

The Day of Judgement

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First and Second Trumpets

The Sound of the Trumpet (Sur, in Arabic) will be the first stage of the Day of Judgement. Allah has mentioned it in many Ayats of the Qur'an. For example:-

"They esteemed not Allah as is His due; and the whole earth shall be in His grip on the Day of Judgement, and heavens rolled up in His right hand (power). Hallowed is He, and Exalted is He, High above all they associate with Him.

"And the Trumpet shall be blown, then shall swoon (i.e., die) whoever is in heavens and whoever is in the earth, except those whom Allah has willed (to keep alive on that occasion).

Then (the Trumpet) shall be blown again and lo! They shall stand up awaiting. "And the earth shall get radiant with the light of its Lord; and the Book (of deeds) shall be set, and the prophets and the witnesses shall be brought up; and (it) shall be judged between them with Justice, and they shall not be wronged.

"And every soul shall be paid in full what it had done; and He knows best what they do. "And those who disbelieved shall be driven unto Hell in flocks. Until, when they come to it, its doors shall be opened, and its keepers shall say unto them: 'Did not come unto you Messengers from amongst you reciting unto you the signs of your Lord and warning you of the meeting of this your day?' They shall say: 'Yes'; but the sentence of punishment is confirmed on the disbelievers.

It shall be said (unto them): 'Enter you the gates of Hell, (to abide) therein forever,' and wretched (is) the abode of the arrogant.

"And -those who feared their Lord shall be conveyed in companies unto the Garden; until when they come to it, and its doors shall be opened, and its keepers shall say unto them: Peace be on you! You shall be happy; enter it then to abide for ever.'

"And they shall say: 'All praise is for Allah, who made good to us His promise, and He has made us to inherit the earth; we may dwell in the Garden wherever we please; and goodly is the recompense of the workers (of good deeds).'

"And thou shalt see the angels circling around the 'Arsh' (The throne of absolute authority), celebrating the praise of their Lord, and it shall be judged between them with justice, and it shall be said: 'All praise is of Allah, the Lord of the universe" (Qur'an, 39:67-75)

These Ayats have been quoted here in full as they give a concise description of the events of

Qiyamat from the beginning upto the end. It would help the readers to understand the next chapters where the details are given.

Anyhow, returning to the topic of 'Trumpet': Allah says:

"And they say: 'When is this promise (going to happen), if you are truthful?'

"They wait not but for a single (terrible) cry which will seize them while they will be wrangling with each other. Then they shall not be able to make a bequest, nor shall they (be able to) return to their families.

"And the Trumpet will be blown; then lo! they shall hasten from (their) graves unto their Lord. "They shall say: 'Oh, Woe unto us! Who did raise us up from our place of repose?' (Qur'an, 39:67-75)

"This is what the Beneficent (Allah) had promised, and the Messengers did speak the truth. "There will be but a single cry, when lo! They shall all be brought unto Us. So, this day no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least, nor shall you be recompensed but that which you were doing." (Qur'an, 36:48-54)

Imam Zaynu'l-'Abidin (A) was asked: How much (time will pass) between the two blowings? He said: "As (much as) Allah would please.' Then he was asked: "Then please tell me, O son of the Messenger of Allah, how the trumpet will be blown?

Imam (A) said:

"So far as the first blowing is concerned, verily Allah will command angel Israfil, who will come down towards the earth, and with him will be a Trumpet; and the Trumpet will have one mouth-piece and two tubes; and the space between the two tubes will be like that between the sky and earth."

"When the angels will see Israfil descend towards the earth with his Trumpet, they will say: "Verily, Allah has ordered the inhabitant of the earth to die, and the inhabitants of the heaven to die."

"Then he will blow into it once; and the voice will come out from that side which is towards the earth and all living beings on the earth will swoon and die; and the voice will come out from that side which is towards the heaven, and all living beings in the heavens will die, except Israfil."

Then Allah will say to Israfil: "O Israfil, die." And he will die.

"They will remain like this as long as Allah would wish. Then Allah will order the heaven and it will reel, and will order the mountains and they will fly. As He has said: 'On the Day when the heaven shall reel a (terrible) reeling, and the mountains shall fly an (awful) flight.'" (Qur'an, 59:9-10)

“And the earth will be changed with another one, i.e., with an earth upon which no sin would have been committed, open without any mountains and without any plant or grass, as He had revolved it in the first creation.”

“And His 'Arsh' (Throne) will return upon the water, as it was in the beginning, independent with His Majesty and Power.”

“At that time, Allah will create a very loud voice which will ring throughout the earth and heaven: “Whose is the kingdom this day?”¹ No one will give any answer (as there will be none alive); then He will answer Himself creating a loud voice: '(It is) Of Allah, the One, the Subduer' (Qur'an, 40:16)

I subdued all the creatures and gave them death; verily, I am Allah, there is no god except I alone, there is no partner for me nor any minister; and I made the creatures by my hand (Power) and I made them die by my Will; and I shall resurrect them by my Power.'

“Then Allah will cause the second blowing of the Trumpet; the voice will come out from that side which is towards the heavens, and there will be none among the inhabitants of the heavens but will become alive and will stand as he was before; and will return the bearers of the 'Arsh' and the Garden and Fire will be brought forth, and the people will be gathered for reckoning.”

Saying this, Imam Zaynul-Abedin (A) wept intensely.

Mentioning some of the events of this tradition, Allah says:

“And when the Trumpet is blown, a single blast; and the earth and the mountains shall be borne away and crushed with a single crushing; on that Day shall happen the Great Event; and the heaven shall cleave asunder, so that on that day it shall be mere frail; and the angels shall be on the sides of it; and above them shall bear on that Day 'Arsh' of thy Lord eight (angels).” (Qur'an, 69:13-17)

A great many Ayats of the Qur'an give us the picture of that time, when the earth and heaven will be crushed and changed into new ones. One who reads the Qur'an, with its meaning, and with open eyes, can understand it very easily. It is not possible to give here even one-tenth of those Ayats. Why? Because the topic of Qiyamat is the most-often described subject in the Qur'an. Unfortunately, nowadays the Muslims treat it as the least important. They do harm to .none except themselves

Resurrection of the Body

Resurrection of the body is one of the cardinal beliefs of Islam; if anyone, knowing this fact, rejects it, he is not a Muslim at all. It will not be out of place to point out here that people are

divided into four groups on this subject:-

1. There are atheists, who do not admit the existence of the Creator, and as a result, do not admit that He would resurrect us after our death.

In my book, God: An Islamic Perspective, enough has been written to show the baselessness of atheism. Some more remarks will be given in the course of other discussions.

2. There are those who accept the existence of a Creator, but reject the idea of the resurrection of body. According to them, the reward and punishment mentioned in the Qur'an and Ahadith will be given to the soul only; the body will not be resurrected after death.

3. Those, like the Muslims, who believe that the Qiyamat will be for the body and soul together.

4. Agnostics, who say that they do not know, and in the nature of things, cannot know any thing about soul, or matters concerned with it. They neither admit nor reject the existence of the Creator or Day of Judgement.

When we look at the writings and arguments of those who refuse to believe in the resurrection of the bodies, it boils down to only one thing: Astonishment. How can the body be resurrected after death when it has already turned into dust?

There is no other argument to prove that the body cannot be resurrected. There is a sense of bewilderment as to how can it be done.

Allah has commented in numerous Ayats on this type of "argument". A few Ayats are given here for enlightenment:-

"And if thou wouldst wonder, then wonderous is their saying: 'What, when we are dust would we really then be in a creation renewed?' These are they who disbelieve in their Lord; they are those round whose necks will be collars (of servitude): They will be companions of the fire; in it shall they abide" (Qur'an, 13:5)

Another group of Ayats :-

"O ye people! Fear your Lord; verily the quake of the Hour (of judgement) is a thing terrible." "The day ye shall see it, every suckling mother shall forget her sucking babe, and every pregnant female shall drop her load, and thou shalt see the people intoxicated, but they will not be drunk; but dreadful will be the wrath of Allah."

"And yet among men there is he who disputes about Allah, without knowledge, and follows every rebellious Satan"

"Against him it is decreed that whosoever turns to him for friendship him will he lead astray and will guide him unto the torment of burning fire."

"O ye people! If you be in doubt about the Resurrection, then verily We created you from dust, then from sperm, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh, formed and (sometimes)

unformed, in order that We may manifest (our power) to you; and We cause to stay in the womb what We will until an appointed time, then do We bring you out as babes, then (foster you) that you may reach your maturity, and of you is he who is caused to die. and of you is he who is brought back to the feeblest (state of) old age so that he knows nothing after knowing (much). And you behold the earth dried (dead) but when We send down on it the water it is stirred to life and swells up and produces every kind of attractive herbage (in pairs)."

"This is because verily Allah, He is the Reality (Truth), and because verily He gives life unto the dead, and because verily He has power over all things."

"And that the Hour (of Resurrection) is coming, there is no doubt therein; and that Allah will raise up those in the graves." (Qur'an, 22:1-7)

In these Ayats, Allah gives two examples to show that Resurrection is not a thing to be wondered at. He reminds mankind that creating a thing is, by human thinking, more difficult than reassembling it after all its parts have disintegrated. Therefore, the Creator, who created the man in the first place can more easily resurrect him after all his body has become dust. (The words "more easily" have been used according to human thinking; so far as the power of Allah is concerned, every thing is easy for Him in equal degree).

Another example is that of a parched earth, which is thought "dead", coming to life again as soon as Allah sends some rain upon it.

So, there is nothing strange if Allah makes us alive again after our death and disintegration. It should be mentioned here that these arguments are effective against the second group, i.e., those who believe that there is a Creator, and still do not believe in the Resurrection of the bodies.

So far as the first group is concerned (those who do not believe in a Creator) they, first of all, should talk about the existence of God; the belief of Qiyamat would come after that

The Last Verses of Sura Ya-Sin

The Surah 'Ya-sin' is called 'The Heart of the Qur'an'. In it Allah has emphasized the Unity and Justice of God, Prophethood of the previous prophets and of the Holy Prophet of Islam, and the Day of Judgement. A few Ayats concerning the 'Trumpets' were given in chapter 36. Here the last Ayats are given with short explanation: -

"What! does not man see that it is We who created him from sperm? Yet behold! he is an open disputant." (Qur'an, 36:77)

Here Allah reminds man of His limitless power. Had the man been created from various 'parts',

there would not have been anything to wonder about: hard elements would have gone into the creation of bones, soft ones into flesh, and so on. But look! there is only one cell and from that one substance various parts are fashioned, some solid like bone, some soft like flesh, others liquid like blood etc. There is the wonder of wonders which is called brain. There are eyes, ears, tongue, nose and hundreds of limbs and their parts. This diversity of finished product created from a single cell of sperm is the proof of the wisdom and power of the Creator. And what an irrefutable proof.

Starting from such a humble substance, man reaches such a stage that he becomes an "open disputant". Here we are reminded of another wonder of creation. Sperm was a body though a small one. Suppose, someone said that, that small body 'naturally' developed into a human body. But what about the reason and the wisdom which is found in the human beings? From which 'body' did he get his thinking power? Thus, the creation of thinking and expression is a far greater proof of the Creator. The words "open disputant" have been used for two reasons. (1) Here his dispute about the Day of Resurrection is being mentioned, therefore, it was appropriate to remind him of his dispute with his Creator. (2) The power of speech is never so much manifested as when a man is arguing with some one; therefore, to show the climax of his speaking power the words "open disputant" were chosen by Allah. Now, Allah describes man's dispute with God:-

"And he made comparison for Us and forgot his (origin and) creation! Said he: 'Who will make these bones alive, and they are rotten (at that)?'"

