



### Notes on Translations of the Guardian

Department of the Secretariat Letters of The Universal House of Justice, 1993 Jan 21, Translations of the Guardian

## It's a girl!



David & Janina Barnes are parents to a healthy 7lb. 4 oz. girl named Elana Tahirih Barnes on Saturday, Nov 15. CONGRATULATIONS!

## CORTEZ

by John Hursey, Correspondent

The Spiritual Assembly of Cortez has been active lately. We have been working on Study Circles (Ruhi training), Children's Classes, and Devotional Gatherings as well as the usual Feasts, Holy Days, Assembly Meetings, Firesides, etc.

### CLUSTER MEETINGS

We recently hosted a Cluster meeting with a program given by Peter Bruss, and some members of this Assembly and the Montezuma County Assembly have been attending inter-faith programs at the local Methodist Church. This inter-faith program has been the outgrowth of follow-up to the Letter to Religious Leaders from the Universal House of Justice, thanks to a very open-minded Methodist clergyman.

### UNIT CONVENTION

Four members of the Cortez Assembly attended the Unit Convention in Alamosa on October 5th. The book sales at the Unit Convention was made possible by our Librarian, Carole Hitti.

## 1. The Clustering Process

• As anticipated, in many cases a large city and its suburbs, generally under the jurisdiction of a single Local Spiritual Assembly, were identified as one cluster. Some of these clusters have millions of inhabitants. To implement effectively programs for growth in such an urban cluster, the Universal House of Justice gave the following advice to a National Assembly that inquired whether the city cluster could be divided into smaller units. It is quite permissible for a Local Assembly to consider its area of jurisdiction as being composed of groupings of believers living in close proximity to each other, when that area is large. To avoid confusion, it would be helpful if a new term, such as sector, were used to distinguish each such segment. There is nothing to prevent a Spiritual Assembly from encouraging a systematic approach to growth in these sectors, along lines similar to those used elsewhere with clusters.

• In categorizing the clusters in a country, a focus was placed on assessing the capacity of the communities to promote and sustain growth. A key factor in determining a cluster's stage of development was the strength of the institute process in the area. An important lesson learned was that the purpose of categorizing clusters was not to assign labels to areas but to assist the institutions to decide on the most appropriate strategy to enable a cluster to advance along a continuum of growth. The Universal House of Justice provided this clarification to a National Assembly: "Clusters" are only a construct—albeit a highly useful one—that enables the friends to think about the growth of the Faith on a manageable scale and to design and implement plans close to the grassroots of the community.

## 2. The Development of Institutes and Strategies for Growth

..., you have stated that the term "self-subsisting", which Baha'u'llah often uses to characterise God, "means nothing" in the English language. It is likely that this term signifies in some way a basic concept of the Faith; namely, that creation is an emanation from God, without Whose continuing bounty and grace it would cease to exist. The term thus underscores the immense contrast between our reality, which is related to the contingent world, and His reality which is independent of any cause and which entirely transcends the world of being. Indeed, the point is that He is the Cause of being itself. There is a way to deduce such a meaning, however, solely from the common meaning of the words. According to its primary dictionary definition, "to subsist" means to have existence, to persist or continue. The addition of "self" makes it reflexive. Knowing just these two things, can we not then say that if God is self-subsisting it means that there is nothing other than Himself upon which He depends for His continuing existence? In other words, He exists in and of Himself without being dependent on any other cause: He has no creator and there is nothing prior to Him.

A few comments may serve to provide a perspective in which to view the issues you have raised. First, it is essential to recall that, as we are told in the Writings, the comprehension of the Sacred Writings is not dependent upon scholarship or learning. This should encourage every believer, no matter what his attainments, to delve into the Revelation with determination and confidence. In the Book of Certitude, Baha'u'llah says:

"The understanding of His words and the comprehension of the utterances of the Birds of Heaven are in no wise dependent upon human learning. They depend solely upon purity of heart, chastity of soul, and freedom of spirit."

