



Afterlife in Islam

1. Introduction

Believing in Afterlife is an important pillar of Islamic faith since a quarter of Quran and a large volume of Hadith (Sayings and traditions of Prophet Muhammad) discuss the subject.

According to Islam, the death is not an end, but the start of a new eternal life, the life of Hereafter. The spirit is eternal; the death separates spirit from body. After death, spirits start living in the Intermediate World until the Day of Destruction. In Hereafter, spirits will be re-united with new bodies. This is called resurrection. On the Day of Judgement, all people will be questioned by God about their deeds in this world. As a result of that Judgment people will enter the final abode, i.e., either paradise or hell. On the Day of Judgement, God will judge not on the basis of His justice, but on the basis of His mercy.

Nursi points out that all things in the universe whether be particular or universal, parts or wholes, have two aspects. One of them is related to the Creator and the other to the Hereafter.

Quran starts with pointing out that believing in invisible realms is essential for a believer:

“This is the Book: there is no doubt about it — a guidance for the God-revering, pious who keep their duty to God. Those who believe in the Unseen, establish the Prayer in conformity with its conditions, and out of what We have provided for them, they spend.” (2:2-3)

Let’s review some important beliefs and concepts regarding to invisible realm of existence.

1.1. Spirit

Like physical laws, spirit is a law originating from the world of Divine Laws or Commands. This is stated in the Quran:

Say: “The Spirit is of my Lord’s Command.” (17:85)

Spirit differs from physical laws that it is a living, conscious law. If the spirit were stripped of life and consciousness, it would be a physical law; if physical laws were given life and consciousness, each one would become a spirit.

For the creation of Adam, God breathed spirit into him:

When your Lord said to the angels: “I am creating a mortal from dried, sounding clay, from molded dark mud.

“When I have fashioned him in due proportions and breathed into him out of My Spirit, then fall down prostrating before him.” (15:27-28)

The spirit is a simple, non-compound entity. We cannot see it; we cannot know its nature. However, we can know it through its manifestations in this world.

When the body's connection with the spirit is cut by death, the body is reduced to something that must be disposed of quickly, before it begins to rot and decompose.

The spirit is a conscious, powerful thing that learns and thinks, senses and reasons. It develops continually, usually in parallel

with the body's physical development, as well as mentally and spiritually through learning and reflection, belief and worship. The spirit determines each individual's character, nature, or identity. As a result, although all human beings are substantially made of the same elements, each individual is unique.

Dreams are ways that spirits connect or open to metaphysical worlds. There are rare clear dreams that come true about future, as well as jumbled ones deserve no interpretation.

1.2. Angels

Angels are created from light. They are pure powerful servants of God; yet they do not sin and cannot disobey God’s orders. According to Nursi, angels have partial will-power, not much like human will-power which can disobey God.

Angels have no experience with such negative qualities as envy, rancor, enmity, and all the lusts and animal appetites found in human beings and jinn (described in the following subsection). They have no gender, do not eat or drink, and do not feel hunger, thirst, or tiredness.

Angels build relations between the metaphysical and material worlds. They convey God's commands and represent their worship in their own realms.

Angels are not constrained with the physical laws of the universe and they can assume any form or shape in this world. Having refined or subtle bodies of light, angels move very rapidly and can be found in all realms of existence. They place themselves in our eyelids or in the bodies of other beings to observe the works of God. They also descend into the hearts of Prophets and saintly people to bring them inspiration. Such inspirations are usually from God, but sometimes they come from angels.

Angels are never promoted for what they do, for each has a fixed, determined rank and receives a particular pleasure from the work itself as well as a radiance from worship. Their reward is found in their service.

There are various classes of angels. One class is engaged in constant worship; another worships by working. These working angels have functions that resemble human occupations, like shepherds or farmers. In short, whatever angels do is worship, and it is therefore not like the ordinary acts of human beings.

There are four archangels (pbut) in Islam:

- Jibril (Gabriel): Angel of message, conveying messages to the prophets.
- Mikail (Michael): Angel of sustenance and mercy.
- Israfil (Raphael): Angel of the trumpet responsible for signaling the coming of Judgment Day.
- Azrael: Angel of death responsible for taking the spirit of people.

1.3. Jinn

The Qur’an states that jinn are created from smokeless fire (55:15). In another verse, it clarifies that this fire is of a scorching wind (15:27) and penetrates as deep as the inner part of the body.

Jinn might have been created while the Earth was still a body of fire. They were created before Adam and Eve, and were responsible for cultivating and improving the world. God later superseded them with humanity.

