



# **Resurrection, Ma'ad**

**Resurrection, Ma'ad, From the Collection "The Splendid Light of  
Wisdom"**

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*The present work discusses the subject of "Resurrection", which is one of the volumes of the "Splendid Light of Wisdom" Collection with the aim to increase the level of knowledge in the young generation's mind, and will enable them to comprehend and to know more deeply, the clear and erudite thoughts of this learned thinker; so that it may open a new path in front of them.*

**Miscellaneous information:**

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## Foreword

The young generation of the contemporary society is indeed, in search of truth and asks itself numerous questions to know its religious beliefs, and to deepen its teachings, in order to possess a general perception, concerning the entire problems, issues and questions, whether mental, spiritual, cultural, or social. For that reason, the young generation searches and researches diverse sources.

However, the thirst for a better knowledge along with a greater measure than it already knows, pushes this young generation to a certain aspiration to acquire a better understanding of all these things; this is because it wishes to lean on all these original thoughts with solid tranquility, to form its proper mental geometry.

Among precious works in the Islamic Doctrine, the works of the respected Martyr, Professor Allamah Murtadha Mutahhari, offer us a deep frame, comprehensive, moderate, rational, and formative at the same time, which regroup, encompass, and embrace, gravely and perfectly, the Islamic Thought.

Indeed, his works can guide the young generation of modern time and that of the future era towards a spiritual path, most secure, safest, and empty of peril.

In fact, qualities such as originality, creativity, equity, eloquence, along with a beautiful rhetoric and a fluent pen, which is very easy to follow, and a serious willingness to answer the actual needs of the contemporary society are the particularities and special characteristics that adorn and purify the intellectual mind of this erudite Martyr. Moreover, we can see in his works, a true desire to offer an intellectual ensemble, very concise and clear, with a fair sense of criticism, and a wish to defend all the discoveries and positions, taken by him in an intellectual and mental point of view.

This fact forces the actual generation of the young people of the society and the scientific and scholastic community to wish to study more, and to deepen these exposed opinions and these beautiful Islamic thoughts; this, in order to safeguard and defend them as a written heritage for the future generations.

Young generation's thoughts Institute has published the collection "The Splendid Light of Wisdom" for the great enthusiasm that the young generation has shown for the thoughts of the learned and erudite Professor Mutahhari, and their willingness to associate themselves more and more with the works of this learned personality. This collection is composed of forty independent booklets.

This beautiful compilation has followed certain regulations:

1- Each booklet of this Collection explains an independent subject of study.

2- The best teachings, offered from the great mind of this erudite should be known to the young and modern generation; and this was accomplished, by taking into account, not only the complete works of this erudite but also his annotations and his other writings, which have been abridged for this very purpose.

3- The efforts of the person responsible for this compilation should appear as charming, attractive, and most interesting; and the adaptation, adjustment, abridgment, composition, construction, compilation, and all the effort put into this work should be in such way as to offer a complete and comprehensive book; and it should be accomplished in a very definite and rigidly precise structure.

4- The person responsible for this compilation had to take into consideration the fact that he should respect the thoughts of this learned erudite, completely and perfectly, without adding or removing anything whatsoever, from the thoughts of this writer. He also had to preserve the style of Professor Mutahhari as it was, and repeat this in a most scrupulous way in every book offered by this respected writer.

5- To honor these works even more, all the written facts had to be well documented with the works of Martyr Professor Mutahhari himself. Thus, the dear readers may actually refer to the footnotes, at the foot of every page, which would guide them either to his Complete Works, and/or his annotations and/or to independent works of this learned personality.

The explanations offered by the writer of this compilation are in the foreword or conclusion of each finished work. They are separated clearly from the text, belonging to the learned Martyr Professor Mutahhari.

“The splendid Light of Wisdom” is solely acting as a "bridge", by connecting people to the green garden of the beautiful thoughts of Professor Mutahhari...!

No doubt, the young readers and the respected researchers will not see themselves free of any need towards the Complete Works of this erudite Martyr. Moreover, they should give themselves the pleasure of studying and reading all those previous works. Therefore, this work should be seen only as an intellectual and literary effort, so that the dear readers may get more interested in reading his other works, and feel a mental and spiritual affinity with him.

The initial efforts to create the chapters and the titles of each part in this beautiful collection belong undoubtedly, to the incessant and meticulous surveillance of the respected, scientific members of “The Splendid Light of Wisdom”.

That is, Mr. Abdol Hosseyn Khosro Panah, Mr. Hamid Reza Shakerin, Mr. Mohammad Ali Da'ee Nejad, Mr. Ali Zou Elm, and Mr. Mohammad Baqir Pur-Amini [the executive editor of this project]. And to the arduous efforts, made by the executive director of this project, who is none other than Mr. Abbas Rezvani Nassab and his respected colleagues: Mr. Reza Mostavi [chief editor] and Mr. Mika'eel Noori.

To all of them, we wish to express our deepest, infinite gratitude.

The present work discusses the subject of "Resurrection", which is one of the volumes of the "Splendid Light of Wisdom" Collection, written by the respected researcher, Mr. Hamid Reza Shakerin. We would like to express our deepest gratitude, to all those men and women, who have helped and assisted us in this compilation. We are ready to receive the opinions and/or critics of the dear readers, with open arms and a warm spirit, full of gratitude.

We dearly hope that this collection shall increase the level of knowledge in the young generation's mind, and will enable them to comprehend and to know more deeply, the clear and erudite thoughts of this learned thinker; so that it may open a new path in front of them.

**The young generation's thoughts Institute**

## Introduction

### *In the Name of Allah, The Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate*

Belief in Resurrection Day and the Hereafter are one of the most important and significant pillars of faith and Islamic Principles; they are among the main conditions of being a Muslim. In more than a hundred verses, the Holy Qur'an has spoken about the characteristics of eternal life, and in sixteen verses has officially mentioned that a firm belief in the afterlife is followed inevitably, by having faith in God; in a few cases, it has even included that Certitude [i.e. Certainty-Conviction] in the Afterlife is among the characteristics of true believers.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, the Holy Qur'an has spoken about the Resurrection Day, with various interpretations and exegesis; and each one of these interpretations is a separate portal for acquiring a better knowledge of it; one such example is the word "Al-Yaom Al- Akhir" [i.e. Judgment Day - Resurrection Day], which mentions two things:

1. The Human life is divided into two main "periods"; and each one is interpreted as one "Day" per se. The first Period [i.e. the life on Earth] is finite and ephemeral, whereas the second period [i.e. the afterlife] is infinite and eternal.

2. Our spiritual happiness and beatitude in either worlds [or Periods] depends on our faith in the afterlife.

To begin with, our happiness in this world of ours depends on our faith in the Resurrection Day.

This is because in the light of having faith in the eternal life, we come to be aware of the quality of immortality and eternity in our deeds; and of our Judgment by the Powerful Creator; and then of our responsibility towards all these notions and concepts. Therefore, eventually, we attempt to purify, to better our intentions and deeds, and to prevent ourselves from committing all kinds of perversities and wrongdoings. Consequently, to believe in Resurrection Day guides us towards goodness and it appears as a support for all the human values that we cherish most; it also prevents the human being from all kinds of sins, misdeeds, and wickedness. It then makes him understand that without having this deep belief, his life will be tormented by all kinds of darkness, abominations, impurities, and stains...

Secondly, to believe in Resurrection Day saves the human being from absurdity and being absurd at the same time. Similarly, being unfamiliar with the hereafter and eternal life provokes undoubtedly a sentiment of meaninglessness, nonsense and absurdity, so that after a while, the individual, burdened by such feelings of fatuousness and restlessness becomes as such, with lots of empty, foolish ideas in his mind.

On the contrary, belief in Resurrection Day allows man to let go of absurdity and unreasonableness<sup>2</sup>.

Thirdly, our happiness and beatitude in the hereafter depend mostly on our belief in the world beyond and in resurrection, because eternal felicity and eternal torment are related to the deeds and misdeeds of each individual in this earthly plane. And the fact that one is endowed with belief and knowledge in choosing the righteous path, in order to attain happiness and beatitude, while at the same time, one is trying one's best to avoid entering

the way of perdition and loss. This is a very crucial and important factor for man to remember.

Indeed, the reality of Resurrection Day is the return to God and the ultimate thing that one has to accomplish. However, according to the Holy Qur'an's point of view, this particular return is not exclusive and restricted to human beings. It also includes all forms of existence in this wide Universe; then again, in regards to the human beings, one should point out that it shall neither be in an absolutely physical form nor in an absolutely spiritual [i.e. ethereal] form; but in all the possible dimensions, which encompass his "human" being.

### **Notes**

1. Please refer to the surah Al-Baqarah 4; An-Naml 3 and Luqman 4
2. Please refer to the Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 2, page 537

## Chapter 1: Death or the beginning of the journey to eternity

### The essence of death

From the Holy Qur'an's perspective, death is a truth with regard to the human life; it is in fact, a special form of transfer from this world to another world. This particular subject has been deeply examined and thoroughly studied, in various verses of the Holy Qur'an, some of which are mentioned below:

### The transfer made by divine agents

Some of the verses in the Holy Qur'an have mentioned death as "Tawaffa"<sup>1</sup>

The word "Tawaffa" comes from the word "Waffa", which means the complete reception of something. It does not mean "Fow't", which means to lose something or someone. Indeed, from these verses, one comes to understand that:

Death does not mean inexistence, nothingness, and destruction, but a transition from one world to another world.

Whatever creates the characteristic and the real "Me" is not one's actual physical body, because the physical body will decay and disintegrate gradually, and that which will be transferred to the other world will be the [human] spirit or the soul.

With the arrival of death, the extra-corporeal dimension of the human being will be taken away, and detached from the individual.<sup>2</sup>

### God's creature

The Holy Qur'an considers death as an essential and absolute Truth for all of God's creatures.

### The great sleep

The Holy Qur'an compares Death, Sleep, Awakening, and Resurrection on Judgment Day, as identical and announces,

"It is Allah, who takes away the souls at the time of their Death and those that die not during their sleep. He keeps those [souls] for which he has ordained Death and sends the rest for a term appointed. Verily, in this are signs for a people who think deeply." - 39: 42

### The Importance of contemplating about death

Indeed, among the subjects that are noteworthy in all the religious instructions, there is the remembrance of death and the fact that one has to be prepared for it.

In regards to the essence of death and the fact that one shall have a re-birth in a far better world, which will be eternal as well, where happiness or unhappiness are the direct effects of the causes one has been responsible for in the earthly plane, one is thus forced to remember death at all times. At the same time, one is made to pay more attention to this matter and to try hard to build oneself a very nice "dwelling-place" in the Hereafter...

Once, a person asked the holy Prophet Muhammad (S)<sup>3</sup>, "Who is the cleverest among the believers?"<sup>4</sup>

The Prophet Muhammad (S) answered him, "He, who remembers death more than anyone else does, and who is also readier; he it is, the cleverest of all..."

It is also reported in another hadith that, "Of the means for Man's happiness and beatitude is that his life be longer and that God may grant him the Blessing of the Repentance, so that he may be able to go to the Hereafter and Eternity..."<sup>5</sup>

### **The agony of death and its cause**

In the Holy Qur'an and numerous Ahadith from the holy family members of the venerable Prophet (S) [i.e. the Ahlil Beyt as<sup>6</sup>], there are all kinds of accounts and descriptions of the agony of death. Regarding this subject, the Holy Qur'an announces,

"And at last, the agony of Death [or the numbness which takes over the person, who is on the verge of Death] unveils the Truth before the eyes of Man [and he is told that]: this is the very thing from which, you were trying to escape..." – 50:19

The Arabic word "Sakrat" derives from "Sakrah", which comes from "Sakr", meaning a state of drunkenness; it refers to the mental state in which, the mind and the reason of man distance themselves from him. The verse mentioned above, explains that the level of intensity of death is such that it disables man's mind, his reason, and even his sanity.

The lord of the believers, Imam Ali [as] regarding this matter had once declared, "The harshness and the torments of death are far more difficult to be described or measured, by the intellect of the human beings..."<sup>7</sup>

The difficulty of dying is mainly because mankind is attached to this world, physically, mentally, and emotionally. Indeed, it is for this reason, that it has been announced, "Die, before your Death."<sup>8</sup> or "Before your limbs separate from your bodies [and before you disintegrate], free yourselves [i.e. your hearts] from this earthly plane!"<sup>9</sup>

A person once asked Imam Hassan [as], "Why have we not a pleasant death...?"

Imam Hassan [as] answered him, "You have ignored and ruined your Hereafter, and built and prospered your earthly world, instead. Therefore, you suffer and are tormented when you are transferred from your prosperous world to the Place of Sorrow and Ruin..."<sup>10</sup>

This hadith shows that the earthly passions and all the things that one longs for on this earth, can easily shift man's behaviors towards satisfying the desires and interests of the world, at the cost of ignoring and destroying the Hereafter. Therefore, because of the wild passion towards the world, the desire for the Hereafter decreases more and more, as a sad, desolate consequence... To the extent that as long as this process continues, and the desire for the earthly world increases, in like manner, the bitter sentiment of the soul's transfer from this world to the Hereafter increases and eventually, it will bring on suffering, sorrow, and all kinds of inner torments for the soul's ultimate Journey to the afterlife...

It has been reported in many ahadith that when someone is on the verge of death, there is a particular moment, called "the examination moment", which is a brief instant, when the dying individual experiences and sees

clearly the “other” world. It is similar to the condition of a person, who is standing next to a room, with a closed door in front of him. When the door opens, and just before the individual exits the room where he is standing, he would see the inside environment of the next room that he is to enter soon. In like manner, when the human beings are standing between the borders of the world and the hereafter, they too will have a similar, identical situation; and they can see the world beyond [i.e. the hereafter] with their physical eyes and with the help of their inner vision, they can have a view of the afterlife. It is from here, that everything illuminates before the very eyes of the human beings; and the disbelievers and the sinners would then suffer deeply. For it is only then, that they can see to where they will be heading. In response to those, who tormented incessantly Prophet Muhammad (S), and who used to ask him mockingly, “Tell us, when will the Day of Judgment come, as you are describing it to us?!” the Holy Qur'an gave two answers:

1. Its Knowledge is only beside God and no one else.

2. When those individuals understood that its time was much nearer than what they had thought, the faces of the disbelievers became horrified and turned pale and ugly; and they were told,

“When will this Promise [i.e. the Day of Resurrection] come to pass if you are telling the truth?” – 67:25

### Notes

1. Al-An'am, 61; Az-Zumar,42; An-Naml, 28, 32, 70; Al-A'raf, 37
2. Please refer to the Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 2, page 537
3. It is an abridged form of the sentence “Sallallah Alayhe wa Alehi wa Sallam”
4. Muhammad Baqir Majlisi, “Beharul-Anwar”, volume 1 page 126
5. Idem, page 138
6. It is an abridged form of the sentence: "Alayaheh Salam"
7. “Nahjul-Balaghah”, Sermon 22; From the Selection of Mizanul-Hekmah, volume 12, page 930, hadith 875
8. Kamaluddin Mey'sam Ibn Ali Meysam Al-Bahrani, The Words of the lord of the Believers, Imam Ali [as], page 6
9. Ibn Abel Hadid, “Sharheh Nahjul-Balaghah”, volume 11, page 3
10. Muhammad Baqir Al-Majlisi, “Beharul-Anwar”, volume 6, page 129

## Chapter 2

In written form, something, which is placed between two things is called “Barzakh” [i.e. Purgatory] and interpreted in the Holy Qur'an as the world and the state of “living” between the world and the Great Judgment Day.

By referring to the verses of the Holy Qur'an and other Religious Sources, we can understand that:

1. No one enters into the realm of the Hereafter, immediately after death.
2. Human Beings will not enter a particular state of “numbness” and total “silence”, but instead will enter another stage of life, until the Judgment day. This intermediate stage is known as the “Purgatory” [or Barzakh].

