

## Ibn Uthaimen - The Cure. Tafsir of Surah Fatihah

### **The explanation of the verse Bismillaah ir rahmaan ir raheem**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[bismillaahi-r-ra7maani-r-ra7eem]

I begin in the name of Allaah the Most gracious, the Most merciful.

1. His saying “bismillaah” necessitates what is known in Arabic as a prepositional phrase. It is connected to a missing action verb (and the doer of this action verb.) It is known that this missing element is an action verb (and it’s doer) that comes at the end of the sentence and is suitable. For example if you intend to say “bismillaah” and you intend to eat then you intend this action (verb - to eat) such that you say: “in the name of Allah I (being the doer) eat (action verb). The sheikh adds “we said that there is an action verb because the preposition and the object of the preposition are two objects in which case each object must have a subject (who does an action).

We have assumed that (the action verb and its doer) come at the end of the sentence due to two benefits:

1. Seeking the blessings (from Allah) by proceeding the name of Allah the most high.

2 Limitation because delaying the doer to the end of the sentence necessitates that only Allah is sought for blessings. For example you may say “I will not eat with any other name seeking blessings and aid except with the name of Allah, the most high.”

We have assumed that there is an action verb because the basis of actions stems from action verbs. Arabic language linguists know this. This is why nouns do not act except with certain conditions.

We have assumed that it is suitable since it should give the meaning of what is intended. This is why the Messenger sal Allahu alayhi wa salam said “whoever intends to slaughter then he should slaughter in the name of Allah” - Saheeh Bukhari [985], Saheeh Muslim [1/1960]

2. Allaah is the name of the Lord of the Worlds. None is given this name other than Him. It is the basis of all other names and this is why all other names follow from it.

3. Ar-ra7maan means the possessor of extensive mercy; this is why it has come in the grammatical form of fa3laan which denotes vastness.

4. Ar-Ra7eem refers to the deliverer of mercy to whomsoever He wills amongst His slaves. This is why it has come in the grammatical form fa3eel which denotes the application of an action.

Mercy is His attribute. This is what Ar Ra7maan denotes and Mercy is His action which means delivering mercy to the recipient (mar7oom - the one deserving mercy). This is what Ar Ra7eem denotes.

Together Ar-Ra7maan Ar-ra7eem are names of Allah proving His essence, the attribute of mercy and the ruling that this attribute necessitates.

The mercy that Allah ascertained for Himself is a mercy that is real which the Quran and Sunnah and (uncorrupt) intellect testify to. The Quran and the sunnah affirm the mercy of Allah and the proofs are many. As for the intellect then every blessing or punishment is from the signs of Allah's mercy. Indeed the intellect proves that real mercy belongs to Allah, the most high. For what we witness from the mercy of creation between each other proves the existence of Allah's mercy. Mercy is an attribute that is complete and Allah is deserving of this completeness. What we witness from the mercy that solely comes from Allah like rain, relief after droughts and the likes proves Allah's mercy

## **The explanation of the verse Al 7amdu lillaahi rabb il 3aalameen**

1. Al Hamd is an attribute of praise. This is due to its completeness which includes the condition of love (al-mu7abba) and exaltation (at-ta3theem)
2. A person may have awe of someone out of fear and as such it is not a requirement for them to have love and exaltation.
3. Poets praise kings and ministers without having in their hearts love and exaltation for them. Rather they praise them out of fear of them. This is why this praise should be called mere commendation.
4. Al Hamd must be accompanied with love and exaltation. It is an attribute belonging solely to Allah in completeness. You will find no completeness above it. The definitive article "al" (the) in al-Hamd is used to encompass all kinds of praise.
5. Regarding the saying lillaah, we see that the first letter meaning belonging to (li) shows that the praise is specific for Allah and that He alone deserves complete praise. This means that none but Allah is praised by those who praise.
6. Allah alone deserves to be praised in a complete way. This is why the scholars said that this li means that the praise is specifically for Allah and he alone is deserving of it.
7. Rabb or Lord means that He is the creator (khaaliq), king (malik) or master (maalik) and the disposer of all affairs (mudabbir). His Lordship falls into these three meanings. The first meaning is that He is the creator, there is no creator except Allah. Allah says regarding the idols:

أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Is the one who creates like the one who does not create? Will you not receive admonition [16:17]

هَلْ مِنْ خَالِقٍ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ

Is there a creator besides Allah to give you sustenance from the heaven and the earth? [35:3]

Al maalik (the master) means there is no one who has complete ownership other than Allah.

