



313717 - Various reports about the width of the gates of Paradise

the question

I would like to know exact what the explanation is of size of the gates of Paradise.

Does one gate consists of two doors for example? What does the hadith mean about distance between Makkah en Hajar/Busra? Does it mean the distance between one gate to the other?

Why is there another hadith that says that the distance of a gate is 40 years, and another that says 500 years.

If they are all sahih, how could there be such huge differences in time/size.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

1. Paradise has several gates

It is proven that Paradise has several gates.

By His mercy, generosity and kindness Allah, may He be Exalted, has made these gates vast for people to pass through, and several hadiths have been narrated about their width.

One example is the hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), which says that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "By the One in Whose hand is my soul, the width of each two gate panels of Paradise is like the distance between Makkah and Himyar, or between Makkah and Busra." Narrated by al-Bukhari, 4712. Muslim (194) narrated it as: "By the One in Whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, the distance between two gate panels of Paradise is like the distance between Makkah and Busra."



Many scholars have stated that these are two gate panels that can be shut together; that is, they are the two parts of the gate.

It says in *Sharh at-Tibi `ala Mishkat al-Masabih* (11/3524):

The two gate panels are the two gates that close over the same entrance. End quote.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar said in *Muqaddimat Fat-h al-Bari* (1/143):

The words “between two gate panels” refer to the two parts of the gate. The word *misra`* (translated here as gate panel) is not used unless the gate has two parts or panels. End quote.

It says in *Kashf al-Mushkil* (1/1147):

The *misra`* is one of two panels or parts of a gate. End quote.

Al-Qadi `Iyad said in *Mashariq al-Anwar* (1/78):

The *misra`* is the gate; this word is not used unless there are two of them. End quote.

Al-Qari said in *Mirqat al-Mafatih* (8/3546):

The *misra` ayn* are the two gates that close over a single entrance. End quote.

2. **Discussion of the variation in the reports which speak of the various distances between the two sides of the gate**

Regarding the distance between the two sides of the gate, three distances have been narrated in the hadith quoted above, and the places mentioned are similar in distance from Makkah.

Ibn Hubayrah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:



Those places are all similar in terms of distance (from Makkah), and they are indicative of the immense width between each pair of gateposts of Paradise.

End quote from *Al-Ifsah*, 6/440.

The distance of these places (from Makkah) was familiar to the Sahabah at that time, because most of their trade journeys – especially for the people of Makkah – were to the south, to Himyar, which is Yemen; to Busra, which was a destination for trade to the north; and Hajar was a place to which they went for trade in Bahrain, which was to the east.

And it was narrated that the width of the gate was the distance of three days' travel for a fast rider. At-Tirmidhi (2548) narrated from Khalid ibn Abi Bakr, from Salim ibn `Abdillah, from his father, who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "The gate of my ummah, through which they will enter Paradise is as wide as the distance covered by a skilled rider in three days, but they will be so crowded at the gate that their shoulders will almost become dislocated." Then at-Tirmidhi said: This is a gharib hadith. I asked Muhammad about this hadith, but he did not recognize it, and he said: Khalid ibn Abi Bakr narrated munkar (odd) reports from Salim ibn `Abdillah. End quote. Shaykh al-Albani classed it as weak (da`if) in *Da`if Sunan at-Tirmidhi*.

Despite its weakness, it hardly differs from the hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) quoted above, because if a horseman rides a swift horse, assuming that it runs swiftly without stopping by night or by day, he will cover that distance (in three days).

End quote from *Fayd al-Qadir*, 3/192.

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This is in agreement with the agreed-upon hadith, "the width of each two gate panels of Paradise is like the distance between Makkah and Busra." If a good rider who is very skilled rides on the swiftest camel, travelling night and day without stopping, he will cover this distance in this time, or close to it.



End quote from *Hadi al-Arwah*, p. 118.

Al-Minawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

It is not contradicted by the report which says that “the distance between two gate panels of Paradise is like the distance between Makkah and Hajar”, because if a good rider who is very skilled rides on the swiftest camel, travelling night and day without stopping, he will cover this distance in this time, or close to it.

End quote from *Fayd al-Qadir*, 3/192.

And it was narrated that the size of the gate is the distance of forty years’ travel.

It was narrated that Khalid ibn `Umayr al-`Adawi said: `Utbah ibn Ghazwan addressed us. He praised and glorified Allah, then he said: To proceed... And we were told that between two of the gateposts of Paradise is a distance of forty years, and there will come a time when that gate will be crowded with people. Narrated by Muslim, 2967.

It was narrated as a marfu` report, attributed to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). It was also narrated by Imam Ahmad in *Al-Musnad* (17/339) and by others from Darraj, from Abul-Haytham, from Abu Sa`id al-Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him), from the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), that he said: “The distance between two gate panels of Paradise is the distance of forty years’ travel.”

