

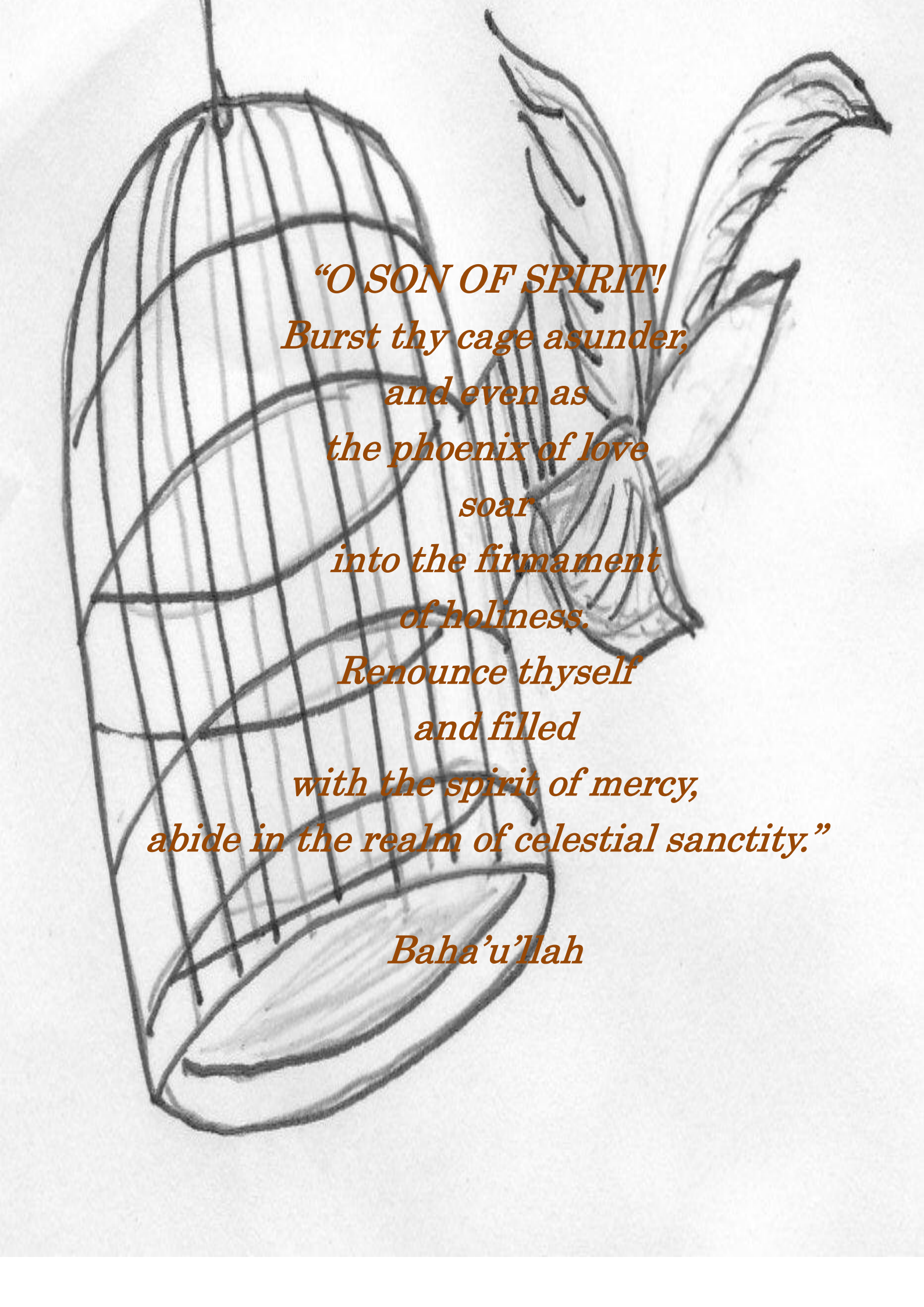


# Hiru no Hoshi

No. 236

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*“O SON OF SPIRIT!  
Burst thy cage asunder,  
and even as  
the phoenix of love  
soar  
into the firmament  
of holiness.  
Renounce thyself  
and filled  
with the spirit of mercy,  
abide in the realm of celestial sanctity.”*

