



A Synopsis  
and Codification of  
THE  
KITÁB-I-AQDAS

the Most Holy Book  
of  
BAHÁ'U'LLÁH



BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE  
HAIFA

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Nay, rather, We have unsealed the choice Wine with the fingers  
of might and power. To this beareth witness that which the Pen  
of Revelation hath revealed. Meditate upon this, O men of  
insight!*

Kitáb-i-Aqdas.

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## PREFACE

This *Synopsis and Codification* offers a concise and comprehensive presentation of the laws, ordinances, exhortations and other subjects which appear in both the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* itself and in the *Questions and Answers* which forms an appendix to that Book. Not all details are included, nor is it possible to give in such a circumscribed form an impression of the loftiness and magnificence of the language of Bahá'u'lláh. In order to provide readers with at least some intimation of this splendour of theme and language, there are included as a prelude to the *Synopsis and Codification*, and in the order in which they appear in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, those passages which have been translated into English by the Guardian of the Faith. It will be the formidable task of future translators to match the beauty and accuracy of Shoghi Effendi's rendition.

A number of additional details, explanations and references are given in notes.

## INTRODUCTION

One hundred years ago, in a room overlooking a dusty square in the ancient seaport of 'Akká, was penned a Book that will come to be recognized as the charter of world civilization. Its Author, Bahá'u'lláh, had for more than a quarter of a century endured tribulation upon tribulation. His Forerunner had been martyred; His young Son, the Purest Branch, and some twenty-thousand believers, men, women and children, had given their lives that the new Revelation might live. He Himself had been tortured, imprisoned, despoiled of His worldly goods, betrayed by His half-brother, and had been subjected, with His family and a small band of followers, to successive exiles and finally to incarceration in the pestilential Turkish prison-city of 'Akká. His enemies, determined to obliterate His Cause, had all unwittingly served to fulfil the ancient purpose of God by bringing to the Holy Land the One Who was destined to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. With His arrival the time for the revelation of the Law of that Kingdom had come.

The circumstances surrounding the revelation of this Book, designated by its Author the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* (The Most Holy Book), are recounted by Shoghi Effendi in *God Passes By*, his history of the first hundred years of the Bahá'í era. Having dwelt upon the world-shaking significance of Bahá'u'lláh's proclamation of His Faith, which had opened in 1867 with the revelation of the *Súriy-i-Mulúk* (Tablet to the Kings), he continues,

“Unique and stupendous as was this Proclamation, it proved to be but a prelude to a still mightier revelation of the creative power of its Author, and to what may well rank as the most signal act of His ministry—the promulgation of the

*Kitáb-i-Aqdas*. Alluded to in the *Kitáb-i-Íqán*; the principal repository of that Law which the Prophet Isaiah had anticipated, and which the writer of the Apocalypse had described as the 'new heaven' and the 'new earth,' as 'the Tabernacle of God,' as the 'Holy City,' as the 'Bride,' the 'New Jerusalem coming down from God,' this 'Most Holy Book,' whose provisions must remain inviolate for no less than a thousand years, and whose system will embrace the entire planet, may well be regarded as the brightest emanation of the mind of Bahá'u'lláh, as the Mother Book of His Dispensation, and the Charter of His New World Order.

"Revealed soon after Bahá'u'lláh had been transferred to the house of 'Údí Khammár\* (circa 1873), at a time when He was still encompassed by the tribulations that had afflicted Him, through the acts committed by His enemies and the professed adherents of His Faith, this Book, this treasury enshrining the priceless gems of His Revelation, stands out, by virtue of the principles it inculcates, the administrative institutions it ordains and the function with which it invests the appointed Successor of its Author, unique and incomparable among the world's sacred Scriptures. For, . . . the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, revealed from first to last by the Author of the Dispensation Himself, not only preserves for posterity the basic laws and ordinances on which the fabric of His future World Order must rest, but ordains, in addition to the function of interpretation which it confers upon His Successor, the necessary institutions through which the integrity and unity of His Faith can alone be safeguarded."

"The laws and ordinances that constitute the major theme of this Book, Bahá'u'lláh, moreover, has specifically characterized as 'the breath of life unto all created things,' as 'the mightiest

\*This house was later joined to the adjacent house of 'Abbúd, by which name both are now known.

stronghold,' as the 'fruits' of His 'Tree,' as 'the highest means for the maintenance of order in the world and the security of its peoples,' as 'the lamps of His wisdom and loving-providence,' as 'the sweet smelling savour of His garment,' as the 'keys' of His 'mercy' to His creatures. 'This Book,' He Himself testifies, 'is a heaven which We have adorned with the stars of Our commandments and prohibitions.' . . . 'Say, O men! Take hold of it with the hand of resignation. . . By My life! It hath been sent down in a manner that amazeth the minds of men. Verily, it is My weightiest testimony unto all people, and the proof of the All-Merciful unto all who are in heaven and all who are on earth.' And again: 'Blessed the palate that savoureth its sweetness, and the perceiving eye that recognizeth that which is treasured therein, and the understanding heart that comprehendeth its allusions and mysteries. By God! Such is the majesty of what hath been revealed therein, and so tremendous the revelation of its veiled allusions that the loins of utterance shake when attempting their description.' And finally: 'In such a manner hath the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* been revealed that it attracteth and embraceth all the divinely appointed Dispensations. . . . So vast is its range that it hath encompassed all men ere their recognition of it. Erelong will its sovereign power, its pervasive influence and the greatness of its might be manifested on earth.'"

"For a number of years," Bahá'u'lláh states in one of His Tablets, "petitions reached the Most Holy Presence from various lands begging for the laws of God, but We held back the Pen ere the appointed time had come. Thereupon the Day-Star of the laws and ordinances shone forth from above the horizon of the Will of God, as a token of His grace unto the peoples of the world. He, verily, is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous." Not until twenty years from the intimation of His Revelation received by Him in the Síyáh-Chál of Tíhrán did Bahá'u'lláh reveal the "Mother Book" of His Dispensation. In another Tablet He indicates that even after its revelation the *Aqdas*

was withheld by Him for some time before it was sent to the friends in Persia.

Shoghi Effendi recounts how

“The formulation by Bahá’u’lláh, in His *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, of the fundamental laws of His Dispensation was followed, as His Mission drew to a close, by the enunciation of certain precepts and principles which lie at the very core of His Faith, by the reaffirmation of truths He had previously proclaimed, by the elaboration and elucidation of some of the laws He had already laid down, by the revelation of further prophecies and warnings, and by the establishment of subsidiary ordinances designed to supplement the provisions of His Most Holy Book. These were recorded in unnumbered Tablets, which He continued to reveal until the last days of His earthly life. . . .”

Among such works is the *Questions and Answers* which constitutes an appendix to the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* and contains the answers revealed by Bahá’u’lláh to questions posed by one of His disciples about the laws. Notwithstanding the volume of His writings on His laws and ordinances, Bahá’u’lláh has, as Shoghi Effendi points out, deliberately left gaps to be filled subsequently by the Universal House of Justice.

Concerning the implementation of the laws themselves Bahá’u’lláh wrote in one of His Tablets: “*Indeed the laws of God are like unto the ocean and the children of men as fish, did they but know it. However, in observing them one must exercise tact and wisdom. . . . Since most people are feeble and far-removed from the purpose of God, therefore one must observe tact and prudence under all conditions, so that nothing might happen that could cause disturbance and dissension or raise clamour among the heedless. Verily, His bounty hath surpassed the whole universe and His bestowals encompassed all that dwell on earth. One must guide mankind to the ocean of true understanding in a spirit of love and tolerance.*”

*The Kitáb-i-Aqdas itself beareth eloquent testimony to the loving providence of God.”*

This divinely-purposed delay in the revelation of the basic laws of God for this age, and the subsequent gradual implementation of their provisions, illustrate the principle of progressive revelation which applies, as Bahá’u’lláh Himself explained, even within the ministry of each Prophet. “*Know of a certainty that in every Dispensation the light of Divine Revelation hath been vouchsafed to men in direct proportion to their spiritual capacity. Consider the sun. How feeble its rays the moment it appeareth above the horizon. How gradually its warmth and potency increase as it approacheth its zenith, enabling meanwhile all created things to adapt themselves to the growing intensity of its light. How steadily it declineth until it reacheth its setting point. Were it all of a sudden to manifest the energies latent within it, it would no doubt cause injury to all created things. . . . In like manner, if the Sun of Truth were suddenly to reveal, at the earliest stages of its manifestation, the full measure of the potencies which the providence of the Almighty hath bestowed upon it, the earth of human understanding would waste away and be consumed; for men’s hearts would neither sustain the intensity of its revelation, nor be able to mirror forth the radiance of its light. Dismayed and overpowered, they would cease to exist.”*

‘Abdu’l-Bahá followed this principle and concentrated His energies on the widespread dissemination of His Father’s teachings and the elucidation of the far-reaching principles that they enshrined. At the same time He revealed interpretations which are of fundamental importance in understanding the laws of the *Aqdas*, culminating in the writing of His *Will and Testament*, “that immortal Document wherein He delineated the features of the Administrative Order which would arise after His passing, and would herald the establishment of that World Order, the advent of which the Báb had announced, and the laws and principles of which Bahá’u’lláh had already formulated.”

During the thirty-six years of his Guardianship, Shoghi Effendi fixed the pattern and laid the foundations of the Administrative Order of Bahá'u'lláh, set in motion the implementation of the Divine Plan of 'Abdu'l-Bahá for the spread of the Faith throughout the world, and, as these twin processes of administrative consolidation and widespread expansion progressed, started to apply and enforce, gradually and according to the progress of the Cause, those laws of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* that in his estimation it was timely and practicable to apply and which were not in direct conflict with the civil law. At his instance the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Egypt prepared a codification of the Bahá'í laws of personal status relative to marriage, divorce and inheritance.

