



HELLFIRE

*described in
the Qur'an
and the Sunnah*

by:

Mahmoud Ibn Khalifah Al-Jasim

Prefaced & Reviewed by:

Muhammad Ibrahim Al-Shaybani

Translation & Foreward by:

Idris Ibn Stanley Palmer

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Preface

All praise be to Allah, and peace be upon His Prophets whom He has chosen - to proceed: The Hellfire is the most terrifying thing created which worshippers of Allah fear falling into. A precise picture of it has already appeared enough in the Glorious Qur'aan in many ayahs, for the heedful to contemplate and to acquaint themselves with, and meditate and think about thousands of times before falling into sin and misdeeds. This terrifying fire which is called by many names in the Qur'aan, it and Paradise have been the subject of preoccupation by the righteous both past and present. Hence, the hope, fear, and prayer of the righteous in this world is to desire for Paradise and to fear falling into Hellfire. Therefore, to that end, the scholars of the past strove to traverse the thin bridge as quick as lightening or lean horses so that they are not even touched by its hooks and thus falling into the abyss of the Hellfire. Man is rescued from the fire commensurate with the deeds, intentions, and activities he does in this world by attaining reward and blessing because the passing over the Bridge with authority or debility is commensurate with one's righteous deeds which endure on this world as it has been stated by Al-Mustafa (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) on the authority of Abu Sa`eed Al-Khudree (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) :

"Explain the Bridge!" He replied: "It is a slippery place, on its path are hooks, tongs, thorns like those in Najd called Sa`daan. The believers will pass over it like the blink of an eye, like lightening, like wind, like a bird, like the best horses and camels. The Muslim will succeed, some will be lacerated and then proceed, and others will be thrust into the Hellfire." Abu Sa`eed stated: "I have come to know that the Bridge is thinner than a hair and sharper than the sword". (Sahih Muslim)

We ask Allah for protection from His Punishment on the Day that He resurrects His worshippers, and that He save us from His Fire and that we control ourselves and our evil desires, and that we establish the Da'wah to Allah The Most High with those who continue to kindle the light and guidance to mankind propagating to man about his eventual meeting with Allah, Glory be to Him, and seeing His Glorious face, and warning mankind about their encounter with Allah Most High, by encouraging righteous deeds.

With this noble wish in mind, the author has written this booklet. He is a young brother active in Da'wah to Allah Most High, calling to that which benefits his brother Muslims, and reminding them of the importance of the deeds that they do in this life.

This booklet opts for functional chapters and details which appear in the Qur'aan and the Sunnah and have been arranged in a sequential, convenient, and brilliant manner which is easily understood by the common man. And we at the same time extend to him this brief presentation taking into account his wishes. We wish him and all the brothers who love knowledge, goodness, and piety, every advantage and blessing. And Praise be to Allah whose Blessing perfects righteous deeds.

Muhammad Ibrahim Ash-Shaybaanee

Foreword

All Praise is due to Allah, We praise Him and seek His forgiveness. We seek refuge from the evil of ourselves and from our evil deeds. Whomsoever is guided by Allah, there is none to misguide him, and whomsoever is misguided by Allah, there is none to guide him. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, alone, and he has no partner or associate. And I bear witness that Muhammad (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) is His servant and messenger. May Allah The Most High bestow His peace and blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam), his family, his Companions, and upon all those who follow in their footsteps until the Day of Judgment.

It Is the purpose of this brief translation of "Sifatun-naar-fil-Kitaab was-Sunnah" to present readers, both Muslims and non-Muslims, with a brief description of Hellfire as portrayed in the authentic source works of Islam. Regretfully, little has been translated into English explaining this aspect of belief; many English speakers, who may be devoid of access to either reliable books on Islam or knowledgeable Muslims, are forced to turn to such books as "Spectacles of the Grave", a book laden with unreliable ahaadeeth, as a means to finding answers. I have already started work on a more comprehensive work well known in the Arabic speaking countries for its reliability entitled: "Ahwaal Al-Qiyaamah" which Insha-Allah, will cover the Grave, the Coming of the Hour, the Resurrection, Hellfire and Paradise. In this present translation I have freely used the words "Hell", "Hellfire", and "The Fire" interchangeably since all are indicative of the Arabic "An-Naar" (See Chapter Two).

And finally, I would like to thank brothers Abdullah Mohammad Redha Al-Kandi, Saleh Al-Lahaam, and Mahmoud Hasan Mohammed Ali for their support, comments, and suggestions. I would also like all the brothers from Daar Al-Hadeeth whose unflinching support to the Path of the Sunnah has been an inspiration. May Allah protect us all from the torment of His Fire and make the Path to Paradise easy.

