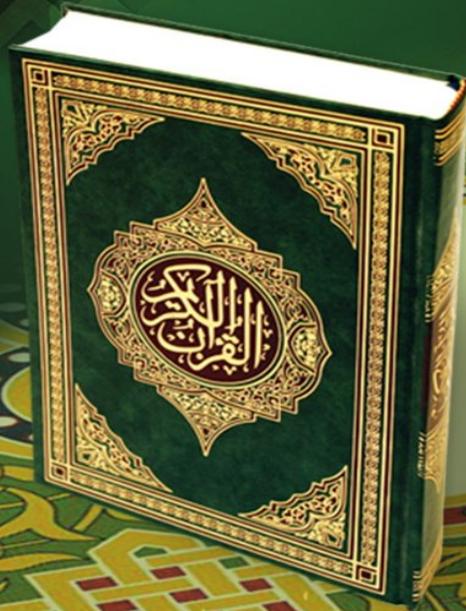


Description of
PARADISE
in the Glorious Qur'an



By: Abdul-Halim ibn Muhammad Nassar As-Salafi



DARUSSALAM

Description of Paradise in The Glorious Quran

By: Abdul-Halim ibn Muhammad Nassar As-Salafi

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INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allah (SWT). We praise Him; we seek for His help, forgiveness and guidance. We seek refuge with Allah (SWT) from the evils of our own souls and misdeeds. None can mislead whomsoever Allah guides, and none can guide whomsoever Allah (SWT) causes to go astray.

I testify that there is no deity worthy of being worshiped except Allah (SWT). He is One and He has no partner. I equally testify that Muhammad is the slave of Allah (SWT) and His Messenger.

Allah (SWT) says:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿١٠٢﴾﴾

“O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always), and die not except in a state of Islaam (as Muslims (with complete submission to Allah). (Aal ‘Imraan 3:102)

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ ۖ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾﴾

“O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife Hawwa (Eve) and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.” (An-Nisaa ‘a’ 4:1)

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا ﴿٧٠﴾ يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۖ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٧١﴾﴾

“O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and will be admitted to Paradise).” (Al-Ahzaab 33:70,71)

To proceed, indeed, the best speech is the Book of Allah and the best guidance is that of Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him. The worst of all affairs are new things introduced into the religion and every introduced thing is bid‘ah [innovation]; and every bid‘ah is error.

Writing about Paradise is of great importance in view of its significance in the belief of a Muslim. This belief makes him eligible for enjoyment of the bliss and the happiness of the Hereafter. It is not a belief that is limited to the life of this finite and ephemeral world only as compared to the everlasting Hereafter. Rather, it is a great creed that links the life of man in this world to that of the Hereafter so that his vision will not be restricted to this world alone but extends to the Hereafter.

Belief in Paradise is one of the fundamentals of faith. The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was asked about faith and he answered,

“أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ، وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ”

“Faith is to believe in Allah, in His Angels, in His Books, in His Messengers and in the Last Day; and to believe in pre-decree, its good and bad.” (Recorded by Muslim)

Belief in the Last Day entails believing in the Unseen that includes Paradise. Though we have not seen it with our eyes or felt it with our hands, we must have absolute, complete and certain belief in it. Our proof for this is the Qur’an and the Sunnah.

The Qur’an is the Book revealed by the One Who created Paradise and its bliss. He is also the One Who created its dwellers, guided them on the path to it, prepared it for them and made it known to them.

The Sunnah is the report attributed to the one who has entered Paradise, walked on its soil and reached the Lot Tree in Paradise. Allah says:

﴿ أَفْتَمَرُونَهُ عَلَى مَا بَرَى ۗ ﴿١٢﴾ وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَى ۗ ﴿١٣﴾ عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَى ۗ ﴿١٤﴾
عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَى ۗ ﴿١٥﴾

“Will you then dispute with him [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] about what he saw (during the Mi’raaj: (Ascent of the Prophet over the seven heavens). And indeed he [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] saw him (Jibreel (Gabriel)) at a second descent (i.e. another time) near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha (a lote-tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass). near it is the Paradise of Abode.” (An-Najm 53:12-15)

The Glorious Qur’an has described Paradise in the most perfect way. The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, has also done the same in the clearest manner that such description has left an amazing impact in the hearts of the earliest Muslims from amongst the Companions – may Allah be pleased with them. This impact transformed their life from that of the age of ignorance to a great life filled with perfect faith and true conviction in the everlasting life of the Hereafter in the blissful Paradise. There are many instances of this from the Sunnah.