The Guardian explained that an essential prelude to the publication of the Most Holy Book was the preparation of a synopsis and codification of its Laws and Ordinances. This would be followed in due time by a complete translation of the Book itself, made by a competent body of experts, and copiously annotated with detailed explanations. Such annotations will undoubtedly have to contain references to the many Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh which supplement the *Aqdas*, to the interpretations penned by 'Abdu'l-Bahá as well as those from the writings of Shoghi Effendi, and will need to elucidate certain passages of the Book or to amplify its religious, cultural and historical references. It is clear that such a Book, rich in allusion and referring to laws and practices of previous Dispensations, could easily be misconstrued by anyone unfamiliar with such laws and practices, insufficiently versed in the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and not thoroughly informed of His fundamental purposes. In particular, inadequate translations could be seriously misleading. During His own lifetime Bahá'u'lláh commented upon a translation of the *Aqdas* made by one of the believers: "*Although the intention of the translator was good, such an action in these days will lead to differences and is therefore not permissible.*"

Shoghi Effendi, towards the end of his life, adopted as one of the goals of the Ten Year Crusade the codification of the laws and ordinances of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, and he himself worked upon it, leaving an outline of a synopsis and codification in English, and notes in Persian. This constituted a great part of the task which the Universal House of Justice included as a goal of the Nine Year Plan and which it then completed according to the pattern he had set.

The number of laws at present binding upon Bahá'ís is not increased by the publication of this work. When the Universal House of Justice deems it advisable it will inform the friends what additional laws are binding upon them, and will provide whatever guidance and supplementary legislation will be necessary for their application. Certain laws, however, as pointed out by the beloved Guardian, "have been formulated in anticipation of a state of society destined to emerge from the chaotic conditions that prevail today."

In this Most Holy Book Bahá'u'lláh declares: "*By My life, if you knew what We have desired for you in revealing Our holy laws, you would offer up your souls for this sacred, mighty and lofty Cause.*" "*This Book is none other than the ancient Lamp of God for the whole world and His undeviating Path amongst men. Say, it is verily the Dayspring of divine knowledge, did ye but know it, and the Dawning-place of the commandments of God, could ye but comprehend it.*" "*Say, this is the spirit of the Scriptures breathed into the Pen of Glory, causing all creation to be dumbfounded, except those who are stirred by the vitalizing fragrance of My tender mercy and the sweet savours of My bounty which pervade all created things.*"

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Haifa  
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(April 1973 A.D.)



PASSAGES FROM THE  
KITÁB-I-AQDAS

Translated into English

*by*

SHOGHI EFFENDI

PASSAGES FROM THE KITÁB-I-AQDAS  
TRANSLATED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI

1. The first duty prescribed by God for His servants is the recognition of Him Who is the Dayspring of His Revelation and the Fountain of His laws, Who representeth the Godhead in both the Kingdom of His Cause and the world of creation. Whoso achieveth this duty hath attained unto all good; and whoso is deprived thereof, hath gone astray, though he be the author of every righteous deed. It behoveth every one who reacheth this most sublime station, this summit of transcendent glory, to observe every ordinance of Him Who is the Desire of the world. These twin duties are inseparable. Neither is acceptable without the other. Thus hath it been decreed by Him Who is the Source of Divine inspiration.

They whom God hath endued with insight will readily recognize that the precepts laid down by God constitute the highest means for the maintenance of order in the world and the security of its peoples. He that turneth away from them, is accounted among the abject and foolish. We, verily, have commanded you to refuse the dictates of your evil passions and corrupt desires, and not to transgress the bounds which the Pen of the Most High hath fixed, for these are the breath of life unto all created things. The seas of Divine wisdom and Divine utterance have risen under the breath of the breeze of the All-Merciful. Hasten to drink your fill, O men of understanding! They that have violated the Covenant of God by breaking His commandments, and have turned back on their heels, these have erred grievously in the sight of God, the All-Possessing, the Most High.

O ye peoples of the world! Know assuredly that My commandments are the lamps of My loving providence among My servants,

and the keys of My mercy for My creatures. Thus hath it been sent down from the heaven of the Will of your Lord, the Lord of Revelation. Were any man to taste the sweetness of the words which the lips of the All-Merciful have willed to utter, he would, though the treasures of the earth be in his possession, renounce them one and all, that he might vindicate the truth of even one of His commandments, shining above the Dayspring of His bountiful care and loving-kindness.

Say: From My laws the sweet smelling savour of My garment can be smelled, and by their aid the standards of Victory will be planted upon the highest peaks. The Tongue of My power hath, from the heaven of My omnipotent glory, addressed to My creation these words: "Observe My commandments, for the love of My beauty." Happy is the lover that hath inhaled the divine fragrance of his Best-Beloved from these words, laden with the perfume of a grace which no tongue can describe. By My life! He who hath drunk the choice wine of fairness from the hands of My bountiful favour, will circle around My commandments that shine above the Dayspring of My creation.

Think not that We have revealed unto you a mere code of laws. Nay, rather, We have unsealed the choice Wine with the fingers of might and power. To this beareth witness that which the Pen of Revelation hath revealed. Meditate upon this, O men of insight!

2. Whenever My laws appear like the sun in the heaven of Mine utterance, they must be faithfully obeyed by all, though My decree be such as to cause the heaven of every religion to be cleft asunder. He doth what He pleaseth. He chooseth; and none may question His choice. Whatsoever He, the Well-Beloved, ordaineth, the same is, verily, beloved. To this He Who is the Lord of all creation beareth Me witness. Whoso hath inhaled the sweet fragrance of the All-Merciful, and recognized the Source of this utterance, will

welcome with his own eyes the shafts of the enemy, that he may establish the truth of the laws of God amongst men. Well is it with him that hath turned thereunto, and apprehended the meaning of His decisive decree.

3. We have commanded you to pray and fast from the beginning of maturity; this is ordained by God, your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers. He has exempted from this those who are weak from illness or age, as a bounty from His Presence, and He is the Forgiving, the Generous.

4. . . . We have enjoined upon you fasting during a brief period, and at its close have designated for you Naw-Rúz as a feast. . . . The traveller, the ailing, those who are with child or giving suck, are not bound by the fast. . . . Abstain from food and drink, from sunrise to sundown, and beware lest desire deprive you of this grace that is appointed in the Book.

5. The Lord hath ordained that in every city a House of Justice be established wherein shall gather counsellors to the number of Bahá, and should it exceed this number it does not matter. . . . It behoveth them to be the trusted ones of the Merciful among men and to regard themselves as the guardians appointed of God for all that dwell on earth. It is incumbent upon them to take counsel together and to have regard for the interests of the servants of God, for His sake, even as they regard their own interests, and to choose that which is meet and seemly. Thus hath the Lord your God commanded you. Beware lest ye put away that which is clearly revealed in His Tablet. Fear God, O ye that perceive.

6. O ye servants of the Merciful One! Arise to serve the Cause of God, in such wise that the cares and sorrows caused by them that have disbelieved in the Dayspring of the Signs of God may not

afflict you. At the time when the Promise was fulfilled and the Promised One made manifest, differences have appeared amongst the kindred of the earth and each people hath followed its own fancy and idle imaginings.

Whoso layeth claim to a Revelation direct from God, ere the expiration of a full thousand years, such a man is assuredly a lying imposter. We pray God that He may graciously assist him to retract and repudiate such claim. Should he repent, God will, no doubt, forgive him. If, however, he persisteth in his error, God will, assuredly, send down one who will deal mercilessly with him. Terrible, indeed, is God in punishing! Whosoever interpreteth this verse otherwise than its obvious meaning is deprived of the Spirit of God and of His mercy which encompasseth all created things. Fear God, and follow not your idle fancies. Nay, rather follow the bidding of your Lord, the Almighty, the All-Wise.

Be not dismayed, O peoples of the world, when the day-star of My beauty is set, and the heaven of My tabernacle is concealed from your eyes. Arise to further My Cause, and to exalt My Word amongst men. We are with you at all times, and shall strengthen you through the power of truth. We are truly almighty. Whoso hath recognized Me, will arise and serve Me with such determination that the powers of earth and heaven shall be unable to defeat his purpose.

The peoples of the world are fast asleep. Were they to wake from their slumber, they would hasten with eagerness unto God, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. They would cast away everything they possess, be it all the treasures of the earth, that their Lord may remember them to the extent of addressing to them but one word. Such is the instruction given you by Him Who holdeth the knowledge of things hidden, in a Tablet which the eye of creation hath not seen, and which is revealed to none except His own Self, the omnipotent Protector of all worlds. So bewildered are they in the

drunkenness of their evil desires, that they are powerless to recognize the Lord of all being, Whose voice calleth aloud from every direction: "There is none other God but Me, the Mighty, the All-Wise."

Say: Rejoice not in the things ye possess; tonight they are yours, tomorrow others will possess them. Thus warneth you He Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. Say: Can ye claim that what ye own is lasting or secure? Nay! By Myself, the All-Merciful. The days of your life flee away as a breath of wind, and all your pomp and glory shall be folded up as were the pomp and glory of those gone before you. Reflect, O people! What hath become of your bygone days, your lost centuries? Happy the days that have been consecrated to the remembrance of God, and blessed the hours which have been spent in praise of Him Who is the All-Wise. By My life! Neither the pomp of the mighty, nor the wealth of the rich, nor even the ascendancy of the ungodly will endure. All will perish, at a word from Him. He, verily, is the All-Powerful, the All-Compelling, the Almighty. What advantage is there in the earthly things which men possess? That which shall profit them, they have utterly neglected. Ere long, they will awake from their slumber, and find themselves unable to obtain that which hath escaped them in the days of their Lord, the Almighty, the All-Praised. Did they but know it, they would renounce their all, that their names may be mentioned before His throne. They, verily, are accounted among the dead.