Allah is the one whose ownership is complete, absolute and all-encompassing. Other ownerships are limited in their comprehensiveness. There is no one who owns all that is in the heavens and the earth except Allah. These other dominions (that belong to the creation) are limited in terms of their lack of (total) control over what they own.

There is no one able to control his own specific dominion entirely except by what Allah has legislated. However the absolute complete and all encompassing ownership belongs to Allah.

8. The third meaning of Rabb is that Allah is the disposer of all affairs (al mudabbir) so the complete disposition belongs to Allah, the most high, no one is able to dispose of all affairs like Him. Even the polytheists (mushrikoon) agree and accept that the one who disposes of all affairs is Allah the Most High. However know that Allah does not dispose of any affair in vain or without wisdom. Everything that Allah has predestined, decreed and disposed of is due to a great wisdom. There are those things in this wisdom which we know and understand and those which we do not. That is because our intellect is deficient and falls short of encompassing all of Allah's wisdom.

9. A person may come across some things from the Islamic Legislation (shariah) and may question "why is this forbidden?" An example of this is that a person may say "How is it forbidden for a person to exchange one measure (saa') in quantity of good wheat with two measures of bad wheat and yet the price is one?" This could confuse a person. It is forbidden to give one measure of good wheat in exchange for two measure (saa'ain) of bad wheat. A person may say "why?" We would say "You are not wiser than Allah!" And if there was not evil accompanied with the sale then Allah would not have forbidden it for His slaves. Allah wants ease for His servants not harshness. You will not find Allah forbidding them any action except that there is harm in it.

10. Some people are confused that Allah decrees wars, poverty, earthquakes, or they are confused with the withholding of rain from the sky ie droughts. The person says "what is this? what is the benefit? this is harmful to the servants of Allah." We say to them "you are not wiser than Allah"

Allah the most high does not decree things except due to great wisdom behind them. A wisdom which you may know or may not know. This is why we must submit to the legislated decree as we have submitted to the natural decree. Everything submits to the natural decree.

Allah said:

وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا

To Him submit all creatures in the Heavens and the Earth, willingly or unwillingly [3:83]

Even the disbelievers submit to the natural decree. However as for the Islamic legislated decree, then noone submits to it except the believers.

It is obligatory upon us to submit to both decrees, the natural decree and the Islamic legislated decree. Or it can be said that we should submit to the Islamic legislated decree just as we have submitted to the natural decree. The one who is disposer of all affairs is Allah, the Most High. Therefore Rabb necessitates three meanings, the third being that Allah is the Disposer of all affairs.

1. Al 3aalameen means everything besides Allah. This word 3aalameen is derived from 3alaamah (sign) since all of the creation are signs from Allah, the Most High. Every species, type and kind is a sign from the signs of Allah. Everything that you contemplate proves the existence of the Lord, Most High. It also proves his wisdom and mercy.

12. And what is more true than the statement of the poet who said:

*wa fee kulli shay2in lahu ayah*

*tadillu 3ala annahu waa7id*

And in everything is a sign

Which proves that He is One.

13. Therefore what is 3aalameen? Everything other than Allah is called 3alam from 3alaamah - a sign, since the existence of this creation and what occurs is a sign proving Allah's existence.

14. You should note the difference between:

Al 3aalameen (fatha lam)

Al 3aalimeen (kasra lam)

Al 3aalameen is everything other than Allah but al 3aalimeen are the possessors of knowledge, as Allah said:

وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ

Such are the examples which we portray to people and none understands them except those who possess knowledge.[29:43]

## The explanation of the verse Ar Rahman ir Raheem

### الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

1. These two names include attributes that describe Allah and it is described by the linguists as an adjective (Na't). This adjective describes what comes before it.

2. الرَّحْمَنُ includes the mercy which is general and all encompassing. As Allah says “And my Mercy encompasses everything (araf:156)” and this general mercy also includes Allah’s mercy to the disbelievers. The disbelievers live by the mercy of Allah. If Allah did not have mercy on them then they would not have found any food to eat, anything to drink, clothes, nor a home. Rather they live under the Mercy of Allah with these things. However this mercy will not benefit them in the hereafter for it is a Mercy that is limited to this life only.

3. وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا

And He was Merciful to the believers

(ahzab:43)

الرَّحِيمُ includes the mercy that is specific to the believers. That is why Allah says above “And He was Merciful to the believers.” This is the reason some of the scholars said that ar-rahmaan is general and ar-raheem is more specific.

4. Allah mentioned that He is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful after He mentioned that He is the Lord of everything that He created. This shows that this Lordship of Allah is built upon mercy. It is not a Lordship built upon revenge or anger. Rather it is a Lordship built upon mercy and anything that comes from Allah is merciful. Even the calamities that affect the people are, in reality, a form of mercy. How can that be? Can someone say sickness is a mercy? Yes, it is but noone will know it is a mercy except those who contemplate and consider.

Allah said:

وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالِمُونَ

Such are the examples which We portray to the people and none understand them except the possessors of knowledge.

(ankabut:43)

Sickness for the believer enables his sins to be forgiven by Allah. There is not a believer that is afflicted with grief or harm except that Allah expiates his sins for him. This is a mercy because what inflicts you in this life will end and will not last. It is only temporary.

5. It is mentioned that a worshipper injured one of her fingers, yet she was not affected by it. She said that the beauty of its reward had made her forget its pain (so she was patient). Hence this sickness that affects you is a mercy.

(Reported Abu Hurayrah radhiallahu anhu that Rasoolallah salAllahu 3alayhi wa salam said” No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even a prick from a thorn, except that Allah expiates some of his sins for that. Saheeh al Bukhari” 5641)

Also sickness might be a reason for someone to return to his Lord, if he had left his duties towards Allah. It might be a reason for the guidance of the disobedient one to return to His Lord. I was told recently about a person who was extravagantly wasting his soul, a sinner, far from Allah. His father died, having seen this calamity, he repented to Allah. He became upright and from amongst the best of the youth. So look at this calamity and how it was a reason for this person’s rectification. So we say everything that Allah has decreed for the creation results in mercy. The proof of that is after Allah said:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

All praise is due to God alone, the Sustainer of all the worlds

He said:

الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

6. The Lordship of Allah is not built upon tyranny, making difficulties for the servants of Allah and oppressing them but rather it is built upon mercy.

## **The explanation of the verse Maaliki yawm id deen**

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1. It is recited (with an elongation of Maalik as in the Hafs recitation):

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

2. Or (shortened as Malik as in another recitation called Warsh):

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

3. مَالِكِ (maalik) then it is the noun that describes a verb (ism faa3il) but مَلِكِ is an attribute.

4. The first one (Maalik) means -Milk(ownership) and the second one (Malik) means Mulk-kingdom. For example you say “this watch is the “milk” of so-and-so (belongs to so-and-so.) And if there was a kingdom ruled by a king you would use the second, “This kingdom is the “mulk” of so-and-so (His Kingdom).”

5. Both of these ways of recitation are authentic and a person is allowed to read them both. He may read the first one sometimes and the second one at other times in the prayer as well as outside it. However we must not read with a recitation from the Quran that is not known to the general people. The reason is that this may result in problems and reduce the effect the Quran has in the mind of the common person. Or the common person might reject what is being recited with his heart or tongue since he does not recognise this recitation. This is why the students of knowledge should not read with a recitation that is unfamiliar to the people. This may lead to belittlement or rejection of the Quran.

6. مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Master of the Day of Judgement.

This means that Allah is the One in control on that day. Noone else will be in absolute control. If one was able to be in control of his affairs on that day he would have made a shade for himself from the suns heat, but the Messenger Sal Allahu 3alayhi wa salam said: “Seven people will be under Allah’s shade on a day when there is no shade but His.”

Allah is the One who creates that shade at that time for those most deserving it, such as the seven categories of people who will be shaded by it. It occurs in a hadeeth that “the believer will be under the shade of his charity on the Day of Judgement”[Hadith Hasan-Saheeh Saheeh Ibn Khuzaimah 2432]

7. Allah is the Master (Malik), there is no Dominion (Mulk) belonging to anyone with Him.

As Allah said:

لَمَنْ الْمُلْكُ الْيَوْمَ

To whom belongs the Mulk (dominion) today?

