baha and the His father’s sheep. 6) He and His family gave the hungry family all of their dinner. 7) Animals take...God gives. 8) Humans have the choice to act animal-like or God-like. 9) It is about the two wolves in side of us: the selfish one and the selfless one, i.e., good and bad. 10) Let’s feed the good wolf and be giving!



No. 258

Published: /June, 2014

If you have stories of your children learning a virtue or anything connected to the Faith, please send them to us. You can either write the story yourself or send the details and we will write the story. Either English or Japanese is fine. We also are waiting for pictures of Children's Classes from your community, or drawings from your children. Please send all stories and pictures to luanahirahara@hotmail.com

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