

Introduction

The path of Islam contains a most comprehensive and total system of conduct for the wayfarer. The outer behaviour of a true Muslim reflects what is deep in his inner consciousness.

As creation is based on unity, tawhid as it is called in Arabic, every aspect of human experience reflects an aspect of unity. The Muslim is he who has submitted and surrendered in peace and knowledge to this wholesome and naturally balanced ecology. The outer courtesy of behaviour emanates from an inner equilibrium. Outer certainty emanates from inner submission and contentment. Outer nobility and courage emanate from inner awareness of the immense mercy and compassion of the Creator.

The outer behaviour, courtesies, practices and rituals of Islam are all manifestations of a subtler and finer inner conditioning, and the balanced fusion of the outer and the inner in the journey of this world. If there is an inner attribute there must be a corresponding outer expression, which is a symptom of an inner attribute.

In his teachings, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq shows the way to equilibrium in a most inspired way of tawhid. As a man of insight and knowledge he sees the unified hand and demonstrates it to the sincere seeker. These teachings can be of benefit to anyone who has an interest in spiritual matters and is concerned with benefiting from the path of Islam.

The Imam's explanations in 'The Lantern of the Path' contain many levels of understanding. Much depends upon the state of the seeker and the extent of his sincerity. Although this book is small, its meanings are vast. We pray to Allah to increase our knowledge and experience of His vast compassion and mercy.

Fadhlallah Haeri

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