



# Hiru no Hoshi

No. 238

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*“To be a Baha’i  
simply means to  
love all the world;  
to love humanity  
and try  
to serve it;  
to work  
for universal peace  
and  
universal  
brotherhood.”*

*Abdul-Baha*



Mother closed the book. She had just finished reading Leo Tolstoy's "What Men Live By". The children all lay listening from their beds.

Suddenly little Anisa sat up and said, "What? What happened? I remember the man walking home in the snow and he saw a naked man laying behind the shrine and he went to help him....then I started dreaming.....was the naked man OK?"

"OHHH....ANISA! You slept through the whole story!" shouted Shahla.

"Well, I guess we can tell her the main points" said Mother, "and it will help us understand it better too."

Mona started, "The poor shoemaker gave the naked man his coat and boots and took him home."

"Yeah, and his wife was real mad at him," said Riaz.

"But then she felt sorry for the man, and gave him dinner," chirped in Shahla.

..."And he smiled and the room became bright!" The four children said together.

Mother went on, "The man said his name was Michael, and he lived with the shoes maker and his family for a year when....."

Asma continued, "A Rich man came to ask for some really strong boots to be made that had to last for a year."

Riaz interrupted, "...and Michael kept looking behind the man and after he left....." Michael smiled again and the room became brighter" the other 3 children joined in.

Mother continued the story. "Michael lived with the family 5 more years.... when one day a woman came into the shop to get shoes made for the twin girls that were with her. One of the girls had a crippled foot."

"Yes," said Mona looking excitedly at Anisa, "The woman said she wasn't the twin girls' mom, that their mother and father had died a week after they were born and the woman had taken pity on them and raised and loved them like her own daughters."

Mother continued, "After the woman left...."

Asma put in, "Michael smiled and became very, very bright, and then he said goodbye."

Mother went on "Michael explained he was an Angel, and six years ago, God had sent him to bring the soul of a woman to Heaven. But when he got

there the woman pleaded with him not to take her soul as her husband had just died and the twin daughters could not live without a mother and father to love and take care of them. Michael had believed her and put the babies in her arms. God was angry that Michael had disobeyed and punished him by sending him to earth.”

Asma interrupted. “What I don’t understand is, Michael just all of sudden said, ‘OK goodbye, I’m going’, and then left instantly, after they took care of him for six years!....That was rude”

Mona shook her head, “No, Asma, Michael explained that had been sent to earth to learn three lessons, and once he learned them he could go home. Like being on a time out till you say you’re sorry.”



“So the two little girls that came in for shoes, were the twin babies that Michael tried to help at the beginning?” asked Shahla.

“Yes,” answered Mona, “and if Michael hadn’t disobeyed God and tried to help the Mom she wouldn’t have rolled over on the little baby girl’s foot when she died and hurt it.”

“Poor Michael,” said Shahla, “he was just trying to help, even though it didn’t work out.”

Riaz jumped up and said, “Yeah but NAKED!” “He was NAKED!” “I guess they don’t have clothes in Heaven!”

At that everyone laughed.

“Well”, said Mother, “When a baby is born into this world it doesn’t come fully dressed, now does it.”

“So,” said Mother, “What were the three lessons Michael had to learn?” Shahla raised her hand.

“Put your hand down silly, you’re not in school!” shouted Riaz.

Shahla stuck her tongue out at Riaz and said “What does “Wells in man” mean Mommy?”

Asma and Mona laughed. “Not ‘Wells’, Shahla DWELLS! It means ‘live’, right Mom?”



“Yes” said Mother, “That was the first thing that Michael had to learn, Shahla, ‘What dwells in man’ and that means, what important thing does man have inside of him.....and the answer is... ?”

“LOVE” said Mona, wisely.

“Yes” said Mother, “We all have LOVE inside of us.

Michael learned that when the poor man and his wife were kind to him, even though they didn't know him. That is when he smiled the first time. And what were the other two things Michael had to learn?"

The children were quiet for a minute.

"I remember" said Riaz.. Everyone was expecting another joke. But Riaz surprised them by saying. "No one knows what he really needs."

Mother gave him a big smile. "That's right Riaz! The Rich man wanted boots to last him a year, but Michael saw the Angel of Death standing behind him and knew that he was going to die that day, so he didn't really need the boots. You may think you need some sweets but really you need a good healthy meal. Grownups are the same way, they may think they need a new car or a new house, but really they need to learn to be generous and selfless. When Michael learned that lesson, he smiled and became brighter.

So," said Mother "what is the third thing Michael had to learn?"

