

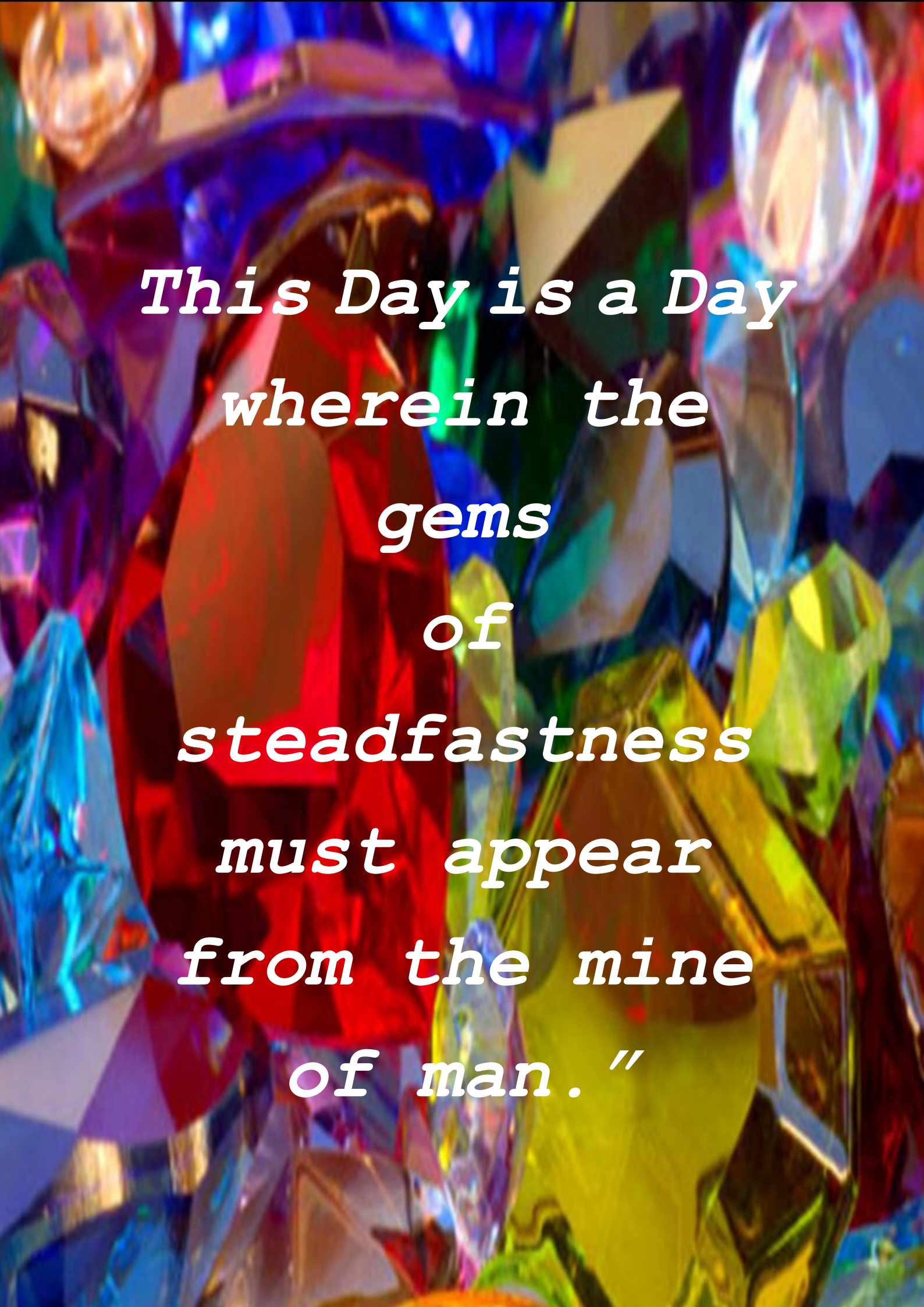


Hiru no Hoshi

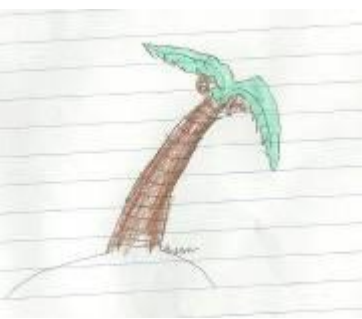
No. 249

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*This Day is a Day
wherein the
gems
of
steadfastness
must appear
from the mine
of man."*



Steadfastness

It was the typhoon season in Okinawa, a very exciting season! Today, the children were all very happy that, not only did they get to stay home from school because of the super typhoon that was about to hit them, but the high schools were closed too, so Father, a math teacher, also got to stay home.

