

Paradise and its Bounties

Paradise means a better world, a place with a pleasing atmosphere and full of varying bounties, in which the righteous would live after death. The Holy Quran has mentioned it as 'Garden', which denotes a place full of greenery and trees. In Quran, there are numerous verses, which promise Paradise to the believers and enumerate its different beauties and bounties; some of which are as follows:

وَيَشْرِبُونَ الْوَيْنَ الْعَذِيبَ وَيَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَأْلَافًا مِّنْ حِوَارٍ تُجْرِي
وَيَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَأْلَافًا مِّنْ حِوَارٍ تُجْرِي
وَيَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَأْلَافًا مِّنْ حِوَارٍ تُجْرِي
وَيَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَأْلَافًا مِّنْ حِوَارٍ تُجْرِي

And convey good news to those who believe and do good deeds, that they shall have gardens in which rivers flow; whenever they shall be given a portion of the fruit thereof, they shall say: This is what was given to us before; and they shall be given the like of it, and they shall have pure mates in them, and in them, they shall abide. (2:25)

لَكِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا نُزُلًا مِّنْ عِندِ اللَّهِ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِّلْأَبْرَارِ

But as to those who are careful of (their duty to) their Lord, they shall have gardens beneath which rivers flow, abiding in them; an entertainment from their Lord, and that which is with Allah is best for the righteous. (3: 198)

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَمَسْكِنٍ طَيِّبَةٍ فِي جَنَّاتٍ عِدْنٍ وَرِضْوَانٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

Allah has promised to the believing men and the believing women gardens, beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them, and goodly dwellings in gardens of perpetual abode; and best of all is Allah's goodly pleasure- that is the grand achievement. (9:72)

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ أُكُلُهَا دَائِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا تِلْكَ عُقُوبَى الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَ عُقُوبَى الْكٰفِرِينَ النَّارُ

A likeness of the garden which the righteous are promised; there now beneath it rivers, its food and shades are perpetual; this is the requital of those who guarded (against evil), and the requital of the unbelievers is the fire. (13:35)

جَنَّتٌ عَدْنٌ يَدْخُلُونَهَا تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُمْ فِيهَا مَا يَشَاءُونَ كَذٰلِكَ يَجْزِي اللَّهُ الْمُتَّقِينَ

The gardens of perpetuity, they shall enter them, rivers flowing beneath them; they shall have in them what they please. Thus does Allah reward those who guard (against evil). (16:31)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّٰلِحٰتِ إِنَّا لَا نُضِيعُ أَجْرَ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا * أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّتٌ عَدْنٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ مُتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَ حَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا

Surely (as for) those who believe and do good, We do not waste the reward of him who does a good work. These it is for whom are gardens of perpetuity beneath which rivers flow, ornaments shall be given to them therein of bracelets of gold, and they shall wear green robes of fine silk and thick silk brocade interwoven with gold, reclining therein on raised couches; excellent the recompense and goodly the resting place. (18:30-31)

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

So no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes; a reward for what they did. (32: 17)

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا بِآيٰتِنَا وَكَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ * ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ أَنْتُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ تُحْبَرُونَ * يُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِصِحَافٍ مِّن ذَهَبٍ وَ أَكْوَابٍ وَ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهِيهِ الْأَنفُسُ وَتَلَذُّ الْأَعْيُنُ وَأَنْتُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ * وَتِلْكَ الْجَنَّةُ الَّتِي أُورِثْتُمُوهَا بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ * لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَاكِهَةٌ كَثِيرَةٌ مِّنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ

Those who believed in Our communications and were submissive: Enter the garden, you and your wives; you shall be made happy. There shall be sent round to them golden bowls and drinking-cups and therein shall be what their souls yearn after and (wherein) the eyes shall delight, and you shall abide therein. And this is the garden which you are given as an inheritance on account of what you did. For you therein are many fruits of which you shall eat. (43:69-73)

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّم يَتَغَيَّر طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن عَسَلٍ مُصَفًّى وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِن كُل الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ كَمَن هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي النَّارِ

A parable of the garden which those guarding (against evil) are promised: Therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change, and rivers of drink delicious to those who drink, and rivers of honey clarified and for them therein are all fruits and protection from their Lord. (Are these) like those who abide in the fire... (47: 15)

سَابِقُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا عَرْضُ السَّمَاءِ وَالأَرْضِ أُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ

Hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and to a garden the extensiveness of which is as the extensiveness of the heaven and the earth; it is prepared for those who believe in Allah and His apostles... (57:21)

إِنَّ الأَبْرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِّن كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُوراً * عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا عِبَادُ اللّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا

Surely the righteous shall drink of a cup the admixture of which is camphor A fountain from which the servants of Allah shall drink; they make it to flow a (goodly) flowing forth. (76:5-6)

وَ جَزَاهُمْ بِمَا صَبَرُوا جَنَّةً وَحَرِيرًا * مُتَكَئِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الأَرَاكِ لا يَرَوْنَ فِيهَا شَمْسًا وَلا زَمَهْرِيرًا * وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلَالُهَا وَذُلِّلَتْ قُطُوفُهَا تَذْلِيلًا * وَبُطَافٌ عَلَيْهِمْ بَآئِنَةٍ مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيرًا * قَوَارِيرًا مِّن فِضَّةٍ قَدْرُوهَا تَقْدِيرًا * وَيُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا * عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلًا * وَبَطُوفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَالأَدَانُ مُخَلَّدُونَ إِذَا رَأَيْتَهُمْ حَسِبْتَهُمْ لُؤْلُؤًا مَّنثُورًا * وَإِذَا رَأَيْتَ تَمَّ رَأَيْتَ نَعِيمًا وَ مُلْكًا كَبِيرًا * عَالِيَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ سُنْدُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ وَحُلُوءٌ أَسَاوِرٌ مِّن فِضَّةٍ وَ سَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا

And reward them, because they were patient, with garden and silk. Reclining therein on raised couches, they shall find therein neither (the severe heat of) the sun nor intense cold. And close down upon them (shall be) its shadows, and its fruits shall be made near (to them), being easy to reach. And there shall be made to go round about them vessels of silver and goblets which are of glass. (Transparent as) glass, made of silver; they have measured them according to a measure.

And they shall be made to drink therein a cup the admixture of which shall be ginger. (Of) a fountain therein which is named Salsabil. And round about them shall go youths never altering in age; when you see them you will think them to be scattered pearls. And when you see there, you shall see blessings and a great kingdom. Upon them shall be garments of fine green silk and thick silk interwoven with gold, and they shall be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Lord shall make them drink a pure drink. (76: 12-21)

The above verses describe Paradise as a place of extremely high standards and pleasing atmosphere in which different types of bounties are ready. They include verdant trees below which streams of sweet water flow; different delicious and fragrance fruits, which would be obtained without any efforts; brooks of clean milk and honey and pure wine flow there; whenever they want they can drink from it; fowl meat is ready for them; they recline on comfortable sofas in beautiful palaces and handsome servants continuously go around them entertaining them.

They wear dresses of fine and soft garments and stroll in the gardens of Paradise; there would be Houries of Paradise for them, who are extremely beautiful and no man has touched them before this and they have not even looked at any man, except their consorts; and the righteous believers would have to just mention whatever he wants and it would be made available to him in Paradise.

It is mentioned that the above mentioned bounties are similar to the bounties of the world and it is necessary to accept this fact, but it is not necessary that we should consider them exactly as worldly examples having all worldly aspects and defects; if it had been so, Paradise would have been a part of the world, and not of hereafter. In the circumstance that hereafter is a very lofty, world which is not in the whole world; matters of the hereafter are pure of the defects of the matters of the world.

In some verses and traditions also the same excellence is mentioned and below we present some of them by way of examples:

The foods in the world are tasty, but along with it they have additional matters which must necessarily be expelled in urine and feces; but the foods of Paradise do not create excrement. Fruits of the world have to be picked, but the branches of fruits of Paradise would themselves come to the believer:

وَدَانِيَةً عَلَيْهِمْ ظِلَالُهَا وَذُلِّلَتْ قُطُوفُهَا تَذْلِيلًا

And close down upon them (shall be) its shadows, and its fruits shall be made near (to them), being easy to reach. (76: 14)

Waters and milk of the world are prone to go bad if they are left for a long time, and their taste undergoes a change, but the water and milk of Paradise do not go bad:

فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِنْ مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ لَبَنٍ لَمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ

Therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change. (47: 15)

Worldly drinks are tasty, but they also lead to intoxication and addiction; as opposed to drinks of Paradise, which are tasty but are pure of the defects of the worldly drinks.

