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THE TWO ROADS



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Dedicated to all
my Teachers

INTRODUCTION

It is the pure grace of Allāh ﷻ that He has made the religion of Islām our faith. It is this same religion that gives us a sense of direction and a mission to fulfil as the purpose of our lives. Like all missions, instructions are given, goals are aimed for and rewards or punishments are given out in lieu of the outcome. Thus is the course of our lives.

The mission of our life is what Allāh has revealed in the Qur'ān,

“I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me.”

adh-Dhāriyāt

This book talks about two possible paths that a person can take. One is that of a person who lived with a Muslim name, but lost his faith; it speaks of his failure in his mission and loss in missing his goal and the subsequent punishment for this failure. The second is that of a true Muslim who lives to fulfil this mission and strives to complete the goals set out, and the subsequent rewards that await him.

In both instances what has been mentioned is not only the deeds of both the people and their outcome, but this book covers their way of life, their sudden meeting with Death, their journey to and stay in the grave, their state on the Day of Reckoning, their meeting with their permanent abodes, and their eternities.

This book is an explanation of the poem that describes the two paths that a person may take. The foundation of the poem originally was the two Ḥadīths that are included at the end of this book. The poem and the book then developed to include more verses of the Qur'ān and more Aḥādīth, and eventually (after two years) took the form that is now presented to you. The purpose of this book with its vivid language is not to make an enjoyable or a limited educational read, but rather to give the reader an idea of what is beyond the deceptive screen of death.

MY REQUEST

With no effort that I claim my own, Allāh's ﷻ pure grace was all it took,
That allowed me in my weakness, to prepare this poem and this book.
Even then, I am at loss in writing, for in words I have so little choice,
To express the state of my emotions, if only my heart had a voice.
With tongue and pen, I am despondent, as in feelings they are dry,
How can they ever suffice, to express the hearts hidden cry?

In wanting good for each other, I plea that we reciprocate,
That Allāh ﷻ forgives us all, let our crying hearts supplicate.
With the greed of doing good, O Allāh ﷻ! Fill every Muslim chest,
So that we all in the afterlife, can be at complete, enjoyable rest.
Thereafter not to criticize but construct, I ask all to show
Me all my shortcomings. Please, for my own sake let me know.

THE FALL TO HELL

“Stop!” is cried by a sudden shout,
“Don’t be deceived when the world calls out:
‘Let me be your fantasy, I can fill your heart with ecstasy,
Come, get down and bow to me, I offer you eternity.’”
This world engulfs yet more easy preys,
With its luciferous lies and wicked ways.
To which a man falls far and deep therein,
As it lures him to perform every shameless sin.
He will run he will sprint after women and money,
Claiming, ‘I am the bee, for me is the “honey”’.
Ignoring warnings his life is in the ‘fast lane’,
He’s fallen out of control, and now all hopes are slain.
He lives for immorality, the ‘rage’ of the land,
Now for him it’s too late as Death takes hold of his hand.

“No! Please,” he screams, “give me just a few more days,
I can be good, I can change my ways.”
Now he wants to stop, but alas! Too late!
His game has been lost; it’s over: Checkmate!
Back when he was young, fit and free,
He didn’t give a “damn” about destiny.
But now that for his life death has appeared,
Reality hits in, hard, just as he had feared.
Each and every soul will soon have to die,
And when life suddenly goes it will be too late to cry.
Through locked doors and windows “Death” appears like a flash,
Revealing to the ignorant that life has finished its dash.
His soul is thrust out of his body in an extremely painful way,
Making it clear to one and all, life can never be forced to stay.
His soul, like a thorny scrub, interlocking into each and every vein,
Will be wrenched out, this is the fashion of death’s intolerable pain.

Placed into an unwelcoming grave, his journey will now start.
He is alone, as kith and kin all helplessly depart.
Far off in the darkness of the grave, two figures appear,
Their sight alone is horrendous, but they still draw ever near.
With hammers behind them, and breaths of fire, they do not care,
The vicious eyes knifing through darkness, do more than merely scare.
'Leave me alone! Leave me be!' the soul cries, but to no avail,
They pay no heed to his cries towering over him they prevail.
"Who is your Lord?" is cried by a thundering shout,
'I don't know,' is all this trembling soul can cry out.
Crashing down come hammers to break him, not one limb they spare,
This soul has just woken up to face his worst nightmare.
"What is your religion?" is bellowed by an awesome roar,
'I don't know,' is the whimpering reply, anticipating more.
Crashing down return the hammers, bringing gut-wrenching screams,
As blow by blow are shattered, all his hopes and dreams.
'Who is the Messenger 差?" is cried by a heart piercing shrill,
'I don't know,' is cried, as they move in for the kill.
The relentless hammers come crashing down for the final time,
And his grave becomes a pit of hell, punishment for every crime.
The grave surges inwards, crushing him with tons of squeezing pain,
His ribs penetrate each other, unable to take its strain.
Snakes upon him are set loose, with their corrosive venomous bites,
This soul joins many before him, suffering the same pitiful plight.

In agony he waits and wails, in increasing pain and torment,
In anxiety and in pain, he hopes for the last day to be sent.

The second blow of the trumpet, now all souls assemble and wait,
Waiting for the decisions, as to where they'll face their fate.
Anxiety is written on this soul's face, as his outlook seems so bleak,
He turns to face the Hellfire, wherein an abode he will seek.
He turns to look for help, but from him all turn away,
'This is my own fault, for my disobedience,' he recollects in dismay,
'I was a Muslim in the world, but alas! only by name,
Now my hypocrisy turns against me, drowning me in shame.'
'He begs help from Muhammad ﷺ, who not recognizing turns away,
'I've been rejected by a world of mercy,' he shrieks out in disarray.
He turns, now penitent to the Lord, pleading for a second chance,
But to him the Lord in His justice, shows no mercy in His glance.
'Let infernal woe forever betide you!' decrees our just Lord's voice,
Shivering, he hears Hell scream out, "I am your only choice."
"We are made for each other," is the message, bolted into his ears,
"You forever are my fodder and I am your eternal fear.
"For my scorpions, and snakes you'll be but a toy,
"You are my eternal prisoner, subject to my infernal ploy."
Hell devours this poor, wasted soul,
Who spent his life without aim and goal.
After being made to enter Hell, while facing it's pungent, fiery breath,
The order of Allāh shall be heard that 'Death' has been given death.
Entered into the depths of Hell, he is engulfed in agony,
There is no hope for this poor soul as he is damned eternally.

The fire burns his body till he is as black as black,
Followed by countless fangs spraying venom, that into his body hack.
Peeled away shall be his skin and flesh, causing excruciating pain,
Punished is he for transgressing Allāh's law, for a tiny, trifling gain.
Smashed will be his skull, after his facial skin is ripped away,
The boulders being thrust through his teeth, is part of the price to pay.
He will be, with iron hammers, shattered, his traces fragmented to dust,
He will be remade, then again scattered; as repayment for his lust.
Into a fiery furnace he will be flung, his blood and brain will boil,
In a lurid bloody lake he will drown, swimming was too great a toil.
A thorny scrub he is made to eat, will liquidise his stomach and spleen,
The scalding, foul pus he will drink, will melt through his intestines.
His eyes are impaled with molten steel and in his ears lead will pour,
His misery is not laid to rest, as he is remade to bear even more.
He will cry and die, to be brought back for yet more pain to bear,
He will shout and scream, 'where is the end to my infernal nightmare?'

Carefree living is the infamous test of fate,
Fail in this test and face the agony that lies in wait.

THE PATH TO PARADISE.

Turning the tables, on the other hand,
Is that true Muslim, who obeyed Allāh's ﷻ commands.
The world can't fool this saintly soul,
Who had Allāh ﷻ as his only goal.
He was not deceived, when the world would shout,
"Come to me! Don't you dare hold out."
He did not succumb to his whims and desire,
Knowing, inevitably they would lead to the fire.
He would worship Allāh ﷻ as if Allāh ﷻ he could see,
Saying, "Though I can't see Him, I know that He sees me."
Fearing Allāh ﷻ, he'd stay away from immoral crime,
For Allāh's ﷻ sake, he'd sacrifice his health, wealth and time.
Striving in the path of Allāh ﷻ to Islām he would call,
Calling all to hold the Sunnah, as it will never let them fall.
To a guide he would go to rectify his aims,
Not caring if because of it people would call him names.
More than anything he wanted, that for Allāh ﷻ his life he could lay,
With sword in hand, for Islam, he'd face the enemies in every fray.
He yearned for religious knowledge thus burned the midnight oil,
He learnt to be a true Muslim, and overcome with sweat and toil.
Only in Allāh's ﷻ worship would his heart be at ease,
He would remain in this thought, of how his Lord he could please.
He turns around and faces 'Death' who shakes him by the hand,
Who tells him "Brother! You have two rak`ahs left on the land"
"May Allāh have mercy on you," says Death, at this saint's last sneeze,
With which out of his body, his soul is gently squeezed.

After he is bathed and upon him Ṣalāh for the dead is read,
From the mouths of the people, about him only good can be said.
As he is gently lowered into the grave and his body is laid to sleep,
'His death is the death of a world,' is what people relentlessly weep.
He is carefully covered in earth and in this world he is now no more,
While deep in the afterlife he merely steps ashore.
Two angels appear to give him a familiar test,
Gently they seat him and make sure he is at rest.
The Qur'ān materializes at his side, a friendly, vital aide,
So now he is at complete rest, when the first question is eventually laid.
From the first voice, "Who is your Lord?" is the cry,
To which he beams, 'Only Allāh ﷻ is my unchangeable reply.'
"What is your religion?" is the next question asked,
"My religion is Islam", is the doubtless answer unmasked.
"Who is your Messenger?" is the last question to voice,
He cheers, "Muḥammad ﷺ is my heart's only choice."
The successful soul is now handed over to the grave,
Which eagerly accepts him and becomes his abiding slave.
The grave says, "Friend! Welcome! In the world I liked you the most,
"Now you are my guest, and I am your hospitable host."
The grave becomes a garden expanding to as far as his eyes can see,
And a window is opened to paradise, oozing tranquillity.

Herein he relaxes and sleeps right to the very last day,
This is just the beginning reward for living the ordained right way.

The second blow of the trumpet; now all the souls assemble and wait,
Waiting for the decision as to where they'll face their fate.
In the shade of Allāh's throne, relaxed this soul will lay,
And in two rak`ahs of Ṣalāh 50,000 years will pass away.
A smile spreads upon his face, as he receives his book in his right hand,
Success is what is achieved as he'll enter Heaven, his promised land.
The parents of a Ḥāfiẓ will both receive sparkling crowns,
People will step aside for them, as they ascend in honour's gowns.
If this is for the parents, then upon the Ḥāfiẓ what will descend?
He will read and he will climb, and into the heights of heaven ascend.
Allāh has saved this servant, and to save, allows him to intercede,
He will seek out his friends, and stay a friend in their hour of need.
"Come," is echoed by an enchanting voice,
"Enter through the gate of your choice,
"We are made for each other can't you see,
"That I am for you and you are for me.
"For your endless pleasure, there is no need to crave,
"As subject to your happiness, I am your slave."
By the hands of Muḥammad ﷺ from a special pool he will drink,
Never again to be thirsty, for his thirst will be left to sink.
For a period, known only to Allāh, he will stare at the gate,
He is in no rush to enter, as eternity lies in wait.

The successful will enter heaven, from which they will never part,
Their only worry is, with which pleasure should they start.
Ahead lies this Jannatī's heaven, which for innumerable miles unfolds,
He is mesmerized beyond belief, as everything is of silvers and golds.
Thousands of fruits off each tree hang, each an indescribable pleasure,
And each leaf is of rubies, diamonds and other priceless treasure.
Unimaginably enjoyable, flow rivers of wine, water, honey and milk,
Drinking from them are heaven's dwellers uniformed in gold and silk.
A bird will present itself and transform into a succulent, juicy roast,
After being eaten, it will ask, "Was I pleasing to whom I was host?"
Whatever he wants, without effort will in front of him appear,
And whenever he wants he will be visited by all his near and dear.
Destroyed will be his hunger, just to enjoy will he choose to eat,
This Jannatī will now lie down, so with his abode he will now meet.
Before him stretches his gold palace, with musk cementing every brick,
He seeks for a room, and from an unending supply, one he will pick.
He enters a shining chamber, in a pearl tent that he'll so quickly seize,
He barely has a chance to lie down, when someone enters to please.
With sparkling skin and radiant hair, she will enchantingly appear,
With warmth and love in her stride, she draws affectionately near.
This Jannatī meets up with his wife, the queen of his eternal abode.
His partner in life is for eternal life, who too into heaven strode.
O women of this world fear not! Let your hearts be at rest,
As in heaven none will match you, you will be the unrivalled best.
The Hūr will be your maids, serving you with love, sincerely true,
In Heaven, O queen, the word 'beauty' will not do justice to you.
The Jannatī will go to the market where everything is absolutely free,
He will come in need of nothing, and walk away with more beauty.

The greatest favour of Allāh is to be honoured by seeing Him by sight,
To behold the Magnificent, to be greeted by the Greatest in His might.
'O heaven's dweller,' the noble Lord calls: 'what more do you desire?
I shall grant you all that you want, your life will never again expire.'
"Thou hast given me all, my Lord, Thou hast filled my heart with glee.
"I regret not doing more in the world, to prove that I adored thee."
Allāh ﷻ proclaims 'My servant there is one thing you have yet to ask.'
"What can this be O Lord? What is this all important task?"
'You have not asked for My happiness, but that I shall grant for free,
'No doubt I am pleased with you, for now, forever, for all eternity.'

Now the pinnacle is reached, in Allāh's pleasure being acquired,
There is nothing left to be asked for, nothing more to be desired.

Suppress your desires in this world, face its insignificant pain,
Then only death will be an obstacle to an eternity of gain.

COMMENTARY ON THE FALL TO HELL

**'Stop!' is cried by a sudden shout,
'Don't be deceived when the world calls out.
"Let me be your fantasy, I can fill your heart with ecstasy,
Come, get down and bow to me, I offer you eternity."
This world engulfs more easy preys,
With its luciferous lies and wicked ways.**

How far can a person go? More or less to everything there is a limit, which a person is not prepared to transgress. This limit is dependent on the individual.

Take for example; crime. Some people due to their own standards will not be prepared to break the law at any cost, even if it were to exceed the speed limit. Others may only decline to offences where a second party is involved, thus stealing, assault etc. is a no go area. Some may go further towards much more serious crimes like rape and serious assault but will draw the line after that.

On the other extreme, there are such individuals who are prepared to take lives, but provided they have a sound mind; will stop in their tracks if a loved one is placed in front of them, in other words everyone has their limits and when they reach that limit and look ahead, there is a small voice in their minds, their conscience, that screams 'Stop!'

