

Relationship with God is ultimate

By Nancy Wheaton

"All those who seek truth in the Heavenly Kingdom shine like the stars; they are like seas full of precious pearls."

- "Paris Talks" Abdu'l-Bahá Kingdom shine like the stars; they are like seas full of precious pearls."

Our lives are built around relationships. We are as faceted as raw crystals each day - friend, parent or child, sister, brother or cousin, worker, exerciser, cleaner, relaxer and lover. These various sides catch the sun and welcome the shadow during the day.

Crystals found in nature manifest the beauty in surrender. Storms, changes in temperatures, steadfastness and then sudden unexpected events have contributed to their formations. Unaware of their surrender, they exhibit unpredictable and tranquil glory.

As conscious beings, we hold within us the essence of the crystal: we are individual works of beauty. How do we differ? Resistance. We have the capacity to know of and worship God. Yet we question. We sit on the fence. Doesn't life wind us through many emotions, those ever-truthful guides to our soul? If those feelings are too painful or hard to face, we use our minds to coach us into escape-mode. This is our discerning intellect. We are able to compare, to judge, to experience and then analyze what we do. Our daily interactions with others represent our vision of heaven. Are we kind to others? Do we speak out when we witness prejudice? Do we bring ourselves to account each day? Do we apologize? Do we praise others truthfully?

Surrender. We are the pinnacle of God's creation. Because of our conscious ability to choose our lifestyle, our spiritual mission must become a healing discipline. Dialogue with God every day expands our light. Then, we must cross-train by helping others. Bahá'u'lláh, the prophet founder of the Baha'í faith, says "O my Provider! In the spirit of Thy love keep me steadfast, O my Succourer, and in the path of Thy good-pleasure set firm my steps, O my Maker!" ience and then analyze what we do. Our daily interactions with others represent our vision of heaven. Are we kind to others? Do we speak out when we witness prejudice? Do we bring ourselves to account each day? Do we apologize? Do we praise others truthfully?

Our relationship to God infuses us with clarity: We remember that we were told we would never be left alone, ever. We are certain that all paths to God, with manifestations such as Muhammad, Buddha, Krishna and Abraham are religions born to the One True God, the All-Glorious, the Most Powerful. Religion is the ultimate present from God. Our fleeting moments of clarity bring understanding to the crucial need for harmony of science and religion.

Think of it - a respectful discussion about stem-cell research and the limitations and possibilities.

How about honest consultation? Consultation, as Baha'is practice, that allows for those consulting to express opinions without fear of judgment and at the same time invites all participants to detach from their opinions once they have been uttered. Imagine a group of interfaith, highly trained, highly educated and deeply spiritual negotiators speaking with representatives from Israel and Palestine. . Our daily interactions with others represent our vision of heaven. Are we kind to others? Do we speak out when we witness prejudice? Do we bring ourselves to account each day? Do we apologize? Do we praise others truthfully?

Most importantly, this healing discipline, walking this every-day conscious path towards God, perpetually invites us to trust in God when we are joyful, when we are worried, when we are afraid and when we just don't know the outcome of all our work and effort.

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