

FLEEING FROM THE FIRE

IBN RAJAB AL-ḤANBALĪ



DĀR AS-SUNNAH CLASSIC COLLECTION

FLEEING FROM THE FIRE

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

التحريف من النار
والتعريف بحال دار البوار

للعافظ أبي الفرج زين الدين عبد الرحمن بن أحمد
ابن رجب الحنبلي البغدادي الدمشقي

٧٢٦ - ٧٩٥ هـ

ALLĀH SAID,

“O you who have believed!
Save yourselves and your families
from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones;
over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and
severe; they do not disobey Allāh in what He
commands them, but [always] do what they
are commanded to do.”

[QUR'ĀN 66: 6]

Fleeing from the Fire

by al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū'l-Faraj Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī



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THE AUTHOR

Ḥāfīz Abū'l-Faraj ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī

His Name and Lineage

He is the Imām and Ḥāfīz, Zaynu'l-Dīn 'Abdul-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn 'Abdul-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Abū-l-Barakāt Mas'ūd al-Sulamī al-Ḥanbalī al-Dimashqī. His agnomen was Abū'l-Faraj, and his nickname was Ibn Rajab, which was the nickname of his grandfather who was born in that Rajab.

His Birth and Upbringing

He was born in Baghdād in 736H and was raised in a pious household that was firmly rooted in knowledge, nobility and righteousness. His grandfather, 'Abdul-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥasan, was one of the scholars of Baghdād who had a circle in which he would teach students ḥadīth using an ancient method for memorisation. Ibn Rajab would attend these lessons of his grandfather on several occasions even though he was just four-five years of age. As for his father, he was also a scholar and *Muḥaddith*, well-known for his knowledge and virtue.

His Teachers

He learned and took knowledge from the greatest scholars of his time. In Damascus, he studied under:

- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, studying closely with him until his death in 751H
- Zaynu'l-Dīn al-'Irāqī, ibn an-Naqīb
- Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Khabbāz
- Dāwūd ibn Ibrāhīm al-'Aṭṭār
- Ibn Qāṭī al-Jabal
- Aḥmad ibn 'Abdu-l-Hādī al-Ḥanbalī

In Makkah, he heard from:

- al-Fakhr 'Uthmān ibn Yūsuf al-Nuwayrī

In Jerusalem, he heard from:

- al-Ḥāfiẓ al-'Alā'ī

In Egypt, he heard from:

- Ṣadru'l-Dīn Abū'l-Faṭḥ al-Maydūmī
- Nāṣiru'l-Dīn ibn al-Mulūk

and many others.

His Students

Many students of knowledge came to him to study under him. Amongst the most famous of his students were:

- Abū'l-'Abbās Aḥmad ibn Abū Bakr ibn 'Alī al-Ḥanbalī, known as Ibn al-Risām [d. 884H]
- Abū'l-Faḍl Aḥmad ibn Naṣr ibn Aḥmad, the *Muḥṭi* of the lands of Egypt [d. 844H]
- Dāwūd ibn Sulaymān al-Mawsilī [d. 844H]

- ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān ibn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad al-Muqṛī
- Zaynū’l-Dīn ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān ibn Sulaymān ibn Abū’l-Karam, well known as Abū Shi’ar;
- Abū Dharr ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Muḥammad al-Miṣrī al-Zarkashī[d. 846H]
- al-Qāḍī ‘Alā’ū’l-Dīn ibn al-Lahām al-Ba’lī [d. 803H], who was the closest of his students to him.
- Aḥmad ibn Ṣayfū’l-Dīn al-Ḥamawī
- and many others.

Ibn Rajab devoted himself to knowledge and spent the vast majority of his time researching, writing, authoring, teaching, and giving legal rulings.

The Scholars Praise for Him

Many scholars praised him for his vast knowledge, asceticism and expertise in the Ḥanbalī *madhhab*. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah said of him, ‘He read and became proficient in the various fields of science. He engrossed himself with the issues of the *madhhab* until he mastered it. He devoted himself to the occupation of knowledge of the texts, defects and meanings of the ḥadīth.’¹

Ibn Ḥajr said of him, ‘He was highly proficient in the science of ḥadīth in terms of the names of reporters, their biographies, their paths of narration and awareness of their meanings.’²

Ibn Mufliḥ said of him, ‘He is the Shaykh, the great scholar, the Ḥāfiẓ, the ascetic, the Shaykh of the Ḥanbalī *madhhab* and he

¹ Ibn Qāḍī al-Shuhbah, *Tārikh*, vol. 3, p. 195.

² Ibn Ḥajr, *Inbā’u’l-Ghamr*, vol. 1, p. 460.

authored many beneficial works.³

His Written Works

He wrote many beneficial works, some of them outstanding such as *al-Qawā'id al-Kubrā fī'l-Furū'* about which it was said, 'It is one of the wonders of this age.'⁴ His commentary to al-Tirmidhī is said to be the most extensive and best ever written so much so that al-'Irāqī; about whom ibn Ḥajr said, 'He was the wonder of his age'; would ask for his help when compiling his own commentary to the same book.

Moreover he has many valuable monographs explaining various aḥādīth such as:

- *Sharḥ Ḥadīth Mā Dhi'bāni Jāi'an Ursilā fī Ghanam;*
- *Ikhtiyār al-Awlā Sharḥ Ḥadīth Ikhtisām al-Mala' al-A'lā;*
- *Nūr al-Iqtibās fī Sharḥ Waṣiyyah al-Nabī li ibn 'Abbās;*
- *Kashfū'l-Kurbah fī Wasfī Hāli Abli-l-Ghurbah.*
- *al-Dhull wa'l-Inkisār li'l-'Aẓīz al-Jabbār*, this book has also been published under the title *al-Khushū' fī'l-Ṣalāh.*
- *Ghayāt al-Nafa' fī Sharḥ Ḥadīth Tamthīl ul-Mu'min bi-Khāmat al-Zara'*
- *al-Mahajjah fī Sayri'l-Dulja*

In exegesis his works include:

- *Tafsīr Sūrah al-Ikhlās;*
- *Tafsīr Sūrah al-Fātiḥah;*
- *Tafsīr Sūrah al-Naṣr;*
- *Irāb al-Basmalah*

³ *al-Maqṣad al-Arṣhad*, vol. 2, p. 81.

⁴ ibn 'Abdu'l-Hādī, *Dhayl 'alā Ṭabaqāt ibn Rajab*, p. 38.

- *al-Istighnā' bi'l-Qur'ān.*

In ḥadīth his works include:

- *Sharḥ Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*
- *Faṭḥu'l-Bārī Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*
- *Jāmi' al-'Ulūm wa'l-Ḥikam*

In *fiqh* his works include:

- *al-Istikbrāj fī Ahkām al-Kharāj,*
- *al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhiyyah.*

In biographies his works include:

- The monumental *Dhayl 'alā Ṭabaqāti'l-Ḥanābilah*
- *Mukhtaṣar Sirah 'Umar Ibn 'Abdu'l-'Aẓīz*

In exhortation his works include:

- *Latā'if al-Ma'ārif fīmā li-Mawāsīm al-'Ām min al-Wadhā'if*
- *al-Farq baynan al-Naṣīḥah wat-Ta'yīr*
- *al-Takhwīf min al-Nār*
- *Aḥwāl Abl ul-Qubūr*
- *Ṭaḥqīq Kalimatu'l-Ikhlāṣ*

His Death

Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Rajab, may Allāh have mercy on him, died on a Monday night, the fourth of Ramaḍān, 795H while in Damascus.

His Published Works in English

Some of his fine works have been translated and published in English under the Dār as-Sunnah Ibn Rajab series:

- The Excellence of Knowledge
- Humility in Prayer
- The Journey to Allāh—An explanation to the Ḥadīth, *“Your actions alone will not save any of you”*
- The Key to Paradise
- The Legacy of the Prophet
An explanation to the Advice given to Ibn ‘Abbās
- The Heavenly Dispute
- The Journey of the Strangers
- Three that Follow the Deceased—An explanation to the Ḥadīth, *“Three things follow the deceased person (to the grave), two of them return, and only one remains...”*
- Difference between Advising and Shaming
- The Inheritors of the Prophets

THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

With the Name of Allāh, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful

The Imām, may Allāh bestow His mercy upon him, said:

All praise is due to Allāh, Lord of all the worlds. May His peace and blessings be upon Muḥammad the seal of the Prophets, the leader of the pious, the Messenger of the Lord of all the worlds, and upon his Family, his Companions and those that followed them until the Day of Judgment.

Allāh Created His creation to acknowledge Him, to worship Him and fear Him. He has made proofs that point to His greatness and magnificence such that He is held in respect and awe with a mighty fear. He described to them His severe punishment and the place of torment prepared for those who defy Him, leading mankind to fortify himself with enacting good deeds. Allāh, the Most High, has often mentioned Hellfire in His Book and the torment it contains for its dwellers.

It contains [the tree of] *al-Zaqūm*, humiliation, boiling water, chains, shackles and other many horrific things. He calls on His slaves to fear Him and abide by his Commands, mentioning these things so that His Pleasure is sought. They are also called to abstain from all that is prohibited and disliked. He who ponders upon the noble Qur’ān will find it very surprising. This is also the case with authentic Sunnah that interprets the meaning of the Book.

Similarly, the lives of the righteous predecessors and learned scholars from the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and their followers (*tabi‘īn*) will surprise him. If he reflects on their lives and the principles they held pertaining to fearing Allāh and humbling themselves to Him, he will realise that such principles accorded them the higher virtues and prestige. They strived endlessly to fulfill all obligations and refrain from even the minute aspects of things that are suspect and disliked, let alone things prohibited. Thus, the scholars said: “The fear of Allāh, the Most High, shields the heart of those who are pious from the enchantments of this world and the doubtful things.”

Allāh, the Most High, has promised Paradise for the one who fears Him among the people of faith. As He said:

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ ۖ

**“But for those who feared the position their Lord,
there are two Gardens.”¹**

Mujāhid said regarding this verse, ‘In this verse, Allāh is saying that He is observant of all deeds one earns for himself. He who wants to perform a deed and fears the rank (*maqām*) of his Lord

¹ *al-Rahmān* (55): 46

as regards this deed, then for him are two gardens (*janntān*).’ He added, ‘This is (about) a man who was planning to sin but remembered the rank (*maqām*) of his Lord and abstained from the sin.’ It is reported that he also said: ‘He is a person who thought of sinning (*ma’siya*) but left it when remembering Allāh.’

‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭalḥah narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that he said: ‘Allāh has promised Paradise for the believers who fear His position (*maqām*) and fulfill all obligations (*farā’id*).’

Al-Ḥasan said: ‘Paradise said: ‘O Lord, for whom did you create me?’ He, the Most High, replied: ‘For him who worships Me while fearing Me.’

Yazid Ibn ‘Abdullāh said: ‘We used to discuss that the dweller of Hellfire is one whose fear of Allāh did not deter him from sinning.’

Wahab Ibn Munabih said: ‘Allāh is not worshipped except by having fear of Him.’

Abū Sulayman al-Daranī said: ‘The origin of all goodness in the world and the Hereafter is the fear of Allāh, the Most High. Every heart that does not have the fear of Allāh is a heart that’s corrupted.’

Wuhayb Ibn Al-Warad said: ‘We were informed about a similitude for the fear of Allāh in the body. It was said that fear of Allāh is like a man who is in his house and in charge of it, as long as the owner of the house lives there. However, if the owner leaves the house and admits another person in the house, the house becomes

corrupted. Similarly, the fear of Allāh Almighty, if present in the body, is in-charge as long as there is the fear of Allāh in it. When the fear of Allāh leaves, the body becomes corrupted so much so that when a man passes by a gathering of people, they say, ‘This is an awful person and they would say to one another: ‘what do you think of such person?’ They would reply: ‘we have no feelings but hatred towards him.’ This is if the fear of Allāh leaves the man’s body. If a man who fears Allāh passed by them, they would remark: ‘he is such a blessed person.’ They would ask each other: ‘what do you think of him?’ They would reply: ‘we have no feelings but love for him.’”

Fuḍayl Ibn ‘Iyyāḍ said: ‘Fear is better than hope if the person is healthy. If he is terminally ill, then hope is better.’

Ibn Al-Mubarak was asked about two men, one of whom fears Allāh while the other was killed in the battlefield fighting for the sake of Allāh Almighty. He replied, ‘The one I have greater admiration for is he who fears Allāh more while among the people.’

I sought guidance from Allāh, the Most High, regarding the compilation of a book containing the description of Hellfire and of what is prepared for the dwellers therein of torment and punishment. With the Will of Allāh, it will deter the soul from transgression and be an impetus to nourish and guide the soul—especially in our present time that is characterised and overwhelmed by laziness and neglect.

The soul is overpowered by desires and it seeks Allāh for safety. Desires do not leave the heart except by one of two things: (Having a) fear that is awful and incendiary; or a yearning that is pleasant and worrying.

I have titled the book '*Al-Takhwīf min al-Nār wal-Ta'rif bi Ḥālī Dār al-Bawār*' [The Fear of Hellfire and Knowing the State of its Dwellers - [Fleeing from the Fire]]. I have divided it into thirty chapters [and sub-sections].

May Allāh protects us from the Fire of Hell, may He put a barrier between the fire and us, by His Grace and Mercy.

CHAPTER ONE

Warnings against the Fire

Allāh, Most High, says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ
نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَاظٌ شِدَادٌ
لَّا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

“O you who have believed! Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones, over which are [appointed] angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them, but [always] do what they are commanded.”²

Allāh, Most High, says,

فَاتَّقُوا
النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾

“Then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones,

² *Al-Tahrim*(66): 6

prepared for the disbelievers.”³

Allāh, Most High, says,

وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

“And fear the Fire, which is prepared for the disbelievers.”⁴

Allāh, Most High, says,

فَأَنْذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّى ﴿١٤﴾

“So I have warned you of a Fire which is blazing.”⁵

Allāh, Most High, says,

لَهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِنَ النَّارِ
وَمِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ذَلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهَ بِهِ عِبَادَهُ، يَلْعَبُدُونَ ﴿١٥﴾

“They will have coverings [layers] of fire above them and coverings [of Fire] beneath them. By that Allāh threatens [and warns] His servants. ‘O My servants, therefore fear Me!’”⁶

Allāh, Most High, says,

³ *Al-Baqarah* (2): 24

⁴ *Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 131

⁵ *Al-Layl* (92): 14

⁶ *Al-Zumar* (39): 16

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ إِلَّا مَلَائِكَةً وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عِدَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً
 لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِيَسْتَوِينَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَبِزَادَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِيمَانًا
 وَلَا يَرْتَابَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَلِيَقُولَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِم مَّرَضٌ
 وَالْكَافِرُونَ مَاذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا كَذَلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي
 مَن يَشَاءُ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَمَا هِيَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْبَشَرِ ﴿٣١﴾ كَلَّا
 وَالْقَمَرِ ﴿٣٢﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا أَدْبَرَ ﴿٣٣﴾ وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا أَشْفَرَ ﴿٣٤﴾ إِنَّهَا لَآحَدٌ
 كُفِّرُ ﴿٣٥﴾ نَذِيرٌ لِلْبَشَرِ ﴿٣٦﴾ لِمَن شَاءَ مِنكُمْ أَن يَسْقُدَ أَوْ يُتَّقِرَ ﴿٣٧﴾

“For We have not made the keepers of the Fire except angels. And We have not made their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve—that those who were given the Scripture will be convinced and those who have believed will increase in faith and those who were given the Scripture and the believers will not doubt and that those in whose hearts is disease [hypocrisy] and the disbelievers will say, ‘What does Allāh intend by this as an example?’ Thus does Allāh leave astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. And none knows the soldiers of your Lord except Him. And it [mention of the Fire] is not but a reminder to humanity. No! By the moon. And [by] the night when it departs. And [by] the morning when it brightens. Indeed, it [the Fire] is of the greatest [afflictions]. As a warning to humanity—To whoever wills among you to proceed or stay behind.”⁷

Al-Hasan said regarding the words, “*warning to humanity*”: ‘By Allāh, man has not been warned from something more severe

⁷ *Al-Muddathir* (74): 31-37

than this.’⁸

Qatadah said that the verse, “*Indeed, it is of the greatest affliction*” refers to Hellfire.’

Samāk Ibn Harb narrated that he heard Nu‘man Ibn Bashīr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) giving a sermon saying, ‘I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say, “I warn you against the Hellfire, I warn you against the Hellfire so much so that if a man in the market were to hear it, his garment over his shoulder would drop to his feet.”’⁹

‘Adī Ibn Ḥātim (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “Save yourself from fire.” And then he said: ‘Save yourself from the Fire’ three times such that we thought he was seeing the Hellfire itself; and then he added, “Fear the fire even by (giving in charity) a portion of a date, and whosoever does not have that then let him say a word of goodness.”¹⁰

In the ḥadīth reported by Bukhārī and Muslim, narrated on the authority Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Verily the example of me and you is like a man who kindles a fire wherein insects and moths dive into it and [similarly] I try to restrain you from the Hellfire while you plunge headlong into it.”¹¹

It was reported by Bazzār and Ṭabārānī from the narration of

⁸ Ibn Abī Ḥātim in his *Tafsīr*.

⁹ Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/268 and 272.

¹⁰ Bukhārī, #1413 and Muslim, #1016.

¹¹ Bukhārī, #3426 and Muslim, #2284.

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I am a restrainer so fear the fire, so fear the fire. Fear (approaching) its boundaries for if I die, I will precede you to the *Hawd*.¹² Whoever arrives there has indeed triumphed. Then a group will be brought forth but diverted towards the left. I will say “O my Lord! They are my people.” Allāh will say, “They treaded a path of apostasy after your demise.”¹³

Imām Muslim records in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he said: ‘When the following verse was revealed:

وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ ﴿٦١٤﴾

“And warn, [O Muḥammad], your closest kindred.”¹⁴

The Prophet (ﷺ) gathered the people of Quraysh together and said: “O the tribe of Ka‘b Ibn Lu‘ayy protect yourselves from the Hellfire, O the tribe of Marah Ibn Ka‘b protect yourselves from the Hellfire, O the tribe of ‘Abdul Shams protect yourselves from the Hellfire, O the tribe of ‘Abdu’l-Manaf protect yourselves from the Hellfire, O the tribe of Hashim protect yourselves from the Hellfire, O the tribe of ‘Abdu’l-Muṭṭalib protect yourselves from the Hellfire, O Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad protect yourself from the Hellfire for indeed I have nothing [to protect you] from [the punishment of] Allāh.¹⁵

¹² *Al-Hawd*, the water cistern/lake that will be for the Prophet (ﷺ) on earth. Whoever drinks from it will never feel thirsty again. Its utensils are as the number of the stars; its water is from *Al-Kawthar* in Paradise that is sent down to it.

¹³ Aḥmad, Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabir* and Bazzar

¹⁴ *Al-Shu‘ara* (26): 214

¹⁵ Muslim, #204

Ṭabāranī reported on the authority of Kulayb Ibn Ḥazn (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say, “Seek Paradise earnestly and flee from the Hellfire earnestly. Verily, neither the seeker of Paradise nor the one who flees from Hellfire, sleeps. The Hereafter is wrapped with detestable things while this world is wrapped with pleasing things and vain desires. Let not the present world distract you from the Hereafter.

Ḥaram Ibn Ḥayyān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) used to walk outside some nights and call at the top of his voice: ‘I am amazed at how one who seeks Paradise can sleep, and at how one who flees from the Hellfire can sleep and then he read the verse:

أَفَأَمِنَ أَهْلُ الْقُرَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا بَيِّنًا
وَهُمْ نَائِمُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

“Then, did the people of the cities feel secure from
Our punishment coming to them at night while
they were asleep?”¹⁶

Imām Aḥmad reported in his *Kitāb al-Zubd* that Abū Jauzā’a said: ‘If I am given any authority over the people, I would erect minarets along the streets and would appoint men to call out to the people: ‘The fire, The fire.’

¹⁶ *Al-A’rāf* (7): 97

CHAPTER TWO

The Fire and the Condition of Those who Fear it

Allāh, Most High, says,

إِنِّى فِى
خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لآيَاتٍ
لِّأُولَى الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١١٢﴾ الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا
وَعَلَى جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِى خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١١٣﴾
رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْرَجْتَهُ مِمَّا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مَن
أَنْصَارِ ﴿١١٤﴾

“Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding. Who remember Allāh while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], ‘Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above

such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire. Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire—You have disgraced him, and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.”¹⁷

Allāh, Most High, says,

قُلْ
أَوْ نَبِّئْكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ ذَلِكَ لِّلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ
تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ
وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ﴿١٥﴾
الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا أَمْتٌ فَأَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَرَبَّنَا
عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٦﴾

“Say, ‘Shall I inform you of [something] better than that? For those who fear Allāh will be gardens in the presence of their Lord beneath which rivers flow, wherein they abide eternally, and purified spouses and approval from Allāh. And Allāh is Seeing [aware] of [His] servants. Those who say, ‘Our Lord, indeed we have believed, so forgive us our sins and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.’”¹⁸

Allāh, Most High, says,

¹⁷ *Āl-Imrān* (3): 190-192

¹⁸ *Āl-Imrān* (3): 15-16

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَبِيتُونَ لِرَبِّهِمْ سُجَّدًا وَقِيَامًا ﴿١٤﴾ وَالَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا اصْرِفْ عَنَّا عَذَابَ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ عَذَابَهَا كَانَ غَرَامًا ﴿١٥﴾ إِنَّهَا سَاءَتْ مُسْتَقَرًّا وَمُقَامًا ﴿١٦﴾

“And the servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth easily, and when the ignorant address them [harshly], they say [words of] peace. And those who spend [part of] the night to their Lord prostrating and standing [in prayer]. And those who say, ‘Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of Hell. Indeed, its punishment is ever adhering. Indeed, it is evil as a settlement and residence.’”¹⁹

Allāh, Most High, says,

وَيَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَهُ وَيَخَافُونَ عَذَابَهُ إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ كَانَ مَحْذُورًا ﴿١٧﴾

“And they hope for His mercy and fear His punishment. Indeed, the punishment of your Lord is ever feared.”²⁰

Allāh, Most High, says,

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مِّنْ عَذَابِ رَبِّهِمْ مُّشْفِقُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

¹⁹ *Al-Furqān* (25): 63-66

²⁰ *Al-Isrā'* (17): 57

“And those who are fearful of the punishment of their Lord.”²¹

Allāh, Most High, says,

ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِي وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ ﴿١٤﴾

“That is for he who fears My position and fears My threat.”²²

Allāh, Most High, says,

وَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ
﴿١٥﴾ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلُ فِي أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ﴿١٦﴾ فَمَنْ اللَّهُ
عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَّعْنَا عَذَابَ السَّمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾

“And they will approach one another, inquiring of each other. They will say, ‘Indeed, we were previously among our people fearful [of displeasing Allāh]. So Allāh conferred favour upon us and protected us from the punishment of the Scorching Fire.’²³

Ibrahīm al-Taymī said: ‘One who is not saddened by the fear of Hellfire deserves Hell for the dwellers of Paradise (*ahlu’l-jannah*) will say:

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ
شَكُورٌ ﴿١٤﴾

²¹ *Al-Ma‘ārij* (70): 27

²² *Ibrāhīm* (14): 14

²³ *Al-Tūr* (52): 25-27

“And they will say, ‘Praise to Allāh, who has removed from us [all] sorrow. Indeed, our Lord is Forgiving and Appreciative.’”²⁴

One who does not feel apprehensive towards it does not deserve Paradise for the dwellers therein will say:

قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا قَبْلَ فِي أَهْلِنَا مُشْفِقِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

“They will say, ‘Indeed, we were previously among our families fearful [of displeasing Allāh].’”²⁵

The Prophet (ﷺ) used to seek refuge from the Hellfire often and commanded us to do so in the prayers and at other times. The narrations regarding this are numerous.

Bukhārī²⁶ reported on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said that the supplication most often read by the Prophet (ﷺ) was:

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا
حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿٣٧﴾

“Our Lord, give us in this world [that which is] good and in the Hereafter [that which is] good and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.”²⁷

In the collection of Al-Nasā’ī, it was narrated on the authority of

²⁴ *Fāṭir* (35): 34

²⁵ *Al-Ṭūr* (52): 26

²⁶ Bukhārī, #4522 and Muslim, #2690

²⁷ *Al-Baqarab* (2): 201

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say:

« اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ مِنْ حَرِّ جَهَنَّمَ »

“O Allāh, I seek refuge in You from the heat of Hellfire (*Jahannam*).”²⁸

Abū Dāwūd and Ibn Mājah report in their Sunan on the authority of Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) asked a man: “What supplication do you recite in the prayer?” He replied: ‘I say the *tashabbud* and then say:

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ

“O Allāh, verily I ask You for Paradise (*al-Jannah*) and seek refuge in You from the Hellfire (*al-Nār*)”

Indeed I do not utter [abundantly] other than this while you and Mu‘adh no doubt utter what is better.’ The Prophet (ﷺ) then said: “We utter this abundantly too.”²⁹

In a narration recorded by Abū Nu‘aym, it was reported that ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘If a caller from the heavens announced, ‘O mankind, all of you will enter Paradise except for one of you, I will be afraid that it would be me.’

Imām Aḥmad reported that ‘Uthmān Ibn ‘Affān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) was heard saying, ‘If I were to be between Paradise and Hell and I do not know to which of these two I will be sent to, I would wish that I were dust before knowing my fate.’

²⁸ Nasā’ī, 8/278-279

²⁹ Abū Dāwūd, #792 and Ibn Mājah, #910

No one is guaranteed safety (*salāma*) from the torment of the Hellfire [except the Prophets of Allāh (*‘alayhi as-salām*)]. In fact He has created beings who commit only sin. Allāh said:

ذَلِكَ مِمَّا أَوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ رَبُّكَ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا
 ءَاخَرَ فَتُلْقَىٰ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَلُومًا مَّدْحُورًا ﴿٣٩﴾

“That is from what your Lord has revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], of wisdom. And, [O mankind], do not make [as equal] with Allāh another deity, lest you be thrown into Hell, blamed and banished.”³⁰

Allāh, Most High, says,

وَمَنْ يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي إِلَهٌ مِّنْ دُونِهِ فَذَلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ
 جَهَنَّمَ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٢١﴾

“And whoever of them should say, ‘Indeed, I am a god besides Him’—that one We would recompense with Hell. Thus do We recompense the wrongdoers.”³¹

In a ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), mankind will go to Prophet Ādam (*‘alayhi as-salām*) on the Day of Judgment asking him for intercession (*shafā‘a*) but he will refuse saying, “My Lord is angry today like he has never been angry before, and will never be angry like this again. He ordered me with a command and I disobeyed Him and I fear that He will throw me into the Hellfire so go to other than me [for

³⁰ *Al-Isrā’* (17): 39

³¹ *Al-Anbiyā’* (21): 29

today it's about] Myself! Myself!" It was narrated that they will go to Prophets Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm, Mūsā and 'Isā (*'alaybuma as-salām*) and each one of them will reply, "I fear for myself that Allāh will throw me into the Hellfire."³² The Prophets, the trustworthy, the martyrs and the pious will all be afraid of the Hellfire they used to warn the people about it.

Wahab Ibn Munabih said that a wise individual once said: 'I am shy from Allāh, the Most High, that I worship Him expecting the rewards of Paradise thus becoming like a wretched labourer who works only if his wages are paid, and stops working if he does not receive anything. I am also shy from my Lord that I worship Him fearing Hellfire, thus becoming like a wretched worshipper if frightened doing good deeds and if not, refrains. Verily, Allāh may remove from me the love for Him.'

It is therefore essential that a true believer in Allāh should worship with fear (*kawf*), hope (*rajā'*) and love (*maḥabbah*) altogether—and whosoever is lacking in one has diminished the prerequisites of faith (*īmān*). We should understand that the love of Allāh should outweigh our fear of Hellfire and the hope of attaining Paradise.

Yaḥyā Ibn Mu'adh said: 'Limit yourself to fear that refrains you from sinning whereas never let anything desist you from the love of Allāh.'

Most scholars agree that fear of Hellfire and the hope of attaining Paradise should be equal where one does not better the other.

The learned people make mention of two factors. Firstly, that

³² Bukhārī, #3340 and Muslim, #194

it is incumbent upon the servant of Allāh to be obedient to Him, love Him and yearn for His closeness, while not being fully focused whether Allāh shall reward or punish based on his deeds.

Just as one would say, ‘Prophethood was not granted because of our love for it, nor did the fuel of Hellfire light up spontaneously.’

Section One:

Shyness of the Servants for the Bestower

It is upon the servant of Allāh to show gratitude (*shukr*) for the favours (*ni‘ma*) granted to him. Being shy (*hayā*) is an element of that gratitude. The Prophet (ﷺ) stood in prayer until his legs were swollen. It was said: “Do you do this to yourself while Allāh has forgiven all your past and future sins?” He replied: “Should I not be a grateful servant?”³³ This was due to his shyness for the favours bestowed upon him by Allāh.

Secondly, one should fear Allāh based solely on his pure attributes and the purest of fear is the fear one has of being ostracised and shunned by Allāh, the Most High. He said of those He shall throw into Hellfire:

كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ
عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَّحْجُورُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٦﴾

“No! Indeed, from their Lord, that Day, they will be partitioned. Then indeed, they will [enter and] burn in Hellfire.”³⁴

³³ Bukhārī, #4837 and Muslim, #2820.

³⁴ *Al-Muttafifin* (83): 15-16

Dhū'l-Nūn al-Maṣrī said: 'Fearing the fire (*kauf al-nār*) while at death's door is like a drop of water from a bottomless ocean, reflecting how minute and insignificant it is. The dwellers of Paradise will be enjoying themselves in the pleasure (*riḍā*) therein but will forget and loath all of it once invited by Allāh to see Him and speak with Him. Such is that moment that it cannot be compared to anything else. When Allāh removes Himself from them, they will not be satisfied with the other bounties in Paradise (*na'im al-jannah*) and when Hell is mentioned, they are unperturbed. When they return to their dwellings, they are given more of the bounties of Paradise yet their hearts' long for the day they will meet their Lord again.'

Those who fear the Hellfire are indeed engaging in the fear of Allāh. The learned men know that Hell is a manifestation (*dalīl*) of Allāh's Might (*'azma*) and Ability (*quwwā*). That it is the product of Allāh's retribution (*intiḳām*) against the evil-doers, His curse and His authority to punish with a severe punishment. One's work reflects his capability and Allāh is able to do all things.

What is the base level when it comes to fearing Allāh? It should prevent him from committing sin and it should bolster his desire to do the least requirements ordained by Allāh; so much so that he loves to do extra good deeds that will delight his Lord, and he keeps his distance from all form of undesirable acts (*makruhāt*). If any calamity were to afflict him that prevents him from undertaking these good deeds, he will drown in sorrow. The predecessors used to worry over 'Aṭā' al-Salamī who used to be bed-ridden due to his fear that he might engage in acts that could make him forget the verses of the Qur'ān he memorised. This is not due to fear of retribution per se; it is however, the whip that spurs the negligence of pious deeds.

Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyaynah said that Allāh created Hell out of His mercy (*rahma*) so that mankind will refrain from sin.³⁵

There were those who used to cry their hearts’ out due to their fear of Hell to the extent that they would fall unconscious.

It was narrated by ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz Ibn Abī Rawād that he said: ‘When the following verse was revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ):

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ
نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones”³⁶

He read it out to those around him. A youth from among them fainted when he heard this verse. The Prophet (ﷺ) placed his hand on the youth’s heart and boy regained consciousness. He told the youth to say ‘*Lā ilāha illa Allāh*’ and as he said it—the Prophet (ﷺ) gave him the good news that he will be among those in Paradise. The Companions asked him, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, are there amongst us [those who will enter Paradise]?’ He replied, ‘Have you all not heard the Words of Allāh:

ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِي وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ ﴿١٤﴾

“That is for he who fears My position and fears My threat.”³⁷

³⁵ Abū Na‘īm, *al-Hilyah*, 7/285.

³⁶ *al-Taḥrīm* (66): 6

³⁷ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 14

A youth went about shouting to the people at night, “Seek protection from the Hellfire.” The Prophet (ﷺ) went to him and told him, “You made a large group of Angels cry.”

Sulaymān Ibn Suhaym said: ‘I was informed by those who saw Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that he would tremble and moan during prayers while reflecting on the verse:

وَإِذَا
أُلْقُوا مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُقَرَّرِينَ دَعَوْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُبُورًا

“And when they are thrown into a narrow place therein bound in chains, they will cry out thereupon for destruction.”³⁸

And other verses that make mention of Hellfire. So much so that if one who does not know his habits would assume he is possessed.’

In *Kitāb al-Zuhd* of Imām Aḥmad, there is narration by ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Yazīd that he said: ‘I asked Yazīd Ibn Murdith: ‘Why is it that I never see your eyes dry?’ He said: ‘Why do you ask?’ I replied, ‘I hope that Allāh will reward me by doing the same.’ He said: ‘O my brother! Allāh has promised that He shall imprison me in Hell were I to sin. By Allāh, if He were to ordain that I be imprisoned even in a toilet, my eyes will never cease to be wet.’ I asked him again, ‘You are likewise [weeping] in your prayers.’ He asked, ‘Why do you ask?’ I replied, ‘I hope that Allāh will reward me by doing the same.’

He then narrated, ‘Yazīd Ibn Ḥawshab said: ‘I have not known anyone more fearing of Hellfire than Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī] and ‘Umar

³⁸ *al-Furqān* (25): 13

Ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz. It is as if they thought Hell was created especially for them!’

Ḥafs Ibn ‘Umar said that Ḥasan wept and it was asked what made him weep. He replied, ‘I fear that I will be thrown into Hell and no one will ask about it.’

Ḥasan used to say, ‘The true believers suppress their sight, hearing and their bodies until they are deemed ill by the ignorant (*jāhīl*), whereas they are those with real hearts (*aṣḥāb al-qulūb*). Have you not heard them say:

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَذْهَبَ عَنَّا الْحَزْنَ إِنَّ رَبَّنَا لَغَفُورٌ

شُكُورٌ ﴿٣٤﴾

“And they will say, ‘Praise to Allāh, who has removed from us [all] sorrow.’”³⁹

They are those who have experienced severe hardship (*ḥuẓn shadīd*) in this world as were experienced by those before them. Indeed whatever was given to people did not bother them; what saddened them was the fear of Hellfire.

Ḥārith Ibn Hisham said that he heard ‘Abdullāh Ibn Ḥanzalah one day mention his many short-comings while lying in his bed. A man seated with them recited this verse:

لَهُمْ مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ مِهَادٌ وَمِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ غَوَاشٍ

وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤١﴾

“They will have from Hell a bed and over them coverings [of fire]. And thus do We recompense

³⁹ *Fāṭir* (35): 34

the wrongdoers.”⁴⁰

‘Abdullāh started to cry his heart out such that I thought his soul will depart. He then stood up but was reminded to lie down. He replied, ‘The thought of Hell, and it prevents me from lying down. Perchance I might be one of its dwellers.’

‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Mus‘ab narrated that when a man standing on the shore of Euphrates he heard someone recite the verse:

إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾

“Indeed, the criminals will be in the punishment of Hell, abiding eternally.”⁴¹

He started to stagger forward. When he heard the verse:

لَا يَفْتُرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

“It will not be allowed to subside for them, and they, therein, are in despair.”⁴²

He lost consciousness and fell into the river and drowned.

Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Ayāsh said: ‘I prayed maghrib led by Fuḍayl Ibn ‘Iyād, and his son ‘Alī was praying beside me. Fudhayl read the verse:

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ﴿٧٦﴾

“You will surely see the Hellfire.”⁴³

⁴⁰ *Al-A‘rāf* (7): 41

⁴¹ *al-Zukhruf* (43): 74

⁴² *al-Zukhruf* (43): 75

And immediately ‘Alī fell unconscious. Fuḍayl could not read beyond that verse and later prayed *Ṣalatul khaḥf*⁴⁴ with us. He then said: ‘I wrapped ‘Alī (in garments) but he only gained consciousness in the middle of the night. Fuḍayl said: ‘I was with ‘Alī one night and as he was in the courtyard, he kept saying, ‘O fire and when is the respite from the fire.’⁴⁵

‘Alī was once at the house of Ibn ‘Uyaynah and while there, Sufyān mentioned a ḥadīth that made mention of the Hellfire. ‘Alī was holding a package wrapped in paper that fell from his hand as he gave out a moan and fell on the ground. He did not regain consciousness for a long time. Sufyān said: ‘Had I known you were here, I would not have related the ḥadīth!’⁴⁶

On another occasion, ‘Alī was praying in congregation where the Imām read *Surah al-Raḥmān*. When it was over, someone asked ‘Alī, ‘Did you not ponder on the verse:

حُرٌّ مَّقْصُورَاتٌ فِي الْخِيَامِ ﴿٧٣﴾

“Fair ones reserved in pavilions.”⁴⁷

‘Alī replied: ‘I was too engrossed with the preceding verse:

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شَوْابٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنْصِرَانِ ﴿٣٥﴾

“There will be sent upon you a flame of fire

⁴³ *al-Takāthur* (120): 6

⁴⁴ A prayer that is performed while in state of fear.

⁴⁵ Reported by Abū Nu‘yam, *al-Hilyah*, 8/297.

⁴⁶ Reported by Abū Nu‘yam, *al-Hilyah*, 8/298.

⁴⁷ *al-Raḥmān* (55): 72

and smoke, and you will not [be able to] defend yourselves.”⁴⁸

Ibn Abī Dhi’b said: ‘Those who have seen ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz when he was the governor of Madīnah told me that once a man read the verse:

وَإِذَا
أُلْقُوا مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُقَرَّبِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورًا ﴿١٣﴾

“And when they are thrown into a narrow place therein bound in chains, they will cry out thereupon for destruction.”⁴⁹

On hearing this, ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz started to weep until he was overwhelmed and his sobbing grew loud.

Abū Nūḥ al-Anṣarī said: ‘In another incident, the house of Ḥusayn Ibn ‘Alī (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) caught fire while he was in prostration to Allāh in it. Those around him shouted out, ‘O grandson of the Prophet (ﷺ), fire! fire!’ He rose from his prostration only after the fire was extinguished. It was asked, ‘What preoccupied you?’ He replied, ‘The (fear of) the Fire of the Hereafter.’

Aḥmad Ibn Abī Al-Ḥawārī heard Abū Sulaymān say, ‘I imagine that my head is between two mountains of fire and I fall head-long into its depth. So how could I find solace in this world when such is my destiny.’

Sirār Abū ‘Abdullāh said: ‘I rebuked ‘Aṭā al-Salamī for weeping a lot.’ He replied, ‘Why do you rebuke me for something beyond

⁴⁸ *al-Raḥmān*: (55): 35

⁴⁹ *al-Furqān* (25): 13

my control, for if I reflect upon the dwellers of Hellfire and the punishment they receive therein, I picture myself amongst them. I imagine how my hands shall be shackled to my neck and then be dragged to Hell. So how do you expect me not to moan and cry thinking about it?’

Muṭarrāf said: ‘The thought of Hellfire prevents me from imagining the pleasures Paradise!’

Al-Raḳāshī read *Surah al-Raḳmān* and when he reached the verse:

يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ ءَانِ

“They will circulate between it and scalding water,
heated [to the utmost degree].”⁵⁰

He started to walk around his house crying and moaning until he fainted. When Mu‘adha Al-‘Adawiyah was presented to the groom, Ṣalah Ibn Ashīm, his nephew showed him to the washroom and then later directed him to rest with his new bride in a beautiful house. However the couple spent the whole night standing in worship until dawn. The next morning, the nephew admonished Ṣalah, to which he replied, ‘When you showed me into the washroom it reminded me of Hellfire and when you showed me into this beautiful house, it reminded me of Paradise. All my thoughts were about these two till dawn.’

‘Abbās Ibn Walīd said that his father narrated, ‘Whenever Al-‘Awzā‘ī was reminded of Hell, he would preach on and on about it, such that none could ask him any questions until he grew quiet. By this time, all those in the assembly would be in a state of grief.’

⁵⁰ *al-Raḳmān* (55): 44

Aminah bint Abī Al-Wara' was a pious God-fearing woman. If she pondered on Hellfire, she would say, 'They will enter Hellfire, eat, drink and dwell therein.' And she would cry her heart out so much and twirl around in sorrow like a bean that pops about on a frying pan.'

'Abdu'l-Wahid Ibn Zayd said: 'I have not seen a people like these (Muslims) we ambushed on the coast. They fled when they saw us, yet we could hear them crying and seeking protection from the Hellfire throughout the night. In the morning we searched for them but could not find them.'

Section Two:
The Change in State of the
Righteous Predecessors when Seeing Fire

Allāh, the Most High said:

نَحْنُ جَعَلْنَاهَا تَذْكَرًا وَرَحْمَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

“We have made it a reminder and provision for the travelers.”⁵¹

Mujahid said that the fire in this world is a reminder of the Hellfire.

Imām Aḥmad reported that Sa'd Ibn al-Akhram said: 'I was walking with Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) one day and we passed by some blacksmiths. One of them drew a blade of steel from the furnace. Upon seeing this Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) began to sob.

⁵¹ *Al-Wāqī'ab* (56): 73

Uways al-Qarnī used to watch the blacksmith blow on the hot steel and hear the bellow of the fire. He would scream in fear and fall to the ground.

Whenever a torch was lit for ‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) he used to go near it and say, ‘O the son of Khaṭṭāb how will you be patient when you encounter this.’

Al-Aḥnaf Ibn Qays used to approach his lamp at night and put his finger into it and exclaim, ‘What misery O Aḥnaf! How will you account for such and such (bad) action that you committed before.’

Layth narrated that Ṭalḥah said: ‘A man removed his clothes and started to roll on the ground saying, ‘Taste the fire of Hell! Taste the fire of Hell which is most intense!’

Section Three: Those whose Fear of Hell gave them Sleepless Nights

Shadād Ibn Aws used to go to bed with much turbulence; like how a bean would pop around in a frying pan. He used to say, ‘O Allāh! The thought of Hell prevents me from sleeping.’ He would then get up to offer prayers in his room.

Abū Sulaymān al-Darānī said: ‘Thawus would go to bed very distressed and no sooner would he lie down that he would jump up to his feet and start praying. He would do so till morning.’

Al-Har Ibn Ḥusayn saw an old man from his tribe who was given one hundred thousand dirham but he refused it saying, ‘The fear of

Hellfire has removed the sweetness of this world from my heart.' This old man used to stay vigil at night in prayer while everyone else slept and would cry out, 'The Fire! The Fire! The Fire!'

A servant boy by the name of Suhayb was reprimanded by his mistress for not sleeping most of his nights. He used to spend them performing prayers and his mistress felt it would affect his health (and ability to work). He replied to her saying, 'The thought of Paradise makes me yearn and the thought of Hell keeps me awake.'

Sufyān Al-Thawrī used to snap out of his sleep, trembling with the fear of Hell. He would make ablution and with water dripping from his body say, 'O Allāh! You know my needs and You have no teacher. I seek nothing except that I be freed from the Hellfire.'

'Abdullāh Ibn Al-Mubarak similarly said: 'The darkness of midnight reveals some who are bowing, with fear having chased away their sleep, so they stood while the people who love this world sleep peacefully.'

Ibn Al-Mubarak also said: 'And their complexion is yellow as if they are suffering from a sickness arising from a bloated stomach that makes one lethargic. They stay awake to earn the pleasure of Allāh at night while others sleep peacefully. They sometimes cry similar to a baby while people wheeze away in contentment. In meetings where Allāh is remembered, their eyes are wet from the fear of Allāh.'

'Abād Ibn Ziyad Al-Taymī had brothers who were pious worshippers. They were afflicted with plague, and it was said they were God-fearing youth who could judge by the Qur'ān while

they were still children.

‘Abād’s body became yellow in complexion and boney due to shunning his bed from fear (of Allāh) while the ignorant people slept the whole night. He wept and moaned while standing in prayer at night. And during the day he fasted and read the Qur’ān with conviction. He spent his night standing and prostrating in prayer.

Section Four:

Those Whose Fear of Hellfire Prevented them from Laughter

Al-Ḥajjaj said to Sa‘īd Ibn Jubayr, ‘I have been informed that you never laugh!’ He replied, ‘How can I laugh when the fire has been lit, the chains are in place and Angels of Hell (*ḡabaniyah*) are on alert.’

‘Uthman Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Ḥamīd saw that the enemy expedition had set fire to his surroundings. He started to extinguish it and as a result burnt his fingers. He said: ‘By Allāh, even as this worldly fire hurts me, I shall not laugh again until I’m assured that the Fire of Hell shall not afflict me.’

Ibn Abī Dunyā reported that Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘When the Prophet (ﷺ) made his ascension to the Heavens with Angel Jibrīl, he heard a loud thudding sound. He asked regarding it and Jibrīl replied that it was a stone which fell from the outer edge of Hell and had just reached the bottom after seventy years. The Prophet (ﷺ) was not seen laughing after this incident but he used to only smile.

Ibn Ḥibban reports a ḥadīth narrated by Abū Dharr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that he asked the Prophet (ﷺ) about the scriptures of Prophet Mūsā to which he (ﷺ) replied, “It was all admonition and I am astonished by he who is merry even as death is lurking, and I am astonished by he who laughs even as Hellfire is certain.”

Section Five:

Those Who Fell ill Due to the Fear of Hellfire

Al-Ḥasan said that those who fear Hellfire are like burning steel. A person seeing them will say, ‘They are ill!’ Though they look ill, they are not so. He will also say, ‘They have been afflicted.’ It is in fact the people who are afflicted when turning away from the thought of the Hereafter.

‘Umar Ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) heard a man reading in the night prayer the following verses:

إِنَّ عَذَابَ رَبِّكَ لَوَاقِعٌ ﴿٧﴾ مَا لَهُ مِنْ دَافِعٍ ﴿٨﴾

**“Indeed, the punishment of your Lord will occur.
Of it there is no preventer.”⁵²**

‘Umar exclaimed, ‘This vow, by the Lord of Ka‘bah, is truth.’

He went back to his house only to fall ill for a month. People visiting him did not know why he fell ill. It is also said that the illness which claimed the life of ‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz was due to his fear of Hellfire.

It was narrated by Al-Thaḡalah that a youth of Madīnah was very fearful of the Hellfire. When he was bed-ridden, the Prophet

⁵² *Al-Tūr* (52): 7-8

(ﷺ) visited him and embraced him. The youth gave a loud sigh and passed away. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Prepare the body of your brother for indeed the fear of Hellfire has seized him.”

Hafs Ibn ‘Amr Al-Ja‘fī said that Dāwūd Al-Tā‘ī was complaining one day of not being well and the reason for it was that he heard someone reading a verse of the Qur’ān that made mention of Hellfire. He kept repeating the verse throughout the night. In the morning, they found him dead with his head resting on a brick.

Manṣūr Ibn ‘Ammār was performing his night prayers when a man went pass him. At the time, he was reading the verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ
نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones”⁵³

Manṣūr said: ‘I heard a loud sound and then there was silence. In the morning there was a funeral and I asked an old lady who did not recognise me regarding the death.’ She replied, ‘There was a man, may Allāh not reward him⁵⁴ who read a verse from the Book of Allāh. My son was overcome by it and fell down dead.’

Another individual named ‘Alī Ibn Fuḍayl died from the fear of Hell after hearing the verse:

⁵³ *Al-Tabrim* (66): 6

⁵⁴ She blamed the death on the person who read the verses which fatally affected her son.

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذْ وَقَفُوا عَلَى النَّارِ

فَقَالُوا يَلَيْسَ إِنَّا نُرَدُّ وَلَا نَكْذِبُ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا وَنَكُونُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾

“If you could but see when they are made to stand before the Fire and will say, ‘Oh, would that we could be returned [to life on earth] and not deny the signs of our Lord and be among the believers.’”⁵⁵

Section Six:

The Fearfulness of the Prophet (ﷺ)

Imām Muslim reported in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) who narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “In whose hand my soul is, if you had seen what I had seen, you will surely laugh less and cry more.” The Companions asked, ‘And what did you see O Messenger of Allāh?’ He replied, “I saw Paradise and Hell.”⁵⁶

On the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) who narrated that the Prophet of Allāh (ﷺ) said: “During a solar eclipse I saw the Hellfire. It was a sight more dreadful than anything I have seen before!” This ḥadīth was reported by Bukhārī and Muslim.

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said that if the Hellfire was to be revealed to the people, they would all collapse and die.

Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said while giving a sermon, “Do not forget the two tremendous things;

⁵⁵ *Al-An‘ām* (6): 27

⁵⁶ Muslim, #426 and others

Paradise and Hell.” He wept after he said this, so much so that the fringes of his beard were totally wet. He (ﷺ) then said: “In whose hand the soul of Muḥammad is. If you know what I know, you will indeed climb the highlands and strew dust on your heads.” This ḥadīth was reported in the *Musnad* of Abī Ya‘la Al-Mawslī.

Abū Mūsā Al-Ash‘arī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) gave a sermon to his people in Baṣrah. The sermon was about the Hellfire and he wept till his tears fell onto the pulpit. Those listening also wept uncontrollably along with him.

In another incident ‘Umar Ibn Abdu’l-‘Azīz realised that one of his men had visibly changed in complexion. He asked him about it, so the man replied that it was due to illness and fatigue. ‘Umar asked him the same question thrice to which the man replied the same each time. He then relented and said: ‘I will admit that it is because I tasted the sweetness of this worldly life only to see its beauty and ambiances diminish in my eye. Its stones and gold nuggets are equivalent to me. I feel that the people around me being led to Paradise while I am being driven to Hell and so I spent my nights contemplating in prayer and my days fasting. However, my deeds are all minute compared to the forgiveness and bounty of Allāh, the Most High. It is inconsequential compared to the punishment He will mete out to the evil-doers.

Mughīth Al-Aswadī used to say, ‘Visit the graves every day in your thoughts, imagine the daily pleasures of Paradise with your mind, remember the Hereafter with your hearts and look at the parting of ways between the dwellers of Hell and Heaven on the Day of Judgment in anxiety. Let your mind and body feel the atmosphere and repression of Hellfire.’

Abū Sulaymān Al-Darānī said: ‘That Mālik Ibn Dinār left his

friends in a room of his house one night and went to the middle of his room. He stood there until the dawn prayer. He later told his friends that while standing in his room, he was reminded of the dwellers of Hell. He added: ‘Those dwellers were showing me their chains and shackles until morning.’

The righteous predecessors (*Salaf*) have described those who fear Allāh thus, ‘When they come across someone reading verses of the Qur’ān that make mention of Hell, they scream in fright as though the bellow of the fire was in their ears and that the fire was right under their nose. Verily no true believer has conviction that Hell exists except he feels the world is a constricted place—its vastness notwithstanding. The hypocrite however, does not believe in Hell even if it was to be right behind his back until such time that he is taken by surprise and falls into it.’

Wahb Ibn Munnabih said: ‘There was a pious man from among the Bani Isra’īl who stood praying in the sun so much so that his complexion darkened. He told his people this is like the burning of the Hellfire.’ He said: ‘If the mere thought of Hell alone leads to this, how then will I fair when seeing it with my naked eye?’

Ibrāhīm Al-Taymī said: ‘I picture myself inhabiting Paradise; eating its fruits and embracing its virgin maidens. I then picture myself in Hell; eating *ḡaḡūm*, drinking from pus and being chained and shackled. I asked my soul, ‘What do you desire O soul?!’ It replied, ‘I want to return to the world and perform good deeds. So I replied, ‘You are safe. Return now and perform!’”

