

# New Muslims Class

LESSON 12

## Al-Akhira (The Hereafter)



DISCOVER ISLAM

# Today's Agenda

- Review of Last Week's Lesson (Lesson 12 – Major Sins and Tawbah)
- Part 3: Lesson Thirteen – The Hereafter
  - Talk about the concept of *al-ghaib* (*the unseen*)
  - Look at and define the stages of human existence
  - Gain appreciation of their significance
  - Define hellfire from an Islamic perspective
  - Define paradise from an Islamic perspective

# Al-Akhira Defined

- “Al-akhira” means the end, the hereafter. It refers to the end of this material existence that we have on the earth, and all that follows after.

# Importance of Study

- Reminder that this world is not the reality
- To increase our faith
- To understand our place and time
- To understand from where we came, and what lies ahead
- It is a tenet of Islamic belief

## Understanding Al-Akhira

*“Its like we’re passengers on a one-way train, and we have one ticket, and the ticket has three slips. We spend time in the womb, and then when we are born the first slip is torn from the ticket. Then we live in the dunya for a while, and when we die the second ticket is torn. The third slip is torn off when we enter either Paradise or the Hellfire, and that this is the final destination.”*

# Stages of the Soul

- Life before conception
- Life in this world {dunya}
- Death
- Life in the grave
- Day of Judgement {Yawm al Qiyama}
- Paradise {jennah} and the Hellfire {an-nar}

## Stage 1: Life before conception

- Each soul met Allah before we were born, and bore witness to Him.

*When thy Lord drew forth from the Children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants, and made them testify concerning themselves, (saying): "Am I not your Lord (who cherishes and sustains you)?"--They said: "Yea! We do testify!" (This), lest ye should say on the Day of Judgment: "Of this we were never mindful"* Al-A'raf (The Heights) , 7:172

## Stage 2: Material world (*dunya*)

- Life in this world may seem long, but is very short in comparison to the other stages of life.

Quran:

*He will say: "What number of years did ye stay on earth?" They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day: but ask those who keep account."*  
Al-Mu'minun (The Believers) 23:112-113

- Material success is not our goal in this world, attaining success in the hereafter is our goal.

Hadith:

*"What have I got to do with the material world. The example of the material world and I is that of a traveler. Traveling in the afternoon heat, he stopped to rest under the shade of a tree for some moments. Then, he rose and left it."* Ahmad, Tirmidhi.

- Life in this world is compared to the rest under the shade of a tree.



## Stage 2: Material world (*dunya*)

- Our existence in this world can be generally divided into six stages:
  - Life in the Womb
  - Childhood (birth to puberty)
    - » *Children are not responsible for their actions; Allah has lightened the load of them, and their actions are not recorded*
  - Youth (puberty to age 35)
    - » *This is when people are in the prime of health, of energy, of will, but also act on emotions, have desires, are quick to act*
  - Maturity (35-50)
    - » *When someone is at the peak of their faculties and maturity, and can expect to attain wisdom*
  - Seniority (50-70)
    - » *The earliest signs of weakness begin to appear, and strength recedes*
  - Decrepitude (70+)
    - » *Here people become weak in all their senses, limbs and faculties.*

## Stage 3: Death

- **Death is one of the few things in this life that everyone has certainty of, yet we treat it as if it was something doubtful.**

### **Qur'an**

*“Every soul will taste of death. And ye will be paid on the Day of Resurrection only that which ye have fairly earned. Whoso is removed from the Fire and is made to enter Paradise, he indeed is triumphant. The life of this world is but comfort of illusion.”* Al-Imran (The Family of Imran) , 3:185

- **The transition from life into death is a difficult one, because we have been living in this world for so long, that we have become accustomed to it.**

### **Hadith:**

*“Abundantly remember the destroyer of pleasures (meaning death)”* (An-Nasaa'i)

*“The wise one is he who reproaches himself and acts in preparation for what is after death.”* (Ahmad)

## Stage 3: Death

- At the time of death, angels descend to take the dying person's soul, and the person can see the angels. A believer's soul will leave his body easily, while the non-believer's soul will leave his body with difficulty.

*"When the believer is about to depart from this world and go forward into the next world, angels with faces as bright as the sun descend from the heavens and sit around him in crowds stretching as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes and sits at his head and says: 'Good soul, come out to forgiveness and pleasure of Allah!' Then his soul emerges like a drop of water leaving from a water-skin and the angel takes hold of it... When a disbeliever is about to depart from this world, strong and rough angels with blackened faces descend from the heavens carrying a rough hair cloth and sit around him in crowds stretching as far as the eye can see. Then the Angel of Death comes and sits at his head and says: 'Foul soul, come out to the wrath and anger of Allah!' Then his soul divides up in his body and is dragged out like a skewer is pulled out of wet wool. Then the angel takes hold of it..." (Al-Bukhari and Muslim).*

## Stage 3: Death

- The believer will look forward to entering his grave, while the non-believer will not.
- Every human will encounter *Sakarāt al-Mout*, or the “stupor of death”. The “stupor of death” is the dizziness and unconsciousness that is caused by pain and occurs as you die. For some, (eg. Martyrs) the pain will be like the sting of an insect, but for most, it is a true difficulty.

