

glory — hath ever been and will continue to be exalted above every expression of praise and is sanctified from the world of existence and all the riches therein. Whatsoever proceedeth from Him produceth a fruit the benefits of which revert to the individuals themselves. Ere long will they perceive the truth of that which the Tongue of Grandeur hath uttered aforetime and will utter hereafter. And such benefits will indeed accrue if the Huqúq is offered with the utmost joy and radiance and in the spirit of perfect humility and lowliness.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Entreat thou the one true God to enable his faithful servants fulfil that which is conducive to the good of this world and the world to come. This is the commandment of God that hath been prescribed in His weighty and inviolable Book. Today is the Day of God when the preservation of the dignity of His Cause must be given precedence over all other things. He ordaineth that which will confer benefit on all mankind. Verily He is the Compassionate, the All-Bountiful. In this connection the Pen of Glory hath revealed that which will enable every man of perception to inhale the fragrance of His loving-kindness and bounty. In truth the benefits arising from the above-mentioned injunction revert to the individuals themselves. Unto this every discerning one that observeth His precepts will bear witness.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

It is incumbent upon everyone to discharge the obligation of Huqúq. The advantages gained from this deed revert to the persons themselves. However the acceptance of the offerings dependeth on the spirit of joy, fellowship and contentment that the righteous souls who fulfil this injunction will manifest. If such is the attitude acceptance is permissible, and not otherwise. Verify thy Lord is the All-Sufficing, the All-Praised.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

O Zayn! Such souls as comply with the injunction of God prescribed in the Book are regarded as most excellent in the same estimation of God. There can be no doubt whatsoever is revealed from the heaven of divine commandment is by virtue of His wisdom and is in the best interests of the people themselves. Moreover, although these insignificant amounts are not worthy of mention, they are well pleasing, since the donors offer them for the sake of God. If the offering be but a single grain it is regarded as the crowning glory of all the harvests of the world.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

It is clear and evident that the payment of the Right of God is conducive to prosperity, to blessing, and to honour and divine protection. Well is it with them that comprehend and recognize this truth and woe betide them that believe not. And this is on condition that the individual should observe the injunctions prescribed in the Book with the utmost radiance, gladness and willing acquiescence. It behoveth you to counsel the friends to do that which is right and praiseworthy.

Whoso hearkeneth to this call, it is to his own behoof, and whoso faileth bringeth loss upon himself. Verily our Lord of Mercy is the All-Sufficing, the All-Praised.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Huqúqu'lláh is indeed a great law. It is incumbent upon all to make this offering, because it is the source of grace, abundance, and of all good. It is a bounty which shall remain with every soul in every world of the worlds of God, the All-Possessing, the All-Bountiful.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

As to the question of Huqúq:

Reference to this matter is in no wise permissible. We have formerly enjoined upon you and Jináb-i-Amín that which will redound to the glory and dignity of the Word of God and of His Cause. Touching on this particular subject We have bidden thus: Ye may relinquish the whole world but must not allow the detraction of even one jot or tittle from the dignity of the Cause of God. Jináb-i-Amín — upon him be My glory — must also refrain from mentioning this matter, for it is entirely dependent

upon the willingness of the individuals themselves. They are well acquainted with the commandment of God and are familiar with that which was revealed in the Book. Let him who wisheth observe it, and let him who wisheth ignore it. Verily, thy Lord is the Self-Sufficing, the All-Praised. Indeed, independence

of all things is a door of guidance unto His faithful servants. Well is it with them that have severed themselves from the world and have arisen to serve His Cause. Verily, they are numbered with the people of Bahá at the court of His resplendent Beauty.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

O Abu'l Hasan:

May my Glory rest upon thee!

Fix thy gaze upon the glory of the Cause. Speak forth that which will attract the hearts and the minds. To demand the Huqúq is in no wise permissible.

This command was revealed in the Book of God for various necessary matters ordained by God to be dependent upon material means. Therefore, if someone, with utmost pleasure and gladness, nay with insistence, wisheth to partake of this blessing, thou mayest accept. Otherwise, acceptance is not permissible.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

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.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p.

55

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QUESTION:

The ordinance of Huqúqu'lláh is revealed in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas.

Is the residence, with the accompanying fixtures and necessary furnishings, included in the property on which Huqúq is payable, or is it otherwise?

ANSWER:

In the laws revealed in Persian We have ordained that in this Most Mighty Dispensation the residence and the household furnishings are exempt — that is, such furnishings as are necessary.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p.
120
)

QUESTION:

Regarding the appointments of a place of business, which are needed for carrying on one's work or profession: are they subject to the payment of Huqúqu'lláh, or are they covered by the same ruling as the household furnishings?

ANSWER:

They are covered by the same ruling as the household furnishings.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p.
135
)

QUESTION:

If the deceased hath not settled his obligation to Huqúqu'lláh, nor paid his other debts, are these to be discharged by proportionate deductions from the residence, personal clothing and the rest of the estate, or are the residence and personal clothing set aside for the male offspring, and consequently the debts must be settled from the rest of the estate? And if the rest of the estate is insufficient for this purpose, how should the debts be settled?

ANSWER:

Outstanding debts and payments of Huqúq should be settled from the remainder of the estate, but if this is insufficient for the purpose, the shortfall should be met from his residence and personal clothing.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p.
130
)

QUESTION:

In the

holy Tablets it hath been revealed that when someone acquireth the equivalent of nineteen mithqáls of gold, he should pay the Right of God on that sum. Might it be explained how much of this nineteen should be paid?

ANSWER:

Nineteen out of one hundred is established by the ordinance of God. Computation should be made on this basis. It may then be ascertained what amount is due on nineteen.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p.

132

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33

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QUESTION:

When one's wealth exceeds nineteen, is it necessary for it to increase by a further nineteen before Huqúq is due again, or would it be due on any increase?

ANSWER:

Any amount added to nineteen is exempt from Huqúq until it reacheth a further nineteen.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p.

133

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QUESTION:

If a person hath, for example, a hundred túmáns, payeth the Huqúq on this sum, loseth half the sum in unsuccessful transactions and then, through trading, the amount in hand is raised again to the sum on which Huqúq is due — must such a person pay Huqúq or not?

ANSWER:

In such an event the Huqúq is not payable.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p.

120

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QUESTION:

If, after payment of Huqúq, this same sum of one hundred túmáns is lost in its entirety, but subsequently regained through trade and business

dealings, must Huqúq be paid a second time or not?

ANSWER:

In this event as well, payment of Huqúq is not required.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p.
120
-
21
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The minimum amount subject to Huqúqu'lláh is reached when one's possessions are worth the number of Váhíd (19); that is, whenever one owneth 19 mithqáls of gold, or acquireth possessions attaining this value, after having deducted therefrom the yearly expenses, the Huqúq becometh applicable and its payment is obligatory.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

As to the question thou has asked concerning the minimum amount of property on which Huqúq is payable, this was mentioned in His exalted and glorious presence and the following is what the Tongue of Grandeur uttered in reply: This matter was revealed in the Most Holy Book in conformity with the pronouncement in the "Bayán". Later, however, as a token of wisdom on Our part, We laid down the ruling whereby the minimum amount of property liable to the payment of Huqúq is fixed at Nineteen. The purpose underlying this law is to ensure that the General Treasury is strengthened in the future. Further details may be furnished later.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

According to that which is revealed in the Most Holy Book, Huqúqu'lláh is fixed at the rate of 19 mithqáls out of every 100 mithqáls worth of gold. This applies to possessions in gold, in silver or other properties.

Moreover certain rights have been fixed for the House of Justice. However before its establishment and the appearance of its members, the appropriation of such funds is and will be subject to the approval of Him Who is the Eternal Truth. Beseech ye God — exalted be His glory — to enable the people to honour the obligation of Huqúq, for had everyone perceived the advantage of such a deed and desisted from withholding the right of God, the friends in that region would not have experienced any hardship.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

QUESTION:

May

a person, in drawing up his will, assign some portion of his property — beyond that which is devoted to payment of Huqúqu'lláh and the settlement of debts — to works of charity, or is he entitled to do no more than allocate a certain sum to cover funeral and burial expenses, so that the rest of his estate will be distributed in the manner fixed by God among the designated categories of heirs?

ANSWER:

A person hath full jurisdiction over his property. If he is able to discharge the Huqúqu'lláh, and is free of debt, then all that is recorded in his will, and any declaration or avowal it containeth, shall be acceptable. God, verily, hath permitted him to deal with that which He hath bestowed upon him in whatever manner he may desire.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Aqdas, p.
127
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A number of people in various regions are at present illumined with the light of faith, but with the exception of a few, they have not been privileged as yet to observe the injunctions revealed from His presence.