CHAPTER THREE

Warning all of Creation about the Fire and their Fear of it

Hell was created for the evil-doers among the jinn and mankind. Hell will eventually be filled with these two types. Allāh, the Most High said:

وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالإِنسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ
لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَهُمْ آذَانٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ
بِهَا أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ ﴿١٧٥﴾

“And We have certainly created for Hell many of the jinn and mankind. They have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are even more astray. It is they who are the heedless.”⁵⁷

Allāh, the Most High, says,

⁵⁷ *Al-A'raf* (7): 179

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ
لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١١٩﴾

“But the word of your Lord is to be fulfilled that, ‘I will surely fill Hell with jinn and men all together.’”⁵⁸

Allāh, Most High, says,

وَلَكِنَّ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ
مِنِّي لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

“But the word from Me will come into effect [that] ‘I will surely fill Hell with jinn and people all together.’”⁵⁹

Allāh, Most High, says,

وَيَوْمَ يَحْشُرُهُمْ جَمِيعًا
يَمْعَشِرَ الْجِنَّةِ قَدْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ وَقَالَ أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمْ
مِنَ الْإِنْسِ رَبَّنَا اسْتَمِعْ بَعْضُنَا بِبَعْضٍ وَبَلَّغْنَا أَجْلَنَا الَّذِي
أَجَلْتَ لَنَا قَالَ النَّارُ مَثْوَاكُمْ خَلَّدِينَ فِيهَا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ
رَبَّكَ حَكِيمٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٢١﴾

“And [mention, O Muḥammad], the Day when He will gather them together [and say], ‘O company of jinn, you have [misled] many of mankind.’ And their allies among mankind will say, ‘Our Lord,

⁵⁸ *Hūd* (11): 119

⁵⁹ *Al-Sajdah* (32): 13

some of us made use of others, and we have [now] reached our term which You appointed for us.’ He will say, ‘The Fire is your residence, wherein you will abide eternally, except for what Allāh wills. Indeed, your Lord is Wise and Knowing.’”⁶⁰

Allāh, Most High, says,

وَأَنَامِنَا الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِنَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ
تَحَرَّوْا رَشَدًا ﴿١٤﴾ وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا ﴿١٥﴾

“And among us are Muslims [in submission to Allāh], and among us are the unjust. And whoever has become Muslim—those have sought out the right course (qāsiṭūn). But as for the unjust, they will be, for Hell, firewood.”⁶¹

Allāh, Most High, says,

سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ أَيُّهَ الثَّقَلَانِ ﴿٣١﴾ فَيَأْتِيَهُمَا آيَاتُنَا
تَكَذِّبَانَ ﴿٣٢﴾

“We will attend to you, O prominent beings. So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?”⁶²

Allāh, Most High, says,

⁶⁰ *Al-An‘ām* (6): 128

⁶¹ *Al-Jinn* (72): 14-15

⁶² *Al-Rahmān* (55): 31-32

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا
 شَوْاطِئُ مِنْ نَارٍ وَخُاسِّ فَلَا تَنْصِرَانِ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَيَأْتِيءُ الْآلَاءَ رَبِّكُمَا
 تُكذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٦﴾ فَإِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً كَالدِّهَانِ
 ﴿٣٧﴾ فَيَأْتِيءُ الْآلَاءَ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبَانِ ﴿٣٨﴾ فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُسْتَأْذَنُ عَنْ ذُنُوبِهِ
 إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ ﴿٣٩﴾ فَيَأْتِيءُ الْآلَاءَ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبَانِ ﴿٤٠﴾
 يُعْرَفُ الْمَجْرُمُونَ بِسِيمَتِهِمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالتَّوَصُّي وَالْأَقْدَامِ ﴿٤١﴾

“A flash of fire will be let loose upon you and smoke, and you will not be able defend yourselves! So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny? And when the sky is split open and becomes rose-colored like [burning] oil— So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?—Then on that Day none will be asked about his sin among men or jinn. So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny? The criminals will be known by their marks, and they will be seized by the forelocks and the feet.”⁶³

The Prophet (ﷺ) read these verses to the Jinn informing them of their creation (*kehalq*), death (*mawt*), resurrection (*ba'ith*) and recompense (*jazā'*) for good or evil deeds. The rest of the created beings, the best among them being the Angels (*malaika*), have been warned of Hellfire if they commit sin (*ma'siya*).⁶⁴

There are amongst them those that fear the Fire (*kebā'ifūn*). Allāh said:

⁶³ *al-Rahmān* (55): 35-41

⁶⁴ Tirmidhī, #3287

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا سُبْحٰنَهُ
 بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾ لَا يَسْبِقُونَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ
 بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ
 وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ وَهُمْ مِنَ خَشْيَتِهِ مُشْفِقُونَ
 ﴿٦٨﴾ وَمَنْ يَقُلْ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي إِلَهٌ مِنْ دُونِهِ فَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِيهِ
 جَهَنَّمَ كَذٰلِكَ نَجْزِي الظَّٰلِمِينَ ﴿٦٩﴾

“And they say, ‘The Most Merciful has taken a son.’ Exalted is He! Rather, they are [but] honored servants. They cannot precede Him in word, and they act by His command. He knows what is [presently] before them and what will be after them, and they cannot intercede except on behalf of one whom He approves. And they, from fear of Him, are apprehensive. And whoever of them should say, ‘Indeed, I am a god besides Him’—that one We would recompense with Hell. Thus do We recompense the wrongdoers.”⁶⁵

It has been narrated by the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) and their followers that when Hārūt and Mārūt⁶⁶ committed sin, they were told to choose either the punishment of this world or the punishment of the Hereafter. They chose the former as the punishment therein will elapse.

Imām Aḥmad reported a ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) asked Jibrīl (*‘alayhi as-salām*) as to why he has never seen the Angel Mikā’īl laugh.

⁶⁵ *Al-Anbiya* (21): 26-29

⁶⁶ The two Angels sent to Babylon

Jibrīl answered that Mikā'īl stopped laughing the day Hell was created.⁶⁷

Imām Aḥmad in his *Kitāb al-Zuhd* we find the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Abū 'Imrān Al-Jawnī who said: 'We were informed that Jibrīl (*'alayhi as-salām*) came to the Prophet weeping one day. The Prophet (ﷺ) asked him about what made him cry.' He replied, 'And why is it that you are not weeping O Muḥammad. My eyes have not been dry since the day Hell was created for the fear that I will sin and Allāh will throw me into it.'

Muḥammad Ibn Munkadir said 'When Hell was created, the hearts of Angels left their places to return only after the creation of mankind. Even the cattle, creatures of the wild and birds fear Hellfire.'

It was reported by Ibn Abī Dunyā that on the day Prophet Dāwūd (*'alayhi as-salām*) died, all the creatures of the jungles, deserts, and sea assembled together at the house of Prophet Dāwūd (*'alayhi as-salām*). He was brought to the pulpit and [they] immediately began to praise Allāh and remind everyone of Heaven and Hell. There was great clamour as the creatures started to cry in unison. As for the non-living things, Allāh the most exalted makes mention of their fear in the Qur'ān in this verse:

فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ
مِنْهُ إِلَّا نَهْرٌ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشْقُقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ وَإِنَّ
مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَفِيلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ

“Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder. For indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth, and there

⁶⁷ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/134

are some of them that split open and water comes out, and there are some of them that fall down for fear of Allāh. And Allāh is not unaware of what you do.”⁶⁸

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘Verily, a rock falls to the earth only because of its fear of Allāh. If a group of people were to try to push it down, they would not be able to do so.’

In an interesting incident, Prophet ‘Isā (*‘alayhi as-salām*) traversed a mountain that had two rivers on each of its side. He said: ‘I do not know from where this water comes and to where it goes.’ The river spoke to him saying, ‘As for that which flows on my left, it is the tears from my left eye.’ It was asked why this was so; it replied, ‘It stemmed from the fear that my Lord will make me fuel for Hellfire.’ [Prophet] ‘Isā (*‘alayhi as-salām*) then said: ‘I supplicate to Allāh the Exalted that He endows you to me.’ And this was granted. In an instant, a strong current of water swept him away. [Prophet] ‘Isā (*‘alayhi as-salām*) exclaimed, ‘Subside! In the name of Allāh. Indeed I have sought you from my Lord and he offered you to me. Why are you doing this?’ To which the mountain replied, ‘The first weeping was that of fear but know this weeping is of gratitude.’

Ṭāwūs said: ‘Indeed the moon does cry from the fear of Allāh. However, it does not have any sin and seeks not the power to do deeds nor is it possible for it to do so.’

⁶⁸ *Al-Baqarah* (2): 74

Section One:
The Worldly Fire Fears Hellfire

Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Verily, this fire of yours is one part of seventy parts of Hellfire. Were it not that it was dipped twice in the ocean, you would never have benefited from it. Indeed the worldly fire will supplicate and seek help from Allāh that it not be returned to Hell.”⁶⁹

⁶⁹ Ibn Mājah, #4318 and Ḥākim, 4/593

CHAPTER FOUR

Crying in Fear of the Fire is a Redemption from it

If one was to cry fearing the Fire he will be spared from it, and he who seeks protection from it shall gain it. When a person cries fearing the Fire, he is in fact crying from the fear of Allāh. For he who avoids transgressing the boundaries set by Allāh hoping not to displease Him has indeed feared Him.

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “He who sheds tears fearing Allāh shall not enter Hell and will do so only if milk returns to the teats.”⁷⁰ This was reported by Nasā’ī and Tirmidhī⁷¹

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said that he heard the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) say, “The eyes that shed tears in the early hours of the morning will not be touched by Hellfire (similar to) the eyes that keep vigilance for the sake of Allāh.”⁷²

⁷⁰ It is an expression meaning this can never happen.

⁷¹ Tirmidhī, #1633

⁷² Tirmidhī, #1639

Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A person who sheds even one tear [like the size of a fly’s head] from the fear of Allāh and as a result is taken ill, will be spared from Hellfire.” This was reported by Ibn Mājah.⁷³

It was narrated by Nadhr Ibn Sa'īd with a traceable chain of transmission to the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “No eye wells with tears from the fear of Allāh except that He bars that body from Hellfire. If the tears were to flow to his cheeks, then his face shall not be subjected to disgrace. If a man weeps for his nation, Allāh will spare it from Hellfire solely because of the tears of that man. Every deed has its rewards but the reward for tears [shed from the fear of Allāh] is the extinguishing of many seas of Hellfire.”

Farqad Al-Sabkī said: ‘I read in some books that Paradise will plead to Allāh on behalf of the one who cried yearning for it. It will say to Allāh, ‘O Lord, let him enter Paradise as he had cried yearning me!’ Hell will seek protection from Allāh on behalf of the one who cried fearing it. It will say to Allāh, ‘O Lord, protect him from the Fire as he had cried fearing that he will enter me!’

It was narrated by ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Samrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I saw a dream last night.....” It’s a long ḥadīth in which he described the dream thus, “I saw a man from my nation on the edge of Hell. Fear of Allāh overtook him and he was saved from it. I saw another man from my nation topple into Hell. Tears from the fear of Allāh, the Most Exalted started to well in his eyes so he was removed from Hell.”⁷⁵

⁷³ Ibn Mājah, #4197

⁷⁴ It is mentioned by Suyūfī in his *al-Jāmi' al-Kabīr* and Ṭabarānī in his *al-Kabīr*

In another ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), he heard the Prophet (ﷺ) read the verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ
نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones.”⁷⁴

Upon hearing this, a dark complexioned man in the Prophet’s presence started to weep loudly. Angel Jibrīl (*‘alayhi as-salām*) descended and asked, ‘Whom is this man who is crying?’ The Prophet (ﷺ) replied that he was an Abyssinian and praised him much. To that Jibrīl (*‘alayhi as-salām*) said: “Allāh, the Most Exalted said: ‘By My Might, Power and Loftiness above My Throne, no slave of Mine cries fearing Me in this world except that I shall increase his laughter in Paradise.’”

Section One:

Seeking Protection from Hellfire

Allāh, the Most High said:

الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَمًا وَقُعُودًا
وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَطْلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٧١﴾
رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ مَن تُدْخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدْ أَخْرَجْتَهُ، وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ
أَنْصَارٍ ﴿١٧٢﴾ رَبَّنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ أَنْ

⁷⁵ *Tabrim*(66): 6

ءَامِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَءَامَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا
 سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَقَّنَا مَعَ ٱلْءَبْرَارِ ﴿١١٣﴾ رَبَّنَا وَءَايِنَا مَا وَعَدْتَنَا
 عَلَى رُسُلِكَ وَلَا تُخْزِنَا يَوْمَ ٱلْقِيَمَةِ إِنَّكَ لَأَتُخَلِّفُ ٱلْمِيْعَادَ ﴿١١٤﴾
 فَٱسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ

“Who remember Allāh while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], “Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire. Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire—You have disgraced him, and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers. Our Lord, indeed we have heard a caller [Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)] calling to faith, [saying], ‘Believe in your Lord,’ and we have believed. Our Lord, so forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds and cause us to die among the righteous. Our Lord, and grant us what You promised us through Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, You do not fail in [Your] promise.’ And their Lord responded to them.”⁷⁶

In a sound ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), the Prophet (ﷺ) said pertaining to the Angels encompassing gatherings of remembrance (*dhikr*). He (ﷺ) said: “Allāh, the Most Exalted asks them (i.e. the Angels), though He is the All-Knowing, “From what to these people seek protection?” The Angels will say, “From Hellfire.” He will ask, “Have they seen it?” They will reply, “No. By Allāh, they have not seen it?” He will

⁷⁶ *Āl-‘Imrān* (2): 191-195

say, "What if they were to see it?" The Angels will reply, "If they do see it, they will fear it more." Allāh will say, "Indeed I call you as witness to (the fact that) I have forgiven them of their sins."⁷⁷

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "On a very hot day, if a man says, 'There is no diety except Allāh. How hot is this day. O Allāh! Protect me from the Fire of Hell.' Allāh will say to Hell, 'A slave among my slaves has sought protection in Me from your Fire. I call you as witness that indeed I have given him protection.' On a bitter cold day, if a man says, 'There is no diety but Allāh. How cold is this day. O Allāh! Protect me from the *Zamharīr* of Hell. Allāh will say to Hell, 'A slave among my slaves has sought protection in Me from your *zamharīr*. I call you as witness that indeed I have given him protection.' The Companions asked the Prophet (ﷺ): 'What is the *zamharīr* of Hell?' He replied, "It is a house in which the disbeliever is thrown wherein his appearance alters (i.e. his body is cut and deformed) as a result of the bitter cold."⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Bukhārī, #6408 and Muslim, #2689.

⁷⁸ Ibn al-Sunnī, '*Amal al-Yawm wal-Layl*', #306; and Abū Nu‘aym in his work of similar title. The isnad is weak as graded by Al-Sakhawī in his, '*Al-Maqasid al-Husnah*', #537; and Al-‘Ajluni in his, '*Kashf al-Khafa*', 2/466.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Hell

Abū Nu‘aym reported a narration on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that he said: “Paradise is in the seventh Heaven and Allāh will place where he wishes on the Day of Judgment. Hell is in the seventh earth.”

Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Paradise is in the lofty seventh heaven while Hell is in the lowest seventh earth.’

He then read the following verses:

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْفُجَّارِ لَفِي سِجِّينَ ﴿٧٩﴾

“No! Indeed, the record of the wicked is in *sijjin*.”⁷⁹

Allāh, the Most High said:

كَلَّا إِنَّ كِتَابَ الْأَبْرَارِ لَفِي عِلِّيُّونَ ﴿٨٠﴾

“No! Indeed, the record of the righteous is in *‘illiyyūn*.”⁸⁰

⁷⁹ *Al-Mutafifin* (83): 7

⁸⁰ *Al-Mutafifin* (83): 18

Allāh, the Most High said:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿١٣١﴾

“And in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised..”⁸¹

Based on this verse, scholars have said that Paradise is in the seventh Heaven, while other scholars claim that Hell is indeed on earth; extrapolating from the verses of the Qur’ān that mention the disbelievers being shown Hell in the morning and evening in *barzakab*⁸² and from the fact that the doors of the sky will not be opened for them.

In the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Al-Barā’ Ibn ‘Āzib (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*), the Prophet (ﷺ) said in explaining the way the soul is seized, “The soul of the person is brought to the Earth’s heaven and permission is requested for it to be opened, it is refused and the Prophet (ﷺ) then read:

لَا تُفْتَحُ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ وَلَا يَدْخُلُونَ
الْجَنَّةَ حَتَّى يَلِجَ الْجَمَلُ فِي سَمِّ الْخِيَاطِ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي
الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٠١﴾

“Indeed, those who deny Our verses and are arrogant toward them—the gates of Heaven will not be opened for them, nor will they enter Paradise until a camel enters into the eye of a needle [i.e., never]. And thus do We recompense the criminals.”⁸³

⁸¹ *Al-Dhāriyāt* (51): 22

⁸² The interim period between worldly life and the Hereafter.

⁸³ *Al-A’raf* (7): 40

He (ﷺ) said: “Allāh said: ‘Write his book (of deeds) in *sijjīn*, in the lowest Earth.’ The soul is than thrown off.” Reported by Aḥmad and others.⁸⁴

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) described the seizing of the disbeliever’s soul, “So it comes out like the foulest stench of a corpse. They bring him to the gates of the Earth, where they say: ‘How foul is this stench!’ Then they take him to the souls of the disbelievers.” Reported by Ibn Hibban, Ḥākim among others.⁸⁵

‘Abdullah Ibn ‘Amr Ibn ‘Āṣ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: “The souls of the disbelievers are in the seventh Earth.”

Section One:

The Seas will Erupt and Overflow on the Day of Judgment

It is said that the seas will erupt and overflow on the Day of Judgment and it will eventually become one sea. Allāh said in the Qur’ān:

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ
شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهَا
سُرَادِقُهَا

“And say, ‘The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills—let him believe; and whoever wills—let him disbelieve.’ Indeed, We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire whose walls will surround

⁸⁴ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/278, 295, 296, Abū Dāwūd, #4753 and others.

⁸⁵ Ibn Hibbān, #773, Ḥākim, 1/302-303 and others.

them.”⁸⁶

Allāh, the Most High said,

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ﴿٦﴾

“And when the seas are filled with flame.”⁸⁷

Ibn ‘Abbas (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) commented on the latter verse saying, ‘It erupts until it becomes fire.’” He added, ‘The sun, moon and stars will fall into the sea. Allāh will send upon it a westerly wind that will blow upon it until a fire is kindled.’ This was reported by Ibn Abi Dunyā and Ibn Abi Hatim. It was reported by them also that Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) commented on the following verse thus:

وَأَيُّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمُحِيطَةٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ

“And indeed, Hell will encompass the disbelievers.”⁸⁸

This is the sea into which the stars will be strewn and into which the sun and moon will fall. This is indeed Hell.

Sa‘īd Ibn Mūsāyyib narrated that a Jewish man once asked ‘Alī (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) regarding the whereabouts of Hell. ‘Alī (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) replied, ‘The sea.’ Adding, ‘I am quite positive that he (the questioner) believes (what I said).’ In another narration, ‘Alī asked a Jew regarding the whereabouts of Hell. He replied: ‘It is under the sea.’ ‘Alī (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) replied in the affirmative and read the following verses.

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ﴿٦﴾

⁸⁶ *Al-Kahf* (18): 29

⁸⁷ *Al-Takwīr* (81): 6

“And when the seas are filled with flame.”

Ubayy Ibn Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said. ‘The Jinn told men, ‘We have come with some news. Go to the sea and behold, it was a raging fire.’ Ibn Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) commented on the verse:

يَوْمَ تَبْدَلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ
وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ ﴿٤٨﴾

“[It will be] on the Day the earth will be replaced by another earth, and the heavens [as well]....”⁸⁹

That the heavens change into gardens while the Earth becomes a flaming sea. It is reported in the *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd that ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “One is not to travel in the sea except for *Hajj*, *Umrah* or War for verily below the sea is the fire and below the fire is the sea.”⁹⁰

Mu‘awiyah Ibn Sa‘īd said: ‘Verily this sea, that is the Roman sea is the centre of the Earth. Confluence of all the rivers is to this sea. Even the great sea pours into it. All the wells deposit copper crusts into it and this will cause it to overflow on the Day of Judgment.’

When the fish swallowed Prophet Yūnus (*‘alayhi as-salām*), it traveled around the seven seas and stopped at the sea bed next

⁸⁸ *Al-Tawbah* (9): 49

⁸⁹ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 48

⁹⁰ Abū Dāwūd, #2489

to Hells pit. Prophet Yunus (*'alayhi as-salām*) glorified Allāh from within the fish, which was heard by Qārūn who was dwelling in Hellfire.”

Some are of the opinion that Hell is in the sky. Mujāhid commented on the verse:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٢١﴾

“And in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised.”⁹¹

That it refers to heaven and Hell. Imām Aḥmad recorded a narration on the authority of Hudayfah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I was presented with *Burāq*⁹² and Jibrīl and I reached *Baitul-Maqdis* (in Jerusalem) as soon as we sat on it. The doors of the skies were opened for us and I saw heaven and Hell.”⁹³

However the ḥadīth mentions that he saw Hell while he was in the skies and thus, it can be argued that his seeing it does not tantamount to it being in the skies. To substantiate this point, it can be noted that the dead see both heaven and Hell in their graves. This does not mean that heaven is on Earth. The Prophet (ﷺ) also saw Paradise and Hell while performing the lunar-eclipse prayer. It was also narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) saw Hell while on his way to *Baitul-Maqdis*.⁹⁴

⁹¹ *Al-Dhāriyāt* (51): 22

⁹² A horse-like creature with wings for flying.

⁹³ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 5/387, 392, 394,

⁹⁴ Ibn Ḥibbān, #2606 and others

‘Ubadah Ibn Şāmit (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) stood in front of the eastern wall of *Baitul-Maqdis* and wept. He then said that it was the exact spot where the Prophet (ﷺ) told us that he saw Hell.

CHAPTER SIX

The Levels (*darajāt*) of Hell, How it is Earned and its Description (*ṣifāt*)

Allāh, the Most High said:

إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ
فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا ﴿١٤٥﴾

“Indeed, the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire—and never will you find for them a helper.”⁹⁵

Allāh, the Most High said:

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَةٍ مِمَّا عَمِلُوا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا
يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٣٣﴾

“And for all are degrees [i.e., positions resulting] from what they have done. And your Lord is not unaware of what they do.”⁹⁶

Allāh, the Most High said:

⁹⁵ *Al-Nisā'* (4): 145

⁹⁶ *Al-An'ām* (6): 132

أَفَمِنْ أَتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانِ
اللَّهِ كَمَنْ بَاءَ بِسَخَطِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ وِبَسَّ الْمَصِيرُ
﴿١١٣﴾ هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بِصِعْرٍ يُمَآعِلُونَ ﴿١١٤﴾

“So is the one who pursues the pleasure of Allāh like one who brings upon himself the anger of Allāh, whose refuge is Hell? And how vile a journey's end! They are on [entirely] different levels in the sight of Allāh, and Allāh is Seeing of whatever they do.”⁹⁷

‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Zayd Ibn Aslam said: ‘The levels (*darajāt*) of Paradise ascend while those of Hell descend.’

When commenting on the verse:

لَهَا سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِكُلِّ بَابٍ مِنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَقْسُومٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

“It has seven gates; for every gate is of them [i.e., Satan's followers] a portion designated.”⁹⁸

‘Ikrimah said: ‘It has seven levels and when commenting on the same verse.’

Qatadah said: ‘By Allāh, it is their abode for what deeds they committed.’

Yazīd Ibn Mālik al-Hamdānī said: ‘Hell has seven fires that radiate. Each one looks away from the other in the fear that it will be eaten up by another.’

⁹⁷ *Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 162-163

⁹⁸ *Al-Ḥijr* (15): 44

Ibn Jazīj said regarding the afore-mentioned verse: ‘The first level is *Jahannam*, then *Lazā* then *Hutamah* then *Ṣa‘īr* then *Ṣagr* then *Jahīm* and lastly *Hāwīyah* wherein dwells Abū Jahl.’

Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) once asked: ‘Who is the most tortured in Hell?’ His companions replied: ‘The Jews and the Christians.’ He corrected them saying: ‘No. But it is the hypocrites who dwell in the lowest level of Hell that is its pit where they are walled in and there are no doors to it.’

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) in explaining the dwelling of the hypocrites in Hell said: ‘Fire will be lit on top of them and below them.’

Allāh says:

لَهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِنَ النَّارِ
وَمِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ذَلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهَ بِهِ عِبَادَهُ لِيُعْبَادُوا فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
﴿١٦﴾

“They will have canopies [layers] of fire above them and below them, canopies. By that Allāh threatens [and warns] His servants. O My servants, then fear Me.”⁹⁹

Ibn Mubārak said: ‘The darkness (*ẓula*) of Hell has seventy corners (*ẓawīya*) and each corner there is a type of torture (*‘adhab*) that is not found elsewhere.’

فَلَا أَقْبَحُ مِنَ الْعُقَبَةِ ﴿١١﴾

“But he has not broken through the difficult pass.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ *Al-Zumar* (39): 16

¹⁰⁰ *Al-Balad* (90): 11

Ibn Abī Ḥātim narrated that Ka‘b said: ‘The steep path has seventy levels in Hell.’

In another narration it mentions that ascension on the steep path is a distance of seven thousand years and descending it is equally long.

Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) described, ‘the steep path as a mountain and advised will you not spare yourself from it by freeing slaves?’

It was reported by Bukhārī on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘I saw in my dream two Angels who came to me armed with an iron hammer in each of their hands. Another Angel then came to me who was similarly armed. They said: ‘Do not fear! You are a fine man. If only you would increase the duration of your night prayer.’ They left with me tagging along until I was brought to the periphery of Hell. It was enclosed like a well and had nooks like the nooks of a well. Standing between every two horns was an Angel who was armed with an iron hammer. Therein were men who were strung up-side down with chains. I recognised one of them who were of the Quraysh tribe. They then departed with me following towards the right. I narrated this dream to Hafsaḥ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anbā*) who in-turn related it to the Prophet (ﷺ) who remarked: “Verily ‘Abdullāh is a pious man.”¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Bukhārī, #440, Muslim, #2478-2479 and others.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Hell's Depth

Imām Muslim reported on the authority of ‘Utbah Ibn Ghazwān (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘We were informed that a stone was thrown from the fringe of Hell and it fell for seventy years without reaching the bottom. Verily it will be filled to the brim even if you are awed. ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) used to say, “Think often of Hell for its heat is intense and its pit is far below and (armoury is that of) iron hammers.”¹⁰²

Muslim also reported a narration of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who said: “We were with the Prophet (ﷺ) one day when we heard a noise. He asked us if we knew what the noise was. We replied that Allāh and his Messenger know best. He explained that it was stone cast into Hell and has just reached the (bottom) pit after falling for seventy years.”¹⁰³

It was narrated by Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If seven camels with their skin intact were to be thrown into Hell, it will not reach the bottom except after

¹⁰² Muslim, #2968 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/174.

¹⁰³ Muslim, #2844 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/371.

seventy years.”¹⁰⁴

‘Abdullāh [Ibn Mas‘ūd] (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Any judge who judges between two men is detained on the Day of Judgment and an Angel takes hold of the back of the judge’s head. He is then made to stand in front of Hell where he raises his head to Allāh, the Most High. If it is said: “Throw him!” He is thrown into a pit that has a depth equal to the distance traveled in forty year.” This was related by Imām Aḥmad.¹⁰⁵

‘Umayr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The ruler will be brought forth on the Day of Judgment and placed on Hell’s Bridge. The Bridge will shake violently such that all the joints of the ruler’s body will be displaced. If he was obedient to Allāh in his deeds, he will be safeguarded. However if he was disobedient to Allāh in his actions, the Bridge shall crumble and he will fall into Hell the distance of fifty years. ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) then asked if anyone would dare seek office after hearing this.

In both Bukhārī and Muslim, it is narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) made mention that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Verily a slave says a casual word and because of that is flung into Hell (equal to the time taken to travel) a distance far greater than the distance between the east and west.”¹⁰⁶ He (ﷺ) also said: “A man says a word that he finds harmless yet because of it, is thrown into Hell for seventy years.”¹⁰⁷ Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu*

¹⁰⁴ Muslim, #195 and Ḥākim in his *Mustadark*, 4/606.

¹⁰⁵ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 1/430

¹⁰⁶ Bukhārī, #6477 and Muslim, #2988.

(*anbumā*) commented on the verse:

وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً

“And they say, ‘Never will the Fire touch us, except for [a few] numbered days.’”¹⁰⁸

Saying, “It is said that the Jews find it written in the Torah that the distance between the two poles of Hell is the distance traveled in forty years. It stops at the tree of *Zaqqūm* having its roots in *Jabīm*.”

Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) also used to say, ‘*Jabīm* is *Ṣaqr* wherein is the *Zaqqūm* tree. The enemies of Allāh assume that if the days mentioned in their book elapses, that is the time taken to travel to where *Jabīm* originates, life will end, punishment will be no more, Hell will be destroyed and shall vanish.’ He (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) also added, ‘When they are hurled from the doors of Hell, they travel while being tortured until they reach the *Zaqqūm* tree on the last day of the prescribed days which is forty years. When they have eaten the fruit of *Zaqqūm* and their bellies’ are filled, the guardians of *Ṣaqr* will say, ‘You assumed that when the prescribed days were to elapse, you shall be spared from the Fire. However, you will be in it forever. They will be driven to Hell’s plateau and hurled down.’

We observe from the narration of Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the depth of Hell is forty years and that is exactly what is written in the Torah. However, the Jews have distorted it to mean the distance between the two poles. They claim that after the prescribed days elapse, Hell will be annihilated and cease to

¹⁰⁷ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/379, Tirmidhī, #2315 and Ibn Mājah, #3970

¹⁰⁸ *Al-Baqarah* (2): 80

exist. Verily it is lies and fabrication concocted by them.¹⁰⁹

Section One: The Size of the Dwellers of Hell

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) once asked, ‘Do you know the size of the dwellers of Hell? His companions answered in the negative. He said: “By Allāh, do you not know that between his ear lobe and his nose is a distance of seventy years where valleys of vomit and blood flow.’

We said that it could be rivers but he corrected us saying they were valleys. He then asked, ‘Do you know the expanse of Hell?’ We said: ‘No.’ To which he replied that ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) related to me that she asked the Prophet (ﷺ) regarding the verse:

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ
وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ
مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ ۗ سُبْحٰنَهُ ۚ وَتَعٰلٰى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُوْنَ ﴿٦٧﴾

“They have not appraised Allāh with true appraisal, while the earth entirely will be [within] His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand....”¹¹⁰

‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) asked the Prophet (ﷺ), “Where will the people be on that Day?” He replied, “On the Bridge spanning [over] Hell.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ *Tafsir Ibn Kathīr*, 1/206-207

¹¹⁰ *Al-Zumar* (39): 67

¹¹¹ Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad*.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Hell's Canopy

Allāh, the Most High said:

وَأِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾
لَهَا سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِكُلِّ بَابٍ مِنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَقْسُومٌ ﴿٤٤﴾

“And indeed, Hell is the promised place for them all. It has seven gates; for every gate is of them [Satan's followers] a portion designated.”¹¹²

Imām Aḥmad and Tirmidhī reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Verily Hell has seven doors, of which is one for him who unleashed his sword upon my nation.”

In another ḥadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed Paradise has eight doors while Hell has seven; and some doors are better than the others.”

Abū Rizīn narrated from the Prophet (ﷺ) that, “Indeed Hell has seven doors. The space between one Hell and the next is the

¹¹² *Al-Hijr* (15): 43-44

distance covered by a rider in one year. ‘Alī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘The doors of Hell are seven; each on top of the other and to illustrate this point, he made a circle with the fingers in both hands. Then he collapsed the circle by placing one hand over the other and kept doing it thrice. This was reported by Ibn Abī Hātim. In another attempt at illustrating his point, ‘Alī placed his right hand up on top of the inner left arm.

Al-Daḥḥāk said: ‘Allāh has classified each door for a particular type of sinners. A door for the Jews, a door for the Christians, a door for the Magian, a door for the Sabaeen, a door for the hypocrites, a door for those who associate partners with Allāh and a door for the people of *Tawḥīd*. The people of *Tawḥīd* have hope (of leaving Hell) while the others do not.’

‘Aṭā al-Kharasānī said: ‘Hell has seven doors. The worst misery, distress, heat and with the most putrid smell is reserved for the fornicators who commit it even when they know [it is forbidden].’

It is clear from the above narrations that Hell has specific doors for specific sins just as Paradise has specific doors for specific good deeds. It is mentioned that each door of Hell is hotter than the door above it.

Hisham Ibn Ḥasan said: ‘We were traveling on our pilgrimage and made a stop and descended at a place when a man amongst us read the verse mentioning the seven doors of Hell. A woman heard this and said: “Repeat it! May Allāh have mercy on you.” So he repeated the verse. She then said: ‘I have left behind in my house seven slaves. I ask you to witness that they are free; for each door I free one slave.’ This was reported by Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā.

Al-'Azīz Ibn Abī Warād said: 'There was a man in the village that built a masjid and placed seven stones in the direction of *qiblah*. Every time he completed his prayer he would address the stones saying, 'O stones! I ask you to witness that there is no god but Allāh.' He fell sick one day and his soul was lifted¹¹³ from him. He said: 'I saw in my dream that I was ordered to enter Hell. I saw the stone that I used to address in my house there and could recognise it. It was enormous and blocked me from the door from among the doors of Hell. All the other stones did likewise [blocking all seven doors of Hell].'

Section One:
The Doors of Hell are Shut

Allāh mentions in the Qur'ān that the doors of Hell are shut tight upon its dwellers. He, the Most High said:

إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِمْ مُّوَصَّدَةٌ ﴿٨﴾

"Indeed, it [i.e., Hellfire] will be closed down upon them."¹¹⁴

And He said:

عَلَيْهِمْ نَارٌ مُّوَصَّدَةٌ ﴿٢٠﴾

"Over them will be fire closed in."¹¹⁵

In explaining the word, Al-Daḥḥāk said: 'It is a wall without

¹¹³ He either fell unconscious or fell asleep.

¹¹⁴ *Al-Humazāh* (104): 8

¹¹⁵ *Al-Balad* (90): 20

doors, perhaps the doors overlap each other to form a solid wall as if there were no doors and Allāh knows best.’

Muqāṭil said: ‘The doors of Hell overlap each other and are held together by stakes of iron such that all misery and heat returns back to them.’ Allāh said:

فِي عَمَدٍ مُمَدَّدَةٍ ﴿١١٦﴾

“In extended columns.”¹¹⁶

It is described that the doors are bound by very strong pillars or poles. The neck of each pole is further bound together by chains completely sealing off the doors of Hell. Furthermore, it is said that the pillars are made of fire.

Sadī said: ‘The meaning of the verse changes according to the way it is read. It could mean ‘long pillars’ or it could mean ‘a very long time—i.e. eternity.’

Sa’id Ibn Jubayr said: ‘A man will cry out from a branch among the branches of Hell, ‘O *Hanān* [the Most Compassionate]! O *Manān* [the Benefactor]!’ Allāh, the Most High will respond: ‘O Jibril! Take My slave out.’ But he will find it sealed and will say: ‘O Lord! It is sealed.’

‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) narrated: ‘Allāh will say to the dwellers of Hell:

قَالَ أَخْسُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تَكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١١٧﴾

“He will say: ‘Remain despised therein, and do not speak to Me.’”¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ *Al-Humazab* (104): 9

¹¹⁷ *Al-Mu’minūn* (23): 108

The doors are shut in on them. Wretched are the people after those Words and for them there remains nothing but moaning and groaning in grief.’

Abū ‘Imrān al-Jawnī said: ‘On the Day of Judgment, Allāh will order every obstinate tyrant, every rebellious devil, everyone who was feared for his evil by people in this world, to be bound by iron and then entered into Hell, that does not come to an end. The Angels then block them [from escaping torture].’ He added, ‘By Allāh, the feet of the dwellers of Hell will never find a steady footing. By Allāh, they will never see the surface of the sky. By Allāh, their eyelids will not see the darkness of sleep. By Allāh, they will never taste a cool drink.’

Some predecessors have described that the dwellers of Hell will be made to wear [an attire] of molted copper, which prevents them from breathing. The fire in their bodies is stoked. Then the doors are shut upon them and Allāh will be angry with them.

Section Two:

Canopy of Hell Encloses the Disbelievers

Allāh, the Most High says:

إِنَّا أَعَدَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ بِهَا سُرَادِقُهَا

“We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire whose walls will surround them.”¹¹⁸

Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The canopy of Hell are four thick walls. Each wall is

¹¹⁸ *Al-Kahf* (18): 29

the length equal to traveling forty years.”¹¹⁹

Since the canopy encloses them, they face the full wrath of the burning fire of Hell thereby causing distress, grieved and sorrow. Allāh said:

وَإِنْ يَسْتَعِيثُوا يُغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ بِئْسَ
الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿١٢٠﴾

“And if they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like murky oil, which scalds [their] faces. Wretched is the drink, and evil is the resting place.”¹²⁰

Allāh, the Most High said:

وَلَهُمْ مَقْعَمٌ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ ﴿١٢١﴾ كُلَّمَا أَرَادُوا
أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ غَمٍّ أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

“And for [striking] them are maces of iron. Every time they want to get out of it [i.e., Hellfire] from anguish, they will be returned to it, and [it will be said]: ‘Taste the punishment of the Burning Fire!’”¹²¹

Abū Ma’shr related, ‘We were at the funeral with Abū Ja’far Al-Qārī who wept and said: ‘Zayd Ibn Aslam narrated to me that the dwellers of Hell do not breathe and that fact made me cry.’”

¹¹⁹ Tirmidhī, #2587

¹²⁰ *Al-Kabf* (18): 29

¹²¹ *Al-Hajj* (22): 21-22

Section Three:
Doors of Hell Remain Closed
before Anyone can Enter

Allāh said:

وَسَيُقَالُ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ زُرًّا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَوهَا
فُتِحَتْ أَبْوَابُهَا

“And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups until, when they reach it, its gates are opened.”¹²²

It is also narrated that the doors of Hell are opened during midday.

Imām Aḥmad narrated on the authority of Khabāb Ibn Al-Araṭ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who saw a man praying at midday [when the sun is at its zenith] and forbade him to do so. He gave the reason saying, ‘Verily, this is the time when the Hell’s doors open and so there is no prayer then.’

Another proof of it being open is the ḥadīth that is narrated by both Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When Ramaḍān approaches, the doors of Paradise are opened and the doors of Hell are closed. The devil and rebellious Jinn are shackled.”¹²³

However it is said that the doors of Paradise are opened and the doors of Hell are closed exclusively for those who fast.

¹²² *Al-Zumar* (39): 71

¹²³ Bukhārī, #1899 and Muslim, #1079.

CHAPTER NINE

Hell's Extreme Darkness

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Hell is heated up for a thousand years until it turns white. Then it is heated a further thousand years until it turns red and again a thousand years until it turns black. This blackness is like a dark night.”¹²⁴

In another ḥadīth reported by Al-Bayhaqī, the Prophet (ﷺ) compared the blackness of Hell to tar, and the fumes of Hell being seventy times more intense than the worldly fumes.

Ibn Abī Dunyā and Ṭabāranī report a narration explaining that the kindling and embers in Hell do not give off light. Ubayy Ibn Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Allāh gives an example of the disbelievers in the Qur’ān with these verses:

أَوْ كَظُلُمَاتٍ فِي بَحْرٍ لَّجِيٍّ يَغْشَاهُ مَوْجٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِ، مَوْجٌ مِّنْ
فَوْقِهِ، سَحَابٌ ظُلُمَاتٌ بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ إِذَا أَخْرَجَ يَكْدُهُ، أَوْ
يَكْدِيرُهَا، وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُورٍ ﴿٤١﴾

¹²⁴ Tirmidhī, #2594 and Ibn Mājah, #4320

“Or [they are] like darknesses within an unfathomable sea which is covered by waves, upon which are waves, over which are clouds—darknesses, some of them upon others. When one puts out his hand [therein], he can hardly see it. And he to whom Allāh has not granted light—for him there is no light.”¹²⁵

The disbeliever is faced with five levels of darkness (*zulumāt*). His speech and deeds are darkness. He shall enter darkness and leave (to enter) another darkness, and his journey is towards darkness of Hell.

Rabī‘ Ibn Anas said: ‘Verily Allāh has made this worldly fire a source of light and radiance. It is also a source of energy for the people of the world. But the great Fire (of Hell) is dark like tar. May Allāh protect us from it.’

Al-Daḥḥāk said: ‘Hell is black, its water is black, its trees are black and its dwellers are black.’

A ḥadīth reveals that the sinners among the believers will be burnt in Hell until they turn into black coal substantiates the fact that the Hell-dwellers are black.

¹²⁵ *Al-Nūr* (24): 40

CHAPTER TEN

Hell's Intense Heat and Bitter Cold

Allāh, the Most High said:

وَقَالُوا لَا تَنْفِرُوا فِي الْحَرِّ قُلْ نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ
أَشَدُّ حَرًّا لَوْ كَانُوا يَفْقَهُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

“And they said, ‘Do not go forth in the heat.’ Say, ‘The fire of Hell is more intense in heat’—if they would but understand!”¹²⁶

It is reported in both Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) who narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Hell pleaded to her Lord saying, ‘O Lord! Some parts of me are eating other parts (from severe heat), so allow me respite in the form of exhalation; once in winter and once again in summer.’ The most severe of heat you experience is from its *Sumoom* and the worst of chill is from its *Zambarīr*.”¹²⁷

Another ḥadīth reported in both Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) where the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The fire that the son of Adam ignites is one of seventy parts intense than Hellfire.” His Companions remarked, ‘By Allāh,

¹²⁶ *Taubah* (9): 81

it (one part) would have been sufficient.’ He (ﷺ) said: “Hellfire is sixty-nine times hotter; each part equally hot.”¹²⁸

Imām Aḥmad reports a narration with the addition, “Were it not that Hellfire was dipped in the sea twice, the worldly fire would have proved too intense for any use.”¹²⁹

Ka‘b said to ‘Umar Al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*): ‘If a hole the size of a bull’s nostril were to open in the east of Hell, a man on the west would have had his brain boiling due to its heat and flow like liquid as a result.’

‘Abdu’l-Mālik Ibn ‘Umayr said that if the dwellers of Hell were to stay in a fire [of intensity] of this world, they would fall asleep therein.¹³⁰

Another ḥadīth states that Hellfire says on a daily basis, “My heat has increased, my depth has deepened, my embers have become great and my Lord has postponed my dwellers from me.”

Bashīr Ibn Maṣṣūr asked ‘Aṭā’ al-Salamī: ‘How would one feel if a (worldly) fire is ignited and he is asked, ‘who shall enter it?’ ‘Ata replied, ‘If I were asked that question I will be so elated that I fear my soul will leave my body before I fall into the fire!’

¹²⁷ Bukhārī, #3660, Muslim, #617 and Tirmidhī, #2595.

¹²⁸ Bukhārī, #3625, Muslim, #2843 and Tirmidhī, #2592.

¹²⁹ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/379

¹³⁰ Meaning they would find it comfortable as compared to Hellfire

Section One:
Freezing coldness (*ẓamharīr*) of Hell

Mujahid said: 'Verily Hell contains freezing coldness (*ẓamharīr*). If they do not boil in Hell, they will flee and reach *ẓamharīr* (on the opposite pole). If they fall therein, their bones will splinter such that its crackle can be heard.'

Layth added that they will not feel the bones breaking because of the bitter cold.

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: 'The dwellers of Hell will seek protection from the fire and Allāh will send them respite in the form of a cold wind. Its bitter cold will break their bones and they will ask for Hellfire again.'

It is said that *ẓamharīr* is so cold that the skin drops off from the body. When Zayd al-Yamī woke up for the night prayer, he washed his hand and put it into the container that held water. He was stunned by the bitter cold which was near freezing level. Immediately, he pondered about *ẓamharīr* and kept his hand in the container until morning. His slave girl came to see him in the morning and saw him in this situation. She asked him, 'O master! Why did you not pray last night like you always do?' He replied, 'Woe unto you! I put my hand into this container and was stunned by the bitter cold which made me think about *ẓamharīr*. By Allāh, I did not feel the coldness of the water and so stood here. Look, do not mention this incident to anyone except after my death.' And so no one knew this story till after he died.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Hell's Flowing and Movement

It was mentioned earlier that the fire of Hell was heated for three thousand years. It was narrated by Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When Allāh created Hell, he sent Jibrīl to see it: ‘Go and see what I have prepared for its dwellers.’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said: ‘Jibrīl saw that Hell was collapsing on itself and returned and said to Allāh: ‘By Your Might, none who hears of it shall (never want to) enter it.’ Hell was then surrounded by lust and desires; and Jibrīl was told: ‘Go and see what I have prepared for its dwellers.’ He saw it and returned saying: ‘By Your Might, indeed I fear that those who do not seek protection from Hell shall fall into it.’”¹³¹

In the ḥadīth of Samrah Ibn Jundub (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*), the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that two Angels came to him in his dream. The following is a portion of that long narration, “I came upon a man with the most horrendous appearance. The worst you could see. He was in Hell stoking it and running around it. I asked them [angels] who was he but they told me to move along.” At the end of the ḥadīth we are informed that, “The two Angels informed me that the horrendous-looking man in Hell was Mālik,

¹³¹ Aḥmad, 2/332-333, 354 and 373, Abū Dāwūd, #4744 and Tirmidhī, #2563

the keeper of Hell.” In another ḥadīth the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I saw a tree that could provide shade to a great number of people if they were to gather under it. There were two men under it; one of them stoking the fire while the other gathered firewood.” At the end of the ḥadīth he said: “I asked who the two men I saw under the tree were. He (the Angel) replied, ‘they are Angels of Hell who preserve it for the enemies of Allāh who will come on the Day of Judgment.’”¹³²

Section One: Hell Flares up During Midday

Hell flares up every day in mid-noon. In the ḥadīth found in Muslim, ‘Amr Ibn ‘Abasah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Perform the dawn prayer and then refrain from praying until the sun has risen and is high in the sky. Verily, it rises between the horns of *shayṭān*. The disbelievers prostrate to the sun at this time, pray after (that period) for prayers then are witnessed. Refrain from praying when the shadow leaves the arrow¹³³ for Hell flares up during this time. When the shadow appears again then pray.” He proceeds to narrate the rest of the ḥadīth. He (ﷺ) also said in another narration that, “When the sun rises, pray till it is on level with your head like an arrow. When it is on level with your head, it is indeed the hour when Hellfire flares up and its doors are opened. Keep refraining from prayer until the sun sets to your right eyebrow.”¹³⁴

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet

¹³² Bukhārī, #1143, Muslim, #2275, Tirmidhī, #2295 and Aḥmad, 5/8

¹³³ i.e when the sun is at its zenith

¹³⁴ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 5/312

(ﷺ) said: “If the heat of the sun intensifies, cool off with making prayer, for verily the intense heat is from the breath of Hell. Prayer at mid-noon is disliked except on Fridays.”¹³⁵

Section Two:

Hell Flares up Due to the Sins of Mankind

Hell flares up when the son of Adam commits sin. As a result Allāh becomes Angry. It will also flare up on Judgment Day (*yawm al-qiyāmah*). Allāh said:

وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِرَتْ ﴿١٣﴾ وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ
أُزْلِفَتْ ﴿١٤﴾ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ ﴿١٤﴾

“And when Hellfire is set ablaze. And when Paradise is brought near, a soul will [then] know what it has brought [with it].”¹³⁶

Just as the provisions of Paradise increase due to good deeds, the atrocity of Hell increases commensurate with evil deeds. Allāh becomes angry as a result and we seek protection with Allāh from His Anger and from Hell. We also seek protection from all speech and acts that bring us closer to Hell seeking Allāh’s Mercy and Support.

¹³⁵ Ibn Mājah, #1254

¹³⁶ *Al-Takwīr* (81): 12-14

Section Three:
Hell is Ignited Time and Again

Allāh said:

وَمَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ
مِنْ دُونِهِ، وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمِيَائًا وَبِكَمَا
وَصَمَّاءُ وَأَنَّهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ كُلًّا خَبِثَ زِدْنَاهُمْ سَعِيرًا ﴿٩٧﴾

“And whoever Allāh guides—he is the [rightly] guided; and whoever He sends astray—you will never find for them protectors besides Him, and We will gather them on the Day of Resurrection [fallen] on their faces—blind, dumb and deaf. Their refuge is Hell; every time it subsides We increase them in blazing fire.”¹³⁷

‘Umar Ibn ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz once read *Suratul-Layl* during prayer. When he reached the verse:

فَأَنْذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّى ﴿١٤﴾

“So I have warned you of a Fire which is blazing.”¹³⁸

He started to weep and could not go beyond the verse. He read the *Surah* again two or three times but every time he came to the verse, he could not surpass it. He then read another *Surah*.

¹³⁷ *Al-Isrā’* (17): 97

¹³⁸ *Al-Layl* (92): 54

CHAPTER TWELVE

Hell's Anger and Heaving

Allāh, the Most High said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ
سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ ﴿١١٩﴾
لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا وَهُمْ فِي مَا أُشْتَهَتْ أَنفُسُهُمْ
خَالِدُونَ ﴿١٢٠﴾

“Indeed, those for whom the best [reward] has preceded from Us—they are from it far removed. They will not hear its sound, while they are, in that which their souls desire, abiding eternally.”¹³⁹

And Allāh, the Most High said:

وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِمَن كَذَّبَ بِالسَّاعَةِ سَعِيرًا ﴿١٢١﴾
إِذَا رَأَتْهُمْ مِّن مَّكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ سَمِعُوا لَهَا تَغِيظًا وَزَفِيرًا ﴿١٢٢﴾

“And We have prepared for those who deny the

¹³⁹ *Al-Anbiyā'* (21): 101-102

¹⁴⁰ *Al-Furqān* (25): 11-12

Hour a Blaze. When it [i.e., the Hellfire] sees them from a distant place, they will hear its fury and roaring.”¹⁴⁰

And Allāh, the Most High said:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ عَذَابُ جَهَنَّمَ وَيَسَّ الْمَصِيرُ
 إِذَا الْفُجُورُ فِيهَا سَمِعُوا لَهَا شَهيقًا وَهِيَ تَفُورُ ﴿٧﴾ تَكَادُ تَمَيَّزُ
 مِنَ الْغَيْظِ كُلَّمَا أُلْقِيَ فِيهَا فَوْجٌ سَأَلَهُمْ خَزَنَتُهَا أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ نَذِيرٌ ﴿٨﴾

“And for those who disbelieved in their Lord is the punishment of Hell, and wretched is the destination. When they are thrown into it, they hear from it a [dreadful] inhaling while it boils up. It almost bursts with rage. Every time a company is thrown in to it, its keepers ask them, ‘Did there not come to you a warner?’”¹⁴¹

And Shahīq described it as great bellowing sound, something akin to the sound of a mule.

Mujahid said regarding the words, ‘as it blazes forth’ that it is like the boiling in a pot.

Khalid Ibn Darīk said a Companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) narrated that he said: “Whosoever attributes to me what I have not said will have a seat in between the eyes of Hell.” He was asked if Hell had eyes, to which he replied, “Yes; have you not heard the Words of Allāh, the Most High:

إِذَا رَأَتْهُمْ مِنْ مَكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ سَمِعُوا لَهَا تَغِيظًا وَزَفِيرًا ﴿١٢﴾

¹⁴¹ *Al-Mulk* (67): 6-8

“When it [i.e., the Hellfire] sees them from a distant place, they will hear its fury and roaring.”¹⁴²

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘Verily a slave will run towards Hell and it will moan like a mule reaching the periphery of Hell. It will then roar and there shall be none but fears it.’¹⁴³

Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) said: ‘All created things hear the roar of Hell in the morning and evening except mankind and Jinn (*thaqalayn*) who bear accountability.’¹⁴⁴ This was reported by Jazjanī.

Daḥḥāk said: ‘Verily Hell will roar on the Day of Judgment hearing which, Angels and Prophets will fall down prostrate and muttering, ‘O Lord! My soul, my soul!’

Imām Aḥmad reported that Wahb Ibn Munabih said: ‘When the mountain hears the roar and rage of Hell, it will screech out like a woman. It will then collapse unto itself and pulverise.’

‘Abdullāh Ibn Abī Ja‘far was reported by ‘Abdullāh, the son of Imām Aḥmad as saying, ‘Verily, Hell will roar and it will split the hearts of tyrants. Hell roars again and behold, these people are swept into the air and dumped on their faces.’

‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) told Ka‘b to, ‘Instill fear in us.’ Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) related, ‘In whose hand my soul is, verily Hell will be brought forth on the Day of Judgment while it is roaring and raging. It lets out a roar when as it nears, which will send Prophets

¹⁴² *Al-Furqān* (25): 12

¹⁴³ Reported by Ibn Abi Ḥātim

¹⁴⁴ Meaning they will have rewards and punishment according to their deeds.

and martyrs to their knees. They will then plead: ‘O Allāh! I do not burden You today except with (keeping safe) my own soul.’ If you had the deeds of seventy Prophets O Ibn Khaṭṭāb, you would probably not be spared (from Hell).’ ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) added, ‘By Allāh, verily the affairs (of the Day of Judgment) will be severe.’

In another narration, Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) read the following verse of the Qur’ān:

﴿يَوْمَ تَأْتِي كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِجُودِ عَنْ نَفْسِهَا وَتُوْفَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهَمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ﴾⁽¹¹¹⁾

“On the Day when every soul will come disputing [i.e., pleading] for itself, and every soul will be fully compensated for what it did, and they will not be wronged [i.e., treated unjustly].”¹⁴⁵

Ḥasan described the God-fearing in these words, ‘When they read verses of the Qur’ān that mention Paradise, they cry yearning for it and when they come across verses that describe Hell, they scream in fear as if the roar of Hell were right in their ears.’

Abū Wa‘il said: “We went out with Ibn Mas‘ūd and Rab‘ī Ibn Khaytham was with us. We came upon a cooking furnace along the shores of the river Euphrates. Upon seeing it, Ibn Mas‘ūd began reading the verses:

إِذَا رَأَتْهُم مِّن مَّكَانٍ يَبْعِدُ سَمِعُوا لَهَا تَغِيظًا وَزَفِيرًا ﴿١١٢﴾ وَإِذَا
 الْقَوَامُ مِنْهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مَّقْرِنِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَا لَكَ ثُبُورًا ﴿١١٣﴾

“When it [i.e., the Hellfire] sees them from a dis-

¹⁴⁵ *Al-Nahl* (16): 111

tant place, they will hear its fury and roaring. And when they are thrown into a narrow place therein bound in chains, they will cry out thereupon for destruction.”¹⁴⁶

Rabī immediately fainted on hearing these verses. We carried him to his family and we prayed *Zhur* and *‘Aṣr*. Yet he did not regain consciousness. He only came around after we prayed *Maghrib*.”