The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, walked all over the land to deliver the message of his Lord. He did so alone and was been driven away from one place after another in the course of that. He would be accused of sorcery, magic or lying. The people of Taif stoned him that his noble face bled and was forced to return to Makkah.

It was during these difficult situations that Allah sent him helpers from Madinah who swore allegiance to him and expressed their readiness to defend and sacrifice their lives for him and his religion in the face of enmity from all human races. What then is their reward for this great sacrifice? Can it be compensated with huge amount of money or worldly statuses?

The answer is: No. Their reward is rather the garden of Paradise which is, today, not seen or felt.

Imaam Ahmad – may Allah have mercy upon him – recorded on the authority of Jabir bin ‘Abdullah – may Allah be pleased with him and his father – who narrated: “The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, spent ten years in Makkah (calling people to Islam) and following them into their places of gathering such as Ukaz, Majannah and during Hajj seasons in Mina. He would say to them,

” مَنْ يُؤْوِينِي؟ مَنْ يَنْصُرُنِي؟ حَتَّىٰ أُبَلِّغَ رِسَالَةَ رَبِّي وَلَهُ الْجَنَّةُ “

‘Who is ready to give me refuge? Who is ready to help me so that I can deliver the message of my Lord and have Paradise as reward for such help?!’

(The situation was so difficult for Allah’s Messenger, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) that a man would set out from Yemen or Mudar and his people would come to him and tell him, ‘Beware of that Qurayshi man (meaning Muhammad, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,) lest he tempts you!’ The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, would walk among the Qurayshi men and they would point their fingers at him (with the aim of warning people against him) until Allah sent us to him from Yathrib and we provided him with refuge and believed in him. A man from among us would come to him and declare his acceptance of Islam. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, would recite the Qur’an to him and the man would then return to his family and all of them would embrace Islam through him until there was no household of Ansaar that did have members who were Muslims, practicing their Islam publicly.

Then we (the Ansaar) got together and said to ourselves, ‘When are we going to stop the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, from being chased around in the mountains of Makkah and from being frightened?’ So, seventy men from among us went to meet him during Hajj season. We agreed to meet him at the valley of ‘Aqabah. At the appointed time, we went to join him one by one or in a group of two men at a time until we were all gathered around him. We told him, ‘Messenger of Allah, we want to swear allegiance to you.’ He said,

” تَبَايَعُونِي عَلَى السَّمْعِ وَالطَّاعَةِ فِي النَّشَاطِ وَالْكَسَلِ، وَالنَّفَقَةِ فِي الْعُسْرِ وَالْيُسْرِ
وَعَلَى الْأَمْرِ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا فِي اللَّهِ لَا تَخَافُونَ فِي اللَّهِ
لَوْمَةً لَا تَمُومُ عَلَى أَنْ تَنْصُرُونِي فَتَمْنَعُونِي إِذَا قَدِمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِمَّا تَمْنَعُونَ مِنْهُ أَنْفُسَكُمْ
وَأَزْوَاجَكُمْ وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَلَكُمْ الْجَنَّةُ “

‘Pledge allegiance to me that you shall listen to me and obey me in pleasure and displeasure; that you will spent (your wealth in Allah’s cause) in adversity and prosperity; that you shall promote the virtue and prevent the vice; that you shall convey Allah’s word without fearing the censuring of a censurer; and that you shall help and protect me against that which you protect your own selves, your wives and your children and you will have Paradise as reward for that.’