*Baha'u'llah*

## Understanding Baha'u'llah's Words

**O Son of Spirit.....**God is talking to us, because the real “us” is our spiritual self.

**Burst.....**means “break”

**Thy.....** is the holy way of saying “ your”

**Asunder.....** “into pieces”

**Even as.....** “just like”

**Phonenix** is the bird that would burn up and be born again from the ashes.

**Soar...** “fly”

**Firmament....** “heaven”

**Renounce.....** “forget about”

**Thyself.....** “yourself”

**Abide.....** “live”

**Realm.....** “kingdom”

**Celestial....** “heavenly”

**Sanctity.....** “holiness”

God is telling us that we are children of the spirit, that even though our bodies are like the animals, the real part of us is spirit, from God. We should free ourselves from the cage of only thinking only about our self and things that are physical, like toys and clothes. We should be full of mercy towards others, wanting what will make other people happy, before we worry about what will make us happy. Then we will feel like we are flying up to God and we can live in “Spiritual Happiness” (which is the only real kind of happiness), forever. The things of this world are just like a cage, and our soul (or spirit) is the only important thing. So whether we are alive or dead, our soul should be flying towards God, and not stuck in the cage of material things.





Once there were five little children living in Okinawa. One day Asma came sadly into the kitchen holding the bowl with his pet turtle in it. The turtle was not moving.

Mother examined the turtle as the other children gathered around and sadly pronounced “I don’t think he will be moving anymore.”

“What!” said Asma, who had a very tender heart and loved all animals.

“She means its dead, dummy!” yelled Riaz, his younger brother.

The girls were also quite upset. “What will happen to him, Mommy?”

“Will he go to heaven like Grandpa did?”

“Is there a heaven just for turtles?”

Mother sighed, wrapped up the turtle in a clean cloth and gave it to Asma. “I will tell you what I know about life after death as we bury the poor little guy.”

The five children dug a small hole in the yard and put the little turtle in it and covered it over with dirt. Shahla and Anisa had brought flowers to place on top. As they sat quietly staring at the tiny grave, Mother began.

“What I understand from reading the Teachings of Baha’u’llah is that there is an animal spirit. When the animal dies it goes back to the great gathering of animal spirit. I think of it kind of like a big ball of clay, that you can pinch off to make a little cat or a little turtle. But when the animal’s body dies, the spirit goes back to the big ball of clay again, and gets mixed in with all the other clay, so you can’t tell it apart anymore.”

“Is that what happened to Grandpa?” asked Mona.

“No sweetheart,” said mother. “Baha’u’llah teaches us that people have a Human Spirit which can recognize God and His Great Teachers. That Human Spirit is called the Soul. This soul, comes from the World of God and it becomes an individual (meaning its own self) as soon as the baby is made in the womb of its mother. The soul stays with the baby as it grows, and the soul learns all the things that God wants it to know while it is here on this earth. When the person gets old and dies....”

“like Grandpa!” shouted Riaz.

“Yes, like Grandpa.” says Mother, “The soul goes back to the Spiritual Worlds of God as an individual and continues on forever to go closer and closer to God. So, Grandpa will always be Grandpa, even if he doesn’t have his body anymore.”

“So, will Grandpa always remember us?” asked Mona.

“Yes,” answered Mother. “Grandpa will remember everything that happened in his life and how it affected everyone around him. The good things he did will make him happy and the not so good things will make him sad.”

“I remember when Grandpa came here to visit us and we played the game, “Sorry” together, and I won.” said Shahla. Everyone laughed.

“I am sure remembering those times will make Grandpa very happy, because he loved each of you very much. And that is the most important thing we will know in the next world, love.”



explained Mother.

“Another way to look at death”, said Mother, “is by thinking of a bird in a cage. The bird is our soul and the cage is our body. The bird is the important thing, not the cage. When the cage breaks open, the bird is free to soar up to the heavens. When we die our soul will be free to be with all of the people we love in this world and the next all at the same time.”