In a narration by Musma‘ Ibn ‘Āsim, he explained that he spent the night on a shore with ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz, Kilāb and Salmān. Kilāb started to cry all of sudden so much so that I thought he would drop down and die.’ Then ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz followed suit. Finally Salman cried too. I too then began to cry seeing all of them crying, oblivious to the reason making them do so. After some time, I asked ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz the reason. He replied, ‘Verily, I saw the swell of the sea surging about and was reminded of the layers of Hell and its roar. That caused me to cry.’ I posed the same question to Kilaab and he replied an exact similar reply as if he had heard ‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz answer. Finally, I asked Salman the question and he replied, ‘There is not one worse than me amongst the people. I cried only because I saw the other two cry due to my sympathy towards them which yields from seeing what they do to themselves (in piety). May Allāh have mercy on them.’

¹⁴⁶ *Al-Furqān* (25): 12-13

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Hell's Smoke and Burning Wood

Allāh, the Most High said:

وَأَصْحَابُ الشِّمَالِ مَا أَصْحَابُ
الشِّمَالِ ﴿٤١﴾ فِي سَمُورٍ وَجَمِيمٍ ﴿٤٢﴾ وَظِلٍّ مِّنْ يَحْمُورٍ ﴿٤٣﴾ لَا بَارِدٍ
وَلَا كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

“And the companions of the left—what are the companions of the left? [They will be] in scorching fire and scalding water. And a shade of black smoke. Neither cool nor beneficial.”¹⁴⁷

Qatādah said: “These verses contain three things that bring coolness to man; water, wind and shade.”

In Hell, the cooling properties of these three are removed and replaced with heat, may Allāh protect us from it through His Mercy and Compassion. Allāh also said:

أَنْظِلُّوْا إِلَى ظِلِّ ذِي ثَلَاثِ شُعَبٍ ﴿٤٥﴾

“Proceed to a shadow [of smoke] having three

¹⁴⁷ *Al-Wāqi'ah* (56): 41-44

columns.”¹⁴⁸

Mujāhid said: ‘It is the smoke of Hell bellowing from the green, black and yellow firewood that shoot flames if ignited.’

إِنَّهَا تَرْمِي بِشَرَرٍ كَالْقَصْرِ كَأَنَّهُ جَمَلٌ صُفْرٌ ﴿٣٢﴾

“Indeed, it throws sparks [as huge] as a fortress.
As if they were yellowish [black] camels.”¹⁴⁹

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) explained that “*Jimālatun Sufr*” also means bits of copper. Allāh said:

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شَوْاظٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنْصِرَانِ ﴿٣٥﴾

“There will be sent upon you a flame of fire and
smoke, and you will not defend yourselves.”¹⁵⁰

Mujāhid read this verse and put his head into his clothes. He wept and then emerged saying, ‘It is the flame of fire.’ He could not complete the ḥadīth.

Nasā’ī and Tirmidhī report the narration of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The dust from striving in the path of Allāh and the smoke of Hell will never come together in a man’s stomach.”¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ *Al-Mursalāt* (77): 30

¹⁴⁹ *Al-Mursalāt* (77): 32-33

¹⁵⁰ *Al-Raḥmān* (55): 35

¹⁵¹ *Al-Nasā’ī*, 6/12 and *Tirmidhī*, #1633

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Hell's Valleys, Mountains, Wells, Pits, Founts and Rivers

Imām Aḥmad reported a narration of Abū Sa'īd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) where he said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “*Wayl* is a valley in Hell wherein disbelievers will be submerged forty years before reaching its pit.” It is reported by Aḥmad and Tirmidhī¹⁵²

‘Abdullāh explained that *Wayl* is a valley of vomit in Hell.’ It is also said that it contains the pus of the dwellers of Hell.

‘Ata Ibn Yasār said: ‘*Wayl* is a valley in Hell. If a mountain were to drop into *Wayl*, it will melt from the intense heat therein.’

Section one:

Commentary on the Verse: “*I will cover him with arduous torment*”

Allāh the Most High says:

سَأْرِهِنَّ، صَعُودًا

¹⁵² Tirmidhī, #2373

“I will cover him with arduous torment.”¹⁵³

Abū Sa‘īd (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said regarding the above verse, “It is a mountain in Hell whose dwellers are made to climb it. If one places his hand on the mountain, it will melt and when he removes his hand, it will return to its original state. If he places his feet on the mountain, it will melt and when he lifts his feet, it will return to its original state. The disbeliever climbs the mountain for seventy years and descends for an equal time.” It is reported by Imām Aḥmad

In another narration in Tirmidhī on the authority of Ibn Sā’ib (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “It is a mountain made of smoothen rock of Hell that the dwellers of Hell are made to climb. When the climber reaches the summit, he is sent back to the foot of the mountain and is made to climb it again. That will be his condition perpetually. He is dragged with iron chains from in front. He is beaten with iron hammers from behind and he climbs it for forty years.”¹⁵⁴

Section 2: Valleys of Hell

Allāh said:

فَسَوْفَ يَلْقَوْنَ عَذَابًا

“So they are going to meet evil.”¹⁵⁵

Ibn Abī al-Dunyā described “*Ghaiyya*” as a very deep valley in Hell which has bad taste.

¹⁵³ *Al-Mudaththir* (74): 17

¹⁵⁴ Tirmidhī, #2373

Al-Bayhaqī added that, 'It is a river of hot water in Hell. Who-soever follows his vain desires shall be cast into it.'

Qatadah said: '*Athām* is a valley in Hell.' *Athām* is described as containing snakes and segmented scorpions. One snake from it contains poison equivalent to seventy jugs. The scorpions are the size of a mule whose sting is so painful that it overshadows the intense heat of Hellfire. It is assigned to whomever it was created for.

Anas (*radīy Allāhu 'anhū*) explained the following verse thus:

وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَوْبِقًا

“And We will put between them [a valley of] destruction..”¹⁵⁶

“It is a valley of vomit in Hell.” It is reported by ‘Abdullāh Ibn Imām Aḥmad

‘Amr Ibn Abasah said: '*Al-Falaq* is a well in Hell. If it is ignited, it bursts into flames. Verily, Hell is hurt by it very much the same way man is hurt by Hell.'

Zayd Ibn ‘Alī narrated from his forefathers who said: '*Al-Falaq* is a pit in the deepest of Hell having a cover. If it is uncovered, fire so intense escapes from it that makes Hell scream (in pain).'

Abū ‘Ubayd said that Ka‘b the priest entered a church and was mesmerised by its beauty. Ka‘b then said: 'This (Christian) nation is destined for *Al-Falaq*.' He was asked what *Al-Falaq* was, so he replied, 'It is a house in Hell that if opened will make all the dwell-

¹⁵⁵ *Maryam* (19): 59

¹⁵⁶ *Al-Kahf* (18): 52

ers in Hell scream due to the intensity of its fire.”

It is mentioned in the *Tafsīr* of Ibn Jarīr that a Companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) went to *Shām*. He noticed that the people of *dhimma*¹⁵⁷ were well-off. He said: “This sight does not bother me. Are they not destined for *Al-Falaq*?” He was then asked about *Al-Falaq*. To which he replied, ‘It is a house in Hell which, when opened, Hell-dwellers will collapse.’

Sa‘īd Ibn Jubayr said: ‘*Sa‘īr* is a valley in Hell full of vomit.’ It is reported by Ibn Abi Ḥātim

Section 3:

A Valley in Hell called *Jubb Al-Ḥuẓn*

Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Seek protection with Allāh from *Jubb Al-Ḥuẓn*.” He was asked, ‘What is *Jubb Al-Ḥuẓn*?’ He (ﷺ) replied, “It is a valley in Hell from which Hell itself seeks protection a hundred times daily.” He was asked again, ‘Who shall enter it?’ He replied, “The reciters (of the Qur’ān) who do deeds to be seen (i.e. show offs).”¹⁵⁸

Bakr Ibn Khanīs said: “There is a valley in Hell from which Hell itself seeks protection seven times daily. In the valley there is a pit from which the valley and Hell seek protection seven times daily. In the pit there is a snake from which the pit, valley and Hell seek protection seven times daily. Those among the reciters (of the Qur’ān) facing this torment first will ask, ‘O our Lord! We are the first to be tormented even before the idol-worshippers?’ It will be said to them, ‘Those who know are not similar to those who

¹⁵⁷ Non-Muslim minorities protected by the Muslim state

¹⁵⁸ Tirmidhi, #2383 and Ibn Mājah, #252

do not know.””

Ḥumayd Ibn Ḥalāl said: ‘I was informed that Ka‘b (*radīy>Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Verily there are furnaces in the bottom most part of Hell that are as small as a spearhead used in this world. These are called *Jubb Al-Huẓn* into which people enter because of their (evil) deeds, and they are sealed within it.’”

Muḥammad Ibn Wāṣī‘ said: ‘I asked Bilāl Ibn Abī Burdah who sent a message saying: ‘I have been told that Hell has a well known as *Jubb Al-Huẓn*. The arrogant are placed in iron caskets made of fire and placed into the well. Hell then envelopes them from above.’” It is reported by Imām Aḥmad

‘Amr Ibn Shu‘ayb related that his father narrated from his grandfather that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The arrogant are resurrected on the Day of Judgment like tiny particles in the form of a human being. All tiny things tower above them; and they enter a prison in Hell called ‘*būlis*’ where the fire soars above them. Their drink is murky clay that is from remnants of the Hell-dwellers.” This was reported by Imām Aḥmad, Nasā‘ī and Tirmidhī.¹⁵⁹

‘Aṭā’ Ibn Yasār related that, ‘Verily there are seventy thousand valleys in Hell and in every valley there are seventy thousand ravines. In every ravine there are seventy thousand stones and in every stone is a snake that eats the faces of the Hell-dwellers.’

It was narrated by Abū Minhāl Al-Riyāhī that he was informed there are valleys in the cavity of Hell that contain snakes the size equivalent to the middle portion of a camel and scorpions that are as big as an Abyssinian mule. If anyone from Hell was to fall

¹⁵⁹ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/279 and Tirmidhī, #2494

unto them, they become hyperactive and sting their victim so much so that he will plead to be put back in Hell in the hope to flee the snakes and scorpions. It is reported by Ibn Abi Dunyā

In another narration, the snakes are described as jumping onto the person and taking hold of his hair and lips; slithering all over his body and then down to his feet.

Ṭāwūs said to Sulaymān Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Mālik, ‘O Commander of the faithful! Verily there is a rock on the edge of a pit in Hell. It fell seventy years before it came to a stop (i.e. fell to the bottom). Do you know for whom Allāh has prepared this pit?’ He replied, ‘No. Woe unto he for whom it has been prepared!’ Ṭāwūs then said: ‘It is for those who associate with Allāh in his Judgments and the tyrant.’ Sulaymān started to weep hearing this.

Ḥasan Ibn Yaḥyā Al-Khashānī said: ‘There is neither a house, a cave, a shackle, a strap nor a chain except that it has its owners name on it. When I related it to Abū Sulaymān, he wept saying, ‘Woe unto me! How will I manage when all this befalls me? Being shackled and chained to my neck, my feet bound and then entered into Hell to be put in a cave. May Allāh protect me from it.’

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Hell's Chains and Shackles

Allāh, the Most High said:

إِنَّا أَعَدَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَلْسِلًا وَأَغْلَالًا وَسَعِيرًا ﴿٤﴾

“Indeed, We have prepared for the disbelievers chains and shackles and a blaze.”¹⁶⁰

And Allāh, the Most High said:

وَجَعَلْنَا الْأَغْلَالَ فِي أَعْنَاقِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
هَلْ يُجْزَوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾

“And We will put shackles on the necks of those who disbelieved. Will they be recompensed except for what they used to do?”¹⁶¹

And Allāh, the Most High said:

¹⁶⁰ *Al-Insān* (76): 4

¹⁶¹ *Sabā'* (34): 33

إِذَا الْأَغْلَلُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلْسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿٧١﴾
 فِي الْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِي النَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

“When the shackles are around their necks and the chains; they will be dragged. In boiling water; then in the Fire they will be filled [with flame].”¹⁶²

And Allāh, the Most High said:

خَذُوهُ فَعَلُوهُ ﴿٧٣﴾ ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمِ
 صَلُّوهُ ﴿٧٤﴾ ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ﴿٧٥﴾

“[Allāh will say], ‘Seize him and shackle him. Then into Hellfire drive him. Then into a chain whose length is seventy cubits insert him.’”¹⁶³

And Allāh, the Most High said:

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا
 وَحَجِيمًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾

“Indeed, with Us [for them] are shackles and burning fire. And food that chokes and a painful punishment.”¹⁶⁴

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) explained the verse:

إِذَا الْأَغْلَلُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلْسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿٧١﴾

¹⁶² *Ghāfir* (40): 71-72

¹⁶³ *Al-Hāqqab* (69): 30-32

¹⁶⁴ *Al-Muzzammil* (73): 12-13

“When the shackles are around their necks and the chains; they will be dragged.”¹⁶⁵

That the chains grip them and they in turn pull onto it. It was reported by Ibn Abī Hātim. These are the three types of bonds:

1. Shackles (*ighlāl*)—that are attached to the neck, as how Allāh describes this in the verses above.

When mentioning Hell, Ḥasan said: ‘If a shackle of Hell were to be placed on a mountain, it will disintegrate into black water. If a span of a chain of Hell were to be put on a mountain, the chain will crush it.’

Mūsā Ibn Abi ‘Ā’ishah said after reading the verse:

أَفَمَنْ يَنْقِي بَوَّجْهِهِ سُوَّةَ
الْعَذَابِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَقِيلَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ ذُوقُوا مَا كُنتُمْ تَكْسِبُونَ

“Then is he who will shield with his face the worst of the punishment on the Day of Resurrection [like one secure from it]? And it will be said to the wrongdoers, ‘Taste what you used to earn.’”¹⁶⁶

Every time a type of torment befalls them, they shield themselves using their faces.”

Fuḍayl Ibn ‘Iyaḍ said: ‘When the Lord says:

خَذُوهُ فَعَلُوهُ ۗ (٣٠)

¹⁶⁵ *Al-Ghāfir* (40): 71

¹⁶⁶ *Al-Zumar* (39): 24

“Seize him and shackle him..”¹⁶⁷

“Seventy thousand Angels rush and compete with each other, vying for the opportunity to shackle his neck.’

2. Fetters (*qiyūd*)—these are straps or bonds. Abū ‘Imrān said: ‘By Allāh, these bonds never loosen or break.’

Allāh said in the Qur’ān:

وَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقْرَنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٤١﴾

“And you will see the criminals that Day bound together in shackles”¹⁶⁸

3. Chains (*salāsīl*)—Nawf Al-Shāmī commented on the following verse:

تُرْفِي فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ﴿٣٢﴾

“Then into a chain whose length is seventy cubits insert him.”¹⁶⁹

Cubits are a span of the outspread arm. Its length is from Kufah (in Irāq) to Makkah.

Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Verily one ring of the chain mentioned by Allāh in the Qur’ān is made of more iron than what this world contains.’

¹⁶⁷ *Al-Hāqqab* (69): 30

¹⁶⁸ *Ibrāhim* (14): 49

¹⁶⁹ *Al-Hāqqab* (69): 32

Ibn Jurayj explained that the cubit used to describe the chain in Hell is the Angel's cubit.

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) described the fastening mentioned in the above verse thus, 'It enters his anus and comes out of his mouth. He is then aligned as a skewed locust with a rod and roasted.' It is reported by Ibn Abī Hātim.

Abū Hashim said: 'The dwellers of Hell have poles in Hell containing chains within them. Order is given that they be tied around their necks and Hell roars loudly. They are sent away a distance equivalent to five hundred years and then brought back one day. This is the meaning of the verse,

وَيَسْتَعِجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا
عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿١٧٠﴾

“...and indeed, a day with your Lord is like a thousand years of those which you count.”¹⁷⁰

Al-Daḥḥāk said regarding the verse:

يَعْرِفُ الْمَجْرُمُونَ بِسِمَتِهِمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَصِيِّ وَالْأَقْدَامِ ﴿١٧١﴾

“And they will be seized by the forelocks and the feet.”¹⁷¹

‘His forelock and his feet are bound together in chains behind his back.’

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: “His forelock and feet

¹⁷⁰ *Al-Hajj* (22): 47

¹⁷¹ *Al-Raḥmān* (55): 41

are seized while his back is broken as how firewood crackles and breaks in a kiln.”

Ṭabāranī and Ibn Abī Hātim reported on the authority of Ya‘la Ibn Maniyyah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh, the Most Glorified, will create a black cloud for the dwellers of Hell and He will ask them, ‘O people of Hell! What do you wish for?’ They will recollect the worldly clouds and reply, ‘O Our Lord! A drink.’ Then shackles will rain on them, adding to their shackles and chains that add to their chains. Ambers will rain down burning them.”

On the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned an account of his ascension to Heaven where he was brought to a valley in which he heard a wretched voice and smelled something decaying. He asked, “What is it O Jibrīl!” Jibrīl replied, “That is the voice of Hell saying, ‘O Lord! Give me what You have promised me. Indeed my fetters, my chains, my blaze, my boiling water, my darkness and my torture have increased. My depth has deepened and my heat has intensified. Give me what You promised me.’ Allāh will reply, “For you is every male and female polytheist, every male and female disbeliever, every evil person from males and females and every oppressor who does not believe in the Day of Recompense.”

Section One:

Commentary on the Verse, “And for them are hooked rods of iron”

Allāh, the Most High and Most Exalted said:

وَلَهُمْ مَقَامِعٌ مِنْ حَدِيدٍ ﴿١٧٢﴾ كَلِمًا أَرَادُوا
أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ غَمٍّ أُعِيدُوا فِيهَا وَذُقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

“And for [striking] them are maces of iron. Every time they want to get out of it [i.e., Hellfire] from anguish, they will be returned to it, and [it will be said], ‘Taste the punishment of the Burning Fire!’”¹⁷²

Al-Daḥḥāk said, ‘*Maqāmi*’ are hammers.’

On the authority of Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If an iron hammer (belonging to the Angels) were to fall onto earth, and if the entire mankind and Jinn were to come together to carry it, they will not be able to do so. This was reported by Imām Aḥmad who also reported that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If a mountain were struck with the iron hammer, it will scatter (into the air as dust) and come resting in its same position as before.” It is reported by Imām Aḥmad

In his ‘*Kitāb al-Zuhd*’, Imām Aḥmad mentioned Mālik bin Dinār say, ‘When the dwellers of Hell get the feel of a beating with iron hammers, they dip themselves into the boiling waters of Hell and will stay submerged [fearing the beating with the iron hammer] as a person would sink in this world.’

¹⁷² *Al-Hajj* (22): 21-22

Şāliḥ Al-Mar'ī said: ‘When it was read to some pious worshippers the verses:

إِذَا الْأَغْلَالُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلْسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿٧١﴾
 فِي الْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِي النَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

“When the shackles are around their necks and the chains; they will be dragged. In boiling water; then in the Fire they will be filled [with flame].”¹⁷⁴

One of them heaved a sigh and fell unconscious. We then left him and went to another gathering where someone was reading to Yazīd Al-Dhabbī the verse:

وَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقْرَّنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٤١﴾

“And you will see the criminals that Day bound together in Shackles.”¹⁷⁵

Yazīd cried so much on hearing it that he fainted as a result.’

¹⁷³ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/29

¹⁷⁴ *Al-Ghāfir* (40): 71-72

¹⁷⁵ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 49

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Hell's Stones

Allāh, the Most High and Most Exalted said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ
نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

“O you who have believed, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones.”¹⁷⁶

And He, the Most High, said:

فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا
النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

“But if you do not—and you will never be able to—then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers.”¹⁷⁷

It has been reported that the sun and the moon oscillate around

¹⁷⁶ *Al-Tahrim* (66): 6

¹⁷⁷ *Al-Baqarah* (2): 24

Hell. ‘Abdullāh Ibn Fayrūz heard Abū Salamah Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān narrate that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The sun and the moon are two bulls that will circle around Hell on the Day of Judgement.”¹⁷⁸

It is said that the meaning of the ḥadīth is that, “The disbelievers who took deities other than Allāh and who had conviction that these deities will intercede for them and draw them closer to Allāh will be punished alongside these deities. This is to increase their humiliation and harm and to make them regret their actions even more. For indeed, ignominy seizes man when he is punished, alongside him whomever was the cause for the punishment. Hence, we see that the disbeliever is accompanied (into Hell) by *Shayṭān* who was the reason for that person going astray.

Allāh, the Most High, said:

وَمَنْ يَعِشْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقِصْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا
 فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيلِ وَيَحْسَبُونَ
 أَنَّهُمْ مُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَنَا قَالَ يَا لَيْتَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ
 بَعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَيَنْسَأُ الْقَرِينُ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَلَنْ يَنْفَعَكُمُ الْيَوْمَ
 إِذْ ظَلَمْتُمْ أَنَّكُمْ فِي الْعَذَابِ مُشْتَرِكُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

“And indeed, they [i.e., the devils] avert them from the way [of guidance] while they think that they are [rightly] guided. Until, when he comes to Us [at Judgement], he says [to his companion], ‘Oh, I wish there was between me and you the distance between the east and west—how wretched a companion.’ And never will it benefit you that Day,

¹⁷⁸ Imām Ṭaḥāwī in his *Musḥkil al-Āthār*, 1/66-67, Bazzār, Bukhārī, #3200 also reports it briefly. See Al-Albānī in his *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #124

**when you have wronged, that you are [all] sharing
in the punishment.”¹⁷⁹**

Mu‘ammar narrated from Sa‘id Al-Jarīrī regarding these verses, ‘We heard that when the disbeliever is resurrected on the Day of Judgment, he is conjoined with his devil until Allāh drives them to Hell-fire, as He said:

يَلَيْتَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكَ بَعْدَ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ فَيَنْسُ الْقَرِينُ ﴿٢٨﴾

“Oh, I wish there was between me and you the distance between the east and west—how wretched a companion.”¹⁸⁰

Abū’l Ash’hab narrated from Sa‘id Al-Jarīrī from ‘Abbās Al-Jashmī that when the disbeliever comes out of his grave, he finds by his head a demoness like a burnt tree, she takes his hand and says, ‘I am your mate; you and I will enter Hell-fire together.’ Then he says, ‘“Oh, I wish there was between me and you the distance between the east and west—how wretched a companion.”¹⁸¹

Allāh the Almighty mentioned the anger of the disbelievers’ with those who misled them:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا رَبَّنَا أَرْنَا الَّذِينَ ضَلَّوْنَا مِنَ الْإِنِّ
وَالْإِنِّسِ جَعَلَهُمَا نَحْتًا أَقْدَامَنَا لِيَكُونَا مِنَ الْأَسْفَلِينَ ﴿٢٩﴾

“And those who disbelieved will [then] say, ‘Our

¹⁷⁹ *Zukhruf* (43): 36-39

¹⁸⁰ *Zukhruf* (43): 38

¹⁸¹ Reported by Ibn Abī Hātim and others

Lord, show us those who misled us of the jinn and men [so] we may put them under our feet that they will be among the lowest.”¹⁸²

Therefore, when one of them is coupled in punishment with the one who misled him, it would increase his agony because the vastness of the place feels narrow to those who hate each other, and the narrow place is even more so.

Allāh the Almighty told us about the disbelievers’ dispute with their devil companions and those they worshipped beside Allāh. He said:

وَرَزَّتْ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ
 ﴿١١﴾ وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ أَنْزِلُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ هَلْ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ
 أَوْ يَنْصُرُونَ ﴿١٣﴾ فَكَبَّكُوا فِيهَا هُمْ وَالْغَاوُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ وَخُنُودٌ أَيْبَسَ
 أَجْمَعُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ قَالُوا وَهُمْ فِيهَا يَخْتَصِمُونَ ﴿١٦﴾ تَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنَّا لَفِي
 ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ﴿١٧﴾ إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿١٨﴾ وَمَا أَضَلَّنَا
 إِلَّا الْأَعْمَجُ مُؤْمِنٌ ﴿١٩﴾

“And Hell-fire will be brought forth for the deviators. And it will be said to them, ‘Where are those you used to worship Other than Allāh? ‘Can they help you or help themselves?’ So they will be overturned into Hell-fire, they and the deviators and the soldiers of Iblees, all together. They will say while they dispute therein, ‘By Allāh, we were indeed in manifest error, when we equated you with the Lord of the worlds. And no one misguided us

¹⁸² *Fuṣṣilat* (41): 29

except the criminals.”¹⁸³

Among the punishment for the inhabitants of the Fire is their cursing, hatred and disassociation from one another. Allāh said:

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَتْ أُمَّةٌ لَعْنَتْ أُخْتَهَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا آرَكُوا فِيهَا
جَمِيعًا قَالَتْ أُخْرَيْنَاهُمْ لِأَوْلَادِهِمْ رَبَّنَا هَؤُلَاءِ أَضَلُّونَا فَآتَيْنَاهُمْ
عَذَابًا بَاضِعًا مِّنَ النَّارِ قَالِ لِكُلِّ ضِعْفٍ وَلَكِن لَّا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

“Every time a nation enters, it will curse its sister until, when they have all overtaken one another therein, the last of them will say about the first of them ‘Our Lord, these had misled us, so give them a double punishment of the Fire.’”¹⁸⁴

Allāh also said:

وَإِذ يَتَحَاوَرُونَ فِي
النَّارِ فَيَقُولُ الضَّعِيفُونَ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا

“And [mention] when they will argue within the Fire, and the weak will say to those who had been arrogant ...”¹⁸⁵

And:

هَذَا فَوْجٌ مُّقْتَضِحٌ مِّمَّكُمْ لَا مَرْجَأَ لَهُمْ فِيهِمْ صَلَوَاتُ النَّارِ ﴿٥١﴾
قَالُوا بَلْ أَنْتُمْ لَا مَرْجَأَ لَكُمْ أَنْتُمْ قَدْ مَتَمُّوهُ لَنَا فَيَسَّ الْقَرَارُ ﴿٦٠﴾

¹⁸³ *Al-Shu‘arā* (42): 91-99

¹⁸⁴ *Al-A‘raf* (7): 38

¹⁸⁵ *Ghafir*:47

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا مَنْ قَدَّمَ لَنَا هَذَا فَزِدْهُ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا فِي النَّارِ ﴿٦١﴾
 وَقَالُوا مَا لَنَا لَنْ نَرَى رِجَالًا كُنَّا نَعُدُّهُمْ مِنَ الْأَشْرَارِ ﴿٦٢﴾ أَخَذْنَاهُمْ
 سِحْرِيًّا أَمْ زَاغَتْ عَنْهُمْ الْأَبْصَارُ ﴿٦٣﴾ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَحَقُّ تَخَاصُمِ أَهْلِ
 النَّارِ ﴿٦٤﴾

“[Its inhabitants will say], ‘This is a company bursting in with you. No welcome for them. Indeed, they will burn in the Fire.’ They will say, ‘Nor you! No welcome for you. You, [our leaders], brought this upon us, and wretched is the settlement.’ They will say, ‘Our Lord, whoever brought this upon us—increase for him double punishment in the Fire.’ And they will say, ‘Why do we not see men whom we used to count among the worst? Is it [because] we took them in ridicule, or has [our] vision turned away from them?’ Indeed, that is truth [i.e., reality]—the quarreling of the people of the Fire.”¹⁸⁶

It is then not unlikely that every disbeliever is joined with his devil who misled him, and with the image of whom he worshipped other than Allāh.

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā narrated from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Waddah, from ‘Ubadah Ibn Kulayb, that Muḥammad Ibn Hashim said: ‘When this verse was revealed,

نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

“A Fire whose fuel is people and stones”¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ *Sad* (38): 59-64

¹⁸⁷ *Al-Tahrim* (66): 6

The Prophet (ﷺ) recited it, a young man beside him heard it and fell unconscious. The Messenger (ﷺ) placed the young man's head in his lap out of mercy, and he stayed unconscious for a while. He then opened his eyes and said: "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you! What does the stones [of Hell-fire] look like?" He (ﷺ) said: "Does it not suffice what befell you? However, if one stone thereof was placed on the mountains of this world altogether, they would melt. Every person [in the Hell-fire] is joined with a stone and a devil."

Al-Ḥasan also said in his sermon, 'I remind you of Allāh as much as you have mercy upon yourself, for you are warned against a fire that does not extinguish. Whoever becomes of its inhabitants, falls therein and frequents its layers together with a devil and stuck to a stone whose flame burns in his face, 'Death is not decreed for them so they may die, nor will its torment be lightened for them.'

Most interpreters of the Qur'ān have said that 'stones' mean sulphur with which the Fire is lit. It is said to contain five types of torment not found in other types of stone: It ignites rapidly, has a rotten smell, dense in smoke, strong adhesion to bodies and has intense heat.

'Abdu'l-Mālik Ibn Umayr conveyed from 'Abdu'l-Raḥmān Ibn Sabit, from 'Amr Ibn Maymūn, that Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said in interpreting the verse:

وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

"whose fuel is people and stones"¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ Ibn Kathīr mentioned this ḥadīth in his *Tafsīr* in mursal form.

¹⁸⁹ *Al-Taḥrīm* (66): 6

‘It is a stone of sulphur that Allāh created when he created the Heavens and the Earth, found in the lower heaven and prepared for the disbelievers.’¹⁹⁰

Al-Suddī said in his interpretation, narrating from Abū Mālik and Abū Šāliḥ from Ibn Ayyāsh, and from Murrah from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allābu ‘anhu*) and from a number of Companions (*radīy Allābu ‘anhum*):

فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

“then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones”¹⁹¹

‘As for the stones, they are stones in Hell-fire made from black sulphur with which they are tormented.’

Mujāhid said: ‘A stone of sulphur smells worse than a rotten corpse.’

This is what Abū Ja‘far, Ibn Jurayj, ‘Amr Ibn Dinār and others said.

Ibn Wahb narrated from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Ayyāsh, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Sulaymān, from Abū'l-Haytham, from ‘Īsā Ibn Hilāl Al-Sadafi, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allābu ‘anhumā*) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Between each earth and the next a walking distance of five hundred years. The uppermost is on a whale’s back whose sides met in the sky, the whale is on a rock, and the rock is in the

¹⁹⁰ Ibn Abī Ḥatim and Al-Ḥākim in his book, Al-Mustadrak. He said it is authentic according to the conditions of Al-Bukhārī and Muslim

¹⁹¹ *Al-Baqarah* (2): 24

hand of an Angel.”

The second is the wind’s prison. When Allāh willed the destruction of ‘Ād, He commanded the wind keeper to send upon them wind to destroy ‘Ād. He said: ‘My Lord, shall I send upon them wind the size of a bull’s nostril?’ The Compeller [Blessed and Exalted] said: ‘That would suffice earth and all above it, but send wind the size of a ring.’ This was the one about which Allāh said:

مَا نَذَرْنَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ أَنْتَ عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ كَالرَّمِيمِ ﴿٤٢﴾

“It left nothing of what it came upon but that it made it like disintegrated ruins.”¹⁹²

The third one contains the stones of Hell-fire, and the fourth contains the Sulphur of Hell-fire. They said: ‘O Allāh’s Messenger, does Hell-fire have Sulphur?’ He said: ‘Yes. By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, there are valleys of Sulphur therein, if the firmly set mountains were sent therein, they would melt. The fifth contains the serpents of Hell-fire, whose mouths are like valleys; when they sting the disbeliever, no flesh remains on his bones. The sixth contains the scorpions of Hell-fire, the smallest of which is like saddled mules; when they sting the disbeliever, he forgets the heat of Hell-fire. The seventh is *saqr*, where *Iblis* is chained with iron in front of him and his hands behind him. When Allāh wills to release him upon whom He wills of His servants, He does.” This narration was recorded by Al-Ḥākim in his, ‘*Al-Mustadrak*’. He noted that, “Abū’l Samḥ is its sole narrator; his good repute is stated by Imām Yaḥyā Ibn Ma‘īn and the narration is authentic, however, others did not narrate it. Some of the later scholars of ḥadīth said it was *shadh* (an ‘irregular’) ḥadīth. ‘Abdullāh Ibn Ayyāsh

¹⁹² *Al-Dhāriyāt* (51): 42

Al-Qatbanī was deemed a weak narrator by Abū Dāwūd, while he was regarded as trustworthy by Imām Muslim. In addition to that, Darraj narrated many irregular ḥadīths, and Allāh knows best.”¹⁹³

I say: To consider this ḥadīth authentic is very irregular. It could have been disconnected [in its chain of narrators] yet someone mistakenly authenticated it by mistake. In addition, ‘Aṭā’ Ibn Yasār narrated from Ka’b saying something similar to this.

‘Abdu’l-‘Azīz Ibn Abū Rawad narrated that the Messenger (ﷺ) recited this verse in the presence of some of his companions:

قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ

“Protect yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is people and stones”¹⁹⁴

Among them was an old man who asked, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, (do you mean) stones like the stones of this world?’ The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “By Him in Whose Hand my soul is, a stone of Hell-fire is mightier than the mountains of this world altogether.” The old man fell unconscious, so the Prophet (ﷺ) put his hand on the old man’s heart, and found him to be alive. He called upon him, “Say: There is no deity except Allāh”, and he said it; the Messenger (ﷺ) gave him the glad tidings of being among the inhabitants of Paradise. The Companions said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh. Are these good tidings for him exclusively among us?’ He replied, “Yes. Allāh said:

¹⁹³ According to Al-Shāfi‘ī, a *Shādh* (irregular) ḥadīth is one which is reported by a trustworthy person but contradicts the narration of a person more reliable than him.

¹⁹⁴ *Al-Tabrīm* (66): 6

ذَٰلِكَ لِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامِي وَخَافَ وَعِيدِ ﴿١٤﴾

**“That is for he who fears My position and fears
My threat.”¹⁹⁵**

This narration was cited by Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 14

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Hell's Snakes and Scorpions

We have mentioned about the serpents (*biyyāt*) and scorpions (*'aqārib*) of Hell-fire (*jahannam*) in previous chapters.

Imām Aḥmad narrated from Ibn Luhay'ah, from Darraj, on the authority of 'Abdullāh Ibn Al-Hārīth Ibn Juz' Al-Zubaydi, that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: "In Hell-fire there are serpents the size of a camel's neck, when one is stung by it, he feels its poison for forty years. In Hell-fire there are also scorpions the size of a saddled mule, when one is stung by it, he feels its poison for forty years."¹⁹⁶

Al-A'mash narrated from 'Abdullāh Ibn Murrāh, from Masrūq, that Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said, regarding Allāh's saying,

زِدْنَهُمْ عَذَابًا فَوْقَ الْعَذَابِ

"We will increase them in punishment over their punishment."¹⁹⁷

That it, 'Refers to scorpions with fangs like elongated bees."¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/191, Ḥākim, 4/593 and others.

¹⁹⁷ *Al-Nabl* (16): 88

In another version, he said: ‘The increase refers to scorpions of fire that are like black mules, with fangs the size of palm trees.’ This was narrated by Adam Ibn Abū Iyyas in his ‘*Tafsīr*’ from Al-Mas‘ūdī, from Al-A‘mash, from Abū Wa‘il, from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). However, the version narrated from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Murrah is more authentic.

Ibn Abī Hātim narrated (in his *Tafsīr*) from Sufyān, that a man narrated from ‘Abdullāh the interpretation of the verse,

فَرْدَةٌ عَذَابًا ضِعْفًا فِي النَّارِ ﴿٦١﴾

“double punishment in the Fire”¹⁹⁹

That, [It means] Snakes and serpents.’

Al-Suddī conveyed from Murrah from ‘Abdullāh regarding the same verse, to mean, ‘Serpents in Hell-fire.’

Ibn Wahb narrated from Yahyā Ibn ‘Abdullāh, from Abū ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Al-Hablī, that ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘In Hell-fire there are shores containing serpents and scorpions whose necks are the size of camels’ necks.’

Ibn Abī Al-Dunyā and others narrated from Mujāhid that Yazīd Ibn Shajarah said: ‘In Hell-fire there are wells in shores similar to the sea shores, containing vermin and serpents like (the size of) camels, and scorpions like mules. When the inhabitants of Hell-fire call out for the alleviation of their punishment, they are told,

¹⁹⁸ Hākim, 2/356; who said it is authentic according to the conditions of Al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

¹⁹⁹ *Sad* (38): 61

‘Go to these shores’ where these vermin take bites out of their lips, sides and other parts, so they hastily return to the Fire. They are subjected to scabies such that one scratches the skin until his bones are exposed. He is then told, ‘O so and so, does this pain you?’ He will say, ‘Yes’. He will be told, ‘This is your punishment for hurting the believers.’

‘Ubaydullāh Ibn Mūsā conveyed from ‘Uthmān Ibn Al-Aswad that Mujāhid said: ‘In Hell-fire there are scorpions like elephants with fangs like spears. When one of them strikes the disbeliever on his head, his flesh falls to his feet.’

Ḥammād Ibn Salamah reported from Al-Jarīrī that Abū ‘Uthmān said: ‘On the *Ṣirāṭ*²⁰⁰ there are serpents stinging the inhabitants of Hell-fire, hissing. That is the sound referred to in the verse,

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ حَسِيسَهَا

“They will not hear its sound.”²⁰¹

Ibrahīm Al-‘Ajli (Allāh have mercy on him) used to have mosquitos landing on his shoulders and back, which annoyed him, so he used to say to himself:

While you are annoyed by the faint sound of a mosquito,
Hellfire has more wretched and tormented inhabitants

²⁰⁰ The Bridge that is placed over the Hellfire.

²⁰¹ *Al-Anbiyā’* (21): 102

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Food and Drink of the Dwellers of Hell

Allāh the Almighty said:

إِنَّ شَجَرَةَ الزَّقُّومِ ﴿٤٣﴾
طَعَامُ الْأَثِيمِ ﴿٤٤﴾ كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ ﴿٤٥﴾ كَغَلِي
الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٦﴾

“Indeed, the tree of *Zaqqūm* is food for the sinners. Like murky oil, it boils within bellies like the boiling of scalding water.”²⁰²

He also said:

أَذَلِكْ خَيْرٌ لَّأُمَّ شَجَرَةٍ
الزَّقُّومِ ﴿٦٢﴾ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهَا فِتْنَةً لِلظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٦٣﴾ إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ
تَخْرُجُ فِي أَصْلِ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٦٤﴾ طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُ رِئُوسُ الشَّيْطَانِ
﴿٦٥﴾ فَإِنَّهُمْ لَا يَكُونُ مِنْهَا قَائِمُونَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونِ ﴿٦٦﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمْ
عَلَيْهَا لَشَوْبَاتٍ مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّ مَرَجِعَهُمْ إِلَى الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٦٨﴾

“Is Paradise a better accommodation or the tree of

²⁰² *Al-Dukhān*(44): 43-46

Zaqqūm? Indeed, We have made it a torment for the wrongdoers. Indeed, it is a tree issuing from the bottom of the Hellfire, Its emerging fruit as if it was heads of the devils. And indeed, they will eat from it and fill with it their bellies. Then indeed, they will have after it a mixture of scalding water. Then indeed, their return will be to the Hellfire.”²⁰³

And He said:

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَيُّهَا الضَّالُّونَ الْمَكِيدُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ لَا تَكُونُونَ مِنْ شَجَرٍ مِنْ زُقُومٍ ﴿٥٢﴾
 فَالَّذِينَ مِنْهَا الْبُطُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَشَرِبُوا عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَشَرِبُوا
 شَرِبَ الْهَمِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾ هَذَا تَرْكُكُمْ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿٥٦﴾ نَحْنُ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ فَلَوْلَا
 تَصَدَّقُونَ ﴿٥٧﴾

“Then indeed you, O those astray [who are] deniers, Will be eating from trees of *Zaqqūm*. And filling with it your bellies. And drinking on top of it from scalding water. And will drink as the drinking of thirsty camels. That is their accommodation on the Day of Recompense. We have created you, so why do you not believe?”²⁰⁴

And He said:

وَمَا
 جَعَلْنَا الرِّيَاءَ الَّتِي أَرَيْنَاكَ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَالشَّجَرَةَ الْمَلْعُونَةَ
 فِي الْقُرْآنِ وَنَحْوَهُمْ فَمَا يَرِيدُهُمْ إِلَّا طُعِينًا كَبِيرًا ﴿٧٠﴾

²⁰³ *Al-Şaffāt* (37): 62-68

²⁰⁴ *Al-Wāqī‘ah* (56): 51-57

“And We did not make the sight which We showed you except as a trial for the people, as was the accursed tree [mentioned] in the Qur'an...”²⁰⁵

Al-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah and Ibn Ḥibbān, in his Ṣaḥīḥ²⁰⁶ narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) recited this verse,

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءٰمَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ تَقٰوْبِهٖۚ وَلَا تَمُوْنُوْا اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ
مُّسْلِمُوْنَ

“O you who have believed, fear Allāh as He should be feared and do not die except as Muslims [in submission to Him].”²⁰⁷

He then said: “If a drop of *Zaqqūm* was to land on the earth, it would ruin the livelihood of the people of this world, so how about those who have no food other than it?”

Al-Tirmidhī said it is authentic, and it was narrated in *Maqtu‘* form²⁰⁸ through another chain of narrators.

Ibn Ishaq conveyed from Ḥākim Ibn Ḥākim, from ‘Ikrimah, from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that when the Messenger (ﷺ) mentioned the tree of *Zaqqūm*, Abū Jahl said: ‘Muḥammad is

²⁰⁵ *Al-Isrā‘* (17): 60

²⁰⁶ Tirmidhī, #2588, Ibn Ḥibbān, #2611 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 1/301 and 338. Tirmidhī said this ḥadīth is ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ.

²⁰⁷ *Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 102

²⁰⁸ *Ḥadīth Maqtu‘*: (literally: A severed ḥadīth), and it means that the chain of narrators is continuous up to the Companion only, and not to the Prophet (ﷺ).

scaring us with it. O people of Quraysh, do you know what the tree of *Zaqqūm* is with which Muḥammad is scaring you?’ They said: ‘No.’ He said: ‘The *Ajwa* dates of Madīnah with butter. By Allāh, if we are victorious against them, we shall consume it thoroughly.’ Then Allāh revealed the verses,

إِنَّ شَجَرَةَ الزَّقُّومِ ﴿٤٣﴾ طَعَامٌ لِلْأَثِيمِ ﴿٤٤﴾

“Indeed, the tree of *Zaqqūm* is food for the sinners.”²⁰⁹

Meaning, ‘What you say is wrong.’ He also revealed, “as was the accursed tree [mentioned] in the Qur’ān. And We threaten them, but it increases them not except in great transgression.”^{210, 211}

‘Abdu’l-Razzāq narrated from Mu‘ammar that Qatadah said, regarding the verse,

فِتْنَةٌ لِلظَّالِمِينَ ﴿١٦﴾

“Torment for the wrongdoers.”²¹²

“Their denial increased when Allāh told them about a tree (*shajara*) in Hell-fire. He told them that there is a tree in the Fire, which feeds on fire.’

We have already narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*)

²⁰⁹ *Al-Dukhān* (44): 43-44

²¹⁰ *Al-Isrā’* (17): 60

²¹¹ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 1/374

²¹² *Al-Sāffāt* (37): 63

that the *Zaqqūm* tree sprouts from the bottom of Hell-fire.

Al-Ḥasan said that its root is in the bottom of Hell-fire while its branches rise through its various layers.

Salām Ibn Miskīn said that he heard Al-Ḥasan recited the verses,

إِنَّ شَجَرَةَ الرَّقُومِ ﴿٤٣﴾
طَعَامَ الْأَثِيمِ ﴿٤٤﴾ كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ ﴿٤٥﴾ كَغَلِي
الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٦﴾

“Indeed, the tree of *Zaqqūm* is food for the sinful. Like murky oil, it boils within bellies as the boiling of scalding water.”²¹³

He then said: ‘Hell-fire is heated upon it.’

Mughīrah narrated from Ibrāhīm and Abū Razīn regarding the verse,

كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ ﴿٤٥﴾

“Like murky oil, it boils within bellies.”²¹⁴

That, ‘The tree (itself) boils.’

Ja‘far Ibn Sulayman conveyed that Abū ‘Imrān Al-Jawnī said: ‘We heard that one does not take a bite from it except it takes a similar bite from him.’

The Qur’ān has indicated that they eat from it until their bellies

²¹³ *Al-Dukhān* (44): 45

²¹⁴ *Al-Dukhān* (44): 43-46

are filled, so it boils in their bellies like scalding water. After eating it, they drink scalding water, like the drinking of thirsty camels.

‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭalḥah narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘[The verse refers to] thirsty camels.’

While Al-Suddī said: ‘[It refers to] a disease that hits camels so they never cease being thirsting until they die; such is also the case with Hell-fire inhabitants—their thirst is never quenched with the scalding water.’

Mujāhid said similarly.

It is narrated from Al-Dahḥāk in interpretation of that verse, ‘Some of the Arabs say that it refers to the sand [in its absorption of water], while others say that it refers to thirsty camels.’

Both views were narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*). Allāh’s saying,

ثُمَّ إِنَّ لَهُمْ عَلَيْهَا لَشَوْبًا مِّنْ حَمِيمٍ ﴿٦٧﴾

“Then indeed, they will have after it a mixture of scalding water.”²¹⁵

Indicates that the scalding water is mixed with the *Zaqqūm* in their bellies.

‘Aṭā’ Al-Khurasanī said regarding this verse, ‘Their food is mixed and blended with scalding water.’

And Mujāhid said similarly.

²¹⁵ *Al-Ṣaffāt* (37): 67

It is narrated that Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr said: 'When inhabitants of Hell-fire call for relief from hunger, they are relieved with the *Zaqqūm* tree. When they eat from it, their skin on their faces falls off, if someone who knew them passed by, they would recognise the skin of their faces. After they eat, thirst befalls them. When they call for relief from thirst, they are relieved with scalding water. If they bring it close to their faces, its heat cooks their faces, and melts what is in their bellies. They are then struck with maces of iron, so their limbs fall apart, and they cry out for destruction.'

Allāh Almighty said:

ثُمَّ إِنَّ مَرْجِعَهُمْ إِلَى الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٢٨﴾

"Then indeed, their return will be to the Hellfire."²¹⁶

Meaning after eating *Zaqqūm* and drinking the scalding water. It indicates that the scalding water is outside Hell-fire, and that they go to it as camels go to water wells before they are returned to Hell-fire. This is also shown by Allāh's saying,

هَذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾ يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا
وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ آتِنَ ﴿٤٤﴾

"This is Hell, which the criminals deny. They will go around between it and scalding water, heated [to the utmost degree]."²¹⁷

This means that they go around between Hell-fire and the scalding water, sometimes here and sometimes there. Qatadah, Ibn

²¹⁶ *Al-Ṣāfiāt* (37): 68

²¹⁷ *Al-Raḥmān* (55): 43-44

Jurayj and others said this.

Al-Quradhī said regarding the verse,

يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ آتٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

“They will go around between it and scalding water, heated [to the utmost degree].”²¹⁸

That, “The scalding water is beneath the Hell. The person is taken by his forelock and dragged in that scalding water until the flesh melts and only the bones and eyes remain in the head. This is what Allāh referred to by saying,

فِي الْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِي النَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿٧٣﴾

“In boiling water; then in the Fire they will be filled [with flame].”²¹⁹

Section One:

Understanding the Verse: “*And food that chokes*”

Allāh the Exalted said:

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا

وَحِمِيمًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَطَعَامًا إِذَا غُصِبَتْ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾

“Indeed, with Us [for them] are shackles and burning fire and food that chokes and a painful punishment.”²²⁰

²¹⁸ *Al-Rahmān* (55): 44

²¹⁹ *Al-Ghāfir* (40): 72

²²⁰ *Al-Muzammil* (73): 12-13

He also said:

لَيْسَ لَهُمْ طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ ضَرِيحٍ ۖ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنْ جُوعٍ ۖ

“For them there will be no food except from a poisonous, thorny plant that neither nourishes nor avails against hunger.”²²¹

Imām Aḥmad narrated (through a chain of narrators)²²² from ‘Ikrimah that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said regarding the verse,

وَطَعَامًا ذَا عَصَاةٍ

“and food that chokes.”²²³

That it refers to, ‘Thorns that gets stuck in the throat, which neither go in nor come out.’

‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭalḥah narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said regarding the verse,

مِنْ ضَرِيحٍ ۖ

“from a poisonous, thorny plant from a poisonous, thorny plant.”²²⁴

It is, ‘Trees in Hell-fire.’

²²¹ *Al-Ghāshiyah* (88): 6-7

²²² This means that the narrator stated the chain of narrators in his book, but the author here has chosen to omit it.

²²³ *Al-Muzḍammil* (73): 13

²²⁴ *Al-Ghāshiyah* (88): 6

Mujahid said: '[It refers to] dry Ononis.'

It was narrated that 'Ikrimah and Qatadah, as narrated by Al-'Awfi as well as Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: 'Ononis is a thorny plant that sticks to the ground.'

Qatadah said: 'It is among the most bitter and horrible food.'

Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr said: 'It refers to stone', and he is also said: 'It refers to *Zaqqūm*.'

It is narrated that Abū'l Jawza' said: 'It refers to palm tree thorns, and how could they nourish?'

Al-Tirmidhī²²⁵ narrated on the authority of Abū'l-Darda' (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The inhabitants of the Fire will suffer from a hunger equal to the punishment they experience, so they will seek relief, and will be given *Dari* to eat, it will neither nourish nor avail against hunger. So they will (again) seek food to relieve (their hunger), and they will be given to eat of a food that causes one to choke. Then they will remember they used remedy choking in the world by drinking something, so they will seek relief from drink. Then they will be given Hamīm with meat hooks, when it comes toward their faces it melts their faces, and when it enters their insides it cuts up what is inside of them...." The ḥadīth proceeds further. It was also narrated as a ḥadīth *maqṭū'*, and some say it is more likely to be *maqṭū'*.

Allāh Almighty said:

²²⁵ Tirmidhi, #2589 its chain is weak

فَلَيْسَ لَهُ الْيَوْمَ هُنَا حَمِيمٌ ﴿٢٥﴾ وَلَا طَعَامٌ إِلَّا مِنْ غَسَلِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾ لَا يَأْكُلُهُ
إِلَّا الْخَاطِئُونَ ﴿٢٧﴾

there is not for him here this Day any devoted friend, nor any food except from the discharge of wounds—None will eat it except the sinners.”²²⁶

‘Alī Ibn Abī Ṭalḥah narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said that,

مِنْ غَسَلِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

“the discharge of wounds”²²⁷

refers to, ‘The pus of inhabitants of Hell-fire.’

Shayb Ibn Bishr conveyed from ‘Ikrimah that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘It means blood and water flowing down from their flesh, and it is their food.’

Muqatil reportedly said: ‘If pus and blood flowed down, they hasten to eat it before the fire does.’

Abū Ja‘far Ibn Al-Rab‘ī said:

مِنْ غَسَلِينَ ﴿٢٦﴾

“the discharge of wounds”

refers to a tree in Hell-fire.”

Al-Daḥḥāk said similarly. Khāsif narrated from Mujahid that Ibn

²²⁶ *Al-Hāqqab* (69): 35-37

²²⁷ *Al-Hāqqab* (69): 36

‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘I do not know what

مِنْ غَسَلِينَ

“the discharge of wounds”

mean, but I think it refers to *Zaqqūm*.’

Abū Hilāl reported that Qatādah said: ‘It is a food of the Hell-fire inhabitants, being among the most despicable of their food.’

Yaḥyā Ibn Salām said: ‘It is the washing liquid of their bellies.’

Ibn Qutaybah said: ‘Its declension indicate that it means the washing liquid.’

Shurayh Ibn ‘Ubayd narrated that Ka‘b said: ‘If a bucket of it was dangled in the east, the skulls of people in the west would boil from it.’

It was narrated that some inhabitants of Hell-fire eat their flesh, and we will mention it later if Allāh Wills.