"Say! He will give them life Who created them for the first time. And He is fully cognizant of all the creation." (Qur'an, 36:78-79)

In these Ayats two arguments against the Day of Resurrection have been refuted: First: Those who do not bring any proof against Resurrection; but only show their bewilderment on this idea. Their 'argument' is given in the Ayat: "Who will make these bones alive, and they are rotten?" Allah has strengthened their argument by mentioning the bone which is a part of body which has no feeling. Such a 'lifeless' thing, and then add to it the fact that it is rotten and turned to dust. Now, how can it be resurrected? Even before giving any reply; Allah shows the shallowness of this 'argument' by saying that "And he made a comparison for Us". This sentence points out the fact that the power of Creator should not be compared with the power of human beings who are created. It reminds us that all the 'bewilderment' is based on the folly of human beings who think that 'because THEY can not do a certain thing, therefore, the Creator also cannot do it. Then, still before mentioning their 'argument', Allah reminds them of their first creation in these

words "and forgot his creation!" It is the second reply: The Creator who created you in the first place, is powerful enough to make the bones alive second time. After mentioning their 'argument' the same reply is described more clearly: "He will give them life Who created them for the first time." If there is any thing to wonder, they should wonder at the first creation, not at the second one.

Now we come to the second 'argument' against Resurrection. Some people said that suppose a man was eaten by a cannibal, and then that cannibal was eaten by a lion. That lion after his death was eaten by other animals. Now the part of the first man became the part of the second man, and afterwards part of the lion, and finally ended up as the parts of several other animals. How will that first man be resurrected? If those parts are removed from the body of the cannibal and returned to the first man, then the body of the cannibal will not be resurrected completely, because these had become a part of his body. And then what will happen to the parts in the bodies of the lion and the other animals, because those parts are now scattered everywhere; so the first body cannot be resurrected completely?

Allah replies to them in these words: "And He is fully cognizant of all the creation.," In every body there are some original components, and others which are later additions. Allah fully knows which is which. He will return the original components of each and every body to its rightful place, and will make them alive. So why this astonishment?

After refuting these two so-called, 'arguments', now Allah gives some more examples of His power:

"The same (Creator) Who produced for you fire from the green tree, when, lo! you kindle (fire) from it." (Qur'an, 36:80)

In ancient Arabia, they used a wooden instrument for kindling fire. It was called 'zinad'. It consisted of two pieces of wood which were rubbed together. And even if green, they produced fire.

Now fire is likened to life. And green wood is generally thought unfit for kindling fire. Keeping in mind these two facts, now repeat the unbelievers' words: "Who will make these bones alive, and they are rotten at that?" Allah reminds them that as He creates fire in the green tree, likewise He will create life in the rotten bones. How is it that one accepts the creation of fire from greenery, but doubts about the creation of life in the bones?

After giving these examples from their day to day life, Allah now reminds them of His Power in these words:

"What! Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create (again) the like of them? Yes, indeed He is the Creator, All-knowing." (Qur'an, 36:81)

The word "Creator" shows His limitless Power, and "All-knowing" shows His Knowledge from which nothing is hidden. Therefore, He has Power enough to resurrect the bodies, and Knowledge enough to know which part of which person has gone where; and then to collect all original parts to make a body complete.

Finally, He says:

"His command, when He intends anything, is only that He says unto it "Be" and it is." (Qur'an, 38:82)

This Ayat exposes the fallacy of those who think about the Power of Allah in terms of human power.

Human beings cannot create anything without its materials, machines, experience and what not. Allah creates without any material, if He so wishes. Therefore, you should not wonder how He will resurrect the bodies after they are rotten in the graves.

"So Glory to Him in whose hand is the kingdom of all things; and unto Him will all you be brought back." (Qur'an, 36:83; The explanation of these verses have been taken from Biharul 'I-anwar, vol.7. pp. 21-24)

He has the kingdom of every thing in his hand; and therefore, you should remain prepared to return to Him; there is no doubt about it.

And lastly a short Hadith of Imam Zaynul-Abidin (A):-

"I am astonished (to see) a proud boastful (person): yesterday he was a sperm and tomorrow he will be a dead-body! And wonder of the wonders is about that (man) who doubts about (the existence of) Allah while he sees His creation! And wonder of wonders is that (person) who denies death, and he sees people dying every day and night! And wonder of wonders is about that (person) who denies the second life (i.e., Resurrection) and he sees the first one! And wonder of wonders is the person who develops the house (which is) to perish, and neglects the everlasting House." 44

Agnostics' View

Now we come to the agnostics' view that nothing is known, nor can be known, beyond material things which can be perceived by one or more of the five senses. Accordingly, they say that they do not know anything about the existence of God or any life -hereafter. Their answer to all questions pertaining to God or the life hereafter is "We do not know". In short, they neither accept nor deny the existence of God and Resurrection.

But if they are not atheist in disguise, then the safest course for them would be to have belief in the Creator and Day of Judgement, Here is a tradition of Imam Ja'far as- Sadiq (A):-

Once, Ibn Abil-'Awja' and Ibn Muqaffa' were sitting in Masjidul-Haram at the time of Hajj, with some of their fellow-atheists. These people pretended to be Muslim just to save their skins; but were always openly arguing against the belief in God. Ibn Muqaffa' pointed towards the space around Ka'bah and said: "Do you see this mob? None of them can be called a human being except that old man (i.e., Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A).) The rest are just cattle and animals."

Ibn Abil-'Awja' asked him how could he say such a thing. Ibn Muqaffa' said: "Because I found with him (virtue and knowledge) which I could not find anywhere else."

Ibn Abil-'Awja' said: "Now it is necessary to see whether what you say is correct." Ibn Muqaffa' tried to dissuade him; but Ibn Abil -'Awja' went to the Imam (A). He came back after some time and said: "O Ibn Muqaffa'! He is not just a human being. If there were in this world a spiritual thing which could become a body if it wished and turn into a spirit if it wanted, then it is he."

Ibn Muqaffa' said: "How come?"

Ibn Abil 'Awja' said: "I sat near him. When all went away, he began talking to me (without my asking anything). He said: If the fact is as they believe and He (God) is as they (pilgrims) say, then they would be saved and you would be in trouble. And if the truth is as you (atheists) say, and not as they say, then they and you both would be equal (and nobody would come to any harm)."

"I said: 'May Allah have mercy on you! What it is which we say and what it is which they say? My belief and their belief is the same.'

"Imam (A) said: 'How can your belief and their belief be the same? They say that there is to be a Resurrection and reward and punishment; and they believe that there is God; (while you reject these beliefs)."

Imam (A) meant that if there was in fact no God and no Day of Judgement, as Ibn Abil-'Awja' said, then the believers and non- believers all would be in the same position after death. Both will perish for ever, and no one will suffer for his belief or disbelief. On the other hand, if there is a God and if there is a Day of Judgement, as the believers say, then after death the believers will be saved and blessed, while the doubters and non -believers will have to suffer. Therefore, reason and wisdom dictate that we must have belief in God and Day of Judgement, to save ourselves from the possibility of eternal disgrace and sufferings.

This irrefutable practical wisdom is based upon the saying of Hadhrat 'Ali (A) which was mentioned in 'Need of Religion 'under the heading 'The So-called Pascal's Bet.'

Now that it has been proved that the views of the first, second and fourth groups, mentioned in chapter 37, are wrong and against the dictate of wisdom, the only thing to believe is that Allah will surely resurrect man, body and soul all together, as He has declared in countless Ayats of the Qur'an.

The following chapters will describe various stages of Qiyamat, as explained by the Qur'an and

Ahadith Here we end this chapter with the words of Shaykh as-Saduq (r.a.)

"It is our belief that Resurrection after death is True. And the Prophet (S) said: 'O Children of Abdul-Muttalib! Verily the guide (of a caravan) does not mislead his own family. I swear by Him Who sent me with truth that you will die as you sleep, and then will be resurrected as you wake up;

and there is no house after death except the Garden (Paradise) or Fire (Hell); and creating the whole creation and resurrecting them is just like creating one person and resurrecting him, so far as (the Power of) Allah is concerned; as Allah Ta'ala has said: "And creating you (all) and (resurrecting you is but like (creating and resurrecting) a single person." (Qur'an, 31:28

Mahshar: The Gathering Place and Time

Allah says in the Qur'an:

"When the earth is shaken to her (utmost) convulsion, and throws up her burden (from within), and the man cries: 'What is the matter with her?'; that day will she declare her tidings that thy Lord will have given her inspiration (order). On that day will men proceed in companies sorted out, to be shown the deeds that they had done. Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it; and anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, see it." (Qur'an, 99:1-8)

This in a nut-shell is the report of the Day of Judgement, from the beginning to the end. The first Ayat describes the earthquake of the Qiyamat, in a previous chapter an Ayat was mentioned which says: "The earthquake of the Hour (of Judgement) will be a thing terrible." (Qur'an, 22:1)

That earthquake will flatten the earth; mountains, rivers, valleys and depressions, all will disappear. A flat earth will re-emerge, which will be the 'Mah-shar', i.e., the Place of Gathering.

A few Ayats of the Qur'an are given here to explain the above statement:

"When the sun is folded up, and when the stars fall losing their lustre, and when the mountains vanish, and when the she-camels ten months with the young (which were highly prized) are left untended, and when the wild animals are gathered, and when the oceans boil over, and when the souls are sorted out (being joined like with like), and when the female infant (buried alive) is

asked for what crime she was killed, and when the scrolls (of deeds) are laid open, and when the sky is removed, and when the Fire (of Hell) is kindled to fierce heat, and when the Garden (Paradise) is brought near: Then shall each soul know what it has put forward. (Qur'an, 81:1-14)

So, the sun, moon and stars also will lose their lustre and light:

"The Day that We will roll up the heavens like a scroll rolled up for books, even as We produce the first creation, so shall We produce a new one." (Qur'an, 21:104)

"The Day when the earth will be changed to a different earth, and so will be the heavens; and (men) will be marshalled forth before Allah, The One, The Subduer." (Qur'an, 14:48)

"They ask thee concerning the mountains; say, 'My Lord will uproot them and scatter them as dust, thus He will leave them as smooth and level plains; Thou wilt not see in their place anything crooked or curved.'" (Qur'an, 20:105-107)

As the earth and heavens will change, and the sun and stars will die, the 'Time' also will change. Allah says: "The angels and the 'Spirit' ascend unto Him in a Day the measure whereof is fifty thousand years." (Qur'an, 70:4)

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (AS) said: "Beware, take account of your souls before your account is taken (by Allah) because, in the Qiyamat, there are fifty stops, every stop is like one thousand years from your counting." Then the Imam (A) recited the above Ayat.

In another Ayat, one day is said to be equal to one thousand years.

"He. rues all affairs then all affairs go up to Him in a Day the space whereof will be a thousand years of your reckoning." (Qur'an, 32:25)

This second Ayat has been explained in more than one way: (1) It means that so far as the Power of Allah is concerned, one day and one thousand years are equal. (2) One day of Qiyamat will look to the unbelievers like one thousand years because of its pains and turmoils.

(3) But more to the point is the explanation given by Allamah Majlisi (r.a.). He writes: "May be, some unbelievers will remain in Qiyamat for one thousand years, and for them that Day will be of a thousand years, while other unbelievers will remain there for fifty thousand years, and their Day will be that much longer. And likewise, the Day of all good and evil people will be according to their stay in Qiyamat.

"Also, may be the 'one thousand years' refers to the time of one stop only (as mentioned previously).

The details of those 50 stops will be given afterwards.

Hadhrat 'Ali (A) said in one of his sermons, describing the 'Gathering' :-

".....until when the affairs come to a close, and the world is disintegrated, and resurrection

draws near, Allah will take them out from the corners of the graves and the nests of the birds and the dens of the beasts, and dumps of death: (They will be) hastening towards His Command, running towards the place fixed for their final return - groups, quite, standing, arrayed in rows. They will be within sight of Allah; and all of them will hear the voice of the caller.

On them will be the dress of helplessness and cover of submission and humiliation (At that time) contrivances (i.e., tricks and excuses) will disappear (will be useless), desires (plans and hopes) will be cut short, the hearts will be sinking silently, voices will be curbed down, and sweat will be like a rein (i.e., will reach upto mouth) and fear will increase. The ears will resound with thundering voice of the announcer calling them towards the final judgement and award of recompense - punishment and reward."

