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Hell

The Fire of Hell says Amen on the Supplication of the Believer

The worldly fire does not have any perception and feeling, but the fire of Hell possesses sight and hearing; so much so, it is narrated that when a person says: O Allah save me from Hellfire, the Hell says: Amen. One who seeks the refuge of Allah from the mischief of Hellfire, the Hell says Amen for him. In the same way is the case of Houries of Paradise; that when a believer person prays: O Allah, marry me to a Hourie of Paradise; the Hourie herself says: Amen.

The Hell says that There is Space for More

When Hellfire decries someone from a distance, it begins to agitate and becomes furious; and it calls out; it speaks up. It is mentioned in the Holy Quran that when Hell would be asked: Are you full? It would reply: Is there more? That is are there more sinners left? Some commentators of Quran have considered the treasure of Hell to be destiny and taken the address of Hell to be that of the angels appointed on Hell, which is against the apparent meaning of the address.

Although through the study of other verses also we can learn about the perceptive ability of Hell as was mentioned before. If an ignorant person thinks that Hellfire is only for infidels and enemies of Ahle Bayt (a.s.), and it is not going to cause harm to anyone else and the believers have nothing to do with it; on the basis of this, firstly we should know that who is it who departs from the world with faith? They do not fear that Shaitan has destroyed their faith.

If supposing they do not die with faith; do they not know that there are seven levels of Hell? This is from the confirmed facts and is the declaration of the Holy Quran. 3 The first level whose chastisement is the easiest. It is abode of those who have not been purified in Barzakh as well and who were postponed till Qiyamat.

Different Levels of the Chastisement of Hell

There is tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) that some people of my Ummah would be in fire up to the shins, some would be enveloped in fire till the thighs, some till the waist, some till the neck and some would be completely immersed in chastisement.

In the same way, it is mentioned in another tradition that the person getting the lightest punishment in Hell would be one who made to wear shoes of fire and because of its heat, his brain would be on the boil. We are much away from it. Where are the signs of faith in us? Where is our hope and fear?

Color of Hellfire

In spite of the fact that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) has been clearly promised the power of intercession,4 and he himself is an expression of salvation and mercy; even then what is his condition? How fearful he is of Hell? Abu Basir says: I came to Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) and said: Maula, my heart has become hard. Imam (a.s.) said: One day Jibraeel Ameen came to the Seal of the prophets. He used to be very cheerful usually. But that day he was very fearful and aggrieved. Sorrow and grief were apparent from his face.

The Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) asked: Why are you so gloomy today? Jibraeel Amin said: O Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.), the blowing of Hell is concluded today. The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) asked: What is the blowing of Hell. Jibraeel replied: The fire of Hell was lighted by the orders of Allah for thousand years till it became white. Then it was kept burning for another thousand years till it turned black. And now they have concluded it. I am terrified of the horror of fire.

The Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) also started crying. An angel came down and said: The Almighty Allah has promised you that He would keep you away from every sin that makes one eligible for Hellfire.

Zaggum Hanzal is Bitterer than Neem

The Almighty Allah has said in many places in the Holy Quran that Zaqqum which is the diet 5of sinners in Hell. It is a tree, whose fruit, Hanzal is bitterer than Neem. Only a particle of its bitterness is kept in this world, which has more stench than a stinking corpse. Its outward appearance is extremely horrible and terrifying.

When it passes down the throat, it begins to boil up, but it creates so much pain of hunger that even the folks of Hell begin to feed on it. What hunger it is that man becomes prepared to eat Zaqqum as well? Among the other foods of Hell is Ghislin Zari'.

Boiling, which even Melts the Flesh of the Face

It is most appropriate that I should mention the drinks of Hell; one of them being Sadeed. It is said that it is the dirt of adulterous women, which is extremely hot and boiling; and it carries a terrible stench. It is flowing like a flood.

The folks of Hell would be so thirsty that they would be compelled to quench their thirst from that liquid and then scream out: Give us water! 6 Among the drinks of Hell is Hameem. It is so hot that when a tumbler of it would be brought forth to drink, before the contents could be taken in the mouth, the heat of this liquid would cause the flesh of the face to melt and drop.

