

Translator's Note

In the Name of God; The Merciful, the Compassionate

The Height of Rhetoric or the noble book entitled “Nahj Al-Fasahah” is an unparalleled treasure of the eloquent wise sayings of the Holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H.). It was first collected by the late Abulghasim Payande and published in 1957 A.D. as an Arabic-Persian edition, containing traditions. It has been widely in use by both the public and the elite since then for deriving guidance from the Holy Prophet's ocean of lore to pave the rocky paths of man's life.

The motive to reconstruct the book into an English edition rose from the fact that most of the previously-published English renderings of the Holy Prophet's sayings were either extracted from certain specific sources not endorsed by all Islamic sects, or were incomplete in terms of the boundless number of traditions coming down to us from the Holy Prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H.). Thus, the translator embarked on the achievement of the great goal of translating “Nahj Al-Fasahah” as documented on many a Shiite and Sunnite source. In so doing, a number of translation strategies were employed as mentioned below:

Efforts were made to observe the highest degree of “fidelity” to the Arabic version of the book in terms of the semantic delicacies of each saying.

Wherever possible, the shining aesthetic elements of the source text concerning the brevity, eloquence and coherence of the original discourse, was kept intact.

In a good number of cases, for the sake of semantic explication, brief lexical or phrasal items were properly incorporated into the English version.

Finally, it is to be admitted here that since translation is to a great extent a matter of taste, the present English translation is by no means claimed to be a perfect flawless rendering of the Holy Prophet's highly eloquent and deeply meaningful sayings. It simply mirrors what was expressed to ordinary human beings through the tongue of the receiver of Divine revelation, Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) who stood at heavenly heights in all and every aspects of worldly and otherworldly life.

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