

مدارج السالكين PATH OF THE TRAVELLER

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

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INTRODUCTION

- We all want to see Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) and we do not want to be distracted from loving Him, loving the Prophet (ﷺ) and loving each other for Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).
- The book (مدارج السالكين) is not just about a path of what we see in life. We may assume the book is only about actions of the heart, but there is something very important to begin with and that is (لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله). We cannot go on in

life without (لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله). It is not just something said without believing in it.

- We say (أشهد) – “I bear witness” – even if we see and witness many scenes in our life, but the scene that we always want to witness in every situation is (لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله). And this testimony brings us together and gathers us.
- To love the Prophet (ﷺ) protects us from our desires and that is why those who believe in Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) and the messengers are the ever-truthful ones. This is because the person gives his love to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) and the Prophet (ﷺ) and not to his desires or the desire of others.

SURAH AL HADID 19

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

And those who have believed in Allah and His messengers - those are [in the ranks of] the supporters of truth

- And this shows us that it is a journey of love. It cannot be that someone is travelling and they hate the path. But when there is no love or something affects the love, then the path becomes unclear.
- Our worship needs to be sincere to Allah (سبحانه) from the inside and it cannot be separated from following the Prophet (ﷺ).

SURAH AL 'ASR

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1

وَالْعَصْرِ

By time,

2

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِفِي خُسْرٍ

Indeed, mankind is in loss,

3

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا
بِالصَّبْرِ

Except for those who have believed and done righteous deeds and advised each other to truth and advised each other to patience.

- As humans we want to succeed, and Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) has given us the definition of success that does not change – this definition gives us completion of ourselves and completion with others. Success is to believe and perform good deeds and to enjoin others to truth and to be patient.

- Complete faith is when we unconditionally love Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), love the Prophet (ﷺ) and love each other for Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).
- The meaning of (وَتَوَاصَوْا), to advise and to enjoin is an exchange to be open to say what we think, even if it is not right or we may hear what we do not like, but to remain patient, and then it is to fill the gaps with truth.
- To have a companion in life allows us to share what we feel which we would be unable to if it is just a group of people.
- Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) sees our hearts and to have a companion keeps us united. A person does not want to leave himself with his own desires.

PATH OF THE TRAVELLER (مدارج السالكين)

SURAH AL FATIHA

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

2

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds -

3

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful,

4

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Sovereign of the Day of Recompense.

5

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

It is You we worship and You we ask for help.

6

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the straight path -

7

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray.

- Surah Al Fatiha is a connection and the entire prayer will be invalid if the surah is not recited in every unit of prayer. Surah Al Fatiha is all about tawheed and we will not find any surah like this in the previous books.

LOFTY GOALS IN SURAH AL FATIHA

1. TO KNOW WHO IS THE ONE WORTHY OF WORSHIP

- We praise Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) because He is One and perfect so we attach to Him alone. We praise Him because He did not leave us

without nurturing us. And we praise Him because He is so merciful to us despite our many faults and weaknesses.

2. CONFIRMATION WE WILL RETURN TO ALLAH

3. CONFIRMATION OF MESSENGERS

4. GUIDANCE

SURAH AL FATIHA 6

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the straight path

- We are all misguided and we all need guidance. Previously we talked about the types of guidance.

TYPES OF GUIDANCE

1. GUIDANCE OF BEING SHOWN WITH EVIDENCE (هداية)

(البيان والدلالة)

- We need guidance to know and understand it, that it is made clear with evidence. So Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) sends the messengers.

2. GUIDANCE OF ACTING AND WHILE AT PEACE (هداية)

(التوفيق والألهام)

- Then there is guidance to act on it and Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) will inspire what to do. For example, the mother of Musa (عليه السلام) knew her son was in danger but did not know what to do, so Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) inspired her of the action she needed to take.

3. GUIDANCE TO REMAIN FIRM (هداية الثبات)

- There is guidance to remain firm and constant.

4. GUIDANCE TO BE SAFE AND PROTECTED (هداية السلامة والحفظ)

5. GUIDANCE TO PARADISE (هداية إلى الجنة)

- There is guidance to remain safe and guidance to paradise.

