

Introduction by the Author

All Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the Universe. May the prayers and salutations be upon our master and leader, the chief of all the Prophets and those who have been sent by Him, the beloved of the Lord of the Universe, the best of His creations and the best of humanity, Abul Qasim Muhammad (S).

In addition, may prayers and salutations be upon his family, the righteous and pure Infallibles (as) especially the Remnants of Allah on His Earth, Imam al-Hujjah ibnil Hasan al-'Askari (ajtf). Finally, may the greetings and salutations be upon all of the great Maraja' [sources of emulation] of the faith and the shining lights of the Shari'ah the past and present especially the late Ayatullah Khumayni, may Allah be pleased with all of them.

The purpose of humanity's creation is for them to attain spiritual growth and advancement towards the pinnacles of greatness and closeness to Allah, the Most High. The only path which one can traverse to reach this station is The Straight Path (as-Siratul Mustaqim) and we cannot diverge from this course.

According to the accepted proofs¹, The Straight Path is nothing other than the Imam whom we have been ordered to follow. Therefore, in every time period, the Imam and Divinely appointed proof of Allah, the Most High, is the true straight path and his is the only direction which leads towards happiness in both worlds.

In the time which we are living, which is full of tribulations and calamities, and during this state of uneasiness and anguish, the straight path which leads to Allah, the Most High, is none other than the 12th Imam who is in occultation (*ghaybah*) and whose advent is awaited by all.

He is the proof of Allah on this Earth, even though he is behind the curtains of occultation and his example is just like the sun which occasionally veils itself behind the clouds; however we still benefit from its rays.

In fact, the twelfth Imam (ajtf) has stated: "During my period of occultation, you will benefit from me just as you benefit from the sun when it goes behind the clouds and is veiled from your sight. Thus, I am the

source of refuge and protection for the people of Earth.”²

During the current age, acquiring *ma'rifah* (a deep understanding and insight into the Imam, his characteristics and traits), bringing about true faith and love for him, and complete obedience to him is the straight path of Allah and is the only road towards salvation and happiness.

We must traverse this path and must not show any lapses rather, we must expend all of our energies in attaining piety and consciousness of Allah so that we may reach to the highest level of our goal. The purification of our soul and the attainment of the consciousness of Allah in our heart.

Taqwa of Allah is the only component which makes up the reality of the straight path, and is the true essence of the path. It is also the same reality and firm foundation which the Imam and proof of Allah of our time, al-Hujjat ibn al-Hasan (as) has invited his Shi'a (followers) and those who are actively awaiting his noble advent to observe:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ جَلَّ جَلَالُهُ وَظَاهِرُونَا عَلَى انْتِيَاشِكُمْ مِنْ فِتْنَةٍ قَدْ أَنَاغَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ

“So be conscious of Allah, Majestic is His Glory, and help us to save you from a seditious matter that is about to overcome you.”³

He has also stated:

فَتَقُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْلَمُوا لَنَا وَرُدُّوا الْأَمْرَ إِلَيْنَا

“Be conscious of Allah and submit to us and refer all affairs to us.”⁴

In addition, he has told us:

وَالْعَاقِبَةُ بِجَمِيلٍ صُنِعَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ تَكُونُ حَمِيدَةً لَهُمْ مَا اجْتَنَبُوا الْمُنْهَى عَنْهُ مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ

“The end result, by virtue of the excellent arrangement of Allah, Glorious is He, shall be praiseworthy for them (our followers) because they avoided committing the sins which He forbade them to perform.”⁵

Those who have a claim over us are many the greatest of which is Allah after Him, His friend (*wali*) and representative on the Earth (*khalifah*) has a right over us and thus, the true definition of taqwa is to fulfill the rights of these individuals.

The rights which must be observed while on the path of truth and which belong to the representative of Allah, Imam Waliul 'Asr (ajtf) are many. Some are related to particular individuals, while others are related to the believers in general.

In this work, we have restricted ourselves to the second category the rights related to the believers in general and as the reader can appreciate, we can only cover some of them.

