1st Star – The start is upon you.
2nd Star - “wahidin li wahidin al tariqa al wahidin” – Be one for one Master.
3rd Star - What is with Allah subhana wa ta'ala will be, what is not with Allah subhana wa ta'ala will not be.
4th Star – To be grateful
5th Star - ‘Yawmuki Yawmuki’ - 'Your day is your day'
6th Star - ‘Wa laysu’ka baytuka’ - Your house, which is sufficient for you.
7th Star - As Sadiq Habibullah – the truthful one is beloved to Allah subhana wa ta'ala
8th Star – Himah – determination
9th Star – Sallim – Submit to your Lord
10th Star – Be Pleased with Allah subhana wa ta'ala.
11th Star – Be Aware of Plotting
12th Star – Everyday do something new
13th Star – Stop Complaining & Start the Remedy
14th Star – Does Allah love me or not?
15th Star – Do you have the provision?
16th Star – Is there a self desire in my deeds?
17th Star – Who are your beloved ones?

The way to Allah
It has been a beautiful journey together to the way of Allah subhana wa ta'ala and we have learnt the guiding stars (asals) needed to travel on this way. Although all these stars are not tangible/physical, the way to Allah (Tariq il Allah) is a tangible/visible path. As we travel
through the different paths on the way to Allah- there may be dark parts or dark tunnels at times but at the end there is light!!! Some paths will have dangerous or sudden twists and turns - at other times you will climb difficult mountains- but at the top will find beautiful gardens rivers and beauty and all what you desire and imagine behind all these difficulties.

**Guiding star number 18**

In our way to Allah with all these difficult paths and obstacles there will gardens and rivers, the light and the good at the end. These obstacles they can make a person stop or back off, lose the way or turn away but don’t worry as at the end of this journey are gardens and rivers and all what you desire!!!!

Don’t worry at all!!!!!

*Don’t you want to reach to the end?*

All of us are on this path and we want to reach Allah at the end and we know the ways (asals) to do this. However, one of the principles, which is important and which we can’t afford to ignore is:

**we need to know the obstacles.**

**What can come in our way?**

We need to know the obstacles which can make us not continue on our way. Therefore it is important that we always think about the end.

Ibn Al Qayum RA said:

"The journey towards Allah - will not be completed unless you are on the straight path!"

Ask yourself: Am I on a journey towards Allah?

Ibn al Qayum RA understood that the way to Allah is a journey and will not be completed till you have the guidance to the straight path.
What does this mean?

Think about it, we need two things:

1) Guidance to go to the straight path.

We all have different paths in life, but we want the path to be the straight path (siraat ul mustaqeen) going to Allah. There are paths going towards duniya, others going towards someone else, but we want the path that reaches Allah in the end...... siraat ul mustaqeen.

We need guidance (hidaya) to put the right step forward.

And, guidance is not complete till we are on the guidance itself (a-tariq fi tariq), that is, guidance within the way (siraat) until the end, till we reach Allah subhana wa ta’ala!!!

To know the right way and continue on the right way....till the end.

2) We must be on the right way (Guidance) and we need the provisions (zaad) to reach our destination!!!

Provisions to help you until you reach your destination, which is the pleasure of Allah subhana wa ta’ala. The way to Allah is very long and difficult and we need provisions in order to reach the pleasure of Allah!!!!

However, we need a third thing which is very important:

3) we need to know the obstacles on this way so that we can overcome them.

What’s the point of knowing all the ways (asals) if we don’t know how to handle the obstacles.

This is the final guiding star, the 18th guiding star:

"Know what the obstacles are and how to deal with them accordingly."

We need to be aware of the obstacles and then we will be able to overcome them!!!!

We can know all the ways etc but without understanding the obstacles we cannot overcome them, and we need to overcome them so that our way is quicker and smoother and we reach Allah quickly!!!

What are the obstacles?

Obstacles on the way to Allah are the things that can affect us on this journey.

Imagine that we are on the path (siraat) and we need to be on the siraat till the end, it is long and we need to reach the end. What are the things we may encounter?

Obstacle 1 - Al khaar - the fear!!!

What is this fear? It is:

- the fear of being alone,
- the thought that nobody is with us,
- Or that very few people are accompanying us on the path.

Don't be afraid / alarmed if a few people are following or the minority are the people of guidance.

Do not be afraid to be one of the very few on the guidance (meaning having knowledge and following it) because actually this is what happens!!! The majority are misguided while the minority is on the guidance.

Be aware of the path of misguidance because sometimes you may be scared that you may be the only one!!!
Be aware of the misguided path because on the way to Allah there will be many dark paths and turns leading away from Allah.