Take now the law, the decree of Allāh ﷻ, regarding the world and worldly life:

"Know this! This worldly life is only amusement, play, pomp and mutual boasting amongst yourselves, and rivalry in respect of wealth and offspring. (It is) like crops after the rain, pleasing to

***the tiller, thereafter it dries up and becomes yellow and then
straw.*** al Ḥadīd

This means that this world is something which is not to be taken seriously; one must not sacrifice all in trying to acquire it, as this effort becomes undone because of death or sickness or any other calamity that may annul it or absorb any pleasure that one was limited to deriving. Thus proving that the one who makes his sole objective acquiring the Dunyā, and in doing so forgetting Allāh ﷻ, is in actual fact inadvertently putting himself in a rat race, unavoidably leading nowhere.

When a person realises that he is being deceived, he will at once resolve to put an end to the deception. But unfortunately the condition is realisation (being aware) of the deception. If it is not realised, there can be no solution. The world engulfs an unwary person, with its lies it tricks him into disobeying Allāh's ﷻ commands, and when his conscience begs and screams for him to stop, its efforts are most certainly futile as the person does not realize that his misdemeanours are in actual fact religious offences or sins. The world in fooling a human simpleton is leading him far away from the mercy of Allāh ﷻ whose divine laws are being ignored.

One of the most sinister tricks of this worldly life is the ambiguity surrounding death, the only guaranteed aspect of an unpredictable life. A person plans and prepares to become someone or achieve something but has no knowledge as to whether or not he will achieve his objective. But death on the other hand is an exact opposite, as a person neither plans nor prepares for it but knows that it will definitely come. The world with its lies distracts a person away from what ultimately will be his destiny.

**Into which a man falls far and deep therein,
As it lures him to perform every shameless sin.**

Because of the world hiding death, a person can easily be fooled into believing that he will have time to repent, after 'living it', after doing what he wants with his life.

**He will run, he will sprint after women and money,
Claiming, 'I am the bee, for me is the "honey".'
Ignoring warnings, his life is in 'the fast lane,'
He's fallen out of control, and now all hopes are slain.
He lives for immorality, the "rage" of the land,
Now he realizes that it's too late as Death takes hold of his hand.**

In the poem a few examples are given of the mediums the world employs, amongst which are sex and wealth, to mislead a person from his real objective, Allah ﷻ.

By fulfilling the dictates of fashion and/or by being subjugated by peer pressure, a person moving with the mainstream, whether wanting to or not, is in reality living after his own or someone else's desires. If this becomes habitual or if a craving develops, he will find it near impossible to resist. The constant reminders of the person's parents, who without doubt want good for this 'individual,' as well as other well-wishers, will then be useless. Death will then become the only preventative, which will mean it will be too late to change.

**"No! Please," he shouts, "just give me a few more days,
I can be good, I can change my ways."
Now he wants to stop, but alas, Too late!
His game has been lost; it's over. Checkmate!**

When his life has to go and he sees that death has him surrounded, not allowing even a thought of escape to materialise, the person will plea that he be given a few more days, a few minutes or even a few seconds in which to repent...It will never be given!

**Back when he was young, fit and free.
He didn't 'give a damn' about destiny.
But now that for his life, death has appeared,
Reality hits in, hard, just as he had feared.**

When this person had the chance to please Allāh ﷻ he did not take it, promising himself to become God-fearing later. Deep in his thoughts, at the back of his mind, the thought of death, was enfeebled and overpowered by his desires, only now it is not just a mere thought, but a harsh, bitter, unavoidable reality.

**Each and every soul will soon have to die,
And when life suddenly goes, it will be too late to cry.**

Allāh ﷻ has declared:

Every soul shall have to taste death. Āl `Imrān

Every person will have to die. Death's time and mode has been predestined. Its time will never be delayed, curtailed nor cancelled.

If a person were to look back at his own life then, without doubt he would have known people who had died. If he were to reflect upon these deaths, he would recall that not everyone had died at the same age. Mankind does not have a set expiry date to which he is guaranteed to go on living until. Some people may make the journey to old age, while others may not live to see their teens. Some die due to

illness or weakness, while others are taken away whilst being in good health.

Despite this being known, he will ignore the warning and will carry on 'living it up' until it is too late to regret and cry over this blunder.

***'Prepare yourself with Taqwā, as it is impossible for you to know,
As night falls will your life at dawn still be here to show?'***

From An Arabic Poem

**Through locked doors and windows "Death" appears like a flash.
Revealing to the ignorant that life has finished its dash.**

The Angel of Death will arrive to extract the soul of a person at the appointed time, moving in such a manner that no barrier can be an obstacle to bar his coming and no amount of running can amount to anything but miserable failure in trying to delay or deny one's final hour.

**His soul is thrust out of his body in an excruciatingly painful way.
Making it clear to one and all, life can never be forced to stay.
His soul, like a thorny scrub, interlocking into each and every vein,
Will be wrenched out, this is the fashion of death's intolerable pain.**

Punishment for those who violate the divine laws will not only be given in the afterlife, but it will start with death itself. When the Angel of death confronts an infidel or transgressor, his appearance alone will be an indescribable punishment, instilling total fear and sheer despondency in the heart of the onlooker.

It had been narrated regarding the Prophet Ibrāhīm ؑ, that the Angel of death, ʿIzrāʿil ؑ was in his company. Ibrāhīm ؑ requested ʿIzrāʿil ؑ that he appear in the form he chooses to adopt, whilst extracting the souls of unbelievers and sinners. ʿIzrāʿil ؑ initially refused, saying that it would be intolerable. Ibrāhīm ؑ persisted, and persuaded ʿIzrāʿil ؑ who then requested him to turn away. Thereafter when, Ibrāhīm ؑ returned his gaze, and upon seeing him, he shrieked and fell unconscious at the sight that he witnessed.

Upon recovery, Ibrāhīm ؑ stated that if a person was to live his entire life in defiance of Allāh's laws, then the mere sight of ʿIzrāʿil ؑ in that hideous form alone would suffice as a severe punishment for him.

This was a description of just the appearance of the Angel of death. The actual removal of the soul is yet another matter. ad-Durr al-Manthūr

Before a person breathes his last, he becomes insatiably thirsty. If at this stage drinking water as immeasurable as the world's oceans were to be put at his disposal it would not quench his bottomless thirst.

In many places the intimacy of the soul to the body has been depicted as a thorny twine, twisting and turning to find its way to ensnare each and every square inch of a damp cloth with its monstrous thorns and spines, so interlocked that it being deemed inseparable is no exaggeration. At the time of a reprobate's death this inseparability ceases to exist, and with one slow grinding tug the soul is thrust out ending the life of the unfortunate. A killing most horrid: ruthlessly painful, inescapable torment: showing no one its handiwork as it steals the last breaths of the miscreant depriving him the opportunity to scream or to warn others of the horrendous pain.

**Placed into an unwelcoming grave, his journey will now start.
He is abandoned; alone; as kith and kin helplessly depart.**

The grave for him is not just a gloomy hole, that will not bring benefit, but on the contrary it is a place of untold horrors and anguish acting as a stepping-stone between the disobedience of Allāh and eternal damnation in becoming a denizen of Hell.

The same people who were there for him, to help him and defend him in the world, upon being rendered helpless return home in tears after the burial, where soon after forgetting about the deceased, they start to fight and argue about who inherits what of the estate in such a way as if it was hoped that the deceased would die.

**Far off in the darkness of the grave, two figures appear,
Their sight alone is horrendous, yet still they draw ever near.**

In various narrations, the mention of two angels appears. The name of one is Munkar, and the other is Nakīr (both are derived from the infinitive 'nakar' meaning to be harsh, and to be disliked, which will be true here). They are sent to the deceased to question him about his Lord, his religion and his prophet.

al-Bukhārī and Muslim. Names mentioned in at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Ḥibbān

**With hammers behind them, and breaths of fire, they do not care,
The vicious eyes knifing through darkness, do more than merely scare.
'Leave me alone! Leave me be!' The soul cries, but to no avail.
They pay no heed to his cries towering over him they prevail.**

Without any other purpose they close in on the soul to demand the answers to the three questions. There is no such thing as a second

chance. They accept no bribes. And with the hammers they carry being colossal enough to destroy mountains with single blows, the unlikely suggestion of trying to overpower them is quickly dismissed.

Musnad Aḥmad and Abū Dawūd

**“Who is your Lord?” is cried by a thunderous shout.
‘I don’t know,’ is all this trembling soul can cry out.
Crashing down come hammers to break him, not one limb they spare.
This soul has just woken up to face his worst nightmare.**

If a person transgresses Allāh’s ﷻ law in this world, then despite knowing the answers, he will find them unpronounceable. And because of the fact that he is already dead, and that a person cannot be killed twice, the punishment meted out to him is not for any purpose but that of inflicting sheer pain.

al-Mirqāt

**“What is your religion?” is bellowed by an awesome roar.
‘I don’t know,’ is the whimpering reply anticipating more.
Crashing down, return the hammers, bringing gut-wrenching screams.
As blow by blow are shattered, all his hopes and dreams.**

Islam, complete and utter submission, is the only acceptable answer, the only true religion. All other religions will be regarded as disbelief; therefore no answer will pass through the lips of the questioned.

On numerous occasions Allāh ﷻ has decreed in the Qur’ān:

‘Indeed the only religion deemed (as such) by Allāh is Islām.’

Āl `Imrān

‘And whosoever is content with a religion other than Islām, it will never be accepted from him. And he in the hereafter will be amongst those who incur great loss.’ Āl `Imrān

In pre-Islāmic time the true Christianity; and before that the true Judaism; were the true accepted religions following the Divine order. But then blasphemy spread and apostasy crept in, and in addition, alterations were made in these religions for worldly benefit. Thus, first, Judaism fell at the hands of the corrupt, thereafter Christianity took over the reigns. When that too fell at the hands of conniving hypocrites it also had to be deemed cancelled and with that Islam was born. This religion has been made the only religion that will last in its pure form until the Day of Judgment, it will be the only religion with which there is a guarantee of entry into Heaven, whether it be an immediate entry or an admission given after chastisement.

The Prophet ﷺ has said,

He who says **LĀ ‘ILĀHA ‘ILLĀL-LĀH** (There is no god but Allāh) and dies believing in it will surely enter paradise. al-Bukhārī and Muslim

The answer to this question now can only be this Islam; the fearsome interrogators will tolerate no other answer.

**“Who is the Messenger?” is cried by a heart-piercing shrill.
‘I don’t know!’ is the whimpering reply, as they move in for the kill.**

An apparition of Muḥammad ﷺ will appear before the interrogated soul, who will then be asked regarding the apparition, as to who it is. Again there will be only one correct answer.

**The relenting hammers come crashing down for the final time,
And his grave becomes a pit of Hell, punishment for his every crime.**

In various narrations it has been reported that the Nabī ﷺ has said:
‘The grave will either be a garden of paradise or a deep dark pit amongst the pits of Hell.’ at-Tirmidhī

It is reported about `Uthmān ؓ that upon seeing a grave he would weep uncontrollably. Upon observing this someone asked why he would weep more at the sight of the grave than at the description of Heaven and Hell. He replied that the grave is the first stage of the journey into the afterlife; if it is passed successfully, then the rest will be an easier task. But if one is to fail here then the rest of the journey will be an even more impossible undertaking. at-Tirmidhī, Ibn Mājah

**The grave surges inwards, crushing him with tons of squeezing pain
His ribs penetrate each other unable to take the strain.**

Meaning found in Musnad Aḥmad, at-Tirmidhī, Abū Dawūd

Upon being handed over to the grave, the grave takes command in unleashing hideous torture on this failure. It will call out to him that in the world it detested and loathed no one more than he, and now that he has been handed over to it, it will mete out a gruesome revenge.

**Snakes upon him are set loose, with their corrosive venomous bites.
This soul joins many before him, suffering the same pitiful plight.**

Many snakes will be set to hack and desecrate him into a thick, lurid blood drenched pulp. These snakes will not be the feeble crawling worm-like predators of the world, but they will be the tyrannical serpents of the Hereafter, which are so venomous that if one were to spit just once on this earth, nothing will ever be able to grow here again. at-Tirmidhī, ad-Dāramī

**In agony he waits and wails, in increasing pain and torment.
Anxiously in pain he waits for the last day to be sent.**

The intolerable pain and ripping agony, which can never be gotten used to, will feel ever increasing in intensity. In this pitiful condition he waits for the final hour, when Allāh will order Isrāfil ﷺ to blow the Trumpet, which will be the Death-knell, the destruction of the entire world.

‘When the sun (with is folded up; When the stars fall, losing their lustre; When the mountains vanish; When the she-camels, ten months with young, are left untended; When the wild beasts are herded together (in human habitations); When the oceans boil over with a swell;’ at-Takwir

The second blow of the trumpet, now all the souls assemble and wait, Waiting for the decision as to where they’ll face their fate.

After the destruction of everyone and everything, Allāh ﷻ will be alone and for a period of time known only to Him, He will remain the only existing being. He will be in complete glory. Abū Dawūd

He will call out:

‘Today, whose is absolute sovereignty?’ al-Mu’min

Those who laid claim to deity will have been destroyed. Those who masqueraded in monarchy were mortified, and those who wallowed in wealth wailed in woe. After one and all were forced to bow down to the divine decree of death, there will be none on that day, to lay claim to control and power over even an atom.

“(Sovereignty) is only Allāh’s, who is the One and the Overpowering.” al-Mu’min

Then after this period of time, Allāh ﷻ will re-create Isrāfil ﷺ who will blow into the trumpet for the second time, and with that everything

will again be reconstructed into existence, not necessarily as in this case for the better.

**Anxiety is written on this souls face, as his outlook seems so bleak,
He turns to face the Hellfire wherein an abode he will seek.**

Wrapped in nothing but an unbearable robe of anxiety this failure realizes that whatever has so far befallen him is not the end. Only now will his real nightmare begin. A nightmare which will have no end and will be more horrific and dread inspiring than his wildest, most twisted imagination and more gruesome and horrendous than what can ever be perceived.

**He turns away to look for help, but from him, all turn away,
'This is my own fault for my disobedience' he will recollect in dismay.**

On the day of resurrection, the Qur'ān has foretold,

**“On that day, a man will turn away from his brother and from
his own mother and his father, and from his wife and children.**

**On that day every individual will be, in his worries, totally
isolated.”**

al `Abas 80:34-37

Only now will he recall the advices and warnings given to him by well-wishers, telling him that by doing such and such actions nothing but the wrath of Allāh ﷻ can be earned.