### **The Holy Qur'an and purgatorial life**

In some cases, the Holy Qur'an has spoken directly or indirectly, about life after death. Some of the verses of the Holy Qur'an are the evidences of what we just discussed, regarding the subject of “the nature of death”. However, the Holy Qur'an has spoken about this particular subject in other ways as well. Such as:

“Nay, they are alive, but you perceive it not”

A number of verses in the Holy Qur'an clearly announce the existence of Life after Death, such as:

“And say not of those, who are slain in God’s cause, “They are dead: nay, they are alive, but you perceive it not.” – 2:154

and,

“But do not think of those that have been slain in God’s cause as dead. Nay, they are alive! With their Sustainer have they their sustenance. Exulting in that [i.e. Martyrdom], which God has bestowed upon them out of His bounty. And they rejoice in the glad tiding given to those [of their brethren,] who have been left behind and have not yet joined them that no fear need, they have, and neither shall they grieve.” - 3:169-170

### **The supplication of the damned to return**

A number of verses in the Holy Qur'an have spoken about the supplications of certain people on their deathbed, to return once again, to the world where they lived; it also reports about their first encounter with the new realm, which will last until the arrival of Judgment Day.

“Until, when Death comes to one of them [i.e. those who join partners with Allah], he says. “My lord! Send me back, so that I may do well in that which I have left behind!” No! It is but a word that he speaks; and behind them<sup>1</sup> is Barzakh [i.e. a barrier] until the Day when they will be resurrected”. – 23:99-100

### **What have you been doing?**

A number of verses in the Holy Qur'an speak about the conversation between angels and dead people, shortly after they face death. For instance, the verse below speaks of the conversation between angels and a number of miserable beings, doomed to be damned:

“Verily, as for those, whom the Angles take [in Death] while they are wronging themselves [as they stayed among the disbelievers even though emigration was obligatory for them, they [i.e. Angels] say to them, “In what

[condition] were you?" They reply, "We were weak and oppressed on the earth." They [i.e. Angels] say, "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to emigrate therein?" Such men will find their abode in Hell. What an evil destination!" – 4:97

On the contrary, the angels salute and greet warmly the righteous and pious individuals and take their souls smoothly and peacefully.

"[Namely] those, whose lives the Angels take in a state of purity, saying [to them], "Peace be on you...! Enter ye the Garden, because of [the good], which ye did [in the world]!" - 16:32

### **The world, purgatory, and resurrection**

A number of verses in the Holy Qur'an speak of the condition, where human beings are held in eternal suffering and torment or on the contrary, in a perpetual state of bliss and beatitude.

It is announced in the surah [Al-Waqiah],

"Then why do you not [intervene], when the soul of a dying person reaches the throat, and you, at the moment are looking on, but we [i.e. our Angels, who take the soul] are nearer to him than you, but you see not. Then why do you not - if you are exempt from the reckoning and recompense punishment-bring back the soul [to its body], if you are truthful; then, if he [i.e. the dying person] be of the "Mūqarrabin" [i.e. those brought near to Allah], there is for him rest and provision, and a Garden of Delights [i.e. Paradise]. And if he [i.e. the dying person] be of those on the Right Hand, then there is safety and peace [from the Punishment of Allah] for those on the right Hand. Then there is safety and peace [from the Punishment of Allah] for those on the right Hand. But if he [i.e. the dying person] be of the denying [of the Resurrection], the erring [i.e. away from the Right Path of Islamic Monotheism], Then for him is an entertainment with boiling water, and Burning in Hell-fire." – 56:83-94

These verses show that between death and resurrection, there is life, bliss, and agony. Surely, it is not that after death, the existence of Man is to be destroyed or that between death and Resurrection, he is to be placed in a state of numbness and apathy, while his life will be taken away from him, only to be returned to him in the Day of Resurrection. Therefore, the life of Man has three stages: the world, Purgatory, and Resurrection.

### **Two deaths, two lives**

The Holy Qur'an speaks of the people of the Day of Resurrection,

"They will say, "Our Lord! You have made us to die twice [i.e. we were dead in the loins of our fathers and dead after our life in this the world], and You have given us life twice [i.e. life when we were born and life, when we are Resurrected]! Now we confess our sins, then is there any way to get out [of the Fire]?" – 40:11

This particular verse of the Holy Qur'an shows that after death, life still continues on, until the day of resurrection, because if it were otherwise, there would have been only one life and one death; that is, to die in this the world and to be resurrected on the day of resurrection. However, two deaths and two lives show that after the earthly and physical death there will be a

purgatorial life. And that eventually after the Purgatorial death, and only then, would life in the Hereafter begin.<sup>2</sup>

### **Eternity, until heaven and earth shall subsist**

A number of the verses in the Holy Qur'an inform us of the eternal quality in heaven and hell, and until the heavens and earth are still existing; as an example, let us see what this verse announces,

“On the Day, when it comes, no person shall speak, except by His [i.e. Allah’s] Leave. Some among them will be wretched and [others] blessed. As for those, who are wretched, they will be in the Fire, sighing in a high and low tone. They will dwell, therein, for all the time that the Heavens and the earth endure, except as your lord wills. Verily, your Lord is the Doer of whatsoever he intends [or wills]. And those, who are blessed, they will be in Paradise, abiding therein, for all the time that the Heavens and the earth endure, except as our Lord wills: a gift without an end.” – 11:105-107

In the book, entitled "Tafsir" [i.e. Exegesis], written by the late erudite scholar Homayi<sup>3</sup>, which is a critical interpretation, there is an explanation from the lord of the believers Imam Ali [as], which refers to the verses, mentioned above; it is thus explained:

“By mentioning Heavens and Earth, these verses mean the time before the Day of Resurrection; and when this Day [i.e. Day of Resurrection] comes, the Heavens and Earth shall change.”<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, the purposes of these noble verses are to inform us of the human misery [or damnation] and happiness [or beatitude]; it also inform us about Heaven and Hell.

### **Fire, each morning and each evening**

Among the noble verses, which the lord of the believers, Imam Ali [as] refers to, as the evidence for the existence of Purgatorial Life there is a particular verse. It is indeed, a clear proof of the divine torment inflicted upon the damned, each morning and each evening,

“In front of the Fire will they be brought, morning and evening; and [the Sentence will be] on the Day that Judgment will be established, "Cast ye the People of Pharaoh into the severest Penalty!" – 40:46

The lord of the believers Imam Ali [as] had also declared in this regard. "On Judgment Day, there shall be no morning or evening. For, morning and evening are created from the continual movement of day and night in the world; and this fact exists only in a Paradise, which comes before Judgment Day [i.e. Barzakh]; while on Resurrection Day, there shall be no trace of any morning or evening. This is because Allah Almighty has announced,

“Reclining in the [Garden], on raised thrones, they will see there, neither the excessive heat of the sun, nor the excessive bitter cold, [as in Paradise there is no sun and no moon].” – 76:13

meaning that no sun exists, therefore, neither shall be any morning nor evening.<sup>5</sup>

## **The state of purgatory**

### **The realm of the forms**

The hereafter is the realm of forms, with an infinite number of various colors and sounds, beauties and abominations, with pleasant and unpleasant odors, which will be revealed for all those who have been stripped down of their earthly clothes to enter the new spiritual Realm.

Some people can actually be endowed with superior inner perceptions in this very world of ours, before entering the other Realm; as the late Sheikh Abbas Qummi [God rest his soul] was prone to hear the cries of the deceased, while others who were close by, could not..<sup>6</sup>

### **The grave's questioning**

One of the most significant events in the Realm of the Purgatory is the phase in which the angels question the faith of men. As it has been reported in a hadith, which says, "Inside the individual's grave, he shall be questioned about his belief [i.e. faith] or his disbelief, and no other question shall be asked from him"<sup>7</sup>

### **The pressure of the grave**

It has been reported in a hadith that, "The grave is either a Garden of Paradise, or a Pit, filled with Hell-Fire..."<sup>8</sup>

Of the Purgatorial torments, one is indeed the pressure of the grave. The causes for the pressure of the grave include: the fact that the deceased, while living had gossiped, or not kept his promise to keep and safeguard a secret, told to him in absolute confidence; and the fact of having abandoned and left their families and kinsmen.<sup>9</sup> Other reasons have also been mentioned in various religious sources as well.<sup>10</sup>

### **To account for one's deeds and misdeeds**

One of the characteristics of the Purgatorial life is the companionship and the existence of man's deeds alongside with him. Good deeds will be his saviors and liberators from the terrible difficulties and miseries, which he shall have to face, while wicked misdeeds will be a continual source of torment and punishment for him.

On one occasion, Imam Sadiq [as] had declared, "The moment when a believer enters his grave, his prayers will be placed on his right side, and his zakat on his left side. In like manner, his good deeds will be placed above his head, while his patience is placed somewhere near him. Then the angels will arrive to question his patience, his prayers, his zakat, and his good deeds; and if they are not able to answer, the believer would then announce that he will answer the angels' Questions himself."<sup>11</sup>

### **Companionship of the souls of the believers**

A number of religious accounts exist, which state that in purgatory, the souls of the pious believers gather<sup>12</sup> in a place called, "Wadi As-Salam" [or the Valley of Peace]; by recognizing and identifying each other, they start talking and conversing with each other. It has been reported in a hadith from the lord of the believers, Imam Ali [as], "To any faithful person, who is deceased wherever in the world, it will be told that his soul has to head into

the “Wadi As-Salam”, where there is a proper dwelling-place [for him/her] inside the everlasting Paradise...”<sup>13</sup>

There are also some other accounts concerning the disbelievers; they speak of a lugubrious wasteland, where the disbelievers will be placed and tormented eternally and perpetually...<sup>14</sup>

### **The connection between the world and purgatory**

Essentially, there is an intense connection between the world and purgatory, which will be discussed in later chapters. There are also various forms of connection and relation between the universe and purgatory, which differ from Judgment day in many ways such as:

#### **The opening of one’s book of deeds**

In purgatory, the "book" of one’s deeds and actions is somewhat open and some of the events, which had happened in this world, along with some of one’s actions, such as benevolence, good deeds, and philanthropy towards the others are shown in this book. At the same time, the consequences of the efforts of the others concerning their goodness and benevolence are very much effective and efficient in this heavenly Book.

In a beautiful hadith, the holy prophet of Islam (S) has been reported to say. “The moment a person dies, the book of his deeds and actions is closed. Except for three things: charity and alms [that is a good deed, which will continue even after his/her death], a [written] page, [which will teach] Knowledge and from which, the others can benefit [greatly]; and to have a virtuous child.”<sup>15</sup>

#### **One’s inner perception of the purgatory**

There are numerous solid religious texts [i.e. Nussus], endowed with an indisputable and irrefutable characteristic, along with the ecstatic visions of those, who were/are endowed with divine vision and Clairvoyance. They tell us that those, whose inner perceptions of the purgatory were/are strong and clear in this world [with some differences in their grades and positions, of course...] were/are finely able to perceive that other realm [i.e. purgatory]. In some of the Ahadith, the holy Prophet (S) himself had seen the visions of past Prophets, such as Hazrat Adam [as] and Hazrat Nuh [i.e. Noah as].<sup>16</sup>

In some other instances, there are also examples of the conversation of the lord of the believers, Hazrat Ali [as] with the souls of the virtuous believers.<sup>17</sup> Then again, we are witness to the manifestation and apparition of the souls of virtuous and pious believers of the past, such as Sarah [i.e. Prophet Abraham’s wife], Assiah [i.e. the Pharaoh’s wife], Mary [i.e. Hazrat Maryam, Prophet Jesus’ Mother sa 2], and Kulsum [i.e. Prophet Moses’ sister] which had appeared before the very astonished eyes of Hazrat Khadijah [sa].<sup>18</sup>

#### **The possibility of returning to earth**

The possibility of "returning" to this earthly plane could be interpreted, in other words, as the Return [i.e. Ridj'at] to the world, from the realm of purgatory; this is also one of the most significant issues, which have been discussed in the Holy Qur'an and numerous ahadith. It concerns the

possibility of such extraordinary event to happen. It should be noted that with regards to this question, there are various accounts.<sup>19</sup>

### Notes

1. The word “behind” means both “being behind something or someone” and “being ahead of something or someone”; but here, it is used, as the indication for the phrase “The Day when they will be resurrected”. Please, refer to the work of Professor Mutahhari, entitled "The Hereafter", page 74
2. From Professor Mutahhari's book, entitled “The Hereafter”, page 51-52
3. He was a great Persian scholar.
4. From Professor Mutahhari's book, entitled “The Hereafter”, page 64
5. Please, refer to Professor Mutahhari's book, entitled “The Hereafter”, page 64-65
6. Volume 7, page 122
7. The other translation of this hadith is, “Indeed, inside the grave, the question is made to he, who is either endowed with the purest faith or on the contrary, afflicted with absolute disbelief and blasphemy; therefore, the others are not faced with the questioning.” According to this meaning, Allamah Al-Majlisi has given an ample explanation in this regard; however, in this case, Professor Mutahhari had preferred the other version of the meaning. Please to refer to pages 124-125.
8. Nah'djul Balaghah, volume 6, page 69
9. Elal ul-Sharaye, page 309
10. “Understanding the Holy Qur'an”, volume 3, page 120
11. Or, volume 7, page 123
12. Idem, page 123
13. Al-Kafi, volume 3, page 243
14. Or, volume 7, page 124
15. The interpretation of the Holy Qur'an [the noble surah of Al-Qiyamah] page 72
16. Muhamamd Baqir Al-Majlisi, Beharul-Anwar, volume 6, pages 23-32
17. Al-Kafi volume 3, page 246
18. Volume 7, page 123
19. This subject has been thoroughly discussed in another collection, known as “Shia Studies”: which is a compilation of Islamic books that have been published in the same collection, known as "Chiragh -e- Hikmat" or the "Splendid Light of Wisdom"

## Chapter 3

### **The great Resurrection: The dawn of a new life**

The second phase of life in the hereafter begins from the resurrection, known as "great" or "principal". Indeed, the Holy Qur'an itself emphasizes on the inevitability of its occurrence. The majesty, the awe-inspiring, and the glory of this event are so great that the human mind is not able to comprehend fully and fathom its absolute greatness... The Holy Qur'an speaks of this tremendous event, as such,

“Again, what will make you know what the Day of Recompense is...?” – 82:17

Indeed, how could anyone, possibly understand what the resurrection day is...? It means that your ability to perceive such great and terrifying day is so limited and so little that it is practically impossible for anyone to understand it truly. This holy verse would tell us though, about one of its characteristics.

“[It will be] the day when no person shall have power [to do] anything for another, and the decision, that day will be [wholly] with Allah.” – 82:19

### **The difference between Judgment day and purgatory**

Purgatory is related to each and every human being; in fact, the individual, who dies, will immediately enter this realm [i.e. Purgatory] shortly after his/her physical death; however, resurrection day is a general event, which comprises every possible thing and every form of life and existence in the whole universe that has been created by Allah Almighty within itself. Judgment day [i.e. resurrection] is an event that happens for everyone and everything in the entire world, and it eventually transforms the entire world into a new form of existence.<sup>1</sup>

### **The preparations for judgment day**

The Holy Qur'an introduces the Judgment day as a universal event, which includes the entire universe. That is: from infinite galaxies in the whole cosmos to the closest and farthest celestial spheres and objects [i.e. At-Tama Al-Kubra] that are accompanied, by different and various changes and diversities, known as “Ash'rat As-Sa'ah”,

"Do they then only wait for the Hour - that it should come on them of a sudden? But already have come some tokens thereof, and when it [actually] is on them, how can they benefit then by their admonition?" - 47:18

### **Various names of Judgment day**

The Holy Qur'an speaks about the resurrection of the whole universe [i.e. creation] and the dawn of immortal life with different names. Each name represents a special condition and shows the domination of a unique system and a particular order, which take over each such name. This is because the entire creation, from the very first creature until the very last one is placed in a single level and stage. Therefore, their chronological order is destroyed; thus, this day is called as the "congregation" day, the "assembly" day, the "gathering" day, or the day of "meeting" [i.e. confluence-merging-combining-incorporation]; that is because all the inner selves of all the

creatures will be finally unveiled and disclosed and all the fundamental truths, which had been hermetically closed until then, will be unrolled, for all to see, at last...

