BISMILLĀH AR-RAḤMĀN AR-RAḤĪM

My beloved sisters and brothers on the Path,

When I look back over the many years that Allah has allowed me to walk this Path, one thing becomes clearer to me with every passing year:

What we receive from a teacher is not ultimately meant to remain with us. It is meant to pass through us.

We receive knowledge so that it may become wisdom, we receive love so that it may become mercy, we receive a path so that our lives may become a means of service.

Sidi reminded us that the real fruit of dhikr is not only what happens when the tongue remembers Allah, but what happens when remembrance enters our character.

That prayer does not end when we leave the prayer rug, that love of Allah must become adab with His creation and that knowledge which does not soften the heart can become a veil and that surrender is not weakness or resignation, but the quiet placing of ourselves into the wisdom of the One who knows what we cannot know.

Allah says:
وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا
“And hold fast, all together, to the rope of Allah, and do not be divided.” (3:103)

These words are especially precious in times when hearts are being tested.

They remind us that there is something greater than our individual understanding, greater than our preferences, greater than our positions and even greater than our pain.

We are asked to return to the rope of Allah.

It is easy to speak about unity when everything is harmonious.

It is much more difficult to protect unity when there are differences, disappointments, misunderstandings and pain.

The Qurʾān does not ask us to become identical, it asks us to remember the One.

Unity does not mean that we see everything in exactly the same way.

Unity means that beneath our differences, we remember where we come from, whom we seek and before whom we will all one day stand.

Our paths may take different forms, our understandings may differ, our experiences may not be the same, but Allah is One.

If Allah has entrusted me with accompanying people on the Path, then I understand my responsibility very simply:

not to gather people around myself, but to help them turn toward Allah.

For this reason, I cannot take sides in a way that deepens separation among us.

This does not mean that we deny differences, it does not mean that we pretend that everything is well when it is not.

Peace does not require the absence of boundaries, sometimes a boundary is itself an act of mercy.

It protects what is sacred, it prevents the heart from becoming entangled in hostility and it creates the space in which respect can survive.

Because the deeper we travel toward Allah, the less there is to defend and the more there is to serve.

My beloved sisters and brothers, perhaps what is being asked of us in this moment is:

Can we remain brothers and sisters while we disagree?
Can we preserve dignity when we are hurt?
Can we remember mercy when we feel misunderstood?
Can we remember that no human being is the destination?

The destination is always Allah.

Let us return there, let us return to the place where the heart is wider than the argument. Where mercy is greater than the wound, where adab is greater than the need to be right, where dignity does not require another person to be humiliated, where difference does not have to become separation.

And where our love for our teacher becomes most faithful when it leads us, as he taught us, beyond ourselves and back to Allah.

May He allow us to differ without hatred, to speak without wounding, to protect without attacking and to serve without seeking recognition.

And may He make this community once again a place where a seeker can enter and feel:

Here, I am not being asked to choose a side, here, I am being invited to remember Allah.

with love and respect for each one of you,

I remain, your sister on the Path, with humility, with love and with hope in Allah.

Fawzia