We stood up and swore allegiance to him. As‘ad ibn Zurarah – who was one of the youngest of those who were present – held the Prophet’s hand and said, ‘Wait a minute, O people of Yathrib! Indeed, we have not undertaken a journey here had we not known that he is the Messenger of Allah. Taking him out today means disagreeing with the Arabs and this could lead to the killing of eminent personalities among you. Therefore, you should decide whether to bear that with patience while you get your reward for that from Allah or you become a coward people fearing for your own necks only. You should explain which choice you are making for such would be an excuse for you before Allah.’ The Ansaar said in response, ‘O Sa’d, by Allah, we are never going to abandon this allegiance and we are never going to withdraw it!’

It was then that we stood up and swore allegiance and the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, made stipulations, promising us Paradise in exchange for fulfillment of those stipulations.”

That is how the impact of the Muslims’ belief in Paradise manifests in the life of this world. After this allegiance – which is regarded as the greatest allegiance in human history – had been concluded and after some ten odd years, an Islamic state grew up, and the authority of that state stretched from the east to the west and from the north to the south, and two superpowers of those age, the Roman and Persian empires bowed to it.

Among the impacts of belief in Paradise is that it makes a Muslim sacrifice his life and wealth to please Allah (SWT). You find him competing with his father and his son in sacrificing his life in the cause of Allah (SWT).

An example of this is the case of Sa’d bin Khithamah – may Allah be pleased with him. When the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, was mobilizing Muslims for the Battle of Badr. The people were hurriedly signing up. Khaithamah told his son Sa’d, “Let me go out and join the army and you stay with the women of the family.” The son refused and said, “Had it been for other things beside the Paradise, I would give you preference over myself.” To put this disagreement to rest, they both drew a lot and the son won. So he was the one who joined the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, in the Battle of Badr.

Another example was that of the elderly ‘Amr bin al-Jamuh. He was very old and lame. When the people were being mobilized for the Battle of Uhud, his sons wanted to prevent him from signing up because he was among the excused due to lameness. But he refused saying, “By Allah, I want to walk with my lame legs in Paradise.” He was martyred in that battle. May Allah be pleased with him and please him.

Here is the family of Yasir. They were made to taste severest persecution and suffer the bitterest punishment simply for declaring their faith in their true Creator. They bore all these sufferings in patience though the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, did not promise them any of the materials of this world; he only promised them Paradise. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, would pass by them while they were being persecuted and tormented and – being unable to render them any physical succor – would say to them,

“اصْبِرُوا آلَ يَاسِرٍ مَّوْعِدُكُمْ الْجَنَّةُ”

“Be patient, O the household of Yasir for Paradise is your promised abode!”

This promise of Paradise was a curing balsam for them and its sweetness overwhelmed the pain of persecution.

Paradise had a great impact in nurturing the Muslim armies upon steadfastness, patience and resilience in most difficult moments. In the Battle of Uhud, a rumor was being spread that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, had been killed. Anas bin Nadr , may Allah be pleased with him, passed by a group of the Companions and asked them, “Why are you sitting down?” They answered, “The Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, had been killed!” He retorted, “Then what is the purpose of your remaining alive?! Get up and die upon what the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, died upon!”

He also said, “O Allah, I am seeking excuse from you for what these people (meaning his Companions) had done and I am denouncing what these people (meaning the polytheists) had done.” He then proceeded until he met Sa’d ibn Mu’adh to whom he said, “Sa’d ibn Mu’adh, I swear by the Lord of Nadr, I can smell the fragrance of Paradise beyond Uhud Mountain!” Sa’d completed the story, “I was unable to accomplish what Anas had accomplished.”

Anas bin Malik , may Allah be pleased with him, said about his uncle, “We later found him dead and we found on his body eighty odd marks of sword, spear or arrow; and the polytheists had also mutilated him so much so that it was only his sister who could identify him through his fingers.”

It was Anas’ belief in Paradise – during this most difficult situation – that kept him firm and steadfast that he was able to smell it while he was still in this world.

There are many other examples on Muslims’ great belief in Paradise and the impact of that belief on their life.