Like angels, jinn move extremely fast and are not bound by our time and space constraints. Jinn can assume any form or shape and appear in this world like humans, and various animals.

Like humans, jinn can be male and female, but they live much longer than humans. Jinn are also sent to this world for test and trial. There are good and bad jinns, as well as pious and sinful ones.

After Prophet Adam (pbuh) was created, Iblis, jinn himself, rebelled against God and become the greatest enemy of humankind. Quran tells the story in detail:

We brought you (humanity) into existence, then We gave you each a form, and then We said to the angels: "Prostrate before Adam!" They all prostrated, but Iblis did not.

God said: "What prevented you from prostrating, when I commanded you to do so?" Iblis said: "I am better than he (Adam), for You have created me from fire, and him You have created from clay."

God said: "Then go down from it; it is not for you to act proudly there! So be gone! Surely you are of the degraded."

Iblis said: "Grant me respite till the Day when they are raised from the dead."

God said: "You shall be among the ones granted respite."

Iblis continued: "Now that You have allowed me to rebel and go astray, I will surely lie in wait for them on Your Straight Path to lure them away."

"Then I will come upon them from before them and from behind them, and from their right and from their left. And You will not find most of them thankful."

God said: "Go away from there, disgraced and disowned! Those of them that follow you, surely I will fill Hell with you all!" (7:11-18)

In Islam, Satan (Shaytan) is referred to the Iblis or his followers dedicated their lives for the doom of humanity.

1.4. Sin, Reward and Forgiveness

In the Day of Judgment, God will question us regarding to our sins and rewards in this life. In Islam, sin refers to any type of disobedience to the God's commands. Some great sins are:

- Associating partners with God.
- Killing an innocent person.
- Lying (including white lies).
- Gossiping, backbiting, slandering, insulting, suspicion, and spying.
- Stealing.
- Adultery and obscenity.
- Drinking alcohol and any other intoxicants.
- Taking drugs, like cocaine, heroin, and marijuana.

As opposite of sin, reward is defined as actions with sincere intentions as God commanded. Some important rewards are:

- Performing prescribed prayers.
- Fasting during the month of Ramadan.

- Giving alms to the poor and needy.
- Performing pilgrimage to Makkah and Medina.
- Respecting and caring for parents and relatives.
- Caring and helping neighbors.
- Caring of orphans, widows and needy.

Every chapter of Qur'an starts with the following sentence: *"In the name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate."*

The All-Merciful and the All-Compassionate are names of God in Islam. Therefore, the mercy and forgiveness is coming from God directly.

In Islam, In Islam, there is no intermediate person who can forgive sins on the behalf of God. Prayers are answered by God directly:

"And when (O Messenger) My servants ask you about Me, then surely I am near: I answer the prayer of the supplicant when he prays to Me." (2:186).

Nobody can be sure that his/her sins are forgiven by God unless there is a revelation coming from God. (Revelations come to Prophets only). Nevertheless, God is All-Forgiving. Turning to God with sincere repentance and asking for forgiveness is a door that opens on God's blessings. Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) said:

"God is more pleased with the repentance of His servant than if one of you wakes up and finds his camel missing along with food and drink in a waterless desert and then accidentally finds the camel."

2. Existence of Afterlife

There is a problem solving technique in scientific methodology called *Occam's razor*, or *law of parsimony*. The principle of this method can be interpreted as

"Among competing hypotheses, the one with the fewest assumptions should be selected."

"The simplest explanation is the best." (Wikipedia)

Along this method, Einstein has a saying,

"If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough."

There are numerous examples of this method in science and engineering:

- Modern axiomatic development of Mathematics.
- Unified Physical Theory of Everything. Gravitation cannot be understood so far. Others, strong, weak and electromagnetism, can be reconciled with Quantum Mechanics.
- Kolmogorov Complexity.

Nursi emphasizes on the compatibility of God, man, and Universe. On this context, he has discovered many simple explanations (Occam Razor's) in Islamic theology:

"Whatever exists in the universe, the material and immaterial, is the result of the manifestations of God's Names and Attributes." (Al-Mathnawi Al-Nuri)

"Causes of events are not creators, rather they are veils to the God's actions."

“This world is a world of wisdom, and the hereafter is a world of power.”

“The science, a mirror to God’s design and art, and the religion, a recipe for living life, cannot be incompatible to each other.”

“Ego is a unit of measurement to comprehend the reflections of God’s Names and Attributes among human beings and the Universe.”

