

Who Goes to Heaven

And who goes to Hell?



Scenario

1. Should we tell non-Muslims they are going to hell?

2. Do all Muslims go to paradise?

3. Why might people be really good and caring but not become Muslim?

4. Should all non-Muslims go to hell?

Does that seem fair - especially when Muslims aren't the most inspiring example?

5. What if you know Islam is right and you admire it,
- but do not openly declare you're Muslim?



1. Should we tell non-Muslims they are going to hell?

- No, because we don't know!
- The Prophet (S) knew the fates of some people because he had (a limited) knowledge of the unseen
- If people's fate depended just on their 'religious badge' we wouldn't need a Day of Judgement!
- Also, we don't know what any person will believe just before their death, which is when it really counts...
- 'Umar (RA) initially hated Islam until... when he was about to kill the Prophet (S) but he went to his sister and her husband, beat them up, felt bad, then felt he should at least read the Qur'an...

1. Should we tell non-Muslims they are going to hell?

- By Him, besides Whom there is no god, that
- one of you acts like the people deserving Paradise until between him and Paradise there remains but the distance of a cubit, when suddenly destiny overcomes him and he begins to act like the denizens of Hell and thus enters Hell, and another one
- acts like the denizens of Hell, until there remains between him and Hell a distance of a cubit and destiny overcomes him and he begins to act like the people of Paradise and enters Paradise.

Sahih Muslim

1. Should we tell non-Muslims they are going to hell?

- So, we don't know people's futures or how good they are inside
- Judging people will be complicated and it is Allah's job – not ours!
- So, why would we alienate and hurt people when we don't know their fate anyway?
- The Prophet (S) taught:

Make things easy, don't make things difficult

Make people feel good, do not frighten them off

Bukhari and Muslim

2. Do all Muslims go to paradise?

- No
- Muslims are just people who have **accepted Islam outwardly**
- Either by choice or by birth
- So, they might have strong faith or none
- Only Allah knows the state of people's hearts

- **True believers are exceptional people**, in the way they behave...
- Only **they** are promised jannah

2. Do all Muslims go to paradise?

- The Arabs of the desert say, “**We have believed**”.
- Say to them, “You have not believed yet; say rather: **We have submitted**,
- “for faith has not yet entered into your hearts.”

Quran 49:14

2. Do all Muslims go to paradise?

Surah Al Mu'minoon 23:1-11

23:1. The believers will be successful,-

23:2. Those who **humble themselves in their prayers**;

23:3. Who **avoid vain talk**;

23:4. And those who **pay the Zakat** .

23:5. And those who **guard their chastity** (i.e. private parts, from illegal sexual acts)

23:6. Except from their wives or (the captives and slaves) that their right hands possess, for then, they are free from blame;

23:7. But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors;

23:8. Those who **faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants**;

23:9. And **who (strictly) guard their prayers**;-

23:10. These will be the inheritors.

23:11. Who will inherit Paradise: they will dwell therein (for ever).

2. Do all Muslims go to paradise?

Sura Balad 93:12-18

- 12 And what will explain to thee the path that is steep?
13 (It is:) **freeing the enslaved;**
14 Or the **giving of food in a day of privation**
15 To the **orphan with claims of relationship**
16 Or to the **indigent (down) in the dust.**
17 Then will he be of those **who believe and enjoin patience**
(constancy and self-restraint) and **enjoin deeds of kindness**
and compassion.
18 Such are the Companions of the Right Hand.

3. Why might people be really good and caring but not become Muslim?

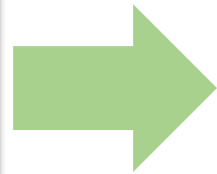
- Maybe they know Islam but still dislike it...
- But why?

Have only encountered distorted, negative aspects

It appears harsh or cruel or alien or weird or unfair

It doesn't make sense to them? 'Like superstition'

Because some Muslims hurt them or their loved ones?



"If Islam is their religion then I want nothing to do with it!"

....Is any of this really their fault, though?

3. Why might people be really good and caring but not become Muslim?

So, it's our responsibility to not only tell people about Islam

But help them see it in a positive light

So that it makes sense and appeals to them

4. Should all non-Muslims go to hell?

Does that seem fair - especially when Muslims aren't the most inspiring example?