Idris ibn Stanley Palmer

(1, Jumadi Al-Ulaa 1410/November 30, 1989)

"O Ye who believe, Save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones, over which are set angels ruthless, violent. Who do not flinch (from executing) the commands they receive from Allah, but do (precisely) what they are commanded."

(Surat-ut-Tahreem 66:6)

"And on the day when those who disbelieve are exposed to the Fire (they will be asked): "Is this not the Truth?" They will say: Yes, by our Lord! (Allah) will say: Then taste the Punishment, because you disbelieved."

(Surat-ul-Ahqaf 46:34)

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah, we praise Him and seek His aid and forgiveness, and we seek refuge in Allah from the evil within ourselves and our sinful deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides there is none who can misguide him, and whomsoever is misguided by Allah, there is no one to guide him. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship but Allah alone, and He has no partners. And I bear witness that Muhammad (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) is His servant and Messenger.

To proceed:

Truly Allah has created creation so that mankind may be aware of Him, and worship Him, and reverence Him, and to show them proof of His Majesty and Glory that they may stand in awe of Him and that they may fear Him - fear his Magnificence - and to describe to them the severity of His punishment and Hellfire which has been prepared for those who disobey Him, in order that they may show Him devotion by righteous deeds. Allah repeats this often in His book in speaking about Hellfire and the hostile torture and the agonizing punishments that have been prepared in it, and all that it includes such as Zaqqoom, Daree' (see chapter five), boiling drink, chains, neck irons, etc. All amongst the powerfully terrifying things there. The believer however, must keep himself from it, and his family must spare themselves from the Fire; and accordingly, he must steer clear from the path towards it before he loses the chance. Excuses are useless. The scholars of Islam have long ago written and spoken about this in countless volumes and treatises of all kinds speaking about the Hellfire and its punishments and the depiction of its inhabitants; and I would like to pay tribute to their writings by selecting points from them.

I pray that Allah grants the utility of what I have written to myself and my brother Muslims and that He make it purely for His Face (one of the many attributes of Allah), All Praise be to Allah, The Lord of all Creation.

Mahmoud ibn Khalifa Al-Jasim

HELLFIRE

The Creation of The Fire

Imam At-Tahaawee said: "Jannah (Paradise) and Naar (The Fire) are two created things. Both are inexhaustible and imperishable; In truth Allah The Most High created them before the Creation.... Ahl-us-Sunnah has unanimously agreed that Paradise and the Fire are two creations which are in existence now. And Ahl-us-Sunnah has not made an error on this point."

Also from the text of the Qur'aan is the statement of the Most High about Paradise:

It is prepared for those who fear Allah. (3:133)

As well as the statement of The Most High about the Fire:

And fear (for yourselves) The Fire prepared for unbelievers. (3:131)

The Prophet (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-Wa-salam) has already been shown Sidrat-ul-Muntahaa (2) and he has seen the abode of Paradise as it is stated in the Hadeeth of Anas (Radiyallaahu-`anhu) during the Night Journey(3):

...Jibreel (‘alayhi-salaam) then travelled with me until we came to Sidrat-ul-Muntahaa. It was covered with colours which I don't know. Then I was admitted to Paradise and saw in it domes of pearls, and it's soil of musk.

(Sahih Muslim).

`Abdullah ibn `Umar (Radiyallaahu-`anhu) reported that the Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

When anyone of you dies, he is shown his place (in the Hereafter) day and night; if he is amongst the dwellers of Paradise, (he is shown the place) from amongst the dwellers of Paradise, and if he is one from amongst the inhabitants of The Fire, then it would be said to him: "That is your place until Allah raises you on the Day of Resurrection (and sends you to your permanent place).

(Sahih Muslim).

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahlaahu-`anhu) reported that the Messenger (Sallallahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

When Allah created Paradise and Hellfire, Allah sent Jibreel (`alayhi-salaam) to Paradise, and said "Go and look at (Paradise)" and (Jibreel `alayhi-salaam) went and saw it and (Jibreel `alayhi-salaam) returned and said "Glory be to You! No one will hear it but will want to enter it!" Then (Allah) ordered that Paradise be surrounded by things which are disliked, then He said to Jibreel (`alayhi-salaam) "Return and look at it." Then (Jibreel `alayhi-salaam) looked at it and he returned and said: "Glory be to you! I fear that no one will enter it!" Then (Allah) sent him towards Hellfire and said: "Go and look at Hellfire." (Jibreel `alayhi-salaam) went and saw it, then he returned and said: "Glory be to you! No one will want to enter it ho has heard of it!" Then (Allah) ordered that it be surrounded by enticements, then (Allah) stated: "Go and look at it. (Jibreel `alayhi-salaam) went to it amd returned and said: "Glory be to You! I fear that no one will be saved from it!