(ghafir:16)

And Allah answered by saying:

لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ

It belongs to Allah the One the Irrestistable.

(ghafir:16)

This means that no matter how vast the kingdom is of those in this world and no matter how strong their leadership is, it is removed as soon as he died. As soon as a leader, king or a ruler died, his authority is removed. What is practised afterwards of honouring his grave does not benefit him because he is dead and his kingdom has been removed. On the Day of Judgment, also, there is no kingdom except the Kingdom belonging to Allah. This is why He said:

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

The Master of the Day of Judgement.

Or:

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

The King of the Day of Judgement.

8. If one says, what is the meaning of **يَوْمِ الدِّينِ** "the Day of Judgment" This is the Day

when people will be recompensed for their actions And **الدِّينِ** means reward as in this verse.

**الدِّينِ** could also refer to actions, as Allah said "to you belong your actions and to us ours."(Kaafiroon:6)

9. The first three verses are for Allah.

## The explanation of the verse - **iyyaaka na3budu wa iyyaaka nasta3een**

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

1. These two sentences “You (Alone) we worship” and “You (Alone) we ask for help” are restrictive phrases (al-hasr). The meaning of You (Alone) we worship is that we do not worship anything else except Allah. The meaning of “your help we seek” is that we do not seek help except from Allah.

Sheikh Abdul Razaq ibn Abdul Muhsin al Badr mentioned that the statement of Tawheed “laa ilaaha ila Allaah” refers to making sincere worship for Allah and that the statement “laa hawla wa laa quwwata ila billaah” refers to seeking help solely from Allah sincerely. This is shown in this verse.

2. The way the restrictive phrase (al hasr) works (in the Arabic language) is that the object comes at the beginning of the sentence instead of the end. In a normal construction of a sentence you would say “we worship you” where the doer of an action comes before the object. However here in the verse the object “you” is mentioned first then the doer and the verb “we worship.” This is called al-hasr (restriction/limitation) in the Arabic language which in this case means to negate the performance of acts of worship to other than Allah. This shows the importance of tawheed and keeping away from associating partners with Allah.

Every time the object which should be at the end is brought forwards, it necessitates al hasr. This is how it is in the Arabic language as has been reported from the linguists and grammarians.

3. What is the meaning of “Ibaadah” that Allah refers to in His saying “You (Alone) we worship?”

Ibaadah is to humble yourself to Allah the most High. It is to have submission to Him and to act according to His orders and keep away from His prohibitions. It is to believe (trust) in whatever He told us, to exalt Him, to love Him including all other types of worship.

4. Sheikh al Islam Ibn Taymiyyah rahimahullah said: “Worship is a comprehensive term for everything that Allah loves and is pleased with, from sayings and actions, both open and hidden.”

5. So for example purifying yourself with ablution is an act of worship. Prayer is worship and giving optional or obligatory charity is worship. As is fasting, performing Hajj, pledging an oath, relying upon Allah, all constitute worship as the people of knowledge have mentioned.

6. The worshipper feels that he is a slave to his Master, his Deity. If He orders him with something he says “we hear and we obey.”

7. From the completeness of worshipping Allah alone is loving and hating for His sake. It is the strongest handhold of faith and it means to make friends and enemies for the sake of Allah. Whoever, then, is from His righteous servants, become loved by him in any place on the earth at any point in time. Even those who truly believed in Musa and Eesa from Bani Israeel (should also be loved). They are our loved ones and brothers. Do not think that a relative or brother is one that can only be from this nation. Rather, whoever is Muslim in any state of time and place is a brother to us. From the completeness of worship is to love for Allah, hate for Allah and to make friends and enemies for the sake of Allah.

8. Also, from the completeness of worship is that when Allah orders something one says “I hear and I obey.” Some people nowadays if you say to them, Allah or the Prophet (saws) have ordered such and such, they say “Is this order obligatory or preferable?” Subhanallah! Did the companions question like this? If Allah or the Messenger (saws) ordered the companions with something, would they say this? Rather they said “we hear and we obey.” However if a person has fallen into a mistake, this question may be asked. A person may ask whether his mistake is related to something obligatory and he may need to slaughter a sacrificial animal or seek an expiation for that mistake.