Believers are Certain

When the infidels hear all this, they say: It is only fiction. 7 It is like the stories of Rustam and Isfandiyar. But it is not so. The Quran is truth. The Paradise and Hell are facts. 8 When the believers hear all this, they believe it all. When the verses of Quran are recited in their presence, there is increase in their faith. 9 In fact the most confirmed report is that which the Almighty Allah has conveyed.

The Garment of Hell would be of Fire

"Their shirts made of pitch and the fire covering their faces." 1011

It is mentioned in the Holy Quran in many places that the folks of Hell would be wearing garments of fire. 12 Like the inmates of prison are made to wear a special dress, the folks of Hell would also be dressed in a special dress of Hell made of fire. It is also worth knowing about the salient features of Hell and it is mentioned in the Holy Quran that an inmate of Hell would be made to wear a chain seventy yards in length. After that he would be dragged into the fire. 13

Entreaty of Imam Ali (a.s.)

It is Ali (a.s.) who swoons during worship at midnight and entreats to the Almighty Allah to give refuge from such a chastisement and says in his whispered prayers (Munajat): O Allah, I seek Your refuge on Judgment Day. The day when children and wealth would give no one any advantage; except to those bestowed with a perfect conscience by Almighty Allah. 14

Some Examples of the Chastisement of Hell

Even if a single link of the chains of Hell is brought into the world, it would reduce the whole world to ashes. Among the sections of chastisement is that the caretakers are very nasty tempered and horrible. When the inmates of Hell want to come out of the fire of Hell, they are turned back with fire only. 15

It is narrated that the inmates of Hell would fall for seventy years and then thrash their limbs in order to come up. And when they would be about to reach the surface, the caretakers of Hell would hit at their heads with their maces (called Magma plural Magameh) and send them down again. 16

Maces of Hell on Heads of the Inmates of Hell

It is a statement of the Holy Quran and not a weak report. On the contrary, it is clearly the Holy Quran. The head which did not bow down in submission to the Almighty Allah all the life and had remained disobedient, in fact it is deserving of the maces of Hell with which his head would be hit. It is mentioned in the tradition of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) that Jibraeel (a.s.) informed him that if one of those maces were to be hit at the caves of this world, it would destroy seven layers of the earth.

People of Submission will not go to Hell

Rebellion people are deserving of such chastisement. Hell is the abode of rebels. Otherwise, if someone is from the folks of submission; that is he has submitted to the Almighty Allah, what concern he has with Hell? But those who are disobedient and rebellious and according to the interpretation of the Holy Quran, are 'Utul' (ignoble) or unjust. 17

On Judgment Day, their bodies would become hard like their selves. The body of the folks of Hell would be hard like their hearts, because in the world, their hearts were harder than rocks. 18 So on Judgment Day their bodies would be like their hearts. Thus, no one should object how this weak body can be subjected to such a severe punishment.

Hard Bodies like Hearts

It is mentioned in Kifayat Muwahideen that the folks of chastisement would get seventy layers of skin and thickness of each layer would be equal to forty yards. That rebellious self, not influenced by verses of Quran in this world, would also become hard on Judgment Day.

It is mentioned in another report that the teeth of the people of Hell would become like mountains of Uhad. Such hard selves and heart would become apparent in the body, the heart which was not influenced by Quran; althoughneven water erodes a rock and makes a hole in it. Death is mentioned, Qiyamat is mentioned, but even then the hardness of self and heart pays no heed and goes to such an extent that Imam Husain (a.s.) is compelled to say: Take this infant and give him a drink of water. But in greed of the rewards of the accursed Yazid the killers pay no heed.

In the Hereafter

In the hereafter, what one feels and thinks would be visible on the faces. That is the body will take the form of what one is internally. Thus whatever is in the hidden conscience would become

apparent. 19 Hearts, which are delicate, would not be able to bear to hear that chastisement. The body would also become thin like a petal. The folks of Paradise are also like this. They also cannot hear it. Delicate neck of an infant becomes the target of a three-pronged arrow.

If Paradise and Hell are Present, Where are they?

It is asked that if Paradise and Hell are present, where are they? This question is mentioned in traditional reports as well and the Imam (a.s.) replied it saying that yes, Paradise and Hell are present even now. But to say that where Paradise is located? According to reports, it is located above the seventh heaven; and the reply of the question that where Hell is; it is said that it is below the surface of the earth.