5. THE STRAIGHT PATH

- We could easily ask Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) to guide us, but here we specify what we want to be guided to – and that is the Straight Path.
- We need guidance to the Straight Path because there are many paths in this life.
- Once the Prophet (ﷺ) was sitting with the Companion and he drew in the sand a straight line and then drew other crooked lines around it. And he pointed to the straight line that will save us. There is balance for us in the Straight Path and everything will be in its place.

FOLLOW THE STRAIGHT PATH

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ كُنَّا عِنْدَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ .
 فَخَطَّ خَطًّا وَخَطَّ خَطَّيْنِ عَنْ يَمِينِهِ وَخَطَّ خَطَّيْنِ عَنْ يَسَارِهِ ثُمَّ
 وَضَعَ يَدَهُ فِي الْخَطِّ الْأَوْسَطِ فَقَالَ " هَذَا سَبِيلُ اللَّهِ " . ثُمَّ تَلَا
 هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ {وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا
 السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ} .

We were with the Prophet (ﷺ), and he drew a line (in the sand), then he drew two lines to its right and two to its left. Then he put his hand on the middle line and said : 'This is the path of Allah. Then he recited the Verse: And verily, this (i.e. Allah's Commandments) is My straight path, so follow it and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you from His path...'¹

¹ Sunan Ibn Majah 11, Authenticated by Al Albani as Sahih

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STRAIGHT PATH

1. STEADFAST

- When we are on the Straight Path, we feel we are upright and steadfast. This means it is a Straight Path that does not shake us.

MY LORD IS ALLAH AND REMAIN
STEADFAST

أَنَّ سُفْيَانَ بْنَ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ التَّقْفِيِّ، قَالَ قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ حَدِّثْنِي
بِأَمْرٍ أَعْتَصِمُ بِهِ . قَالَ " قُلْ رَبِّيَ اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقِمْ "

"I said: 'O Messenger of Allah, tell me of something that I can adhere to.' He said: 'Say: "Allah is my Lord," then stand straight (adhere steadfastly to Islam).'²

SURAH HUD 112

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ

So remain on a right course as you have been
commanded

² Sunan Ibn Majah 3972

- Surah Hud is about reforming ourselves before reforming others. It is important to have istiqamah and be on the Straight Path as Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) commanded us.
- Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) commands what to do and what not to do. The messengers could not act without inspiration from Allah (سبحانه وتعالى). For example, the people would ask the Prophet (ﷺ) something and he would not answer on his own until he receives inspiration from Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).

SURAH ASH SHURA 15

فَلِذَلِكَ فَادُعُ ۖ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَقُلْ
 آمَنْتُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابٍ ۖ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۖ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا
 وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ ۖ لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۖ
 اللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا ۖ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ

So to that [religion of Allah] invite, [O Muhammad (ﷺ)], and remain on a right course as you are commanded and do not follow their inclinations but say, "I have believed in what Allah has revealed of the Qur'an, and I have been commanded to do justice among you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us are our deeds, and for you your deeds. There is no [need for] argument between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is the [final] destination."

- Sometimes we tell ourselves, "I will not eat sugar for a week" and we remain firm on it. And if asked why, we may say, "we read an article or the doctor told us".
- But here it is what Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) commands us and this is what will help us to remain upright.

SURAH FUSSILAT 30 TO 32

30

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا
تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ

Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allah" and then remained on a right course - the angels will descend upon them, [saying], "Do not fear and do not grieve but receive good tidings of Paradise, which you were promised.

31

نَحْنُ أَوْلِيَاؤُكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا
تَشْتَهِي أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَلَكُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَدَّعُونَ

We [angels] were your allies in worldly life and [are so] in the Hereafter. And you will have therein whatever your souls desire, and you will have therein whatever you request [or wish]

32

نُزُلًا مِّنْ غَفُورٍ رَّحِيمٍ

As accommodation from a [Lord who is] Forgiving and Merciful."