Then there was a long silence. "I guess that is a hard one. It is 'What Men live by'. That means, 'How do people manage to survive on this world'. The answer is....?"

"By helping each other" said Mona.

"Very Good Mona", said Mother. Michael learned that lesson when the woman took pity on the twin girls and loved them like her own children, and Michael smiled the third time and became so bright that it lit up the whole house. None of us know what we ourselves need, but we should look carefully at what everyone around us needs, and help them. God wants us all to learn we are not put on this world to help ourselves or only help our own family, but to help every single person living here."

The children thought a moment. Shahla said what they were all thinking.

"We are just little kids, how can we help the people of the world."

"Well," said Mother, "just keep your eyes open to see what help anyone, whether you know them or not, needs."

"I can help one of my classmates who always has trouble understanding the math homework." said Asma.

"If I see a lady walking down the street carrying a heavy package, I can help, even if I don't know her." said Shahla.

"I can help the kids that are being teased." Riaz suggested.

"HA!" said Mona, "You're the one that does the teasing! You can help them by stopping you!" at that everyone laughed.

"I can pick up candy wrappers that people left in the park." Anisa said, not

liking to be left out.

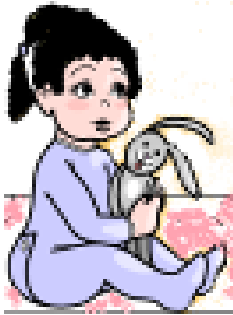
“All these are very good ideas” said Mother. “Just remember it is not for just tomorrow, or this week, it is for your whole life. Remember Abdul-Baha said to ***Be not content with showing friendship in words alone; let your hear burn with loving kindness for all who may cross your path.***”

“Now, Good night children,” said Mother.

Little Anisa suddenly jumped up. “But what happened to Michael? Did he go back to heaven?” Everyone laughed.

“Yes” said mother. “After he explained the three lessons he had learned he became very bright, and disappeared.”

“The End”.....**Now Goodnight!!**”



Would you like to read the story the children heard? Well turn the page!

## What Men Live By

Adapted from Leo Tolstoy



Simon the shoe maker slowly walked back from town in the snow. He was very cold and disappointed. He and his wife were so poor that they had to share one coat. He had gone to town to collect the money that people owed him so that he could buy a sheepskin to make another coat, but no one could pay him what they owed him. He was coming home with just a pair of boots to fix for one of his customers. As he came near a Shrine, he saw something white lying



behind the Shrine. When he looked closer, he realized that it was a naked man. Simon hurried past, he was afraid that if he stopped to help, something bad would happen

to him, too. Then he paused and thought, "What are you doing, Simon? The man may be dying of want and you slip past, afraid. Have you grown so rich as to be afraid of robbers? Ah, Simon, shame on you!" So Simon went back to the naked man. He saw that it was a young man who looked as though he were going to freeze to death. Simon put his only coat around the man and put the boots he was going to fix on the man's feet. Simon took off his hat to put it on the man's head, but then his own head became very cold. He said to himself, "I'm bald, while he has long curly hair." So he put his hat



back on his head. He asked the man how he came to be there. The man answered, "God has punished me". Simon did not know what else to do with the man, so he took him to his house. Simon's wife was very angry when she saw Simon without the sheepskin for a new coat, and a stranger wearing the only coat they had.



She started yelling at Simon. This made the stranger look very sad and frightened. Then Simon reminded her that she should have God's love in her heart. She suddenly stopped yelling and took pity on the stranger. She gave him and her husband the last bit of bread they had in the house and some soup, for supper. When she looked on the stranger kindly, he suddenly

smiled... And the room became a bit brighter.

The stranger said his name was Michael, and that he had nowhere to go, so Simon taught him how to make shoes. Michael became the best shoe maker in the region and Simon started to become very successful, because everyone wanted shoes made by Simon's worker, Michael.

One year after Michael had come to live with them a very rich Gentleman came to get boots made. The Gentleman was very loud and big. He brought very expensive leather to Simon and said that the boots must last a year without coming loose or wearing out. Simon promised to make the boots. While the rich Gentleman was in the shop, Michael kept looking behind the Gentleman, as if there were someone standing behind him that only Michael could see. Suddenly Michael smiled. In the whole year that he



had lived with Simon, Michael had only smiled that first time when Simon's wife had taken pity on him and given him food. Now Michael smiled again and the whole room lit up. When the Gentleman left, Simon asked Michael to cut the expensive leather carefully and start making the boots that must last a year. Michael began working immediately. The next day when Simon looked, he saw that Michael had just finished making soft slippers instead of strong boots out of the expensive leather. Simon was very upset and started to yell at

Michael. Just then there was a knock at the door. The servant of the Gentleman came in. He said the Gentleman that ordered the boots yesterday had died in the carriage on the way home. The boots would not be needed now. Instead, please make a pair of slippers for the dead man to be buried in. Michael handed the man the slippers and the rest of the leather. "How did Michael know that?" Simon wondered.