The whole family had gathered in the tatami room, drinking hot chocolate as the wind roared outside.

“This is good story-telling weather!” commented Mona.

“Yeah, tell us a story, please, Mom,” pleaded Shahla.

All the children looked up expectantly, and Mother smiled as she looked around at them.

“Hmmm, I have a story on steadfastness. How about that?” Mother asked the children.

“Stead.....fast.....ness? What does that mean?” asked little Anisa. The children all looked at each other, but no one could answer.

Mother laughed, “Well, I guess it **is** good that I tell the story then.....Let’s see who can explain ‘steadfastness’ after the story is finished.

“Once upon a time there was a little girl who lived on an island...” Mother began as all the children, and Father, got comfortable on the tatami floor.

“This was a very strange island. It was very isolated, no one knew of any outsider that had visited that island for generations, and no one knew of any islander that had left the island in just as long. The people on the mainland could see the island but whenever anyone had ever tried to go to that island, a very dangerous current would take the small boat out to sea. Not only that, everyone knew that that island was cursed!!”

“Ooh, neat! A ghost story!!” shouted Riaz.

“No, not really,” laughed Mother.

“Let her go on, Riaz! Don’t interrupt!” yelled Shahla. She and Riaz were always fighting.

“There were not any ghosts, but there was something very strange about that island. All the people born on that island, were born blind.”

“Ahhh, poor things!” sighed Shahla, Mona and Anisa all at once.

“The people that lived there, didn’t feel sorry for themselves at all, in fact...none of them thought that there even was such a thing as ‘seeing’. To them being



blind was normal. They thought everyone in the world was like they were. Actually they believed that the people on that island were the only people that existed. That beyond their island was just water, and nothing else! Nothing else in the whole wide world!”



“Wow, that is weird,” said Asma.

“So,” continued Mother, “this little girl lived on this strange island. Her name was Nina. Nina was different from everyone else that lived on the island....she could see! There was also one old man on the island that could see. He was the one that helped people when they got sick. They called him ‘the Doctor’.

Everyone on the island thought this little girl, Nina, and the Doctor were so clever, because they knew things that no one else could know. Like when someone was coming even though they were too far away to hear. Or, where things were that someone had lost, they just knew where the thing was even when they were too far away to feel it. Everyone on the island thought that these were very strange and useful ‘powers’. None of them could understand the ‘power’ of sight.”

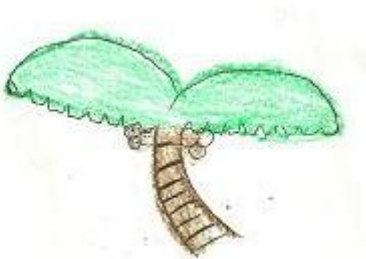
“Yeah, can you imagine trying to explain to someone who couldn’t do it, what ‘seeing’ was like?” suggested Asma.

“Or what ‘red’ or ‘blue’ or ‘green’ is!” put in Mona. All the children thought about that for a moment and then Mother continued.



“Little Nina, even with her wonderful ‘power’ was very lonely, because even though everyone used her for information, like finding things, and letting people know what was going to happen before they could hear or feel it...none of the children would let Nina play with them. They were afraid of her, and also she was too good at all the games because of her special ‘powers’.”

“Sometimes when Nina was not busy finding things for people, she would climb to the top of the hill and look out over the water, and in the distance she could see the mainland, and the small village that was nestled there. Sometimes she could even see children playing on the beach. One day while Nina watched the children playing a game of hide and seek, she came to an amazing realization! All of the children over in that village were just like her! They could “see” just like she could. Nina was so excited, she wanted so badly to go over there and play with



them.

“She ran back to her village and tried to tell her family and her friends about the wonderful children living across the water who were just like her. They just laughed at her, ‘Nina!’ everyone scolded. ‘There is nothing across the water, this island is all there is.’ and, ‘Nina, don’t let your imagination run away with you, we are the only people there are. There is no one else!’

