

NOTES TO FACILITATORS

The programme, Nine Lessons on the Covenant, has been designed to group participation or classes. It is suitable for youth or adult classes, for pre-youth children's classes, for summer school sessions and even with some adaptation for correspondence courses. Feel free to photocopy the material and adapt the lessons for your own use. The lesson plans are meant as a guide only and allow the teacher or facilitator to plan the lesson and assign the time to areas which they feel to be most valuable for the situation.

Lesson Structure.

The numbers in parentheses eg (1) refers to the Baha'i quotations which are numbered.

Group Activities.

There are several group activities created. Feel free to change or adjust any of the activities as you see fit. We would welcome any new ideas regarding games or group activities which you may come up with.

Some Ideas.

1. Keep the classes informal and encourage discussion and questions from the participants.
2. To encourage and stimulate ideas divide the class into three or groups. Participants will remain in the same group for the duration of the course. You may like to encourage friendly competition between groups and award prizes etc depending on the group. Groups could have meaningful names, such as names of early Australian believers, or funny names.

Supplementary Materials.

Supplement the lessons with other materials of interest. For example in Lesson 5, in the Hands of the Cause section bring along pictures of Hands of the Cause. Bring along the original documents and books to show the class eg *The Kitab-i-Ahdi*, *The Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha*. Use pictures, diagrams and charts etc to illustrate your points.

In order to gain maximum benefit from the course the students should have access to an English dictionary and the Baha'i dictionary or glossary. See below for references:

Baha'i World Volumes (especially Volume XIV, names and pictures of the Hands of the Cause of God)

A Basic Baha'i Dictionary by Wendi Momen, George Ronald, Oxford, U.K., 1989.

Baha'i Glossary by Marzieh Gail, Baha'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A., 1976.

For further references see the Further Reading section at the end of the Covenant Deepening Programme.

Suggestions.

We welcome any comments or ideas you may have in improving the deepening programme. Our address and contact phone numbers are given below.

Thank you for your interest in the programme. We wish you every success in our common endeavour to deepen and immerse ourselves in the ocean of His Words.

Jimmy and Mona Seow
104 Aitken Drive,
Winthrop, W.A. 6150
AUSTRALIA
Tel/fax: +61 (09) 310 8808
email: j.seow@dme.wa.gov.au

LESSON 1 - WHAT IS THE COVENANT**LESSON PLAN****TOPICS****TIME**

1. Introduction

2. Definition

- contract (1)
 - Greater and Lessor Covenants (4)
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3. Great or Ancient Covenant

- unending guidance (5)
 - twin duties: recognition and obedience (6)
 - purpose of sending Prophets (7)
 - Baha'i cycle (10)
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4. Baha'i Covenant

- two forms (13)

5. Everlasting or Eternal Covenant

- different from Great and Lesser Covenants (14)
 - Promise of All Ages (13)
 - Great Day of God (16)
 - Coming of Age of Humanity (17)
 - Fulfilment of Everlasting Covenant (17)
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6. Notes

LESSON 2 - THE COVENANT OF BAHA'U'LLAH**LESSON PLAN****TOPICS****TIME**

1. Lesson 1 Review

2. Ministry of Baha'u'llah

- Him Whom God Shall Make Manifest (1)
 - period of waiting foretold by the Bab (2)
 - Covenant of the Bab (3)
 - family of Baha'u'llah
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3. The Kitab-i-Ahd

- background
 - turn to Abdu'l-Baha (4)
 - significance (5)
 - no parallel in any previous Dispensation (5)
 - Shoghi Effendi's description and itemisation (6)
 - most great characteristic of the revelation of Baha'u'llah (7)
 - unique characteristics (8)
 - support and comfort to believers (9, 10)
 - next manifestation after one thousand years (11)
 - no interpretation (12)
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4. Notes

LESSON 3 - ABDU'L-BAHA, THE CENTRE OF THE COVENANT

LESSON PLAN

TOPICS	TIME
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1. Lesson 2 Review

2. Abdu'l-Baha

- meaning in Arabic
 - Tablets of the Divine Plan
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3. Centre of the Covenant

- Kitab-i-Ahd entrusted to Abdu'l-Baha
 - Suriy-i-Ghusn
 - Kitab-i-Aqdas
 - Station of Abdu'l-Baha (1)
 - Ghushn (Branch) (4)
 - family faithful to Abdu'l-Baha
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4. Reaffirmation of the station of Abdu'l-Baha

- Abdu'l-Baha reaffirms (5) (6)
- Instructions given by Baha'u'llah (7)

5. Abdu'l-Baha, The Perfect Exemplar

- Centre & Pivot (8)
 - titles of Abdu'l-Baha (8)
 - not a prophet (8)
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6. Abdu'l-Baha's relationship with Us

- not speak on own authority (9)
 - Baha'u'llah shuns such souls
 - do not test the authority (10)
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7. Servitude of Abdu'l-Baha

- station of servitude (11)
 - subject to no interpretation
 - famous quote (12)
 - prefers Abdu'l-Baha as title (12)
 - prayed for forgiveness of those opposed to Him (13)
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8. Notes