If a person is not on the path to Allah he needs to be afraid that this path of misguidance is away from Allah, because even though the path looks like it is going somewhere, it is actually a destruction, a deception. Stay on the straight path even if it is just you because as you go forward you will see that there will be very few people.

**The Guided are few**

This is actually the way of Allah...One of the divine ways of Allah is that the people of the truth (people having knowledge and acting on it) are very few. If we read history from the early times of prophet Nuh AS till later, the path of truth has always been followed by few people.

Allah says in the Quran, Surah 38. Sad, Verse 24:

> إلا الذين آمنوا وعملوا الصالحات وقليل ما هم

> ص 24

قالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعْجَتِكَ إِلَىٰ نِعَاجِهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْخُلَطَاءِ لَيَبْغِي بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَىٰ بَعْضٍ إِلَّا أَلِينَ آمَنُوا وَعملُوا الصالحات وَقليلٌ مَّا هُمْ وَظَنَّ دَاوُودُ أَنَّمَا فَتَاهُ فَ اسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ

**Translation:**

[Dawud (David)] said (immediately without listening to the opponent): "He has wronged you in demanding your ewe in addition to his ewes. And, verily, many partners oppress one another, except those who believe and do righteous good deeds, and they are few." And Dawud (David) guessed that We have tried him and he sought Forgiveness of his Lord, and he fell down prostrate and turned (to Allah) in repentance.

**Gratitude is the goal of our creation**

In Surah Saba ayat 13 Allah tells us very few of His servants do good and are grateful!
Surah 34. Saba, Verse 13:

They worked for him what he desired, (making) high rooms, images, basins as large as reservoirs, and (cooking) cauldrons fixed (in their places). “Work you, O family of Dawud (David), with thanks!” But few of My slaves are grateful.

When you are acting on your belief (in Allah) you are giving thanks to Allah. That's why the Gratitude is the goal behind our creation. Allah created us in order to worship him and worshipping him shows our gratitude to Allah. Thank Allah! This is the wisdom behind gratitude!!! When you know none deserves the worship except Him and you worship Him thinking this.

The majority are on falsehood
In the Quran, Allah says the majority are on falsehood, (May Allah protect us Ameen!)

Surah 12. Yusuf, Verse 103:

And most of mankind will not believe even if you desire it eagerly.

Many people are disbelievers
So many people are not believers, are fasiqeen, i.e., are not on the way to Allah!
And judge (you O Muhammad SAW) between them by what Allah has revealed and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they turn you (O Muhammad SAW) far away from some of that which Allah has sent down to you. And if they turn away, then know that Allah's Will is to punish them for some sins of theirs. And truly, most of men are Fasiqun (rebellious and disobedient to Allah).

Therefore don't be afraid to be alone on your path! So fear not, the minority are always the best and the majority do not know what they are facing!!!

Obstacle 2 - Dark tunnel(s)

Don't worry about going through dark tunnels, don't be scared and don't be bothered! It is like when we are on a roller coaster, we know that we will pass through a dark tunnel but we know that this will pass and there will be light at the end.

What are these dark tunnels? This is like a parable and can be compared to the trials of the people (fitnah khilaaf bain al muslimeen), people fighting, arguing, in conflict, disputing, etc these are the dark tunnels - you are on the way to Allah, and worshipping Allah but what can cause a turbulence on the way? It is the people in conflict - and whether you are included or not - when you are in the middle of this situation, this is a dark tunnel and this dark, dark tunnel occupies your time, thoughts, and energies!!! You will enter the tunnel and see the darkness covering you, you will not know what you were doing, what you are doing, what you need to do and how to get out of this dark tunnel - you forget what exactly you are here for, why you were created. When you have problems with people at times you will find that your heart, mind and soul will be occupied to solve the problem - this is the dark tunnels, the trials between people, tribes, communities, countries etc.

How do we overcome the dark tunnels?

All these resemble a dark tunnel but don't worry at the end of this dark tunnel there is light!!! But we need to have belief/yakeen that there is an end to this dark tunnel and at the end there will be sunshine, light, brightness. We have to go through these dark tunnels, people are trials but we have to go through these. Allah subhana wa ta’ala tells us that we do have to go through these disputes, we don't have a choice but it has to be done with patience!
We should not occupy our hearts and minds in that dispute and we need to have this certainty that there is an exit to this problem. We need to be certain, not allow ourselves to be lost, exhausted, slip or fall or leave our path by these trials. The trick is to know that all these afflictions are only duniya, there is an end/exit to them and to have certainty (yaqeen) that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. This will make the path easy for us.