(Hasan: Aboo Daawood, At-Tirmidhee & An-Nisaa`ee).

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahlaahu-`anhu) also reported that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

When Ramadaan comes, the gates of Paradise are opened, and the gates of Hell are locked and the devils are chained. (Sahih Muslim).

Imraan ibn Husain (Radiyahlaahu-`anhu) reported that the Prophet (Sallallahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

I looked at Paradise and found poor people forming the majority of its inhabitants, and I looked at Hell and saw that the majority of its inhabitants were women. (Sahih Bukhari)

The Names of Hellfire

- *An-Naar*

The Most High states:

But they who disbelieve, and deny our revelations, are companions of The Fire. They will dwell therein. (2:39)

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) also reported that the Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

"Your (ordinary) fire is one of 70 parts of the Hellfire." someone said: "O Messenger of Allah, (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) This (ordinary) fire would have been sufficient (to torture the unbelievers)": The Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) replied: "The hellfire has 69 parts more than the ordinary (worldly) fire; Each part is as hot as this (worldly) fire." (Sahih Bukhari and Muslim)

- *Jahannam*

Allah The Most High states:

Indeed Hell (Jahannam) lurks in ambush, a home for the rebellious, they will dwell there for ages. They will taste there neither coolness nor (any) drink. Except boiling water and a paralysing cold. Reward in proportion (to their evil deeds). (78:21-26)

Ibn ManZoor(4) defines the name Al-Jahannam thus: "A pit unfathomably deep and far-reaching...." Jawhaaree(5) states: "Jahannam is one of the names of The Fire which one prays for refuge in Allah The Glorious and The Majestic from it."

• *Al-Jaheem*

The Most High states:

And Hell (Jaheem) will stand forth visible to he who can see (79:36)

Ibn ManZoor says: "Al-Jaheem: A name of Hellfire, and every fire in Hell (Jaheem) is an awesome abyss; A name from the names of Hellfire, the root being that it is the fiercest of blazes in Hell; Jaheem: a place of extreme heat."" (Lisaan al-arab, vol-1 P408)

• *As-Sa`eer*

And thus We have inspired in you (Muhammad) the Qur'aan in Arabic, that you may warn the mother-city (Makkah) and those around it, and may warn of a day of assembling whereof there is no doubt. A (group) will be in the Garden, and a (group) of them in the flame (As-Sa`eer). (42:7)

Ar-Raazee(6) says, "As-Sa`eer means Hell".

• *Saqar*

The Most High states:

Him shall I fling into the burning (Saqar) -Ah, What will convey to you what that burning (saqar) is! It leaves not; It spares not. It shrivels man. Above it are nineteen. (74:26-30)

Ibn ManZoor says: "Saqar is a name from the names of Hell. It is called "The Burning" (Saqar) of Hell because it melts the bodies and souls and burns. Also: Iron heated and used to brand cattle." (Lisaan al-Arab)

Ibn Jawzee(7) explains Allahs statement, ...it leaves not; it spares not... "...in other words, it doesn't stop burning them until they are consumed, and they don't cease being freshly created anew (to be punished again continuously)." (Allah's) statement: ...It shrivels... means: It alters (the skin of man). (Allah's) statement, ...*man*... means: All mankind (who enter it)." (Tafseer Zaad al-Maseer)

• *Al-Hutamah*

The Most High States:

But no! Indeed he will be flung into the Consuming One (Al-Hutamah). Ah! what will convey to you what the Consuming One (Al-Hutamah) is! (It is) The Fire of Allah, kindled, which leaps up over the hearts (of men). Indeed it is closed in on them, in outstretched columns. (104:4-9)

Ibn Al-Jawzee explains: the Consuming One is one of the names of Hell. It is called by that name because it consumes (whatever goes in it). It is an immense destruction after consuming the flesh. (Tafseer Zaad al-Maseer)

• *Al-Haawiyah*

The Most High says:

But as for him whose scales are light, The Pit (Haawiyah) will be his mother. Ah. What convey to you what she is! Raging fire! (101:8-11)

Ibn Katheer explains: "It is one of the names of Hellfire." Ibn Jareer(8) states: "It is said The Pit is "his mother" because there is no other dwelling place for him other than it."

