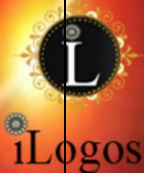


Book to go!

Theology of Life

Hamid Kasiri



iLogos's 5th Anniversary!

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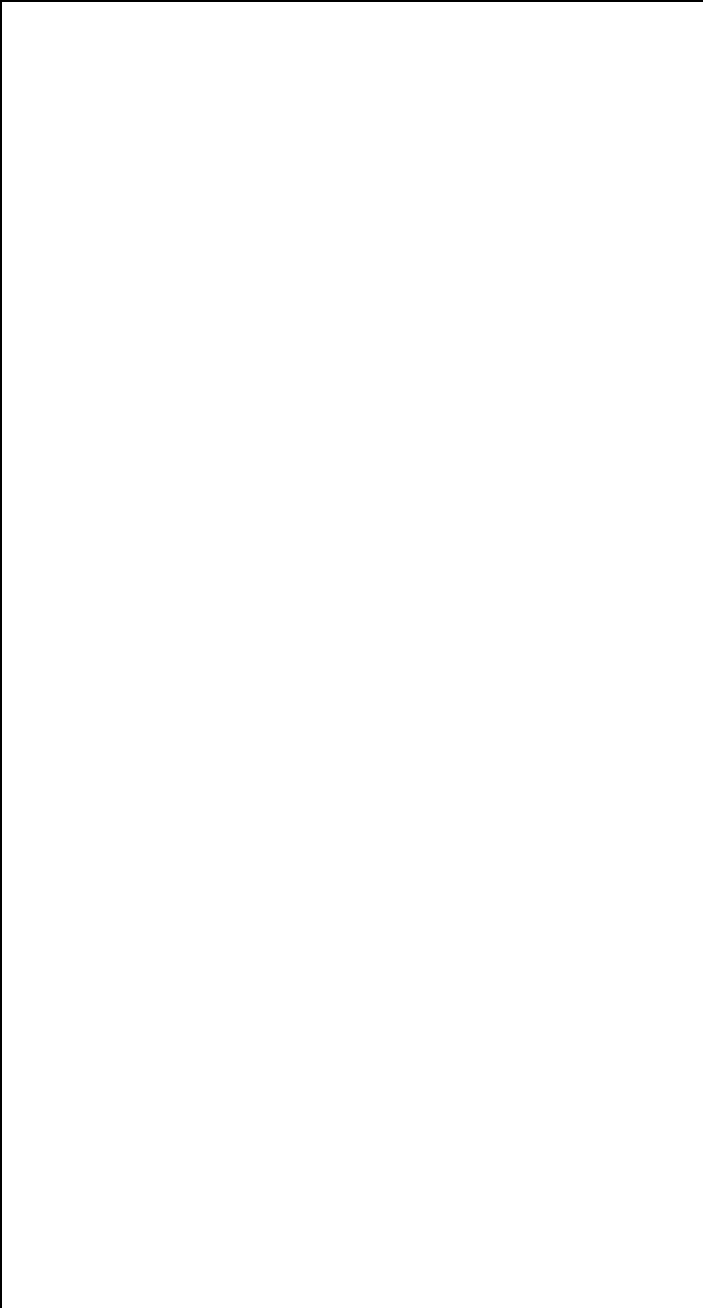
Book to Go!

“Book to Go!” as a new book series deals with some relevant issues from the perspective of the Shia Islam. Everything presented here is **“Shiite Discourses”** and was published in my previous works, but some readers was interested to have them in a new compact form so that they can take them with on travel, on the subway and ...!

These multi-volume study booklets are a kind of **“Book to Go!”** and try to remind us in a different way of actions and lead us to harmony between faith and praxis and in life with others: *“Behave toward people the way, you want them to behave toward you.”* And this is my way, so follow it and do not follow the other paths.

This book series is published in the hope of contributing to a better understanding of **“Shiite Discourses”** in the 21st century. **“Book to Go!”** aims to motivate people to think. It thus doesn't mean, “cash and carry” or “cash and go”, but rather **“cash and read”!** This is because reading leads to the revival of the soul and refresh the mind!

Hamid Kasiri
(Amin-ul-Islam Mazandarani)
Vienna, at 03.03.2023!



Life Program

Shia Islam is described as a *life program* that corresponds to human spiritual and physical nature (*Fitra*). Its perfection consists in the complete *coordination* of the spiritual and material aspects of human life. In this coordination and in this harmony, there is a great potential to guide man and bring him closer to God.

According to the teachings of Islam, these two aspects need to be reconciled not only for this reason, so as not to create an inherent conflict between the physical and spiritual existence of man, but to emphasize the fact that their interaction and their actual indivisibility are the *natural basis* of life. Nevertheless, Shia Islam is in the sense of a life theology that is designed to spread.

This Quranic ***theology of life*** is a way of thinking that has fundamental influence on the structure and management of society as well as on the development, directive prevailing in society, its aims and purposes of society, and safeguarding the factors necessary for the maintenance of this Order. It

establishes a harmonious balance between the physical and the spiritual as well as between the private and the social dimension of life.

