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## A Few Words About This Book by Ayatullah Al-Uzma Makarim Shirazi

Questions have always been a key to the treasures of human knowledge, and individuals and nations who tend to question less come to acquire a reduced share from this vast treasure. Basically, it is the right of every person to ask questions and obtain their answers, and none can be deprived of this logical and rational privilege.

The Noble Qur'an has repeatedly emphasized this aspect – ask those, who possess knowledge, about that of which you do not possess knowledge.

فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

The extensiveness of this Qur'anic ruling reveals that Islam does not recognize any limits or restrictions as far as the issue of 'questioning' is concerned, and permits the Muslims and even the non-Muslims (despite appearing to be general in meaning, this verse, in reality is addressed to the non-Muslims) to pose every kind of question, including those pertaining to various doctrinal, social, ethical and political issues, to those who have knowledge about them.

Exceptions to this rule are misleading questions asked with the intention of spoiling people's faith, distorting constructive ideas, fermenting disturbance and confusion in the minds of the public, mere wrangling, baseless arguments, obstinacy and prejudice. In reality, these are not questions but destructive inhumane plots in the guise of questions.

In any case, since the Noble Qur'an is a colossal encyclopaedia of divine sciences and human affairs, on numerous occasions and in connection with various verses, there are questions that come to the fore – a great number of which, due to lack of applicability in those periods, have remained unanswered in the books of past commentators.

While writing Tafsir-e-Namunah (with the assistance of some accomplished scholars), we strived to propound all these questions – especially those related to present-day issues – and to answer them in detail.

Since it appeared essential that everyone, especially the educated youths, possess the answers to these questions, Hujjatul Islam Agha-e-Husaini and a number of honourable scholars of the Theological Seminary of Qum – whose names appear in the introduction of the book – exerted themselves greatly in extracting these questions and answers from the 27 volumes of Tafsir-e-Namunah and 10 volumes of Payam-e-Qur'an. Consequently, they accumulated one hundred and eighty important questions and expended great effort in imparting a systematic arrangement to them – may Allah (s.w.t.) accept their efforts.

It is hoped that this collection creates a new opening for everyone – especially the beloved Muslim youths – regarding issues pertaining to Islam and the Qur'an, and serves as provision for all of us for the Day of Judgment.

Hawzah 'Ilmiyyah, Qum  
Nasir Makarim Shirazi

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