

Foreword

The precious legacy left behind by the Holy Prophet's Household [*ahl al-bayt*] (may peace be upon them all) and their followers' preservation of this legacy from the menace of extinction is a perfect example of an all-encompassing school [*maktab*], which embraces the different branches of the Islamic knowledge and has been able to train many of the talented personalities by quenching them with this gushing-forth fountain. This school has presented scholars to the Muslim *ummah* who, by following the Holy Prophet's Household ('*a*),¹ have occupied the station of clarifying the doubts and skepticisms brought forth by the various creeds and intellectual currents both inside and outside the Muslim society, and throughout the past centuries, they have been the presenters of the firmest answers and solutions to these doubts.

Anchored on the responsibilities it is shouldering, the Ahl al-Bayt ('*a*) World Assembly has embarked upon defending the sanctity of *risālah* [messengership] and its authentic beliefs—truths which have always been opposed by the chiefs and leaders of the anti-Islamic sects, religions and trends. In this sacred path,

¹ The abbreviation, “‘*a*” stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, '*alayhis-salām*, '*alayhimus-salām*, or '*alayhās-salām* [may peace be upon him/them/her], which is used after the names of the prophets, angels, Imāms from the Prophet's progeny, and saints ('*a*). [Trans.]

the Assembly regards itself as a follower of the upright pupils of the Ahl al-Bayt's ('a) school—those who have always been ready to refute those accusations and calumnies and have tried to be always in the frontline of this struggle on the basis of the expediencies of time and space.

The experiences in this field, which have been preserved in the books of the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt's ('a) school, are unique in their own right. It is because these experiences have been based upon knowledge [*ilm*] and the preeminence of intellect and reasoning, and at the same time, devoid of any iota of blind prejudices as well as whims and caprices. These experiences address the experts, scholars and thinkers in such a manner that is acceptable to a healthy mind and the pure human natural disposition [*fiṭrah*].

In a bid to assist those who are in quest of truth, the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly has endeavored to enter the new phase of these worthy experiences within the framework of research and writing works of the contemporary Shi'ah writers or those who, through the divine guidance, embraced this noble school.

This Assembly is also engaged in the study and publication of the valuable works of the pious predecessors and outstanding Shi'ah personalities so that those who are thirsty of truth could quench their thirst from this refreshing fountain by listening and embracing this truth, which the Holy Prophet's Household ('a) has offered as gift to the entire world.

It is hoped that the dear readers would not deprive the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly of their valuable views and suggestions as well as constructive criticisms in this arena.

We also do invite the scholars, translators and other institutions to assist us in propagating the pure Muḥammadan (s) Islam.

We ask God, the Exalted, to accept this trivial effort and enhance it further under the auspices of His vicegerent on earth,

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Ḥaḍrat al-Mahdī (may Allah, the Exalted, expedite his glorious advent).

It is appropriate here to express our utmost gratitude to Āyatullāh Muḥammad Taqī Miṣbāḥ Yazdī, the author of this book, and to Mr. Mansoor Limba for translating it, as well as to all our honorable colleagues in accomplishing this task especially the dear ones in the Translation Office for performing their responsibility.

Cultural Affairs Department
Ahl al-Bayt^(ع) World Assembly

