

Heaven and Hell

Once a group of people wanted to know what makes for hell and what makes heaven. Where all suffer, it is called hell and where all enjoy it is called heaven. So the committee of the above persons wanting to know how hell is made first went to hell where all people were suffering. What they saw in hell surprised them very much because hell looked a very rich place where every enjoyable object was available in plenty. Why any one should suffer here, they wondered.

As it was the lunch time in hell, all denizens of hell were in the dining hall and the committee went to investigate whether there was any food problem. Again what met their eyes surprised them beyond words because the dining table was full with a variety of delicacies in abundance and no one need starve for lack of food. Yet the most puzzling thing of all was the fact that all the hell-dwellers who were gathered there looked famished, hungry and angry. They were quarrelling and shouting at one another blaming one another in abuse language.

The members of the investigation committee closely scrutinized the people who were thus quarrelling and fighting. They found that the persons in hell had no elbow joints in their arms because of which they were unable to bend their hands and feed themselves though food was plenty available. So all of them starved and had no joy.

The committee felt that it was cruel joke to play upon people. Why give them plenty of food if it was not meant to feed them?

They wished to see how things were in heaven and went there in time to see the heavenly beings at lunch. The heaven was exactly like hell... looked very rich with all enjoyable things of life. As they approached the dining hall they could hear the loud cries of satisfaction and joy emanating from the hall. The committee members hastened to the hall to witness such an exuberance of joy. The dining table was full with delicacies just as in hell. The people looked happy, well-fed and contented and they were still eating. Now the committee members watched carefully how their arms were. Here too the arms of the denizens were without elbow joints. They too could not bend their forearms to feed themselves. Still they were not unhappy. They understood that the plenty of food in front of them was not given to them to feed themselves but was meant for serving others. So they all collected enough food from the table and fed the others. When each one fed the others, all of them got plenty to eat and nobody famished. All were happy and it became heaven. In the other place they did not know that the hands were given to serve others. When they tried to serve themselves they could not, and it became hell.