

BAHÁ'Í CHILDREN'S CLASS LESSONS

14. PRAYER

Welcome the children to the class. See that they are sitting comfortably. Ask one or two children to say an opening prayer

Who are we talking to when we pray? Yes, we are talking to God. God hears us no matter if we pray silently or aloud. He is with us at all times. Ask the children to suggest times when they might wish to pray. Draw from the children anything they know of the Bahá'í teachings on prayer. How many times a day should we pray? Which prayers should we say? Can we pray at any time? Yes, we can because God is always listening.

Long ago some people thought that if they spent many hours in prayer, they would be specially blessed by God, but Bahá'u'lláh said, **“To chant but one verse with joy and gladness is better for you than reading all the Revelations of the Omnipotent God with carelessness.”** Bahá'u'lláh quoted in 'New Era' p. 92

What does it mean to be careless? Yes, it means to take no care. God wants us to take care, to concentrate when we pray. We should think about what we are saying. When someone else prays, we should pay the same attention, and think about the words that are being said. God is so very, very wonderful and we should remember that He is right near when we pray. We should be reverent -- that is show respect as God is more important than any king or president.

Aren't we blessed that He loves and cares for each one of us? We love God so it is good to tell Him so. It is good to thank Him for all His wonderful gifts to us. Here is a prayer of thankfulness: - **“O compassionate God! Thanks be to Thee for Thou hast awakened and made me conscious. Thou hast given me a seeing eye and favoured me with a hearing ear, hast led me to Thy kingdom and guided me to Thy path. Thou hast shown me the right way and caused me to enter the ark of deliverance. O God! Keep me steadfast and make me firm and staunch. Protect me from violent tests and preserve and shelter me in the strongly fortified fortress of Thy Covenant and Testament. Thou are the Powerful. Thou art the Seeing. Thou art the Hearing.”** 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Note – for other language speakers, if you do not have the translation of this from the English, choose another prayer for them to start learning.

Remind the children of how important it is to know some prayers by heart so that we can say them at any time. Go over the first two or three sentences according to the ability of the children, and so start them learning the words by heart.

Also it is important for each child to have their own prayer book. Children's small prayer books are available in several languages. Information on how to order these available from the South African Baha'i Centre, Tel.

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ACTIVITIES

GROUP A

Tell the little children the meaning of the words as most of them cannot read. Colour in words "O God" and make a decorative border.

GROUP B

Have children copy out in their best handwriting from the above prayer, the first three sentences – up to the word 'path'. Then decorate it.

GROUP C

Have the children copy out in their best handwriting, the above prayer and then decorate it.

FINISHING

Children can take their work home. Praise them for working hard and doing good work. Have them tidy the room and then when they are settled quietly, have one child read the above prayer.

PRAYER. Group A. These words say, "O God" Colour the letters and make the page pretty.