Allāh Almighty said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَكُلُونَ فِي
بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلُونَ سَعِيرًا

“Indeed, those who devour the property of orphans unjustly are only consuming into their bellies fire. And they will be burned in a Blaze.”²²⁸

It was narrated in a ḥadīth, “Those who consume usury are

²²⁸ *Al-Nisā’* (4): 10

resurrected with fire blazing from their mouths” and then stated this verse. It was narrated by Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Abū Burzah, from the Prophet (ﷺ).²²⁹

Section Two:
Regarding the Drinks of its Inhabitants

As for their drink (*shārab*), Allāh Almighty said:

فَشْرَبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٥٤﴾

“And drinking on top of it from scalding water.”²³⁰

And said:

وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

“...and are given to drink scalding water that will sever their intestines?”²³¹

And said:

لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا ﴿١٦﴾ إِلَّا الْحَمِيمَ وَعَسَاقًا ﴿١٥﴾

“They will not taste therein [any] coolness or drink, except scalding water and [foul] pus.”²³²

And said:

²²⁹ Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, #2580

²³⁰ *Al-Wāqī‘ah* (56): 54

²³¹ *Muḥammad* (47): 15

²³² *Al-Nabā’* (78): 24-25

هَذَا

فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَعَسَاقٌ ﴿٥٧﴾ وَآخِرُ مِنْ شَكْلِهِ أَنْزَاجٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

“This—so let them taste it—is scalding water and [foul] pus. And other [punishments] of its type [in various] kinds.”²³³

And said:

وَسُقَى

مِنْ مَاءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿٦٦﴾ يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يَسِيفُهُ

“...and he will be given a drink of purulent water. He will gulp it but will hardly [be able to] swallow it ...”²³⁴

And said:

وَإِنْ يَسْتَعِينُوا يَغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ بِئْسَ
الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾

“...and if they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like murky oil, which scalds [their] faces. Wretched is the drink, and evil is the resting place.”²³⁵

So, these are four types of their drink mentioned by Allāh in His book:

²³³ *Ṣad* (38): 57-58

²³⁴ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 16-17

²³⁵ *Al-Kahf* (18): 29

First Type: *Ḥamīm* (Scalding Water)

‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Īsā Al-Kharrāz narrated from Dāwūd, from ‘Ikrimah that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: “[It means] the scalding water that burns.”

Al-Ḥasan and Al-Suddī said: ‘[It means] water heated to extremity.’

Jubayr conveyed that Al-Daḥḥāk said: ‘They drink from water that has been boiling since Allāh created the Heavens and the Earth until the day they drink it, and it is poured over their heads.’

Ibn Wahb narrated that Ibn Zayd said: ‘[It refers] to their tears in Hell-fire, which are gathered in the basins of Hell-fire for them to drink.’

Allāh Almighty said:

يَطُوفُونَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ ءَانِ ﴿٤٤﴾

“They will go around between it and scalding water, heated [to the utmost degree].”²³⁶

Muḥammad Ibn Ka‘b said: ‘The verse means ‘present scalding water.’

However, the majority of interpreters disagreed with him and said that it means, ‘Scalding water heated to its utmost degree’.

Shubayb Ibn ‘Ikrimah narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said, regarding this verse, ‘Scalding water boiled to its

²³⁶ *Al-Raḥmān* (55): 44

utmost degree.’

Sa‘id Ibn Bishr conveyed that Qatadah said: ‘Allāh has been boiling it since He created the Heavens and the Earth.’

Allāh said:

تُسْفَى مِنْ عَيْنِءَانِيَةٍ

“They will be given drink from a boiling spring.”²³⁷

Mujāhid said: “It boiled to the maximum and is ready to be drunk.”

Al-Ḥasan said: “The Arabs used this [Arabic expression] to indicate that something is heated to its utmost degree so that nothing could be hotter.

Allāh Almighty said:

مِنْ عَيْنِءَانِيَةٍ

“from a boiling spring”²³⁸

Allāh has lit Hell-fire on it since it was created.’

It is also narrated that he said: ‘It has been boiling since Allāh created the Heavens and the Earth.’

Al-Suddī said: ‘It is heated to its utmost degree, beyond which there is no higher degree.’

We have already stated the ḥadīth narrated by Abū’l-Darda’

²³⁷ *Al-Ghāshiyah* (88): 5

²³⁸ *Al-Ghāshiyah* (88): 5

(*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) about giving them scalding water with iron hooks.

Second Type: *Ghassāq* (Foul Purulence)

Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘*Ghassāq* is what flows from between the disbeliever’s skin and flesh.’ It is also narrated that he said: ‘*Ghassāq* is the freezing cold water whose cold temperature burns.’

‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr said: ‘*Ghassāq* is foul purulence. If a drop thereof fell in the west, it would befoul the people of the east, and vice versa.’

Mujahid said: ‘*Ghassāq* is what is too cold for them to taste.’

‘Aṭīyah said: ‘It is what flows off their skin.’

Ka‘b (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘*Ghassāq* is a fountain in Hell-fire to which poison flows from every poisonous source, such as serpents, scorpions and the like, and it stagnates. Man is brought and dipped into it momentarily, so he comes out having his skin and flesh fallen off his bones. His skin and flesh dangle from his heels, and he drags them along as one drags his long garments.’

Al-Suddī said: ‘*Ghassāq* is the tears that flow from their eyes, which they are made to drink along with scalding water.’

Darraḡ narrated from Abū’l Haytham, from Abū Sa‘īd, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If a pot of *Ghassāq* was spilled in the world, it would befoul all its inhabitants.”²³⁹

²³⁹ Imām Aḡmad in his *Musnad*, 3/28, 83, Al-Tirmidhī, #2587 and Al-Ḥākim, 4/602 who graded it authentic.

Bilal Ibn Sa'd said: 'If a pot of *Ghassāq* was put on Earth, everyone above it would die.' He also reportedly said: 'If a drop thereof fell on earth, it would befoul all within it.' It is reported by Abū Nu'aym

Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) as well as Mujahid stated in one narration that *Ghassāq* here is the extremely cold drink. It is supported by Allāh's saying,

لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا ﴿٢٤﴾ إِلَّا أَحْمِيمًا وَعَسَاقًا ﴿٢٥﴾

"They will not taste therein [any] coolness or drink, except scalding water and Ghassāq."²⁴⁰

Therefore, he excluded *Ghassāq* from coolness, and scalding water from drinks. It is said that *Ghassāq* is the foul cold drink, and that it is not an Arabic word. Others say that it is an Arab word derived from the verb '*Ghasaq* (to become dark)', and that the word '*Ghasiq*' refers to the night because of its cold.

Third Type: *Sadīd* (Pus)

Mujahid said regarding the verse,

وَيُسْقَىٰ مِنْ مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾

"He will gulp it but will hardly [be able to] swallow it."²⁴¹

'Meaning pus and blood.'

Qatadah said: '[This verse] refers to what flows from between

²⁴⁰ *Al-Nabā'* (78): 24-25

²⁴¹ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 16

his flesh and skin.’ Allāh said:

وَيُسْقَىٰ مِنْ مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾

“He will gulp it but will hardly [be able to] swallow it.”²⁴²

Do you have power or endurance for such [punishment]? Obeying Allāh is easier for you people, so obey Allāh and His Messenger.’ Imām Aḥmad and Tirmidhī²⁴³ mentioned the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Abū Umamah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Messenger (ﷺ) spoke about the verses,

وَيُسْقَىٰ

مِنْ مَّاءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾ يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِيفُهُ.

“...and he will be given a drink of purulent water. He will gulp it but will hardly [be able to] swallow it...”²⁴⁴

He said: “It will be brought toward his mouth and he will detest it, so whenever it is brought closer to him it will melt his face and the skin of his head will fall into it. Then whenever he drinks from it, his bowels will be severed until it comes out from his anus. Allāh, the Blessed and Exalted said:

وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

“...and are given to drink scalding water that will sever their intestines.”²⁴⁵

²⁴² *Ibrāhīm* (14): 16

²⁴³ Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 5/265 and Tirmidhī, #2586

²⁴⁴ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 16-17

²⁴⁵ *Muḥammad* (47): 15

and He said:

وَأِنْ يَسْتَعِينُوا يَغَاثُوا بِمَاءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهُ بِنَسِ
الشَّرَابِ وَسَاءَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا ﴿٢٩﴾

“...and if they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like murky oil that scalds [their] faces. Wretched is the drink ...”²⁴⁶

Abū Yahyā Al-Qaṭṭan conveyed from Mujāhid that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘In Hell-fire, there are valleys of pus, from which jugs are filled and then poured into their mouths.’

It is stated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, on the authority of Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Verily Allāh made a covenant to those who drank intoxicants to make them drink the Mud of Madness.” They said: ‘O Allāh’s Messenger, what is the mud of madness?’ He (ﷺ) replied, “It is the sweat of the inhabitants of Hell or the discharge of the inhabitants of Hell.”²⁴⁷

Imām Aḥmad, Al-Nasā’ī, Ibn Mājah and Ibn Ḥibbān, in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, have similarly mentioned, as narrated by ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Āṣ, except that it restricts such punishment until one drinks intoxicants for the fourth time. In some versions, the Messenger referred to ‘*the Fountain of Madness*’.

Al-Tirmidhī stated similarly as narrated on the authority of ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “From the river of madness.” He (Abdullah) was asked, ‘O Abū ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān! What is the river of madness?’ He said: ‘A

²⁴⁶ *Al-Kabf* (18): 29

²⁴⁷ Muslim, #2002, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/178, 179, Ibn Mājah, #3377 and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, #1378

river of the pus of Hell-fire inhabitants.”²⁴⁸

Abū Dāwūd stated similarly as narrated on the authority of ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “From the clay of madness.” He was asked, “O Allāh’s Messenger! What is the clay of madness?” He said: “The pus of Hell-fire inhabitants.” He also said in another version, “What comes out of the stink and pus of Hell-fire inhabitants.”²⁴⁹

Imām Aḥmad stated ḥadīths with a similar meaning from Abū Dharr (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) and Asmā’ bint Yazīd (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhū*) from the Prophet (ﷺ).

Imām Aḥmad and Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, stated the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Abū Mūsā (*raḍīy Allāhu ‘anhū*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever dies as an addict of wine, will be made to drink from the river of *Ghutaḥ*.” He was asked, “What is the river of *Ghutaḥ*?” He (ﷺ) said: “A river that streams out of prostitutes’ private parts, which will torment the inhabitants of Hell-fire with the stink of their private parts.”

We have already stated the ḥadīth narrated by ‘Amr Ibn Shu‘ayb, from his father, from his grandfather, in which the Prophet (ﷺ) talked about the arrogant, and said therein, “They will be made to drink from the discharge of Hell-fire inhabitants, the clay of madness.”

²⁴⁸ Tirmidhī, #1863 and he graded this narration as ḥasan. Al-Albānī said in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘*, #6188. It is ṣaḥīḥ

²⁴⁹ Abū Dāwūd, #3680 and he said it is ṣaḥīḥ and Al-Albānī also said in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘*, #4424 that it is ṣaḥīḥ

Fourth Type: Water like Murky Oil (*muhl*)

Imām Aḥmad and Al-Tirmidhī stated the ḥadīth narrated by Dar-raj, from Abū'l Haytham, on the authority of Abū Sa'īd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said about the phrase,

كَالْمُهْلِ

“like murky oil”,²⁵⁰

Like muddy oil, when it is brought closer to him, the skin of his face falls therein.”²⁵¹

‘Aṭīyah reports that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) was asked about the meaning of the verse,

كَالْمُهْلِ

“like murky oil”

and he said: ‘Thick like murky oil.’

‘Ali Ibn Abi Ṭālib (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) narrated that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) said: ‘Black like murky oil.’ Such was the view of Sa'īd Ibn Jubayr and others.

Al-Daḥḥāk said that Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) melted some silver from the Treasury and then sent for the people in the masjīd saying, ‘Whoever wants to look at the water like murky oil should look at this.’

Mujahid said regarding the verse,

²⁵⁰ *Al-Kahf* (18): 29

²⁵¹ Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/71 and Al-Tirmidhī, #2584. It's chain is weak.

بِماءٍ كَالْمُهْلِ

“water like murky oil”

like pus and blood, black like murky oil.’

Ṭabāranī stated the ḥadīth conveyed by Tammām Ibn Najīh, on the authority of Al-Ḥasan (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*), from Anas (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If a glass was filled from the scalding water of Hell-fire and was placed in the middle of the earth, its stink and heat would befoul what is between the east and the west.”²⁵²

In the sermon of Al-Awza‘ī to Al-Manṣūr, he said: ‘I learned that Jibrīl (*‘alayhis-salām*) told the Prophet (ﷺ), “If a portion from the drinks of Hell-fire was spilled in the water of the earth, it would kill any who tastes it.”’

In the past, someone went out for travel and passed by grapes planted in a village called Tizanabadh, where wine is pressed. So he started singing:

Tizanabadh has grapes; each time I pass by them,

I marvel at those who drink water.

Then, someone replied to him:

Hell-fire has water; which no one puts in his throat and have any
intestines left in his abdomen.

²⁵² Al-Haythamī said in *al-Majma‘*, 10/387 that Tammām Ibn Najīh is considered weak.

Section Three:

Early Predecessors Eating being Embittered upon
Remembering the Food of Hell-fire

Many pious early Muslims had their worldly eating and drinking embittered when remembering the food of the inhabitants of Hell-fire, so much so that they refrained from eating altogether sometime. Imām Aḥmad used to say, ‘Fear prevents me from eating and drinking, and makes me lose my appetite.’

Shu‘bah narrated that Sa‘d Ibn Ibrahīm said: “Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Awf (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) had his dinner brought to him after fasting through the day, so he recited the verses,

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا
وَحِجَابًا ﴿١٣﴾ وَطَعَامًا إِذَا غُضِبَ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٤﴾

“Indeed, with Us [for them] are shackles and burning fire, And food that chokes and a painful punishment.”²⁵³

He kept crying until the food was taken away, and he did not eat even after fasting through the day.²⁵⁴

Ibn Abi Dunyā narrated through Yūnus, from Al-Ḥasan that two men met each other, and one said to the other, ‘I can see that your colour has changed and your body has become slender; why is that?’ He said: ‘Three days ago I was fasting, and when I was brought dinner, this verse came to mind

²⁵³ *Al-Muzḍammil* (73): 12-13

²⁵⁴ Stated by Al-Jawzajani.

مِنْ وَرَائِهِ جَهَنَّمُ وَيُسْقَى
مِنْ مَاءٍ صَدِيدٍ ﴿١٦﴾ يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِيغُهُ
وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ وَمِنْ
وَرَائِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ ﴿١٧﴾

“...and he will be given a drink of purulent water. He will gulp it but will hardly [be able to] swallow it. And death will come to him from everywhere, but he is not to die. And before him is a massive punishment.”²⁵⁵

Thus, I could not eat and continued fasting to the next day. When I was brought dinner, it came to me once more, so I still could not eat. Thus, I have been fasting for three days.’ The other man said: ‘[This verse] did the same to me.’

Ibn Abī Dunyā also narrated from Khulayd Ibn Ḥasan Al-Ḥajarī that Al-Ḥasan was fasting and was brought dinner when this verse came to his mind,

إِنَّ لَدَيْنَا أَنْكَالًا
وَجَحِيمًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَطَعَامًا ذَا غُصَّةٍ وَعَذَابًا أَلِيمًا ﴿١٣﴾

“Indeed, with Us [for them] are shackles and burning fire, And food that chokes and a painful punishment.”²⁵⁶

His hand contracted and he said: ‘Take it away.’ He continued fasting through the next day, and in the evening, when he was

²⁵⁵ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 16-17

²⁵⁶ *Al-Muzzammil* (73): 12-13

brought his dinner, he was reminded of it once again and he said: ‘Take it away.’ I [the narrator] told him, ‘O Abū Sa‘īd! You will become weak and perish.’ He continued fasting to the third day, so his son went to Yaḥyā Al-Bakā’, Thabit Al-Bananī and Yazīd Al-Dhabbī and said: ‘Save my father, for he is going to perish,’ so they did not leave him until they made him drink some water.

He also narrated that Ṣāliḥ Al-Marrī said: “Aṭā’ Al-Sulamī had harmed himself until he became weak. I told him, ‘You have harmed yourself, and I will get you something, so do not reject my gift.’ He said: ‘Do it then.’ I therefore bought the finest flour he could find and butter oil, and I prepared a shuraybah, sweetened it and sent it with my son along with a jug of water. I told him, ‘Do not leave him until he drinks it.’ He returned and said: ‘He drank it.’ The next day, I made him a similar one and sent it with my son, but he returned with it, undrunk. I went to him and blamed him saying, ‘Glory is for Allāh!’²⁵⁷ Why did you reject my gift if it helps and gives you strength for prayer and the remembrance of Allāh?’ When he saw that I got angry over this, he said: ‘O Abū Bishr! Do not be angry. By Allāh, I drank it the first time you sent it. Then the next day, I tried to get myself to swallow it, but could not do it. Whenever I wanted to drink it, I remembered this verse,

يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِيغُهُ
وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ وَمِن
وَرَأْيِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ ﴿١٧﴾

“He will gulp it but will hardly [be able to] swallow it. And death will come to him from everywhere, but he is not to die. And before him is a massive

²⁵⁷ Used for exclamation.

punishment.”²⁵⁸

Ṣāliḥ cried upon hearing this and said (to himself), ‘How far apart are you from me!’

Imām Aḥmad narrated from Ṣāliḥ Al-Marrī that ‘Aṭā’ Al-Sulamī said: ‘Whenever I remember Hell-fire, I lose appetite for food and drink.’

‘Abdullāh, the son of Imām Aḥmad, narrated that Murajja Ibn Wadā‘ah said: ‘I went with Ṣāliḥ Al-Marrī and we entered upon ‘Aṭā’ Al-Sulamī, so we said to him, “O ‘Aṭā’! You refrained from eating and drinking.’ He said: ‘Whenever I remembered the pus of Hell-fire inhabitants, I lose my appetite for eating and drinking.’”

Ibn Abī Dunyā narrated [through a chain of narrators] that ‘Abdu’l-Mu‘min Al-Sā‘igh said: ‘I once invited Rabah Al-Qaysī to my house, so he came late into the night. I brought him food and he ate some of it. I told him, ‘Have some more, for I do not think you are full yet.’ He then yelled in a matter that frightened me and said: ‘How can I fill my stomach in this life when the *Zaaqūm* tree is ahead of me as food for the sinful!’” I then took the food away and said: “You are much far ahead of us.’

He also narrated [through a chain of narrators] from Abū Sa‘īd that ‘Ubayd Allāh Ibn Al-Walīd Al-Taymī entered upon Ḥabbayah Al-Taymiyah, and she offered him some butter oil, bread and honey. He said: ‘O Ḥabbayah! Do you not fear that after this could be the poisonous, thorny plant?’²⁵⁹ Thereupon, he kept weeping

²⁵⁸ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 17

²⁵⁹ Referring to the verse *Al-Ghāshiyah*:6 of the the Qur‘ān.

and she kept weeping until he left without eating anything.

He also narrated [through a chain of narrators] that Suwar Ibn ‘Abdullāh Al-Quray‘ī said: ‘We were with ‘Umar Ibn Dirham on the coast, and he used to only eat in the fore-dawn. We brought some food, and as he was raising the food to his mouth, he heard someone praying and reciting the verse,

إِنَّ شَجَرَتَ الزَّقُّومِ ﴿٤٣﴾
 طَعَامُ الْأَثِيمِ ﴿٤٤﴾ كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ ﴿٤٥﴾ كَغَلِي
 الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٦﴾

**“Indeed, the tree of *Zaqqūm* is food for the sinful.
 Like murky oil, it boils within bellies, like the boiling
 of scalding water.”²⁶⁰**

He fell unconscious and the morsel fell from his hand. He did not regain consciousness until after the dawn. He remained in that state for seven days, not eating anything. Whenever food was presented to him, he remembered the verse, and got up without eating anything. His companions gathered around him and said: “‘Glory be to Allāh! You will kill yourself,’ and they did not leave him until he ate something.’

He also narrated [through a chain of narrators] that Muḥammad Ibn Suwayd said: ‘Tāwūs had two routes to get home from the *masjid*, one upon which was a *Rawwas*.²⁶¹ After the Maghrib prayer, if he took the route with the *Rawwas*, he did not have dinner. When he was asked about this he said: ‘Whenever I see these grim heads,

²⁶⁰ *Al-Dukhan* (44): 43-46

²⁶¹ *Rawwas* is a merchant who sells cooked heads of sheep and cows.

I cannot eat.’ Mālik stated this story from Ṭāwūs and said: ‘He was referring to the verse,

وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَانُوا كَالْحِجَابِ
(104)

“...and they therein will have taut smiles.”²⁶²

Ibn Abī Dunyā also narrated [through a chain of narrators] that ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) drank some cold water, so he wept intensely. When asked, ‘Why do you weep?’ He said: ‘I remembered a verse from the Book of Allāh,

وَحِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ

“And prevention will be placed between them and what they desire...”²⁶³

I realised that the inhabitants of Hell-fire do not desire anything as much as cold water. Allāh Almighty said,

أَفِضُوا عَلَيْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ

“Pour upon us some water or from whatever Allāh has provided you.”²⁶⁴

It is narrated that Salām Ibn Abū Muṭī‘ said: ‘Al-Ḥasan was given a cup of water to break his fasting, when he brought it closer to his mouth, he wept and said: ‘I remembered the wish of the inhabit-

²⁶² *Al-Mu‘minūn* (23): 104

²⁶³ *Saba’* (43): 54

²⁶⁴ *Al-A‘rāf* (7): 50—How the inhabitants of the Fire will call out to the inhabitants of Paradise

ants of Hell-fire and their saying,

أَفِضُوا عَلَيْنَا مِنْ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ

“Pour upon us some water or from whatever Allāh has provided you.”

I also remembered the response,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ عَلَيَّ الْكُفْرِينَ

“Indeed, Allāh has forbidden them both to the disbelievers.”²⁶⁵

It is narrated that ‘Abdu’l-Mālīk Ibn Marwan drank cold water, and he interrupted his drinking and wept. People asked, ‘Why do you weep, O Amīr Al-Mu’minīn?’ He said: ‘I remembered the thirst of the Day of Judgment, and remembered the inhabitants of Hell-fire and how they are deprived of cold drinks.’ Then he recited the verse,

يَتَجَرَّعُهُ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُسِيفُهُ

“He will gulp it but will hardly [be able to] swallow it ...”²⁶⁶

Imām Aḥmad narrated [through a chain of narrators] that Ibrāhīm Al-Nakh‘ī said: ‘Whenever I recite this verse, it recalls to mind chilled drinks.’ He then recited the verse,

وَحِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ

“And prevention will be placed between them and

²⁶⁵ *Al-A’raf* (7): 50

²⁶⁶ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 17

what they desire...”²⁶⁷

Muḥammad Ibn Muṣ‘ab Al-‘Ābid asked for water, and he heard the *barradab*.²⁶⁸ He yelled at himself saying, ‘Where will you find a *barradab* in Hell-fire?’ Then he recited the verse,

وَجِيلَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ

**“...And if they call for relief, they will be relieved
with water like murky oil...”²⁶⁹**

²⁶⁷ *Sabā’* (34): 54

²⁶⁸ A leather skinned container for cooling water

²⁶⁹ *Al-Kahf* (18): 29

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Attire and Clothes of the Dwellers of Hell

Allāh Almighty said:

فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قُطِعَتْ لَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ مِنْ نَارٍ

“...But those who disbelieved will have cut out for them garments of fire...”²⁷⁰

When Ibrahīm Al-Taymī recited this verse, he used to say, ‘Glory is due to Him who created garments out of fire.’

We narrated through Yaḥyā Ibn Ma‘īn, from Abū Ubaydah Al-Haddad, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Buhayr, from ‘Abbās Al-Jurayrī, that Ibn ‘Abbās²⁷¹ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Garments of fire are made for the disbeliever.’ He even stated the Quba,²⁷² the shirt and the hood.

²⁷⁰ *Al-Hajj* (22): 19

²⁷¹ The author noted that he believed it was narrated by Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

²⁷² A piece of clothing worn over one’s dress

Abū Dāwūd and others stated the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Al-Mustawrid (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If anyone eats food at the expense of a Muslim’s honour, Allāh will feed him a like amount of Hellfire. If anyone clothes himself with a garment at the expense of a Muslim’s honour, Allāh will clothe him with a like amount of Hellfire.”²⁷³

It is stated in *Musnad* Imām Aḥmad, from Hubayb Ibn Al-Mughfal that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever wore his dress in self-conceit (*ḵbaylā*), will be made to wear it in Hell-fire.”²⁷⁴

This clarifies the meaning of the ḥadīth stated in Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī²⁷⁵ from Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whatever of the *Izār*²⁷⁶ comes below the ankles is in the Fire.” It clarifies that it refers to what is below the ankle both of the body and the garments, and that he will drag his garment in Hell-fire as he drags it in this world in self-conceit.

The ḥadīth stating, “The least punished person in the Hell-fire will be a man who is wearing shoes made of fire, because of which his brain will boil.”²⁷⁷ This will be discussed later, if Allāh Wills.

²⁷³ Abū Dāwūd, #4881, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/229 and it is ṣaḥīḥ and Al-Albānī agreed also in his *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #934.

²⁷⁴ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/337, 4/237, 238 and it is ṣaḥīḥ and Al-Albānī agreed also in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi*, #6468.

²⁷⁵ Bukhārī, #5787, Nasā’ī, 8/207 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/255, 287, 410, 461, 498 and 504

²⁷⁶ A piece of cloth worn round the waist as a sole garment

²⁷⁷ Bukhārī refer to chapter 21 and after it

It is stated in the books of Abū Dāwūd, Nasaʿī and Tirmidhī, on the authority of Buraydah (*raḍiy Allāhu ʿanhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) saw a man wearing an iron ring, so he said: “Why do I see you wearing the adornment of the inhabitants of Hell-fire?”²⁷⁸

Ḥammād Ibn Salamah conveyed from ʿAlī Ibn Yazīd, on the authority of Anas (*raḍiy Allāhu ʿanhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The first one to wear the clothing of Hell-fire is *Iblīs*; he puts it over his eyebrows and drags it along, followed by his descendants. He cries out for destruction, and so do they, until they reach Hell-fire. He cries out for destruction, and so do they,

لَا تَدْعُوا الْيَوْمَ تُبُورًا وَاحِدًا وَادْعُوا تُبُورًا كَثِيرًا ﴿١٤﴾

“[They will be told], ‘Do not cry this Day for one destruction but cry for much destruction.’”²⁷⁹

This was stated by Imām Aḥmad.²⁸⁰

ʿAdī Al-Kindī narrated on he authority ʿUmar (*raḍiy Allāhu ʿanhumā*) that Jibrīl (*ʿalayhi as-salām*) told the Prophet (ﷺ), “By Him Who has sent you with the Truth, if a garment of Hell-fire hung between the Heaven and the earth, all who are on earth would die of its heat.”²⁸¹

The same is also stated in the sermon of Al-Awzaʿī to Al-Manṣūr.

²⁷⁸ Abū Dāwūd, #4223, Nasaʿī, 8/172 and Tirmidhī, #1786 and it is ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth and Al-Albānī agreed also in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ*, #5540.

²⁷⁹ *Al-Furqān* (25): 14

²⁸⁰ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/152, 153 and 154

²⁸¹ Narrated by Ṭabārānī with its chain of narrators was previously mentioned.

Section One:

The Garments of the People of Hell-fire are Made of
Liquid Pitch (*sarābīl*)

Allāh Almighty said:

وَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ
مُقَرَّبِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ ﴿٤٩﴾ سَرَابِيْلُهُمْ مِّنْ قَطْرَانٍ وَتَعَسَى
وُجُوهُهُمْ النَّارُ ﴿٥٠﴾

“And you will see the criminals that Day bound together in shackles. Their garments of liquid pitch and their faces covered by the Fire.”²⁸²

‘Alī Ibn Ṭalḥah conveyed from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that regarding the phrase,

قَطْرَانٍ

“liquid pitch”

means ‘molten copper.’

Ḥasan narrated that ‘Ikrimah said: ‘It refers to heated brass.’

Mu‘amar narrated that ‘Ikrimah said: ‘They are made from copper.’

Mu‘amar and Al-Ḥasan said: ‘It refers to tar.’

It is narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim from Abū Mālīk Al-Ash‘arī that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If the wailing woman does not repent before

²⁸² *Ibrāhīm* (14): 49-50

she dies, she will be made to stand on the Day of Resurrection wearing a garment of pitch and a mangle undergarment.”²⁸³

Ibn Mājah also stated the ḥadīth narrated by Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “If the woman who wails does not repent before she dies, she will be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection wearing a shirt of pitch (*tar*), over which she will wear a shirt of flaming fire.”²⁸⁴

Section Two:

Understanding the Verse: “*They will have from Hell a bed and over them coverings of fire*”

Allāh Almighty said:

لَهُمْ مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ مِهَادٌ وَمِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ غَوَاشٍ ؕ

“They will have from Hell a bed and over them coverings [of fire].”²⁸⁵

Muḥammad Ibn Ka‘b, Al-Daḥḥāk, Al-Suddī and others said: ‘Coverings mean quilts.’

Al-Ḥasan said in interpreting the verse,

وَجَعَلْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ حَصِيرًا ﴿٨﴾

“And We have made Hell, for the disbelievers, a prison-bed.”²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Muslim, #934 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 5/342, 343 and 344.

²⁸⁴ Ibn Mājah, #1582

²⁸⁵ *Al-A‘rāf* (7): 41

²⁸⁶ *Al-Isrā’* (17): 8

‘It refers to a bed.’

Qatadah said: ‘It refers to a prison where they are confined.’

Miskīn conveyed from Ḥawshab that when Al-Ḥasan mentioned the inhabitants of Hell-fire, he used to describe them by saying, ‘Shoes of fire are made for them, as well as garments of pitch. Their food is made of fire, their drinks are made of fire, their beds are made of fire, their quilts are made of fire and their houses are made of fire. They are in the worst home and the worst torment for the body that is being eaten away by molten and broken.’

Dāwūd Ibn Al-Mihbar narrated from Al-Ḥasan Ibn Wasil, and ‘Abdu’l-Wahid Ibn Zayd narrated from Al-Ḥasan that a man of this *Ummah* used to say upon entering the graveyard, ‘O inhabitants of graves! After luxury and comfort, you will experience shackles in Hell-fire; after cotton and linen, you will wear garments of patch and cuttings of fire; and after the indulgence of servants and embracing spouses, they will be coupled with the devil in Hell-fire, bound together in shackles.’

Ibn Abī Dunyā narrated, through a chain of narrators, that Wahb Ibn Munabbih said: ‘As for the inhabitants of Hell-fire who are its permanent inhabitants, they have therein no break, no sleep and no death. They walk on fire, sit on fire, drink from their pus and eat from the *Zaqqūm* of Hell. Their beds are of fire, their quilts are of fire, their garments are of fire and pitch, and their faces covered by the Fire. All the inhabitants of Hell-fire are in shackles pulled forward and backward by the keepers of Hell-fire. Their pus streams into holes in Hell-fire, and it becomes their drink.’ Ibn Abī Dunyā said: ‘Thereupon, Wahb wept until he fell unconscious, Bakr Ibn Khunays was overcome by weeping so much so that he was unable to speak and Muḥammad Ibn Ja‘far wept intensely.’

He also narrated, through a chain of narrators, from Ḥaddab that the mother of Yaḥyā Ibn Zakariyah (*'alaybi as-salām*) entered upon him with a garment that she was treating for him to wear. He said: 'I will wear a garment made from [animal's] hair.' She said: 'Son! It will eat at your flesh.' He said: 'O Mother! If I remember the cuttings worn by the inhabitants of Hell-fire, it will become soft on my skin.'

'Aṭā' Al-Khurasanī used to call his companions during travel, 'O So-and-so and Such-and-such! Praying that night and fasting that day is easier than drinking pus and wearing cuttings of iron, one sheet after another.'

When Nawar, Al-Farazdaq's wife died and was buried. He stood over her grave and recited the following lines²⁸⁷ in the presence of Al-Ḥasan, may Allāh have mercy on his soul:

I fear beyond the grave, unless He saves me
 What is more ablaze and narrower than the grave
 If, on the Day of Judgment, came to me
 A violent leader and a driver that drives Al-Farazdaq
 Among the sons of Adam, he has failed, who
 Walks to Hell-fire, shackled and blue-eyed
 Driven to Hell, clothed in Garments of pitch and burned clothing
 If they drank pus therein, I saw them
 Melting in torment from the pus' heat

Thereupon, Al-Ḥasan wept.

²⁸⁷ *Diwān Al-Farazdaq* p.578 al-Sāwī

CHAPTER TWENTY

The Enormity of the Hell Dwellers’ Size and their Ugly Appearance

Al-Bukhārī stated the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The distance between the two shoulders of the disbeliever in Hell will be a three-day journey for a swift rider.”²⁸⁸

Muslim also stated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The molar tooth of a disbeliever or the canine teeth of a disbeliever will be like [Mount] Uhud and the thickness of his skin a three night’s journey.”²⁸⁹

Al-Hākim stated the ḥadīth Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The molar tooth of an disbeliever will be like [Mount] Uhud, the width of his skin is seventy forearm lengths, his upper arm is like *Al-Baydā’*, his thigh is like *Warqān* and the width of his seat in Hell-fire is like the distance between me and *Al-Rabadha*.”^{290, 291}

²⁸⁸ Bukhārī, #6551 and Muslim, #2582

²⁸⁹ Muslim, #2851 and Tirmidhī, #2580, 2581 and 2582

Imām Aḥmad also stated Abū Hurayrah’s ḥadīth that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The molar tooth of a disbeliever on the Day of Judgment will be like [Mount] Uhud, his thigh is like *Al-Bayḍā’*, the width of his seat in Hell-fire is like the distance between *Qadīd*²⁹² and Makkah and the thickness of his skin is forty-two lengths of a strong man’s forearm.”²⁹³

Tirmidhī also stated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The molar tooth of a disbeliever on the Day of Judgment will be like [Mount] Uhud, his thigh is like *Al-Bayḍā’*, the width of his seat in Hell-fire is a three-day journey, like *Al-Rabadba*.” Al-Tirmidhī added, “The phrase ‘Like *Al-Rabadba*’ means like the distance between Madīnah and *Al-Rabadba*, and *Al-Bayḍā’* is a mountain.”²⁹⁴

He also stated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “The thickness of the disbeliever’s skin is forty-two forearm lengths, his molar tooth is like [Mount] Uhud and the width of his seat in Hell-fire is like the distance between Makkah and Madīnah.”²⁹⁵

²⁹⁰ *Al-Bayḍā’* is a place northeast of Madīnah, *Warqān* is a black mountain southwest of, and *Al-Rabadba* is a village in outside of Madīnah, which lies at a three-day ride’s distance from Madīnah.

²⁹¹ Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 4/595 1786 and Al-Albānī said in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’*, #5540, that the ḥadīth is ṣaḥīḥ.

²⁹² *Qadīd* is a location between Makkah and Madīnah.

²⁹³ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/334, 537, Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 4/595 and it is a ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth.

²⁹⁴ Tirmidhī, #2581, Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 4/595 and it is a ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth.

²⁹⁵ Tirmidhī, #2581, Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 4/595 and it is a ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth.

Imām Aḥmad stated the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The size of the inhabitants of Hell-fire become enlarged, so much so that the distance between his earlobe and his shoulder is a journey of seven hundred years.”²⁹⁶

Imām Aḥmad and Al-Ḥākim stated Abū Sa‘īd’s (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*) ḥadīth that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The width of the disbeliever’s seat in Hell-fire is a three- day journey. Each molar tooth of his is like [Mount] Uhud, his thigh is like *Warqān* and his skin, without his flesh and bones is forty forearm lengths wide.”²⁹⁷

Ibn Mājah stated Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī’s (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*) ḥadīth that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The disbeliever’s build grows larger, so much so that his molar tooth becomes larger than [Mount] Uhud and the ratio of his body to his molar tooth is like the ratio of the body of one of you to his molar tooth.”²⁹⁸

Al-Bazzār stated the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Thawbān (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The disbeliever’s molar tooth is like Mount Uhud, and the thickness of his skin is forty lengths of a strong man’s forearm.”²⁹⁹

Ṭabārānī and others also stated on the authority of Al-Miqdam Ibn Mu‘īd Yakrub (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The disbeliever’s build grows large until the thickness of his

²⁹⁶ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/26

²⁹⁷ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/29 and Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 4/598

²⁹⁸ Ibn Mājah, #4322 see *al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #1601

²⁹⁹ Al-Albānī said in is ṣaḥīḥ in his *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘*, #3783

skin reaches forty *bāʾ*³⁰⁰, and until his canine tooth is the size of Mount Uhud.”

Ṭabārānī also stated on the authority of Al-Miqdām (*raḍīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Those who are among the inhabitants of Hell have their build size increased until they are the size of mountains.”

Zayd Ibn Arqam (*raḍīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) said: “The resident of Hell-fire grows in his build until his molar tooth is the size of Mount Uhud.” Imām Aḥmad stated it as a *mawqūf*³⁰¹ ḥadīth.³⁰²

Ibn ʿAbbās (*raḍīy Allāhu ʿanhumā*) said: ‘Between the earlobe of one of them and his shoulder is a journey of seven hundred years and valleys of pus and blood.’ He was asked, ‘You mean rivers?’ He said: ‘No. Valleys!’

ʿAmr Ibn Maymūn said: ‘From between the disbeliever’s skin and flesh, the noise of worms is heard like a beast’s roar.’

Imām Aḥmad and Tirmidhī stated on the authority of Ibn ʿUmar (*raḍīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) ḥadīth, that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “The disbeliever drags his tongue behind him, on the Day of Judgment, extending over two leagues, and having people step on it.”³⁰³

³⁰⁰ The *bāʾ* is the range of the outstretched arms.

³⁰¹ Ḥadīth *mawqūf* is a narration whose chain of narrators is continuous until the Companion of the Prophet (ﷺ).

³⁰² Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/396 and Al-Albānī said it is ṣaḥīḥ; see *al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥībah*, #1601

³⁰³ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 2/92 and Tirmidhī, #2583.

Similar sayings were narrated regarding the disobedient believers as well. Imām Aḥmad, Ibn Mājah and Al-Ḥākim stated the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Al-Ḥārith Ibn Qays (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Among my nation are some who will be made huge for the Fire until they fill one of its corners.”³⁰⁴

Ṭabāranī also narrated from Abū Ghanam Al-Kala‘ī, that Abū Ghasān Al-Dhabbī said: ‘Abū Hurayrah told me, ‘Do you know ‘Abdullāh Ibn Khaddash? For I heard the Messenger (ﷺ) say, “His thigh in Hell-fire is the size of Mount Uhud, and his molar tooth is the size of *Al-Bayḍā’*.’” I asked, ‘Why so, O Allāh’s Messenger?’ He said: ‘He was disobedient to his parents.’”

Aghlab Ibn Tamīm, who is considered a weak narrator, narrated from Thābit Ibn Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The unjust ruler is brought on the Day of Judgment, and his subjects fight with him and overpower him, saying, ‘Take and occupy a corner of Hell-fire on our behalf.’”

Al-Khallāl stated in his *Kitāb Al-Sunnah* from Al-Ḥakam Ibn Al-A‘raj that Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘One grows larger in Hell-fire until his width is a seven-day journey and his molar tooth is the size of Mount Uhud. The lips are (broiled) unto their chests, despised; they crowd one another in Hell-fire.’

Miskīn narrated from Ḥawshab that Al-Ḥasan mentioned inhabitants of Hell-fire and said: ‘They are made as huge for Hell-fire as a three-day and three-night journey for the swift rider. The canine tooth of each of them is like tall palm trees, and his backside is like

³⁰⁴ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 4/212, 313, Ibn Mājah, #4323 and and Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 1/1.

a mountain pass. Their hands are chained to their necks, and their heads and feet are bound together. Angels strike their faces and their backs and drive them to Hell-fire. Each of them will plead with the Angel, ‘Show me mercy!’ With the reply being, ‘How will I show you mercy when the Most Merciful of the merciful did not?’

Section One:

Understanding the Verse, “*The Fire will Burn their faces, and they therein will have lips distorted in pain*”

Allāh, the Almighty said:

تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهُهُمْ النَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

“The Fire will burn their faces, and they therein will have lips distorted in [severe] pain.”³⁰⁵

Darrāj narrated from Abū'l-Haytham, on the authority of Abū Sa'īd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

“...and they therein will have lips distorted in [severe] pain...”³⁰⁶

He will be broiled by the Fire, such that his upper lip will shrink until it reaches the middle of his head, and his lower lip will droop until it is near his navel.” Stated by Imām Aḥmad and Al-Tirmidhī, and they both said it is authentic.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁵ *Mu'minūn* (23): 104

³⁰⁶ *Mu'minūn* (23): 104

³⁰⁷ Tirmidhī, #3175, Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/88, and and Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 2/395

It is narrated that Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said regarding the verse,

وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالْحِجُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

“...and they therein will have lips distorted in [severe] pain...”

It is, ‘Like the gloom of a cooked head.’ It is also narrated that he said: ‘Like the gloom of a scorched head; their teeth have emerged and their lips have shriveled.’ It is also narrated that he said: ‘Did you not see the scorched head having its lips shrunk and its teeth revealed?’

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Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Ayyāsh narrated that Muḥammad Ibn Suwayd said, ‘Ṭawūs had two routes to get home from the *masjid*, one upon which was a *Rawwās*.³⁰⁸ After the Maghrib prayer, if he took the route with the *Rawwās*, he did not have dinner. When he was asked about this he said: ‘Whenever I see these grim heads, I cannot eat.’ Abū Bakr said: “When I told this to Sarai’ Al-Makkī, he said: ‘I saw him stop and ponder there.’”

Abū Ghandar Al-Dimashqī said: “When ‘Uways saw grilled heads (of sheep), he would remember the verse,

تَلْفَحُ وُجُوهُهُمْ النَّارُ وَهُمْ فِيهَا كَالْحِجُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

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³⁰⁸ *Rawwās* is a merchant who sells cooked heads of sheep and cows.

a mountain pass. Their hands are chained to their necks, and their heads and feet are bound together. Angels strike their faces and their backs and drive them to Hell-fire. Each of them will plead with the Angel, ‘Show me mercy!’ With the reply being, ‘How will I show you mercy when the Most Merciful of the merciful did not?’

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“...and they therein will have lips distorted in [severe] pain...”³⁰⁶

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“The Fire will burn their faces, and they therein

³⁰⁸ *Rawwās* is a merchant who sells cooked heads of sheep and cows.

will have lips distorted in [severe] pain.”

and faint, so much so that passers-by would think he is crazy.’ This was stated by Ibn Abī Dunyā and others.

Al-Aṣmā’ī narrated that Al-Ṣaqr Ibn Ḥabīb said: “Ibn Sireen passed by a *Ranwās* who had put a head out on display, and he fell unconscious.

Section Two:

Understanding the Verse, “*Every time their skins are roasted through We will replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment*”

Allāh, The Almighty said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصَلِّبُهُمْ نَارًا كَمَا نُصِيبَتْ
جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ³⁰⁹

“Indeed, those who disbelieve in Our verses—We will drive them into a Fire. Every time their skins are roasted through We will replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment.”³⁰⁹

Nafi³¹⁰ narrated from Nafi‘ that Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘A man recited this verse in the presence of ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*),

كَمَا نُصِيبَتْ
جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ *Al-Nisā’* (4): 56

³¹⁰ The servant of Yūsuf Al-Salamī

“Every time their skins are roasted through We will replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment.”

Thereupon ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Repeat it again’, and he did. Mu‘adh Ibn Jabal (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘I know its interpretation. It (the skin) is replaced a hundred times each hour.’ Hearing this, ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘This is what I heard from the Messenger (ﷺ).’” Stated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ibn Mardawiyah.

Ibn Mardawiyah also stated what is narrated through Nafi‘ Abū Ḥurmuz from Nafi‘ that Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “A man recited this verse in the presence of ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*),

كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ

جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ

“Every time their skins are roasted through We will replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment.”

Thereupon ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Repeat it again’, while Ka‘b was there. Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘O Amir Al-Mu‘minīn, I know the interpretation of this verse, as I have recited it before (embracing) Islam.’ ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) noted, ‘Say it, O Ka‘b. If your interpretation is the same as the one I heard from the Messenger (ﷺ), we will believe you, otherwise we will disregard it.’ He said: “I have recited as,

كُلَّمَا نَضِجَتْ

جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ

“Every time their skins are roasted through We will

replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment.”

a hundred and twenty times each hour.”

‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘This is what I heard from the Messenger (ﷺ).’ Nafi‘ Abū Ḥurmuz is a very weak narrator, and he is known to some ḥadīth masters—including Ibn ‘Adī—as Nafi‘ the slave of Yūsuf Al-Salamī, and some of them said: ‘‘They are two different people, and both of them are weak narrators.’’

Al-Rabī‘ narrated from Al-Faḍl Al-Ruqashī that, ‘‘Umar asked Ka‘b about this verse and he said: ‘His skin is burnt and replaced a hundred thousand times each hour or thereabouts.’ And ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘You are correct!’’ The chain of narrators for this statement is severed.

Thuwayr Ibn Abū Fakhīnah, who is a weak narrator, narrated that Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said regarding this verse, ‘Every time their skin is burnt, they are replaced with skin that is white as paper sheets.’ This was stated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim.

He also stated from Yaḥyā Ibn Yazīd Al-Ḥadramī that he heard, in interpretation of this verse, ‘Allāh makes a hundred skin for the disbeliever, between each two is a form of punishment.’

It is narrated that Hisham Ibn Al-Ḥasan said regarding this verse, ‘The Fire eats them seventy thousand times each day. Every time it eats them, they are told, ‘Return,’ and they return as they were.’

It is narrated that Al-Rabī‘ Ibn Anas said: ‘It is written in the first book that the [thickness of the] skin of each of them is forty forearm lengths, his tooth is ninety forearm length, his belly is big

enough to accommodate a mountain, and whenever the Fire eats their skin, they are replaced with new ones.’

Section Three:

Regarding their Faces Turning Black and their Bodies
Growing Large

Al-Tirmidhī stated the ḥadīth narrated by Al-Suddī from his father, from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said regarding the saying of Allāh, Most High,

يَوْمَ نَدْعُوا كُلَّ أُنَاسٍ بِإِٰمِنِمَّهِمْ

“The Day when We shall call together all human beings with their (respective) Imām”³¹¹

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “One of you will be called out to be given his record in his right hand, he will be grown in his body to sixty forearm-lengths, his face will be whitened, and a crown of sparkling pearls will be placed upon his head. So he will go to his companions, who can see him from afar, and they will say, ‘O Allāh! Bring this one to us, and let us be blessed by him.’ Until he reaches them, and says to them, ‘Receive the good news! For each man among you shall be the likes of this.’” He (ﷺ) added, “As for the disbeliever, then his face shall be blackened, he will be grown in his body to sixty forearm-lengths in the image of Adam, he will be given a crown, and his companions will see him and say, ‘We seek refuge in Allāh from the evil of this one. O Allāh! Do not bring this one to us.’” He said: “So when he reaches them, they say, ‘O Allāh! Take him away’ so they will be told, ‘May Allāh cast you away! Indeed for each man among you is the likes of this.’”

³¹¹ *Al-Isrā’* (17): 71

Tirmidhī said: “This ḥadīth is ḥasan gharīb.”³¹²

‘Aṭā’ Ibn Yassar narrated that Ka‘b said: “The leader in evil is brought forth and told, ‘Answer your Lord’, so he is taken to his Lord but denied an audience and commanded to enter Hell-fire. Thereupon, he is shown his place and the places of his companions therein and is told, ‘This is the place of such-and-such. This is the place of so-and-so.’ He sees the humiliation that Allāh prepared for them, and finds his place to be even worse than theirs, so his face turns black, his eyes turn blue and a cap of fire is placed on his head. He goes out, and no groups of people see him except ask Allāh for refuge from him. He reaches his companions who used to join him in evil (on earth) and help him therein, and he keeps telling them what Allāh prepared for them in Hell-fire, until their faces turn black as his did. People recognise them by the blackness of their faces and say “These are inhabitants of Hell-fire.” Stated by Abū Nu‘aym and others. All this precedes their entrance to Hell-fire. After they enter, their bodies grow large in size as previously stated.

As for their age, it is the same as the age of the inhabitants of Paradise they never go beyond. Darrāj narrated from Abū’l Haytham, from Abū Sa‘īd, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever of the people (destined for) Paradise dies, young or old, they shall be brought back in Paradise thirty years old, they will not increase in that ever, and likewise the people of the Fire.” It is stated by Tirmidhī. Others have stated another version where the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “thirty-three years old.”³¹³

³¹² Tirmidhī, #3135 and he said: ‘ḥasan gharīb: A ḥadīth with a good chain of narrators that has within it, a single narrator.’

³¹³ Tirmidhī, #2565

Ṭabāranī stated from Salim Ibn ‘Āmir that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The two-faced in this life will come on the Day of Judgment with two faces of fire.”

Section Four:

Regarding Those whose Shapes are Defaced into Ugly Images

The shapes of some of them are defaced into ugly images. It is stated in the Ṣaḥīḥ³¹⁴ that when Ibrāhīm (*‘alayhi as-salām*) intercedes for his father, he is told, “O Ibrāhīm! Look and see what is behind you.” He will find a spotted male Hyena, which is then taken by its hind legs and thrown in Hellfire.

Abū’l-Āliyah said in interpreting the verse,

ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ سَافِلِينَ

“Then We return him to the lowest of the low.”³¹⁵

Meaning in Hell-fire in the form of a swine, as stated by Ibn Abi Ḥātim.

Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘If Allāh Almighty willed not to let any of them out, He would change their images and colours so that none of them are recognisable.’ We will mention his saying in full later if Allāh Wills.

³¹⁴ Bukhārī, #3350

³¹⁵ *Al-Tīm* (95): 5

Section Five:

Regarding the Stink of the Hell-fire Inhabitants

Al-Awza'ī said in his sermon to Al-Manṣūr, 'I heard that Jibrīl told the Prophet (ﷺ), "If a man was put in Hell-fire and then let out, the inhabitants of the Earth would perish from his stink and deformation."'" This was also narrated by Bakr Ibn Khunays, from 'Abdu'l-Mālik Al-Jasrī, from Al-Ḥasan, from the Prophet (ﷺ) as a ḥadīth mursal.³¹⁶

Ibn Luhay'ah narrated from Abū Qabil, from 'Abdullāh Ibn 'Amr who said: "If a man of this world was put in Hell-fire and then let out, the people of this world would die from his ugliness and stink." It is reported by Ibn Abī Dunyā.

He also stated that Al-Nadr Ibn Isma'īl said: 'Al-Rabī' Ibn Abū Rashid passed by a man who was physically handicapped, so he sat down and began to praise Allāh and weep. Someone passed by him and asked, 'Why do you cry, may Allāh show you mercy?' He replied, 'I remembered the inhabitants of Paradise and Hell, so I related the healthy with people of Paradise and the handicapped with the people of Hell and this made me weep.'

³¹⁶ Ḥadīth mursal is a ḥadīth for which the first person in the chain of narrators [the Companion who heard from the Prophet and reported to the Follower] is unknown.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

The Types of Torment upon the Dwellers of Hell

Muslim stated the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Samurah Ibn Jundub (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) from the Prophet (ﷺ), “There will be among them those whom the fire will reach up to their ankles, some whom the fire will reach their knees, others whom it will reach their waists and for some it will reach up to their collar-bones.”³¹⁷

Imām Aḥmad recorded on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Among the inhabitants of the Fire, the one having the least suffering is a man who will be wearing two shoes of Fire from which his brain will boil with a partial punishment. There will be among them those to whom the fire will reach up to their knees with a partial punishment, to some it would reach the tip of their nose with a partial punishment, and to some it would reach their chest with a partial punishment, and some would be fully immersed in it.”³¹⁸

³¹⁷ Muslim, #2845

³¹⁸ Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/78 and its chain is ṣaḥīḥ.

It is stated in both Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Al-Nu‘man Ibn Bashīr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The person least inflicted with punishment in the (Hell) Fire on the Day of Resurrection will be a man under whose arch of the feet two smoldering embers will be placed, because of which his brain will boil just like *Al-Mirjal* [copper vessel] or a *qum-qum* [narrow-necked vessel] is boiling with water.”³¹⁹

In the wording in of Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, “Verily the least suffering for the inhabitants of Fire will be one who will have two shoes and two laces of Fire (on his feet) due to which his brain will boil as the cooking vessel boils, and he would think that no one else is in a more grievous torment than him, whereas he would be in the least torment.”³¹⁹

Muslim also mentions on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The least torment for the inhabitants of the Fire will be one who will wear two shoes of Fire whereby his brain will boil on account of the heat of the shoes.”³²⁰

It is also stated in Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that a mention was made of the Messenger’s uncle Abū Tālib, before the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ). He (ﷺ) said: “My intercession may benefit him on the Day of Resurrection and he may be placed in the shallowest part of the Fire that would reach his ankles because of which his brain will boil.”³²¹

³¹⁹ Bukhārī, #6566, Muslim, #213 and Tirmidhī, #2607

³²⁰ Muslim, #211

³²¹ Bukhārī, #3885, #6564, Muslim, #210

It is also stated therein that Al-'Abbās Ibn 'Abdu'l-Muṭṭalib (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: "O Allāh's Messenger (ﷺ)! Did you benefit Abū Ṭālib with anything as he used to protect and take care of you, he used to become angry for you?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Yes, he is in a shallow place of Fire. Had it not been for me, he would have been in the lowest part of the Fire."³²²

In another version in Muslim, he (ﷺ) said: "Yes, I found him in the lowest part of the Fire and I brought him to the shallowest part."³²²

Muslim also stated on the authority of Ibn 'Abbās (*radīy Allāhu 'anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Among the inhabitants of the Fire, Abū Ṭālib will have the least suffering, and he will be wearing two shoes (of Fire) that will boil his brain."³²³

Al-Hakam Ibn Zahir, who is a weak narrator, narrated from Al-Suddi, from Murrah, on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The most tormented among the people of Hell-fire is a man who is thrown therein and falls continually for seventy years, and the least tormented among its inhabitants is placed in the shallow part of the Fire that will reach his ankles and his brain would be boiling, until it comes out of his nostrils."