The Warning of Hellfire and Preparation against It.

The Most High states:

And if you don't do it -and you can never do it- then guard yourselves against The Fire prepared for unbelievers, whose fuel is of men and stones. (2:24)

And The Most High also says:

Therefore have I warned you of the Flaming Fire. (92:14)

Ash-Shawkaanee(9) explains: "This means to beware and fear the burning, blazing, Fire."

The Most High Says:

They have over them an awning of Fire, and beneath them a covering (of Fire), with this does Allah fear for his worshippers. O my worshippers, therefore fear Me! (39:16)

ʿAdee Ibn Haatim (Radiyallaahu-`anhu) reported that the Prophet (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) cited the Hellfire and sought refuge (with Allah) from it, and turned his face aside. He mentioned the Hellfire again and took refuge (with Allah) from it and turned his face aside. He (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) then said:

Save yourselves from the Hellfire even if with half a date and if this is not available, then (save yourselves) by saying a pleasant friendly word. (Sahih Bukhari & Muslim)

The Description of Hellfire in the Qur'aan.

Allah, Glory be to Him, The Most High, describes Hellfire with a description that is powerfully eloquent and fear-inspiring so as to render fear in one's heart and make one's flesh creep, and to give one insight into it.

And He is The Severe in Punishment:

This it is you are promised for the Day of Reckoning. Indeed, this is our provision which will never waste away. This (is for the righteous). And for the transgressors there will be an evil journey's end, Hell, where they will burn, an evil resting place. Here is boiling and a bitter cold drink, so let them taste it, and other (torment) of the kind in pairs (the two extremes)! Here is an army rushing blindly with you. (Those who are already in the Fire say): No word of welcome for them. Indeed, they will roast in the Fire. (38:53-59)

As for those who will be wretched (on that Day) they will be in the Fire; sighing and wailing will be their portion there, abiding there so long as the heavens and the earth endure save for that which your Lord wills, Indeed! Your Lord is doer of what He wills. (11:106-107)

And Most High says:

And those who disbelieve are driven into Hell in troops till, when they reach it and the gates there are opened, and the (angels) there say to them: "Did not Messengers of your own come to you, reciting to you the revelations of your Lord and warning you of the meeting of this your Day?" They reply, "Yes indeed," But the word of doom is fulfilled for unbelievers. (39:71)

And (Allah's) statement, Glory be to Him:

When they are flung in there, the (angels) there ask them: "Did no warner come to you? They say: "Yes, indeed a warner came to us: but we denied and said: "Allah hasn't revealed; you are in nothing but great misguidance. (67:7-9)

And the statement of the Owner of Exalted Honour (Allah):

And those on the left hand: what of those on the left hand? In scorching wind and scalding water and shadow of black smoke, neither cool nor refreshing. Indeed! They were beforehand living in ease and luxury. (56:41-45)

And the statement of The Most High:

And Hell is brought near that Day; on that Day man will remember, but how will the remembrance (then avail him)? He will say: Ah, if only I had sent before me (some provision) for my life! (89:23-24)

The Most High says:

Indeed, this is one of the greatest (portents). (74:35)

Imam Baghaawee(10) explains: "This means one of the greatest of portents which is Hellfire."

The Most High says:

Its wrath is indeed a grievous doom. (25:65)

grievous doom means "a penalty unleashed"; It is also said that it means "extreme punishment".

The Most High says:

And drive the guilty into Hell, a weary herd. (19:86)

That is, herded in like thirsty cattle to water. (Imam Baghaawee - Sharh-us-Sunnah, Vol. 15 P.236-237)

The Most High says:

Indeed it throws up sparks (huge) as castles. (77:32)

Baghaawee says: That is, sparks similar in size to Arabian castles." (Sharh-us-Sunnah, Vol.15 P.235)

Hellfire Described in the Qur'aan and Sunnah.

• *The Gates of Hell*

The Most High says:

It has seven gates, and each gate has an appointed portion. (15:44)

Ibn Katheer explains: "This means every gate has already been assigned to it a portion of the followers of Iblees; They cannot avoid entering it; May Allah keep us from it! And each one enters commensurate with his deeds, and he will remain there forever commensurate with his deeds."

• *The Lowest Levels of Hell*

The Most High says:

Indeed the hypocrites will be in the lowest depths of the Fire, and you will find no helper for them. (4:145)

Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbalee (11) states: "It has been seen that the lowest part of Hell is inhabited by hypocrites and is presently in action;(It has two (characteristics) Ad-Dahhaak (Taabi`ee) explains:) Ad-Darja means ascending levels (or highest heights) whereas Ad-Darka means descending levels (or lowest depths). It is also been stated that Hell has ascending levels also, as it is stated by The Most High after mentioning the people of Paradise and the people of the Fire.

