



Surat al Fatiha (5)

IHDINAS SIRAT AL MUSTAQEEM

completing the prayer for help in the last verse, we ask Allah to show us how best to live our lives. we ask to be guided to His straight path: which is the only route to success in this life and the next. This is the path of true humanity, of subservience and worship of Allah. It is the path taken by those who follow their consciences and morals, who follow the guidance sent by Allah in His books, and the examples of the prophets sent to humanity.

Allah, in His mercies, has sent us many indicators of how to tread this path. He has given all humans conscience through their innate natures (fitrah), which inclines us towards good deeds, and deters us from bad ones through feelings of guilt and discomfort. Allah has given all men intellect, which can be used to study and learn about the world around us, and deduce the presence and glory of Allah from His signs. Further, since the beginning of time Allah has sent down Books of His words, containing specific, gradually developed teachings and laws to help us live our lives in the best manner. And with and between these Books, Allah sent His messengers as perfect examples of humanity for all mankind to emulate. In the same way that Islam is the final, most perfect religion - encompassing and perfecting all the teachings of previous faiths - the Prophet and his Ahlul Bayt (as) are the final, most complete living examples of the laws of God, for humanity to emulate.

The "straight path" of Allah is known to us through His beloved examples, who are on it. The straight path refers to following the Prophet (saw) and his ahlul bayt (as).

O people! I am the Straight Path of Allah whom He commanded you to follow. and such after me also is Ali, and then my offspring from his loins, the Imams who guide with truth and turn (people) to it."

Then, the Prophet (PBUH&HF) recited the entire Quranic chapter of the opening (al- Fatiha) and said: "This (chapter) was revealed in my honor and in theirs (i.e., the Imams') generally and specifically. They are the authorized friends of Allah, for whom there shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.

Prophet Muhammad (saw), according to the [Sermon of Ghadeer](#)

Ihdina - guide us to (and in): Allah is the one who guides people to this path, and we seek His aid to find it and stay firm on it. It is the path He has decreed for us, which alone will lead us to the fulfilment of our collective (human) and individual destinies.

as-Sirat - The path. Like any path, this has a fixed starting point, and an end. It leads all who follow it to the same place, provided they do not stray from it. No extra maps or directions are needed to get to the final destination, as long as the traveller follows this path correctly. As with all journeys, the ultimate aim is always to reach the destination, and not simply travel for the sake of it; so if we do not wish to be distracted by things that will hinder our journey, we must keep our eyes on the goal.

al Mustaqeem - the upright (noble), straight. A straight path is the shortest distance between two points, and so the most effective way to get to the goal. Winding paths may result in confusion, leaving the traveller exhausted, lost, and no closer to any destination.

This verse introduces us to the second part of the shahadah: PROPHETHOOD. we learn about the true status of the Prophet (saw) and ahlul bayt (as), and our responsibility to follow them if we wish to obey Allah. we understand that Allah has given us, through them, beautiful examples to learn from - and we understand that they are a comprehensive, most direct, divinely sanctioned path to closeness to Allah.

with these words, Allah introduces the Prophets and Imams (as) to us, and teaches us our respective roles in life. With these words, Allah is teaching us how to live.