But, in addition to needing the proper spirit, it requires concentration and meditation to unravel the meanings which lie enshrined in the Revealed Word. Nowadays, however, the lives of most

# Colorado Springs

**SUNDAYS** - 1622 Rainier Drive  
Directions: Corner of Rainier and  
Arlington, just east of Circle Drive  
and one block north of Monterey.

- Devotions 10-10:30 AM
- Classes for all ages, 10:30-11:30
- Potluck refreshments

## NOVEMBER

**FEASTS** 1622 Rainier Drive  
Qudrat Monday, Nov. 3, 7:15 PM

**Host:** David & Janina Barnes  
*Bring flowers!*

Qawl Sat., Nov. 22, 7:15 PM

**Host:** Sirius Rouhani & family

### HOLY DAYS:

- Day of the Covenant  
Tuesday, Nov. 25, 7:15 PM
- Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá  
Fri/Sat, Nov. 28/29, 11 PM - 2 AM  
Ferdowsian home, 5285 Whip Trail

### *Public Fireside:*

Saturday, Nov. 8, 7:00 PM

## DECEMBER

**FEASTS** 1622 Rainier Drive  
Qawl Sat., Nov. 22, 7:15 PM

**Host:** Star Stone  
Sirius Rouhani & family

Masá'il Thurs., Dec. 11, 7:15 PM

**Host:** Velma Ferguson  
Sheldon & Eileen Jones

Sharaf Tues., Dec. 30, 7:15 PM

**Host:** Lua & Richard Jamison

### *Cluster Reflection Meeting:*

Saturday, December 6 Bahá'í Center  
6:00 Potluck dinner

7:00 9:00 Reflection Meeting

### *Public Fireside:*

Saturday, Dec. 13, 7:30 PM

From **ODDS & ENDS** page 1

people are busy and crowded with distractions, so it requires great discipline to devote the time, attention and care necessary to study the Teachings in the way they deserve. Deepening is like a skill or art which must be acquired through effort. And, just as there are millions of Christians who would not trade the King James Version of the Holy Bible, once one has caught the flavour of the English translations done by Shoghi Effendi -- or done in the style he developed -- the beauty and power of expression become appealing and inspiring. One comes to fall in love with that style.

The questions you have asked touch on matters, such as the theory of translation, which have occupied thinkers for generations and about which much ink has flowed. They cannot be adequately addressed within the scope of a brief letter. You are, therefore, urged to take up these issues with knowledgeable believers, or you may ask your Local Spiritual Assembly to appoint someone to assist you in working through these questions.

As you study the Holy Writings, be assured of the prayers of the House of Justice at the Sacred Threshold that the Blessed Beauty may assist you in this process.

## Messengers continue to come Revelation Continues ...

Followers of every religion think of it as the last religion. In the following verses we see that God has not been pleased with this:

"And to you there came Joseph in times gone by, with Clear Signs, but ye ceased not to doubt of the (Mission) for which he had come: At length, when he died, ye said: 'No messenger will Allah send after him.' thus doth Allah leave to stray such as transgress and live in doubt,- " Qur'an 40:36

"The Jews say: "Allah's hand is tied up." Be their hands tied up and be they accursed for the (blasphemy) they utter. Nay, both His hands are widely Outstretched: He giveth and spendeth (of His bounty) as He pleaseth. But the revelation that cometh to thee from Allah

increaseth in most of them their obstinate rebellion and blasphemy. Amongst them we have placed enmity and hatred till the Day of Judgment. Every time they kindle the fire of war, Allah doth extinguish it; but they (ever) strive to do mischief on earth. And Allah loveth not those who do mischief. " Qur'an 5:64

Verse 7:35 seems to be clear about the coming of Messengers. The Arabic verb "ya' tiyenna" clearly conveys future continuation :

## Bahá'í Connection

**Contributions** to offset publication costs and mailing should be sent to Allan Kirby, 1406 Friendship Lane East, Colorado Springs, CO 80904. The cost of producing each newsletter is currently \$8.00 per year.

