

سورة المؤمنون



The Believers A Visionary Journey to Al-Firdaus Al-A'la

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Surah Al-Mu'minoon comes after Surah Al-Hajj, a journey of the heart, towards Allah. This is a big task, and cannot be achieved without focusing on the mission.

Surah Al-Mu'minoon presents a visionary journey for those who are focused. The very title, Al-Mu'minoon, tells us about the people who believe in all the aspects of deen, all the pillars of faith. That is what brings the elevation.

Al-Firdaus, the highest level of Jannah, under the Throne of Allah, is mentioned in only two surahs of the Qura'an, Al-Kahf, and Al-Mu'minoon. This is the place from where all the rivers flow, the origin of all the water bodies in Jannah. It is the center of Jannah. The people dwelling therein will be able to look at Allah in the beginning and end of the day.

In both these surahs, there is a high resolution and determination of worship. You must decide where you want to go, and then keep your eyes focused on your goal, worshipping with determination, struggling with the people around you, to serve the deen and society. You find this struggle in Surah Al-Kahf, when the boys left their families and their comfort zone to protect their deen. The struggle is apparent in the trial of wealth, in the story of the two gardens, when one friend struggled to advise his friend not to commit shirk. The trial of knowledge is seen in the story of Musa عليه السلام and Khidr, when Musa عليه السلام has to struggle too acquire deen, undertaking a difficult journey, and being instructed not to question the actions of Khidr, even though he was a prophet. The struggle of the great king Dhul Qarnain, in the trial of power and authority, is also seen, when he travels the length and breadth of his vast kingdom, solving the issues of his subjects, and dealing with them with justice.

Surah Al-Mu'minoon discloses to us about the characteristics of the believers. They give sacrifices to serve the deen, and remain firm. They have the highest vision and mission, Al-Firdaus Al-A'la, and they focus on it. It also mentions the creation of the human being, in the womb, and the end.

The human being is a very complex creation, and surely he is meant to do something great in his life; he must work to attain Al-Firdaus Al-A'la. This vision is revealed to everyone. Allah wants everyone to reach this elevation. There are no secrets, the plan is laid out in plain view of everyone, everyone has access to it. It is a perfect and foolproof plan, finely detailed, with all the obstacles and motivations mentioned. What a waste it would be if this perfect plan was not attempted and implemented. Don't disregard it, don't think it is farfetched. Everyone can attain it, so don't be lazy.

The believers will inherit Jannah, their own spots and the plots of the disbelievers too, because they will give up their places by going to the Fire. The believers will give up their places in the Fire. We all have a place in Jannah and the Fire. It is upon us to choose which one we want.

Allah calls the believers الوارثون, the inheritors. They will inherit their own places and those of the kuffar, in Jannah.

The most complete blessings are in Al-Firdaus. It is the highest level anyone can reach. How can we get there? How can we inherit a place there? Allah says in the Qura'an: قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ. Who reaches Al-Firdaus? The believers. It is mentioned in the past tense, although it is in the fixture, because it will surely happen, without a doubt.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ
Certainly will the believers have succeeded
الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ
They who are during their prayer humbly
submissive
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُونَ
And they who turn away from ill speech
والَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ
And they who are observant of zakah
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَعْيُنِهِمْ هَادِئُونَ
And they who guard their private parts
إِلَّا عَلَىٰ أَرْوَاحِهِمْ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ غَيْرُ
مَلُومِينَ
Except from their wives or those their right
hands possess, for indeed, they will not be
blamed
فَمَنْ ابْتَغَىٰ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْعَادُونَ
But whoever seeks beyond that, then those
are the transgressors
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمَانَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ
And they who are to their trusts and their
promises attentive
وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَىٰ صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ
And they who carefully maintain their
prayers
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ
Those are the inheritors
الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَاوسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ
Who will inherit al-Firdaus. They will abide
therein eternally
23:1-11



Al-Mu'minoon believe in all the pillars of faith; their faith is their investment. They work hard for their belief, fighting anything which will decrease it, or affect it adversely.