LESSON 4 -THE WILL AND TESTAMENT OF ABDU'L-BAHA**LESSON PLAN****TOPICS****TIME**

1. Lesson 3 Review

2. Introduction

- link between Heroic and Formative Ages (1)
- offspring from mystic intercourse (2)

3. Unique in Origin and Character

- unique (3)

4. Charter of Future World Civilisation

- supplementary to Kitab-i-Aqdas (4)
- Shoghi Effendi codifies contents

5. Protection of Faith of Baha'u'llah

- infallible protection (5)
- greatest thing one can do (5)
- warns against those who go astray (7)

6. Appointment of Shoghi Effendi as the Guardian

- biographical data
 - Prayer from Abdu'l-Baha (8)
 - very clear appointment (9)
 - Universal House of Justice (9)
 - infallible
 - directions to Afnan and Aghsan
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7. The Universal House of Justice

- establishment, authority and jurisdiction from Baha'u'llah
 - election and confirmation of infallibility and jurisdiction (10, 11)
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8. Twin Pillars

- twin pillars (12)
 - relationship and functions (12)
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9. Notes

LESSON 5 -SUCCESSION**LESSON PLAN****TOPICS****TIME**

1. Lesson 4 Review

2. Introduction

3. The Institution of the Guardianship

- appointment (1)
 - functions and authority (2)
 - appointment of successor (3)
 - permanent head of Universal House of Justice (4)
 - expulsion of other members of House of Justice (5)
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4. Institution the Universal House of Justice

- ordained and described by the Bab, Baha'u'llah, Abdu'l-Baha (6)
 - election (7, 8)
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5. Relationship between the Guardian and the Universal House of Justice

- sphere of authority and functioning of each (9)
 - twin chosen successors (10)
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6. The Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God

- appointment (11)
 - sphere of functioning (12, 13)
 - Chief Stewards (14)
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7. Institution of Hands of the Cause of God Not Similar to Priesthood

- not priesthood (15)
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8. The Passing of Shoghi Effendi

- no successor (16)
 - no will (17)
 - events after passing (19, 20)
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9. The Functioning of the Universal House of Justice without the Guardian

- Universal House of Justice clarifies (21, 22)
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10. Future Guardians

- possible break in line allowed for (23)
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11. No Women of the Universal House of Justice

- membership confined to men (24, 25)
-

- not indication of superiority (26)
- accept with faith (26, 27)

12. Notes

LESSON 6 -THE PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE COVENANT

LESSON PLAN

TOPICS	TIME
1. Lesson 5 Review	
2. Introduction	
3. Source of Unity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purpose (1) • prevent differences (2, 3) • protection and unity (4, 5) 	
4. Maintains Order and Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • means of order and security of world (6) • preservation for schism (7, 8) • importance of unity in world (9, 10) 	
5. Protects the Faith of God <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protects Faith from enemies (11) • protection for corruption (12) • future of humanity (13,14) 	
6. Child of the Covenant	

- Administrative Order (15)

7. Notes

LESSON 7 -THE POWER OF THE COVENANT**LESSON PLAN****TOPICS****TIME**

1. Lesson 6 Review

2. Power of the Covenant

- protection of the Cause of God (1, 2)
 - mysterious (3)
 - protection from division (4)
 - requirement for spiritual growth (5)
 - incomparable and indispensable (6, 7, 8, 9)
 - incorruptible (10)
 - life-giving (11)
 - unifying (12)
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2. Firmness of the Baha'is of Iran

- protection of the Covenant
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3. Notes

LESSON 8 - COVENANT-BREAKING**LESSON PLAN****TOPICS****TIME**

1. Lesson 7 Review

2. Introduction

- do not violate the Covenant (1)
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3. What is Covenant-Breaking?

- attack of a Baha'i on the Authority (2)
 - serious in nature (3)
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4. Cause of Covenant-Breaking

- human ego, carnal desires (4, 5)
 - term 'Satan' (6)
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5. The Role of the Individual

- shun covenant-breakers (7)
 - avoidance of deadly disease (8)
 - avoid literature and association (9, 10, 11)
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6. Role of Institution

- protection (12, 13)
 - investigations carried by institutions (14)
 - reinstatement (15)
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7. Consequences of Covenant-Breaking

- “utter deprivation of spiritual bounty” (16)
 - motives of covenant-breakers (17, 18)
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8. Difference Between Covenant-Breaking and Removal of Voting Rights

- covenant-breaking is a spiritual condition (19)
 - removal of voting rights is a disciplinary action (19)
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9. Notes

**LESSON 9 - FIRMNESS AND STEADFASTNESS IN THE
COVENANT****LESSON PLAN****TOPICS****TIME**

1. Lesson 8 Review

2. Introduction

- spirit that quickeneth (1)
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3. The Conditions Required of Us

- firmness (2)
 - love and fellowship (3)
 - preservation of unity (4)
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4. What Does Firmness in the Covenant Mean?

- obedience (5)
- authoritative versus personal interpretation (6)
- conduct (6)

5. Necessity for Firmness in the Covenant

- strength in unity (9)
 - blessings (10)
 - no one exempt (11)
 - influence of steadfast soul (12, 13, 14)
 - assistance (15)
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6. Importance of Daily Recital of God's Holy Verses

- faithful to pledge to Covenant (16)
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7. Notes