22836 - The ratio of people of Paradise to people of Hell

the question

In Saheeh al-Bukhari there are two ahadith (nos. 6529 and 6530 according to the numbering of Fath al-Baari). In hadith no. 6529 it says that the number of “those who are to be sent to Hell is ninety nine from every hundred.” And in hadith no. 6530 it says that the number of “those who are to be sent to Hell is nine hundred and ninety nine from every thousand.” I hope that you could comment and explain this. May Allah reward you with good.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The first hadith was narrated by al-Bukhari (6529) from Abu Hurayrah, that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The first one to be called on the Day of Resurrection will be Adam. He will be shown his progeny and it will be said, ‘This is your father Adam.’ He will say, ‘Here I am at Your service.’ He will say: ‘Bring forth those who are to be sent to Hell from among your progeny.’ He will say, ‘O Lord, how many should I bring forth?’ He will say, ‘Bring forth from every hundred ninety nine.’” They said: “O Messenger of Allah, if ninety nine are taken from every hundred of us, what will be left of us?” He said, “My ummah, among the other nations, is like a white hair on a black bull.”

The second hadith was narrated by al-Bukhari (3348) and Muslim (222) from Abu Sa’eed al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him), that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Allah will say, ‘O Adam!’ and he will say, ‘Here I am at Your service, and all goodness is in Your hand.’ He will say, ‘Bring forth those who are to be sent to Hell.’ He will say, ‘Who are those who are to be sent to Hell?’ He will say, ‘From every thousand, nine hundred and ninety nine.’ At that point the young will turn grey, every pregnant female will abort, and the people will appear intoxicated although they are not. But the punishment of Allah is severe.” They said, “O

Messenger of Allah, which of us will be that one?" He said, "Be of good cheer, for there will be one man from among you and one thousand from among Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj." Then he said, "By the One in Whose hand is my soul, I hope that you will be one quarter of the people of Paradise," and they said, "Allahu akbar!" Then he said, "I hope that you will be one third of the people of Paradise," and they said, "Allahu akbar!" Then he said, "I hope that you will be half of the people of Paradise," and they said, "Allahu akbar!" Then he said, "Among the people you are like a black hair on the hide of a white bull, or like a white hair on the hide of a black bull."

According to the first hadith, the number of those who will be saved on the Day of Resurrection is ten in a thousand. According to the second hadith it is one in a thousand.

The scholars have reconciled between these two ahadith in several ways, such as the following:

1 – The numbers are not to be taken literally, so stating a particular number does not mean that there may not be more than that. What is meant by the two numbers mentioned in the two hadith is the small number of believers and the large number of kaafirs.

2 – The hadith of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri may be understood as referring to all the progeny of Adam, so there will be one in every thousand (who goes to Paradise), and the hadith of Abu Hurayrah may be understood as referring to everyone except Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj, so that the number is ten in every thousand. This is supported by the fact that Ya'jooj and Ma'jooj are mentioned in the hadith of Abu Sa'eed but not in the hadith of Abu Hurayrah.

3 – It may be that the division will happen twice: once involving all the nations who came before this ummah, when the number will be one in every thousand, and again for this ummah only, when the number will be ten in every thousand.

4 – It may be that what is meant by "those who are to be sent to Hell" is the kaafirs and the sinners [from among the Muslims] who will enter it, so that from every thousand nine hundred and ninety nine kaafirs are sent, and from every hundred ninety-nine sinners are sent.

These answers were mentioned by al-Haafiz Ibn Hajar in Fath al-Baari, 11/390.

And Allah knows best.