The word أَفْلَحَ also means digging the earth, to sow seeds. The فلاح is a farmer, digging, working hard, removing the stones and weeds, so that he can prepare the soil to plant the seeds. The mu'min is also busy toiling his heart, planting the seeds of his faith, watering them with knowledge and good deeds, caring for the tree of faith, until it grows and becomes strong. They work hard to achieve their goal, Al-Firdaus. He takes care of his capital just as a farmer cares for his crops.

There are six characteristics of the believers mentioned in the surah.

- الذين هم في صلاتهم خاشعون
- و الذين هم عن اللغو معرضون
- و الذين هم للزكاة فاعلون
- والذين هم لفروجهم حافظون
- و الذين هم لأماناتهم و عهدهم راعون
- والذين هم على صلواتهم يحافظون

- Their focus is on prayer the most. this brings everything into perspective. The prayer is very important, so it is mentioned twice. You may think other forms of worship are more beneficial, and neglect the prayer, or delay it, or not give it importance. But you cannot get anywhere without salah. The salah is what makes you achieve success.

The believers are humble in their prayer, their hearts are tranquil and present while they are praying. They are alert, as if they can see Allah. This is how they are in life also, clear and focused. Prayer is their top priority. Prayer is also mentioned at the end of the list of the characteristics of the believers. They guard and care for their prayers, offering them on time, perfecting all the pillars.

We think someone who enters Al-Firdaus must be doing great deeds, but it is so simple, yet so challenging; focus on your prayer.

- There is an obstacle on the way, لغو, vain pursuits. The believers don't want to do anything which will pull them down. They keep their eyes focused on their noble target, so there is no time left for لغو, which is a useless waste of time. we need vain pursuits in life like salt, not too much. They are to be used to soften the relationships with people. The vain or ineffective pursuits are zero value, so they are a waste of time of indulged in too much. The successful person will not waste his valuable time in useless pastimes.

This believers will turn away from useless actions. This shows their determination. They save their time and energy for more useful things.

- The believers will give zakat, which means not only money. They give whatever they have, such as time, a smile, knowledge. They give whatever they can to purify themselves. You cannot get purification by sitting alone, you have to interact with people, dealing with them in a good manner, overcoming their harm.

They are also helpful in society, and is this is purification too. Giving is purification. If you only take from society, without giving anything back, you will have many sicknesses of the heart. Give from your money and time to help others. You don't want to climb up in levels with sicknesses and negative feelings in your heart. The believers are always at the service of the people. Be the person who always smiles and greets people with salam.

- The believers guard their honour and chastity. Al-Firdaus is not only formal worship, it is a 360 degrees mission and vision. We can't focus only on one aspect, you must be on your toes. When we hear of chastity, we tend to think we would never go to any unlawful relationships, it we must ask Allah for the well-being.

Guarding the chastity starts with lowering the gaze for the believing men and women. For the believing woman, there is the added precaution of covering. In this way, she helps the whole society to protect their honour. Dont look at haram, and don't tempt others.

The believers use the halal ways to satisfy their natural desires, i.e, marriage. We hear of priests, they suppress their natural desires, and this results in them satisfying them in unnatural ways. Islam doesn't ask us to go against nature, but gives us a halal option. You must not neglect your wellbeing either, by depriving yourself of your natural needs, such as food and sleep. You must give yourself consideration. The one who follows the right way will not be distracted from the main mission. Any other way will make you indulge in transgression.

- The believers fulfill their trusts, which Allah has entrusted them with. They try to fulfill whatever role Allah has assigned for them, be it motherhood, as a wife, in money matters, etc. Your body is also a trust given to you by Allah. Dont neglect any role in life. Don't neglect your health. Maintain a balance between your home, husband, children and any other responsibility, that Allah gave you. It is not only prayer and fasting. A trust is a covenant, guard it like a shepherd guards his herd. This is your contract.

These are the ones who deserve to inherit Al-Firdaus. Focus on yur salah. Take the vain and ineffective pursuits out of your life, except as 'salt'. Protect your honour, fulfill your "contracts". These are the areas you must focus on.