

before turning to God. If there is no water, or if using water would harm the face or hands, the person can repeat instead five times "In the Name of God, the Most Pure, the Most Pure".

Ablutions must be performed, even if the person has just had a bath.

Choice of Prayers

Each day a Bahá'í can choose one of the three daily Obligatory Prayers: the short, medium or long one.

The Short Obligatory

Prayer should be said between noon and sunset each day and should be said whilst standing.

The Medium Obligatory

Prayer should be said three times a day: between sunrise and noon, between noon and sunset, and from sunset till two hours after sunset. More details can be found in a prayer book.

The Long Obligatory

Prayer can be said at any time, between one sunset and the next.

In countries in the

extreme north or south, where the length of days and nights varies greatly, clocks and watches are used, instead of sunrise or sunset. In Britain we use sunrise and sunset.

Exemptions

A person who is "weak from illness" need not say an Obligatory Prayer.

Sometimes, if

a person is travelling or in danger, it is not possible to say an Obligatory Prayer. When a safe place is reached, for each prayer missed the person must kneel down with forehead on the floor and say "Glorified be God, the Lord of Might and Majesty, of Grace and Bounty". After this he or she must sit cross-legged and repeat 18 times "Glorified be God, the Lord of the kingdoms of earth and heaven."

Women
only

Women need not say

Obligatory Prayers during a period. Instead, each day they should perform their ablutions and then repeat 95 times "Glorified be God, the Lord of Splendour and Beauty". In this case a day means between one noon and the next.

Reading the
Writings

Bahá'ís should read something from the Writings of the Báb or Bahá'u'lláh every morning and evening.

It does not have to be a long passage, what matters is the spirit in which it is read.

Bahá'u'lláh said we should meditate on what we have read. In other words, to think deeply about it, try to understand it and take it to heart.

Repetition
of the Greatest Name

This is another form of meditation. The repetition can help to bring a state of deep relaxation during which spiritual insights may be realised.

The Greatest Name is "Alláh-u-Abhá" which means "God the All-Glorious".

Every day a Bahá'í should repeat the Greatest Name 95 times. It may be helpful to use prayer beads to keep count.

Ablutions must be performed before repeating the Greatest Name (the same as for the Obligatory Prayers).

If repeating the Greatest Name immediately before or after saying an Obligatory Prayer, ablutions are only needed once, not twice.

The Greatest Name should be said whilst sitting down and facing the Qiblah (the place where Bahá'u'lláh is buried -- see under Obligatory Prayers).

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METADATA

Views10743 views since posted 2010-07-07; last edit 2026-04-18 14:54 UTC;

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