

Cleanliness Laws: To Wash One's Feet

Bahá'u'lláh



To Wash One's Feet

Wash your feet once every day in summer, and once every three days during winter.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, para. 152)

Question: *Concerning the washing of the feet in winter and summer.*

Answer: It is the same in both cases; warm water is preferable, but there can be no objection to cold.

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Bahá'u'lláh, Questions & Answers, NO. 97)

“Cleave ye unto the cord of refinement”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá refers to the effect of “purity and holiness, cleanliness and refinement” on the exaltation of “the human condition” and “the development of man’s inner reality.” He states: “The fact of having a pure and spotless body exercises an influence upon the spirit of man.” (See also note .)

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes NO. 104)

“Wash your feet”

The believers are exhorted in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas to bathe regularly, to wear clean clothes and generally to be the essence of cleanliness and refinement. The Synopsis and Codification, section IV.D.3.y.i.–vii., summarizes the relevant provisions. In relation to the washing of the feet, Bahá'u'lláh states that it is preferable to use warm water; however, washing in cold water is also permissible (Q&A).

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes NO. 167)

“Adopt ye such usages as are most in keeping with refinement.”

This is the first of several passages referring to the importance of refinement and cleanliness. The original Arabic word “laáfah” rendered here as “refinement,” has a wide



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range of meanings with both spiritual and physical implications, such as elegance, gracefulness, cleanliness, civility, politeness, gentleness, delicacy and graciousness, as well as being subtle, refined, sanctified and pure. In accordance with the context of the various passages where it occurs in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas, it has been translated either as “refinement” or “cleanliness.”

(The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, The Most Holy Book, Notes NO. 74)