

Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. All peace and blessings be upon our master and guide, Prophet Muhammad, and upon his immaculate, infallible Household. Ceaseless curse be upon their enemies.

My interest in researching into this book, has arisen from the significance of the book itself and the urgent need to release it among the various milieus of society. The best proof of this fact is the great interest shown by scholars, translators, publishers, and cultural and scientific centers in this book, which maybe small in size but is huge in contents. Confirming this fact, too, are the repeated editions of this book in various languages. The following is a list of the frequent editions of this book that I found:

In Arabic:

1. *'Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha (1322–1384 AH), with an introduction by Hamid Hafni Dawud; Najaf: Dar al-Nu`man; Date of Introduction: 1380 AH; Pocket size (120 x 180 mm); Number of pages: 136.
2. *'Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha (1322 – 1384 AH), with an introduction by Hamid Hafni Dawud; Cairo: Al-Najah Publishers, 1384 AH/1361 CE; Pocket size (120 x 180 mm); Number of pages: 126.
3. *'Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha (1322 – 1384 AH), with an introduction by Muhammad Mahdi al-Asifi and Hamid Hafni Dawud; Qum: Dar al-Tabligh al-Islami; Date of Introduction: 1381 AH; Book size: Pocket size (120 x 180 mm); Number of pages: 176; second offset printing.
4. *'Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha (1322 – 1384 AH), with an introduction by Hamid Hafni Dawud (with noteworthy additions); Cairo: Al-Najah Publishers, 1391 AH; Pocket size (120 x 180 mm); Number of pages: 126.
5. *'Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha, with an introduction by Muhammad Mahdi al-

Asifi and Hamid Hafni Dawud; (publisher is not mentioned) 1393 AH, Pocket size (120 x 180 mm);
Number of pages: 135; Offset printing.

6. *`Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: The Reformist Mujtahid Muhammad Ridha al-Muzaffar, with an introduction by Hamid Hafni Dawud; Qum: al-Sharif al-Radhi Publishers; Second Edition, 1411 AH, Envelope C5 size (162 x 229 mm); Number of pages: 136.

7. *`Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha, (d. 1384 AH) with an introduction by Muhammad Mahdi al-Asifi and Hamid Hafni Dawud; Qum: Shukuri Publishers 1371 AHS/1413 AH, Third Offset Edition, Pocket size (120 x 180 mm); Number of pages: 147.

8. *`Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: The Great `Allamah (well-versed scholar) Shaykh Muhammad Ridha al-Muzaffar (1904 – 1964 CE); with revision and commentary by Muhammad Jawad al-Turayhi; Qum: Imam `Ali Foundation (*mu'assasat al-imam `ali*); First Revised Edition, 1417 AH; Envelope C5 size (162 x 229 mm); Number of pages: 512.

9. *Bidayat al-Ma`arif al-Ilahiyyah fi Sharh `Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: Commentary and revision by Sayyid Muhsin al-Kharrazi; Qum: Islamic Publication Center (*markaz an-nashr al-islami*); First Edition; Date of Introduction: 1366 AHS/1418 AH; Envelope C5 size (162 x 229 mm); 2 volumes: 1st volume: 320 pages; 2nd volume: 281 pages.

10. *`Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: `Allamah Shaykh Muhammad Ridha al-Muzaffar; Qum: Doctrinal Research Center (*markaz al-abhath al-`aqa'id*); 1422 AH, Pocket size (120 x 180 mm); Number of pages: 176.

11. *`Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: The Reformist Mujtahid Muhammad Ridha al-Muzaffar, with an introduction by Hamid Hafni Dawud; Qum: Ansariyan Publications; Fourth Reprint, 1422 AH; Number of pages: 135.

12. *`Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha (d. 1384 AH), with an introduction by Hamid Hafni Dawud; Tehran: The Major Islamic Library (*al-maktabah al-islamiyyah al-kubra*), Be'sat Foundation (date is not mentioned); Pocket size (120 x 180 mm); Number of pages: 136.

13. *`Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha (date and publishers are not mentioned), Pocket size (120 x 180 mm); Number of pages: 136.

14. *`Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha, with an introduction by Hamid Hafni Dawud; Tehran: Ninawa Modern Library (*maktabat ninawa al-hadithah*) (date is not mentioned); Pocket size (120 x 180 mm); Number of pages: 136.

15. *`Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah fi Thawbihi al-Jadid*; Faris `Ali al-`Amir; Qum: al-Sharif al-Radhi Publishers; Second Edition; Envelope C5 size (162 x 229 mm); Number of pages: 227.