Imam Muhammad Baqir (A) said:

"When the Day of Resurrection will come, Allah will gather the people in one (vast) field; they will be barefooted, naked; then they will be made to stand in the gathering place (Mah-shar) till they will sweat profusely, and the breathing will come heavy, they will remain in that condition for fifty years as Allah says:

"And the voices will be subdued for the Merciful (Allah), so that thou will not hear but a whisper." (Qur'an, 20:108)

(Then Imam A.S said) Then an announcer will call out from the direction of the "Arsh": Where is the 'Ummi' (i.e., Meccan) Prophet?' Some people will say, "While you are announcing, better announce his name.' Then he will announce, 'Where is the Prophet of Mercy, Muhammad son of Abdullah?' Then the Messenger of Allah (our Holy Prophet) will advance in front of all mankind, till he reaches the Haudh' (i.e., Kawthar) whose length is like the distance between Ailah (present day's 'Eilat' in Israel) and San'aa (capital of Yemen), and will stand on it. Then your companion (i.e. Hadhrat Ali A) will be called, and he will advance in front of the people and will stand with the Holy Prophet.

Hadhrat Fatima Zahra(A) asked her Father (SAW): "O Father tell me what will be (the condition of) people on the Day of Qiyamat?" The Holy Prophet (SAW.) said: "O Fatimah! Every one will be busy (i.e., one will be submerged in one's worries). Thus nobody will look towards anyone-neither father towards his son nor the son towards his mother."

Hadhrat Fatima (A) asked: "Will there be shrouds on them when they will come out of the graves?" The Holy Prophet (SAW) said: "O Fatimah! Shrouds will perish, and the bodies will be preserved; (but) the private parts of a believer will remain hidden, while those of the unbelievers will be without any cover."

Hadhrat Fatima (A): "O Father! What will be the cover of the believers?".

The Holy Prophet (S): "A Light, dazzling in brilliance, their bodies will not be seen because of that Light."

Fatimah (A): "O Father! Where should I meet you on the Day of Qiyamat?"

The Holy Prophet (S): "Look (for me) near the Weighing scale and I shall be entreating, 'My Lord! Increase the weight of (the good deeds of) him who solemnly declared that there is no god except Allah'; and look (for me) near the Books (of deeds) when the scrolls (of deeds) will be distributed, and I will be pleading, 'My Lord! Take account of my Ummat (people) leniently!' And look (for me) at the place of my intercession near the bridge of Jahannam (Hell) when every man will be busy in his own affairs (with his own soul) and I will be preoccupied with (the salvation of) my Ummat, praying, 'My Lord! Save my Ummat'; and the prophets (will be) around me praying 'Our Lord! Save the Ummat of Muhammad'."

Imam 'Ali Ridha (A) said:

"There are three occasions when this creation is most bewildered and frightened: 'The day he is born, he comes out of the womb of his mother and sees the world (for the first time); and the day he dies, and sees the next world and its people; and the day he will be resurrected and will see the commands (or judgements, like) which he had not seen in this world.

"And Allah sent Salaam (peace, safety) on (the prophet) Yahya (John, and Baptist) in these three places and removed his fear, as He said (in the Qur'an): 'And peace be on him the day he is born, and the day he will die, and the day he will be resurrected alive.' (Qur'an, 19:15)

And 'Isa (A) sent peace on himself in these three places, as he said: 'And peace be on me the day I was born, and the day I will die, and the day I will be resurrected alive

Questioning of The Prophets and Their Ummats

Before questioning the people, Allah, in His Justice, will first of all, ask the Prophets and Imams whether they had truly conveyed the message of Allah to their people. When the Prophets will affirm that they had indeed done so, they will be asked to produce their witness. They will declare that Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa (S) is their witness. The Holy Prophet of Islam will testify on their behalf; and after establishing the fact that the prophets had really conveyed the message of Allah to their peoples, questions will be put to the people as to how they received that message and how they followed it.

Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa (SAW.) will be the witness of the Twelve Imams (A) also and
Allah Himself will be the witness of the Holy Prophet of Islam (SAW.)

Some Ayats, which mention one or the other aspect of this event are given here for guidance:

"The Day when Allah will gather the Messengers together and ask: 'What was the response you received?' They will say: 'We have no knowledge (Thou knowest better than we!), verily, Thou art the Knower of (all that is) hidden'." (Qur'an, 5:109)

"So, surely, shall We question those to whom (the prophets) were sent, and surely We shall question the Messengers." (Qur'an, 7:6)

Addressing the Holy Prophet (S), Allah says: "Then, how will it be when We will bring a witness from every Ummat, and will bring thee as witness over those witnesses." (Qur'an, 4:41)

The witness over the people are the prophets, and our Holy Prophet (S) will be the prophets' witness.

About our 12 Imams (A) it has been decreed: "Thus have we made you (O successors of Muhammad!) a middle group, so that you may be witnesses over the people, and the Messenger be witness over you." (Qur'an, 2:143)

The Imams (A) said: "That Middle group (between the Ummat and the Prophet), the witnesses over the people, are we (the 12 Imams), and Allah has intended only us in this Ayat; and the Prophet (S) is witness over us.:

A second Hadith from the First Imam (A):

"When the Day of Qiyamat will come, and the scales will be erected, and the prophets and witnesses (And witnesses means Imams) will be present, then every Imam will testify on the people of his time that he stood before them with the commands of Allah and called them towards the way of Allah... ."

Question: How can Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa (S) be a witness of the previous prophets and of the Imams who came after his departure from this world? Surely, Allah cannot allow a testimony based on hearsay?

Answer: The Light of our Holy Prophet (S) was created thousands of years before the creation of Adam. And from the same Light were created his daughter Bibi Fatimah Zahra and the twelve Imams (peace from Allah be on them all). It is not a place to describe the Ahadith to this effect; but it is a fact which is beyond doubt in the Islamic faith.

Even after his death, he is alive; and so are Bibi Fatirna Zahra and 11 Imams who have departed from this world. So far as the 12th Imam (A) is concerned, he is alive in this world, and is waiting the order of Allah to re-appear.

Therefore, when Hadhrat Muhammad Mustafa (S) will testify on behalf of the previous

prophets, it will not be a hearsay; he will testify as an eye-witness, because in his 'Existence of Light' he had seen all that had transpired between the prophets and their people. And the same .is the case about testifying on behalf of the Imams

Scrolls of Deeds, Testimony of the Limbs and Places etc.

The topics which are described in these lesson are the central part of the belief in the Day of Judgement. They show how the deeds will be judged on that Day. As an outline, the translation of relevant paragraphs from 'Itiquadiyyah' of Shaykh as-Saduq is given here (with some relevant verses in brackets):

"Our faith concerning the writing of Deeds: It is our faith that there are two angels deputed on every servant of Allah; they write down each and every deed he performs.

"And if someone intends to do a good deed but does not do it, one virtue (of good intention) is written in his record; and if he performed that good deed, ten virtues are written (to his credit). And if someone intends to do an evil deed (but does not do it) nothing is written against him, till he actually does that evil deed. Even after doing that, he is given seven hours grace. If he repents then nothing is written against him. But if he did not repent in that time, only one evil act is written against him.

(As Allah says in the Qur'an: "He who brought one good deed, for him are ten like it; and he who brought one evil deed, he will not be paid but only its equal)." (Qur'an, 6:160)

"And the two angels write every thing, even blowing into ash. (As Allah says: "And on you are the guards, noble writers, they know whatever you do.") (Qur'an, 82:10-12)

"And Amiru'l-Mu'minin (A) once passed near a person who was talking vain words; Amiru'l-Mu'minin (A) said: 'O man! Verily, you are dictating a book to your angels which will be taken to your Lord; therefore, talk only what is useful to you, and leave useless talks.'

"Also he said: 'A Muslim is recorded as engaged in good deeds as long as he remains silent. Then when he talks, he is counted either as a virtuous man or an evil-doer (according to what he says.)"

"And the place of the two angels is the collar-bone: the one on the right side writes good deeds, and the one on the left writes evil deeds. And the two angels of the day write his actions during day-time; and the two angels of the night write his deeds during the night.

"Verily, Allah has ordered us to do justice; but He Himself treats us with something higher than justice, that is Grace. It is as Allah says: "He who brought one good deed, for him are ten like it; and he who brought one evil deed, he will not be paid but only its equal, and they will not be treated unjustly." (Qur'an, 6:160)

If Allah had treated us with justice only, He would have given only one reward for one good deed, as He gives one punishment for one bad deed.”

This written record of our whole life will be given to us on the Day of Judgement. As Allah says: “And the book (i.e., deed) of every man have We bound around his neck, and We shall produce unto him, on the Day of Resurrection, a book which he will find open; (It will be said to him) Read thy book, thine own self will be a sufficient reckoner against thee (Qur’an, 17:13-14) Imam Ja’far as Sadiq (A) said: “On the Day of Judgement, a man will be given his scroll, to read... then Allah will make him remember: there will be not a single look, or a single word, or a single step, or anything which he had done but that he will remember as though he had done it that very moment. It is for this reason that they will say: “O Woe unto us! What is about this book: it had not left any small or big thing without recording it thoroughly.”

The distribution of the scrolls is mentioned in many Ayats. Those whose good deeds exceed the bad will be given their scroll in their right hands: those whose bad deeds outweigh their good deeds will receive it in their left hands.

Their respective reactions are mentioned in these Ayats:

“The Day that you shall be brought to Judgement; no secret of yours shall remain hidden. Then he that shall be given his book in his right hand will say: ‘Ah here! Read you my book. I did really believe that my accounts will (one day) reach me.’ So he will be in a life of Bliss, in a Garden on high, the fruits whereof (will hang in bunches) low and near. Eat and drink, with full satisfaction (in reward) of the (good) that you sent before you, in the days that are gone. “But he that will be given his records in his left hand, will say: ‘Ah! Would that my record had not been given to me! And that I had never known what my account was! Ah! Would that the (death) had made an end of me! Of no profit to me had been my wealth! My power has gone from me! (The stern command will be issued:) ‘Seize you him and bind him, burn him in the blazing fire.” (Qur’an, 69:18-31)

While the “People of Right Hand’ will be happy and well-pleased with the outcome of their belief and actions, the ‘People of Left Hand’ will try to find some loop-holes in the overwhelming adverse records. Some of them will deny that they had done any of the things mentioned in those records. Then the Angels (who had written those records) will testify against them.

The culprits will say: “O Lord! Thy Angels are testifying to please Thee.” Finally, they will swear that they had not done any of the bad things recorded therein. Allah refers to it in the Qur'an in these words:

“The Day Allah will resurrect them all, then they will swear before Him as they swear before

you.” (Qur’an, 58:18)

Then they will be silenced, and their limbs will speak against them. The following Ayats are about this aspect of Qiyamat:-

“On the Day when their tongues, and their hands, and their feet will testify against them about their actions. On that Day Allah will pay them back their just dues, and they will realize that

Allah is the Truth that makes all things manifest.” (Qur’an, 24:24-25)

“This Day shall We set a seal on their mouths; and their hands will speak to us and their feet will bear witness to all that they did.” (Qur’an, 36:65)

“On the Day that the enemies of Allah will be gathered together to the Fire, they will be marched in ranks. At length, when they reach the (Fire), their hearings, and their sights, and their skins will bear witness against them as to their deeds. They will say to their skins: 'Why bear you witness against us?' The (limbs) will say: 'Allah gave us speech - He who gives speech to every thing. He created you for the first time, and unto Him you were to return. You did not seek to hide yourselves, lest your hearing and your eyes and your skins should bear witness against you! But you did think that Allah knew not many of the things that you used to do! And that thought of yours which you did entertain concerning your Lord, has brought you to destruction, and now you have become of those utterly lost.’” (Qur’an, 41:19-23)

In a long Hadith, The Holy Prophet (S) has said: “As Allah has commanded you to safeguard yourselves and your religion and your wealth by getting witnesses of approved probity for your affairs, in the same way He has made sure about the affairs of His servants, by keeping witnesses on them. Thus there are for Allah on every being guards from among His various creations, and there are (angels) in succession in front of and behind him, and they guard him by order of Allah and note down whatever he does - his actions, words and looks. And the places where he lives are the witnesses of Allah, for or against him; And the nights, days and months are His witnesses, for or against him; and the Guardian (Angels) who write his deeds are His witnesses, for or against him.

“Therefore, how many on the Day of Qiyamat will be pleased by the testimonies of those witnesses for them? And how many on the day of Qiyamat will be disgraced by the testimony of those witnesses against them?