"The Day that [all] things secret will be tested." – 86:9

Then, because it will have an immortal, indestructible, and eternal characteristic, it is also called the "Day of regret". This is because there shall be many souls, who will fall into deep sadness and immense sorrow, and they will be full of regrets and intolerable bitterness for the unbearable and unendurable truth that will destroy their whole beings forever, for not having prepared duly themselves for such a frightening day.

Another name is the day of "deception" for the sinner had "deceived the others" into committing all kinds of sins and misdeeds. Then again, it is also called the "great news", because the greatest news and the greatest happenings and events will occur on that Day.<sup>2</sup>

Some other names are: the day of "favor", the "Last day", the "Day of religion", the "Day of truth", the "Day of justice", the "Happening", and the "Event", etc, etc...

A number of these universal events are listed below:

- Tremendous explosions will occur.
- The crack and the fissure of heaven.<sup>3</sup>
- The extinction of the stars<sup>4</sup> and their dispersion in the sky<sup>5</sup>.
- The diminishing of the sun's splendid light<sup>6</sup>.
- The depletion of the oceans from their water or on the contrary, the filling of the oceans with high mountains.<sup>7</sup>
- The flattening and stretching of the earth<sup>8</sup>.
- The destruction of mountains<sup>9</sup>
- The movement of mountains
- The emergence of earthquakes
- The sounds of massive roars and great and unparallel changes and extraordinary transformations<sup>10</sup>;
- and the emergence of an ever-expanding and massive dark cloud in the sky,

"Then wait you for the day, when the sky will bring forth a visible smoke, covering the people: this is a painful torment..." – 44:10

### **The first blow of the celestial horn or the new life**

On the Day of Judgment, the entire universe would become as an embryo, which is resurrected [i.e. revived], while there will be no one, except the dead...! Rocks and trees, heaven and earth, the sun and the sky, the roaring fire, and even the limbs and physical members of the people's bodies will all undergo a complete transformation! In other words, everything in the universe shall become fully alive and existent, once again. This particular form of existence is presented as the time of the "blow of the celestial horn". On the day of resurrection, Allah Almighty grants a new revival, better known as the resurrection to everyone and everything in the whole Creation.

### **The duration of the Judgment day**

In a number of the holy verses of Qur'an, the duration of Judgment day has been estimated as fifty thousand years,

“The Angels and the Ruh [i.e. Djibril, the Archangel Gabriel as] ascend to Him in a Day, the measure whereof, is fifty thousand years.” - 70:4

Question: Now, according to the Holy Qur'an, if there are going to be no more sun or moon or stars in Judgment day, then how these fifty thousand years [i.e. the duration of the Judgment day, according to the Holy Qur'an] are justifiable and explainable...?

Is this long duration of time, equal for everyone? And would everyone experience it?

Answer: In order to attempt to answer the first question, religious experts and Islamic scholastics have answered that the mentioned fifty thousand years is an "extension" and "prolongation" of resurrection day, according to the laws and order of the hereafter; so that if one should calculate it according to earthly measures, it will be equal to fifty thousand earth years.

The answer to the second question can be found, by referring to the words of the Prophet Muhammad (S). When someone said to Prophet Muhammad (S) that this long duration of time [i.e. fifty thousand years] was indeed, very, very long, the Prophet Muhammad (S) replied as such, “By Allah, the sovereign lord of the whole universe...! That day shall pass in such quickness that the believer can only perform one salat [i.e. Prayer], while on the other, it will be extremely long for the disbeliever...”

By these statements, it is clearly understood that the passage of time is a relative concept for human beings and has a direct relationship with their states. If an individual is in a state of happiness and joy, he will not feel the passage of time, but if he were in a state of agony and suffering, the time will indeed, pass very slowly for him. Therefore, the mentioned duration of time will not be the same for every human being and it differs from one individual to another. This is because for true believers, it [i.e. the passage of time] passes with such fast pace that it would be equivalent to a simple and regular prayer, but for the disbelievers and the sinners, it will be significantly much longer indeed.<sup>11</sup>

### **The relationship between the world and Judgment day**

Indeed, a crucial relationship exists between the earthly life and the way of life, which exists in the hereafter; and the two are as similar as the two distinguished seasons or chapters of a year; such as a planting season and a harvest season. Therefore, the hands of the human beings, through their own deeds and actions, determine the essence of Infinity and Immortality of the "hereafter". The holy Prophet Muhammad (S) once said regarding his wise and interesting interpretation, “The world is the field of the hereafter”<sup>12</sup>

The human beings thus plant the seeds of eternal happiness or on the contrary, the terrible torment during their lifetimes. Just as it is impossible to grow wheat and harvest barley or to grow deadly thorns and harvest beautiful flowers instead, it is just as impossible to possess a corrupt and sinful mind and to commit all kinds of wrong deeds and to benefit eventually in the hereafter as well.<sup>13</sup>

There is a religious hadith, which states:

“Paradise is nothing but a wasteland now, empty and dry with nothing to grow and nothing to harvest. However, the Islamic attestation, “Allah is pure and exempt from all impurities; and there is no god but Allah; and Allah is the greatest; and there is no power or force, but from Allah!” are the green trees that are planted here and there.”<sup>14</sup>

### **The appearance of the angels**

Indeed, with the coming of death, the hidden inner face of man, which is the accumulation and the total sum of all the characteristics that it had earned in this world, finally reveals itself. The characteristics and habits are things that ultimately become the inseparable part of his/her soul’s face and existence, due to countless repetitions of various deeds and behaviors.

While each of these inner states is considered as being among his/her spiritual deeds, thus in the other world, it comes to possess a unique and special form. Sometimes, it resembles a human face sometimes an animal or a wild beast. Sometimes, it appears as a combination of various forms [such as a camel, a cow, or a leopard, etc....]. Then again, as a frightening appearance, so that the faces of pigs and apes seem less unpleasant, if compared to it...<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, in the Islamic religious books and written sources, it has been reported that on Judgment day, individuals are resurrected by their acquired spiritual traits and characteristics that had been collected, fortunately or unfortunately, during their lifetimes on earth. Some people, in regards to their acquired characteristics will be resurrected as similar as those other creatures that resemble them the most. Only those among them will be resurrected as human beings whose morality, acquired characteristics, and secondary spiritual dimension are proportionate with their humanistic ranks and status; in other words, those, who possess the best of the human moral qualities and finest ethics.<sup>16</sup>

### **The embodiment and ever-lasting effects of actions and deeds**

From what was mentioned above, regarding the creation of the “self” [i.e. nafs], the issue of the embodiment of deeds and actions can then be discussed and understood more fully. Each deed possesses in fact, a unique form in every person, and it is appeared by a particular determination or will in the individual; and it is exactly similar to the appearance of deeds and actions. The form and the image of each and every deed will not disappear from the human mind and will remain within the human “self”.<sup>17</sup>

This is because nothing disappears from the human “self”; thus, the face of each deed and action will remain as such, just as when it had entered the human “self” in the first place. If the mentioned face is then compatible or appropriate with the true “self” of the individual, it is thus quite pleasant and enjoyable. However, if it were inconsistent with the true “self” of the individual, then it will be quite terrifying and painful.<sup>18</sup>

It has been reported in the Islamic religious sources and the holy verses of the Holy Qur'an that anyone’s good deeds and actions are embodied with beautiful and pleasant faces and most harmonious forms, turning into the

center of happiness and beatitude. On the other hand, the wrong and sinful actions will appear in extremely grotesque, terrifying, and painful faces, and will indeed turn into the center of eternal torment and suffering...

“On the Day, when every person will be confronted with all the good he has done, and all the evil he has done, he will wish that there were a great distance between him and his evil. And Allah warns you against Himself [i.e. His Punishment] and Allah is full of kindness to [His] slaves.” – 3:30

“And they will find all that they did place before them, and your Lord treats no one with injustice.” – 18:49

“The Day, Mankind will proceed in scattered groups that they may be shown their deeds. Therefore, whosoever does good, equal to the weight of an atom [or a small ant] shall see it. And whosoever does evil, equal to the weight of an atom [or a small ant] shall see it.” – 99:6-8

The holy Prophet Muhammad (S) once said in response to a group of believers [i.e. Muslims], who were seeking religious advice from him, “From now on, do try to choose good companions, friends, and mates for yourselves in the other world, where every person’s companion is indeed the embodiment of his/her deeds and actions...”<sup>19</sup>

It can thus be understood from the holy and religious sentences, mentioned above, that the infinite quality of God’s bounties and goodness, along with the eternal quality of paradise are created in fact, from the good and righteous deeds and actions of the individual. On the other hand, scorpions, lizards, snakes, burning water, and the bitter fruit of hell are indeed, created from impurities and sinful deeds, committed by wicked people; and that they will eventually be sent to that eternal world [i.e. The Hereafter].

## **The similarities and differences between the two worlds**

### **Similarities**

Undoubtedly, there exist similarities and common characteristics between this earthly world and the hereafter. These similarities include a reality and a truth for both forms of life. That is knowledge and awareness of the human being towards himself, along with his earthly attachments and feelings. One can also name the existence of happiness and suffering alongside each other, or joy and agony, or bliss and cruelty. Moreover, the existence of animal instincts and special human instincts; the experience of the human being with his limbs, his [internal/external] organs, and his body, as a whole entity; then again, the existence of outer space and all kinds of supernatural, otherworldly things in the space.<sup>20</sup>

### **The differences**

#### **Stability and change**

In this world, there is always movement and change. Children and the young generation become one day old and will eventually face death, as an inevitable and inescapable fact. The young generation becomes old and obsolete and the old generation will eventually perish at the end... However, in the other world [i.e. the Hereafter,] no such obsolescence and deterioration exist. Here, in this earthly world, it is indeed the place of

deteriorations, corruptions, and destructions, while the other world is the place of stability, constancy, eternity, and survival. Therefore, the possibility of changing our destiny and our inner beings in this world exists as a fact, while no such thing will ever exist in the Hereafter.

### **The pure and impure life**

In this world, life and death are combined together, but the other world [i.e. the Hereafter] is full of life and existence; full of dynamism! Gems, pebbles, trees, and fruits will all be full of life and existence; and even the fire shall be endowed with an inner perception. In this regard, the Holy Qur'an announces,

“And this life of the world is only an amusement and a play! Verily, the home of the Hereafter that is the life indeed [i.e. the Eternal life that will never end], if they but knew!” – 29:64

### **Planting and harvesting**

As we have already mentioned, this world of ours appears as the season of planting seeds in the soil, while the hereafter appears as the season of reap and harvest. The lord of the believers Imam Ali [as] says about this matter, “This world is the day of action and not calculation; while tomorrow would be the day of calculation; and then, there will be no action or deed...”<sup>21</sup>

### **Unshared destinies**

People in this world are each other's partners in creating happiness or committing crime and they are most efficient in each other's destiny; therefore, an equal and common responsibility exists among all people; thus if anyone tries to commit a wrongful deed, others must and should prevent him from committing sinful, wicked deeds.

The holy Prophet Muhammad (S) explains the effect of an individual's sinful deed on the society by a fine example. He said, “A group of people were on board of a ship, which was navigating in the sea. One of the passengers started to pierce the [wooden] floor of where he was sitting. The other passengers witnessed this fact but did not protest or object to his action. Eventually however, the ship sank and everyone on board was drowned; if anyone had tried to stop him from piercing the ship in the first place, not only they would have saved him from certain death but they would have saved themselves as well from drowning in the sea, uselessly...”

However, in the hereafter, nothing in the destinies of the souls is considered as a "shared thing" among the human beings. In the afterlife, there is nothing as a human "society" on earth. This means that no mixing, association, or mingling exists in a proper sense of the meaning, as you would see on Earth, with different people. People whose destinies are intertwined;<sup>22</sup> in fact, it is as similar as living with each other, with this difference that within the community of kind believers, intimacy, affection, and sincerity exist, whereas in the community of the cruel disbelievers, it is indeed hatred, disgust, and repugnance toward each other, which prevails.<sup>23</sup>

### **The laws of means and fates**

The laws and order of this world are indeed, the laws and order of cause and effect; and they are ruled by special chronological conditions; however, in the hereafter, no such things exist, except the absolute sovereignty and dominion of Allah's inexorable will and the emergence of the divine realm, which prevail over everything else.

### **The diminishing and/or intensification of the inner perception**

In this world, the inner perception and knowledge in general are weaker and not strong enough to pierce through the invisible veils of the hidden mysteries of the universe; however, man's inner perception in the hereafter is significantly stronger and more powerful. In other words, the invisible veils of reality are removed from before the very eyes of the human being and he/she can finally understand and comprehend the realities of the universe with the help of his/her inner perception, as the Holy Qur'an announces,

"[It will be said to the sinners], "Indeed you were heedless of this. Now, We have removed from you your covering, and sharp is your sight this day!"<sup>24</sup> – 50:22

### **The attachment and boredom of the heart**

In this earthly plane, the human being is in a special state of loss. He constantly struggles to find what he feels is missing in his life. However, whenever he finds something that he considers as his "missing thing", he preoccupies and busies himself with it; but after a while, he would get bored and exhausted by it, once again, and will eventually go after another thing to distract his sense of loss, in a new path.

However, in the hereafter, true believers reach to what they had considered as their true "missing thing", which is nothing but the eternal life and the blissful existence near the creator of the worlds [i.e. Rabbul Alamin]; and indeed, no boredom and exhaustion will ever reach them again; no sense of loss, whatsoever. The Holy Qur'an explains about this condition as,

"Wherein, they shall dwell [forever]. No desire will they have for removal therefore." – 18:108

Therefore, the inhabitants of paradise will be there for all eternity and never get bored. Additionally, Allah's will shall bestow whatever they will want, on them. Moreover, they will never be annoyed or frustrated by what they do not have.<sup>25</sup>

### **The ways by which Allah calls mankind to account**

One of the most fundamental subjects, regarding Judgment day is the nature and the way Allah calls to account, the deeds of the human beings. Is there any questioning and calling to account in that place? The Holy Qur'an announces,

"Then, which of the blessings of your Lord will you both [Djinn and men] deny?" – 55:16

This is because Allah knows everyone's deeds and misdeeds; and there exists no doubt, whatsoever, about any one of them. However, there are various "Checkpoints" [or should one say "stations"] in that process. Allah Almighty states,

"But stop them; for verily, they are to be questioned." – 37:24

Therefore, on Judgment Day, there are some "checkpoints" or "stations", where questions and answers will be made. In other words, sometimes there are some questions and sometimes not; and one should not compare Judgment day with the world of ours. When the actual event of "resurrection" happens, the questions and answers, which will be made, will not be for the sake of reaching to a conclusion or to make a discovery or even to investigate anything. It is not even a completion of all the arguments [i.e. proofs - Hujjah], previously offered to the human being during his/her lifetime on earth. It is some kind of fateful formality, which is to be done, one way or another. The divine angels, which are acting as Allah's agents do not need to ask the resurrected spirits whether they belong to the group of the Obedient or to the group of the Sinners. They know each one of them for what they are.

"For the Sinners will be known by their Marks..." – 55:41

Therefore, they are known exactly as what they are. Consequently, we come to understand that the questions are not made with the human, physical tongue, but with all the human body members. This is to say that each human member has its own sin or sins and is forced to show itself, as it truly is. These celestial agents will then question them severely. And they will be punished accordingly.<sup>26</sup>

The Holy Qur'an announces,

"That day shall We set a seal on their mouths. But their hands will speak to Us and their feet bear witness to all that they did." - 36:65

Therefore, on that unique day, the human tongue will not speak, in order to be able to defend itself.