### Submissions

If you wish to have the Bahá'í Connection run an article or advertise for your event please submit as soon as possible. The Bahá'í Connection is finished on the 21st of each month that means that regular type is received up to the 20th. If you want a special design connected with an event please send it so that it is received by the 14th.

Articles are edited for size, clarity and relative value to the readers. Photographs and artwork are encouraged, however it is best to avoid having us return the illustrations.

**All items for the Bahá'í Connection can be sent to:**

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## **Radiant Acquiescence** from page 1

- Early in the planning process it became clear that there were very few clusters in the world where Baha'i communities had achieved the stage of development necessary to launch intensive programs of growth. Whereas the training institutes were gradually increasing human resources, in most cases they had not been able to advance beyond the first few courses.

- As the House of Justice stated in its message dated 9 January 2001, "institutes will have to provide their communities with a constant stream of human resources to serve the process of entry by troops." Therefore, advancing the institute process has served as a major strategy for moving a cluster from one stage of development to another. Not only are more believers to be involved in institute courses but also a greater number need to proceed through a full sequence. Furthermore, it has become clear that to reinforce the link between the institute process and systematic growth, efforts to train more tutors and to have an increasing number of friends complete higher courses in the sequence should be concentrated in the more advanced clusters in a country. This strategy generates enthusiasm and creates a sizable group of capable believers who understand "the prerequisites for sustainable growth."

- The experience of the past several months in promoting strategies for growth within advanced clusters in a country has centered on the following measures: Institute campaigns. In order to give a boost to the process of human resource development and prepare more well-established clusters for launching intensive growth programs, the International Teaching Centre has encouraged a number of Counsellors to promote institute campaigns in selected clusters. The aim of these campaigns is to enable the believers who have already completed the first few books of the institute's sequence of courses, and preferably have served as tutors, to move rapidly through the remaining courses so that they can develop the capacity to serve as tutors for all of the books in the sequence.

Multiplication of activities. Through strengthening the institute process in well-developed communities, a growing pool of human resources is being generated

that may be likened to a pyramid. As a result of the encouragement of the institutions within a cluster, these highly motivated friends are initiating an increasing number of study circles, devotional meetings, and children's classes. The gradual multiplication of these lines of action—"measures that have proven ... to be indispensable to large-scale expansion and consolidation"—has moved forward with ease and growing momentum.

Reflection meetings. An effective vehicle for the multiplication of these lines of action has been reflection meetings at the cluster level. In these gatherings the institutions consult with the believers, many of whom are involved in the institute process, on the achievements and strengths within the cluster. They also discuss the nature and scope of activities to be undertaken in the next phase of their plan. A simple, short-term plan is devised that reflects the pledges of individuals as well as the collective activities proposed by the Local Assemblies. This plan is incorporated into a calendar of activities that becomes the framework for the subsequent three- to four-month period. As a result of such reflection meetings, the plan for a cluster is based on the human resources available rather than, as has often been the practice in the past, on the minimum needs of the Baha'i communities themselves. In this way, a community is able to offer services—for example, children's classes—beyond its small circle of believers, to the community at large.

## **3. Administration within a Cluster**

- Questions have arisen about the most suitable administrative arrangements at the cluster level. Generally the type of structure needed depends on the stage of development of a particular cluster and the kind of activities to be carried out. For example:

In a cluster where only a few isolated believers and groups exist, much of the planning can continue to be carried out by the Regional Council or their committees.

. As growth proceeds in a cluster, a task force of a few active believers may provide an adequate structure. Similarly, the regional institute area coordinator may be able to assist with some of the needs for coordination.

. At some stage of development, when the activities within the cluster become more complex, the communities would benefit from having an Area Teaching Committee, or some such coordinating entity, to stimulate and coordinate activities at the cluster level. This would be especially useful in clusters without Local Assemblies or Assemblies that are not functioning.

