

مدارج السالكين

PATH OF THE TRAVELLER

All praises are due to Allah. Anything good is from Allah and any mistakes are from ourselves and the shaitan. May Allah forgive us.

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سم الله الرحمن الرحيم
لا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله

مدارج السالكين PATH OF THE TRAVELLER

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PATH OF THE TRAVELLER (مدارج السالكين)

YOU ALONE WE WORSHIP AND YOU ALONE
WE ASK FOR HELP (إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ)

- The way to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) is to be active and the opposite is to be lazy and lacking in motivation. Or a person can be active, but is only active for himself.

SURAH AL BALAD 17

ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ

And then being among those who believed and advised one another to patience and advised one another to compassion.

- The place of patience is in the heart, and patience is to hold our heart from complaining.
- Previously, we mentioned the way to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) cannot just be routine because this kills the feelings and reward. And to be active begins with the heart.
- If the heart is sound (قلب سليم) then we can have an active heart, but if our heart is sick then it will not benefit us.
- The heart is the place where Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) looks and observes (القلب محل نظر الرب). Allah (سبحانه) monitors our heart and knows when it turns, what it desires, what it is eager towards. He knows if there is disbelief, hypocrisy or jealousy.

- Knowledge is light and the way to Allah (سبحانه) is not with limbs only, but the main driver is the heart. The goodness or wickedness of a person is based on the activity of his heart. If the heart is active in a right way, then all that we do will be right and correct.

SOUND HEART AND TRUTHFUL TONGUE

أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ يَقُولُ فِي صَلَاتِهِ " اللَّهُمَّ
إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الثَّبَاتَ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَالْعَزِيمَةَ عَلَى الرُّشْدِ وَأَسْأَلُكَ شُكْرَ
نِعْمَتِكَ وَحُسْنَ عِبَادَتِكَ وَأَسْأَلُكَ قَلْبًا سَلِيمًا وَلِسَانًا صَادِقًا
وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ مَا تَعَلَّمَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا تَعَلَّمَ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ
لِمَا تَعَلَّمْتُ " .

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to say in his prayer:

"Allahumma inni as'aluka at-thabbuta fi al-amr wal-'azimata 'alar-rushdi wa as'aluka shukr ni'matik wa husna 'ibadatik wa as'aluka qalban saliman wa lisanan sadiqan wa as'aluka min

*khairi ma at'lamu wa author bika min sharri ma
at'lamu wastaghfiruka lima ta'lam*

(O Allah, I ask You for steadfastness in all my affairs and determination in following the right path, I ask You to make me thankful for Your blessings and to make me worship You properly.

I ask You for a sound heart and a truthful tongue. I ask You for the best of what You know and I seek refuge in You from the worst of what You know and I seek Your forgiveness for what You know.)"¹

- The sound heart needs to be purified from any sins and to be beautified with goodness.
- We all want (تزكية) – which is to be purified first and then beautified. For example, if there is a glass with dirt inside and we fill it with pure water, even if we place pure water, it still gets mixed with dirt. And similarly, if we just add good deeds, but without purifying our heart, then it is still mixed with impurity.

¹ Sunan an-Nasa'i 1304

SURAH ASH SHAMS 9

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

He has succeeded who purifies it,

- It is important to remove what is impure and fill it with good. Just like a cavity, it is removed and then it is filled. If it is not filled then it will be filled with a cavity again.
- If someone has shirk inside their heart, it needs to be removed and then filled with tawheed. If there is jealousy, it needs to be removed and filled with loving for others what we love for ourselves. If someone has hypocrisy and their heart lies, then it needs to be removed and filled with truthfulness.
- In the way to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), we do not want to be lazy, we need a pure heart and that is

with purification and beautification. And the heart is a container which can quickly change.

- As we are approaching Ramadan, may Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) make us reach it, we want to increase in purification, seeking forgiveness before filling it with the great worships in Ramadan.

SUPPLICATION FOR FORGIVENESS

أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ وَ أَتُوبُ
إِلَيْهِ

*Astaghfirullāha 'l-'Adhīm alladhi lā ilāha illā
huwa 'l-ḥayyul-Qayyūm wa atūbu ilayh.*

I seek the forgiveness of Allah the Mighty, Whom there is none worthy of worship except Him, the Living, the Eternal, and I repent to Him.²

² Al-Albani graded it authentic in Sahih At-Tirmidhi 3/182

- When we know the heart turns quickly, then we need to quickly purify it because we know it can quickly get stained.

