

Individual Laws: The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár

Bahá'u'lláh



The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár

O people of the world! Build ye houses of worship throughout the lands in the name of Him Who is the Lord of all religions. Make them as perfect as is possible in the world of being, and adorn them with that which befitteth them, not with images and effigies. Then, with radiance and joy, celebrate therein the praise of your Lord, the Most Compassionate. Verily, by His remembrance the eye is cheered and the heart is filled with light.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, para. 31)

Blessed is he who, at the hour of dawn, centering his thoughts on God, occupied with His remembrance, and supplicating His forgiveness, directeth his steps to the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and, entering therein, seateth himself in silence to listen to the verses of God, the Sovereign, the Mighty, the All-Praised. Say: The Mashriqu'l-Adhkár is each and every building which hath been erected in cities and villages for the celebration of My praise. Such is the name by which it hath been designated before the throne of glory, were ye of those who understand.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, para. 115)

Teach your children the verses revealed from the heaven of majesty and power, so that, in most melodious tones, they may recite the Tablets of the All-Merciful in the alcoves within the Mashriqu'l-Adhkárs.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, para. 150)

Question: *Concerning the remembrance of God in the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár “at the hour of dawn.”*

Answer: Although the words “at the hour of dawn” are used in the Book of God, it is acceptable to God at the earliest dawn of day, between dawn and sunrise, or even up to two hours after sunrise.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, Questions & Answers, NO. 15)



TABLET

The Bahá'í House of Worship is dedicated to the praise of God. The House of Worship forms the central edifice of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár (the Dawning-place of the Praise of God), a complex which, as it unfolds in the future, will comprise in addition to the House of Worship a number of dependencies dedicated to social, humanitarian, educational, and scientific pursuits. 'Abdu'l-Bahá describes the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár as "one of the most vital institutions in the world," and Shoghi Effendi indicates that it exemplifies in tangible form the integration of "Bahá'í worship and service." Anticipating the future development of this institution, Shoghi Effendi envisages that the House of Worship and its dependencies "shall afford relief to the suffering, sustenance to the poor, shelter to the wayfarer, solace to the bereaved, and education to the ignorant." In the future, Bahá'í Houses of Worship will be constructed in every town and village.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes NO. 53)

"the hour of dawn"

With reference to attending dawn prayers in the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, the Bahá'í House of Worship, Bahá'u'lláh has explained that, although the actual time specified in the Book of God is "the hour of dawn," it is acceptable at any time from "the earliest dawn of day, between dawn and sunrise, or even up to two hours after sunrise"

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes NO. 142)

"Ye have been prohibited from making use of pulpits. Whoso wisheth to recite unto you the verses of his Lord, let him sit on a chair placed upon a dais"

These provisions have their antecedent in the Persian Bayán. The Báb forbade the use of pulpits for the delivery of sermons and the reading of the Text. He specified, instead, that to enable all to hear the Word of God clearly, a chair for the speaker should be placed upon a platform.

In comments on this law, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi have made it clear that in the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár (where sermons are prohibited and only the words of Holy Scripture may be read) the reader may stand or sit, and if necessary to be better heard, may use a low movable platform, but that no pulpit is permitted. In the case of meetings in places other than the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár, it is also permissible for the reader or speaker to sit or stand, and to use a platform. In one of His Tablets, when reiterating the prohibition of the use of pulpits in any location, 'Abdu'l-Bahá has stressed that when Bahá'ís deliver their speeches in gatherings, they are to do so in an attitude of utmost humility and self-abnegation.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes NO. 168)