

## How Much Will Each Person Enjoy Heaven? What Determines the Quality of Our Heaven?

### The Degree to Which We Will Enjoy Heaven

Many of us deeply wish to know what end awaits us in the Hereafter. What role do we ourselves play in the formation of our own Heaven or Hell? The degree to which we will enjoy Heaven, and when we enter the Hereafter, do we step into a world that has already been prepared for us in advance—or is it a realm shaped by our own actions?

These types of questions are entirely natural when they pertain to realities we will inevitably face, even if the moment of encounter has not yet arrived. We have every right to seek knowledge about our eternal future and the everlasting life that lies ahead. Such knowledge could very well bring about a profound shift in the way we live and lead to a transformation in our lifestyle. Because, based on the Law of Proportion, we understand that there exists a profound relationship between the life we lead in this world and the quality of our life in the Hereafter, including the degree to which we will enjoy heaven.

But how exactly does this life shape the Hereafter?

What role do we play in determining our eternal reward?

These are the very questions we intend to address in this lesson. However, before delving into this discussion, it is necessary to first explore the Divine attribute of Qayyūm (the Sustainer), how the manifestation of this attribute can be found within ourselves, and how it connects to the degree to which we will enjoy heaven.

## God as the *Qayyūm* — The Sustainer of All Existence

One of the Divine attributes of God is *Qayyūm*—meaning that not only is God self-sustaining, but all other beings in the universe, both in their very existence and in their ongoing persistence, are entirely dependent on Him. In fact, while God's existence is entirely independent of anything else, all other beings are in need of Him for their existence. They are manifestations and reflections of Him and we, as human beings, are no exception to this rule. In every state and aspect of our being, we are dependent on and sustained by the existence of God.

However, as we mentioned earlier, the ultimate purpose of our creation is to resemble Allah through the manifestation of His names and attributes, which have been placed within us in potential form. That is why, in His address to the human being—the Quran—God refers to those who have attained eternal Heaven as ever-living and self-sustaining (*hayy al-qayyūm*). This means that a human being who lived in a world where everything—from the tiniest particles to the greatest celestial bodies—had no independence of their own and were entirely reliant on the existence of God, now steps into a realm in which the conditions, circumstances, and blessings of Heaven are not only connected to God's infinite essence, but are also linked to the person himself and to his own soul. In truth, the soul that we shaped over the course of our limited worldly life now reaps the harvest of what was sown in the field of this world. It is this very soul that determines the quality of our eternal life in the Hereafter.

Imagine the school where you once studied. As you focus, its various components—its courtyard, classrooms, benches, and so on—begin to take shape in your mind. If

your attention shifts to another image, that mental picture fades—not because it has truly been destroyed, but because it is no longer present in your mind. However, the moment you bring it back into focus, it reappears.

This image:

- **Is alive**, because you can recreate it whenever you want.
- **Is entirely dependent on your will**; if you do not wish to recall it, it ceases to exist in your mind.
- **Is under your control**; you can alter it, erase it, or replace it at will.

This mental image is a simple example of a far greater truth: **the very existence of the human being in relation to God functions in the same way**:

- At every moment, the human being is receiving the divine “grace of existence” from God.
- Our existence is **dependent upon—and sustained by—God**.
- This dependency is **constant and uninterrupted**, just as the image in the mind is utterly dependent on the mind that holds it.

We possess no existential independence of our own. Everything we are is tied to the will of God. If He were to will otherwise, we would vanish—returning to the source of all existence, which is none other than God Himself. In the next section, we will examine how this reality connects to the Hereafter and to the degree to which we will enjoy Heaven.

## The Heaven We Build

In truth, the quality of what we will encounter in the Hereafter is directly shaped by our own soul. The heaven we dwell in—or the Hell we suffer—is born from within us, sustained by the very soul we have nurtured. Even now, in this wordly life, we are actively building our own Heaven and Hell, laying the foundation for our eternal existence. Though God has described heaven as vast as the heavens and the earth, the degree to which we enjoy it, the extent of our share in it, and the manifestation of its various blessings all depend on us. We are the ones who give form and stability to its parts: its cities and kingdoms, its palaces, servants, and attendants—even its waterfalls, trees, and fruits—all are manifestations of our own soul.

In essence, we build heaven in accordance with the vastness of our soul. For each one of us—created as God’s deputy on earth—a Heaven at the size of the heavens and the earth has been prepared. But the quality of filling this Heaven, of giving it substance and richness, is up to us. It is as though each of us has been given a home spanning thousands of square meters, but the task of furnishing and completing it has been left to our own capabilities. Naturally, the one who possesses more wealth, who has acquired the tools and resources to furnish every corner of this home, will enjoy a more beautiful, well-equipped, and comfortable life. On the other hand, the one who made no preparation, though in possession of a home of such vastness, will constantly feel regret and deprivation—because instead of inhabiting a grand palace, they lack even the means to maintain the little they were given.

### **Enjoyment Proportional to Our Assets**

Just as a fetus is born into a world that already exists—and benefits from it to the extent that they possess healthy limbs and organs, while suffering deprivation or

even pain if they are born with deficiencies—we, too, will enter the Hereafter into a heaven that has long been prepared. But our ability to dwell in it, to enjoy its blessings, and even to truly be present within it depends on the tools we have acquired in this world: the divine names and attributes we have carried within our hearts into the Hereafter.

It is through these very names and attributes that we come to resemble God, and it is in proportion to them that we gain the capacity to reign over our Heaven and enjoy living in the higher levels of Heaven. Thus, the degree to which we will enjoy Heaven is directly tied to the assets we carry with us from this world. If we lack the divine names, if we are unequipped with the qualities required to inhabit that realm, we will suffer regret, deprivation, and possibly even torment—despite being in a Heaven vast and prepared.

In short, the degree to which we will enjoy Heaven—and the clarity with which we comprehend what kind of Hereafter awaits us, whether blissful or painful—depends entirely on the spiritual assets in the Hereafter and the divine names and attributes we have acquired in the world.