Five more years passed. Michael never smiled except for those two times, once when Simon's wife had given him food and once when he looked at something behind the rich Gentleman. Michael had been working and living with them for 6 years when one day, Simon's little son said to Michael, "Look Uncle Michael! There is a lady with twin little girls! She seems to be coming here, and one of the girls is lame."





Michael jumped up and stared out of the window. The woman came into the shop with two little girls who were identical twins. She asked that Simon make some pretty little shoes for the two girls. She put the girl with the twisted foot on her lap and told Simon to take special care to make the size right for this little girl's foot. Michael kept staring at the pretty little girls like he knew them. The woman explained that the little girls were not her daughters. She said that the girl's mother and father had died the week that they were born. She explained that the children had no relatives, or friends to take care of them, so she had taken pity on them. She has been taking care of them ever since. She said she loved them as much as if they were her own. Suddenly Michael started to smile. The lady and the children left the shop.

When Simon and his family looked, Michael was smiling so brightly that he made the whole room glow. Michael said "Farewell, master."

Simon was surprised and said "You're leaving?"

Michael said, "God has forgiven me, so I can return home."

Simon said, "I see Michael that you are no ordinary man, and I shouldn't ask you, but, why did you only smiled three times in these six years, and each time you became brighter and brighter when you smiled."

Michael answered. "I am an Angel, and six years ago God asked me to take the soul of a woman to heaven. The woman had just given birth to twin girls, she begged me not to take her soul yet, that her husband had just died and that if she died there would be no one to take care and love her little daughters. I believed her, and put the babies in her arms and went back to heaven. God punished me for disobeying Him and sent me to take the woman's soul. I did and as the woman died she fell on one of the babies and crushed her foot. As her soul went to heaven, I fell to earth, naked. God punished me, and sent me to earth to learn three lessons. ***What dwells in man?***, ***What is not given to man?*** and ***What men live by?*** Each time I learned one of the three lessons, I smiled and became brighter.

The first lesson, ***What dwells in man?*** I learned when your wife took pity on me, a stranger, that I lived not by my own care, but because you and she loved me. When I looked at her I saw God in her, and I learned that **"LOVE"** ***dwells in man***.....and I smiled.

The next lesson I learned is when the Rich Gentleman was here. He

thought he needed boots to last him a year, but I saw the Angel of Death standing behind him and I knew that he would not live until sunset, so he did not need boots to last him a year. Then I understood ***What is not given to man***. It is not given to man to know his own needs. So I smiled again.

Finally today I saw the twins whose mother I was suppose take to heaven. She had told me that her daughters could not live without a mother and father to love them. But a stranger has loved and cared for them. I then understood the final lesson, ***What men live by***. Men live by the care and love of one another. From those three lessons I understand that God does not want men to live apart, but united, so He does not reveal to them what each one needs for himself, but what is necessary for all. Even though it seems to men that they live by caring for themselves, in truth people can only live by **Loving** each other.”

Then Angel Michael rose into heaven and suddenly there was no one in the shop but Simon and his family.