Darraj is Ibn Sam`an Abus-Samah al-Masri, the preacher. He was honest (saduq) but what he narrated from Darraj is weak.

End quote from *Taqrib at-Tahdhib*, p. 201.

There is a corroborating report that was narrated by at-Tabarani in *Al-Mu`jam al-Kabir* (14/338-339) from Zurayk ibn Abi Zurayk, from Mu`awiyah ibn Qurrah, from `Abdullah ibn Salam, who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: The distance between two gate panels of Paradise is the distance of forty years’ travel, and there will come a



day when it will be crowded like the crowding of camels that come to a water source after five days of thirst.”

Shaykh al-Albani said: The isnad is authentic because each of its narrators is trustworthy.

End quote from *As-Silsilah as-Sahihah*, 4/275.

It has a corroborating report in the hadith of Hammad ibn Salamah, who said: I heard al-Jurayri narrating from Hakim ibn Mu`awiyah, from his father Mu`awiyah ibn Haydah, that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said:

“You will come with seventy nations of whom you are the last and the dearest to Allah. The distance between two gate panels of Paradise is the distance of forty years’ travel, and there will come a day when it will be very crowded.”

Narrated by Imam Ahmad in *Al-Musnad* (33/228) and elsewhere. The commentators on *Al-Musnad* classed its isnad as good (hasan), and al-Albani classed it as authentic (sahih) in *As-Silsilah as-Sahihah* (4/274).

But it was narrated by Khalid ibn `Abdillah al-Wasiti from al-Jurayri, and he differed from Hammad, as he narrated it with the phrase “seven years’ travel”, as narrated in *Sahih Ibn Hibban* (16/401) and *Al-Ba`th* by Ibn Abi Dawud (61), from Khalid, from al-Jurayri, from Hakim ibn Mu`awiyah, from his father, who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “The distance between two gate panels of Paradise is the distance of seven years’ travel.”

But al-Jurayri is Sa`id ibn Iyas, who became confused and his memory weakened towards the end of his life.

Hammad ibn Salamah is one of those who heard hadiths from him before he became confused. As for Khalid ibn `Abdillah, it is not clear when he heard from al-Jurayri: was it after he became confused or before?

Al-Athram said: I said to Abu `Abdillah – Ahmad ibn Hanbal –:



They say that Khalid heard – from al-Jurayri – after he became confused. He said: I do not know.

End quote from *Al-Muntakhab min 'Ilal al-Khallal* (p. 166).

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

I have not reached any conclusion about him until now: did he hear from him before he became confused or after that?

End quote from *Hadi as-Sari* (p. 401).

'Ali ibn 'Asim narrated a similar report to that of Khalid: Sa'id al-Jurayri told me: Hakim ibn Mu'awiyah al-Qushayri told me, from his father, who said: I heard the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: "The distance between two gateposts of Paradise is the distance of seven years' travel." Narrated by al-Bayhaqi in *Al-Ba`th wan-Nushur*, p. 169.

But in the case of 'Ali ibn 'Asim – who was similar in age to Khalid al-Wasiti – it is also not known whether he heard from Sa'id after he became confused or before, as he is known to have many mistakes in his narrations.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

'Ali ibn 'Asim ibn Suhayb al-Wasiti, an ally of [the tribe of] Taym, was honest but made mistakes and persisted in them.

End quote from *Taqrib at-Tahdhib*, p. 403.

Conclusion:

Examination of the reports dictates that precedence is to be given to the report of Hammad ibn Salamah, which mentions "forty years." He is one of those who heard from al-Jurayri before he became confused, and his report is supported by the hadith of 'Utbah ibn Ghazwan, which was narrated by Imam Muslim, as noted above.



But perhaps this distance – forty years – applies to a specific, enormous gate that is different from the other gates.

Ibn al-Qayyim narrated from `Utbah ibn Ghazwan:

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was the one who told them that this immense distance is the size of one of its gates, and perhaps it is the biggest gate.

End quote from *Hadi al-Arwah*, p. 115.

As-San`ani (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

You should understand that it was narrated that “the distance between two gate panels of Paradise is like the distance between Makkah and Hajar”, and according to a report narrated by Ahmad, “The distance between two of the gate panels of Paradise is the distance of forty years’ travel.”

It may be said that the gates of Paradise are eight, all of which are very wide, but they vary in size. Some of them are immense, as mentioned in the hadith of Ahmad, and some are smaller, as mentioned in the first hadith.

End quote from *At-Tanwir Sharh al-Jami` as-Saghir*, 4/522-523.

As for the width of the gate being the distance of five hundred years’ travel, we have not come across any report that mentions that.

And Allah knows best.