

## CLASS 6

# DESCRIPTION OF HELL

Hell is the abode which Allaah (swt) has prepared for those who do not believe in Him (swt), those who rebel against His (swt) laws and disbelieve in His Messengers. It is the punishment for His (swt) enemies, the prison for evildoers. (Sahih)

It is the ultimate humiliation and loss; there is nothing worse:

- *"Our Lord! Verily, whom You admit to the Fire, indeed, You have disgraced him, and never will the Dhaalimoon [polytheists and wrongdoers] find any helpers" (3:192)*
- *"Know they not that whoever opposes and shows hostility to Allaah and His Messenger, certainly for him will be the fire of Hell to abide therein? That is extreme disgrace". (9:63)*
- *"The losers are those who will lose themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection. Verily, that will be a manifest loss!" (39:15)*

How could Hell be other than we have described, when it is full of utterly indescribable torment, pain and grief? It is eternal and its inhabitants will remain there forever. Allaah (swt) has condemned them and their place in the Fire:

- *"Evil indeed it [Hell] is as an abode and as a place to dwell" (25:66)*
- *"This is so! And for the Tagheen [transgressors] - will be an evil final return - Hell! Where they will burn, and worst [indeed] is that place to rest!" (38:55-6)*

### Paradise and Hell Have Already Been Created

Paradise and Hell have already been created. They will never come to an end or cease to exist. Proofs from the Qur'aan and Hadeeth in support of this are, for example:

- *"Race with one another in hastening towards forgiveness from your Lord, and Paradise the width whereof is as the width of the heaven and the earth, prepared for those who believe in Allaah and His Messengers. That is the Grace of Allaah, which He bestows on whom He is pleased with. And Allaah is the Owner of Great Bounty". (57:21)*
- *"...for Paradise as wide as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for al-Muttaqun" (3:133)*
- *"And fear the fire, which is prepared for the disbelievers" (3:131)*
- *"And indeed he (Muhammad) saw him (Jibreel) at a second descent (ie another time), near Sidrat al-Muntahaa (lote tree of the utmost boundary (beyond which none can pass), near it is the Paradise of Abode" (53:13-15)*



The Prophet ﷺ saw Sidrat al-Muntahaa, a tree in Heaven, and near it, Paradise, as is mention in al-Bukhaari, and Muslim in the hadith of Anas (ra). At the end of this narrative of al-Israa, the Prophet ﷺ said, *"Then Jibreel brought me to Sidrat al-Muntahaa which was veiled in colours indescribable. Then I entered Paradise, and its lights were of pearls and its soil was musk"*.

He also ﷺ said,

- *"By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, if you had seen what I saw, you would laugh little and cry much." They said, "What did you see, O Messenger of Allaah?", He said, "I saw Paradise and Hell". (Sahih Muslim)*
- *"When anyone of you dies, he will be shown his position morning and evening. If he is one of the people of Paradise then he will be one of the people of Paradise, and if he is one of the people of Hell, then he will be one of the people of Hell, and he will be told, "This is your position, until Allaah (swt) resurrects you on the Day of Resurrection". (Bukhari & Muslim)*

## The Keepers of Hell

Standing over Hell are MIGHTY and STERN angels who never disobey Allaah subhaanahu wa ta'ala Who has created them. They do whatever He commands them, as Allaah subhaanahu wa ta'ala says:

*"O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones, over which are [appointed] angels stern [and] severe, who flinch not [from executing] the Commands they receive from Allaah, but do [precisely what] they are commanded." (66:6)*

Their number is nineteen as Allaah (swt) says:

*"Soon I will cast him into Hellfire. And what will explain to you what Hellfire is? Naught does it permit to endure, and naught does it leave alone! Darkening and changing the colour of man! Over it are nineteen [angels as guardians and keepers of Hell]" (74:26-30)*

This number was a challenge to the kuffaar who thought that they would easily overcome such a small number, but they did not realise that one of these angels has the strength to confront the whole of mankind on his own. These angels are the ones whom Allaah subhaanahu wa ta'ala called the guardians of Hell:

*"Those in the Fire will say to the keepers [angels] of Hell:  
"Call upon your Rabb to lighten for us the torment for a day!" (40:49)*