You can see the fighters in the way of Allah equipping themselves with the little they could and then advancing towards the enemy, selling their lives cheap in the cause of Allah and fighting the enemies of their religion. In the eyes of these noble men, forces of this world mean nothing. They have no fear for aircraft carriers, attack ships, rocket launchers, and weapons of destruction or armored tanks! What is it that makes these things insignificant in their estimation?! It is Allah’s statement:

﴿فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَٰئِبٌ قَلِيلٌ﴾
﴿مَتَعُ الْغُرُورِ﴾ (١٨٥)

“And whoever is removed away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise, he indeed is successful. The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception (a deceiving thing).” (Aal ‘Imraan 3:185)

The blissful Paradise is only attained through Allah’s mercy and favor. Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that that Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said,

“ لَنْ يُدْخِلَ أَحَدًا عَمَلُهُ الْجَنَّةَ ”

“The good deeds of any person will not make him enter Paradise.” (i.e. none can enter Paradise through his good deeds.) They (the Prophet’s Companions) said, ‘Not even you, O Allah’s Messenger?’ He said,

“ وَلَا أَنَا إِلَّا أَنْ يَتَغَمَّدَنِي اللَّهُ بِفَضْلٍ وَرَحْمَةٍ ”

“Not even myself, unless Allah bestows His favor and mercy on me.” (Recorded by Al-Bukhari)

It is a manifestation of Allah’s mercy upon His servant to make him succeed in doing righteous deeds and to guide him to pious acts. A servant’s good deed is not enough to make him enter Paradise if Allah has not bestowed His blessing on him. His deeds, even if done according to the way that Allah loves and is pleased with, are not equal to the blessings that Allah bestows on him in this world. In fact, if his deeds and Allah’s blessings that he enjoys in this world are to be compared, the entire good deeds would be comparable to only a tiny fraction of these blessings; and no amount of gratitude from his part would

compensate for the rest of the blessings. If, in this situation, Allah chose to punish the servant, such a punishment would be in place and not be regarded as injustice; and if He chose to bless him, such blessing would far outweigh his good deeds. The Messenger of Allah, said,

”لَوْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَذَّبَ أَهْلَ سَمَوَاتِهِ وَأَهْلَ أَرْضِهِ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ وَهُوَ غَيْرُ ظَالِمٍ لَهُمْ ،
وَلَوْ رَحِمَهُمْ لَكَانَتْ رَحْمَتُهُ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ“

“If Allah were to punish the inhabitants of His heavens and earth, He would do so without His being accused of any injustice to them; and if He were to bless them, His blessing would be far greater than their own deeds.” (Recorded by Ibn Majah)

Does Paradise Presently Exist?

The opinion of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah is that Paradise presently exists. They have many proofs for this. Some of these are as follows:

1. The bargain between the Lord of Honor and Majesty and His believing servants

Allah (SWT) says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعَدًّا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَى بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَاسْتَبْشِرُوا بِبَيْعِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

“Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah’s Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and the Qur’an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.” (At-Tawbah 9:111)

The above noble verse indicates that there is a bargain in which the purchaser is Allah, Lord of Glory and Majesty and the sellers are the believers and the commodity is lives and properties and the price is the blissful Paradise. Is it then logical that Allah would make a bargain with His servants on an inexistent price?

2. Allah’s good tidings to the believers

Allah gave good tidings of Paradise to His believing servants in many verses of the Glorious Qur’an some of which are:

﴿وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرَى مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ﴾

“And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise).” (Al-Baqarah 2:25)

﴿الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ أَكْبَرُ دَرَجَةً عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُونَ ﴿٢٠﴾ يُبَشِّرُهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِّنْهُ وَرِضْوَانٍ وَجَنَّاتٍ لَهُمْ فِيهَا نَعِيمٌ مُّقِيمٌ ﴿٢١﴾﴾

“Those who believed (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) and emigrated and strove hard and fought in Allah’s Cause with their wealth and their lives are far higher in degree with Allah. They are the successful. Their Lord gives them glad tidings of Mercy from Him, and His being pleased (with them), and of Gardens (Paradise) for them wherein are everlasting delights.” (At-Tawbah 9:20, 21)

