

159301 - He is asking: why are most of the people on earth disbelievers, and why does Allah want them to enter Hell?

the question

I am wondering: why are most of the people on earth non-Muslims? As far as I know, Allah's love for His creation is seventy times greater than the love of a mother for her child, so why are the majority non-Muslims? Is it true that no one will ever enter Paradise except Muslims, and Ahl as-Sunnah in particular? If this is true, then that means that no one who will enter Paradise except a percentage that is very small in comparison to the total number of people on earth. So why does Allah want the majority of His creation to enter Hell?

Detailed answer

Firstly:

First of all we should point out that what the questioner mentioned about Allah's love for His creation being "seventy times greater than the love of a mother for her child" has no basis in the Qur'an or Sunnah. Allah, may He be exalted, does not love the transgressors, and He does not love the evildoers, and He does not love the disbelievers, so how can it be affirmed that Allah, may He be exalted, loves all of His creation when the vast majority of them are these types of people? Rather Allah, may He be exalted, loves those who do good, and He loves the pious, and He loves those who repent, and He loves those who purify themselves, and He loves those who are patient, and He loves those who put their trust in Him, and He loves those who are fair and just. These types of people are the ones for whom Allah, may He be exalted, affirmed His love and they - naturally - cannot be any but those who affirm His Oneness and not those who associate others with Him.

But despite all that, among the names of Allah, may He be glorified, are the names ar-Rahmaan (the Most Gracious), ar-Raheem (the Most Merciful); His mercy precedes His wrath, and His pardon precedes His punishment, and He is more merciful to His slaves than a mother to her child.

It was narrated that 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab (may Allah be pleased with him) said: Some prisoners were brought to the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), and there was a woman among the prisoners who was searching for someone. When she found a small boy among the prisoners, she clasped him to her and started to breastfeed him. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said to us: "Do you think that this woman would throw her child into the fire?" We said: No, by Allah, she would never do that if she is able not to. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Allah is more merciful towards His slaves than this woman is towards her child."

Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 5999; Muslim, 2754.

There is a difference between mercy and love. Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, has sent down a share of His mercy by virtue of which people show compassion towards one another, He grants provision to His slaves, gives them more time, is forbearing towards them and bears patiently their disbelief and offensive words. All of that is in this world; but in the hereafter, His mercy will be only for those who believed in Him and submitted to Him.

Secondly:

With regard to the question, "Why are most people on earth non-Muslims?" The answer to that is: because they are the ones who have chosen disbelief over Islam. Here we will set aside those who are excused because the message did not reach them, and let us ask: what is the matter with those who read about Islam and whom the call reached, and they saw thousands of their coreligionists race towards Islam, and they saw the millions who follow this great religion, and they saw the clear signs that point to the truthfulness of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) and the truthfulness of his call, and the truthfulness and miraculous nature of the Qur'an, and they heard the debates in which the enemies of Islam were defeated and their specious arguments refuted – yet despite all of that, and much more besides, they did not believe in Islam and they did not accept it as their religion; rather billions of them were content to worship a cross that they made or an

idol that they carved, or a grave that they built up, or a cow that they worshipped instead of Allah. There is no power and no strength except with Allah.

The truth is obvious and clear; the signs that point to the greatness of Islam are too many to be counted; no wise person can argue against the evidence that what these disbelievers are doing is false; sound human nature and reasoning reject those (false) acts of worship and the taking of other gods as lords instead of Allah, the One. Allah, may He be exalted, has highlighted the evidence and has established proof against them. Yet despite that, most people insist on disbelieving and you will not find most people to be grateful monotheists; rather they are disbelievers and polytheists.

Thirdly:

As for the answer to the question, So why does Allah want the majority of His creation to enter Hell?, The answer is that Allah, may He be exalted, does not approve of the disbelief of these people and He does not like it, but they liked it for themselves. The Almighty Lord, may He be glorified and exalted, has stated in His holy Book that He is not pleased with the disbelief of the disbelievers, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“If you disbelieve, then verily, Allaah is not in need of you; He likes not disbelief for His slaves. And if you are grateful (by being believers), He is pleased therewith for you”

[az-Zumar 39:7].

This is a clear statement that Allah, may He be exalted, does not like disbelief for His slaves; rather He likes Tawheed (affirmation of the Oneness of Allah) and Islam for them. Rather they are the ones who like disbelief as a religion for themselves, and they refused to join the ranks of those who affirm the Oneness of Allah. Allah, may He be exalted, does not force anyone to become a Muslim or to become a disbeliever; rather He, may He be glorified and exalted, has explained the paths of truth and falsehood, right and wrong, Islam and disbelief, then He has given people the choice, along with His promise to the Muslims of reward and His warning to the disbelievers of Hell. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“29. And say: ‘The truth is from your Lord.’ Then whosoever wills, let him believe; and whosoever wills, let him disbelieve. Verily, We have prepared for the Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers), a Fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah). And if they ask for help (relief, water), they will be granted water like boiling oil, that will scald their faces. Terrible is the drink, and an evil Murtafaq (dwelling, resting place)!