In fact, all the particles of the human being, even the skin will start speaking, in order to give the tale of their destiny; that is because all the history of the human being is being inevitably and inexorably recorded and registered in his/her being.<sup>27</sup>

## Notes

1. Complete works of professor Mottahari, volume 2, page 51
2. Please refer to the Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 2, pages 511-520
3. Al-Murasalat, 77
4. Al-Infitar, 82
5. At-Takwir, 1
6. At-Takwir, 6
7. Al-Inshiqaq, 3
8. Al-Murasalat, 77
9. At-Takwir, 3
10. Ya-Sin 51, An-Naba-18, Al-Muddaththir -8
11. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an" volume 9, pages 72-73
12. "The Treasures of Divine Truth" from Chapter known as "dal"
13. Please refer to the Complete works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 2, pages 520-521, and volume 1, page 223

14. Taf'sir Al-Mizan, volume 13, page 23; Also, refer to the Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 1, pages 223-224
15. Or, volume 7, page 118
16. The Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 2, page 288
17. Al-Kah'f, 18
18. Or, volume 7, page 119
19. Please refer to the Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 3, page 521
20. The Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 2, page 523
21. Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 42
22. Al-Hijr, 47; Al-A'rāf, 38
23. The Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 1, pages 218-223
24. or volume 7, page 152; and the Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 2, pages 523-524
25. The Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, volume 2, page 524
26. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 6, page 59-61
27. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 10, page 204; and volume 3, page 63

## Chapter 4

### **The Holy Qur'an's arguments on Resurrection Day**

For the Muslim believer, there is no need of any direct argument or cause, in order to believe in Resurrection Day and the Hereafter, because he/she already believes through his/her faith and the Prophets' words and teachings. However, the Holy Qur'an has given man some arguments, to familiarize the human mind with the concept of "Ma'ad" [i.e. Resurrection]. The Holy Qur'an's Arguments are divided into three categories:

1. Some of these arguments show that there are no obstacles whatsoever, in the path of resurrection.
2. Some others state that many of the events on Resurrection Day are happening in the very world of ours and clarify the fact that there is no way whatsoever, for any negation or the possibility of any improbability.
3. Then again, some others point out the necessity of a definite existence of Resurrection Day and consider it as a necessary and mandatory thing for the existence of a perfect divine universal order and its wise creation.

### **The logical reason for the existence of the divine power**

In the noble surah "Ya-Sin" [verse 78], it is announced,  
"And he makes comparisons for us and forgets his own [origin and] creation: He says.  
"Who can give life to [dry] bones and decomposed ones [at that] ...?" - 36:78

### **The arguments of similarity**

A number of divine verses speak about examples, similar to the actual happening of Resurrection Day; these holy verses are divided into two categories:

1. The holy verses that deal with events that had happened in the past, such as the story of Prophet Abraham [as], which is thus recounted:  
And [remember] when Ibrahim [i.e. Abraham] said, "My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead." He [i.e. Allah] said, "Do you not believe?" He [i.e. Ibrahim] said, "Yes, [I believe], but to be stronger in Faith." He said, "Take four birds, then cause them to incline towards you [then slaughter them, cut them into pieces], and then put a portion of them on every hill, and call them: they will come to you in haste. And know that Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise." - 2:260
2. The noble verses, which address the current existing order of the universe, state a truth: it shall act exactly like the ways of earth, which leaves the freshness and vigor of summertime to enter the sorrowful lifelessness of autumn, in order to complete and achieve the transformation. Then again, when spring arrives, and trees and plants grow and bloom, in like manner, the entire world will one day go to a state of silence, coldness, and depression. Then, all of a sudden, all the creatures in the whole world will once again, come to life and begin a new existence; this time, with a different quality and a different condition.

The holy Prophet Muhammad (S) once said, "Whenever you witness spring, remind yourselves of the Day of Resurrection"<sup>1</sup>; in other words,

spring is a perfect example and model for the event, known as Resurrection Day.

### **The necessary divine arguments**

A number of the holy verses of the Holy Qur'an introduce Resurrection Day as an inevitable and necessary divine event, which will have to happen, inexorably; and they consider its inexistence as something unacceptable and impossible. These holy verses are divided into two categories:

#### **The argument and the proof for the existence of divine justice**

In the noble surah "Sad", after stating the fact that the sinners are deviated from the Path of God and that some day, they will face eternal torments from God Almighty, it also speaks about the true concept and philosophy of Judgment Day. It says,

"Shall we treat those, who believe [in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism] and do righteous good deeds as "Mufsidūn" [i.e. those, who associate partners in worship with Allah and commit crimes] on earth, or shall We treat the "Muttaqūn" [i.e. the pious] as the Fudjjar" [i.e. criminals, disbelievers, the wicked]?" – 38:28

In the holy surah of "Djassiyah" [verses 21, 22] the same, identical concept has been mentioned, once again. In these holy verses, divine Justice has been mentioned as the main reason and the sole purpose for the occurrence of Judgment day.<sup>2</sup> Several points regarding this subject should be studied subsequently, such as for example:

#### **A- The true meaning of divine Justice**

In a broad sense, justice means, "to give a justified right and rightfulness to somebody, without performing any sort of discrimination toward him/her." Therefore, divine Justice, here, means, "there shall be no discrimination, oppression, and injustice done towards any creature, as much as possible, so that no creature whatsoever, shall be denied of his/her justified right and rightfulness."

In other words, eternal and divine Justice do indeed refer to divine grace and mercy towards all the creatures, which dwell in this earthly plane. Therefore, the reason that not all the creatures have everything they wish for is because of the fact that they have neither the necessary condition nor the actual possibility to possess them.<sup>3</sup>

#### **B- Aptitudes beyond this world**

Among other creatures, human beings have unique tendencies, capabilities, abilities, and talents in higher levels of immortality and far beyond the possible capacity of this earthly world. Actions and motivations, such as having a far superior level of knowledge, and being fully conscious of ethics and moral values or being endowed with scientific and/or religious aspirations, along with a sense of true devotion and servitude to God Almighty.

Thus the ability to do good, by worshiping the rightful God, and by having faith in Allah, while performing the right deeds are certainly, most useful and beneficial to them; however, in the real sense of the word, the

actual benefit that one could retrieve from these things differ from one human being to another.

A person, who sacrifices his/her physical life for the sake of achieving great goals would, in fact, plant a seed, which can only be grown in an eternal life, full of bliss and nothing more... Therefore, man can fly higher and far better than in his usual natural state, in a realm where faith and good deeds prevail and dominate triumphantly.

In like manner, in a realm where only disbelief, misdeeds, and sins prevail, his actions will deviate more and more from their natural state, by entering a wicked mental state, in an eternal, immortal surrounding. In fact, those actions will even get past the usual and natural physical limits and needs, to bring on terrible suffering and atrocious pains to him, and to make him become at last, a dweller of hell.

Therefore, inside the human beings' nature, there is not only the reflection of greatness but also a tremendous desire and aspiration to reach immortality. In other words, the human beings not only wish for immortality, but they also possess, fortunately or unfortunately, various instincts, which will encourage and incite them to go for it and possess immortality by any means, whatsoever. In other words, the human beings have the capability and capacity of obtaining immortality for themselves.

#### **Injustice and deprivation of man from his capabilities**

The fact of preventing mankind from the possibility of reaching immortality and an eternal existence, in regards to his talents and capabilities is indeed a form of injustice; and it is thus, against the principles of divine justice. The human beings, who have walked in the path of faith in God and done the rightful deeds, are similar to those studious students, who have correctly done their assigned homework.

In like manner, those human beings, who are against any faith in Allah Almighty and perform ugly, wrongful deeds, are similar to those lazy students, who only spend their time, by doing no fruitful action whatsoever; and eventually, the teacher would punish and deprive them of their marks. This form of deprivation is nothing but cruelty and it is against the principles of divine Justice.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, this world does not have the limit and capability of giving and directing the penalty of the deeds and actions of the human being, whether right or wrong. This is because after some particular rightful actions such as wanting to sacrifice oneself for the sake of the others or the sense of abnegation and devotion, the very existence and life of the human being ends there and then; thus, there will be no opportunity for any divine bounty and reward from God Almighty in that moment.

Therefore, there must exist another world, where people, who have done good deeds and then again, those, who have committed wrongful misdeeds could face their misbehaviors and/or good deeds and see the consequences of their deeds/misdeeds as well; for otherwise, it will certainly be against the principles of divine justice.

Allah is Just and thus rewards anyone, who has the potential and the capability of doing good deeds; then again, He deprives no one from His infinite mercy, whatever limit he/she may possess within his/her inner self.

Therefore, the existence of the hereafter and eternal life for the human being is an inevitable event and it is considered as the means and instrument for divine mercy and justice, granted here by God Almighty, as a divine blessing to the human being.<sup>5</sup>

### **The argument which shows Allah's infinite wisdom**

A number of verses in the Holy Qur'an have spoken about Allah's wisdom, and the fact that nothing in this world is in any way, futile, vain or sent down as a playful thing.<sup>6</sup> It speaks of the non-futility of the creation of the universe by God and His intention, concerning the humans; it also explains and proves the existence of Resurrection Day.

These holy verses mention the importance of God's Creation as well, based upon the fact that this world is in no way, a place for worldly amusements and/or a vain and useless distraction for its inhabitants. Such as the noble surah below [Al-Mumenūn- 115, 116], which announces,

“What did you then think that we had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us? So exalted be Allah, the True King; no God is there but He, the Lord of the honorable Dominion!” – 23:115-116

The meaning of this noble surah is given to us with subtlety, and by using a question, which is made, by negating an evident fact, in order to reach an inevitable truth. Meaning that Man has wrongly assumed that God has created him/her in vain and pointlessly; and did Man really believe that he would not return to his creator one day? Then the noble verses affirm that such presumption is absolutely, a false assumption. For Allah is pure and exempt from such false and vain accusations! They then affirm that if man had known Allah correctly and properly, he would have never approved nor accepted this false assumption; this is because, such assumption, according to the divine attributes that God possesses is inadmissible and utterly impossible.

The Holy Qur'an mentions three divine attributes, each one, refers to one of the means and causes of such futile and useless thinking from man, and then it negates them strongly and categorically. Thus, the main origins of committing vain and futile actions are:

#### **A- Disability and incompetence**

Sometimes, a person begins to do something, but because of his/her incompetence and disability, he/she cannot accomplish it. Therefore, he/she would confess that. “I have done a futile thing”.

Here, the Holy Qur'an invites us to concentrate on the word “Mulk” [i.e. Dominion], which points at the absolute dominion and omnipotence of Allah, and shows us that for this particular reason, the Divine actions do not end in futility and vainness.

#### **B- Natural annulment and essential imperfection**

An individual, who is essentially afflicted with an imperfection, a sense futility and vainness, along with a state of impatience in his nature often tends to do vain and futile actions; on the other hand, one should know that whatever is produced from an eternal essence would be nothing but righteous; thus perfect deeds and actions come forth.

Now, everything that comes forth from such an essence is always righteous and just, endowed with perfection, and in complete accordance with that essence. In like manner, anything that is created in vainness and futility is doomed to be false and erroneous; therefore, no falsity or vainness comes from the glorious essence of the unique God, whatsoever. By using the word “Al-Haqq”, the Holy Qur'an has given a tremendous attention to this essential and important characteristic of God and explains that for this very particular reason, there is no futility and vainness at all in the Universe, created by Allah Almighty, which is considered as His action.

### **C- The existence of obstacles**

Sometimes, the existence of obstacles and other people's troubles and disturbances is the main reason that actions and deeds would not be accomplished, thus, reaching the limit of futility and vainness. Here, by referring to the Oneness and Uniqueness of Allah, “La-Ilaha-Illa-Allah [i.e. there is no God but Allah]” the existence of any form of obstacle and barrier such as associating other divinities to Allah and/or giving Him any partner are indeed negated categorically and strongly. This also goes along for His divinity and undisputed sovereignty, “Rabūl-Arshil-Azim [i.e. the Lord of the Great Throne]”. Therefore, the divine actions are far more superior, glorious, and sublime; and they are not considered at all, as something vain and useless.<sup>7</sup>

In the noble surah of "Ad-Dukhan" [34-40], it is indeed insisted that,

“Most surely, these do say, “There is naught but our first Death and we shall not be raised again.” So bring our fathers [back], if you are truthful. Are they better or the people of "Tubba" and those before them? We destroyed them, for surely they were guilty. And We did not create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in sport. We did not create them both but with the truth, but most of them do not know. Surely the day of separation is their appointed term, of all of them.” – 44:34-40

Indeed, this verse shows that:

1. The inexistence of Judgment day means that there is no purpose in the divine creation of the universe, which would ultimately signify that the existence of this world of ours is aimless and pointless; and that there would be nothing but entertainment and distraction for its inhabitants as a result, which is not true at all.

2. The divine essence is exempt from all kind of amusement and sport; God Almighty never accomplishes anything pointlessly and/or based on futility or amusement; for He does everything, according to a great truth and for the good of all. Therefore, the creation of the universe, which is indeed God's Work, -Sublime and All-Wise He is!- will eventually finish its natural course in an eternal dwelling place and there is no other way to this, whatsoever.

In fact, the difference between the verses above and the verses 115-116 of the noble surah of "Al- Mūmenūn", which were mentioned earlier is that in those verses, the Holy Qur'an points out the vainness of mankind's creation by God, minus the arrival of Resurrection Day. On the contrary, the above verses [Ad-Dukhan"-34-40] try to expand the subject, regarding the

purpose of Creation even further, and by negating the claim that the world was created without the existence of Resurrection Day.<sup>8</sup>

### **Resurrection and Allah's infinite wisdom**

In order to discover the connection between Resurrection Day and divine wisdom, it is important to pay attention to these important points below:

#### **The true meaning and interpretation of divine wisdom**

Wisdom can generally be referred to as performing beneficial actions and deeds and being endowed with the characteristic of goal-mindedness [i.e. having an ultimate positive goal in life], while on the opposite side, we can face vainness, futility in our actions, and the execution of all kinds of aimless deeds, false distractions, and useless amusements. Yet, it should be noted that knowledge [i.e. reason] or wisdom towards divine actions [i.e. actions, which are only performed by God the Sublime] and the actions and deeds of the human beings are significantly different from one another.

An action, which is the production of the human intelligence and wisdom causes him to reach to higher spiritual levels and the aspired human perfection, which are worthy of him and which will eventually take away all kinds of imperfection from his inner self. For instance, actions such as learning something and trying hard to provide for one's provision and a place to live and things to wear are done to satisfy man's primary needs.

However, it should be noted that due to the fact that God is absolutely perfect in his divine essence and absolutely free from any kinds of need towards the others, therefore, the significance and meaning of knowledge and wisdom in His divine actions cannot possibly be as similar as those of the human beings. Therefore, Divine Wisdom associated with Allah means that He wants all His creatures to reach their own unique level of perfection and spiritual evolution, of which they are worthy, and which the will of God Almighty can only do. In other words, their Creation is based on the human efforts to attain the ultimate human perfection, so aspired, and so valued, and so worthy of them...

It is thus understood that by distinguishing the differences, which exist between the significance, the execution, and the usage of wisdom, in regards to God and man, the meaning and the interpretation of "vainness" and "futility" in man's deeds differ thus greatly from that which is done by Allah Almighty. Therefore, the existence of any pointlessness and futility in God's eyes means to be away from the ultimate, sublime goal of any matter whatsoever, where the identity of that matter revolves around reaching that particular ultimate goal; and this is something, which completely differs from the action of God's bestowing and granting something to the human being.<sup>9</sup>

#### **The talent for enjoying immortality**

According to what was discussed earlier, not only human beings always seek immortality and perpetuity but they also wish for their own survival and their much valued immortality. He also has powerful potentials, talents, and capabilities, which appear to be far beyond the capacity of this earthly world...

Mankind's sublime and transcendental potentials, capabilities, and actions require a horizon far greater than this world's limited horizon. Furthermore, this earthly plane is nothing but the finite, small universe, which embraces the fetus. It is nothing but a place [or should we say, a recipient], which only acts as a place of growth and acquiring great knowledge. A place where man is educated and taught accordingly to reach higher and more prominent spiritual and mental levels; however, man can only seek his final goal in another world, where the horizon is limitless and where everything in it is far better and far more superior than this actual world in which we live.

