

The Nineteen Day Feast

Verily, it is enjoined upon you to offer a feast, once in every month, though only water be served; for God hath purposed to bind hearts together, albeit through both earthly and heavenly means.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, para. 57)

Question: "A feast hath been enjoined upon you..." Is this obligatory or not?

Answer: It is not obligatory.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, Questions & Answers, NO. 48)



"Verily, it is enjoined upon you to offer a feast, once in every month"

This injunction has become the basis for the holding of monthly Bahá'í festivities and as such constitutes the ordination of the Nineteen Day Feast. In the Arabic Bayán the Báb called upon His followers to gather together once every nineteen days to show hospitality and fellowship. Bahá'u'lláh here confirms this and notes the unifying role of such occasions.

'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi after Him have gradually unfolded the institutional significance of this injunction. 'Abdu'l-Bahá emphasized the importance of the spiritual and devotional character of these gatherings. Shoghi Effendi, besides further elaborating the devotional and social aspects of the Feast, has developed the administrative element of such gatherings and, in systematically instituting the Feast, has provided for a period of consultation on the affairs of the Bahá'í community, including the sharing of news and messages.

In answer to a question as to whether this injunction is obligatory, Bahá'u'lláh stated it was not (Q&A 48). Shoghi Effendi in a letter written on his behalf further comments:

Attendance at Nineteen Day Feasts is not obligatory but very important, and every believer should consider it a duty and privilege to be present on such occasions.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes NO. 82)