### Hadith:

*There was a leather or wood container full of water in front of Allah's Apostle (at the time of his death). He would put his hand into the water and rub his face with it, saying, "None has the right to be worshipped but Allah! No doubt, death has its stupors." Then he raised his hand and started saying, "(O Allah!) with the highest companions." (and kept on saying it) till he expired and his hand dropped." (Bukhari)*

## Stage 3: Death

### Qur'an:

*“Until, when death cometh unto one of them, he saith: My Lord! Send me back.*

*That I may do right in that which I have left behind! But nay! It is but a word that he speaketh; and behind them is a barrier until the day when they are raised.”* (Al-Mu'minun (The Believers) 23:99-100)

- A barrier comes up behind a person once they die, and they can never go back and cross the barrier.
- Repentance is not accepted at the moment of death. Since death comes unannounced, it's best to make repentance right away.

## Stage 4: Life in the grave

- A person enters into this temporary stage from the time the soul leaves the body, to the time of resurrection. This time in the grave is known as Barzakh.
- Our souls will wait in our graves until the Day of Judgment
- Upon entering the grave, the soul is squeezed by the grave in a painful embrace.
- Every soul is questioned in the grave with three questions: Who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your prophet?

## Stage 4: Life in the grave

- The only thing that accompanies you in the grave is your deeds.
- There are both punishments and rewards in the grave. A believer's grave is connected directly to *jenna*, and the believer can see his place in *jenna* waiting for him. The non-believer's grave is connected directly with the Hellfire.

### Hadith:

*“When carried to his grave, a dead person is followed by three, two of which return (after his burial) and one remains with him: his relatives, his property, and his deeds will follow him; relatives and his property go back while his deeds remain with him.” (Bukhari)*

## Stage 4: Life in the grave

- Muslim can be punished in the grave, for such things as:
  - Theft
  - Cheating
  - Stealing
  - Slandering others, causing disunity among brothers and sisters
  - Improper cleaning (*tahara*) after using the toilet
  - Debt
  - Shortcomings in general



## Stage 4: Life in the grave

What saves a Muslim from punishments in the grave?

- Good deeds
- Seeking refuge in Allah from punishments of the grave
- Reading *Surah al-Mulk* (Qur'an, 67)

# Stage 5: Day of Judgment

- Known as *Yawm al-Qiyama* (day of Resurrection) or *Yawm id-Deen* (day when the debts fall due)
- Signs of the Day of Judgment
  - Minor signs
    - » *Many scholars agree these have all come to pass*
  - Major signs (examples)
    - » *Ad-Dajjal*
    - » *Return of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him)*
    - » *The sun will rise in the west and set in the east*
- When will it come?
  - When asked when the Day of Judgment would be, the Prophet Muhammad (s) replied, “The one who is asking knows as much as the one who is being asked.”

# Stage 5: Day of Judgment

- The Archangel Israfil blows the horn
- Every human soul is resurrected
- All souls are gathered, and their deeds brought before them
- The Balance and the Bridge
  - Deeds will be weighed on a *Mizan*, or balance. Even the smallest of deeds will be weighed.
- A bridge (*Sirat*) will be thrown across the Hellfire, and mankind will be forced to cross it.
  - It will be sharper than a sword, narrower than a hair, and people will have to cross it with their deeds.
- The *Hawd* (lake)
  - believers will reach the *Hawd*, or lake, of the Prophet Muhammad (s), and drink from it. When they drink, their thirst will vanish. This lake is fed by the river *Kawthar*.
- Intercession
  - The prophets (beginning with Prophet), ulema, righteous, and believers will intercede, each according to his rank

## Stage 5: Day of Judgment

### Hadith:

*“The feet of a man will not move [from the standing place] until he is questioned about four things: his **youth** and how he spent it, his **life** and how he used it, his **wealth**, and how he earned it and how he spent it,”* and in one version of the hadith, *“and his **actions** and what they were.”*

## Stage 6: Paradise and the Hellfire

- Either Paradise or the Hellfire will be our last destination.
- This stage of the soul's life is eternal.

# The Hellfire (*an-Nar*)

- **Description of the Hellfire:**
  - A place of intense heat, fire, and eternal punishment.
  - A place of torment, hideous tortures, and great humiliation.

*“And certainly We know best those who are most worthy of being burned therein Not one of you but will pass over it: this is, with thy Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished, But We shall save those who guarded against evil, and We shall leave the wrong-doers therein, (humbled) to their knees.”* Maryam (Mary), 19:70-72

# The Hellfire (*an-Nar*)

The hellfire has seven levels

1. Jahannam
2. Saqar
3. Laza
4. Al-Hutama
5. Al-Sair
6. Al-Jahim
7. Al-Hawiya (lowermost)

# The Hellfire (*an-Nar*)

The People of the Fire are of two kinds:

- Those of *tawhid*, who enter because of their sins; their stay is temporary.
- Those who are disbelievers, polytheists and hypocrites; their stay is forever.



