

Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

- 1 This fire of yours which a person lights up has the heat of one out of seventy portions of Hell's heat.
- 2 People said: By God, it would have been sufficient [as it is], Messenger of God.
- 3 He said: It is made greater by sixty-nine portions, each is similar to it in heat.⁽¹⁾

1 Related by al-Bukhari, 3265; Muslim, 2843.

From the Qur'an

- ﴿Nay! It is the Last Hour that they deny. For those who deny the Last Hour We have prepared a blazing fire. (11) When it sees them from a far-off place, they will hear its fury and its raging sigh. (12) And when, chained together, they are flung into a tight space within, they will pray for extinction there and then.﴾ (25: 11-13)
- ﴿Believers! Guard yourselves and your families against a fire fuelled by people and stones, over which are appointed angels, stern and mighty, who never disobey God in whatever He commands them and always do what they are bidden to do.﴾ (66: 6)
- ﴿We have heavy fetters and a blazing fire, (12) food that chokes and painful suffering .﴾ (73: 12-13)
- ﴿Hell stands as a vigilant watch guard, (21) a final resort for those who transgress all bounds. (22) Therein they shall abide for ages, (23) tasting neither coolness nor any drink, (24) except boiling fluid and decaying filth: (25) a fitting recompense.﴾ (78: 21-26)

The Narrator

According to the best reports, Abu Hurayrah's name was 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Ṣakhr al-Dawsī emanating from a branch of the Yemeni Azd. He embraced Islam in the year in which the Battle of Khaybar took place, i.e. Year 7 of the Hijri calendar. He stayed close to the Prophet. His mother was an idolator, and she used to speak ill of the Prophet, which grieved Abu Hurayrah and he wept on account of this. He went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and requested him to pray for his mother. The Prophet did and she believed in Islam. He was very keen to learn and memorize the Prophet's hadiths. He was the Prophet's companion who narrated the largest number of hadiths. He died in Madinah in Year 58 AH, 678 CE.

Summary

In this hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) states that the burning power of the fire of Hell is seventy times as much as the fire of our world.



Message and Meaning

- 1** The Prophet (peace be upon him) draws a comparison between the fire we have in this world and the fire of Hell, stating that the heat of the fire people use is only one portion, while the fire God has made ready for the punishment of unbelievers and sinners is seventy times as intense.
- 2** The Prophet's companions considered this very grave. They said that were the fire in the Hereafter to be the same in intensity as the fire in our world, it would be enough to deliver severe punishment and provide the right incentive to steer away from sin. It, of itself, would suffice to burn people, animals, plants and all types of inanimate objects.
- 3** The Prophet confirms that the fire in the Hereafter is sixty-nine times more intense and hotter than the fire familiar to them.



Implementation



Whoever addresses people – whether a parent, an advocate of Islam, a teacher, etc. – should seek to illustrate his ideas, using similes, numbers, metaphors and other methods of expression in order to help his audience to understand him fully.



Reminding people of Heaven and Hell is a very effective method of admonition. The Qur'an uses it often. We will do well to resort to it in our own discussions in mosques, homes, gatherings and via the media.



It behoves man to run away from a fire which is seventy times more intense in heat than the fire of our world. Everyone should do more of good deeds that keep him away from the Fire. Real success is to save oneself from the Fire and ensure admittance into Heaven. God says: 'He who shall be drawn away from the Fire and brought into paradise shall indeed have gained a triumph'. (3: 185)



To take measures to avoid burning in our world is perfectly right. The Prophet (peace be upon him) recommends such measures, even if it means putting out a small flame lest it might lead to the burning of a home. Therefore, it is wise to take precautions and close every way that leads to the spread of fire, although the use of fire is perfectly legitimate. Taking measures to protect oneself from the Fire of Hell is far more important.



To save people from fire in this life is a heroic and good deed which deserves thanks and gratitude. Advocates of Islam and scholars save people from a much fiercer fire. They deserve greater thanks and appreciation.



The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to pray for God's refuge from the heat of Hell. Abu Hurayrah narrated that he heard the Prophet (peace be upon him) say in his prayer: 'My Lord, I seek refuge with You from the trial in the grave; and from the trial of the Impostor; and from the trials of life and death; and from the heat of Hell'.⁽¹⁾ The Prophet was guarded and God forgave him whatever sin he might have committed at any time in life. Nevertheless, he prayed for God's refuge from Hell. It behoves every Muslim to always pray for such refuge.

1 Related by al-Nasā'ī, 5520.