Whatever is mentioned especially concerns bounties whose corrupted versions are found in the world; but it can be concluded from Quran that in Paradise there would be numerous bounties, which are much more superior and so extraordinary that they were neither heard nor seen. Nor the human heart had ever imagined them. The Holy Quran says:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ

So no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes... (32: 17)

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“There are such bounties in Paradise that neither the human eye has seen them nor the human heart has imagined.”¹

Bounties of Paradise would come in search of the believer and not that the believer has to go out in search of them. Amirul Momineen (as) said:

“Tooba is a tree in Paradise; its roots are in the house of the Messenger of Allah (S), and it will have a branch in the house of every believer; whenever a believer desires something, it would be given to him by that branch.”²

The folks of Paradise would remain in perpetual youth and elegance. Senility, disease, weakness, pain, sorrow, jealousy enmity and worry have no place in Paradise. People of Paradise would enjoy the different types of foods, but would not produce any excrement. They would live in Paradise forever and death will never come to them.

The late Mulla Mohsin Faiz Kashani has mentioned the difference between the bounties of Paradise and the bounties of the world:

Desire of man is under the control of things, which are beyond existence but the matters of Paradise would be under the control of the folks of Paradise. Whatever they desire would be given to them only by wishing for it. The Almighty Allah says in the Holy Quran:

وَ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهُهُ الْاَنْفُسُ وَ تَلذُّ الْاَعْيُنُ

...therein shall be what their souls yearn after and (wherein) the eyes shall delight... (43:71)

Thus whatever they intend would be given to them immediately and not that what is present at that time.³ Another difference is that the growth of the hereafter is the growth of effulgence, perception, divine proximity, life and appearance; matters of the hereafter are alive and perceptible.

As mentioned in traditions, different fruits would tell the folks of Paradise: ‘O Wali of Allah, eat me before you are inclined to something else.’ And when the believer sits on his throne, it would become extremely elated. And it is mentioned in Quran that:

وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

...as for the next abode, that most surely is the life- did they but know! (29:64)[4](#)

Grades of Paradise

Paradise has different grades and ranks. The bounties of Paradise are also not same for all the people of Paradise. All folks of Paradise are not confined to the same place.

Some are placed in lofty positions and some inhabit the lower grades and some occupy the middle stages.

Amirul Momineen (as) has said in description of Paradise:

“It has more and higher grades; it has different kinds of abodes and its bounties are never exhausted. Its inhabitants never depart and one who lives therein never becomes aged, its folks never fall in any need.”[5](#)

The Quran says:

هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ

There are (varying) grades with Allah, and Allah sees what they do. (3: 163)

And it says:

لَا يَسْتَوِي الْفَاعِلُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُولَى الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

The holders back from among the believers, not having any injury, and those who strive hard in Allah’s way with their property and their persons are not equal; Allah has made the strivers with their property and their persons to excel the holders back a (high) degree, and to each (class) Allah has promised good; and Allah shall grant to the strivers above the holders back a mighty reward. (4:95)

And also says:

يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

Allah will exalt those of you who believe, and those who are given knowledge, in high degrees; and Allah is Aware of what you do. (58: 11)

Also it says:

وَلِكُلِّ دَرَجَاتٍ مِمَّا عَمِلُوا وَلِيُوقَفِيَهُمْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

And for all are degrees according to what they did, and that He may pay them back fully their deeds and they shall not be wronged. (46: 19)

The loftiest stage of Paradise is Rizwan; the Holy Quran says:

وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ أَكْبَرُ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

...and best of all is Allah's goodly pleasure- that is the grand achievement. (9:72)

Therefore all the believers would go to Paradise and enjoy the bounties of Paradise; but the abode of Paradise is not same for them all, neither the bounties that they would enjoy. On the contrary there are so many differences between them that our limited intellect cannot understand them all. It is possible that these differences are due to the following reasons:

One: How much divine recognition they have and what are their religious beliefs.

Two: Their mental faculties and potential in observing moral values;

Three: How particular they are in performing their religious duties.

Four: Quantum of piety, refraining from evil traits and abstaining from sins.

Although the people of Paradise would get whatever they intend or wish for, immediately:

وَ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهُهُ الْأَنْفُسُ وَاَلَّذُ الْأَعْيُنُ

...therein shall be what their souls yearn after and (wherein) the eyes shall delight... (43:71)

But the desires of all the people are not same; on the contrary they are dependent on their cognition and faith.

