

Congregational Prayer

Bahá'u'lláh

Partial translation



Congregational prayer

*"It hath been ordained that obligatory prayer is to be performed by each of you individually. Save in the Prayer for the Dead, the practice of congregational prayer hath been annulled. He, of a truth, is the Ordainer, the All-Wise."*¹

"Question: *Shaving the head hath been forbidden in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas but enjoined in the Súriy-i-Hajj.*

Answer: *All are charged with obedience to the Kitáb-i-Aqdas; whatsoever is revealed therein is the Law of God amid His servants. The injunction on pilgrims to the sacred House to shave the head hath been lifted."*²

"Save in the Prayer for the Dead, the practice of congregational prayer hath been annulled.

Congregational prayer, in the sense of formal obligatory prayer which is to be recited in accordance with a prescribed ritual as, for example, is the custom in Islám where Friday prayer in the mosque is led by an imám, has been annulled in the Bahá'í Dispensation. The Prayer for the Dead (see note 10) is the only congregational prayer prescribed by Bahá'í law. It is to be recited by one of those present while the remainder of the party stands in silence; the reader has no special status. The congregation is not required to face the Qiblih (Q&A 85).

The three daily Obligatory Prayers are to be recited individually, not in congregation.

There is no prescribed way for the recital of the many other Bahá'í prayers, and all are free to use such non-obligatory prayers in gatherings or individually as they please. In this regard, Shoghi Effendi states that...although the friends are thus left free to follow their own inclination ... they should take the utmost care that any manner they practice 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 by the Teachings."³



1. Baha'u'llah, The Most Holy Book, para 12

2. Notes to the Kitab-i-Aqdas no. 10

3. Notes to the Kitab-i-Aqdas no. 19

