

## Passes On the Road to Mahshar

### Passes On the Road to Mahshar<sup>1</sup>

Says the Shaykh Abu Ja'far: Our belief concerning this is that verily these mountain-passes (*'aqabat*) have each a specific name; some are called *fard*, (compulsory duty) others, *amr* (command); yet others, *nahy* (prohibition).<sup>2</sup> So when a man will reach a mountain-pass called *fard*, and he had neglected it (in his life), he will be stopped there and the dues of Allah will be demanded of him.

Now if he goes out of it by means of some good act performed by him in the world, or by the mercy of Allah reaching him, then he escapes from it and goes on to another *'aqaba*. He will not cease to be sent from one *'aqaba* to another, and be stopped and questioned regarding his shortcomings in respect of each stage.

If he escapes safely from all the stages, he arrives at the Abode of Permanence (*daru'l-baqa'*). Here he comes upon life everlasting, and perpetual beatitude, without any affliction whatever. He will reside in the neighborhood of Allah, with the Prophets, and His Proofs (Imams), the veracious ones, the martyrs and the righteous ones from among His slaves.

And if he is stopped at a pass, and is questioned about a certain due in respect of which he is found wanting, and neither a good action on his own part, nor the mercy of Allah reaches him, his step will stumble and he will be hurled down in the fire of Hell, may Allah protect us from it.

All these passes are on the Bridge (*as-Sirat*). The name of one of them is *al-walaya* (love of Imams). All mankind will be stopped before it and questioned as regards their love for the Prince of Believers, 'Ali, and for the Imams who followed him.

He who will have a proper answer will be saved and will be permitted (to cross the Bridge safely). And he who is unable will tarry and be hurled down (in the fires of Hell). And (the proof) of this is the saying of Allah, the Mighty and Glorious:

***“And stop them for they must be questioned” (Qur'an 37:24).***

And the name of another pass is *Mirsad* (watch) and that is on account of the saying of Allah, the Mighty

and Glorious:

**“Lo! Thy Lord is ever watchful” (Qur’an 89: 14).**<sup>3</sup>

Allah, the Mighty and Glorious,<sup>4</sup> says: I swear by My Honor and Glory, the wrongdoing of a wrongdoer is not permissible to me.<sup>5</sup>

One of the passes is called *ar-Rahm* (kindness); another, *al-Amana* (trust); another, *as-Salat* (prayer). There is a special *'aqaba* named after each (act which is) *fard* (compulsory), or *amr* (command), or *nahy* (prohibition); and before each one of these the individual will be detained and questioned.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1.</sup> *'aqabah*, pl. *'aqabaat*, is explained by Lane (p.2102) as generally "a mountain-road, difficult of access". The word "pass" has been used as being simpler. It here means the difficulties or obstacles which men will have to encounter stage by stage before the actual entry into Paradise or Hell.

The Urdu translator explains on the authority of Shaykh Mufid that by *'aqabatul mahshar* are meant the obligatory acts regarding which questioning will take place on the Day of Resurrection. In reality *'agabat* do not mean hills, nor does it appear from any tradition that these are hills or mountains over which men will have to ascend, some with ease, others with difficulty. God has compared obligatory acts (*a'mal wajiba*) with *'aqabat*, and the reason for this is that just as men find it difficult to ascend mountains, so is it difficult to perform the obligatory acts. The translator explains, on the authority of MB, that the correct belief is that on the Day of Resurrection, every obligatory act will be accounted for; people will be stopped for the purpose of being questioned regarding obligatory acts at short distance. If any one is found without shortcomings in this respect, he will be freed from the difficulties of the Bridge (Urdu, pl. *sirat*); but he who had abandoned the obligatory acts will be subjected to difficulties. And then, unless God forgives him, or the intercession of a mediator avails him, he will be thrown headlong into Hell.

<sup>2.</sup> Compare BHA, no. 113.

<sup>3.</sup> In D the verses of the Qur'an are transposed. The Urdu translator, apparently following MB, relates on the authority of Imam Ja'far as -Sadiq that one of the mountain-paths of the *Sirat* is named *Mirsad*; which lit. means "a place where one lies in wait for, or watches, an enemy" (Lane).

<sup>4.</sup> This is not a Qur'anic verse, but apparently a tradition, as the Urdu translator explains.

<sup>5.</sup> Reading with D *لي يجوز لي*; N *بي يجوز بي*. The Urdu translator reading *la yajuzu bi* renders this as follows: "The wrong of no wrongdoer will escape Me, that is, escape My punishment". Both reading are possible. But the latter, read with *mirsad*, is perhaps even more appropriate.

<sup>6.</sup> Compare MC, 163 – 164 for a different account of the interrogation in the grave.

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.al-islam.org/shiite-creed-shaykh-saduq/passes-road-mahshar#comment-0>