Our purpose in compiling this work was to make these responsibilities available to the lovers of the Imam (ajtf) and those who are seeking to follow the path of true guidance. It is hoped that the believers will be able to uphold these responsibilities which we have to Imam al-Hujjah (ajtf).

In addition, the believers will also be acquainted with responsibilities which the Imam (ajtf) himself has to fulfill towards his followers.

In the current era, the enemies of the faith have increased and have been able to use various weapons against the believers. Through their onslaught, they have launched wars against religion and those who follow Divine guidance, and without doubt, one of their aims is to misguide the young generation of Muslims.

Unfortunately, those who are unaware of their personal responsibilities have fallen into the trap of the enemies, and either knowingly or unknowingly, has assisted them and may actually be at the forefront of helping them.

The actions of the enemies of Islam, both in the past and present, have been enacted in order to remove the aura of spirituality which exists amongst the true believers and to delude the people from their primary goals of life.

In such a time, it is incumbent upon the scholars and researchers of the faith of Islam to elucidate upon the spiritual issues and pure teachings of the religion of Islam.

In order to further advance the spiritual teachings, one must pay attention to the discussions related to Imam al-Zaman (ajtf) as he is the spiritual sun of the universe and the primary reason for all spiritual movements. It is through the dissemination of these teachings that we will arrive to the best methods of explaining the spiritual issues, which will in turn, have a favourable impact upon the entire Islamic society.

Thus, we hope that this book will lead to a continuation of discussions in regards to Imam al-Hujjah (ajtf) especially those which focus on the practical actions which we must perform.

As mentioned previously, this work focuses on the rights and responsibilities which the true believers have to the Imam. As we know, the best way which one can fulfill such responsibilities is through purification of the soul and in addition, a spiritual change must take place within each person and we must seek to maintain closeness to Allah.

Therefore, with the permission of Allah, and through the blessings which we pray are showered upon us by Imam al-Mahdi (ajtf), may our souls be sacrificed for him, we hope to be able to reach our goal and encounter a favourable end while on this path.

We pray that we are able to grant contentment and happiness to the Imam (ajtf) and that we are given a grand status for our endeavours.

This book is an abridgment of various books which have been written on this topic and its contents has been extracted from works such as *Mikyalul Makarim*⁶ and *Spiritual Links with the Sacred Presence of the Mahdi*⁷ however the work in your hands has been presented with slight modifications from these two books.

We have elucidated upon close to eighty responsibilities, however when we look at all the responsibilities and their sub categories as presented in this book, the number reaches ninety-nine.

Where we have deemed necessary and in order to offer a deeper explanation, we have divided a duty into numerous discussions. Obviously, all of the branches of that particular responsibility are merely extensions of the primary responsibility.

As you shall see, responsibilities which are branches of the general responsibility are noted accordingly.

17th of Rabi' al-Awwal, 1420 ah

Birth Anniversary of Prophet Muhammad b. 'Abdullah (S) and Imam Ja'far b. Muhammad as-Sadiq (as)
Sayyid Muhammad Rida Husaini Mutlaq

¹. These proofs can be seen in the books of traditions such as Biharul Anwar, and Usulul Kafi in the discussions related to the Divinely appointed leadership (Imamah).

². Kamal ad-Din wa Tamam an-Ni'mah, pg. 483 – the letter given by the Imam in response to questions by Ishaq b. Ya'qub; al-Ihtijaj (al-Tabrisi), vol. 2, pg. 284

³. Biharul Anwar, vol. 53, pg. 175, sec. 31, no. 8 (the letter written by the Imam to Shaykh al-Mufid)

⁴. al-Ghaybah of Shaykh Tusi, pg. 285; Biharul Anwar, vol. 53, pg. 179, sec. 31, no. 9

⁵. al-Ihtijaj, pg. 498 (The letter written by the Imam to Shaykh al-Mufid); Biharul Anwar, vol. 53, pg. 177, sec. 31, no. 8

⁶. Written by the late Ayatullah Sayyid Muhammad Taqi Musawi ISfahani.

⁷. Written by the late Sadrul Islam Mirza 'Ali Akbar Hamdani.

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