



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

HOW TO INCREASE OUR RANKS IN PARADISE

Allah has described Paradise in many verses of the Qur'an. This can be summarised in the hadith below:

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Allah has said: I have prepared for My righteous servants what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no heart has conceived. So recite if you wish: No person knows what is kept hidden for them of delights of the eye as a reward for what they used to do (32:17). And in Paradise there is a tree under whose shade a rider can travel for one hundred years without stopping. Recite if you wish: In shade extended (56:30). And the space in Paradise occupied by a whip is better than the whole world and everything in it. Recite if you wish: Whoever is removed from the Hellfire and entered into Paradise is indeed successful, for the life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception." (3:185)

Source: Sunan At-Tirmidhi 3292

"And whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while being a believer – those will enter Paradise and will not be wronged, [even as much as] the speck on a date seed." [Quran, 4: 124]

IS IT EASY TO ENTER PARADISE?

"Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger and those who believed along with him said, "When (will come) the Help of Allah?" Yes! Certainly, the Help of Allah is near!"
2: 214

The Prophet (sal Allahu alaihi wa sallam) said, "When Allah created Paradise and Hell, He sent Jibreel to Paradise and said, 'Look at it and at what I have prepared for its people therein.' So he went and looked at it and at what Allah had prepared for its people therein. Then he went back to Him and said, 'By Your Glory, no one will hear of it but he will enter it.' Then He commanded that it should be surrounded with difficult things. Then He said, 'Go back and

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look at what I have prepared for its people therein.' He went back and saw that it was surrounded with difficult things. He came back and said, 'By Your Glory, I am afraid that no one will enter it.' Allah said, 'Go and look at Hell and see what I have prepared for its people therein.' [He saw it] with parts of it consuming other parts. He came back and said, 'By Your Glory, no one who hears of it will enter it.' So Allah commanded that it should be surrounded with desires. Then he said, 'Go back to it.' So he went back, then he said, 'By Your Glory, I am afraid that no one will be saved from it and that all will enter it.'"

[Sunan al-Tirmidhi (2560), Al-Tirmidhi said: this is a Hasan Sahih Hadith. Al-Haafiz said in al-Fath: its isnaad (chain) is qawiy (strong). Also classed as Hasan Sahih by al-Albaani]

ONLY THE MERCY OF ALLAH WILL ENABLE US TO ENTER PARADISE

Aisha reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Be deliberate in worship, draw near to Allah, and give glad tidings. Verily, none of you will enter Paradise because of his deeds alone." They said, "Not even you, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet said, "Not even me, unless Allah grants me mercy from himself. Know that the most beloved deed to Allah is that which is done regularly even if it is small."

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 6099, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 2818

VARIOUS LEVELS WITHIN PARADISE

The darajah (degree or level) varies according to their efforts in this world. The difference among the people of Paradise in status and levels is only due to the difference among them in terms of acts of obedience and righteousness in this world.

The prophet (SallAllahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Paradise has one hundred grades, each of which is as big as the distance between heaven and earth. The highest of them is Firdaus and the best of them is Firdaus. The Throne is above Firdaus and from it spring forth the rivers of Paradise. If you ask of Allah, ask Him for Firdaus." [Sunan Ibn Majah]

The highest of the degrees of Paradise is al-Firdaws, as it was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "... When you ask of Allaah, ask Him for al-Firdaws, for it is in the middle of Paradise and is the highest part of Paradise, and above it is the Throne of the Most Merciful, and

from it spring forth the rivers of Paradise." Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 2637; Muslim, 2831

What is meant by the "middle of Paradise" is the best of it, as when Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"Thus We have made you a just (and the best) nation (lit. a middle nation)"

[al-Baqarah 2:143]

The Sunnah also describes the position of those who do certain actions. For example:

1 - Faith in Allaah and belief in the Messengers:

It was narrated from Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "The people of Paradise will be able to see the people in the apartments above them as you see the shining stars on the horizon in the east and the west, because of the differences in their status." They said: "O Messenger of Allaah, is that the status of the Prophets which no one else will reach besides them?" He said: "No, by the One in Whose hand is my soul, they are men who had faith in Allaah and believed in the Messengers." Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 2082; Muslim, 2831.

2 - Jihad for the sake of Allaah:

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "In Paradise there are one hundred degrees which Allaah has prepared for those who strive in jihad for the sake of Allaah. The distance between each two degrees is like the distance between the heavens and the earth." Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 2637.

3 - The one who sincerely desires martyrdom may also attain that.

It was narrated from Sahl ibn Haneef that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever asks Allaah sincerely for martyrdom, Allaah will cause him to reach the status of the martyrs even if he dies in his bed." Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1909.

4 - Spending for the sake of Allaah.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The poor came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) and said: "The rich people have taken all the highest positions. They pray as we pray, and they fast as we fast, but they have surplus wealth with which they perform Hajj and strive in jihad and give in charity..." Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 807; Muslim, 595.

5 - Doing wudoo' properly even when it is difficult, taking many steps towards the mosque and waiting for prayer after prayer.

