

Mar 14, 2020, 9:39 PM

Hi Mohammed:

How are you?

The world is in tense situation because of the corona virus. We pray our God protects all of us from the virus.

I read the 14 Quran verses that you sent. I found that the three verses were recited in Medina and the remaining verses were in Mecca. Even though they were recited in different places and different time, they are all similar. Common phrase is (in order to go to heaven) we have to "believe and work righteous deed". As the concept of going to heaven may be different between Islam and Christianity. I have several questions to know what Muslims believe.

First, what do Muslims have to believe to go to heaven?

Second, What are righteous deeds? How do you know whether your deed is a righteous deed or not? How much righteous deeds do you have to do to go to heaven?

Third, at the lunch discussion, you mentioned that if a Muslim committed a sin, he will get some punishment for cleansing his sin before being allowed to go heaven. Does it mean that all the Muslims can go to heaven after getting some punishment for cleansing their sins? Does it mean that there is no eternal hell for Islam?

You also mentioned that if you committed a sin to your friend, God will call your friend and ask him whether he forgave you. If your friend forgives you, then God will send you to heaven. I am not sure I understand it correctly. If not, please correct me.

What are the source of these teachings? In Quran and/or Hadith? What chapters and verses? It is new for me.

After receiving your answer and understanding better about the heaven from your answers, I will also provide Christian view of going to heaven. I hope this discussion will give us better understanding of Islam and Christianity.

Whenever you are not busy, give me your answers to the questions.

Thanks,

Huggy An

Mar 15, 2020, 11:00 AM

Hi Huggy,

I hope this email finds you and your family all well and in good health. May the Creator of this universe have mercy on humanity, relieve the pain from those who are suffering, and make this pandemic a sign for all of us to believe in the One true God and come closer to Him. Amen.

Thank you so much for your insightful questions. I ask God that He shows us the light and truth and make us among those who understand the truth and follow it. Amen.

Huggy, while your questions are excellent, it seems that you are missing the main point. The main point is not how much or what sort of things I need to do to go to heaven. The main points that need to be established first is the existence of God. I know that there are many gods out there but we need to investigate and establish if there is a true God that deserves to be worshiped. If there is not one, then this discussion is not necessary. However, if we do establish (with evidence) and agree that there is a true God that deserves to be worshiped, then the first thing we need to do is to investigate as to who this true God is, which need to be supported with logic and reasoning. After we establish that, we can move on to other questions to investigate and discuss.

Anyway, since you are interested to learn about Islamic faith and its views about heaven, I will go ahead and give some answers supported with either Qura'an and Hadith .

To your first question, Muslims believe that only God knows where a person will end up in the afterlife, since only God knows a person's intentions, deeds, circumstances, and limitations. We believe that God will judge human beings according to His complete justice on the Day of Judgment based on both their beliefs and actions, taking into account the opportunities and abilities that He gave them. This is very clear from the verses I sent you earlier (there are other verses as well) and from the below Hadiths. True faith and work always go hand in hand. It is impossible to have true faith without "any" good work since if someone have true faith, this would reflect in his/her actions/work. It is true that someone may have true faith, but still commits sins, and not fully follow the commands of God. This person, as long as he/she believes in Allah as the one true God and does not associate any other god with Him, then surely, he/she will live in heaven eternally. Please see the Hadiths below.

A bedouin came to Prophet Muhammad - peace and blessings be upon him- and asked him, "O Messenger of Allah, what are the two imperatives which lead to Heaven or Hell". Prophet Muhammad – peace and blessings be upon him- replied, "He who dies without associating anything with Allah will enter Heaven, and he who dies associating partners with Allah will enter the Fire". Source: Hadith <https://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/1/414>

Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- said, “ (in the day of judgment) Allah will bring a believer near Him and shelter him with His Screen and ask him: Did you commit such-and-such sins? He will say: Yes, my Lord. Allah will keep on asking him till he will confess all his sins and will think that he is ruined. Allah will say: 'I did screen your sins in the world and I forgive them for you today', and then he will be given the book of his good deeds. Regarding infidels and hypocrites (their evil acts will be exposed publicly) and the witnesses will say: These are the people who lied against their Lord. Behold! The Curse of Allah is upon the wrongdoers." Source: Hadith <https://sunnah.com/bukhari/46/2>

The concept of requiring both faith and work righteous deeds to go to heaven is not only present in the Qura'an but also in the Bible (both Old Testament and New Testament). Since you like the New Testament more than the Old Testament, I will quote some verses from the New Testament for you to think about and reflect upon.