“Truly the religion in the sight of God is Islam.” (3:19)

“Whoever seeks other than Islam as a religion, it will not be accepted from him, and he shall be in the Hereafter among the lost.” (3:85)

As Islam is the true and complete path to God, all people should follow Islam, once they discover its beauty and understand it

And those that reject it, knowing it is true are destined to hell:

“Indeed, those who disbelieve (in the religion of Islam) from among the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) and the pagans will abide in the fire of Hell. They are the worst of creatures.” (Qur'an Sura Bayyinah 98:6)

The Prophet (S) said: **“By the One in Whose hand is my soul, no one of this nation, Jew or Christian, hears of me then dies without having believed in that with which I was sent, but he will be one of the people of the Fire.”**

(Sahih Muslim, no. 153)

But does this apply to *all* non-Muslims?



4. Should all non-Muslims go to hell?

Does that seem fair - especially when Muslims aren't
the most inspiring example?

But what if they don't get to understand Islam properly?

What if they didn't really know it to reject it?

Surely, they have an excuse?

Can't Allah be forgiving, in these exceptional circumstances?

4. Should all non-Muslims go to hell?

Does that seem fair - especially when Muslims aren't the most inspiring example?

In Islamic law, a person who accepts Islam is a **Muslim**
– even if they aren't *true believers*

Anyone that does not profess Islam is a '**kafir**' –
disbeliever

- even if they aren't *true disbelievers* – i.e. enemies and rejecters of Islam

So, the label of 'Muslim' **doesn't mean you go to heaven**

So, the label of 'disbeliever' **does not mean you are going to hell**

The Qur'an says **heaven** is for *true believers*

The Qur'an says **hell** is for *true disbelievers*



The Quran says hell is for full-on, *true disbelievers*, who:

- Rejected their own Prophet
- Opposed him as enemies
- Oppressed believers
- Were nasty characters



A True disbeliever...

4. Should all non-Muslims go to hell?
Does that seem fair - especially when Muslims aren't the most inspiring example?



“But whoever opposes the Messenger, after guidance has been made clear to him, and follows a way other than that of the believers, We shall leave him on [the path] he has taken, and We shall cause him to burn in Hell—what an evil journey’s end!
(Qur’an 4:115)



4. Should all non-Muslims go to hell?

Does that seem fair - especially when Muslims aren't the most inspiring example?

BUT *True* disbelievers, rejected Islam when it was offered to them by:

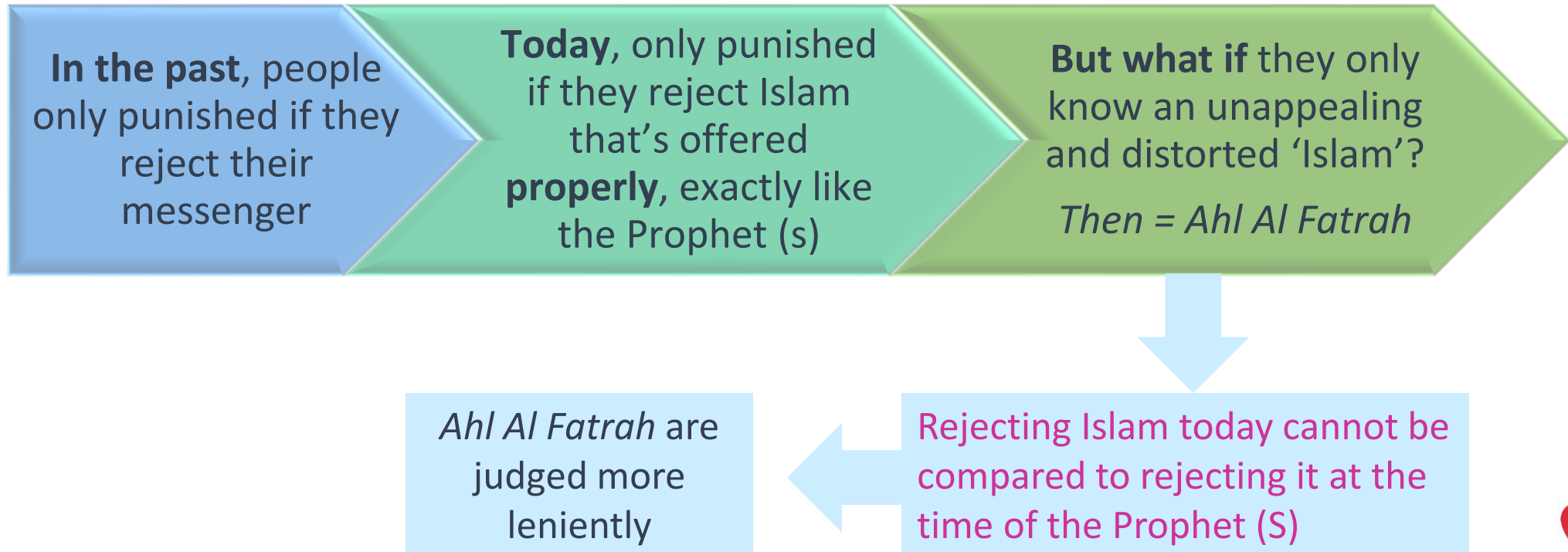
- A Prophet they knew and had respected
 - One of their own people, from their culture
 - With impeccable character
 - With a Book in their language
 - Whose beauty was overwhelming to them – to the point that they couldn't accept it was from him (“he copied it”, “he is a sorcerer”)
-
- **Rejecting Islam today cannot be compared to rejecting it back then!**

