

In the name of Allah Most Gracious Most Merciful

Being Straight

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{In the name of Allah Most Gracious Most Merciful (1)

Thanks be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds, (2) The Beneficent, the Merciful. (3) Owner of the Day of Judgment, (4) You alone we worship; You alone we ask for help. (5) Guide us to the straight path, (6) The path of those whom You have favoured. Not (the path) of those who earn Your anger nor of those who go astray. (7)} 1:1-7.

Our beloved, our topic today is about being straight which is going along and staying firmly fixed on the proper doctrine, the straight path, which is the religion of Allah. Allah says: {Say: As for me, my Lord has guided me unto a straight path, a right religion, the faith of Abraham, the straight, who was no idolater.} 6:161. Asking to be put on the straight path is a request made by each and every Muslim more than seventeen times a day when Al-Fatiha Chapter is recited: Aya 6 says: {اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ - Guide us to the straight path}. The order to be straight was repeated numerous times in the Quran. One time when Allah says: {Be on the straight path as you are commanded, and those who repent (to Allah) with you, and do not transgress. He sees what you do} 11:112.

Allah (may He be elevated) commanded His faithful slaves to remain fixed continuously on to the straight path. It is through that, Allah

provides success to a slave in his/her faith and his/her life. It is through being straight that Allah brings down His support to his slaves at the individual's level and at the nation's level.

Those who are on the straight path are the ones who are favoured by Him. They followed his commands by doing all deeds of obedience in public and private. Also, they are those who kept away from all deeds which Allah had warned against in public and in private. They do that without over or under doing it. Or not being extreme in either. Every faithful individual is required to continuously be straight. If one fails in doing what he/she is commanded to do or fails in avoiding what they are commanded to stay away from then that is deviating from being straight. The Quran guides us back on to the straight path, as Allah says: {**be straight to Him and ask for His forgiveness**} 41:6. If one fails to remain straight due to a human weakness then this is fixed through asking for forgiveness leading to repentance and returning to the straight path. The messenger ppbu said: {**fear Allah where ever you happen to be, and follow a bad deed with a good deed. It will wipe it off**}. The messenger ppbu also said: {**be truly straight or get as close as you can be to that**}. A true believer does not stay away from either of those two states and should always strive to reach the higher status. That is being truly straight. Being truly straight means to be balanced in your obedience in words, and in deeds and in behaviour. This means middle levels of behaviour between being extreme and hard onto one's self, or being extremely relaxed and adopting an uncaring attitude. Some scholar said: "Everything Allah has commanded; then Satan has two tendencies in it. Either being extreme

and over doing it, or being extreme and skipping over it”. In Islamic faith both extremes are considered bad. A true Muslim always sticks to the prophet’s type of style, in all words, deeds and behaviour. That is outside the scope of both ends of extremities, and inside the scope of the middle grounds and the proper balance. The human soul is prone just as faith is prone to the increase and decrease levels. Being on the straight path also changes from time to time. Some times it reaches its peak and some times drops for any individual. The winner is the one who does not get too extreme when he or she are at the peak of being on the straight, and not to over do it when they are at their lowest level, rather to stick to the guidance of the prophet. The messenger ppbu said: **{Every deed has period of getting carried away or a period of eagerness. Then it gets followed by a period of cooling off and deflation and settling down of the level of faith. Whosoever in his or her settling down period comes to my ways (or sunnah) then he or she has been guided}**.

Being straight means sticking to the truth. There is a known prayer (duaa) **{O Allah we fortify ourselves with You from being brought back or from temptation}**. This who treads along the straight path has to be firm with the truth, firm on doing the good deed and continuing to do it. The messenger ppbu said: **{the most loved of deeds to Allah is the continuous one even it is small}**. This good feature of continuity on obedience and submissiveness to Allah’s commands is one of the bases of Islamic view. The messenger ppbu once said: **{The Chapter “Hood” and its sister chapters have made my hair go**

grey. Because of what Allah says in it: *<Be straight as you are commanded>* }.