**'I was a Muslim on earth, but alas! Only by name,
Now my hypocrisy has turned against my drowning me in shame.'**

A severe warning should be paid heed to by all Muslims. Many a time a person can utter something, which without his knowledge leads him to

apostasy. Sometimes he may trivialize a fundamental aspect of Islām by saying that it is not absolutely essential or he may state that a prohibited or forbidden act is permissible; and despite knowing that it isn't, out of pride he views himself as doing something permissible and appropriate. Such a person has thrown himself out of the fold of Islām, by showing himself as not completely submitting to Allāh ﷻ, by not completely and whole-heartedly accepting Islam. Furthermore by calling himself a Muslim he has dived deep into an oblivious state of hypocrisy, literally putting himself into Hell's locking jaws of eternal damnation.

Note: What is being mentioned here is not the neglect of Islāmic injunctions but their denial, if a person does this he is no longer a Muslim.

**'He begs help from Muhammad ﷺ, who not recognizing turns away.
'I've been rejected by a world of mercy,' he shrieks out in disarray.**

Amongst the special favours Allāh ﷻ has granted Muḥammad ﷺ, is the permission to intercede on behalf of true Muslims who may have fallen short of Jannah. But because this dark, forgotten traveller had sold himself to hypocrisy, there is without a shadow of doubt absolutely no possibility of him not being denied and left bereft of intercession.

A man should make an utmost effort to adhere to the Sunnah in its entirety to gain the honour of Rasūlullāh's company and the benefit of his concern. How can those who oppose, ridicule or even snub the Sunnah even hope to acquire the Messenger's favour?

**He turns now penitent to the Lord, pleading for a second chance.
But to him the Lord in His Justice shows no mercy in His glance.**

“...Until such a time when they (the transgressors) will be overtaken by death, then each of them will cry out, ‘ O Lord! Return me (to the world) so that I may perform those acts of virtue, which I had omitted.’ Never! These are only words which one merely renders verbally.” al Mu’min

These are the immortal word of Allāh ﷻ, an undying warning.

‘Let infernal woe forever betide you!’ decrees our just Lord’s voice. Shivering he hears Hell scream out, “I am your only choice.”

When accounting for his deeds a person will be asked:

“Were you not approached by a messenger from amongst yourselves (or their legacy), preaching upon you the doctrines of you Lord? And did they not warn you of the inevitable approach of this day (of Reckoning).

They will reply, “Undeniably (this was the case) and yes the warnings of the punishment for the disbelievers have come true.”

“They will then be told ‘Enter through the gates of Hell to remain Therein forever.’”

“Indeed terrible is the dwelling of those who act in pride (to reject the truth).” az-Zumar

This is the decree of Allāh ﷻ ordaining that there is no choice for a person who dares to defy Allāh’s order. There will be none on that day to lay challenge to His command.

“We are made for each other” is the message bolted into his ears. “Your are my fodder and I am your eternal fear.”

The scorching welcome that will be given by Hell will be far from reassuring. The Qur'an warns us;

“O believers! Save yourselves and your families from a fire the fuel of which is men and stones.” at-Tahrim

Hell is incredibly vast; even if all humans and jinns were made to enter into it, it would neither be full nor satisfied.

On the day when (We shall have sent the accursed people to Hell, and) we will ask Hell, “Are you now satisfied?” and Hell (in return) will ask, “Is there yet more?” Qāf

Upon seeing Hell all the misfortunate ones who disobeyed Allāh's order will want to turn away, but there will be nowhere else for them to go. Trapped, they will be driven to Hell in disgrace.

And the disbelievers will be driven to Hell in flocks. az-Zumar

The disbelievers will be herded into Hell, whether they like it or hate it. And hating Hell on that day will be a hideous understatement.

***‘For my scorpions and snakes you’ll be a fragile toy,
You forever are my prisoner, subject to my infernal ploy.’***

In a Ḥadith these vicious killers are described in detail to be nothing less than absolutely petrifying beasts.

In Hell there are snakes that are the size of camels. If one of them was to bite a person only once, the corrosive effects of its venom will be felt even after 40 years. And in Hell there are scorpions the size of mules. If one of them was to sting a person only once, the corrosive effects of its venom will be felt even after 40 years.

Musnad

**Hell devours this poor wasted soul.
Who spent his life without aim and goal.**

The Qur'ān squarely states:

'They (the accursed disbelievers) are the denizens of Hell, and therein they shall remain forever.' al-Baqarah

In another place it is even more explicit in its warning:

"And he who rejects Allāh and His Messenger, then (unavoidably) for him is the fire of Hell, he will remain therein forever, eternally." al-Jinn

The words "Khālidina Fihā" alone means to stay forever therein. And the word "Abadā" also meaning forever/eternally, only adds to the weight laid in the never-ending nature of the sentence.

**After being made to enter Hell while facing its pungent fiery breath.
The order of Allāh ﷻ shall be heard, that death has been given death.**

After every person is entered into their permanent abode, Allāh ﷻ will create a ram that will symbolize death. This ram will then be slaughtered, making it clear to one and all that from that moment on immortality will be the only life-span. No one will taste death for a second time.

To the dwellers of Hell this will not be good news. It will mean that no matter how severe their punishment may be, it will never end. No matter how many times they apparently die, it will not stop. They will be recreated to run the gauntlet of eternal torment an infinite more amount of times.

**Entered into the furthest depths of Hell, he is engulfed in agony,
There is no hope for this poor soul as he is dammed eternally.**

With no hope whatsoever of redemption, with no chance of punishment being lessened by even a fraction of a degree, he will have to tolerate the intolerable; he will have to bear the unbearable. Without a second being spared for rest or recuperation, without exaggeration he will pray, wish, and cry for death to put him out of his misery. But unfortunately for him this is all only part of the punishment he has to face.

**The fire burns his body till he is as black as black,
Followed by countless fangs spraying venom that into his body hack.**

It is obvious that not all people are on the same level when it comes to defiance of Allāh's ﷻ command. Some dive deep into disobedience and sinning leaving no stone unturned in a race to quench their endless desires. Others are negligent, due to laziness, of what has been ordained upon them but are shy of taking tasks against which severe warnings are given. In this regard, it is obvious that it would be unfair to punish them equally. Allāh ﷻ in His Justice has made such a difference manifest in the way He treats the blasphemous and disbelieving from those who had accepted His commands as incumbent but because of prevailing laziness and negligence fell short only when it came to acting in accordance to them.

The polytheists, the hypocrites, the atheists and the ones guilty of blasphemy will be hurled deep into the infernal abyss of Hell and into its unmentionable atrocities that lie in wait therein, while those who are to be chastised will be punished in accordance to the severity of their sins. Some may be in over their heads in the inferno, while for others the blaze may burn until their waists. Some may wade knee

deep in the licking tongues of the fire, while others will be forced to don shoes made of flames. at-Tirmidhī

But make no mistake, even if the fire is only up to the ankles it is a fire which burns 70 times hotter and 70 times more fiercely than the fire of this world. A furnace in this world will melt lead, iron and nickel in minutes. A fire can burn cities and forests alike to cinders. The hottest known fire has been detected to burn at over an incredible 15 million degrees Celsius, which can kill a person 150 kilometres away. Is there any substance that will be able to withstand a temperature 70 times greater than this? No... and nor will he be able to.

Fire of Hell being 70 times hotter - at-Tirmidhī

The snakes and scorpions mentioned before which will be meting out punishment to some of the dwellers of the grave, will be comparatively tame in respect to the savage mauling beasts of Hell. The fangs of the snakes and the stings of the scorpions will ravage, desecrate and impale the damned in their doomed abodes.

**Peeled away shall be his skin and flesh, causing excruciating pain,
Punished is he for transgressing Allāh's law for a tiny, trifling gain.**

In a Ḥadīth it is mentioned that amongst the punishments of Hell there will be some who will be given nails made out of copper in place of their own finger nails. With these they will scratch themselves, but instead of causing relief from the irritation, they will shred their skin and flesh into tattered ribbons. It will feel much worse than it sounds. The crime for such a punishment will be carrying tales between two parties intending to cause rift and disunity between them. al-Bukhārī

The Prophet, Muḥammad ﷺ, has stated:

‘A person who carries tales will not enter paradise.’ al-Bukhārī and Muslim

He will enter Hell and his pastime there is already known.

A question arises as to why Allāh ﷻ punishes His slaves in such a severe manner for offences that are seemingly insignificant. This question would never arise if one recognized his Creator and his Creator's benevolence upon him.

From every person's birth until his death, Allāh ﷻ in His boundless clemency and magnanimity has catered for and has provided him with absolutely everything. His body, his food, his drink, his clothes, his parents, his family, his friends, his health, his wealth, his time, his ability to work, to walk, to talk, to think - absolutely everything, down to the very air we breathe, Allāh ﷻ is the Creator, the Provider and the Sustainer of it.

These bounties alone are an unrepayable mercy from Allāh ﷻ. If we were to spend our entire lives worshipping this all-giving Allāh ﷻ, expressing our most heart felt gratitude, if we spent our entire lives obeying and acting in accordance with His each and every command, it would not amount to even a fraction of a reimbursement for the Merciful Lord's generosity upon us.

His promise of Paradise to those who accept Him as Lord, *who merely accept Him as Lord*, is His pure generosity upon us; Heaven can never be earned nor deserved.

But on the other hand if a person turns his back upon the uncountable favours of Allāh ﷻ by disobeying even one of His simple commands, then it is an obvious, vile injustice on the part of the traitor, an unforgivable treachery, which deserves severe punishment.

Allāh ﷻ does not command His creation anything that is beyond them.

'Allāh does not impose upon any person apart from that what is within his capacity.' al Baqarah

From a 24-hour day, Allāh ﷻ asks for a few minutes only, for remembering Him in prayer (Ṣalāh). From a 360 day Lunar year, He asks that for 30 days (and that too only from dawn till dusk) we remember Him in a state of hunger and thirst (Ṣawm). From our over-sufficient livelihood, He asks for a mere 2.5 percent to give to those in need (Zakāh). Once in a lifetime, and then only if possible He asks that we pay a visit to the holy land, to the sacred Masjid He calls His own (Ḥajj).

He has given us everything and despite having the right to take everything back He doesn't. He asks for a small amount, an insignificant percentage. But we in our vile, evil plagiarism, depicting everything as the fruits of our efforts and labour, have refused to give Him back even a fraction of what is His right.

***'We gave our lives, but what we gave was already His.
The truth is that of His rights we gave nothing.'***

Translation Of Urdu Couplet

**Smashed will be his skull, after his facial skin is ripped away,
The boulders being thrust through his teeth, is part of the price to pay.**

On one night of spiritual Mi`rāj (ascension to the heavens), (the physical Mi`rāj that took place was a different event), the beloved of Allāh ﷻ, Muḥammad ﷺ was taken to see both Heaven and Hell. On giving a description of Hell he described some of its inmates and their punishments.

One of the things that the Nabī ﷺ described was a person standing over another person lying face down. The former brandished a large rock above his head, which he forced down upon the head of the latter, smashing his skull into a lurid crimson pool of mush. The former then readapted the position with the boulder poised high above his head, in which time the latter's head had been reformed. The standing person once again brought the boulder crashing down upon the head of the floored reprobate. This gruesome pattern is an eternal one. al-Bukhārī

The crime deserving this punishment is disregarding the Qur'ān and neglecting Ṣalāh. al-Bukhārī

The Prophet ﷺ also described a person who had claws made out of iron standing aloof of the cries of the person above whom he was towering. With these iron talons he punctured the face, the eyes and the throat of his pin-cushion victim, peeling and ripping away his skin and flesh right down to his shoulder blades with one slow, ghastly, grinding tug. He then proceeded to do the same to the other side of his victim's lacerated body, in which time the wounds were painfully sealed up, but only long enough for it to be ripped up again and again in a perpetual process of pain. al-Bukhārī

The punished was guilty of being a flagrant liar. al-Bukhārī

The Prophet ﷺ also saw a person into whose mouth stones were being thrust. His teeth were no match for the rocks in trying to stop the stones from entering. The dwellers of Hell will be devastated in a way that will take the description of pain to agonizing new depths.

While the stones are used in shattering the smile off his face he will be swimming in a sea of plasma, in a large lake of lurid lifeblood. Every time he will reach the shore the force of the stones that will be thrust

through his teeth will knock him back into the middle. There will be no question of him surviving or not as his nightmare will not end there, but against his will he will be brought back to life again and again to face an ever growing, painful punishment. al-Bukhārī

This person was guilty of consuming interest. The rocks being thrust into his mouth are only part of the foretold punishment.

He will be with iron hammers, shattered: his traces fragmented to dust, He will be remade, then again scattered, as repayment for his lust.

The accursed already underwent the incessant pounding from Munkar and Nakīr in the grave. It is an accepted view that the punishment of the grave will not match the severity of the punishment of Hell. If a person was crushed to an unimaginable state in the grave, then Allāh ﷻ alone knows what lies in store for those who are doomed to Hell.

Whether a body is burnt to cinders in Hell due to the punishment, or whether it is made to explode, or even if it were to melt or it were to be beaten to a grim, bloody pulp; it will be recreated, not out of mercy or to be granted a second chance, but as a means of inflicting the severest punishments upon the person. It will signify that there will be no end to the hellish torture which he will unavoidably face. This will be the punishment for ignoring Allāh's ﷻ law and for living in accordance with one's own carnal desires and greed, for living for one's lust.

Into a fiery furnace he will be flung, his blood and brain will boil, In a lurid bloody lake he will drown, swimming was too great a toil.

Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ while seeing the horrors of Hell was made to observe a structure similar to a giant furnace, in which he witnessed

naked men and women in a colossal, scorching fire. At times the flames would lower in height and the tortured would plummet downward, then all of sudden the fire would erupt abruptly hurling those inside upwards to such a height that it appeared that the furnace would overflow. Then it would lessen again. This harsh undulation will continue its unending fluctuating pattern while the ferocious heat and pain will continue to remain at an astronomical high. This method of infernal chastisement will be for those engulfed in adultery and fornication.

al-Bukhārī

The punishment of being drowned in a lake of blood has already been mentioned for those immersed in consuming interest and usury. It is almost ironic that he was so quick in taking the sweat and toil of people, and so shameless in drinking the blood of hardworking people, that he will be in over his head in Hell.

al-Bukhārī

**A thorny scrub he is made to eat, will liquidize his stomach and spleen.
The scalding, foul pus he will drink, will melt through his intestines.**

In the deep dark abyss of Hell there is only one type of vegetation that can grow. It is called Zaqqūm.

The Qur'ān states;

'They (dwellers of Hell) will eat from the tree of Zaqqūm.'

al Waqī`ah

'They will have no food except for a poisonous thorny plant. It will not nourish (its eater) nor will it free him from hunger.'

al Ghāshiyah

Naturally, in Hell the damned are going to feel hungry and thirsty. For

their hunger the Zaqqūm plant will be placed in front of them. This plant will have razor sharp thorns, which when consumed will expand and tear through the consumer's throat, stomach and every other part of his body. And instead of putting an end to the hunger, it will increase it. After eating it the person will have wished for eternal hunger instead of being treated like a pin-cushion by the spines of this infernal plant.