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَمُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾﴾

“Verily, those who say: “Our Lord is Allah (Alone),” and then they stand firm, on them the angels will descend (at the time of their death) (saying): “Fear not, nor grieve! But receive the glad tidings of Paradise which you have been promised!” (Fussilat 41:30)

These and other verses clearly indicate Allah’s glad tidings for His servants that He would make them enter Paradise. Is it then reasonable that Allah would give His servants glad tidings of something that is not existent?

3. The Prophet’s visit to Paradise and his informing his Ummah about what he saw there

This is one of the clearest proofs on the existence of Paradise. The Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, had visited Paradise and entered it in a state of wakefulness when he was taken on the night journey to the heavens. He informed his followers about what he saw there.

Allah (SWT) says in this regard:

﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِن آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿١﴾﴾

“Glorified (and Exalted) is He (Allah) (above all that (evil) they associate with Him) Who took His slave (Muhammad r) for a journey by night from Al-Masjid-al-Haraam (at Makkah) to the farthest mosque (in Jerusalem), the neighborhood whereof We have blessed, in order that We might show him (Muhammad) of Our Ayaat (proofs, evidences, lessons, signs, etc.). Verily, He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.” (Al-Israa’ 17:1)

﴿وَلَقَدْ رَآهُ نَزْلَةً أُخْرَىٰ ﴿١٣﴾ عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ﴿١٤﴾ عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَىٰ ﴿١٥﴾ إِذْ يَغْشَى السِّدْرَةَ مَا يَغْشَىٰ ﴿١٦﴾ مَا زَاغَ الْبَصَرُ وَمَا طَغَىٰ ﴿١٧﴾ لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَىٰ ﴿١٨﴾﴾

“And indeed he [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] saw him [Jibreel (Gabriel)] at a second descent (i.e. another time) near Sidrat-ul-Muntaha (a lote-tree of the utmost boundary over the seventh heaven beyond which none can pass). Near it is the Paradise of Abode. When that covered the lote-tree which did cover it! The sight [of Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] turned not aside (right or left), nor it transgressed beyond the limit (ordained for it). Indeed he [Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)] did see of the Greatest Signs, of his Lord (Allah).” (An-Najm 53:13-18)

Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported on the authority of Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, who narrated the story of Israa’ and Mi’raj from the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,. Part of the narrations goes thus:

”ثُمَّ انْطَلَقَ بِي حَتَّى انْتَهَى بِي إِلَى سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَى وَغَشِيَهَا أَلْوَانٌ مَا أُدْرِي
مَا هِيَ، ثُمَّ أُدْخِلْتُ الْجَنَّةَ فَإِذَا فِيهَا حَبَائِلُ اللُّؤْلُؤِ، وَإِذَا تُرَابُهَا الْمِسْكُ“

“Then Gabriel took me till we reached Sidratul-Muntaha (Lote Tree of the utmost boundary) which was shrouded in colors, indescribable. Then I was admitted into Paradise where I found small (tents or) walls (made) of pearls and its earth was of musk.”

4. Adam’s stay in Paradise:

One of the clearest proofs on existence of Paradise is that Allah, High and Exalted, made Adam and his wife, peace be upon them – to live in the everlasting Paradise. This is the opinion that the righteous predecessors and the generality of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa‘ah are upon. It is that upon which the human mind is inclined. It is the opinion that is glaringly clear to the ordinary people.

Allah (SWT) says:

﴿وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا
تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ (٣٥)

“And We said: “O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein as wherever you will, but come not near this tree or you both will be of the Zaalimoon (wrong-doers).” (Al-Baqarah 2:35)

He also says:

﴿وَيَتَادَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ فَكُلَا مِنْ حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ
فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾ (١٩)

“And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise, and eat thereof as you both wish, but approach not this tree otherwise you both will be of the Zaalimoon (unjust and wrong-doers).” (Al-A‘raf 7:19)

However, there are two groups who believe that Paradise has not been created and that it would only be created on the Day of Resurrection. The holders of this mistaken opinion contradict the clear texts of the Qur’an and the Sunnah and the belief of the Companions of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, and that of their successors and those who came after them of the rest of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa‘ah.

