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As-Sirat al-Mustageem, The Straight Path

الصراط المستقيم

It is also one of the most terrifying stages/stages of the Hereafter if not the very most. It is described in both Holy Qur'an and authentic Sunnah in numerous verses and traditions due to its significance, so much so that the faithful are reminded of it ten times a day in their obligatory daily prayers and in all optional ones, nawafil, when they recite Surat al–Fatiha, the Opening Chapter to the Book of Allah, the Qur'an. Following is a good deal of more information about this Sirat; so, keep reading.

On pp. 103–105, Vol. 46 of Bihar al–Anwar, we read detailed descriptions of this Sirat, and additional text is indicated on pp. 69–71 of the same reference. Here is some of the text on the latter pages:

هو جسر ممدود على جهنم، لا يدخل الجنة إلا من اجتازه. و جاء في الروايات أنه أدق من الشعرة و أحد من السيف و أصلى من النار. يعبره خالص المؤمنين كالبرق الخاطف، و بعضهم يعبره بصعوبة لكنه يجتازه و ينجو بنفسه. و بعض المارة يسقطون في جهنم من بعض عقبات الصراط. و هو نموذج من صراط الدنيا المستقبم حيث الدين الحق و طريق الولاية، و متابعة أمير المؤمنين و ذريته الأئمة الطاهرين (صلوات الله عليهم أجمعين)، فمن مال عن هذا الصراط الدنيوي و عدل عنه إلى الباطل قولا أو عملا، فقد ارتجف من عقبة صراط الآخرة و سقط الى الجحيم، و الصراط المستقيم الذي تجده في سورة الحمد في القرآن الكريم يشير إلى صراط الدنيا و صراط الآخرة كليهما

"It is a bridge extended over Hell: Nobody enters Paradise without successfully passing over it.

Traditions indicate that it is thinner than hair, sharper than the sword and hotter than fire. Sincere believers cross over it like lightning that snatches the eyes. Some of them pass over it with difficulty but they pass it and are thus saved, whereas others fall into Hell from one of the obstacles on this Sirat. It is

a sort of this life's As-Sirat al-Mustaqeem where true faith, the path of the wilaya, is to follow in the footsteps of the Commander of the Faithful and the Purified Imams (peace of Allah be with all of them): Anyone who swerves from this worldly path and leans towards falsehood by speech or by action, the obstacle of the Hereafter's Sirat will shake under his feet, causing him to fall into hell. As-Sirat Al-Mustaqeem which you find in Surat al-Hamd in the Holy Qur'an points out to both Sirats: the one in this life and the one in the hereafter."

In his book titled Al-Haqq Al-Yaqeen, where he quotes Al-`Aqa'id by Sheikh as-Saduq, may Allah have mercy on his soul, al-Majlisi states the following:

إننا نعتقد أن كل عقبة من العقبات التي تعترض سبيل المحشر هو إسم لفريضة من الفرائض—الأوامر و النواهي — فإذا وصل الإنسان الى عقبة مسماة بإسم فريضة، و كان مقصرا في ذلك الواجب، اوقف في تلك العقبة و . طلب منه تأدية حق الله تعالى بالنسبة لذلك الواجب. فإن إستطاع الخروج من تلك العقبة بالأعمال الصالحة التي قدمها، أو برحمة من الله تشمله، فقد خرج و اجتاز تلك العقبة بالذات، و مدة التوقيف في كل عقبة ألف سنة، و تتوالى العقبات، و تتواصل التوقيفات و تنهال الأسئلة و الإستنطاق عما يعود إلى مسمى إسم تلك العقبة من الواجب و الفريضة، حتى إذا أجاب عن جميع ما عليه بما يجب من حسن الإجابة، إنتهى من العقبة الأخيرة إلى دار البقاء و سرح سراحا جميلا، و يحيى حياة خالدة لا موت فيها و لا بوار، و يسعد سعادة لا شقاء فيها و لا دمار، و يسكن إلى جوار رحمة ربه مع النبيين و الحجج و الصديقين و الشفعاء و الصالحين و حسن أولئك رفيقا. أما إذا استجوب في عقبة من العقبات، و طلب منه حق قصر في تأديته في الدنيا، و لم يقدم عملا صالحا يكافيء ذلك التقصير، و لا تدركه رحمة من الله تعالى لينجو من تلك العقبة، فتزل قدمه في تلك العقبة و يسقط منها إلى الهاوية و الجحيم، و نعوذ بالله من ذلك الأمر. و جميع هذه العقبات على الصراط،، تسمى واحده منها الولاية، يتوقف فيها جميع الخلائق، فيسأل عن ولاية أمير المؤمنين على بن أبي طالب و الأئمة الطاهرين من بعده، فإذا كان قد أتاها و إتبعها فقد نجا و اجتاز هذه العقبة، و إلا فقد هوى إلى الجحيم. قال تعالى: "وَقَفُوهُمْ إِنَّهُم مَّسْنُولُونَ" (الصافات: آيه 24)، و أهم العقبات هي المرصاد: "إنَّ رَبُّكَ لَبالْمرْصاد" (الفجر: آية 14). يقول الله تعالى: بعزتي و جلالي لا يفوتني ظلم ظالم. و تسمى عقبة أخرى بعقبة الرحم، و أخرى بالأمانة، و أخرى بالصلاة، و هكذا فإن لكل فريضة أو أمر .من أوامر الله، أو نهى من نواهيه، يقف المرء ليجيب عما هو مسؤول عنه