“Also”, said Mother, “think of a baby in its mother’s womb, it is growing arms and legs and ears and eyes, but it doesn’t really need any of these things in the mother’s womb. But when it is born it will need all of those things, and if didn’t get them, it will be born handicapped. The same way, our souls are getting spiritual arms and legs. Can you guess what those might be?”

“I know, I know” said Riaz. “Generosity!” His best quality.

“Justice” added Asma, his favorite attribute.

“Responsibility!” said Mona, who was always very responsible.

“Friendliness” said Shahla, something she was very good at.

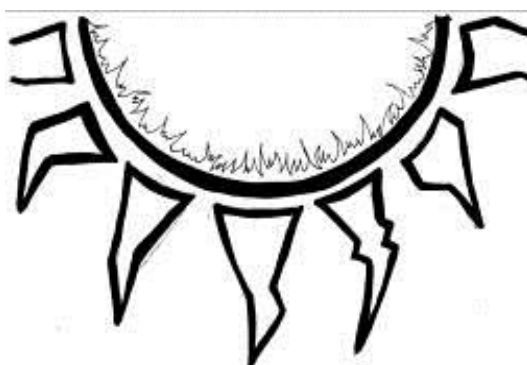
“Patience” said little Anisa who needed a lot of that being the youngest of five children.

“Yes, said Mother, all these attributes are our spiritual arms and legs, the things our souls will need when they get to the next world to help us grow closer to God.”

“So the little turtle’s job is finished, all animals were put on earth to help man learn more about God. This little turtle taught us all how to love a little bit more, to be responsible for it and generous with our time in taking care of it. Our jobs though, began when our souls were connected with our body in our mother’s womb, and will go on forever. Our job, our purpose for being, is to always grow closer to God. And that job never finishes.”

The children sat quietly for a few minutes, then, first Riaz, then Shahla, finally all of them joined in on this little song that they had sung when their Grandfather had died last year.

*“We all come from God,  
And unto Him do we return,  
Like a river flowing...  
To the ocean,  
Like a ray of light...  
Returning to the Sun.  
We all come from God,  
And unto Him do we return.  
And unto Him do we return.”*



## Quiz

1. Who is God talking to when He says “O Son of Spirit!”?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What does “burst thy cage asunder” mean?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What kind of bird are we like, when we fly up towards God?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Where will we live when we are “filled with the spirit of mercy”?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. In the story of the 5 children, what was the pet that had died?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What family member had also died recently?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What did Mother explain was the job of all animals on earth?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What did she say was our job?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What did the children do after they had buried their pet and heard mother explain about life after death?  
\_\_\_\_\_



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

The answers are on the Parents Page.

