

Individual Laws: Pilgrimage

Bahá'u'lláh



Pilgrimage

The Lord hath ordained that those of you who are able shall make pilgrimage to the sacred House, and from this He hath exempted women as a mercy on His part. He, of a truth, is the All-Bountiful, the Most Generous.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, para. 32)

Question: *Concerning the pilgrimage.*

Answer: It is an obligation to make pilgrimage to one of the two sacred Houses; but as to which, it is for the pilgrim to decide.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, Questions & Answers, NO. 25)

Question: *Again inquiry hath been made about the pilgrimage.*

Answer: By pilgrimage to the sacred House, which is enjoined upon men, is intended both the Most Great House in Baghdád and the House of the Primal Point in Shíráz; pilgrimage to either of these Houses sufficeth. They may thus make pilgrimage to whichever lieth nearer to the place where they reside.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, Questions & Answers, NO. 25)

The Lord hath ordained that those of you who are able shall make pilgrimage to the sacred House

Two sacred Houses are covered by this ordinance, the House of the Báb in Shíráz and the House of Bahá'u'lláh in Baghdád. Bahá'u'lláh has specified that pilgrimage to either of these two Houses fulfills the requirement of this passage (Q&A ,). In two separate Tablets, known as Súriy-Hajj (Q&A), Bahá'u'lláh has prescribed specific rites for each of these pilgrimages. In this sense, the performance of a pilgrimage is more than simply visiting these two Houses.

After the passing of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá designated the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh at Bahjí as a place of pilgrimage. In a Tablet, He indicates that the "Most Holy Shrine, the Blessed House in Baghdád and the venerated House of the Báb in Shíráz" are



TABLET

“consecrated to pilgrimage,” and that it is “obligatory” to visit these places “if one can afford it and is able to do so, and if no obstacle stands in one’s way.” No rites have been prescribed for pilgrimage to the Most Holy Shrine.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes NO. 54)

In the Bayán, the Báb enjoined the ordinance of pilgrimage once in a lifetime upon those of His followers who were financially able to undertake the journey. He stated that the obligation was not binding on women in order to spare them the rigors of travel.

Bahá’u’lláh likewise exempts women from His pilgrimage requirements. The Universal House of Justice has clarified that this exemption is not a prohibition, and that women are free to perform the pilgrimage.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes NO. 55)