7. Lament not in your hours of trial, neither rejoice therein; seek ye the Middle Way which is the remembrance of Me in your afflictions and reflection over that which may befall you in future. Thus informeth you, He Who is the Omniscient, He Who is Aware.

8. Unto every father hath been enjoined the instruction of his son and daughter in the art of reading and writing and in all that hath

been laid down in the Holy Tablet. He that putteth away that which is commanded unto him, the Trustees are then to take from him that which is required for their instruction, if he be wealthy, and if not the matter devolveth upon the House of Justice. Verily, have We made it a shelter for the poor and needy. He that bringeth up his son or the son of another, it is as though he hath brought up a son of Mine; upon him rest My Glory, My loving kindness, My Mercy, that have compassed the world.

9. O ye Men of Justice! Be ye in the realm of God shepherds unto His sheep and guard them from the ravening wolves that have appeared in disguise, even as ye would guard your own sons. Thus exhorteth you the Counsellor, the Faithful.

10. Let not your hearts be perturbed, O people, when the glory of My Presence is withdrawn, and the ocean of My utterance is stilled. In My presence amongst you there is a wisdom, and in My absence there is yet another, inscrutable to all but God, the Incomparable, the All-Knowing. Verily, We behold you from Our realm of glory, and shall aid whosoever will arise for the triumph of Our Cause with the hosts of the Concourse on high and a company of Our favoured angels.

O peoples of the earth! God, the Eternal Truth, is My witness that streams of fresh and soft-flowing waters have gushed from the rocks, through the sweetness of the words uttered by your Lord, the Unconstrained; and still ye slumber. Cast away that which ye possess, and, on the wings of detachment, soar beyond all created things. Thus biddeth you the Lord of creation, the movement of Whose Pen hath revolutionized the soul of mankind.

Know ye from what heights your Lord, the All-Glorious is calling? Think ye that ye have recognized the Pen wherewith your Lord, the Lord of all names, commandeth you? Nay, by My life! Did ye but know it, ye would renounce the world, and would

hasten with your whole hearts to the presence of the Well-Beloved. Your spirits would be so transported by His Word as to throw into commotion the Greater World—how much more this small and petty one! Thus have the showers of My bounty been poured down from the heaven of My loving-kindness, as a token of My grace; that ye may be of the thankful.

11. Beware lest the desires of the flesh and of a corrupt inclination provoke divisions among you. Be ye as the fingers of one hand, the members of one body. Thus counselleth you the Pen of Revelation, if ye be of them that believe.

Consider the mercy of God and His gifts. He enjoineth upon you that which shall profit you, though He Himself can well dispense with all creatures. Your evil doings can never harm Us, neither can your good works profit Us. We summon you wholly for the sake of God. To this every man of understanding and insight will testify.

12. Enter into wedlock, O people, that ye may bring forth one who will make mention of Me. . .

13. O kings of the earth! He Who is the sovereign Lord of all is come. The Kingdom is God's, the omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting. Worship none but God, and, with radiant hearts, lift up your faces unto your Lord, the Lord of all names. This is a Revelation to which whatever ye possess can never be compared, could ye but know it.

We see you rejoicing in that which ye have amassed for others and shutting out yourselves from the worlds which naught except My guarded Tablet can reckon. The treasures ye have laid up have drawn you far away from your ultimate objective. This ill becometh you, could ye but understand it. Wash from your hearts all earthly defilements, and hasten to enter the Kingdom of your

Lord, the Creator of earth and heaven, Who caused the world to tremble and all its peoples to wail, except them that have renounced all things and clung to that which the Hidden Tablet hath ordained.

This is the Day in which He Who held converse with God hath attained the light of the Ancient of Days, and quaffed the pure waters of reunion from this Cup that hath caused the seas to swell. Say: By the one true God! Sinai is circling round the Dayspring of Revelation, while from the heights of the Kingdom the Voice of the Spirit of God is heard proclaiming: "Bestir yourselves, ye proud ones of the earth, and hasten ye unto Him." Carmel hath, in this Day, hastened in longing adoration to attain His court, whilst from the heart of Zion there cometh the cry: "The promise is fulfilled. That which had been announced in the holy Writ of God, the most Exalted, the Almighty, the Best-Beloved, is made manifest."

O kings of the earth! The Most Great Law hath been revealed in this Spot, this scene of transcendent splendour. Every hidden thing hath been brought to light, by virtue of the Will of the Supreme Ordainer, He Who hath ushered in the Last Hour, through Whom the Moon hath been cleft, and every irrevocable decree expounded.

Ye are but vassals, O kings of the earth! He Who is the King of Kings hath appeared, arrayed in His most wondrous glory, and is summoning you unto Himself, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting. Take heed lest pride deter you from recognizing the Source of Revelation, lest the things of this world shut you out as by a veil from Him Who is the Creator of heaven. Arise, and serve Him Who is the Desire of all nations, Who hath created you through a word from Him, and ordained you to be, for all time, the emblems of His sovereignty.

By the righteousness of God! It is not Our wish to lay hands on your kingdoms. Our mission is to seize and possess the hearts of men. Upon them the eyes of Bahá are fastened. To this testifieth the

Kingdom of Names, could ye but comprehend it. Whoso followeth his Lord, will renounce the world and all that is therein; how much greater, then, must be the detachment of Him Who holdeth so august a station! Forsake your palaces, and haste ye to gain admittance into His Kingdom. This, indeed, will profit you both in this world and in the next. To this testifieth the Lord of the realm on high, did ye but know it.

How great the blessedness that awaiteth the king who will arise to aid My Cause in My Kingdom, who will detach himself from all else but Me! Such a king is numbered with the companions of the Crimson Ark—the Ark which God hath prepared for the people of Bahá. All must glorify his name, must reverence his station, and aid him to unlock the cities with the keys of My Name, the omnipotent Protector of all that inhabit the visible and invisible kingdoms. Such a king is the very eye of mankind, the luminous ornament on the brow of creation, the fountain-head of blessings unto the whole world. Offer up, O people of Bahá, your substance, nay your very lives, for his assistance.

O Emperor of Austria! He Who is the Dayspring of God's Light dwelt in the prison of 'Akká, at the time when thou didst set forth to visit the Aqsá Mosque.\* Thou passed Him by, and inquired not about Him, by Whom every house is exalted, and every lofty gate unlocked. We, verily, made it\* a place whereunto the world should turn, that they might remember Me, and yet thou hast rejected Him Who is the Object of this remembrance, when He appeared with the Kingdom of God, thy Lord and the Lord of the worlds. We have been with thee at all times, and found thee clinging unto the Branch and heedless of the Root. Thy Lord, verily, is a witness unto what I say. We grieved to see thee circle round Our Name, whilst unaware of Us, though We were before thy face. Open thine eyes, that thou mayest behold this glorious Vision, and

\*Jerusalem.

recognize Him Whom thou invokest in the daytime and in the night season, and gaze on the Light that shineth above this luminous Horizon.

Say: O King of Berlin! Give ear unto the Voice calling from this manifest Temple: Verily, there is none other God but Me, the Everlasting, the Peerless, the Ancient of Days. Take heed lest pride debar thee from recognizing the Dayspring of Divine Revelation, lest earthly desires shut thee out, as by a veil, from the Lord of the Throne above and of the earth below. Thus counselleth thee the Pen of the Most High. He, verily, is the Most Gracious, the All-Bountiful. Do thou remember the one\* whose power transcended thy power, and whose station excelled thy station. Where is he? Whither are gone the things he possessed? Take warning, and be not of them that are fast asleep. He it was who cast the Tablet of God behind him, when We made known unto him what the hosts of tyranny had caused Us to suffer. Wherefore, disgrace assailed him from all sides, and he went down to dust in great loss. Think deeply, O King, concerning him, and concerning them who, like unto thee, have conquered cities and ruled over men. The All-Merciful brought them down from their palaces to their graves. Be warned, be of them who reflect.

We have asked nothing from you. For the sake of God We, verily, exhort you, and will be patient as We have been patient in that which hath befallen Us at your hands, O concourse of kings!

Hearken ye, O Rulers of America and the Presidents of the Republics therein, unto that which the Dove is warbling on the Branch of Eternity: There is none other God but Me, the Ever-Abiding, the Forgiving, the All-Bountiful. Adorn ye the temple of dominion with the ornament of justice and of the fear of God, and its head with the crown of the remembrance of your Lord, the

\*Napoleon III.

Creator of the heavens. Thus counselleth you He Who is the Day-spring of Names, as bidden by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. The Promised One hath appeared in this glorified Station, whereat all beings, both seen and unseen, have rejoiced. Take ye advantage of the Day of God. Verily, to meet Him is better for you than all that whereon the sun shineth, could ye but know it. O concourse of rulers! Give ear unto that which hath been raised from the Dayspring of Grandeur: Verily, there is none other God but Me, the Lord of Utterance, the All-Knowing. Bind ye the broken with the hands of justice, and crush the oppressor who flourisheth with the rod of the commandments of your Lord, the Ordainer, the All-Wise.

. . . O Spot\* that art situate on the shores of the two seas! The throne of tyranny hath, verily, been established upon thee, and the flame of hatred hath been kindled within thy bosom, in such wise that the Concourse on high and they who circle around the Exalted Throne have wailed and lamented. We behold in thee the foolish ruling over the wise, and darkness vaunting itself against the light. Thou art indeed filled with manifest pride. Hath thine outward splendour made thee vainglorious? By Him Who is the Lord of mankind! It shall soon perish, and thy daughters and thy widows and all the kindreds that dwell within thee shall lament. Thus informeth thee the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.

O banks of the Rhine! We have seen you covered with gore, inasmuch as the swords of retribution were drawn against you; and you shall have another turn. And We hear the lamentations of Berlin, though she be today in conspicuous glory.