Previously We wrote to thee that had the friends there observed the payment of Huqúqu'lláh, the people of that region would have enjoyed ease and comfort. Before this law was revealed there was no obligation on the part of any soul. The Pen of Glory held back from revealing laws and ordinances for a number of years, and this was a token of His heavenly grace. Were the people of the world to recognize what inestimable benefits the ordinances of the All-Merciful would bring forth, they would arise to fulfil His commandments and would observe His bidding...

The Pen of the Most High hath ordained that the Huqúqu'lláh is payable on nineteen mithqáls of gold. That is, the Huqúq is levied on money equalling this amount. As to other possessions in silver or otherwise, it is payable when they equal this in value, not in number. The Huqúqu'lláh is payable only once; for example if a person acquireth a thousand mithqáls in gold and payeth the Huqúq thereof, the Right of God ceaseth to be applicable to that amount, except in regard to what accrueth to it through commerce and transactions; when such profits reach the prescribed minimum, one must carry out what God hath decreed. When, however, the original sum

changeth hands, the Huqúq is again payable as it was the first time; in this event the Right of God must be given.

Beseech ye God — magnified be His glory — to grant that His loved ones may be privileged to take a portion from the ocean of His good-pleasure, for this would serve as the means for the salvation of mankind, and may of their own accord carry out that which would purify them and cause them to attain everlasting life....

The Primal Point hath said that they should pay Huqúqu'lláh on the value of whatsoever they possess, but notwithstanding, We have in this greatest Dispensation exempted the residence and household furnishings; that is, such furnishings as are needful.

Thou has asked which is to take precedence: the Huqúqu'lláh, the debts of the deceased, or the cost of burial. It is God's command that the cost of burial take precedence, then payment of debts, then the Right of God. Verily He is the One Who will pay due recompense, the All-Rewarding, the All-Generous. If the property is not equal to the debts, the estate must be distributed in direct proportion to each debt. The settlement of debts is a most important command set forth in the Book. Well is it with him who ascendeth unto God, without any obligations to Huqúqu'lláh and to His servants. It is evident that the Huqúqu'lláh hath priority over all other liabilities; however, as a token of mercy, He Who is the Dawning-Place of Revelation hath commanded that which hath been revealed by His life-giving and omniscient Pen in this Tablet.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

It hath been decreed by God that a property which is not lucrative, that is, yieldeth no profit, is not subject to the payment of Huqúq. Verily He is the Ordainer, the Bountiful.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

The payment of the Right of God is conditional upon one's financial ability. If a person is unable to meet his obligation, God will verily excuse him. He is the All-Forgiving, the All-Generous.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

This is the Book of Generosity which hath been revealed by the King of Eternity. Whoso adorneth himself with this virtue hath distinguished himself and will be blessed by the All-Merciful from His exalted Kingdom of Glory. However, despite his high rank and prominent position, were he to pass beyond the limits, he would be regarded among the prodigal by the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. Cling ye unto moderation. This is the commandment that He Who is the All-Possessing, the Most High hath enjoined upon you in His Generous Book. O ye that are the exponents of generosity and the manifestations thereof! Be generous unto them whom ye find in manifest poverty. O ye that are possessed of riches! Take heed lest outward appearance deter you from benevolent deeds in the path of God, the Lord of all mankind.

Say: I swear by God! No one is despised in the sight of the Almighty for being poor. Rather is he exalted, if he is found to be of them who are patient. Blessed are the poor that are steadfast in patience, and woe betide the rich that hold back Huqúqu'lláh and fail to observe that which is enjoined upon them in His Preserved Tablet.

Say: Pride not yourselves on earthly riches ye possess. Reflect upon your end and upon the recompense of your works that hath been ordained in the Book of God, the Exalted, the Mighty. Blessed is the rich man whom earthly possessions have been powerless to hinder from turning unto God, the Lord of all names. Verily he is accounted among the most distinguished of men before God, the Gracious, the All-Knowing.

Say: The appointed Day is come. This is the Springtime of benevolent deeds, were ye of them that comprehend. Strive ye with all your might, O people, that ye may bring forth that which will truly profit you in the worlds of your Lord, the All-Glorious, the All-Praised.

Say: Hold ye fast unto praiseworthy characteristics and goodly deeds and be not of them that tarry. It behoveth everyone to cleave tenaciously unto that which is conducive to the exaltation of the Cause of God, your Lord, the Mighty, the Powerful.

Say: Behold ye not the world, its changes and chances, and its varying colours? Wherefore are ye satisfied with it and with all the things therein? Open your eyes and be of them that are endued with insight. The day is fast approaching when all these things will have vanished as fast as the lightning, nay even faster. Unto this beareth witness the Lord of the Kingdom in this wondrous Tablet.

Wert thou to be enraptured by the uplifting ecstasy of the verses of God, thou wouldst yield thanks unto thy Lord and say: "Praise be unto Thee, O Desire of the hearts of them that hasten to meet Thee!" Rejoice then with exceeding gladness, inasmuch

as the Pen of Glory hath turned unto thee and hath revealed in thy honour that which the tongues of creation and the tongues of transcendence are powerless to describe.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

They that have kept their promises,
fulfilled their obligations, redeemed their pledges and vows, rendered the Trust of God and His Right unto Him — these are numbered among the inmates of the all-highest Paradise. Thus from His mighty Prison doth the Wronged One announce unto them this glad-tiding. Blessed are the servants and maidservants that have performed their deeds and blessed is the man that hath cleaved tenaciously unto praiseworthy acts and fulfilled that which is enjoined upon him in the Book of God, the Lord of the worlds.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

For a number of years Huqúq was not accepted. How numerous the offerings that on reaching Our presence were returned to the donors, because they were not needed then. However in recent years We have, in view of the exigencies of the times, accepted the payment of the Huqúq, but have forbidden solicitation thereof. Everyone must have the utmost regard for the dignity of the Word of God and for the exaltation of His Cause. Were a person to offer all the treasures of the earth at the cost of debasing the honour of the Cause of God, were it even less than a grain of mustard, such an offering would not be permissible.

All the world hath belonged and will always belong to God. If one spontaneously offereth Huqúq with the utmost joy and radiance it will be acceptable, and not otherwise. The benefit of such deeds reverteth unto the individuals themselves. This measure hath been ordained in view of the necessity for material means, for "averse is God from putting aught into effect through its means." Thus instructions were given to receive the Huqúq.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Well is it with those who have met their obligations in respect of the Right of God and observed that which is prescribed in the Book.... This payment of Huqúq is conclusively established in the Book of God, yet for a number of years it had been forbidden to receive it. Later, however, in view of certain considerations and in order to arrange some essential matters, permission was granted to accept such payments. Verily He is the Ordainer, the Compassionate, the Forgiving, the Bountiful.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

As to the Huqúqu'lláh:

This is the source of blessings, and the mainspring of God's loving-kindness and tender love vouchsafed unto men. Verily He can dispense with whatsoever hath been and will be. Until two years ago the matter of Huqúq was undisclosed. When it was revealed it was by virtue of His grace. If a person be privileged to fulfil that which is prescribed in the Most Holy Book, it would assuredly be better for him, and to his greater behoof. However the observation of this injunction dependeth upon one's circumstances. Verily He speaketh the truth and guideth aright.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Thou has written concerning the minimum amount of property on which Huqúqu'lláh is payable. This is as set forth to Jináb-i-Zaynu'l-Muqarrabin — upon him be the glory of the Most Glorious. The minimum sum liable to Huqúq is based on the number Nineteen, in accordance with the text of the blessed, the Most Holy Book. Therein reference is made to the amount of Huqúq payable and not to the minimum sum on which Huqúq falls due. Verily, He is the Expounder both in the Beginning and in the End. Until the present year no mention had been made regarding the Huqúqu'lláh.

To wit, this servant had never heard a single word uttered by the Tongue of Holiness as being indicative of payment of Huqúq. However in this year, His binding decree hath been put into effect and His commandment hath shone forth above the horizon of divine Revelation. Thus whosoever is willing to offer Huqúqu'lláh spontaneously and in a spirit of radiant acquiescence it would be graciously accepted.

The Trustees should receive these offerings and, as instructed, notify His Holy Presence. Although the Most Holy Book had been revealed some years ago with the injunction concerning the Right of God clearly set forth therein, nevertheless the permission authorizing receipt of Huqúq was not granted until this year. Verily He is the Ordainer, the Omnipotent, the Gracious, the Most Exalted.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Thine intention to pay a visit to the blessed House is acceptable and well-pleasing in the sight of this Wronged One, provided it is accomplished in a spirit of joy and radiance and would not prove contrary to the dictates of wisdom.

