

## FASTING

Fasting is a symbol. Fasting signifies abstinence from lust. Physical fasting is a symbol of that abstinence, and is a reminder; that is, just as a person abstains from physical appetites, he is to abstain from self-appetites and self-desires. But mere abstention from food has no effect on the spirit. It is only a symbol, a reminder. Otherwise it is of no importance.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá in “Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era”)

### IV. Laws, Ordinances and Exhortations

#### B. Fasting

1. The sublime station occupied by fasting in the Bahá’í Revelation.
2. The period of fasting commences with the termination of the Intercalary Days, and ends with the Naw-Rúz Festival.
3. Abstinance from food and drink, from sunrise to sunset, is obligatory.
4. Fasting is binding on men and women on attaining the age of maturity, which is fixed at 15.
5. Exemption from fasting is granted to:
  - a. Travellers
    - i. Provided the journey exceeds 9 hours.
    - ii. Those travelling on foot, provided the journey exceeds 2 hours.
    - iii. Those who break their journey for less than 19 days.
    - iv. Those who break their journey during the Fast at a place where they are to stay 19 days are exempt from fasting only for the first three days from their arrival.
    - v. Those who reach home during the Fast must commence fasting from the day of their arrival.
  - b. Those who are ill.
  - c. Those who are over 70.
  - d. Women who are with child.
  - e. Women who are nursing. specifically revealed verse 95 times a day.
  - f. Women in their courses, provided they perform their ablutions and repeat a specifically revealed verse 95 times a day.
  - g. Those who are engaged in heavy labour, who are advised to show respect for the law by using discretion and restraint when availing themselves of the exemption.
6. Vowing to fast (in a month other than the one prescribed for fasting) is permissible. Vows which profit mankind are however preferable in the sight of God.

(Bahá’u’lláh in “The Kitáb-i-Aqdas”)