In clusters with well-established local institutions, a coordinating committee with representatives from the Local Assemblies in the cluster might be an appropriate structure.

## **4. Steady Expansion and Systematic Growth**

- It is important to keep in mind that advancing the institute process and multiplying the three lines of action identified in the 9 January message do not in themselves represent intensive growth. Ultimately these endeavors must lead to a steady and significant increase in the number of new enrollments. As the House of Justice has pointed out in reference to systematic programs of growth:

At the core of the program must lie a sound and steady process of expansion, matched by an equally strong process of human resource development. A range of teaching efforts needs to be carried out, involving both activities undertaken by the individual and campaigns promoted by the institutions.

- In order to achieve this expansion, the believers and institutions need to be alert to new opportunities as they devise their approaches to teaching. In many cases, teaching campaigns have focused on inviting a large number of interested individuals to participate in the institute courses, thereby using the institute itself as an instrument of teaching. In some instances, the arts have been used with marvelous efficacy. Other approaches include an emphasis on teaching families of believers, while in many rural clusters increasing attention is being given to reaching junior youth.



# BAHA'I CALENDAR • 2004 • 160-161 B.E.

A Bahá'í Day Begins at Sunset. The slanted shapes demonstrate this feature.

## JANUARY

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19th Feast of Sultan (Sovereignty)

1 - New Year's Day  
19 - Martin Luther King Birthday

## FEBRUARY

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7th Feast of Mulk (Dominion)  
26 Feb-1 Mar Ayyam-i-Ha (Intercalary)  
14 - Valentine's Day  
16 - President's Day

## MARCH

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2nd Feast of 'Alá (Lofiness)  
2nd-21st Fast  
21st Feast of Bahá  
21st Naw-Rúz (New Year) no work

## APRIL

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9th Feast of Jalál (Glory)  
21st April-May 2nd Ridván Feast  
21st First day of Ridván (no work)  
28th Feast of Jamál (Beauty)  
29th Ninth day of Ridván (no work)

## MAY

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2nd Twelfth day Ridván (no work)  
17th Feast of 'Azamat (Grandeur)  
23rd Declaration of the Báb (no work)  
29th Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh (no work)

## JUNE

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5th Feast of Núr (Might)  
24th Feast of Rahmat (Mercy)

6 - Passover at Sundown, 11 - Easter, 22 - Earth Day

# JULY

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9th Martyrdom of The Báb (no work)  
13th Feast of Kalimát (Words)

4 - Independence Day

5 - Cinco de Mayo • 9 - Mother's Day • 31 - Memorial Day

# AUGUST

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1st Feast of Kamál (Perfection)  
20th Feast of Asmá (Names)

20 - Father's Day  
19 - Juneteenth

# SEPTEMBER

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8th Feast of 'Izzat (Might)  
27th Feast of Mashíyyat (Will)

# OCTOBER

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16th Feast of 'Ilm (Knowledge)  
20th Birth of The Báb (no work)

31

= HOLY DAYS

= FEASTS

# NOVEMBER

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4th Feast of Quдрat (Power)  
12th Birth of Bahá'u'lláh (no work)  
23rd Feast of Qawl (Speech)  
26th Day of the Covenant  
28th Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

# DECEMBER

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12th Feast of Masá'il (Questions)  
31st Feast of Sharaf (Honor)

9-15 - Chanukah (Begins at Sundown\*)  
25 - Christmas Day  
26- Jan 1 - Kwanzaa

= HOLY DAYS

= FEASTS

= US HOLIDAYS

"O children of Adam! When Messengers come (ya' tiyenna) to you from among you, who convey my verses, then those who take heed and amend will have neither fear nor regret."

Qur'an 7:35 another translation:

[7:35] : "O children of Adam! there shall come to you Apostles from among yourselves, rehearsing my signs to you; and whoso shall fear God and do good works, no fear shall be upon them, neither shall they be put to grief."