For all there will be degrees (or ranks) according to their deeds. (6:132)

Allah says:

Is one who follows the pleasure of Allah like the one who earns the wrath of Allah, and whose dwelling is the Fire? A miserable fate! They are in varying grades with Allah, and Allah sees all that you do. (3:162-163)

Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Zaid ibn Aslam (Taabi` Taabi`ee) states: "The levels of Paradise ascend, and the levels of Hell descend."

• *The Depth of Hell.*

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) reported:

We were in the company of Allah's Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) when we heard a terrible sound. He (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said: Do you know what (sound) is this? We said: Allah and His Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) know best. Thereupon He (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said: That is a stone which was thrown seventy years before in Hell and it been constantly slipping down and now it has reached its base and you heard its sound. (Sahih Muslim)

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) also reported that he heard the Prophet (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) say:

The Worshipper speaks words for which he is sent down to Hellfire further than the distance between the east and west. (Sahih Bukhari and Muslim)

• *The Canopy of Fire.*

The Most High says:

Indeed, We have prepared for the astray, Fire. Its canopy will hem them in. (18:29)

Zajaaj (a past scholar of arabic language) explains: "Canopy: All enveloping, something similar to confinement in a large tent with walls covering over everything."(12)

• *The Intense Heat of the Fire and its Bitter Cold.*

And they say: Go not forth in the heat! Say: The fire of hell is hotter, if only they could understand. (9:81)

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) reported that the Prophet (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

The Fire said to the Lord: O Lord! Some parts of mine have consumed the others, so it was allowed to take two exhalations, one in winter, and the other exhalation in summer. That is why you find extreme heat (in summer) and extreme cold (in winter). (Sahih Bukhari - Vol. 4, No. 482 and Sahih Muslim)

• *The Neck Irons and Chains of Hellfire.*

(Allah) Glory be to Him says:

Indeed, We have prepared for Unbelievers chains and neck irons and a raging Fire. (76:4)

And The Most High Says:

When the irons are around their necks, and chains, they are dragged through boiling waters; then they are thrust into the fire. (40:71-72)

Also:

(It will be said): Seize him and chain him, and burn him in Hellfire. And then march him in a chain whereof the length is seventy cubits. (69:30-32)

• *The Food of the Inhabitants of Hellfire.*

The Most High States:

Leave me to deal with the deniers, lords of ease and comfort (in this life); and bear with them for a while. Indeed, with us are heavy chains and a raging fire; And food that chokes and a painful doom. (73:11-13)

Ibn `Abbaas (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) states:

It (the food of Hell) sticks in the throat and does not enter (the stomach) nor exit (the mouth). mouth) (Tafseer Ibn Katheer).

The Most High Says:

No Food for them except a bitter`Daree` . (88:6)

`Ikrimah (Taabi`ee; freed slave of Ibn `Abbaas) says: "It (Daree`) is a tree which grows close to the earth"(13). And Bukhari says: "Mujaahid (student of Ibn `Abbaas) states that Daree` is a bush which grows and the people of Hijaaz call it that name because it is dry and poisonous."

The most High says:

Is that better, as a welcome or the tree of Zaqqoom? For it is a tree that springs out in the bottom of Hell; Its crop are the heads of Devils. Truly they will eat it and fill their stomachs with it and then they have a drink of boiling water and afterward, they will surely return to the Hellfire! (37:62-68)

And The Most High says:

Indeed the tree of Zaqqoom, the food of the sinner! Like molten brass it will boil in their insides, like the boiling of scalding water. (A voice will say): Take him and drag him into the midst of Hell, then pour over his head the torment of boiling water (saying): Taste! Truly you were mighty, noble! (44:43-49)

Ibn `Abbaas (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) reported that the Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) read this ayah:

O you who believe; Fear Allah as he should be feared; and don't die except as Muslims. (3:102)

The Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

If one drop from Zaqqoom dropped on the earth it would destroy it: The people of Hell (have it as) subsistence, just imagine it as food! (Al-Albanee in Sahih-at-Tirmidhee)

• *The Drink of the Inhabitants of Hellfire.*

Truly you shall drink like diseased camels raging with thirst Such will be their welcome on the Day of Judgment! (56:55-56)

And The Most High says:

...and are given boiling water to drink, which cuts up their bowels (to pieces). (47:15)

And The Most High says:

