

were like that, death came to them and took away the benefit of that light, and there befell them all kinds of distress, grief and torment, as well as the darkness of disbelief, the darkness of hypocrisy and the darkness of various kinds of sin. After that came the darkness of hellfire – an evil place to settle in (*cf.* 14: 29).

Hence Allah says concerning them: «Deaf» that is, unable to hear the truth.

«dumb» that is, unable to speak the truth

«blind» that is, unable to see the truth.

«they will not return [to the right path]» because they have forsaken the truth after having come to know it, so they will not return to it, unlike those who kept away from the truth as the result of ignorance and misguidance; they did not understand it and they are more likely to come back to it than the hypocrites.

«Or [another likeness] is that of a heavy downpour from the sky» that is, they are like one who is caught in a heavy downpour from the sky, which is rain that comes down in copious amounts.

«accompanied by darkness» namely the darkness of the night, the darkness of the cloud and the darkness of the rain

«thunder» which is the sound that is heard from the cloud

«and lightning» which is the flashing light that is seen with the cloud.

«every time it flashes» that is, every time the lightning flashes in that darkness «they walk [a few steps] therein, but when the darkness overtakes them again, they stand still» that is, they halt.

This is the situation of the hypocrites. When they hear the Qur'an and its commands and prohibitions, promises and warnings, they put their fingers in their ears and turn away from its commands and prohibitions, promises and warnings. They are terrified of its warnings and disturbed by its promises (to the believers). Hence they turn away as much as they can and they hate it as the one who is caught in a downpour hates it, and when he hears the thunder he puts his