

Last Day 19 – Will specific people go to Paradise or Hell?

Based on the works of Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan (حفظه الله)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

QUESTION: Does Islam teach that certain specific people will go to Paradise or Hell?

ANSWER:

This is a very important issue which many many people, both Muslims and non Muslims, have completely misunderstood.

From the fundamental aspects of Islamic creed is the belief that it is forbidden to point the finger at a specific person and say that they are going to Paradise or Hell - unless there is an authentic text from the Qur'aan and/or hadeeths naming that person and stating where their final destination will be.

This is such an important point in Islamic creed that if a person reads the books of the earliest Muslims – who were the best and most knowledgeable of the Muslims – they will find this to be one of the issues which are singled out and given particular attention.

Why should this be so?

We have mentioned in the previous four **Last Day** articles the events surrounding the death of a person. The hadeeth that we discussed was general and referred to the believer and the disbeliever.

Yes, Islam teaches that in general the believers, the Muslims, the people who follow the last of the Prophets – these people will go to Paradise.

And in general those who disbelieved in the last of the Prophets will go to the Hellfire. There are many Qur'aanic verses and hadeeths which show this.

This however is very different from saying Elvis Presley (for example) will definitely go the Hellfire because he was a Christian and Yassir Arafat (for example) will definitely go to Paradise because he was a Muslim.

Saying this is something forbidden in Islam because none of us:

a) have knowledge of what will happen in the future

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b) know what was in the person's heart - i.e. did he just pretend to be a Muslim whilst secretly hating Islam

c) know what that person did and believed right at the end of their life – i.e. maybe they repented and accepted Islam

d) know how much knowledge that person had of the true message of Islam i.e. Tawheed before they died – since it may be that Allaah judges a person differently if for example that person had only been exposed to corrupt Muslims (and had never learned about what Islam truly is) from the person who truly knew about Islam and chose to reject it.

The only exception, as mentioned, is if there is a specific text from the Qur'aan or hadeeths which name a particular person and state what their destination.

For example, Muhammad (may perfect peace and security be upon him), stated that several specific Companions of his would go to Paradise e.g. Aboo Bakr, Umar, Uthman, Ali, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqas and Abdur Rahman ibn 'Awf amongst others.

He also stated that his paternal uncle, Aboo Talib, would go to the Hellfire due to his persistent refusal to leave polytheism despite his understanding of what Tawheed was.

But apart from these examples, and others for which there is an authentic text, then it is forbidden to take on the role of Allaah by judging specific persons to be heading for Paradise or Hell.

Thus the foolishness and crass ignorance of the modern day "Islamic" terrorists can be seen, people who say that "such and such suicide bomber is going to Paradise because he sacrificed his life".

Quite apart from the fact that suicide bombings are forbidden in Islam – which is a separate issue which we are not going to discuss in this article — then the testimony of that particular person going to Paradise or Hellfire is something which is without any doubt forbidden for any person alive today to do.