- We all want to be on the Straight Path to what Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) commands us and to what He has nurtured us. The istiqamah for someone in grade 1 is different for someone in grade 12.
- When Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) nurtures us to love Him, love the Prophet (ﷺ) and love each other for Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) then we want to have istaqamah and remain steadfast on it.
- When we say, “our Rabb is Allah” and we remain steadfast on what Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) has nurtured us then we will feel firm and it will make us not fear or panic.
- And then the angels will come down and tell us, “to not fear or be sad and receive glad tidings of paradise, that which you were promised”.

- The one seeking the truth always wants these feelings. He does not want to be restless in what he is doing.
- Then the angels say, “we were your close beloved friends in this life and the next”.

SURAH AL AHQAAF 13

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

Indeed, those who have said, "Our Lord is Allah," and then remained on a right course - there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.

- We always want to remain steadfast on the nurturing of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).

REMAINING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STRAIGHT PATH

- The remaining characteristics of the Straight Path which we will look into in the upcoming classes in sha'a Allah:
 2. It will reach the destination (الإيصال إلى المقصود): the Straight Path will take us to paradise.
 3. The Straight Path is not something far away from us, it is near to us.
 4. Its capacity can handle all, but only a few will go on the Straight Path
 5. It is the path chosen to reach paradise

ALLAH AL 'ALEEM (THE ALL-KNOWER)

- The knowledge of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) is vast and deep. We did not even know there will be a class today.

- The knowledge of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) is not preceded with ignorance nor is it followed with forgetfulness. Unlike ourselves who came out of the wombs of our mothers not knowing anything.

SURAH AN NAHL 78

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّن بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا

And Allah has extracted you from the wombs of your mothers not knowing a thing,

- We did not know about matters of faith either.

SURAH ASH SHURA 52

مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ

You did not know what is the Book or [what is] faith,

- It is only Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) Who taught us.
- We forget and we need Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) to forgive us.

SURAH AL BAQARAH 286

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا

"Our Lord, do not impose blame upon us if we have forgotten or erred.

- The knowledge of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) is the first stage of the decree.
- He knows everything that will happen to us. He knows every single possibility and impossibility. He knows who will be our parents, siblings, spouse and children and He chooses the best for us.
- This makes us trust the knowledge of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى). Whatever He chose for us is the best way to have the best connection to Him.
- At the same time to never think 'why did this happen?', 'I know this way would have been better'.

- There are many kinds of knowledge but the knowledge about Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) is the greatest because there is no subject greater than Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).
- The Prophet (ﷺ) asked to be increased in knowledge.

SURAH TAHA 114

وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

and say, "My Lord, increase me in knowledge."

- Knowledge is the first condition of Laa Ilaaha illa Allah (لا إله إلا الله) There is no one worthy of worship except Allah.
- Then comes the other conditions of certainty, acceptance, submission, truthfulness, sincerity and love. Notice that the end is with love. This greatest knowledge is what leads us to the

feeling of love. Loving Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) leads to loving the Prophet (ﷺ) and the believers. Everything will be in line.

SURAH MOHAMMED 19

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ

So know, [O Muhammad (ﷺ)], that there is no deity except Allah and ask forgiveness for your sin

- With knowledge we can feel we know and feel less connected to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى). But the more we know Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), His actions, His nurturing and how He deals with us, the more we seek forgiveness. This is the balance.
- They keys of the knowledge of the unseen belongs to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).

SURAH LUQMAN 34

إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنزِلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

Indeed, Allah [alone] has knowledge of the Hour and sends down the rain and knows what is in the wombs. And no soul perceives what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul perceives in what land it will die. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.

- Only Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) knows when the Day of Judgement will take place.
- Only Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) knows where rain will fall, how many drops and with what intensity.
- Only Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) knows what we will earn tomorrow even from feelings and connections.

- Only Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) knows what will be our final place. A person can be at home and end up in the hospital. A person can be at the hospital and ends at home. A person can be from one land but dies in another. The knowledge of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) is vast.
- Only Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) knows what is in our hearts.
- Only Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) knows what we feel and think, so judgment only belongs to Him.
- Knowledge can purify a person and make them better or make a person arrogant and proud. With knowledge, it is very important to be humble to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

GUIDE US TO THE STRAIGHT PATH.

REFERENCES

1. مدارج السالكين - ابن القيم

RELATED RESOURCES

STAGES OF GUIDANCE
TEN PRINCIPLES FOR STEADFASTNESS

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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