James 2:14-26

14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15 Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

18 But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.”

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. 19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

20 You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? 21 Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. 23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. 24 You see that a person is considered righteous by what they do and not by faith alone.

25 In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? 26 As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

To your second question, I cannot list all of the righteous deeds in one, two, or even a thousand of emails. Righteous deeds in Islam would include every good and morally correct action toward the only One true God and his creatures including human beings, animals and plants. This includes worshiping the One true God alone (including all actions of worship like praying, fasting, or any other types of worship). Righteous deeds would also include treating yourself, you parents, your family, and all humanity with kindness. This includes a wide range of good deeds from simply smiling when you see someone since Prophet Muhammad-peace be upon him- said God will reward you if you smile when you see another person to helping the needy people and act with justice and moral. It also includes treating animals and plants well in a way that serves the ecosystem that God had established in earth.

As for your third question, all true Muslims will have their eternal life in heaven. Some Muslims would go immediately to heaven without any punishment. Others would go to hell temporarily until they are purified and then they will go to heaven where they will dwell eternally. True Muslims will never go to hell eternally. This is clear from the verses I sent you earlier and the narrations of Prophet Muhammad - peace and blessings be upon him – which are called the Hadiths or the Sunnah of the Prophet. I have already quoted some Hadiths in my answer to your first question. Here are few more Hadiths that talk about this topic.

Mu'adh bin Jabal (one of Prophet Muhammad's disciples) reported:

I was riding a pillion with the Prophet- peace and blessings be upon him- on a donkey. The Prophet- peace and blessings be upon him- said, "O Mu'adh, do you know what is the right of Allah upon His slaves, and what is the Right of His slaves upon Allah?" I said: "Allah and His Messenger know better". Upon this the Messenger of Allah- peace and blessings be upon him-said, "Allah's Right upon His slaves is that they should worship Him Alone and associate nothing with Him; and His slaves' right upon Him is that He should not punish who does not associate a thing with Him." He (Mu'adh) added: I said to the Messenger of Allah: "Shall I give the glad tidings to people?" Prophet Muhammad – peace and blessings be upon him- said, "Do not tell them this good news for they will depend on it alone" Source: Hadith <https://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/1/426>

Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- said, "When the believers pass safely over (the bridge across) Hell, they will be stopped at a bridge in between Hell and Paradise where they will retaliate upon each other for the injustices done among them in the world, and when they get purified of all their sins, they will be admitted into Paradise. By Him in Whose Hands the life of Muhammad is everybody will recognize his dwelling in Paradise better than he recognizes his dwelling in this world." Source: Hadith <https://sunnah.com/bukhari/46>

Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- said, "Allah will admit into Paradise those deserving of Paradise, and He will admit whom He wishes out of His Mercy, and admit those condemned to Hell into the Fire (of Hell). He would then say: See, he whom you find having as much faith in his heart as a grain of mustard, bring him out. They will then be brought out burned

and turned to charcoal, and would be cast into the river of life, and they would sprout as does a seed in the silt carried away by flood. Have you not seen that it comes out yellow (fresh) and intertwined?" Source: Hadith <https://sunnah.com/muslim/1/364>

As for your point regarding committing a sin against another person, the person who wronged someone or committed injustice or a sin against another person, he or she should ask forgiveness from that person as soon as possible. If the person does not forgive the other person who did the wrong thing during his/her lifetime, then in the Day of Judgment, God would establish justice between those two people. Here are few Hadiths on this topic.

Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- said, "Whoever has oppressed another person concerning his reputation or anything else, he should beg him to forgive him before the Day of Resurrection when there will be no money (to compensate for wrong deeds), but if he has good deeds, those good deeds will be taken from him according to his oppression which he has done, and if he has no good deeds, the sins of the oppressed person will be loaded on him." Source: Hadith <https://sunnah.com/bukhari/46/10>

Prophet Muhammad – peace and blessings be upon him, said, “The claimants would get their claims on the Day of Resurrection so much so that the hornless sheep would get its claim from the horned sheep.” Source: Hadith <https://sunnah.com/muslim/45/78>

Prophet Muhammad – peace and blessings be upon him, said, "When the believers pass safely over (the bridge across) Hell, they will be stopped at a bridge in between Hell and Paradise **where they will retaliate upon each other for the injustices done among them in the world, and when they get purified of all their sins, they will be admitted into Paradise. By Him in Whose Hands the life of Muhammad is everybody will recognize his dwelling in Paradise better than he recognizes his dwelling in this world."** Source: Hadith <https://sunnah.com/bukhari/46>

Thanks again for your questions and I hope that I was able to address them clearly and sufficiently. If you have any further questions or need any clarification, please do let me know. Thank you!

-Mohammed

Huggy An <huggyan@gmail.com>
to Mohammed

Mon, Mar 16, 11:56 AM

Hi Mohammed:

Thanks for your kind and thorough answers to my questions. It is hard for me to understand the Hadith verses that you provided.

I chose the three Hadith verses and ask some questions as below.

(1) Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- said, “ (in the day of judgment) Allah will bring a believer near Him and shelter him with His Screen and ask him: Did you commit such-and-such sins? He will say: Yes, my Lord. Allah will keep on asking him till he will confess all his sins and will think that he is ruined. Allah will say: 'I did screen your sins in the world and I forgive them for you today', and then he will be given the book of his good deeds. Regarding infidels and hypocrites (their evil acts will be exposed publicly) and the witnesses will say: These are the people who lied against their Lord. Behold! The Curse of Allah is upon the wrongdoers."

Q1: In the above hadith , Allah directly deals with the believer and inquires the person of his sins until he confesses all his sins.

Is Allah going to admit him to heaven after his confession without purifying him in the hell?

I heard that Hadith prophesizes Jesus' return before the day of judgement.

What will be the role of Jesus on the day of judgement?

(2) Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- said, "Whoever has oppressed another person concerning his reputation or anything else, he should beg him to forgive him before the Day of Resurrection when there will be no money (to compensate for wrong deeds), but if he has good deeds, those good deeds will be taken from him according to his oppression which he has done, and if he has no good deeds, the sins of the oppressed person will be loaded on him."

Q2: Does it happen before the Day of Resurrection?

If person A has 10 good deeds and 15 bad deeds after the Day of resurrection, is he going to be punished for his 15 bad deeds or 5 (=15-10) bad deeds for purification?

Will Allah forgive person A if he confesses all his 15 bad deeds and let him go to heaven without purification?

(3) Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- said, "When the believers pass safely over (the bridge across) Hell, they will be stopped at a bridge in between Hell and Paradise where they will retaliate upon each other for the injustices done among them in the world, and when they get purified of all their sins, they will be admitted into Paradise."

Q3: What does it mean "retaliate upon each other" at a bridge? I guess "retaliate upon each other" means to revenge (or fight) each other. Is it the process of purification?

I thought they are admitted into paradise after they are purified in the hell. Is there a bridge between hell and Paradise and are they purified by fighting each other on the bridge?

Thanks in advance for your kind answers to my questions.

Huggy An

Mohammed Bin Rusayyis <rosies655@hotmail.com>
to me

Tue, Mar 17, 8:45 AM

Hi Huggy,

Thank you for the insightful questions. I agree with you that some of the Hadiths sometimes are not easy to understand in English since some Arabic words does not have an exact meaning in English. Please see my answers to your questions below.

To your first question, as Prophet Muhammad said in the Hadith, Allah Almighty would forgive his servant and admits him/her in heaven directly without being purified in hell fire. As Allah Almighty mentioned in the Qura'an 4:48 , **"Indeed, Allah does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills. And he who associates others with Allah has certainly fabricated a tremendous sin."** So,

as long the person does not associate anything with Allah Almighty and does not worship any other gods, then Allah Almighty would forgive his servant and admits him/her in heaven as mentioned in the Hadith. This only applies to the sins against Allah Almighty but if someone wronged another human being or did a sin or injustice against someone, then he/she would need to ask forgiveness from the other person as I explained in my previous email.

