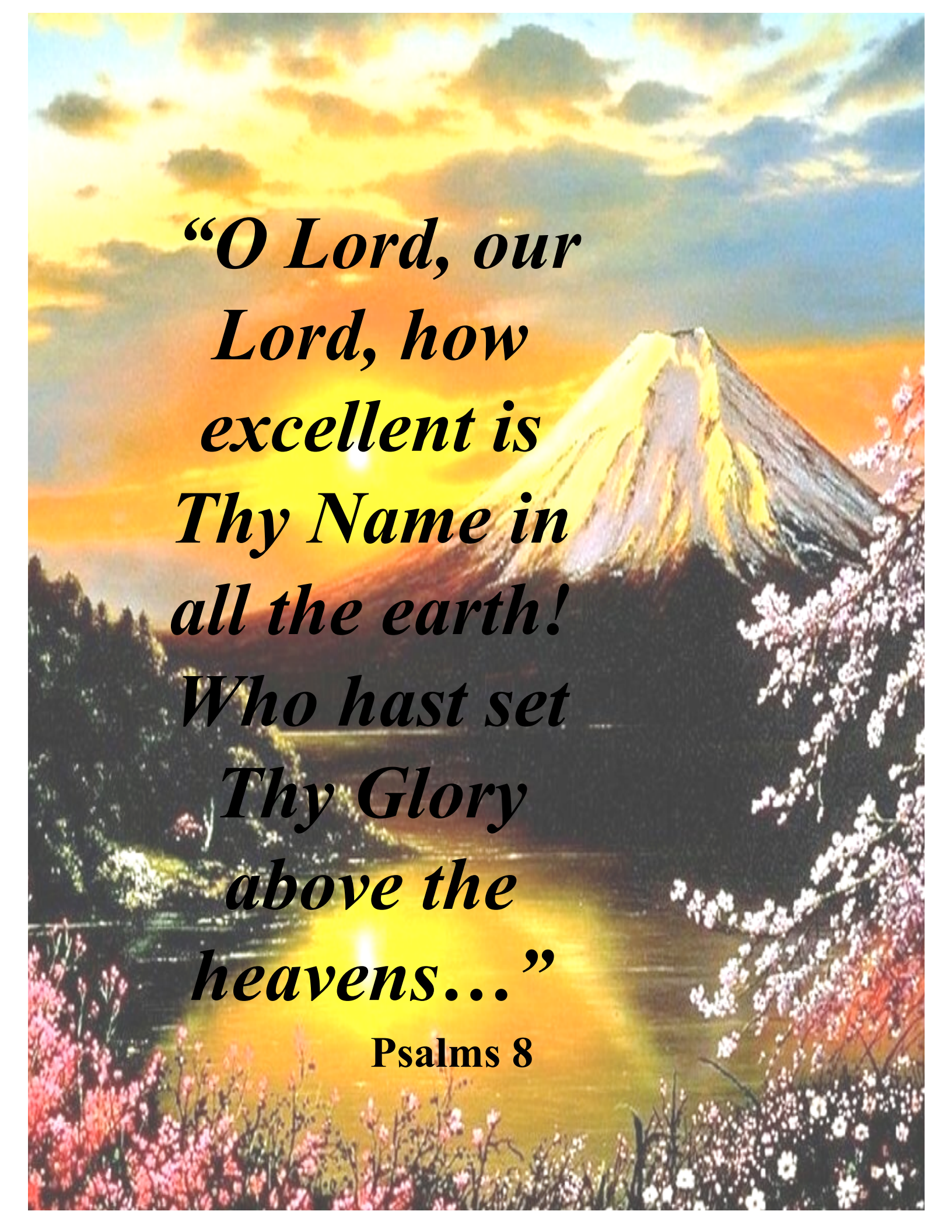


Hiru no Hoshi

No. 259

Contents	
2.....	Psalms 8
3.....	Greatest Name
7.....	Quiz
8.....	Pearly Shells
9.....	Dot to Dot
10.....	Photos
11.....	Parents' Page



***“O Lord, our
Lord, how
excellent is
Thy Name in
all the earth!
Who hast set
Thy Glory
above the
heavens...”***

Psalms 8

The Greatest Name

The family was visiting Father's home in Hiroshima. Mother was in the kitchen when she heard Riaz's loud laughter and little Anisa crying. Mother walked in to see what the problem was and saw that the children had gathered at the Butsudhan, the traditional family altar.

Riaz laughingly said, "Anisa was playing 'Rock, Paper, Scissors', with the statue inside the Butsudhan!"

"Well that's what the statue looked like it was doing! He looked like He wanted someone to play with!" said Anisa.