If they ask for showers, they will be showered with water like molten lead which burns their faces; Horribl Horrible the drink and evil the resting place. (18:29)

And The Most High says:

In front of him is Hell, and he is made to drink boiling, stinking water. In gulps will he sip it, but can hardly swallow... (14:16-17)

The Most High Says:

Here is a boiling and a bitter cold fluid, so let them taste it. (38:57)

`Amr ibn Shu`aib reported from his father who reported from his grandfather (Radiyallaahu-`anhu) that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

(Allah) will gather the arrogant like specks on the Day of Resurrection in the shape of men. He will overwhelm the vile everywhere, they will be made to drink a fluid called boolus, in addition to confinement in Hell. The Fire will rage over them. The people of the Fire will be given a juice made from pus to drink. (Hasan - Tirmidhee).

- *No Death in The Hellfire.*

The Most High says:

Truly the guilty will be in the punishment of Hell to dwell forever. It is not relaxed for them, and they will be there in despair. We did them no injustice; But they have been unjust to themselves. They will cry: O Maalik! (14) Let your Lord put an end to us! He will say, Indeed here you must remain! Verily We brought the Truth to you: But most of you have hatred for Truth. (43:74-78)

And The Most High says:

But as for those who disbelieve, for them is the Fire of Hell: No end shall be determined for them, so they can die; Nor shall its penalty be lightened for them. Thus do we punish every ingrate. (35:36)

`Abdullaah ibn `Umar (Radiyallaahu-`anhu) narrated that the Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

When the people of Paradise have entered Paradise, and the people of Hellfire have entered Hellfire, Death will be brought and will be placed between The Fire and Paradise, and then it will be slaughtered, and a call will be made: O People of Paradise, no (more) death! O People of The Fire, no (more) death! So the people of Paradise will have happiness added to their (previous) happiness, and the people of The Fire will have sorrow added to their (previous) sorrow. (Sahih Bukhari and Muslim)

The Condition of People in The Fire

• *Their Description*

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) reported that the Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

The molar tooth of a kaafir (unbeliever) or the canine tooth of a kafir will be like 'Uhud and the thickness of his skin (the distance of) a three day journey. (Sahih Muslim)

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) also reported that the Prophet (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

The (distance) which is between the shoulders of a kaafir in Hell is a three day journey for a swift rider. (Sahih Bukhari & Muslim)

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) also stated that the Prophet (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

The skin of the kaafir in Hell is forty two times fore-arms thick, his molar tooth is like (Mount) 'Uhud, and his seat in Hell is like the distance between Makkah and Madinah. (Al-Albaanee in Sahih-at-Tirmidhee)

• *Their Regretful Sorrow*

"Extreme remorse until one is fatigued from repenting: Similar to fatigue which increases during a long journey". (Imam Baghaawee in Sharh-us-sunnah)

The Most High Says:

...And they are filled with remorse when they see the punishment: We shall put chains on the necks of the unbelievers: It would be requital for their (ill) deeds. (34:33)

Abu Hurayrah (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) reported that the Prophet (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

No one will enter paradise without seeing his place in Hell if he had disbelieved, so that he may be more thankful; and no one will enter Hell without seeing his

place in paradise if he had believed, so that he will become filled with sorrow. (Sahih Bukhari)

- *Their Weeping*

`Abdullaah ibn Qays (Radiyallaahu-`anhu) reported that the Messenger (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

Truly the people of the Fire will cry to the extent that a ship could sail on their tears, and they will cry tears of blood. (Sahih : Al-Haakim)

- *Their Arguing*

The Most High says:

Verily this is the Truth: The arguing of the people of the Fire. (38:64)

Ibn Katheer states: This means that (Allah says): "This which we have informed you of O Muhammad (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam), regarding the arguing of the people of the Fire with each other, and their cursing each other is the truth, without question or doubt about it." (15)

And The Most High says:

And they will turn to one another, and question one another. They will say: It was you who used to come to us from the right hand (swearing that you spoke the truth) They reply: No! But You (Yourself) were not believers, we had no power over you, No, It was you who were rebellious! "So now the word of our Lord has proven true against us Indeed we are about to taste (the Doom)." (37:27-31)

- *The Alternation of Their Skins.*

Truly, those who disbelieve Our revelations, We shall fling into the fire: As often as their skins are roasted through, We shall exchange them for fresh skins, that they may taste the punishment, for Allah is the Almighty, The Wise. (4:56)

Ash-Shawkaanee says: "As soon as all of their skin is incinerated, Allah changes them to another skin."(16)