Sofyan ben Abdullah asked: “O messenger of Allah, tell me something in Islam I won’t need to ask anyone else after you”. The messenger ppbu said to him: {**Say I have faith into Allah then be straight**}. The messenger ppbu said: {**be straight, and remember that you may not be able to reach the high levels of being perfectly straight. And you ought to know that your best deeds are doing the prayers**}. The messenger ppbu also said: {**Successful he is who purified his heart for faith, and made his heart free and healthy, and who made his tongue truthful, and his soul at peace, and made his behaviour and morals straight,**} All these are calls to stay straight for as much as the individual can. But it also indicates that it is a relative matter and only few people would be able to reach the higher levels of being straight. Allah says: {**and those who strive in Our way or for Our sake, then We shall guide them Our paths. Allah is with those who are perfectionists or kind**} 29:69. Being straight is the right way to be for the individual, and for the members of society, in the mind or physically or in practical effort requiring acts of worship. Those who are straight are Allah’s successors on earth, surrounded by the Godly care, lined up with angels asking for forgiveness on their behalf and bringing them good tidings. In Allah; their hearts do trust, and with Allah they are at peace, they have no fear except from Him.

One example of those who were on the straight path is Abdullah ben Hothafa As-Sahmi (عبدالله بن حُذافة السهمي). He was in the Muslim army

fighting the Romans. Abdullah was captured by the Romans and was taken away to their king. The king said to him: become a Christian and I will make you a partner in my status and in my riches. Abudllah said: Not even if you gave me all you own and all the Arabs own. The king said: then I will kill you. And ordered him to be put on to a cross and ordered his archers to aim close just enough to frighten him, while he was making his offers to him to be a Christian in order to spare his life. Then he ordered a large pot of water to be boiled and ordered that Abdullah to be thrown into it. When he was about to be put into the water Abdullah cried. The king was told and he thought that Abdulla was about to give up. He came and offered him to be Christian again but Abdullah still refused. The king asked: Then what is it that made you cry? He said: what made me cry is something I said to my self, I said: I shall be thrown into this water and be gone. I wished if I had as many souls as I have hairs to be thrown in the boiling water for the sake of Allah. The king said to him would you kiss my head and I will let you go free? Abudllah said: I will if you let all the Muslim captives go free too. Abudullah said: I said to my self, kissing the head of Allah's enemy in return for saving my life and all the lives of the Muslim captives!! I don't care. He did and all the Muslim prisoners were set free with Abdullah. When they got home Abdullah told the Khalifah Omar Ben Al-Khattab the story. Omar said: every Muslim ought to kiss the head of Abudullah ben Hothafa (عبدالله بن حذافة), and I shall be the first to do so, and he did.

Allah says: **{Allah holds firm those who believe by firm words in this first life and in the Hereafter}** 14:27. Allah also says: **{those**

who say: Our Lord is Allah, and then they remained straight, the angels descend upon them, saying: Do not Fear and do not grieve, but hear the good tidings of the paradise which you are promised (30) We are your protectors in the life of the world and in the Hereafter. There you will have (all) that your souls desire, and there you will have anything you claim for (31)} 41:30-31. Allah also says: {those who say: Our Lord is Allah, and then they go straight, then no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve (13). Such are rightful owners (of the people) of Paradise, immortal therein, as a reward for what they used to do. (14)} 46:13-14.

A true Muslim who takes the straight path lives for Allah through Allah and with Allah all his or her life, hard work in obedience to Allah. Because he or she knows that the true rest is the rest in the next life, not the rest in this life. Imam Ahmed was asked: When would the slave find the taste of rest? He answered: when he puts his/her first foot into paradise.

Those who are living a straight life, who are obedient to Allah, Allah becomes satisfied with them, and they are promised that on the day of resurrection the angels come to them with the good news, and assures them to have no fear and nor grieve, and makes them happy by the good tiding of paradise which they were promised during the worldly life.