Access to Paradise and Enjoying Its Bounties

Paradise is earned in this same world through faith and correct beliefs, good ethics and deeds and through keeping away from sins and it would become clear in the world of the hereafter. Paradise and its bounties are as a result of the deeds of the world; on the contrary they would be the deeds themselves.

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) said:

“Allah, the exalted and the blessed said: My true servants, enjoy the bounties of My worship in this world, as you will enjoy the same in the world of the hereafter.”[6](#)

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“In Paradise there are transparent palaces of glass, which would be occupied by those from my nation, who speak nicely with others, who feed the poor, greet aloud and during the night when people sleep, they are occupied in prayers.”[7](#)

Imam Sajjad (as) said:

“Be blessed through reciting and acting on the Holy Quran. Indeed the Almighty Allah has created Paradise with bricks of gold and silver. Its mortar is musk; its sand is saffron and emeralds its pebbles. He has made the stages of Paradise as numerous as the verses of Quran. One who recited the Quran in the world (and acted on it) on Judgment Day he would be told: Recite and continue to climb and anyone who enters Paradise would not be higher than him, except the prophets and the truthful ones.”[8](#)

The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“When on the night of ascension I entered Paradise, I beheld a white plain where a number of angels were building palaces of gold and silver bricks. Now they plied their work, and then they stood idle. I asked them why their labors were interrupted. They replied, “We wait to be paid for our labors.” “What payments?” I asked. They answered, “The recital on earth by believers of such ascriptions as: Glory be to Allah, and praise be to Allah, and there is no god except Allah, and Allah is the greatest. Whenever they pronounce these ascriptions, we build; but when they cease, our work also ceases.”[9](#)

The Messenger of Allah (S) also said:

“Generosity is a tree of the trees of Paradise, with branches hanging in the world; one who is generous is taken hold by one of those branches and taken to Paradise. And miserliness is a tree from the trees of Hell; it has branches in the world; thus one who is miserly takes up one of its branches and enters Hell.”[10](#)

Quran says:

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ * وَ سَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَ جَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ
لِلْمُتَّقِينَ * الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ * وَ
الَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَ مَنْ يَغْفِرِ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ لَمْ يَصِرُوا عَلَى
مَا فَعَلُوا وَ هُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ * أُولَئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَ نِعْمَ أَجْرُ
الْعَامِلِينَ

And obey Allah and the Apostle, that you may be shown mercy. And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord; and a Garden, the extensiveness of which is (as) the heavens and the earth, it is prepared for those who guard (against evil). Those who spend (benevolently) in ease as well as in straitness, and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men; and Allah loves the doers of good (to others). And those who when they commit an indecency or do injustice to their souls remember Allah and ask forgiveness for their faults- and who forgives the faults but Allah, and (who) do not knowingly persist in what they have done. (As for) these- their reward is forgiveness from their Lord, and gardens beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them, and excellent is the reward of the laborers. (3: 132-136)

That which is mentioned here was about the perfect Paradise, but as for the Paradise of morals, good qualities and the Paradise of meeting the Lord; it is another thing, to explain which is beyond the aim of this brief treatise.

Our final statement is: Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds. O Allah pity my old age, the termination of my days, the approach of my death and my feebleness, my poverty and the scarcity of resources! Pity me when my trace disappears from the world, my memory is wiped off from among the creatures and I be one who is forgotten!

My Lord, pity me at my resurrection and my rising (from the grave). On that day, let my place be with Your friends, my exit among Your friends and my dwelling in Your neighborhood, O Lord, of the Worlds! O my God, discontinue Your goodness in my life and do not cut off Your favors on me at my death Oh, the most merciful of the merciful ones.

- [1.](#) Wasailush Shia, Vol. 11, Pg. 476.
- [2.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 8, Pg. 117.
- [3.](#) Usul al-Ma'rif, Pg. 197.
- [4.](#) Usul al-Ma'rif, Pg. 201.
- [5.](#) Nahjul Balagha, Sermon 85.
- [6.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 8, Pg. 155.
- [7.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 8, Pg. 119.
- [8.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 8, Pg. 133.
- [9.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 8, Pg. 123.
- [10.](#) Biharul Anwar, Vol. 8, Pg. 171.

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