Let nothing grieve thee, O Land of ٢آ†, for God hath chosen thee to be the source of the joy of all mankind. He shall, if it be His Will, bless thy throne with one who will rule with justice,

\*Constantinople. †Tíhrán.

who will gather together the flock of God which the wolves have scattered. Such a ruler will, with joy and gladness, turn his face towards, and extend his favours unto, the people of Bahá. He indeed is accounted in the sight of God as a jewel among men. Upon him rest forever the glory of God, and the glory of all that dwell in the kingdom of His revelation.

Rejoice with great joy, for God hath made thee “the Day-spring of His light,” inasmuch as within thee was born the Manifestation of His Glory. Be thou glad for this name that hath been conferred upon thee—a name through which the Day-star of grace hath shed its splendour, through which both earth and heaven have been illumined.

Ere long will the state of affairs within thee be changed, and the reins of power fall into the hands of the people. Verily, thy Lord is the All-Knowing. His authority embraceth all things. Rest thou assured in the gracious favour of thy Lord. The eye of His loving-kindness shall everlastingly be directed towards thee. The day is approaching when thy agitation will have been transmuted into peace and quiet calm. Thus hath it been decreed in the wondrous Book.

14. Say: O leaders of religion! Weigh not the Book of God with such standards and sciences as are current amongst you, for the Book itself is the unerring balance established amongst men. In this most perfect balance whatsoever the peoples and kindreds of the earth possess must be weighed, while the measure of its weight should be tested according to its own standard, did ye but know it.

The eye of My loving-kindness weepeth sore over you, inasmuch as ye have failed to recognize the One upon Whom ye have been calling in the daytime and in the night season, at even and at morn. Advance, O people, with snow-white faces and radiant hearts, unto the blest and crimson Spot, wherein the Sadratu'l-

Muntahá is calling: “Verily, there is none other God beside Me, the Omnipotent Protector, the Self-Subsisting!”

O ye leaders of religion! Who is the man amongst you that can rival Me in vision or insight? Where is he to be found that dareth to claim to be My equal in utterance or wisdom? No, by My Lord, the All-Merciful! All on the earth shall pass away; and this is the face of your Lord, the Almighty, the Well-Beloved.

We have decreed, O people, that the highest and last end of all learning be the recognition of Him Who is the Object of all knowledge; and yet, behold how ye have allowed your learning to shut you out, as by a veil, from Him Who is the Dayspring of this Light, through Whom every hidden thing hath been revealed. Could ye but discover the source whence the splendour of this utterance is diffused, ye would cast away the peoples of the world and all that they possess, and would draw nigh unto this most blessed Seat of glory.

Say: This, verily, is the heaven in which the Mother Book is treasured, could ye but comprehend it. He it is Who hath caused the Rock to shout, and the Burning Bush to lift up its voice, upon the Mount rising above the Holy Land, and proclaim: “The Kingdom is God’s, the sovereign Lord of all, the All-Powerful, the Loving!”

We have not entered any school, nor read any of your dissertations. Incline your ears to the words of this unlettered One, where-with He summoneth you unto God, the Ever-Abiding. Better is this for you than all the treasures of the earth, could ye but comprehend it.

Whoso interpreteth what hath been sent down from the heaven of Revelation, and altereth its evident meaning, he, verily, is of them that have perverted the Sublime Word of God, and is of the lost ones in the Lucid Book.



15. The Lord hath granted leave to whosoever desireth it that he be instructed in the divers tongues of the world that he may deliver the Message of the Cause of God throughout the East and throughout the West, that he make mention of Him amidst the kindreds and peoples of the world in such wise that hearts may revive and the mouldering bone be quickened.

16. Adorn your heads with the garlands of trustworthiness and fidelity, your hearts with the attire of the Fear of God, your tongues with absolute truthfulness, your bodies with the vesture of courtesy. These are in truth seemly adornings unto the temple of man, if ye be of them that reflect. Cling, O ye people of Bahá, to the cord of servitude unto God, the True One, for thereby your stations shall be made manifest, your names written and preserved, your ranks raised and your memory exalted in the Preserved Tablet. Beware lest the dwellers on earth hinder you from this glorious and exalted station. Thus have We exhorted you in most of our Epistles and now in this, Our Holy Tablet, above which hath beamed the Day-star of the Laws of the Lord, your God, the Powerful, the All-Wise.

When the ocean of My presence hath ebbed and the Book of My Revelation is ended, turn your faces toward Him Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root. Consider the pettiness of men's minds. They ask for that which injureth them, and cast away the thing that profiteth them. They are, indeed, of those that are far astray. We find some men desiring liberty, and priding themselves therein. Such men are in the depths of ignorance.

Liberty must, in the end, lead to sedition, whose flames none can quench. Thus warneth you He Who is the Reckoner, the All-Knowing. Know ye that the embodiment of liberty and its symbol is the animal. That which besemeth man is submission unto such

restraints as will protect him from his own ignorance, and guard him against the harm of the mischief-maker. Liberty causeth man to overstep the bounds of propriety, and to infringe on the dignity of his station. It debaseth him to the level of extreme depravity and wickedness.

Regard men as a flock of sheep that need a shepherd for their protection. This, verily, is the truth, the certain truth. We approve of liberty in certain circumstances, and refuse to sanction it in others. We, verily, are the All-Knowing.

Say: True liberty consisteth in man's submission unto My commandments, little as ye know it. Were men to observe that which We have sent down unto them from the Heaven of Revelation, they would, of a certainty, attain unto perfect liberty. Happy is the man that hath apprehended the Purpose of God in whatever He hath revealed from the Heaven of His Will, that pervadeth all created things. Say: The liberty that profiteth you is to be found nowhere except in complete servitude unto God, the Eternal Truth. Whoso hath tasted of its sweetness will refuse to barter it for all the dominion of earth and heaven.

17. Consort with all religions with amity and concord, that they may inhale from you the sweet fragrance of God. Beware lest amidst men the flame of foolish ignorance overpower you. All things proceed from God and unto Him they return. He is the source of all things and in Him all things are ended.

18. Blessed is the man that hath acknowledged his belief in God and in His signs, and recognized that "He shall not be asked of His doings." Such a recognition hath been made by God the ornament of every belief, and its very foundation. Upon it must depend the acceptance of every goodly deed. Fasten your eyes upon it, that haply the whisperings of the rebellious may not cause you to slip.

Were He to decree as lawful the thing which from time im-

memorial had been forbidden, and forbid that which had, at all times, been regarded as lawful, to none is given the right to question His authority. Whoso will hesitate, though it be for less than a moment, should be regarded as a transgressor.

Whoso hath not recognized this sublime and fundamental verity, and hath failed to attain this most exalted station, the winds of doubt will agitate him, and the sayings of the infidels will distract his soul. He that hath acknowledged this principle will be endowed with the most perfect constancy. All-honour to this all-glorious station, the remembrance of which adorneth every exalted Tablet. Such is the teaching which God bestoweth on you, a teaching that will deliver you from all manner of doubt and perplexity, and enable you to attain unto salvation in both this world and in the next. He, verily, is the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Bountiful.

19. O concourse of divines! When My verses were sent down, and My clear tokens were revealed, We found you behind the veils. This, verily, is a strange thing. . . . We have rent the veils asunder. Beware lest ye shut out the people by yet another veil. Pluck asunder the chains of vain imaginings, in the name of the Lord of all men, and be not of the deceitful. Should ye turn unto God, and embrace His Cause, spread not disorder within it, and measure not the Book of God with your selfish desires. This, verily, is the counsel of God aforesaid and hereafter. . . . Had ye believed in God, when He revealed Himself, the people would not have turned aside from Him, nor would the things ye witness today have befallen Us. Fear God, and be not of the heedless. . . . This is the Cause that hath caused all your superstitions and idols to tremble. . . .

O concourse of divines! Beware lest ye be the cause of strife in the land, even as ye were the cause of the repudiation of the Faith in its early days. Gather the people around this Word that hath made the pebbles to cry out: "The Kingdom is God's, the Dawning-Place of all signs!" . . . Tear the veils asunder in such wise that

the inmates of the Kingdom will hear them being rent. This is the command of God, in days gone by, and for those to come. Blessed the man that observeth that whereunto he was bidden, and woe betide the negligent.

20. Happy are ye, O ye the learned ones in Bahá. By the Lord! Ye are the billows of the Most Mighty Ocean, the stars of the firmament of Glory, the standards of triumph waving betwixt earth and heaven. Ye are the manifestations of steadfastness amidst men and the daysprings of Divine Utterance to all that dwell on earth. Well is it with him that turneth unto you and woe betide the froward. This day, it behoveth whoso hath quaffed the Mystic Wine of Everlasting Life from the Hands of the loving-kindness of the Lord his God, the Merciful, to pulsate even as the throbbing artery in the body of mankind, that through him may be quickened the world and every crumbling bone.

When the Mystic Dove will have winged its flight from its Sanctuary of Praise and sought its far-off goal, its hidden habitation, refer ye whatsoever ye understand not in the Book to Him Who hath branched from this mighty Stock.

21. The world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this new World Order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous System—the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed.

Immerse yourselves in the ocean of My words, that ye may unravel its secrets, and discover all the pearls of wisdom that lie hid in its depths. Take heed that ye do not vacillate in your determination to embrace the truth of this Cause—a Cause through which the potentialities of the might of God have been revealed, and His sovereignty established. With faces beaming with joy, hasten ye unto Him. This is the changeless Faith of God, eternal in the past,

eternal in the future. Let him that seeketh, attain it; and as to him that hath refused to seek it—verily, God is Self-Sufficient, above any need of His creatures.

