

BAHÁ'Í CHILDREN'S CLASS LESSONS

24. THE MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD

Greet the children and see that they are comfortably seated. It is preferable if they are not too squashed together or they become restless and fidget. Ask one or two children to recite or read opening prayers.

Today we are going to talk about the Manifestations of God. Manifestation is a very big word but it is not difficult to understand. It just means to show, make clear or reflect like in a mirror. Let us practise saying Mani-fest-ation (*mani-fest-ashun*). Have the children repeat it several times until they can say it with confidence.

God made us and the whole world and He loves us. We are His children. Just like children need to go to school to learn many things, so grown-ups also have many things to learn. People especially need to learn how God wants us to live. God knows that people make mistakes and also do bad things that make other people unhappy. He wants to tell us just how He wants us to behave. But there is one big problem and that is that we can't see God and we can't hear Him! But God can overcome all problems and He has a very wonderful way to overcome this one. He sends His Messenger, His Manifestation, who outwardly looks human just like us. The Manifestation is born into a human family and starts as a little baby just as we do, but as He grows older He realises that He has a special spirit which is a Divine gift from God. This is the spirit of the Manifestation, the One who reflects God.

All these Manifestations come to earth for one purpose and that is to teach humans to love God and to obey His laws. These laws are the rules to help people live together happily in this world.

There have been many Manifestations of God. They were born in many different countries so that they could teach different people.

The Manifestations or Prophets we hear most about are Abraham, Moses, Christ, Muhammad, the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh, but there were many others as well. The Jewish people follow Abraham and Moses. The Christians follow Christ. The Moslems follow Muhammad. We Bahá'ís know that all these Manifestations come from God, but the two latest Manifestations are the Báb and Bahá'u'lláh. (Here the older children can be asked to name Manifestations that they have heard of)

ACTIVITIES

GROUP A

Children open up the paper chain of children prepared by the facilitator. Suggest that they colour in the children wearing different coloured clothes. Remind them to be very gentle

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when they colour as the chain can be easily broken.

GROUPS B AND C

Have these older children fold and then cut out paper chains of children as directed. Colour them in. Form the chains into circles and stick with sticky tape. Colour in an A4 sheet in many different beautiful colours and designs. Form this sheet of paper into a tube which will represent the Teachings of the Manifestation. (Remind the children that out of respect, Bahá'ís do not try to draw any Manifestation). Now Place the 'Teachings' in the centre with the "People" gathered round.

FINISHING

Ask the children to clear away any scraps and tidy the room. Have one or two children say a closing prayer.

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MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD. Fold paper in half (First Fold) and in half again (Second Fold) and in half again (Third Fold). Hold folded paper with diagram of half the man showing. Cut carefully through all layers of paper together. Open out gently and you will have 4 little men holding hands. Show children this prepared sample. If scissors are available, have older children fold and cut their own men. Otherwise facilitator prepares one for each child before the class, but keep them folded so that the children can have the fun of opening them themselves. Tell the children to draw faces, clothes and colour in the little men, working very carefully so that they do not tear.

