

Introduction to the Arabic edition

“.. Oh my Lord! Expand my breast for me, Make my affair easy to me, Loosen the knot from my tongue, and (that) they may understand my word”. (20/25–28).

May praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and may peace and benediction be with our Prophet, Mohammad and his Pure Progeny.

In writing this book, I tried to use a style that is simple and familiar. My aim has been to disentangle the complexity of the juridical text, making it readily accessible to those who need to be acquainted with and act upon it among the laity.

I have sought to employ a method that aims at encouraging the reader to want to know more about the injunctions of religion. In so doing, I confined myself to discussing those matters of religious dictates that are more important to the mukallaf (Compos mentis: The person obligated to observe the precepts of religion). For further in-depth details, the reader may consult the books of Islamic jurisprudence and manuals of religious practice.

Every now and then, I have also tried to make the link in the reader’s mind between the science of jurisprudence and that of ethics (akhlaq), and between his actions and the spirit of those actions.

The book has been divided into three main sections. The first deals with acts of worship (ibadaat), making prayer the main axis, for “It is the pillar of religion. If it was accepted, other deeds of the mukallaf would be accepted. If it was rejected, the other deeds would be rejected”.

After the Dialogue on Taqleed (the following, by a lay person of a learned scholar, Mujtahid, in matters of religious practice), the structure of the discussion required me to deal with that which renders the body najis (ceremonially unclean). This has been so for the simple reason that no prayer can be performed without the person performing it being tahir (ceremonially clean). Thus, najis as well as tahir things are discussed, leading to the discussion of prayer itself.

To complete the circle of purity of the heart, the mind and personal hygiene the mukallaf should have when having audience with his Creator in prayer, I have discussed other acts of worship, such as fasting

and hajj (pilgrimage to Mekkah).

Section two of the book is dedicated to financial transactions, such as buying and selling, agencies, hiring, companies and others.

Section three deals with man's personal status, such as matrimonial matters, votive offering (nadhr), covenants, oaths, etc. Discussed in this section too are matters of al amr bil ma'ruf wan nahi anil munkar (enjoining what is good and forbidding what is wrong) and two dialogues on general themes.

According to this plan, the book shall feature the following dialogues:

Taqleed, Najis and Tahir things, Janabah (the state of being najis after a sexual act that may or may not lead to ejaculation), Haydh (menstruation), Wudhu (an act of ablution that is required before the performance of certain acts of worship), Ghusl (obligatory ceremonial bathing that is required after certain acts or occurrences), Tayamum (Dry ablution, i.e. using dust instead of water, as in the cases of wudhu and ghusl when, for specific reasons, these acts are not possible), Jabirah (splint), Prayer, in two parts, Fasting, Hajj, Zakat (the poor rate: A legally prescribed tax), Khums (a type of religious levy, equivalent to one fifth of taxable income), Trade, Slaughtering and Hunting, Marriage, Divorce, Votive Offering, Oath, and Covenant, Making a Will, Inheritance, Waqf (religious endowment), Enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil, and the two all-round dialogues, covering matters ranging from women issues, reproduction, medical, ethical, science and technology, entertainment to donating human organs.

This edition of the book has been the subject of checking and scrutiny by the Office of Grand Ayatullah as-Sayyid as-Seestani in Holy Najaf to ensure that the contents conform to his edicts. Where necessary modifications have been made to ensure compliance.

I hope that I have succeeded in what I set out to do. I thank all those who lent me their support in the process of writing this book.

Finally, I pray to Allah, the Most High, to make me amongst those,

"..given his book in his right hand, these shall read their book.." (17/71),

make my work pure in His way on,

"The day on which property will not avail, nor sons, except him who comes to Allah with a heart free (of evil)". (26/88, 89).

"..Oh Lord! do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake..". (2/286).

"..Oh Lord! Thy forgiveness (do we crave), and to Thee is the eventual course". (2/285).

May praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

The Author

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