Miskīn Abū Fāṭimah narrated from Yazīd, from Muḥammad Ibn Ḥumayr, from Muḥammad Ibn 'Alī, from his father, from his grandfather that the Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned those who commit major sins and said: "There will be among them those to whom the fire will reach up to their knees, to some it would reach their

³²² Bukhārī, #3883, #6564, Muslim, #209, 357, 358, 359.

³²³ Muslim, #213

waists, to some it would reach their chest with a partial punishment, and to some it would reach their necks, according to their sins and deeds.” This ḥadīth is munkar³²⁴ as Al-Dārquṭnī and others stated.

‘Ubayd Ibn ‘Umayr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) narrated on the authority of the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The least tormented among the inhabitants of the Fire is a man wearing two shoes (of Fire) by which his brain will boil like a cauldron, his ears are of live coal, his molar teeth are of live coal, and his lips are of the flame of fire. His guts exit out of his feet, and the majority of them are like few seeds in plenty of water—they boil over.” Ḥannād Ibn Al-Sarrī stated in ‘*Kitāb Al-Zuhd*’ with a authentic chain of narrators up until ‘Ubayd as a ḥadīth mursal.³²⁵

He also narrated (through a chain of narrators) on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), in interpretation of Allāh’s saying,

فَاطَّلَعَ قَرَأَهُ فِي سَوَاءِ الْجَحِيمِ

“And he will look and see him in the midst of the Hellfire.”³²⁶

He will look and then look back to his companion and say, ‘I saw the skulls of these people boiling.’

He also narrated [through a chain of narrators] from Mujāhid regarding the verse,

³²⁴ Ḥadīth munkar: A ḥadīth narrated by a weak narrator which contradicts others ḥadīths narrated by trustworthy narrators.

³²⁵ It was also narrated from ‘Ubayd as a ḥadīth mawqūf.

³²⁶ *Al-Ṣāffāt* (37): 55

سَمِعُوا هَاهَا شَيْقَاوَهُ تَنْوُرٌ

“...they hear from it a [dreadful] inhaling while it boils up.”³²⁷

It boils up with them like the few seeds do when boiled in plenty of water.

It is narrated that Sufyān Al-Thawrī said about this verse, ‘It boils up with them like the few seeds in plenty of water.’

‘Abdu’l-Razzāq stated in his *‘Mūṣannaḥ*’ from Mu‘amar, from Ismā‘īl Ibn Abū Sa‘īd, on the authority of ‘Ikrimah mawlā Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍīyAllāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “The least tormented among the inhabitants of Hell-fire is a man who steps on a live coal from which his brain will boil.” Thereupon Abū Bakr Al-Ṣiddīq (*raḍīyAllāhu ‘anhū*) asked, ‘What was his crime, O Allāh’s Messenger?’ He said: “He had owned cattle with which he stomped over plants and harmed them.”³²⁸

It is stated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim from Anas (*raḍīyAllāhu ‘anhū*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Among the inmates of Hell, a person who had led the most luxurious life in this world will be brought up on the Day of Resurrection and dipped in the Fire and will be asked, ‘O son of Adam! Did you ever experience any comfort? Did you happen to get any luxury?’ He will reply, ‘By Allāh, no, my Lord.’”³²⁹

³²⁷ *Al-Mulk* (67): 7

³²⁸ *Al-Mūṣannaḥ* of ‘Abdū’l-Razzaq, #18447

³²⁹ Muslim, #2807 and Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 3/203, 253

Be aware that the variation of torment for the people of Hell-fire is based on the variation of the deeds that led them into the Hell-fire, as Allāh Almighty said:

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَةٍ مِمَّا عَمِلُوا

“And for all are degrees from what they have done...”³³⁰

He also said:

جَزَاءً وَفَاءً

“An appropriate recompense.”³³¹

Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘Appropriate to their deeds. Because the punishment of whoever was excessive in blasphemy, spread corruption and invited others to disbelief is unlike those who were not like that.’

Allāh Almighty said:

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ زِدْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا فَوْقَ
الْعَذَابِ بِمَا كَانُوا يُفْسِدُونَ

“Those who disbelieved and averted [others] from the way of Allāh—We will increase them in punishment over [their] punishment for what corruption they were causing.”³³²

³³⁰ *Al-An‘ām* (6): 132

³³¹ *Al-Nabā’* (78): 26

³³² *Al-Nahl* (16): 88

He also said:

وَيَوْمَ نَقُومُ
السَّاعَةَ أَذْخَلُوا إِلَىٰ أَعْيُنِ عَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

“...And the Day the Hour appears [it will be said],
‘Make the people of Pharaoh enter the severest
punishment.’”³³³

Similarly, the variation of punishment for the disobedient believers in Hell-fire is according to their deeds. The punishment those who committed major sins is not like those who enacted minor sins. Punishment may be alleviated by way of other good deeds or whatever Allāh wills.

As for the disbelievers, if they had good deeds in the worldly life, such as being just and showing kindness to people, does that alleviate their torment in Hell-fire or not? There are two views regarding this from the early scholars.

Section One:

The First View: It does alleviate their punishment

The summary of this was narrated by Ibn Luhay‘ah, from ‘Aṭā’ Ibn Dīnār, from Sa‘īd Ibn Jubayr. It was the preferred view of Ibn Jarīr Al-Ṭabarī and others.

Al-Aswad Ibn Shayban narrated from Abū Nawfal that ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) said: ‘O Allāh’s Messenger! Where is ‘Abdullāh Ibn Jud‘ān?’³³⁴ He said: “In Hell-fire.” ‘Ā’ishah was saddened by

³³³ *Ghāfir* (40): 46

³³⁴ ‘Abdullāh ibn Jud‘ān is one of the nobles of Quraysh who died as a disbeliever but was known for generosity and feeding the poor.

this. When the Messenger (ﷺ) saw this, he said: “O ‘Ā’ishah! Why do you feel uneasy?” She said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ)! May my mother and father be sacrificed for you! He used to feed the poor and preserve the ties of kinship.’ He (ﷺ) remarked, “What you have said will alleviate his torment.” This was stated by Al-Kharā’iṭī in ‘*Makārim Al-Akhlāq*’, as a mursal ḥadīth.

‘Āmir Ibn Mudrik Al-Ḥārithī narrated from ‘Utbah Ibn Al-Yaqdhān, from Qays Ibn Muslim, from Ṭāriq Ibn Shihāb, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “No one does good, whether a disbeliever or a believer, except Allāh rewards him sooner in this life or saves it for him in the Hereafter.” They said: ‘O Allāh’s Messenger! How is the disbeliever rewarded in this life?’ He said: “If he preserved the ties of kinship, donated to charity or did good deeds, Allāh rewards him with fortune, progeny, health and so on.” They said: ‘How then is the disbeliever rewarded in the Hereafter?’ He said: “[with] A punishment short of their punishment.” Then he recited the verse,

أَدْخُلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾

“...Make the people of Pharaoh enter the severest punishment.”³³⁵

This was stated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Al-Kharā’iṭī, Al-Bazzār in his ‘*Musnad*’ and Ḥākīm in ‘*Al-Mustadrak*’³³⁶, who said: ‘Its chain of narrators is sound.’ Al-Bayhaqī stated it in ‘*Kitāb Al-Ba’th wa’l-Nushūr*’ and said: ‘Its chain of narrators is doubtful.’ ‘Utbah Ibn Yaqdhān is doubted by some among the scholars of ḥadīth.

³³⁵ *Al-Ghāfir* (40): 46

³³⁶ Ḥākīm in his *al-Mustadrak*, 2/253

We have already stated the ḥadīth indicating the alleviation of punishment for Abū Ṭālib for his kindness to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Tabāranī stated, through a weak chain of narrators, from Umm Salamah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hisham came to the Prophet (ﷺ) during the Farewell Pilgrimage and said: “You promote preserving the ties of kinship, kindness, sheltering the orphan and feeding the weak and needy. Hisham Ibn Al-Mughīrah used to do all that, so what do you think of his fate, O Allāh’s Messenger?” He said: “Every grave whose inhabitant does not testify that there is no deity save Allāh is a pit of Hell-fire. I have found my uncle, Abū Ṭālib, to be amidst a deep sea of fire, so Allāh brought him out, due to his closeness and kindness to me, to a shallow part of the Fire.”

Section Two:

The Second View: It does not alleviate their
punishment

Those who hold this view cite as evidence the verse,

وَقَدْ مَنَّآ إِلَىٰ مَا عَمِلُوا مِنَّ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ

هَبَاءً مَّنشُورًا ﴿٢٣﴾

“And We will regard what they have done of deeds
and make them as dust dispersed.”³³⁷

And the verse,

³³⁷ *Al-Furqān* (25): 23

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِرَبِّهِمْ
 أَعْمَلُهُمْ كَرَمَادٍ اشْتَدَّتْ بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي يَوْمٍ عَاصِفٍ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ
 مِمَّا كَسَبُوا عَلَى شَيْءٍ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الضَّلَالُ الْبَعِيدُ ﴿١٨﴾

“The example of those who disbelieve in their Lord is [that] their deeds are like ashes which the wind blows forcefully on a stormy day; they are unable [to keep] from what they earned a [single] thing...”³³⁸

And there are similar such verses.

It is narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim on the authority Anas (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh does not wrong a believer, a doer of good deed because he is given blessings for it in this world and will be rewarded for it in the Hereafter. But the disbeliever is rewarded for his good deeds in the world that he performed for the sake of Allāh and when he comes in the Hereafter, there is no good deed for which he can be rewarded.”³³⁹

In another version, he says, “When a disbeliever accomplishes any good deed, he is rewarded for it in this world; and in the case of a Muslim, Allāh stores up his good deeds for him in the Hereafter, and provides him with subsistence in this life due to his obedience.”

He also stated that ‘Ā’ishah (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anḥā*) said: ‘O Messenger of Allāh, Ibn Jud‘an maintained the ties of kinship and fed the

³³⁸ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 18

³³⁹ Muslim, #2808, 56, 57

poor. Would that be of any avail to him?’ He (ﷺ) said: “It would be of no avail to him as he did not ever say: “O my Lord, forgive my sins on the Day of Resurrection.”³⁴⁰

Those holding this regarded the alleviation of Abū Ṭālib’s punishment exclusive of the Messenger’s (ﷺ) intercession on his behalf, and regarded the Prophet’s (ﷺ) intercession (*shafā‘at*) as a sole merit (*khaṣā‘is*) belonging to him, not shared by others.

Section 3:

Among the Torment of Hell is the Melting (*al-Ṣabr*) of its Inhabitants

Another form of punishment is melting (*ṣabr*). Allāh Almighty said:

فَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا قُطِعَتْ لَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ مِنْ نَارٍ يُصَبُّ
مِنْ فَوْقِ رُءُوسِهِمُ الْحَمِيمُ ﴿١٩﴾ يُصْهَرُ بِهِ مَا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ
وَالْجُلُودُ ﴿٢٠﴾ وَهُمْ مَقْلَعُونَ مِنْ حديدٍ ﴿٢١﴾

“...But those who disbelieved will have cut out for them garments of fire. Poured upon their heads will be scalding water By which is melted that within their bellies and [their] skins. And for [striking] them are maces of iron.”³⁴¹

Mujāhid said regarding the verse,

يُصْهَرُ بِهِ مَا فِي بُطُونِهِمْ

³⁴⁰ Muslim, #214 and Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 6/93

³⁴¹ *Al-Hajj* (22): 19-21

“By which is melted that within their bellies”,

That, ‘It melts it completely.’

‘Aṭā’ al-Khurasānī said: ‘It dissolves what is in their bellies like how fat is dissolved.’

Tirmidhī³⁴² stated the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed, scalding water will be poured over their heads. The scalding water will penetrate until it finds its way to his insides. Then whatever is inside him will fall out until it pours over his feet while it melts away. Then he will be reformed to how he was.” Tirmidhī said: “This ḥadīth is ḥasan gharīb.”³⁴³

Allāh Almighty said:

خُذُوهُ فَاعْتِلُوهُ إِلَى سَوَاءِ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٤٧﴾ ثُمَّ
صَبُّوا فَوْقَ رَأْسِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٤٨﴾ ذُوقْ إِنَّكَ
أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ ﴿٤٩﴾

“[It will be commanded], ‘Seize him and drag him into the midst of the Hellfire, Then pour over his head from the torment of scalding water.’ [It will be said], ‘Taste! Indeed, you are the honored, the noble!’”³⁴⁴

Many of the early Muslims (*salaf*) said: ‘This verse was revealed

³⁴² Tirmidhi. #2585

³⁴³ Ḥasan gharīb: A ḥadīth with a good chain of narrators that has within it, a single narrator.

³⁴⁴ *Al-Dukhān* (44): 47-49

concerning Abū Jahl.’

Mujāhid said about the verse,

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شَوَاظٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ فَلَا تَنْصِرَانِ ﴿٣٥﴾

“There will be sent upon you a flame of fire and copper, and you will not defend yourselves.”³⁴⁵

That the, ‘Brass will be melted over their heads for their torment.’

‘Aṭā’ al-Khurāsānī said about the words,

وَنُحَاسٌ

“and copper”,

That its, ‘Brass will be molten and then poured over their heads as torment.’

We have already stated in Chapter Eighteen several effects relating to this sub-chapter.

³⁴⁵ *Al-Raḥmān* (55): 35

Section Four:

Interpreting the verse: “Which mounts directed at the hearts”

Allāh, the Exalted said:

كَلَّا لَيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ ﴿٤٤﴾
 وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ ﴿٤٥﴾ نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْجِدَةُ ﴿٤٦﴾ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ
 عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ ﴿٤٧﴾

“No! He will surely be thrown into the Crusher.
 And what can make you know what is the crusher?
 It is the fire of Allāh, [eternally] fueled, which
 mounts directed at the hearts.”³⁴⁶

Muḥammad Ibn Ka‘b Al-Qardhī said regarding the verse,

الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ ﴿٤٧﴾

“which mounts directed at the hearts.”

That it means, ‘Fire consumes him up to his heart. When it reaches his heart, he is recreated.’

It is narrated that Thābit Al-Banānī recited this verse and said: ‘It burns them to their hearts while they are alive. They have been truly tormented’, and then he began to seep.

Allāh Almighty also said:

إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا أَقْوَلُ الْبَشَرِ ﴿٢٥﴾ سَأُصَلِّيهِ سَقَرًا ﴿٢٦﴾ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ
 مَا سَقَرٌ ﴿٢٧﴾ لَا يَقِي وَلَا تَنْدُرُ ﴿٢٨﴾ أَوْاحِدَةٌ لِلْبَشَرِ ﴿٢٩﴾

³⁴⁶ Al-Humazāh (104): 4-7

“And what can make you know what is *saqar*? It lets nothing remain and leaves nothing [unburned], Blackening the skins.”³⁴⁸

Ṣāliḥ Ibn Ḥayyān narrated that Ibn Buraydah said about the verse,

لَا تَبْقَىٰ وَلَا تَذَرُ ۝۱۸

“it lets nothing remain and leaves nothing.”³⁴⁹

That, ‘It eats the bones, the flesh and the brain and leaves nothing behind.’

Al-Suddī said: ‘It leaves nothing of their skin unburned nor gives them respite from torment.’

Abū Sinān said: ‘It does not give them respite when they are replaced with new skin.’

Abū Razīn said regarding the verse,

لَوَاحِشَةً لِلْبَشَرِ ۝۱۹

“Blackening the skins.”³⁵⁰

That, ‘It will sear his face once, leaving it darker than the night.’

Qatādah said regarding the verse,

³⁴⁷ *Al-Humazāb* (104): 7

³⁴⁸ *Al-Mudaththir* (74): 27-29

³⁴⁹ *Al-Mudaththir* (74): 28

³⁵⁰ *Al-Mudaththir* (74): 29

لَوَاحَةٌ لِلْبَشَرِ ﴿١٩﴾

“Blackening the skins.”

It refers to, ‘Burning the skin.’ All this was stated by Ibn Abī Hātim and others.

Allāh Almighty also said:

كَلَّا إِنَّهَا لَأَطْفَاءُ ﴿١٥﴾ نَزَّاعَةٌ لِّلشَّوْءِ ﴿١٦﴾

“No! Indeed, it is the Flame [of Hell], A remover of exteriors.”³⁵¹

He³⁵² said: ‘It burns everything and leaves his heart screaming.’

Ibn Zayd said: ‘It breaks their bones then they are recreated and their skin is replaced anew.’

Ibn Muhājir narrated that Mujāhid said concerning the verse,

نَزَّاعَةٌ لِّلشَّوْءِ ﴿١٦﴾

“A remover of exteriors.”³⁵³

That, ‘It removes the skin.’

It is also narrated the he said: ‘It removes the flesh off the bones.’

³⁵¹ *Al-Ma‘ārij* (70): 15-16

³⁵² Most likely referring to Qatadah, whose interpretation was mentioned in the previous paragraph.

³⁵³ *Al-Ma‘ārij* (70): 16

Section Five:

Among the Torment of the Inhabitants of Hellfire:
Being Dragged on their Faces

Another form of torment in Hell-fire is being dragged on faces. Allāh the Exalted said:

إِنَّ الْمَجْرِمِينَ فِي ضَلَالٍ وَسُعُرٍ ﴿٤٧﴾ يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِي النَّارِ
عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُوقُوا مَسَّ سَقَرَ ﴿٤٨﴾

“Indeed, the criminals are in error and madness. The Day they are dragged into the Fire on their faces [it will be said], ‘Taste the touch of *saqar*.’”³⁵⁴

He also said:

إِذَا الْأَغْلَلُ فِي أَعْنَاقِهِمْ وَالسَّلْسِلُ يُسْحَبُونَ ﴿٧١﴾
فِي الْحَمِيمِ ثُمَّ فِي النَّارِ يُسْجَرُونَ ﴿٧٢﴾

“When the shackles are around their necks and the chains; they will be dragged. In boiling water; then in the Fire they will be filled [with flame].”³⁵⁵

Qatadah said: ‘They are dragged once in the Fire and once in the boiling water.’

He, the Almighty also said:

يَوْمَ تُقَلَّبُ وُجُوهُهُمْ فِي النَّارِ يَقُولُونَ يَا لَيْتَنَا أَطَعْنَا اللَّهَ
وَأَطَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ ﴿٦٦﴾

³⁵⁴ *Al-Qamar* (54): 47-48

³⁵⁵ *Al-Ghāfir* (40): 70-72

“The Day their faces will be turned about in the Fire, they will say, ‘How we wish we had obeyed Allāh and obeyed the Messenger.’”³⁵⁶

Qatadah said regarding the word *ṣa‘ūdā*

سَأْرُهُمْ صَعُودًا (١٧)

“arduous torment”³⁵⁷

It is, ‘A stone in Hell-fire where the disbeliever is dragged on his face.’

Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “Allāh the Almighty will say to the unjust ruler,

خَذُوهُ فَعَلُوهُ (٣٠) ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمِ صَلُّوهُ (٣١)

“Seize him and shackle him, then into Hellfire drive him.”³⁵⁸

Thus, ‘he is dragged on his face in Hell-fire, which scatters his flesh, bones and brain.’

Thābit Abū Zayd Al-Qaisī narrated from ‘Āsim Al-Ahwal, from Abū Maṣṣūr (the freed slave of Sālim) that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said regarding the verse

خَذُوهُ فَعَلُوهُ (٣٠) ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمِ صَلُّوهُ (٣١)

³⁵⁶ *Al-Abzāb* (33): 66

³⁵⁷ The last word in the verse of *al-Mudaththir*: 17 usually translated as ‘arduous torment’.

³⁵⁸ *Al-Hāqqab* (69): 30-31

“...they will be dragged in boiling water.”³⁵⁹

Abū Zayd said: ‘I think he said: ‘Every part of the self is disintegrated, such as skin, flesh, veins and nerves until another body of flesh is formed upon him—as tall as him—sixty forearm lengths tall. He is then covered with another skin and filled with flame in the fire.’ All of such was stated by Ibn Ḥātim.

Section Six:
Some Inhabitants are Tormented
by Climbing and Falling

Some of them are tormented by climbing up to the top of Hell-Fire and then falling down therein repeatedly to eternity. Some of them are charged to climb up a mountain in Hell-Fire then fall off from it.

We have already stated in Chapter Fourteen the different views in interpreting the verse,

سَأُرْهِقُهُ صِعُودًا ﴿١٧﴾

“I will cover him with arduous torment.”³⁶⁰

It is stated in the both in Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever kills himself with an iron weapon, will be carrying that weapon in his hand and stabbing his abdomen with it in the (Hell) Fire wherein he will abide eternally forever; and whoever drinks poison and kills himself with it, he will be carrying his poison in

³⁵⁹ *Al-Ghāfir* (40): 71-72

³⁶⁰ *Al-Mudaththir* (74): 17

his hand and drinking it in the (Hell) Fire wherein he will abide eternally forever; and whoever purposely throws himself from a mountain and kills himself, will be in the (Hell) Fire falling down into it and abiding therein perpetually forever.”³⁶¹

Shurayk narrated from Al-A‘mash, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Al-Sā’ib, from Zāthān, on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Dying in the cause of Allāh expiates everything—or did he say “expiates every sin”—except [unfulfilled] trust. The trustee is brought on the Day of Judgment and told, “Fulfill your trust,” and he will say, “How, O my Lord, when the worldly life is over?” It will be said: “Take him to the Abyss,” and he falls therein until he reaches its bottom. He will find the trust there as it was, so he will carry it, place it on his neck and climb up Hell-fire with it, until he thinks he got out, it [the trust] will fall off his shoulders, and he will fall behind it repeatedly forever.’ He added, “There is trust in the prayers, there is trust in fasting, there is trust in speech, and most importantly, there is trust in consignment.”³⁶² The narrator said: “I met Al-Barā’ and asked, ‘Did you not hear what your brother ‘Abdullāh said?’ He said: ‘What he said is true.’”

Shurayk said: “Ayyash Al-‘Āmarī narrated something similar from Zāthān, from ‘Abdullāh, from the Prophet (ﷺ), but did not mention the part about “trust in fasting and trust in everything.” It was also narrated by Ishāq Al-Azraq from Shurayk with a continuous chain of narrators. It was also narrated by Munjab Ibn Al-Ḥārith from Shurayk with a severed chain of narrators, and narrated by Abū’l Aḥwas from Al-A‘mash with a continuous chain

³⁶¹ Bukhārī, #5778, Muslim, #109, Tirmidhī, #2044, 2045, Abū Dāwūd, #3872 and others

³⁶² Ṭabarānī in *al-Kabīr* and Abū Nu‘yam in his *al-Ḥilyah*, 4/201

of narrators until Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), and he added in the forms of trust, “measurement, weighing and *ghusl* from *Janabah*.”³⁶³

‘Āsim narrated that Abū Šāliḥ said: “When a man is thrown in Hell-fire, he does not stop falling until he reaches its bottom, thereafter Hell-fire surges, raising him to its top with no single piece of flesh left on his bones. The Angels then strike him with rods and he falls to its bottom again—and he keeps going on like that [or similar to it].” This was stated by Al-Bayhaqī.

Henceforth, ‘Abdullāh Ibn Al-Mubārak (Allāh have mercy upon him) said, in describing Hell-fire:

It brings its inhabitants down sometimes and up sometimes,
If they hope for an escape from its anguish,
they are smacked down

Section Seven:
Some Inhabitants will Walk therein
while Dragging their Intestines

Some of them will go around in Hell-fire while dragging their intestines along. The Prophet (ﷺ) saw ‘Amr Ibn Luhayy dragging his intestines in Hell-fire.

It is narrated in both Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Usāmah Ibn Zayd that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and will be cast into Hell. His intestines will pour forth and he will go round them as a donkey goes round a millstone. The inmates of Hell will gather round

³⁶³ Ceremonial bathing after sexual intercourse.

him and say, ‘What has happened to you, O so-and-so? Were you not enjoining us to do good and forbidding us to do evil?’ He will reply, ‘I was enjoining you to do good, but was not doing it myself; and I was forbidding you to do evil, but was doing it myself.’”

Abū’l Muthanna Al-Amlukī said: ‘In Hell-fire, there are people who are tied to waterwheels of fire that revolve with them with neither rest nor break.’

Section Eight:

Some Inhabitants are Thrown in a Narrow Place Where They’re Unable to Move

Some of them are thrown in a narrow place where they cannot move. Allāh Almighty said:

وَإِذَا
الْقَوْمَانَهَا مَكَانًا ضَيِّقًا مُقَرَّنِينَ دَعَوْا هُنَالِكَ ثُبُورًا ﴿١٣﴾

“And when they are thrown into a narrow place therein bound in chains, they will cry out thereupon for destruction.”³⁶⁵

Ka’b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘In Hell-fire, there are ovens as narrow as the spear’s blade, which are clamped down on some people due to their deeds.’ This was previously mentioned.

Adam Ibn Abū Iyās narrated from Al-Mas‘ūdī, from Yūnus Ibn Khabbāb that Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “[Some among] those who are doomed to remain in Hell-fire for eternity, they’ll be

³⁶⁴ The narrator is not sure of the exact wording.

³⁶⁵ *Al-Furqān* (25): 13

placed in coffins of fire with nails of fire. These coffins will then be placed in (other) coffins and thrown in Hell-fire, so they won't see anyone else being tormented in Hell-fire." Then Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) recited the verse,

لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

"For them therein is heavy sighing, and they therein will not hear."³⁶⁶

In another version stated by Ibn Abī Hātim, Ibn Mas'ūd (*radīy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: 'So he does not see anyone else tormented in Hell-fire besides himself.'

Al-Minhāl Ibn 'Amr narrated from Na'im [some say Ibn Al-Dajājah] that Suwayd Ibn Ghafilah said: 'When Allāh Wills to forget inhabitants of the Hell-fire, He makes a box for each man corresponding to his size in Hell-fire, so that no vein pulsates except there is a nail of fire struck in it. Then it is set on fire, and locked with a lock of fire, then that box is placed in another box of fire, and fire is ignited between them. It is then locked and thrown in Fire. This is the meaning of Allāh's saying,

لَهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ﴿١٠٠﴾

"They will have canopies of fire above them and below them, canopies..."³⁶⁷

and His saying,

لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

³⁶⁶ *Al-Anbiyā* (21): 100

³⁶⁷ *Al-Zumar* (39): 16

“For them therein is heavy sighing, and they therein will not hear.”³⁶⁸

So he does not see anyone in Hell-fire besides himself. This was stated by Al-Bayhaqī as well as Abū Na‘īm, except that the latter reported it from Al-Minhāl, from Khaythamah, from Suwayd.

Section Nine:

There are Seventy Illness in Hell-fire

The people of Hellfire will be tormented with new diseases (*amrād*). We have already narrated from Shafī Ibn Mātī‘ that there are seventy illnesses in Hell-fire; each illness is like a part of Hell-fire.

Al-A‘mash narrated that Mujāhid said: ‘Mange is placed unto the inhabitants of Hell-fire, so they scratch themselves until their bones are exposed. They ask, ‘Why are we tormented by this?’ They are told, ‘For wronging the believers.’

It was also narrated by Shu‘bah, from Manşūr, from Mujāhid, from Yazīd Ibn Shagarah, who said similar to it.

Section Ten:

Some Inhabitants are Distressed by the Torment of Others in Hell-fire by Their Foul Stench

Some people of Hell are distressed by the torment of others in Hell-fire due to their stench. Şāliḥ Ibn Ḥayyān narrated from Ibn Buraydah, from his father that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The smell of adulterers’ genitals harms the inhabitants of Hell-fire.”

³⁶⁸ *Al-Anbiyā’* (21): 100

Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Ayyāsh narrated from someone from Makḥūl, that he said, conveying from the Prophet (ﷺ), ‘People of Hell-fire sense a foul smell and ask, ‘O our Lord, we have never sensed a more putrid smell since we entered Hell-fire.’ He will respond, ‘This is the smell of adulterers’ genitals.’”

Ismā‘il Ibn ‘Ayyash narrated from Tha‘labah Ibn Muslim Al-Kha‘thamī, from Ayyūb Ibn Bashīr Al-‘Ajālī, from Shāfi Ibn Matī‘, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Four kinds of people cause distress to the inhabitants Hell-fire above their own distress. They go back and forth between Hell-fire and the scalding water, crying for woe and destruction. The inhabitants of Hell-fire say to each other, ‘Why did these people cause us distress above our distress?’ One of them is enclosed in a coffin of live coal, one is dragging his intestines along, one is dripping pus and blood from his mouth, and one is eating his flesh. The one in the coffin is told, ‘Why did the accursed cause us distress above our distress?’ He says, ‘The accursed died without repaying people’s debts and trusts.’ The one who is dragging his intestines is told, ‘Why did the accursed cause us distress above our distress?’ He is told, ‘The accursed did not care where urine befouled his body or clothe, and did not wash it off.’ The one who is dripping pus and blood from his mouth is told, ‘Why did the accursed cause us distress above our distress?’ He is told, ‘The accursed used to wait for a word,³⁶⁹ and seek pleasure from it like one does with sexual intercourse.’ Then, the one who is eating his flesh is told, ‘Why did the accursed cause us distress above our distress?’ He says, ‘The accursed used to eat the flesh of people³⁷⁰.’” This was stated by Al-Ḥāfiẓ Abū Nu‘aym, who said: ‘Shāfi Ibn Matī‘ is debated as a narrator, while some say that he

³⁶⁹ Meaning to spread gossip and carry tales.

³⁷⁰ An expression that means backbiting, as stated in the Qur’ān [49:12]

had (supporting) companions.³⁷¹

He also stated it through a different chain of narrators to Ismā'īl Ibn Ayyāsh, wherein he said: "... without repaying people's debts and trusts nor included their repayment/fulfillment in his will." He also said: "used to undertake every wicked word and seek pleasure from it." And: "He used to eat people's flesh and go about with malicious gossip."

Imām Aḥmad narrated that Maṣṣūr Ibn Zādhān said: 'I was told that some of those thrown in Hell-fire give distress to others of its inhabitants with their stench, so they are asked, 'Woe to you! What have you done? Are we not in enough torment for you and your stench to increases our distress?' He will say, 'I was a scholar but did not benefit from my knowledge.'

Section Eleven:

Interpreting the Verse

"And death will come to him from everywhere"

Allāh, the Exalted said:

وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَيِّتٍ وَمِنْ
وَرَأْيِهِ عَذَابٌ غَلِيظٌ

"...And death will come to him from everywhere, but he is not to die. And before him is a massive punishment."³⁷²

Ibrāhīm said regarding the phrase,

³⁷¹ Abū Nu'yam in his *al-Hilyah*, 5/167-168

³⁷² *Ibrāhim* (14): 17

وَيَأْتِيهِ الْمَوْتُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ

“And death will come to him from everywhere”

That it will come, ‘Even from under every hair on his body.’
Al-Daḥḥāk said: ‘Even from his big toe.’

The meaning of the verse is that a distress and pain similar to those of death befall each part of his body. Even his hair and nails. However, his soul does not depart to give him some respite.

Ibn Jurayj said: ‘His soul becomes stuck in his throat. It neither goes out to allow him some rest, nor return to its place inside him.’
Some interpreters related that to the verse,

ثُمَّ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَى ﴿١٣﴾

“Neither dying therein nor living.”³⁷³

Al-Awza‘ī narrated that Bilāl Ibn Sād said: ‘Hell-fire is called on the Day of Judgment, ‘O Hell-fire, burn! O Hell-fire, drink up! O Hell-fire, cook! Eat and do not kill!’”

Section Twelve:
The Disbelievers’ Torment in Hell-fire
is Ever-Continuous

The disbelievers’ torment in Hell-fire is not subject to any subsidence, halting or alleviation; rather it is ever-continuous.

³⁷³ *Al-A‘lā*:(87): 13

Allāh Almighty said:

إِنَّ الْمُجْرِمِينَ فِي عَذَابٍ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧٤﴾ لَا يُفْتَرُ عَنْهُمْ وَهُمْ
فِيهِ مُبْلِسُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

“Indeed, the criminals will be in the punishment of Hell, abiding eternally. It will not be allowed to subside for them, and they, therein, are in despair.”³⁷⁴

He also said:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَهُمْ
نَارُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يُقْضَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ فَيَمُوتُوا وَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ مِنْ
عَذَابِهَا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي كُلَّ كَافِرٍ ﴿٣٦﴾

“And for those who disbelieve will be the fire of Hell. [Death] is not decreed for them so they may die, nor will its torment be lightened for them...”³⁷⁵

He also said:

فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ ﴿٨١﴾

“...so the punishment will not be lightened for them, nor will they be aided.”³⁷⁶

He also said:

³⁷⁴ *Zukhruf* (43): 74-75

³⁷⁵ *Fātir* (35): 36

³⁷⁶ *Al-Baqarah* (2): 86

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ فِي النَّارِ لِخَزَنَةِ
جَهَنَّمَ ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ يُخَفِّفْ عَنَّا يَوْمًا مِّنَ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٤٦﴾
قَالُوا أَوَلَمْ تَكُنَّا تُبْعَثُكُمْ رَسُولًا مِّنْ أَيْمَانِكُمْ قَالُوا
بَلَىٰ قَالُوا فَادْعُوا وَمَا دَعْوَةُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ

“And those in the Fire will say to the keepers of Hell, ‘Supplicate to your Lord to lighten for us a day from the punishment.’ They will say, ‘Did there not come to you your messengers with clear proofs?’ They will say, ‘Yes.’ They will reply, ‘Then supplicate [yourselves], but the supplication of the disbelievers is not except in error.’”³⁷⁷

Aḥmad Ibn Al-Ḥawarī narrated that he heard Ishāq Ibn Ibrāhīm saying on the Minbar in Damascus, “An hour does not pass by the inhabitants of Paradise except he is blessed with a new form of pleasure, and an hour does not pass by the inhabitants of Hell-fire except he is subjected to a new form of torment.

Allāh Almighty said:

فَذُوقُوا فَلَن نَّزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا ﴿٣٠﴾

“So taste [the penalty], and never will We increase you except in torment.”³⁷⁸

Jisr Ibn Farqad narrated that Al-Ḥasan said: ‘I asked Abū Burzah about the most difficult verse in the Book of Allāh for the people of Hell-fire. He said: “I heard the Messenger (ﷺ) recite the verse,

³⁷⁷ *Al-Ghāfir* (40): 49-50

³⁷⁸ *Al-Nabā’* (78): 30

فَذُوقُوا فَلَنْ نَزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا ﴿٣٠﴾

“So taste [the penalty], and never will We increase you except in torment.”

And he said: “These people are destroyed by their disobedience to Allāh the Exalted.”

This was stated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Jisr however, is a weak narrator.

Al-Bayhaqī recorded it as well, but did not attribute it to the Prophet (ﷺ), and its wording is, ‘I asked Abū Burzah about the most difficult verse for the people of Hell-fire and he said: “So taste [the penalty], and never will We increase you except in torment.”’

Mujāhid said: ‘I heard that the respite for the people of Hell-fire get is to put their hands on their waists. They experience forms of torment that Allāh did not reveal to any of His creatures in this life.’

Ibn Al-Mubārak narrated that Al-Ḥasan said: “Allāh mentioned the chains, the shackles, the fire and other things that exist in this life, and then added,

وَمَا أُخْرِمْنَ سَكَلِهِمْ أَرْوَاحٌ ﴿٥٨﴾

“And other [punishments] of its type [in various] kinds.”³⁷⁹

Others said: ‘It means other punishments that are not seen (or known) in this life.’ This was stated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim.

³⁷⁹ *Sad* (38): 58

Abū Ya‘la Al-Mawsilī narrated from Shurayh, from Ibrāhīm Ibn Sulayman, from Al-A‘mash, from Al-Ḥasan, that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said regarding the verse,

فَذُوْقُوا فَلْنَزِيدَكُمْ إِلاَّ عَذَابًا ﴿٢٠﴾

“...We will increase them in punishment over [their] punishment...”³⁸⁰

That it, ‘Refers to five rivers below the throne of Allāh; they are tormented within some during the night, and within the others during the day.’

Section Thirteen:

Being Veiled from Allāh the Exalted is the Greatest Torment for People of Hell-fire

The greatest torment (*a‘zam ‘adbāb*) for the people of Hell-fire is that they remain veiled (*hijāb*) and kept away from Allāh the Majestic; as well as being shunned by Him and having His wrath upon them. Equally, Allāh being pleased with the people of Paradise is greater than all the pleasures of Paradise, and Him being visible to them is greater than all forms of enjoy.

Allāh Almighty said:

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿١٤﴾ كَلَّا إِنَّهُمْ
عَنْ رَبِّهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ لَمَحْجُورُونَ ﴿١٥﴾ ثُمَّ إِنَّهُمْ لَصَالُوا الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ يُنَادَى
هَذَا الَّذِي كُنْتُمْ بِهِ تَكَذِّبُونَ ﴿١٧﴾

“No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of

³⁸⁰ *Al-Nabā’* (78): 30

that which they were earning. No! Indeed, from their Lord, that Day, they will be partitioned. Then indeed, they will [enter and] burn in Hellfire. Then it will be said [to them], ‘This is what you used to deny.’”³⁸¹

Therefore, Allāh stated three forms of torment: being screened away from Him, then entering Hell-fire, and then being admonished for denying Him in the worldly life. He also described them as having a stain covering their hearts, which is the rust of sins that blackened their hearts, hence nothing of knowing Allāh, glorifying Him, revering Him, fearing and loving Him could reach these hearts. Thus, just as their hearts were veiled from Allāh in this life, they are veiled from seeing Him in the Hereafter.

This is in contrast to the state of the inhabitants of Paradise.

Allāh, the Exalted said:

لِّلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ
وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٦٦﴾

“For them who have done good is the best [reward] and extra. No darkness will cover their faces, nor humiliation...”³⁸²

Those who have excelled are people of *Iḥsān*,³⁸³ and *Iḥsān* means to worship Allāh as if one sees Him as explained by the Prophet

³⁸¹ *Al-Mutafifin* (83): 14-17

³⁸² *Yūnus* (10): 26

³⁸³ Loosely meaning to enact excellence in worship while seeking perfection.

(ﷺ) in the famous narration of Jibrīl.³⁸⁴ Therefore, Allāh made the reward for perfection the best reward, which is Paradise—and the prized extra is being honoured to behold the majesty of Allāh with one’s own eyes, as mentioned by the Messenger (ﷺ) in the ḥadīths narrated by Suhayb and others.³⁸⁵

Ja‘far Ibn Sulayman related that Abū ‘Imrān Al-Jawnī said: ‘Allāh does not look upon man except that He grants him mercy. Were He to look upon the people of Hell-fire, He would grant them mercy, yet He decreed not to look unto them.’

Aḥmad Ibn Abū’l-Ḥawarī reported from Aḥmad Ibn Mūsa that Abū Maryam said that the people of Hell-fire will say, ‘O our Lord! Be satisfied with us and punish us as you see fit, for Your dissatisfaction with us is more tougher on us than the punishment we are experiencing.’

Aḥmad then continued, ‘When I told Sulayman Ibn Abū Sulayman about this statement (of Abū Maryam) and he said: ‘These cannot be the words of the people of Hell-fire, these are the words of those who are obedient to Allāh.’ I then told (his father) Abū Sulayman about this, he concurred. Sulayman is the son of Abū Sulayman Al-Daranī, who was a great man of piety, and what he said is correct because the inhabitants of Hell-fire are ignorant and unable to realise such a concept—even though it is true in its essence. This can only be understood by those who are acquainted with Allāh and obedient to Him. Such statements may come from some among disobedient believers who enter Hell-fire, just as some of them call upon Allāh alone and are consequently taken out from

³⁸⁴ Single most profound ḥadīth containing an overview of the core tenets of Islam. See Muslim, #8.

³⁸⁵ Muslim, #181 and Tirmidhī, #2555

it. Some exit Hell-Fire by their hope in Allāh alone, while others who are judged to enter Hell-fire intercede with their knowledge of Allāh, and are therefore saved from it.

Abū'l-'Abbās Ibn Masrūq narrated from Suwayd Ibn Sa'īd that Al-Fuḍayl Ibn 'Iyād said: "A man will be brought before Allāh, the Exalted, without having any good deeds. Allāh will say to him, 'Go and see if you know any person of virtue so that I can forgive you for knowing them.' He goes searching for thirty years but is unable to find anyone. So he returns to Allāh, the Exalted, and says, 'O my Lord! I cannot find anyone.' Allāh will say, 'Take him to Hell-fire.' The Angels of Hell grab hold of him and drag him to the Hell-Fire, thereupon the man pleads, 'O my Lord! If you were going to forgive me by virtue of knowing your creation, then I, believing in Your Oneness, is more worthy of Your forgiveness.' Thereupon, Allāh says to the Angels of Hell, "Bring back the one who knows Me. Bestow upon him the robes of My honour. Let him live in the meadows of Paradise comfortably, because he is acquainted with Me, and I am known to him.""

Section Fourteen:

What Hell-fire Inhabitants are Presented with Upon Entering it, may Allāh Save us from it

Allāh, the Exalted said:

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ أَتَيْتُمُوهَا الضَّالُّونَ الْمَكِيدُونَ ﴿٥١﴾ لَا يَكُونُ مِنْ شَجَرٍ مِنْ رَقُومٍ ﴿٥٢﴾
 فَتَشْرَبُونَ ﴿٥٣﴾ فَتَشْرَبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْحَمِيمِ ﴿٥٤﴾ فَتَشْرَبُونَ
 شَرِبَ الْهَيْدِ ﴿٥٥﴾ هَذَا نُزِّلَتْكُمْ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ﴿٥٦﴾

"Then indeed you, O those astray [who are] deniers, Will be eating from trees of *Zaqqūm* And

filling with it your bellies And drinking on top of it from scalding water And will drink as the drinking of thirsty camels. That is their accommodation on the Day of Recompense.”³⁸⁶

Accommodation is what is prepared for the guest after his arrival. These verses indicate that the people of Hell-fire, upon entering it are presented with food from the *Zaqqūm* tree and drinking from scalding water. They are driven to Hell-fire while thirsty, as Allāh said:

وَسَوْقُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وَرَدًا ﴿٨٦﴾

“And will drive the criminals to Hell in thirst.”³⁸⁷

Abū ‘Imrān Al-Jawnī said: ‘We heard that the inhabitants of Hell-fire are resurrected in thirst, then stand in the events of the Day of Judgment in thirst.’ He then recited the verse,

وَسَوْقُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وَرَدًا ﴿٨٦﴾

“And will drive the criminals to Hell in thirst.”

Mujahid said in interpreting this verse, ‘Their necks are torn apart by thirst.’

And Matar Al-Warraq said: ‘Intensely thirsty.’

It is stated in Bukhārī and Muslim that the Prophet (ﷺ) said, in the long ḥadīth of intercession, that the Jews and Christians will be asked, ‘What do you want now?’ They will say, ‘We feel thirsty,

³⁸⁶ *Al-Wāqī‘ah* (56): 51-56

³⁸⁷ *Maryam* (19): 86

O our Lord! Quench our thirst.” They will be directed [to a certain direction] and asked, “Why don’t you go there to drink water?” They will then be pushed towards the Fire [and they will find to their great dismay that] it was but a mirage [with raging flames of fire] consuming one another, and they will fall into the Fire.”³³⁸

Ayyūb [Al-Sakhtiyānī] conveyed that Al-Ḥasan said: ‘What do you think of people who stood on their feet for fifty thousand years without eating or drinking, until their necks were torn apart by thirst and their bellies are burnt by hunger—they are then driven to Hell-fire, where they are made to drink from a boiling spring that is boiled to the utmost degree?’

[‘Abdullāh] Ibn Al-Mubārak narrated [through a chain of narrators] that Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “Allāh looks upon His servant on the Day of Judgment in anger, and He says, ‘Take him.’ A hundred thousand Angels or more take him and tie his forehead to his feet, angry for the sake of Allāh’s anger, and they drag him on his face to Hell-fire. Hell-Fire itself is seventy times more enraged with him than they are. He calls for relief with a drink, and is given a drink causing his flesh and nerves to melt away. He is then returned to Hell-fire, so woe to him from Hell-fire!”

Ibn Al-Mubārak said: ‘I was told by someone from Madīnah that the people of Hell-fire crumble in the hands of the Angels [of Hell] when they take hold of him. He will say, ‘Will you not show me mercy?’ They will say, ‘How can we show you mercy when the Most Merciful of the merciful did not?’

Al-A‘mash narrated that Mālik Ibn Al-Ḥārith said: ‘When a man is thrown in Hell-fire, he falls therein until he reaches one of its

³³⁸ Bukhāri and Muslim, #183

doors. He is then told, ‘Stay where you are until you are served.’ He is then served a cup of venom of serpents and scorpions by which his skin, hair, nerves and veins are separated from each other.’ This was stated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim.

Muḥammad Ibn Sulayman Ibn Al-Aṣbahānī narrated from Abū Sinān Dirār Ibn Murrah, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Abū’l-Hudhayl, on the authority Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When the inhabitants of Hell-Fire are driven to it, it burns them a burn that does not leave any flesh on a bone except cause it to fall on the hamstring.”

Ṭabāranī recorded this, however, attributing it to the Prophet (ﷺ) is not affirmed as it was narrated by Ibn ‘Uyaynah, from Abū Sinān, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Abū’l-Hudhayl (or others) as his own statement and not attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ). It was also narrated by Muḥammad Ibn Fuḍayl, from Abū Sinan, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Abū’l-Hudhayl, as Abū Hurayrah’s (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) saying in interpretation of the verse,



“Blackening the skins.”³⁸⁹

He said: ‘Hell-fire meets them on the Day of Judgment and burns them once, thereby not leaving any flesh on a bone except causing it to fall on the hamstring.’

³⁸⁹ *Al-Mudaththir* (74): 29

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Hell Dweller's Cries, Groans, Sighs, Screams and their Unanswered Invocations

Allāh Almighty said:

لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا لَا يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿١٠٠﴾

“For them therein is heavy sighing, and they therein will not hear.”³⁹⁰

He also said:

فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ سَفُؤًا فِي النَّارِ لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَشَهيقٌ ﴿١٠١﴾

“As for those who were [destined to be] wretched, they will be in the Fire. For them therein is [violent] exhaling and inhaling.”³⁹¹

Al-Rabī' Ibn Anas said: 'Exhalation takes place in the throat, while inhalation takes place in the chest.' Mu'amar narrated that Qatadah said: 'The disbeliever's voice in Hell-fire is like that of

³⁹⁰ *Al-Anbiyā'* (21): 100

³⁹¹ *Hūd* (11): 106

the donkey; it begins with exhalation and ends with inhalation.’ Allāh the Exalted said:

وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِحُونَ فِيهَا

“And they will cry out therein...”³⁹²

In the ḥadīth narrated by Ḥarīthah, it is mentioned, “...It is as if I am looking at the inhabitants of Hell-fire howling therein.” Mu‘awiyah Ibn Ṣāliḥ narrated from Salīm Ibn Āmir, from Abū Umamah, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I saw a vision” and stated a long ḥadīth wherein he said: “Then we went along until we saw a smoke and heard howling. I said: ‘What is this?’ He said: ‘This is Hell-fire.’” Ṭabārānī³⁹³ and others stated this.

Al-A‘mash related from Yazīd Al-Raqashī, from Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The people of Hell will be made to weep and they will weep until they run out of tears. Then they will weep blood until something like trenches appear on their faces, and if ships were placed in them they would float.” This was stated by Ibn Mājah.³⁹⁴ It was narrated from Al-A‘mash, from ‘Amr Ibn Murrāh and Yazīd Al-Raqashī, from Anas [attributed to Anas]. It was also narrated by Sa‘īd Ibn Salamah from Yazīd Al-Raqashī, and he said: “We heard this from him, but he did not attribute it to the Prophet (ﷺ) or provide the chain of narrators to support that.”

Salam Ibn Miskīn narrated from Qatadah, from Abū Burdah Ibn Abū Mūsā, that his father said: “The people of Hell-fire cry so much tears that ships can sail upon their tears. After running

³⁹² *Al-Fāṭir* (35): 37

³⁹³ Ṭabārānī in *al-Kabīr* and its narrators are all authentic

³⁹⁴ Ibn Mājah, #4324

out of tears, they begin crying blood.”

Ṣāliḥ Al-Murri said: “I hear that they scream in Hell-fire until their voices break and the only sound that comes out of them is like the moaning of the moribund.”

Ibn Ishaq conveyed that Muḥammad Ibn Ka‘b said: “They will exhale in Hell-fire, so Hell-fire will exhale, and they will inhale so Hell-fire will inhale with what Allāh forbade them, yet they considered as lawful.” He added, “Exhalation is of breathing, but inhalation is of crying.”

‘Alī Ibn Ṭalḥah conveyed that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said in interpretation of the verse,

لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَشَهيقٌ ﴿١٠٦﴾

“For them therein is [violent] exhaling and inhaling.”³⁹⁵

That it is, “An intense sound (followed by) a faint sound.” Mālik narrated that Zayd Ibn Aslam said regarding the verse

سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْنَا أَجْرٌ عَنَّا أَمْ صَبَرْنَا مَا لَنَا مِنْ مَّحِيصٍ ﴿١٠٧﴾

“...It is all the same for us whether we show intolerance or are patient: there is for us no place of escape.”³⁹⁶

“They were patient for a hundred years, then they wept for a hundred years and then they said: ‘It is all the same for us whether we show intolerance or are patient: there is for us no place of escape.’”

³⁹⁵ *Hūd* (11): 106

³⁹⁶ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 21

Al-Walid Ibn Muslim reports from Abū Salamah Al-Dawsī, whose name is Thabit Ibn Shurayh, from Salīm Ibn ‘Abdullāh that the Prophet (ﷺ) used to pray, “O Allāh! Give me two eyes that frequently cry, which heal the heart by crying from fearing You, before the tears become blood and the teeth become live coal.” Sālīm Ibn ‘Abdullāh is Al-Muharabī, and his ḥadīth is mursal. Some thought that this is Sālīm Ibn ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar, and some added to the chain of narrators ‘from his father’, all of which is incorrect.

Al-Walid Ibn Muslim also narrated from ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Yazīd Ibn Jābir, that Ismā‘īl Ibn ‘Ubayd-Allāh said: “Dāwūd (*‘alayhis-salām*) said: ‘O Allāh! Grant me two eyes that are frequent in weeping, and which heal the heart by weeping from fearing You, before the tears become blood and the teeth become live coal.’ Dāwūd (*‘alayhis-salām*) was admonished for weeping frequently, he said: ‘Let me weep before the Day of weeping, before the bones are burnt and the beards are set on fire. Before the harsh and severe Angels, who do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them but do what they are commanded, they are commanded to take me.’”

Yūnus Ibn Maysarah narrated that Abū Idrīs Al-Khawlanī said: “Dāwūd (*‘alayhis-salām*) said: ‘I weep before the day of weeping. I weep now before weeping becomes useless.’ Then he asked for live coal upon which he placed his hand until it burned him; he removed it and said: ‘Oh! ‘Oh’ from Allāh’s Punishment! Oh! ‘Oh’ before saying ‘Oh’ becomes useless!’”

Thābit Al-Bananī narrated that Ṣafwān Ibn Muhriz said: “There was a day in which Dāwūd (*‘alayhis-salām*) groaned and said: ‘Oh! ‘Oh’ from Allāh’s punishment before saying ‘Oh’ becomes useless.” Ṣafwān mentioned this story once in a gathering and he wept until he could not help himself, so he got up and left.

‘Abdullāh Ibn Riyah Al-Anṣarī said: ‘I heard Ka‘b interpret the verse,

إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لَحَلِيمٌ أَوَّاهٌ مُنِيبٌ ﴿٧٥﴾

“Indeed, Ibrāhīm was forbearing, grieving and [frequently] returning [to Allāh].”³⁹⁷

And say, ‘When Ibrāhīm (*alayhis-salām*) mentioned Hell-fire, he used to say, “Oh from Hell-fire! Oh from Hell-fire!”³⁹⁸ Abū’l Jawza’ and ‘Ubayd Ibn Umayr stated similarly.

Ibn Abī Dunyā narrated [through a chain of narrators] that Riyah Al-Qaysī passed by a young boy who was weeping. He stopped and asked him, ‘Why do you weep, young boy?’ But the boy could not explain nor reply to him. Riyah started weeping himself and said: ‘The inhabitants of Hell-fire have no comfort or consolation except weeping,’ and he kept weeping.

He also narrated [through another chain of narrators] that Riyah Al-Qaysī visited some people, and their child was crying at night, so Riyah cried because of his crying. Later on, he was asked about the reason for his crying to which he said: “The child’s crying reminded me of the weeping of people of Hell-fire, but having no helper.” Then he continued to weep.