(It is also interesting to note that the verse right before it [7:34] tells us that for each nation, there is a set term.)

Question: Does not the term "children of Adam" include Muslims?

If we argue that mankind has reached perfection or is on its way towards it, and thus it stands in no need for further guidance, we are told that even angles continue to need guidance:

"Say, if there were settled on earth angels walking about in peace and quiet, We should certainly have sent them down from heaven an angel for an apostle."

Qur'an 17:95

And let us not forget that we are also promised the return of Jesus (PBUH) :

"And [Jesus] shall be a Sign of the Hour [of Judgment]; therefore have no doubt about it, but follow Me: this is a straight way."

Qur'an 43:61

"And he shall speak to the people when in the cradle and when of old age, and (he shall be) one of the good ones."

Qur'an 3:46

These other verses are also presented as food for thought:

"Were We then weary with the first Creation, that they should be in confused doubt about a new Creation? "

Qur'an 50:15

"Whatever verses we cancel, or cause thee to forget, we bring a better or its like."

Qur'an 2:100

# WANTED A CAR

A Senior Baha'i in the Colorado Springs community needs a vehicle to get to work.

They are facing financial hardships and cannot afford to purchase a car. The only requirement of the car beyond functioning properly is that it be an automatic. If you have a car to donate please contact

the LSA of Colorado Springs.

(719) 598-4806

## Invitation to Members of the Pikes Peak Cluster

*That means Bahá'ís in Colorado Springs, Teller County, Manitou Springs, El Paso County, Woodland Park*

Reflection meetings at the level of cluster's have become a powerful means of unifying thought and action across institutions and localities; they have lent a potent stimulus to institutional and individual initiatives in a mutually supportive spirit.

*(from the 2003 Ridvan letter)*

Friends, the assistants,  
Bonnie Rouhani, Siamak  
Rouhani, Toni Goggans  
and Tony Goggans,  
warmly invite you to a  
Reflection meeting.

**Sat Dec 6 from 6 pm to 9:30 pm.  
Colorado Springs Baha'i Center**

The purpose of the meeting is to bring the friends, the assistants, the Assembly and the community to a higher level of understanding regarding clusters and the strategies that have proven to support their success.

We hope to provide helpful information, example of successes (including some in our own cluster), and facilitate consultation.

And most importantly to bring the friends together as a cluster united in the service of Baha'u'llah and determine concrete steps we can take to move more solidly towards a B Cluster.

Meeting starts with a pot luck (from 6 to 7pm)

Join us as soldiers in the army of Baha'u'llah as we continue the campaign to Emblazon His Name.

With loving greetings,  
Assistants for Propagation and Protection

The Theme for Winter School is  
**“Blazoning the Name of Baha'u'llah”**

Winter School is: January 23-25, 2004.

Summer School is: July 7 - 11, 2004.



# November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all 10:30-11:30	Feast Qudrat				Conversational English Classes	8 ○ FIRESIDE at Baha'i Center
Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all 10:30-11:30		Birth Baha'u'llah			Conversational English Classes	
Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all 10:30-11:30					Conversational English Classes	
Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all 10:30-11:30						
Feast Qawl Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all 10:30-11:30			Day of Covenant		Ascension Abdu'l-Baha	
Devotions 10-10:30 AM Classes for all 10:30-11:30						

**Baha'i Children,  
 Pre-Youth, Youth Classes  
 Beginning October 12th  
 At the Pikes Peak Area  
 Baha'i Center  
 Following Sunday Devotions  
 10:30 am to 11:30 am**

The Greatest name is the Name of Bahá'u'lláh.  
 "Ya Baha'u'l-Abha" is an invocation meaning:  
 "O Thou Glory of Glories!"  
 "Allah'u'Abha" is a greeting which means:  
 "God the All-Glorious."  
 both refer to Bahá'u'lláh.

**December**

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**THE**  
**BAHÁ'Í**  
**CONNECTION**



**November-December 2003**

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