Say: O people, the first duty is to recognize the one true God — magnified be his Glory — the second is to show forth constancy in His Cause and, after these, one's duty is to purify one's riches and earthly possessions according to that which

is prescribed by God. Therefore it beseemeth thee to meet thine obligation to the Right of God first, then to direct thy steps toward His blessed House. This hath been brought to thine attention as a sign of favour.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Whoso is privileged to pay the Right of God will be numbered with such as have observed the ordinances of the one true God — magnified be His glory — and have fulfilled that which is set down by the All-Glorious Pen.

Time and again have We written and commanded that no one should solicit such payment. The offering of every person that voluntarily tendereth the Huqúqu'lláh with the utmost joy and pleasure may be accepted, otherwise acceptance was not and is not permissible. Those that are oblivious of their duty should be briefly reminded. Deeds must be performed with willingness and in all circumstances high regard must be given to the dignity of the Cause of God. Formerly We have mentioned that were a person to possess the whole world and would tender his possessions at the cost of degrading the honour of the Cause, even to the extent of a grain of mustard, it would be essential and imperative to refuse to accept such wealth. Such is the Cause of God, eternal in the past, eternal in the future. Well is it with them that act accordingly.

The ordinance prescribing the payment of Huqúq is but a favour vouchsafed by the one true God — exalted be His glory — and the benefits arising therefrom shall fall to the donors themselves. It behoveth all to render thanks unto God, the Most Exalted, Who hath graciously enabled them to meet the obligation of Huqúq. We held back the Pen for a long period during which no instruction was issued in this respect, until such time as the requirements of His inscrutable wisdom demanded the acceptance of Huqúq. "Averse is God from putting aught into effect except through its means." It is essential for certain people to receive aid, and others need attention and care, but all this must take place by the leave of God, the Help in Peril, the Self-Subsisting.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

O thou that bearest My Name! God grant that everyone may be graciously aided to honour the Huqúq. The Huqúq is exclusively assigned unto Him Who is the sovereign Truth, but, as you are aware, there are at present many individuals diligently engaged in the service of the Cause in various regions, who are unable to earn their living. And inasmuch as God hath made the achievement of everything conditional upon material means, therefore the injunction prescribing

payment of the Huqúq hath been revealed from the heaven of His Will,
and the blessings flowing from this deed shall fall to the donors themselves.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

In this day it is incumbent upon
everyone to serve the Cause of God, while He who is the Eternal Truth —
exalted be His glory — hath made the fulfilment of every undertaking on
earth dependent on material means. Hence it is enjoined upon every individual
to offer that which is the Right of God.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

If a person is willing to offer
the Right of God, such offering should be received by the Trustees, to
whom reference hath been made in the Book of God. This ordinance hath,
in view of certain considerations, been revealed from the heaven of divine
Revelation as a token of His grace. The advantages arising therefrom shall
fall to the individuals themselves. Verily He speaketh the truth and there
is none other God but Him, the Mighty, the Powerful.

The Trustees are present
in the land of Yá (Yazd). Whosoever desireth to fulfil that which
is enjoined upon him in the Book may refer to them. Any amount received
by them will be transmitted. Great is the blessedness of them that observe
His bidding.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

It is indeed a most excellent favour,
a boundless grace vouchsafed unto whosoever is privileged in this day to
render service to the Cause of God and to offer the Right of God, for its
goodly results and the fruits thereof will last as long as the kingdom
of earth and heaven will endure.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

O Zayn! It behoveth thee to entreat
God to graciously enable His faithful servants to meet the obligation of
Huqúq. The world is evanescent, and one's life fleeting. Therefore
if one is privileged to offer that which is binding upon him, such an act
hath ever been and will be nearer to piety and righteousness.... It is
incumbent
upon everyone to fulfil that which hath been set forth in the Book of God
— exalted be His glory.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

The Right of God is an obligation upon everyone. This commandment hath been revealed and set down in the Book by the Pen of Glory. However, it is not permissible to solicit or demand it. If one is privileged to pay the Huqúq, and doeth so in a spirit of joy and radiance, such an act is acceptable, and not otherwise. As a reminder to the friends, a general appeal should be made once at the meeting, and that should suffice. They that are assured, steadfast and endowed with insight will act spontaneously and observe what hath been prescribed by God, thereby reaping the benefit of their own deed. Verily, God is independent of all mankind.

The people of God should not be grieved. By the righteousness of God, that which is destined for them is far beyond the power of reckoners to reckon.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Great God! In this glorious Dispensation the treasures laid up by kings and queens are not worthy of mention, nor will they be acceptable in the presence of God. However, a grain of mustard offered by His loved ones will be extolled in the exalted court of His holiness and invested with the ornament of His acceptance. Immeasurably exalted is His bounty, immeasurably glorified is His majesty. And yet, when an offering was adorned with the glory of His acceptance and reported by Jináb-i-Amín, twice that amount was ordered to be paid out to the poor and the needy. Unto this beareth witness every fair-minded man of insight, and those that are truthful and trustworthy.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

The benefits accruing from benevolent works shall fall to the individuals concerned. In such matters only a word would suffice. Should anyone offer Huqúq with utmost joy and radiance, manifesting a spirit of resignation and content, his offering shall be acceptable before God, otherwise He can dispense with all the peoples of the earth.... Well is it with them that have fulfilled that which is prescribed in the Book of God. It is incumbent upon everyone to observe that which God hath purposed, for whatsoever hath been set forth in the Book by the Pen of Glory is an effective means for the purging, the purification and sanctification of the souls of men and the source of prosperity and blessing. Happy are they that have observed His commandments.

Whenever they make reference to the Huqúq, let them confine themselves to a mere word uttered for the sake of God and this will suffice; coercion is unnecessary, inasmuch as God hath never wished that those engaged in His service should experience any hardship. Verily He is the Forgiving, the Merciful, The Gracious, the All-Bountiful. ...No goodly deed was or will ever be lost, for benevolent

acts are treasures preserved with God for the benefit of those who act. Blessed the servant and the maidservant who have fulfilled their obligation in the path of God our Lord, the Lord of all worlds ... The Right of God must be paid whenever possible and should be offered in a spirit of joy and radiance. Those that are unable to pay will be invested with the ornament of His forgiveness.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

In this day it is incumbent upon everyone to meet the obligation of the Right of God as far as it lieth in his power. For a number of years it was not permitted to accept the payment of Huqúq. Recently, however, We have issued instructions to receive it. Therefore the friends in that region should, as far as possible, collect the payments, and remit the amounts either to Zaynu'l-Muqarrabin — upon him be the glory of God — in Hadbá' (Mosul) or to the Trustee of God in the land of Ya (Yazd) who will forward them. The observance of this ordinance hath been and will always be conducive to prosperity, to divine increase and to salvation. Great is the blessedness of him who hath observed that which is prescribed in the Book of God, the Gracious, the Mighty.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

And now concerning what thou has mentioned regarding the Huqúq. This hath been ordained especially for the one true God — exalted be His glory — and should be forwarded to the court of His Holy Presence. In His grasp is the source of authority. He doeth what He pleaseth and ordaineth what He chooseth.

Since thou hast enquired about this subject, the following answer was revealed from the heaven of His tender mercy:

This ordinance is binding upon everyone, and by observing it one will be raised to honour inasmuch as it will serve to purify one's possessions and will impart blessing, and added prosperity. However, the people are as yet ignorant of its significance. They continually endeavour to amass riches by lawful or unlawful means in order to transmit them to their heirs, and this to what advantage, no one can tell. Say: In this day the true Heir is the Word of God, since the underlying purpose of inheritance is the preservation of the name and traces of men. It is indubitably clear that the passing of centuries and ages will obliterate these signs, while every word that hath streamed from the Pen of Glory in honour of a certain individual will last as long as the dominions of earth and heaven will endure.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

If the people had not withheld
the Right of God they owe but rather had paid what was due, or would pay
it now, they could be recipients of God's loving-kindness. We entreat God
to graciously grant them abundance.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

This Huqúq which hath been
mentioned, and the command of which hath issued forth from the horizon
of God's Holy Tablet, hath benefits which are the prescribed lot of the
individuals themselves. By God! Were the people to know what hath been
concealed from their eyes and become fully aware of the ocean of grace
which lieth hid within this divine command, all the people of the world
would offer everything they possess in order to be mentioned by Him. Blessed
is the man who hath been privileged to observe that which he hath been
commanded by God, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise....