16. *Bidayat al-Ma`arif al-Ilahiyyah fi Sharh `Aqa'id al-Imamiyyah*: Commentary and explanation by

Sayyid Muhsin al-Kharrazi; Qum: Islamic Publication Center (*markaz an-nashr al-islami*); Seventh Edition; two parts in one volume.

In Other Languages:

1. **In English:** *The Faith of Shi'ah Islam*: al-Muzaffar, Muhammad Ridha (1904 – 1964); Qum: Ansariyan Publications; 1409 AH/1989 CE; Number of pages: 89.

2. **In French:** Translated into French by `Abbas al-Bostani; commentary by Muhammad Jawad al-Turayhi; Qum: Imam `Ali Foundation (date is not mentioned); Number of pages: 270.

3. **In Russian:** Translated into Russian by Translation Department in the Ahl al-Bayt (`a) World Assembly 1998; Number of pages: 152.

4. **In Chinese:** Translated into Chinese by Sulayman Hi Khwa; Tehran: Islamic Culture and Relations League; 1997; Number of pages: 87.

5. **In Urdu:** Translated into Urdu by Muhammad Naqvi Najafi; Revised by Muhammad Jawad al-Turayhi; Qum: Imam `Ali Foundation; First Edition; Number of pages: 340.

6. **In Urdu:** Edited by Ahmad Husayn Naqvi; Qum: Imam `Ali Foundation; 1420 AH; Number of pages: 440.

7. **In Farsi:** Translated into Farsi by `Ali Ridha Masjid-Jami'i; Tehran: Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance; Publication and Printing Organization; 1380 AHS; A5 Size (148 x 210 mm); Number of pages: 368.

8. **In Tajik:** Translated into Tajik by Iqbal Strochni; Tehran: Islamic Culture and Relations League; 1997; Number of pages: 212.

Because of summing up, we will not mention the other prints of this book, which have been published by the aforesaid publishers as well as others.

We would like to express our gratitude and acknowledgement to all those who have contributed to this cultural project, especially our esteemed brother, His Eminence Shaykh Dr. Muhammad Jawad al-Turayhi and those who have collaborated with him in the production of the book's distinctive edition of Imam `Ali Foundation. Our acknowledgement also extends to the eminent scholar, Ayatullah Sayyid Muhsin al-Kharrazi, whose efforts to explain and comment on the book are praiseworthy, and the hardworking scholar, Mr. Faris `Ali al-`Amir, who has not only dressed the book in a new garment but also omitted, added, and re-coined many of the book's words and expressions. We thus pray Almighty Allah to lead all of us to all that which is good for us.

Because the material of this book is rich, agreeable, and fulfills the requirements and levels of divergent

classes of people, this diverse need is divided between various milieus of society as follows:

A. Shi'ite Milieu: This milieu comprises the juvenile and young Shi'ah, including the scholarly youth and teachers, who are at different levels of schools and universities on the one hand and seminaries (*hawzah*: institutes of religious studies) on the other. A Shi'ite individual strives to acquire materials that enable him/her to achieve self-education concerning the basics of his/her sect and the fundamentals of his/her faith in an easy and facile way.

B. Sunni Milieu: Sunnis generally persevere in gaining knowledge of the doctrines and beliefs that their Shi'ite brethren embrace. Normally, a thirsty person tries to drink from a headspring; therefore, Sunnis have the desire to become acquainted with the Shi'ah through the Shi'ah themselves, but not through mediators, strangers, or biased people.

C. Non-Muslim Milieus: Non-Muslim milieus who desire to acquaint themselves with Muslim Shi'ite beliefs also try to gain such knowledge from the Shi'ah themselves through their own words and pens with the hope of saving time and procuring tranquility.

Among matters that have confirmed the need for turning to studying the Muslim Shi'ite doctrines are the events and developments witnessed by the present age, such as:

- (a) the blessed Islamic revolution of Iran,
- (b) the collapse of the Soviet Union,
- (c) the changes that the extremist radical movements (*salafiyyah*) are facing,
- (d) the eviction of the Iraqi Shi'ah and their spread all over the world, and,
- (e) the traumatic experiences of the Shi'ah in countries like Lebanon, Bahrain, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Azerbaijan.