It is mentioned in some traditional reports: By the sea of fire; that is oath is taken of a sea of fire. It is an indication that the earth throws out the fire which is there in it. There are a large number of traditions regarding the fact that Paradise and Hell are present right now; one of them being the report of Meraj.

Creation of Lady Zahra (s.a.) from the Apple of Paradise

This report must have been heard time and again that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) said: On the night of ascension (Meraj), when I entered heaven, Jibraeel brought to me an apple of Paradise and I consumed it. That matter converted to the seed, through which Fatima was conceived.

Perpetuity in Hell - Special Feature of Hell Inmates

Although I convey the good news to believers that one who takes faith, equal to even a single particle, would at last be able to come out of Hell. The gate of Hell does not bear that a person having even the least faith should be with it.

Perpetuity in Hell is only for the folks of malice: infidels and polytheists. 20lf a believer dies without repenting for his sins, and is not purified by Barzakh, he will remain in Hell till he is purified; but how long he would remain in Hell is a matter related to his sins, which he has taken with himself. In brief, just as he has behaved here, in the same way he would see himself there. If he has made himself a wolf, a quadruped etc, he would be same there also; if he had acted like an angel, he would be an angel there also.

As long as you don't adopt the qualities of angels, you would not be able to gain the lofty rank of the hereafter and will not be able to gain Paradise. Till you don't converse with the angels, angels will not come to meet you in hordes. 21 The first night in the grave and after that on different times, man will be having the condition as he has molded himself.

Bashir and Mubashshir are same Nakir and Munkir

You must have heard that on the first night in the grave, two angels arrive to interrogate the dead and they are famous as Munkir and Nakeer. The root words of Nakeer and Munkir is N-K-R, which means that which causes harm and which displeases. What is the function of Nakeer and Munkir? The reply is: It is for one who died without becoming a man. But if someone became a man, there is no Munkir and Nakeer for him.

On the contrary, there is Bashir and Mubashshir; that is those who convey the good news. It is mentioned in the Dua of the month of Rajab that: O Allah, on the first night in the grave, do not make me encounter Munkir and Nakeer; on the contrary let me see Bashir and Mubashshir. Thus they are not more than two angels.

There is Bashir and Mubashshir for that believer man, who had reformed himself and for the disbeliever there is Nakeer and Munkir. It is upto you, no one else would be present there to make arrangements for you. In this background, please pay attention to some interesting lines of poetry composed by Imam Ali (a.s.):

After death one has only that which he has provided for himself here. What type of a house one has built for himself? Two hand spans in length and two spans in breadth or as far as the eye can see? If he has created wideness there is no kind of thirst for you. Wideness after the death of man in that world is dependent on the wideness of the heart.

Faces will be Raised According to Deeds

It is mentioned in Tafsir Qummi under the interpretation of the verse: "The day on which the trumpet shall be blown so you shall come forth in hosts." 22

...that the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) was asked whether this verse was concerning infidels or Muslims? His Eminence replied: It is with regard to Muslims; who would enter the field of Mahshar in ten rows. Some would come in form of monkeys, some as pigs; some hanging down their heads and a group will be brought blind. Some people would be chewing their tongues and dirt would be dripping from it and some will be raised in a condition that their face would be illuminated like a full moon. They would resemble angels hovering over the crowd.

In other words, everyone would be raised according to his character and nature. If he develops angelic habits, tomorrow on Judgment Day, he would possess more elegance than the angels and if he becomes a wild beast, he develops anger and base desires in himself he would become an implication of that well known traditional report, in which it is said that people would arrive on the field of gathering in such a form that the ape and wolf would seem more beautiful than them.

And they would be so horrified of their own forms that they would wish to be cast into Hell as soon as possible so that people may not see them in that condition. Indeed, how painful it must be for them that they consider Hell a comfortable place? Yes, one who cultivates the qualities of wild animals would be like this only.

The dog bites with teeth, but a human being tears up with speech and writing and he criticizes and condemns others. He is not fearful of his words; he insults some and some he causes distress. In other words, on Judgment Day the face of every person would be like his internal being. If he is human internally, he would be there in the best form and if he is internally a beast, he would be raised in the worst form.