Question: How can hands, feet and skins testify for or against any one? These things do not speak! And how can the places of our actions testify for or against us?

Answer: Even today, our hands speak for or against us. The fingerprints have sent tens of thousand culprits to their doom; and, likewise, have saved innumerable innocent people from being wrongly convicted. The same is the case with a strand of hair, a small thread from the

fabrics worn, a minute amount of mud or dust, a scrapping of nail, and countless similar things which help an investigator to determine the guilt or innocence of a suspect. So, these speechless things are speaking even today on sins and crimes committed by human-beings. Why then does it seem strange if on the Day of Qiyamat Allah brings them as witnesses against evil doers? So far as creating speech is concerned, we know that Allah can create this power in any thing. Therefore, if He gives the hands and other limbs power to speak on that special occasion, it is not to be doubted. And the limbs will give this very reply to the astonished wrongdoers, by saying that Allah, who creates speech in any thing He wishes, has made them speak

Weighing-Scale

The belief that there will be weighing-scale in the Qiyamat to weight the good and evil deeds of a man is universally held by all the Muslims because Allah has mentioned it in numerous Ayats of the Qur'an. Weighing of the deeds is a part of the Reckoning. Here is the translation of the relevant chapter from 'Itiquadiyyah':-

"It is our belief about the Reckoning that it is True. Some of that (Reckoning or Accounting) will be done by Allah Taala Himself; and the rest will be done by His Proofs (i.e., Prophets and Imams). Thus the Reckoning of the Prophets, Messengers and Imams will; be done by Allah; and every prophet will take the account of his successor; and the successors will take the account of the Ummats... .And Imam Ja'far Sadiq (A) was asked about the words of Allah: "And We will put the weighing-scale with justice on the Day of Qiyamat; and to none will be done injustice even a little." (Qur'an, 21:47) (The Imam A) said: 'The "Weighing-scale" means the prophets and their successors.'

"And there will be some people who will enter the Garden (Paradise) without any Accounting (of their deeds).

"And, verily, Allah will address His servants - from the ancients to the last ones - concerning the Reckoning of their deeds, in one address: and every one will hear his own case, not of others, and will think that Allah was talking to him alone, not to others; and talking with one person will not prevent Allah from talking to others (at that very moment).

"And Allah will finalize the accounts of all- from ancients to the last ones - in half an hour according to the timing of this world. And Allah will put forth for every person a scroll which he will find open, which will describe all his actions; it will not leave any small or big thing without fully exposing it; and Allah will make him his own scrutinizer and his own judge: it will be told to

him: "Read thy book; Thine own self will be a sufficient reckoner against thee."

Now a few Ayats on 'Weighing-scale':-

"And the Balance that Day is True: So, that whose scales (of good deeds) will be heavy, will prosper; and those whose scales will be light will find themselves in loss, because they mistreated our Signs." (Qur'an, 7:8-9)

"We shall set up scales of Justice for the Day of Judgement, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least; and if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account"(Qur'an, 21:47)

What is the "Weighing-scale"?

There are three interpretations:-

Weighing-scale means 'Justice of Allah',

As mentioned earlier, it means 'The prophets and Imams' who will judge the people on the Day of Qiyamat justly.

Allah will give the deeds a sort of material form, and that will be weighed in weighing-scales, created for the purpose.

All these meanings may be correct; and, what is more, all of them may 'exist' together.

Therefore, we do not have to 'choose' between them.

The first meaning is all-encompassing. Whatever the meaning of 'scale', Justice of Allah will always be there.

So far as the second meaning is concerned, it needs some explanation:-

The word 'Mizan' (Scale) has one essential meaning (the device, standard and principle by which other things may be judged, measured or weighed); that essential meaning may take any of the forms (measures to find out length, weight, volume, mass, time, heat and various other such items); it may even be a device without any material form: like 'logic' which is also called 'Mizan' because it weighs the correctness (or otherwise) of an argument, and 'prosody' which determines the correctness (or otherwise) of metre of poetry.

Thus, we have 'Mizan' of various shapes and types to 'measure' various things: there is the rain-gauge to measure rain-fell, seismograph to measure earthquake, ECG, to measure electrical impulses in the heart-muscles.

On the Day of Qiyamat, people will be judged according to their belief or disbelief and their good or evil deeds; in short, this means whether they accepted and followed the prophets and Imams or not.

Therefore, the Prophets and Imams will be the 'Mizan' by which the faith and deeds of the people will be measured and weighed.

Now we come to the third meaning: The idea of a weighing-scale to weigh the deeds (which would be given some weighable form) was rejected by many ancient scholars. They said that deeds were not 'body' which could be weighed. On the other hand, many scholars like 'Allamah Majlisi said that: "We believe in 'Mizan' and leave its meaning to the interpreters of the Qur'an (i.e., to the Holy Prophet and Imams), and we do not take it upon ourselves to 'know' what has not been clearly explained to us (by the Prophet and Imams)."

He means that we should believe that there will be the 'Mizan' on the Day of Judgement. But, as the Ahadith on this subject do not give it one definite meaning, we should not try to define what has been left vague by the Prophet and Imams; rather, we should say that whatever the meaning of 'Mizan' it is the 'Truth' and we believe in it.

And in these days the idea of weighing or measuring beliefs and deeds does not appear so far-fetched as it did in ancient times.

Man, with all his limitations, has invented machines which 'measure' the emotions and feelings of a man. Not only that, they judge the behaviour of an army or a country, and even predict the trends of their future conduct. What happens is this; definite examples of behaviour and conduct (i.e., deeds and emotions) are changed to some symbols and signs or numbers; and the data are fed into a computer; the computer weighs the data and gives its judgement.

If man has succeeded in giving the actions and feelings a "weighable" or "measurable" form, and in inventing a machine which weighs the data and passes its own judgement, how can we reject the idea of a 'weighing-scale' (in its literal meaning) on the Day of Judgement. Surely, the

Creator is Omnipotent, and He can easily create a 'Mizan' to weight our beliefs and actions. As mentioned in the beginning, all three meanings may be correct and may exist side by side: The people may be judged by the 'Mizan' (literal meaning) on the basis of their accepting and following of the Prophets and Imams (2nd meaning), and all this process will be based upon the Justice of Allah (1st meaning).

But, as explained by Allamah Majlisi, we leave the actual interpretation in the hands of the Holy Prophet and Imams, without choosing or rejecting any of the meanings. Whatever the meaning of 'Mizan', it is certain that our Holy Prophet (S) and his 12 successors (A) will be present near 'Mizan', and will take the accounts of our deeds as has been quoted .from Itiquadiyyah of Shaykh Saduq (r.a..) earlier

Reckoning and Accounting

'Hisab' (Reckoning) is a 'Term' which may be applied to the whole proceeding right from the distribution of the scrolls of deeds to the 'Sirat' and its 'stops' (which will be described later). All

these things are closely connected with each other and overlap so much that sometimes they appear to mean one and the same thing.

To explain each and every term, the writers have to give separate headings to each; but it must be made clear that explaining one term after another does not imply the sequence of the happenings on the Day of Qiyamat.

'Hisab' is a very vast subject; and the size of this book does not permit the quotation here of even one per cent of the Ayats and Ahadith.

Therefore only a few important principles will be given here.

The questioning about conveying the message of Allah (See chapter 41) will be universal. Nobody will be exempted from it: the prophets, their successors and the people, all will be questioned about it.

Once it is done, the 'Mushrikun' (polytheists and/or pantheists) will be sent to Hell straight away. They will not be asked anything about their deeds. It is clear from many Ahadith as well as from the Qur'an:

"Verily Allah will not forgive that partners be set up with Him; and He will forgive other things to whom He will please. " (Qur'an, 4:48)

Also, many Believers will be sent straight away to Paradise.

Those whose accounts will be checked cannot be easily divided into categories, because each will be dealt with in his own way, according to his belief and deeds, whether he loved the 14 Masoomeen (A), was good to his parents, relatives and neighbours, whether his sins were against Allah, or against the creatures of Allah; and finally whether the Holy Prophet (S) or his Ahlul-Bait (A) would like to intercede for him or not.

Obviously, no hard and fast rules can be laid down for this purpose. Suffice it to say that those who did not believe in Allah, or did not believe in the Holy Prophet of Islam, or did not believe in the 12 Imams who came after the Holy Prophet of Islam, would enter Hell, after they had given full account of their deeds and beliefs.

Now as to those who believed in all the above -mentioned: If a believer had committed a sin and was punished for it by the rightful Qadhi or Imam, according to Shariat, that sin would not be brought up again for reckoning (because Allah is Just and does not punish twice for one thing.) If he had committed a sin against another creature of Allah, it will not be pardoned by Allah; he will have to repay it (or seek pardon from the wronged party). If he had committed a sin against Allah (but no creature of Allah was wronged by it), and then had done Tawba (had repented), then, in the words of Hadhrat Ali (A), "we hope that the Mercy of Allah will cover him, but, at the same time, we are afraid of His punishment to him."

On that Day, Allah will give His creatures opportunities to seek pardon from their fellows and forgive them. Imam Zaynu'l- Abidin (A) narrated a long Hadith from Hadhrat 'Ali (A), a part of which runs as follows :-

".....Then, Allah will say: "I Am Allah; there is no god except I, the Judge, the Just who does not do any injustice. Today I will judge between you by My Justice and Fairness; none will be dealt with unjustly. Today I will take the right of the weak from the strong; and the wrong done to anyone will be righted with repayments of good and evil deeds, and I will reward those who will forgive their fellow-beings. And no one, who had done wrong to anyone (if that wrong has not been forgiven), will be allowed to pass this 'narrow passage' before Me. Therefore, seek each other and demand your dues from him who did injustice to you in the world, and I am your witness against them, and enough am I for witness."

Then people will recognise each other and catch each other, till everyone has found the person (s) who had done any wrong to him.

They will remain in that condition as long as Allah would wish; their condition will become tough, sweat will pour down from them, and their grief will increase; and their cries will rise high and loud: many of them will be ready to forgive their oppressors just to get away from that place.

".....'(Then an announcer will say)': 'Verily Allah tells you, 'I am the Giver; if you wish to forgive each other, do so; and if anybody does not want to forgive, I will surely get his recompense from his oppressor.'" Many will forgive their dues; but there will remain many who would not forgive.

Then Ridhwan (the Angel who manages the Paradise) will be called, and Allah will command him to raise before them a palace, made of silver, with all its paraphernalia, from the palaces of Paradise. The people will be told to raise their eyes and look at it. Everyone will covet it.

'Then an announcer will declare from Allah: 'O creatures! It is for anyone who forgives a believer.' A great many will forgive their dues to their oppressors. Still a few will not do so.

"Then Allah will say: 'No one who did wrong to another will go to my Paradise today. And no such person will be sent towards Hell who has to repay any due to a Muslim, before repaying it at the time of 'reckoning' O my creatures! Be ready for Reckoning.'

Then they will be allowed to proceed.....till they reach the field (of Mah-shar).....and the Books will be laid open (given to the people), and weighing-scales will be set, and the prophets and the witnesses (i.e., Imams) will be present: every Imam will give witness against his people that he had stood among them with the command of Allah, and called them to the Way of Allah."

At this juncture, a Qurayshite asked Imam Zaynul-Abidin (A):
"O Son of the Messenger of Allah! If a believer demands some dues from an unbeliever, what
will be taken from that unbeliever when he is from the people of Fire?
Imam said: "Some of the sins of the believer will be transferred to the account of the unbeliever
(to the extent of the right of the believer upon him) and he will have to undergo that much extra
punishment.

The Qurayshite asked: " if that due was from a Muslim to a Muslim, how would it be
recompensated?

The Imam said: "Some of the good deeds of the man who had wronged (to the extent of that
wrong) will be taken away from him and given to the wronged party."

The Qurayshite again asked: "If the man who had done wrong did not have any good deed?"
The Imam said "If the wrong-doer did not have any good deed, surely there would be some
sins committed by the wronged party; those sins will be taken away from him and added to the
sins of the wrongdoer."

In this way, people will have to repay for the wrongs, injustices and tyrannies committed
against other persons. Can we afford it?

Hadhrat Ali (A) said: "Know that the sin is of three types: There is a sin which will not be
forgiven; and a sin which will not be ignored, and a forgiven sin which will not be looked into.