Regarding Prophet Isa (Jesus) – peace and blessings be upon him-, you are correct that Prophet Muhammad has prophesied that Prophet Jesus -peace and blessings be upon him- would come back **before the Day of Judgment**. Prophet Jesus- peace and blessings be upon him- does **not** have any unique or special role **on the Day of Judgment**. His unique role, which is the Messiah role would be fulfilled when he comes back **before the Day of Judgment, not on the Day of Judgment**.

Prophet Jesus –peace and blessings be upon him- is a sign for the Day of Judgment as his second coming is close to the Day of Judgment. See the verses from Qura'an below.

Qura'an 43:57-67

"And when the son of Mary (Jesus) was presented as an example, immediately your people laughed aloud [57]. And they said, "Are our gods better, or is he?" They did not present the comparison except for [mere] argument. But, [in fact], they are a people prone to dispute [58]. Jesus was not but a servant upon whom We (Allah) bestowed favor, and We made him an example for the Children of Israel [59]. And if We (Allah) willed, We could have made [instead] of you angels succeeding [one another] on the earth [60]. And indeed, **Jesus will be [a sign for] knowledge of the Hour, so be not in doubt of it, and follow Me. This is a straight path [61]. And never let Satan avert you. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy [62]. And when Jesus brought clear proofs, he said, "I have come to you with wisdom and to make clear to you some of that over which you differ, so fear Allah and obey me [63]. Indeed, Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. This is a straight path [64]. But the denominations from among them differed [and separated], so woe to those who have wronged from the punishment of a painful Day [65]. Are they waiting except for the Hour to come upon them suddenly while they perceive not? [66] Close friends, that Day, will be enemies to each other, except for the righteous [67]."**

There are several purposes of the second coming of Prophet Jesus, peace and blessings be upon him.

The first purpose is to clear the disputes among the people about Prophet Jesus, peace and blessings be upon him. What I mean by the dispute is the differences among Jewish, Christians, and Muslims regarding Prophet Jesus- peace and blessings be upon him- since Jewish do not believe in Prophet Jesus at all, Christians believe Jesus is divine and he is god, and Muslims believe he is a great prophet and the awaited Messiah that was sent by Allah Almighty. So when Prophet Jesus- peace and blessings be upon him- come back, he would witness for the truthfulness of Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- and his message/teachings. It would be clear for the Jewish that they did not kill or crucify Jesus in his first coming. We also believe that all Christians that witness the second coming of Prophet Jesus- peace and blessings be upon him- would become Muslims and real followers of Jesus (i.e., they would no longer believe in him as god).

The second purpose of the second coming of Prophet Jesus- peace and blessings be upon him- is to fight the Al-Masih Al-DAJJAL (which is called in English the Anti-Christ or the false Christ), which I think Christians also believe in that.

The third purpose of his second coming is fight Yajooj and Majooj, which I think you call them in Christianity Gog and Magog.

The last purpose of his second coming is to die and be buried in the ground like all the other prophets and true believers.

To your second question, I am not sure if I fully understand your question but I will try my best to clarify what this Hadith means. In this Hadith, Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- urges the believers (the Muslims) to ask forgiveness from others whenever they do anything wrong to them before the Day of Resurrection (i.e., when they are alive, because when they die, you cannot ask them to forgive you!). If person A did something wrong to person B, then person A should ask person B for forgiveness while person B is alive. If person B did not forgive person A or if person A did not ask forgiveness from person B, then, on the Day of Judgment, Allah would establish judgment between person A and person B. This judgment may, but not necessarily, include taking some of the good deeds of person A and give them to person B or taking some of the bad deeds of person B and load them on person A.

Note that this Hadith talks about the sins against other people and it does not talk about the sins against Allah Almighty. Allah may forgive all the sins the person did against Allah (except the sin of associating someone else with Allah or worshiping other gods) without going through purification or judgment as I explained in my answer to your first question. I hope this clarifies the Hadith and answers your question.

As for your third question, the original word in the Arabic Hadith that was translated into the English word “retaliate” does not exactly mean revenge. The meaning here is that everyone that commits injustice or sins against other people would be held accountable by Allah Almighty for these sins on the Day of Judgment. There is no fighting on the Day of Judgment. All judgment including any punishment or purification will be done by Allah Almighty and not by other people. This is the process of purification for the sins that someone has committed against other people.