And for the thirst of Hell's dwellers, when it reaches an unbearable peak, there will be a foul liquid, which they hope will quench their parching thirst.

***'He will be made to drink pus, unwillingly he will gulp it
but it will not be able to pass his throat without great difficulty.'***

Ibrāhim

The burning pus in itself is something which no one will ever dream of drinking. It will be the contents of the drip-tray of Hell, where all the blood and pus and every other undesirable bodily waste will collect and will rot and then be boiled to increase its unpleasantness.

Because of being put into such dire straits by the immense heat and punishments, one will reluctantly be willing to make an attempt at drinking it. This will be a fatal blunder. The scalding hot liquid will burn his mouth and not be able to pass his throat...normally. After suffocating the drinker it will literally melt through his throat, dissolve his stomach and then eat its way through his intestines. On top of that it will amplify his thirst to such an extent that he will be forced to drink it again and again.

**His eyes are impaled with steel and into his ears molten lead will pour.
His misery is not laid to rest, as he is remade to bear even more.**

With red-hot steel rods a person's eyes will be pierced. The metal will erupt through his iris and eat away his retina not only stopping his sight, but also blinding him in tremendous pain.

This chastisement will be for not protecting one's gaze from making unlawful glances toward an illegal object of ones carnal desires.

There is a common misunderstanding amongst people, that a glance, a first glance, is permitted. This is shamelessly incorrect. What is correct is that the first unintended gaze is forgiven. Which means that if a man is made aware of a woman being in view, then too it is incorrect and not permissible for him to look. And if a glance is unintentionally made, then it is essential that it be immediately turned away, otherwise the unintended part of the action ceases to exist.

Hot, scalding lead will be melted down into liquid and will be poured down the ears of eavesdroppers, causing a deafening silence from all noise apart from the lead that will be busy eating through his skull and brains to emerge on the floor only to repeat this painful process, unrelentingly.

al-Bukhārī and at-Tirmidhī

The same punishment has also been mentioned to be in store for music-lovers. (Musalsalāt an-Naysābūrī) Music is a means of hardening the heart. The truth will become harder to accept. Concentration and devotion will vanish from any existing act of worship.

The Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ has said:

‘Songs causes hypocrisy to grow in the heart (the same way that water causes plants to grow).’

Abū Dāwūd (addition is of al-Bayhaqī)

One of the reasons for music being ordained impermissible is that it is an obstacle in the road to Allāh ﷻ and His pleasure. This alone should be sufficient a reason for people who attest to their being Muslims, as a

preventative from this vile act. Among the many dangers of modern music is the usage of backtracking and explicit messages for spreading satanic messages by means of subliminal messages, which indoctrinate the subconscious mind of the listeners. (The harms of music is a subject which has been extensively researched and put in to book form. These books are a must to read if we wish to know exactly what we are being exposed to.)

**He will cry and die, to be brought back for yet more pain to bear.
He will shout and scream, 'where is the end to my infernal nightmare?'**

The people of Hell will approach the guardian of Hell and complain about the severity of the punishment. They will ask that if not stopped could it at least be toned down. This request will be flatly refused. This also will be a form of punishment.

at-Tirmidhī

**Carefree living is the infamous test of fate
Fail in this test and face the agony that lies in wait.**

Explaining the reality of this world, the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ has so beautifully stated:

“This world is a prison for the true believer and a paradise for the disbeliever.”

Muslim

Even if a Muslim were to live like an emperor in this world, if he had his each and every desire fulfilled it will still appear lame in comparison to Heaven, as if he had absolutely nothing, and as though he had been detained in prison. He will be bound by rules (of Shari`ah) and because of being given a life-long regime to follow (five Ṣalāh daily, to

fast, to give alms, etc.) he will remain subservient to the will of one other than himself, that is to the will of Allāh ﷻ.

On the other hand the unbeliever being bound by no rules, being 'free' to do as he desires, will have made himself king of his own temporary materialistic heaven. His life on earth will be described as heavenly, even if he were to be a pauper, suffering from ailments and illnesses, unloved and totally unknown, for the reason that his pain and hurt in this world will be nothing in comparison to the waiting torment of the fiery afterlife. It will appear to him that this world was an enjoyable holiday.

In this Ḥadīth the Prophet, Muḥammad ﷺ at one and the same time warns us against having love for this world and shows us three ways to save ourselves, against its deception.

He states: "This world is accursed and everything regarding it is accursed except for the remembrance of Allāh along with everything relating to it and a knowledgeable person and one in search of knowledge,"
at-Tirmidhī

The word Mal`ūn, although having been translated as accursed, explicitly implies being thrown from the mercy of Allāh ﷻ.

From this it is obvious that Allāh ﷻ does not merely dislike this world, but He despises and detests it to such an extent that it has been said that if Allāh ﷻ valued this world even to the extent of a wing of a mosquito then He would never allow any disbeliever even a drop of water to drink.
at-Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd and Musnad Aḥmad

So if a person instead of aiming for the things which Allāh ﷻ likes, throws himself into those things upon which is Allāh's ﷻ curse he has

foolishly thrown himself into Allāh's ﷻ curse, into a destructive limbo, far away from the mercy and love of Allāh ﷻ. This is what we all have been warned against and is something that the avoiding of must be a vital goal for everybody.

In the same Ḥadīth, Nabī Muḥammad ﷺ tells us of three things, which if adopted, prevent a person from being included amongst those drowning in Allāh's ﷻ curse: The first is Allāh's ﷻ remembrance and those things relating to it. If a person out of love and adoration for Allāh ﷻ spends time in His remembrance, either by pondering over his gifts given to us, or by use of the tongue, or by means of just the heart, beholding His sacred name, one is likely to obtain the mercy of the Merciful and proximity and closeness to Him.

The second and third people mentioned in the Ḥadīth, (the possessor of religious knowledge who is a teacher of it and the student in search of religious knowledge respectively) have been given the glad tidings of being close to Allāh ﷻ, of being engulfed in his love and mercy. A person should try and spend as much time as possible in those things regarding which closeness to Allāh ﷻ and His love have been promised.

If one thinks that Allāh ﷻ enjoys destroying His servants, then one has unjustly overlooked Allāh's ﷻ qualities of being the Merciful and the Compassionate.

We have heard of the incident of Nūḥ ﷺ that for 950 years he tried to propagate the truth to his people.

Nūḥ ﷺ said: 'O my people! Indeed I am to you a Warner.' Nūḥ

But few accepted his call. He raised his hands and supplicated to Allāh:

***'My lord! I have called my people (to the truth)
by night and by day.'***

***"But my calling them did not affect them
except that it caused them to flee."***

***'And every time I call them so that You may forgive them they
placed their fingers in their ears (not wanting to hear me).***

***And with their clothes they covered their faces
(not wanting to even look at me).***

And they remained stubborn and proud and arrogant.'

'Then verily I called them openly.'

***'In the open, in public I would call them,
and also on a one to one basis.'***

***'I told them, "Repent unto your Lord!
Without doubt He is the Forgiver." Nūḥ***

But most of them went astray. Nūḥ

Nūḥ ﷺ in despondency cried:

***'My Lord! Do not leave upon this earth even one wandering
person amongst the rejecters.'* Nūḥ**

***'And do not increase anything for the disbelievers except total
destruction.'* Nūḥ**

Allāh ﷻ answered the prayer of Nūḥ ﷺ.

***'Until our order was decreed and (the earth like) an oven
erupted (with water). Hūd***

For a considerable period of time (according to some a period of 40 days), the sky continued its torrential downpour of unending rain, and

the earth had continued to froth up its water. Their whole world with its undulating mountains and plains had totally disappeared under a blanket of flood-water. The only unevenness was formed by the colossal, pyramidal tsunamis, huge triangular waves making sure that there were no survivors apart from those who had boarded the ark of Nūḥ ﷺ.

When the water had finally subsided the world had been totally purified from the filth of disbelief and from the plague of polytheism.

Allāh ﷻ has created, nurtured, clothed and fed His creation to such an extent that even if any one of His creations were to fall ill, Allāh ﷻ alone would be able to restore his health. Despite loving His creation so much, because of their disobeying and betraying and denying Him, Allāh ﷻ had decided that enough was enough, and thus in one fell swoop, annihilated all of those who chose to oppose Him by filling their lungs with an unquantifiable amount of water, making them fall into the sleep of death. And thus they deprived themselves of the love and affection that Allāh ﷻ had to offer them, by sowing the seeds of their own destruction with their own hands.

Nabī Muḥammad ﷺ had also given such an example. He spoke of a fire burning brightly surrounded by innumerable insects all being drawn by the light towards it. Next to the fire is a person trying to push back the insects. This person keeps on pushing the insects back but still they keep on coming, swarming him, hellbent on getting into the fire, which will be their self-destruction, and even with the person trying to keep them away, their suicidal goal is achieved in a burning and complete form.

The Nabī ﷺ compared this with reality. The fire is nothing but Hell. The insects are men, women and jinn. The force attracting the insects to

the fire is the same force attracting the people to the fire of Hell; the deceptive appearance of the fire is worldly pleasure, and the person trying to save them in reality is the example of the Nabī ﷺ himself, trying to keep everyone away from the fire. Muslim

Despite him pushing us away from the fire and showing us the right way and also by Allāh ﷻ giving us a conscience which differentiates for us right from wrong, good from evil, we, on our own accord choose to ignore his warnings and hasten to the edge of the Abyss, wanting to plummet into a horrid annihilation.

‘Whoever, in this world is blind (from the truth) then too in the Hereafter he will be blind (from the path to salvation) and he will be from the right path (to Heaven) misled.’ ash Shūrā

‘And say (O Muḥammad ﷺ to the disbelievers) the truth has been shown by your Lord, so whoever wants, he can believe in it and whoever wants he can reject the truth.’ al Kahf

The ball has been thrown into our court. It is our choice to accept the truth to gain Allāh’s pleasure or we can choose to reject it and face the promised consequences. It is our choice...

COMMENTARY ON THE PATH TO PARADISE.

**Turning the tables, on the other hand,
Is that true Muslim, who obeyed Allāh's command.**

All the horrors of Hell that have been described in the previous section lie in wait for all the reprobates, miscreants and sinners, who dare to defy Allāh. The topic described in this section is the life and reward for a Muslim who was the exact opposite of those facing a fiery punishment in the pit of Hell. Instead of living his life according to his whims and fancies, he suppressed his desires. He lived his life, given to him by Allāh, the way Allāh wants, in His obedience.

**The world can't fool this saintly soul,
Who had Allāh as his only goal.
He was not deceived when the world would shout.
"Come to me! Don't you dare hold out."**

It has been said that the heart has place for only one love. Because this person chose Allāh to fill that space, he chose to let go of everything else, e.g. money, women, houses, cars, idols etc. Whatever the world tried to seduce him with, he immediately deemed it insignificant and worthless. Thus he did not fall prey to its satanic deception. This did not mean that he did not love his family or achieved nothing in this world, but it means that his priority was Allāh, everything else was centred around Allāh.

**He did not succumb to his whims and desire,
Knowing inevitably it would lead to the fire.**

He recognized Allāh as his Creator, his Sustainer, his Provider, and as his Lord, and because he appreciated the favours bestowed upon him by Allāh, he realized that he owed Allāh a lot more than just his life. He therefore gave up his cravings and desires so that he could live in showing his gratitude toward Allāh by obeying His commands, knowing that being ungrateful would result in diving into Allāh’s wrath, and ultimately Hell.

**He would worship Allāh, as if Allāh he could see.
Saying, ‘though I can’t see Him, I know He sees me.’**

In a lengthy Ḥadīth, the Archangel Jibrīl ؑ approached Muḥammad ﷺ and for the purpose of teaching the present gathering, asked:
“Tell me what is Iḥsān?”

The Prophet ﷺ replied:
‘To worship Allāh as though you see can Him. And if you cannot see Him then without doubt He can see you.’ al-Bukhārī and Muslim

None other than the beloved of Allāh, Muḥammad ﷺ himself, offers an invaluable piece of advice here. If a person were to embed in his heart that as he is always in the presence of Allāh ﷻ, he would realise that Allāh ﷻ is always with him. By accommodating this noble thought one would feel compelled to stay away from sins, as the fear of Allāh ﷻ would overcome him. Whichever way he turns he sees the greatness of Allāh ﷻ manifest, and out of indebtedness he is grateful to Allāh ﷻ. And in prayer and meditation he would believe that he is in Allāh’s presence and that he can feel Allāh’s presence around him. In such a situation he will feel the sweetness of sincerity.

If however a person cannot manage such a task then he can bear in

mind that Allāh ﷻ indeed does see him, and that Allāh ﷻ indeed does hear him, to such an extent that Allāh ﷻ comprehends the voice of his thoughts and the feelings of his heart. This also encourages a person to abstain from committing sins and to develop sincerity in worship.

**Fearing Allāh he'd stay away from immoral crime,
And for Allāh's sake, he'd sacrifice his health, wealth and time.**

Time and again Allāh ﷻ in His book, the Qur'ān, instructs and reminds His servants to fear Him, as this is the root of all goodness.

'Fear Allāh.' Ten times in al Baqarah alone

'Fear Allāh as He ought to be feared.' Āl `Imrān

***'And those who obey Allāh and His Messenger,
and fear Allāh, and are wary of their actions
they indeed are the successful.'*** an Nūr

Shaykh ul Islām, Ibrāhīm ibn Ad-ham was one of the formidable saints of Islam. He had chosen to release the reigns of the rulers and revert to righteousness and run on the road to resignation in front of his Lord. He offers the world an entire treasure of advice regarding true fear of Allāh ﷻ and it's inculcation into the heart.

A person once approached him and said, 'I cannot control myself. Please tell me something from which I can take heed.'

Ibrāhīm said: 'I offer you five lessons, to which if you pay heed you will never fall prey to committing sins. The first: When you desire to disobey Allāh ﷻ do not consume from His sustenance.'

The person replied: “Then from where can I eat when everything on Earth is His sustenance and provision?”

The reply came: ‘Then can it really be favoured that you consume His sustenance and still disobey Him?’

Ibrāhīm continued: ‘Secondly if you desire to dwell in His defiance, Then don’t live on His land.’

The person responded: “Then where can I stay? The East and the West and whatever lies between them belong solely to Him.”

Ibrāhīm reproached him, ‘Then how can a person prefer partaking in provision provided by Allāh and parking his person on Allāh’s property while daring to defy him? Thirdly, if you really want to sin then do so only in a place where he can’t see you.’

The person answered: “How can there possibly be such a place? While He is the Knower of all secrets. Wherever I am He is already there, He is omnipresent.”

The anticipated reply came: ‘Then how can it be deemed correct to consume His sustenance, live on His land, and whilst He is watching, still disobey Him?’