SUPPLICATION TO KEEP OUR HEARTS FIRM

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

Yā muqallibal-qulūbi thabbit qalbī `alā dīnik
 O Turner of the hearts, keep my heart firm upon
 Your religion³

- The Prophet (ﷺ) used to say this dua the most because our heart can quickly flip and change. Our path to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) has to be with a purified and beautified heart. When we change, we need to return and see why did it happen and not for ourselves, but for Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).

³ Jami` at-Tirmidhi 3587

- If the heart is so purified and good, then it cannot have enough of the Words of Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), subhan Allah. May Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) purify our hearts. Ameen. What is the point of doing good deeds while our heart is jealous, desires evil and so forth.

DIRECTOR OF THE HEARTS

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "اللهم مصرف القلوب
صرف قلوبنا على طاعتك"

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) supplicated:

*"Allahumma musarrifal-qulubi, sarrif qulubana
'ala ta'atika*

*(O Allah! Controller of the hearts, direct our
hearts to Your obedience)."*⁴

- The word (مصرف) means to be directed, converted and exchanged, we do not want

⁴ Riyadh As Saliheen, Muslim, Book 16, Hadith 6

our heart to be directed to disobedience, but to be directed to obedience.

- Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) is among the sidiqeen (ever-truthful ones) because his heart was constantly relying on Allah (سبحانه وتعالى). If the heart is stained, then it can slow down from going forward. Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was foremost in belief and foremost in performing good deeds. When Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was informed by Quraish that the Prophet (ﷺ) went up to the heavens in a night, he said, “I believe him”, he does not need more verification. And Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was foremost in returning to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى). When he stopped providing his relative after discovering he had spoken about his daughter Aisha (may Allah be

pleased with him), Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) revealed an ayah to not stop his goodness despite what happened. And Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) continue to give.

- When he asked the Prophet (ﷺ) to teach him a dua, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

THE PROPHET (ﷺ) TAUGHT ABU BAKR (رضي الله عنه) THIS SUPPLICATION

أَنَّ أَبَا بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. قَالَ لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ عَلِّمْنِي دُعَاءً أَدْعُو بِهِ فِي صَلَاتِي. قَالَ " قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي ظُلْمًا كَثِيرًا، وَلَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، فَاعْفِرْ لِي مِنْ عِنْدِكَ مَغْفِرَةً، إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ".

Abu Bakr As-Siddiq said to the Prophet (ﷺ) "O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)! Teach me an invocation with which I may invoke Allah in my prayers."

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Say: O Allah! I have wronged my soul very much (oppressed myself), and none forgives the sins but You; so please

bestow Your Forgiveness upon me. No doubt,
You are the Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."⁵

- Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) did not say, “why is this dua for me?”, but he quickly said it. And this truly shows how he is constantly observing his heart to be foremost in belief, foremost in actions and foremost in purification.
- The heart cannot be foremost if it is not clean, so it is important to manage the purity of the heart before managing the activity of the heart.
- In the book, it mentions activities of the heart, tongue and limbs. And with regards to the heart, we will look at the disobedience (معاصي) and obedience (طاعات) of the heart.

⁵ Sahih al-Bukhari 7387

Disobedience (Sins) of the Heart (معاصي القلب)	Obedience (Worship) of the Heart (طاعات القلب)
Sins that kill the heart, we ask Allah for the well-being.	To be continued in sha'a Allah
1. Disbelief	
2. Shirk	
3. Hypocrisy	

SINS OF THE HEART (معاصي القلب)

1. DISBELIEF

Disbelief is to deny Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), the Last Day, the messengers and the books. The meaning of disbelief is to cover the truth, so how can someone go to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) with disbelief, denying and mocking Him? Subhan Allah.

SEEKING REFUGE FROM DISBELIEF

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْكُفْرِ

Allahumma inni a-udhu bika min al-kufri

O Allah, I seek refuge with You from disbelief⁶

2. SHIRK

- Shirk: this means he believes in Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), but associates with Him that someone else can cure, someone else is worthy of worship, whether it is a messenger, angel, stone or anything else. Allah does not accept shirk.
- Shirk is not only to worship idols, but it begins in the heart when we think someone with Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) disposes affairs. For example it is shirk to believe stars or energy can provide us, benefit us or harm us.