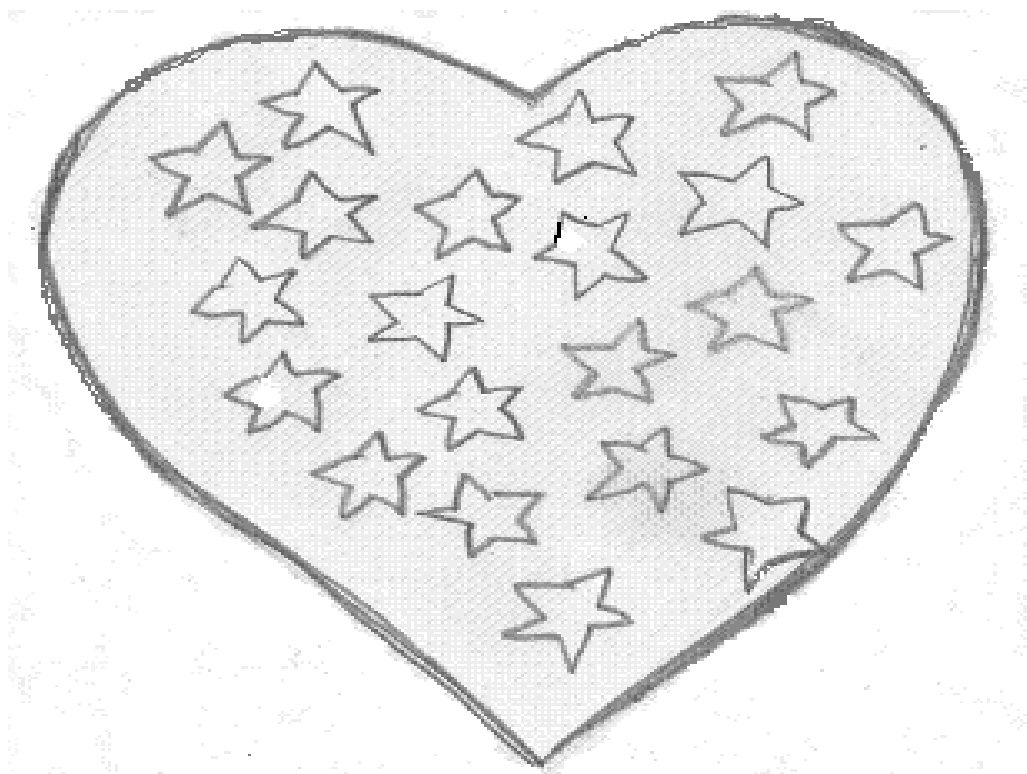
## How I Can Serve

Like the kids in the story, can you think of how you could help the people around you? Try to help people without getting any reward for yourself...Maybe even try to help secretly, without anyone ever guessing it was you.

- 1) I can help someone in my family by.....
- 2) I can help someone in my school by.....
- 3) I can help someone in my neighborhood by.....
- 4) I can help someone I don't know by.....
- 5) I can help someone secretly by.....

Whenever you have helped someone, color in one of the stars in your heart.

*"God has crowned you with honor, and in your heart has He set a radiant star; verily the light thereof will brighten the whole world!"*



## Tissue Paper Sun Catcher



### Materials

- Plastic cover from a food container (throw away kind)
- Colored tissue paper
- Glue (nori)
- Paintbrush
- Tooth pick
- Mixing Dish
- Picture from a coloring book
- Permanent Marker

### Method

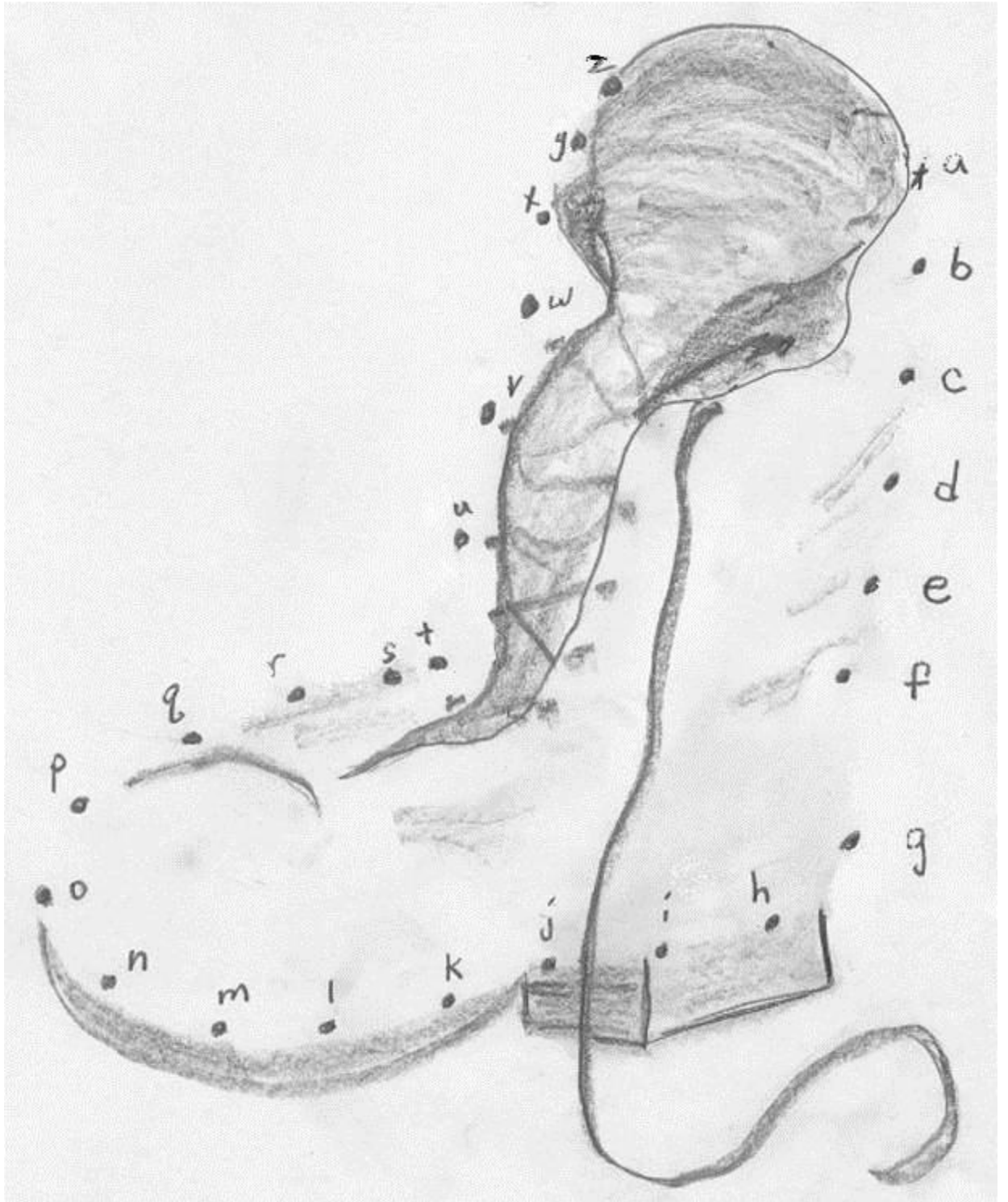
1. Trace the picture on the plastic cover with the permanent marker.
2. Mix the glue (nori) with a little water so it can be painted on with a paintbrush.
3. Tear the paper into little pieces and glue them on the picture. (you can use the toothpick to move the tiny pieces around.)  
Paint over the pieces with glue, too. (They move around more easily when they are thoroughly wet.)
4. Let your picture dry. Punch a hole in it and hang it up in the window.