“Poor Nina must have been so lonely,” said Shahla. The other children nodded in agreement.

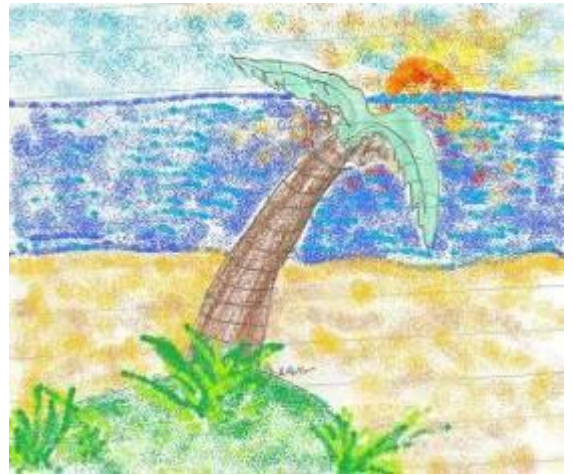
“Then,” continued Mother, “ something happened to Nina’s village that was very frightening. First the old man who could also see, got very sick, and since he was the doctor, there was no one to help him get better. Then, all the people started getting very, very sick. Nina was so scared with everyone around her sick and no doctor to help them, because he was sick too.”

“The grownups that were still well, gathered to discuss what could be done. Nina saw them talking and ran to them saying, ‘Let’s go over the water to that village over there and get help. I bet they have a doctor.’ They all started yelling at her, ‘Stupid girl, we don’t have time for your silliness now!’ ‘There is NOTHING beyond the water, only death!’”

“Nina was so sad and worried, she went to the bedside of the old man, and with tears in her eyes she said ‘Tell me Grandfather, what can I do? I want to go across the water and get help. I can see the village, but no one will believe me. Are they right? Are we really the only people? Is what I see real? There are many, many people on our island and they all say that there is nothing beyond the water. I am only one child, how can I be right and all of them be wrong?’”

“The old man patted her hand and said. ‘Be steadfast in what you know to be true. No matter what others may say. Down at the beach, by the big tree, there is a little canoe that I used when I was young, you can use that. Before you launch the canoe, throw a stick into the water, and watch how the current takes it. Sometimes during the day it will go one way, and sometimes another. When the stick goes towards the mainland, put the canoe into the water and paddle to the





mainland. The current will help you. Do not go if the stick goes out to sea, the current will take you with it and you will be taken out to sea! Go little one, go and get help! You are the only one that can.”

At this point Anisa jumped up and said, “Yah!” “Go, Nina, Go!” The other four children laughed.

“Anisa, you’re really into this story aren’t you.” teased Riaz.

Mother smiled and continued. “Nina ran to the beach. She saw on her way that more and more people had become sick, she hoped she could help them. She got to the beach, found a stick and threw it into the water as far as she could. She watched as it sped out to sea. Nina was so disappointed that she started to cry. She threw another stick in just in case, and it too went out to sea. She sat down on the beach and cried and cried until she fell asleep there on the beach. The next morning when she woke up, she grabbed another stick and threw it far out into the water. To her delight, the stick went straight for the mainland. She pulled out the canoe and was just about to climb in and push off, when her friends came down to the beach. When they realized that she was going into the water, they did everything in their power to try and stop her. They kept telling her that she would surely die if she went into the water. ‘There is nothing over the water except death, everyone knows that!’ they all said. She shook them off, pushed the canoe into the water, and jumped in. There was a paddle inside of the canoe she tried to use. It was very difficult, at first the canoe kept going around in circles, while her friends screamed at her. Finally, she figured out how to paddle; once on one side, then once on the other. The current helped carry her to the mainland.”

“As she pulled onto the far shore, a crowd gathered around her, they were all so surprised to see someone from the “crazy island”. She told the people all about her island and how the people were sick and needed help. A doctor and some others came to help the people of her island.”

“Thanks to Nina’s steadfastness, the whole island was saved. Also, they eventually found the cause for everyone’s blindness and a way to help them with that too.”

Mother finished, as all the children clapped.

“Now, who can tell me what ‘steadfastness’ means?” asked Mother. All the children just looked at each other, and then at Mother.