As bidden by Him, no one
is allowed to solicit payment of the Huqúq. In the Book of God everyone
is enjoined to offer the Huqúq spontaneously and in a spirit of
joy and fellowship. I beseech Him, the Most Exalted, to graciously enable
everyone to do that which is pleasing and acceptable unto Him.

And now concerning the poor,
thou has written to ask whether it is permissible to pay them out of the
Right of God. This is conditional upon permission having been granted.
In each locality where the Right of God is being received, details of it
must be submitted to His exalted presence together with a statement describing
the position of the needy ones. Verily He doeth what He willeth and ordaineth
what He pleaseth. If permission were to be given universally it would lead
to strife and give rise to trouble.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

It is indubitably clear and evident
that whatsoever hath been sent down from the heaven of divine commandment
— magnified be His glory — is intended to confer benefits upon His
servants.

The question of Huqúq is highly significant. It hath been and will
always be conducive to divine increase, prosperity, dignity and honour....
It is obvious and manifest that the whole world is devoid of any real value.
On numerous occasions — and to this everyone here would testify — large
sums have been sent to His holy court but were not adorned with the ornament
of His acceptance. At present, however, in view of the ingathering of the
friends and the requirements of the time, payment of the Huqúq is

accepted. The object is to show that this acceptance is but a token of divine favour and a proof of His loving-kindness and tender compassion.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

To discharge one's obligations is highly praiseworthy in the sight of God. However, it is not permitted to solicit Huqúq from anyone. Beseech ye the one true God to enable His loved ones to offer that which is the Right of God, inasmuch as the observance of this injunction would cause one's possessions to be purified and protected and would become the means of attracting goodly gifts and heavenly blessings.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

O Samandar! How many are the souls who with the utmost endeavour and effort, collect a handful of worldly goods and greatly rejoice in this act and yet in reality the Pen of the Most High hath decreed this wealth for others; that is, it is not meant to be their lot or it may even fall into the hands of their enemies! We seek shelter in God from such an evident loss. One's life is wasted; by day and by night, troubles are endured, and wealth becometh a source of affliction. Most of the wealth of men is not pure. Should they follow what is revealed by God, they would, in all circumstances, be protected under His bounty and blessed by His mercy.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

There can be no doubt that whatsoever hath been revealed from the All-Glorious Pen, be it ordinances of prohibitions, conferreth benefits upon the believers themselves. For example, among the commandments is that of the Huqúqu'lláh. If the people attain the privileges of paying the Huqúq, the one true God, exalted by His glory, will of a certainty confer blessing upon them. Moreover, such payment will enable them and their offspring to benefit from their possessions. As thou dost observe, large portions of people's wealth are lost to them as God causeth strangers, or heirs in comparison with whom strangers would have been preferable, to lay hands on their possessions.

God's consummate wisdom is far beyond any description or fitting mention. Verily, people see with their own eyes and yet deny; they are aware, yet they pretend not to know. Had they observed the ordinance of God they would have attained the good of this world and the next.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Someone must needs remind the servants of God, that perchance they may be privileged to meet their obligations of Huqúq, thus attaining a sublime station and gaining a reward that would last for ever. The payments for the Huqúq should be kept in the custody of a trusted person and a report submitted so that steps may be taken according to the good-pleasure of God.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

The question of the Huqúq dependeth on the willingness of the individuals themselves. From every true believer who is willing to tender the Right of God spontaneously and with the utmost joy and radiance, the offering is graciously accepted, but not otherwise. Verily, thy Lord is independent of all mankind. Consider that which the All-Merciful hath revealed in the Qur'án: "O men! Ye are but paupers in need of God, but God is the Self-Sufficient, the All-Praised."

At all times one must have the utmost regard for the dignity and honour of the Cause of God.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

No one should demand the Huqúqu'lláh. Its payment should depend on the volition of the individuals themselves, namely such souls that are devout, faithful and well disposed, who would make their offerings of Huqúqu'lláh in a spirit of willing submission and contentment.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

It is not permissible to solicit [Huqúq]. If anyone offereth something of his own volition, thou mayest accept it, but it is not thine to demand anything from anyone. Verily thy Lord is the All-Bountiful, the Most Generous.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

As to what thou hast written concerning the Right of God: The binding injunction of God is set forth in the Book, but this matter is conditional upon the willingness of the individual themselves; inasmuch as the one true God — magnified be His glory — hath, by reason of His all-encompassing mercy, acquainted everyone with that which is enjoined in the Book. Well is it with them that act accordingly.

Demanding the Huqúq hath never been regarded with favour. Every deed must be performed in a

spirit of joy and radiance. If a person is willing to make his offering with utmost contentment, its acceptance is permissible, otherwise our merciful Lord is independent of all mankind. In this day one must observe that which is conducive to the glory, loftiness and exaltation of the Cause of God. Thus hath spoken the Lord of Truth, the knower of things unseen....

O My friend! Were the people to perceive the sweetness of the commandments enjoined by God and to discover the benefits arising therefrom, they would certainly, one and all, carry them out with the utmost joy and eagerness. We entreat the one true God to aid everyone to observe that which is pleasing and acceptable unto Him. Verily, He is the Helper, the Confirmer, the All-Wise.

It hath been enjoined that whatsoever the loved ones of God may offer as gifts for His holy court, should be treated as the donor wisheth, lest the hearts of the faithful and the souls of the true believers be obscured by the dust of despondency and sorrow. But in the case of gifts that are offered as Huqúq it is permissible to have them sold....

At all times and under all conditions one must have high regard for the dignity of the Cause. Solicitation of Huqúq is in no wise permitted. Whoso is willing to tender payments for Huqúq with the utmost joy, radiance and good-pleasure, his offering may be accepted; otherwise God is the Self-Sufficient, the All-Praised.

Consider that which the All-Merciful hath revealed in the Qur'án — exalted in His Word: "Some of them injure themselves through evil deeds, others follow a middle course, and others vie with each other in charitable works". Indeed any benefits arising from praiseworthy deeds shall fall to the individuals that have performed them. Were the people to comprehend this truth, they would compete with each other in benevolent works....

Ye may relinquish the whole world, but must not forgo even one jot of the dignity of the Cause of God. Such is the divine exhortation that hath been inscribed in the Crimson Book by the Pen of the Most High. Well is it with them that accordingly....

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

It is the binding command of God that in every locality whatever hath been or will be made available for the Huqúqu'lláh should be submitted to His holy presence. Any instructions issued in this respect should be observed accordingly, so that all matters may be well-ordered.

It is highly pleasing if whatever is prescribed in the Most Holy Book be observed, so that everyone may be invested with the ornament of the purpose of the Best Beloved of

the world.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

There is no objection to offering
for sale that which is donated in the name of Huqúq. Thus proclaimeth
the All-Glorious Pen from His noble habitation at the behest of the King
of Eternity.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Whoso desireth to offer Huqúqu'lláh
with the utmost joy and eagerness should pay it to trustworthy persons
like unto thyself and obtain a receipt, so that whatsoever is effected
may conform to His sanction and permission. Verily He is Knowing, the Wise.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Thou has written that they have
pledged themselves to observe maximum austerity in their lives with a view
to forwarding the remainder of their income to His exalted presence. This
matter was mentioned at His holy court. He said: Let them act with moderation
and not impose hardship upon themselves. We would like them both to enjoy
a life that is well-pleasing.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Payments for the Huqúqu'lláh
cannot be handed over to every person. These words have been uttered by
Him Who is the sovereign Truth. The Huqúqu'lláh should be
kept in the custody of trusted individuals and forwarded to His holy court
through the Trustees of God.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

There is a prescribed ruling for
the Huqúqu'lláh. After the House of Justice hath come into
being, the law thereof will be made manifest, in conformity with the Will
of God.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Magnified art Thou, O Lord of the
entire creation, the One unto Whom all things must turn. With my inner
and outer tongues I bear witness that Thou hast manifested and revealed
Thyself, sent down Thy signs, and proclaimed Thy testimonies. I testify
to Thy self-sufficiency from aught else except Thee, and Thy sanctity above

all earthly things. I entreat Thee by the transcendent glory of Thy Cause and the supreme potency of Thy Word to grant confirmation unto him who desireth to offer what Thou hast prescribed unto him in Thy Book and to observe that which will shed forth the fragrance of Thine acceptance. Verily Thou art the All-Mighty, the All-Gracious, the All-Forgiving, the All-Generous.

(Bahá'u'lláh,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

II.