Say: This is the infallible Balance which the Hand of God is holding, in which all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth are weighed, and their fate determined, if ye be of them that believe and recognize this truth. Say: Through it the poor have been enriched, the learned enlightened, and the seekers enabled to ascend unto the presence of God. Beware, lest ye make it a cause of dissension amongst you. Be ye as firmly settled as the immovable mountain in the Cause of your Lord, the Mighty, the Loving.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS  
IN WHICH THE ABOVE PASSAGES  
MAY BE FOUND

1. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* CLV (any edition)
2. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* CLV (any edition)
3. *The Bahá'í Community* p. 40 (National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the U.S.A., 1963)
4. *The Bahá'í Community* p. 40 (National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the U.S.A., 1963)
5. *Bahá'í Administration* p. 21 (Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, 5th edition 1945)
6. *Star of the West* Volume XIV p. 112 (Committee for the National Spiritual Assembly of America, 1923), *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* CLXV and LXXI
7. *Star of the West* Volume XIV p. 112
8. *Star of the West* Volume XIV p. 112
9. *Star of the West* Volume XIV p. 112
10. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* LXXII
11. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* LXXII
12. Bahá'í Marriage Certificate issued by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles
13. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* CV, *The Promised Day Is Come* pp. 37, 36 and 26 (B.P.T. Wilmette, 1941), *Citadel of Faith* pp. 18-19 (B.P.T. Wilmette, 1965), *The Promised Day Is Come* pp. 40 and 37, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* LVI

14. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* XCVIII, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf* pp. 129-130 (B.P.T. Wilmette, 1941)
15. *Star of the West* Volume XIV p. 113
16. *Star of the West* Volume XIV p. 113, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* p. 134 (B.P.T. Wilmette, 1938), *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* CLIX
17. *Star of the West* Volume XIV p. 114
18. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* XXXVII
19. *The Promised Day Is Come* pp. 84-85
20. *Star of the West* Volume XIV p. 114, *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh* p. 134
21. *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh* LXX

SYNOPSIS AND CODIFICATION  
OF THE LAWS AND ORDINANCES  
OF THE KITÁB-I-AQDAS

## SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- I. THE APPOINTMENT OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ AS THE SUCCESSOR OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH AND INTERPRETER OF HIS TEACHINGS
  - A. Turn towards Him
  - B. Refer to Him
- II. ANTICIPATION OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE GUARDIANSHIP
- III. THE INSTITUTION OF THE HOUSE OF JUSTICE
- IV. LAWS, ORDINANCES AND EXHORTATIONS
  - A. Prayer
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  - D. Miscellaneous Laws, Ordinances and Exhortations
- V. SPECIFIC ADMONITIONS, REPROOFS AND WARNINGS
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## SYNOPSIS AND CODIFICATION

- I. THE APPOINTMENT OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ AS THE SUCCESSOR OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH AND INTERPRETER OF HIS TEACHINGS
  - A. The faithful are enjoined to turn their faces towards the One "*Whom God hath purposed, Who hath branched from this Ancient Root.*"
  - B. The faithful are bidden to refer whatsoever they do not understand in the Bahá'í writings to "*Him Who hath branched from this mighty Stock.*"
- II. ANTICIPATION OF THE INSTITUTION OF GUARDIANSHIP
- III. THE INSTITUTION OF THE HOUSE OF JUSTICE<sup>1</sup>
  - A. The House of Justice is formally ordained.
  - B. Its functions are defined.
  - C. Its revenues are fixed.
- IV. LAWS, ORDINANCES AND EXHORTATIONS
  - A. **Prayer**<sup>2</sup>
    - (1) The sublime station occupied by the Obligatory Prayers in the Bahá'í Revelation.
    - (2) The Qiblih:<sup>3</sup>
      - (a) Identified by the Báb with "*the One Whom God will make manifest*".
      - (b) The appointment made by the Báb is confirmed by Bahá'u'lláh.
      - (c) Bahá'u'lláh ordains His resting-place as the Qiblih after His passing.
      - (d) Turning to the Qiblih is mandatory while reciting the Obligatory Prayers.

- (3) The Obligatory Prayers are binding on men and women on attaining the age of maturity, which is fixed at 15.
- (4) Exemption from offering the Obligatory Prayers is granted to:
  - (a) Those who are ill.
  - (b) Those who are over 70.
  - (c) Women in their courses provided they perform their ablutions<sup>4</sup> and repeat a specifically revealed verse<sup>5</sup> 95 times a day.
- (5) The Obligatory Prayers should be offered individually.
- (6) The choice of one of the three Obligatory Prayers is permissible.<sup>6</sup>
- (7) By "morning", "noon" and "evening", mentioned in connection with the Obligatory Prayers, is meant respectively the intervals between sunrise<sup>7</sup> and noon, between noon and sunset, and from sunset till two hours after sunset.
- (8) The recital of the first (long) Obligatory Prayer, once in twenty-four hours is sufficient.
- (9) It is preferable to offer the third (short) Obligatory Prayer while standing.
- (10) Ablutions:<sup>4</sup>
  - (a) Ablutions must precede the recital of the Obligatory Prayers.
  - (b) For every Obligatory Prayer fresh ablutions must be performed.

- (c) Should two Obligatory Prayers be offered at noon one ablution for both prayers is sufficient.
  - (d) If water is unavailable or its use harmful to the face or hands, the repetition, five times, of a specifically revealed verse<sup>8</sup> is prescribed.
  - (e) Should the weather be too cold the use of warm water is recommended.
  - (f) If ablutions have been performed for other purposes, their renewal prior to the recital of the Obligatory Prayer is not required.
  - (g) Ablutions are essential whether a bath has been taken previously or not.
- (11) Determining the times fixed for Prayer:
- (a) Reliance on clocks is permissible in determining the times for offering the Obligatory Prayers.
  - (b) In countries situated in the extreme north or south, where the duration of days and nights varies considerably, clocks and timepieces should be relied upon, without reference to sunrise or sunset.
- (12) In case of danger,<sup>9</sup> whether when travelling or not, for every Obligatory Prayer not offered a prostration and the recital of a specific verse is enjoined, to be followed by the repetition, eighteen times, of another specific verse.<sup>10</sup>
- (13) Congregational Prayer<sup>2</sup> is forbidden except the *Prayer for the Dead*.
- (14) The recital, in its entirety, of the *Prayer for the Dead*<sup>11</sup> is prescribed except for those unable to read, who are commanded to repeat the six specific passages in that Prayer.

- (15) The Obligatory Prayer to be thrice repeated, three times a day, at morn, noon and evening, has been superseded by three Obligatory Prayers subsequently revealed.<sup>12</sup>
- (16) The *Prayer of the Signs* has been annulled, and a specifically revealed verse substituted for it. The recital of this verse is not however obligatory.<sup>13</sup>
- (17) Hair, sable, bones and the like do not nullify one's prayer.<sup>14</sup>

### B. *Fasting*

- (1) The sublime station occupied by fasting in the Bahá'í Revelation.
- (2) The period of fasting commences with the termination of the Intercalary Days, and ends with the Naw-Rúz Festival.<sup>15</sup>
- (3) Abstinence from food and drink,<sup>16</sup> from sunrise to sunset, is obligatory.
- (4) Fasting is binding on men and women on attaining the age of maturity, which is fixed at 15.
- (5) Exemption from fasting is granted to:
- (a) Travellers
    - i. Provided the journey exceeds 9 hours.
    - ii. Those travelling on foot, provided the journey exceeds 2 hours.
    - iii. Those who break their journey for less than 19 days.
    - iv. Those who break their journey during the Fast at a place where they are to stay 19 days are exempt from fasting only for the first three days from their arrival.

- v. Those who reach home during the Fast must commence fasting from the day of their arrival.
  - (b) Those who are ill.
  - (c) Those who are over 70.
  - (d) Women who are with child.
  - (e) Women who are nursing.
  - (f) Women in their courses, provided they perform their ablutions and repeat a specifically revealed verse 95 times a day.<sup>5</sup>
  - (g) Those who are engaged in heavy labour, who are advised to show respect for the law by using discretion and restraint when availing themselves of the exemption.
- (6) Vowing to fast (in a month other than the one prescribed for fasting) is permissible. Vows which profit mankind are however preferable in the sight of God.

### C. *Laws of Personal Status*

- (1) Marriage:
- (a) Marriage is highly recommended but not obligatory.
  - (b) Plurality of wives is forbidden.<sup>17</sup>
  - (c) Marriage is conditioned upon both parties having attained the age of maturity which is fixed at 15.
  - (d) Marriage is conditioned on the consent of both parties and their parents, whether the woman be a maiden or not.



- (e) It is incumbent upon both parties to recite a specifically revealed verse indicating their being content with the will of God.<sup>18</sup>
- (f) Marriage with one's step-mother is forbidden.
- (g) All matters related to marriage with one's kindred are to be referred to the House of Justice.
- (h) Marriage with unbelievers is permitted.
- (i) Betrothal:
  - i. The period of engagement must not exceed 95 days.
  - ii. It is unlawful to become engaged to a girl before she reaches the age of maturity.
- (j) The Dowry:
  - i. Marriage is conditioned on payment of a dowry.
  - ii. The dowry is fixed at 19 mithqáls<sup>19</sup> of pure gold for city-dwellers, and 19 mithqáls of silver for village-dwellers, depending on the permanent residence of the husband, and not of the wife.
  - iii. It is forbidden to pay more than 95 mithqáls.
  - iv. It is preferable that a man content himself with the payment of 19 mithqáls of silver.
  - v. If the full payment of dowry is not possible the issue of a promissory note is permissible.

