

Paradise: the Eternal Abode

Paradise is the tremendous reward which Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) has prepared for His beloved (awliyyaa) and those who obey Him. It is complete joy and pleasure, where nothing is lacking and nothing can disturb its purity. What Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) and His Messenger have told us about it makes our heads spin because our minds are not able to comprehend the greatness of such blessings.

Listen to the words of Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) in this hadith qudsi:

"I have prepared for My righteous slaves that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard and has never crossed the mind of any human being".

Then the Prophet (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said, ***"Recite, if you wish: "No person knows what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do". (32:17)***

The joys of Paradise are far greater than the pleasures of this world, which pale into insignificance in comparison. al-Bukhaari reports from Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Sa'idee that the Messenger of Allaah (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said: ***"A space the size of a whip in Paradise is better than this world and all that is in it".*** (Fath al-Baari, 6/319, an-Nawawi's commentary on Muslim 17/166)

Because admittance to Paradise and salvation from the Fire are according to Allaah's will and judgement, it is a great victory and tremendous success, as Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) says:

"Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden, will have indeed attained the object of life [or: been successful]" (3:185)

"Allaah has promised to believers - men and women - Gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein , and beautiful mansions in Gardens of everlasting bliss. But the greatest bliss is the Good Pleasure of Allaah. That is the supreme felicity ". (9:72)

"...and those who obey Allaah and His Messenger will be admitted to Gardens with rivers flowing underneath, to abide therein and that will be the supreme achievement". (4:13)

Admittance to Paradise

There is no doubt that the joy of the believers will be incomparable when they are led, group by group, to the blessed Gardens of Paradise.

When they reach Paradise its gates will be opened for them, and they will be welcomed by noble angels congratulating them on their safe arrival after suffering so much hardship and witnessing so much horror:

"And those who feared their Rabb will be led to the garden in crowds, until, behold, they arrive there; its gates will be opened and its keepers will say "Peace be upon you! Well have you done! Enter here, to dwell therein". (39:73)

In other words, your words, thoughts and deeds were good so your hearts and souls became pure and for that you deserve Paradise.

Paradise: There is Nothing Like It

The delights of Paradise surpass the imagination and defy description. They are like nothing known to the people of this world; no matter how advanced we may become, what we achieve is as nothing in comparison with the joys of the Hereafter. As is mentioned in several reports, there is nothing like Paradise:

"It is sparkling light, aromatic plants, a lofty palace, a flowing river, ripe fruit, a beautiful wife and abundant clothing, in an eternal abode of radiant joy, in beautiful soundly-constructed high houses". [Ibn Maajah, as-Sunan, Kitaab az-Zuhd, Baab Sifaat al-Jannah, 2/1448, no. 4332. Ibn Hibbaan narrated it in his saheeh]

The Sahabah asked the Prophet (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) about the buildings of Paradise and he replied with a wonderful description:

"Bricks of gold and silver, and mortar of fragrant musk, pebbles of pearl and sapphire, and soil of saffron. Whoever enters it is filled with joy and will never feel miserable; he will live there forever and

never die; their clothes will never wear out and their youth will never fade. [Ahmad, at-Tirmidhi, ad-Daarimee, Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh, 3/29, sahih].

Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) indeed spoke the truth when He (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) said: **"And when you look there you will see a delight . and a great dominion"** [76:20]

What Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) has kept hidden from us the delights of Paradise is beyond our ability to comprehend: al-Bukhaari reported from Abu Hurayrah (Radiyallahu Anhu) that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said that Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) said, **"I have prepared for My slaves what no eye has seen, no ear has heard and no human heart can imagine"**. Recite if you wish, **"No person know what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do."** (32:17).

In the version reported by Muslim from Abu Hurayrah, there is the addition, ***"Never mind what Allaah has told you; what He has not told you is EVEN greater"***.