‘Fourthly, when the angel designated to give you death comes to take you, tell him, ‘Wait until I repent sincerely and start to act according to my Lord’s wishes.’

The person interjected: “But this request will never be accepted from me. It will be flatly refused” .

Ibrāhim berated him: ‘So if you do not possess the capability to defend yourself against death enabling you to repent, and you know that when it comes you cannot possibly delay it, how can you still possess the audacity in even hoping to avoid this, while continuing to sin.’

‘Finally on the day of reckoning when the warders of Hell come to drag you off to an infernal end, don’t go with them.’

The saddened reply came “But they will never leave me nor will they show mercy upon me by acknowledging my cries! I will not be able to overpower them nor can I hope to escape.”

Ibrāhim explained ‘If you still sin, how then can you ever hope to succeed?’

Grasping the meaning of the reply the person lowered his head and replied: “Enough! Enough! While bearing this in mind I will find it extremely hard to continue in sin. I seek Allāh’s forgiveness and turn to him repenting.”

Kitāb at Tawwābin of al Muquddasi

Indeed if a person were to consider these points as often as possible then he too will find it hard to disobey Allāh ﷻ.

**‘Prepare yourself with the fear of Allāh,
as without doubt you cannot know.
That when night falls, then with the break of dawn
will your life still definitely show?’**

From an Arabic Poem

‘Make provisions! Indeed the best provision is Taqwā.’ al Baqarah

Taqwā (fear of Allāh ﷻ) consists primarily of two things:

- 1) Abstinance from sins.
- 2) Inclination towards good.

The former by far is the greater and its acquirement is mandatory. Nevertheless the latter can never be deemed as unimportant, as it has essentially been decreed vital by nothing less than the Word of Allāh ﷻ, the Qur'ān.

'Upon oath of the essence of time. Verily mankind has incurred loss. Apart from those who believe and act upon what is good...'
al `Aṣr

Allāh ﷻ also states:

'And he who carries out good deeds and is a believer, then he will not fear injustice (in the afterlife) or curtailment (of his own rewards).' Tā-Hā

Allāh ﷻ also decrees:

***'Does mankind think that they will be left alone?
(Do they think) that they can merely utter "We believe"
and they will not be tested?
Indeed We have tested those before them.
With this Allāh will make manifest all of those
who are true (in their saying "We Believe")
and He will make apparent those who are (blatant) liars.
Do those who do evil think that they can avoid Us?
Evil indeed is that which they foolishly perceive.'*** al `Ankabūt

The necessity of acting in accordance to Allāh's wishes, has been emphasized in the Qur'ān by the fact that the majority of times when belief is referred to, acting upon good has accompanied it. Owing to this there are many leaders in the field of beliefs, who with substantial proof claim that acting upon good is part of true, correct beliefs.

Shaykh Ḥasan al Baṣrī, one of the greatest towering pillars to uphold Islām, had gone to the extent of stating that the person guilty of not performing good but instead performing acts of evil, cannot be called a proper believer. He reasons that it cannot be possible for a person to believe in Allāh, to accept Him as his own God and to claim to have accepted His every command, (the wavering of which results in nothing short of disbelief, i.e. rejection of submission to Allāh's will) if these commands are not adhered to, if he does not revere Allāh to such an extent that to disobey Him or to break any of His commands becomes conceivable, then this cannot be counted as anything but lip service, which in practice is hypocrisy.

Whatever view is taken, without doubt the carrying out of good deeds is an integral part of true belief.

Worship and good deeds are of two types:

1. Worship by means of the body
2. Worship by means of one's wealth.

Physical worship, for example Ṣalāh, Ṣawm (fasting), Ḥajj, Dhikr (remembrance of Allāh) etc, is to practically involve oneself in making an effort for the acquisition of Allāh's pleasure.

Supportive worship by means of wealth is to spend money, not only on the poor (Zakāh, Ṣadaqah) but also for other necessities like building Masājid (plural of masjid), enabling people (including oneself) to go out in the path of Allāh ﷻ etc. all for the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ (Lillāh).

Once a Ṣaḥābī came to the beloved Nabī ﷺ and asked: 'Who is the best of men?'

Rasūlullāh ﷺ replied:

"That believer who strives with his health and wealth in the path of Allāh."

al-Bukhārī and Muslim

This is in corroboration with the āyah:

'You (O Muslims) are the best of nations sent out for mankind.'

Āl `Imrān

Muslims are the best of nations if they fulfil their mission of enjoining mankind in performing good deeds and preventing them from evil. This is something in addition to belief alone.

Time, one of the most valuable gifts of Allāh ﷻ, has also been mentioned in the poem for the reason that without it nothing would be possible. The very essence of existence depends upon this. It is a great shame to see that this very thing, this great gift is more often than not the most wasted, and the most abused.

Amongst the questions a person will have to face on the day of reckoning will be how his time was spent in this world. If it was utilised properly in trying to gain Allāh's pleasure, a more than satisfactory answer will be given.

**Striving in the path of Allāh ﷻ to Islām he would call,
Calling all to hold the Sunnah, as it will never let them fall.**

“Striving in the path of Allāh.” is a translation of Jihād fī sabīlillāh. A question arises as to what the word Jihād means. A common misconception is that the word denotes ‘Muslim holy war against non-believers’ (Oxford Concise), which is the usually rendered, stereotypical and incomplete interpretation.

The word Jihād is derived from the infinitive Juhd, which means to make a determined effort. This word, Jihād; unlike the word Qitāl which means to fight, to engage in battle, is inclusive of many different actions of which to engage in battle is undeniably one, but not the only

one. To say that Jihād means ‘Islāmic holy war’ does not allow room for the many other actions that fall under this category.

One of the many forms of Jihād is to call people to the truth. This is of two types:

- To call non-Muslims to Islam, the real, eternal salvation.
- To call Muslims to Ihsān and the Sunnah, to sincerity, to good deeds.

‘Call, (O Muḥammad) to the path of your Lord (to Islām) with wisdom (the Qur’ān) and a pleasant way of calling them, and reason with them in that way, which is best,’

an Naḥl

‘Say (O Muḥammad) this is my way. I call towards Allāh.’

Yūsuf

The key to obtaining Allāh’s pleasure and entry into Paradise is to have the belief in the kalimah:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ

LĀ ILĀHA ILLAL-LĀHU MUḤAMMADUR-RASŪLULLĀH.

‘There is no God besides Allāh.
Muḥammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allāh.

Forgiveness from Allāh ﷻ will eventually be granted to all Muslims as the Nabī ﷺ has explained:

‘Whoever says ‘There is no God besides Allāh’ will enter Paradise... Even if he were to fornicate or steal.’

al-Bukhārī and Muslim

This does not, and will not ever mean that saying the Kalimah is enough and there is no need to work for the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ. The

Prophet, Muḥammad ﷺ has also said that a person who intentionally misses Ṣalāh will find his name carved onto the doors of Hell, which he will then be forced to enter.

Kanzul `Ummāl – Abū Nu`aym narrating from Abū Sa`id

The severity of disobeying Allāh's commands is no small matter. It can be tolerated by none and thus must be avoided. One has to strive against one's desire not only by practising good but also by trying to get others to practice on good. For the unbelievers the only goal is in accepting Islām. And for Muslims, there can never be enough good in their account.

No person will attain salvation from it (oppression of tyrants) apart from that person who recognizes the religion of Allāh and he makes an effort for it with his tongue, his hand and his heart. al-Bayhaqī

In other words these people will be regarded as saved from tyranny who recognize Islām and make an effort towards it, by using the tongue to differentiate between right and wrong, and to inform people of it, by using the hands to act upon good and to give practical examples of it. And deep down in their hearts they have love for good and hate for evil.

Other examples of striving in the path of Allāh ﷻ include:

Speaking the truth in the face of danger. The Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ has said, "To speak the truth in the face of a tyrant (monarch) is the best Jihād." at-Tirmidhi, Abū Dāwūd, an-Nasa'ī and Ibn Mājah

Ḥajj (pilgrimage - counted as Jihād for women only). Nabī Muḥammad ﷺ has said, "A good form of Jihād is Ḥajj (pilgrimage)." al-Bukhārī

Even walking to the Masjid has been counted as in the path of Allāh ﷻ

by the Prophet, Muḥammad ﷺ, and has been included within the threshold of Jihād by the great commentators of Ḥadīth such as Imām al-Bukhārī in his compilation Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Whilst walking towards the Masjid one Ṣaḥābī informed another that he had heard the Prophet, Muḥammad ﷺ state, “The person upon whose feet dust gathers in the path of Allāh ﷻ, Allāh ﷻ has made the fire of Hell forbidden upon him.” Imām al-Bukhārī narrates the very same Ḥadīth in his book of Jihād and in ‘the virtue of walking to the Masjid’.

There are many other forms of Jihād, some of which are to be mentioned further on. But it is interesting, indeed uplifting, to see that some of the things we deem insignificant or things which we wouldn't associate with Jihād, are in actual fact by the words of the Nabī ﷺ himself to be included amongst the many different forms of worship that are to be found under the mighty banner of Jihād – striving, making a determined effort, in the path of Allāh ﷻ. We are able to participate in Jihād, in any one of its forms, perpetually. We can see that Allāh ﷻ wants us to come to Him. He has laid all the stepping-stones perfectly for us and is now waiting for us to utilise them in gaining His proximity.

Boosting our hopes Allāh ﷻ, the Merciful, the Compassionate states (when Allāh ﷻ Himself directly decrees a command, or engages in speech, which is not considered part of the Qur'ān, it is known as Ḥadīth Qudsi):

“I am according to My servant's expectations of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me. If he remembers Me in his heart, I shall remember him in My heart. And if he were to remember Me in a gathering, I shall remember him in a nobler gathering (i.e. that of angels). And if he approaches Me by a span then I shall go to him by a cubit (measurement equal to distance between fingertips and elbow).

And if he comes to Me by a cubit, I shall go to him by an arm's length.
And if he comes to me walking, I shall go to him running."

al-Bukhārī and Muslim

In each and every part of this Ḥadīth, the love of Allāh ﷻ is clearly shown as wanting to engulf the loyal servant, but with that it shows the need, the essentiality of a common opening factor, a key. This key mentioned is nothing more than a little effort from our own side.

**To a guide he would go to rectify his aims,
Not caring if it would make people call him names.**

One form of Jihād is that against one's self, against one's desires that is known as Jihād al Bāṭin (the inner Jihād).

In a Ḥadīth, the Nabī ﷺ is reported to have said: That person will not enter paradise who has an atom's weight of pride in his heart. Muslim

If actions create pride in one's heart, or a person performs certain actions with the intention of obtaining the praise of the people then these actions are not worthy of being accepted by Allāh ﷻ for the reason of not being performed for His pleasure. So in this sense it is as though one has given preference to obtaining the pleasure of someone other than Allāh ﷻ and has performed his actions for this latter inferior being.

This and other spiritual vices are not easy for a person to recognise in himself, therefore, he should go to a person with knowledge to learn all the religious implications that concern him both inwardly and outwardly.

Unfortunately, when a person tries to do an act according to Islām to please Allāh he is branded as being backwards, and he is portrayed as being a fundamentalist - he is not moving with “the times”.

The world has been turned upside down to such an extent that good actions are considered inferior, thought of as social vice and are looked down upon, while morally evil actions are the vogue and are considered ‘cool’ and are envied and respected.

Take for example adultery and fornication, a person who has many sexual partners and is constantly ‘getting laid’ is drowning in evil. But such an act, instead of warranting society’s disgust and lament, in this day and age commands encouraging comments praising his sexual prowess, such as ‘Romeo’, ‘Casanova’, ‘Playboy’, and ‘a bit of a lad’. Whereas a person who does not commit adultery - one who cherishes chastity and venerates virginity before marriage - is laughed at, mocked at and jeered, on account of not being able to “score”.

So keeping in mind that it is Allāh ﷻ whom he wishes to please and that he does not desire to become a victim of his ego, he disregards the taunt and torment of people laughing at him and belittling him in order to perform those actions which will make him ascend the spiritual heights and gain proximity to his beloved.

**More than anything he craved, that for Allāh, his life he could lay,
With sword in hand, for Islam, he’d face foes in every fray.**

The ultimate pinnacle of love and devotion is to be able to lay down one’s life for one’s beloved; to be able to give up one’s every comfort and desire for the pleasure of that being Who possesses one’s heart.

Muslims know that a person who dies fighting in the path of Allāh, their beloved, may lose his life but he gains so much more, he gains his objective, his beloved Lord's pleasure, which in itself is a greater achievement than mere entry into Paradise.

Love lies in fighting for Allāh ﷻ; Life lies in dying for Him.

Those who die fighting for this Universal Truth - the promotion of the word of Allāh ﷻ - gain this honour, and yet in reality don't really die.

Allāh ﷻ states:

'Do not call those who are killed in the way of Allāh "dead". They are indeed alive but you cannot perceive it.' al Baqarah

'Do not ever think that those who were killed in the path of Allāh are dead. Definitely they are alive, and from their Lord they are receiving sustenance.' Āl `Imrān

One of the meanings of this is that immediately after acquiring martyrdom a martyr will be given a new life in Heaven even before the day of Reckoning. But in this temporary life between death and resurrection he will be incarnated as a magnificent bird being permitted to fly wherever he wants to in heaven, with the euphoric feeling of achieving one of the greatest honours, being able to please his Lord by giving back what was already belonging to Allāh, he gave back his own life.

Muslim and at-Tirmidhī

**He yearned for religious knowledge, thus burned the midnight oil,
He strived to learn to be a Muslim; he overcame with sweat and toil.**

To seek religious knowledge is Farḍ (incumbent) upon every Muslim.

Ibn Mājah

The bare minimum knowledge that every Muslim is required to know is what is generally required of him on a daily basis. To be able to differentiate between right and wrong, good and evil, Ḥalāl (permitted) and Ḥarām (prohibited) and to know how to carry out the commands of Allāh is an obligation upon each and every Muslim.

To go beyond this is incumbent but not on everybody. Those who have been given the opportunity to study religion in detail become the vital links between the religion and the people, between Islām and Muslims. In the darkness of this deceptive world where every evil glows, drawing people to their utter destruction, every person who commits himself to lifting the load of religious knowledge in reality lifts up a light which illuminates its vicinity, allowing the lay community to avoid all obstacles in their way to their Lord.

The greater the `Ālim (possessor of knowledge) is, the greater the light that is given.

**The greatest heights are reached, in accordance to one's toil,
Thus he who aspires for the heights, must burn the midnight oil.**

Arabic Poem

The acquiring of religious knowledge is indeed a great service to Islām, nevertheless it is a great responsibility and only those are chosen whom Allāh wants to elevate.