## The Vast Extent of Hell

Hell is huge and vast and immensely deep, as is proven by several things:

1. Those who will enter Hell are innumerable, yet one of them will be so huge that his molars will be as big as Mount Uhud, and the distance between his shoulders will be equivalent to three days walking. Nevertheless, Hell will accommodate the huge number of disbeliever and evildoers who have existed throughout history, in spite of their huge size, and there will still be room for more, as Allaah says in the Qur'aan:

*"On the Day when We will say to Hell: "Are you filled?" It will say: "Are there any more to come?"*  
(50:30)

The Fire of Hell is like a mill to which are brought thousands upon thousands of tons of grain, which it grinds tirelessly until it is all done, then waits for more. In the hadith that describes the debate between Paradise and Hell, it says that Allaah (swt) said to Hell, *"You are My Punishment; I will punish in you whomsoever I will". Both Paradise and Hell will be filled, but Hell will not be filled until Allaah (swt) places His foot in it and it will say, "Enough, enough!"*. Then it will be filled and its different parts will come closer to one another. Allaah (swt) will not wrong any one of His Creation. Reported by al-Bukhaari and Muslim from Abu Hurayrah (ra) (Jaami' al-Usool, 10/544). [See the narration from Anas in al-Bukhaari, Muslim and Mishkaat ul-Masaabeeh, 3/109 with a similar meaning].

2. Another indication of its vast depth is the fact that a stone thrown from the top of Hell takes a very long time to reach the bottom. Muslim reports that Abu Hurayrah (ra) said: "We were with the Messenger of Allaah ﷺ and we heard the sound of something falling. The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Do you know what that was?"* We said, "Allaah and His Messenger know best". He said, *"That was a stone that was thrown into Hell seventy years ago and it was falling through Hell until now"*. (Muslim, Kitaab al-Jannah, Baab fi shiddat haar an-naar, 4/2184 no. 2844)

Haakim reports from Abu Hurayrah, and Tabaraani from Mu'aadh and Abu Umamah (ra) that the Prophet ﷺ said,

*"If there was a huge stone as big as seven khalifaat stones, and it was thrown from the edge of Hell it would fly through it for seventy years before it reached the bottom"*. (Saheeh ).

### 3. The great number of angels who will bring Hell forth on the Day of Resurrection.

The Messenger ﷺ described how Hell will be brought forth on the Day of Resurrection, concerning which Allaah (swt) said, *"And Hell will be brought near that Day"*. (89:23)

The Prophet ﷺ said, *"Hell will be brought forth that Day by means of seventy thousand ropes, each of which will be held by seventy thousand angels."* (reported by Muslim from 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ud, 4/2184 no.2842)

We can only image the vastness of this terrifying creation that requires such a huge number of strong and powerful angels whose strength is known only to Allaah! *May Allah save us from it!*

4. Another indication of the vastness of Hell is the fact that two great creations like the sun and moon will be two rolled-up bulls in Hell. The Prophet ﷺ said: *"The sun and moon will be two rolled-up bulls in Hell on the Day of Resurrection"* (reported by al-Bayhaqi, Sheikh Naasir ud-Deen al-Albaani narrated this hadeeth in Silsilah al-ahadeeth as-Saheehah, 1/32, hadith no:124)

## The Levels of Hell

There are variations in the degrees of heat in Hell, and in the levels of punishment which Allaah (swt) has prepared for its inhabitants; there is not just one level.

As Allaah says: *"Verily the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths [grade] of the Fire"*(4:145)

It is said that both Paradise and Hell have different levels; the lower the level in Hell, the greater the intensity of the heat. The hypocrites will suffer the worst punishment, and so they will be in the lowest level of Hell.

Allaah (swt) refers to the levels of Paradise and Hell in the Qur'aan:

- *"For all there will be degrees [or ranks] according to what they did"* (6:132)
- *"Is then one who follows [seeks] the good pleasure of Allaah like the one who draws on himself the Wrath of Allaah? His abode is Hell - and worst, indeed, is that destination! They are in varying grades with Allaah, and Allaah is All-Seer of what they do"*. (3:162-3)

'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Zayd ibn Aslam said, "The levels of paradise go up and the levels of Hell go down" [Ibn Rajab, at-Takhweef min an-Naar, p.5]. It was reported from some of the righteous predecessors that the sinners amongst the monotheists who enter Hell would be in the first level, the disbelievers in the lower levels and the hypocrites in the seventh level.