9. Likewise, if the Prophet (saws) forbade something, some say “Is this forbiddance disliked or prohibited?” Subhanallah! When He forbids something we say “we hear and obey.” We should keep away and turn away. No one will be able to bring one letter of proof that the companions questioned the Messenger (saws) after they were ordered with something by saying “Is this order obligatory or preferable?” If they were forbidden with anything, did they say “Is this forbiddance disliked or prohibited?” Never! Rather if a situation arose that needed clarification they sought it. For example look at the situation of Bareerah, may Allah be pleased with her. When she was freed from slavery, the Messenger (saw) gave her a choice to either remain with husband, who was a thin man (and also a slave), or to annul the marriage. She said, “I choose for myself (To be alone).” So they absolved the marriage. Her husband Mugheeth loved her very much. He used to walk behind her in the streets of Madinah asking her to come back and listen to him, but she refused. So Mugheeth asked the Messenger (saws) to intercede for him. So he (saws) interceded for him and asked him to return to him. So she said “O Messenger of Allah saws, if you are ordering me then I hear and I obey, or if it is a situation where you are only suggesting him then I have no need for him.” He saws said “Rather it is a situation where I am only suggesting him.” She said “Then I have no need for him.” (saheeh al bukhari 4977,4979)

10. Also, if there is something in the proof that shows an order is not obligatory like the saying of the Messenger saws to Jaabir bin Abdillah “sell me the camel...” until he bought it. (Sahih al bukhari 2097. The whole wording of the hadeeth shows that the order was not an obligation from the Messenger saws when he asked Jaabir to sell him the camel.)

11. The companions were not a people to question whether an order was an obligation or a recommendation. From the completeness of worship is that when you hear an order from Allah and His Messenger (saws) then you must not hesitate and question whether it is obligatory or just preferable. Say “we hear and obey” and act and you will be rewarded.

12. If you hear of a forbiddance then do not hesitate and say “Is this matter prohibited or disliked?” If a person falls into error, in which case he asks “is it obligatory or forbidden?” so as to know what he has missed.

13. From the completeness of worship is to be upright in fulfilling the orders and abstaining from the prohibitions.

14. **إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ** means we ask help from Allah (alone). Isti3aanah (seeking help) is of two types. The first type is worship. This means that a person leaves his affairs to Allah and knows he has no power over anything except by the help of Allah.

15. The second type of isti3aanah which is sought from the creation. This is to seek aid from your brother or aid him. For example the Messenger (saws) said “to help a man mount his riding beast or to pass him his provisions is charity.” (sahih al bukhari 2891, sahih al muslim 1009[56])

16. What does isti3aanah refer to in this verse? Is it the isti3aanah between Allah and His creation or from creation to creation? The answer is the former.

Sheikh Muhammad ibn Saalih al-Uthaimen rahimahullah said: “Seeking aid from creation is allowed if the one from the help is sought is alive and able to help, for this is not considered worship. This is why Allah said “Aid one another upon righteousness and piety (maidah:2)... Yet if a person from whom help is sought is not able to help you, it is not allowed to seek his aid. Like seeking help from a person in his grave. This is forbidden. It is also major shirk because the companion of this grave cannot even help himself so how can he help you?!”

## **The explanation of the verse: Ihdinaa as-Siraat al mustaqeem**

اهدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the Straight Way

Sheikh Saalih ibn Fawzan al Fawzan says: This is a supplication (dua). It is the supplication of one seeking aid or help and the beginning of the surah “alhamdulillah rabb il 3aalameen” is also called a dua but this is in worship since dua is divided into two categories; dua in worship - praising Allah and dua in seeking aid from Allah as in “ihdinaa as-siraat al mustaqeem.”

Also Sheikh Rabee’ ibn Haadi al Madhkhali said: “After reading the first three verses of surah Fatihah mentioning Allah’s names and attributes, the believer then recites the fourth verse showing that they worship only Allah alone. This is followed by reciting the fifth verse seeking guidance from Allah. This is the tawassul (seeking a means of nearness to Allah) that is allowed.