⁶ Sunan an-Nasa'i 1347

- Shirk is a very vast matter and Allah will not accept it. For example, someone believes a certain tree can bring good luck, so they go to it and make a wish to this tree. And another commits adultery with his mother, though which is worse? We will react to the second, but the first is the right of Allah. If Allah (سبحانه) is more important than anyone else, then our heart will go to Him first.
- Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) will not accept shirk, even if the person does good, helps others, prays and does good deeds.

SUPPLICATION TO BE PROTECTED FROM SHIRK

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أُشْرِكَ بِكَ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ بِمَا لَا أَعْلَمُ

Allāhumma innī a`ūdhu bika an ushrika bika wa anā a`lam, wa astaghfiruka limā lā a`lam.
 O Allah, I seek refuge in You lest I associate anything with You knowingly, and I seek Your forgiveness for what I know not.⁷

- We belittle shirk because we think, “he’s not harming anyone”. Though we do not want our heart to turn to other than Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), or hope, fear or love with Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).
- For example, what caused Banu Israel to worship the calf after being saved from Firaoun? There is a desire in the heart.
- They were under the oppression of Firaoun for a long time and Allah sent clear ayat of (Ia), and the greatest ayah of (Ia) was to see the sea split to twelve dry paths, one for each tribe. And when Firaoun and his soldiers followed

⁷ Sahihut-Tarhib wat- Tarhib 1/19

them, the sea returned as before and they all drowned. After being saved, they saw people worshipping a tree with charms, and they asked Musa (عليه السلام) to create an idol for them just as they have one.

SURAH AL 'ARAAF 138

وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتَوْا عَلَى قَوْمٍ يَعْكُفُونَ عَلَى
أَصْنَامٍ لَهُمْ قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى اجْعَلْ لَنَا إِلَهًا كَمَا لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ قَالَ
إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ تَجْهَلُونَ

And We took the Children of Israel across the sea; then they came upon a people intent in devotion to [some] idols of theirs. They said, "O Moses, make for us a god just as they have gods." He said, "Indeed, you are a people behaving ignorantly.

- People are attracted to charms, placing stones, checking their star signs as if it gives them security.

- And Musa (عليه السلام) was very firm with them as mercy for them, and not that it is something ok.
- When Musa (عليه السلام) went to receive the Tablets, Banu Israel took their jewelry and one man named As Samiree said I will melt this gold and make it into an idol of a calf. And the calf was made because they used to see statues of it with Firaoun. And from the way the calf was made, it made a “mooing” sound due to hollowness in it.
- And the punishment for As Samiree was not to not be touched by anyone because he touched haram.

SURAH TA HA 97

قَالَ فَاذْهَبْ فَإِنَّ لَكَ فِي الْحَيَاةِ أَنْ تَقُولَ لَا مِسَاسَ صَوِّانٍ لَكَ
 مَوْعِدًا لَنْ تُخْلَفَهُ صَوِّوَانظُرْ إِلَى إِلٰهِكَ الَّذِي ظَلْتَ عَلَيْهِ عَاكِفًا
 لَنُحَرِّقَنَّهُ ثُمَّ لَنَنْسِفَنَّهُ فِي الْيَمِّ نَسْفًا

[Moses] said, "Then go. And indeed, it is [decreed] for you in [this] life to say, 'No contact.' And indeed, you have an appointment [in the Hereafter] you will not fail to keep. And look at your 'god' to which you remained devoted. We will surely burn it and blow it into the sea with a blast.

- Then Musa (عليه السلام) burnt the idol, took the ashes and threw it in the sea.

SURAH AL BAQARAH 93

وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ ؕ

And their hearts absorbed [the worship of] the calf because of their disbelief.

- Their heart was quenched with the love of that idol in their heart. We seek refuge with Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) from shirk.
- A heart cannot be sound if there is shirk. When there is shirk then everything will be wrong. Anyone who associates another partner with Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) will be tormented by it.