There is a bridge above hell fire (called Al-Sirat). At the end of this bridge, where hell fire ends, there will be a place (between hell and heaven); at the end of this place, the gates of heaven are located. In the Qura’an (19:71), Allah Almighty said, **“There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with your Lord; a Decree which must be accomplished.”** There are also some Hadiths that talk about Al-Sirat, or the bridge. Every human being would pass over this bridge, which is located above hell fire. Some people would pass the bridge safely and go to heaven; others would fell down from the bridge into hell fire.

May God Almighty make us all among the people of heaven and protect us from hell fire. Amen.

Thanks again for your questions, Huggy. I hope my answers give a better understanding of Islam. Please let me know if you have any further questions. Have a wonderful day and stay healthy!

-Mohammed

Huggy An <huggyan@gmail.com>
to Mohammed

Wed, Mar 18, 2:46 PM

Hi Mohammed

Thanks again for your thorough and kind response. I truly appreciate your spending time for me.

I understand the Islamic view of going to heaven much better now than before. Here, I am going to summarize what I understand based on your answers. If wrong, please correct me.

Any one who believes other gods (until his death) than Allah will go to hell. Let's assume Person A believes only Allah but commits sins to person B. If person A asks forgiveness for his sin to person B, and person B forgive his sin, Person A's sin to person B disappears. But if person A did not ask forgiveness of person B or if person B did not forgive person A before his death, Allah on the judgement day will take out good deeds or add bad deed to person A to compensate the sin person A committed to person B. After that, person A will pass over the bridge over the hell with all other people. All non-Muslims will fall into the hell and suffer the fire in the hell forever. Person A will fall into the hell until the hell's fire completely purifies him and then will go to heaven. I guess the duration of staying in the hell and suffering the hell's fire will depend on how much he accumulated bad and good deeds. If his good deeds are more than bad deeds, he will cross the bridge without falling into hell. But if his bad deeds are more that his good deeds, he will suffer the hell's fire for the difference between bad and good deeds (**is it correct?**).

I learn a lot about Islamic view of going to heaven from you. I am going to provide you the Christian view of going to heaven in my next emails. I hope we can understand each other through the constructive discussion.

Thanks,

Huggy

Mar 19, 2020, 12:52 PM

Hi Huggy,

I am glad that you have a better understanding of the Islam now.

While the general idea of the first part of your understanding is correct, the details (especially in the second part) are rather inaccurate.

Let's look at this Hadith again.

Prophet Muhammad- peace and blessings be upon him- said, "**When the believers pass safely over (the bridge across) Hell**, they will be stopped at a bridge in between Hell and Paradise where they will retaliate upon each other for the injustices done among them in the world, and when they get purified of all their sins, they will be admitted into Paradise.

The Hadith states that **once the believers pass safely over the bridge**, they will be stopped at the end of the bridge, where there is a place between the end of the bridge and the gates of heaven. This is the place between hell and heaven that I mentioned earlier in my answer to

your third question in my previous email. In this place, Allah Almighty will judge between sins or injustices a believer had done against another person. This judgment would include some sort of compensation but not necessarily with good/bad deeds compensations, as I mentioned in my previous email. This compensation may results in person A going to heaven directly or being purified first in hell fire before going to heaven as a believer. I cannot comment on the duration of this purification since it is only in the knowledge of Allah Almighty and it is up to Him alone to judge between His creatures and His judgment is always just.

Huggy, I noticed that you are thinking of the idea of going to heaven as a math problem where the number of good vs bad deeds determines whether a person goes to heaven or hell. This idea has absolutely no basis in Islam. Let me be clear, **the number of good deeds or bad deeds on itself has no significance in Islam. There is not a single passage or verse in the Qura'an or in the Hadith that puts any importance of the number of deeds on their own as to whether a person would go to hell or heaven or how long that person would spend in hell for purification.** I hope this provides a better clarification of my previous answers.

Thank you again for your questions and engagement in this discussion. May God make this discussion a witness for us and a not a witness against us on the Day of Judgment. Amen.

-Mohammed