1. Providing guidance is of two types: the guidance of instruction and secondly the guidance of enlightenment. So which of the two meanings does the caller seek (in this verse)? Is it the guidance of instruction and teaching or the guidance of being enlightened to the truth and to be firm upon the straight path? This verse refers to both the guidance of instruction and teaching and the guidance of enlightenment. However a person cannot adhere to the straight path except with knowledge. How can he worship Allah upon ignorance? It is not possible. First, He must show him the way then enlighten him.

Translators addition: So Allah first sent the messengers as guidance of instruction and teaching and then He guided those with enlightenment who followed them sincerely.

Allah said:

وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

and verily you(Muhammad) guide to the straight path

(shura:52)

2. And the saying of Allah:

إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ

You do not guide those whom you love, but Allah guides whom He wills.

(Qasas:56)

The guidance here refers to the guidance of being enlightened to the truth. No one is able to enlighten another to this type of guidance except Allah alone.

3. Allah said:

وَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ فَاسْتَحَبُّوا الْعَمَىٰ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ

And as for Thamud, then we guided them, but they chose misguidance over guidance

(Fusilat:17)

This is the guidance of instruction and teaching. Allah and His Messenger (saws) showed them the way to the truth but they chose misguidance at the expense of guidance. In consequence they were punished with a feirce wind. So guidance is of these two types; guidance with proof that is based upon knowledge and the guidance to the straight way that is enlightenment from Allah.

4. As for the verse “Guide us to the straight way(as-siraat al mustaqeem)” then this refers to both the guidance of instutruction and teaching and the guidance of enlightenment. This call, therefore, encompasses both knowledge and acting upon the truth. And the following verse includes both types of guidance. Allah said:

إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا

We showed him the way whether he be grateful or ungrateful.

(insaana:3)

5. As for the way or path (Siraat), then the linguists say it does not refer to other than a broad path, so a narrow road cannot be called a Siraat. It refers, therefore, to the spacious and easy path. It is said “sarata ar-rajulu al luqma” meaning the man easily put food in his mouth. So siraat refers to the spacious, wide path which a person treads without hardship and difficulty and without hills and valleys. However, the Siraat might divert from the straight path that is why Allah mentioned the path being straight without any crookedness (al-Mustaqeem). This has no crookedness in it, since the crooked path causes hardship. If there was a straight path between you and a place you are going to, totaling a distance of 20km, it may total 30km or more if it was crooked due to hills and valleys. If the path had hills and valleys, a person would travel a longer distance (than if it was flat). So mustaqeem is that which is straight and on a flat plane.

6. What is the meaning of as-Sirat al-Mustaqeem? Does it refer to a physical path or a metaphorical one? It refers to a metaphorical path and not a physical one.

Sheikh Saalih ibn Fawzan al Fawzan says: “The straight path is clear, whoever treads it is not misguided as opposed to different crooked paths. Whoever treads those paths will be misguided that is why Allah says:

وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن  
سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

This is my straight way so follow it and do not follow other paths as they will lead you away from His path, that is what He has commanded you with that you may gain piety

(Anam:153)

So Allah’s path is one. There is no division in it, no crookedness and no hiddenness. The crooked paths are paths of misguidance and we seek refuge with Allah. This is why when the Prophet (saws) recited the above verse, he (saws) drew a straight line and on its right and left many other shorter lines and said “This is Allah’s path that is straight.” And he said about the other paths, “upon every one is a devil calling to it.” (Reported by Ahmad [4142] and Haakim in Kitaab Tafseer [3294] and said its chain is authentic).

7. As for the saying of Musa (As Allah said):

قَالَ عَسَىٰ رَبِّي أَن يَهْدِيَنِي سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ

He said: It may be that my Lord guides me to the right way.

(Qasas:22)

This refers to a physical path and due to this Allah guided him to the right way. However here (in Surah Fatihah) the path siraat is metaphorical and Allah explained this in His saying:

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

the way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace.

meaning the path of those You have blessed completely, encompassing the religion and worldly affairs.

So who are these (blessed) ones? This is answered in the next verse.

## The explanation of the verse: Siraat alladheena an3amta 3alayhim

Sheikh Saalih ibn Fawzan al Fawzan said “sometimes Allah attributes the path to Himself as in Surah al An3am and Surah al Shurah:52/53 because Allah is the One who legislated it, directed towards it and clarified it to the people. It is the path that leads to Allah and He attributed the path to Himself as an attribute of honour. Sometimes He attributes the path to its adherers (people) which is an attribution to those whom Allah has favoured. This is because they are the ones who tread this path as opposed to the people of misguidance for they tread the misguided paths.