### **The absence of the Resurrection Day, thus the vainness of divine creation**

There are different interpretations, concerning the vainness and futility of divine creation and/or that of mankind, along with the inexistence and absence of any form of Resurrection Day.<sup>10</sup>

By referring to the verses of the Holy Qur'an, one can reach the rational conclusion that not only the hereafter [i.e. the Afterlife] exists inside the deep significance of God's creation of mankind, but that it already includes purgatory and resurrection day in itself, naturally and essentially.

It also implies that in all forms of life, there is always the notion and concept of a "return" to God, as the Almighty, sublime creator. In fact, if such concept [that is, the return to God] did not exist, the entire concept of divine creation would have been pointless and futile! And no Creation would have been made in the first place either, because it would have appeared as something utterly useless and devoid of any usefulness and cause.

Just as similar as the fact that if the entire existence of the fetus was to be limited and restricted only to the maternal womb, the formation and the creation of the human being's eyes and ears and then again, all the different parts of his/her body would have been pointless as well. Therefore, those which explain the "purposeful" nature of the Universe and then the existence of Mankind with all the existing characteristics, which only belong to him are indeed that same "marching progress" and "advancement" towards God Almighty. And the fact of going from this earthly plane to a higher, better, and far more superior world, which can only appear as "the" permanent dwelling-place of Man, as a natural ending...

### **Notes**

1. Or, volume 7, page 129
2. In the noble surah of [Djassiyah, 28] the principles of wisdom and knowledge are also mentioned, and they will be later discussed in "The divine argument of wisdom".
3. For more information, please refer to "The complete works of Professor Mutahhari" volume 1, pages 78-86, 115-132
4. Idem, volume 2, page 534
5. Idem, pages 532-534 or, volume 7, pages 135-136-140
6. For more explanation, regarding the difference between falsehoods, please refer to the book, entitled: "the Hereafter" pages 68-69. Or volume 3 of the Complete Works of Professor Mutahhari, pages 141-142; there is also another explanation regarding the existence of a connection between Divine Justice and the necessity for the existence of Resurrection Day that are not valid; therefore, the erudite author had preferred to state what

is mentioned here as the more valid statements. For more information, refer to volume 7, page 134-135.

7. Extract from the book "The Hereafter", pages 65-66

8. There are other verses in the Holy Qur'an, which discuss the same subject, in the surah Al-Djassiah-21-22-27-28, Al-Hajj-5-7, etc, etc...

9. Idem, page 132

10. Please, refer to the book "The Hereafter" pages 90-91; or volume 7, pages 132-139; then again, the "Complete Works", volume 2, page 536; and "The Social Evolution of Man" [Takamol-e Edjtemaii-e Ensan] , pages 75-76

## Chapter 5: Heaven and Hell

### The human typology from the Holy Qur'an's point of view

The Holy Qur'an divides mankind into two categories: Blissful and Damned.

Then again, in another category, human beings are also divided into three different categories [Al- Waqiah- 7-11],

“[On that Day,] then, shall you be [divided into] three kinds. Thus, there shall be such as will have attained to what is right: oh, how [happy] will be they who have attained to what is right! And there shall be such as will have lost them-selves in evil: oh, how [unhappy] will be they who have lost themselves in evil! But the foremost shall be [they who in life were] the foremost [in Faith and good works]: they who were [always] drawn close unto God!” – 56:7-11

#### Notes

First: In this category, the Holy Qur'an has not intended to identify the entire blessed souls as only one group, but instead intends to clarify the fact that different levels of bliss and eternal happiness exist; it then goes on to divide and distinguish them in two different categories, subsequently.

Second: The Holy Qur'an introduces in one part a group, known as the companions of the right hand [i.e. As'habil Yamin], and then introduces another group as the companions of the left hand [i.e. As'habi Mash'amah]. This nomination is not superficial at all and does not intend to be so, whatsoever. It includes in fact, a series of divine Secrets and represents truthful facts about the afterlife.

Third: The Holy Qur'an refers to the benevolent and the wrongdoers as “Ashabil Yamin” and “Ashabi Shemal” respectively, which contain subtle and delicate points to consider carefully. The word “Ashab” implies a very tight and stretched constancy. Therefore, it can be understood from this interpretation that the fact of being called “Ashabil Yamin” and becoming “Mey'manah [i.e. becoming blessed in the hereafter] means that the blessed souls have become the happy dwellers of paradise in the hereafter.

It means that they are already where they should be and that they have reached the place they had to reach in the first place. In like manner, the damned or “Ashabi Shemal” have already become the unfortunate, unhappy dwellers of hell; it means that they have already reached the place they had to reach in the first place, which is the most inferior place in the terrible region, called Hell...

Fourth: The Holy Qur'an has referred to “As'habil Yamin” as “As'habil Mey'manah”. It had also named “Ashabe Shemal” as “As'hab Mash'ama”, which in fact, intends to clarify between “good” and “evil” or between “virtue” [i.e. righteousness] and “wickedness” [i.e. Yumn and Sheamat]. It signifies that a soul reaches the highest realm of heaven, according to his/her good, virtuous deeds, and obtains the best of the blessings and favors; and most of all, the best of fates. Then again, in contrast to the Blessed souls, the wicked souls have reached

hell in their turn, according to their wicked, sinful, and villainous misdeeds. The Damned souls have fallen in fact, in the deepest, farthest, and

inferior region of hell, because of their false and vain thoughts [i.e. heresy]; these damned souls have reached their darkest nightmares, by falling to their sinister, lugubrious misfortune, where no deliverance will ever be possible for them.

In simpler words, these two words point out to the good and the wickedness that can be found in the human being itself. Goodness can be seen as something virtuous in the creed, ethics, and good deeds, while wickedness in the creed, ethics, and misdeeds can be seen and found in all kinds of misbehavior and misconduct; in all forms of sinful and bad characteristics of the human being, and nothing else.<sup>1</sup>

### **The standard for being a blessed soul or a damned soul**

In several cases, the Holy Qur'an has spoken about a specific and fundamental standard, which exists in regards to the blessed souls or the damned souls. It also speaks about the characteristics with which, individuals are destined to become Damned, as in the noble surah of "An-Naziat" [37-39],

“For, unto him who shall have transgressed the bounds of what is right, and preferred the life of this world [to the good of his soul], that blazing fire will truly be the goal!” – 79 : 37-39

Therefore, the necessary characteristics for becoming the unfortunate inhabitant of hell are:

1. Rebellion and disobedience before Allah's commandments. At the same time, the action of fleeing from His true worship and servitude. And ignoring such vital, essential action.
2. Becoming an individual, who values only his/her physical, earthly life more than anything else, while at the same time, abandoning the hereafter, by ignoring and neglecting utterly its importance.

In contrast, these are the characteristics, which help the human being to become the eternal inhabitant of Heaven:

1. Fearing God's great status and eminent position as the one and unique creator and sovereign lord of all things.
2. Disobeying the worldly desires and vile passions, as it has been announced in the surah "An- Naziat" [40-41]. It says,

“But onto him, who shall have stood in fear of his Sustainer's Presence, and held back his inner self from base desires. Paradise will truly be the goal!” – 79:40-41

### **Heaven [or Paradise]**

In the Holy Qur'an, the existence of multiple “Heavens” has been mentioned for those, who had sincerely feared God's position as the creator; thus, Heaven has different sorts, categories, and levels within itself. The diversity of heaven is thus, because of the very presence of different grades and ranks among virtuous souls and other believers, subsequently.

### **The spiritual and physical heaven**

Indeed, the Holy Qur'an has mentioned the existence of two heavens for those human beings, who had truly and verily feared God's Eminent Position. Let us study that in the noble surah "Ar- Rah'man" [verse 46],

“But for him, who fears the standing before his Lord, there will be two gardens [i.e. in Paradise].” – 55:46

About the nature of these two “Heavens”, religious scholars have given different possible interpretations. Perhaps the best explanation might be the fact that by stating two different “Heavens”, the Holy Qur'an intended to announce that there are is “physical” heaven and one “spiritual” heaven in the other realm. That is, just as there is a "physical" pain and/or pleasure in the earthly plane, and then again a "spiritual" pain and/or pleasure in the world, such notion exists also in the afterlife. Therefore, in the noble surah of "Ar-Rah'man" [Verse 46], the Holy Qur'an has subsequently spoken about both kinds of “heaven”.

#### **The heaven of ‘Riz'wan’**

After mentioning the physical Rewards and Bounties, the Holy Qur'an speaks then of the Heaven, known as “Riz'wan” and announces,

“Allah has promised the believers-men and women,- Gardens under which rivers flow to dwell therein forever, and beautiful mansions in Gardens of Adn [i.e. Eden- Paradise]. But the greatest Bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allah. That is the supreme Success!”<sup>2</sup> – 9:72

Indeed, God’s satisfaction and contentment towards mankind is the greatest truth of all, and even the smallest amount or the faintest particle of this divine satisfaction and approval is far beyond all the physical delights, found in the "Physical" Heaven!<sup>3</sup>

#### **The pure and heavenly drink**

Among the heavenly bounties and blessings of paradise, there is the purest and most spiritual heavenly drink. Concerning the [Physical] heaven, where the blessed dwell, Allah announces,

“Their garments will be of fine green silk and gold embroidery. They will be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their lord will give them a pure drink.” – 76:21

The word “Tahūr” means a purifier; that is, in addition to the purity and the spiritual cleanness of the blessed souls, this particular drink will purify and clean them even more from all the earthly imperfections. Here, Allah becomes the "Cup Bearer" par excellence, as Imam Sadiq [as] has stated in this regard, "The Purifier is no one but Allah Himself!"

Therefore, those, who will only drink a sip from the purifying cup of Allah will soon find out that all the physical pleasures that they are faced with will have a completely different significance; and that they would ultimately see only Allah, in all those Divine pleasures.<sup>4</sup>

#### **The heavenly gates**

It is stated in all the religious sources that heaven has indeed eight doors or gates [i.e. portals]. These eight Gates are surely not ceremonial and/or superfluous and neither are they installed there, to control and restrict people from entering heaven, because the hereafter is not a World of limitations and restrictions. Indeed, there is no obstacle whatsoever, as to the way the human beings would want to enter inside paradise; they can all enter through the gates of heaven in an instant, and from one heavenly gate only. These Gates are not intended either to make a distinction between the poor

and the rich, by letting them enter through different portals. Therefore, what truth lies exactly, behind the existence of these heavenly Gates...?

Truth is, in the hereafter, what matters is the grade [i.e. level-degree] of the souls' spiritual evolution and virtues, and not the ranks and positions that they had enjoyed having during their lifetime on earth. Faith, good deeds, and virtue have various levels and ranks. Each person and each group of people have their own unique level of faith and piety. Each group has moved up differently in the ladder of spiritual evolution and piety; therefore, according to their specific and proportional level of spiritual evolution and progress, a certain Gate of heaven will be opened to them respectively.

For instance, the gate through which, illustrious martyrs and those, who have fought in the Path of Allah [i.e. the Mujahidoun] enter is the same gate that the "elite" and those, who are Allah's "Friends" enter into heaven, to be near Allah and enjoy such infinite privilege.<sup>5</sup>

### **The characteristics of paradise**

Paradise is the center of divine blessings, bounties, and all the most beautiful characteristics and descriptions of all the most pleasant things that only exist in heaven. However, before we start mentioning the details of the divine bounties, it is necessary to review a number of basic and general properties of this heavenly place, such as:

#### **Purity and pureness**

The Holy Qur'an has mentioned the heavenly abode, called "Tooba", which is the ultimate dwelling-place of the believers:

"[And so it is that] they who attain to Faith and do righteous deeds are destined for happiness [in this world] and the most beautiful of all goals [in the life to come]!" – 13:19

"Tooba" is derived from the word "Tayyib", which means purity, pureness, and cleanness. It has been reported that "Tooba" is a special tree in paradise; its trunk is located inside the house of the lord of the believers: Ali Ibn-e Abi Talib [as] and its branches have penetrated inside the houses of all the believers, in all over the world, until the day of resurrection. The branches of this heavenly tree are in fact, the very true beliefs of the believers, along with the best of their characteristics and temperaments.<sup>6</sup>

The human spirit is basically, similar and identical to a tree, consisting of infinite roots, branches, and delicious, juicy fruits. As long as mankind exists and lives in this world, and by performing righteous deed, he/she "grafts" and "unites" himself/herself to the heavenly Tree of "Tooba"; on the contrary, by committing wrongful deeds and demonstrating bad behaviors, and showing cruelty to other people, he/she will instead "graft" his/her existence to the hellish Tree of "Zaqqūm". Just as it is depicted in the noble surah of "Ad-Dukhan" [verse 43-44],

"Verily, [in the life to come], the tree of deadly fruit will be the food of the sinful."<sup>7</sup> - 43:44

#### **The divine safety and security**

Heaven is the safest and most secure of all places. A number of verses in the Holy Qur'an have emphasized this fact; for instance, it has been reported that, "Good deeds bring on a security and safety..."

Indeed, good and benevolent deeds, along with truth will bring on security. And the kind of security and safety that the believers enjoy in the hereafter is due to their efforts, for having previously accomplished good actions in this world of ours.

#### **Health and well-being**

Health and well-being is among the special characteristics of paradise and there exist no physical, mental, and spiritual harm and injury to its inhabitants, whatsoever. The Holy Qur'an describes the pure and clean drinks of heaven, by announcing,

“By which, their minds will not be clouded and which will not make them drunk.” - 56:19

#### **Constancy and eternity**

Heaven is indeed the place of eternity, constancy, and immortality. In paradise, no one will ever think of leaving such divine place nor will anyone ever be expelled from it or die in that heavenly abode,

“And neither shall they taste Death there after having passed through their erstwhile Death. Thus will He have preserved them from all suffering through the blazing Fire.” - 44:56

#### **The inexistence of prohibitions and limitations**

Heaven is no place for the execution of any task and duty; because the order of that other world is very different from the order, which exists in this world of ours; in fact, its order is not comparable to the earthly plane; thus, there are no limitations and prohibitions in heaven. Whosoever desires anything sees his/her wish fulfilled and can enjoy from any

Bounty that exists there, as much as he/she desires. Therefore, the Holy Qur'an points out to the inexistence of any kind of prohibition and limitations and states,

“Never failing and never out of reach...” – 56:19

#### **The divine mercy, favor, and grace**

Heaven and its infinite bounties are solely made of God's favors and infinite Grace:

“An act of thy Sustainer's Favor; and that that will be the Triumph supreme!” – 44:57

For those blessed souls, who will be the fortunate inhabitants of heaven and who shall possess spiritual knowledge of the divine, the heavenly bounties shall not only be enjoyable, due to their divine nature, but also most pleasing and agreeable, because they shall come directly from their beloved and merciful God as their well-deserved rewards. And indeed, this latter reason is the most delightful of all Bounties and goes beyond every other heavenly delight, by far...!<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, any human being, in any position and rank that he/she might be, is always prone to committing sinful deeds and errors, and always in the need of divine mercy and forgiveness. He/she will always be in need of a purification from the sinful deeds he/she had committed in the past; therefore, the Holy Qur'an announces,

“[As against this,] behold for those, who stand in awe of God although He is beyond the reach of their perception, there is forgiveness in store and a great reward.” – 67:12

According to this noble verse in the Holy Qur'an, two rewards have been given to the human souls: the divine forgiveness and great, innumerable rewards. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) had stated in this regard, "If there were a conflict between divine reckoning and mankind's deeds to be calculated precisely by Allah, no one would have ever become a creditor towards God, whatsoever!" This is because whatever mankind possesses, is bestowed on him by only God; and even if someone claims that all of his/her prayers is a form of gratitude and rendering of grace to God Almighty for only a single one of God's Rewards, this statement is utterly vain and meaningless. Therefore, human beings need to purify themselves from their sins, misdeeds, and crimes, by asking for God's Forgiveness before asking for the bestowal and conferment of Allah's Bounties and Delights.