Mother smiled and said, “Steadfastness means standing firm and not being pulled by other people to do, or think things that you know are not right. Nina was steadfast in her belief that there were other people who COULD help them. She knew something that others did not have the capacity to know and she didn’t let anyone talk her out of

doing what she knew was necessary. So I want you all to be like Nina. Don't ever let your friends talk you into acting or thinking in a way that will let someone be hurt, or in a way that is not right."



"How do we know what is right, Mom? Sometimes people don't seem to know." asked Mona.

"That is why we have Manifestations of God," put in Father, who had been listening quietly the whole time. "The Great Teachers from God that tell us what is right. They are the Standard, the way we know what is right, and what is wrong."

"Who can name some Manifestations of God?" asked Mother.

"Christ!" "Buddha!" "Moses!" "Muhammad!" "Krishna!" "Zoraster!" "The Bab!" "Baha'u'llah!" the children all shouted at once.

Mother finished with, "***This Day is a Day wherein the gems of steadfastness must appear from the mine of man.***" And as she said it, she went to each one of them and touched their heart as though she were taking a gem from their heart and looking at it, smiling, and putting it back.



Quiz

1. Why were all the children home from school? What was happening outside?

2. What was strange about the island in Mother's story?

3. Why was Nina sad and lonely?

4. What terrible thing happened on the island?

5. What was Nina's idea of how to help the people?

6. Did she let her friends talk her out of trying to go to the Mainland?

7. How did Nina know when it was safe to go to the Mainland?

8. What does "steadfastness" mean?

9. What should we have in our hearts?

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



The answers are on the Parents' Page.

RESPONSIBILITY

Now it is time for us to take a special journey to help us remember what we have learned so far. First, let's prepare for our journey. Close your eyes and be still. Take a deep breath, hold it, and blow it out. Do it one more time. Squeeze your arms, and let them loose. Squeeze your legs, then let them loose.

We are taking a journey to a place high on a mossy hill, where all the stepping stones change to your favorite color every time you walk on them. All the bugs turn into flowers each time you breathe on them. The moss curls under our feet like a thick green carpet. It is a magical place.

In this place, it seems we do not have to do anything for ourselves, but that is not so. Everything that happens comes from our efforts. We practice Responsibility. We know that being responsible makes us beautiful because beauty is what we do! Real beauty comes from inside. When we desire to become something beautiful ourselves, we treat other people with kindness and love and that's how we show our beauty.

This is a magical place, but in some ways, we know it is not so different from where we live. We will try to be beautiful inside and see what is beautiful in people and things all around us. We will create beauty through our own responsible actions.

Now we will look at one last butterfly, one last flower, and bring these beautiful thoughts back to our circle. When we open our eyes, we will see beauty in each of our friends and we will share beautiful smiles...

さあ、これからすてきな旅に出しましょう。先に準備をしましょう。目を閉じて。気を静めて。息をすって、はいて。もう一度すって、はいて。腕をぎゅっとして、力をぬいて。足をぎゅっとして、力をぬいて。



すてきな丘の上まで想像の中で旅をします。この丘は魔法みたいな所です。石は触るたびに自分の一番好きな色に変わったり、虫は息を吹きかけると花に変わったり。足の下の草はふわふわでとても気持ちのいい所です。

この場所は自分の為は何もしなくていいような所ですが、本当はがんばる事によってすべてが変わる所なのです。責任を取る事で自分の中からの美しさがみんなに見える事になり、他の人たちを愛と優しさであつかう事で自分はきれいな人になれます。

そこは魔法にみちた所です。でも私たちの住む場所とあまり変わりませんね。ここでも自分の中の美しさをみんなに見せる事ができます。そう、みんなの中の美しさも見つけられます。責任を通して美しさを作りましょう。

では、最後にちょうちょうをもう一羽ながめて。すてきな色ですね。この美しい思いをサークルに持って帰りましょう。目を開けて。お互いの美しさを見て自分の一番すてきな微笑みを見せましょう。