Chastisement of Hell is in Addition to Worldly Punishment

It is known through the study of Resurrection that the punishment of the hereafter is not like the punishment of the world. For example, they would bring someone and cast him into prison. They would pull out his nails. It is another thing. It cannot be compared to worldly punishment. We will not discuss the personification of deeds over here. In the same way is the fire, which man will raise with his tongue.23

In other words, as much as we want, we can form an image of Hell and its chastisement, even then we would not be able to understand its reality. We should only know that it is not worldly and its condition and quality is not from the fundamentals of religion that it should be necessary to know about it and have faith in it.

Dream of a Hell Inmate

"And one of His signs is your sleeping and your seeking of His grace by night and (by) day" 24

In Usul Kafi it is mentioned in interpretation of the above verse that human beings did not have dreams previously. When the Almighty Allah appointed a prophet on his nation and he preached to them about Barzakh, questioning of the grave and reward and punishment, the people did not believe him and they used to say how a dead man can be questioned. After death we would be mixed up with dust.

Thus the Almighty Allah bestowed dreams to all the people of that nation. After that they began to have a particular dream; such a different dream that they had never seen them before; and when they met each other, they used to say:

Last night I saw many things in my dream, but when I woke up, there was nothing. Another one said: I said much more than this; but when I awoke, there was nothing. At last they mentioned this to their Prophet. He said: The Almighty Allah wants that you should understand that after death also, it is possible for man to be in dream. But this body would be in dust and in a long sleep or God forbid, he

wails and asks for help.

It is mentioned in Maniul Akhbar that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) said: Before being appointed to the office of prophet hood, I was grazing the goats of my uncle; in such condition, sometimes I see that goats run about in panic without any apparent cause; I asked Jibraeel of its cause and he said: When the wail of a dead is raised in Barzakh, all can hear it except Jinns and human beings.

These goats panic, because of that sound. It is divine wisdom that God has concealed the sounds of the dead from the living, so that their comfort is not disturbed.

The Dead Request the Living

If man can hear the wails and screams of his near kindred, he cannot remain alive. It is a divine wisdom that no one should be aware of the condition of the dead. Now Allah knows what the dead entreat and request from you. Tonight, which is the Night of Power (Shabe–Qadr) they request you for supplications. Not like a request for Dua, which we make to one another. All these are only formalities; the request of a deceased for supplication is a sort of begging.

It is mentioned in traditional reports that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) wept and then said: Have mercy on the dead ones. Especially, during the month of Ramadhan and he used to say: We have the month of Ramadhan and the Night of Power; we have not realized its value. We became deprived of it.

You also come with me. But as long as we have the month of Ramadhan, you have some concern for us also. Thus they entreat in such a way that even the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) is moved. Sometimes, it is in such a way that a person sees a horrible dream and he starts crying.

However, the one who is sitting next to him cannot hear it. Or sometimes he laughs aloud with joy; in such way that if he is alive, his voice reaches to a long distance. But the one who is seated next to him cannot understand. When they go at the head side of the grave of their father, no sound is audible there, but Allah knows how that poor fellow is entreating. Or if Allah wills...

Dream: A wisdom of seeing the dreams is that man should understand life after death and he should see in dream the condition after death.

I Free the Slave Girls so that I may not go to Hell

It is mentioned that a respected lady of Medina Munawwara came behind the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) to offer prayers in the Mosque. At that moment His Eminence was reciting the above verse.

That believer lady came to the Prophet and began to weep incessantly and said: O Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.), this verse has terrified and aggrieved me. What I should do so that the doors of Hell are closed on me? He (s.a.w.s.) said: Sadaqah is a shield against the fire of Hell. O Messenger of Allah

(s.a.w.s.) I had purchased seven slave girls and I don't possess anything else (that she had bought these seven maids in exchange of her total wealth).

I emancipate each slave girl in order to close each gate of Hell. O Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) please give me assurance that the fire of Hell will not burn me.

