

What Is a Heart Harder Than Stone, and What Are Its Signs?

Who Has a Heart Harder Than Stone?

Have you ever heard of hardness of the heart and its signs? But what about a heart harder than stone? That may sound strange—can anything be tougher than stone? Yes, it can. Some people's hearts reach such a level of impenetrability that they are called a heart harder than stone. We often use stone as a symbol of the hardest things. So when we talk about a heart harder than stone, we mean the peak of rigidity and hardness of the heart. You might remember we previously discussed hardness of the heart as a kind of inward or spiritual disease—and talked about its treatment. This discussion continues from there but this time, we approach it through Quranic classification.

As we stated, the Quran divides *fasiqs* based on their inward structure and the dominant dimension of their being. The first group is dominated by their animal dimension; the second is driven by vegetative perfections; the third becomes attached to inanimate perfections, and the fourth, due to grave sins and deviation, develop a satanic inward state. Among them, there is a group that God describes as having a heart harder than stone. This is essentially the same as hardness of the heart, which we discussed earlier. In fact, hardness of heart does not simply mean that the heart has turned to stone; it's far beyond that.

If you have spent time in nature, you have likely seen cracked rocks from which springs or streams flow. In verse seventy-four of Surah al-Baqarah, God highlights

this positive quality of rocks, saying that although they are hard and solid, they can still split open and allow water to emerge ¹.

But some human hearts are not even as receptive as those stones. Stones have consciousness, and in their own way, they praise and glorify God. Divine figures and saints who unveil spiritual mysteries and have special abilities have reported hearing the praise of stones and inanimate beings, and countless stories support their claims. So even rocks possess some perfections. As the verse continues, God says some stones, out of awe and fear of Him, fall from high places. Yet some people's hearts remain completely unmoved when God's name is mentioned. This verse refers to the hardness of the heart of Israelites, who despite witnessing miracles and receiving divine blessings, still chose the path of rebellion and stubbornness.

Hardness of the heart can arise from any dominant inward dimension (inanimate, vegetative, animal, or intellectual) overpowering the human dimension.

For example:

- Someone obsessed with storing wealth, collecting luxury villas, or hoarding jewelry shows the dominance of the inanimate dimension.
- Someone craving status and power at all costs is dominated by the animal dimension.

¹. "Even then your hearts became hardened like a rock or even harder, for some rocks gush rivers; others split, spilling water; while others are humbled in awe of Allah."

-A person obsessed with publishing books, presenting at conferences, or academic titles develops hardness of the heart due to the dominance of intellectual perfections.

-Even acts of worship and sacred practices—if they distract us from God Himself—can fuel hardness of the heart.

Signs of the Hardness of the Heart

In its natural state, every part of our being loves its pair and finds joy in being united with it. The inanimate part seeks material wealth, the vegetative part desires beauty, the animal part desires the opposite sex, and the intellectual part longs for knowledge and information. So if our heart is sound, it should yearn for closeness and intimacy with its true Beloved—God. If that is not the case, it means we have been afflicted to some degree with hardness of the heart. And if left unchecked, this condition may reach an advanced stage where healing is no longer possible.

Like any disease, hardness of the heart begins with early warning signs. The first sign is a lack of interest in remembering God and connecting with the heavenly family. Someone who enjoys drinking tea, watching football, hanging out with friends, reading scientific books, or watching movies more than intimate time with God is likely suffering from a sick heart which is out of balance. Hardness of the heart functions like autoimmune disorders. Normally, the body can differentiate between foreign invaders and its own cells, targeting only threats like pathogens and viruses. But in autoimmune diseases, the body has difficulty discerning its own best interests and, instead of attacking foreign invaders, it attacks its own cells. Hardness of the heart works similarly—it confuses truth and falsehood, and can no

longer recognize what is truly good for it. Such a person no longer sees beyond this short worldly life. They are always in a rush—trying to get ahead, become famous, earn more, rise in rank—even if it means stepping on others or violating their rights. They do not realize the deep damage this causes to their eternal life, and what torments will follow. Instead of seeking God’s pleasure, they start begging for attention, trying to gain scraps of validation from people—selling out their dignity and self-worth for fleeting approval. Unfortunately, in advanced stages, hardness of the heart becomes incurable. A heart harder than stone will not accept any advice or guidance.

What do you think are other signs of hardness of the heart? We’d love to hear your thoughts.