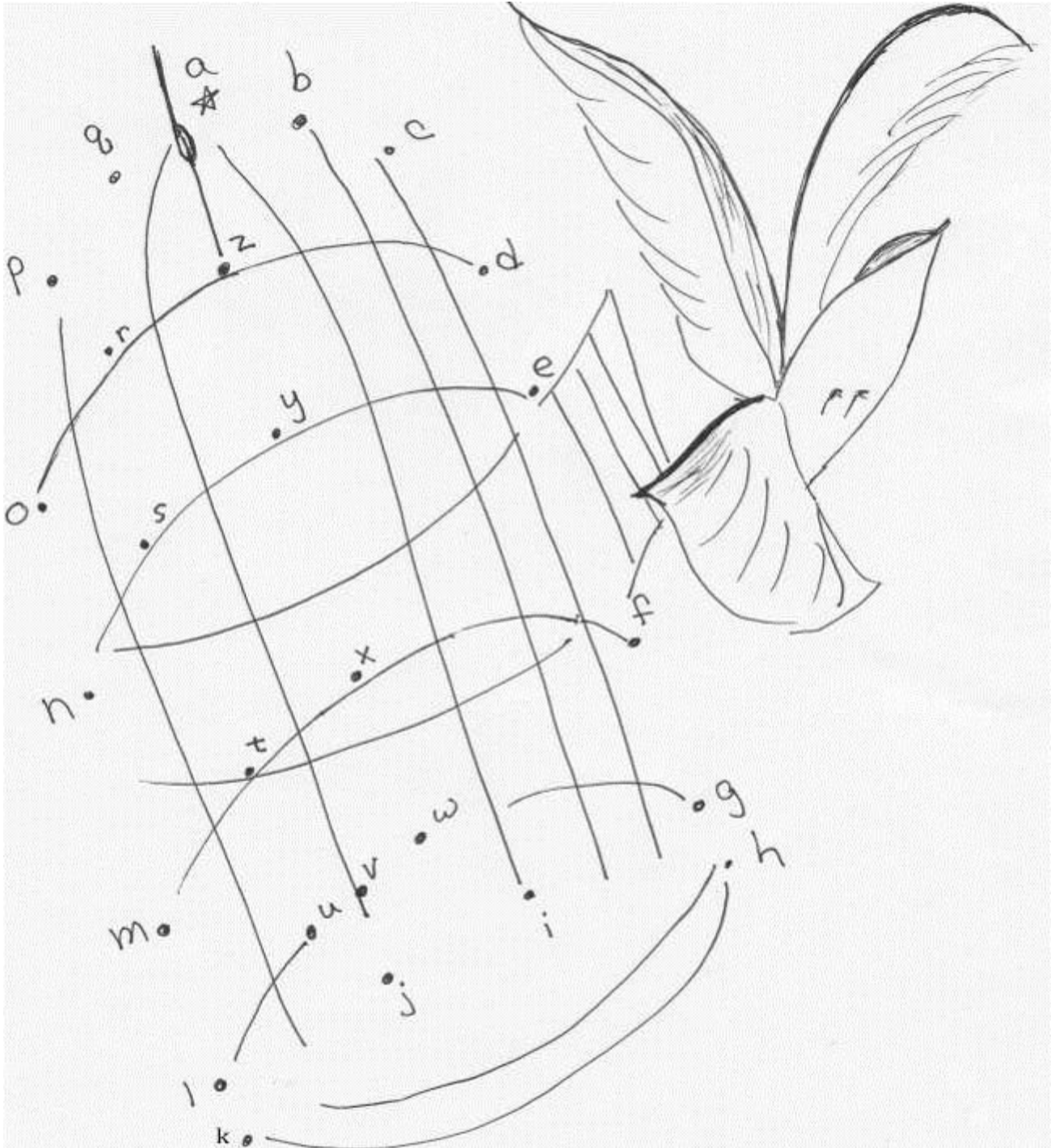
From a to b....

From b to c....

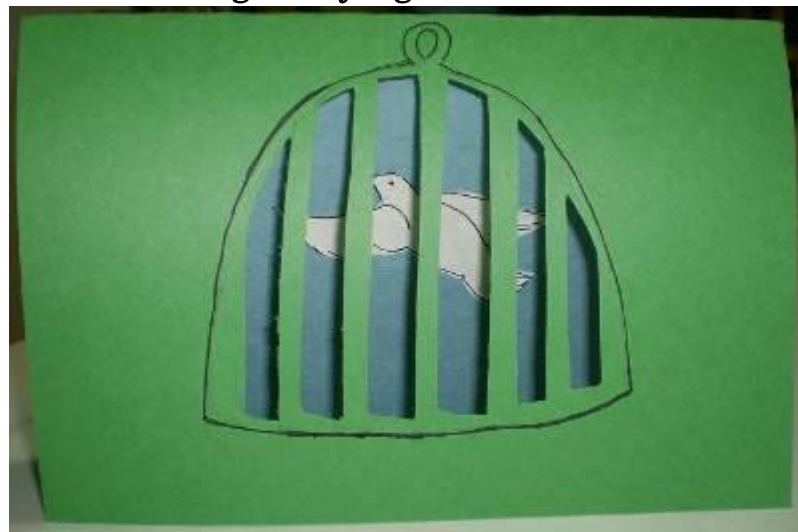
Follow the dots

and what do you see?

Then color it nicely.



