



500897 - Reconciling between the idea that people who lived during the interval between prophets will be tested in the hereafter and the hadith which says “No one will enter Paradise except a Muslim soul”

the question

I have become very confused, because I read the hadith of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) in *As-Sahihayn* which says that no one will enter Paradise except a Muslim soul, and I cannot understand the hadiths and words of the scholars – such as Ibn Taymiyah and Ibn al-Qayyim – about some of the adult polytheists of sound mind who lived during the intervals between Prophets entering Paradise. For example, in *Dar' at-Ta'arud*, it says: “All those whom the message did not reach in this world will be tested, and whoever obeys at that time will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys will enter Hell.” How can we reconcile between the idea of these polytheists, who were not children of the polytheists or insane people who will be admitted to Paradise, and the fact that no one will enter paradise except a Muslim soul?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

There is no contradiction between the hadith in *As-Sahihayn* in which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “No one will enter Paradise except a Muslim soul” [narrated by al-Bukhari, 2897; and Muslim, 178],

and what Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said, that adults who lived during the interval between prophets may enter Paradise after being tested. That is because, after being tested, some of them will pass the test and thus become Muslim, submitting to Allah, so they will enter paradise. Thus the hadith which says “No one will enter Paradise except a Muslim soul” includes them, because they will not enter it until after they become Muslim.



The statement of Shaykh al-Islam [Ibn Taymiyah] clearly indicates that what is meant is that those of the people who lived during the interval between prophets who will enter Paradise are those who will obey and thus pass the test: “whoever obeys at that time will enter Paradise, and whoever disobeys will enter Hell.”

He stated this more clearly in his book *Ar-Radd `ala ash-Shadhili*, 1/131, where he said: The general guideline concerning this issue is that no one will enter Paradise except a believer, and every believer will inevitably enter Paradise, and every disbeliever will inevitably enter Hell. So whoever believed in the messengers will inevitably enter Paradise, and whoever disbelieved in the messengers will inevitably be punished.

Whoever neither believed nor disbelieved in them because the message never reached him will not be among either group. Rather Allah knows best about him, and in the report it says that messengers will be sent to these people in the hereafter, after which those who believe will enjoy bliss and those who disbelieve will be punished.

We have previously given a detailed answer on our website about the issue of those who lived during the interval between prophets being tested [in the hereafter]. Please see the answer to question no. [98714](#).

And Allah knows best.