～責任～

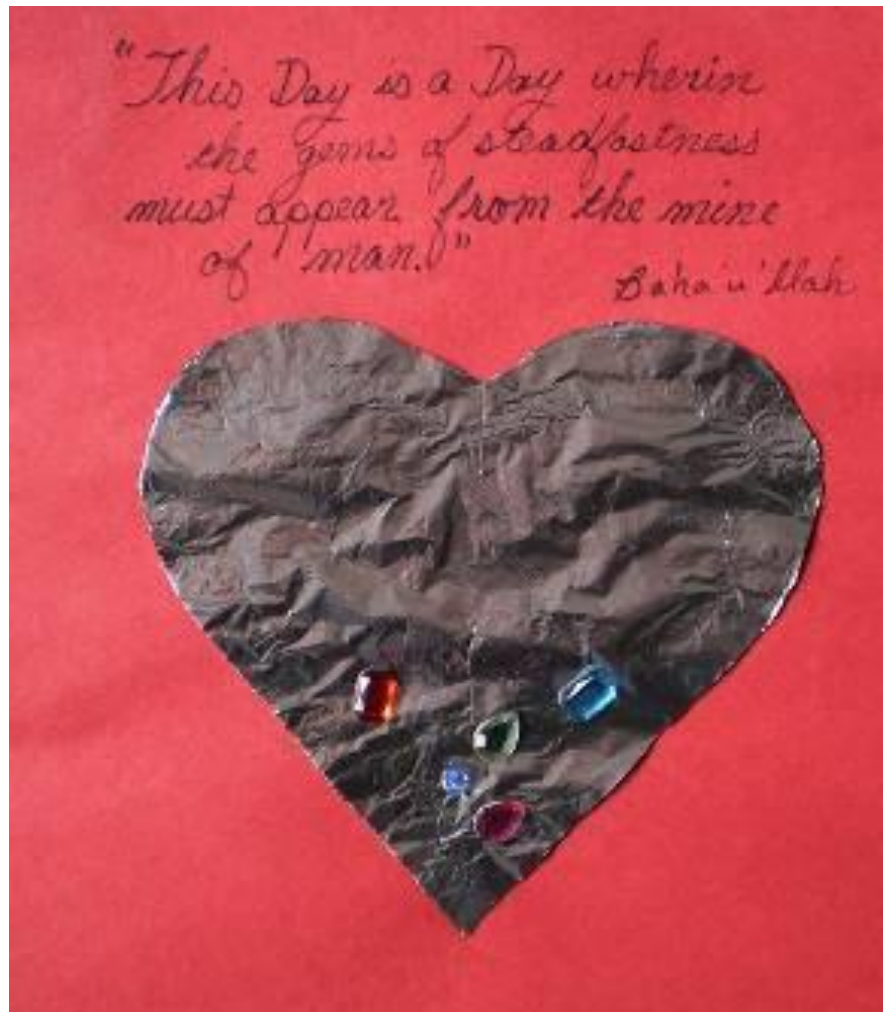
Art Page

Materials

- *1 piece of construction paper
- *1 piece of aluminum foil
- *Scissors
- *Paste
- *Plastic gems from the dollar store
or imitation jewel necklace.

Method

- *Choose the color of construction paper you want.
- *Write the quotation onto the paper. Leave enough room for the heart.
- *Fold a big piece of aluminum foil in half and cut half a heart, open it up and both sides will be the same.
- *Glue the heart onto the construction paper.
- *Glue the gems of steadfastness onto the heart.



