

Individual Laws: Ḥuqúqu'lláh

Bahá'u'lláh



Ḥuqúqu'lláh

Should anyone acquire one hundred mithqáls of gold, nineteen mithqáls thereof are God's and to be rendered unto Him, the Fashioner of earth and heaven. Take heed, O people, lest ye deprive yourselves of so great a bounty. This We have commanded you, though We are well able to dispense with you and with all who are in the heavens and on earth; in it there are benefits and wisdoms beyond the ken of anyone but God, the Omniscient, the All-Informed. Say: By this means He hath desired to purify what ye possess and to enable you to draw nigh unto such stations as none can comprehend save those whom God hath willed. He, in truth, is the Beneficent, the Gracious, the Bountiful. O people! Deal not faithlessly with the Right of God, nor, without His leave, make free with its disposal. Thus hath His commandment been established in the holy Tablets, and in this exalted Book. He who dealeth faithlessly with God shall in justice meet with faithlessness himself; he, however, who acteth in accordance with God's bidding shall receive a blessing from the heaven of the bounty of his Lord, the Gracious, the Bestower, the Generous, the Ancient of Days. He, verily, hath willed for you that which is yet beyond your knowledge, but which shall be known to you when, after this fleeting life, your souls soar heavenwards and the trappings of your earthly joys are folded up. Thus admonisheth you He in Whose possession is the Guarded Tablet.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, para. 97)

Division of the estate should take place only after the Ḥuqúqu'lláh hath been paid, any debts have been settled, the expenses of the funeral and burial defrayed, and such provision made that the deceased may be carried to his resting-place with dignity and honor.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, para. 28)

Should anyone acquire one hundred mithqáls of gold, nineteen mithqáls thereof are God's and to be rendered unto Him

This verse establishes Ḥuqúqu'lláh, the Right of God, the offering of a fixed portion of the value of the believer's possessions. This offering was made to Bahá'u'lláh as the Manifestation of God and then, following His Ascension, to 'Abdu'l-Bahá as the Center of the Covenant. In His Will and Testament, 'Abdu'l-Bahá provided that the Ḥuqúqu'lláh



TABLET

was to be offered “through the Guardian of the Cause of God.” There now being no Guardian, it is offered through the Universal House of Justice as the Head of the Faith. This fund is used for the promotion of the Faith of God and its interests as well as for various philanthropic purposes. The offering of the Ḥuqúqu’lláh is a spiritual obligation, the fulfillment of which has been left to the conscience of each Bahá’í. While the community is reminded of the requirements of the law of Ḥuqúq, no believer may be approached individually to pay it.

A number of items in Questions and Answers further elaborate this law. The payment of Ḥuqúqu’lláh is based on the calculation of the value of the individual’s possessions. If a person has possessions equal in value to at least nineteen mithqáls of gold (Q&A), it is a spiritual obligation to pay nineteen percent of the total amount, once only, as Ḥuqúqu’lláh (Q&A). Thereafter, whenever one’s income, after all expenses have been paid, increases the value of one’s possessions by the amount of at least nineteen mithqáls of gold, one is to pay nineteen percent of this increase, and so on for each further increase (Q&A ,).

Certain categories of possessions, such as one’s residence, are exempt from the payment of Ḥuqúqu’lláh (Q&A , ,), and specific provisions are outlined to cover cases of financial loss (Q&A ,), the failure of investments to yield a profit (Q&A) and for the payment of Ḥuqúq in the event of the person’s death (Q&A , ,). (In this latter case, see note .)

Extensive extracts from Tablets, Questions and Answers, and other Writings concerning the spiritual significance of Ḥuqúqu’lláh and the details of its application have been published in a compilation entitled Ḥuqúqu’lláh.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes 125)

Division of the estate should take place only after the Ḥuqúqu’lláh hath been paid, any debts have been settled, the expenses of the funeral and burial defrayed

Bahá’u’lláh specifies that the order of precedence for payment of these expenses is first the funeral and burial expenses, then the debts of the deceased, then the Ḥuqúqu’lláh (see note) (Q&A). He also specifies that when applying the estate to these, payment must first be made out of the residue of the estate and then, if this is insufficient, out of the residence and personal clothing of the deceased (Q&A).

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes 47)