



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate the Merciful



Al-Mustafa International
Translation and Publication Center

Islamic Theology: A Textbook

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Publisher's Forward

To begin and execute a research is like walking in the path of development and evolvement. When the seeds of the “questions” are planted, in the soil of the mind of the researcher, this phase initiates, and its end is culminated when the result and the outcome of knowledge and wisdom is gained.

Evidently, this end is a new chapter in itself, for growth, and announces beforehand this good news to humans. For the result of all those mental efforts will not only bring the blooming and flowering of talent and all kinds of Blessings to humans, but it also makes the mind of the researcher to ponder and shape new, more questions.

This will produce a great collection of growing plants and flowers for the seeking mind... Those “questions” are in fact, the seeds, which according to the necessities of Time and the strength of the researchers will grow and bloom by themselves. They will make Culture and Civilization to move forward.

In like manner, the increasing rate of transferring oneself from one place to another place and the decrease of the distances will make those seeds travel miles and miles, to faraway places, in order to install them inside the curious mind of other seekers. This will bring an amazing diversity and a novelty for another civilization...

It is true then, that the presence of knowledge and a good, capable management will help this project to develop itself and one has to admit indeed, that it has always played an important role...

Al-Mustafa International Publication and Translation Center, because of its global mission, and its special position among the Religious Schools and the colorful human diversity that it has developed inside itself, sees it as a moral duty to procure all the appropriate conditions for any research works, and takes its role in this matter, most seriously. To procure all kinds of necessary grounds, with an excellent management of all the existing possibilities and talents, and to care and protect all its researchers in religious fields; these are the most crucial responsibilities of the Department of Research in this International center.

We dearly hope that by being attentive to all these autonomous scientific movements, and by fortifying all the existing motives, we shall be able to witness the blooming of the Religious Culture in every part of this wide world!

**Al-Mustafa International
Publication and Translation Center**

Note to the reader

Victory of the Islamic Revolution and establishment of an Islamic Republic promised active presence of religion in socio-political scenes. This idea illustrated religious-national identity as well as socio-political life of Iranians at national level, and demonstrated the need to restore Islamic civilization and reconstitute the identity and dignity to Muslims in the contemporary era at transnational level. Illustration of the need to reconstruct Islamic civilization and attempts to reconstitute Muslim identity led to new questions as well as epistemic and practical challenges for Muslims so that the newly-established system of religious government in Iran decided to explore these questions and challenges through such institutes as Al-Mustafa and talk closely to those interested in the Islamic Revolution. Undoubtedly, Al-Hikmah Institute, as one of the most important sub-branches of Al-Mustafa, has taken some significant and effective steps to accomplish the mission through providing intensive courses and trained many learners. These trainings which were provided in teaching classes, usually with no textbooks available, had to be empowered through preparing teaching material in different languages which has been focused as part of the teaching responsibilities of the Institute in recent years. Not to mention that teaching material in this Institute is very different from what is commonly found in teaching environment of seminary schools and universities. In fact, our textbooks should be concise enough to cover the intensive nature of our teachings as they follow the required teaching standards. Further, as the Institute addresses Muslims-whether Shia or Sunni- as well as believers in other divine religions and even the unfaithful, it seemed necessary to take a proximate approach, create a feeling of sympathy, open the path to dialogue, present the teachings of Ahl al-Bayt (AS) and accomplish our mission to fulfill the goals of our glorious Islamic Revolution. However, it is important to point that the primary purpose of preparing these material is not merely to produce new works, but we also intend to make the best use of available texts and submit them in different forms of summary, compilation or translation to learners. It is obvious that accomplishment of the mission and its scientific

6 Islamic Theology: A Textbook

enrichment owe to precious efforts of instructors and members of scientific groups in the institute who all deserve worthy appreciation. Our Institute provides the learners and enthusiasts with our writings to revive and flourish the learnings of Ahl al-Bayt (AS). We welcome all scientific suggestions and comments by respected instructors, thinkers and researchers in advance. We hope that these scientific and educational efforts lead to the growth and flourish of religious culture, particularly the great teachings of Ahl al-Bayt (AS).

Contents

Introduction	11
Unit 1: Islamic Theology (science of Kalam) in general, proving the existence of God	13
Definition of Islamic Theology	13
Ways to know God	14
Proof of Fitrah (human nature)	15
Argumentation of order	17
Definition of order	17
Conclusion of the proof	18
Proof of Order in the Quran	18
Unit 2: Theoretical monotheism	21
Unity of divine essence	22
Negation of inner essence composition	22
Negation of multiple gods and proof for unity of God	23
Numerical unity and real unity	24
Unity of divine essence in the Quran	24
Unity of divine attributes	25
Proof for unity of divine attributes	26
Proof for unity of divine acts	28
Branches of unity of divine acts	29
Divine unity in creatorship	29
Unity in divine Lordship (Rububiyah)	30
Unity in legislation and sovereignty	31
Divine unity in legislation and sovereignty from viewpoint of the Quran	32
Unity in divinity	33
Unit 3: Practical monotheism, polytheism and the related levels	37
1. Branches of practical monotheism	37
Unity in worship	37
Unity in seeking aid	39
Unity in obedience	39
Unity in affection	40

