

The Types of Hell | Why Is Knowing Its Different Levels Beneficial for Us?

How Are the Types of Hell Categorized, and How Do They Affect Our Lives?

If we have heard of heaven, we have also encountered the concept of hell. However, while we may be familiar with the various levels and ranks of hell, we might not know as much about its different types. In truth, one of the factors that influences our healthy journey toward the hereafter and impacts our healthy birth and quality of life there, is our knowledge of different sins and the harms or diseases that can threaten our spiritual health at various levels.

It is natural that based on the severity of our deeds, we may be placed in different levels of hell. For example, the punishment for causing harm to someone is not the same that for a murderer. Similarly, someone who unjustly takes another's money is not on the same level as someone who has exploited hundreds of people. Each person faces hell according to the number, severity, and nature of their sins. However, there is also a broader classification related to the type of sin or the impact of evil deeds on us, which leads to different kinds of punishments. Just as in this world, we distinguish between someone who unintentionally commits a wrong and someone who does so deliberately and with premeditation.

Therefore, it is only natural that in the hereafter, depending on how much we have engaged with various sins, we will face different types of hell. A sin we committed once or twice is different from a behavior that has become part of our character or a deviation rooted in our beliefs. Each affects us differently based on its depth and influence.

In this lesson, we will explore the types of hell based on the nature of sins. Accordingly, the types of hell are: The Hell of Deeds, the Hell of Morality, and the Hell of Beliefs. We will examine each of these in detail.

What Is the Hell of Deeds?

What we commonly imagine and perceive as hell is primarily the hell of Deeds. People generally think of hell as a place for those who neglect religious commandments, those who fail to pray or fast, committed theft, or violate social boundaries. While these actions are indeed wrong and carry their own punishments, they are considered the lowest level of hell and involve less severe torment compared to other types. These punishments are temporary, unlike the torments of the hell of morality or the hell of beliefs.

Think of it like committing a traffic violation: You must pay a fine, but the offense isn't severe enough to have your car impounded or your license revoked. Or imagine going to the hospital for a broken limb. While you endure pain and spend time recovering, you know it is not permanent, and once treatment is over, you will be discharged and free of suffering. Similarly, the hell of deeds is less severe than other types. Yet we cannot deny the pain and hardship it brings for neglecting religious duties or committing sins. Given the eternity and enormity of the hereafter, even this temporary suffering is a serious ordeal.

Neglecting the Hell of Morality

What we often overlook and casually dismiss are the actions that create other forms of hell. Yet, because these behaviors have become ingrained in our character, we see them as part of ourselves and fail to recognize just how much torment they

produce. There is a difference between doing a good deed and a good deed repeated so often that it becomes a part of our being. Similarly, a sin committed a few times is not the same as a wicked act repeated so frequently that it takes root within us, becoming a part of our character.

For example, an ordinary person might occasionally lose their temper in extreme situations and must bear the consequences accordingly. But a person with a bad temper constantly produces hell within themselves. The moment circumstances provoke anger, they react without hesitation. Just as a generous person doesn't need to think before giving, a hot-tempered individual is so accustomed to their trait that they manifest it in every situation. This internal hell is much more intense and long-lasting, like someone suffering from a chronic illness such as cancer, requiring ongoing treatment and care.

There is no better place to compensate for the deficiencies and shortcomings of a fetus than the mother's womb, which has incredible constructive power. Similarly, there is no better place to overcome the bad traits that have become part of our being than the womb of the world, which has a unique constructive power compared to the hereafter. If we do not repent and ignore our bad traits, it is uncertain how long we will remain in hell in the hereafter, as it takes much less time and effort to improve in this world.

While Allah, out of His mercy, often provides opportunities for us to cleanse ourselves of sins before entering the hereafter, taking advantage of these chances depends on our capacity and the effort they exert to heal their own moral diseases.

Hell of Beliefs: The Most Severe Type

However, hell is not limited to deeds and morality. In truth, the hell of beliefs, caused by wrong thoughts, beliefs, and misconceptions, is even more dangerous. It leads to a defective birth to the eternal hereafter, with no way to escape. We must learn how to think correctly about Allah, religion, and the friends of Allah (Awliya' Allah). We must also recognize the boundaries between accurate beliefs and misbeliefs. The hell associated with false beliefs, such as disbelief, polytheism, or hypocrisy, is the most severe of all hells. Indeed, disbelievers, polytheists, and hypocrites will suffer in a hell that the righteous will never enter. They will endure endless torment, deprived of even the most basic necessities required to adapt to the conditions of the hereafter.

Thus, our awareness of different sins and the corresponding hells, along with how we respond to each, shapes the quality of our life in the hereafter.