Extracts From The Writings
Of `Abdu'l-Bahá

As preordained by the Fountainhead of Creation, the temple of the world hath been fashioned after the image and likeness of the human body. In fact each mirroreth forth the image of the other, wert thou but to observe with discerning eyes. By this is meant that even as the human body is this world which is outwardly composed of different limbs and organs, is in reality a closely integrated, coherent entity, similarly the structure of the physical world is like unto a single being whose limbs and members are inseparably linked together.

Were one to observe with an eye that discovereth the realities of all things, it would become clear that the greatest relationship that bindeth the world of being together lieth in the range of created things themselves, and that co-operation, mutual aid and reciprocity are essential characteristics in the unified body of the world of being, inasmuch as all created things are closely related together and each is influenced by the other or deriveth benefit therefrom, either directly or indirectly.

Consider for instance how one group of created things constituteth the vegetable kingdom, and another the animal kingdom. Each of these two maketh use of certain elements in the air on which its own life dependeth, while each increaseth the quantity of such elements as are essential for the life of the other. In other words, the growth and development of the vegetable world is impossible without the existence of the animal kingdom, and the maintenance of animal life is inconceivable without the co-operation of the vegetable kingdom. Of like kind are the relationships that exist among all created things. Hence it was stated that co-operation and reciprocity are essential properties which are inherent in the unified system of the world of existence, and without which the entire creation would be reduced to nothingness.

In surveying the vast range of creation thou shalt perceive that the higher a kingdom of created things is on the arc of ascent, the more conspicuous are the signs and evidences of the truth that co-operation and reciprocity at the level of a higher order are greater than those that exist at the level of a lower order.

For example the evident signs of this fundamental reality are more discernible in the vegetable kingdom than in the mineral, and still more manifest in the animal world than in the vegetable.

And thus when contemplating the human world thou beholdest this wondrous phenomenon shining resplendent from all sides with the utmost perfection, inasmuch as in this station acts of co-operation, mutual assistance and reciprocity are not confined to the body and to things that pertain to the material world, but for all conditions, whether physical or spiritual, such as those related to minds, thoughts, opinions, manners, customs, attitudes, understandings, feelings or other human susceptibilities. In all these thou shouldst find these binding relationships securely established. The more this inter-relationship is strengthened and expanded, the more will human society advance in progress and prosperity. Indeed without these vital ties it would be wholly impossible for the world of humanity to attain true felicity and success.

Now consider, if among the people who are merely the manifestations of the world of being this significant matter is of such importance, how much greater must be the spirit of co-operation and mutual assistance among those who are the essences of the world of creation, who have sought the sheltering shadow of the heavenly Tree, and are favoured by the manifestations of divine grace; and how the evidences of this spirit should, through their earnest endeavour, their fellowship and concord, become manifest in every sphere of their inner and outer lives, in the realm of the spirit and divine mysteries and in all things related to this world and the next. Thus there can be no doubt that they must be willing even to offer up their lives for each other.

This is the basic principle on which the institution of Huqúqu'lláh is established, inasmuch as its proceeds are dedicated to the furtherance of these ends. Otherwise the one true God hath ever been and will always be independent of all else beside Him. Even as He hath enabled all created things to partake of His boundless grace and loving-kindness, likewise is He able to bestow riches upon His loved ones out of the treasuries of His power. However, the wisdom of this command is that the act of giving is well-pleasing in the sight of God. Consider how well-pleasing must this mighty act be in His estimation that He hath ascribed it unto His Own Self. Rejoice ye then, O people of generosity!

We earnestly hope that in this Most Great Cycle the wondrous attributes of the All-Merciful may, through the infinite bounty and blessings of the King of Glory, find expression in the lives of the servants of God in such wise that the sweet savours thereof will shed fragrance upon all regions.

This matter needeth further

details, but We have treated it in brief.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from
a previously untranslated Tablet.)

O my heavenly friends! It is certain
and evident that the Incomparable One is always praised for His absolute
wealth, distinguished for His all-embracing mercy, characterized by His
eternal grace, and known for His gifts to the world of existence. Nonetheless,
in accordance with His inscrutable wisdom and in order to apply a unique
test to distinguish the friend from the stranger, He hath enjoined the
Huqúq upon His servants and made it obligatory.

Those who have observed
this weighty ordinance have received heavenly blessings and in both worlds
their faces have shone radiantly and their nostrils perfumed by the sweet
savours of God's tender mercy. One of the tokens of His consummate wisdom
is that the payment of the Huqúq will enable the donors to become
firm and steadfast and will exert a great influence on their hearts and
souls. Furthermore the Huqúq will be used to charitable purposes.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from
a previously untranslated Tablet.)

O friends of `Abdu'l-Bahá!
The Lord, as a sign of His infinite bounties, hath graciously favoured
His servants by providing for a fixed money offering (Huqúq), to
be dutifully presented unto Him, though He, the True One and His servants
have been at all times independent of all created things, and God verily
is the All-Possessing, exalted above the need of any gift from His creatures.
This fixed money offering, however, causeth the people to become firm and
steadfast and draweth Divine increase upon them.

("The Will and Testament
of `Abdu'l-Bahá" p.
15
)

As regards the Huqúq which
hath been explicitly prescribed in the Book: This is intended for the benefit
and prosperity of the individuals themselves and is conducive to their
happiness and constancy. Otherwise the one true God hath been and will
always be self-sufficient in all things.

('Abdu'l-Bahá,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Thou has enquired about the Huqúq.
From one's annual income, all expenses during the year are deductible,
and on what is left 19% is payable to the Huqúq. Thus, a person
hath earned 1,000 income out of his business. After deducting his annual

expenses of say 600, he would have a surplus of 400 on which Huqúq is payable at the rate of 19%. This would amount to 76 to be offered for charitable purposes to the Huqúq.

The Huqúq is not levied on one's entire possessions each year. A person's wealth may be worth 100,000. How can he be expected to pay Huqúq on this property every year? For instance, whatever income thou hast earned in a particular year, you should deduct from it your expenses during that year. The Huqúq will then be payable on the remainder. Possessions on which Huqúq was paid the previous year will be exempt from further payment.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

In brief, after having deducted the yearly expenses, if there is still any surplus left, then Huqúq will be applicable to this surplus at the rate of 19% and no further payment of Huqúq will fall due on it. In the following year however, after the annual expenses, if there is still an excess of income over the expenditure of that second year, then Huqúq will be applicable to the amount of the excess only.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

As to the Huqúq, it is payable on whatever is left over after deducting one's yearly expenses. However, any money or possession which is necessary in producing income for one's subsistence, and on which Huqúq hath once been paid is exempt from Huqúq. This exemption also applieth to a property on which Huqúq hath already been paid, and the income of which doth not exceed one's needs.... Disposition of the Huqúq, wholly or partly, is permissible, but this should be done by permission of the authority in the Cause to whom all must turn.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Huqúq is applied on everything one possesseth. However, if a person hath paid the Huqúq on a certain property, and the income from that property is equal to his needs, no Huqúq is payable by that person.

Huqúq is not payable on agricultural tools and equipment, and on animals used in ploughing the land, to the extent that these are necessary.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

As to the way the Huqúq

must be paid: Having deducted the expenses incurred during the year, any excess of income derived from one's property, profession or business is subject to the payment of Huqúq.

('Abdu'l-Bahá,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

As to the question of Huqúq:

In no wise shouldst thou make statements requiring any person to pay the Huqúq. However if a devoted and self-sacrificing soul freely and spontaneously offereth thee something in the name of Huqúq or for the poor then thou mayest accept.

('Abdu'l-Bahá,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

According to the explicit text of the Most Holy Book the amounts offered for the Huqúq should be deposited in a place and be disbursed, as necessary. However, thou shouldst not require anyone there to offer the Huqúq unless someone is prepared to do so willingly and of his own free choice.

('Abdu'l-Bahá,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

The Blessed Beauty — may my life be offered up for His Dust — hath emphasized through His decisive Word that the utmost honesty hath to be observed in matters related to the Huqúq. The institution of Huqúq is sacred.

('Abdu'l-Bahá,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

A third requisite [for them that take counsel together] is the promulgation of the divine commandments among the friends, such as the Obligatory Prayers, Fasting, Pilgrimage, Huqúqu'lláh and all the other ordinances.

('Abdu'l-Bahá,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Since the loved ones of God in Persia are regarded as veteran friends, it is by virtue of the tremendous affection I cherish for them that their offerings for Huqúq are accepted. They must rejoice exceedingly for having been invested with such a bounty.