- (k) Should either party, following the recital of the specifically revealed verse and the payment of the dowry, take a dislike to the other, before the marriage is consummated, the period of waiting<sup>20</sup> is not necessary prior to a divorce. The taking back of the dowry, however, is not permitted.
- (l) The husband must fix for his wife the time of his return when intending to travel. If, for a legitimate reason, he is prevented from returning at the appointed time, he must inform her and strive to return to her. If he fails to fulfil either condition, she must wait 9 months, after which she may remarry, though it is preferable for her to wait longer. If news of his death or murder reaches her, and the news is confirmed by general report or by 2 reliable witnesses, she may remarry after the lapse of 9 months.
- (m) If the husband departs without informing his wife of the date of his return, and is aware of the law prescribed in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, the wife may remarry after waiting a full year. If the husband is unaware of this law, the wife must wait until news of her husband reaches her.
- (n) Should the husband, after the payment of the dowry, discover that the wife is not a virgin, the refund of the dowry and of the expenses incurred may be demanded.
- (o) If the marriage has been conditioned on virginity the refund of the dowry and of the expenses incurred may be demanded and the marriage in-

validated. To conceal the matter, however, is highly meritorious in the sight of God.

- (2) Divorce:
- (a) Divorce is strongly condemned.
  - (b) If antipathy or resentment develop on the part of either the husband or the wife, divorce is permissible, only after the lapse of one full year. The beginning and end of the year of waiting must be testified by two or more witnesses. The act of divorce should be registered by the judicial officer representing the House of Justice. Intercourse during this period of waiting is forbidden and whoever breaks this law must repent and pay the House of Justice 19 mithqáls<sup>19</sup> of gold.
  - (c) A further period of waiting after divorce has taken place is not required.
  - (d) The wife who is to be divorced as a result of her unfaithfulness forfeits the payment of the expenses during the waiting period.
  - (e) Remarrying the wife whom one has divorced is permissible, provided she has not married another person. If she has, she must be divorced before her former husband can remarry her.
  - (f) If at any time during the waiting period affection should recur, the marriage tie is valid. If this reconciliation is followed by estrangement and divorce is again desired, a new year of waiting will have to be commenced.
  - (g) Should differences arise between husband and wife while travelling, he is required to send her home, or entrust her to a dependable person, who

will escort her there, paying her journey and her full year's expenses.

- (h) Should a wife insist on divorcing her husband rather than migrate to another country, the year of waiting is to be counted from the time they separate, either while he is preparing to leave, or upon his departure.
  - (i) The Islamic Law regarding remarriage with the wife whom one has previously divorced is abrogated.<sup>21</sup>
- (3) Inheritance:\*
- (a) Inheritance falls into the following categories:
 

(1) children	1,080	out of	2,520	shares
(2) husband or wife	390	„	2,520	„
(3) father	330	„	2,520	„
(4) mother	270	„	2,520	„
(5) brother	210	„	2,520	„
(6) sister	150	„	2,520	„
(7) teacher <sup>22</sup>	90	„	2,520	„
  - (b) The share of the children, as allotted by the Báb is doubled by Bahá'u'lláh, and an equal portion correspondingly reduced from each of the remaining beneficiaries.
  - (c) i. In cases where there is no issue the share of the children reverts to the House of Justice to be expended on orphans and widows and for whatever will profit mankind.

\*The method of dividing the estate is to be applied in cases of intestacy. See item (o) in this section and note 25.

- ii. If the son of the deceased be dead and leave issue, these will inherit the share of their father. If the daughter of the deceased be dead and leave issue, her share will have to be divided into the seven categories specified in the Most Holy Book.
- (d) Should one leave offspring but either part or all of the other categories of inheritors be nonexistent, two thirds of their shares reverts to the offspring and one third to the House of Justice.
- (e) Should none of the specified beneficiaries exist two thirds of the inheritance reverts to the nephews and nieces of the deceased. If these do not exist the same share reverts to the aunts and uncles; lacking these to their sons and daughters. In any case the remaining third reverts to the House of Justice.
- (f) Should one leave none of the aforementioned heirs, the entire inheritance reverts to the House of Justice.
- (g) The residence and the personal clothing of the deceased father pass to the male not to the female offspring.<sup>23</sup> If there be several residences the principal and most important one passes to the male offspring. The remaining residences will together with the other possessions of the deceased have to be divided among the heirs. If there be no male offspring two thirds of the principal residence and the personal clothing of the deceased father will revert to the female issue and one third to the House of Justice. In the

- case of the deceased mother all her used clothing is to be equally divided amongst her daughters. Her unworn clothing, jewels and property must be divided among her heirs, as well as her used clothing if she leaves no daughter.
- (h) Should the children of the deceased be minors their share should either be entrusted to a reliable person or to a company for purposes of investment, until they attain the age of maturity. A share of the interest accrued should be assigned to the trustee.
  - (i) The inheritance should not be divided until after the payment of the *Ḥuqúqu'lláh*<sup>24</sup> (The Right of God), of any debts contracted by the deceased and of any expenses incurred for a befitting funeral and burial.
  - (j) If the brother of the deceased is from the same father he will inherit his full allotted share. If he is from another father he will inherit only two thirds of his share, the remaining one third reverting to the House of Justice. The same law is applicable to the sister of the deceased.
  - (k) In case there are full brothers or full sisters, brothers and sisters from the mother's side do not inherit.
  - (l) A non-Bahá'í teacher does not inherit. If there should be more than one teacher the share allotted to the teacher is to be equally divided among them.
  - (m) Non-Bahá'í heirs do not inherit.<sup>25</sup>
  - (n) Aside from the wife's used clothing and gifts of jewellery or otherwise which have been proven

to have been given her by her husband, whatever the husband has purchased for his wife are to be considered as the husband's possessions to be divided among his heirs.

- (o) Any person is at liberty to will his possessions as he sees fit provided he makes provisions for the payment of Ḥuqúqu'lláh and the discharge of his debts.

#### D. Miscellaneous Laws, Ordinances and Exhortations

##### (I) Miscellaneous Laws and Ordinances:

- (a) Pilgrimage<sup>26</sup>
- (b) Ḥuqúqu'lláh<sup>24</sup>
- (c) Endowments
- (d) The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár<sup>27</sup>
- (e) Duration of the Bahá'í Dispensation<sup>28</sup>
- (f) Bahá'í Festivals<sup>29</sup>
- (g) The Nineteen Day Feast
- (h) The Bahá'í Year
- (i) The Intercalary Days
- (j) The age of maturity
- (k) Burial of the dead<sup>30</sup>
- (l) Engaging in a trade or profession is made obligatory and is exalted to the rank of worship<sup>31</sup>
- (m) Obedience to government
- (n) Education of children
- (o) The writing of a testament
- (p) Tithes<sup>32</sup>
- (q) Repetition of the Greatest Name 95 times a day<sup>33</sup>
- (r) The hunting of animals<sup>34</sup>

- (s) Treatment of female servants<sup>35</sup>
- (t) The finding of lost property<sup>36</sup>
- (u) Disposition of treasure trove
- (v) Disposal of objects held in trust<sup>37</sup>
- (w) Manslaughter<sup>38</sup>
- (x) Definition of just witnesses<sup>39</sup>
- (y) Prohibitions:
  - i. Interpretation of the Holy Writ
  - ii. Slave trading
  - iii. Asceticism
  - iv. Monasticism
  - v. Mendicancy<sup>40</sup>
  - vi. Priesthood
  - vii. Use of pulpits
  - viii. The kissing of hands
  - ix. Confession of sins<sup>41</sup>
  - x. Plurality of wives<sup>17</sup>
  - xi. Intoxicating drinks
  - xii. Opium
  - xiii. Gambling
  - xiv. Arson<sup>42</sup>
  - xv. Adultery<sup>42</sup>
  - xvi. Murder<sup>42</sup>
  - xvii. Theft<sup>42</sup>
  - xviii. Homosexuality<sup>43</sup>
  - xix. Congregational prayer, except for the dead<sup>2</sup>
  - xx. Cruelty to animals
  - xxi. Idleness and sloth
  - xxii. Backbiting
  - xxiii. Calumny
  - xxiv. Carrying arms unless essential

- xxv. Use of public pools in Persian baths<sup>44</sup>
  - xxvi. Entering a house without the owner's permission
  - xxvii. Striking or wounding a person
  - xxviii. Contention and conflict
  - xxix. Muttering sacred verses in the street
  - xxx. Plunging one's hand in food<sup>45</sup>
  - xxxi. Shaving one's head
  - xxxii. Growth of men's hair beyond the lobe of the ear
- (2) Abrogation of specific laws and ordinances of previous Dispensations, which prescribed:
- (a) Destruction of books
  - (b) Prohibition of the wearing of silk
  - (c) Prohibition of the use of gold and silver utensils
  - (d) Limitation of travel
  - (e) Offering priceless gifts to the Founder of the Faith
  - (f) Prohibition on questioning the Founder of the Faith
  - (g) Prohibition against remarrying one's divorced wife<sup>21</sup>
  - (h) Penalizing whoever causes sadness to his neighbour
  - (i) Prohibition of music
  - (j) Limitations upon one's apparel and beard
  - (k) Uncleanliness of divers objects and peoples<sup>46</sup>
  - (l) Uncleanliness of semen
  - (m) Uncleanliness of certain objects for purposes of prostration

- (3) Miscellaneous Exhortations:
- (a) To associate with the followers of all religions with fellowship
  - (b) To honour one's parents
  - (c) Not to wish for others what one does not wish for one's self
  - (d) To teach and propagate the Faith after the ascension of its Founder
  - (e) To assist those who arise to promote the Faith
  - (f) Not to depart from the Writings or to be misled by those who do
  - (g) To refer to the Holy Writ when differences arise
  - (h) To immerse one's self in the study of the Teachings
  - (i) Not to follow one's idle fancies and vain imaginations
  - (j) To recite the holy verses at morn and at eventide
  - (k) To recite the holy verses melodiously
  - (l) To teach one's children to chant the holy verses in the *Mashriqu'l-Adhkár*
  - (m) To study such arts and sciences as benefit mankind
  - (n) To take counsel together
  - (o) Not to be indulgent in carrying out the statutes of God
  - (p) To repent to God of one's sins
  - (q) To distinguish one's self through good deeds
    - i. To be truthful
    - ii. To be trustworthy

