



LESSON 2

Today it is suggested that you begin the class with the following prayer.

“O God! Rear this little babe in the bosom of Thy love and give it milk from the breast of Thy Providence. Cultivate this fresh plant in the rose garden of Thy love and aid it to grow through the showers of Thy bounty. Make it a child of the kingdom, and lead it to Thy heavenly realm. Thou art powerful and kind, and Thou art the Bestower, the Generous, the Lord of surpassing bounty.”¹⁶

After the prayer the children should be asked to say a prayer they already know. Then you may help them review the prayer they began to memorize during the previous class.

The activity that follows consists of two songs, the one you introduced last time and a new one:

His First Counsel

A
Listen to the voice

that makes our hearts rejoice,
G D A
His first counsel is this,
E
possess a pure heart,
A
a kindly heart,
B7 E
a radiant heart,

D A
 The heart is a treasure,
 D A
 a gift beyond measure,
 B7 E
 a bounty from your Lord,
 D A
 Protect it from the fire
 D A
 of worldly desire,
 D E A
 and freely let it soar.

After the songs, the children may memorize a quotation from Bahá'u'lláh. You could explain it in the following way:

Our hearts are like mirrors. We should always keep them clean. Hatred, envy, and negative thoughts are like dust that stop the mirror from shining. When our hearts are pure they reflect the light of God, and we become a cause of happiness for others. To help keep our hearts pure, let us memorize this quotation of Bahá'u'lláh:

“O Son of Spirit! My first counsel is this: Possess a pure, kindly and radiant heart...”

Counsel

1. One day Gerard and Mary were coloring some drawings. Gerard needed the yellow crayon, but Mary did not want to give it to him. The teacher told Mary she should share. The teacher gave Mary wise counsel.
2. Patricia has to decide whether to spend her money on cookies or on a story book. Her parents counsel her to buy the story book. Her parents give Patricia wise counsel.

Possess

1. Tinaye likes to read prayers before going to sleep. She has a small prayer book to read from. Tinaye possesses a small prayer book.
2. There was a flood and many people lost their possessions, but everyone came to their aid and soon they had the things they needed again.

Pure heart

1. Cathy became angry and screamed at Susan. Susan was sad but quickly forgave Cathy. Susan possesses a pure heart.
2. Jorge likes to share his cookies with all the children, even with Gustavo, who throws stones at him. Jorge possesses a pure heart.

Kindly heart

1. When people in need come to her house, Ming Ling always takes care of them. Ming Ling possesses a kindly heart.
2. Mr. Robertson is very old. Jimmy helps him carry his fruit harvest to the market. Jimmy possesses a kindly heart.

Radiant heart

1. When I feel sad, my mother always cheers me up and makes me happy. My mother possesses a radiant heart.
2. Obuya became ill and has to spend all his time in bed. He says many prayers, does not become sad, and continues to show forth happiness. Obuya possesses a radiant heart.

After the children learn the quotation, you may tell them a story. As always, if you keep the different parts of the story clearly in mind and you tell the story with joy and sincerity the children will understand it better.

'Abdu'l-Bahá could always tell what was in a person's heart, and He greatly loved people whose hearts were pure and radiant. There was a lady who had the great honor of being the guest of 'Abdu'l-Bahá at dinner. As she sat listening to His words of wisdom, she looked at a glass of water in front of her and thought, "Oh! If only 'Abdu'l-Bahá would take my heart and empty it of every earthly desire and then refill it with divine love and understanding, just as you would do with this glass of water."

This thought passed through her mind quickly, and she did not say anything about it, but soon something happened that made her realize 'Abdu'l-Bahá had known what she was thinking. While He was in the middle of His talk, he paused to call a servant and say a few words to him in Persian. The servant quietly came to the lady's place at the table, took her glass, emptied it, and put it back in front of her.

A little later, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, while continuing to talk, picked up a pitcher of water from the table, and in a most natural way, slowly refilled the lady's empty glass. No one noticed what had happened, but the lady knew that 'Abdu'l-Bahá was answering her heart's desire. She was filled with joy. Now she knew that hearts and minds were like open books to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Who read them with great love and kindness.

The activity following the story is the game called "The Burning Thirst":

Sticks are tied to the children's arms so they cannot bend their elbows. Then the children pretend that they are walking in a desert and are very, very thirsty. They come upon water in cups and have to find a way to drink it. (They will discover that the only way is to help each other, being careful not to get each other wet).

To end the class each child is given Drawing 2 to color.