Section One:

The Inhabitants Requesting Removal Therefrom

Allāh, the Exalted said:

³⁹⁷ *Hūd* (11): 75

³⁹⁸ The Arabic word ‘*anwāb*’, translated in the verse as ‘*grieving*’ also means ‘*frequently groan.*’

قَالُوا

رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ رَبَّنَا
أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِن عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿٧٧﴾ قَالَ انخسوا فيها
وَلَا تَكَلِّمُونِ ﴿٧٨﴾

“They will say, ‘Our Lord, our wretchedness overcame us, and we were a people astray. Our Lord, remove us from it, and if we were to return [to evil], we would indeed be wrongdoers.’ He will say, ‘Remain despised therein and do not speak to Me’.”³⁹⁹

He also said:

وَنَادَوْا بِمَلِكِكُمْ لِيَقْضِيَ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَرْكُومُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

“And they will call, ‘O Mālik, let your Lord put an end to us!’ He will say, ‘Indeed, you will remain.’”⁴⁰⁰

He also said:

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ فِي النَّارِ لِخَزَنَةِ
جَهَنَّمَ ادعوا ربكم يَخَفِ فَعَنَاءَ يَوْمَائِمِنَ الْعَذَابِ ﴿٨٠﴾
قَالُوا أَوَلَمْ نَكُ تَأْتِيكُمْ رُسُلُكُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا
بَلَى قَالُوا فَادْعُوا وَمَا دَعَوْا إِلَّا كَفَرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ

“And those in the Fire will say to the keepers of Hell, ‘Supplicate to your Lord to lighten for us a day from the punishment.’ They will say, ‘Did

³⁹⁹ *al-Mu'minūn* (23): 106-108

⁴⁰⁰ *al-Zukhruf* (43): 77

there not come to you your messengers with clear proofs?’ They will say, ‘Yes.’ They will reply, ‘Then supplicate [yourselves], but the supplication of the disbelievers is not except in error.’⁴⁰¹

He also said:

وَهُمْ يَصْطَرِحُونَ
فِيهَا رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ
أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُمْ مَا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمْ النَّذِيرُ
فَذُوقُوا فَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ نَصِيرٍ ﴿٣٧﴾

“And they will cry out therein, ‘Our Lord, remove us; we will do righteousness—other than what we were doing!’ But did We not grant you life enough for whoever would remember therein to remember, and the warner had come to you? So taste [the punishment], for there is not for the wrongdoers any helper.”⁴⁰²

In the ḥadīth narrated by Al-A‘mash, from Shamar Ibn Aṭīyah, from Shahr Ibn Ḥawshab, from Umm al-Darda’, from Abū’l-Darda’ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said about the inhabitants of Hell-fire,

قَالُوا أَوْلَمْ تَأْتِكُمْ رُسُلُكُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا
بَلَى قَالُوا فَادْعُوا وَمَا دَعَوْا إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ

“So (some of them) say, ‘Call the keepers of Hell’. They will say, ‘Did there not come to you your

⁴⁰¹ *Ghāfir* (40): 49-50

⁴⁰² *Fāṭir* (35): 37

messengers with clear proofs?’ They will say, ‘Yes.’ They will reply, ‘Then supplicate [yourselves], but the supplication of the disbelievers is not except in error.’”⁴⁰³

He added,

وَنَادُوا بِمَلِكٍ لِّفَيْضِ عَيْنَارٍ بِكَ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مِّنْ كَاثِرِينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾

“Then, they will say, ‘Call Mālik.’ And they will call, ‘O Mālik, let your Lord put an end to us!’ He will say, ‘Indeed, you will remain.’”⁴⁰⁴

Al-A‘mash said: “I was informed that there is a thousand years between their calling him, and Mālik’s answering them.” He [the Prophet (ﷺ)] continued, “They say, ‘Call your Lord, for there is none better than your Lord.’ They will say,

رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ ﴿١٠٦﴾ رَبَّنَا
أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِن عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

“Our Lord, our wretchedness overcame us, and we were a people astray. Our Lord, remove us from it, and if we were to return [to evil], we would indeed be wrongdoers.”⁴⁰⁵

He replies to them and says,

قَالَ أَحْسَبُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تَكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

⁴⁰³ Ghāfir (40): 50

⁴⁰⁴ al-Zukhruf (43): 77

⁴⁰⁵ al-Mu‘minūn (23): 106-107

“Remain despised therein and do not speak to Me.”⁴⁰⁶

So with that, they lose hope of any good, and with that they are taken to moaning, despair and severe ruin.” Stated by Al-Tirmidhī,⁴⁰⁷ it has been attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) in some versions and to Abū’l-Darda’ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) in others.

Abū Ma’shar conveyed that Muḥammad Ibn Ka’b Al-Farḍī said: ‘For the people of Hell-fire, there are five callings; they are responded to in four and ignored in the fifth. They will say,

قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَمَتْنَا اثْنَيْنِ وَأَحْيَيْتَنَا اثْنَيْنِ فَأَعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا
فَهَلْ إِلَى خُرُوجٍ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ ﴿١١﴾

“Our Lord, You made us lifeless twice and gave us life twice, and we have confessed our sins; is there any way to get out?”⁴⁰⁸

They are answered,

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُ إِذَا دُعِيَ
اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ كَفَرْتُمْ وَإِنْ يُشْرَكْ بِهِ تُؤْمِنُوا

“That is because, when Allāh was called upon alone, you disbelieved; but if others were associated with Him, you believed.”⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁶ *al-Mu’minūn* (23): 108

⁴⁰⁷ Tirmidhī, #2589

⁴⁰⁸ *Ghāfir* (40): 11

⁴⁰⁹ *Ghāfir* (40): 12

Then they say,

رَبَّنَا أَبْصَرْنَا وَسَمِعْنَا فَارْجِعْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا إِنَّا مُوقِنُونَ

“Our Lord, we have seen and heard, so return us [to the world]; we will work righteousness. Indeed, we are [now] certain.”⁴¹⁰

They are answered.

وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدًى

“And if we had willed, We could have given every soul its guidance...”⁴¹¹

until the end of the verse. Then they say,

رَبَّنَا أَخِّرْنَا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ يُحِبِّ دَعْوَتَكَ وَتَتَّبِعِ الرُّسُلَ

“Our Lord, delay us for a short term; we will answer Your call and follow the Messengers.”⁴¹²

They are answered,

أَوَلَمْ تَكُونُوا أَقْسَمْتُمْ مِّن قَبْلُ مَا لَكُم مِّن زَوَالٍ ﴿٤٤﴾

“What! did you not swear before, for you there will be no end?”⁴¹³

⁴¹⁰ *al-Sajdah* (32): 12

⁴¹¹ *al-Sajdah* (32): 13

⁴¹² *Ibrāhīm* (14): 44

⁴¹³ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 44

Then they say,

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا نَعْمَلْ صَالِحًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ

“Our Lord, remove us; we will do righteousness—other than what we were doing!”⁴¹⁴

They are answered,

أَوَلَمْ نُعَمِّرْكُمْ مَا يَتَذَكَّرُ فِيهِ مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ وَجَاءَكُمْ النَّذِيرُ

“But did We not grant you life enough for whoever would remember therein to remember, and the warner had come to you?”⁴¹⁵

Then they say,

رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ ﴿١٧٦﴾ رَبَّنَا
أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

“Our Lord, our wretchedness overcame us, and we were a people astray. Our Lord, remove us from it, and if we were to return [to evil], we would indeed be wrongdoers.”⁴¹⁶

They are answered,

قَالَ اخْسَرُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٧٨﴾

“He will say: ‘Go away into it! And do not speak

⁴¹⁴ *Fāṭir* (35): 37

⁴¹⁵ *Fāṭir* (35): 37

⁴¹⁶ *al-Mu'minūn* (23): 106-107

to Me!”

until the verse

وَكُنْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ تَصَاحُكُونَ

‘...and you used to laugh at them.’⁴¹⁷

Thereupon, they never talk after that.’ This was stated by Adam Ibn Abū Iyās and Ibn Abī Ḥātim.

Ibn Abī Ḥātim related from Qatadah, from Abū Ayyūb Al-Atakī that ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr (*radīy>Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘Inhabitants of Hell-fire will say,

وَنَادُوا يَا مَلِكُ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ

“O Mālik, let your Lord put an end to us!”

He will ignore them for forty years before answering,

قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَثَكُونَ

“...indeed, you will remain.”

So they will say,

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ

“Our Lord, remove us from it, and if we were to return [to evil], we would indeed be wrongdoers.”⁴¹⁸

He will ignore them for the length of the worldly life before answering,

⁴¹⁷ *al-Mu'minūn* (23): 108-110

⁴¹⁸ *al-Mu'minūn* (23): 107

قَالَ أَخْسَرُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

“He will say: ‘Go away into it! And do not speak to Me!’”⁴¹⁹

Thereupon, it [Hell] is closed upon them, and they despair after this response. No sound comes out of them afterwards, except exhalation and inhalation.’

‘Aṭā’ Ibn Al-Ṣā’ib narrated from Abū’l-Ḥasan that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said, regarding the verse,

وَنَادَوْا بِيَمَانِكَ لِيَقْضِ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ

“And they will call, “O Mālik, let your Lord put an end to us!”

That, ‘He will ignore them for a thousand years before replying,

قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَكَثُونَ ﴿١٠٩﴾

“...indeed, you will remain.”

Al-Bayhaqī stated this narration from ‘Aṭā’ from ‘Ikrimah from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*).

Sunayd stated, in his *Tafsīr*, from Ḥajjaj that Ibn Jurayj said: ‘Inhabitants of Hell-fire will call upon the Angels of Hell asking, “Supplicate your Lord to lighten for us a day from the punishment.” They will be ignored as much as Allāh Wills before responding, “Then supplicate [yourselves], but the supplication of the disbelievers is not except in error.” Then they call out,

⁴¹⁹ *al-Mu’minūn* (23): 108

وَنَادُوا بِمَلِكِكُمْ لِيَقْضَ عَلَيْنَا رَبُّكَ

“O Mālik, let your Lord put an end to us!”

Mālik, the chief of the Angels of Hell-fire will ignore them for forty years before answering,

قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ مَقِيضُونَ

“...indeed, you will remain.”

Then the wretched will call upon their Lord,

رَبَّنَا غَلَبَتْ عَلَيْنَا شِقْوَتُنَا وَكُنَّا قَوْمًا ضَالِّينَ

“Our Lord, our wretchedness overcame us...”

until the end of the verses; He will thus ignore them for the length of the worldly life before answering,

قَالَ أَحْسَبُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ

“Remain despised therein and do not speak to Me.”⁴²⁰

Ṣafwān Ibn ‘Amr narrated from Ayfa‘ Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Kalā‘ī, that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “When the people of Paradise enter therein, and people of Hell-fire enter therein, Allāh will Say, ‘O inhabitants of Paradise,

كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ

قَالُوا الْبُنَيَاءُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضُ

يَوْمٍ فَسَلِّ الْعَادِينَ

“How long did you remain on earth in number of

⁴²⁰ *al-Mu‘minūn* (23): 108

years?’ They will say, “We remained a day or part of a day; ask those who enumerate.”⁴²¹

He will say, ‘Excellent is what you traded, a day or part of a day in exchange for My mercy, satisfaction and Paradise. Remain therein eternally forever.’ Then he will ask the inhabitants of Hell-fire,

كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ ﴿٢٢١﴾
قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ
يَوْمٍ فَسْئَلُ الْعَادِينَ ﴿٢٢٢﴾

“How long did you remain on earth in number of years?’ They will say, “We remained a day or part of a day; ask those who enumerate.”

He will say, ‘Wretched is what you traded, a day or part of a day in exchange for My dissatisfaction, disobedience and Hell-fire. Remain therein eternally forever.’ They will say,

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿٢٢٣﴾

“Our Lord, remove us from it, and if we were to return [to evil], we would indeed be wrongdoers.”⁴²²

He will say,

قَالَ اخْسَرُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿٢٢٤﴾

“Remain despised therein and do not speak to Me.”⁴²³

⁴²¹ *al-Mu'minūn* (23): 112-113

⁴²² *al-Mu'minūn* (23): 107

⁴²³ *al-Mu'minūn* (23): 108

This will be the last time that their Lord, the Exalted and the Majestic, speaks to them.” Stated by Abū Na‘īm, and he said: ‘It was thus narrated by Ayfa‘ as a ḥadīth mursal.’⁴²⁴

Abū Al-Za‘ra’ narrated that Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘When Allāh wills not to let anyone out of Hell-fire, he changes the faces and colours of its inhabitants. When a believer comes to intercede, saying, ‘My Lord!’ It will be said: ‘Whoever knows someone may let him out.’ The believer will come and look but recognise no one. The man [whom he knew] will call upon him, ‘O so-and-so! I am such-and-such.’ He will say, ‘I do not know you.’ Thereupon, the people of Hell-fire will say,

رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَإِنْ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٠٧﴾

“Our Lord, remove us from it, and if we were to return [to evil], we would indeed be wrongdoers.”⁴²⁵

And Allāh will say,

قَالَ أَحْسَبُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تَكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

“Remain despised therein and do not speak to Me.”⁴²⁶

When He says so, Hell-fire closes upon them and none of them will leave it.”

In another version, Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “There

⁴²⁴ *Al-Hilyah*, 5/132

⁴²⁵ *al-Mu‘minūn* (23): 107

⁴²⁶ *al-Mu‘minūn* (23): 108

is no departure after this verse,

قَالَ أَحْسَبُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

“Remain despised therein and do not speak to Me.”⁴²⁷

‘Abdu’l-Razzaq stated in his *Tafsīr*, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Isa, from Ziyad Al-Khurasanī that an unnamed scholar said: ‘When they are told,

قَالَ أَحْسَبُوا فِيهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِ ﴿١٠٨﴾

“Remain despised therein and do not speak to Me.”⁴²⁸

they become silent, so that no sound comes out of them except like the buzzing of the washbowl.’

Section Two:

People of Hell-fire Remain Hopeful until Death is Slaughtered

The inhabitants of Hell-fire will remain hopeful of rescue (*rajā’ al-farj*) until death (*mawt*) itself is slaughtered. This will lead to total despair (*‘iyās*), regret (*basrā*) and grief (*huzn*) taking hold of them.

It is stated in both Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abū Sa’id (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Death would be brought on the Day of Resurrection in the form of a white-colored ram. Then it would be made to stand between Paradise and Hell. It

⁴²⁷ *al-Mu’minūn* (23): 108

⁴²⁸ *al-Mu’minūn* (23): 108

will be said to the inhabitants of Paradise, ‘Do you recognise this?’ They would raise up their necks and look towards it and say, ‘Yes, it is death.’ Then it would be said to the inhabitants of Hell-Fire, ‘Do you recognise this?’ They will raise up their necks and look, then they will say, ‘Yes, it is death.’ Then the command will be given for death to be slaughtered. After which it will be said: ‘O inhabitants of Paradise, there is an everlasting life for you and no death. O inhabitants of Hell-Fire, there is an everlasting existence for you and no death.’”⁴²⁹

Then, the Messenger (ﷺ) recited this verse,

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ وَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

“And warn them, [O Muḥammad], of the Day of Regret, when the matter will be concluded; and [yet], they are in [a state of] heedlessness, and they do not believe.”⁴³⁰

Al-Tirmidhī stated another ḥadīth with the same meaning and added, “If it were not that Allāh had decreed for the inhabitants of Paradise to remain (forever), then they would die of joy, and if it were not that Allāh had decreed for the inhabitants of the Fire to remain, and then they would die of grief.”

Imām Aḥmad, Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah stated a similar ḥadīth on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), in which the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The people of Paradise will look anxiously, afraid lest they be brought out of the place they are in. And people of Hell will look hopeful that they will be brought out of the place

⁴²⁹ Bukhārī, #4730, Muslim, #2849 and Tirmidhī, #3125

⁴³⁰ *Maryam* (19): 39

they are in.”⁴³¹ In Tirmidhī’s version, “Hopeful for intercession on their behalf.”

It was also stated in both Bukhārī and Muslim from Ibn ‘Umar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) with the same meaning, and in his version, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “So the people of Paradise will have happiness added to their previous happiness, and the people of Hell-fire will have grief added to their previous grief.”⁴³²

Tirmidhī stated it from Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), in a more concise version, wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If anyone were to die of joy, then surely the people of Paradise would die, and if anyone were to die of grief, then surely the people of the Fire would die.”

Ibn Abī Hātim stated [through a chain of narrators] from the saying of Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) with a same meaning. It is not attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) however. He added, “People of Paradise feel joy and if anyone were to die of joy, then surely they would. The people of Hell give a gasp, and if anyone were to die of a gasp, then surely they would. This is the meaning of Allāh’s saying,

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْأَازِفَةِ إِذِ الْقُلُوبُ لَدَى الْحَنَاجِرِ كَظِيمِينَ^٤

“And warn them, [O Muḥammad], of the Approaching Day, when hearts are at the throats, filled [with distress].”⁴³³

⁴³¹ Aḥmad, 2/261, Ibn Mājah, #4327 and Tirmidhī, #2560

⁴³² Bukhārī, #6548, Muslim, #2850 and Tirmidhī, #2561

⁴³³ *Ghāfir* (40): 18

and His saying,

وَأَنْذِرْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْحَسْرَةِ إِذْ قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ

“And warn them, [O Muḥammad], of the Day of Regret, when the matter will be concluded.”⁴³⁴

Ibn Abī Dunyā stated [through his chain of narrators] that Hisham Ibn Ḥasan said: ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb passed by a heap of sand, so he began to weep. He was asked, ‘Why do you cry, O Amir Al-Mu’minīn’⁴³⁵ He replied, ‘I remembered the people of Hell-fire. If they were to remain in Hell-fire for a period that equals the number of these grains of sand, they would (at least) have a due time to look forward to. However, it is an eternal residence.’ The same meaning was narrated from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) in some versions and to Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) in others.

Section Three:

The Disobedient Believers are Benefitted by Prayer in Hell-fire

As for the disobedient believers, they may be benefitted by praying while in Hell-fire. Imām Aḥmad stated from Abū Zilāl, from Anas Ibn Mālīk (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A servant [of Allāh] will remain in Hell for a thousand years crying, ‘O the Compassionate! O the Benefactor!’ Allāh, the Exalted, will say to Jibrīl (*‘alayhi as-salām*), ‘Go and bring me this servant of mine.’” Jibrīl will go and find the people of Hell-fire on their faces [in prostration], crying. He will return and report to Allāh

⁴³⁴ *Maryam* (19): 39

⁴³⁵ *Amir Al-Mu’minīn*: The commander or the chief of the believers; a title given to the early rulers of Muslim caliphate

the Exalted, and will be Told, ‘Bring him to me, he is in such-and-such place.’ He is brought forth and placed before his Lord, and He says to him, ‘My servant, how did you find your place?’ He will say, ‘The worst position and the worst resting place.’ He will say, ‘Take back my servant.’ He will say, ‘My Lord! I was not expecting once you took me out of it to send me back.’ Allāh will say, ‘Leave my servant.’”⁴³⁶ Abū Zilāl’s name is Hilāl, and he was deemed a weak narrator.

Tirmidhī stated through Rashdin Ibn Sa’d, from Ibn An’am, who is known as Al-Ifriqī,⁴³⁷ from Abū ‘Uthman, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Indeed two men among those who entered the Fire will be screaming violently. So the Lord, Blessed and Exalted, will say, ‘Take them out.’ Then when they are taken out, He will say, ‘What caused you to scream so violently?’ They will reply, ‘We did that so You would have Mercy on us.’ He will say, ‘My Mercy for you is that you both go (back) and throw yourselves where you were in the Fire.’ So they will go. One of them will throw himself in and He will make it cool and comforting for him. And the other will stand there and not throw himself in, so the Lord, Mighty and Majestic, will ask him, ‘What prevented you from throwing yourself in as your companion did?’ He will say, ‘O Lord! I hope that you will not return me to it after You have taken me out.’ So the Lord, Blessed and Exalted, will Say to him: ‘For you is what you hoped for,’ and so they will both enter Paradise together by the Mercy of Allāh.”⁴³⁸ Tirmidhī said, the chain of narrators for this ḥadīth is weak.

⁴³⁶ Aḥmad, 3/230 its chain is weak

⁴³⁷ Lit: The African

⁴³⁸ Tirmidhī, #2602

It is narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Four people will be brought out from the Fire and be presented to Allāh. One of them would turn (towards Hell) and say, ‘O my Lord, since You brought me out from it, do not throw me back into it,’ and Allāh would rescue him from it.” It was also stated by Ibn Ḥibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, and the version reads, “He will turn and say, ‘O My Lord! This was not my hope in you.’ He will say, ‘What was your hope?’ He will say, ‘My hope was that when you bring me out of it, not to send me back to it.’ Allāh will grant him mercy and permit him to enter Paradise.”⁴³⁹

Imām Aḥmad stated from ‘Alī Ibn Zayd Ibn Jud’an, from Ibn Al-Mūsāyyab, from Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The last two men to come out of Hell-fire, Allāh will say to one of them, ‘O Son of Ādam, what did you prepare for this day? Did you ever perform a good deed? Did you hope for My forgiveness?’ He will say, ‘No, my Lord.’ Thereupon, the command is issued for him to be taken to Hell-fire, and he is then the most regretful among the inhabitants of Hell-fire. Allāh will ask the other, ‘What did you prepare for this day? Did you ever perform a good deed, or hope for My forgiveness?’ He will say, ‘No, my Lord, except that I hoped for your forgiveness.’ Thereupon, a tree is raised before him...”⁴⁴⁰ and he continued the ḥadīth about his entering Paradise and what is given to him therein.

Ḥannad Ibn Al-Sarrī stated through Abū Harūn Al-‘Abd, who is an extremely weak narrator, on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd Al-

⁴³⁹ Muslim, #192

⁴⁴⁰ Aḥmad, 3/70 and 74 its chain is weak

Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh will make some people enter Hell-fire. He will burn them therein until they become like black coal, and they will be highest among the people of Hell-fire. They will cry for Allāh’s Help and pray to Him saying, ‘Our Lord! Remove us from it and place us at the bottom of that wall.’ When He places them at the bottom of the wall, they will find it does not avail them at all, so they will say, ‘Our Lord! Place us behind that wall, and we will not ask you for anything afterwards.’ Thereupon, a tree will be raised before them so that they are sheltered from the heat of Hell-fire...” and he stated the rest of the ḥadīth.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The Hell Dweller's Calling out to the People in Paradise and vice versa and their Talking to Each Other

Allāh, the Almighty said:

وَنَادَى أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ أَنْ قَدْ وَجَدْنَا مَا وَعَدَنَا رَبُّنَا حَقًّا
فَهَلْ وَجَدْتُمْ مَا وَعَدَ رَبُّكُمْ حَقًّا قَالُوا نَعَمْ

“And the companions of Paradise will call out to the companions of the Fire, ‘We have already found what our Lord promised us to be true. Have you found what your Lord promised to be true?’ They will say, ‘Yes.’...”

until He said:

وَنَادَى أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ أَنْ أَفِضُوا عَلَيْنَا
مِنَ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَهَا عَلَى
الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٥٥﴾

“And the companions of the Fire will call to the companions of Paradise, ‘Pour upon us some water or from whatever Allāh has provided you.’ They

will say, ‘Indeed, Allāh has forbidden them both to the disbelievers.’”⁴⁴¹

Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyaynah narrated from ‘Uthman al-Thaqafī, from Sa‘īd Ibn Jubayr, that Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said, regarding this verse, ‘The man will call upon his brother, ‘I have been burned so pour upon me some water.’ It will be said: ‘Answer him,’ so he will say,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ حَرَّمَ مَا عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ

“Indeed, Allāh has forbidden them both to the disbelievers.’

Sunayd related in his *Tafsīr*, from Hajjaj that Abū Bakr Ibn ‘Abdullāh said: ‘People of Hell-fire will call out, ‘O People of Paradise!’ But they will not respond for a while, until they are asked, ‘Answer them; the ties of kinship and mercy have been severed.’ People of Paradise will say, ‘O People of Hell-fire, the curse of Allāh is upon you. O people of Hell-fire, the wrath of Allāh is upon you. O people of Hell-fire, we are neither at your service nor at your call. What do you want to say?’ They will say, ‘Have we not been in the worldly life your parents, children, siblings and family?’ They will reply, ‘Yes.’ They will say,

أَفِضُوا عَلَيْنَا
مِنَ الْمَاءِ أَوْ مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ اللَّهُ حَرَّمَ مَا عَلَى
الْكَافِرِينَ

“Pour upon us some water or from whatever Allāh has provided you.’ They will say, ‘Indeed, Allāh has forbidden them both to the disbelievers.’”⁴⁴²

Allāh, the Almighty said:

⁴⁴¹ *al-A‘rāf* (7): 44-50

فَأَقْبَلَ بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى
بَعْضٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ ﴿٥٠﴾ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِنْهُمْ إِنِّي كَانَ لِي قَرِينٌ ﴿٥١﴾
يَقُولُ أَهْ تَكْ لِمِنَ الْمُصَدِّقِينَ ﴿٥٢﴾

“And they will approach one another, inquiring of each other. A speaker among them will say, ‘Indeed, I had a companion [on earth] Who would say: Are you indeed of those who believe...’”

the verses continue.⁴⁴³

Khulayd Al-‘Asrī said, regarding the verse,

فَأَطْلَعَ فَرَأَاهُ فِي سَوَاءِ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿٥٥﴾

“And he will look and see him in the midst of the Hellfire.”⁴⁴⁴

Meaning that, ‘In its midst he will see skulls boiling, so he will say, ‘[Is that] such-and-such?’ By Allāh, had Allāh not made him recognise him, he would not have recognised him, as his look is completely changed. Thereupon he will say, “You almost ruined me.”⁴⁴⁵ Allāh Almighty said:

كُلُّ
نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ ﴿٥٨﴾ إِلَّا أَصْحَابَ الْيَمِينِ ﴿٥٩﴾ فِي جَنَّاتٍ يَسَاءَلُونَ
عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٤١﴾ مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ ﴿٤٢﴾

“Every soul, for what it has earned, will be retained

⁴⁴² *al-A‘rāf* (7): 50

⁴⁴³ *At-Şāffāt* (37): 50-52

⁴⁴⁴ *At-Şāffāt* (37): 55

except the companions of the right, [Who will be] in gardens, questioning each other about the criminals, [and asking them], ‘What put you into *Saqar*?’⁴⁴⁶

Abū Al-Za‘rā’ narrated that Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said that no one is left in Hell-fire except these four kinds⁴⁴⁷ and said: ‘There is no good in them.’

In the ḥadīth narrated by Miskīn Abū Fāṭimah, from Al-Yaman Ibn Yazīd, from Muḥammad Ibn Ḥumayr, from Muḥammad Ibn ‘Alī, from his father, from his grandfather, the Prophet (ﷺ) said regarding the taking out of believers from Hell-fire, “Then Allāh will tell the people of Paradise, ‘Look upon those who remained in Hell-fire.’ They will look upon them and say,

مَا سَأَلَكُمُ فِي سَقَرٍ ﴿٤٢﴾ قَالُوا لَوْ أَنَّا كُنَّا مِنَ
الْمُصَلِّينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

“‘What put you into *Saqar*?’ They will say, ‘We were not of those who prayed’

meaning ‘we were not among them, had we been among them, we would have got out with them.’⁴⁴⁸

This was stated by Al-Ismā‘īlī and others; and it is a munkar ḥadīth⁴⁴⁹ as previously stated.

⁴⁴⁵ *Al-Ṣaffāt* (37): 56

⁴⁴⁶ *Al-Mudatbtbir* (74): 38-42

⁴⁴⁷ The four kinds that are mentioned in the subsequent verses.

⁴⁴⁸ *Al-Mudatbtbir* (74): 42-43

Imām Aḥmad narrated from ‘Alī Ibn Ḥafs, from Al-Thawrī, from Abū Khālid, that Al-Sha‘bī said: ‘Some people in Paradise will look upon some people in Hell-fire and ask, ‘Why are you in Hell-fire? We used to follow what you preached to us?’ They will say, ‘We did not practice what we preached to you.’

Sa‘īd Ibn Bashīr conveyed that Qatādah said: ‘In Paradise, there are holes looking down upon Hell-fire. People of Paradise will look through these holes and say, ‘What is the matter with you, wretched people? We only entered Paradise because of your (righteous) teachings.’ They will say, ‘We used to ignore what we enjoined, and do what we forbade.’”

Mu‘ammar conveyed from Qatādah that Ka‘b said: ‘Between the people of Hell-fire and the people of Paradise, there are holes, through which anyone from Paradise wanting to look upon his enemy in Hell-fire can do so.’

Aḥmad Ibn Al-Ḥawarī narrated from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Ghayyath that Al-Farrazī said: ‘For every believer in Paradise, there are four doors: a door where his visiting Angel enter; a door where his Hourī wives enter; a closed door between him and the inhabitants of Hell-fire, which is opened at his will so that his appreciation of his blessing increases; and a door between him and *Dār Al-Salām*⁴⁵⁰ where he enters upon his Lord at his will.’

Ibn Abī Ḥātim stated [through a chain of narrators], that Al-Daḥḥāk said, regarding the verses,

⁴⁴⁹ A narration that is very weak and goes against an authentic one.

⁴⁵⁰ Lit: Abode of Peace.

فَالْيَوْمَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ يَضْحَكُونَ ﴿٣٤﴾
عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ

“So Today those who believed are laughing at the disbelievers, On adorned couches...”

Made of pearls and rubies,

يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

“observing.”⁴⁵¹

That this means, ‘sitting on couches and looking,’ Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) used to say, “The couches are between Paradise and Hell-fire, so the people of Paradise open the doors and look, while on the couches, to how the people of Hell-fire are being tormented, and laugh at them. This is one source of their pleasure; to look upon their enemies and how Allāh is taking retribution from them.”

Al-Bayhaqī⁴⁵² and others stated the ḥadīth narrated by ‘Alī Ibn Abū Sārah, on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A person of Paradise looks upon the inhabitants of Hell-fire on the Day of Judgment, so the person of Hell-fire calls upon him and says, ‘O so-and-so! Do you recognise me?’ He will say, ‘No, by Allāh, I do not recognise you. Who are you?’ He will reply, ‘I am the one by whom you passed [once] in the worldly life and asked for some water, which I gave you.’ He will say, ‘I do remember.’ He will ask, ‘Then intercede with that incident on my behalf to your Lord.’ Thereupon, he asks Allāh the Exalted, ‘My Lord! Accept my intercession on his behalf.’ He is then, commanded to be removed from Hell-fire.”

⁴⁵¹ *al-Mutaffifin* (83): 34-35

⁴⁵² Its chain is weak

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Hell's Vault and its Keepers

Allāh Almighty said:

عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ
﴿٣٠﴾ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا أَحْسَبَ النَّارِ إِلَّا الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عِدَّتَهُمُ إِلَّا الْإِتْسَانُ
لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

“Over it are nineteen [Angels]. And We have not made the keepers of the Fire except Angels. And We have not made their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve...”⁴⁶³

Adam Ibn Abū Iyyās conveyed from Ḥammād Ibn Salamah, from Al-Azraq Ibn Qays, that a man from the tribe of Tamīm said: ‘We were in Abū’l-‘Awam’s council, when he recited this verse,

عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ

“Over it are nineteen”

⁴⁶³ *Al-Mudaththir* (74): 30-31

and asked, ‘What do you think this means—nineteen Angels?’ I said: ‘No. Nineteen thousand [Angels].’ He asked, ‘How do you know that?’ I said: ‘Because Allāh Almighty said:

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عَدَّتَهُمُ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

“And We have not made their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve.”

He said: ‘You are correct! In addition to that, in the hands of each of them is an iron gavel with two branches. He strikes with it, causing seventy thousand [people of Hell] to fall down. Between the shoulders of each Angel is the distance of such-and-such.’ According to Abū’l-‘Awam and those who agree with him, the disbelievers’ trial lies in mentioning the number that gives the false impression of scarcity, since the unit is omitted.

This is similar to what Sa‘īd Ibn Bashīr narrated from Qatadah regarding Allāh’s saying

وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ

“...And none knows the soldiers of your Lord except Him...”⁴⁵⁴

Meaning, ‘because of their great numbers.’

Similarly, Ibrahīm Ibn Al-Ḥakam, who is a weak narrator, narrated from his father that ‘Ikrimah said: “As soon as the people of Hell-fire reach it, they find at its doors four hundred thousand Angels of Hell, with dark faces and grim teeth; Allāh having removed all mercy from their hearts, so that none of them has even

⁴⁵⁴ *Al-Mudatthir* (74): 31

an atom's weight of mercy. If a bird flew off the shoulder of one of them, it would take two months of flying before reaching the other shoulder. They then find at the door the nineteen [Angels], the width of their chest is a seventy day journey for the rider. They fall from one door to another, each fall taking five hundred years, and they find Angels at each door like they found at the first, until they reach its end.' Stated by Ibn Abī Hātim.

This indicates that at each door of Hell, there are nineteen Angels, who are the chief Angels, under each of them are four hundred thousand Angels.

It's commonly known among the early and later scholars that the trial originates from stating the number of the Angles, which deludes the disbelievers by their scarcity. It makes them think they can oppose and face them, not knowing that all humanity cannot resist even a single Angel. That is why Allāh Almighty said:

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا أَصْحَابَ النَّارِ إِلَّا مَلَائِكَةً وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عِدَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا فِتْنَةً
لِّلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

“And We have not made the keepers of the Fire except Angels. And We have not made their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve...”

until He said:

وَمَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ

“...And none knows the soldiers of your Lord except Him...”⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁵ *Al-Mudaththir* (74): 31

Al-Suddī said: “A man from Quraysh called Abū’l-Ashadayn sarcastically remarked, ‘O people of Quraysh! Do not be frightened by the nineteen Angels! I will push ten Angels away from you with my right shoulder and nine with my left shoulder, then you will be free to pass to Paradise.’ Thereupon, Allāh the Exalted said:

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا أَحْسَبَ النَّارِ إِلَّا الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا عَدَّتَهُمْ إِلَّا تِسْعَةً
لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا

“And We have not made the keepers of the Fire except Angels. And We have not made their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve...”

Qatadah said: “We were told that when this verse was revealed, Abū Jahl said: ‘O people of Quraysh, can every ten of you not take on one Angel of Hell, for you are many and this fellow of yours [referring to the Prophet (ﷺ)] claims they are nineteen?’

Qatadah also said: ‘It is stated in the Torah and the Injil that the Angels of Hell are nineteen.’

Hurayth narrated from Al-Sha’bī, from Al-Barā, regarding the verse,

عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ

“Over it are nineteen”

He said: ‘A group of Jews asked a man from the Prophet’s (ﷺ) Companions about the Angels of Hell, and he said: ‘Allāh and His Messenger know best.’ The man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and mentioned it to him, whereupon Allāh revealed the verse,

عَلَيْهَا تِسْعَةَ عَشَرَ

“Over it are nineteen”

He told his Companions and said: ‘Invite them to come.’ They came and asked him about the Angels of Hell, so he flashed his fingers twice; keeping his thumb closed the second time.’ Stated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim; Ḥurayth is the son of Abū Matar, and he is a weak narrator.

A similar ḥadīth is stated by Tirmidhī,⁴⁵⁶ through Mujāhid, from Al-Sha‘bī, that Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘A group of Jews said to a group of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) Companions, ‘Does your Prophet know the number of Angels of Hell-fire?’ They said: ‘We will not know until we ask him.’ Thereupon, a man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: ‘O Muḥammad! Your companions were defeated today.’ He asked, “In what were they defeated?” He replied, “The Jews asked them: Does your Prophet know the number of Angels of Hell-fire?’ He said: “Are a people defeated who are asked about something that they do not know, merely because they said: We do not know until we ask our Prophet? But these people had asked their Prophet and said: ‘Show us Allāh outright.’ Bring me the enemies of Allāh. [Verily, I will ask them about the soil of Paradise, and it is Al-Darmak].’ When they came, they said: ‘O Abū’l-Qāsim! How many Angels of Hell are there?’ He (ﷺ) replied, “This, and this,” pointing with ten fingers, and then with nine fingers. They said: ‘Yes...’ This is more authentic than the ḥadīth of Ḥurayth, which was already mentioned, according to Al-Bayhaqī and others.

Imām Aḥmad stated the ḥadīth narrated by ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr

⁴⁵⁶ Tirmidhī, #3324

Ibn Al-‘Āṣ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), who said: ‘The Messenger (ﷺ) came out upon us one day as one who bids farewell, so he said: “It is I, Muḥammad, the illiterate Prophet,” thrice, and added, “There is no Prophet after me. I was given collective manners of eloquence, and words that are concise yet comprehensive in meaning. I was taught the number of Angels of Hell-fire and the Carriers of the Throne...”’ and he continued the ḥadīth.⁴⁵⁷

Section One:

Interpreting the Verse: ‘*Over which are [appointed] Angels, harsh and severe*’

Allāh, the Exalted, has described the Angels of Hell with harshness and severity. Allāh, the Exalted, said:

عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غُلَاطٌ شِدَادٌ
لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ ﴿٦﴾

“... over which are [appointed] Angels, harsh and severe; they do not disobey Allāh in what He commands them but do what they are commanded.”⁴⁵⁸

Abū Nu‘aym stated [through a chain of narrators] that Ka‘b said: ‘For the Angel of Hell, the distance between its shoulders is a year-long journey for the rider. Each one of them has an iron rod with two branches, with a single push he it causes seven hundred thousand [inhabitants] to fall in Hell.’

‘Abdullāh, the son of Imām Aḥmad, narrated [through a chain of narrators] that Abū ‘Imrān Al-Jawnī said: ‘We heard that the

⁴⁵⁷ Aḥmad, 2/172, 212

⁴⁵⁸ *al-Taḥrīm* (66): 6

distance between the shoulders of the Angel of Hell is a one-year journey for the rider. He strikes the Hell-fire inhabitants once leaving them crushed from top to bottom.’ In another version, he said: ‘We heard that the Angels of Hell are nineteen, the distance between the shoulders of each of them is a one-year journey for the rider, and they have no mercy in their hearts, they were only created to mete out punishment.’

Al-Jawzanī related [through a chain of narrators] that Ṣāliḥ Abū’l-Khalīl said: “On the night that the Prophet (ﷺ) was taken on the journey of Isrā’ and Mi’rāj, Allāh sent him a group of Messengers to receive him, they received him with happiness and joy (in Jerusalem). However in the corner of the masjid, there was someone praying who did not turn to him. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “There is none of you except I have seen happiness and joy from him, except the one in that corner.” They said: ‘He is happy to see you like we are, but he is an Angel of Hell.’

Bakr Ibn Khunays conveyed from ‘Abdu’l-Mālik Al-Jasrī, from Al-Ḥasan, that Jibrīl (*alayhi as-salām*) told the Prophet (ﷺ), “If an Angel of Hell looked upon the people of the Earth, the people of Earth would die from the deformation of his appearance.” This ḥadīth is mursal and weak.

Section Two:

Interpreting the Verse: “*And they will call, ‘O Mālik!’*”

Allāh, Almighty said:

وَنَادُوايَمَلِكُ

“And they will call, ‘O Mālik...’”⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁹ *Al-Zukhruf* (43): 77

Mālik is the Gatekeeper of Hell-fire; he is the chief and leader of the Angels of Hell-fire. The Prophet (ﷺ) saw him on the night of the Journey of *Isrā'* and *Mi'rāj*, and Mālik greeted him.⁴⁶⁰ The Prophet (ﷺ) also saw him in his dream, and he has a repulsive appearance, the most repulsive appearance you ever saw someone having' this was previously stated in the ḥadīth of Samurah Ibn Jundub (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*).

Section Three:

Interpreting the Verse: “*Then let him call his associates;
We will call the Angels of Hell*”

Allāh, the Exalted said:

فَلْيَدْعُ نَادِيَهُ. سَنَدْعُ الزَّانِبِينَ ﴿٧٨﴾

“Then let him call his associates; We will call the
Angels of Hell.”⁴⁶¹

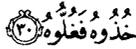
Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*) said: ‘It refers to the Angels of Hell.’⁴⁶² ‘Aṭā’ said: ‘It refers to the harsh and severe Angels.’ Mujāhid said: ‘It refers to the gatekeepers of Hell.’ Qatādah said: ‘The Arabs use it to refer to [security] officers.’ ‘Abdullāh Ibn Al-Ḥārith said: ‘Their heads are in the ground and their legs are in towards the sky.’ Stated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim.

He also stated [through a chain of narrators] that Al-Mīnhal Ibn ‘Amr said: ‘When Allāh, Almighty says,

⁴⁶⁰ Muslim, #163 on the authority of Anas (*raḍiy Allāhu 'anhu*).

⁴⁶¹ *al-'Alaq* (96): 17-18

⁴⁶² This saying and the subsequent ones aim to interpret the Arabic word ‘*ḡabāniya*’, which is translated in the verse as ‘*the Angels of Hell*’



“Seize him and shackle him.”⁴⁶³

There are seventy thousand Angels that go out like this—meaning each opens his arms—and throws seventy thousand in Hell-fire.’

⁴⁶³ *al-Hāqqah* (69): 30

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Hell is Brought on the Day of Judgement and its Neck Protrudes and then it Speaks

Allāh, Almighty said:

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا
دَكًّا ﴿١١﴾ وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ﴿١٢﴾ وَجِئَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَنْذِرُ الْإِنْسَانَ وَأَنَّى لَهُ الذِّكْرَى ﴿١٣﴾
يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي قَدَّمْتُ لِحَيَاتِي ﴿١٤﴾

“No! When the earth has been leveled—pounded and crushed, and your Lord has come and the Angels, rank upon rank, and brought [within view], that Day, is Hell—that Day, man will remember, but what good to him will be the remembrance? He will say, ‘Oh, I wish I had sent ahead [some good] for my life.’”⁴⁶⁴

Allāh also said:

⁴⁶⁴ *Al-Fajr* (89): 21-24

فَإِذَا جَاءَ رَبُّ الطَّائِمَةِ
الْكُبْرَى ﴿٣٤﴾ يَوْمَ يَتَذَكَّرُ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا سَعَى ﴿٣٥﴾ وَبُرْزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ
لِمَنْ يَرَى ﴿٣٦﴾

“But when there comes the greatest Overwhelming Calamity—The Day when man will remember that for which he strove, and Hellfire will be exposed for [all] those who see.”⁴⁶⁵

Al- Rabīʿ Ibn Anas said in regards to the verse,

وَبُرْزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِمَنْ يَرَى ﴿٣٦﴾

“and Hellfire will be exposed for [all] those who see”

That, ‘Its cover will be removed.’

Allāh, Almighty said:

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ
عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٥﴾ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ﴿٦﴾ ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا
عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٧﴾

“No! If you only knew with knowledge of certainty... You will surely see the Hellfire. Then you will surely see it with the eye of certainty.”⁴⁶⁶

Al-Alāʿ Ibn Khālid Al-Kāhili reports from Abū Wāʿil, from Ibn Masʿūd (*raḍiy>Allāhu ʿanhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Hell will

⁴⁶⁵ *Al-Nāziʿāt* (79): 34-36

⁴⁶⁶ *Al-Takāthur* (102): 5-7

be brought on that Day [of Resurrection] with seventy thousand bridles; and with every bridle will be seventy thousand Angels, pulling it.” This was stated by Muslim,⁴⁶⁷ through Ḥafs Ibn Ghaiyath, from Al-Alā‘. It was also stated by Tirmidhī through Sufyān, from Al-Alā‘, attributed to Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*). Al-‘Uqaylī and Al-Darqutnī consider it more likely to be attributed to Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).

Ibn Abi Hātim stated through ‘Ubayd-Allāh Ibn Al-Walid Al-Wasāfi, from ‘Aṭīyah, that Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “When this verse,

وَجَاءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ

“and brought [within view], that Day, is Hell.”⁴⁶⁸

The colour of the Prophet’s (ﷺ) face changed, and it was apparent in his face. This distressed his Companions, so they asked him, and he said: “Jibrīl (*‘alayhis-salām*) came to me and gave me this verse.” It was asked, ‘How is it (i.e. Hell) brought?’ He said: “Seventy thousand Angels will be pulling it; it goes astray once, and if it was left, it would burn the people congregated on the plains and everything above it. The Hell-fire is then exposed, and it says, “...for you, O Muḥammad (ﷺ), Allāh has made your flesh forbidden for me. There’s none remaining except saying, ‘Myself, myself’, and Muḥammad (ﷺ) says, ‘My *Ummah* (nation), my *Ummah*.’” Al-Wasafi is a righteous man with poor memorisation, thus, many munkar ḥadīths are narrated from him.

Abi Ya‘la Al-Mawsalī stated from Abū’l Haytham, from Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When

⁴⁶⁷ Muslim, #2842

⁴⁶⁸ *Al-Fajr* (89): 23

Allāh gathers all people in one plain on the Day of Judgment, the Fire is brought—parts of it are piling over other parts—and its Angels are holding it back, while it exclaims, ‘By the might of my Lord, you shall not stand between me and my spouses or I shall overwhelm people with a single embrace.’ They ask, ‘Who are your spouses?’ It replies, ‘Every arrogant tyrant.’”⁴⁶⁹

Imām Aḥmad and Al-Tirmidhī⁴⁷⁰ stated from Al-A‘mash, from Abū Ṣāliḥ, from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Some of the Fire (in the shape of a long neck) will come out of the Fire on the Day of Judgment. It will have two eyes that can see, two ears that can hear, and a tongue that can speak. It will say, ‘I have been left in charge of three: Every obstinate oppressor, everyone who called upon a deity besides Allāh, and the makers of sculpture.’” This is deemed as authentic by Tirmidhī. Some said: ‘It was not preserved through this chain of narrators, rather it was narrated by Al-A‘mash, from ‘Aṭīyah, from Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*).’

For it was narrated from Al-A‘mash and others, from ‘Aṭīyah, from Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Some of the Fire (in the shape of a long neck) will come out of the Fire and say, ‘I have been left in charge of three: Every obstinate oppressor, everyone who called upon a deity besides Allāh, and whoever killed a soul unless for a soul.’ Thereupon, it will embrace them and throw them into the wrenches of Hell-fire.” This was stated by Imām Aḥmad.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁹ *Al-Majma‘*, 10/292

⁴⁷⁰ Aḥmad, 2/292, Tirmidhī, #2577 and al-Albānī said its isnad is ṣaḥīḥ see *Abādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #512

⁴⁷¹ Aḥmad, 3/40 and its chain is weak

Al-Bazzār stated similarly, with the wording, “Some of the Fire [in the shape of a long neck] will come out of the Fire and speak with an unfettered eloquent tongue. It will have two eyes that can see, and a tongue that can speak. It will say, ‘I have been left in charge of everyone who called upon a deity besides Allāh, every obstinate oppressor and whoever killed a soul unless for a soul.’ It takes them away five hundred years before the rest of the people.” It was also narrated by ‘Atiyyah and attributed to Abū Sa‘īd rather than the Prophet (ﷺ).

Ibn Luhay‘ah narrated from Khalid Ibn Abū ‘Imrān, from Al-Qāsim, from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Some of the Fire [in the shape of a long neck] will come out of the Fire, embracing and raging upon them. This neck-shaped object will say, ‘I have been left in charge of three. I have been left in charge of three. I have been left in charge of three: Everyone who called upon a deity besides Allāh, everyone who did not believe in the Day of Judgment, and every obstinate oppressor.’ Thereupon, it will embrace them and throw them in the wrenches of Hell-fire.” Stated by Imām Aḥmad⁴⁷²

It was stated from Shahr Ibn Ḥawshab, that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: ‘On the Day of Judgment, some of the Fire in the shape of a long neck will come out and look upon the creatures. It will have eyes that can see and an eloquent tongue. It will say, ‘I have been left in charge of every obstinate oppressor,’ thereupon it will pick them out from amidst the rows and confine them in Hell-fire. Then it will come out again and say, ‘I have been left in charge of those who abuse Allāh and His Messenger,’ thereupon it will pick them out from amidst the rows and confine them

⁴⁷² Aḥmad, 6/110 and its chain is weak

in Hell-fire. Then it will come out again and say, ‘I have been left in charge of those who made sculptures,’ thereupon it will pick them out from amidst the rows and confine them in Hell-fire.’

In the lengthy ḥadīth of sculptures stated by Ishāq Ibn Rahawīya, Abī Ya‘la and others, through a chain of narration that contain weak narrators, from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “... Then Allāh Commands Hell-fire, and some of the Fire in the shape of a long, dark neck will come out and He will say,

وَأَمْتَرُوا الْيَوْمَ أَيُّهَا الْمَجْرُمُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

‘But stand apart today, you criminals’,

until the verse,

أَفَلَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٦٠﴾

‘...so did you not use reason?’⁴⁷³

Ibn Abū Dunyā stated through Al-Sha‘bī that Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Hell-fire is brought being pulled by seventy thousand bridles; each bridle is pulled by seventy thousand Angels. It resists them until it stops on the right side of the throne. Allāh throws shame upon it on that Day, and reveals to it, ‘What is this shame?’ Hell-fire says, ‘O my Lord! I fear Your resentment for me.’ Allāh revels to it, ‘I created you as resentment [for others], but I have no resentment for you.’ Thereupon, Allāh reveals to it, and it exhales an exhalation that leaves no tear in an eye except it is dried; then it exhales another exhalation that leaves no Angel nor a Messenger or Prophet except they are shocked—except your Prophet (ﷺ)—the Prophet of mercy (ﷺ). He will [be concerned

⁴⁷³ *Yāsīn* (36): 59-62

for his people and] say, “My Lord! My *Ummah!* My *Ummah!*”

‘Abdullāh, the son of Imām Aḥmad, narrated [through a chain of narrators] from Abū ‘Abdullāh Al-Jadalī, that ‘Ubadah Ibn Al-Ṣāmit (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Some of the Fire (in the shape of a long neck) will come out of the Fire and pronounce, ‘I have been left in charge of three: ever person who called upon a deity besides Allāh, every obstinate oppressor and every aggressor. Verily, I know the man better than a parent knows his child and better than the child knows his parent.’”

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

A Bridge Spans across the Middle of Hell and the Monotheist Cross it

Ziyad Ibn Aslam narrated from ‘Aṭā’ Ibn Yasar, from Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) stated a lengthy ḥadīth wherein he said: “Then the *Ṣirāt* (Bridge) will be set up over the Hell and intercession would be allowed and they will say, ‘O Allāh, grant safety, grant safety.’” It was asked, “O Messenger of Allāh, what is this Bridge?” He said: “It is a slippery [bridge] on which there are clamps and [hooks like] a thorny seed that is wide at one side and narrow at the other and has thorns with bent ends. Such a thorny seed is found in Najd and is called Al-Sa‘dan. Some of the believers will cross the Bridge as quickly as the blink of an eye, some others as quick as lightning, a strong wind, fast horses or she-camels. Some will be safe without any harm; some will be safe after receiving some scratches, and some will fall down on their faces into Hell-Fire.” Imām Bukhārī mentioned this in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* as well as Imām Muslim’. In one version from Al-Bukhārī, it states, “The last person will cross [the Bridge] by being dragged [over it].” In another version from Muslim, Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “I heard that the Bridge is thinner than a hair and sharper than a sword.”

Adam Ibn Iyyās stated in his *Tafsīr*, from Abū ‘Amr Al-San‘ānī, from Ziyad Ibn Aslam; he then stated the ḥadīth, which said: “The believers pass by the Bridge using their light. Some of them pass as quickly as a blink of an eye.” And he stated the rest of the ḥadīth.

It was also stated in the both in Bukhārī and Muslim, from Al-Zuhri, from ‘Aṭā’ Ibn Yazīd, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) stated the ḥadīth, in which he said: “... and the Bridge will be laid across Hell and I (Muḥammad) shall be the first among the Prophets to cross it with my followers. Nobody except the Prophets will then be able to speak and they will be saying, ‘O Allāh! Save us. O Allāh Save us.’ There will be hooks like the thorns of Sa‘dan in Hell. Have you seen the thorns of Sa‘dan?” The people said: ‘Yes.’ He said: “These hooks will be like the thorns of Sa‘dan but nobody except Allāh knows their greatness in size and these will entangle the people according to their deeds; some of them will fall and stay in Hell forever; others will receive punishment and will get out of Hell...”⁴⁸⁴ He stated the rest of the ḥadīth, at the end of which he said: ‘Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) conforms with Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), and does not disagree with any part of his narration.’

