

Impermissibility of testifying to people's entrance to Jannah or Hell...

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Impermissibility of testifying to people's entrance to Jannah or Hell except those whom the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) testified to their virtue

Question: In a book entitled "Shifaa' al-`Aleel" I came up to a narration reported from the Mother of the Faithful, `Aaishah¹ (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا)², that [A child died in her presence, so she said, "Blessed be your soul. You are as one of the birds of Jannah (Paradise)." To this the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) replied, "How do you know, O `Aaishah, that he will be in Jannah? Only Allaah knows better what he may have done in this life."] On a different occasion, the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) is reported to have said, [The Pen is lifted from three persons (their deeds will not be recorded)]³ and he counted among them, [a child until he reaches puberty.]⁴ Both narrations are known as Saheeh (authentic). The question now is: how to reconcile them.

Shaykh Bin Baaz (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ)⁵: This Hadeeth is Saheeh (a Hadeeth that has been transmitted by people known for their uprightness and exactitude; free from eccentricity and blemish). It is recorded in the collections of Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim, wherein `Aaishah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا) described the child as "one of the sparrows of Jannah". The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) commented on her statement, saying [O, `Aaishah! Allaah created for Jannah its inhabitants even before they were born.]⁶

What the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) meant here was to prevent her from testifying to the entry of any specific person into Jannah or Hell, even if that person is a child. We should not testify to the virtue of children, because they may have been following the creed of their

¹ Umm-al-Mumineen `Aaishah, the Mother of The Believers (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا)

² (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا) (rad iyallaahu `anhaa) May Allaah the Most High be pleased with her

³ An-Nasaa'ee, Aboo Daawood, Ibn Maajah, Musnad Ahmad and ad-Daarimee.

⁴ At-Tirmidhee, Aboo Daawood and Musnad Ahmad.

⁵ (رَحِمَهُ اللهُ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah the Most High have mercy on him

⁶ Saheeh Muslim

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parents who may be non-Muslims or even hypocrites pretending to believe in Islaam. Therefore, it is not permissible to testify to one's admission to Jannah or to Hell, even if they are children, nor to say that a certain person will definitely be of the inhabitants of Jannah. For, we do not know the religious position of their parents, and habitually children follow the creed of their parents.

Anyone who dies in childhood not following the religion of Islaam, will be tested on the Day of Resurrection, according to the most authentic opinion of scholars. If their parents were not Muslims and were Kaafirs (disbelievers), they will be tested on the Day of Resurrection. If they obey and submit to Allaah, they will enter Jannah; and if they do not, they will go to Hell. This is typical of the condition of Ahlul-Fatrah (those whom Islaamic Da`wah has not reached in an uncorrupted form) who will be tested, according to the most authentic opinion, and the same ruling applies to children. **[When the Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was asked about the destiny of the deceased children of Mushriks (those who associate others with Allaah in His Divinity or worship), he answered, "Allaah knows best what they would have done (had they lived)."]**⁷

There is also evidence from the Sunnah⁸ that the children who die before puberty will be tested on the Day of Resurrection, and they will be commanded to fulfil some obligations. If they obey, they will enter Jannah; and if they disobey they will enter Hell.

This again reiterates that none should testify to anyone that they will enter Jannah or Hell, except those whom the Messenger of Allaah (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) testified to their virtue. This is one of the fundamental doctrines of Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah (those adhering to the Sunnah and the Muslim mainstream).

The Prophet (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) did not consent `Aaishah's statement on the ground that she testified to the child's admission into Jannah in the affirmation, calling him "one of the birds of Jannah." He (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) did not endorse her saying, as there was perhaps something preventing the child from entering Jannah; and so he will first be tested on the Day of Resurrection because his parents were non-Muslims.

According to Ahl-ul-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah, Muslim deceased children will join their parents in Jannah, but the children of non-Muslims will first be tested on the Day of Resurrection. This is Al-Haqq (the Truth). Those who obey will enter Jannah and those who disobey will go to Hell, typical of the condition of Ahl-ul-Fatrah. This is the correct ruling, and this is the meaning of the Hadeeth.

⁷ Saheeh al-Bukhaaree and Saheeh Muslim

⁸ Whatever is reported from the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