It also contradicts what is known by necessity from the Prophets from the first to the last of them. For, all of them invited their peoples to believe in Paradise and informed them about the same. The two groups who deny that Paradise presently exists are the Qadariyyah and the Mu‘tazilah.

They have argued – in support of this inglorious view of theirs – that had Paradise been presently existent, it would be useless for it would remain idle and uninhabited for a long time. They added that if a king

were to build a house and put therein different types of food and drinks and various kinds of facilities without filling it with dwellers his action would be deemed unwise.

They were led into this argument by their vicious doctrine based upon their belief that Allah must do such and such and that He must not do such and such. They thereby equaled the Creator with His creation as far as actions are concerned. They likened Allah (SWT) to His creatures in His deeds and denied His exclusive attributes. Allah is far above what they attribute to Him! He is the Lord of Glory and Majesty and He should never be compared to His creation neither must His actions be compared to those of His creation. He says about Himself:

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾ (11)

“There is nothing like Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer.” (Ash-Shura 42:11)

They also argued that if it was agreed that Paradise was presently existent, it would be inevitable for it not be extinct on the Day of Resurrection due to Allah’s statement,

﴿كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ﴾

“Everything will perish save His Face.” (Al-Qasas 28:88)

This is indeed a very weak argument. They did not understand the meaning of the verse. What is meant by ‘everything’ is: everything upon which perish and finiteness had been decreed. As for Paradise and its bliss such as the Al-Hoor Al-‘Iyn, Allah has created them for everlasting existence. Any contrary opinion is wrong and whoever holds it is heretic and has gone astray.

In their futile attempt to prove that Paradise was not yet created, they cited the Prophet’s statement,

“مَنْ قَالَ: سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ غُرِسَتْ لَهُ نَخْلَةٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ”

“Whoever says, ‘subhanallahil-‘Azeem wabihamdih’, Allah would plant a palm tree for him in Paradise.” And his statement,

“أَنَّ الْجَنَّةَ طَيِّبَةُ التُّرْبَةِ عَذْبَةُ الْمَاءِ وَأَنَّهَا قَيْعَانٌ وَأَنَّ غِرَاسَهَا
سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ”

“Indeed, the soil of Paradise is beautiful and its water is sweet. It is a lowland and its plants will be ‘Subhanallah wal-Hamdulillaah wa laa ilaaha illallah wa Allahu akbar’.”

They argued that if Paradise had been created then the planting would be meaningless and it would not be a lowland.

They also cited Allah’s statement in which He informed us of the supplication made by the wife of Pharaoh, “My Lord! Build for me a home with You in Paradise.” (At-Tahreem 66:11) With this verse,

they argued that it would be impossible for a person to tell someone who has already woven a garment for him or built a house for him, ‘weave a garment for me or built a house for me’.

Another of their proofs is the Prophet’s statement,

“مَنْ بَنَى مَسْجِدًا لِلَّهِ تَعَالَى بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ”

“Whoever builds a mosque for Allah, Allah will build a house for him in Paradise.” (Recorded by Muslim) They argued that this statement is a conditional sentence just like another statement of the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him,

“مَنْ صَلَّى اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ رَكْعَةً فِي يَوْمٍ وَلَيْلَةٍ بُنِيَ لَهُ بِهِنَّ بَيْتٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ”

“Whoever performs twelve supererogatory Rak’ahs during the day and night, Allah will build a house for him in Paradise.” (Recorded by At-Tirmidhi)

Response to these arguments:

If they meant that Paradise has not yet been created at all and that it is absolutely inexistent in the present, then their claim is false; for facts from the Qur’an and the Sunnah repudiate it. Such a claim also contradicts what is known in religion by necessity. If they meant that Paradise had not been completely created then this is an incontestable truth.

