

Stories about Bahá'í Funds- by Gloria Faizi (Page 108)

Many years ago, something marvelous happened in a Bahà'i community which was made up of very poor people. They were longing to proclaim the Faith in their town but did not have the money. Then, at one of their 19 Day Feasts, someone explained the spiritual nature of giving, and how universal participation by the friends in contributing to the Funds can produce wonderful results. It was mentioned that the Guardian had repeatedly told us that if we arise to serve in unity, the Supreme Concourse will come to our aid and we shall be astonished at the blessings and confirmations that we shall receive. It was also said that, so great is the spiritual power generated by the Bahá'ís when every one of them participates in giving to the Funds, that is better to collect a hundred dollars from all the members of a community than to get one thousand dollars from only two or three people.

So the Bahá'ís of that town had never fully participated in contributing to the Funds, but after hearing about the spiritual bounties that result from giving in unity, they decided to try it. That evening every single member of the community, even the children, put something in the Fund Box.

The Treasurer, a man of the world, counted the money collected in the box, sadly said: Everybody in our community has contributed for proclamation and we have just collected 3 dollars and 10 cents! Then he added: "And I don't think we are going to get any kind of proclamation with 3 dollars and 10 cents!" A young boy of 12 stood up and said to him: "You are only the treasurer, they are the Supreme Concourse, and if they say we'll get the proclamation for three dollars and 10 cents we'll get it! The community consulted on what they could do with 3 dollars and 10 cents and decided to buy a book for their library. The secretary, who had not read that book, took it with her to read on the bus going home. At one of the bus stops a man came in dripping with rain and looked around for a seat. There was only one left – the seat beside the secretary. As he sat down, the secretary moved uneasily in her seat, afraid of getting a drop of water on her book. Then she got absorbed in reading again. The man sitting beside her was looking at the book through the corner of his eye. Then he asked her, "What are you reading?" The secretary did not want to be interrupted. "I am reading a book", she said. The man was not put off and said, "It looks interesting. May I ask you what kind of book it is?" "If you must know, I am reading a Bahà'i book" she replied impatiently." You must have heard about the Bahá'í Faith, surely?" "No, I have not," he told her, But I would like to hear about it. Suddenly the secretary realized how rude she had been and immediately changed her attitude. She told him about the Bahà'i Faith, about their

small community and how they longed to tell the people of the town about the wonderful message of Baha'u'llah, but could not afford it. He listened to all this with interest, then he told her that he was the editor of a newspaper. His wife, who usually came to take him home in their car after work, had telephoned that evening to say that one of their children was ill and she could not come to fetch him; so, for the first time after some six or seven years, he was riding a bus to go home. And that is how he happened to be sitting next to her.

He asked her if he could borrow her book to take home to read. She said he could and later, when he had returned the book, she introduced him to the Bahà'i community. He was much impressed by what he read and touched by the sincerity of the Baha'is, so he decided to help them. This is what he did: He sent a reporter and a photographer to meet with the LSA, as a result of which two articles about the Faith, entitled *The New Religion in Town*, came out in the newspaper. After this he wrote a series of thirteen 13 articles about the Cause, the last of which was *Baha'u'llah the Lord of all Mankind*. He gave the Baha'is the auditorium of the newspaper - a large hall on the second floor - in which to hold a proclamation meeting. He sent a reporter and a photographer to cover the entire program, which was a grand success. He also arranged for the Baha'is to have 2 radio programs and 2 television shows. If the Bahà'i community of that town had had to pay for all the proclamation that was done through that one man on the bus, they would have had to pay 15000 dollars. This blessing came to them because they had all unitedly contributed towards the 3 dollars and 10 cents the collected for the Fund!