“If a person does not accept One Unique God, he/she must accept infinitely many deities.”

Therefore, the life that we are living should be compatible with the God’s Names and Attributes. For the same reason, the science, a mirror to God’s design and art, and the religion, a recipe for living life, cannot be incompatible to each other. However, without the existence of Afterlife, the compatibility between God’s Names and this world cannot be established.

As Nursi points out in 10th Word, many Names and Attributes of God requires the existence of resurrection, paradise and hell.

2.1. Divine Wisdom

In Islam, God is All-Wise. God is absolutely free in His acts; He does whatever He wills and no one can call Him to account for what He does. However, He is the All-Wise and acts with absolute purposiveness and wisdom. He never exerts Himself in vain and never does a thing that is futile or pointless.

Since only a tiny fraction of His Justice and Wisdom with respect to humanity is established in this world, they must be deferred to hereafter. Most of the misguided die unpunished, and most of the guided die unrewarded. Such affairs certainly are deferred to a supreme tribunal, an ultimate judgement.

Human body is an example of perfect creation. All parts work harmoniously, nothing is excessive or without purpose. So God does not abandon His perfect creation. This is against His Wisdom.

Human spiritual faculties and powers like imagination go beyond time and space. Despite man’s matchlessness and indescribable worth among creatures, some human beings die at birth and some quite young. In addition, man longs for eternity and desires an eternal life; some of his senses or feelings are satisfied with nothing but eternity.

God, All-Merciful and All-Wise, did not condemn man to eternal non-existence. Nor did He give him the desire for eternity so that he would suffer the anguish of a heart-felt desire impossible to satisfy. So Divine Wisdom requires the existence of an eternal world where man will live eternally.

Supposing there was nothing to require the Resurrection, the necessity of man’s deeds being weighed alone would require an infinitely just and sensitive balance to be set up as Quran declares,

“We set up a just balance for the Day of Resurrection. Thus, no soul will be treated unjustly. Even though it be the weight of one mustard seed, We shall bring it forth to be weighed; and Our reckoning will suffice.” (21:47)

There is great Persian Sufi saying related the desires of humanity:

“If He did not will to give, He would not give the desire to want.”

2.2. Divine Mercy and Munificence

We see in the world that the needier and helpless a creature is, the better it is nourished. For example, during the first stages of life, a human being is nourished in the best way and with no effort before and immediately after his birth.

For human beings in particular, it is impossible to gratify all of their desires and appetites in this limited life. Such qualities as youth, beauty, and strength, upon which a man sets his heart, desert him without even saying farewell and leave behind great sorrows, causing him to grieve. Their full satisfaction will in the Hereafter.

God is eternal, so are His Mercy and Munificence. An Eternal One manifests Himself eternally and requires the existence of eternal beings. His eternal Mercy and Munificence demand eternal manifestation and therefore eternal beings on whom He will confer His bounties eternally.

For a blessing to be really a blessing, it must be constant.

Without an eternal life, in which man will be able to gratify all his desires eternally, all the bounties and blessings God Almighty confers on man in this world will change into pains and sorrows. Therefore, after its overall destruction, God will change the world into an eternal one, which is able to receive the manifestations of His Mercy and Munificence without any obstruction, in which man can satisfy all his desires eternally.

2.3. Divine Pity and Caring

It is through the Divine Pity and Caring that wounds and wounded hearts and feelings are healed. Without this Pity and Caring, you could not stop a wound bleeding. Again, it is this Pity and Caring Which make a patient recover, stop the pangs of separation, and change pains and sorrows into joy and pleasure.

The Divine Pity and Caring encompass the whole universe, but we encounter in the world numerous wounds and wounded feelings unhealed and numerous cases of incurable illness. Innumerable living beings suffer hunger and thirst and poverty. As in the case with the Divine Mercy and Munificence, the material world is also unable to receive all the manifestations of the Divine Pity and Caring. Above all, death is the fate of all living beings; nothing else other than belief in another, eternal world can stop the sorrows it arouses in hearts.

2.4. Divine Justice and Honor

God’s Names and Attributes are all absolute and eternal. As He is absolutely and eternally Merciful and Forgiving, so He is, again, absolutely and eternally Mighty, Just and Dignified. Although His Mercy embraces all things (7:156) and, as is stated in a hadith, exceeds His wrath, some people commit such great crimes and sins (like unbelief and associating partners with God) that their due can only be eternal punishment.