The sin which will not be forgiven is to ascribe any partner to Allah.

Allah has said: 'Verily, Allah will not forgive that partner be set up with Him.' (Qur'an, 4:48)
And the sin which will be forgiven is the ordinary sins done by a servant (of Allah) by which he
puts only himself into harm.

And the sin which will not be ignored is the wrong done by the servants (of Allah) to one
another. The Reckoning in this case is very tough. (And) this does not mean (big injustices like)
wounding by knife or flogging by whips. But it includes even small injustices."

Someone asked Hadhrat Ali (AS): "How will Allah take the accounts of all His creation (at one
time) and they would be so many?" Imam (A) said: "Just as He gives them sustenance (at one
time) and they are so many". Then he was asked: "How will He take their accounts when they
would not be seeing Him?" Imam (A) said: "Just as He gives them sustenance and they do not
see Him."

It is the right of every person to be treated with justice; but nobody has a 'right' to the mercy of
the judge. It is for this reason that every person will get his due rewards from Allah; there is no
exception in this rule. Even the unbelievers, if their worldly well-being had not compensated
their good deeds, will be given their rewards - in the form of reduction in their punishment. For

example, Hatim and Nushirwan will have to go to hell, because they were unbelievers; but according to a Hadith, they will not feel any trouble there, because of their generosity and justice respectively.

But as was mentioned in 'God: An Islamic Perspective', the Mercy of Allah on the Day of Judgement will surround the true believers only; it will not reach the unbelievers and Hypocrites.

About Promise of Reward and Threat of Punishment: Shaykh as-Saduq (r.a..) has written: "It is our belief that whatever reward Allah has promised for a deed, He will surely fulfil that promise; but whatever punishment has been threatened for an action, Allah has the discretion about it. If He metes out that punishment it will be by His Justice; and if He forgives, it will be by His Mercy and Grace; and your Lord is not unjust towards the creatures."

Therefore; if someone is a believer, he is basically entitled to go to paradise. And he will finally reach Paradise. The only question is - and it is a big question indeed - whether he will be sent there without first being punished for his sins and misdeeds. As was mentioned in chapter 17, 20, and 22, if a believer was not cleansed of his sins by the troubles of the worldly life, or by death-pangs, or by the squeeze of the grave, or punishment in Barzakh, then he will have to be sent to Hell for his due punishment. If this happens, then it will be a manifestation of the Justice of Allah. On the other hand, he may have to his credit one or more such good deeds which may give Allah an "excuse" to shower His Mercy upon him, and forgive His sins. Or he may get 'Shafa'at' (intercession) of the Prophet (S) or Imams, or Bibi Fatima (peace be on them all) or of other believers. In that case, Allah will forgive him, to show the honour of the interceders.

But here the warning given by Hadhrat Ali (A), (quoted in chapter 17) must be repeated: "Therefore, do good work, and obey (the commands of God), and do not rely merely on faith and our intercession, and do not think of the punishment of Allah as a small matter, because there will be among the sinner (believers) those who Will not get our intercession but after three hundred thousands years."

Think of it! Three hundred thousands years in the Fire of Hell! May Allah have Mercy on us! 'Allamah Majisi (r.a..) says: "Know that Hisab (Accounting of deeds) is Haqq (Truth), and numerous Ayats and Mutawatir Ahadith have spoken about it.

"But there is some deference in the Ahadith concerning what will the servant (of Allah) be required to give account of, and what they will be asked of. For example, some Ahadith show that one will not be asked about the things used lawfully, while other Ahadith say: "In (the world's) lawful things is Reckoning and in its unlawful things is punishment."

Maybe the first type of Ahadith refer to the believers (that they will not be asked about lawfully used things), and the second type refers to unbelievers; or, maybe, the first type refers to the necessities, like food, clothes, house and spouse, while the others refer to that which exceeds the need, like hoarding wealth more than one's need, or spending it on unnecessary items which are disliked by Shariaat."

From the above explanation we may understand other Ayats and Ahadith which, at first glance, may appear to differ from each other. But in fact there is no difference and no contradiction at all. An atheist had asked Hadhrat Ali (A) about many Ayats of the Qur'an concerning the Day of Judgement, which he claimed were contradictory to one another. Hadhrat Ali (A) said: "These Ayats do not describe the condition of one time and place. They explain the situation of various places on the Day which will be fifty thousand years long." Afterwards, the Imam (A) explained which Ayat is about which group and for what period

The 'Path' and its Stations

"Sirat" in Arabic means the Path. The Qur'an has used the word 'As-Siratul-Mustaquim' (Straight Path) for the Divine religion.

In the context of Qiyamat, Sirat means a bridge upon Hell over which all mankind, will have to pass. Shaykh as-Saduq(r.a..) has written:-

"It is our belief about 'Sirat' that it is Haqq (Truth); and that it is the bridge of Hell; and upon it is the path of all the creatures, as Allah has said: 'Not one of you but will pass over it; this is a firm decree of thy Lord. (Qur'an, 19:71)

"And 'Sirat', on the other hand, is the name of the Proofs of Allah (i.e., the Prophets and Imams); Thus he who knew them (had their true 'Maarifat') in this world and obeyed them, Allah will give him permission to pass from that 'Sirat' which is the bridge over Jahannam (Hell), on the Day of Qiyamat, the Day of sorrow and shame. The Prophet (S) said to Ali (A): 'O Ali! On the Day of Qiyamat, shall sit I and you and Gabriel on the 'Sirat'; and shall not pass over the 'Sirat' except he who would have a 'release' (from Jahannam) based on your 'Wilayat' (love and obedience)."

This Hadith has been narrated by many Sunni scholars also; and it proves that the salvation on that Day depends upon the love and obedience of Ali(A)

How is it that the Prophets and Imams are called 'Sirat' in this world?

As was explained about 'Mizan', the essential meaning of 'Path' is the way connecting two points. As the Prophets and Imams connect the human beings with God, it is perfectly right to call them the 'Path of Allah'. At the same time, they brought the Divine religion to help the

people reach nearer to Allah. For this reason the Religion brought by them is also called 'Path of Allah'; and, in that context, they are called 'Guides'. Thus they are the paths; and they are the Guides.

On that Sirat of Qiyamat, there will be 'Aquabat' (mountain passes) or 'Mawaquif (Stops or stations). Every Station is named after one command of Allah and His laws. When some one will reach a station named, for example, 'Fast', he will be asked whether he had fasted as ordered by Allah.

Shaykh as-Saduq (r.a..) writes:

"About the mountain-passes which are on the Way of Mah-shar: It is our belief that each of these passes has a separate name: A Wajib thing, or an order, or a Haram thing. When a man will reach a pass named after a Wajib thing, and he had neglected that thing (in this world), he will be detained there and asked to repay the dues of Allah; then if any other good deed came to his rescue or Mercy of Allah saved him, he will be allowed to safely pass from there to the next 'mountain-pass'. In this way, he will be sent from one pass to another, and will be detained at every pass, and asked about his short-comings in that particular order of Allah. Then if he came out safely from all the Passes, he will reach 'The House of Eternity' (i.e., Paradise);

he will live there a life which will not be conquered by death, and will find a bliss which will not be marred by any distress; will remain in the protection of Allah, with His prophets, and proofs, and truthful persons, and martyrs and virtuous servants of Allah

"But if he was detained at a pass, and asked about a Right of Allah which he had neglected, and was not saved by any good deed and the Mercy of Allah did not come to his rescue, his foot would slip from that pass, and he will fall into the Fire of Jahannam. We seek protection of Allah against it.

"And all these passes are upon the 'Sirat'. And name of one 'Pass' is "Wilayat": Everyone will be stopped therein, and asked about the Love and Obedience of Ameerul-Mumeneen Ali bin Abi Talib and the 11 Imams after him (peace of Allah be upon them). He who will bring it with him, as he was supposed to, will be saved; and he who did not bring it will enter Hell. And this is the meaning of the saying of Allah: 'And stop them, for they must be asked.'" (Qur'an, 37:24)

"Likewise, one Pass is named 'Sila-e-Rihm' (good behaviour towards relatives), and another is named 'Mirsaad' (watch-tower).....and one is named 'Trust', another is named 'Salat' (Prayer). Likewise, there will be passes named after every Wajib, order or Haram deed. Man will be detained there and asked about that particular thing."

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (A) said that there are fifty stations in the Qiyamat, and man will be detained at each of them for thousand years by this world's reckoning

It is narrated by Shia and Sunni traditionalists that: "The Messenger of Allah (S) told Hadhrat Ali: "If a person worshipped Allah as long as Noah stayed in his Ummat (i.e., 2500 or 950 years), and spent gold equal to the Uhud mountain in the way of Allah, and got such long life that did one thousand Hajj (pilgrimage) on foot, then was killed unjustly between the Safa and Marwa. yet if he did not love thee, O Ali! he would not smell the scent of the Garden (Paradise) and would not enter it"

Similar Ahadith have been narrated in various Commentaries of the Qur'an. One may ask 'Why?' The reason is this: The belief that 'Hadhrat Ali (A) is the first of the 12 rightful successors of the Prophet of Allah ensures that one believes in Allah, His Messenger and 12 Imams. In short, it is the culmination of all the fundamental beliefs. And if anyone rejects this belief, his faith in Allah and the Prophet remains incomplete.

And we know that there will be 'stops' on the Bridge of Jahannam. Naturally, the stop of 'Imamat' will come after the stops of 'Tawheed' and 'Nubuwwat'. And even after passing through these 'Stops' if one had not accepted Hadhrat Ali as the first Imam, he would fall down from the 'Stop, of 'Imamat'. In this background, the above-mentioned Ahadith become crystal clear.

After the matters of Faith, we come to the Commands of Allah. On this side, the daily prayers have been given the same importance as 'Imamat' has in Faith. The Holy Prophet (S) has said: "If it (the prayer) is accepted, other (deeds) will be accepted; and if it is rejected, the rest will be rejected." According to other Ahadith, the prayer will be the first thing (action) to be checked; if it is correct, other deeds will be looked into; otherwise, the rest will be ignored. As the prayer will be the first 'Stop' of the deeds, the reason of the above Ahadith is not difficult to understand.

Correctness and Acceptance of Good Deeds:

In the above Ahadith, two words have been used: 'Accepted' and 'Correct'. First of all, it should be appreciated that performing a Wajib action, e.g., prayer, has two benefits: one negative, another positive. The negative benefit is that it protects you from the punishment of 'Tarikussalah' (one who neglects the prayer). This benefit will reach to any one who performs the prayer correctly and regularly.

After that comes the stage of 'Acceptance'. Allah has declared through His Representatives that He accepts only that good deed which is done with 'pure intention' (Ikhlas), which is performed purely for the Pleasure of Allah, without any worldly motive, like showing people how pious one is. It is for this reason that, according to many Ahadith, some prayers are accepted completely, while others are accepted in parts only: a Sajdah, a Surah, or

aTashahhud, and so on. Only that part is accepted during which the whole attention and intention of the praying person was towards Allah. It is on those 'Accepted' parts that the 'Rewards' will be given. This is what I have termed as the 'positive benefit.'

Therefore, although the Reward and Acceptance of a Wajib or Sunnat deed depends upon purity of intention, one has to go on performing those Wajib actions to save oneself from punishment and disgrace. And getting saved from punishment is no less desirable than getting .rewards on the Day of Judgement

The Holy Prophet and His Ahlul-Bayt (A)

Previous chapters have shown some of the 'Fadhilat' (High prestige) of the Holy Prophet (S) and his Ahlul-Bayt (A) on the Day of Qiyamat. Based upon the Ayats of the Qur'an and Ahadith of Holy Prophet and A'imma (peace be upon them all), it is our belief that their position and rank will be the highest in the presence of Allah. Here just a few of the most important Fadhillat (plural of Fadhilat) are given for the information of the readers.

First of all: As was hinted in a previous chapter, these 14 Masoomeen (A) will take the accounts of their ShiA Imam Ja'far Sadiq (A) was asked the explanation of the Ayats: 'Verily, unto Us is their return; then verily upon Us is to reckon with them.' (Qur'an, 88:25-26) Imam (A) said, inter alia. "On the Day of Qiyamat, Allah will entrust the accounting of our Shias to us."

