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Preface

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

The precious legacy left behind by the Holy Prophet's Household [*ahl al-bayt*] (may peace be upon them all) and their followers' preservation of this legacy from the menace of extinction is a perfect example of an all-encompassing school [*maktab*], which embraces the different branches of Islamic knowledge. This school has been able to train many talented personalities by quenching them with this gushing fountain. This school has presented scholars to the Muslim *ummah* who, by following the Holy Prophet's Household (*'a*), have occupied the station of clarifying doubts and skepticisms brought forth by various creeds and intellectual currents both inside and outside Muslim society. Throughout the past centuries, they have presented the firmest answers and solutions to these doubts.

Anchored in the responsibilities it is shouldering, the Ahl al-Bayt (*'a*) World Assembly has embarked upon defending the sanctity of *risalah* [messengership] and its authentic beliefs—truths which have always been opposed by the chiefs and leaders of anti-Islamic sects, religions and trends. In this sacred path, the Assembly regards itself as a follower of the upright pupils of the school of the Ahl al-Bayt (*'a*)—those who have always been ready to refute those accusations and calumnies and have tried to be always in the frontline of this struggle on the basis of the expediencies of time and space.

The experiences in this field, which have been preserved in the books of scholars belonging to the school of the Ahl al-Bayt (*'a*), are unique in their own right. It is because these experiences have been based upon knowledge [*'ilm*] and the preeminence of the intellect and reasoning, and at the same time, they are completely devoid of blind prejudice, whim and caprice. These experiences address experts, scholars and thinkers in a manner that is acceptable to a healthy mind and the pure human natural disposition [*fitrah*].

In a bid to assist those who are in quest of truth, the Ahl al-Bayt (*'a*) World Assembly has endeavored to enter a new phase of these worthy experiences within the framework of research and translating the works of contemporary Shi'ah writers or those who, through divine guidance, have embraced this noble school.

The Assembly is also engaged in the study and publication of the valuable works of pious predecessors

and outstanding Shi'ah personalities so that those who are thirsty for the truth could quench their thirst from this refreshing fountain by listening and embracing this truth, which the Holy Prophet's Household (*'a*) has offered as a gift to the entire world.

It is hoped that our dear readers would not deprive the Ahl al-Bayt (*'a*) World Assembly of their valuable opinions, suggestions and constructive criticisms in this arena.

We also invite scholars, translators and other institutions to assist us in propagating the pure Muhammadan (*S*) Islam.

We ask God, the Exalted, to accept this trivial effort and enhance it further under the auspices of His vicegerent on earth, Hadrat al-Mahdi (may Allah, the Exalted, expedite his glorious advent).

It is appropriate here to express our utmost gratitude to Ayatollah Shaykh Ibrahim Amini for writing the book, and to Mr. Ali Reza'i for translating it, as well as to all our honorable colleagues in accomplishing this task especially the dear ones in the Translation Office for undertaking this responsibility.

Cultural Affairs Department

The Ahl al-Bayt (*'a*) World Assembly

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