It therefore enables the perfect use of the goods created by God, while at the same time the duties to God are tightened for each human being: prayer, fasting, charity and financial duties or tasks towards his fellow human beings. Thus, Shia Islam proves to be a religion for general humanity and not just as a religion of the elect. Its attraction is universal: all believers are brothers and sisters, they are equal, regardless of which class, race, or language. The only possible superiority is the respect and admiration of God: the greatest piety.

Islam is not a religion of the ignorant. On the contrary, Islam is the final and perfected religion that has been revealed to eliminate ignorance. That is why the Quran proclaims that knowledge is the most important requirement for being a true and godly believer: *“Truly, God-fearing of his servants are those **who know**,”*¹

The Prophet Muhammad (s) said: “The superiority of the one who possesses knowledge over a person who worships is

¹ *Holy Quran* 35:28.

like my superiority to the least of you.”² But beyond that, the Prophet Muhammad (s) combines knowledge with wisdom, because knowledge without wisdom harms humanity more than it benefits. Therefore, one should combine knowledge with reason and spirituality on one’s life path in order to achieve perfection, otherwise one expects an alienation. It is an important principle of ***Shiite ethics of knowledge*** that those who expand their knowledge without increasing their fear of God at the same time distance themselves from their exalted Creator!

This fear of God should be understood as reverence. Man does not have to fear God as he fears the drought that can destroy his livelihood. Instead, he should realize every moment of his life that everything he holds in his hands has come to him directly by God’s grace and that everything he creates and edifies in life can only be traced back with the help and will of God. God thus becomes the central, supreme principle that offers guidance and orientation for all people at the same time.

² Majlisi, M. B. (Allama): *Bihar-ul-Anwar*. Mo-assasah al-Wafa, Beirut/Lebanon, 21982, Vol. 61, p. 245.

This *theology of life*, based on knowledge, wisdom and awe, claims universal validity. Its goal is to establish the Islamic order or rule in the lives of the individual Shiites around the world and in all stages of life. Their accomplished execution consists in the complete coordination of the spiritual and material aspects of human life.³

Life theology includes laws, and laws are arguably the strongest objectivizations that exists; but it is essentially not a law itself, always the present trace of speech always cling to the commanding word, the wise voice is always there or still resonates. The reproduction by the comparatively firm and rigid term “law” deprives the term “Sharia” of this inner dynamic and vital character. This dynamic means that Islam does not belief in letters, but rather presents the need for an interpretation of the specific situation.

According to the teachings of Islam, these two aspects must be reconciled not only in order not to create an inherent conflict between the physical and moral existence of man, but in order to emphasis the fact, that their interaction and actual indivisibility are the natural basis of life. These elements

³ *Hl. Quran 34:28.*

result in a balance between thinking and living. ***Islam is a religion of spiritual balance*** and fairness, which is why the first commandment of Islamic thought is: Be fair to yourself! Those who think that they can achieve the goal of thinking and life by putting themselves under pressure are mistaken, such people come to nothing.

You are like a man riding a horse from one city to another. He thinks that if he rides faster, he gets to the finish line faster. In fact, he can cover a distance faster, but then he realizes that he not only misses his goal, but also harms his horse.

Those who use their powers prudently, trust in God and live in unity with themselves can achieve any goal without having to push themselves too hard. In this sense, the Prophet Muhammad (s) says to his follower Jabir: *“Truly! This religion (Islam) is a stronghold. So, enter with courtesy and contemplation. A man who hastiest and wants to take shortcuts will not come anywhere, and he will tire his horse. So, care for the country as if you want to live there forever. And act as if you were going to die tomorrow.”*⁴

⁴ Qumi, Abbas (Shaikh): *Safinat-ul-Bihar*. Oswah, Qum/Iran, 1998, Vol. 1, p. 532.

Book to Go!

"Book to Go!" as a multi-volume study booklet is a kind of **"cash and read"** and tries to remind the readers different ways of thinking and actions. Its compact content leads to harmony between faith and praxis and in living with others.

Theology of Life

Shia Islam is described as a *life program* that corresponds to human spiritual and physical nature (*Fitra*). In this coordination there is a great potential to guide man and bring him closer to God; now and here. **Theology of life**, based on **knowledge (education), wisdom (of the Quran and the Sunnah) and relationship (through supplication and prayer)**, and claims universal validity. At the **forum of its social commitment**, Shia Islam deals not only with the Muslims as brothers in faith alone, but also with all people - and especially with the book owners - and extends the hand of scientific and practical cooperation to them. In doing so, he tries to pave the way for a non-violent coexistence on the basis of a **"just peace"**.

Prof. Dr. Hamid Kasiri

Author of several book series on nonviolent, Dialogue, **"Just peace"** and Shia Studies. His monographs on Shia Islam at universities are now considered as classics. He is the founder and owner of **"ILogos International Publications"**, Vienna/Austria.