Besides, despite the Divine declaration that whoever kills a human being unjustly, it is as if he killed all mankind (5:32), especially in a world like today’s where might is right is the rule, thousands of innocent people are killed almost every day

and many others are wronged and deprived of their basic human rights, and, worse, a great many of the most abominable sins and injustices go unpunished.

When death comes, it does not discriminate between the oppressed and oppressors, the innocent and criminals, and between the sinless and sinful. This means that, as is the case in this world where little crimes are judged in small courts while great ones are referred to supreme tribunals, such great crimes and sins as unbelief and associating partners with God and murder and oppression, are postponed to a day when God will judge them with His Absolute Justice.

2.5. Divine Beauty Requires the Resurrection

Any blessings which are not eternal leave unbearable pains in our hearts through their disappearance. If spring which has passed would not come back again next year, we would sigh over it until we die. So, true blessing is that which is eternal. That is why God, the Eternally Beautiful One, shows us in the world only the shadows of His Beauty in order to arouse in us a desire for Its eternal and perfect manifestations.

Death puts an end to all pleasures and makes everything as if it had never been. Then, were it not for the Resurrection, this life would be reduced to a meaningless plaything, leaving behind sufferings and pains. However, this world is a shadowy miniature of the other, eternal one. The bounties God bestows on us here are only examples of their eternal and much better forms in the eternal world.

2.6. Divine Power

These are only a few examples to understand the Creator's Power, for which nothing is difficult, for which to create and administer the whole universe is equally as easy as to create and administer a single atom.

God Almighty is absolutely able to do anything He wills and promises and He does not lie at all. He is absolutely free from any defect. So, He will keep His word and re-create the world after its overall destruction.

God created the world while there was nothing of the world, and He creates man while there is nothing of him in the world. He brings together the building-blocks of his body from earth, air and water and makes them into a conscious, intelligent being. Is there any doubt that a machine-maker who made a new machine can put and reset in their former positions the pieces of that machine after he has broken it into pieces?

“Look at the prints of God's mercy (in creation): how He gives life to the earth after its death. He surely is the reviver of the dead (in the same way), and He is able to do all things.” (30:50)

3. Life of Hereafter

3.1. Death

According to Islam, the death is not an end, but the start of a new eternal life, the life of Hereafter. We understand that death is the separation of the spirit from the body when an appointed hour comes. With God's permission, Archangel Azrael (pbuh) take the spirits of the people. Although the body decomposes

afterwards, the spirit will live in the intermediate world until the day of destruction.

In reality, God causes people to die. However, to avoid the complains about Him, God uses Archangel Azrael (pbuh) to take the spirits of those who are to die. Furthermore, God also uses illness or other calamities as another veil between Azrael and death so that people should not criticize the Archangel.

Since angles are not constrained by space and time of universe, they can be present in multiple places at the same time, thus Azrael can take millions of spirits at the same moment with ease.

The deaths of righteous and wicked are different as described by Quran:

“By those (angles) who pluck out violently; by those (angles) who draw out gently.” (79:1-2)

The wicked ones are plucked out violently, and have sour, frightened faces at death. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) stated that the souls of righteous people are drawn out as gently as the flowing of water from a pitcher. Better than that, martyrs do not feel death's agony and do not know that they are dead. Instead, they consider themselves to have been transferred to a better world and enjoy perfect happiness.

According to Islam, death cannot be cured and will come to every living person:

“Everyone is going to taste death, and We shall make a trial of you with evil and with good, and to Us you will be returned.” (21:35)

God promises Paradise for those who do good deeds and Hell for those who do bad deeds in this world.

As for those who say, “Our Lord is God,” and then follow the Straight Path without deviation, the angels descend upon them from time to time: “Do not fear or grieve; but rejoice in the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised.” (41:30)

Those whose souls the angels take while they are still wronging themselves. (When they see the punishment), they offer full submission: “We did not mean to do any evil.” (But they are answered:) “No! Surely God has full knowledge of what you were doing. So, go in through the gates of Hell to abide therein.” How evil, indeed, is the dwelling of the arrogant. (16:28-29)

In Islam, repentance for the sins are accepted until death. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said,

“God accepts repentance from a person as long as death does not reach his throat.” (Tirmithi, Ibn Maja)

Those who are wicked will want to go back to life after death: *Until when death comes to one of them (evil ones), and then he implores: “My Lord! Please, let me return to life, “That I may act righteously with respect to whatever I have left undone in the world.” No, never! It is merely a word that he utters over and over again.* (23:99-100)

3.2. The Intermediate World

The intermediate world is the realm where the spirit feels the “breath” of the bliss of Paradise or the punishment of Hell depending on whether the person led a virtuous life in the

world, or wicked one. The spirit suffers pain and feels happy as it continues its relation with the body in the intermediate world. Spirits in the intermediate world will see and hear us, provided that God allows this. If He does, He may permit some saintly people to see, and hear, and communicate with us. Our account of deeds is not closed after we die. If we leave behind good, virtuous children, books or institutions from which people continue to benefit, or if we have raised or contributed to raising those who benefit others, our reward increases. If we leave evil behind, our sins increase as long as our evil harms others.