The Palaces and Tents of Paradise

Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) will build good and beautiful dwellings for the people of Paradise:

"and beautiful mansions in Gardens of everlasting bliss" [9:72]

In some places in the Qur'aan, Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) described these dwellings as ghurafaat :

"and they will reside in the high dwellings in peace and security." [34:37]

The reward for the slaves of the all-Merciful will be:

"Those will be rewarded with the highest place because of their patience. Therein they shall be met with greetings and the word of peace and respect" [25:75]

Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) described these Ghurafaat:

"But for those who fear Allaah and keep their duty to their Rabb , for them are built lofty rooms, one above the other, under which rivers flow. the Promise of Allaah, and Allaah does not fail in Promise." [39:20]

Ibn Katheer said: "Allaah has told us about His blessed slaves who will have rooms in Paradise: these will be lofty palaces, "lofty rooms, one above another - story upon story, well-constructed, strong and decorated. The Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) described these palaces to us. According to a hadith narrated by Ahmad, and Ibn Hibbaan from Abu Maalik al-Ash'ari and by at-Tirmidhi from 'Ali (Radiyallahu Anhu) the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said:

"In Paradise there are dwellings whose inside can be seen from the outside, and the outside can be seen from inside. Allaah [Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala] has prepared them for those who feed the hungry, and speak softly and gently, fast continuously and pray at night whilst the people are asleep." [Saheeh al-Jaami' as-Sagheer, 2/220, no. 2119]

Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) has told us that there are tents or pavilions in Paradise:

"Houris [beautiful, fair females] restrained in pavilions" [55:72]

These pavilions are wondrous tents, made of pearls, each one is made from a single, hollowed-out pearl. They are sixty miles high; according to some reports they are sixty miles wide. al-Bukhaari reports from 'Abdullaah ibn Qays that the Messenger of Allaah (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said, ***"The tent is a hollowed out pearl, thirty miles high; in each corner of it the believer will have a wife whom no one else can see"***. Abu 'Abdus-Samad and al-Haarith reported from Abu 'Imraan that the wording was ***"sixty miles high"*** [Sahih al-Bukhaari, Kitaab Bid' al-Khalq, Baab Sifaat al-Jannah, Fath al-Baari, 6/318]

Muslim reported from 'Abdullaah ibn Qays that the Prophet (Sallallahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said:

"The believer in Paradise will have a tent made out of a single, hollowed-out pearl, sixty miles long, in which he will have wives, whom he will visit in turn, none of whom will see the others". [see also Muslim, Kitaab al-Jannah, Baab fi Sifaat Khiyaam al-Jannah, 4/2182, no. 2838]

The Prophet (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) told us about the characteristics of the palaces of some of his wives and companions. al-Bukhaari and Muslim report that Abu Hurayrah (Radiyallahu Anhu) said, "Jibreel came to the Prophet (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said, **"O Messenger of Allaah, Khadeejah is coming, carrying a container of food. When she comes to you, convey to her greetings of peace from her Rabb and from me, and give her the glad tidings of a house in Paradise made of brocade, in which there is no noise or exhaustion."**" [Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh, 3/266]

The Prophet (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) has told us of the way in which the believer may acquire more than one house in Paradise:

Ahmad reports with a saheeh isnaad from Ibn 'Abbaas that the Prophet (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said, **"Whoever builds a masjid for Allaah, even if it is as small as the nestling-place scratched out by the same grouse for its eggs, Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) will build a house for him in Paradise"**. [Saheeh al-Jaami' as-Sagheer, 5/265, no. 6005]

Ahmad, al-Bukhaari, Muslim, at-Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah report from 'Uthmaan that the Messenger of Allaah (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said **"Whoever builds a mosque for Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala), Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) will build something similar for him in Paradise"**. [Saheeh al-Jaami' as-Sagheer, 5/265, no. 6007]

Muslim, Abu Dawud, Ahmad, an-Nasaa'ee, and Ibn Maajah report from Umm Habeebah that the Messenger of Allaah (Sallallaahu Alaihi Wa Salaam) said, **"Whoever prays twelve extra rak'ahs every day, Allaah (Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala) will build for him a house in Paradise."** [Saheeh al-Jaami', 5/316, no. 6234]