Question: The Ayat says that the people will return to 'Us' (i.e., to Allah) and upon 'Us' (i.e., upon Allah) is their reckoning. How could Imam (A) claim that the accounting of their Shias would be in their hands?

Answer: Here is an example: Allah says in the Qur'an: "It is Allah that takes the souls (of men) at death" (Qur'an, 39:42)

But in various other Ayats He attributes this work to the angels. For example: "Those whose souls the angels take in a state of purity....."

So, Allah is Al-Mumeet (The bringer of Death); and angels take out the souls of men by His authority and according to His command. Likewise, Allah is Al-Haseeb (The Reckoner); and still He mau authorize Muhammad (S) and his true successors to check the accounts of their Shias according to His guidance and command. Such arrangement can not undermine His Power and Authority

Second and Third are Wasilah and Liwa-ul-Hamd, which will be given to our beloved Prophet

(S)

Wasilah is his pulpit, made of precious jewels and minerals, and very high. When it will be placed among the pulpits of other prophets, it will look like full moon among the stars.

'Liwa' means 'standard, flag', Liwa-ul-Hamd means 'Standard of Praise'. It is the personal standard of the Holy Prophet, given to him by Allah on the Day of Judgement. On it is written "There is none to be worshipped except Allah; Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; the successful are only those who succeed by (Mercy of) Allah." It will be borne by Hadhrat Ali (A). The Holy Prophet (S) will proceed towards his 'Wasilah', enwrapped in a robe of 'Nur' (Light), wearing the Crown of 'Power and Majesty'; and Ali bin Abi Talib will be before him, carrying the Liwa-ul-Hamd. Reaching the Wasilah, the Holy Prophet will ascend to its highest step, and Ali will sit just below him, carrying his standard. Then it will be announced: "This is my beloved Muhammad, and this is my Wali Ali bin Abi Talib; 'Tuba' (a tree in Paradise) is for him who loved him, and 'Wail' (Hell) is for him who held enmity towards him and told lies about him.

Then 'Ridhwan' (The keeper of Paradise) will present himself before the Holy Prophet and after Salam will say: "I am Ridhwan, the keeper of the Garden; My Lord has ordered me to bring to you the keys of the Gardens. So, please, accept them, O Muhammad!"

The Holy Prophet will say: "I accept it from Lord; to Him belongs the gratitude for all that He has Blessed me with: Give them to my brother Ali bin Abi Talib."

After that, Malik (The keeper of the Hell) will come and in the same way will present the keys of Hell to the Holy Prophet, who after thanking Allah, will order Malik to give it to Hadhrat Ali (AS). Then Hadhrat Ali (A) will sit near Hell, and will tell it to "leave this man, because he is my follower and devotee, and take that man, he is my enemy."

And, in the words of the Holy Prophet (S), "Verily, Jahannam (Hell) on that Day will be the most obedient towards Ali; and it is because, verily, Ali (A) that Day is "Qaseemul-Jannati-Wannar (The Distributor of the Garden and Fire)."

It is to these distinctions of 'Ali (A) that Imam Shafi'i refers in his poem:

Translation:

'Ali, his love is a shield (against fire);

He is the distributor of the Hell and the Paradise; The true successor of the Chosen One (i.e. the Prophet); The Imam of the human beings and the Jinns.

Let us pray to Allah to include us on that Day among the devotees and followers of Ali bin Abi Talib (A).

The Fourth is the 'Hawdh' of 'Kawthar'. 'Hawdh' means small reservoir of water artificially formed. 'Kawthar' literally means abundance. Allah says in the Qur'an: "Verily, We gave thee

'Kawthar'." (Qur'an, 108:1)

This abundance was promised to our beloved Muhammad (S) both in this world and in the Qiyamat.

The Abundance in Qiyamat is the 'Hawdh' which Allah created for Muhammad (S). Shaykh as-Saduq (r.a.) says:-

"It is our belief about the 'Hawdh' that it is True and that its width is (like) the distance between 'Ayilah' and Sanaa. And it is the 'Hawdh' of the Prophet; it has (countless) cups like stars; and its administration on the Day of Qiyamat will be (in the hands of) Ali bin Abi Talib; he will give its drink to his devotees and will remove his enemies from there.

"And one who drinks once from it would never be thirsty again. And the Prophet (SAW) said: 'A group among my companions will be taken out from near me, and I will be on the 'Hawdh', and they will be taken towards the left side (the side of punishment) and I will say, 'O My Lord, (they are) my companions.' And I will be told: 'Surely, you do not know what they did after you (after your death).'"

Almost all these things are narrated by the Sunni scholars also. The abundance in this world means continuity of his lineage through Ali and Fatimah (A).

The Meccans used to taunt the Holy Prophet (S) that he had no male issue and as such he was childless, because the Arabs used to think that one's progeny could be continued through a son only.

Allah promised our beloved Prophet that: "Verily, We granted thee Abundance; Therefore, turn to thy Lord in prayer and sacrifice, Verily, thy enemy is 'Abtar (cut off from progeny)" (Qur'an, 108:1-3)

This Sura has two prophecies: 1) that the progeny of the Holy Prophet would be abundant: 2) that the progeny of his spiteful enemies would be cut off.

Today you will not find anyone claiming to be from the progeny of Abu Jehl and his group (who are meant by 'thy enemies'); and the progeny of the Holy Prophet, through Ali and Fatimah (A) are found in every part of the world, and are the living proof of the truth of the Qur'an.

The Sunni and Shia traditionalists have narrated various traditions from the Holy Prophet (SAW) to the effect that "Verily, Allah made progeny of every prophet from his loin, and He made my progeny from the loin of Ali."

Also, both sects have narrated from the Holy Prophet (S) that "Every relationship (by marriage or blood) will be cut off on the Day of Qiyamat, except my relationship by marriage and blood."

On that Day, people will be called by their mothers' names (e.g., Zaid son of Zainab), so that illegitimate children may be saved from public humiliation. But, according to the Sunni

traditions, the progeny of Ali and Fatimah (A) will be called by the names of their fathers. The Shia traditions say that all the followers (Shias) of Ali bin Abi Talib (A) will share this honour. A Shia of 'Ali (A) will be called by the name of his father.³⁸

On that Day, the followers will be called with their Leaders. Allah says: "The Day We shall call together all peoples with their (respective) Imams." (Qur'an, 17:71)

The true believers will follow their True Imams and be overwhelmed by their Divine Light. As Allah says: "The Day when Allah will not permit humiliation for the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their Light (i.e., Imam) will run forward before them and by their right hands while they say, 'Our Lord! Perfect our Light for us and Grant us forgiveness; for Thou hast power over all things,' (Qur'an, 66:8)

.Let us pray to Allah to give us the benefit of that Light. Amen

Shafa'at (Intercession)

Allah, in His Mercy, has opened many doors for His sinner servants to seek His pleasure and forgiveness. Two very important doors are 'Tawbah' (Repentance) and Shafa'at (Intercession).

Before explaining the Shafa 'at, a few details about 'Tawbah' will not be out of place here. Allah says in the Qur'an: "O ye who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance, in the hope that your Lord will remove from you your ills (evil deeds) and admit you into the Gardens beneath which rivers flow." (Qur'an, 66:8)

Another Ayat says: "When those come to thee who believe in our signs, say 'Peace be on you' your Lord has inscribed for Himself (the rule of) Mercy. Verily, if any of you did evil in ignorance, and thereafter repented and amended (his conduct), lo! He is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful " (Qur'an, 6:54)

Thus Allah forgives all sins and transgressions if a sinner repents sincerely. The key word is 'sincerely'. A repentance without a change of heart is no repentance. It must produce change in habit, and enhance the love and fear of Allah in one's dealings.

According to Hadhrat Ali (AS), "Repentance must have six elements: the repentant must be really sorry for what he had done; he must have firm determination not to do so again; he must make amends for whatever wrong he might have done to others; he must fulfil all the obligations of religion which he had previously neglected; he should fast long enough to shed away the flesh grown of unclean and unlawful food; and he should make his Self feel the taste of obedience of Allah, as he had previously enjoyed the taste of sin."

When a man repents sincerely, Allah makes him as clean (from sins) as he was the day he was born. The Holy Prophet (SAW) has said: "One who repents from sin is like the one who has

never committed any sin."

It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet has said: "There is no intercessor more successful than repentance."

Now we come to Shafa'at. It is accepted by all Muslims that the Holy Prophet (S) will intercede on behalf of the sinners of his Ummat. A few Ayats on this subjects:-

"Who is there that can intercede in His presence except by His permission?" (Qur'an, 2:255)

"He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they offer no intercession except for those who are acceptable (to Allah); and they stand in awe and reverence of His (glory)."

(Qur'an, 21:28)

Other Ayats show that for the unbelievers there will not be any intercessor. But the above-mentioned two Ayats show that those with whom Allah is pleased will intercede on behalf of the sinner believers, by permission of Allah.

Shaykh as-Saduq (r.a.) has, written:-

"It is our belief about Shafa'at that it is meant for (the benefit of) those whose faith was acceptable to Allah (i.e., for the true believers) who might have committed sins - capital or trivial. And those who had repented from their sins will not need any intercession. And the Prophet said: "He who does not believe in my intercession, Allah will not permit him to get my Shafa'at." Also he said: "There is no intercessor more successful than repentance."

"And the (right of) Shafa'at is for the prophets, Walis, successors (of the prophets), believers and angels.

"And there will be some believers who will do Shafa'at for (very large numbers) like the tribes of Rabi'a and Mudhar. And the smallest number will be that of a believer who will intercede on behalf of only thirty thousand believers.

"And the benefit of Shafa'at is not for those who had doubts about religion, nor for those who ascribed a partner to Allah, nor it is for unbelievers and those who rejected the (truth); but it is for (the benefit of) the sinners among those who believed in one Allah (together with His true Representatives.)

The following two Ayats are about the right of the Shafa'at given to our Holy Prophet (SA.W.):-

"Soon will thy Lord raise thee to a station of Praise and Glory" (Qur'an, 17:79)

According to many Ahadith, it will be the station where the Holy Prophet will intercede on behalf of the sinners.

"And, verily, the hereafter will be better for thee than this world. And soon will thy Lord give thee (that wherewith) thou shall be well-pleased." (Qur'an, 93:4-5)

It means, according to Ahadith, that Allah will go on granting the intercession of the Holy

'Prophet till he will say: 'O my Lord! Now I am well pleased and fully satisfied

Paradise

It is not possible to describe even partially the Bliss of Paradise, or the tortures of Hell.

Therefore, some fundamental facts are mentioned here in brief.

First: As Resurrection will be of body and soul together, the Reward and Punishment will have to cover both. In other words, Paradise and Hell will provide physical comforts and tortures respectively as well as the spiritual ones.

Therefore, Paradise and Hell are physical things, and not just spiritual bliss or sorrow as the Sufiyya say.

Second: Paradise and Hell are already created. It is not that they will be created at some time in future. Our Holy Prophet (SAW.) entered the Paradise and saw Hell at the time of 'Miraj' (Ascension). Allah did not create any witness more trustworthy than Muhammad (S) and we believe all that he said.

Third: The word used in the Qur'an for the abode of the believers is 'Jannat' (Garden).

Sometimes, other words are joined with it; thus we find:-

Jannatu-Adn: Garden of everlasting Bliss.

Jannatul-Firdaus: Garden of Paradise (The Arabic 'Firdaus' is rendered in Latin languages as 'Paradise'; and in this book almost all references to the 'Jannat' have been rendered as 'Paradise' for easy understanding).

Jannatul-Mawa: Garden of Abode

Jannatun-Naeem: Garden of Bliss

Jannatul-Khuld: Garden of Eternity

Some other words used for the Paradise are:

Darus-Salaam: Abode of Peace

Darul-Akhirah: Abode of the Hereafter

Darul-Maquamah: Abode of Residence

Some streams of the Paradise mentioned by name in the Qur'an are: Kawthar, Salsabil and Tasneem.

According to many Ahadith, Paradise has eight Gates. Some of them are: Gate of Mercy, Gate of Patience, Gate of Gratitude, Gate of Sufferings, and The Great Gate.

