

## With the Noble Quran

# Humanity's Constant Need for Guiding (هداية hidayah) from Allah (swt) Alone

(Translated)

<https://www.al-waie.org/archives/article/20252>

Khalifa Muhammad – Jordan

Al Waie Magazine Issue No. 477

Fortieth Year, Shawwal 1447 AH corresponding to April 2026 CE

Allah (swt) says, ﴿إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾ **“Guide us to the straight path”** [TMQ Surah Al-Fatihah: 6].

The words “guidance (هدى huda)” and “guiding (هداية hidayah)” have different meanings in the Arabic language, and this is also true in the Noble Quran and the Prophetic Sunnah. They are used to describe the creation of the capacity for guidance within humankind, as in several verses of the Noble Quran, such as the saying of Allah (swt) Who said, ﴿وَهَدَيْنَاهُ النَّجْدَيْنِ﴾ **“And We guided him to the two paths”** [TMQ Surah Al-Balad: 10], meaning the choice between the path of good and the path of evil, and His saying, ﴿إِنَّا هَدَيْنَاهُ السَّبِيلَ إِمَّا شَاكِرًا وَإِمَّا كَفُورًا﴾ **“Indeed, We guided him to the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful”** [TMQ Surah Al-Insan 76:3], meaning He created within humankind the capacity to choose between gratitude and ingratitude, that is, belief and disbelief (iman / kufr). This meaning is confirmed by the Oath of Allah (swt) by the soul, ﴿فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا﴾ **“And inspired it with discernment of its wickedness and its righteousness”** [TMQ Surah Ash-Shams 91:8], meaning He (swt) placed within the soul the capacity to choose between wickedness and righteousness. However, this is not the intended meaning in the verse we are discussing from Al-Fatihah.

Guidance (هدى huda) and guiding (هداية hidayah) appear in most places in the Noble Quran with meanings revolving around clarification, instruction, evidencing, support, and enabling one to embrace the truth and remain steadfast upon it. It is within these meanings that the request for hidayah in this verse we are examining is directed. The Muslim stands before Allah (swt) in Salah (Shariah prayer), and in every Rak'ah of prayer, and asks Allah to guide him to the straight path, repeating this dozens of times every day and night.

So, what is the straight path? Why this repetition day and night? How is guidance to the straight path achieved? And who are those who deserve to be guided by Allah to the straight path?

The straight path is mentioned many times in the Noble Quran. Before mentioning some of these instances, we should note that Allah (swt) defined the straight path in Surah Al-Fatihah as the path of those upon whom Allah has bestowed His favor, not the path of those upon whom the Wrath of Allah (swt) has fallen, namely the Jews, nor the path of those who have gone astray, namely the Christians. As for those upon whom Allah has bestowed His favor, Allah (swt) mentioned them in His saying, ﴿وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا﴾ **“And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the Prophets (as), the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions.”** [TMQ Surah An-Nisa':69]. Those upon whom Allah (swt) has bestowed His favor are the Prophets (as), the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. Whoever obeys Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw) will be gathered with them and will have been guided to the straight path, which is obedience to Allah (swt) and His Messenger (saw). This meaning is confirmed by the words of Allah (swt)

Who said, ﴿وَمَنْ يَعْصِمِ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾ **“And whoever holds fast to Allah has certainly been guided to a straight path.”** [TMQ Surah Aali Imran: 101].