"We believe that each of the obstacles along the path to the Gathering represents the name of one of the obligations, i.e. what the Almighty has commanded or prohibited. If someone reaches an obstacle bearing the name of an obligation, and if he had fallen short of performing that obligation, he will be stopped at it and will be required to pay what he owes Allah Almighty. If he can get out of that obstacle through the good deeds which he had done, or there may be mercy from Allah which will include him, he will get out and pass that particular obstacle. The time period of keeping anyone at each of these obstacles is a thousand years. The obstacles continue, following each other; questions go on and arguments are pursued about what each station represents: the obligations and the commandments. If one answers duly, he will pass by the last station to the abode of eternity and will be released most beautifully:

He will live a perpetual life where there is neither death nor loss, and he will taste happiness where there

is neither misery nor destruction. He will live beside the mercy of his Lord with the prophets, the Signs of Allah, the Truthful Ones, the ones who can intercede on behalf of others, the righteous ones whose company is truly the very best. But if he is asked at one of the obstacles and required to make up for falling short of performing it during his lifetime, if he did not offer an act of righteousness to make up for that shortcoming, and if he is not saved through mercy from Allah Almighty that rescues him from that obstacle, his feet will slip in that area and he will fall from it into the abyss and into Hell, we seek refuge with Allah against this. All these obstacles are on the Sirat. One of them is called the wilayat (mastership of or loyalty to the Imams from among the Ahl al–Bayt (ε)): All people will be stopped at it and asked about the wilayat of the Commander of the Faithful Ali ibn Abu Talib and the Pure Imams after him (ε). If one was observing this wilayat, adhering to it, he will pass this obstacle; otherwise, he will fall into Hell. Allah Almighty has said

"But stop them, for they must be asked" (Qur'an, 37:24).

And the most important of these obstacles is the Mirsad:

"For your Lord is (as a Guardian) on a watch-tower" (Qur'an, 89:14).

Allah Almighty says: "By My Honor and Greatness (do I swear) that no oppression committed by an oppressor escapes My knowledge." Another obstacle is called the kinship obstacle. Another is called amana, trust (something entrusted for safe keep to someone), another is called salat, prayer, and so on:

Each obligation—what is commanded and what is prohibitive—has an obstacle at which the servant of Allah is stopped to answer about his responsibility towards it."