The preliminary questioning of death will happen in the grave by the angels called Munkar and Nakir. They will ask questions concerning the good or bad deeds in the world. The following story indicates that the questioning will be severe and detailed.

Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, desired very much to see the second caliph Umar in his dream after he had died. When he saw him six months later, he asked him: "Where were you until now?" Umar replied: "Don't ask me that! I have just finished accounting (for my life)."

According to Islam, those who has unaccounted minor sins in the life will be punished in the intermediate world so that they will be purified and not punished in Hereafter.

3.3. The Day of Destruction

Quran gives the news of the day of destruction in numerous places. According to Islam, nobody knows when the day of destruction except God. The day of destruction marks the end of this world and the start of the hereafter. The day of destruction will be initiated by Archangel Israfil (Raphael) (pbuh) blowing the trumpet:

The Trumpet will be blown, and so all who are in the heavens and all who are on the earth will fall dead, except those whom God wills to exempt. Then it will be blown for the second time, and see, they have all stood upright, looking on (in anticipation). (39:68)

The blowing the trumpet in second time indicates the day of resurrection.

In Quran, the day of destruction is described as a great calamity destroying the universe. It is understood that no one will be able to escape the day of destruction.

*"He asks: "When is the Day of Resurrection?"
When the eyesight is confounded (through fear),
And the moon is darkened,
And the sun and the moon are joined together,
On that Day human will say: "Where is the escape?"
By no means! No refuge (to flee to)!
To your Lord the journey's end will be on that Day.
Human will be made to understand on that Day all (the good and evil) that he forwarded (to his afterlife while in the world),
and all (the good and evil) that he has left behind." (75:6-13)*

3.4. Resurrection

Since the spirit lives the worldly life together with the body and shares all its joys and sorrows, God will resurrect people both bodily and spiritually. According to mainstream Sunni Islam, the spirit and the body will go either to Paradise or Hell

together. God will build bodies in forms unique to the Hereafter.

Quran likens the universe to a book unfolded. At the end of time, its destruction will be as easy for God as to roll up a book. As He unfolded it at the beginning, He will roll it up and, through the manifestation of His Absolute Power re-create it in a much better and different form:

The Day when We will roll up heaven as written scrolls are rolled up. We will bring the creation back into existence as easily as We originated it in the first instance. This is a binding promise on Us, and assuredly, We fulfill whatever We promise. (21:104)

Bringing the dead back to life again is not more difficult for God than creation of the universe:

Have they not seen that God, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not wearied by their creation, is able to give life to the dead? Surely He has power over everything. (46:33)

According to Quran, the raising of all the dead on the Day of Judgment will be like this:

Among His signs is that you see the earth dry and barren; and when We send down rain on it, it stirs to life and swells. Surely God Who gives the dead earth life will raise the dead also to life. Indeed, He has power over all things. (41:39)

The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, "No doubt, you will be resurrected (on the Day of Resurrection) barefooted, naked and uncircumcised."

Prophet's wife Aisha asked: "O Messenger of God! Will the men and women look at each other?"

He said: "The situation will be too difficult for them to pay attention to that." (Bukhari, Muslim)

3.5. The Day of Judgement

People are sent to this world for God's test and trial.

Everybody will be questioned by God on the Day of Judgment regarding what they have done in this world. Depending on the result of the test, people enter paradise or hell. Everybody's situation will be different in the hereafter based on what they have done in this world. Heaven and hell have many ranks and levels.

There is no concept of Savior in Islam. Even prophets cannot save whom they deserve. We cannot say that we are saved or doomed. All our life is between hope and fear.

On the day of Judgment, God will judge people not based on His Justice, but based His Mercy. Even Satan will hope that he would be forgiven, in fact he will not be. Thus, going into paradise is not something one can earn, but it will be bestowed by God's grace.