As for the proofs they mention, what those proofs indicate is that the land of Paradise has already been created and that it presently exists. As for remembrance of Allah mentioned in the Hadith, Allah will create a plant in the land of Paradise. The same applies for building of houses for those who perform the righteous deeds mentioned in the Hadiths. The more a servant performs righteous deeds, the more Allah expands for him his place in Paradise.

Qadi Mundhir ibn Sa’eed said: “The Paradise in which Adam lived was not the eternal Paradise. He supported this view with the following arguments:

One: Had it been the everlasting Paradise, Adam would not have eaten from the forbidden tree in order to have eternal life. Also, Satan had lied in that Paradise while there will be no lying in the eternal Paradise. Equally, whoever is admitted to the eternal Paradise will never be expelled from it. He would rather abide therein forever, while Adam and Eve, peace be upon them – were sent out of it.

Ibn Hazm has refuted all these arguments with the following statement:

“There is no proof in all this. It is known that Adam’s belief that he would have eternal life by eating from the forbidden tree was incorrect; it was only a wrong assumption on his part. Therefore, an action that was based on a wrong assumption could not be cited as a proof. This is in addition to the fact that Allah did not inform Adam that he would live forever in Paradise because He – High and Exalted – had prior knowledge that He would expel him from there.”

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah clearly mentioned that the Paradise in which Adam lived was the eternal Paradise. He said: “Whoever says that it was a Paradise in the land of India or any other place on the earth

is indeed among the apostates or the heretics. For, this is the claim of the philosophists and the Mu'tazilites; and the Qur'an and the Sunnah repudiate this claim."

Therefore, the correct and the preponderant opinion is that it was in the eternal Paradise that Prophet Adam and his wife, peace be upon them – lived. This opinion is supported by the following proofs:

1. The word 'Paradise' is mentioned in the Qur'an affixed by the article (alif and laam) which indicate definiteness. Allah (SWT) says:

﴿ وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ ﴾

"And We said: O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise." (Al-Baqarah 2:35)

﴿ وَيَتَّادِمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ ﴾

"And O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in Paradise." (Al-A'raaf 7:19)

And there is no known Paradise except the everlasting Paradise. It has become a proper name whereby whenever the word 'Al-Jannah' is mentioned; it is naturally understood to be the Paradise that the believers have in mind. Whenever the word is intended for something else, it is mentioned in an indefinite form or qualified with another word or explained by the context. Examples of this are the following statements of Allah:

﴿ جَنَّاتٍ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ ﴾

"two gardens of grapes." (Al-Kahf 18:32)

﴿ وَلَوْلَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتَكَ ﴾

"It was better for you to say, when you entered your garden: " (Al-Kahf 18:39)

﴿ إِنَّا بَلَوْنَهُمْ كَمَا بَلَوْنَا أَصْحَابَ الْجَنَّةِ ﴾

"Verily, We have tried them as We tried the people of the garden." (Al-Qalam 68:17)

2. Allah describes the Paradise in which Adam lived with descriptions that could only be those of the everlasting Paradise. Allah (SWT) says:

﴿ إِنَّ لَكَ أَلَّا يَجُوعَ فِيهَا وَلَا تَعْرَى ۗ ﴿١١٨﴾ وَأَنَّكَ لَا تَظْمَأُ فِيهَا وَلَا تَصْحَى ۗ ﴿١١٩﴾ ﴾

"Verily, you have (a promise from Us) that you will never be hungry therein nor naked. And you (will) suffer not from thirst therein nor from the sun's heat." (Ta Ha 20:118-119)

It could obviously be seen that the matters mentioned in the above two verses are signs that are only found in this worldly life. No human being can escape being afflicted by some – if not all of them – while he is still in this world, even if he enjoys the best and the most pleasant positions in this world.