Whoever Allāh wishes good for He gives him deep insight into religion.

al-Bukhārī and Muslim

True religious knowledge from Allāh ﷻ is never given to those who are transgressors of Allāh's divine law. Imām ash-Shāfi`ī states:

**I complained to (my teacher Imām) Wakī` of a bad memory,
He instructed me to leave sinning.**

**Religious knowledge is a radiating light given by Allāh,
And this light of Allāh is never given to any sinner.**

True religious knowledge is a radiating light from Allāh ﷻ, and its benefits are manifest in its possessor through his acting according to it, and its being a means of guidance for the community. A person's `ilm (Knowledge) saves him from being led astray. It is extremely different to mere information or data, which have none of the above stated benefits.

Acquisition of empty knowledge, which does not fit this description, is a burden as it is going to have to be reckoned for on the Day of Judgement.

The Prophet, Muḥammad ﷺ sought refuge from it by saying, “O Allāh! I seek Your protection from that knowledge which is not beneficial.

Muslim

As has already been mentioned, it can never be enough for Muslims just to say “We believe”. To face trials and to worship Allāh ﷻ by means of actions, which may feel difficult, is all part and parcel of this prestigious responsibility.

‘Does mankind think that they will be left alone by merely uttering, “We believe”, and they will not be tested?’ al `Ankabūt

**Only in Allāh’s worship would his heart be at ease,
He would remain in the thought of how his Lord he could please.**

One of Allāh’s special favours is that He gives His chosen servants happiness and inner peace in worship. Allāh ﷻ creates within them a craving to do more and more only for pleasing Allāh ﷻ. This condition

of inner peace is called having, 'a contented soul'. And with this is a special individual channel of communication with Allāh ﷻ. Because of this the special servant of Allāh ﷻ feels that every time he calls Allāh ﷻ, just by taking His name, Allāh ﷻ has already responded by granting this servant of His the permission to take His name in the first place. And again, in granting the ability of taking His name after that, Allāh ﷻ shows its acceptance in His court. In this way this pious servant of Allāh ﷻ would spend night and day, day and night, seeking more ways to please his Beloved, Allāh ﷻ.

No matter how much a pious person achieves, to him it will never be enough. Regarding this we can take the example of our beloved master Muḥammad ﷺ who was guaranteed the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ, despite the fact that Allāh ﷻ would never become displeased with him, he would still in the night stand in prayer until his feet became swollen. Someone asked him why he did this as he was guaranteed Allāh's forgiveness and pleasure. The Nabi ﷺ replied, "Then should I not be a grateful servant?"

al-Bukhārī

If this is the condition of the best of creation ﷺ, then automatically we should understand where we stand.

**He turns around and faces 'Death' who shakes him by the hand,
And 'Death' tells him 'Brother! You have two rak`ahs left on this land.'
"May Allāh have mercy on you," says Death at this soul's final sneeze,
With which out of his body, his soul is gently squeezed.**

It has been narrated about many pious servants of Allāh ﷻ, that when they faced death, the angels appointed to take their souls were sent early enough to allow them to perform two rak`ahs of Ṣalāh so that their souls would be taken in a state while they were pleasing their

Lord. And when they will be resurrected they will be in Allāh's presence in the same state, which will be pleasing to Him.

As a special favour Allāh ﷻ grants some of His servants a death free of pain. The grinding pain of death (as explained earlier) will not be experienced.

Note: While an easy, pain-free death is a favour which Allāh ﷻ grants whomsoever He wills, it does not necessarily mean that a person who at the time of death experiences no pain is definitely pious, nor does experiencing the agonies of death necessarily mean that the dying is a transgressor of Allāh's Law. It is purely up to Allāh in deciding who is to be given such a blessing. `Ā'ishah ؓ is reported to have said that she used to believe that a pain free death is an indication of piety, but at the time of the Nabī's ﷺ demise when she watched him many a time placing his hand into a container of water to dampen his brow this supposition was quickly vanquished.

Mirqāt

**After he is bathed and upon him du`ās are read,
From the mouths of people about him only good can be said.
As he is gently placed into his grave and his body is laid to sleep,
"His death is the death of the world," people uncontrollably weep.**

With the completion of the rites of passage the lay and the elite alike, all lower their heads, in sadness that one of Allāh's favoured servants has been taken away from them.

**The death of a possessor of religious knowledge is like the death
of an entire world.**

Arabic Saying

**He is carefully covered in earth and in this world he is now no more,
While deep into the afterlife he merely steps ashore.**

After being buried, people depart helplessly from the burial site with no more than an affectionate memory of the deceased deeply embedded in their hearts. Although his legacy lives on unabated in this world, in this life he is a permanently lost love, gone to join eternity.

**Two angels appear to give him a familiar test,
And gently seat him making sure he is at rest.**

The terrifying angels known as Munkar and Nakir appear to place the three questions before the now awakened soul. However, for this servant they do not, carry the horrific appearance which they displayed while confronting an evil soul, waking him up to see his nightmarish destiny.

**The Qur'ān materializes at his side, a friendly vital aide,
So now he is at complete rest, when the first question is eventually laid.**

The Qur'ān is either an argument for you or against you.

Muslim

For a person who reads and acts upon it, the Qur'ān will appear in the grave with the sole purpose of assisting the reader in his hour of need. The Qur'ān's intercession for a person will never be refused.

There are certain chapters of the Qur'ān in particular which materialize as formidable birds that spread their wings around the deceased protecting him from any onslaught that may be brought down upon him if he was constant in reciting them.

Muslim and at-Tirmidhi

Furthermore these chapters will beseech the Lord asking for His forgiveness or else to be removed from His Word. These sūrahs' (chapters) intercession will not be refused.

They are al Baqarah and Āl `Imrān.

Muslim

Similarly the benefits of al Mulk are equally amazing.

Tirmidhī

There are also many other benefits of other sūrahs of the Qur'an.

**From the first voice, "Who is your Lord?" is the cry,
To which he beams, 'Only Allāh is my reply.'
"What is your religion?" is the next question asked,
'My religion is Islām,' is the doubtless answer unmasked.
"Who is your prophet?" is the last question to voice,
The answer, "Muḥammad ﷺ is my heart's only choice."**

The same test in which his counterpart failed and began his journey to eternal and infernal damnation, will be a stepping stone to the infinity of the gardens of bliss for this soul.

**The successful soul is now handed over to the grave,
Which happily accepts him and becomes his abiding slave.
The grave says 'Friend! Welcome! In the world I liked you the most,
Now you are my guest and I am your hospitable host.'
The grave becomes a garden expanding to as far as his eyes can see,
And a window to heaven is opened, oozing tranquillity.
Here he relaxes and sleeps, right to the very last day,
This is just the beginning reward, for living the ordained right way.**

The life of the grave is a toned down version of what lies in wait. In the same way in which the grave will be an unbearable punishment for the

transgressors of Allāh's law, it becomes one of the many gardens of Paradise for him with whom Allāh ﷻ is pleased.

The grave is either a garden from the gardens of Paradise, or a pit from the pits of Hell. at-Tirmidhi

**The second blow of the trumpet now all the souls assemble and wait.
Waiting for the decision as to where they'll face their fate.**

**Time will soon tell you what you were ignorant of.
And he who you did not pay will give you news** Arabic Saying

The day of reckoning will be the day when every person from the first man till the very last person to walk upon the face of the Earth will be resurrected and gathered to find out where they are to face eternity. That day will reveal all.

**In the shade of Allāh's throne relaxed this soul will lay,
And in two rak'ahs of Ṣalāh 50,000 years will pass away.**

On that day, the length of which will be 50,000 years. al Ma`ārij

Every single soul will be gathered on to a flattened plain, the sun will be brought down to an unreal scorching low of a mere mile above the ground's surface. Muslim

There will be no shade on that day. People will be engulfed in their own perspiration, according to their sins that are to be reckoned for. While some may be only to their ankles, knees or waists in this waste liquid, others will helplessly be drowning in their sweat when it pours into their mouths.

Allāh ﷻ, in His benevolence, will create shade on that dreadful day: that shade will be of His mighty throne. And He will give seven categories of people the honour and comfort of sitting under it, to relax in its shade. They will be:

1. Leaders who are just and are upholders of virtue.
2. Young people who find pleasure in worship.
3. Those whose hearts are always attached to the Masājid.
4. Two people who love each other for the sake of Allāh ﷻ, they meet and part with the intention of pleasing Allāh.
5. People who remember Allāh ﷻ in seclusion, in such a manner that their eyes flow with tears.
6. Those who have the opportunity to fornicate with someone who is both good looking and of high, noble birth, who is calling them towards fulfilling their desires, but they abstain and say, “We fear Allāh.”
7. That person who gives charity in such secrecy that it is as though even his left hand does not know what his right hand is spending.

al-Bukhāri and Muslim

Judgment day for people, who have to account for great volumes of sin, will grind to an excruciating halt, making sure that they feel the anguish of the full 50,000 year long day.

Those upon whom Allāh ﷻ has shown extra mercy will feel the long day pass so quickly that it would seem that it was only the duration that it normally takes to perform two rak'ahs of Ṣalāh.

A smile spreads upon his face, as he receives his book in his right hand, Success is what is achieved as he'll enter heaven, his promised land.

He is engulfed in a halo of happiness as the universal objective has

finally been reached by him, and none other than Allāh, the Merciful, the Magnificent Himself has ordained it.

'Then, as for he who will be given his record in his right hand, he will say 'Here! Read my record books. Indeed I had known that I would undergo reckoning.' He will then be in a life well pleasing, in the highest heavens.' al-Ḥāqqah

The parents of a Ḥāfiẓ will both receive sparkling crowns. People will step aside for them, as they ascend in honour's gowns. If this is for the parents, then upon the Ḥāfiẓ what will descend? He will read and he will climb, and into the heights of heaven ascend.

The Prophet ﷺ said, "Whosoever reads the Qur'ān and acts upon it his parent will be made to wear crowns on the Day of Judgment, the radiance of which will be more brilliant than the sun, even if the sun was to be within your own homes. So what do you think about the person who himself acts upon it?" Abū Dāwūd and Musnad Aḥmad

And in another Ḥadīth it has been narrated that they will be given honorary robes so splendid that their value will exceed that of the entire world. al-Ḥakim

The status of a Ḥāfiẓ cannot be imagined if the standards set in the aforementioned Aḥādīth are anything to go by.

In another Ḥadīth it has been narrated, "It will be said to the man of the Qur'ān (Ḥāfiẓ) "Go on reading and ascending. Read in that measured tone in which you used to read in the world. Indeed your place (in Heaven) will be where you reach with the final Āyah (verse) you recite." Muslim

Note: The literal meaning of **TARTĪL** is to recite in a slow measured tone, it also means to recite the Qur'ān correctly bearing in mind its rules and meanings. The latter meaning is by far the more important.

Allāh has saved this servant, and to save, allows him to intercede. He will seek out his friends; and stay a friend in their hour of need.

Allāh ﷻ in His limitless mercy will grant His prosperous servants the ability to intercede for their kith and kin who were to face Hell on account of their shortcomings.

In a lengthy Ḥadīth it has been mentioned, 'Upon oath of Him in Whose hands my life remains, none of you can make a more determined effort in fighting for a right that has become apparent to him, than the Believers who will argue the case of their brothers, who have fallen into Hell, to Allāh ﷻ on the day of Reckoning.

The Believers will say, "O Lord they used to fast with us and they used to offer Ṣalāh and perform pilgrimage."

It will be said to them "Take out those whom you recognize." When going to extract them from Hell their bodies will be forbidden upon Hell (i.e. they will not be burned by Hell's fire) Thus they will remove from Hell a large group of people.

al-Bukhārī and Muslim

It is imperative that a person maintains ties with those servants of Allāh ﷻ who will be granted the opportunity to intercede.

There are two main points worth considering in regards to this issue. They are:

1. Those for whom intercession was made **were in Hell** because of their misdemeanours and only after they remain therein for some time, will intercession be accepted. Being in Hell for even "only a short time" is no small matter and must be avoided at all cost.

2. In the accounts of the sinful Muslims there are actions that proved that they had made an effort from their own side. When intercession was made on their behalf references were made to these actions. Thus Allāh ﷻ will shower His mercy as acknowledgement of the fact that effort was made on the side of these short-fallen slaves.

There is a practice amongst ignorant people, who argue that they can do as they wish, because of having the acquaintance of a certain Wali (Saint) they claim to have an irrevocable, already-accepted intercession on the Day of Resurrection, guaranteeing Allāh's forgiveness. This is hideously wrong. Allāh ﷻ grants permission to intercede to whomsoever He wills for whomsoever He wills, not whoever we feel deserves the gift of being able to intercede, for his hospitable, generous friends and benefactors.

If one lives life fulfilling his desires in the vain, naïve expectation of having a 'golden ticket' to fly direct to Allāh's forgiveness, he will be in for a rude awakening when Allāh ﷻ refuses to grant permission for intercession. When the would-be intercessors see that Allāh ﷻ Himself is displeased with this overconfident sinner, they too will turn their faces in contempt and disgust.

It is extremely hazardous to keep friends who are of bad character. A man follows the ways (religion) of his friend. It is necessary for a person to watch who he keeps as friends. al-Ḥākim and Aḥmad

Just as a good friendship is beneficial, a bad friendship is harmful. In the next life a bad friend will be unable to help,

That day a person will flee from his own brother. al `Abas

As the saying goes ‘When days are dark, friends are few.’ At the time of a person’s greatest need this friend will be an obstacle only on the path to Hell.

**“Come,” is echoed by an enchanting voice,
“Enter through the gate of your choice.
We are made for each other can’t you see,
That I am for you and you are for me,
From my endless pleasures there is no need to be coy,
I am your eternal slave, subject to your every joy.”**

*Those who feared their Lord,
will be herded into heaven in flocks.
When they reach it, its gates will have been opened.
And Heaven’s custodians will say to them
“Peace be upon you. You have done well.
Now enter into heaven to stay forever therein.”* az-Zumar

Paradise has eight gates:

Heaven has eight gates from amongst them there is one named Rayyān. None will enter it apart from those who kept fasts.

al-Bukhāri and Muslim

In a similar way, just as there is a special gate reserved for this one act of worship, the others are dedicated to different acts performed for the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ. In all there are eight gates.

1. Door of Ṣalāh. at-Tirmidhī
2. Door of Jihād. at-Tirmidhī
3. Door of Fasting. al-Bukhāri and Muslim
4. Door of Charity. at-Tirmidhī
5. Door of Pilgrimage. at-Tirmidhī

6. Door of Suppression of Anger.

Musnad Aḥmad

7. Door of Faith and Belief.

Faṭḥul Bāri

8. Door of Knowledge or Remembrance of Allāh.

at-Tirmidhi

This saint pleased Allāh ﷺ so much in his life that not just one but all the gates of heaven will call him by name hoping that he will enter heaven through them. They will consider it an honour that such an auspicious guest chose to enter into his new permanent residence through them.