**Have yaqeen that there is a solution for all problems!!!**

Know that Allah is The Light! He is that glow in the dark! He will be with you! The knowledge of Allah will illuminate our way in the darkness! Don't stress and don't worry, save your emotions for the sake of Allah and do your best. Do Al ihsaan, do your best towards people, -don't oppress, be angry, don't be unfair, don't harm people and do not react!!!! When we are in these kinds of difficult situations we may react, it may be that we can't ignore the situation so we need to deal with people in the best way, do ihsaan!!! Don't occupy your mind with what she said, what they did, arguments, questions and react, we will be in the middle of this tunnel and we will be busy arguing and disputing without realising that we have stopped or moved away from the siraat!!!! The key is to:

**Know the way (siraat), do ihsaan, deal with people in the best way and just go forward!!!**

We need *yaqeen*, the knowledge of Allah and *ihsaan* to go forward. There is a saying that:

"The loser among the people is the one who is occupied with the people (what they said and did) and forgets himself (what he needs to do to reach Allah)"

The person dealing with himself and forgetting about Allah is a loser. So free yourself from yourself and turn to Allah!!! Think of yourself by thinking of everything you need to do for Allah, for the sake of Allah alone and not by thinking of the duniya!!!

**Obstacle 3 – High Bridges(s)**

We have to go over a very high bridge and everybody has to be on it! If we want to go on the path to Allah we need to go over this bridge. What is this bridge?

**الابتلاء والمحن** trials and tests!!!

We all have to go through trials and tests to reach Allah. Everyone, even the Messengers and the Prophets had to go through this bridge, these trials. Trials can be:

1. The decree of Allah / afflictions (things that happen to us)
or
2. The legislation (do or don’t s against our desire) of Allah!

**Trials and Tests... Why?**

Why do we need to go over this bridge, go through trials?

In order to know who we are!!!!!
We don’t know what we are exactly, what are our cracks, what sins we commit. We need to cross the bridges we encounter in order to recognise ourselves, recognise our cracks, show us our weaknesses, or the talents we are not using or don’t know about, i.e., for our own good. It shows us who we are and we know this it will allow us to wash, purify and beautify our hearts!!!

**The heart is purified when we accept the decree of Allah and beautified when we follow the commands of Allah!**

This is the bridge we need to face, so be patient, thank Allah and be grateful!

Tell yourself “I will be patient, I will be grateful; I will accept this as the Will of Allah”. This is how we will purify ourselves. Follow the legislation and not your heart -This is how we will beautify ourselves!

This is the wisdom behind the trails!!!

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**Surah 29. Al-Ankaboot, Verse 2:**

أَحَسِبَ الَّذِينَ أَن يُتْرَكُوا أَن نُقُولُوا ممَّا وَهُمْ ََّ نُفْتَُُانَ

**Translation:**

Do people think that they will be left alone because they say: "We believe," and will not be tested.

Allah is giving the trials to see who the sincere truthful ones are. The crossing of this bridge (trials decree) is how Allah will give us honour, establish us on the earth, exalt and elevate us in rank! If we want honour, ask yourself who gives honour. Allah is the owner of the honour and He will honour you when you cross this bridge. So don’t be afraid of crossing this bridge, this is actually the way of victory/honour/elevation (*tariq ul tamqeen*) in the land! But we must go over the bridge.

**How will we pass over the bridge?**

**By being patient!! As Sabr as sabr as sabr!!!!**

If you are not patient on the decree of Allah, you cannot continue on this bridge. So when any decree happens which we don’t like or if there is a commandment from Allah which is not according to your wishes:

**BE PATIENT AND ACCEPT IT!!!!!**

And we must have acceptance! If we reject it we are the losers!!! So accept with a good heart (*Ar Rida ain Allah*).

Patience is the minimum and it is better is to accept the decree and commandments of Allah. Paradise, the beautiful place we all want to go to, is surrounded by difficulties, trials and afflictions. So don’t be afraid, have *yaaqeen* in Allah and just climb the bridge and you will reach paradise with the will of Allah.
Obstacle 4 – Difficult Mountains

Mountains in the middle of the road, uneven rough difficult mountains, are an obstacle on the way to Allah. This mountain is very difficult, more so than the other obstacles on the way to Allah, i.e., the fear of being alone, trials of people, trials and tests. It is very difficult not like the bridge or tunnel which at least has an end...

What is the Mountain?
Your self!!!! Your nafs

Allahuma inni audubika min shururi nafsii wa min shaayiatii amalina
Oh Allah I seek refuge from the evil within my own self and the evil of my deeds.