## The Gates of Hell

Allaah has told us that Hell has seven gates, as He (swt) said: *"And surely, Hell is the promised place for them all. It [Hell] has seven gates, for each of these gates is a [special] class [of sinners] assigned"*. (15:43-44)

Ibn Katheer commenting on this aayah, said: *"This means that each gate has been allotted its share of the followers of Iblees who will enter it, and they will not be able to avoid it. May Allaah (swt) protect us from it. Each will enter a gate according to his deeds, and will be assigned to a level of Hell according to his deeds."*

It was reported from 'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (ra) that he said, during a khutbah (sermon): *"The gates of Hell are such and-such"*. Abu Harun said, *"They are in layers, one above the other"*. It is reported that he also said, *"The gates of Hell number seven, one above the other. The first will be filled, then the second, then the third, until all of them are filled."* (Tafseer Ibn Katheer, 4/162)

When the disbelievers come to Hell, its gates will be opened, and they will enter it, to remain there forever: *"And those who disbelieved will be driven to Hell in groups, till, when they reach it, the gates thereof will be opened [suddenly like a prison at the arrival of the prisoners]. And its keepers will say, "Did not the Messengers come to you from yourselves - reciting to you the Verses of your Rabb, and warning you of the Meeting of this Day of yours". They will say, "Yes" but the Word of torment has been justified against the disbelievers"*. (39:71)

After they are admitted, they will be told: *"Enter you the gates of Hell, to abide therein. And [indeed] what an evil abode of the arrogant!"* (39:72)

These gates will be shut upon the evildoers, and they will have no hope of ever escaping from them after that, as Allaah (swt) says, *"But those who reject Our Signs, they are the [unhappy] Companions of the Left Hand. On them will be Fire vaulted over [all round]"*. (90:19-20)

Ibn 'Abbaas said, "vaulted" (literally: "shut over them") means that the gates will be locked".

In the Qur'aan Allaah (swt) says: *"Woe to every [kind of] scandalmonger and backbiter, who piles up wealth and lays it by. Thinking that his wealth would make him last forever! By no means! He will be sure to be thrown into that which Breaks to Pieces. And what will explain to you that which breaks to pieces? The Fire of [the wrath of] Allaah, kindled [to a blaze], which mounts [right] to the heart. It shall be made into a vault over them, in columns outstretched."* (104:1-9)

Allaah (swt) states that the gates of Hell will be locked behind them. Ibn Abbaas said, *"In columns outstretched" means that the gates will be stretched out"*. Muqaatil said, *"The gates will be closed firmly behind them and locked with a bolt of iron, so that the pain and heat will be intensified."*



## Nothing in this World is worth going to Hell for

Anas b. Malik reported that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said that

*One amongst the denizens of Hell who had led a life of ease and plenty amongst the people of the world would be made to dip in Fire only once on the Day of Resurrection and then it would be said to him:*

*O, son of Adam, did you find any comfort, did you happen to get any material blessing? He would say: By Allah, no, my Lord. And then that person from amongst the persons of the world be brought who had led the most miserable life (in the world) from amongst the inmates of Paradise and he would be made to dip once in Paradise and it would be said to him.*

*O, son of Adam, did you face, any hardship? Or had any distress fallen to your lot? And he would say: By Allah, no, O my Lord, never did I face any hardship or experience any distress.*

(Sahih Muslim)

SubhaanAllah, a dip? Just a dip in Hell fire makes one forget the life-long pleasures that one had so imagine being there for a period of time when a day is equivalent to years and there is no respite, fire from all sides. How can we sell our deen for this duniya which is temporary and risk going to Hell fire (even if it is for a period of time) and face the horrors.

So stay away from things that are Haram as much as possible, those who have fallen into sins, Repent and He is the Oft Forgiving the ever Merciful.

*May Allah give us all the Hidayah to stay away from sins and make us amongst those who repent sincerely.*