30. Verily, as for those who believed and did righteous deeds, certainly We shall not make the reward of anyone who does his (righteous) deeds in the most perfect manner to be lost.

31. These! For them will be ‘Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them; therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk. They will recline therein on raised thrones. How good is the reward, and what an excellent Murtafaq (dwelling, resting place)!”

[al-Kahf 18:29-31]

“2. Verily, We have created man from Nutfah (drops) of mixed semen (sexual discharge of man and woman), in order to try him, so We made him hearer and seer.

3. Verily, We showed him the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful.

4. Verily, We have prepared for the disbelievers iron chains, iron collars, and a blazing Fire.

5. Verily, the Abraar (the pious believers of Islamic Monotheism) shall drink of a cup (of wine) mixed with (water from a spring in Paradise called) Kaafoor.

6. A spring wherefrom the slaves of Allah will drink, causing it to gush forth abundantly.”

[al-Insaan 76:2-6].

Here we will quote an example of how Allah offered guidance to people by sending Messengers with clear signs, yet they chose disbelief over Islam. They were the people of Thamood. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“17. And as for Thamood, We showed and made clear to them the Path of Truth (Islamic Monotheism) through Our Messenger (i.e. showed them the way of success), but they preferred blindness to guidance; so the Saa’iqah (a destructive awful cry, torment, hit, thunderbolt) of disgracing torment seized them because of what they used to earn.

18. And We saved those who believed and used to fear Allaah, keep their duty to Him and avoid evil.”

[Fussilat 41:17-18].

This is an example, and similar to these people are all those who disbelieved in their Lord and rejected their Messengers, and were content with disbelief in this world and eternity in the Fire in the Hereafter. These modern disbelievers have a precedent; messengers brought the truth from their Lord to them, and Allah, may He be exalted, made the Messenger to each people one of their own, so that they would recognise his truthfulness and honesty, and He gave each one of them a sign that is enough proof for people, yet despite that, they said that their Messengers were sorcerers or madmen. The disbelievers of Quraysh demanded a sign from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) so that they would believe. He showed them the splitting of the moon, and they said that it was sorcery. So the words of Allah concerning them are true (interpretation of the meaning):

“and even if they see every one of the Ayaat (signs) they will not believe therein”

[al-An’aam 6:25].

Those people did not stop at rejecting the Messengers of their Lord; rather they conspired against them, to kill them or expel them from their lands. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And those who disbelieved, said to their Messengers: ‘Surely, we shall drive you out of our land, or you shall return to our religion.’ So their Lord revealed to them: ‘Truly, We shall destroy the Zaalimoon (polytheists, disbelievers and wrongdoers)’”

[Ibraaheem 14:13].

And Allah, may He be exalted, tells us that the people of Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) said:

“So nothing was the answer of [Ibraaheem’s (Abraham’s)] people except that they said: ‘Kill him or burn him.’ Then Allah saved him from the fire. Verily, in this are indeed signs for a people who believe”

[al-‘Ankaboot 29:24].

And Allah, may He be exalted, says concerning our Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him):

“And (remember) when the disbelievers plotted against you (O Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) to imprison you, or to kill you, or to get you out (from your home, i.e. Makkah)”

[al-Anfaal 8:30].

If this was the case with regard to those to whom the Messenger, whom they knew, brought the message from his Lord, and they saw the signs with their own eyes, then what about those Indians, Chinese and Europeans, if the Arabian Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon them) came to them as a bringer of glad tidings and a warner??

When some of the polytheists claimed that Allah, may He be exalted, approved of their disbelief and that if that was not the case, He would have diverted them from it, our Lord, may He be blessed and exulted, showed them to be liars and explained that they were only following their whims and desires and their forefathers who had gone astray. Allah, may He be exalted, said (interpretation of the meaning)

“And those who joined others in worship with Allah said: ‘If Allah had so willed, neither we nor our fathers would have worshipped aught but Him, nor would we have forbidden anything without (Command from) Him’”

[an-Nahl 16:35].

Then Allah, may He be exalted, refuted them by saying:

“And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): ‘Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) Taghoot (all false deities, i.e. do not worship Taaghoot alongside Allah).’ Then of them were some whom Allah guided and of them were some upon whom the straying was justified”

[an-Nahl 16:36].