### **Spiritual bounties**

Indeed, one should insist that spiritual heaven is far better and far more superior than material, physical heaven. However, in opposition to physical and material Heaven, which is describable, spiritual heaven cannot be described as one would expect it to be. Therefore, the Holy Qur'an has announced,

“And [as for all such believers,] no human being can imagine what blissful delights, as yet hidden, await them [in the life to come] as a reward for all that they did.” – 32:17

### **Physical and material bounties**

In order to describe the physical and material heaven, the Holy Qur'an sometimes mentions "special bounties" and in some other times, calls them "All kinds of delights"; especially in the description of two particular Divine Gardens,

“[Two Gardens] of many wondrous hues.” – 55:48

Those two gardens possess “All kinds of delights”. Here, the matter has been intentionally stated with ambiguity, in order for the minds of those, who read this sentence, to wander wherever they please.

Here, God Almighty wants the human beings to understand that if each of the “heavenly bounties” were to be named and accounted for, then the entire notion of “limiting” heaven's Realm would be entirely vain and false as a result; when this subject is indeed, far beyond our understanding, and therefore, it cannot be fully explained and understood thoroughly.

### **Heavenly food and drinks**

The Holy Qur'an has mentioned various kinds of heavenly drinks and food such as the delicious meat of different Heavenly birds<sup>9</sup>, different kinds of fruits<sup>10</sup> [two<sup>11</sup> for each kind] and various pure and delicious Drinks<sup>12</sup>, of which the blessed souls can retrieve all the best possible benefits without having to face any negative effects upon themselves, whatsoever.

### Heavenly spouses

The Holy Qur'an has referred to spouses in paradise as “those endowed with beautiful eyes” [i.e. Hurul Ain]<sup>13</sup> and in a number of occasions has described them as well. These Heavenly spouses have always been described in a most delightful manner:

From moral and spiritual points of view: The Holy Qur'an describes them as being virtuous, pure, chaste<sup>14</sup>, innocent, and endowed with the best of temperaments. It says,

“In these [Gardens] will be mates of modest gaze, whom neither man nor invisible being will have touched ere then.” – 55:56

From an emotional point of view:

“For, behold, We shall have brought them into being in a life renewed, having resurrected them as virgins, full of love, well-matched.” – 56: 35-37

From a physical point of view: some of the physical characteristics of these heavenly spouses have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an; such as a “chaste, restraining glances”<sup>15</sup> or a perfection in the qualities, which adorn them; then again, goodness, great beauty<sup>16</sup>, virginity<sup>17</sup>, a pearl well-guarded<sup>18</sup>, eloquence, and identical age with their companions.

### Spectacular sights and wonders

Spectacular sights and wonders<sup>19</sup>

Heaven is a place full of beautiful sights with magnificent, picturesque, and delightful sceneries and panoramas...! Among these wonderful sceneries, one can speak of the trees, of the darkest green in color<sup>20</sup>, with sources pouring forth water in continuous abundance<sup>21</sup>, and ever-flowing rivers, and springs flowing free<sup>22</sup>, and fountains with translucent, crystal-like water...

A number of verses in the Holy Qur'an have described perfectly and beautifully the characteristics of the different springs, which exist in Paradise. In one noble verse, four different kinds of Heavenly Rivers have been mentioned.

For instance: the rivers, the water of which never putrefies or alters its color [i.e. incorruptible]; the rivers of pure milk that are never corrupted or change taste; the holy rivers, made from delicious and Heavenly wine for those, who wish to drink; and rivers that are made from pure honey and which flow free, devoid of any other thing.<sup>23</sup>

### Heavenly garments and ornaments

The blessed dwellers of paradise wear beautiful garments,

“Wearing [garments] of silk and brocade, facing one another [in love].” – 44:53

“Allah will admit those, who attain to faith and do righteous deeds into gardens through which, running waters flow, wherein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls, and where silk will be their raiment.” – 22:33

And,

“Gardens of Eternity will they enter: therein will they be adorned with bracelets of gold and pearls; and their garments there will be of silk...” – 35:33

### **Affectionate and sweet relationships**

One of the characteristics of heaven is the existence of affectionate, sweet relationships and enthusiastic, friendly conversations and dialogues, based on mutual respect and admiration, devoid of any exaggerations, lies, gossips, unworthy thoughts, and grudge<sup>24</sup>,

“[They will be seated] on gold-encrusted thrones of happiness, reclining upon them, facing one another [in love].” – 56:15-16

“No empty talk will they hear there-nothing but [tidings of] inner soundness and peace; and there will they have their sustenance by day and by night.” – 19:62

Allah has also promised the righteous parents and their virtuous offspring to join each other, as well as uniting the close and intimate relatives, in the light of His inexorable Promise.<sup>25</sup>

Additionally, the Holy Qur'an refers also to other bounties such as couches, thrones, shades, pure dwellings, cups, etc, etc... which, due to the limited space of the present work, we shall have to refrain from explaining thoroughly.<sup>26</sup>

### **Hell**

Hell is the vilest, most atrocious, and most oppressive place in the whole universe, where the divine torment and punishment are executed for those, who will have sinned.

The Holy Qur'an has warned Hell in many instances and described it as "Ba'as Ul-Mossir" [i.e. a bad place, where the individual is arrested and kept in custody], "Ba'as Ul-Mahad" [i.e. a very bad dwelling-place], "Ba'as Ul-Gharar" [i.e. a very bad abode], "Ba'as Ul-Mas'wa" [i.e. a very bad residence], etc, etc...

#### **The various names of Hell**

The Holy Qur'an has quoted and named Hell with many different names; such as Hell [or Jahhannam]<sup>27</sup>, Nar<sup>28</sup> [i.e. Fire], Jahim<sup>29</sup>, Sa'ir<sup>30</sup>, Saghar<sup>31</sup>, Hatmah<sup>32</sup>, and Hawiyyah<sup>33</sup>.

Each one of these names describes a kind of reality about this horrible, terrible place and talks about its particular characteristics, concerning that specific, particular name.

To give you an example, Hawiyyah means a place where you shall fall down; and that hell is a place where whosoever enters it, he/she will fall down. The Holy Qur'an has called the place of the downfall and the tumbling of the human soul [or Mah'wiyyah] as "Hawiyyah". As though the miserable soul, who falls down and tumbles has become one with that dwelling-place, so that the soul and the dwelling-place become one and the same; that means the soul itself is transformed into hell and the painful flames...<sup>34</sup>

#### **Hell's doors**

The Holy Qur'an has announced that Hell has seven Doors or Portals:

"And surely, Hell is the promised place for them all. It [Hell] has seven gates, for each of those gates is a [special] class [of sinners] assigned." – 15:43-44

Allamah Tabatabayi [God rest his soul] had explained that it is probable that hell's doors are not in fact, the entrance doors, such as one sees in all places, which open and lead to a house or a garden or some other interior places...

It is in fact, referring to the different places in hell such as the pits and the valleys, where all kinds of eternal torment and suffering are inflicted upon the damned... The reason for the variety of the torments comes from the variety, which exists for all the devious ways of sin and wrongdoing, committed by man during his lifetime on earth. That is why hell chooses the torment, which suits best the sin that had been committed by the damned.<sup>35</sup>

### **Hell is on the lookout...**

The Holy Qur'an announces,

"Truly, Hell is a place of ambush..." – 78:21

This interpretation is truly a very extraordinary and astonishing one, to put it mildly... For, to be on watch is usually used for those, who hid themselves and stand guardedly in some place, in some mountainous pass for something or someone to arrive, to then come out of the hiding place and to show themselves in full view. They wait then, in order to ambush... They also benefit from the element of surprise from the person in particular; it seems as though the person on the lookout wishes to take over the individual before him and keep him as his unfortunate captive...

From the verses in the Holy Qur'an, one understands that every human being has to pass by hell and cross it inevitably. It says,

"There is not one of you but will pass over it [Hell]: this is with your Lord; a Decree which must be accomplished." – 19:71

In fact, nobody can be exempted from this terrible, frightening task. Everyone should pass that horrible, fearful place: from the noble prophets to the most common of the people! Every soul is forced to take that path and pass through, in order to go across this way. It is even possible that the crossing could last as long as thousands and thousands of years. Concerning the interpretation of that particular verse, some disciples asked questions from the illustrious Imams [as]. They would usually ask them, "Will you cross Hell as well...?"

And they would all give the one and same answer, which was, "Yes indeed, but we shall pass through it while it shall be extinct..."<sup>36</sup>

This reply has a very deep and precise meaning. In fact, the root of hell fire comes from the human being. It signifies that it comes in fact, from his vile passions, his vices, his sins, and his deviations...

All those sinful crimes ignite, inflame, and set fire to the human being to make him become as those hellish flames that envelop his sinful being. And he, who succeeds in extinguishing those sinful, horrible flames in his inner self is certain to have no such thing as painful flames, made by his own vilest passions; that is why he can pass through hell, while hell fire shall be extinct, only for him.

The concept, which announces that whosoever wishes to enter paradise [i.e. Heaven] should first pass through hell, is indeed a parable. This means that whosoever wishes to reach happiness and beatitude should first be tested by all kinds of spiritual tests and trials. And this is accomplished by

passing through all kinds of sins, without becoming stained, by any of those sins, whatsoever. Therefore, the measure of a human being, becoming stained and corrupted by sins shows the measure of his affliction in that atrocious place; for, in that moment, hell shall be awaiting him and it shall be on the "lookout" for him.<sup>37</sup>

### **The uniqueness of man, his deeds and his punishment**

Some of the verses in the Holy Qur'an show a kind of unity, identicalness, and sameness between man and his misdeeds, and hell fire and the divine torment...

In the noble surah "Al-Baqarah", Allah announces,

“But if you do it not, and you can never do it, and then fear the Fire [Hell] whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers.” – 2:24

In like manner, in the noble surah "At-Tah'rim", Allah the Sublime announces,

“O you, who have attained to Faith! Ward off from yourselves and those who are close to you that fire [of the Hereafter] whose fuel is human beings and stones: [lording] over it are angelic powers awesome [and] severe, who do not disobey God in whatever He has commanded them, but [always] do what they are bidden to do.” – 66:6

We can thus learn many points from these two noble verses:

1. There is a unity, similarity, and likeness between man and the divine; this means that someone has already prepared a big pile of wood to be kindled with the arrival of the damned, where the soul is pushed harshly and brutally into it, to be burned for all eternity.

The truth is that the fire, which awaits the damned and the damned himself are one and the same; this is because that fire comes from his own misdeeds and the material, which is thrown in that pile, is the damned himself, with the heavy, atrocious burden of his wrongdoings and his wicked sins. Nothing else exists then, except the damned and his misdeeds. And the meaning of the "stone" is the heart of the sinner and wrongdoer, which has become hard and cruel, just like a lifeless stone

2. There is a moral responsibility for man to take into consideration in his confrontation with his folks and kin.

3. There is also a relation between one's preservation from the divine torment and the will to preserve others from any harm. This verse shows that man should not only be responsible for himself but also take responsibility for others as well.

Secondly, the best way to preserve and protect others from that atrocious torment is to begin and initiate from oneself and commit no wrongdoing and no sin, in order to be far and away from hell fire. One should be on the lookout, so as not to sin, while trying to purify his soul as best as he can, to be able to protect and defend not only himself but his kindred as well.<sup>38</sup>

There is no excuse!

The Holy Qur'an has insisted that on resurrection day, the disbelievers cannot be excused for any reason whatsoever, for all the sins and wrongdoings that they had committed shamelessly during their lifetime on earth. It says,

"O you, who are bent on denying the truth, make no [empty] excuses today; [in the life to come] you shall be but recompensed for what you were doing [in this world]." – 66:7

In some instances, it also speaks about the impossibility of reducing and diminishing their torments. Indeed, it announces,

"In this state shall they abide; [and] neither will their suffering, be lightened, nor will they be granted respite." – 2:162

Now, one is faced with a very important question, which is: why God Almighty, Who is the Most Merciful and whose generosity and grace are infinite, cannot accept the repentance of the damned...?

The answer to this question has already been given in that same verse, mentioned above. According to the Holy Qur'an, there is a direct relation between the divine torment inflicted upon the damned on resurrection day and the characteristics, temperament, and deeds of the human being itself; and therefore, there can never be any excuse, offered by the Damned; and it cannot be accepted by God Almighty either. Indeed, the negation of any Torment means that God has not been acting as Himself.<sup>39</sup>

### **Different kinds of Torments**

Just as the human beings have all kinds of pleasures, physical, mental, and spiritual, the Damned too, have to bear all kinds of physical, mental, and spiritual Torments in the Hereafter...

### **The mental Torments**

The Holy Qur'an has spoken in several places about the numerous spiritual and mental torments in hell; to give you an example one can name the torment of vileness<sup>40</sup> and humiliation<sup>41</sup> or the torment of blame<sup>42</sup> and reprobation<sup>43</sup> or that of the curse<sup>44</sup> or even envy<sup>45</sup> or utter despair.<sup>46</sup>

### **The spiritual Torments**

In the noble surah "Al-Homazah", after Allah has refuted categorically the erroneous thought of those, who love this earthly plane and think of nothing else but to amass riches and fortunes as something vain and false, and because those individuals think by mistake that to possess riches and gold means to be always immortal, He announces,

"Nay, but [in the life to come such as] he shall indeed be abandoned to crushing torment! And what could make thee conceive what that crushing torment will be? A fire kindled, by God, which will rise over the [guilty] heart". – 104:4-7

Here, the Holy Qur'an corrects their faulty thought and replies that that kind of fire is not like the other earthly fires, which tend to burn only the physical body and leave nothing but ashes. This fire, here, is a fire, which takes form in the hearts of the damned and burns them thoroughly and excruciatingly.<sup>47</sup>

### **Loneliness and utter solitude**

One of the most painful and terrible torments in the hereafter and which is of the spiritual kind is the feeling of utter loneliness and absolute solitude; that is, when the soul comes to understand that it has no friends or

companions anymore. This matter has been discussed in various verses of the Holy Qur'an.<sup>48</sup>

In the surah "Al-Haqqah", the Holy Qur'an speaks about the individual, who is devoid of any faith and belief; he, who had never wanted to help and assist God's creatures; it announces,

"For behold, he did not believe in God, the Tremendous, and did not feel any urge to feed the needy: and so, no friend has here today." – 69:33-35

#### **The physical torments**

The Holy Qur'an has announced the existence of various physical torments in hell. Some of them are listed below:

#### **To be chained and bound together in fetters**

The Holy Qur'an has announced several times that the damned, who dwell in hell shall be bound in fetters; for example, in the surah "Ibrahim", one reads,

"And thou wilt see the sinners that day, bound together in fetters..." - 14:49<sup>49</sup>

#### **To be thrown in hell fire**

One of the torments that the damned are facing is that they shall actually be "thrown" in Hell Fire,

"For the Rejecters, We have prepared Chains..." – 76:4

and,

"Those, who reject the Book and the [Revelations] with which, We sent our Messengers: but soon, shall they know! When the yokes [shall be] round their necks, and the chains; they shall be dragged along in the boiling fetid fluid, then in the Fire shall they be burned!" - 40-70-72<sup>50</sup>

#### **A chain with a length of seventy cubits**

In the surah "Al-Haqqah", there is a description of the destiny and the outcome of the cruel people, who had been too attached to their goods and possessions, along with deep feelings of power and force. And then we see them, destroyed very easily,

"Further, make him march in a chain, whereof the length is seventy cubits..." – 69:32

The seventy cubits, which is named here, is not really about its actual length, which is seventy cubits; for, every one of the damned has a different chain, with a different length to it. In fact, about the Day of Judgment, all the rings in all the chains that one can read about are dominated by the fact that the damned, while on earth had used all kinds of chains, related to all sorts of sins, perversity, and vices. Thus, to know with how many rings those chains had been formed.<sup>51</sup>

#### **To wander [round]**

The Holy Qur'an announces,

"In its midst and in the midst of boiling hot water will they wander round! Then which of the Favors of Your Lord will ye deny?!" – 55:44-45

It is indeed extraordinary that after recounting the terrible things that shall befall the damned in Hell Fire and the fact that they will be burned and

wandered round, the Holy Qur'an demands, "Then, which of the Favors of Your Lord will ye deny?!"