SUPPLICATION TO BE PROTECTED FROM SHIRK

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أُشْرِكَ بِكَ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ بِمَا لَا أَعْلَمُ

Allāhumma innī a`ūdhu bika an ushrika bika wa anā a`lam, wa astaghfiruka limā lā a`lam.
O Allah, I seek refuge in You lest I associate anything with You knowingly, and I seek Your forgiveness for what I know not.⁸

⁸ Sahihut-Tarhib wat- Tarhib 1/19

3. HYPOCRISY

- A person appears good and speaks well, but his heart is wicked, it disbelieves in Allah (سبحانه و تعالی), thinks bad of Him and others. A person shows gratitude from the outside and says “I’m grateful”, but inside he is ungrateful to Allah (سبحانه و تعالی). Or he says, “I’m patient’, but inside he is impatient and angry with Allah (سبحانه و تعالی), astaghfar Allah.
- His motive is to impress people, but he ignores his heart. Allah (سبحانه و تعالی) says the hypocrites have no sense of understanding or knowledge.
- Their strength is only focused on the outer, but they neglect their inner.
- Hypocrisy is the worst of sins because the hypocrites are in the lowest level of the fire, why? Because they appear to show belief, but

they have disbelieved in Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) and associated with Him with their heart turning to other than Allah (سبحانه وتعالى). The hypocrites are liars, and the Companions were most fearful of hypocrisy.

- When we are in front of people, we can easily focus on the outside and forget our inner.

SEEKING REFUGE FROM HYPOCRISY

وأعوذُ بك من الفقر والكفر، والفسوق والشقاق والنفاق،
والسمعة والرياء

I seek refuge with You from poverty and disbelief, transgression, misery and hypocrisy, and from wanting to be heard (about one's goodness) and seen (while showing goodness).⁹

- If a person has disbelief, shirk or hypocrisy and he did not seek forgiveness and died on it, then he will be in the hellfire forever. We ask Allah

⁹ Sahih Aj Jami'e 1285, Authenticated by Al Albani as Sahih

(سبحانه وتعالى) for the well-being. Ameen. And Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) is The Most Merciful and He will never leave the people without nurturing them.

- Our priority is to make our heart alive and will Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) leave us with disbelief, shirk or hypocrisy? No, He will bring ayat to show us its ugliness and He will bring ayat to show us the truth. Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) is so merciful to people, and He will not leave them without ayat, He will not leave them without nurturing by showing the one you associated with left you and disappointed you. And those who are hypocrites who seek people's praise will be dispraised and looked down upon to show that hypocrisy is not the way of salvation.

- So according to the intensity of the sins, Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) will nurture us for us.

SURAH AL 'ARAAF 156

وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

My mercy encompasses all things."

- There are sins and impurities, but at the same time there is mercy, vastness and hope from Allah (سبحانه وتعالى).
- We all need to observe our heart (مراقبة القلب) and how can we know the turning of the heart if we do not know the sins, and Allah (سبحانه وتعالى) observes us, and how much we need. And this takes us to the Name of Allah Ar Raqeeb – The Ever-Watchful.

ALLAH AR RAQEEB – THE EVER-WATCHFUL (الرقيب)

- We see the concept of monitoring and surveillance around us like through the radars on the streets.
- Patients in hospitals are also monitored. A person would be treated if his blood pressure was high, and discharged once stable.
- People also monitor sales and change strategies accordingly.
- This is all monitoring to protect the bodies or businesses. But Allah Ar Raqeeb is the One Who monitors our hearts.
- He observes our hearts in every moment because He wants the best for us. So we can return back to Him.

- Ibn Al Qayyim said we cannot start to observe or outer without observing our inner. The reaction outside starts from what lies within.
- Allah Ar Raqeeb is especially observing us in the times we are alone. This is the time of truthfulness.
- We can be observant of our actions when we are with people - our behavior, tone and words can change.
- But to know that Allah Ar Raqeeb is constantly observing us makes us watchful. We feel shy of having bad thoughts. Immediately we want to return to Allah (سبحانه وتعالى), seek forgiveness, purify ourselves and do good.
- If the heart is in this constant mode of observing, there will be expansion. It makes a

person take more of His words and accept more of His nurturing.

- When we feel like we cannot take more, then we go back to ourselves to purify, monitor and come back to rebalance.
- When He observes and monitors us, it is not for Him but for our benefit. He knows what purification and beautification is needed. This is a beautiful monitoring.
- No one likes to be monitored but the monitoring of Allah Ar Raqeeb is for our protection to give us an eternal life of goodness.
- Knowing Ar Raqeeb brings out ihsan from us. Even if there are faces around, ihsan is to go above it. To not see the faces of people but to see the Face of Allah.

- This also brings out ikhlas, sincerity and will reform our dealing with people. May Allah help us always be watchful over our hearts. Ameen.

MAY ALLAH GRANT US SOUND HEARTS. AMEEN.

REFERENCES

1. مدارج السالكين - ابن القيم



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