

that they might believe: do not grieve over them (cf. 5: 26) and do not destroy yourself with grief for them (cf. 35: 8).

Then mention is made of the impediments that prevent them from believing:

﴿Allah has placed a seal on their hearts and on their hearing﴾ that is, He has sealed them up so that faith will not enter them or penetrate them, and thus they will not understand or hear that which might benefit them.

﴿and over their eyes is a cover﴾ that is, a cover that prevents them from seeing that which might benefit them. Thus the means of attaining knowledge and goodness are blocked for them, so there is no hope for them and no goodness is to be expected of them. Rather that has been withheld from them and the door to faith is closed for them because of their disbelief, rejection and stubbornness after the truth became clear to them, as Allah (ﷻ) says:

﴿We will turn their hearts and eyes away [from the truth], since they refused to believe in it the first time...﴾ (al-An'âm 6: 110)

This is an immediate punishment (in this world).

Then Allah mentions the punishment in the hereafter: ﴿theirs will be a severe penalty﴾ namely the punishment of hellfire and the eternal, everlasting wrath of the Compeller (al-Jabbâr).

Then He describes the hypocrites who make an outward display of being Muslim whilst concealing disbelief in their hearts:



﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَيَا أَيُّهَا الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٨﴾ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يُخَادِعُونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٩﴾ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠﴾ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ ﴿١١﴾﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٨-١٠)