"Anisa! That is supposed to be The Buddha! You shouldn't be trying to play with Him, that is not respectful!" said Mona.

"True, but it is funny!" said Asma with a smile.

"Anisa, you are supposed to kneel and say, 'Mamamam Butsu' as you play with a bead bracelet." said Shahla wisely.

With that the three older children laughed again.

Mona explained the Japanese tradition. "Shahla! People hold prayer beads and say 'Namu Amida Butsu'. It's a way of calling on the Divine Spirit to help us, right Mom?"

"Something like that, it is calling on the Unknowable Essence, and saying you will obey," agreed Mother. "People all around the world, throughout history have called on God in different ways, using different names. The Buddhists in other countries say 'Om', the Divine Vibration, to connect with the Divine Spirit."

"Yeah it seems like every religion has a word like that, doesn't it?" put in Asma. "We Bahai's say 'Allah'u'Abha', 'God is Most Glorious!'"

"And the Jewish people say, 'Shalome', I heard it in a movie!" added Shahla.

"Yes," said Mother, "that means 'Peace' but it is basically the same thing...trying to get closer to the Divine Spirit, or God."

"Hmmm, I heard a song the Christians sang....it was 'Alleluia'." suggested Mona.

"That means 'Praise to God'", agreed Mother. "Can you think of any other ways people of different religions call on God?"

"I know, I know!" said Riaz, "When we eat at an Indian restaurant, or people do Yoga, they put their hands together and say 'Namaste', though I don't know what it means, it must be something like that, right?"



“That’s right Riaz!” praised Mother. “The Hindu people say ‘Namaste’ it means ‘I honor the Divine in you’. It is saying that you see God’s spirit reflected in every person. Can you guys think of any other Holy Names? How about in Islam, what do they say?”

There was a long pause while the children looked at each other.

Just then Father walked in and Mother asked him, “Do you remember the words that people in Islam say to connect to God?”

Father said, smiling, ‘In Sha Allah’ I can remember it.”

Mother laughed, but the children missed the joke so Mother explained.

“‘In Sha Allah’ means ‘If God Wills’. So Dad was saying, ‘If God wills I will remember’, but that is the Divine Name. It is what the people of Islam say all the time because they are admitting that everything is in God’s Hands.”

“OK, OK, I got one....what did the Babi’s say?” asked Asma.

“Ya Alliiyyal Allah!” answered Mona...She and Asma had just learned that song at Summer School.

“That means ‘O Exalted of the Most Exalted’,” Asma proudly finished.

“Wow! There are a lot of different ways to call on God using Holy Words!” said Riaz.

“Those aren’t the only ones, every religion, since man could speak, had some special Word or Words that helped them to connect with the Eternal, Divine Spirit.” explained Mother.

“And all those different religions and peoples were praying to the same Person?” asked Shahla.

“God isn’t a person! Silly!” laughed Riaz.

“Than what is He?” asked Shahla.

“Not a ‘He’ either!” Riaz said laughing harder.

“MOM! RIAZ IS TEASING ME!” Shahla yelled.

“Alright, Alright! I have heard some people say, ‘The Unknowable Essence’, or, the Native Americans say ‘The Great Spirit’, because no one can really understand what God is....we just know that God is the Supreme Creator of every physical thing, as well as the source of all Divine Attributes; such as Love, Mercy, Forgiveness, and Generosity,” explained Mother. “All the peoples around the world, from ancient times, until now, have tried to become closer to that Great Unknowable Essence, because that is the Source of all Joy and Light. It is like there were thousands of different Mirrors all around the world, all throughout history, reflecting the same Great Light. And people call on those Mirrors using different Names.... each one of those



Names is, 'The Greatest Name,' because It represents the Reflection of the Great Unknowable Essence," finished Mother.

"How can there be more than one Greatest Name? Doesn't Greatest mean that there is only one?" asked Riaz.

"The Greatest Name represents the Creator of the Universe...so the Names people use to call on that Creator is The Greatest Name. For example...Anisa calls me 'Mommy' you guys call me 'Mom', Daddy sometimes calls me 'Okaasan' my nieces and nephews call me 'Auntie', other people call me 'Luana', my mother calls me 'Tootie'....all those names represent 'me'.



"What is important is recognizing that Divine Spirit reflected in the soul of every person. Then you can never treat anyone unkindly." Mother explained.

"Yeah! Like your SISTER!" Shahla said to Riaz as she stuck out her tongue.

Mother frowned at Shahla, but Riaz just laughed.