This difficult uneven mountain is the evil of yourself!!! Your nafs- your desires are like the ups and downs, the thorns and difficult paths of the mountain, an obstacle towards your way to Allah! Your nafs is a difficult mountain in the way to Allah, which you may not even be aware of, and you have to climb this mountain, you have to climb over your nafs!!!

You need to fight against yourself (Jihad in nafs) as if you are climbing a mountain. It is so difficult because we love ourselves and it is hidden. Our nafs is our biggest enemy and causes sicknesses of the heart that we need to overcome.

How can we climb this mountain?
We need faith to climb over the mountain, faith in Allah, the Day of Judgement, the Prophets, the angels, the decree, and the books:

We need to BELIEVE!!!!

This is the only way to make jihad in nafs, fight against our nafs. We need the belief to overcome our own self, overcome our weaknesses, we need yaqeen that there will be something good after this mountain, that there will be great good after fighting our nafs! We need this yaqeen till we reach the end of the Road, until we reach the pleasure of Ar Rahman!! Therefore don’t go after the pleasures you want, your nafs wants etc. This is actually mujahhadan nafs!! If we overcome our desires we will reach the pleasure of Allah!
Obstacle 5 – Thieves who cut your way

The last obstacle on our path to Allah, which is present in all the other obstacles like the dark tunnel, bridge, mountain etc are thieves that cut our path on the way to Allah, that steal!!!

Who are these thieves?
They are Shaitaan and his followers!!!! He occupies us and makes us focus on the unimportant; he will steal our time and energies and discourage us by telling us that we can't cross this bridge or tunnel etc. He steals our time as he wants us to be delayed. He does not want us to be of the first to reach. The more we try to work though the tunnels and mountains, the more we do, the more knowledge we gain, the more Shaitaan gets angry and tries to cut our way.

But the plots of shaitaan are weak!!

How do we overcome Shaitaan?
Seek refuge in Allah from the Shaitaan and his weak plots!
Rely on Allah to protect you from this enemy and Allah will protect and help you. Shaitaan will try and cut your path and discourage you but don't pay attention.

He is just a sound! He is nothing!!

And he does not have power over you!

Overcoming the Obstacles
When you will overcome all these obstacles, Allah will help! Allah will bless your path and you will see the paths becoming wider, secure, and beautiful, you will see the path blooming and you will go towards Ar Rahman!!! and - he will put you on a road with a delegation with security that is blessed and secure! The path to Ar- Rahman-The Owner of The Honour and Majesty!

Don't you want to reach Ar Rahman, dul Jalaal wal Ikram?
Don't you want to see Allah's face and be in His presence, enjoy His closeness, hear his voice and enjoy the pleasure of seeing His face?
So seek Him and rely on Him and Trust in Him only and long for Him (tawakul)!!! Be truthful and feel your poverty, feel your need for Him, understand how poor and weak you are and seek and rely on Allah's Might and Power - you need Allah- He is The Most Rich-The Most Powerful! We need to feel la ilaha illah Allah - we need to rely on Him only and make sure we don't feel we are self sufficient.
We need to feel:
"I need Allah the most rich, I need Allah the most powerful in everything, in every place, in every situation!!"

Accept Allah!!
We need to accept Allah! Glad tidings to the one who accepts Allah!
If you accept Allah, He will accept you and surround you with his love, guardianship,
compassion, passion and protection. Allah will accept you. If a person accepts Allah, his life will be illuminated and it will be visible, the acceptance of Allah will appear in your face, you will be put on the path to Allah and all the inhabitants of the earth will love and accept you! !!

Duas

اعقد قلبي بحبل محبتك
و اهدني لأقصى مرادك

Oh my Lord tie a knot on my heart with the rope of your love
Guide me to be the best/max of what you want me to be in this life

اسلوك بي مسلك اصفياتك
حتى اصل الى رياض كرامته

Guide me on the path of those you have guided, give me the gardens of Your Honour, the Gardens of your closeness- and the Max of the delights!

الله اجعل قلبي من القلوب التي سافرت إليك و أست بيك

Oh Allah make my heart be among the hearts that travel to You and feels so content and happy in this way

اجعل نفسي من النفوس التي حررت من الأسر الى الحرية
Oh Allah make my soul be from the souls that are freed from the slavery to the freedom of La illah illah Allah! I want to be a slave of Allah

Oh Allah grant me the Taqwa! Purify me, you are the best who purifies the self. You are the best, You are the guardian and keeper if my soul!

The last of our duas – All praise and thanks due to Allah- because huwa rabul ala min..!