

## Grade 1 Lesson 3 Love

When `Abdu'l-Bahá was a prisoner in `Akká, there was a man in that city who behaved very badly towards the Bahá'ís. He thought that `Abdu'l-Bahá was not a good man and that God did not care how badly the Bahá'ís were treated. In fact, he believed that he was showing love for God by showing hatred to the Bahá'ís. He hated `Abdu'l-Bahá with all his heart. That hate grew and festered inside him, sometimes spilling out of him the way water spills out of a broken pot.

In the mosque, when people came to pray, this man would cry out against `Abdu'l-Bahá and say terrible things about Him. When he passed `Abdu'l-Bahá on the street, he would cover his face with his robe so that he would not see Him. Now, this man was very poor and had neither enough to eat nor warm clothes to wear. What do you think `Abdu'l-Bahá did about him? He showed him kindness, sent him food and clothes, and made sure he was being taken care of. For example, once when this man became very ill, `Abdu'l-Bahá sent him a doctor, paid for his medicine and food, and also gave him some money. He accepted the gifts from `Abdu'l-Bahá, but did not thank Him. In fact, this ignorant man held out one hand to the doctor to take his pulse, and with the other hand, covered his face so that he would not have to look upon the countenance of `Abdu'l-Bahá. And so it went for many long years. And then, one day, the man's heart finally changed. He came to `Abdu'l-Bahá's house, fell at His feet and with a very heavy heart and tears flowing down his face like twin rivers, cried, "Forgive me, Sir! For twenty-four years I have done evil to You. For twenty-four years You have shown only goodness to me. Now I know that I have been wrong. Please forgive me!" Thus, the great love of `Abdu'l-Bahá triumphed over hatred.