Quran indicates that everybody will be held responsible on their actions:

"Whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it; and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it." (99:7-8)

The following verse indicates the inevitability of the day of judgment,

The Day when every soul will find whatever good it has done brought forward, and whatever evil it has done, it will wish that there were a far space between it and that evil. God warns

you that you beware of Himself; and God is All-Pitying for the servants. (3:30)

On the day of judgement, people's records of deeds will be handed out to them:

On that Day you will be arraigned for judgment, and no secret of yours will remain hidden.

Then, as for him who is given his Record in his right hand, he will say: "Here, take and read my Record!

"I surely knew that (one day) I would meet my account."

And so he will be in a state of life pleasing to him (in paradise). (69:18-21)

But as for him whose Record is given in his left hand, he will say: "Ah, would that I had never been given my Record,

"And that I had known nothing of my account!

"Oh, would that death had been (and nothing thereafter had followed).

"My wealth has availed me nothing,

"And all my authority (my power over all that I had) has gone from me!" (69:25-29)

There will be two different ways that God will hold people accountable for their deeds. (Bukhari and Muslim)

1. God will quickly and easily skim through the people's deeds, and will allow them to enter paradise safely. These are the ones who believe in God with sincerity.
2. God will discuss the people's deeds in depth and in detail, and will hold them accountable for each evil act they committed. Then God will send them away to the Hell Fire. These are the disbelievers, hypocrites, those who are weak in their faith, or those who are not sincere.

If the good deeds of the believers outweigh their evil acts, their evil acts will be forgiven and they will receive an easy reckoning.

On the day of judgment, God will confront everybody directly, without a mediator. The Prophet (pbuh) said,

"God will talk to everyone directly, without a translator. The person will look to his right, and will not see anything but his deeds. Then the person, will look in front of himself and will see nothing but the hellfire facing him. So protect yourself from Hellfire even by giving a charity of half a date." (Bukhari)

We will be asked on the Day of Judgment about five things. The Prophet said,

"The son of Adam will not pass away from God until he is asked about five things: how he lived his life, and how he utilized his youth, with what means did he earn his wealth, how did he spend his wealth, and what did he do with his knowledge." (Tirmithi)

God's Messenger (pbuh) was once sitting in the Mosque, when some prisoners of war were brought to him. A woman who was looking for something in a great anxiety drew the Messenger's attention to herself. She must have been looking for her son. At last she found him and embraced him, pressing him to her breast and caressing him with a great affection. This caused the Messenger to burst into tears and pointing to the woman, he asked his Companions around him:

- Do you see that woman? Does she throw that child in her arms into Hell?

- "No!", the Companions answered, and the Messenger added:

- God is more compassionate than that woman. He does not throw His servants into Hell (unless the servants absolutely deserve it.)

God may forgive sins in this world or in the hereafter, but He does not forgive the violation of rights of other people. In Islam, only the wronged person may forgive the one who wronged him. Therefore, one must find a way to make himself forgiven by the one who he wronged. Otherwise, the problem will be solved in the hereafter, which will turn into a grave issue. He will be interrogated on the day of judgment and the wronged one will get his right from him.

3.6. Paradise and Hell

In Islam, Paradise and Hell are eternal places. There will not be any way of going back to this world again. Paradise described in the following verses is an eternal place far better than this world,

The Paradise promised to the God-revering, pious ones can be likened to a garden through which rivers flow. Its produce is everlasting, and so its shade. That is the ultimate outcome for those who keep from disobedience to God in reverence for Him and piety. (13:35)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) described the beauty of Paradise, *"For His righteous servants, God has prepared things that no eyes ever saw, no ears ever heard, and no mind ever conceived."*

On the other hand, the others who tainted the world with the blood they shed and the sins and crimes they committed, will be thrown into Hell. Quran describes Hell as a far worse place than this world,

"Enter (through) the gates of Hell to dwell therein forever: what an evil abode for the arrogant!" (39:72).

"And also for those who disbelieve in their Lord is the punishment of Hell. How evil a destination to arrive at! When they are cast into it, they will hear its wild breath as it boils up, almost bursting with fury. Every time a group is cast into it, its keepers will ask them: 'Did no warner ever come to you?'" (67:6-8)

4. References

- All numbered references are from the Qur'an. (The Qur'an with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Unal)
- All named references are from authentic Hadith books. A hadith is a saying or tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).
- Essentials of Islamic Faith by Fethullah Gulen.
- Section 2 is adapted from 10th Word, Words, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, The Light, Inc.
- Matnawi Al-Nuri: Seedbed of the Light, Bediuzaman Said Nursi, The Light, Inc.