Fourth: An important tree in Paradise is called 'Tuba'; it is planted in the Abode of the Holy Prophet (S) and Hadhrat Ali (A), and it has a branch in every palace and mansion of the Paradise. Whenever a believer would desire anything, that branch would provide it for him at

once - there would be no need to utter the command; the desire would be obeyed without necessitating any utterance.

Some times the Holy Prophet (SAW.) said that the root of 'Tuba' was in his House; at other times he said that it was in the House of Ali (A). Somebody asked him about it and the Holy Prophet (SAW.) replied: "Verily, my House and Ali's House is the same....."

Many traditions narrated by Sunni traditionalist like Daylami, Tabarani and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal confirm that the Holy Prophet (SAW.), Hadhrat Ali (AS), Hadhrat Fatimah (A) Imam Hasan (A) and Imam Husain (A) will be in the same mansion in Jannat.

'Allamah Majlisi has narrated a Hadith from Ikmalu 'd-din that The Holy Prophet (S AW.)'s abode is in Jannatu 'Adn in the centre of the Paradise, nearest to the divine 'Arsh, (Throne); and the twelve Imams (A) will be in the same Garden with the Holy Prophet (S)

Fifth: Imam Muhammad Baqir (A) narrated from the Holy Prophet (SAW.) that "The Paradise is prohibited to the prophets until I enter it; and is prohibited to all the Ummats (peoples) until enter into it the Shias of us Ahlul-Bait."

Sixth: Shaykh as-Saduq (r.a.) has written:

"And it is our belief that before entering the Garden, the believer will be shown his place in the Fire and informed that, that was the place where he would have gone if he had disobeyed Allah. "And before entering the Fire, the unbeliever will be shown his place in the Garden and told that, that was the place where he would have gone if he had obeyed Allah.

"Then those vacant places in the Garden will be added to the rewards of the people of the Paradise; and those vacant places in the Fire will be added to the punishments of the people of Fire: And this is the meaning of the words of Allah: "those will be the heirs who will inherit the Paradise; they will dwell therein for ever."

The words 'heir' and 'inherit' refer to this episode, whereas the believers will get the places which were kept for others who did not make it and whose rejection of faith led them to die .Fire

Blessings of Paradise

Paradise is the confluence of every imaginable, and even unimagined, Bliss, Content, Happiness and Joy

Shaykh as-Saduq (r.a.) has written:

"It is our belief that paradise is the abode of eternity and house of peace; there is neither death there or old age; neither ailment nor disease; neither deterioration nor any handicap; neither sorrow nor worry; neither need nor poverty. And it is the house of plenty and bliss, and place of

permanency with honour. The people of paradise will not suffer from any monotony or tiredness therein. They will get there what the souls desire and eyes appreciate, and they will abide there forever.

“And it is the house whose residents will be (like) neighbours to Allah in the company of the friends of Allah and His beloveds - those who are honoured in His presence.

“And the people of paradise will be of various grades..... some of them will enjoy the numerous foods and drinks and fruits and houris... ..,

“Every one of them will enjoy what he likes most. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (A) said: “Verily, people (who) worship Allah (are) divided in three groups: one group worships Him with the aim of Paradise hoping to get the rewards from Allah - this is the worship of servants; another group worships Him because they are afraid of His Fire -this is the worship of slaves; and one group worships Him for His Love - this is the worship of noble people.....”

“And it is our belief that nobody leaves this world until he sees his place in the Paradise.or the Fire....” .

“And the lowest in the rank among the people of the Paradise will be given in the Paradise ten times like this world.”

Shaykh Mufid (r.a.) has said;

“Paradise is the house of Bliss. Its residents will not feel any monotony or tiredness. Allah has made it the abode of those who knew Him and worshipped Him. Its blessings are eternal - it will not be discontinued.

“And its residents will be of various types: There will be one who spent his life purely for Allah - he is the person who will enter it without any fear.

“And then there will be another who mixed good deeds with sins and evils, and kept postponing the repentance till the death pounced upon him and he died without repenting -maybe such a man was punished in his worldly life and Barzakh (or only in the worldly life); (if so) then he will enter the Paradise (without further trouble): And may be his sins would be forgiven (for any reason known to Allah). (Such a man also will go to Paradise straight away), Or maybe he will get deliverance after being punished (in Hell) first.

“And there will be the one who will find the Grace of Allah without any good deed on his part - they are the children who will remain in the Paradise to serve its residence.....And these children will not find the least trouble in serving the people of Paradise, rather they will enjoy it.

“And the reward of the residents of the Paradise consists of the enjoyments of foods and drinks; and (attractive) scenes and sexual enjoyments... .”

'Allamah Majlisi (r.a.) has explained the grades of enjoyments in a long description, in which he,

interalia, says:-

“Enjoyment of the physical comforts and blessings has many grades according to the Qum difference in the (spiritual) condition of the people. Some of them will enjoy as the catles enjoy pasture, and will get the physical pleasure as they were doing in this world, without appreciating the nearness or love of Allah. Others will enjoy these blessing because the Paradise is a place of honour chosen by Allah for His friends, and because it is the place which manifests the pleasure of Allah and which has brought them nearer to Allah.”

According to Qur'an and Hadith, there will not be any hatred, enmity, envy or quarrel in the Paradise. Everyone will be highly-pleased with what he would be given by Allah, and no one will desire the other's place or rank.

There will be no excrement of any kind in the Paradise, whatever they will eat and drink will be removed from their bodies in the form of a scented, fragrant, aromatic sweat.

The women will be free from bleeding, pregnancy and other such troubles. The light in the Paradise will be not that of sun, moon or stars. The time there will always be like that between dawn and sun-rise in this world; and the breeze will be like cool gentle wind which one often feels at dawn in this world.

Mulla Hasan Yazdi has written in 'Anwarul-Hidayah' about some of the bounties of the Paradise. A gist is given here:-

“The enjoyments of the Paradise are of various kinds:

1. The greatest bliss will be the 'Pleasure of Allah', as Allah says in the Qur'an, “And the greatest bliss is the pleasure of Allah.” (Qur'an, 9:72)

Sexual pleasure: The believers will get at least seventy thousand houris, apart from their believer wives. Whenever the believer will go to them, he will find them virgins.

Tasty food and fruits: Every time they would get a fruit it would give a new taste. As Allah says in the Qur'an: “Every time they are fed with fruits therefrom, they say, 'Why, this is what we were fed with before', but they are given similar (just in shape, not in taste)” (Qur'an, 2:25)

Joy, happiness and content of heart.

Gatherings with friends, as Allah says: “And We shall remove from their hearts any lurking sense of injury; they will be brothers (joyfully) facing each others on thrones.” (Qur'an, 15:47)

Palaces and abodes made of precious metals and adorned with jewels; gardens with streams and fruits and flowers.

Various types of entertainments, including musical sounds of birds, reserved for those who protected themselves from music in this life.

Various streams: As Allah says in the Qur'an: “Here is a likeness of the Garden which the pious

are promised, in it are rivers of incorruptible water, rivers of milk, of which taste never changes, and rivers of wine, a joy to those who will drink it, and rivers of pure and clear honey. In it for them are all kind of fruits; and Grace from their Lord.” (Qur’an, 47:15)

According to Ahadith, the wine will be non-intoxicating. It will give pleasure without having any effect on sense or morality. And it is reserved for those only who abstain from liquor in this world.

The knowledge that the bliss of the Paradise is theirs for ever, without any danger of death or transfer or illness or worry etc.

Ever-increasing Grace of Allah, visits from the angels and remembrance of Allah at all times: As Allah says, “And those who believe and do good, their Lord will guide them because of their faith: beneath them will flow rivers in Gardens of Bliss. This will be their cry therein “Glory to Thee, O Allah!” and “Peace” will be their greeting therein, and the close of their cry will be

“Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the Worlds.” (Qur’an, 10:9 – 10)

And the most pleasant bliss will be nearness to the Holy Prophet (S) and his progeny (A) , and for a lover and follower of Muhammad and Aal-e-Muhammad (peace be on them all) this Grace of Allah will surpass all other graces.

But the best description of the bliss of the Paradise is given in a Hadith Qudsi in these words: “I have kept ready for my servants what no eye ever looked upon, and no ear ever heard of, nor any heart ever imagined.”

And it is written in the Qur’an: “Now no person knows what delights of the eyes are kept hidden (for them as a Reward for their good deeds.” (Qur’an, 32:17)

The Hell

As the Paradise contains all kinds of joy, happiness and Grace of Allah, the Hell contains all types of punishment, torture and humiliation.

Shaykh as-Saduq (r.a..) has written:-

“And it is our belief about the Fire that it is the abode of disgrace and place of punishment for the unbelievers and sinners; and will not remain for ever in the Fire except the unbelievers and polytheisms. And so far as the wrong-doers from among the believers are concerned, they will eventually come out of it by the mercy (of Allah) or the Intercession (of the Prophets and Imams)...and the people of Fire are truly poor, they will neither be allowed to die nor their punishment will be reduced, (Qur’an, 35:36) they will not taste in it any cold (water) or drink except a boiling fluid, and a fluid, dark, and murky; (Qur’an, 78:24 – 25) and if they would want food, they would be fed with 'Zaqqum' (a cursed tree); and if they seek relief they will be

granted water like molten brass that will scald their faces. How dreadful the drink! How uncomfortable a couch to recline upon! (Qur'an, 18:29) They will cry from a place far (from the Grace of Allah): 'Our Lord! Bring us out of this; of ever we return (to evil) then shall we be wrong-doers indeed!' (Qur'an, 23:107) For a time no reply will be given to them, then it will be said, 'Be you driven into it (with ignominy)! And speak you not to Me!' (Qur'an, 23:108)

And they will cry to Malik (the Keeper of the Fire), 'O Malik! (Request) thy Lord to let us die!' He will say, 'Verily, you are to remain therein for ever.'

"And it has come into the traditions that Allah shall order some people to be led to the Fire, then He will tell Malik: "Tell the Fire not to burn their feet, because they used to go to the mosques; and not to burn their hands, as they used to raise them in Invocations (Duas); and not to burn their tongues, because they recite the Qur'an very much; and not to burn their faces, because they used to perform Wudhu perfectly'

"Then Malik will ask them: 'O Wretched Ones! What was your condition? (Why have you been sent to Hell?)' They will say: 'We were doing good deeds not for Allah (but to show people).

Now it was said to us, Take your rewards from those for whom you had worked." Shaykh Mufid (r.a..) has said: "The Fire (i.e Hell) is the adobe of all who did not know Allah. And even some of those will be sent therein because of their sins and wrong-doings; but such a man will not remain there for ever, he will be taken out of it and sent to the ever-lasting bliss. And nobody will remain for ever in the Fire except the unbelievers And every Ayat, which mentions ever-lasting punishment of Fire, is about the unbelievers, and not about those who knew Allah. And it is proved by the reason, and the Qur'an, and well-known traditions and unanimous belief."

Hell has seven gates, as Allah says: "To it are seven gates; for each of those gates is a (special) class (of sinners assigned)." (Qur'an, 15:44)

According to the traditions, those gates are as follows:
Jaheem: Its people will be made to stand on burning stone which will make their brains boil, as cooking-pot boils its contents.

Allah says: "Then, for such as had transgressed the bounds, and had preferred the life of this world, the abode will be Jaheem." (Qur'an, 79:37 – 39)

Laza: It will be the place of those who turned away from Allah, and were busy in amassing wealth without taking out the dues of Allah and His creatures. The Fire will catch them by their hands, feet and forehead and suck them inside. Allah says: "By no means! For it would be the Laza (Fire), plucking out (the sinner) right to the skull! Inviting all such as turn their backs and turn away their faces, and collect (wealth) and hide it." (Qur'an, 70:15 – 18)

Saquar: Allah says about it: "Soon will I cast him into Saquar. And what will explain to thee what Saquar is? It allows nothing to endure, nor does it leave anything alone; darkening and changing the colour of man. Over it are nineteen (guards)" (Qur'an, 74:26-30)

Hutamah: Literally it means 'That which crushes to pieces.' It throws out sparks as huge as forts, as if there were a string of yellow camels (marching swiftly). It will break everyone who is sent inside and grind him to powder, and then they will be made whole again and again. Allah says:

"Woe to every scandal-monger and back-biter, who piles up the wealth, and lays it by; he thinks that his wealth would make him last for ever. By no means! He will be sure to be thrown into Hutamah (that which crushes to pieces). And what will explain to thee what is that which crushes to pieces? (It is) the Fire of (the Wrath of) Allah, kindled to a blaze, that does mount right to the hearts. It shall be made into a vault over them, in columns outstretched." (Qur'an, 104:1-9)

Hawiyah: Literal meaning: A Pit. Allah says: "But he, whose Balance of (good) deeds will be light, will have his home in a bottomless Pit. And what will explain to thee what it is? A fire blazing fiercely." (Qur'an, 101:8-11)

There will be in it people who will cry out, 'O Malik! Help us!' Then Malik will provide them with pots of fire in which will be boiling fetid water, which will come out from their bodies like (molten) brass. When they will raise it to drink, the flesh of their faces will drop away because of its intense heat.