# The Hellfire (*an-Nar*)

## Supplication for protection from the hellfire:

*And there are men who say: "Our Lord! Give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and defend us from the torment of the Fire!"* Al-Baqara (The Cow); 2:201

# Paradise (*Jenna*)

- **Description of *Jenna*:**
  - It has many degrees, each level better than the one beneath it. The highest level is *Jenna al-Firdaws*.
  - When souls first arrive, they are so overwhelmed with what they see that all they can do is walk around for days saying, “Salam, salam.”
  - It is a place of flowing rivers, delicious fruit,
  - It is the abode of the prophets; those who enter Paradise can meet with the prophets, and spend time with them, for Paradise is eternal.

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# Paradise (*Jenna*)

## Descriptions of Paradise in the Qur'an:

*“And the Garden is brought nigh for those who had taqwa, not distant. This is what you were promised, for every penitent heedful one, who feared the All-Merciful in secret and came with a contrite heart. Enter it in peace, this is the day of immortality. There they have all that they desire, and We have more.” (Qaf, 50:31-35)*

*“And give glad news to those who believe and do good works, that theirs shall be gardens underneath which rivers flow. Each time they are given food of the fruits thereof they say, “This is what was given us before” – and it is given to them in resemblance. There for them are purified wives. There forever shall they abide.” (Al-Baqara (The Cow), 2:25)*

# Paradise (*Jenna*)

## Descriptions of Paradise in the Qur'an:

*“Enter the Garden, ye and your wives, to be made glad. Therein are brought round for them trays of gold and goblets, and therein is all that souls desire and eyes find sweet. And ye are immortal therein. This is the Garden which ye are made to inherit because of what ye used to do.*

*Therein for you is fruit in plenty whence to eat.*

*(Az-Zukhruf (The Gold Adornments) , 43:70-73)*

## Paradise (*Jenna*)

*“But for him who feareth the standing before his Lord there are two gardens.*

*Which is it, of the favors of your Lord, that ye deny?*

*Of spreading branches.*

*Which is it, of the favors of your Lord, that ye deny?*

*Wherein are two fountains flowing.*

*Which is it, of the favors of your Lord, that ye deny?*

*Wherein is every kind of fruit in pairs.*

*Which is it, of the favors of your Lord, that ye deny?*

*Reclining upon couches lined with silk brocade, the fruit of both gardens near to hand.*

*Which is it, of the favors of your Lord, that ye deny?*

*Therein are those of modest gaze, whom neither man nor jinn will have touched before them,*

*Which is it, of the favors of your Lord, that ye deny?*

*In beauty) like the rubies and the coral stone.*

*Which is it, of the favors of your Lord, that ye deny?*

*Is the reward of goodness aught save goodness?* Ar-Rahman (The Most Beneficent), 55:46-60

# Paradise (*Jenna*)

## Hadith:

Abu Hurayra, may God be pleased with him, once asked, “O Messenger of God! From what was creation created?” He said, “From water.” He asked, “Of what is the Garden built?” He replied, “One brick of gold and one brick of silver; its mortar is fragrant musk, its pebbles are pearls and rubies, its dust is saffron. Those who enter it shall find joy without sorrow, permanence with neither extinction nor death; their clothes shall never wear out, neither shall their youth pass away.”

*May Allah grant us all Jennat al Firdaws!*

# New Muslims Class

## LESSON 11 Appendix



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# Glossary

**al-Akhira:** the end, the hereafter

**Fitra:** primordial nature (every child is born in this state)

**Sahaba:** companion of the Prophet Muhammad (s)

**Sakar al-Mout:** stupor of death

**ash-Shuhada:** martyrs

**Barzakh:** barrier; also life in the grave

**Tahara:** purity

**Al-ghaib:** the unseen

**Jenna:** Paradise

**Dunya:** material world, this life

**Hawd:** the lake of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him

**Jenna al-Firdaws:** the highest level of heaven

**Yawm al-Qiyama:** Day of Judgment

**An-Nar:** Hellfire

**Taqwa:** fear of Allah

**Tawhid:** belief in the Oneness of God

**Jahannam:** the first level of the hellfire

**Hypocrite:** one who outwardly announces his faith, concealing disbelief in his heart

# FAQs

## How can I prepare myself for the Hereafter?

*Aside from what has already been mentioned in this lecture, one should be ever-mindful of Allah and the Hereafter, not be taken in by this worldly life, be steadfast in faith and righteous deeds, and supplicate Allah for His mercy.*

## When will the Day of Judgment come?

*Even the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, stated that he did not know. What is important is that we be aware that our life in the Hereafter begins with death, and death can come at any moment.*

# References

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