('Abdu'l-Bahá,
from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

Render thou thanks unto God, for He hath graciously enabled thee to observe the injunction set forth in His Most Holy Book, inasmuch as thou hast arisen to fulfil the obligation

of Huqúq, and God hath accepted thy goodly deed.

Know thou, moreover, that those who faithfully serve the All-Merciful will be enriched by Him out of His heavenly treasury, and that the Huqúq offering is but a test applied by Him unto His servants and maidservants. Thus every true and sincere believer will offer Huqúq to be expended for the relief of the poor, the disabled, the needy, and the orphans, and for other vital needs of the Cause of God, even as Christ did establish a Fund for benevolent purposes.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

It behoveth thee to render thanks unto God, inasmuch as He hath aided thee to fulfil the obligations of Huqúq. This is a confirmation that God hath vouchsafed unto thee. Therefore yield thou praise unto Him for the bounty of this divine ordinance which is prescribed in the Epistles of thy Lord, the Ancient of Days. Verily He is the Clement, the Bountiful.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

As regards the donation thou hast offered as Huqúq, We have received this as if it were a treasure, inasmuch as it was tendered with profound love and devotion. We shall use it soon for His Holy Shrine, that thy name may thereby be immortalized for ever.

('Abdu'l-Bahá, from a previously untranslated Tablet.)

III.

Extracts From An Utterance
Of 'Abdu'l-Bahá

QUESTION:

As to the matter of Huqúq, does it mean 1/19th of one's net income or one's gross income? For example, in America, there is a tax on the gross income, after certain exemptions are made. How is the Huqúq to be worked out?

ANSWER:

The substance of `Abdu'l-Bahá's explanation was:
After one has paid all his necessary expenses 19% of what is left is then taken by him and given as Huqúq. For example, if a person has 100 piastres left after all his expenses have been paid, then 19 piastres are

taken as Huqúq for the Cause of God. This is done at the end of the year after he has ascertained what his expenses are. For every hundred piastres, 19 are taken for Huqúq.

He pays this once, then there is no more Huqúq to be paid on that sum. It is finished. Next year he will pay on the amount he has left over in his possession after his expenses have been deducted, and after the amount he paid Huqúq on the previous year is also deducted.

For example, at the end of the first year a man who has 1000 piastres left after all his expenses are paid, then 190 piastres are taken as Huqúq: at the end of the next year after all expenses are determined, he may have 2000 piastres left. As he has already paid Huqúq on 1000 piastres the previous year this sum is deducted from the 2000 and he pays Huqúq on 1000 piastres (or 190 piastres). The third year the net amount of what he owns may be 2500 piastres, he deducts 2000 piastres from this amount and pays 19 per cent on 500 piastres or 95 piastres. If at the end of the 4th year he has 2500 Piastres, no Huqúq is taken.

QUESTION:

In the deduction of our necessary expenses, are contributions to the Mashriqu'l-Akbar, teaching and other activities of the Cause considered a part of Huqúq or should they be taken separately?

ANSWER:

'Abdu'l-Bahá replied that Huqúq was separate and independent of these and came first. After that had been determined then the other affairs could be looked after. He smiled and said when Huqúq is given 'Abdu'l-Bahá will ascertain how much of it is for the Mashriqu'l-Akbar, how much for teaching and how much for the needy, etc.

(From an utterance of 'Abdu'l-Bahá)

IV.

Extract From A Letter Of
Shoghi Effendi

To offer contributions towards this end [in support of the activities of the Spiritual Assembly] is one of the pressing requirements of the Cause of God, is deemed highly essential, and is of fundamental importance. Next to the payment of the Huqúq

it is the obligation of every Bahá'í.

(In a letter written
by Shoghi Effendi, 27 February 1923, translated from the Persian)

V.

Extracts From Letters Written
On Behalf Of Shoghi Effendi

Regarding the Huqúqu'lláh...this
is applied to one's merchandise, property and income. After deducting the
necessary expenses, whatever is left as profit, and is an addition to one's
capital, such a sum is subject to Huqúq. When one has paid Huqúq
once on a particular sum, that sum is no longer subject to Huqúq,
unless it should pass from one person to another. One's residence, and
the household furnishings are exempt from Huqúq...Huqúqu'lláh
is paid to the Centre of the Cause.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 4 April-3 May 1927, translated from the Persian)

You will find reference to the
Huqúq in the Book of Aqdas, manuscript copies of which I believe
are to be found among a few believers in America. All matters not specifically
provided by Bahá'u'lláh are to be referred to the Universal
House of Justice.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 26 December 1927)

Concerning Huqúq, the guardian
wishes me to inform you that at present it is not obligatory for the friends
to pay, but that they should be urged to contribute to the local and national
funds.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 19 September 1929)

As regards Huqúq, it is
really 19 per cent of one's income payable to the Guardian. But it is not
obligatory now.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 19 December 1929, "Dawn of the New Day" p.

27

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You enquired concerning the Huqúq.
Shoghi Effendi would much prefer if the friends in America concentrate
their financial resources towards the completion of the Temple, rather
then dissipate their energy along channels that do not as yet call for

immediate attention. When the time comes that the Cause would need the enforcement of this religious donation, Shoghi Effendi would say it and would set forth the amount prescribed. It is only gradually that the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh can be enforced. The time has to become ripe if the desired result is to be obtained.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 15 February 1932)

With reference to your question concerning the "Huqúq", Shoghi Effendi wishes me to inform you that, although it has been prescribed by Bahá'u'lláh and referred to by `Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament, he is nevertheless reluctant to emphasize it, in view of the paramount necessity of preserving the dignity of the Cause, and also in view of the increasing national expenses of the Faith.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 10 February 1935)

Regarding the subject of Huqúq; Shoghi Effendi is reluctant to emphasize it at present, in view of the urgent needs of the Cause in America. But when the time comes for him to explain it to the friends, he will not fail to do so; suffice it to say that the Huqúq constitutes nineteen per cent of one's income, and not nine as some seem to think.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 31 May 1937)

One míthqál consists of nineteen nakhuds. The weight of twenty-four nakhuds equals four and three-fifths grammes. Calculations may be made on this basis.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 17 November 1937)

Concerning your question whether the heirs to whom the principal residence, furniture and clothing of the deceased are transferred by way of inheritance will be exempt from the payment of Huqúq or not, he said: Since the residence, furniture and the tools of trade have, in accordance with the explicit Text, been granted exemption from the Huqúq, therefore when the transfer of ownership takes place such possessions continue to be exempt.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 29 September 1942 to the National Spiritual Assembly of Iran, translated from the Persian)

Regarding the questions raised

in your letters: The Huqúq is a conscientious obligation; but the Guardian has not felt the time was ripe to stress this in the West.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 24 March 1945)

Great is the recompense that God has ordained for the true and devoted souls, the pure and detached beings who have spontaneously bequeathed a portion of their earthly possessions to the Cause of God, either during their own lifetimes or through their wills, and have had the privilege and honour of discharging their obligations to Huqúqu'lláh.

Give assurance on my behalf to the donors and to the survivors of those who have ascended unto God, affirming that these efforts and donations are bound to attract divine confirmations, heavenly blessings and incalculable favours, and to promote the manifold interests of the International Bahá'í Community. Well is it with them, inasmuch as God has enabled them to fulfil that which shall elevate their stations in this world and in the world to come.

(In a letter written on behalf
of Shoghi Effendi, 23 June 1945, translated from the Persian)

The Guardian does not wish at present to go into the subject of Huqúq; but the general principle is that once you have paid on your capital you don't have to pay it again.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 28 July 1946)

The paying of the Huqúq is a spiritual obligation; the friends must not be obliged by the assemblies to pay it, but they should be encouraged to fulfil this spiritual obligation laid upon them in the Aqdas.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 12 October 1946 to the National Spiritual Assembly of India)

The Huqúq is payable to the Guardian individually by the believers; but he has not, in view of the many financial demands of the work the American believers are accomplishing, thought it timely to stress this point. They are free to do as they wish in this matter; later, when the time comes, he will explain fully to them the details of this matter.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 27 March 1949)

Huqúq is at the present

time the same as the International Fund, and therefore I am sending you a receipt stating it is for the international interests of the Faith.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 8 June 1947)

As regards Huqúq: it is
the payment of 19 per cent, not one 19th.

(In a letter written
on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, 4 October 1950)

VI.