From a to b....

From b to c....

Follow the dots

and what do you see? A boot for Simon to fix?



# Photos



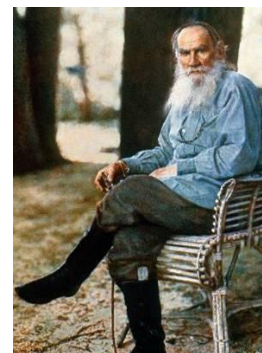
# Everyone's Art



## Parents Page

***“O God! Protect these children, graciously assist them to be educated and enable them to render service to the world of humanity.”***

Tolstoy knew of Baha'u'llah and His teaching and it can be seen that Tolstoy has used many of Baha'u'llah's teachings in his stories. Of course these teachings are the same in all the world's great Religions. The stories of Tolstoy are rich in imageries of the Nobility of Man. Many of his short stories are very good for teaching children the concepts of Service, Compassion and Love. We as parents can expand our children's world by introducing them to great literature such as that of Tolstoy and others writers, enriching their education in language, culture and morals. Not only libraries but also online libraries, can be sources of wonderful stories to read aloud with our children.



*In response to the messenger's question about Tolstoy's relationship to Baha'u'llah and His Cause, Tolstoy replied: "How can I reject it? ... Clearly, this cause will win over the whole world."*

*Tolstoy observed that the principles of the Bahá'í Faith were in accordance with the spirit of the age and, in time, would be firmly established in the world, ensuring the well-being of humanity.<sup>1</sup>*

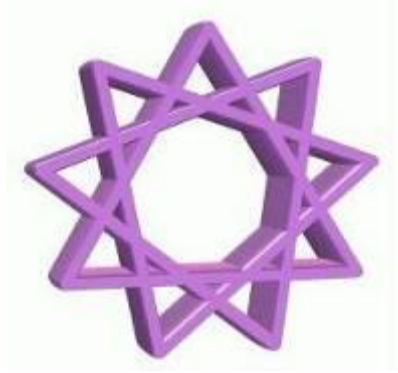
*Towards the end of his life L. N. Tolstoy came to the conclusion that the teachings of the Bab, as developed in the works of Baha'u'llah, represented that highest and purest form of religion. In 1910, shortly before his death, Tolstoy wrote of the Bahá'í Faith: "It is very profound. I know of no other religion which is so profound."<sup>2</sup>*

1. Moojan Momen, The Babi and Bahá'í Religions, p.30

2. Tolstoy, Complete Works, v. 78, p. 306

<http://www.bahaindex.com/documents/tolstoy.pdf>





*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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**Published:** / June 2009

No. 238

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