

THE JOURNEY INTO THE HEREAFTER (PART 7 OF 8): THE UNBELIEVER AND HELL

Rating: 4.8

Description: How the Hellfire will receive the unbelievers.

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Hell will receive the faithless with its fury and roar:

"...and We have prepared for those who deny the Hour, a Blaze. When it [Hellfire] sees them from a distant place, they will hear its fury and roaring." (Quran 25:11-12)

When they near it, they will anticipate their shackles and their destiny as fuel:

"Indeed, We have prepared for the disbelievers chains and shackles and a blaze." (Quran 76:4)

"Indeed, with Us are shackles and burning fire." (Quran 73:12)

Angels will rush at God's command to seize and shackle him:

"Seize him and shackle him." (Quran 69:30)

"...and We will put shackles on the necks of those who disbelieved." (Quran 34:33)

Bound in chains...

"...a chain whereof the length is seventy cubits." (Quran 69:32)

...he will be dragged along:

"When iron collars will be rounded over their necks, and the chains, they shall be dragged along." (Quran 40:71)

While they are being tied down, chained, and dragged to be thrown into Hell, they will hear its rage:

"And for those who disbelieved in their Lord is the punishment of Hell, and wretched is the destination. When they are thrown into it, they hear from it a [dreadful] inhaling while it boils up. It almost bursts with rage...." (Quran 67:6-8)

Since they will be driven from the great plain of gathering, naked and hungry, they will beg the inhabitants of Paradise for water:

"And the companions of the Fire will call to the companions of Paradise: 'Pour upon us some water, or from whatever God has provided you.' They will say: 'Indeed God has forbidden them both to the disbelievers.'" (Quran 7:50)

At the same time the faithful in Paradise will be received with honor, made comfortable, and served with delicious banquets, the disbeliever will dine in Hell:

"Then indeed, you, the stray, the deniers, will be eating from trees of zaqqoom and filling your bellies with it." (Quran 56:51-53)

Zaqqoom: a tree whose roots are in the bottom of Hell and which branches into its other levels; its fruit resembles the heads of the devils:

"Is that (Paradise) better as hospitality or the tree of zaqqoom? Indeed, We have made it a torment for the wrongdoers. Indeed, it is a tree issuing from the bottom of the Hellfire, its emerging fruits as if it was heads of the devils. And indeed, they will eat from it and fill with it their bellies." (Quran 37:62-66)

The wicked will have other food to eat as well, some that chokes,^[1] and some like dry, thorny bushes.^[2]

"Nor any food except from the (foul) discharge of wounds; none will eat it except the sinners." (Quran 69:36-37)

And to wash down their melancholy meals, an extremely cold mix of their own pus, blood, sweat and wound discharge^[3] as well as boiling, scolding water which dissolves their intestines:

"...and are given to drink scalding water that will sever their intestines." (Quran 47:15)

The clothing of the denizens of Hell will be made of fire and pitch:

"...but those who disbelieved will have cut out for them garments of fire." (Quran 22:19)

"Their garments of liquid pitch and their faces covered by the Fire." (Quran 14:50)

Their sandals,^[4] bed, and canopies will likewise be made of fire;^[5] a punishment encapsulating the entire body, from heedless head to transgressing toe:

"Then pour over his head from the torment of scalding water." (Quran 44:48)

"On the Day the punishment will cover them from above them and from below their feet and it is said: 'Taste what you used to do.'" (Quran 29:55)

Their punishment in Hell will vary according to their disbelief and other sins.

"By no means! He will surely be thrown into the Crusher. And what can make you know what is the Crusher? It is the fire of God, [eternally] fueled, which mounts directed at the hearts. Indeed, it [Hellfire] will be closed down upon them. In extended columns." (Quran 104:5-9)

Every time the skin will burn through, it will be replenished with new skin:

"Indeed, those who disbelieve in Our verses – We will drive them into a Fire. Every time their skins are roasted through, We will replace them with other skins so they may taste the punishment. Indeed, God is ever Exalted in Might and Wise." (Quran 4:56)

Worst of all, the punishment will keep increasing:

"So taste [the penalty], and never will We increase you except in torment." (Quran 78:30)

The psychological effect of this punishing chastisement will be tremendous. A chastisement so severe that its sufferers will cry out for it to be multiplied on those who led them astray:

"They will say: 'Our Lord, whoever brought this upon us – increase for him double punishment in the Fire.'" (Quran 38:61)

The daring will make their first attempt to break out, but:

"And for them are maces of iron. Every time they want to get out of it from anguish, they will be returned to it, and [it will be said]: 'Taste the punishment of the Burning Fire!'" (Quran 22:21-22)

After failing several times, they will seek assistance from Iblees, the Great Satan himself.

"And Satan will say when the matter has been concluded: 'Indeed, God had promised you the promise of truth. And I promised you, but I betrayed you. But I had no authority over you except that I invited you, and you responded to me. So do not blame me; but blame yourselves. I cannot be called to your aid, nor can you be called to my aid. Indeed, I deny your association of me [with God] before. Indeed, for the wrongdoers is a painful punishment.'" (Quran 14:22)

Giving up on Satan, they will turn to the angels guarding Hell to get their torment reduced, even if just for a day:

"And those in the Fire will say to the keepers of Hell: 'Supplicate your Lord to lighten for us [even] one day from the punishment.'" (Quran 40:49)

Awaiting the response for as long as God wills, the guards will come back and ask:

"'Did there not come to you your messengers with clear proofs?' They will say, 'Yes.' They (Hell's keepers) will reply: 'Then supplicate yourselves, but the supplication of the disbelievers is nothing but (an exercise in) futility.'" (Quran 40:50)

Losing hope in the reduction of punishment, they will seek death. This time they will turn to the Hell's Chief Keeper, the angel, Malik, pleading to him for forty years:

"And they will call: 'O Malik, let your Lord put an end to us!...' (Quran 43:77)

His curt rebuttal after a thousand years will be:

"...Indeed, you will remain." (Quran 43:77)

Eventually, they will return to He Whom they refused to turn to in this world, asking for one last chance:

"They will say, 'Our Lord, our wretchedness overcame us, and we were a people astray. Our Lord, remove us from it, and if we were to return [to evil], we would indeed be wrongdoers.'" (Quran 23:106-107)

God's respond will be thus:

"Remain despised therein and do not speak to Me." (Quran 23:108)

The pain from this response will be worse than their fiery torment. For the disbeliever will know his stay in Hell will be for an eternity, his omission from Paradise absolute and final:

"Indeed, those who disbelieve and commit wrong – never will God forgive them, nor will He guide them to a path except the path of Hell; they will abide therein forever. And that, for God, is easy." (Quran 4:168-169)

The greatest deprivation and sorrow for an unbeliever will be spiritual: he will be veiled from God and will be deprived of seeing Him:

"No! Indeed, from their Lord, that Day, they will be partitioned." (Quran 83:15)

Just like they refused to "see" Him in this life, they will be separated from God in the next life. The faithful will jeer at them.

"So Today, those who believed are laughing at the disbelievers, on adorned couches, observing. Have the disbelievers [not] been rewarded [this Day] for what they used to do?" (Quran 83:34-36)

Their total despair and grief will culminate when death is brought in the form of a ram and slaughtered in front of them, so they know no refuge will ever be found in a final dissolution.

"And warn them, (O Muhammad), of the Day of Regret, when the matter will be concluded; and yet they are heedless, and they do not believe!" (Quran 19:39)

Footnotes:

[1] Quran 72:13.

[2] Quran 88:6-7.

[3] Quran 78:24-25.

[4] Saheeh Muslim.

[5] Quran 7:41.

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