The straight path (الصراط المستقيم) As-Siraat Al-Mustaqeem) is the path of Allah (swt) says, addressing His Messenger (saw), that, ﴿وَكَذَلِكَ أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ رُوحًا مِّنْ أَمْرِنَا مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِي مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيمَانُ وَلَكِن جَعَلْنَاهُ نُورًا نَّهْدِي بِهِ مَنْ نَّشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ \* صِرَاطِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَصِيرُ الْأُمُورُ﴾ **“And thus We have revealed to you a spirit from Our command. You did not know what the Scripture was, nor what Iman was, but We have made it a light by which We guide whom We will of Our servants. And indeed, O Muhammad, you guide to a straight path. (\*) The path of Allah, to Whom belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth. Unquestionably, to Allah do all matters return.”** [TMQ Surah Ash-Shura: 52-53]. These two verses indicate that the Noble Quran, which Allah (swt) revealed to His Messenger (saw) a spirit from His command, is His straight path. Through the Noble Quran, Allah (swt) guides whomever He wills of His servants, and the Messenger (saw) guides to a straight path. This is stated in many verses of the Noble Quran, such as His (swt) saying, ﴿وَهَذَا صِرَاطُ رَبِّكَ مُسْتَقِيمًا قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَذَكَّرُونَ﴾ **“And this is the straight path of your Lord. We have detailed the verses for a people who remember.”** [TMQ Surah Al-An’am 6:126], and His saying, ﴿وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَن سَبِيلِهِ ذَلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾ **“And this is My straight path, so follow it; and do not follow other paths, for you will be separated from His path. This is what He has instructed you so that you may be mindful of Allah”** [TMQ Surah Al-An’am:153]. The pronoun “this” in these two verses refers to the Noble Quran, which is the straight path of Allah (swt).

It is worth noting here that hidayah is attributed to Allah (swt) in some places in the Noble Quran, as in His saying, ﴿وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ يُضِلُّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾ **“And if Allah had willed, He would have made you one ummah, but He causes to stray whom He wills and guides whom He wills”** [An-Nahl 16:93]. In other places, it is attributed to the servant, as in His (swt) saying, ﴿مَنْ اهْتَدَى فَإِنَّمَا يَهْتَدِي لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ عَلَيْهَا﴾ **“Whoever is guided is only guided for the benefit of himself; and whoever goes astray only goes astray to his own detriment”** [TMQ Surah Al-Isra’: 15].

In other places, it is attributed to the Noble Quran, and to the Messengers (as) and their followers, as this has already been explained. There is no contradiction between these matters, for Allah (swt) created in humankind the capacity for guidance (هدى huda) and misguidance, such that the servant chooses the path of guiding (هداية hidayah) or the path of misguidance. The path of guiding (هداية hidayah) that the servant must choose and follow is the path that which Allah (swt) revealed to His Messenger (saw), which is the Noble Quran, along with the Clarification (بيان Bayan) of it by the Messenger (saw).

If the servant chooses this straight and upright path, Allah (swt) will grant him success in it, support him, and strengthen him as long as he follows it and adopts it as a way of life. Allah (swt) says, ﴿وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ﴾ **“And those who are guided - He increases them in guidance and grants them their piety”** [TMQ Surah Muhammad: 17], and He (swt) also says, ﴿وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى﴾ **“And Allah increases those who are guided in guidance”** [TMQ Surah Maryam: 76].

Allah (swt) has made Iman (إيمان belief) a means of attaining hidayah from Him, as He (swt) said, ﴿وَمَنْ يُؤْمِن بِاللَّهِ يَهْدِ قَلْبَهُ﴾ **“And whoever believes in Allah - He will guide his heart”** [TMQ Surah At-Taghabun 11].

Allah (swt) made striving in His cause a means for the servant to be guided to the paths of Allah Almighty, as He, Glory be to Him, said, ﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾ **“And those who strive for Us - We will surely guide them to Our ways. And indeed, Allah is with the doers of good.”** [TMQ Surah Al-Ankabut 69].

Thus, the guiding (هداية hidayah) by Allah (swt) is first the creation of receptivity (قابلية qaabilliyah), then the granting of enabling (التوفيق At-Tawfeeq) within it to those who choose it. The guiding of the servant is over the choice of hidayah. The hidayah of the Quran is a

clarification of the straight path, and the hidayah of the Messenger (saw) is an evidencing and directing to it and to its clarification.