Shaykh Muhammad al-Ameen ash-Shanqeeti (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

In these verses, Allah explains that He did not approve of their disbelief, and that He sent a Messenger to every nation, commanding them on the Messenger’s lips to worship Allah alone and to avoid taaghoot (false gods), i.e., to keep away from the worship of any deity besides Him. He also told them that Allah guided some of them to worship Him alone, and that some of them went astray; in other words, their disbelief and doom were confirmed.

Allah, may He be exalted, says in Soorat al-An’aam (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say: ‘With Allah is the perfect proof and argument, (i.e. the Oneness of Allaah, the sending of His Messengers and His Holy Books, to mankind); had He so willed, He would indeed have guided you all’”

[al-An’aam 6:149].

The fact that He alone can help and guide people is the perfect proof and argument against His creation. In other words: whoever We guide and bless with Our help, that is grace and mercy from Us. And whoever We do not do that for, that is justice and wisdom from Us, because he was not owed that by Us and did not deserve it from Us. Rather if We grant that, it is grace, and if we do not grant it, it is justice.

End quote from Adwa’ al-Bayaan, 7/95, 96.

Fourthly:

The questioner says: Is it true that no one will ever enter Paradise except Muslims, and Ahl as-Sunnah in particular? That is subject to further discussion:

Following the sending of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), then yes, no one will enter Paradise except a Muslim, because Islam abrogated all the previous religions; Allah, may He be exalted, commanded all His creation to enter this religion, and stated that He will never accept any other religion from anyone, and that whoever meets Him with any other religion will be among the losers. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:85].

Because of that, the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) instructed Bilaal to call out to the people: “No one will enter Paradise except a Muslim.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 3062; Muslim, 178.

With regard to the previous nations, everyone who believed in his Prophet and Messenger will enter Paradise; they were the Muslims of their time. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and Sabians, whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and does righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve”

[al-Baqarah 2:62].

With regard to the question of Paradise being for Ahl as-Sunnah in particular, this is an incorrect view. None of the scholars have said such a thing; rather all of the ummah of Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) who responded to his call will enter Paradise; no one will be deprived of it except those who turned on their heels (apostatized)

and nullified their Islam by doing something that took them out of Islam altogether, and those innovators who went against sharee'ah and opposed Ahl as-Sunnah. They, like other sinners among the monotheists, will be subject to the will of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted: if He wills, He will punish them, and if He wills, He will forgive them, then the final destination of any one of them will be Paradise, if he died believing in Tawheed.

This also applies to those who committed some sins or fell into some innovation, but were among Ahl as-Sunnah in general; they will also be subject to the will of Allah, may He be glorified and exalted: if He wills, He will punish them, and if He wills, He will forgive them. However, adhering to the Sunnah, defending it and following it in word and deed will increase the hope of entering Paradise and being saved from the punishment of Allah.

Fifthly:

The one who understands from the hadeeth about divisions and from the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) about the seventy-two different sects who go against Ahl as-Sunnah, "All of them will be in the Fire", that they will abide forever in the fire of Hell, is mistaken and has gone against the consensus of the Muslims. The fact that these sects have gone astray and have been given a warning of Hellfire does not mean that they will abide therein forever.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

Whoever says that the seventy-two sects have all committed kufr (disbelief) in a way that puts them beyond the pale of Islam has gone against the Qur'an, Sunnah and the consensus of the Sahaabah (may Allah be pleased with them all), and also the consensus of the four imams and others. There is no one among them who regarded each one of the seventy-two sects as disbelievers.

End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 7/218

Describing those who differ as disbelievers is the way of the followers of innovation and misguidance; it is not the way of Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The Khaarijis were the first ones to regard the Muslims as disbelievers, saying that they become disbelievers because of committing sins. They also regarded as disbelievers those who disagreed with their innovation and regarded it as permissible to kill them and take their wealth. This is how the innovators are: they introduce an innovation and regard as disbelievers those who differ with them, concerning it. Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah follow the Qur'an and Sunnah, and obey Allah and His Messenger; they follow the truth and show compassion to all people.

End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 3/279

And he said concerning the seventy-two sects: They regard one another as disbelievers because of some of the ideas they believe in.

End quote from Majmoo' al-Fataawa, 7/218

For reports of the hadeeth about division and some comments on it, please see the answer to question no. [90112](#)

For a description of Ahl as-Sunnah and the saved sect, please see the answers to questions no. [10777](#) and [206](#)

Sixthly:

By the mercy of Allah, may He be exalted, to His slaves, He will not punish with Hell those whom the call of Islam did not reach. For those who are alive at the present, or who lived before, whom news of Islam did not reach, they will be tested on the Day of Resurrection. We have discussed this matter in the answers to questions no. [1244](#) and [130271](#).

And Allah knows best.