Muslim stated the ḥadīth narrated by Abū Mālīk Al-Ashga‘ī, from Abū Hāzīm, from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), as well as from Abū Mālīk, from Rab‘ī, from Hudayfah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), both from the Prophet (ﷺ) that he stated the ḥadīth of intercession (*shifā‘at*), wherein he said: “So they will come to Muḥammad (ﷺ); and he will stand and be given permission. Trusts (*amanah*) and ties of relationship will be sent forth and will stand on the

⁴⁸⁴ Bukhārī, #6573 and Muslim, #182

sides of the Bridge, right and left, and the first of you will pass like lightning.” I [Abū Hurayrah] said: ‘May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, what is like the movement of lightning?’ The Messenger (ﷺ) replied, “Have you not seen how the lightning goes and returns in the blink of an eye? The next [group will pass] like the passing of the breeze, the next like the passing of a bird, and the next with the speed of a running man, according to the quality of their deeds. [During all this time] your Prophet (ﷺ) will remain standing on the Bridge saying, ‘O my Lord! Keep (them) safe, keep (them) safe,’ until men’s deeds are so weak that a man comes by only crawling. On both sides of the Bridge pronged flesh hooks, placed under command, will be hung and will seize those about whom they receive command, some people being lacerated (deep cuts) and escaping and others being thrown violently into Hell.” Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) added, “By Him in Whose Hand Abū Hurayrah's soul is, the pit of Hell-fire is seventy years in depth.”⁴⁸⁵

In a ḥadīth that was previously stated from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), from the Prophet (ﷺ), he said: “... and *Al-Ṣirāṭ* will be laid across Hell, it is as thin as a hair or a sword’s blade. It has hooks, tongs and clamps like the thorns of *Al-Sa’dan*. Below it is a slippery Bridge.” It indicates that *Al-Ṣirāṭ* and the Bridge are two different objects, when the previous authentic ḥadīths prove they are the same thing.

Abū Khālīd Al-Dālānī narrated from Al-Minhāl Ibn ‘Amr, from Abū ‘Ubaydah, from Masrūq, from ‘Abdullāh (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) stated a long ḥadīth wherein he said: “The Bridge is as sharp as the sword’s blade, and slippery. It is said: ‘Be saved according to your light.’ Some of them pass like the shooting

⁴⁸⁵ Muslim, #195

star, some will pass like the blinking of the eye, some will pass like the wind, some will pass over it like the fast runner and like a fast runner. They will pass according to their deeds. Until he, whose light is the size of his thumb, passes, with one hand slipping and the other hanging, with one leg slipping and the other hanging, so the fire hits his sides.”⁴⁸⁶ Stated by Al-Ḥākim, who deemed it authentic, as did other ḥadīth scholars.

It is stated in *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd, from Al-Ḥasan, from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anḥā*), that she remembered Hell-fire and she wept, so the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “What is the matter with you, O ‘Ā’ishah?” She said: “I thought of Hell-fire and wept. Will one remember his family on the Day of Resurrection?” The Messenger (ﷺ) said: “There are three situations where no one will remember anyone: At the scale until one knows whether his scales are light or heavy; at [the examination of] the book [of deeds] when it is said:

هَاتُوا أَعْرَابَكُمْ وَأَكْتِسِبْتُمْ

“Here, read my record!”⁴⁸⁷,

until one knows whether his book will be put into his right hand or into his left hand, or behind his back; and at the Bridge when it is set up across Hell-fire, on whose side there are many hooks and clamps, with which Allāh captures whom He wills among His creation, until one knows whether or not he will survive.”⁴⁸⁸

Ibn Luhay‘ah stated similarly from Khalid Ibn Abū ‘Imrān, from

⁴⁸⁶ Ḥākim in his *al-Mutadark*, 2/376-377

⁴⁸⁷ *Al-Ḥāqqah* (69): 19

Al-Qasim, from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*), from the Prophet (ﷺ), that he stated [the three situations] with the scales. The flying of the books, the emergence of a neck-shaped object from the fire, and he said: “For Hell-fire, there is a Bridge that is thinner than a hair, sharper than a sword, on which there are hooks and clamps that will take whom Allāh Wills. People [passing] on it are like the blink (of an eye), the lightening, the wind, the good horses and riders. The Angels will say, ‘Our Lord! Keep (them) safe! Keep (them) safe! So some will be safe without any harm; some will be safe after receiving some scratches, and some will fall down on their faces into Hell-Fire.’” Reported by Imām Aḥmad.⁴⁸⁹

Abū Salam Al-Dimashqī narrated from ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān, that a man from Kindah said: “I came to ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*) and said: “Did the Messenger (ﷺ) tell you of an hour where he has no power to intercede for anyone?” She said: “I asked him about this, and he said: ‘Yes. When the Bridge is set up, I have no power to intercede for anyone until I know where I am to be taken, and on that Day some faces will turn white and some faces will turn black, until I see what will be done with me,’ or did he say, ‘until I see what will be revealed to me, and at the Bridge when it is sharpened and heated.’ I said: ‘How will it be sharpened and heated?’ He said: ‘It is sharpened until it becomes like a sword’s blade, and it is heated until it becomes like the live coal. As for the believer, he passes over it unharmed. As for the hypocrite, he hangs from it, until he reaches its middle, then his feet fall, and his hands fall to his feet.’” She added, ‘Did you see someone walking barefoot and being struck by a thorn that almost pierces his foot? It is similar [for the hypocrite]; he falls with his hands and head to his feet.’ She then continued, “So the Angels of Hell strike him

⁴⁸⁸ Abū Dāwūd, #4700

with a grapple to his forehead and feet, throwing him into Hell-fire, where he (continues to) falls for fifty years.’ I asked, ‘How heavy is the man?’ He said: ‘The weight of ten fat children. On that day,

يُعْرَفُ الْمَجْرِمُونَ بِسِيمَاهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَاصِي وَالْأَقْدَامِ ﴿٤١﴾

“The criminals will be known by their marks, and they will be seized by the forelocks and the feet.”⁴⁹⁰

Stated by Baqī Ibn Mukhallad in his *Musnad* and Ibn Abī Hātim in his *Tafsīr*. Its chain of narration includes unknown narrators, and some of its words are *munkar* [as they contradict authentic ḥadīths].

Authentic ḥadīths indicate that the Bridge is set up after the permission for intercession is granted, as previously mentioned. Imām Aḥmad⁴⁹¹ stated from Abū Bakrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “People are driven to the Bridge on the Day of Judgment, and they are thrown off its sides like moths in the fire, and Allāh saves, with His Mercy, whom He Wills.”

Al-Ḥākim⁴⁹² also stated the ḥadīth of Salmān Al-Farsī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The Bridge is set up, as sharp as the razor’s blade, so the Angels say, ‘Who shall survive this?’ Allāh says, ‘Whom I will among My creation.’ They say,

⁴⁸⁹ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 6/110 and its chain is weak

⁴⁹⁰ *Al-Raḥmān* (55): 41

⁴⁹¹ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 5/43

⁴⁹² Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrik*, 4/586

‘Glory is for You! We have not worshipped You as You should be worshipped.’” Al-Hākīm said: ‘It is authentic.’ However, it is known to be attributed to Salman (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and not a saying of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Al-Hākīm also stated from Abū Razīn Al-‘Uqaylī, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “And you will pass on a Bridge of fire, where one of you steps on a live coal and says, ‘Oh! Oh!’ and your Lord Says, ‘(Proceed to) cross it.’”

Al-Bayhaqī stated from Ziyād Al-Numayrī, from Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The Bridge is as sharp as the razor’s blade or the sword’s blade. The Angels rescue the believing men and women, Jibrīl will grab me by the waist. I will be saying, ‘O our Lord! Keep (them) safe, keep (them) safe,’ for the men and women who fall on that Day are many.”

He also stated from Sa‘īd Ibn Zarbī, from Yazīd Al-Raqāshī, from Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Above Hell-fire, a Bridge is set up that is thinner than a hair, sharper than a sword, its higher end is towards Paradise, and it is slippery. On its sides, there are hooks and clamps of fire with which Allāh catches whom He wills. The men and women who fall on that Day are many. The Angels are standing beside it saying, ‘O our Lord! Keep (them) safe, keep (them) safe.’ Whoever comes with truth on that day, passes. They are granted (far-reaching) light according to their faith and deeds; some of them pass as fast as lightening, some of them pass like the wind, some of them pass like a fast horse, some of them run quickly thereon, some of them at pace, and some of them are granted light that (only) covers the place underneath their feet. Some of them pass it crawling, and the fire hits them due to sins they committed, whereupon the believer

says, ‘In the name of Allāh! Oh! Oh!’ And turns (in pain), and it burns whomever Allāh wills among them according to their sins.” Al-Bayhaqī then said about Ziyād Al-Numayrī, Yazīd Al-Raqāshī and Sa‘īd Ibn Zarbī, ‘They are not strong narrators.’

He also stated from ‘Ubayd Ibn ‘Umayr that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The Bridge over Hell-fire is like the sword’s blade. On its sides, there are hooks and clamps. People ride it and get captured. I swear by Him in whose hands my soul is, that with a single clamp, more people are taken than [the tribes of] Rabī‘ah and Mudar.” This ḥadīth is mursal. He also stated it through another chain of narrators attributed to ‘Ubayd Ibn ‘Umar and with a shorter text.

He also stated (through a chain of narrators) that Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “The Bridge over Hell is as sharp as the sword’s blade.”

Al-Tirmidhī stated through a weak chain of narrators, from Al-Mughīrah Ibn Shu‘bah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The believers’ slogan on the Bridge is, ‘Our Lord! Protect us! Protect us!’” A similar ḥadīth is narrated from Anas and attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) through a chain of narrators that is not acceptable.⁴⁹³

Manṣūr Ibn Ammar narrated from Ibn Luhay‘ah, from Abū Quayl, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The slogan of my Ummah when they are driven to the Bridge is, ‘There is no deity except You.’” This ḥadīth is

⁴⁹³ Tirmidhī, #2434, Ḥākim, 2/385 and it is a weak ḥadīth like al-Albānī in *Da‘īf al-Jāmi‘*, #3398

munkar; and Allāh knows best.

It is stated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim,⁴⁹⁴ from Masrūq, from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anbā*), that she asked the Prophet (ﷺ), “Where would the people be,

يَوْمَ تَبْدُلُ الْأَرْضَ عَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتِ
وَيَبْرُزُونَ لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ ﴿٤٨﴾

“on the Day the earth will be replaced by another earth and the heavens [as well]’?...”⁴⁹⁵

He said: “On the Bridge.”

It is also narrated⁴⁹⁶ therein from Thawbān, that a rabbi of the Jews asked the Prophet (ﷺ), “Where will the people be, ‘on the Day the earth will be replaced by another earth, and the heavens [as well]?’” He (ﷺ) replied, “They will be in darkness beside the Bridge.” The Jew said: “Who amongst people will be the first to cross (this Bridge)?” He (ﷺ) said: “They will be the poor from those who migrated (to Madīnah).”

The two narrations can be reconciled by understanding the ‘darkness beside the Bridge’ the same as the Bridge, because there will be lights distributed for the passage upon the Bridge. The replacement of the earth and the heavens and folding of the heaven may take place when people are in the darkness, and extend during their passage on the Bridge; and Allāh knows best.

⁴⁹⁴ Muslim, #2791

⁴⁹⁵ Ibrāhīm:48

⁴⁹⁶ A part of a long ḥadīth mentioned in Muslim, #315

Be aware that people are divided into believers who worship Allāh alone and associate none with Him, and those who associate others with Allāh. As for those who associate others with Allāh, they do not pass on the Bridge, but rather fall in the Fire before the Bridge is placed. This is evidenced by what is stated in the both Bukhārī and Muslim from Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh will gather all the people and say, ‘Whoever used to worship anything (besides Me) should follow that thing.’ Thus, he who used to worship the sun, will follow it, and he who used to worship the moon will follow it, and he who used to worship false deities will follow them; and then only this Ummah will remain, including their hypocrites.” He stated the rest of the ḥadīth until he said: “Then a Bridge will be laid over Hell-fire. My Ummah and I will be the first to cross it.”⁴⁹⁷

It is also stated⁴⁹⁸ therein, from Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “On the Day of Resurrection, a caller will announce, ‘Let every nation follow what they used to worship.’ Then none of those who used to worship anything other than Allāh, like idols and other deities except will fall in Hell-fire until there will remain none but those who used to worship Allāh—both those who were obedient and those who were disobedient, and the remaining party of the People of the Scripture. Then the Jews will be called upon and it will be said to them, ‘Who did you use to worship?’ They will say, ‘We used to worship Ezra, the son of Allāh.’ It will be said to them, ‘You are liars, for Allāh has never taken anyone as a wife or a son. What do you want now?’ They will say, ‘O our Lord! We are thirsty, so give us something to drink.’ They will be directed and addressed thus, ‘(There) will you drink,’ whereupon they will be gathered unto Hell-fire, which will

⁴⁹⁷ Reference already mentioned earlier

⁴⁹⁸ Reference already mentioned earlier

look like a mirage whose different sides will be destroying each other. Then they will fall into the Fire. Thereafter the Christians will be called upon and it will be said to them, 'Who did you use to worship?' They will say, 'We used to worship Jesus, the son of Allāh.' It will be said to them, 'You are liars, for Allāh has never taken anyone as a wife or a son,' Then it will be said to them, 'What do you want?' They will say what the former people said. Then there remain (in the gathering) none but those who used to worship Allāh [alone, the real Lord of the Worlds] whether they were obedient or disobedient. Then (Allāh) the Lord of the worlds will come to them in an image nearest to what they had in their minds about Him. It will be said: 'What are you waiting for?' Every nation has followed what they used to worship.' They will reply, 'We left the people in the world when we were in great need of them and we did not take them as friends. Now we are waiting for our Lord Whom we used to worship.' Allāh will say, 'I am your Lord.' They will say, 'We seek refuge in Allāh from you. We do not worship any besides Allāh (twice or thrice),' until some of them will be about to return. He will Say, 'Is there any sign between you and Him by which you will recognise Him?' They will say, 'Yes' and the things would be laid bare. He who used to prostrate themselves before Allāh of their own accord would be permitted to prostrate himself, and those who used to prostrate out of fear (of people) and ostentation, Allāh would make his back as one piece, and whenever he would attempt to prostrate he would fall on his back. Then they will raise their heads and He will assume the Form in which they had seen Him the first time and will say, 'I am your Lord.' They will say, 'You are our Lord.' Then the Bridge will be set up over Hell-fire ..." and they continued the ḥadīth.

In another version from Al-Bukhārī, it says, "Then Hell will be presented to them as if it were a mirage. Then it will be said to

the Jews, ‘Who did you use to worship?’...” and he stated the rest of the ḥadīth with a similar meaning to the previous one.

This ḥadīth explicitly states that everyone who declared worship for anything besides Allāh, such as ‘Isā (*‘alayhi as-salām*) and Ezra, will join the disbelievers in falling into Hell-fire before the Bridge is set up. However, the worshippers of idols, the sun, the moon and so on of those who used to associate others with Allāh will follow what they used to worship in the worldly life, and enter Hell-fire first with their worshipped deities. The Qur’ān testifies to this meaning in the verse regarding Pharaoh,

يَقْدُمُ قَوْمَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَأَوْرَدَهُمُ النَّارَ وَبِئْسَ الْوَرْدُ
 الْمَوْزُودُ ﴿١٨﴾

“He will precede his people on the Day of Resurrection and lead them into the Fire; and wretched is the place to which they are led.”⁴⁹⁹

As for those among the People of Scripture who worshipped [Prophet] ‘Isā and Ezra, they remain behind with the followers of Prophets, and they enter Hell-fire afterwards. It is stated in another ḥadīth that those who used to worship Jesus will be shown the image of ‘Isa and follow it, and similarly those who used to worship Ezra. In the ḥadīth of images, they are shown an Angel in the image of Jesus and an Angel in the image of Ezra, and no one remains except those who used to worship Allāh alone openly—whether truthfully or deceptively—of this *Ummah* and others. The hypocrites are then separated from the believers by being prevented from prostration, and by the light that is dispersed among the believers as well.

⁴⁹⁹ *Hūd* (11): 98

The early scholars debated whether the hypocrite is given light along with the believers that is extinguished afterwards, or not given at all.

The First view: One group said that they are not given any light at all

Safwān Ibn ‘Amr narrated from Salīm Ibn ‘Āmir that he heard Abū Umamah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) say, “People are overwhelmed with an intense darkness—meaning on the Day of Judgment—then light is distributed, so the believer is given light. The disbeliever and the hypocrite are given nothing. This is the analogy that Allāh stated in His book when he (the Almighty) said:

أَوْ كَظُلُمَاتٍ فِي بَحْرٍ لُجِّيٍّ يَغْشَاهُ مَوْجٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِ، مَوْجٌ مِّنْ فَوْقِهِ، سَحَابٌ ظُلُمَاتٌ بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ إِذَا أَخْرَجَ يَدَهُ لَمْ يَكْتَبِرْهَا وَمَنْ لَّنْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا أَفْهَامَهُ، مِنْ نُورٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

“Or [they are] like darkness within an unfathomable sea that is covered by waves upon which are waves, over which are clouds—darkness, some of them upon others. When one puts out his hand [therein], he can hardly see it. And he to whom Allāh has not granted light—for him there is no light.”⁵⁰⁰

Therefore, the disbeliever and the hypocrite do not gain light from the believer, just as the blind cannot see with the sight of the clear-eyed.

⁵⁰⁰ *al-Nūr* (24): 40

يَوْمَ يَقُولُ الْمُنَافِقُونَ وَالْمُنَافِقَاتُ لِلَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا انظروا نافعنا نقبئس من نُورِكُمْ قِيلَ ارْجِعُوا وَرَاءَكُمْ فَالْتَمِسُوا نُورًا

“On the [same] Day the hypocrite men and hypocrite women will say to those who believed, "Wait for us that we may acquire some of your light." It will be said, "Go back, and seek a light..."⁵⁰¹

This is with which Allāh has tricked the hypocrites. He, the Majestic said:

يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ

“...the hypocrites [think to] deceive Allāh, but He is deceiving them.”⁵⁰²

They return to the place where the light was distributed but find nothing, so they return to them,

فَضْرِبَ بَيْنَهُمْ سُورًا لَّهُ أَبْوَابٌ بَاطِنُهُ فِيهِ الرَّحْمَةُ وَظَاهِرُهُ مِنْ قِبَلِهِ
الْعَذَابُ

“And a wall will be placed between them with a door, its interior containing mercy, but on the outside of it is torment.”

Until He said:

وَيْتَسَّ الْمَصِيرُ

“...and how evil a journey's end!”⁵⁰³

⁵⁰¹ *al-Hadid* (57):13

⁵⁰² *Al-Imrān* (3): 142

Sulaym said: “The hypocrite remains deluded until the light is distributed and Allāh distinguishes the believers from the hypocrites.” As stated by Abū Ḥatim.

He also stated what Muqātil Ibn Ḥayyān and Al-Ḍaḥḥāk narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) what supports this view; the chain of narrators is severed however.

The second view: Light is distributed among hypocrites along with the believers, just as they were together in the worldly life, and then the hypocrite’s light is extinguished upon reaching the wall.

This view was reported from Mujahid. ‘Utbah Ibn Yaḡdhan narrated from ‘Ikrimah, that Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) said: “There is no believer except given light on the Day of Judgment. However, the hypocrite’s light is extinguished. Thereupon, the believer feels afraid of what he sees, and so,

يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَتَمِّمَ لَنَا نُورَنَا

“they will say, ‘Our Lord, perfect for us our light’⁵⁰⁴

when the hypocrite’s lights are extinguished.

The hypocrite’s passage on the Bridge was already stated in the ḥadīth related from ‘Ā’ishah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhā*), despite having weakness in its narrators.

⁵⁰³ *Al-Ḥadīd* (57):13-15

⁵⁰⁴ *Ṭaḥrīm*:8

Bishr Ibn Shaghāf conveyed that ‘Abdullāh Ibn Salam (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘When the Bridge is set up over Hell-fire, a caller calls out, ‘Where is Muḥammad (ﷺ) and his Ummah?’ Thereupon, he (ﷺ) will proceed, followed by his Ummah—both its pious and its wretched. When they get onto the Bridge, Allāh snatches the sights of His enemies, they fall left and right in Hell-fire. The Prophet (ﷺ) and the pious are saved. Then a caller calls out, ‘Where is ‘Isa and his Ummah?’ Thereupon, he (*alayhis-salām*) will proceed, followed by his Ummah—both its pious and its wretched. When they get onto the Bridge, Allāh snatches the sights of His enemies, they fall left and right in Hell-fire. The Prophet and the pious are saved. Then they are followed by the rest of the Prophets and their nations. The last of which is Nūḥ may Allāh bestow His Mercy upon Nūḥ.’ This was stated by Ibn Khuzaymah and others.

It is clear from what we mentioned in this chapter relating the ḥadīths narrated by Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and others that the distribution of lights among the believers is according to their faith and good deeds, as is the case with their passage on the Bridge, in terms of speed. This is also stated in the ḥadīths narrated by Hudhayfah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and others.

Abū’l-Za‘rā’ narrated that Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Allāh will Command the Bridge to be placed across Hell-fire, and people will pass according to their deeds in groups. The first [group] will pass as fast as lightening, the next [group] will pass as fast as wind, the next as fast as birds and the next as fast as livestock. Some people pass pacing, some pass walking, until the last of which pass crawling on their stomachs, so they say, ‘O my Lord! Why did You slow me down?’ He will Reply, ‘I did not slow

you down, your deeds did.”

For belief and righteous deeds in this life are the straight path that Allāh Commanded His servants to tread and remain firm thereon, and to request guidance thereto. Whoever walked straightforwardly on this straight path in this life, both in openness and in secret, their passage on the Bridge over Hell-fire will also be straightforward. Similarly, whoever did not remain on the straight path in this life, but strayed to the seduction of doubts or the seduction of desires, will be snatched by the Bridge’s hooks as much as he was snatched by the doubts and desires away from the straight path. This is what is stated in Abū Hurayrah’s ḥadīth, “... these will entangle the people according to their deeds.”⁵⁰⁵

Al-A‘mash conveyed from Sālim, from Abū Al-Ja‘d that ‘Abdullāh said, regarding the verse,

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمُرْصَادِ ﴿١٤﴾

“Indeed, your Lord is in observation.”⁵⁰⁶

That this means, ‘Beyond the *Ṣirāṭ* are three Bridges; above the first is trust, above the second are the ties of kinship, and above the third is the Lord (Blessed and Exalted).’

Ayfa‘ Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Kala‘i said: “For Hell-fire there are seven arches, along with the *Ṣirāṭ*. People are held at the first arch and called to account for the *Ṣalāt* (prayer); some of them perish and the rest survive. Then they are held at the second arch and called to account for Trusts—whether they fulfilled them; some of them

⁵⁰⁵ Muslim, #182

⁵⁰⁶ *al-Fajr* (89): 14

perish and the rest survive. Then they are held at the third arch and called to account for the ties of kinship.”⁵⁰⁷

We have already stated more than one ḥadīth regarding the detainment of rulers on the Bridge of Hell-fire and its quaking with them.

Abū Dāwūd stated the ḥadīth narrated by Mu‘adh Ibn Anas Al-Juhanī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “If anyone attacks a Muslim saying something by which he wishes to disgrace him, he will be restrained by Allāh on the Bridge over *Jahannam* until he is acquitted of what he said.” He (ﷺ) also said in another version, “If anyone attacks a Muslim by saying something which he does not know, he will be restrained by Allāh on the Bridge over *Jahannam* until he is acquitted of what he said.”⁵⁰⁸

Ibn Abī Dunyā stated [through a chain of narrators] that Abū Sulaymān Al-Darānī said: “I described to my sister, Abdah an arch or Hell-fire, so she remained for a day and a night repeatedly shrieking, and then she became calm. Whenever I mentioned it afterwards, she would scream.” He was asked, “What made her scream?” He said: “She visualised herself on the arch falling off it.”

Abū Sulaymān used to say, ‘If you hear a man saying to another, ‘Between you and me is the *Ṣirāt*.’⁵⁰⁹ Then know that he doesn’t know the *Ṣirāt* or what it is. If he knew the *Ṣirāt*, he would not like to be attached to anyone or have anyone attached to him.’

⁵⁰⁷ Reference already mentioned

⁵⁰⁸ Abū Dāwūd, 4883 and Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 3/441 and its chain is weak

⁵⁰⁹ Meaning, ‘Our judgement will be settled over the bridge’ if they had a dispute.

Abū Muslim Al-Khawlanī used to say to his wife, ‘O Umm Muslim! Prepare for the journey, for there is no passageway on the Bridge of Hell-fire.’

Ibn Abī Dunyā conveyed, through Mu‘awiyah Ibn Šāliḥ, from Abū Al-Yaman, that a man, with black hair and beard, was sleeping one night. He saw in his sleep as if people were resurrected. There was a river from the flames of Hell and a Bridge, where people pass when their names are called out. When a man’s name is called, he responds—some survive while some perish. He was called by his name, so he entered upon the Bridge; he found it sharper than the sword’s blade and swaying with him left and right. When the man woke up, his head and beard had become white from the awe of what he had seen.’

Aswad Ibn Sālim heard a man reciting these poetic verses:

Ahead of me is facing my Lord,
Questioning me and the veil is lifted.
It is enough, passing on a *Širāṭ*,
Sharp as a sword, above a flame.

Upon hearing them he fell unconscious.

It is narrated from Bishr Ibn Al-Ḥārith, that Al-Fuḍayl Ibn ‘Iyād told him, ‘O Bishr! The length of the *Širāṭ* is fifteen thousand leagues. Therefore, consider where you will be on the *Širāṭ*.’

Muḥammad Ibn Al-Sammāk said: ‘I heard some of the ascetics of Baṣrah saying, ‘The *Širāṭ* is a three thousand year journey: A thousand years to climb up, a thousand years walking straight, and a thousand years to climb down.’

Fayḍ Ibn Ishāq narrated that Al-Fuḍayl said: ‘The *Ṣirāṭ* is forty thousand leagues long.’

Ibn Abī Dunyā stated in his, *Kitāb Al-Anlīyā*’ from Ja‘far Ibn Sulaymān, that he heard Mālik Ibn Dinār asking ‘Alī Ibn Zayḍ, while crying, ‘O Abū’l-Ḥasan! Did you hear how long the ally of Allāh is held on the *Ṣirāṭ*?’ He said: ‘The length of time it takes some to pray an obligatory prayer which he perfected its bowing down and prostration.’ He said: ‘Did you hear whether the *Ṣirāṭ* can accommodate the allies of Allāh?’ He said: ‘Yes.’

He also narrated from Rashḍīn Ibn Sa‘d, from ‘Amr Ibn Al-Ḥārith, that Sa‘īd Ibn Abū Hilāl said: ‘We heard that the *Ṣirāṭ* is, for some people, thinner than a hair, and for some people, like the wide valley.’

Sahl Al-Tustarī said: ‘The person for whom the path was tight in this life, the *Ṣirāṭ* will be wide for him in the Hereafter, and the person for whom the path was wide in this life, the *Ṣirāṭ* will be thin for them in the Hereafter. This means that whoever restricted himself in this life by following the divine Commands and refraining from prohibitions—which is the essence of maintaining the straight path—is rewarded by having the *Ṣirāṭ* widened for him in the Hereafter. On the other hand, whoever indulged in this life by following the forbidden desires and was misled by doubts until he left the straight path, the *Ṣirāṭ* will be too narrow for him in the Hereafter accordingly; and Allāh knows best.’

Some of the early scholars saw a man laughing, so he said to him, “What makes you laugh? Your eyes should find no comfort until you leave Hell-fire behind you.”

Aḥmad Ibn Abū’l-Ḥawārī conveyed from Yunus Al-Ḥadhā,’

from Abū Ḥamzah Al-Baysānī, on the authority of Mu‘ādh Ibn Jabal (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), attributing to the Prophet (ﷺ) that he said: “The believer’s fear is not soothed, nor is his worry alleviated until he leaves the Bridge of Hell-fire behind his back.” by Ibn Abī Ḥātim, who said: ‘Abū Ḥamzah is an unknown narrator, and Yūnus Al-Ḥadhā’ said: ‘Abū Ḥamzah’s narration from Mu‘ādh is mursal.’”

And Allāh knows best.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

The Appearance of Hell

Allāh, the Almighty said:

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ
حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾ ثُمَّ نَسَجِي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ
فِيهَا جُنُودًا ﴿٧٢﴾

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.
This is upon your Lord inevitability decreed. Then
We will save those who feared Allāh and leave the
wrongdoers within it, on their knees.”⁵¹⁰

Ismā‘īl Ibn Abū Khālid narrated that Qays Ibn Abū Ḥāzim said:
“Abdullāh Ibn Rawḥah (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*) wept, and his wife wept
as well, so he said to her, ‘What made you cry?’ She said: ‘I saw you
crying, so I cried.’ He said: ‘I remembered this verse,

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to
it.”⁵¹¹

⁵¹⁰ *Maryam* (19): 71-72

⁵¹¹ *Maryam* (19): 71

I so know that I will come to it, but do not know whether I will be saved from it.’

Ibn Al-Mubārak narrated from ‘Abbād Al-Maqbarī, that Bakr Al-Muznī said: “When this verse was revealed,

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَّارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”

‘Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) went to his house and wept, his wife came and wept, his housemaid came and wept, and the household came and wept altogether. When he stopped weeping, he said: ‘O my family, what made you cry?’ They said: ‘We do not know, but we saw you crying so we cried.’ He said: ‘[I cried because of] a verse that was revealed to Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) where my Lord tells me that I am coming to Hell-fire, but does not tell me that I am leaving it.’”

Mūsā Ibn ‘Uqbah said in his book *al-Maghāzī*, ‘It is claimed that Ibn Rawāḥah wept when he set out for the battle of *Mu’tab*, so his family wept upon seeing him weep, so he said: ‘By Allāh, I do not cry for fear of death or longing for you. I cry out of restlessness from Allāh’s saying,

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَّارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”,

so I am certain that I will come to it, but do not know whether I will be saved from it.’

Ḥafs Ibn Ḥumayd conveyed that Shamar Ibn ‘Aṭīyyah said: ‘When ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) read this verse, he used to weep and say, ‘O my Lord! Am I of those whom you save, or those whom you leave within it, on their knees?’”

Ibn Ishāq reported that when Abū Maysarah went to bed, he said: ‘I wish my mother had not given birth to me.’ His wife told him, ‘O Abū Maysarah! Allāh has done good to you by guiding you to Islam.’ He said: ‘Yes. Allāh has clarified to us that we are coming to Hell-fire, but did not clarify whether we are leaving it.’

We stated from Sufyān Ibn Ḥusayn that Al-Ḥasan said: ‘When the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) met, they used to say to each other, ‘Did you hear that you will be coming to the Hell-fire?’ The other would say, ‘Yes.’ He would say, ‘Did you hear that you will be leaving it?’ The other would say, ‘No.’ He would say, ‘Then why do you laugh?’”

Ibn ‘Uyaynah conveyed from a man from Al-Ḥasan that someone told his brother, ‘Did you hear that you will be coming to Hell-fire?’ He said: ‘Yes.’ He said: ‘Did you hear that you will be leaving it?’ The brother said: ‘No.’ He said: ‘Then why would you laugh?’ Al-Ḥasan adds, ‘Therefore, he was never seen laughing until he died.’

Imām Aḥmad narrated from Hashim Ibn Al-Qāsim, from Al-Mubārak Ibn Faḍalah that Al-Ḥasan said regarding the verse,

وَأِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”

That a man asked his brother, ‘Were you told by Allāh that you will be coming to Hell-fire?’ He said: ‘Yes.’ He said: ‘So you are certain of coming to it?’ He said: ‘Yes.’ He said: ‘Are you certain and sure of that?’ He said: ‘Yes. Why would I not be certain when Allāh the Exalted, said:

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا ﴿٧١﴾

“And there is none of you except he will come to it. This is upon your Lord an inevitability decreed.”

He then asked, ‘Are you certain that you will be leaving it?’ He said: ‘By Allāh, I do not know whether I will be leaving it.’ He said: ‘Then why would you laugh, why would you be complacent, and why would you play in amusement?’

Aḥmad also narrated from Khalaf Ibn Al-Walid, from Al-Mubārak, that he heard Al-Ḥasan saying, ‘No, by Allāh. There is no believer except he wakes up sad, and why would he not be sad when he was told by Allāh that he would be coming to Hell-fire, and was not told whether he would be leaving it.’

Aḥmad also narrated from Ḥusayn Ibn Muḥammad, from Ibn ‘Ayyash, from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Dinār, that Luqmān told his son, ‘My son! How can he, who is coming to Hell-fire, feel secure from it?’

The Companions (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*) and those who followed them debated the meaning of coming to Hell-fire. One group said: “Coming to it is passing on the *Ṣirāt*.” This is the view held by Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), Jābir, Al-Ḥasan, Qatādah, ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Zayd Ibn Aslam, Al-Kalbī and others.

Al-Suddī said: “I once asked Al-Ḥamadānī about Allāh’s saying,

وَأِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”,

so he conveyed to me that Ibn Mas‘ūd (*raḍiy>Allāhu ‘anhu*) told them that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The people will come to Hell-fire, then they will avert it based upon their deeds. The first of them (would pass over it) like a flash of lightening, then like the wind, then like a fleeing horse, then like a rider fleeing on a mount, then like a man running, then like one walking.” Stated by Al-Tirmidhī⁵¹² who said: ‘It is a good ḥadīth.’ Imām Aḥmad stated its first half, and Al-Ḥākīm stated it and said: ‘It’s an authentic ḥadīth.’ It was also stated by Shu‘bah from Al-Suddī, from Murrāh, from ‘Abdullāh, of his own saying. Shu‘bah did not attribute it to the Prophet (ﷺ), although he admits that Al-Suddī narrated to him attributing it to the Prophet (ﷺ). Al-Darqūṭnī said: ‘It may be attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ).’

I say: A number of groups of people have narrated it from Al-Suddī, from Murrāh Al-Ḥamadānī, from ‘Abdullāh, of his [‘Abdullāh’s] own saying that he said: ‘All people come to the *Ṣirāṭ*, standing around the Fire. They will then depart from the *Ṣirāṭ* based on their deeds. The first of them (would pass over it) like a flash of lightening ...’ and he stated the rest of the ḥadīth, and in ending he said: ‘The last of them passing is a man whose light is the size of his big toes, he stumbles with it. The *Ṣirāṭ* is a slippery Bridge; on it are thorns like the thorns of Astragalus; on its sides are Angels with clamps of fire, with which they snatch

⁵¹² Tirmidhī, #3158 and Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 1/433 and 435, Darāmī, #2812, Ḥākīm, 2/375 and *al-Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, #311.

people.’ And he stated the rest of the ḥadīth. This was stated by Ibn Abī Ḥatim.

Al-Ḥakam Ibn Ḥazīr also stated it from Al-Suddī, from Murah, from ‘Abdullāh and he attributed the last part to the Prophet (ﷺ). He narrated that ‘Abdullāh said: “Coming to Hell-fire does not mean entering it, but arriving at it and standing before it, like the animal coming to the water source and not entering it.” Then ‘Abdullāh said: “The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh will set up the *Ṣirāṭ* across Hell-fire and people will traverse it.”” He stated the full ḥadīth, and he said in its end, “If the inhabitants of Hell-fire were told, ‘You will be staying in Hell-fire years equal in number to every stone in the worldly life,’ they would be hopeful and say, ‘We will eventually be removed therefrom.’ Similarly, if the inhabitants of Paradise were told, ‘You will be staying in Paradise years equal in number to every stone in the worldly life,’ they would be distressed and say, ‘We will eventually be removed therefrom.’ However, Allāh granted them eternity therein, rather than a certain period.” It should be noted that Al-Ḥakam Ibn Ḥazīr is a weak narrator.

That last part may be attributed to Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), because it was narrated attributed to him through another good chain of narrators.

Abū’l-Ḥasan Ibn Al-Bara‘ Al-Abdī stated in his book ‘*Al-Rawḍah*’, from Aḥmad Ibn Khalid (also known as Al-Khallāl), from ‘Uthman Ibn ‘Amr, from Isra’īl, from Abū Ishāq, from ‘Amr Ibn Maymūn, that ‘Abdullāh said: “If the inhabitants of Hell-fire were promised an end date, or to remain therein the length of the worldly life, they would rejoice because what is eventually coming is close.”

The first part of the ḥadīth was also narrated through Abū Ishāq attributed to ‘Abdullāh, but with a difference in the chain of narrators. ‘Amr Ibn Ṭalḥah Al-Qattad narrated from Isra’īl, from Abū Ishāq, from Abū Al-Ahwas that ‘Abdullāh said regarding the verse,

وَأِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”

The Bridge over Hell-fire is as sharp as the sword’s blade. The first group would pass like the flash of lightening, the second like the wind, the third like the swift horse, the fourth like the good camels and cattle, and they pass while the Angels are saying, “Our Lord! Rescue (them), rescue (them).”

Reported by Al-Ḥākim⁵¹³, who said: ‘It is authentic according to the conditions of Bukhārī and Muslim.’ It was also stated by ‘Ādam Ibn Iyyas in his *Tafsīr*, narrating from Isra’īl.

Another citation as evidence of coming to Hell-fire does not necessitate entering it. Muslim⁵¹⁴ stated from Abū Al-Zubayr, from Jābir, from Umm Bishr, that she heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying in the presence of Ḥafsaḥ, “Allāh willing, the people of the Tree⁵¹⁵ will never enter the fire of Hell, ones whom owed allegiance under that.” She said: ‘O Allāh’s Messenger, why not?’ She was rebuked for this, so she said: ‘And there is none of you except he will come to it.’ Thereupon, Allāh’s Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Allāh the Exalted has said:

⁵¹³ Ḥākim in his *al-Mustadrak*, 2/375-376

⁵¹⁴ Muslim, #191, #316 and Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 3/283

⁵¹⁵ Those who gave the pledge of allegiance to the Prophet (ﷺ) under the tree.

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثَاً ﴿٧٦﴾

“Then We will save those who feared Allāh and leave the wrongdoers within it, on their knees.”⁵¹⁶

It is also narrated by Al-A‘mash, from Abū Sufyān, from Jābir, from Umm Bishr, with a similar wording. In some versions narrated by Al-A‘mash, the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “They come to it and then depart from it according to their deeds.”

Another group said: “Coming to it means entering it.” This is the known view of Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), and it was narrated from him through a number of ways. He cited as evidence Allāh’s saying about Fir‘awn,

يَقْدُمُ قَوْمَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَأَوْرَدَهُمُ النَّارَ وَبِئْسَ الْوَرْدُ
الْمَوْرُودُ ﴿٩٨﴾

“He will precede his people on the Day of Resurrection and lead them into the Fire...”⁵¹⁷

And His saying,

وَنَسُوفُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وَرِدًا ﴿٨٦﴾

“And will drive the criminals to Hell in thirst.”⁵¹⁸

And His saying,

لَوْ كَانَتْ هَتُؤُلَاءِ آءَالِهَةً مَا وَرَدُوها وَكُلُّ فِيها خَالِدُونَ ﴿٧٦﴾

⁵¹⁶ *Maryam* (19): 72

⁵¹⁷ *Hūd* (11): 98

⁵¹⁸ *Maryam* (19): 86

“Had these [false deities] been [actual] gods, they would not have come to it, but all are eternal therein.”⁵¹⁹

Similar views were narrated from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Rawāḥah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), but the chain of narrators for this is severed.

Muslim Al-A‘war narrated from Mujāhid regarding the verse,

وَأِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”

That he said: ‘[come to it] means enter it.’

Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) was asked about coming to Hell-fire that is mentioned in the verse, and he said: ‘Hell-fire holds all people like a greasy surface, until it cooks the feet of all creatures; their righteous and their wretched. Then, Allāh the Exalted, Tells the Fire, “Take your companions and leave My companions.” It then sinks down every ally of its own, and Allāh rescues the believers, their clothes being damp.’

Ka‘b (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: ‘Do you not see the cooking jar full of fat, when it cools down, a white level grease-like surface forms. Then, when fire is lit beneath it, fat sinks in the jar from here and there.’ In another version, he said: ‘(The fire) knows them better than a parent knows his child.’

Thawr Ibn Yazīd conveyed that Khālid Ibn Mi‘dān said: ‘When the inhabitants of Paradise enter Paradise they will say, ‘Did our Lord not promise us that we would come to Hell-fire?’ He will

⁵¹⁹ *al-Anbiya’* (21): 99

say, ‘Yes. But you passed by it while it was put out.’ In another version, he said: “When the believers pass the *Ṣirāṭ*, they will call upon each other saying, ‘Did our Lord not promise us that we would pass on the Bridge of Hell-fire?’ They will say, ‘Yes, but you passed by it while it was put out.’”

Miskīn reports that he heard Ash‘ath Al-Hadānī saying, ‘I heard that when the believers (*abl al-īmān*) pass over the *Ṣirāṭ* of Hell-fire, Hell-fire says to them, ‘Leave me and go. You have cooled down my blaze. Leave me with my people.’ However, this saying and the previous one could indicate that coming to it is passing on the *Sirat*, as the first view says.

Kathīr Ibn Ziyād Al-Barsānī conveyed that Abū Sumayyah said: ‘We disagreed about the meaning of coming to Hell-fire. Some of us said: ‘No believer shall enter it.’ Others said: ‘They all enter it, then Allāh rescues the believers.’ Afterwards, I met Jābir Ibn ‘Abdullāh and said to him, ‘We disagreed about the meaning of coming to Hell-fire.’ He said: ‘They all enter it, and Sulaym Ibn Murrah said that they enter it. I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) say, “There is no righteous or wretched except enters it, and it becomes coolness and safety upon the believers, as it was upon Ibrahīm so much so that the Fire would roar because of their coolness,

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًا ﴿٧٢﴾

“Then We will save those who feared Allāh and leave the wrongdoers within it, on their knees.”⁵²⁰

Reported by Imām Aḥmad,⁵²¹ and Abū Sumayyah is an unknown narrator.

⁵²⁰ *Maryam* (19): 72

⁵²¹ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 3/328-329

It is stated in both in Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Any Muslim who has lost three of his children will not be touched by the Fire except that which will render Allāh’s oath fulfilled.”⁵²²

‘Abdu’l-Razzāq and others interpreted fulfilling the oath as coming to Hell-fire, for Allāh’s saying,

وَأِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”

The apparent meaning of this ḥadīth is that coming to it means being touched by the fire. In another version, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “...will not enter the Fire except that which will render Allāh’s oath fulfilled.” Therefore, he declared him exempted from entering it.⁵²³

‘Abdu’l-Mālik Ibn Umayr conveyed from ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Bashīr Al-Anṣarī, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Any Muslim who has lost three of his children who did not reach puberty will not enter the Fire except as a passerby.”

Imām Aḥmad stated the ḥadīth narrated by Ibn Luhay’ah and Rushdayn Ibn Sad, both from Zadhān Ibn Na’il, from Mu’adh Ibn Anas, from his father, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever kept watch over the Muslims, volunteering, and not being enticed, will not enter the Fire except that which will render Allāh’s oath

⁵²² Bukhārī, #1251 and Muslim, #2632, #2634 and #2635, al-Muawatta’, 1/235, Tirmidhi, #1060 and Nasa’i, 4/25.

⁵²³ *Taqrib*, 1/521

fulfilled. For Allāh says,

وَأِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَأَآوَادُهُآ

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”

Its chain of narrators is weak.

Ṭabāranī stated the ḥadīth narrated by Al-Waqidī, from Shu‘ayb Ibn Ṭalḥah Ibn ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Abū Bakr, from his father, from his grandfather, from his great grandfather, from Abū Bakr, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The heat of Hell-fire upon my Ummah is like the heat of the bath.” Al-Waqidī is matrūk.⁵²⁴

Maṣṣūr Ibn ‘Ammār reported from Bashīr Ibn Ṭalḥah, from Khālīd Ibn Durayk, from Ya‘la Ibn Munabbih, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Hell-fire will tell the believer, ‘Pass O believer, for your light has extinguished my flame.’” This ḥadīth is gharīb and munkar.

Some of them interpreted “coming to Hell-fire” as having fever in the worldly life. Mujahid and ‘Uthman Ibn Al-Aswad narrated a ḥadīth attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) in this regard, which states, “Fever is the believer’s share of Hell-fire.” Its chain of narrators is weak.

Another group said: ‘Coming to Hell-fire is not universal; it is exclusive to those who are brought around Hell-fire, as stated in the verse,

⁵²⁴ Matrūk: Literally: abandoned—a narrator who is known for fabrication and lying. Ḥadīth that is matrūk is a narration that is only narrated through a matrūk narrator.

فَوَرِيكَ لَنَحْضِرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ ثُمَّ
لَنَحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ حِثًّا ﴿٦٨﴾

“So by your Lord, We will surely gather them and the devils; then We will bring them to be present around Hell upon their knees,”

until He said:

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”⁵²⁵

It is as if the phrase is said to those described in this verse.’ This interpretation is narrated from Zayd Ibn Aslam, and it is unlikely.

It is narrated that ‘Ikrimah used to recite,

وَإِن مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا

“And there is none of you except he will come to it.”

And he said: “The pronoun ‘you’ refers to the wrongdoers; this is how we used to recite it.” This view was also narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) through a severed chain of narrators; the authentic view related from him is the one mentioned previously.

⁵²⁵ *Maryam* (19): 68-71

Section One:
When the Servant Stands Before his Lord,
Hell-fire is Facing Him

The Prophet (ﷺ) told us that when the servant stands before his Lord, Hell-fire faces him, and his charity protects him from Hell-fire.

It is stated in both in Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of ‘Adyy Ibn Hātim (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Every one of you will speak to his Lord without an interpreter between them. He will look to his right side and will see only the deeds he had previously done; he will look to his left and will see only the deeds he had previously done, and he will look in front of him and will see nothing but Hell-fire before his face. Therefore, protect yourselves from Hell-fire, even if by giving half a date (in charity).”⁵²⁶

It is also narrated from him in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever among you can protect himself against the Fire, even with half a date, should do so.”

It is also narrated from him in Al-Bukhārī that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Undoubtedly, each one of you will stand in front of Allāh and there will be neither a curtain nor an interpreter between them, Allāh will ask him, ‘Did I not give you wealth?’ He will reply, ‘Yes.’ Allāh will ask, ‘Did I not send a Messenger to you?’ He will reply, ‘Yes.’ Then he will look to his right, seeing nothing except the Hell-fire, then he will look to his left seeing nothing but Hell-fire. Therefore, whoever among you can, should save himself from the Fire even by giving half a date (in charity). And

⁵²⁶ Reference already mentioned earlier

if you do not find half a date, then (you can do it through saying) a good pleasant word.”

In the ḥadīth narrated by ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Ṣamurah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), the Prophet (ﷺ) came out one day and said: “I saw strange things at night.” He stated a long ḥadīth, wherein he said: “I saw a man of my Ummah sheltering his face from the heat of Hell-fire with his hands, so his charity came to him and became a veil on his head and a shade on his face.”⁵²⁷

⁵²⁷ Reference already mentioned earlier

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

The Condition of the Monotheists in Hell and their Removal from it by the Mercy of The Most Merciful and the Intercession of the Intercessors

It has been previously mentioned in authentic ḥadīths that the believers pass on the *Ṣirāṭ*, some of whom pass safely, while others fall into Hell-fire. When the inhabitants of Paradise enter Paradise, they will miss some of their brothers who fell into Hell-fire, so they ask Allāh the Exalted, to remove them from it.

Zayd Ibn Aslam narrated from ‘Aṭā’ Ibn Yasar, on the authority Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said in a lengthy ḥadīth, of which we previously mentioned the part about passing on the *Ṣirāṭ*... then he (ﷺ) said: “When the believers find rescue from the Fire, by One in Whose hand is my soul, there will be none among you more eager to claim a right than the believers on the Day of Resurrection in saving their brothers in the Fire. They will say, ‘O our Lord, they were fasting along with us, praying and performing pilgrimage.’ It will be said to them, ‘Take out those whom you recognise.’ The Fire would be forbidden to consume their faces, and they’ll take out a large number of people who had been overtaken by Fire up to the middle of the shin or

up to the knees. They will then say, ‘O our Lord, none of those about whom you commanded us remains in it.’ He will then Say, ‘Go and take out (of Hell) anyone in whose heart you find goodness equal to the weight of one (gold) *dinar*.’ They will then take out a large number of people. Then they will say, ‘O our Lord! We have not left anyone about whom You commanded us.’ He will then say, ‘Go and take out (of Hell) anyone in whose heart you find goodness equal to the weight of half a (gold) *dinar*.’ Then they will take out a large number of people, and will say, ‘O our Lord! We have not left anyone about whom You commanded us.’ Then He will say, ‘Go and take out (of Hell) anyone in whose heart you find goodness equal to the weight of an atom.’ They would bring out a large number of people, and would then say, ‘O our Lord, now we have not left anyone in it (Hell) having any good in him.’”
 Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “If you don't testify to this ḥadīth, then recite if you like:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ
 مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ وَإِن تَكُ حَسَنَةً يُضْعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ
 أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

**“Surely Allāh wrongs not the weight of an atom;
 and if it is a good deed, He multiplies it and gives
 from Himself a great reward.”⁵²⁸**

Allāh, the Exalted will then say, “The Angels have interceded, the messengers have interceded, the believers have interceded, and no one remains (to grant pardon) but the Most Merciful of the merciful.’ He will then take a handful from Fire and bring out people who never did any good and who had been turned into charcoal, and will cast them into a river called the ‘river of life’

⁵²⁸ *al-Nisā’* (4): 40

that lies on the outskirts of Paradise. They will come out as a seed comes cut from the silt carried by flood ...” and he narrated the rest of the ḥadīth. It is reported by both Bukhārī and Muslim; this wording is from Muslim.⁵²⁹

When he said: “never did any good” he was referring to the physical deeds (*jawāriḥ*). However, the roots of belief were within them. That is why it was stated in the ḥadīth of the man, who commanded his family to burn him after death, that he did not do any good except believe in the oneness of Allāh. It was stated by Imām Aḥmad on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ),⁵³⁰ and from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), from his own saying.

This is affirmed by what is narrated on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the ḥadīth of intercession, “I will say, ‘O Lord, allow me to intercede for whoever said: ‘There is no deity except Allāh.’ Allāh will then say, “By my Power, by my Majesty, by My Supremacy and by My Greatness, I will take out of Hell (Fire) whoever said: ‘There is no deity except Allāh.’” This is reported in both Bukhārī and Muslim;⁵³¹ in Muslim’s version it has the wording, “The Lord will say, “That is not for you, or that is not what lies with you.”” This indicates that those whom Allāh takes out of the Fire with his Mercy—without intercession from a creation—are those who declared the Oneness of Allāh (*tawḥīd*) and did not do any good deeds alongside it; Allāh knows best.

⁵²⁹ Reference already mentioned earlier

⁵³⁰ Bukhārī, #3481, #7506 and Muslim, #2756

⁵³¹ Bukhārī, 13/395-397 and Muslim, #193

Abū'l-Haytham narrated on the authority of Abū Sa'īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy>Allāhu 'anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Then the Bridge will be set up over Hell-fire. There will be thorns like the thorn of Al-Sa'dān. Some will escape and be safe, some will be lacerated and let go, and some will be pushed into the Fire and detained therein. When Allāh is done judging between His servants, and the believers look for people who were, in the worldly life, praying with them, paying *zakaat* with them, fasting with them, performing Pilgrimage with them and going to war with them. They will say, "O our Lord! Some of Your servants who were with us in life, praying with us, paying *zakaat* with us, fasting with us, performing pilgrimage with us and going to war with us, yet we cannot see them. Allāh the Exalted will say, "Go to the Fire; whomever you find [of them], take them out." Thereupon, they will take them out after the Fire has overtaken them according to their sins. Some of them are overtaken to their feet, some are overtaken to their knees, some are overtaken to their waists, some are overtaken to their breasts, and some are overtaken to their necks, but their faces are sound. They are brought out and thrown in the 'fountain of life'." It was asked, "O Allāh's Prophet, what is the fountain of life?" He replied, "The bathing of the inhabitants of Paradise; they sprout therein as the plant sprouts in the flood water. The Prophets will then intercede for everyone who sincerely testified that there is no deity except Allāh, and they take them out of the Fire. Allāh then bestows His Mercy upon those inside it, so he does not leave a single person whose heart had an atom's weight of belief except removes him therefrom."

Reported by Al-Hākim, and he said: 'Its chain of narrators is authentic.'

A similar ḥadīth was reported in both Bukhārī and Muslim⁵³² from Mālik, from ‘Amr Ibn Yaḥyā Al-Māzinī, from his father, from Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh will admit into Paradise those deserving of Paradise, and He will admit whom He wishes out of His Mercy. He will admit those condemned to Hell into the Hell-fire and He will then Say, ‘Whomever you find having as much faith in his heart as a grain of mustard, bring him out.’ They will then be brought out blackened, and would be cast into the river of *Ḥayā*’ (rain) or *Ḥayāt* (life),⁵³³ and they will sprout as does a seed in the silt carried away by flood. Have you not seen that it comes out yellow (fresh) and intertwined?” This is the wording of Al-Bukhārī’s version. In Muslim’s version, it states, “They will then be brought out burned and turned to charcoal.”

It is also reported in both Bukhārī and Muslim⁵³⁴ from Al-Zuhrī, from ‘Aṭā’ Ibn Yasār, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When Allāh has finished Judging among the people, He will take whomever He wills out of Hell through His Mercy. He will then order the Angels to take out of the Fire all those who used to worship none but Allāh from among those whom Allāh wants to show Mercy to; and those who testified (in the world) that none has the right to be worshipped but Allāh. The Angels will recognise them in the Fire by the marks of prostration (on their foreheads)—for the Fire will consume the human body except the mark of prostration as Allāh has forbidden the Fire from doing so. They will come out of the (Hell) Fire,

⁵³² Bukhārī, #22, and Muslim, #184

⁵³³ The Narrator is in doubt as to which is the right term.