3. Allah (SWT) says:

﴿وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٣٤﴾ وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ فَأَزَلَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ ﴿٣٦﴾﴾

“And (remember) when We said to the angels: “Prostrate yourselves before Adam.” And they prostrated except Iblis (Satan), he refused and was proud and was one of the disbelievers (disobedient to Allah). And We said: “O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Paradise and eat both of you freely with pleasure and delight, of things therein as wherever you will, but come not near this tree or you both will be of the Zaalimoon (wrong-doers).” Then the Shaitaan (Satan) made them slip therefrom (the Paradise), and got them out from that in which they were. We said: “Get you down, all, with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be a dwelling place for you and an enjoyment for a time.” (Al-Baqarah 2:34-36)

In the above verses, Allah (SWT) explains that He commanded them (the humans) to get down to the earth, that there would be enmity between them and that they were not initially in the earth; and that it was later that they were commanded to get down there. For, if they had been in the earth before and they then moved from a land to another like the movement of Prophet Moosaa’s people from one land to another, their dwelling and their enjoyment for a time would have been in the earth before and after their getting down.

4. Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Prophet, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”حَاجَّ مُوسَىٰ آدَمَ فَقَالَ لَهُ: أَنْتَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجْتَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ بِذَنْبِكَ وَأَشَقَيْتَهُمْ، قَالَ: قَالَ آدَمُ: يَا مُوسَىٰ أَنْتَ الَّذِي اصْطَفَاكَ اللَّهُ بِرِسَالَتِهِ وَبِكَلَامِهِ، أَتَلُوْمُنِي عَلَىٰ أَمْرِ كَتَبَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيَّ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَنِي، أَوْ قَدَرَهُ عَلَيَّ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَنِي“ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: ”فَحَجَّ آدَمُ مُوسَىٰ“

“Adam and Moses met, and Moses said to Adam, ‘You are the one who made people miserable and turned them out of Paradise. Adam said to him, ‘You are the one whom Allah selected for His message and whom He selected for Himself and upon whom He revealed the Torah.’ Moses said, ‘Yes.’ Adam said, ‘Did you find that written in my fate before my creation?’ Moses said, ‘Yes.’ So Adam overcame Moses with this argument.”

The essence of this Hadith is that Moses, peace be upon him – blamed Adam, peace be upon him – for being the cause of his progeny’s removal from the eternal abode of bliss to the abode of misery and hardship. (This indicates that Adam lived in the eternal Paradise).

Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: “Adam, peace be upon him – supported his argument with Moses with the fact that man is commanded to bear whatever Allah has written down for him of hardships and calamities with patience, to return to Him in repentance and to seek His forgiveness from all sins. And Allah knows best.”

5. Imaam Muslim recorded on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, that the Messenger of Allah, blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, said:

”يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى النَّاسَ، فَيَقُومُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى تُزْلَفَ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةُ
فَيَأْتُونَ آدَمَ فَيَقُولُونَ: يَا أَبَانَا اسْتَفْتِحْ لَنَا الْجَنَّةَ. فَيَقُولُ: وَهَلْ أَخْرَجَكُم مِّنَ
الْجَنَّةِ إِلَّا حَاطِيئَةُ أَبِيكُمْ....“

“Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, would gather people. The believers would stand till the Paradise would be brought near them. They would come to Adam and say: O our father, open for us the Paradise. He would say: What turned you out from the Paradise was the sin of your father?”

This Hadith indicates that the Paradise in which Adam lived was the eternal Paradise which mankind would seek its opening on the Day of Resurrection and which they would seek to enter on that day.

Allah (SWT) says:

﴿وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ
عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ﴾ (١٣٣)

And march forth in the way (which leads to) forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious.” (Aal ‘Imraan 3:133)

He (SWT) also says:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَىٰ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنَّ لَهُمُ
الْجَنَّةَ يَقْتُلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ وَعَدًّا عَلَيْهِ حَقًّا
فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ وَالْقُرْآنِ وَمَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ
فَأَسْتَبْشِرُوا بِيَعْيِكُمُ الَّذِي بَايَعْتُمْ بِهِ وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾ (١١١)

“Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties for (the price) that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah’s Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Tauraat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and the Qur’an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.” (At-Tawbah 9:111)