The “liberal” view of Twelver Shi‘ite jurisprudence holds that the leading mujtahids (or jurisconsults), who are few in number, have the right to command while the ordinary believer has a choice as to which mujtahid he or she should obey. In fact, the situation of the believer is much more complex, and the question of choosing one mujtahid as the believer’s highest “source of emulation” has become a question of national importance in Shi‘ite-majority countries such as Iraq, Iran and Bahrain. Manuals for Islamic conduct have been issued by all of the high-ranking mujtahids. Each manual opens with a discussion on choosing a mujtahid and the legal consequences of this choice. These discussions include consideration of the possibility of following a deceased mujtahid, such as Khomeini or Montazeri, his more liberal pupil. They also include consideration of which people have the experience to guide the ordinary believer toward choosing an appropriate mujtahid to follow. Furthermore, they consider the question as to whether the leading mujtahids should have the ability to be politically effective as well as possess the required learning. This lecture is concerned primarily with the Arab world although some reference will be made to the Iranian example.