- iii. To be faithful
  - iv. To be righteous and fear God
  - v. To be just and fair
  - vi. To be tactful and wise
  - vii. To be courteous
  - viii. To be hospitable
  - ix. To be persevering
  - x. To be detached
  - xi. To be absolutely submissive to the Will of God
  - xii. Not to stir up mischief
  - xiii. Not to be hypocritical
  - xiv. Not to be proud
  - xv. Not to be fanatical
  - xvi. Not to prefer one's self to one's neighbour
  - xvii. Not to contend with one's neighbour
  - xviii. Not to indulge one's passions
  - xix. Not to lament in adversity
  - xx. Not to contend with those in authority
  - xxi. Not to lose one's temper
  - xxii. Not to anger one's neighbour
- (r) To be closely united
  - (s) To consult competent physicians when ill
  - (t) To respond to invitations
  - (u) To show kindness to the kindred of the Founder of the Faith<sup>47</sup>
  - (v) To study languages for the furtherance of the Faith
  - (w) To further the development of cities and countries for the glorification of the Faith

- (x) To restore and preserve the sites associated with the Founders of the Faith
- (y) To be the essence of cleanliness:
  - i. To wash one's feet
  - ii. To perfume one's self
  - iii. To bathe in clean water
  - iv. To cut one's nails
  - v. To wash soiled things in clean water
  - vi. To be stainless in one's dress
  - vii. To renew the furnishings of one's house<sup>48</sup>

#### V. SPECIFIC ADMONITIONS, REPROOFS AND WARNINGS

##### *Addressed to:*

1. The entire human race
2. Crowned heads of the world<sup>49</sup>
3. The concourse of ecclesiastics<sup>50</sup>
4. The Rulers of America and Presidents of the Republics therein<sup>51</sup>
5. William I, King of Prussia<sup>52</sup>
6. Francis Joseph, Emperor of Austria<sup>53</sup>
7. The people of the Bayán
8. Members of parliaments throughout the world

#### VI. MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS

1. The transcendent character of the Bahá'í Revelation
2. The exalted station of the Author of the Faith
3. The supreme importance of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, "The Most Holy Book"
4. The doctrine of the "Most Great Infallibility"<sup>54</sup>
5. The twin duties of recognition of the Manifestation and observance of His Laws, and their inseparability<sup>55</sup>

6. The end of all learning is the recognition of Him Who is the Object of all knowledge<sup>56</sup>
7. The blessedness of those who have recognized the fundamental verity "He shall not be asked of His doings"<sup>57</sup>
8. The revolutionizing effect of the "Most Great Order"<sup>58</sup>
9. The selection of a single language and the adoption of a common script for all on earth to use: one of two signs of the maturity of the human race<sup>59</sup>
10. Prophecies of the Báb regarding "He Whom God will make manifest"
11. Prediction relating to opposition to the Faith
12. Eulogy of the king who will profess the Faith and arise to serve it<sup>60</sup>
13. The instability of human affairs<sup>61</sup>
14. The meaning of true liberty<sup>62</sup>
15. The merit of all deeds is dependent upon God's acceptance
16. The importance of love for God as the motive of obedience to His Laws<sup>63</sup>
17. The importance of utilizing material means
18. Eulogy of the learned among the people of Bahá<sup>64</sup>
19. Assurance of forgiveness to Mírzá Yahyá should he repent<sup>65</sup>
20. Apostrophe addressed to Tíhrán<sup>66</sup>
21. Apostrophe addressed to Constantinople and its people<sup>67</sup>
22. Apostrophe addressed to the "banks of the Rhine"<sup>68</sup>

23. Condemnation of those who lay false claim to esoteric knowledge
24. Condemnation of those who allow pride in their learning to debar them from God
25. Prophecies relating to Khurásán<sup>69</sup>
26. Prophecies relating to Kirmán<sup>70</sup>
27. Allusion to Shaykh Ahmad-i-Aḥsá'í<sup>71</sup>
28. Allusion to the Sifter of Wheat<sup>72</sup>
29. Condemnation of Hájí Muḥammad-Karím Khán<sup>73</sup>
30. Condemnation of Shaykh Muḥammad-Ḥasan<sup>74</sup>
31. Allusion to Napoleon III<sup>75</sup>
32. Allusion to Siyyid-i-Muḥammad-i-Iṣfáhání<sup>76</sup>
33. Assurance of aid to all those who arise to serve the Faith<sup>77</sup>

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

At the end of each note, in brackets, is given the number of the page of the *Synopsis and Codification* to which reference is made.



## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. In the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* Bahá'u'lláh ordains both the Universal House of Justice and the Local Houses of Justice. In many of His laws He refers simply to "the House of Justice" leaving open for later decision which level or levels of the whole institution each law would apply to. (p. 35)
2. Congregational prayer, in the sense of formal prayer which is to be recited in accordance with a prescribed ritual, is forbidden in the Bahá'í Faith, with the exception of the *Prayer for the Dead* (see note 11). Thus the three Daily Obligatory Prayers are to be recited privately, not in congregation. There is no prescribed way for the recital of the many other Bahá'í prayers, and the friends are free to use them in gatherings or individually as they please, "But," as the Guardian explains, "although the friends are thus left free to follow their own inclination, . . . they should take the utmost care that any manner they practise should not acquire too rigid a character, and thus develop into an institution. This is a point which the friends should always bear in mind, lest they deviate from the clear path indicated in the Teachings." (pp. 35, 37, 47)
3. The Qiblih: the Point of Adoration, i.e. Bahjí, 'Akká. (p. 35)
4. Ablutions: washing the hands and face in preparation for prayer. (pp. 36, 37)
5. The specifically revealed verse, which is to be repeated 95 times a day between one noon and the next, is "*Glorified be God, the Lord of Splendour and Beauty.*" (pp. 36, 39)
6. These three Obligatory Prayers are published in *Prayers and Meditations of Bahá'u'lláh*, Nos. CLXXXI, CLXXXII and CLXXXIII. (p. 36)

7. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has stated that when saying the morning Obligatory Prayer it is permissible to do so as early as dawn. (p. 36)
8. The specifically revealed verse to be recited five times under certain circumstances in place of ablutions is: "*In the Name of God, the Most Pure, the Most Pure.*" (p. 37)
9. "Danger" here refers to a condition of insecurity which makes the saying of the Obligatory Prayers impossible. When asked whether this provision meant that obligatory prayer was to be completely suspended during travel, Bahá'u'lláh replied that this referred only to insecurity, and that if one could find a secure place in which to say the prayer one should do so. (p. 37)
10. In place of every Obligatory Prayer that has been missed the believer is to kneel and, bowing his forehead to the ground, say "*Glorified be God, the Lord of Might and Majesty, of Grace and Bounty*", or only "*Glorified be God*". After the requisite number of prostrations he is to sit cross-legged and repeat eighteen times "*Glorified be God, the Lord of the kingdoms of earth and heaven.*" (p. 37)
11. The *Prayer for the Dead* is published in *Prayers and Meditations of Bahá'u'lláh*, No. CLXVII. It is the only Bahá'í obligatory prayer which is to be recited in congregation; it is to be recited by one believer while all present stand. There is no requirement to face the Qiblah when reciting this prayer. (p. 37)
12. The original Obligatory Prayer referred to had been revealed separately from the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*. The three Obligatory Prayers which superseded it are those which are now in use. Shortly after the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, the text of the superseded prayer was stolen by the Covenant-breakers. (p. 38)
13. In Islám a special prayer was ordained to be said in times of natural phenomena which cause fear, such as earthquakes. This has been annulled, and in its place a Bahá'í may say

- "*Dominion is God's, the Lord of the seen and the unseen, the Lord of creation*". (p. 38)
14. Bahá'u'lláh states that hair, sable, bones and the like do not nullify one's prayer, and points out that the belief that they did so was evolved by the 'ulamá (Muslim religious leaders) and was not a teaching of the Qur'án. (p. 38)
  15. As the Báb did not specifically define the place for the Intercalary Days in the calendar, the Bábís were at a loss as to how they should regard them. The *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* resolved this problem. For further details see the section on the Bahá'í calendar in any volume of *The Bahá'í World*. (p. 38)
  16. In one of His Tablets 'Abdu'l-Bahá, after stating that fasting consists of abstinence from food and drink, categorically says that smoking is a form of "drink". (In Arabic the verb "drink" applies equally to smoking.) (p. 38)
  17. The text of the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* upholds monogamy, but as it appears also to permit bigamy, the Guardian was asked for a clarification, and in reply his secretary wrote on his behalf: "Regarding Bahá'í marriage; in the light of the Master's Tablet interpreting the provision in the *Aqdas* on the subject of the plurality of wives, it becomes evident that monogamy alone is permissible, since, as 'Abdu'l-Bahá states, bigamy is conditioned upon justice, and as justice is impossible, it follows that bigamy is not permissible, and monogamy alone should be practised." (pp. 39, 47)
  18. The specifically revealed verse is "*We will all, verily, abide by the Will of God.*" (p. 40)
  19. A mithqál is a weight designated by the Báb and is equivalent to a little over 3½ grammes. (pp. 40, 42)
  20. See section IV.C.(2)(b) on page 42 for the definition of the period of waiting. (p. 41)