Note: This privilege is that of Abū Bakr ؓ but will also be granted to those who after wuḍū' recite punctually:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولُهُ

‘ASH-HADU ‘AL-LĀ ‘ILĀHA ‘ILLĀL-LĀH,
WA ‘ANNA MUḤAMMADAN ‘ABDUL-LĀHI WA RASŪLUH

I testify that there is no god but Allāh,
and that Muḥammad is Allāh’s servant and Messenger.

Muslim

**By the hands of Muḥammad ﷺ from a special pool he will now drink,
Never again will he be thirsty for his thirst will be left to sink.**

The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has said, “My pool will be the equivalent to a month’s journey in length and its width will be equal to that. Its water will be whiter than pure milk. Its fragrance will be more pleasant than musk. Its goblets will be like stars of the night sky. Whoever drinks from it will never be thirsty again.”

al-Bukhārī and Muslim

And in another narration it has also been mentioned that its water will be sweeter than honey.

Muslim

**For a period known only to Allāh will he stare at each gate.
He is in no rush to enter as eternity lies in wait.**

Every single aspect of Jannah will be so wondrous that even to say that it is beyond description does not do justice. The gates will be no exception. Their beauty will demand the onlooker to gawk and stare mesmerized by its radiance. He will only go forth because of the promise of better things inside.

**The successful will enter heaven, from which they will never part,
Their only worry is, with which pleasure should they start.**

*'Indeed there is for those who believe and act upon good the gardens of Firdaws to remain in. They will remain forever
al Kahf therein; they will not want anything in lieu of it.'*

'And they (the dwellers of Heaven) will say "All praise be to Allāh who has taken away from us all grief. Indeed our Lord is the Forgiving, the Appreciating, He, Who has granted us a place to stay, out of His grace, in which no difficulties will reach us nor will exhaustion catch us up."' al Faṭīr

**Ahead lies His Heaven, which for millions of miles unfolds.
He stares beyond belief, as everything is of silvers and golds.**

In a lengthy Ḥadīth, after having taken the last believer out of Hell, Allāh ﷻ will tell him, 'Go! And enter Heaven. For you there is a Heaven the size of the world and its equal with it.'

The person (in bewilderment) will ask "Are You teasing me or mocking me while you are the Lord of the Worlds?"

The Ṣaḥābī narrating this Ḥadīth, `Abdullāh Ibn Mas`ūd ؓ mentions,

‘I then saw the Nabī ﷺ smile to such an extent that even his premolars became visible.’

The Nabī ﷺ further went on to say, “He (who obtains this much) will be the lowest dweller of heaven in terms of status.” al-Bukhārī and Muslim

Think about this: if we were to be given a house, we would be happy. If we were to be given an entire street, we would be delighted. If we were to be given an entire city, we would be ecstatic. And if we were to be given a country, we would be euphoric. What would our situation be, how would we feel, if we were given an entire world, and not just a world, but that which would be at least ten times the size of the Earth? If this is the size of the heaven of the lowest in Jannah, then what will be the status of the norm, of the elite and that of the highest?

Allāh ﷻ himself states (in Ḥadīth Qudsī):

‘I have prepared for my pious servants that which no eye has ever seen and what no ear has ever heard, and what no human heart has ever been able to comprehend.’

The Nabī ﷺ then said: If you wish you may read the Āyah:

“And no soul can know what joys have been hidden for them (the citizens of paradise).” as Sajdah

al-Bukhārī and Muslim

An area equal to that which can be covered by a bow of any of you in heaven is better than whatever the sun rises upon or sets over (in this world).

al-Bukhārī and Muslim

Abū Hurayrah ؓ asked the Nabī ﷺ, ‘What is Jannah made of?’ The Nabī ﷺ replied: ‘A brick of gold and a brick of silver (in other words the buildings of heaven will be made of gold and silver), its cement will be of a strong, sweet smelling musk, its pebbles and stones will be pearls and diamonds, and its soil will be of saffron. Whosoever enters into it

will be well entertained, he will never be despondent; he will live forever, he will never die, his clothes will never perish nor will his youth ever end.”

at-Tirmidhi and Musnad Aḥmad

**Thousands of fruit off each tree hang, each an indescribable pleasure.
And each leaf is of rubies, diamonds and other priceless treasure.**

*‘Indeed for those who abstain from sin there is great success.
Great gardens and grapes, and young, voluptuous maidens of the
same age, and goblets full to the brim.’* an Naba’

*And for he who feared his Lord are two gardens.
Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?
In which are trees with wide spreading branches.
Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?
In two gardens will be two flowing springs.
Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?
In the two gardens will be fruits of every kind in pairs.
Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?
They will be reclining on couches the lining of which will be silk.
And the fruits of the two gardens will be within reach.
Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?*

ar Raḥmān

There will not be a single tree in Heaven which will not brandish a trunk of pure shimmering gold.

at-Tirmidhi

*‘They will be reclining therein and will call for
the plentiful sweet dishes and drink.’* Şād

*‘They will have therein sweet things and they will have
whatever they call for.’* Yā Sin

Whenever any of Heaven's dwellers desire fruit, a tree will approach him and lower an entire branch for his comfort and when he chooses to stand it will automatically move itself back to an appropriate distance.

Tafsir Ibn Kathir

**Unimaginably enjoyable, flow rivers of wine, water, honey and milk,
Drinking from them are heaven's dwellers uniformed in gold and silk.**

'Verily those who believe and perform good deeds, indeed they are the best of creation. Their reward, from their Lord will be eternal gardens, beneath which flow rivers. They will abide therein forever, eternally.' al Bayyinah

'Such a Heaven has been promised to those who abstain from sin. In which will be rivers of pure untouched water, and rivers of pure milk the taste of which will be unadulterated, and rivers of wine pleasing and enjoyable for the drinkers, and rivers of pure undiluted sweet honey. For them will be every kind of fruit. And they will be granted forgiveness from their Lord.' Muḥammad

Water, one of the greatest gifts of Allāh ﷻ upon his creation will also be a great favour in Heaven. Allāh ﷻ has made it such that in this world waters from different places taste differently, the water of Zamzam, spring water and river water all vary in taste. Some waters taste better than others. In Heaven the water will taste sweeter than honey and will always be at a refreshingly cool temperature.

Milk, in heaven, will be a dazzling radiant white, free flowing yet unnaturally creamy and indescribably sweet.

Wine will be enjoyable yet it will not intoxicate nor will it cause headaches or hangovers.

Honey is the epitome of sweetness in this world. If in Heaven plain water is sweeter than honey, then what the honey of Heaven will be like in sweetness, is beyond human comprehension.

***‘They will be made to wear bracelets of gold and pearls
and their clothes will be of silk.’*** al Ḥajj

Gold and silk are forbidden for men to don in this world yet in the hereafter as a reward they will be the norm, bringing out the beauty of the wearer.

**A bird will present itself, and transform into a succulent, juicy roast,
After being eaten, it will ask, “Was I pleasing to whom I was host?”**

‘And the flesh of fowls of what they will desire.’ al Waqī`ah

In heaven the birds will be as big as camels that will roam and wander from tree to tree. They will enjoy their lives but not as much as those men and women who live in Jannah. They will enjoy eating them.

Musnad Aḥmad

Whenever a Jannatī will want to eat poultry, a bird from mid-flight will present itself as a cooked, succulent, juicy, mouth-wateringly delicious roast. Without any effort the meat will fall in his hands, and he, after eating till satisfaction, will throw away the remains. The bird will then reassemble and by the power of Allāh come back to life fully intact and fly away.

at-Tarḥīb wa at-Tarḥīb

**Whatever he wants, without effort will in front of him appear.
And whenever he wants he will be visited by all his near and dear.**

'In heaven will be whatever the heart desires, whatever the eyes gain pleasure in. And you will live there forever.' az-Zukhruf

Allāh ﷻ in His infinite mercy will grant the people of Jannah two qualities, the like of which He possesses.

The first is that they will live forever; death will never overtake them. **KHĀLIDĪNA FĪHĀ ABADĀ** The explanation of this term has already been given, that the words **KHĀLIDĪNA** and **ABADĀ** both denote to live without end, eternally. This will definitely add to the pleasure of the Heaven-dweller.

The second is that they will have whatever they desire, without having to make an effort for it. In the world even if one were to be a billionaire there will always be instances where one cannot have one's own way.

A person in this world no matter how successful or powerful he may be, will always be bound by the law of the world which is that you cannot always have your own way. In Heaven, however, you can. The lowly placed people of Heaven will be higher than the most elite of this world, in the sense that they will always have whatever they want and will always be happy.

*'Their way of request therein will be just saying, SUBḤĀNAK
(Your Glory, O Allāh)'* Yūnus

Whenever they want anything they will merely think of that object and say **SUBḤĀNAK** and the desired object will materialize in front of them, waiting for them to indulge.

Mankind recognizes family and have the sociability to make friends. Many a time this proves itself to be a bearer of utmost joy and in Heaven this will be taken to an extreme.

In this world a person can have friends but at the same time he can also have enemies. In Heaven the latter will be non-existent. Before entry into Heaven all those who have been deemed successful will first be taken to a juncture, there whatever enmity they may have had will be removed, they will then proceed to Paradise.

From time to time, those who will be graced with the gardens of the higher stages of Jannah will want to see their friends who may not have attained that high a status. They will be permitted to visit them whenever they wish. This will be a source of immense pleasure and happiness for both the visitor and the host who for long periods of time will share in the pleasure of Jannah together. If the dwellers of the lower heavens want to visit their beloved ones in the higher heavens, then they too will not be prevented from doing so.

**Destroyed will be his hunger, just to enjoy will he choose to eat,
This Jannatī will now lie down, so with his abode he will now meet.**

In Heaven no one will suffer from any form of defect or illness.

The Jannatīs will never become ill, they will have no need to urinate or to excrete, nor will they spit or have to clean their noses.

al-Bukhāri and Muslim

When Allāh created Ādam and entered him into heaven. He decreed that he would never go hungry or thirsty therein.

‘Indeed for you in Heaven there is such that you will never go hungry nor will you be naked. Nor shall you suffer from thirst nor from the Sun’s direct, harmful heat.’

Ṭā Hā

In other words with such an abundance of food and drink, never again will hunger or thirst ever be able to rear their ugly heads. Even when this Jannatī is not hungry he will still be able to indulge in the gastronomically delightful treats of Heavens ever-delicious delicacies. He will eat to enjoy.

The palaces and manors belonging to this Jannati will be so beautiful that the proud new owner will not know whether to enter it or just carry on gawking at it, not even allowing the thought of turning his eyes away from it to enter in his head.

Before him stretches his gold palace, with musk cementing every brick. He seeks for a room, and from an unending supply, one, he will pick.

As previously explained the palaces of Heaven are made up of glistening gold and shimmering silver bricks with fresh invigorating fragrant musk cementing them together. Heaven's palaces will show off their awesome brilliance to please their owners.

Gold, the same precious metal which is fought over and valued so much that only the wealthy really befriend it, while the poor are so bereft of it that some may never get to catch a glimpse of its glimmer throughout their lives. Gold in heaven will be thousands of times more valuable and it will be in such abundance, as all the bricks of all the palaces will be made of solid gold. Imagination cannot grasp the wonders of the greater gifts of Allāh.

He enters a shining chamber, in a pearl tent that he'll so quickly seize, He barely has a chance to lie down, when someone enters to please.

After looking at his dream-come-true palace, he will take a look in his gardens and what he sees is far from disappointing.

“For him will be erected a giant tent made of pearl and diamond and other gems, the size of which will be the distance between Jābiyah (a town in Syria) and Ṣan`ā’ (a town in Yemen).” at-Tirmidhī

This dome will be made of a single gigantic pearl. It will be hollowed out and encrusted with priceless jewels. The tent will have chambers so far apart from one another, that the one will not be visible from the other. And in these glistening suites the room service will be nothing less than perfect.

**With sparkling skin and radiant hair, she will enchantingly appear.
With warmth and love in her stride, she draws affectionately near.
This Jannatī meets up with his wife, the queen of his eternal abode .
His partner in life is for eternal life, who too into heaven strode.**

The wife of a Jannatī will in Heaven possess beauty and elegance to such a degree that it will seem that nothing else, in comparison to her can ever possess those attributes. Even the Ḥūrs (explained later) with their seemingly unlimited beauty will pale in comparison to the successful wife, in the way that stars pale and totally fade away in comparison to the radiant rays of the blazing sun.

**‘In Heaven we will give them (women of this world) a new form.
We will make them virgins (forever), loving, the same young age
(of their spouses). This is for the righteous people.’** al-Wāqī`ah

The successful women of the hereafter, if they were to peer out of Heaven onto the earth then everything between the Heaven and the Earth would be illuminated by the incredible light which they radiate.

Furthermore their fragrance will fill the entire world (with such a sweet scent the likes of which would not have been experienced before and never would be again.)

al-Bukhārī

Adding to this the beloved Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has exclaimed that the scarf on their heads will be better, and worth more than the entire world inclusive of all its contents.

al-Bukhārī

**O women of this world fear not! Let your hearts be at rest.
As in heaven none will match you, you will be the unrivalled best.
The Ḥūr will be your maids, serving you with love, sincerely true.
In Heaven O queen, the word 'beauty' will not do justice to you.**

The Ḥūr ʿīn is the personification of unparalleled, extraordinary and exquisite beauty. These wide-eyed maidens are the possessors of every feature of perfection a person could imagine.

'In the palaces of Heaven there will be beautiful maidens.

Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?

The Ḥūr will be sheltered in tents.

Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?

They will be touched by no man nor jinn (before their owners).

Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?' ar Raḥmān

They will be and remain essentially chaste. They will remain faithful and loving to their owners. They will not even want to look at anyone besides them. They will exclusively want to entertain their masters.

'And the wide-eyed Ḥūr will be like hidden precious pearls.'

al Wāqī`ah

Ḥūr ʿīn is a term, which can mean maidens possessing eyes of a rich

deep meaningful colour. Alternatively it can also mean, large, wide-eyed, damsels; either way both invite towards unprecedented beauty.

Regarding their absolute beauty it has been foretold by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ himself, “The marrow of their shins will be seen through their bone and flesh owing to their beauty. al-Bukhārī and Muslim

And he further said, “(When he looks at one of the Ḥūr) he will see his own face in her cheeks, which will be more reflective, than a mirror. Musnad Aḥmad

In other words, words are insufficient to describe their beauty.

Note: Many people like to think that Jannah equals Ḥūr and Ḥūr equal Jannah. The attitude that they portray marginalises women totally from Heaven and makes them feel infinitely subordinated to men even when they are being “rewarded”.