### Caged/Flying Bird Card



Opened Card



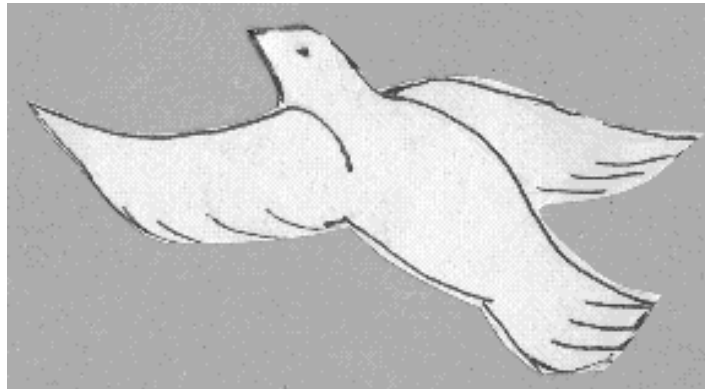
### Caged/Flying Bird Spinner





## Making the Cage Card

- \*Get 2 pieces of construction paper, a blue one and another color.
- \*Cut the blue one in half.
- \*Draw or trace a flying bird out of white paper and cut it out.
- \*Cut some white clouds out too.
- \*Fold the other colored paper in half to make a card.
- \*Draw a cage on the front half and using a cutter, cut out 6 or so spaces between the bars. (ask a grown-up help, or, do it for you).
- \*Glue the blue paper on the open card for the sky.
- \*Glue on clouds (clouds are hidden when the card is closed).
- \*To give a 3-D effect, glue a little folded paper on the back of the bird and just glue that to the paper instead of the bird, so it kind of pops out.
- \*Make sure the bird is centered in the cage before you glue it on.
- \*You can write the quote at the bottom of the card.



## Making the Spinner

- \*Trace or draw 2 birds, exactly the same size and shape, except that one has closed wings and the other has open wings, on white paper and cut them out.
- \*Cut circles out of blue construction paper.
- \*Glue them on each side of a circle of cardboard the same size....The bird with open wings on one side, and the bird with closed wings upside down on the other side.
- \*Draw with pencil the cage around the bird with closed wings.
- \*Using a needle, tie string or yarn though each side of the circle.
- \*When you spin the circle with the string, the caged bird looks like it is free and flying.

# Summer Schools were FUN!





If you missed Summer school, don't be sad, come and join us at Winter School, and lets have some FUN!

# Summer School Art



## Parents Page

At around five years of age children become very curious about death. It is a good opportunity to teach them not to fear death.

We cannot shield our children from death, it is as much a part of our life as birth is. There is that old Buddhist story about the woman whose child dies and she asks the wise man to bring her child back to life. The wise man tells her that he will, if she can bring him a mustard seed from a house of a family that has never known death. She of course cannot find such a family, and therefore becomes acceptant of her lot, and indeed ends up helping the families that she sees are worse off than she. She becomes contented because she has been able to forget her own problems in caring for others.

In the book "Some Answered Questions" Abdul'Baha has given us some wonderful explanations, which we can share with our children about life and death. Baha'u'llah also has taught of much on this subject in the "Hidden Words", "I have made death a messenger of joy to thee. Wherefore dost thou grieve?" Ruhi Book 1 has a wonderful unit on Life and Death with many of these quotes.



The site below has a beautiful song with photos that fits into this Theme of the bird being released from the cage. Perhaps you could share it with your children.

<http://jp.youtube.com/watch?v=dU4eUEidG8A>

### Answers to the Quiz:

- 1) Us;
- 2) break your cage into pieces;
- 3) Phoenix of Love;
- 4) We will live in the kingdom of Heavenly Holiness.
- 5) a little turtle;
- 6) Grandfather
- 7) to help us learn more about God;
- 8) To grow closer to God;
- 9) they sang a song.

Your children generously shared their art work for Hiru no Hoshi.

Any child wanting their art work back, please notify me of your address and I will snail mail it to them.



*If you have stories of your children learning a virtue or anything connected to the Faith, please send them to us, so we can have stories of "A little boy in Yamaguchi" or "A little girl in Akita". 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 [hirunohoshi@gmail.com](mailto:hirunohoshi@gmail.com) or [vb7mb7@bma.biglobe.ne.jp](mailto:vb7mb7@bma.biglobe.ne.jp)*

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**<http://www.msu.edu/~mayerni2/HnoH.htm>**

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