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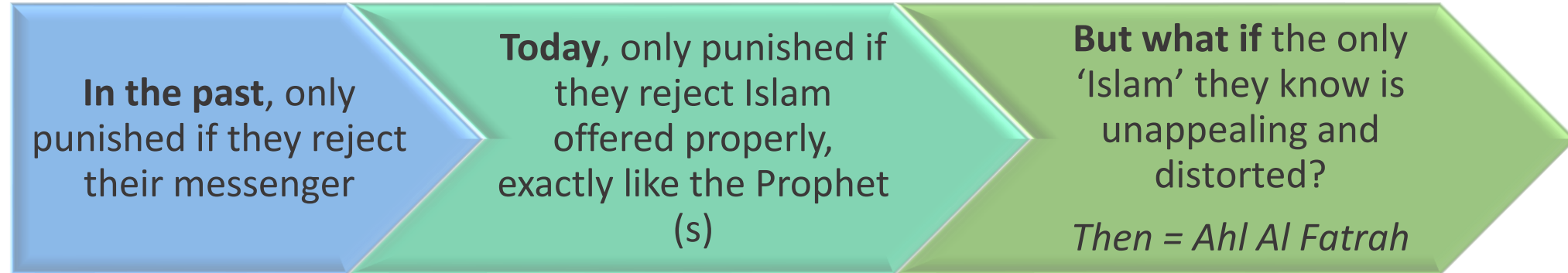
And if people *didn't* have the benefit of a Prophet in their language? = *Ahl Al fatrah*

“We do not punish [a people] unless We have sent a messenger.” (17:15)



4. Should all non-Muslims go to hell?

Does that seem fair - especially when Muslims aren't the most inspiring example?



“We do not punish [a people] until We have sent a messenger.” (17:15)

Ahl Al Fatrah are judged more leniently

“The great Muslim scholar, Imam Ghazali, includes in this category those who have only been reached with a distorted picture of the Messenger of Islam (Allah bless him and give him peace), **presumably including many people in the West today who know nothing about Allah's religion but newspaper stories about Ayatollahs and mad Muslim bombers. Is it within such people's capacity to believe?**

In Ghazali's view, such people are excused until after they have had an opportunity to learn the undistorted truth about Islam” (Ghazali: "Faysal al-tafriqa," Majmu'a rasa'il al-Imam al-Ghazali, 3.96)

Shaykh Nuh Ha Mim Keller

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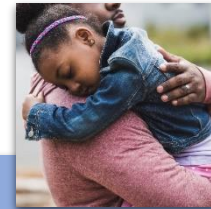
How are Ahl Al Fatrah judged then?



- Imam Ghazali
- Asharis

Mercy!

- Believe you can't know truth without revelation
- So will be given another chance to accept Islam in the Afterlife
- Imam Ibn Taymiyyah agreed, but believed that you can still discover God rationally



- Maturidis
- Mu'tazilis

Mercy!