"Shahla, you have to try and see the Divine Spirit reflected (however imperfectly) in Riaz, too!" counseled Mona.

With that everyone laughed while they tried to picture Riaz with a Divine Spirit!

"Getting back to the Greatest Name, Mother continued. Abdul-Baha wrote... ***"Ya Baha'u'l Abha! In that cry, are all the cries of the universe sounded."*** Do you all remember what Ya Baha'u'l Abha means?"

"O Thou Glory of the Most Glorious!" said the older children.

"Yes, and Abdul Baha said it is like all the Greatest Names since the world began are all rolled up in that one, most recent, Greatest Name. Abdul-Baha also said, ***'The Greatest Name should be found upon the lips in the first awakening moment of early dawn...and should be the last word breathed when the head rests upon the pillow at night.'***

"I know, Mommy, you always say that to us when you put us to bed...'last thing before you go to sleep...." Anisa began. "...and first thing when you wake up...Ya Baha'ul Abha!" the rest of the children finished with Anisa. Then they all laughed together.

Mother smiled and said, "Yes!" "Thank you for reminding me because now it is time to straighten up this room, help me put down the futons and get ready for bed!"

"AHHHHH!" said all the children...but they all got up and started helping, while Mother got out the futons.



To hear the song of the Names of God check online at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vo8NzYg2znM>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDNZrW60aoo>



In the time of the First Manifestation
the Primal Will appeared in Adam;
in the day of Noah It became known in Noah;
in the day of Abraham in Him; and so in the day of Moses;
the day of Jesus; the day of Muhammad, the Apostle of God;
the day of the Point of the Bayn; the day of Him Whom God shall make manifest;
and the day of the One Who will appear after Him Whom God shall make manifest

Hence the inner meaning of the words uttered by the Apostle of God,
I am all the Prophets, inasmuch as what shineth resplendent in each one of Them
hath been and will ever remain the one and the same sun.

The Báb

Quiz

1. Where was the family visiting?

2. What game was Anisa playing when the story began?

3. With whom was she playing?

4. What do other sects of Buddhism say?

5. What do the Jewish people say?

6. How do the Christians praise God?

7. What do the Hindu people say?

8. What do the people of Islam often say?

9. In what Name did Abdul-Baha say all the cries in the universe could be found?

10. What did Abdul-Baha say should be the last thing we say before we go to sleep and the first thing we say when we wake up?

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

The answers are on the Parents' Page.



Pearly Shells

Material

- *Small clam shells
- *Costume pearls
- *Various colored small beads
- *Small necklace ring (to put a chain through for a necklace, or bracelet)
- *Cord or chain for hanging
- *White glue or Resin (resin dries in a few minutes, the white glue takes hours)