In fact, the Holy Qur'an wishes to say that this harsh Torment is a necessary action, which has to be accomplished, whether one approves of it or not. That it is considered as one of the necessary things that "should" exist in the universe, without which, there shall be no laws or order; and the fact that without these punishments, all the Divine blessings and favors will be devoid of any perfection and significance.

In other words: God's general favor to all the human beings makes it so that every human being and every simple thing has to have "exactly" and "precisely" that which "he/she" or "it" deserves to receive from Him as his/her/its rightful retribution. Therefore, because all these things have been made, and exist, according to a very exact and rigid wisdom and justice, and a very exact reckoning, they are thus considered as the inseparable parts of the Divine blessings and favors.<sup>52</sup>

### **The Garment of Fire**

The Holy Qur'an announces,

"These two antagonists dispute with each other about their Lord: but those who deny [their Lord], for them will be cut out a Garment of Fire: over their heads will be poured out boiling water!" – 57:19

In another noble verse, the Holy Qur'an names the garment, donned by the damned. This garment is called "Ghat'ran", and described in this fashion,

"Their garments of liquid pitch and their faces, covered with dire!" – 14:50

Ghat'ran is in fact, a pitch black, fetid substance, which is also horribly sticky; the Arabs, in bygone days, used to pour it over their camels and massage them with it. The Holy Qur'an wishes to make this comparison, so that one may come to imagine and visualize what sort of garment is, that which is donned by the damned. This garment covers their whole person.<sup>53</sup>

### **The food of the Damned**

The Holy Qur'an announces that there is a special food for the sinners. It says,

"Verily the Tree of Zaqqum will be the Food of the sinful, like molten brass! It will boil in their insides, like the boiling of scalding water..." – 44:43-46

It also says in another verse,

"For, it is a tree that springs out of the bottom of Hell Fire: the shoots of its fruit-stalks are like the heads of devils. Truly, they will eat thereof and fill their bellies therewith..." – 37:64

In the surah "An-Naba" there is another verse, which also speaks of the food of the damned,

"Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink, save a boiling fluid and a fluid, dark, murky, intensely cold, a fitting recompense for them..." – 78:25

After that, the Holy Qur'an insists upon the fact that these are truly a hundred per cent "fitting" retribution [i.e. Punishment-Penalty] for them. This "fitting" quality shows us that this torment is exactly similar and

identical to the misdeed perpetrated by the sinner, while on earth. Therefore, if the misdeed were heavy [very sinful] or light [not very sinful, but sinful however], the retribution would exactly fit that particular deed, whatever it may be. Therefore, it all returns in fact, to the misdeed itself.<sup>54</sup>

There is also one last thing, known as the boiling water; the Holy Qur'an says that the angels are ordered to do, that which is commanded by Allah Almighty,

“A voice will cry, “Seize ye him and drag him into the midst of the Blazing Fire! Then pour over his head the Penalty of Boiling Water!”

Here, we are faced with two kinds of torments: one is the torment, which is endured by the damned from his/her inner parts and organs, and then, there is the second torment, which is poured over him. This is once again, a metaphorical comparison of the sin, committed by the sinner, while on earth: that is, the suffering that he/she is about to endure, along with all the pain and hardship that he/she has to bear as his/her "fitting" Punishment. They are accompanied by the reactions of his/her sinful misdeeds, "returned" to him/her, by "the others" from his/her past sins, against "the others"<sup>55</sup>

#### **The duration of the torment**

Those, whose human nature has not been stained and tainted, by all kinds of sinful actions, and who can see clearly the principle of Truth within their hearts. Those, whose utter submission and obedience to Allah have still remained untouched and intact; those, who have not yet turned into monsters, for their enmity and hostility towards Universal Truth and God Almighty: those souls, then, have to bear their Torments with dignity. This is because of the sins they had committed while on earth; these Torments have a purifying effect on them; when they are purified and free from any sin, then they are saved.<sup>56</sup>

#### **Notes**

1. “Understanding the Holy Qur'an”, volume 6, page 112
2. "And his gladness towards men is the supreme Success."
3. “Understanding the Holy Qur'an”, volume 6, pages 70-73
4. “Understanding the Holy Qur'an” volume 11 pages 62-70
5. Please refer to the book, entitled: The "Rise" of Mahdi [May Allah hastens his Apparition and his Manifestation] from the historical point of view [along with an article, written by the Martyr Professor Murtadha Mutahhari himself] page 74
6. Refer to the noble surah Ibrahim, verses 24-24
7. The Infernal Tree that exists in Hell and is the food of the sinners
8. “Understanding the Holy Qur'an” - volume 5, page 152
9. Refer to the noble surah Al-Waqiah, verse 21
10. Refer to the noble surah Ad-Dukhan, verse 55, Ar-Rah'man, verses 52 and 68, Al-Waqiah, verse 20
11. Refer to the noble surah Al-Waqiah, verse 213
12. Refer to the noble surah Al-Waqiah, verses 18-19
13. Ad-Dukhan- 54, "The ones with beautiful eyes" [i.e. Hurul-Ain] can also be the same spouses, who had shared their husbands lives on earth, and who shall live together in heaven for all eternity.
14. Al-Baqarah, 25, Ali-Imran, 15, An-Nissa, 57
15. Al-Waqiah, 35-37
16. Ar-Rah'man,56
17. Al-Waqiah, 36

18. Al-Waqiah, 22-23
19. It does not mean that Heavenly sights are created without any purpose, but that they have other uses as well.
20. Ar-Rah'man, 64
21. Ar-Rah'man, 66
22. Ar-Rah'man, 50
23. Muhammad, 15, "Here is a Parable of the Garden, which the righteous are promised: in it are rivers of water incorruptible: rivers of milk of which the taste never changes; rivers of wine, a joy to those who drink; and rivers of honey pure and clear..."
24. "And We shall remove from their hearts any lurking sense of injury: [they will be] brothers [joyfully] facing each other on thrones [of dignity]." – 15:47
25. "And those, who believe and whose families follow them in Faith- to them shall We join their families: nor shall We deprive them [of the fruit] of aught of their works: [yet] is each individual in pledge for his deeds..." – 15:21
26. For more information, please refer to the work of Mohammad Mohammadian, entitled "Ayatul-Ma'ad", pages 159-184
27. This name has been mentioned seventy-seven times in the Holy Quran, including in the surah Al-Baqarah, 206
28. This name has been mentioned one hundred and twenty-one times in the Holy Quran, including in the holy surah: [Al-Baqarah, 24]
29. This name has been mentioned twenty-five times in the Holy Quran, including in the holy surah: [Al-Ma'idah, 10]
30. This name has been mentioned sixteen times in the Holy Quran, including in the holy surah: [Ash-Shura, 7]
31. This name has been mentioned four times in the Holy Quran, including in the holy surah: [Al-Muddaththir, 26-27]
32. This name has been mentioned two times in the Holy Quran, including in the holy surah: [Al-Humazah, 9]
33. [Al-Qari'ah, 9]
34. "The interpretation of the Holy Quran" page 301
35. For more information, please refer to "Al-Mizan fi Taf'sir Al-Qur'an", volume 12, page 170
36. Mulla Hadi Sabzevari, from his book entitled "Sharhul-Asma Ul-Husna", volume 1, page 30
37. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 11, page 179
38. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 8, pages 93-103
39. For further information, please, do study once again the sixth Chapter, where there is question of the opposition and the contrast, which exist between Divine Mercy and Divine Torment.
40. [At-Taw'bah, 63]
41. [Yunus, 27]
42. [Al-Baqarah, 90]
43. [Al-Isra, 39]
44. [Al-A'raf, 44]
45. [Al-Baqarah, 167]
46. [Fussilat, 48]
47. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 8, page 97
48. Please, refer to: [Ale-Imran, verses 91 and 192]; [An-Nissa, 145]; [Al-Ma'idah, 72]; [Yunus, 27]; [Al-Anbiya, 39]; [Ash-Shuara, verses 101 and 102]; [Al-Ankabūt, 25]; [Al-Ahzab, verses 64 and 65]; [Fussilat, 16]; [Ash-Shura, verses 45 and 46]; [Al-Djassiyah, 34]; [Al-Haqqah, 35]; [Nooh, 25]; [Al-Muddaththir, 48]
49. [Ibrahim, 49]; also refer to: [Ar-Rad, 5]; [Saba, 33]; [Ya-Sin, 8]; [Qafir, 71]; [Al-Haqqah, verses 30-32]; [Al-Insan, 4]
50. Also refer to: [Al-Haqqah, 30-32]; [Maryam, 86]; [Al-Mūmenūn, 104]; [Al-Kah'f, 29]; [At-Taw'bah, 35]; [Az-Zumar, 16]
51. For more information, please refer to the book "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 11, pages 34-38
52. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 6, page 63

53. Please, refer to the book, written by Seyyed Ali-Akbar Ghorashi: "Ghamous-e-Qur'an", volume 6, page 19
54. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 11, pages 180-181
55. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 5, page 146
56. "Understanding the Holy Qur'an", volume 5, pages 54-55

## Chapter 6: Uncertainty and questions

### The time of the Resurrection Day

Among all the various questions, asked from the Divine prophets, there was this particular question: whether Resurrection Day was a truth to be trusted? And when would be the time of this great event? When will it happen? When shall mankind be faced with it?<sup>1</sup>

The Holy Qur'an tries to make us understand before any explanation, that these kinds of questions are a way to make some excuses to not believe in that great day; it is a kind of evasive behavior, in order to run away from the greatest challenges that the human nature has to face yet. It then gives two answers to this question:

1. Knowledge of this event is beside Allah and He only knows it.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, this is one of the greatest mysteries of the universe and no one but Allah Almighty knows the answer to it.

2. It then begins rapidly to describe all the events, which will take place in the Resurrection Day. It says,

“Man will be apprised, on that Day, of what he has done and what he has left undone.” – 75:13

In fact, the manner with which the Holy Qur'an answers in this way has many reasons. One can name some of them.

First, these kinds of questions cannot be answered essentially; that is, even if the right answer shall be given, the person, who has received one such answer cannot verify properly and concretely this answer. These questions are like some silly, strange demands such as, "Where is the centre of the Universe?!"

Someone had answered to that question and replied, "It is right here!"

Someone asked him then, "Pray, how come you say it is right here?!"

He replied, "[If you do not believe it, then] go and measure the Universe yourself!"

However, we see that the Holy Qur'an answers very wisely to that useless question.

The issue of Judgment Day is essentially not possible to be considered by the standard measurement of this world of ours and it bears a post-historical truth; it is not an event, which could be measured or calculated with the help of our earthly calendars. Therefore, this question is a foolish demand, not to be answered by the learned and the erudite.

In fact, man has to ask for things and make some research in things and concepts that could be very useful for him. Something to bring him a certain benefit; that is why, any question that does not bear these particularities is devoid of any importance and one can go so far as to say that it can also become very harmful and damaging.

This is because it can make the human brain work incessantly, without providing him any acceptable, reasonable answer; and this can prevent man from understanding truth and reality. However, one of the things that would suffice us to know, concerning the Resurrection Day is that:

"And verily the Hour will come: and there can be no doubt about it, or about the fact that Allah will raise up all who are in the graves!" – 57:7

Therefore, Resurrection Day shall come certainly. There is no doubt about it, whatsoever. However, the fact of knowing or ignoring the time of that event is devoid of any importance for the human being, at this stage of his existence on Earth.

Therefore, the Holy Qur'an explains that which is useful for the human beings to know, and instead of answering such vain questions, tries to explain things that one has the necessity and the obligation to know of them. And it then gives us all kinds of information, in this regard.<sup>3</sup>

### **Physical and spiritual Resurrection**

Will the "matter" and the physical life survive, in the Hereafter...?<sup>4</sup>

The Holy Qur'an announces that there is also a physical and material aspect in the Hereafter; and that "Ma'ad" [i.e. Resurrection] has two aspects: one is physical and the other one is spiritual. However, this does not mean that in that other world, "matter" will survive and remain with all its earthly characteristics and particularities; for in that case, it would have been a place of change, oldness, agedness, elderliness, and ending of many things. Then, it would have been under the domination of many duties to be executed duly. Therefore, in the Afterlife, "matter" will not exist with its philosophical meaning; for in that place, there is no possibility of any change of situation[s].

And whatever shall be there, will be endowed with the quality of "newness" and "innovation"; in fact, each creature can have a grade or degree of its own and it can create and produce things, according to its personal grade or degree; however, it cannot transform itself from one thing to another.

### **Some equivocal thoughts to be considered**

Some equivocal thoughts to be considered<sup>5</sup>

There has always been a concept, from time immemorial, that our body had been "part" of the "parts" of the "bodies" of some other creatures; and that after death, and with all the natural transformations that will follow one after the other, it shall become once again, a "part" of the body of some other human being. Therefore, if the physical body of the human being accompanies the physical resurrection, how will it be possible to distinguish these bodies, from one another? And how can each person resurrect with his/her own physical body?

It is true that resurrection is both physical and spiritual; however, there is no necessity that the body one is in possession of, in the afterlife, be the same body one had had in the earthly plane.

In fact, we go a little farther and say that even the physical body of this earthly plane had never remained unchanged, unvarying, and invariable; however, it had always changed from one form to another form, in each decade of the human lifetime...

Now, what one needs in the afterlife is the survival of that human being and the particularities, which proves amply that he/she is truly that particular person; and these particularities are equal to the human soul. Therefore, just as the human cells change and the transformation of all the

parts of the human body is an incessant process, making the inner personality and the "ego" of the individual not prone to any change.

In like manner, in the afterlife, whatever the different body parts of that soul might be, the characteristics and the personality of the individual will remain as same as during his stay on earth. And this, whether he/she shall be with this body or not, and whether he/she will be with this existing form or with another new form. Even if they will change our human form in the afterlife and make us resurrect with an animal form, it is still us! There is no change whatsoever, in this regard. It shall keep on being us, no matter what happens, either with an animal form or with some other form: it shall still be us, and no one else.

### **The secret of insisting on the blessing of the physical form**

The secret of insisting on the blessing of the physical form<sup>6</sup>

Why is it that the Holy Qur'an has insisted so much on the physical blessings, which shall exist in Heaven [i.e. Paradise]? Why does it speak often of things such as trees, flowers, rivers, cups, angels, etc.? Why does it speak of things and pleasures that are considered to having a "physical" nature and characteristics...?

### **The negation of God's blessings, appearing as bad things**

The Christians created in fact, this concept, and it concentrates on negating each of the earthly pleasures that God has granted to man, by calling them as wicked and abominable things. Things that one should abstain from executing or feeling them; that is, from a sexual drive, which leads to procreation to the willingness of having a licit fruitful business, in order to enjoy life, as wisely as one can do. This concept is against the principle of monotheism [i.e. Tow'hid] and the laws of creation, which have been made wisely for the human beings. Moreover, nothing of these blessings is bad, in itself. Indeed, the root of the wickedness that might be found in these sound, simple pleasures of life comes from two things alone:

1. That man, acts in such way that even with all his talents and tendencies, he still brings on torpor and apathy for his other talents, thus, preventing their blossoming in his life.

2. Then again, man acts in such way as to violate and transgress the moral rights of the others, only to fulfill his own whims and wishes; and by acting thus, to make the life of his fellowmen, as miserable as can be, by preventing them from doing any good things in their lives on earth.

### **Absence of any limitation for all the pleasures, awaiting man in the afterlife**

First, one should point out that the world beyond is not limited in any way, whatsoever. Each life force will reach its maximum limit of activity and perfection. There, if the eyes could see even better and clearer, if the ears can hear more clearly and far beyond their normal range and the palate can enjoy everything, much more than usual, it will then be called and considered as "pure perfection". Then again, there shall be no limit from anywhere, and the moral right of anyone will be far beyond what it had enjoyed so far; for it is now infinite, and everyone can wish for anything, in an unlimited and infinite mode.<sup>7</sup>

Secondly, all the Divine blessings, which are actually inside Heaven [i.e. Paradise], will not distract the blessed inhabitants of paradise from the remembrance of Allah Almighty. The Holy Qur'an announces that after some of the physical blessings, God will grant them much more,

“Upon those [blessed] will be garments of green silk and brocade; and they will be adorned with bracelets of silver, and their Sustainer will them to drink of a drink most pure.” – 76:21

"Tahur" means pure, clean. Imam Sadiq [as] has given a very nice interpretation for this verse and for the question that had been put to him: of what impurity does the heavenly Drink clean and purify man? And he had replied, "It cleans and purifies us from the notion of wanting anything, except Truth [and Justice]."