About this, Allah says "And if they seek relief they will be granted water like molten brass that will scald their faces; how dreadful the drink! How uncomfortable a seat to recline upon!" (Qur'an, 18:29)

And anyone thrown into it, will go on falling for seventy years, always engulfed by Fire. When his skin will burn away, Allah will give him another skin.

Ibn Abil-'Awja' (an atheist) once asked Imam Ja'far-as Sadiq (A) about the word of Allah: "As often as their skins are roasted through, we shall change them for fresh skins; so that they may taste the punishment; for Allah is exalted in power, Wise." (Qur'an, 4:56)

He objected to it saying: "Let us suppose that the present skins had participated in the sins. But what would be the sins of the new skins?" Imam (A) said: "Woe unto thee! It would be the same (skin) and yet it would be a new one." Ibn Abil-'Awja' said: "Give me an example from this world".

Imam (A) said: "Let us say that a man took a brick and crushed it to small particles, then pouring some water on it and putting it into a brick-making frame, made another brick out of it.

Now, is it not the same brick, and yet is it not another brick? Ibn Abil-'Awja' said: "Certainly!" Sa'eer: It means Blazing Fire. There are in it three hundred curtains of Fire, in every curtain are three hundred forts of Fire, in every fort are three hundred abodes of Fire, and in every abode are three hundred types of punishments of Fire; there are snakes of fire, and scorpions of fire, and yokes of fire; and it is this about which Allah says: "Verily, We have prepared for the unbelievers chains, and yokes, and a blazing Fire." (Qur'an, 76:4)

Jahannam: There are in it 'Falaq' and 'Sa'ud' and 'Atham'.

Falaq is a 'well' or pit inside the Jahannam; when it is opened it makes the Fire blaze even more fiercely. And it is a far greater punishment (compared to the previous 6 stages).

Sa'ud is a brass mountain of Fire in the centre of Jahannam. It is mentioned in this Ayat: "Soon will I take him to Sa'ud (i.e., the mountain of punishment)." (Qur'an, 74:17)

Atham is a valley of melted brass around the above-mentioned mountain. And it is the place of the fiercest punishment.

Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (A) said: "Verily, there is a fire inside the Fire from which even the people of the Fire would seek protection. It was created only for every proud, powerful obstinate transgressor, and for every rebellious Satan, and for every obstinate person who does not believe in the Day of Reckoning, and for every enemy of the progeny of Muhammad. "

Also, he said: "The man with the lightest punishment on the Day of Resurrection will be the one standing up to his ankles in the Fire, wearing two sandals of fire with two straps of fire; his brain will be boiling by its heat like a cooking pot. He would think that nobody would be in greater punishment, while in fact his would be the lightest calamity.

The seven gates of the Fire have been interpreted in some traditions as seven grades: the seventh being the fiercest, which is the abode of the hypocrites, as Allah says: "Verily the hypocrites will be in the lowest depth of the Fire: no helper you will find for them. (Qur'an, 4:145)

And the first grade (or depth) will be for those believers who had committed sins and would have to undergo punishment to atone for it (the details of which have been given earlier).

For those believers, the hardest punishment will be the realization that they have been turned away from the Divine Grace, and removed from the company of the friends of Allah. It is this aspect of punishment which has been described by Amirul-Mu'menin 'Ali' bin Abi Talib (A) in

Du'a-e-Kumayl:-

"For, if Thou will subject me, together with Thy enemies, to the penalties, and join me with those who shall have merited punishment, and separate me from those who love and adore Thee: grant me, my God, my Master, my Lord, that I shall patiently endure Thy punishment, but

how shall I be patient on separation from Thee?
of being deprived of beholding Thy Clemency? Or how can I remain in the Fire, while I have the
hope of Thy Forgiveness?"

Then by Mercy of Allah and Intercession of the Prophet and Imams (A) they shall be forgiven.
They will be taken out of the Fire, given bath in Kawthar and awarded their places in the
Paradise.

May Allah have Mercy on us and save us from the Fire, as we do not have strength to endure
.that punishment even for a single moment

A'raf

A'raf means the Heights. It is a place between the Gardens and Fire. It has been mentioned in
the 7th Sura of the Qur'an, which is called 'Al-A'raf because of it.

Here are some Ayats from that Surah: -

Until, when Our messengers (of death) arrive and take their (i.e., unbelievers') souls, they say:
"Where are the things that you used to invoke besides Auah?" They will reply: "They have left
us in the lurch." And they will bear witness against themselves that they rejected Allah.
He will say: "Enter you in the company of the peoples who passed away before you, men and
Jinns, into the Fire. Every time a new people enters, it curses its people, until they follow each
other, all into the Fire. Says the last about the first: "Our Lord! It is these that misled us; so give
them a double penalty in the Fire." He will say: "Double for all, but this you do not understand."
Then will say the first to the last: "See then! No advantage you have over us; so taste you of the
penalty for all that you did."

To those who reject Our signs and treat them with arrogance, no opening will there be of the
gates of heaven, nor will they enter the Garden, until the camel passes through the eye of the
needle. Such is Our reward of those in sin.

For them there is Hell as a couch and folds of covering above.

Such is Our requital of those who wrong.

But those who believe and do good deeds, no burden do We place on any soul but that which it
can bear, they will be companions of the Garden, therein to dwell forever.

And We shall remove from their hearts any lurking sense of injury; beneath them will be rivers
flowing; and they shall say: "Praise be to Allah Who has guided us to this: Never could we have
found guidance, had it not been for the Guidance of Allah. Indeed it was the Truth that the
Messengers of our Lord brought unto us." And they shall hear the cry: "Behold! The Gardens
before you! You have been made its inheritors, because of your deeds."

The Companions of the Garden will call out to the Companions of the Fire: "We have indeed found the promise of our Lord to us true. Have you also found your Lord's promise true?" They shall say: "Yes." Then a crier shall proclaim between them: "The curse of Allah is on the wrongdoers, those who would hinder (men) from the path of Allah and would seek in it something crooked; they were those who denied the Hereafter."

And between them shall be a veil (or partition), and on the Heights will be men who would know every one by his marks; they will call out to the Companions of the Garden: "Peace on you". They will not have entered it but they will have assurance (thereof).

When their eyes shall be turned towards the companions of the Fire, they shall say: "Our Lord! Send us not to the company of wrongdoers."

And the men on the Heights will call to certain men whom they will know from their marks, saying: "Of what profit to you were your hoards and your arrogant ways? Behold! Are these not the men whom you swore that Allah would never bless them with His Mercy?" (Then turning to other group, they will say) "Enter you the Garden; no fear shall be on you nor shall you grieve."

The companions of the Fire will call to the companions of the Garden: "Pour down to us water or anything that Allah has provided for your sustenance." They will say. "Both these things has Allah forbidden to those who rejected Him, such as took their religion to be mere amusement and play, and were deceived by the life of the world." That day shall We forget them as they forget the meeting of this Day of theirs, and as they were wont to reject Our signs. (Qur'an, 7:37-51)

I have quoted these Ayats in full as they show the condition of the people of the Paradise and those of the Fire, and the ever-lasting grief and sorrow of the latter on losing their chance of salvation.

These Ayats mention two groups which will be on the Heights. There will be those who will identify every one by his marks, and who will rebuke the people of the Fire and will tell the people of the Garden to enter the Paradise. These men are the Holy Prophet of Islam and his 12 successors, who will order their followers to be placed in the Paradise. According to some traditions, Hamza (uncle of the Holy Prophet) and Ja'far (brother of 'Ali bin Abi Talib (AS)) and 'Abbas (uncle of the Holy Prophet) also will stand there.

Also there will be those who would be waiting for the decision of Allah concerning themselves. For example; those true believers whose good and bad deeds would be of equal weight; those non-Shia Muslims who just followed a faith in which they were born, without knowing or understanding any thing and who had no enmity towards the progeny of the Prophet (S).

The word 'A'raf is from the same root from which is the word Ma 'rifah (Knowledge). And, accordingly, it implies that only those people will get salvation on that Day who knew the Prophet and Imams. And whom they would recognise as their followers.

Shaykh as-Saduq (r.a.) has written:-

“And it is our belief about A'raf that it is the boundary between the Garden and the Fire. Upon it will be men who will know every one by his marks; and those men are the Prophet and his successors (peace be on them); only such man will enter the garden who knew them and would be recognised by them (as such), and the one who did not know them and whom they did not recognise would enter the Fire.

“And upon that Height will (also) be those who would be waiting for the decision of Allah - either He gives them punishment or turns towards them (with His Mercy).”

Shaykh Mufid (r.a.) has written:-

“It has been said that A'raf is a mountain between Paradise and Hell; and also it is said that it is the boundary-wall between the two places. What is certain is that it is a place neither of the Paradise nor of the Fire. On the Day of Resurrection, the Messenger of Allah (S) and Imams (A) will be upon it, and it is they that are meant in the words of Allah 'And on the Heights will be men who will know every one by his marks'. It is so, because Allah will inform them about the people of Garden and people of Fire by some marks which He will put on them, and these will be the 'signs' mentioned in the following Ayats:-

“They will know every one by his marks” (Qur'an, 7:46)

“The sinners will be known by their marks” (Qur'an, 55:41)

“Verily, in this are Signs for those who do understand by tokens.” (Qur'an, 15:75)

“And it has been mentioned in the traditions that Allah will keep upon the A'raf some groups which would not deserve a Reward without punishment but would not deserve ever-lasting abode in the Hell. These are the people who would be waiting for the order of Allah; for such people there is intercession, and they will have to remain on the A'raf till they are allowed to enter the Garden by the intercession of the Prophet (S), Ali (A) and the Imams after him (A).

“Also, it is said that it will be the abode of such people who were not 'Mukallaf in this life (Mukallaf: an adult and sane person), i.e., they were either idiots or insane, or died before attaining adulthood. Therefore, they did not do any good or bad deed to deserve the Garden or Fire. So, Allah will make them live in A'raf; they will be saved from punishment (because they were not Mukallaf) but will not be given such blessings which other people will be given after doing good deeds. (They will not be placed equal to those who reached there after a life spent in good deeds).”

Shaykh Mufid (r.a.) has mentioned children etc. in his discourse. It is better to give some details here on this subject: -

The minor children are not 'Mukallaf' (are not obliged to follow the rules of Shari'at), and if they died at that age, they would not deserve any reward. But Allah in His Mercy has made an exception in the case of the minor children of the believers. They will be allowed to enter the Paradise. Not only that, the Mercy of Allah will allow those children of the believers who had died in their infancy, to intercede for their parents.

Now we come to the children of unbelievers, and the idiots, and mad persons, and the person who died without getting any information about the Prophet or true religion, and the deaf and dumb persons. There are many traditions which show that they will be briefly tested on the Day of Resurrection and sent to the Paradise or. Hell, accordingly. For example, Imam Muhammad Baqir (A) has said:-

"On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will test five groups: Children, and the man who died between the appearance of two prophets (and did not meet either of them), and the person who was alive at the time of a prophet but did not know (about his claim), and the idiot, and the insane, and the deaf and dumb: Allah will send a messenger towards them, and he will prepare a blazing fire; then he will tell them: 'Your Lord orders you to jump into it.' Whosoever will jump into it will find it cool and safe; but whosoever will disobey will be led towards Hell