Method

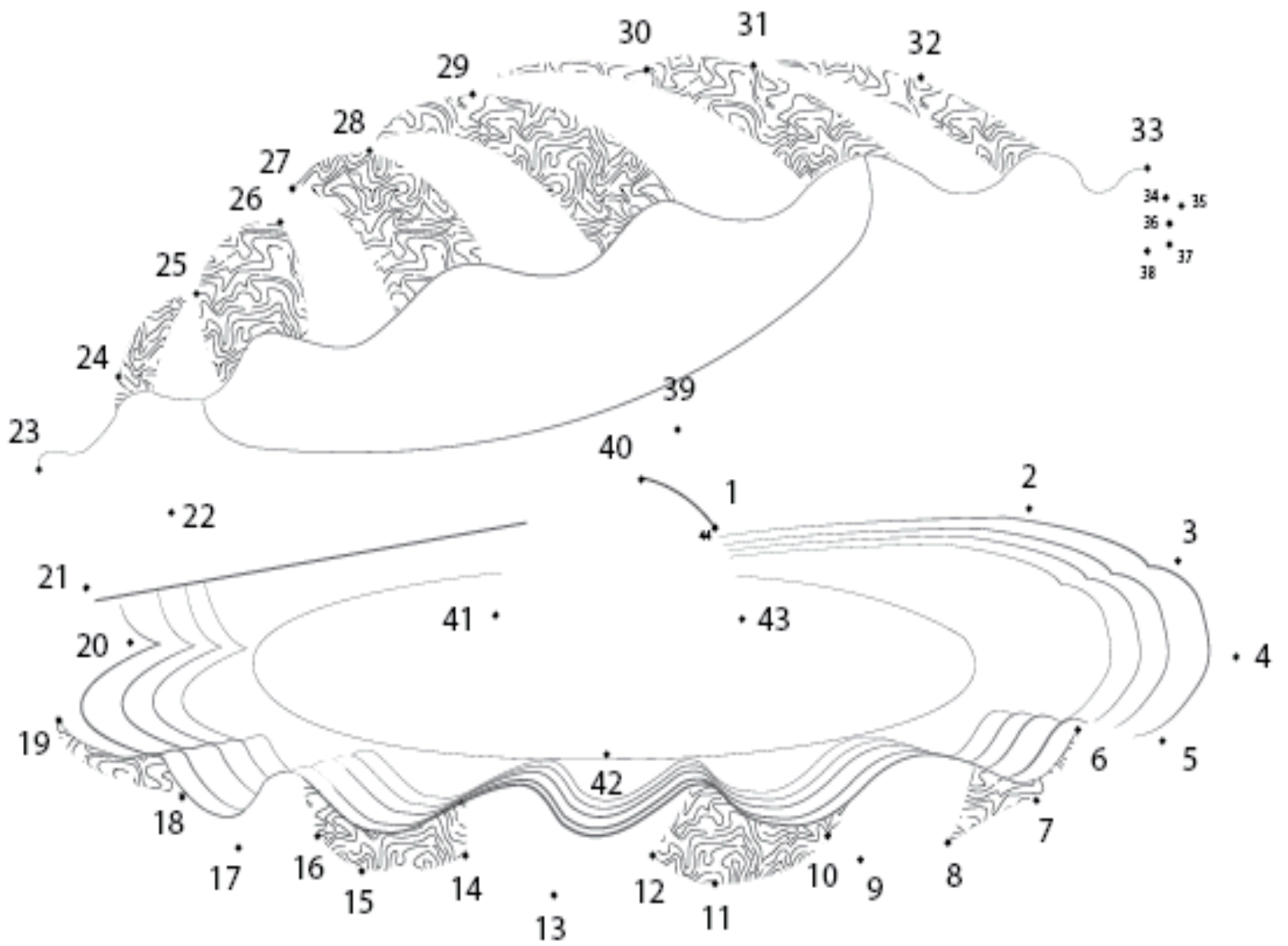
- *Put some white glue in the shell
- *Put a pearl in the middle
- *Decorate with the small beads
- *Put the ring in the glue, at the top
- *Let dry
- *Turn over, and coat the back of the shell thinly with glue, to make it shiny, then dry
- *Thread cord or chain through for a necklace, or bracelet



*“He is God! O God, my God!
Bestow upon me a pure heart,
like unto a pearl.”*



Dot to Dot





Parents Page

As parents or educators we can work towards ending hatred and disunity around the world, by educating our children to respect other people's customs and religions.

You could do a family project to study the customs and beliefs of the world's Great Religions as well as the indigenous religions of different countries. Please be sure to take note of their similarities and not just dwell on their differences. For example, below are some similar quotations from some different religions on a single topic of the Golden Rule. *

Bahá'í Faith: *"Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee, and say not that which thou doest not."* *"Blessed is he who preferreth his brother before himself."* Baha'u'llah

"And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbor that which thou choosest for thyself." Baha'u'llah; *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf.*

Buddhism: *"...a state that is not pleasing or delightful to me, how could I inflict that upon another?"*
Samyutta Nikaya v. 353

"Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful." *Udana-Varga 5:18*

Christianity: *"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."* *Matthew 7:12, King James Version.*

"And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." *Luke 6:31, King James Version.*

"...and don't do what you hate...", *Gospel of Thomas 6. The Gospel of Thomas is one of about 40 gospels that circulated among the early Christian movement, but which never made it into the Christian Scriptures (New Testament).*

Hinduism: *This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.* *Mahabharata 5:1517*

Islam: *"None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself."* *Number 13 of Imam "Al-Nawawi's Forty Hadiths."*

Judaism: *"What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man. This is the law; all the rest is commentary."* *Talmud, Shabbt 31a* *"And what you hate, do not do to anyone."* *Tobit 4:15 4i*

Zoroastrianism: *"That nature alone is good which refrains from doing to another whatsoever is not good for itself."* *Dadisten-I-dinik, 94,5* *"Whatever is disagreeable to yourself do not do unto others."* *Shayast-na-Shayast 13:29 5*

Quiz answers: 1) Father's home in Hiroshima. 2) Paper, Rock, Scissors. 3) The statue of Buddha. 4) Om. 5) Shalome. 6) Alleluia. 7) Namaste. 8) In Sha Allah. 9) Ya Baha'ul'Abha. 10) Ya Baha'ul'Abha.

* *Religious Tolerance. org*



No. 259

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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

To print out Issues in color of Hiru no Hoshi see our site

<http://hirunohoshi.weebly.com/>

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