• *Their Cries for Help to the People of Paradise.*

The dwellers of the Fire will cry out to the dwellers of the Garden: Pour on us some water or anything that Allah has provided for you. They will say: Verily, Allah has forbidden both to unbelievers who took their faith as a sport and pastime and were deceived by the life of the world. So this day we have forgotten them just as they forgot the meeting of this day and as they used to reject our signs. (7:50-51)

• *Their Clothing.*

The Most High Says:

These two (believers and unbelievers) are opponents who contend concerning their Lord, but as for those who disbelieve, garments of fire will be cut out for them; boiling fluid will be poured down on their heads. Whereby that which is in their stomachs, and their skins too, will be melted; In addition there will be hooked rods of iron (to punish) them whenever in their anguish, They would go forth from there, they are driven back in and (it is said to them): Taste the punishment of burning! (22:19-22)

• *Their Desire to Come Out of The Fire.*

The Most High Says:

They will say: Our Lord! Our evil fortune conquered us, and we became a people astray Our Lord! Oh, bring us out of this: If ever we return (to evil) then indeed we shall be wrongdoers. He will say: begone therein and speak not to me! (23:106-108)

ʿAbdullah ibn ʿAmr ibn Al-ʿAas (Radiyahallaahu-ʿanhu) explains,

(Truly) the people of Hellfire (will) call out to the angel (Maalik) but he will not answer them for forty years, then he replies: "Indeed here you must remain". (43:77).

ʿAbdullah ibn ʿAmr ibn Al-ʿAas (Radiyahallaahu-ʿanhu) further states,

The Angel becomes contemptuous towards them and I swear by Allah, they call out to the Angel, and to the Lord of the Angel (Allah),

"They will say: Our Lord! Our evil fortune conquered us, and we became a people of astray Our Lord! Oh, bring us out of this: If we return (to evil) then indeed we shall be wrongdoers". (23:106-107)

Then (the Angel) shall not speak to them for a length of time (equal to) twice the age of creation; Then Allah replies to them:

“Begone therein, and speak not to me!” (23:108). By Allah, they will not utter a word after that except moaning and sobbing in the fire of Hell with a sound similar to that of donkeys, firstly with their moans and lastly with their sobs. (17)

And The Most High Says:

And those in the Fire say to the Guards of Hell: Pray your Lord that He relieve us of a day of the torment. They (the Guards of Hell) says: Did not the Messenger come to you with clear proofs? They say: Yes, Indeed. The (Guards) reply: Then you pray, although the prayer of unbelievers is in vain. (40:49-50)

The Most High also Says:

And they cry aloud for help there (saying) “Our Lord! Release us; We will do right, not the wrong that we used to do”. Did not We grant you a life long enough for him who reflected to reflect therein? And (moreover) the Warner came to you. Now taste (the fruits of your deeds), for the astray there is no helper. (35:37)

• *The Lightest of Punishment.*

Nu`maan ibn Basheer (Radiyahlaahu-`anhu) reported:

I heard the Messenger of Allah (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) say: “Verily the least suffering for the inhabitants of the Fire would be for him who would have two shoes and two laces of fire (on his feet) and with these his brain would boil as boils (the contents of) a cook pot and he would think that he would not see anyone in more grievous torment than himself, whereas he would be in the least torment.” (Sahih Muslim)

• *Their Contrasting Punishment.*

Samurah ibn Jundub (Radiyahlaahu-`anhu) reported that the Prophet (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

There would be among them those to whom the Fire will reach their ankles and to some it would reach their knees and to some it would reach up to their collarbones. (Sahih Muslim)

The Angels Who Thrust Sinners in to Hell.

Allah, Glory be to Him, The Most High Says:

Over it are nineteen. And We have appointed only angels as Guards of the Fire, and their number have we made to be a stumbling block for the unbelievers... (74:30-31)

Allah has further described the Angels over the Hellfire as being ruthlessly violent. The Most High Says:

...over which are set Angels ruthless, violent. Who do not finch (from executing) the commands they receive from Allah, but do (precisely) what they are commanded. (66:6)

The Most High States:

Then let him call upon his henchmen! We will call the Angels of Punishment. (96:17-18)

Qataadah (Tabi`ee) states: "Zabaaniyah (Angels of Punishment)" in the Arabic language means "to tear apart". (18)

The Advent of Hellfire on the Day of Resurrection.