Extracts From The Writings Of The Universal House Of Justice

Since the Huqúqu'lláh has, according to the injunction in the Book, been designated as one of the institutions of the Cause, and inasmuch as the fulfilment of this obligation is binding on the people of Bahá, therefore it is deemed appropriate that your Spiritual Assembly should fully familiarize the dear friends in Persia with the significance of this momentous responsibility and to promulgate gradually in the entire community such ordinances related to Huqúqu'lláh as are laid down in His perspicuous Book. Obviously in pursuance of the explicit Texts solicitation of the Huqúqu'lláh is not permissible, but it is the responsibility of those Trustees of the Cause to address appeals of a general character to the dear friends, so that they may become more informed about this essential obligation. God willing, through the occasional reminders issued by your Assembly, they may gain the privilege and honour of achieving this benevolent deed — a deed that draws forth heavenly blessings, serves as a means of purifying the earthly possessions of the devoted friends, and promotes the international activities of the people of Bahá.

The Trustee of the Huqúqu'lláh, the Hand of the Cause of God Dr. `Ali-Muhammad Varqá, has been asked to designate, whenever advisable, certain representatives for the Huqúqu'lláh in various townships, provinces and neighbouring countries, so that the offering of the Huqúqu'lláh may be facilitated for the friends in those regions.

It is evident to those Trustees of the Merciful that this Body, by virtue of the explicit Text of the sacred Writings, is the Body to which all things must be referred, and the Huqúqu'lláh can be used to promote the interests of the Cause throughout the Bahá'í world only with the permission of the Authority in the Cause to which all must turn.

(27 October 1963, written
by the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of
Iran, translated from the Persian)

The payment of the Huqúqu'lláh
is one of the essential spiritual obligations that the wondrous Pen of
Bahá'u'lláh has laid down in the Most Holy Book.

It would be preferable and
more fitting if these two accounts, namely contributions to the Funds and
payments of the Huqúqu'lláh were to be kept separate. This
means that in the first instance you should pay your Huqúqu'lláh,
and then you may offer your devoted contributions at your own discretion
to the International Fund which is now being used for achieving the goals
of the Nine-Year Plan.

(18 August 1965, written
by the Universal House of Justice, translated from the Persian)

Recently one of the friends asked
the following question: Were a person to offer his property, partly or
wholly, to the Bahá'í Funds, what responsibility does he
still have for payment of the Huqúqu'lláh?

This is what was stated
in reply: The payment of Huqúqu'lláh is one of the essential
spiritual obligations of the people of Bahá which has been revealed
in the Most Holy Book by the Pen of Glory. Therefore the friends should
separate the account of Huqúqu'lláh from that of their other
contributions. Thus they must first settle their obligations concerning
Huqúqu'lláh, then they may make other contributions at their
own discretion, inasmuch as the disposition of the funds of the Huqúqu'lláh
is subject to decision by the Authority in the Cause to which all must
turn, whereas the purposes of contributions to other Funds may be determined
by the donors themselves.

(22 August 1966, written
by the Universal House of Justice, translated from the Persian)

Undoubtedly the friends are illumined
with the light of the fear of God and are fully conscious of the need to
purify and protect their possessions in accordance with the decisive Words
revealed by our Lord, the Most High.

In these turbulent days,
we that yearn for Him, fervently turn in prayer to the court of the Lord
of mankind that He may graciously enable that august Assembly to repeatedly
remind the lovers of the Beauty of the All-Merciful of the vital importance
and the binding character of this sacred and heavenly injunction. Through
issuing announcements, distributing leaflets and in gatherings, schools
and conferences held by the followers of our Zealous Lord, they should

be guided and encouraged to observe strictly and conscientiously that which His divine commandment has enjoined upon them, so that those believers who are adorned with the fear of God may be shielded from the dire consequences foreshadowed in His ominous warnings, may become the recipients of His assured blessings and be enabled to partake of the outpourings of His infallible spiritual grace.

(12 September 1969, written
by the Universal House of Justice, translated from the Persian)

Some of the dear friends who observe their Huqúqu'lláh obligations have written asking about the relationship that exists between contribution to the Funds and the payment of Huqúqu'lláh. That is, if a person who intends to meet his Huqúqu'lláh obligations offers contributions to other Funds and projects instead, would be exempted from the payment of Huqúqu'lláh or not?

The Holy Texts relevant to this matter are clear but, since this question has been repeatedly asked by the friends, it was decided to elucidate it for their information.

Payment of Huqúqu'lláh is a spiritual obligation binding on the people of Bahá. The injunction is laid down in the Most Holy Book, and clear and conclusive explanations are embodied in various Tablets.

Every devoted believer who is able to meet the specified conditions, must pay the Huqúqu'lláh, without any exception. Indeed according to the explicit Text of the Most Holy Book, failure to comply with this injunction is regarded as a betrayal of trust, and the divine call: "Whoso dealeth dishonestly with God will in justice be exposed," is a clear reference to such people.

The Centre of the Covenant has affirmed the obligation of Huqúq in these words: "The Lord as a sign of His infinite bounties hath graciously favoured His servants by providing for a fixed money offering [Huqúq], to be dutifully presented unto Him though He, the True One and His servants have been at all times independent of all created things."

This weighty ordinance, as testified by the Pen of Glory is invested with incalculable benefit and wisdom. It purifies one's possessions, averts loss and disaster, conduces to prosperity and honour and imparts divine increase and blessing. It is a sacrifice offered for and related to God, and an act of servitude leading to the promotion of His Cause. As affirmed by the Centre of the Covenant, Huqúq offerings constitute a test for the believers and enable the friends to become firm and steadfast in faith and certitude.

In brief, payment of Huqúqu'lláh

is one of the binding spiritual responsibilities of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh

and the proceeds thereof revert to the Authority in the Cause to whom all must turn. Moreover, the Ancient Beauty — magnified be His praise — has affirmed that after the establishment of the Universal House of Justice necessary rulings would be enacted in this connection in conformity with that which God has purposed, and that no one, except the Authority to which all must turn, has the right to dispose of this Fund. In other words, whatever portion of one's wealth is due to the Huqúqu'lláh belongs to the World Centre of the Cause of God, not to the individuals concerned.

Thus the friends should not follow their own volition and judgement in using any of the funds set aside for Huqúqu'lláh for any other purpose, even for charitable contributions of the Faith.

We earnestly hope that everyone may be privileged to observe this sacred and blessed obligation which would ensure the attainment of true happiness and would serve to promote the execution of Bahá'í enterprises throughout the world.

Verily God is Self-Sufficient
above the need of His creatures.

(25 October 1970, written
by the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of
Iran, translated from the Persian)

`Abdu'l-Bahá in one of His Tablets has stated: "Disposition of the Huqúq, wholly or partly, is permissible, but this should be done by permission of the authority in the Cause to whom all must turn." The provision in His Will and Testament that the Huqúqu'lláh "is to be offered through the guardian of the Cause of God..." is clearly in accord with this principle. In another Tablet `Abdu'l-Bahá referred to the Universal House of Justice as "the authority to whom all must turn" and it is clear that in the absence of the Guardian it is the supreme and central institution of the Cause. Moreover, before `Abdu'l-Bahá, Bahá'u'lláh had revealed the following: "There is a prescribed ruling for the Huqúqu'lláh. After the House of Justice hath come into being the law thereof will be made manifest, in conformity with the Will of God." In accordance with these explicit texts it is clearly within the jurisdiction of the Universal House of Justice to decide about the receipt and disbursement of Huqúqu'lláh at the present time.

(2 March 1972, written
by the Universal House of Justice to the Hands of the Cause residing in
the Holy Land)

Payment of Huqúqu'lláh

has not yet been applied to the western world. It will undoubtedly be universal at some future time but at present the believers in the West are able to discharge their material obligations to the Cause by contribution to the Funds.

(12 July 1972, written
by the Universal House of Justice)

We are deeply touched by your loving letter of 27 December, 1972 expressing the wish to follow the law of Huqúqu'lláh with respect to your inheritance from your mother.

Although, as you correctly state, this Law is not at present applicable to the friends in the West, any believer is free to observe it if he wishes.

This Law of the Aqdas stipulates that nineteen per cent of one's capital is payable as Huqúqu'lláh when such capital has reached an amount of at least "nineteen mithqáls in gold" In determining the amount a believer should pay, he should first deduct any debts and expenses he may have, and pay nineteen per cent of the remainder of his capital if it is equal to at least nineteen mithqáls of gold.

If you decide that you wish to observe this Law of the Aqdas at the present time, you should determine the total value of your inheritance in cash and other assets less any expenses or debts you may have, and consider the circumstances under which you may be able to pay Huqúqu'lláh on the net value of your inheritance. The time and conditions of payment are left to each individual.