8 Islamic Theology: A Textbook

Unity in trust	40
2. Levels of polytheism	40
Visible and invisible levels of polytheism	42
Required limit of monotheism	42
Reasons for polytheistic tendencies	43
Polytheism in the Quran	44
Unit 4: Divine attributes	49
Name and attribute	49
Categorization of attributes	50
Possibility to know attributes	51
Divine power	53
Divine living	54
Eternity and everlastingness	54
Divine will	55
Divine word	56
Negative attributes	58
Unit 5: Rational good and evil and divine wisdom and justice	61
Good and evil	61
Divine justice	63
Meaning of justice	64
Kinds of divine justice	64
Argument for divine justice	64
Divine justice in the Quran	65
Issue of evil	67
Unit 6: Fate and Destiny, Determinism and Choice	73
Fate and destiny	73
Scientific fate and destiny	74
Objective fate and destiny	74
Destiny and choice	74
Determinism and choice (free will)	77
The theory of determinism	78
The theory of acquisition	79
The Theory of delegation	79
The chosen theory: The issue between the issues	80
Unit 7: Prophecy	83
The Meaning of "Nabi" (Messenger)	83
Difference between messenger and apostle	84
Goodness or necessity of prophecy	84
Reasoning necessity of the mission	85
Principle of grace	85
Reason of grace	86
The ways of knowing prophets	86
Miracle	87

The Privileges of prophets _____	88
Infallibility _____	89
Rational reason for the infallibility of sin _____	90
Intuitive knowledge _____	92
The universality and immortality of Islam _____	93
Unit 8: Learning objectives: _____	97
Infallibility _____	99
Intuitive science _____	100
Superiority _____	101
Being appointed _____	101
Necessity of appointment of imam from God _____	102
The position of Sunnis on the issue of the succession of the prophet _____	102
Some points _____	103
Unit 9: The imamate of Imam Ali (AS) _____	105
Imamate of Imam Ali (AS) in the Quran _____	106
Answering Some Doubts _____	107
The tradition of the Manzilah (dignity) _____	108
The Story and tradition of Ghadir _____	109
Position of Sunnis _____	113
Unit 10: Twelve Imams and Imam Mahdi (AJ) _____	117
The imamate of Imams in the Quran and narrations _____	118
1. Imamate of People of the House _____	119
2. The expression of the number of Twelve Imams _____	120
3. Mentioning the Names of Imams _____	121
Imam Ali determining the next Imam _____	121
Historical Reference _____	122
Mahdiism in Sunni Narrations _____	124
Imam Mahdi (AJ), the son of Imam Hassan Askari (AS) _____	125
Factors of absence _____	125
Functions of imamate in the time of absence _____	126
Time and signs of the Advent _____	126
The form of the government in the time of the advent _____	128
Longevity _____	128
Unit 11: Eschatology 1: Death and Limbo _____	133
Relationship between eschatology and anthropology _____	134
Death in the Quran and narrations _____	135
Limbo _____	138
Limbo in the Quran and Narrations _____	139
Limo Life _____	140
Deeds embodiment in the limbo _____	142
Unit 12: Eschatology 2 _____	145
Physical and spiritual resurrection _____	146
Eschatological body _____	147
Proving the necessity of the resurrection _____	148

10 Islamic Theology: A Textbook

The Proof of righteousness _____	148
The Proof of wisdom _____	148
The signs of the day of resurrection in the Quran and narrations _____	148
The record of deeds _____	151
Scale (deeds evaluation) _____	151
Inferno and paradise _____	152
Inferno signs _____	154
References _____	159

Introduction

Concerning the importance of religious beliefs and Islamic theology, it is enough to say that imitation is not permissible in such issues. Various books have been written for readers with different purposes, each of which can help believers to modify, illuminate and protect their religious beliefs.

Today, modern theology has introduced new approaches and themes to the field. One may think that modern theology has set aside the traditional and classical themes of theology; in other words, the period for ancient theology has ended and it makes no help to raise the relevant issues anymore. Nonetheless, this assumption is not true and it has to be reviewed in an appropriate occasion. The real fact is that the ancient and modern theologies complement each other. The need to the old themes and approach to theology is still the same. Thus, thinkers and writers in the field have produced and continue to produce precocious works.

One of the primary needs of learners who participate in Al-Hikmah intensive courses from all over the world, particularly from Muslim countries, is to know and deepen their knowledge of religious beliefs. Because of this demand, and in order to establish uniformity in teaching beliefs the Institute's scientific committee for textbook production decided to put the preparation of a single textbook according to the requirements of the Institute on its agenda. Among the available works, the committee found the two-volume book on teaching Islamic theology by the respected scholar, Dr. Muhammad Sa'idi Mehr, as appropriate to serve its purpose, though it was too extensive for its learners. The author was a by the committee to rewrite the most important and up- to- date issues of the above work, considering other similar works, in twelve units, which resulted to the following:

The first four units deal with general issues of Muslim theology, monotheism, polytheism and divine attributes.

Unit five discusses the good and evil, justice and divine wisdom.

12 Islamic Theology: A Textbook

Unit six looks at the issues of fate and destiny as well as compulsion and freedom of will.

Unit seven examines the Prophecy, units eight, nine and ten study custodianship and units eleven and twelve examine issues about Resurrection.

Finally, I would like to thank all contributors for their contribution to produce this textbook and I wish them success and prosperity from God.