1. Allah said:

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ  
وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا

Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will be in the company of those whom the Grace of Allah is upon, amongst the Prophets, the truthful ones, those who bear witness to the truth and the righteous. What a good companionship that is.

(nisaa:69)

In this verse four categories of people are mentioned. They are the ones Allah has blessed and they are upon these levels. The first of them are the Prophets and these include the Messengers because a Messenger is also a Prophet. The messengers are the highest level of the Prophets.

The prophets of firm resolve (Ulul 3azm) are the highest level of the Messengers. The Prophets of firm resolve are: Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, Eesa and Muhammad peace be upon all of them.

2. The next level are the Siddiqoon, the truthful ones. They are the ones who have reached the highest level of truthfulness trusting that which Allah has sent down to His Messenger (saw) remaining upright upon that. At the head of them is Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq radiya Allahu 3anhu. Allah said:

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ  
وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَئِكَ رَفِيقًا

Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will be in the company of those whom the Grace of Allah is upon, amongst the Prophets, the truthful ones, those who bear witness to the truth and the righteous. What a good companionship that is.

(nisaa:69)

By agreement of the companions, Abu Bakr radiya Allahu ʿanhu is the best of this nation. The Companions used to say at the time of the Messenger (saws) that the best of them was Abu Bakr (r) and then Umar (r). Even Ali ibn Abi Talib (r) used to openly proclaim this on the pulpit in Kufah (Iraq) after he became the Khaleefah (Successor), “the best of this Ummah is Abu Bakr and then Umar (r)

[kitab as-sunnah no. 1201 by Haafidh bin Abi Aasim authenticated by Sheikh al-muhadith Muhammad Nasruddin l-Albaani]

3. From this we recognise the lies of the Raafidah who claim that Abu Bakr (r) is not a khaleefah and that is an oppressor to Ali (r) since, to them, Ali is the Khalifah. It is said, “Why did Ali not declare that he was oppressed?” Rather, he acknowledged openly that the leadership of Abu Bakr (r) was based upon justice because he ascertained that the best of this Ummah was Abu Bakr (r)

This acknowledgement shows the superiority of Abu Bakr (r) and that he had the right to be khaleefah. Also, no one heads a people except the best of them. Therefore, the truthful ones are the second blessed people mentioned in this verse.

4. The shuhadaa are those who bear witness to the truth. They include those who are martyred in battles, the ones who are killed for the sake of Allah. Who are the ones killed for the sake of Allah? They are those who fight so that the word of Allah is the highest.

5. Whoever fights due to nationalsim, tribalism or to be seen then he is at loss. The one who fights for the purpose of Allah’s word to be the highest then this is for the sake of Allah.

6. The Messenger (saws) was asked about the one who fights for it to be said he is brave and another fights due to passions and another fights to show off, which is for the sake of Allah. He (saws) said “whoever fights such that the word of Allah is the highest, this is for the sake of Allah.” (sahih al Bukhari, al Fath ul Bari [2/296] hadith [123])

These others are not for the sake of Allah. That is why it has come in the hadeeth “...and Allah knows who is injured for His sake...” This wording is important. He may, in our opinion, be a martyr but to Allah he may not because he (saws) said “Allah knows who is injured for His sake.” (This means Jihad must fulfil the conditions to be acceptable)

7. The martyr will come on the Day of Judgment with blood the smell of musk.

8. Those who bear witness (from the verse) also include the people of knowledge. For the scholars are from those who bear witness as Allah said:

شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لَا  
إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

Allah bears witness that there is no one truly deserving of being worshipped except Him, as do the angels and the possessors of knowledge. He always maintains His creation in justice, none has the right to be worshipped but He, the All-Mighty, the All-Wise.

(Al-Imran:18 )

9. However, who are the possessors of knowledge who bear witness (to the truth)? They are the possessors of knowledge who seek knowledge for the sake of Allah. They are those that when the truth is clear to them, they follow it. They are those who do not go away from the path of the Prophet (saws) and his companions. The scholar is not a (mere) reciter. This is why Ibn Masud (r) said “how will you be if your reciters are many and scholars are few?”