Having noticed the significance and the need for this book, as well as the variety of its seekers and their levels, we can now understand the various methods used in displaying it. It was important to consider the up-to-date requirements and the prerequisites necessitated by this age. As is visible in the aforementioned list, you will have noticed that the book was first published as simply as possible. The second edition included further remarks and details. The third edition was complemented by varying additions and commentaries. Similarly, the release of non-Arabic versions of the book stems from the surrounding circumstances and the scope of the need for it. Factors that have a hold over the way of displaying and printing the book depend upon the publishers' interest in the scientific, cultural, and artistic issues, in addition to their taste and financial potentials.

Noticeably, the aforementioned editions of this book, despite their diversity, do not satisfy its utmost purpose. Some of these editions do not meet with the multi-aspect modern standards inspite of the

typographical technical improvements they made. Other editions have not succeeded in meeting the modern scientific needs of indexing and documenting the quotations from the Holy Qur'an, the Sunnah (i.e. the Holy Prophet's (s) reported words and deeds), and other references that are mentioned in the book; and some editions have not cited the references completely or accurately.

Moreover, other editions have been originally dedicated to scholarly purposes; they therefore comprise explanations and theological details. Although other editions have comprised additional, yet valuable, information, such additions have been even more than the original material of the book. Other editions have also included translations of the book besides its original language.

Undeniably, such explanations, commentaries, additions, and translations involve many advantages, but, at the same time, they have caused the book to lose its purpose, as visualized by the author of the book, the late `Allamah Muhammad Ridha al-Muzaffar, and the foremost publisher, the virtuous scholar, Muhammad Kazim al-Katabi.

As is confirmed by the author himself in the introduction of the first and second editions of the book, their purpose of publishing this book was to publicize its material. However, the book became restricted to a certain class of people. On the other hand, the bigger a book the more expensive and, as a result, its distribution and publishing became limited. Despite everything, we still believe that there must be variety and change in the presentation of the book whenever time and age require it.

In view of that, I have humbly attempted to present this book on the following lines:

(1) I have committed myself to observing the middle state by manifesting some points presented by the author and in hinting at some themes, which, in my opinion, are significant. I have therefore employed brevity in explaining the doctrines, the concepts, and the fundamentals and basics mentioned in the book. I have also done my best to avoid expatiation and elaboration.

(2) I have stressed the significance of the principle of proximity between the followers of the same religion (the followers of the different sects of Islam), based on the author's purpose behind writing this book. A considerable number of reference books trusted by both Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims have been used to classify and document the narrations, quotations, and opinions that are cited in the book to satisfy the readers of all sects. They also show the similarity of Muslim doctrines that unite the followers of the School of the Ahl al-Bayt (a) and their brethren of other Muslim sects. When this aim is achieved, the points of discrepancy between Muslim sects will automatically diminish and the sources of the genuine heritage of Islam will shine forth.

(3) I have aimed at making the reader realize that the doctrines of the *Imamiyyah Shi'ah* are not extraneous or intrusive to the doctrines of Islam but in keeping with the instructions of the Seal of the Prophets, Muhammad, (may peace be upon him and his Household). He clearly dictated unswerving adherence to the two Weighty Things—the Holy Qur'an and the Immaculate Progeny of the Holy Prophet—. Had it not been for some opportunistic elements who wished to gain individual and family

advantages and control the resources of power, domination, and supremacy, all Muslims would certainly have assembled around the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) from whom Almighty Allah removed all impurity and whom He purified thoroughly and made heir to the knowledge of His Prophet (s). Very soon shall all Muslims gather under the (Divinely commissioned) leadership of the Ahl al-Bayt (‘a) at the imminent, expected Advent of the Guide of all nations, Imam al-Mahdi (‘a), who shall unite all different opinions and spread justice over the east and the west of this globe. Such have come the good tidings from his grandfather, the Holy Prophet (may peace be upon him and his Household).

(4) I have worked on guiding observant readers towards some reference books that grant them an opportunity to elaborate on the topics that attract their attention.

(5) I have notified the death-date of the authors (mentioned in the book) in the margins to facilitate researchers to have an idea about the historical sequence of the topics under discussion. Repetition of such information in the margins of the book will allow readers to learn these dates and, consequently, contribute by teaching Muslims the history of the personalities and famous individuals of their nation.

(6) I have made every single effort to observe accuracy and honesty in citing and documenting all information related to the topics under discussion.

I end with the prayer that Almighty Allah guide our steps towards genuine prosperity and forgive us our transgression. He is verily the All-Forgiver and Hearer of prayers.

‘Abd al-Karim al-Kirmani

Rajab 15, 1423 AH

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