⁵³⁴ Bukhārī, #806, #6573, #7437, Muslim, #182, Tirmidhī, 2560 and Aḥmad, 2/275, 276, 293, 534.

completely burnt and then the water of life will be poured over them and they will grow under it as does a seed that comes in the mud of the torrent.” Then he stated the rest of the ḥadīth.

Muslim stated from Yazīd Al-Fāqir, on the authority of Jābir (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*), that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “Verily people will be brought out from the Fire and they will be burnt except the exterior of their faces; and they would enter Paradise.”⁵³⁵

He also stated⁵³⁶ from Abū Nadrah, from Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The (permanent) inhabitants of the Fire are those who are doomed to it, and verily they will neither die nor live in it. But the people whom the Fire would afflict (temporarily) because of their sins—or did he say ‘because of their misdeeds’—Allāh will cause them to die till they would be turned into charcoal. Then they will be granted intercession, they will be brought in groups and they will be spread out on the rivers of Paradise and it will be said: ‘O People of Paradise! Pour water over them.’ They will then sprout forth like the sprouting of seed in the silt carried by flood.” The apparent meaning of the ḥadīth is that these people actually die and their souls leave their bodies.

This is supported by what Al-Bazzār stated from ‘Abdullāh Ibn Rajā’, from Abū Umāmah Ibn Sahl, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhū*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The lowest among the inhabitants of Paradise in share (of fortune), are people whom Allāh removes from the Fire. The Lord Most Exalted is pleased with them as they did not associate anyone with Allāh.

⁵³⁵ Muslim, #191, #319

⁵³⁶ Muslim, #185

They are thrown into the open and they sprout as herbs do. When the souls return to their bodies, they say, 'O our Lord! Just as You removed us from the Fire and returned our souls to our bodies, remove our faces from the Fire.' So their faces are removed away from the Fire."

Miskīn Abū Fāṭimah reported from Al-Yaman Ibn Yazīd, from Muḥammad Ibn Ḥumayr, from Muḥammad Ibn 'Alī, from his father, from his grandfather, that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "When those who committed major sins among the believers from all nations die persisting on their major sins, without regret or repentance; those among them who enter Hell-fire through the first door do not have their eyes turned blue or their faces turned black, they are not coupled with the devils, bound in chains, drink scalding water or wear pitch (tar) in Hell-fire. Allāh forbade eternal habitation for their bodies in the Fire, because of their belief. And He forbade their faces to be consumed by the Fire, because of prostration [to Allāh]. Some of them are overtaken by fire up to their feet, some are overtaken to their waists, and some are overtaken to their necks, according to their sins and deeds. Some of them stay there a month before getting out of it, some stay for a year before getting out, and the longest of them stays for a period equivalent to the life of the world, since it was created until it perishes. When Allāh wills to let them out of it, the Jews and the Christians and other inhabitants of Hell-fire from the worshippers of [false] religions and idols say to the believers who are in Hell-Fire, 'You believed in Allāh, His Book, and His Messengers, yet you and us both are equally in Hell-fire.' Thereupon, Allāh becomes angry like never before (by their statement), so he takes out the believers to a fountain in Paradise, which is what is referred to in the verse,

رُبَمَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوَ كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

“Perhaps those who disbelieve will wish that they had been Muslims.”⁵³⁷

Stated by Ibn Abī Hātim and others, and Al-Isma‘īlī stated an elaborated version of it. Al-Darqutnī said in his *Kitāb Al-Mukhtalaq* that, “This ḥadīth is munkar, Al-Yaman is unknown, Miskīn is a weak narrator, and Muḥammad Ibn Ḥumayr is not known to have narrated any other ḥadīth apart from this one.”

The ḥadīth narrated by Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) was already stated, regarding the man who keeps calling, “O Compassionate! O Benefactor!” for a thousand years, before being taken out of it.

We stated through Marwān Ibn Mu‘awiyah, from Hāzim, from Al-Ḥasan, “The believers in Hell-fire are not chained, so the Angels of Hell-fire say to each other, ‘Why are these chained and they are not?’ Thereupon, a caller says to them, ‘Because they used to walk in the darkness to the *masājid*.’”

Marwān Ibn Mu‘awiyah reports from Mālik Ibn Abū’l-Ḥasan, that Al-Ḥasan said: “A man comes out of the fire after one thousand years.” He added, “I wish I am that man.”⁵³⁸

⁵³⁷ *Al-Ḥijr* (15): 2

⁵³⁸ Believers must assume hope and always think good about Allāh, while also maintaining fear of His Punishment.

Section One:

Having Good Expectation of Allāh, the Exalted

Aḥmad Ibn Abū Al-Ḥawārī said: 'I entered upon Abū Sulaymān whilst he was weeping, so I asked, 'Why do you weep?' He said: 'If Allāh called me to account for my sins, I would call upon Him to account for His forgiveness. If He called me to account for my greed, I would call upon Him to account for His generosity. If he sends me to Hell-fire, I would tell its inhabitants that I love Him.'

Ibn Abī Dunyā stated in his book *Husn-al-ẓann-billāhī*⁵³⁹ [through a chain of narrators] that 'Alī Ibn Bakkar was asked about good expectations from Allāh, and he said: "[To expect] that he does not join you with the wretched in the same residence (of Hell-fire).'

It is narrated from Salmān Ibn Al-Ḥakam Ibn 'Awānah that a man supplicated to Allāh in 'Arafat and said: 'Do not punish us with the Fire after You settled belief of Your oneness (*tawḥīd*) in our hearts.' He then cried and said: 'I do not think that You would do that, for You are as forgiving as You are.' Then he cried again and said: 'Even if You did, it would be on account of our sins. Do not join us with the people with whom we have been enemies for You.'

Ḥakīm Ibn Jābir said: 'Ibrāhīm (*alayhi as-salām*) said: 'O Allāh! Do not join those who associated others with You with those who did not.'"

Ibn Abī Dunyā reported from Abū Ḥafs al-Sirāfī that when

⁵³⁹ Lit: Having good thoughts and assuming good expectations from Allāh Almighty.

‘Umar Ibn Al-Khattāb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) recited the verse,

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَن يَمُوتُ

“And they swear by Allāh their strongest oaths
[that] Allāh will not resurrect one who dies.”⁵⁴⁰

He used to say, ‘And we swear by Allāh our strongest oath that Allāh will resurrect one who dies. Will You join the two oaths in the same residence?’ He then cried intensely.

Abū Na‘īm conveyed [through a chain of narrators] that ‘Awn Ibn ‘Abdullāh said: ‘Allāh was never to rescue us from an evil and then return us to it,

وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُم مِّنْهَا

“And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and
He saved you from it.”⁵⁴¹

Allāh was never to join the two oaths in Hell-fire,

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَن يَمُوتُ

“And they swear by Allāh their strongest oaths
[that] Allāh will not resurrect one who dies.”⁵⁴²

And we swear by Allāh our strongest oath that Allāh will resurrect one who dies.”

⁵⁴⁰ *Al-Nabl* (16): 38

⁵⁴¹ *Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 103

⁵⁴² *Al-Nabl* (16): 38

Muḥammad Ibn Ishāq Al-Sarrāj narrated from Ḥammād Ibn Al-Mu'mil Al-Kalbī, from some of his companions, that Ibn Al-Sammāk said: "When Harūn Al-Rashid called for me, he said: 'Speak and supplicate'; so I supplicated with a supplication that he liked. I said in my supplication, 'O Allāh! You said:

وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَا يَبْعَثُ اللَّهُ مَن يَمُوتُ

**"And they swear by Allāh their strongest oaths
[that] Allāh will not resurrect one who dies."⁵⁴³**

O Allāh! We swear by Allāh our strongest oath that You will resurrect one who dies. Would you gather the two oaths in the same place?' At this, Harūn began to weep."

⁵⁴³ *Al-Nahl* (16): 38

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

The Mention of Those who are a Majority in Hell

Hell-fire inhabitants (*ablu'l-nār*), who are its real inhabitants, who will be eternally living therein, and to whom it is prepared, as Allāh, the Exalted said:

أَعَدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ

“...prepared for the disbelievers.”⁵⁴⁴

We have already stated the ḥadīth narrated on the authority of Abū Saʿīd (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*), wherein the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The (permanent) inhabitants of the Fire are those who are doomed to it, and verily they would neither die nor live in it.” Such are its permanent inhabitants, and they are more than those who enter it from the disobedient believers, who will exit from it after being refined and purified.

This is supported by what Abū Saʿīd (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allāh will Say on the day of Judgement,

⁵⁴⁴ *Al-Baqarah* (2): 24

⁵⁴⁵ Lit: I respond to Your Call, I am obedient to Your Order

‘O Adam!’ Adam will reply, ‘*Labbayk wa Sa’dayk*,⁵⁴⁵ and all the good is in Your Hands!’ A voice will say to Adam, ‘Allāh Commands you to bring out the delegation (destined) for the Fire.’ Adam will say, ‘What is the delegation for the Fire?’ Allāh will say, ‘Out of every thousand (take out) nine hundred and ninety-nine (persons).’ At that time, the pregnant woman will abort her pregnancy and children will become white-haired,

وَتَرَى النَّاسَ

سُكْرَى وَمَاهُمْ بِسُكْرَى وَلَكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ

“and you will see the people [appearing] intoxicated while they are not intoxicated; but the punishment of Allāh is severe.”⁵⁴⁶

That news distressed the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) so much, until their faces changed. He (ﷺ) said, “Nine hundred and ninety-nine will be from Yajūj and Majūj, and the one [to be saved will be] from you.” He added “Your example in comparison to the other people, is like that of a black hair on the side of a white bull, or a white hair in the side of a black bull. I Hope that you will be a quarter of the people of Paradise.” Upon hearing this, we said: “Allāhu Akbar!” He (ﷺ) said: “A third of the people of Paradise.” We said: “Allāhu Akbar.” He (ﷺ) then said: “A Half of the people of Paradise,” and we said: “Allāhu Akbar.” This is stated in both Bukhārī and Muslim⁵⁴⁷ and the wording is that of Al-Bukhārī.

Hilāl Ibn Khabāb narrated from ‘Ikrimah, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said a

⁵⁴⁶ *Al-Hajj* (22): 2

⁵⁴⁷ Bukhārī, #3348, #4741, #6530, #7483 and Muslim, #222

ḥadīth with similar meaning, wherein he said: “You are but one in a thousand.” Reported by Imām Aḥmad and Al-Ḥākim, who deemed it authentic.⁵⁴⁸

Imām Aḥmad and Tirmidhī stated similarly from Al-Ḥasan, from ‘Imrān, from Ḥusayn, from the Prophet (ﷺ), “Close your ranks and be straight forward, for there was never any Prophethood but there was a time of ignorance just before its advent, so the number will be taken from that time of ignorance, and if that is not enough, it will be made up of the hypocrites. The parable of you and the other nations is that you are like a mark on the foreleg of an animal, or a mole on the flank of a camel.”

In another version, he (ﷺ) said: “Strive hard and receive the good news. By the One in Whose Hand is the soul of Muḥammad, you will be counted with two creations who are immense in numbers; Yajūj and Majūj, and those who have died among the progeny of Ādam and the progeny of *Iblīs*.”⁵⁴⁹

Ibn Abī Ḥātim stated a similar ḥadīth on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), from the Prophet (ﷺ) who said: “and those who have disbelieved among the progeny of Adam and the progeny of *Iblīs*.”

These ḥadīth and its counterparts prove that the majority of inhabitants of the Hell-fire are people; and proves that the followers of Messengers are few compared to others. Those who did not follow the Messengers are all in Hell-fire, except those whom

⁵⁴⁸ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 1/388 and Ḥākim, 4/568 who authenticate it and Dhahabī agreed.

⁵⁴⁹ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 4/432, 435, Tirmidhī, #3168 and Ḥākim, 4/567 who authenticate it and Dhahabī agreed.

the message of Messengers did not reach, or who were not able to comprehend it, despite the debate in this regard. Many of the followers of Messengers clung to abrogated religions and replaced scriptures, and they are of among the people of Hell-fire as well, as Allāh the Exalted said:

وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِهِ، مِنَ الْأَحْزَابِ، فَالْتَأْرِمُوعِدُهُ،

“But whoever disbelieves in it from the [various] factions—the Fire is his promised destination.”⁵⁵⁰

As for the followers of the precise Book, the affirmed Law and the religion of Truth, many of them are also people of Hell-fire. This refers to the hypocrites whom will be in the lowest depths of the Fire. As for its followers in secret and in openness, many of them succumbed to doubts—these are the people of fabrication and aberration.

Ḥadīths were narrated to indicate that this Ummah will be divided into seventy-something groups, all of which are in Hell-fire, except one. In addition, many of them were seduced with forbidden desires whose punishment is Hell-fire—even if it does not necessitate eternal life therein—so they did not escape the threat of Hell-fire. No one deserves the absolute promise of Paradise from this Ummah except one group, they are the followers of the Way of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions, and those who escaped the seduction of desires and doubts. These are very few, especially in the later days. The Qur’ān testifies that most people are bound for Hell-fire—those who followed *Shaytān*, as Allāh the Exalted said:

⁵⁵⁰ *Hūd* (11): 17

وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِبْلِيسُ ظَنَّهُ فَاتَّبَعُوهُ إِلَّا
 فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٢٠﴾

“And Iblīs had already confirmed through them his assumption, so they followed him, except for a party of believers.”⁵⁵¹

He the Exalted also said:

لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنكَ وَمِمَّن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ ﴿٤٥﴾

“[That] I will surely fill Hell with you and those of them that follow you all together.”⁵⁵²

As for the disobedient believers, most of whom who enter Hell-fire are women, as stated in both Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said in the Sermon of the Eclipse, “I saw Hell and I observed that most of its inhabitants were women, for reason of their ingratitude (*kufr*).”⁵⁵³ It was said: “Do they disbelieve in Allāh?” He said: “[Not for their disbelief in Allāh] but for their ingratitude to their husbands and ingratitude to kindness. If you were to forever treat one of them kindly and she later saw anything (displeasing) in you, she would say, ‘I have never seen any good in you.’”⁵⁵⁴

⁵⁵¹ *Sabā*’(34): 20

⁵⁵² *Sad* (38): 85

⁵⁵³ The Arabic word ‘*kufr*’ could mean ingratitude or disbelief.

⁵⁵⁴ Bukhārī, #29, #431, #738, #1052, #3202, #5197 and Muslim, #907.

⁵⁵⁵ Muslim, #2737

It is narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I saw Hell and I observed that most of its inhabitants were women.”⁵⁵⁵

Al-Bukhārī narrated the same ḥadīth from ‘Imrān Ibn Ḥusayn (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), from the Prophet (ﷺ).⁵⁵⁶

They also stated in both Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority Abū Sa‘īd Al-Khudrī (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “O women! Give charity, as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-fire were you.” They asked, “Why is it so, O Allāh’s Messenger?” He replied, “You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone deficient in intelligence and religion such you, yet a cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you.”⁵⁵⁷

Muslim stated similarly from Jābir, Ibn ‘Umar and Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhum*), from the Prophet (ﷺ).⁵⁵⁸

Also stated in both Bukhārī and Muslim, from Usāmah Ibn Zayd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhumā*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I stood at the gate of Paradise, and (I saw) the majority of those who entered it are the poor, and the wealthy were kept confined. The inmates of the Fire had been ordered to (enter) Hell-fire, and I stood at the gate of Hell and saw the majority of its inmates are women.”⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁶ Bukhārī, #3241, #5198, #6449, #6546 and Tirmidhī, #2605, #2606

⁵⁵⁷ Bukhārī, ##304, #956, #1462, #2658 and Muslim, #889 and others.

⁵⁵⁸ Muslim, #885, #79, #80

⁵⁵⁹ Bukhārī, #5196, #6547 and Muslim, #2736

Imām Aḥmad stated from ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr Ibn Al-‘Āṣ (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “I observed Paradise and found the majority of its inhabitants are the poor, and I observed Hell-fire and found the majority of its inhabitants are women and the wealthy.”⁵⁶⁰

In Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim,⁵⁶¹ it is stated on the authority of ‘Imrān Ibn Ḥusayn (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Amongst the inmates of Paradise the women form a minority.” People found problems reconciling this ḥadīth with the one narrated by Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), where the Prophet (ﷺ) said about the inhabitants of Paradise, “For every man of them are two wives.”⁵⁶² It is also stated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim,⁵⁶³ from Ayyūb, that Ibn Sirīn reported that some people stated with a sense of pride and some discussed whether there would be more men in Paradise or more women. Thereupon, Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) said: “The first group to enter Paradise would have their faces as bright as full moon during the night, and the next to this group would have their faces as bright as the shining stars in the sky, and every person would have two wives and the marrow of their shanks would glimmer beneath the flesh and there would be none without a wife in Paradise.”

Some of them tried to reconcile the two ḥadīths by explaining that the scarcity of women in Paradise is before the disobedient believers get out of the Fire, and when they do exit, women in

⁵⁶⁰ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 2/173 and its chain is jayyid.

⁵⁶¹ Muslim, #2738 and Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 4/427, 436, 443

⁵⁶² Muslim, 17/171

⁵⁶³ Bukhārī, #3245, Muslim, #2834 and Tirmidhī, #2540.

Paradise will be more than men. However, the correct explanation is that Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) meant there would be more females in general than men, because each man has two wives; he did not mean to specify women from the sons of Adam.

This is supported by the fact that in some of the authentic versions of this ḥadīth narrated by Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), it states, “and every person would have two wives from the Houris.”⁵⁶⁴ It was also narrated by Yūnus, from Muḥammad, on the authority Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), from the Prophet (ﷺ), and stated through this chain of narrators by Imām Aḥmad. It was also narrated by Hisham, from Muḥammad Ibn Sirīn, from Muḥammad, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), from the Prophet (ﷺ), and recorded by Al-Bayhaqī. This wording was stated by Al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, from ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Abū ‘Amrah, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), from the Prophet (ﷺ).

This is also supported by the fact that in some versions of this ḥadīth narrated [as stated in Bukhārī] on the authority of by Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) as well, it says, “and their wives are Ḥouris,” instead of “and every person would have two wives from the Ḥouris.” Therefore, these two Ḥourī wives are obliged for each man entering Paradise. As for the abundance over that, it is according to ranks and deeds. Nothing is narrated to indicate restricting the Ḥourī wives to two.

⁵⁶⁴ Virgin maidens of Paradise, created especially as companions for men who are admitted to Paradise.

⁵⁶⁵ Muslim, #188

⁵⁶⁶ Aḥmad, 2/297, 427, Ibn Mājah, #2798 and its chain is weak.

This is also supported in what the previously mentioned ḥadīth stated by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*,⁵⁶⁵ on the authority of Abū Saʿīd (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Among the lowest ranking inhabitants of Paradise, will be a person whose face Allāh will turn away from the Fire and towards Paradise ...”⁵⁶⁶ and he stated the ḥadīth, at the end of which he (ﷺ) said: “He will then enter his house and his two Hourī wives with large and dark eyes will enter after him.” This means that each resident of Paradise has two Hourī wives, even if he is the lowest in rank among the inhabitants of Paradise; and Allāh knows best.

ʿAbdullāh, the son of Imām Aḥmad, narrated [through a chain of narrators] that Abū Ṣāliḥ said: ‘We heard that the majority of sins of the people of Hell-fire are in women’ as if he is referring to adultery and everything related to it (of sexual nature).

Ibn Abī Dunyā narrated [through a severed chain of narrators] that Ibn Masʿūd (*radīy Allāhu ʿanhu*) said: ‘Two types of sins are not forgiven,’ and he mentioned one of them as, ‘A man to whom the evil of his deed has been made attractive so he considers it good, as this is what leads many of this *Ummah* to destruction’—referring to misguided doubts.

And Allāh knows best.

CHAPTER THIRTY

The Characters and Types of Hell Dwellers

We have already mentioned Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*)’s saying that none is left in Hell-fire except four kinds of people, as there is no good left in them. He drew them from Allāh’s saying,

قَالُوا لَوْ لَمْ يَمُرْنَا بِكَ مِنْ
الْمُصَلِّينَ (٤٦) وَلَوْ لَمْ نَطْعِمُ الْمَسْكِينِ (٤٤) وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ
الْحَايِضِينَ (٤٥) وَكُنَّا نَكْذِبُ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ (٤٦)

“They will say, ‘We were not of those who prayed, Nor did we used to feed the poor. And we used to enter into vain discourse with those who engaged [in it]. And we used to deny the Day of Recompense.’”⁵⁶⁷

In both Bukhārī and Muslim, it is narrated on the authority of Ḥārithah Ibn Wahb (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Shall I not inform you about the people of Paradise? It is every type of person who is, modest and humble [before Allāh], a person who is considered weak and is looked down upon but if he adjures Allāh, Allāh will certainly give him what he desires.

⁵⁶⁷ *Al-Mudathtbir* (74): 43-45

Now shall I not inform you about the inmates of Hell? It is every violent, impertinent and proud man.”⁵⁶⁸

Mujāhid and ‘Ikrimah said regarding the word *‘al-‘Uṭul*⁵⁶⁹, “[It means] strong,” While Abū Razin said: “[It means] healthy.”

‘Aṭā’ Ibn Yasar conveyed that Wahb al-Dhamarī said: “The heavens and earth cry for a man whom Allāh perfected his creation and gave him a great share of this worldly life. Then he became an oppressor and a tyrant for people; such is the cruel and illegitimate pretender.”⁵⁷⁰

Ibrāhīm Al-Nakhī said: “[*‘Uṭul* means] the wretched (*fājir*), and *zanīm*⁵⁷¹ means the troublemaker when interacting with people.’

Shahr Ibn Hawshab conveyed from ‘Abdu’l-Raḥmān Ibn Ghanam, that the Messenger (ﷺ) said: “No *Jawāz* or *Ja‘zarī* or *‘utul al-zanīm* shall enter Paradise.” A man among the Muslims said: “What does *Jawāz*, *ja‘zarī* and *‘utul al-zanīm* mean?” The Messenger (ﷺ) said: “*Jawāz* is the man who collects and withholds [meaning a miser]. As for the *Ja‘zarī*, he is rude and harsh.

Allāh, the Exalted said:

⁵⁶⁸ Bukhārī, #4918, Muslim, #2753, Tirmidhī, #2608

⁵⁶⁹ This is the transliteration of the Arabic word “*‘utul*”, translated in the ḥadīth as ‘*violent*’

⁵⁷⁰ In reference to the *al-Qalam*:13, where the word “*‘utul*” is translated as ‘*cruel*’.

⁵⁷¹ Also in reference to the *al-Qalam*:13; *Zanīm* is the transliteration of the Arabic word ‘*zanīm*’, translated in the verse as ‘*illegitimate pretender*’.

فِيمَا رَحِمَةٍ مِّنَ
 اللَّهُ لَئِن لَّهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

“And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would indeed have broken away from you.”⁵⁷²

As for the ‘*utul al-zanīm*, he is ill-mannered, the big-stomached, the healthy, heavy eater and heavy drinker, who seeks after food and opposes people.”⁵⁷³

Mu‘awiyah Ibn Ṣāliḥ narrated from Kathīr Ibn Al-Ḥārith, from Al-Qāsim [Mu‘awiyah’s slave] that the Messenger (ﷺ) was asked about the meaning of “*utul al-zanīm*”, and he said: “It means the indecent miscreant (*fāḥish al-la’im*).” Mu‘awiyah also narrated it from ‘Iyaḍ Ibn ‘Abdullāh Al-Fahrī, from Mūsa Ibn ‘Uqbah, from the Prophet (ﷺ). It was all stated by Ibn Abī Ḥatim.

As for the proud (*mutakabir*), he is the one who treats people arrogantly (*kibr*) and haughtily (*ta‘āẓm*). Allāh Almighty said:

أَلَيْسَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ

“Is there not in Hell a residence for the arrogant?”⁵⁷⁴

We have already stated the ḥadīth mentioning, “The proud will be gathered on the Day of Judgement resembling tiny particles in the image of men, driven into a prison in Hell called *Būlus*, submerged

⁵⁷² *Āl-‘Imrān* (3): 159

⁵⁷³ *Al-Majma‘*, 10/393 and Aḥmad reported it with ḥasan chain.

⁵⁷⁴ *Al-Zumar* (39): 60

in the Fire of Fires, covered with humiliation everywhere.”⁵⁷⁵ The punishment for arrogance is humiliation and degradation, as Allāh Almighty said:

فَالْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ
بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَمِمَّا كُنْتُمْ نَفْسُوفُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾

“...so this Day you will be awarded the punishment of [extreme] humiliation because you were arrogant upon the earth without right...”⁵⁷⁶

In the authentic ḥadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) said, narrating from his Lord the Exalted and Majestic, “Allāh, the Exalted, says, ‘Pride is My Cloak and Honour is My *Izār*. Whoever competes with Me regarding one of them, shall be tormented with My Fire,”⁵⁷⁷ meaning I will throw him in Hell-fire.

In Bukhārī and Muslim, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Hell and Paradise fell into dispute, Hell said: ‘I have been distinguished by the proud and the haughty (being cast into me).’ And Paradise said: ‘Why is it that only the meek and the humble among people, the downtrodden and the simple enter Me?’ Thereupon Allāh said to Paradise, ‘You are (the means) of My Mercy whereby I show mercy to those of My servants whom I wish.’ And He said to Hell, ‘You are (the means) of punishment whereby I punish those of My servants whom I wish. Both of you will be filled up.’ Hell will be filled up until Allāh puts down His Foot in it, then Hell will say,

⁵⁷⁵ Reference mentioned already

⁵⁷⁶ *Al-Abqāf* (46): 20

⁵⁷⁷ Muslim, #2620

‘(It is) enough, enough, enough.’ Thus, it will be full with all its parts integrated together. And Allāh will not treat unjustly any of His Creation and He will create another creation for Paradise (to accommodate it).”⁵⁷⁸

In another version stated by Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Hell-fire will say, “Why is it that only the tyrants, the arrogant, the high status and the wealthy enter me.”

Imām Aḥmad⁵⁷⁹ stated on the authority of Abū Sa‘īd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Paradise and Hell-fire boasted with one another. Hell-fire said: ‘O my Lord! The tyrants, the arrogant, the Kings and the high status enter me.’ Paradise said: ‘O my Lord! The weak, the poor and the needy enter me’...” stating the rest of the ḥadīth with similar as previously mentioned.

The reason for this is that Allāh the Exalted, surrounded Paradise by hardships, while surrounding Hell-fire by temptation, as He Almighty said:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَىٰ ﴿٣٧﴾ وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ﴿٣٨﴾ فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ
هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٣٩﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ
﴿٤٠﴾ فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿٤١﴾

“So as for he who transgressed and preferred the life of the world, then indeed, Hellfire will be [his] refuge. But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination, then indeed, Paradise will be [his]

⁵⁷⁸ Bukhārī, #4850, Muslim, 2846 and Tirmidhī, #2564

⁵⁷⁹ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 3/13, 78

refuge.”⁵⁸⁰

In Bukhārī, it is stated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The Paradise is concealed by hardships and the Hell-Fire is concealed by temptations.”⁵⁸¹ It was also stated by Muslim with the wording, “The Paradise is surrounded by hardships and the Hell-Fire is surrounded by temptations.”⁵⁸² He also stated it on the authority of Anas (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), from the Prophet (ﷺ).

Imām Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd and Tirmidhī also stated it on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “When Allāh created Paradise and the Fire, He sent Jibrīl to Paradise, saying, ‘Go and look at it and at what I have prepared in it for its inhabitants.’ So he came to it and looked at it, and at what Allāh had prepared in it. Jibrīl said: ‘Indeed, by Your Might, none shall hear of it except wanting to enter it.’ He then gave the order for it to be surrounded with hardships. He said: ‘Return to it and look at it and at what I have prepared in it for its inhabitants.’ So he returned to it and found it surrounded with hardships. He returned to Him and said: ‘Indeed, by Your Might, I fear that none shall enter it.’ He (the Almighty) said: ‘Go to the Fire and look at it and at what I have prepared in it for its inhabitants.’ So he found it in layers, one above the other. So he returned to Him and said: ‘Indeed, by Your Might, none shall hear of it, except that they would not want to enter it.’ He then gave the order for it to be surrounded with desires, then He said: ‘Return to it,’ so he Jibrīl returned to it, then he said: ‘Indeed, by Your Might, I fear

⁵⁸⁰ *Al-Nāzi‘āt* (79): 37-41

⁵⁸¹ Bukhārī, #6478, Muslim, #2823 and Aḥmad, 3/153, 254, 284

⁵⁸² Muslim, #2822, Tirmidhī, #2562 and Aḥmad, 3/153, 254, 284.

that none shall be saved from it except that he shall enter it.”⁵⁸³

This clarifies that the physical health, strength, wealth, enjoyment of worldly pleasures, pride and arrogance towards people, which are the attributes of people of Hell-fire—as stated in the ḥadīth of Ḥārithah Ibn Wahb—are the essence of transgression and oppression, as Allāh the Exalted said:

كَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنَّاظٍ ﴿١٧٠﴾ أَنْ رَأَاهُ اسْتَعْتَابَ ﴿١٧١﴾

“No! [But] indeed, man transgresses, because he sees himself self-sufficient.”⁵⁸⁴

Transgression and preferring the life of the world and its desires merit residing in Hell-fire, as Allāh Almighty said:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ طَغَى ﴿١٧٢﴾ وَءَاثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا ﴿١٧٣﴾ فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿١٧٤﴾

“So as for him who transgressed and preferred the life of the world, then indeed, Hellfire will be [his] refuge.”⁵⁸⁵

As for the physically weak, who is considered humble due to lack of wealth or power along with faith, and then they have gathered all good. That is why it is said: ‘It’s virtue to not find.’ This is the attribute of the people of Paradise inhabitants [as stated in the ḥadīth of Ḥārithah Ibn Wahb].

Ḥadīth that are similar to Ḥārithah’s were narrated through many

⁵⁸³ Abū Dāwūd, #4744, Tirmidhī, 2563 and Aḥmad, 2/233-333 and 354

⁵⁸⁴ *Al-‘Alaḳ* (96): 6-7

⁵⁸⁵ *Al-Nāzi‘āt* (79): 37-39

ways, some of which contained additional text.

Imām Aḥmad stated from him the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*), who narrated that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Should I not tell you about the people of Paradise?” They said: “Of course, O Allāh’s Messenger!” He said: “The weak and oppressed. Should I not tell you about the people of Hell-fire?” They said: ‘Of course, O Allāh’s Messenger!’ He said: “Every violent and harsh person, who feel no pain in their heads.”⁵⁸⁶

It is also narrated on the authority of Surāqah Ibn Mālik Ibn Ja’sham (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “O Surāqah! Should I not tell you about the people of Paradise and the people of Hell-fire?” He said: ‘Of course, O Messengers of Allāh.’ He (ﷺ) said: “As for the people of Hell-fire, they are every rude, stingy and arrogant person, as for the people of Paradise, they are the weak and oppressed.”⁵⁸⁷

It is also stated on the authority of ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Amr (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “The people of Hell-fire are every harsh, arrogant and stingy person. The people of Paradise are the weak and oppressed.”⁵⁸⁸

It is also narrated on the authority of Anas (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Should I not tell you about the people of Paradise and the people of Hell-fire? As for the people of

⁵⁸⁶ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 2/508 and its chain is weak

⁵⁸⁷ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 4/175, Ṭabārānī in his *al-Kabīr* with a ḥasan chain and Ḥākīm, 1/69 and he said it is ṣaḥīḥ according to the conditions of Muslim and Dhahabi agreed.

⁵⁸⁸ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 2/214 and *al-Majma’*, 1/393

Paradise, they are every weak, humble, with disheveled hair and possessing two cloths; if he swears by Allāh then He shall fulfill it. As for the people of Hell-fire, they are every harsh, stingy and avaricious with followers.”⁵⁸⁹

Ṭabārānī stated on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Should I not tell you about the description of the inhabitants of Paradise?” They said: “Of course, O Allāh’s Messenger!” He said: “Every weak, humble, and possessing two cloths; if he swears by Allāh then He shall fulfill it. Should I not tell you about the description of Hell-fire inhabitants?” They said: “Of course, O Allāh’s Messenger!” He said: “Every *jaʿazz*, *jaʿzar* and arrogant man.” He [the Narrator] asked, “What does *jaʿazz* mean?” He said: “The huge.”⁵⁹⁰ He asked, “What does *jaʿzar* mean?” He said: “The one with delusions of grandeur.”⁵⁹¹

‘Uthmān Ibn Abū ‘Ātikah narrated from Abū Ja‘far Al-Ḥanafī, on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), that the Prophet (ﷺ), “Should I not tell you about the people of Hell-fire?” They said: ‘Of course!’ He replied, “Every fat person who has a foul smell.”⁵⁹²

Sulaym Ibn ‘Āmir narrated from Furāt Al-Baharānī, from Abū ‘Āmir Al-Ash‘arī, that a man asked the Messenger (ﷺ) about the

⁵⁸⁹ Aḥmad in his *al-Musnad*, 3/145 and *al-Majma‘*, 10/264

⁵⁹⁰ This could imply obesity through gluttony, or being puffed up with haughtiness, and Allāh knows best.

⁵⁹¹ Ṭabārānī in *al-Awsaṭ* and *al-Majma‘*, 10/265.

⁵⁹² In its chain is Abū Ja‘far al-Ḥanafī and he is *majhūl* (unknown) as mentioned in *al-Miẓān*

people of Hell-Fire. He replied, “You have asked about a great matter. [They are] every harsh *qa’barī*.” He was asked, ‘What does *qa’barī* mean, O Allāh’s Messenger?’ He said: “The one who is harsh to his tribe, harsh to his family and harsh to his friends.” He said: ‘Then who are the people of Paradise, O Allāh’s Messenger?’ He said: “Glory is due to Allāh! You have asked about a great matter. [They are] every weak and disregarded person.”⁵⁹³

There are other ḥadīths with similar meaning. It is stated in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, from ‘Iyād Ibn Ḥimar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said in his sermon, “The inhabitants of Paradise are three: One who wields authority and is just and has been endowed with power to do good deeds. The person who is merciful and kind hearted towards his relatives and to every pious Muslim; and one who does not stretch his hand (to beg) in spite of having a large family to support. The inmates of Hell are five: the weak who lacks power, who are [blind] followers and who do not have any care for their family or for their wealth; the dishonest whose greed (*tama’*) cannot be concealed even in the case of minor things; the traitor who betrays you morning and evening, in regard to your family and your property.”⁵⁹⁴ He also made a mention of the miser (*bukhī*) and the liar (*kadhīb*) and those who are in the habit of abusing people and using obscene and foul language (*shinẓir al-fahāsh*).

In this ḥadīth, the Prophet (ﷺ) classified the inhabitants of Paradise (*ahlul-jannah*) into three groups:

1) The just and kind ruler, who wields authority among people and he exercised his power fairly (‘*adl*) and climbed the ranks of beneficence (*darajat al-faḍl*).

⁵⁹³ The reference for this was not found

⁵⁹⁴ Muslim, #2865

2) The merciful (*rahim*) and kind-hearted (*al-rafiq al-qalb*) whose mercy is not exclusive for his relatives, but is rather open to all Muslims. These two types are the people of beneficence and kindness.

3) The self-restraining person (*'afif*) with a large family to support, who is in need for what people have, but he restrains himself from begging people. This is one kind of generosity—abstinence (*'iffa*) from people's wealth, particularly when in need.

Allāh has described the people of Paradise in His book as giving charity and refraining from harm, even if they had the right to do so. He said:

﴿ وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا
السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٣﴾ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ
فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَبِيرِ وَالنَّظِيمِ وَالْعَافِينَ
عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٤﴾ ﴾

“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous Who spend [in the cause of Allāh] during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people—and Allāh loves the doers of good.”⁵⁹⁵

This is their interaction with people. Then, He described their fulfillment of the rights of Allāh, saying

⁵⁹⁵ *Al-‘Imrān*:133-134

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا

فَعَلُوا فَحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا
لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَى
مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ أُولَئِكَ جَزَاءُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ
مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ
فِيهَا وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾

“And those who, when they commit an immorality or wrong themselves [by transgression], remember Allāh and seek forgiveness for their sins—and who can forgive sins except Allāh?—and [who] do not persist in what they have done while they know. Those—their reward is forgiveness from their Lord and gardens beneath which rivers flow [in Paradise], wherein they will abide eternally; and excellent is the reward of the [righteous] workers.”⁵⁹⁶

Therefore, Allāh described them as sinners and then seeking forgiveness (*istighfār*) and not persisting in committing it, which is the truth of sincere repentance (*taḥba al-naṣūḥ*). Similar to these verses is Allāh’s saying,

فَلَا أَقْنَمِ الْعُقَبَةَ ﴿١١﴾ وَمَا أَدْرِنَاكَ مَا الْعُقَبَةُ ﴿١٢﴾
فَأَكْرَبَةُ ﴿١٣﴾ أَوْ إِطْعَمَةٌ فِي يَوْمٍ ذِي مَسْغَبَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾ بَيْنَمَا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ
﴿١٥﴾ أَوْ مَسْكِينًا ذَا مَقْرَبَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾ ثُمَّ كَانَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا
بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ ﴿١٧﴾ أُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْمَيْمَنَةِ ﴿١٨﴾

⁵⁹⁶ *Āl-Imrān* (3): 135-136

“But he has not broken through the difficult pass. And what can make you know what is [breaking through] the difficult pass? It is the freeing of a slave, or feeding on a day of severe hunger an orphan of near relationship or a needy person in misery, and then being among those who believed and advised one another to patience and advised one another to compassion. Those are the companions of the right.”⁵⁹⁷

The difficult pass, is interpreted by Ibn ‘Abbās (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) as being Hell-fire. Ibn ‘Umar (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhumā*) described it as an obstacle in Hell-fire, as previously stated. Allāh the Exalted, clarified that ‘breaking through it and passing it’ happens by kindness (*iḥsān*) to people, either by freeing slaves or by feeding in times of hunger—the person fed is either a relative, orphan or a needy person who is lying in the dust and having nothing left. Along with this kindness, he must be among the believers and those who enjoin others to justice (*‘adl*) and kindness (*iḥsān*), which is advising one another to patience (*ṣabr*) and compassion (*rahma*). He the Exalted, informed us that these attributes are the attributes of the Companions of the Right (*aṣāf aṣḥāb al-maymanah*).

As for the people of Hell-fire, they are classified by the Messenger (ﷺ) into five groups:

1) The weak (*da‘if*): Those who have no power, and by power it’s meant strength (*quwa*) and adherence (*ḥiry*) to what benefits him in the Hereafter, of piety and righteousness. Al-‘Uqaylī stated the ḥadīth narrated by Abū Hurayrah (*raḍiy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ), “Allāh dislikes the believer who has

⁵⁹⁷ *Al-Balad* (90): 11-18

no strength.”⁵⁹⁸ Some ḥadīth narrators said that it refers to standing up for what is right. When Muṭarrif Ibn ‘Abdullāh narrated the ḥadīth of ‘Iyād Ibn Ḥimar (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*) and reached the phrase, ‘...the weak who lacks power to (avoid evil)’ he was asked, ‘Can this be (possible)?’ He said: ‘Yes, by Allāh, I have witnessed them during the pre-Islāmic period of ignorance. A man used to herd sheep for people in exchange for having [illegitimate] sexual intercourse with their slave girl.’

Ibn Shawdab narrated that it was said: “The majority of people in Hell-fire are, ‘the weak who lack power,⁵⁹⁹ who are [blind] followers and who do not have any care for their family or for their wealth” This was stated by ‘Abdullāh Ibn Imām Aḥmad in *Kitāb Al-Zuhd*. This is the worst type, and their souls are vile because they have no resolve in pursuing this life or the Hereafter—their only care is fulfilling desires of their stomach and their private parts however they can. They are followers of other people, who either serve them, or beg for their favours.

2) The dishonest (*ḵbā’in*): Those whose greed cannot be concealed even in the case of minor things. This means he does not see opportunities for betrayal, even a worthless one, except he seizes it. This includes defrauding in measurements and not honouring of small trusts such as deposits and wealth of orphans, etc., which is from the attribute of hypocrisy. This may also include betraying Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ) by committing forbidden deeds in secret while pretending to avoid them in public.

Some of the early scholars said: “We used to say that inhabitants

⁵⁹⁸ It is a weak ḥadīth as al-Albānī said in *Da‘if al-Jāmi‘*, #1691

⁵⁹⁹ This can also imply lack of will power, and Allāh knows best.

of Hell-fire are not prevented by fear of Allāh from committing sins secretly.”

3) The deceitful (*mukhāda*): Those who are preoccupied, day and night, to trick people regarding their family and wealth. Deceit is from the traits of hypocrites, as Allāh the Almighty, described them. Deceit means making apparent one’s goodness and hiding one’s evil in order to access people’s money and family in order to exploit them; such is among the prohibited type of cheating and deception. In the ḥadīth narrated by Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Whoever cheats us is not one of us, and slyness and deception [puts its doer] in the fire.”⁶⁰⁰

4) Lying and Stinginess (*kadhb wa’l-bukhl*). The narrator did not memorise what the Prophet (ﷺ) said about this accurately, as lying and stinginess are two traits. In this version of the narration stated in the *Musnad* of Imām Aḥmad, it is either lying or stinginess. Some say that he counted them as one trait, which is the view of Maṭar Al-Warraḡ, who is one of the narrators of this ḥadīth.

Both, lying (*kadhb*) and stinginess (*bukhl*) stem from greed (*shuḥḥ*), as stated in the ḥadīth. Greed is the strong inclination to what is not rightfully for someone and it is attained through forbidden ways. Stinginess stems from it, which is withholding what the person has and refraining from giving it in the commanded ways. Therefore, deceit is extreme greed, while this type is miserliness—for the greed took the money wrongly, while the miser withheld it from its rightful recipient. This is the interpretation of greed and stinginess as narrated from Ibn Mas‘ūd (*radīy Allāhu ‘anhu*), Ṭāwūs

⁶⁰⁰ It is a ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth as al-Albānī said in *al-Irwā’*, #1319, it is reported in Ibn Ḥibban, #1107, Ṭabarānī in *al-Ṣaḡhīr* and *al-Kabīr* and Abū Nu‘aym in *al-Ḥilyah*, 4/188

and others of the early scholars.

It is narrated that *Shaytān* said: 'No matter how many times the son of Adam overpowers me, he will never overpower me with regards to three actions: Taking money without due right; spending it inappropriately, and withholding it from its rightful recipient.'

May Allāh protect us from the Fire of Hell.
May He put a screen between the fire and us
by His Grace and Mercy.

INDEX OF ARABIC WORDS

Awliyā': plural of *walī*; friend, ally, loyal companion. From the word *wilāyah* meaning loyalty and closeness, the opposite of enmity.

Barẓakh: barrier, isthmus, A barrier that is erected between the deceased and this life preventing him from returning and a generic reference to the life that commences after death.

Bid'ah: innovation, that which is newly introduced into the religion of Allāh.

Da'if: weak; the ḥadīth that is neither ṣaḥīḥ nor ḥasan because it fails to meet one of their requirements. It is of varying degrees of severity, the most severe of which being mawḏū', fabricated.

Dbīkr: remembrance, recollection, technically referring the remembrance of Allāh.

Du'ā': supplication, invocation, it is an action of worship that may only be directed to Allāh. It is of two types, supplication

through worship (*du'ā 'ibādah*) and supplication of request (*du'ā mas'alah*). The first type of *du'ā* can be understood when one understands that every act of worship is done with the unstated plea that Allāh accept that action of worship and the desire to draw closer to him; and hence attain His pleasure. Hence every action of worship is a type of request to Allāh. The second type of *du'ā* is whereby one explicitly asks his Lord of something such as 'O Allāh! Grant me good in this world and the Hereafter.' The second type includes the first type and the first type necessitates the second type.

Ḥadīth: A text attributed to the Prophet (ﷺ) describing his actions, words, descriptions and tacit approvals. It consists of two portions, the body of the text (*matn*) and the *isnād*. Rarely the term is also used to refer to a text attributed to a Companion or a *Tābi'i*.

Ḥāfiẓ: pl. *ḥuffāẓ*. Ḥadīth Master, commonly referred to one who has memorised at least 100,000 ḥadīths.

Ḥasan: good, fair. A ḥadīth whose *isnād* is continuously linked of just, morally upright narrators but whose precision (*dabt*) falls short of the requirements of the ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth; containing no irregularity (*shādh*) and no hidden defect (*'illah*). A ḥadīth can be ḥasan in and of itself, or contain a defect but still be ruled to be so due to supporting evidences.

Hudūd: limits, boundaries. The limits ordained by Allāh, prescribed punishments.

Iḥsān: beneficence, excellence. To worship Allāh as if one is seeing Him, and knowing that even though one sees Him not, He

sees the servant.

Ikhlās: sincerity, to strip oneself of worshipping any besides Allāh such that everything one does is performed only to draw closer to Him and for His pleasure. It is to purify ones actions from any but the Creator having a share in them, from any defect or self-desire. The one who has true *ikhhlās* (*mukhlīs*) will be free of *riyā'*.

‘Ilm: knowledge.

Īmān: The firm belief, complete acknowledgement and acceptance of all that Allāh and His Messenger have commanded to have faith in, submitting to it both inwardly and outwardly. It is the acceptance and belief of the heart that includes the actions of the heart and body, therefore it encompasses the establishment of the whole religion. This is why the Imāms and Salaf used to say, ‘Faith is the statement of the heart and tongue, action of the heart, tongue and limbs.’ Hence it comprises statement, action and belief, it increases through obedience and decreases through disobedience. It includes the beliefs of faith, its morals and manners and the actions demanded by it.

Islām: submission, submitting to the will of Allāh through following His law as revealed upon the tongue of the Messenger (ﷺ).

Isnād: support. The chain of authorities on which a narration is based, linking the end narrator of a narration to the one it is attributed to, be it the Prophet (ﷺ) or anyone else, narrator by narrator.

Istidrāj: gradually leading to a desired conclusion. Technically refers

to Allāh gradually leading one who displays ingratitude to His favours to his destruction as a befitting recompense. Some of the Salaf would say, ‘When you see Allāh bestowing His blessings upon you, one after the other, and you are steadfast in disobeying Him, then beware for this is *istidrāj* by which He gradually leads you to destruction.’

Ittibāʿ: following, technically referring to following the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Jāhiliyyah: Pre-Islāmic Ignorance. Technically this refers to the condition of a people before the guidance of Allāh reaches them, or the state of a people that prevents them from accepting the guidance of Allāh.

Jahl: ignorance.

Kalām: speech, discourse. Technically used to refer to dialectics and scholastic theology.

Kufr: denial, rejection, hiding, technically referring to disbelief. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).

Majhūl: unknown. A reference to a narrator from whom only one narrator narrates (*majhūl al-ʿain*) or whose state of precision (*dabt*) is unknown (*majhūl al-ḥāl*), such a narrator makes the *isnād ḍaʿīf*.

Matruk: abandoned. A narrator who is accused of lying, or makes many mistakes, or makes mistakes in aḥādith that are agreed upon, or narrates from famous narrators that which those

narrators do not know.

Munqati': that ḥadīth from which the narrator just before the Companion has been omitted from its *isnād*.

Murāqabah: self-inspection. The servant having the sure knowledge that Allāh sees him in all circumstances and knows all that he is doing, as such the he does his utmost not to fall into the prohibited matters and to correct his own failings.

Mursal: disconnected. A ḥadīth whereby a *Tābi'ī* narrates directly from the Prophet (ﷺ) without mentioning the Companion. In the view of the majority of Scholars it is a sub-category of *ḍa'īf*.

Muṣḥaf: text of the Qur'ān

Qadr: Divine Decree and Destiny.

Qur'ān: The actual Word of Allāh revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ) in the Arabic language through the medium of the Angel Gabriel and the greatest miracle bestowed him. It consists of 114 chapters commencing with al-Fātiḥah and ending with an-Nās.

Riyā': showing off, ostentation, an example of which lies in person beautifying actions of worship because he knows people are watching.

Ruqyā': recitation used to cure an illness or disease. It can only be done in the Arabic tongue, in words whose meaning is understood, using verses of the Qur'ān or supplications of the Prophet combined with the belief that it is only Allāh who in reality gives the cure.

Ṣaḥīḥ: correct, authentic. A ḥadīth which has a continuously linked *isnād*, of just, morally upright and precise narrators; containing no irregularity (*shādh*) or hidden defect (*'illab*). Hence five conditions have to be met: the *isnād* being continuously linked; the justice (*'adl*) of the narrator; the precision (*dabt*) of the narrator; its not being *shādh*; and its not containing an *'illab*. The ḥadīth can be *ṣaḥīḥ* in and of itself, or it can contain a defect but still be ruled to be *ṣaḥīḥ* due to supporting evidences.

Salaf: predecessors. Technically used to refer to the best generations of Muslims, the first three generation: the *Ṣaḥābah*, the *Tābi'ūn* and the *Tab' Tābi'ūn* due to the ḥadīth, "The best of people are my generation, then the one that follows, then the one that follows."

Shādh: irregular, odd. A ḥadīth narrated by a trustworthy and precise narrator that contradicts the narrative of other narrators or the narration of one more trustworthy and precise than him, provided that a reconciliation is not possible.

Shirk: association, technically referring to directing a right that is due to Allāh Alone to another object of creation, either completely or partially. It can be major (removing a person from the fold of Islām) or minor (not removing a person from the fold of Islām).

Sunnab: way, path. The actions, words, descriptions, commands, prohibitions and tacit approvals of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Tābi'ūn: The generation following that of the Companions.

Tab' Tābi'ūn: The generation following that of the *Tābi'ūn*.

Tadlīs: deceit. An action of a narrator whereby he makes out that he heard something from a particular narrator what he did not hear or conceals the identity of the one he is narrating from. In order to do so, he will use terms that are vague such as ‘such-and-such said’ and ‘on the authority of such-and-such.’ The first type of *tadlīs* is blameworthy and constitutes a defect in the *isnād*. The second is dependant upon exactly what was done and the motives of the narrator, it can be blameworthy or not.

Taqwā: the basic meaning of which is setting a barrier between two things. This is why it is said that one *ittaqa* with his shield, i.e. he set it as a barrier between him and the one who wished him evil. Therefore it is as if the one who has *taqwa* (*muttaqī*) has used his following the commands of Allāh and avoiding His prohibitions as a barrier between himself and the Punishment. Hence he has preserved and fortified himself against the punishment of Allāh through his obeying Him.

Tawḥīd: unification, monotheism, the belief in the absolute Oneness of Allāh. It is to believe that Allāh Alone is the creator, nourisher, and sustainer of the worlds; it is to believe that Allāh Alone deserves to be worshipped; and it is to believe that He has unique and perfect Names and Attributes that far transcend anything that one can imagine.

Waraʿ: pious caution, scrupulousness. A mannerism through which the heart is purified of all that would sully it and has been excellently summarised in the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), “From the excellence of ones Islām is his leaving that which does not concern him.” It is to leave all that causes one doubt, all that does not concern him, to continuously bring oneself to account and to devote oneself to Allāh. Some of the Salaf said,

‘None attains the reality of *taqwā* until he leaves that which is harmless for fear of falling into that which is harmful.’

Yaqīn: certainty. It is faith (*Īmān*) what the soul is to the body, it is the soul to the actions of the heart which in turn formulate the souls to the actions of the limbs and through it one attains the rank of *Ṣiddīq*. From *yaqīn* does *tawakkul* (absolute reliance in Allāh) sprout and through *yaqīn* is all doubt, suspicion and worry dispelled and the heart filled with love, hope and fear of Allāh. *Yaqīn* is of three levels, that which arises from knowledge (*‘ilm al-yaqīn*), seeing (*‘ain al-yaqīn*) and actual experience (*ḥaqq al-yaqīn*).

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Hell is the final abode prepared by Allāh, the Most High for those do not believe in Him, those who transgress against His Laws and deny His Messengers. It epitomises the scourge of punishment, filled with indescribable torment, pain and grief that has been detailed by Allāh and His Messenger (ﷺ).

It is often observed from our righteous predecessors that they regularly took account of themselves lest they become negligent of the Hereafter and fall under divine retribution that'll be weighed against mankind on the Day of Judgement. When a fire torch was once lit for 'Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb, he felt angst at its burning heat, so he reprimanded himself, "How will you be patient if you encounter this O son of Al-Khaṭṭāb!" He was of course, making a worldly parallel with the unparalleled Fire of Hell.

Such self-reprimand was a true recognition reflecting fear of being cast into Hell as one of its inhabitants. And there is no more poignant way towards reform and turning back to Allāh than learning about Hellfire and its unsettling descriptions. Mentioning its penalties and punishments entices a wise person to avoid the means leading to them: "Evil indeed it is as an abode and as a place to dwell." [Al-Furqān, 66]

Imām Ibn Rajab gathered together Prophetic narrations and many statements from scholars that warn regarding the Fire, means to safeguard against it and the state of those who truly fear its consequences - with the purpose to practically awaken our inattentiveness and jolt our beings into positive action and treading the Path towards its opposite: Paradise.

"Indeed, they who are apprehensive from fear of their Lord... It is these who hasten to good deeds and they are foremost in them." [Al-Mu'minūn, 57-61]

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