The Most High Says:

And Hellfire shall stand forth visible for (all) to see. (79:36)

Ibn Mas'ood (Radiyahallahu-`anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) said:

Hellfire will arrive that Day with seventy thousand angels pulling it.
(Sahih Muslim)

And The Most High Says:

And Hell that Day is brought near; On that Day man will remember, but how will that remembrance profit him? (89:23)

The Bridge over Hellfire.

Abu Sa`eed Al-Khudree (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) reported that the Messenger of Allah (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) was citing a long hadith, then someone said:

"Explain the Bridge!", He (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) replied, "It is a slippery place, on its path are hooks, tongs, and thorns like those in Najd called sa`daan. The believers will pass over it like the blink of an eye, like lightning, like a bird, like the best horses and camels. The Muslims will succeed, some will be lacerated, and then proceed, and others will be thrust into the Hellfire."

Abu Sa`eed Al-Khudree (Radiyahallaahu-`anhu) said:

I have come to know that the Bridge is thinner than a hair and sharper than the sword. (Sahih Bukhari Vol 8, No 577 and Sahih Muslim)

This has appeared in the Statement of the Most High:

There is not one of you but shall pass over it: That is a decree of your Lord which is fixed (19). Then We shall rescue those who kept from evil, and leave the astray there on their knees. (19:71-72)

Ibn Katheer states: "This means that all of mankind will travel over the (Bridge over) Hell and the unbelievers and sinners will fall into it and shrivel commensurate with their sins. Allah The Most High will save the believers who fear Him from it commensurate with their deeds, and their admissibility and quickness over the Bridge will be commensurate with the deeds they have done in this life." (Tafseer Ibn Katheer: Surat-ul-Maryam)

Footnotes

1. Imam At-Tahaawee : Abu Ja'far Ahmad ibn Jawaab Al-Azdee At-Tahaawee; Very famous Islamic scholar in Hadeeth, Fiqh, and Qur'aan.
2. Sidrat-ul-Muntahaa: The lote tree of Paradise (see Surat-ul-Najm 53:14-18)
3. The Night Journey: Al-Israa' wal Mi'raaj (The journey of the Prophet (Sallallaahu-`alaihi-wa-sallam) from Makkah to Jerusalem in one night (Qur'an 17:1). Believers bear witness that during that night, he was taken through the Seven Heavens where he saw angels, Prophets (Alayhi-salaam), and spoke to them. Allah The Exalted also spoke to him, honored him and made prayer obligatory on him and the Muslims five times a day.
4. Ibn MandHoor: Abi Fadhl Muhammad Ibn Makram Ibn ManZoor Al-Afreekee , the author of Lisaan al-arab, the most comprehensive dictionary of the Arabic language.
5. Jawhaaree: author of As-Sahah.
6. Ar-Raazee: Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr ibn `Abdul-Qaadir Ar-Raazee, the author of Mukhtar-As-Sihah a specialized dictionary of the Arabic language.
7. Ibn Al-Jawzee: `Abdur-rahman ibn `Alee ibn Jaa'fir Al-Jawzee; Early Hanbalee scholar and author of over 350 books on a variety of Islamic topics.
8. Ibn Jareer: Ibn Jareer At-Tabaaree, early Islamic scholar famous for his knowledge of tafseer.

9. Ash-Shawkaanee: Muhammad Ibn `Alee Ash-Shawkaanee, famous Islamic scholar and author of Nayl Al-Awtaar and Fath-Al-Qadeer dealing with fiqh and tafseer respectively.
10. Imam Baghaawee: Abu Muhammad Al-Hussain ibn Mas`ood Al-Far`a Al-Baghaawee Ash-Shar`ai; Famous Islamic scholar from the 5th century after the Hijra.
11. Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbalee: Very famous Islamic scholar and author of At-Takhweef Min An-Naar (A Frightening Description of the Fire).
12. Ibid. P.63
13. Tafseer Ibn Katheer, Surat-ul-Ghaashiyah.
14. Maalik: One of the angels who guards over the Hellfire.
15. Tafseer Ibn Katheer, Surat-us-Saad.
16. Ash-Shawkaanee - Fath-Al-Qadeer, Surat-un Nisaa'
17. Baghaawee - Sharh-us-Sunnah, Vol.15 P.200
18. Ibn Rajab - At-Takhweef Min An-Naar, P.162
19. Fixed: i.e. immutable, unchangeable.

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4. Tafseer Zaad Al-Maseer Fee Uloom-ut-Tafseer / by Ibn Al-Jawzee.
5. Tafseer Fat'h Al-Qadeer / by Ash-Shawkaanee (1171-1250 AH)
6. Fath Al-Baaree Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari / by Ibn Hajar al-`Asqalaanee (773-852 AH)
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