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## **Concerning The Bridge (as-Sirat)**

Says the Shaykh Abu Ja'far: Our belief concerning the Bridge (*as-sirat*) 1 is that it is true, and that it is the bridge over Hell. It is the place from which the whole of mankind will pass. Allah the Mighty and Glorious says:

"There is not one of you but shall go down unto it. That is a fixed ordinance of thy Lord" (Qur'an 19:71).

According to another view, as-sirat means the name of the Imams (literally, proofs) of Allah. And to him who knows them and obeys them in this world, Allah will grant permission (to traverse) the path, which is the bridge over Hell, on the Day of Resurrection-the Day of Regret and Contrition. And the Prophet said to Ali: O 'Ali, on the Day of Resurrection, I shall sit near the Bridge with you and Gabriel, and no one will cross the Bridge unless he can produce a writ (of absolution) by reason of devotion (walaya) to you.

- 1. Lit. "path", but here "bridge". Fully explained in MC, 232–233. It is a thin ridge over Hell; the wicked will fall, but the righteous will escape. Macdonald, 296 (Ash'ari). It is "sharper than a sword and finer than a hair", loc. cit., 306 (al–Ghazali), 311 (Nasafi), 349 (Fudali); BHA, no.224; KP, 107. According to Ibnu'l–`Arabi, "the sirat is the straight path of the Divine Essence on which everything `walks' because it is the source whence all things come and whither all things return," Affifi, 164–165.
- <u>2.</u> For hujja in the sense of Imam, see FC, 8 and this is clearly explained in art. 38. The Imam is the Proof of Allah on earth, KP, 22 and at numerous other places. For a full discussion, MB, S.V.
- 3. MC, 168 mentions this note of credit.

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