21. This refers to a law of Islám which decreed that under certain conditions a man could not remarry his divorced wife unless she had married and been divorced by another man. This provision has been abolished by the *Aqdas*. (pp. 43, 48)
22. When asked by an individual believer whether the term "teacher", referred to as one of the heirs, meant a specific individual teacher or teachers, or whether the term could be applied generally, i.e. to education and learning, the Guardian replied that the manner in which the law will be applied in this respect will be determined by the Universal House of Justice. (p. 43)
23. It has been explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá that the residence and personal clothing of the deceased father go to the eldest son, or if he has predeceased his father, to the second son, and so on. (p. 44)
24. *Ḥuqúqu'lláh* (The Right of God). If a person has possessions equal in value to at least 19 *mithqáls* in gold, it is a spiritual obligation for him to pay 19% of the total amount, once only, as *Ḥuqúqu'lláh*. Certain categories of possessions, such as one's residence, are exempt from this. Thereafter, whenever his income, after all expenses have been paid, increases the value of his possessions by the amount of at least 19 *mithqáls* of gold, he is to pay 19% of this increase, and so on for each further increase. (pp. 45, 46)
25. In a letter to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of India the Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf: "Although in the *Questions and Answers* Bahá'u'lláh has specifically stated that non-Bahá'ís have no right to inherit from their Bahá'í parents or relatives, yet this restriction applies only to such cases when a Bahá'í dies without leaving a will and when, therefore, his property will have to be divided in accordance

- with the rules set forth in the *Aqdas*. Otherwise, a Bahá'í is free to bequeath his property to any person, irrespective of religion, provided however, he leaves a will, specifying his wishes. As you see therefore it is always possible for a Bahá'í to provide for his non-Bahá'í wife, children or relatives by leaving a will. And it is only fair that he should do so." (p. 45)
26. In the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* Bahá'u'lláh specifically ordains pilgrimage to the Most Great House in Baghdád and to the House of the Báb in Shíráz. Details concerning these pilgrimages are given in other Tablets. In a Tablet to an individual believer 'Abdu'l-Bahá commented on the general subject of visits to holy places: "You have asked about visiting holy places and the observance of marked reverence toward these resplendent spots. Holy places are undoubtedly centres of the outpouring of Divine grace, because on entering the illumined sites associated with martyrs and holy souls, and by observing reverence, both physical and spiritual, one's heart is moved with great tenderness. But there is no obligation for everyone to visit such places, other than the three, namely: the Most Holy Shrine, the Blessed House in Baghdád and the venerated House of the Báb in Shíráz. To visit these is obligatory if one can afford it and is able to do so, and if no obstacle stands in one's way. Details are given in the Tablets. These three Holy Places are consecrated to pilgrimage. But as to the other resting places of martyrs and holy souls, it is pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God if a person desires to draw nigh unto Him by visiting them; this, however, is not a binding obligation." (p. 46)
27. The *Mashriqu'l-Adhikár* (The Dawning-Place of the Praise of God) comprises a central House of Worship and, clustered around it, a number of dependencies which, in the words of Shoghi Effendi, "shall afford relief to the suffering, sustenance to the poor, shelter to the wayfarer, solace to the bereaved, and education to the ignorant." Within the central edifice there

shall be read, chanted or sung only the words of the Sacred Scriptures of the revealed religions, or hymns based upon those words. "Blessed is he", wrote Bahá'u'lláh in the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, "who directeth his steps towards the *Mashriq'u'l-Adhkar* at the hour of dawn, communing with Him, attuned to His remembrance, imploring His forgiveness. And having entered therein, let him sit in silence to hearken to the verses of God, the Sovereign, the Almighty, the All-Praised." (p. 46)

28. Concerning the duration of the Bahá'í Dispensation see the quotation No. 6 on page 14. (p. 46)
29. In the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* Bahá'u'lláh establishes the festivals of Riḍván (on the first, ninth and twelfth days of which work is to be suspended), the Declaration of the Báb, the Birthday of the Báb, the Birthday of Bahá'u'lláh, and Naw-Rúz. In the days of Bahá'u'lláh the Martyrdom of the Báb was also commemorated and 'Abdu'l-Bahá added the observance of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh as a corollary to these Holy Days, making nine in all. In addition to these nine days, the Day of the Covenant and the Anniversary of the Passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá are commemorated, but work is not suspended on these two days. See also the section on the Bahá'í calendar in any volume of *The Bahá'í World*. (p. 46)
30. Briefly the law for the burial of the dead states that it is forbidden to carry the body for more than one hour's journey from the place of death; that the body should be wrapped in a shroud of silk or cotton, and on its finger should be placed a ring bearing the inscription "I came forth from God, and return unto Him, detached from all save Him, holding fast to His Name, the Merciful, the Compassionate"; and that the coffin should be of crystal, stone or hard fine wood. A specific *Prayer for the Dead* is ordained, to be said before interment (see note 11). It has been explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the Guardian that this law

prohibits cremation of the dead. The formal prayer and the ring are meant to be used for those who have attained the age of maturity. (p. 46)

31. If a person is unable to earn his own living it is incumbent upon the House of Justice and the wealthy to provide for him. (p. 46)
32. In respect to tithes Bahá'u'lláh has ordained that what is prescribed in the Qur'án should be followed. In general the law imposes an obligation to give a portion of one's assets for the relief of the poor, for various other charitable purposes, and to aid the Faith of God. The details of the application of this law are left to the Universal House of Justice to decide in future, and the Guardian has stated that in the meantime the believers may contribute regularly and according to their means to the Bahá'í Fund. (p. 46)
33. The believer should perform his ablutions (see note 4), seat himself, and then repeat "Alláh-u-Abhá" ninety-five times. (p. 46)
34. Bahá'u'lláh warns against hunting to excess and prescribes laws prohibiting the eating of game if it is found dead in a trap or net. (p. 46)
35. Bahá'u'lláh states that a man may employ a maiden for domestic service. This was not permissible under *Shí'ih* Muslim practice unless the employer married her. (p. 47)
36. Concerns the ruling laid down to trace the owner of lost property. (p. 47)
37. Refers to the exchange of property held in trust in order to protect the owner against loss. (p. 47)
38. Deals with the question of compensation in case a person kills another without intention to do so. (p. 47)
39. When something is to be proved on the testimony of two just witnesses, the criterion for determining the justice of a witness is his reputation, irrespective of whether he is a Bahá'í. (p. 47)

40. Bahá'u'lláh forbids both begging and giving to beggars, but exhorts the wealthy and the House of Justice to help the needy, and referring to the House of Justice He says, "*Verily have We made it a shelter for the poor and needy.*" (cf. note 31). (p. 47)
41. Bahá'u'lláh prohibits confession to, and seeking absolution of one's sins from, a human being, and enjoins the sinner, when alone, to repent before God, for it is He Who forgives. In this connection the Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf to an individual believer: "We are forbidden to confess to any person, as do the Catholics to their priests, our sins and shortcomings, or to do so in public, as some religious sects do. However, if we spontaneously desire to acknowledge we have been wrong in something, or that we have some fault of character, and ask another person's forgiveness or pardon, we are quite free to do so." (p. 47)
42. Punishments for arson, adultery, murder and theft are specified in the *Aqdas*, but they are intended for a future condition of society, when they will be supplemented and applied by the Universal House of Justice. (p. 47)
43. In a letter to an individual believer, the Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf: "No matter how devoted and fine the love may be between people of the same sex, to let it find expression in sexual acts is wrong. Immorality of every sort is really forbidden by Bahá'u'lláh, and homosexual relationships He looks upon as such, besides being against nature." (p. 47)
44. In Persian public baths it was formerly the custom for everyone to wash in the same water. (p. 48)
45. The prohibition against plunging one's hand in food refers to the manner of eating. (p. 48)
46. See *God Passes By* page 154. (p. 48)
47. In the *Kitáb-i-Aqdas* Bahá'u'lláh writes that the injunction to

- show kindness to His Family does not give them a share in the properties of men. (p. 50)
48. Bahá'u'lláh states that the law requiring the renewal of the furnishings of one's house after nineteen years applies only if one is able to do so. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has explained that the purpose of the law is that one should change those furnishings that become old, lose their lustre and provoke repugnance. It does not apply to such things as scarce or treasured articles, antiques or jewelry. (p. 51)
49. See page 17, No. 13 (p. 51)
50. See page 22, No. 14, and page 26, No. 19. (p. 51)
51. See page 20, No. 13. (p. 51)
52. See page 20, No. 13. (p. 51)
53. See page 19, No. 13. (p. 51)
54. See *Some Answered Questions* Chapter XLV and *God Passes By* page 214. (p. 51)
55. See page 11, No. 1. (p. 51)
56. See page 23, No. 14. (p. 52)
57. See page 25, No. 18. (p. 52)
58. See page 27, No. 21. (p. 52)
59. See *God Passes By* page 211. The other sign of maturity is cited in *The Promised Day Is Come* page 72. (p. 52)
60. See page 19, No. 13. (p. 52)
61. See page 15, No. 6. (p. 52)
62. See page 24, No. 16. (p. 52)
63. See page 12, No. 1. (p. 52)
64. See page 27, No. 20. (p. 52)
65. See *God Passes By* page 215. (p. 52)
66. See page 21, No. 13. (p. 52)

67. See page 21, No. 13. (p. 52)
68. See page 21, No. 13. (p. 52)
69. See *God Passes By* page 215. (p. 53)
70. See *God Passes By* page 215. (p. 53)
71. See *The Dawn-Breakers* Chapter 1, and page 201 (B.P.T. Wilmette, 1962). (p. 53)
72. Mullá Muḥammad Ja'far-i-Isfáhání. See *The Dawn-Breakers* page 99. (p. 53)
73. See the *Kitáb-i-Íqán* pages 184-191 (B.P.T. Wilmette editions). (p. 53)
74. Shaykh Muḥammad-Ḥasan-i-Najafí, one of the leading Shí'ih ecclesiastics, who rejected the Báb. (p. 53)
75. See page 20, No. 13. (p. 53)
76. See *God Passes By* pages 164-169. (p. 53)
77. See page 16, No. 10. (p. 53)