The truth of the matter sees a huge shift in the actuality of heaven. While there is without doubt the pleasure of Ḥūrs for the successful men, the role of the Ḥūrs is that of being servant to both the men and the women of Heaven. The matrimonial partner and true sharer in happiness for a man will remain his wife. She will be the Queen. With her existence in heaven being infinitely more than the Hūrs', they will command all the attention of their spouses, making the Ḥūrs, in comparison, little more than beautiful commodities of Heaven.

**The Jannatī will go to the market where everything is absolutely free,
He will come in need of nothing, and walk away with more beauty.**

In heaven there is a market in which there is nothing to buy or sell except (the giving away) of images of men and women. Whenever a person desires a new image he will automatically fit onto it. at-Tirmidhī

In Heaven there will be a market place where the dwellers of Heaven will go every Friday. Therein a wind will blow from the North, which will cause the faces of the Jannatis and their clothes to let out a sweet fragrance. The same wind will also increase their beauty and elegance. When they return to their wives in this state, who will also have become more beautiful and elegant. Their wives (in joy) will cry, "By Allāh! You have increased in beauty and elegance since you had left us." They in return will exclaim, "By Allāh! You too have become more beautiful and elegant since we left you."

Muslim

Heaven will not cease to amaze those who are admitted into it. Allāh ﷻ Himself has decreed:

***'In Heaven for them there shall be whatever they want...
...and We have more!'***

Qāf

Just when the Jannatī thought that things couldn't get any better Allāh ﷻ fulfils His promise and grants them even more. He will grant the Jannatī ultimate ecstasy in two amazing and indescribable forms. The first will be the opportunity to see Allāh ﷻ, and the second will be His declaration of eternal contentment and pleasure upon those who have inherited Heaven.

**The greatest favour of Allāh is to be honoured by viewing Him in sight.
To behold the Magnificent, to see the Greatest in His might.**

The greatest feeling of happiness for a lover is when he gets to see and be with his beloved. In an infinitely enhanced way, is the feeling of a slave of Allāh ﷻ when he finally sees, with his own eyes, that Being who gave him life and granted him each and every favour and bounty. From the vital yet often unappreciated gifts, like breathing, to the more obvious ones like good fortune. For this is the Being whose pleasure he

spent his entire life trying to acquire, in the knowledge that the rights of Allāh ﷻ can never be fulfilled; he strived on obeying His every command at every given opportunity. Finally this Jannatī's joy will know no bounds when he gets to raise his eyes to see the overwhelming presence of the Almighty in His Infinite glory. No written word in any language will be able to grasp the indescribable ecstasy experienced by the Jannatis at being granted the honour as well as the feeling of being able to see the splendour of the All Magnificent.

The sighting of Allāh ﷻ will be like the sighting of the full Moon or, the Sun, in the sense that there will be no difficulty in trying to see Him. The Jannatīs will, while seated on thrones of pure light, gold, silver, pearls, diamonds and rubies, see the Greatest in all His glory. The result will be that the faces of those who are present will be filled with Nūr (light). at-Tirmidhī

Allāh ﷻ in His limitless generosity will then make certain that everyone of those present will feel that they had spoken to Allāh ﷻ, as though they were speaking face to face. at-Tirmidhī and Ibn Mājah

'O heaven's dweller,' the Noble Lord calls: 'What more do you desire? I shall grant you all that you want, your life will never again expire.'
"Thou hast given me all, my Lord, Thou hast filled my heart with glee,
**"I regret not doing more in the world, to prove that I adored thee."
Allāh proclaims 'My servant there is one thing you have yet to ask.'**
"What can this be O Lord? What is this all important task?"
'You have not asked for my happiness, but that I shall grant for free,
No doubt I am pleased with you, for now, forever, for all eternity.'

In this worldly life, a person would strive to gain the pleasure of Allāh ﷻ. Allāh ﷻ in His clemency will announce His pleasure upon the successful; He will announce that their goal has been achieved and that He will never become angry with them.

Allāh ﷻ will call out to the people of Jannah *‘O people of Jannah!’*

And they will reply: *“We are present O Lord! And we are honoured due to You calling us and all good is only in Your hands.”*

Allāh ﷻ will then ask, *‘Are you contented?’*

Astonished they will ask, *“What reason can there be for us not to be pleased, whereas You have given us that which You haven’t given to any other of Your creation.”*

The Lord will exclaim, *‘Shall I not grant you something which is even better than that?’*

In total bewilderment at there being something greater than what they already possess, they will ask *“O Allāh, what is there that can be greater still than what You have already given us?”*

Allāh ﷻ will decree; *‘I place My happiness, My pleasure forever upon you. And never again with you shall I be displeased.’* al-Bukhārī and Muslim

In Heaven a person will not regret anything he had done in this world, apart from time he had wasted, not remembering Allāh ﷻ. This regret and remorse felt by the Jannati has been mentioned in many authentic Aḥādīth (Ibn Ḥibbān, al-Ḥākim and Musnad Aḥmad). The above-mentioned Ḥadīth illustrates that everything that he had received in Heaven as a bounty of Allāh ﷻ surpassed his greatest expectations and desires. Allāh ﷻ granted him Heaven as one of His unquestionable favours. Allāh ﷻ gave it to him for free, in exchange for nothing, as whatever good deed that may have been performed can never and will never suffice to repay for the benefits given to him in this world alone.

Regarding this Allāh ﷻ has said:

‘Compete with one another in obtaining forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Heaven the width of which will be as the width of the sky and the Earth, which has been prepared for those who believe in Allāh and His messengers. That (Heaven) is the grace of Allāh, which He bestows upon whosoever He wishes. Allāh Alone is the possessor of great bounties.’ al Ḥadīd

Faḍl means a reward given without it being deserved, in which case it is no longer a reward but a pure gift. In the aforementioned Āyah, Heaven has been described as exactly that. No amount of earning or effort can ever deserve such a great reward. That is why it has been said that entry into Heaven is a hundred percent faḍl from Allāh ﷻ.

The good deeds performed by a believer are principally gratitude for all the favours Allāh ﷻ has granted him in this world. Despite this being inadequate for such, Allāh ﷻ in His faḍl and grace accepts them. Then on top of that, Allāh ﷻ allows these same actions to double up as a means of elevating one’s status in heaven. This too is His pure faḍl.

In other words, no matter what or how much we do, it can never be equal to anything. The only reason it is worth something is because of Allāh ﷻ and Allāh’s infinite, unending, overwhelming, and all-encompassing mercy.

**We gave our lives. But what we gave was already His.
The truth is that from His rights we could fulfil nothing.**

Urdu Couplet

**Now the pinnacle is reached, in Allāh’s ﷻ pleasure being acquired.
There is nothing left to be asked for, nothing more to be desired.**

**O Allāh ﷻ! If You Alone are not for me,
Then nothing, in reality belongs to me.
If You are for me then all is for me.
The stars are for me, the Earth is for me.**
Urdu Couplet

**Suppress your desires in this world, face it's insignificant pain.
And then only death will be an obstacle, to an eternity of gain.**

This last couplet is as parting advice. We all know that it is difficult not to follow our desires and to live a life free from sin, but we must also acknowledge that whatever difficulties are to be faced by ourselves for the sake of Allāh, they are only small and temporary. And with each difficulty we go through we are getting closer and closer to Allāh and His pleasure...

***“And for he who had entertained
the fear of standing before his Lord
(at His court) and had restrained his soul
from lower desires,
his abode will be the Garden.”***

an-Nāzi`at

Two traditions
narrated from
the Prophet
that describe scenes
of the Hereafter.

The Prophet's Dream

Samurah ibn Jundub ﷺ has reported the following Ḥadīth:

Allah's Apostle ﷺ very often used to ask his companions, "Did anyone of you see a dream?" So dreams would be narrated to him by those whom Allah wished to tell.

One morning the Prophet ﷺ said, "Last night two persons came to me (in a dream) and woke me up and said to me, 'Proceed!' I set out with them and we came across a man lying down, and behold, another man was standing over his head, holding a big rock. Behold, he was throwing the rock at the man's head, injuring it. The rock rolled away and the thrower followed it and took it back. By the time he reached the man, his head returned to the normal state. The thrower then did the same as he had done before.

I said to my two companions, 'Subḥānal-lāh! Who are these two persons?' They said, 'Proceed!'

So we proceeded and came to a man lying flat on his back and another man standing over his head with an iron hook, and behold, he would put the hook in one side of the man's mouth and tear off that side of his face to the back (of the neck) and similarly tear his nose from front to back and his eye from front to back. Then he turned to the other side of the man's face and did just as he had done with the other side. He hardly completed this side when the other side returned to its normal state. Then he returned to it to repeat what he had done before.

I said to my two companions, 'Subḥānal-lāh! Who are these two persons?' They said to me, 'Proceed!'

So we proceeded and came across something resembling an oven." I think the Prophet said, "In that oven there were (loud) noises and (many) voices." The Prophet added, "We looked into it and found naked men and women, and behold, a flame of fire was reaching to them from underneath, and when it reached them, they cried loudly.

I asked them, 'Who are these?' They said to me, 'Proceed!'

And so we proceeded and came across a river." I think he said, "... red like blood." The Prophet added, "And behold, in the river there was a man swimming, and on the bank there was a man who had collected many stones. Behold. while the other man was swimming, he went near him. The former opened his mouth and the latter (on the bank) threw a stone into his mouth whereupon he went swimming again. He returned and every time the performance was repeated.

I asked my two companions, 'Who are these (two) persons?' They replied, 'Proceed! Proceed!'

And we proceeded till we came to a man with a repulsive appearance, the most repulsive appearance, you ever saw a man having! Beside him there was a fire and he was kindling it and running around it.

I asked my companions, 'Who is this (man)?' They said to me, 'Proceed! Proceed!'

So we proceeded till we reached a garden of deep green dense vegetation, having all sorts of spring colours. In the midst of the garden there was a very tall man and I could hardly see his head because of his great height, and around him there were children in such a large number as I have never seen.

I said to my companions, 'Who is this?' They replied, 'Proceed! Proceed!'

So we proceeded till we came to a majestic huge garden, greater and better than I have ever seen! My two companions said to me, 'Go up!' and I went up.' The Prophet added, "So we ascended till we reached a city built of gold and silver bricks and we went to its gate and asked (the gatekeeper) to open the gate, and it was opened and we entered the city and found in it, men with one side of their bodies as handsome as the handsomest person you have ever seen, and the other side as ugly as the ugliest person you have ever seen. My two companions ordered those men to throw themselves into the river. Behold, there was a river flowing across (the city), and its water was like milk in whiteness. Those men went and threw themselves in it and then returned to us after the ugliness (of their bodies) had disappeared and they became in the best shape."

The Prophet further added, "My two companions (angels) said to me, 'This place is the Eden Paradise, and that is your place.' I raised up my sight, and behold, there I saw a palace like a white cloud! My two companions said to me, 'That (palace) is your place.' I said to them, 'May Allah bless you both! Let me enter it.' They replied, 'As for now, you will not enter it, but you shall enter it (one day)'

I said to them, 'I have seen many wonders tonight. What does all that mean which I have seen?'

They replied, 'We will inform you:

As for the first man you came upon whose head was being injured with the rock, he is the symbol of the one who studies the Qur'an and then neither recites it nor acts on its orders, and sleeps, neglecting the enjoined prayers.

As for the man you came upon whose sides of mouth, nostrils and eyes were torn off from front to back, he is the symbol of the man who goes out of his house in the morning and tells so many lies that it spreads all over the world.

And those naked men and women whom you saw in a construction resembling an oven, they are the adulterers and the adulteresses.

The man whom you saw swimming in the river and given a stone to swallow, is the eater of usury (Ribā).

The bad looking man whom you saw near the fire kindling it and going round it, is Mālik, the (angel appointed as) custodian of Hell.

The tall man whom you saw in the garden, is Abraham and the children around him are those children who die upon Fiṭrah (Natural Monotheism)."

The narrator added: Some Muslims asked the Prophet, "O Allah's Apostle! What about the children of pagans?" The Prophet replied, "And also the children of pagans." (i.e. Children who die before the age of accountability, even if their parents are idolaters or disbelievers, are classified as being on Fiṭrah.)

The Prophet ﷺ added, "My two companions added, 'The men you saw half handsome and half ugly were those persons who had mixed an act that was good with another that was bad, but Allah forgave them.'"

al-Bukhārī

The Last Man to Enter Heaven

ʿAbdullāh) ibn Masʿūd ؓ relates that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said:

“The last person to enter Paradise will be a man who will alternately walk and fall and be lapped by the Fire. When he finally passes (the last of) it, he will turn to face the Fire and say, ‘Blessed be He who has rescued me from you, Allāh has granted me something He has not given anyone from the first or the last people!’

Then a tree will be raised before him, and he will say, ‘My Lord! Draw me near to this tree that I may take shade in its shadow and drink from its brook.’ Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent, will say, ‘O son of Ādam, would it be that if I granted you this you would ask Me for something else?’ He will reply, ‘No, O my Lord,’ and he will swear that he will ask Him for nothing more. And His Lord will excuse him, seeing that he cannot bear to not have it, and so will bring him close to the tree and he will take shade in its shadow and drink from its brook.

Then another tree will be raised before him, this one more beautiful than the first. So he will say, ‘O my Lord! Draw me near to this one that I may drink from its brook and take shade in its shadow - I will not ask You for anything else.’ He will reply, ‘O son of Ādam! Have you not already sworn to Me that you would ask for nothing more?’ He will continue, ‘Might it be that if I drew you near this one, you will ask Me for something else?’ So the man will swear to Him that he will not ask for more, and his Lord will excuse him, seeing that he cannot bear to not have it, and so will bring him close to the tree and he will take shade in its shadow and drink from its brook.

Then another tree will be raised before him by the gate of Paradise, more beautiful than both the others. The man will say, ‘O my Lord!

Draw me near to this one that I may take shade in its shadow and drink from its brook - I will not ask You for anything else.' He will reply, 'O son of Ādam! Have you not already sworn to Me that you would ask for nothing more?' The man will say, 'I had, my Lord, but this one - I will not ask You for anything else!' And his Lord will excuse him, seeing that he cannot bear to not have it, and so will bring him near to it. Now when He brings him near to it, the man will hear the voices of the people of Paradise. So he will say, 'O my Lord, enter me into it.' He will say, 'O son of Ādam! What will relieve me you? Would it satisfy you if I were to give you the world and its like with it?' He will say, 'O my Lord, do you joke with me while you are the Lord of the worlds?'"

ʿIbn Masʿūd ؓ laughed at this point, and asked, "Do you not ask me why I laugh?"

They (his students) asked, "Why do you laugh?"

He replied, "Thus did the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ laugh, so the people (his Companions listening) asked, 'Why do you laugh O Messenger of Allāh?' He replied, 'Because of the laughing of the Lord of the worlds when the man says, 'Do you joke with me while you are the Lord of the worlds?' He will then say, 'I do not joke with you, but I have the power to do as I wish.'"

Muslim