

Preface

Each year, as we approach the Graceful Month of Ramadan, we are considered as the ‘Special Guests’ of Allah (SwT). What does it mean to be a special guest? What is the difference between an ‘ordinary’ invitation and a ‘special’ invitation? Why is the Holy Month of Ramadan described by the Holy Prophet (s) as ‘The Banquet of Allah’?

This book goes beyond providing logical analysis to these questions. It is typical of the style the author adopts in his other profound titles for a spiritual wayfarer ‘Soaring to the Only Beloved’ (a brief treatise on the presence of the heart in prayer) and ‘Manifestations of the All-Merciful’ (a commentary on a daily supplication of the Holy Month of Ramadan), published by the Islamic Education Board of the World Federation.

Such an approach is ideal for Mubalighin, proactive ‘Urafi’ and the youth, for it combines beautifully the theme with lexical origins, *ayāt* from the Holy Qur’an, *ahādīth* of the A’immah (‘a), mystical narrations, poetry, *fadāil* of the Ahlu’l Bayt (‘a) as well as touch of historical accounts relevant to the subject.

We live in a time when people feel an urgent need to examine the spiritual dimensions of their lives. The materialistic tendencies which have dominated so much of the modern age are beginning to lose their lustre. People are beginning to realize that their deepest needs cannot be satisfied by consumer products. This book together with a series of related books can go a long way to quench the thirst of spiritual wayfarers and be a catalyst in guiding the traveler towards ‘The Host’.

IEB is indebted to Sheikh Muhammad Khalfan who is also an active member of the Editorial Advisory Committee (EAC) that was recently established by the World Federation to ensure high quality, sustainable and effective publications.

Sheikh Muhammad Khalfan studies at the Seminary in Qum specialising in philosophy and theoretical gnosis. Besides the three books mentioned above, he has also translated various articles on philosophical issues for the Transcendent Philosophy Journal (published by the Islamic Centre London) as well as the introduction of the *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Karīm* of Mullā Sadra (written by the esteemed

research scholar Agha Bidar Far) for the same institution.

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