Abdullah ibn Masud (r) said “How will you be if the trials and tribulations befall you, in which the young one grows old and the old one becomes senile and when something is abandoned it is said the Sunnah has been abandoned.” It was said “when will that be Oh Abu Abdurrahman?! He said “that is when you scholars disappear and your ignorance ones become many and your reciters increase and your people of understanding become few and the world is sought with the actions of the hereafter and learning and understanding are sought of other than this religion.” [Sharh Usool 3itiqaad ahli sunnah wal jamaa3ah vol 1/2 p.103 no.123]

For example if we see a person who is an ocean in knowledge then you come to him seeking an explanation of the Quran (Tafseer) then you will find him an ocean in it, in hadeeth, Islamic Science (fiqh) and in every aspect, he is an ocean (in knowledge). However if he does not practise what he knows or follow the path of the pious predecessors, he is not from the possessors of knowledge. Allah said about the hypocrites:

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ تُعْجِبُكَ أَجْسَامُهُمْ وَإِنْ يَقُولُوا تَسْمَعُ لِقَوْلِهِمْ كَأَنْهُمْ خُشْبٌ  
مُسَدَّدَةٌ

When you see them (the hypocrites) you like their appearances and when they speak you hear their words, they are just like empty vessels

(Munaafiqoon:4)

Why do you listen to their speech? Because in it there is eloquence. So one likes their appearance but there is no good in them. They are just like hollow trunks. So “those who bear

witness” in the Verse include two types of people. The first refers to those who are killed in the path of Allah. The second refers to the true scholars.

10. As for the righteous ones (mentioned in the verse) then they are the last level who are the general Muslims and believers. So you are asking Allah to guide you to the straight path, the path of those whom Allah has blessed from amongst the Prophets, the truthful ones, those who bear witness and the righteous ones. All of these together are upon one way. That is, they all have knowledge of the truth and they act according to it.

## **The explanation of the Verse: ghayr il maghdhoobi 3alayhim wa laa aDh-Daaleen**

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

Not (the way of) those who earned Anger, nor of those who went astray.

1. These two groups differ from those that Allah has blessed. We said that those whom Allah has blessed are connected together upon having knowledge of the truth and acting according to it.

2. The two groups mentioned in the verse are the opposite of the last group. So those whom Allah is angry with know the truth but they do not practise it. At the head of them are the Jews. As for those who went astray, they are those who do not know the truth, meaning they worship Allah upon ignorance. At the head of them are the Christians who came before the Messenger (saws). Yet, the Jews and the Christians who came after the Messenger (saws) are the same. They know the truth but they do not practise it. Just like the Jews who knew the truth about the Prophethood of Eesa but they did not follow him, likewise many of the Christians who knew the truth about the Prophethood of Muhammad (saws) did not follow him. Therefore, there is no difference between the Jews and Christians after the coming of the Messenger (saws), so Allah’s anger is upon them both.

3. Why did Allah, after He mentioned those whom He has blessed, say “not(the way) of those who earned Anger, nor of those who went astray?”

Sheikh Hamaad al-Ansaari rahimahullah said “The jews used to kill their scholars and prophets while the Christians used to worship their scholars and prophets, so neither be like the Jews nor like the Christians but follow the middle path.” [Biography of Sheikh Hamaad al-Ansaari rahimahullah, Tasjeelaat ibn Rajab in Madinah]

The reason is because the blessing is from Allah, but anger can come from Allah and from other than Allah. So if Allah is angry with someone, all the believers are also angry with them. In this case, Allah, the Prophets, the martyrs, the truthful ones, those who bear witness to His Oneness, and the righteous are all angry with the Jews.

Sheikh Saalih ibn Fawzan al Fawzan said: “This whole Surah includes this great dua encompassing the dua in worship in the beginning and the dua for seeking aid (from Allah) at the end. All of it is a supplication and this is why it is preferable in the prayer after

completing its recitation to say “aameen”, both the Imam and the follower and the one praying on his own. The meaning of Aameen is “O Allah, answer my supplication.”

We ask Allah to guide us and you to His straight path, the path of those whom Allah has blessed from amongst the Prophets, martyrs, the truthful ones, those who bear witness to His Oneness and the righteous.