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Shall I not tell you of something by means of which Allaah erases sins and raises you in status?" They said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allaah." He said: "Doing wudoo' well even when it is difficult, taking many steps to the mosques and waiting for prayer after prayer. That is (equivalent) to guarding the frontier." Narrated by Muslim, 251.

6 - Memorizing Qur'aan

'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Amr narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "It will be said to the companion of the Qur'aan: 'Recite and rise in status as you used to recite in the world, and your position will be at the last verse you recite.'" Narrated by Abu Dawood, 1646; al-Tirmidhi, 2914; classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

The one who is keen should set his sights on the highest position in Paradise and strive to earn the pleasure of Allaah and enter the Paradise of al-Firdaws, which is the highest that Allaah has promised.

7 - Increase in prostrations¹

It was narrated from Kathir bin Murrah (radiyallahu anhu) that Abu Fatimah told him:

"I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! Tell me of a deed that I can adhere to and act upon.'

He said: "You should prostrate, for you will not prostrate to Allah but He will raise you in status one degree thereby and erase from you one sin." (Ibn Majah)

SubhanAllah, pondering on these ahadith shows us how merciful Allah ﷻ is. One prostration, reflect upon this with me brothers and sisters, one prostration in this life raises one to a higher degree in Paradise, a degree that is in distance like that between the heavens and the earth! How can we forsake such an opportunity, it really is not difficult if we sincerely desire for our eternal abode to be Jannah.

A practical way to implement this in our lives would be to increase in nawafil (voluntary prayers), here are some virtues of these prayers:

- **Tahjjud(night prayer):** Most beloved prayer to Allah ﷻ after the obligatory.

Abu Hurairah (radiyallahu anhu) narrated that: Allah's Messenger ﷺ

said: "The most virtuous fasting after the month of Ramadan is that of Allah's month of Al-Muharram. And the most virtuous Salat after the obligatory is the night prayer." (at Tarmidhi)

- **Ad-Duha (forenoon prayer):** Acts as a charity for the 360 joints in our bodies.

Abu Dharr (radiyallahu anhu) reported Allah's Apostle ﷺ as saying: "In the morning charity is due from every bone in the body of every one of you. Every utterance of Allah's glorification is an act of charity. Every utterance of praise of Him is an act of charity, every utterance of profession of His Oneness is an act of charity, every utterance of profession of His Greatness is an act of charity, enjoining good is an act of charity, forbidding what is distreputable is an act of charity, and two rak'ahs which one prays in the forenoon will suffice." (Muslim)

- **Sunan Al-Rawatib:** Twelve extra sunnah prayers a day grants one a house in Jannah.

Umm Habibah (radiyallahu anha) narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: "Whoever prays twelve Rak'ah in a day and night, a house will be built from him in Paradise: Four Rak'ah before Zuhr, two Rak'ah after it, two Rak'ah after Maghrib, two Rak'ah after Isha, and two Rak'ah before Fajr in the morning Salat." (at Tarmidhi)

- **Witr:** Allah ﷻ loves the witr prayer, and it is a sunnah mu'akkada.

Narrated Ali ibn AbuTalib (radiyallahu anhu): The Prophet ﷺ said: Allah is single (witr) and loves what is single, so observe the witr, you who follow the Qur'an.

These are just some of them, and if we make it a habit to continually pray these nawafil we will not only be immensely rewarded, but will also be elevated in Jannah, in sha Allah. (Kindly research more on the timings of these prayers and how to pray them).

Rabi'ah bin Ka'b Al-Aslami (radiyallahu anhu) said:

"I used to bring to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ water for wudu and serve him. He said:

'Ask of me.' I said: 'I want to be with you in Paradise.' He said: 'Is there anything

else?' I said: 'That is all.' He said: 'Help me to fulfill your wish by prostrating a great deal.'" (an Nasa'i)

SO, HOW TO REACH JANNATUL FIRDAUS?

1. Successful indeed are the believers.
2. Those who offer their *Salat* (prayers) with all solemnity and full submissiveness.

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3. And those who turn away from *Al-Laghw* (dirty, false, evil vain talk, falsehood, and all that Allah has forbidden).
4. And those who pay the *Zakat* .
5. And those who guard their chastity (i.e. private parts, from illegal sexual acts)
6. Except from their wives or (the captives and slaves) that their right hands possess, for then, they are free from blame;
7. But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors;
8. Those who are faithfully true to their *Amanat* (all the duties which Allah has ordained, honesty, moral responsibility and trusts etc.) and to their covenants;
9. And those who strictly guard their (five compulsory congregational) *Salawat* (prayers) (at their fixed stated hours).
10. These are indeed the inheritors.
11. Who shall inherit the *Firdaus* (Paradise). They shall dwell therein forever.

QUR'AN SURAH AL MU'MINOON (23) VERSES 1 - 11

Conclusion

Paradise is a big investment for all of us to do while we are in this world. We may be suffering now, tested by Allah many times, Devoting ourselves to worship Him while our friends are all enjoying themselves in the allurements of the dunya, but the reward will all be seen in the hereafter.

May Allah Accept our deeds, Raise our ranks in Paradise, and Grant us Jannatul Firdaus.