

Translator's Preface

It gives me immense pleasure to present the English Translation of Allamah Muhammad Baqir Majlisi's *Hayat al-Qulub*. *Hayat al-Qulub* is one of the best-known works of Allamah Majlisi. Published in three volumes, the first volume deals with the lives and times of all the prophets up to the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The second volume is exclusively about the Holy Prophet Muhammad. This volume was translated by Rev. James Merrick in 19th century under the title *Life and Religion of Muhammad*. It was later published by Zahra Trust, USA. Ansarian Publication, Iran, have also reprinted the same edition.

The third volume explores the question of Succession to Prophet Muhammad and describes the lofty position of Ahl al-Bayt in Islam.

The title, *Hayat al-Qulub* means the Life of the Hearts, or the lifeblood of humanity and it is most appropriate.

Indeed without the guidance of the Prophets and Imams, the life of this world would have been meaningless. Through the ages, the appointees of God sacrificed their lives to bring the errant people on the right path.

In course of their duty, they encountered unimaginable difficulties and unreliable followers. However, not once do we find them compromising with falsehood or accepting defeat from the satanic forces.

Can we get such examples of persistence, steadfastness and patience other than these divine guides? They derived strength from the unflinching faith they had on the Almighty and the realisation of the temporal nature of worldly life.

Such lessons abound in *Hayat al-Qulub* and this is the main benefit that I realized while translating the book.

Though it had incidents that seem incredible and somewhat incredulous, if we see the gems of prophetic morals we can discount the other shortcomings. It is a treasury of spiritual and moral teachings. This is the main aim of the mission of prophets as mentioned by Prophet Muhammad when he said, "I have been sent for the perfection of morals."

I have adapted the language for the modern readers, but retained some key Islamic terms like Halaal, haraam etc, as they convey the exact meaning that would be difficult to express in a single word.

Since there is always scope for improvement, I invite the readers to email their comments to sayedathar@hotmail.com [1].

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