For example, if one's assets include property or shares in addition to cash, he may find it disadvantageous or inconvenient to pay nineteen per cent of the value of the non-cash assets until they are disposed of, at which time he would prefer to fulfil this spiritual obligation. Any expenses that may be involved in disposing of one's assets should be deducted before calculating the net value on which Huqúqu'lláh is payable.

(21 January 1973, written
by the Universal House of Justice)

...The devoted believer who is privileged to pay "the Right of God", far from seeking excuses for evading this spiritual obligation, will do his utmost to meet it. On the other hand, inasmuch as obedience to this Law is a matter of conscience, and payment of Huqúqu'lláh is a voluntary act, it would not be seemly to go beyond informing the Persian friends of their spiritual obligation, and leaving to them to decide what

they wish to do about it.

The same principle applies to those friends who spend lavishly on their families, who purchase or build residences and furnish them far in excess of their needs, and rationalize these expenditures in their desire to avoid payment of Huqúqu'lláh. Likewise those friends who marry non-Persians and reside in Europe or other countries should not be pressed, but informed and left to decide for themselves.

(26 February 1973, written
by the Universal House of Justice)

...many details in the computation of Huqúqu'lláh have been left by Bahá'u'lláh to the judgement and conscience of the individual believer. For example, He exempts such household equipment and furnishings as are needful, but He leaves it to the individual to decide which items are necessary and which are not. Contributions to the funds of the Faith cannot be considered as part of one's payment of Huqúqu'lláh; moreover, if one owes Huqúqu'lláh and cannot afford both to pay it and to make contributions to the Fund, the payment of Huqúqu'lláh should take priority over making contributions. But as to whether contributions to the Fund may be treated as expenses in calculating the amount of one's assets on which Huqúqu'lláh is payable; this is left to the judgement of each individual in the light of his own circumstances.

The Guardian's secretary wrote on his behalf that "one mithqál consists of nineteen na kh uds. The weight of twenty-four na kh uds equals four and three-fifths grammes. Calculations may be made on this basis". Nineteen mithqáls therefore equal 69.191667 grammes. One troy ounce equals 31.103486 grammes, thus 19 mithqáls equal 2.224563 oz. At the current rate of \$339.10 per ounce, 19 mithqáls of gold would amount to \$754.35. Thus on a savings of \$754.35 an amount of \$143.33 (i.e. 19%) would be payable as Huqúqu'lláh.

(16 September 1979, written
by the Universal House of Justice)

It is clear from the Writings that a person is exempt from paying Huqúqu'lláh on his residence and such household and professional equipment as are needful. It is left to the discretion of the individual to decide which items are necessary and which are not. It is obvious that the friends should not spend lavishly on residences and furnishings and rationalize on these expenditures in

their desire to avoid payment of Huqúqu'lláh. No specific text has been found exempting capital used to earn income. The Universal House of Justice leaves such matters to the consciences of individual believers.

(9 April 1980, written
by the Universal House of Justice)

The House of Justice further points out that however weighty are the obligations resting upon the believers to pay the Huqúqu'lláh and to support the other funds of the Faith, these are spiritual obligations which are to be fulfilled voluntarily, and under no circumstances may contributions to any of these funds, even the Huqúqu'lláh, be demanded or solicited from individual believers. Appeals and exhortations must always be made to the generality of the friends, not to individuals.

(7 May 1980, written
by the Universal House of Justice)

He who after setting aside his annual expenses owns a surplus worth at least nineteen mithqáls of gold is liable to the payment of Huqúqu'lláh.

(20 October 1981, written
by the Universal House of Justice, translated from the Persian)

As to your second question asking whether, where there is perfect understanding between husband and wife and she is empowered to manage her husband's property as well as her own, she could pay the amount of Huqúqu'lláh applicable to all their possessions or, since the husband owns a portion of the property, she could pay only the amount of Huqúqu'lláh on her own share of the property.

In answering this question one should remember that the Huqúqu'lláh is payable on possessions that are indisputably recognized as being one's own and not on property that one merely controls or uses. However, in cases similar to the one you have mentioned above, it is incumbent on husband and wife to take counsel together and to define precisely the limits of their personal belongings, then they should either jointly or individually render to the Huqúq the amount they consider to be their binding obligation.

As regards Mrs....., since her husband is an American and the law of Huqúqu'lláh does not apply at this time to the friends in the West, the payment of Huqúqu'lláh on the part of her husband is neither binding nor prohibited.

(10 January 1982, written

by the Universal House of Justice, translated from the Persian)

The Universal House of Justice

has received your letter of 10 September, 1982 enquiring about the responsibility

of a Bahá'í couple to pay Huqúqu'lláh where

one partner is American and the other Persian, and we have been instructed to provide you with the following clarification.

Your letter refers to basing the

calculation of Huqúqu'lláh on one's income. As you will realize

from a study of the texts, however, the computation is made on the net

value of one's possessions after deducting a number of exempt items such

as residence and necessary furnishings, and on subsequent annual increases

to this net property arising from surplus income after the payment of necessary

expenses. It is, moreover, calculated on units of property equal in value

to 19 mithqáls of gold (2.22456 troy ounces).

No hard and fast rule can be laid

down as to the share of a couple's property on which Huqúqu'lláh

should be paid where one partner is a westerner and the other a Persian.

This depends upon the way the husband and wife themselves regard the ownership

of the family's property. Thus it is basically a matter for consultation

between husband and wife and, as stated previously, Bahá'u'lláh

has left many of the details of computation of Huqúqu'lláh

to the judgement of the individual believers.

(11 October 1982, written

by the Universal House of Justice)

As to the question raised by Mr....,

kindly inform him that in a letter to an individual believer the beloved

Guardian explained that Huqúqu'lláh is payable only once

on a given property, whether personal or real, but should this property

pass from one person to another, such as through inheritance, it becomes

again subject to the payment of Huqúqu'lláh. This in effect

means that heirs receiving a share of their inheritance from an estate

must pay Huqúqu'lláh, if the share they are receiving increases

their wealth to a level calling for the discharge of this sacred obligation.

(1 June 1983, written

by the Universal House of Justice to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States)

As regards your question concerning

the principal residence and subsidiary rulings relevant to it, we wish

to let you know that in these days it is not deemed advisable to enact

detailed rulings for Huqúqu'lláh. Thus the friends are left

free, and whenever no definite rulings exist they may fulfil in each case

that which they understand from the texts, and may honour their Huqúqu'lláh

obligations according to their own judgement and the promptings of their own conscience.

(4 March 1984, written
by the Universal House of Justice, translated from the Persian)

VII.

Extract From A Letter Written
On Behalf Of The

Universal House Of Justice

As you state, the obligation to
Huqúqu'lláh rests on individual believers, not on corporate
bodies, even if these are wholly owned by Bahá'ís.

On the other hand, if the
owners of a company which is entirely Bahá'í-owned wish their
company to make a donation to Huqúqu'lláh, such a contribution
is acceptable. It does not, of course, reduce the obligation of the individual
believers concerned to pay their own Huqúqu'lláh.

There is no objection in principle
to a Bahá'í's paying money to an agent, requesting that agent
to issue a cheque on his behalf in payment of his Huqúqu'lláh,
whether the agent be an individual, a bank, a limited company or a firm.
Such a cheque should be accepted. However, the individual who is thereby
fulfilling his obligation to Huqúqu'lláh should make clear
that this is what he is doing, and the receipt should be issued in his
name, not in that of the agent.

(30 March 1989, written
on behalf of the Universal House of Justice to an individual believer)

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Notes:

1. i Known as Jinab-i-Amin, Trustee of the Huqúq
in the days of Bahá'u'lláh.

2. ii See number

105

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3. iii A newer translation of this question and answer has been
substituted for the translation originally included.

4. iv A newer translation of this question and answer has
been substituted for the translation originally included.

5. v A newer translation of this question and answer has been substituted for the translation originally included.
6. vi A newer translation of this question and answer has been substituted for the translation originally included.
7. vii A newer translation of this question and answer has been substituted for the translation originally included.
8. viii A newer translation of this question and answer has been substituted for the translation originally included.
9. ix Túman is a Persian unit of currency.
10. x A newer translation of this question and answer has been substituted for the translation originally included.
11. xi A newer translation of this question and answer has been substituted for the translation originally included.
12. xii A newer translation of this question and answer has been substituted for the translation originally included.
13. xiii Zaynu'l-Muqarrabin
14. xiv The amanuensis of Huqúqu'llah.
15. xv 1295 A.H. - 1878 A.D.
16. xvi Qur'an 35:12.
17. xvii Qur'an 35:32.
18. xviii Haji Abu'l-Hasan-i-Ardikani.

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— Huququ'llah