There is Nothing, but Fear in Barzakh

It is narrated from a special companion of Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) in Man laa Yahzarahul Faqih that he said: I heard a tradition from the Imam; this tradition would continue to terrify me as long as I am alive. It has taken away my peace and comfort. I faced the most severe difficulties in the world, but it had no effect on me. The fire that is blazing in my heart is so severe that no fire affects me now. One day I was in the company of Imam Musa Kazim (a.s.) and he said:

When you want to bury the dead, you must not put it in the grave suddenly. If the corpse is male, it should be put into the grave from the foot side. If the corpse is female you must place it in the grave from her side. You must raise it three times and then bring it somewhat near and put it in the grave the third time.

There is fear and terror from the grave. There is trepidation in the world of Barzakh. How much hardness our hearts have developed? The narrator says: I can continue to travel till the end of my life, but we are not affected in any way. If someone considers them as fiction, he would be an extremely hard hearted person like Hajjaj bin Yusuf.

If only I Pass Over the Siraat Bridge

When a hypocrite came to Salman (who was a foremost Muslim, when he was the governor of Madayan) and said: O Salman: What is better? Your white beard or the tail of a dog? Salman is Salman and not a child. He heard the hypocrite and replied without any emotion:

If I pass over the Siraat Bridge, my beard is better. If I fall down, the tail of a dog is better. Since the hereafter is great in his view that is why these things do not affect the soul and heart of a believer like the humming of the housefly. Because he was great and he had recognition of greatness. In his view, material life was very short.

Till you don't grow up, you will not be able to reach to the elders and supposing you manage to reach an elder, you will run away from there and will not be able to benefit from the great station. They will not be able to take advantage of understandings and perceptions. They will be unable to gain from spirituality and its way is also patience.25

Divine Fire in the Grave of Yazid

Historians of some centuries ago write that there was a ruin in their times and it was rumored that the grave of the accursed Yazid was situated there. And it is experienced that whoever passed that way and whatever need he had and if he threw a stone or a pebble there, he used to have his need fulfilled. Due to this that place became a place of dirt and refuse. During our time, that grave is also missing. When Bani Abbas came to Syria, they dug up every Umayyad grave and burnt down its corpse. In the grave of Yazid they found a natural pile of ashes equal to the size of his physical body. Authentic Ahle Sunnat historians have also mentioned this fact. Thus that grave was filled up again. It remained a latrine for many years. Today that is also not in existence.26

This same earth, which we tread; apparently it does not possess any perception and understanding, but it is internally cognizant of the believer and infidel. Have you not heard that the earth pleads to three kinds of people on three occasions? One when an innocent blood is shed; secondly when the dirt of adultery drops on it; thirdly when someone continues to sleep from dawn till sunrise and does not even get up to pray two units of prayers.27

It is mentioned in traditional reports that when the corpse of a believer is buried and people go away from there, the grave itself says: O believer servant, when you walked on me, I used to be proud of you that you worshipped the Almighty Allah upon me and pleased me. I used to say to myself, when you will come inside me, I should recompense you. This is the time of recompense.

The grave is widened as far as the eyes of the ethereal world can see. On the other hand, if there is someone who leaves the prayer, the realm of the graves says: When he walked on me, I used to plead and protest; now I have got the opportunity of recompense. On the basis of this, the grave exerts such a terrible squeeze that it is equal to the driving of a nail into the wall. It is according to the narrowness and severity of the grave and this unfortunate man is also squeezed in the grave.

- 1. Surah Furqan 25:12
- 2. Surah Qaf 50:30
- 3. Surah Hijr 15:44
- 4. Biharul Anwar, Vol. 3
- 5. Surah Dukhan 44:43
- 6. Surah Kahf 18:29
- 7. Surah Anam 6:25
- 8. Surah Haqqah 69:1
- 9. Surah Anfal 8:3
- 10. Maad, Chapter 5
- 11. Surah Ibrahim 14:50
- 12. Surah Shoara 26:89
- 13. Surah Hajj 22:19
- 14. Surah Haggah 69:32
- 15. Surah Hajj 22:22

- 16. Surah Hajj 22:21
- 17. Surah Qalam 68:13
- 18. Surah Baqarah 2:74
- 19. Surah Tariq 86:9
- 20. Words of Dua Kumail
- 21. Surah Raad 13:23
- 22. Surah Naba 78:18
- 23. Surah Baqarah 2:24
- 24. Surah Rum 30:23
- 25. Kitabul Iman, Pg. 271
- 26. Surah Anam 6:45
- 27. Kitabul Iman

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