- Believe you can find God through His signs
- And have a sense of morals
- So, you will be judged on the above – i.e. whether you followed your conscience



4. Should all non-Muslims go to hell?

Does that seem fair - especially when Muslims aren't the most inspiring example?

"Most people out there that I see are pretty decent people.

You know, they're nice people and God certainly doesn't have to burn people.

I know a lot of nice people that aren't Muslim and I find it very hard to believe that they're just going to roast in hell.

If Allah wants to do that, then Amantu billah ('I believe in God regardless') but I'm not going to assume that about God. I just don't. It's not my assumption. I just think it's deeper than it appears to people who are reading these texts without really thinking deeply about them..."

Shaykh Hamza Yusuf

Qurrat al-Absar (The Discerning Eye's Delight) - lesson 2

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=2&v=qTsS2FcVK-4

4. Should all non-Muslims go to hell?

Does that seem fair - especially when Muslims aren't the most inspiring example?

“And your Lord treats no one with injustice.”

(Qur'an S. Kahf 18:49)

“Beware of a Day when you will be returned to God: every soul will be paid in full for what it has done, and none shall be dealt with unfairly.”

(Qur'an 2:281)

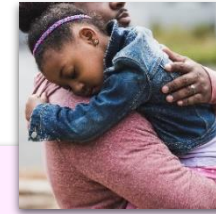


If it doesn't seem fair...

Fairness

- Allah is more fair than any of us
- “Is not Allah the fairest of judges?”

(Sura Tin)



If it doesn't seem fair...

Mercy

- He is *Al Ra'uf* – The Most Pitying
- And *Arham-Al-Rahimeen*, The Most Merciful of any that can show mercy

He said: "With My punishment I visit whom I will;

But My mercy extends to all things.

That (mercy) I shall ordain for those who do right, and practise regular charity, and those who believe in Our signs.

(Qur'an 7:156)



5. What if you know Islam is right and you admire it,
- but do not openly declare you're Muslim?

e.g. maybe many learned Christians and Jews

Who is this?



5. What if you know Islam is right and you admire it,
- but do not openly declare you're Muslim?

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, told us about the **Negus, the ruler of Abyssinia**, on the day he died. The Prophet said to us, **“Seek forgiveness for your brother.”**

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī & Muslim

(The Negus secretly believed in the Prophet (S) and Islamic teachings but outwardly remained Christian because he believed he could do more good remaining as king, which required him to stay a Christian)

e.g. maybe many learned Christians and Jews



Take home message: *Who gets to Heaven?*



<p>'True believer' - <i>Mu'min</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong faith in God • Dedicated and conscious in prayer, deep love of Allah • Avoids major sins • Excellent character, does lots of good in the world, caring for people, standing up for justice etc 	<p>Promised paradise</p>
<p>'Muslim'</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Too many factors and only God can judge their heart and actions – not us! 2. Plus, everyone is on a journey – we don't know where it ends 3. We should be honest and say, "only God can know!" 4. God will judge disbelievers on the basis of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - if they believed in Him - and how much they followed their own conscience 	<p>Outcome: ?</p>
<p>'Disbeliever'</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Other scholars say they will just be given a second chance on the Day of Judgement 6. Remember, God is the Fairest of Judges and the Most Merciful 7. Respect everyone as a brother/ sister in humanity 8. And as a potential Muslim – that they may get to Jannah before us! 	<p>Outcome: ?</p>
<p>'True rejecter' - <i>Kafir</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejected the Prophet (S) as he preached to them • Opposed Islam and oppressed believers • And had an evil character 	<p>Destined to hell</p>

Further Reading...

The Fate of Non-Muslims: Perspectives on Salvation Outside of Islam

Dr Jonathan Brown, March 2018, Yaqeen Institute

yaqeeninstitute.org/en/jonathan-brown/the-fate-of-non-muslims-perspectives-on-salvation-outside-of-islam

Salvific Exclusivity

Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, 2014

muslimmatters.org/2014/04/11/salvific-exclusivity-i-shaykh-yasir-qadhi

The Universality of Religions and Finality of Islam

Shaykh Nuh Ha Mim Keller, 1996

Part of the article: On the validity of all religions in the thought of ibn Al-'Arabi and Emir 'Abd al-Qadir (1996) -

www.masud.co.uk/ISLAM/nuh/amat.htm