Imam Al-Qurtubi says in his Tafsir [1/160], (الهُدَى هُدْيَانٌ: هُدَى دَلَالَةٌ، وَهُوَ الَّذِي تَقْدِرُ عَلَيْهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأَتْبَاعُهُمْ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ﴾ [الرعد/7]. وقال: ﴿وَإِنَّكَ لَتَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾ [الشورى/52] فَأَثَبْتَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَى الَّذِي مَعْنَاهُ الدَّلَالَةُ وَالِدَعْوَةُ وَالتَّنْبِيهُ، وَتَفَرَّدَ هُوَ سُبْحَانَهُ بِالْهُدَى الَّذِي مَعْنَاهُ التَّأْيِيدُ وَالتَّوْفِيقُ، فَقَالَ لِنَبِيِّهِ ﷺ: ﴿إِنَّكَ لَا تَهْدِي مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ﴾ [القصاص/56] فالهدى على هذا يجى بِمَعْنَى خَلْقِ الْإِيمَانِ فِي الْقَلْبِ، وَمِنْهُ قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿أُولَئِكَ عَلَى هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ﴾ [البقرة: 5] [Guidance (هُدَى hudah) is of two kinds: guidance of evidencing, which is that which the Messengers (as) and their followers are capable of it, as Allah (swt) said, **“For every people is a guide (هاد haad )”** [TMQ Surah Ar-Ra'd: 7]. Allah (swt) said, **“Indeed, you guide to a straight path”** [TMQ Surah Ash-Shura: 52]. So, He (swt) established for them guidance which means showing the way, Dawah to the truth, and admonition (التنبيه At-Tanbeeh). Allah (swt) Alone possesses guidance (هُدَى huda) which means support (التأييد At-Ta'yeed) and enabling (التوفيق At-Tawfeeq). Allah (swt) said to His Prophet (saw), **“Indeed, you do not guide whom you love”** [TMQ Surah Al-Qasas 28:56]. Thus, huda in this context means the creation of Iman in the heart. This is supported by His saying, **“Those are upon guidance from their Lord”** [Al-Baqarah 2:5] and His saying, **“He (swt) guides whom He wills”** [Fatir 35:8].” This concludes the statement of Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him).

One might ask about the importance of guiding (هداية hidayah) for humankind.

To answer this, it is essential to understand the nature of humankind and its difference from the rest of the tangible creatures that Allah (swt) created and for which He (swt) ordained a system of living that rectifies and sustains them. This is with the exception of humankind, whom Allah (swt) chose for vicegerency (استخلاف istikhlaaf) on Earth, He (swt) did not compel them to follow a specific system of living. Instead, He endowed them with reason to choose the system of living they would follow. Allah (swt) placed within them organic needs and instincts that require a system for their fulfillment. The limited intellect of humankind cannot comprehensibly originate the system that would bring them a comfortable living pleasing to Allah Almighty. This is because human reasoning is prone to variation, inconsistency, contradiction, and environmental influence. Therefore, they need a system of living from Allah (swt), which He revealed to His Messengers (as) to guide people to His divine system and to what pleases Him.

It is no wonder, then, that a Muslim asks Allah (swt) to guide him to the straight path dozens of times a day and night, and to grant him steadfastness on the straight path—the path of Allah, to whom belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. Failure to follow Allah's system is undoubtedly following one's desires, which is misguidance itself. Allah (swt) has forbidden this, saying, ﴿وَلَا تَتَّبِعِ الْهَوَىٰ فَيُضِلَّكَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ﴾ **“And do not Following your desires will lead you astray from the path of Allah.”** [TMQ Surah Saad: 26]. Allah (swt) said, ﴿أَفَرَأَيْتَ مَنِ اتَّخَذَ إِلَهَهُ هَوَاهُ وَأَضَلَّهُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ وَخَتَمَ عَلَىٰ سَمْعِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَجَعَلَ عَلَىٰ بَصَرِهِ غِشَاوَةً فَمَنْ يَهْدِيهِ مِن بَعْدِ اللَّهِ﴾ **“Have you seen the one who takes his desires as his Allah, and Allah has led him astray knowingly, and sealed his hearing and his heart and placed a veil over his sight? Then who can guide him after Allah? Will you not then remember?”** [TMQ Surah Al-Jaathiyah: 23].

O Allah, guide us to the straight path! Aameen.