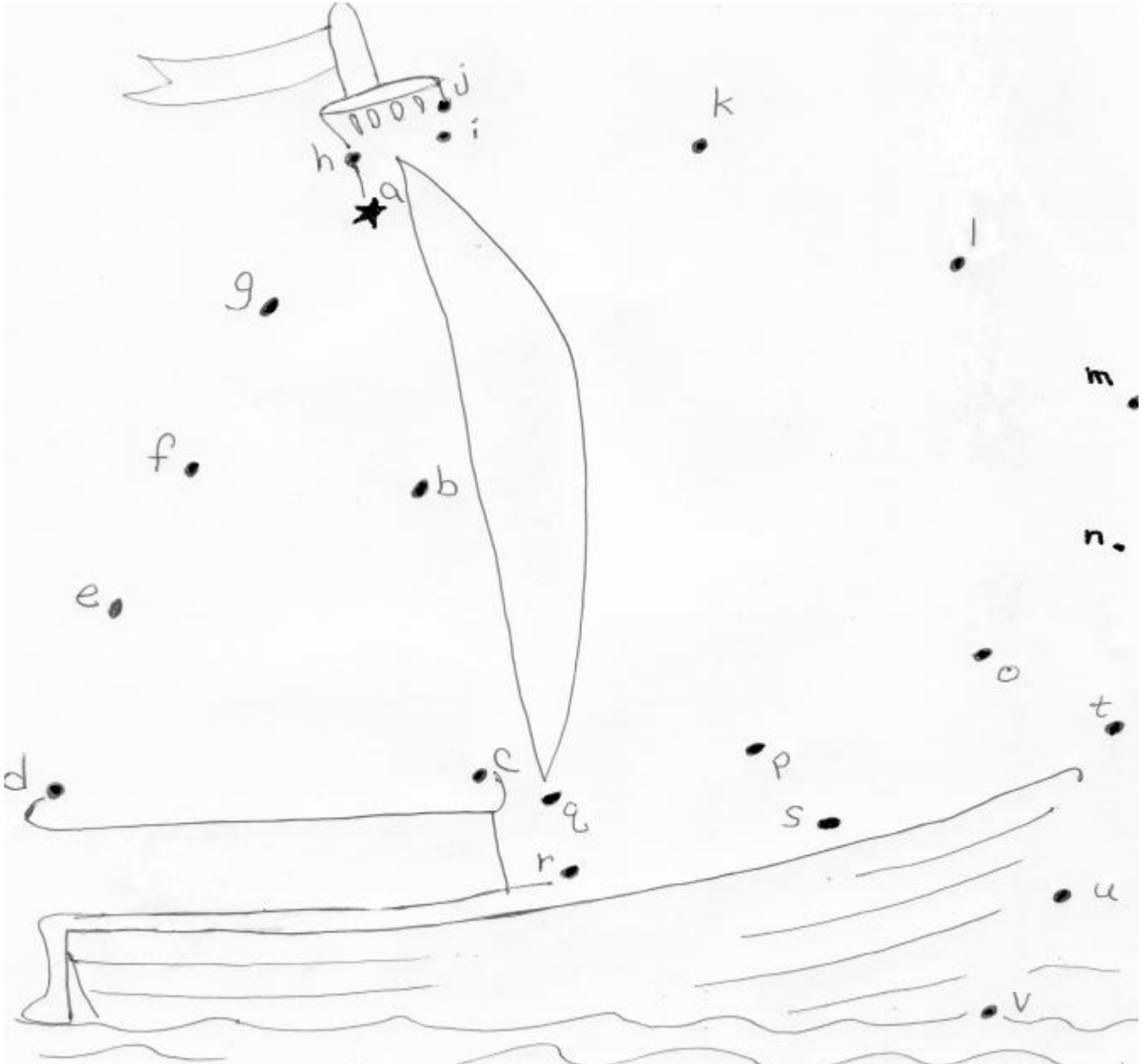
Dot to Dot

From a to b...

From b to c...

Follow the dots... and what do you see?

Use this to go to the strange island?





Bahai Schools





Parents Page

The point of this story is to explain to children the concept that sometimes we can have the ability to know and understand things that others around us are unable to perceive. If a regular person were in the audience listening to Albert Einstein give a lecture, they would see an old man with messy hair and unkempt clothes making scratches on a blackboard. While the mathematicians sitting there would be amazed at the wonder of the man's intelligence and not notice his appearance at all.

If we have the ability to understand a concept, and others do not, we cannot let them affect how we act.

The majority of the people around us do not understand the concept of the existence of God and His Manifestations. If they do not have the ability to do so, because of the veils that are obscuring their sight, we cannot let that affect how we act and react to the world around us.

For example, if we have certitude that this brief time on earth is not our only existence, that there is life after death, and that we must prepare for that future existence by obtaining virtues and spiritual attributes, and others around us, maybe even our own family, do not understand that concept, we cannot let that affect how we live our lives.

Our children need to be prepared to act with steadfastness in a world that, for the most part, will not accept their views on the importance of service to mankind and growing ever closer to God, which we understand as the purpose of our existence.



Answers to the Quiz

- 1) There was a typhoon. 2) None of the people could see. 3) The other children wouldn't play with her.
- 4) The people all started to get sick. 5) Nina wanted to go to the Mainland to get help. 6) No, she didn't.
- 7) She threw a stick into the water. 8) Steadfastness means to not change what you know is right, no matter how many people are against you. 9) We must have the gem of Steadfastness in our heart.



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 or vb7mb7@bma.biglobe.ne.jp

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