On p. 65, Vol. 8 of Bihar al-Anwar, we read the following:

فترى الناس على الصراط يسقطون كالفراش المبثوث، و ترى آخرين قد تعلقوا بأيديهم أو بيد واحده أو بأرجلهم و هم يمسكون خوفا من الهبوط و الملائكة حولهم واقفون يدعون و ينادون: أيها الرب الحليم، اغفر لهؤلاء و اعف عن هؤلاء بفضلك و جودك، و سلمهم ليجاوزوا الصراط و يقطعوا الصراط. فمن اجتاز الصراط برحمة الله الواسعة، قال: الحمد لله، و بنعمة الله تتم صالحات الأعمال، و تنمو الحسنات، و أحمد الله الذي نجاني منك بفضله و منه، بعد أن كنت قد يئست، ان ربنا لأعمال العباد لغفور شكور

"So you would see people on the Sirat falling like scattered butterflies while others are holding to it with their hands or feet or even with one foot fearing they would fall down as the angels around them stand, call upon the Almighty and plead to Him saying: 'O Clement Lord! Forgive these people, overlook them through Your favor and generosity, let them safely pass on the Path and cross it.' Whoever passes the Path does so through wide mercy from Allah and says, 'Praise to Allah and through a blessing from Allah

that good deeds are sealed and blessed actions grow, and I praise Allah Who saved me from you through His favor and boon after I had lost all hope; surely our Lord forgives the servants' [sinful] deeds, appreciative [of good deeds]'."

On p. 410, Vol. 22 of the same reference, we are also told that the great sahabi Abu Tharr al-Ghifari, Allah is pleased with him, has cited the Messenger of Allah (صر) saying:

"Kinship and trust are at both ends of the Path: Whoever maintains good relations with his kinsfolk and returns the trust safely will pass over the Path, for both ends of the Path shall protect him against falling into the Fire." In another narrative, Imam al-Baqir (ε) said:

"If one who severed his ties and betrayed the trust reaches the Path, his good deeds will not avail him so long as both these characteristics were in him, and they will cause him to fall into the Fire (of hell)."

May the Almighty have mercy on us in this life and the life to come and enable us to keep our feet firm on His Straight Path and admit us into His Paradise, Allahomma Ameen.

Good deeds that make the passage on the Sirat easy:

According to p. 639 of the book الأعمال إقبال by Ibn Tawoos, one who offers 21 rek'as after the sunset prayers in the eve of the first of the month of Rajab in each rek'a of which he recites both Surat al-Hamd (Chapter 1) and Surat at-Tawhid (Chapter 112), then he recites the tasleem after each couple of prostrations will be protected by the Almighty, and his family, wealth and children will be protected, too, and he will be granted security from the torment in the grave. Moreover, he will pass over the Sirat without any questioning like lightning.

On p. 136 of Thawab al-A`mal, we are told that one who fasts six days during the month of Rajab will be secure on the Day of Reckoning and will pass over the Sirat without being asked any questions.

.من صام من رجب ستة أيّام ... بعث من الآمنين يوم القيامة حتّى يمرّ على الصراط بغير حساب

Ibn Tawoos also narrates that one who performs ten rek'as during the 29th eve of the month of Sha'ban, reciting in each rek'a Surat al-Hamd once and at-Takathur (Chapter 102) ten times, in addition to both Chapter 113 and Chapter 114 ten times each and Surat at-Tawhid (Chapter 112), he will be granted by the Almighty rewards of those who exert their utmost in learning the creed and in teaching it, making his scale of good deeds heavier and easing for him to pass over the Sirat like lightning.

مَن صلّى في الليلة التاسعة والعشرين من شعبان عشر ركعات يقرأ في كل ركعة فاتحة الكتاب مرّة وألهاكم التكاثر عشر مرّات، والمعوذتين عشر مرّات، وقل هو الله أحد عشر مرّات، أعطاه الله تعالى ثواب المجتهدين، وثقل مرّات، ويشاف عنه الحساب، ويمرّ على الصراط كالبرق الخاطف

On p. 102, Vol. 34 of Bihar al-Anwar, we are told that one who performs the ziyara of Imam ar-Ridha (ع) despite his grave being so far, the Imam will visit him at three places on the Judgment Day in order to save him from their horrors, and one of these horrors is the Sirat.

من زار الامام الرضا عليهِ السَّلام على بعد قبره الشريف، فانّه يأتي عنده يوم القيامة في ثلاثة مواطن ليخلصه من .

What will happen after all of these stages/stages? The answer is very simple: One will be led either to eternal happiness in Paradise or to damnation in hell. And surely Allah knows best.

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