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Publisher's Preface

We live in a time when people have come to feel an urgent need to examine the spiritual dimension of their lives. The materialistic tendencies which have dominated so much of the modern age are beginning to lose their attraction. People are beginning to realize that their deepest needs cannot be satisfied by consumer products.

The turn within, however, is not without dangers of its own; sometimes the seeker becomes blinded by the brilliance of relatively superficial religious experiences, other may become victims of extreme forms of asceticism, and perhaps the greatest danger is pride. Guidance is needed for the spiritual journey. With the publication of this book, we hope to provide the seeker with a few basic ideas to guide him or her in the spiritual quest.

This work provides the reader with guidance drawn from the Glorious Qur'an and ahadith about the value of knowledge of the self, and the ways in which this knowledge can help one to achieve one's highest potential.

This book was written in English as a text for foreign students in the Islamic Republic of Iran. While it retains the style of a text of fourteen lessons, it is engaging and lively rather than pedantic. It takes the reader step by step from considerations of the value of self-knowledge to an understanding of the ultimate goal for humanity.

The author has completed advanced degrees in the Islamic seminaries of Qom and in the University of Tehran, where he earned an M.A. in Western philosophy. He has also been teaching Islamic sciences in Qom, Mashhad and Tehran for more than a decade.

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