

Answer to Question

Who are the people of Al-Fatra?

To: Adel Abu Ahmad

Question:

Assalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatuh... Our Sheikh, our dear Ameer, may Allah protect you from all harm and grant you the power on the earth.

There is an understanding that the people of Al-Fatra will be saved from the torment of the Day of Judgment, and they are those who were not sent a messenger, due to the saying of Allah (swt): ﴿وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا﴾ **“And never would We punish until We sent a messenger”** [Al-Isra': 15].

However there are noble Hadiths that mention that the Arabs in the Jahiliya days before the Bi'tha (mission) of Prophet Muhammad (saw) were Kuffar and will end up in Hellfire. In Sahih Muslim: (أن رجلا سأل الرسول صلى الله عليه وسلم: أين أبي؟ فقال: أبوك في النار. فحزن الرجل. فقال له صلى الله عليه وسلم: أبا وأبوك في النار) **“A man asked the Prophet (saw): Where is my father (i.e. his fate)? He (saw) said: your father is in Hellfire. The man was sad, the Prophet (saw) said: your father and my father are both in Hellfire”.**

There are more evidences about this.

The question is: How can we reconcile both understandings? Jazak Allah Khair.

Answer:

Wa Alaikum Assalam Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatuh

1- Your question is regarding what is mentioned in the book, *Islamic Personality* (Shakhsiyah Islamiya) Volume 3, under the title: “No rule before the decree of the Shar’i”:

“Things and actions must not be given a ruling unless there are Shariah evidences for that ruling, hence there is in no ruling on the things and actions of the sane before the decree of the Shariah, this is for the saying of Allah (swt): ﴿وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّىٰ نَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا﴾ **“And never would We punish until We sent a messenger”** [Al-Isra': 15]. And for His (swt) saying: ﴿لَنَلَّا﴾ **“[We sent] messengers as bringers of good tidings and warners so that mankind will have no argument against Allah after the messengers. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise”** [An-Nisa': 165]. And because ruling is only established by one of two: either Shar' or the mind. There is no place for the mind here, because the issue is about an obligation and a prohibition. And the mind cannot dictate the obligation and the prohibition; this is not the role of the mind, it is the role of the Shariah. The rule must be given by the Shariah. This only means the rule was not given to people before a Prophet was sent to them by Allah (swt), this is why the people of Al-Fatra are saved (from Hellfire). They are the ones who lived between the loss of a message and the sending of a message. They take the ruling of those who were not sent a message, like those who lived before the Bi'tha (mission) of Prophet Muhammad (saw).” **End.**

This means that the people in between the Bi'tha of the Messenger (saw) and the previous Bi'tha of the Prophets (i.e. people of Al-Fatra) are saved from Hellfire because they did not receive a message; this is if they were polytheists or did not follow a message.

c- At-Tabarani narrated in Al-Ma'jam Al-Kabeer from Az-Zahri, from 'Amir Bin Saad, from his father (Saad Bin Abi Waqqas) he said: «جَاءَ أَعْرَابِيٌّ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّ أَبِي كَانَ يَصِلُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، فَأَيْنَ أَبِيكَ؟ قَالَ: حَيْثُ مَا مَرَرْتُ الرَّجِمَ، وَكَانَ وَكَانَ، فَأَيْنَ هُوَ؟ قَالَ: فِي النَّارِ، فَكَانَ الْأَعْرَابِيُّ وَجِدَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ، فَقَالَ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، فَأَيْنَ أَبِيكَ؟ قَالَ: حَيْثُ مَا مَرَرْتُ بِقَبْرِ كَافِرٍ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِالنَّارِ» "An I'rabi (Arab man) came to the Prophet (saw) and said: O Messenger of Allah, my father used to observe his family ties, and used to and used to...etc, so where is he now? The Messenger (saw) said: He is in Hellfire. He said: it is as if he was saddened by this, so he asked: O Messenger of Allah, where is your father? The Messenger (saw) said: Whenever you pass by a polytheist's grave, tell him he will be in Hellfire." Al-Haithami said its men are those in the Sahih (narrators).

3- Combining the evidence shows the following:

- The verse shows that the people of Al-Fatra are saved and will not be punished; therefore none of the Hadiths that contradict this verse can be taken; if they cannot be combined.

- Evidences can be combined according to what Sayooti said regarding the Hadith of Muslim as mentioned in Hashiyat As-Sindi on the Sunan of ibn Majah, that the Messenger (saw) most probably did not answer the inquirer by saying: «إِنَّ أَبِي وَأَبَاكَ فِي النَّارِ» "Your father and my father are in Hellfire", but he (saw) answered: «إِذَا مَرَرْتُ بِقَبْرِ كَافِرٍ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِالنَّارِ» "If you pass by a polytheist's grave, tell him he will be in Hellfire."

The Hadith of Tabarani on the authority of Saad Bin Abi Waqqas (ra) is outweighed and taken and the Hadith of Ibn Majah from Ibn Umar may Allah be pleased with them.

4- In conclusion, the answer about the ruling on the people of Al-Fatra is that they are saved, and what I outweigh as likely after combining the evidences is what As-Syooti said: "As-Syooti said in Hashiyat Al-Kitab i.e. the Sunan of Ibn Majah from the best answers that when the I'rabi was sad, the Prophet (saw) wanted to cheer him up and changed the answer to a general one that includes every polytheist and did not mention the Prophet's father, not in denial nor confirmation" this is due to At-Tabarani Hadith: «حَيْثُ مَا مَرَرْتُ بِقَبْرِ كَافِرٍ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِالنَّارِ» "When you pass by a polytheist's grave, tell him he will be in Hellfire". And the Hadith of Ibn Majah «حَيْثُ مَا مَرَرْتُ بِقَبْرِ مُشْرِكٍ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِالنَّارِ» "Whenever you pass by a polytheist's grave, tell him he will be in Hellfire". And they are both Sahih Hadith. This is what I see when combining all the evidences with the conformation that any contradiction between the verse and Hadith if combining the evidences is not possible, then the rule is that the Hadith is rejected due to dirayah (details of narration) and the verse is taken as in known in Usul. Allah is most wise and all knowing

Your brother,

Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah

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The link to the answer from the Ameer's Facebook page:

<https://web.facebook.com/AmeerhtAtabinKhalil/photos/pb.122848424578904.-2207520000.1528315012./823483071182099/?type=3&theater>

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