Indeed, the enumeration and recall of the physical blessings in the Holy Qur'an is not only considered as a mistake and/or an imperfection, but it also bears witness to its general characteristics. The human being, who is going towards his eternal dwelling-place, goes there, endowed with all his aspects, and not with a limited part of his being. Therefore, if he has reached his human and spiritual perfections, he should then enjoy fully all the blessings that appear as heavenly pleasures to him. Moreover, he should never doubt that the spiritual pleasures are far better than those he had experienced before, during his life on earth.

### **Punishment, according to the deed**

Punishment, according to the deed<sup>8</sup>

Punishment should be in accordance with the committed crime. Now, the torments in the afterlife are far more terrible and difficult to bear. And for some horrible crimes [i.e. sins] such as killing someone, eternal torment would be the verdict of the Divine Balance; strange enough, the more someone commits a crime, the more the duration of the actual moment of committing that crime had been brief, short, and more limited.

### **Why is it so?**

Now, the Torment in the afterlife differs with the punishment one has to endure on this earth. However, in order to distinguish the variety of the punishment, we should first give a brief explanation, in this regard. Those Punishments are divided into three categories.

1. The conventional Punishments: That is, the Punishments that had been decreed, by various laws and regulations, made in this world of ours. These kinds of Punishments are changeable and the duration can get shorter or longer.

2. The Punishment for a deed committed: Certain Punishments are the direct, natural, and determining consequences of a certain committed deed. Like for example, the individual, who takes poison to end his/her life; the natural consequence of such act is instant death. These kinds of punishments do not have anything to do with any convention, and nobody can do anything about it, with the existing laws and regulations, in order to shorten or lengthen that punishment in particular.

3. The similarity between the deed and the Punishment: To begin with, the Torment [i.e. Punishment] in the Hereafter belongs to the category of the

determining Punishments; it has nothing to do with any convention or pre-established order. Secondly, the determining relation between the torment [i.e. Punishment] in the afterlife and the human deed [or to be more exact: misdeed] is something far more powerful than the punishments that a criminal human being has to endure on earth.

In fact, the Torments of the Afterlife are nothing but the direct consequences of the actual crime [i.e. misdeed] and it is the concrete, palpable visualization of the deeds [or to be more exact: misdeeds] that the human beings have done in this earthly plane. In this regard, the Holy Qur'an says,

“And the record [of everyone’s deeds] will be laid open; and thou wilt behold the guilty filled with dread at what [they see] therein; and they will exclaim, “Oh, woe unto us! What a record is this! It leaves out nothing, be it small or great, but takes everything into account!” For they will find all that they ever wrought [now] facing them, [will know that] thy Sustainer does not wrong anyone.” – 18:49

### **A good deed accomplished by a Non-Muslim**

A good deed accomplished by a Non-Muslim<sup>9</sup>

The good deeds, accomplished by the Non-Muslims, such as [Louis] Pasteur, [Thomas] Edison, and [Albert] Einstein, and then the good deeds of Muslims, who are not Shiite are services rendered unselfishly and most generously to the humankind. However, one may wish to know: will all those deeds, be accepted by God Almighty, on Resurrection Day, or will they not...?

If they will not be accepted, how then can this matter be in harmony and in accordance with Divine Justice...?

Most certainly, we as humans cannot fathom such notions in this world of ours and/or clarify the "reckoning" of each individual, on Judgment Day. However, in a general way, one can clarify certain necessary things for you to understand better:

First, the "Truthful Religion" comes, once in every era, and it is necessary for everyone to obey it and to submit himself/herself to it. The Holy Qur'an announces,

“For, if one goes in search of a religion other than self-surrender unto God, it will never be accepted from him, and in the life to come he shall be among the lost.” – 3:85

Secondly, Sin and Perdition have many varieties:

The sin of Obstinacy: That is, to commit sin, by obstinacy and enmity; in these instances, it is possible that truth has been unveiled for the individual, by the help of some solid arguments; however, the individual refuses to comply, only because of his obstinate nature and the enmity he feels inside his heart. In these situations, the individual is certainly most worthy of punishment and penalty.

The sin of Ignorance: That is, a certain individual does not affirm nor attest this absolute truth, only because of his pitiful ignorance. In this instance as well, there are two things to consider. Either this ignorance is intentional and deliberate or it is unintentional.

Ignorance of the first kind is when an individual does indeed have the necessary conditions to know the truth and/or had given the probability of its existence. And that if he was to search for it, he would certainly find it. However, because of some apathy, indifference, or negligence, he had not wanted to unveil the Truth. This kind of individual has in fact, not searched the way of salvation, by his own volition; that is why he has lost the right to be granted God's Mercy and Forgiveness.

The other Ignorance is when an individual had no way to reach the truth, and thus, had not been able to understand and comprehend it. While in reality, he was willing to seek and find it, to submit then himself to it wholeheartedly; however, alas, he had not found it. According to the reasoning of the Holy Qur'an and its logic, this individual is prone to be forgiven and God's Mercy and Forgiveness shall be granted to him. The Holy Qur'an announces,

“Whoever chooses to follow the right path, follows it but for his own good; and whoever goes astray, goes but astray to his own hurt; and no bearer of burdens shall be made to bear another burden. Moreover, We would never chastise [any community for the wrong they may do] ere We have sent an apostle [to them]” - 17:15

Therefore, when a human being accomplishes a good deed, its social influence can be identical and equal everywhere. However, if it were done, minus the presence of faith and belief in God, just a simple, soulless physical body accomplishes it then. For, it does not go in search of any spirituality, God or even the celestial Heavens; thus this good deed does not have any effect to make that soulless body, get closer to God, in order to attain perfection and happiness; while, it is only the pure intention and devotion, which count, in this instance.

Therefore, it is impossible for the good deeds of he, who does not know God and does not intend to search and seek Him, in order to offer Him his good deeds, to ascend to heaven and reach God; for He will certainly reject them. In fact, he has not tried to pass through many Invisible veils to reach the Divine Threshold; he has not crossed the labyrinth of his vilest passions; he does not aspire to attain God, in order to transform his deeds into heavenly, celestial actions, thus pleasing God, by the fact of having accomplished them. He does not wish to make them become heavenly, so as to bring him joy, happiness, beatitude, and eternal Bliss. In like manner, God only accepts a good deed, when this good deed had been accomplished with all these inner intentions, inside the seeker's soul.

In like manner, the sin of obstinacy and hostility concerning truth, [even though you are well aware of its rightfulness] is the destroyer of any good deed and it will eliminate and nullify it. Evidently, the way a good deed is destroyed so quickly and easily does not belong only to the disbelievers; for the good deeds of the Muslims as well can be eliminated and destroyed by envy, jealousy, wrath, hypocrisy, and condescendence. In fact, a sin, which puts you in a hostile mood towards the absolute truth, while you know of the falsehood of your claim, provokes the ruin and the destruction of your good deeds. God Almighty has announced in this regard,

“[This, then, is] the parable of those who are bent on denying their Sustainer. All their works are as ashes which the wind blows about fiercely on a stormy day: [in the life to come,] they cannot achieve any benefit whatever from all [the good] that they may have wrought: for this [denial of God] is indeed the farthest one can go astray.” – 14:14

### **Intercession and Justice**

Now, is it true that on Resurrection Day, intercession is somehow an injustice and a wrong done, because a rare privilege will be granted to someone, more than the others?

Intercession has varieties: one of them is wrong and unjust; one of them is just and correct; and the third one is wrong, while at the same time, you are preventing the law to act justly, with the help of a third party. Something like this, in this earthly plane is considered as wrong and oppressive, and in the Hereafter, it will be considered as an absolutely impossible thing to do. This kind of Intercession, according to the reasoning of the Holy Qur'an is unacceptable and null.

Let us therefore, consider the particularities of a just and correct Intercession:

**The Principle of Mercy:** In order to reach happiness, without taking into account the human deeds and actions, one is certainly in need of the flux of divine grace as well. One of the many manifestations of divine grace is the symbol of purity and pureness. God's Forgiveness is the cleaning and purifying action, which shall erase the stains of the committed sins from the human souls. Of course, some hearts are such that they have alas, lost their capability of purifying themselves, and thus turn into the very impurity from which they aspire to get free; they cannot be purified by any [spiritual] water, and according to the Holy Qur'an, their hearts have been transformed into seals...

**Grace as a general quality, granted to everyone:** Grace and forgiveness are granted as a general thing, encompassing everything and everyone. It envelops and embraces all the creatures, according to their possibilities and their capabilities; it is a thing, without the presence of which, absolutely no one can hope to escape from the Divine Torment. The holy Prophet (S) had said in this regard, "I swear to Allah, Who created me that nothing but a [good] deed and God's Grace will not be able to bring on Salvation! Even if I, [as a Prophet and Messenger of God] had committed a sin, I too, would have fallen undoubtedly [without the presence of God's Grace]!"<sup>10</sup>

**Intercession and forgiveness:** Intercession is nothing but divine forgiveness, which is attributed to Allah, who is the possessor of all goodness. This action is called forgiveness; and when He is acting as a cause of mercy and grace, this state is then called: Intercession.

**The conditions of Intercession:** All the conditions, which bring on divine forgiveness, are also acting for the intercession. Now, faith is the necessary and obligatory condition for the human being to become worthy of forgiveness and the reception of intercession by God Almighty. However, this condition is not enough and no one can enumerate either, all the needed and necessary conditions as a definitive thing. It seems as though the Holy Qur'an had not wanted to announce clearly and frankly, all the necessary

conditions that would bring on the divine intercession, so that human minds and hearts may still be wary of God and remain in the dual states between a fear of God and a hope in His Mercy [i.e. Khow'f wa Radja].

In Divine Intercession and Forgiveness, there are no such things as injustice and/or granting somebody various favors and privileges, whatsoever. God's Grace is infinite and whosoever is deprived of it, is because he has lost this capability of receiving it altogether; this means that this deprivation comes from the individual himself, who had acted as a negligent person.<sup>11</sup>

### **Contrast between Mercy and Torment**

However, one may wonder: how is it possible to think that God, who is more compassionate and more benevolent than a mother is, and who has such infinite generosity and absolute grace and mercy can actually torment and punish his creatures and not accept their apologies and their repentances? Now, one should make that clear that God's mercy is not like the emotions and feelings that a human being can feel in his heart and soul, and that his pity and compassion are not identical to the sentiments that we, as humans, could feel. God's Mercy is his wisdom and his favor, bestowed generously upon us; and it means that he will make everything and everyone reach the maximum perfection; and he grants his favor to whosoever is worthy of receiving It. It is not possible to think that one may actually have the possibility and privilege of possessing such inner worth and not receiving God's favor from Him.

Those, who, on Resurrection Day will not be forgiven by God Almighty and who will be deprived of God's compassion are not only among the disbelievers; in fact, many of the sinners will benefit from God's mercy and Intercession, according to their worth and merit; and they will actually be freed from their horrible Torments.

In effect, only those individuals shall be deprived of divine forgiveness, which had closed all the doors of special mercy before them, in the first place; therefore, their punishment has already become the same with their identity and their character.

In answer to the hostile disbelievers, the Holy Qur'an announces,

“[Hence] O you, who are bent on denying the truth, make no [empty] excuses today: [in the life to come] you shall be but recompensed for what you were doing [in this world].” – 66:7

In fact, the Holy Qur'an clarifies that their excuses will no longer be possible to be accepted; and not because they were acceptable but that it is God, in fact, who shall refuse to forgive them...

Therefore, in reply to their supplication to be able to return to Earth and to do some good deeds, God announces,

“But nay [they will say this only because] the truth, which they used to conceal [from themselves] in the past, will have become obvious to them. And if they were brought back [to life], they would return to the very thing which was forbidden to them: for behold, they are indeed liars!” – 6:28

That is why, the inexcusable quality of their request does not mean that it was God, Who had not accepted their excuses, but because those sinners cannot change themselves anymore; and that their characters and

personalities have already become one, with their Punishment and their Torment.<sup>12</sup>

### **Tiredness and frustration**

Now, what will happen after Resurrection Day, after Paradise and Hell...? Will man not be tired and frustrated after a while, during his unlimited, perpetual sojourn in God's beautiful Paradise...?

First, we have to consider that man is always seeking, finding, and having something for himself; and that after he has sought something and found it, after a while, his enthusiasm will diminish and he will be filled with feelings of frustration, annoyance, weariness, irritation, boredom, and vexation...

The secret of this bored irritation is that that which the human being aspires from the bottom of his heart and the depth of his nature, is something apart from that which he has reached to it.

In the depth of his soul, he is searching for the absolute perfection and runs away from all kinds of imperfection and limitation; therefore, whatever perfection happens before him at first, is that same ray of light, which comes from the infinite perfection; thus, he thinks that he has finally found his lost object of desire.

That is why, he goes after all kinds of material possessions; but the moment he reaches them, he finds out that it is much less than what he had expected it to be and once again, he goes in search of a new interest, a new toy...

However, if man reaches a place, where the absolute perfection is within his reach, he then becomes calm and serene, and does not feel any frustration or irritation anymore.

He does not aspire for any change and begins to act as a powerful river, which joins the great ocean, at last. And there and then, it stops from being agitated anymore...

Now, by considering all that has happened, and by studying all the characteristics about the hereafter, there shall be no more frustration or tiredness, no more boredom and vexation, no more weariness for any happy soul, in Paradise; this is because:

In the Hereafter, the believer has finally reached the real lost object of his desire, which comes from the depth of his good nature; that is, an eternal life, pure and devoid of any impurity, near God Almighty, who is the sovereign lord of the worlds.

Thus, by attaining paradise, man has reached the ultimate longing of his inner being, which had been to attain absolute perfection. That is why the Holy Qur'an clarifies that no one in the eternal dwelling-place, which is the ultimate place of sojourn for man, wishes to go away from it or/and have any change or transformation made to his blissful state. The Holy Qur'an says,

“[But,] behold, as for those who attain to Faith and do righteous deeds- verily, We do not fail to requite any who persevere in doing good.” – 18:30

In like manner, the Holy Qur'an insists that the blessed souls of the believers will have whatever they wish for,

“In that [Paradise,] they shall have whatever they desire, but there is yet more with Us.” - 50:35

Therefore, there is no sign of an unfulfilled wish in Paradise, so that someone may accidentally become irritated, vexed, or frustrated. In simpler words, tiredness, weariness, and annoyance occur only for Man, whenever there is cause for any gap or lack.

However, if man is granted instantly, anything he wishes for, and that there will be nothing whatsoever above that, it is thus everything that every man had always wished for longingly and desperately! Then nothing could provoke any weariness, vexation, irritation, or frustration in him.<sup>13</sup>

*Al'hamdulillahe Rabbil Alamin*

**Sayyid Mehdi Mohammadi**

**The End**

### Notes

1. Al-Qiamah, 6
2. Az-Zukhruf, 85
3. “Understanding the Holy Qur'an”, volume 11, pages 197-202
4. From the book “Ma’ad”, pages 212 and 213
5. Idem, pages 222-227
6. “Understanding the Holy Qur'an”, volume 11, pages 45-63
7. An-Nah'l, verse 31
8. Please refer to the "Complete Works" of Professor Mutahhari, volume 1, pages 215-239
9. Please refer to the "Complete Works" of Professor Mutahhari, volume 1, page 269
10. “Sharheh Ibn-e Abel Hadid”, volume 2, page 862
11. Please refer to Pr. Mutahhari's "Complete Works", page 225
12. “Understanding the Holy Qur'an”, volume 8, page 103; or volume 5, page 54
13. Please refer to the "Complete Works" of Professor Mutahhari, volume 2, page 524; or refer to the book entitled “Ma’ad”, pages 171, 172

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