949 - Will the Love of Allah Save You from Punishment?

the question

Will a person who loves Allah enter Hell? There are many non-Muslims such as Jews and Christians who love Allah, and similarly there are immoral Muslims who love Allah. They would never say that they hate their Lord. Can you clarify this matter?

Summary of answer

Loving Allah alone is insufficient to earn Allah's reward and for salvation. Loving what Allah loves is a means to enter Islam and leave disbelief, and those most devoted to this love are most beloved to Allah. Love for the sake of Allah is essential and interconnected with loving what Allah loves. Loving that which Allah loves cannot be complete until one also loves for the sake of Allah.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said regarding this matter:

“There are four kinds of love , which we must differentiate between, and those who go astray do so because they do not make this distinction.

1. The first of them is loving of Allah, but this alone is not sufficient to save a person from the punishment of Allah or to earn His reward. The Mushrikun (polytheists), worshippers of the cross, Jews and others all love Allah.
2. The second is loving that which Allah loves. This is what brings a person into Islam and out of disbelief. The most beloved of people to Allah are those who are most correct and most devoted in this kind of love.
3. The third kind is loving for the sake of Allah , which is one of the essential components of

loving that which Allah loves. Loving that which Allah loves cannot be complete until one also loves for the sake of Allah .

4. The fourth is loving something alongside Allah, and this is polytheistic love. Whoever loves something along with Allah, not for His sake or through His love or for it, has taken another as an equal with Him. This is the love of the polytheists.

There remains a fifth kind of love which has nothing to do with our topic; this is the natural love which is a person's inclination towards that which suits his nature, such as the love of a thirsty person for water or of a hungry person for food, or the love of sleep, or of one's wife and children. There is nothing wrong with this unless it distracts a person from remembering Allah and keeps him from loving Him. Allah says (interpretation of the meanings):

"O you who believe! Let not your properties or your children divert you from the remembrance of Allah." [Al-Munafiqun 63:9]

"Men whom neither trade nor sale (business) diverts from the remembrance of Allah." [An-Nur 24:37]" (Al-Jawab al-Kafi, 1/134)

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

"The difference between loving for the sake of Allah and loving something alongside Allah is one of the most important distinctions. Everyone needs to make this distinction and is indeed obliged to do so. Loving for the sake of Allah is a sign of the perfection of faith, but loving something alongside Allah is the essence of shirk (polytheism).

The difference between them is that a person's love for the sake of Allah is connected to his love of Allah; if this love becomes strong in his heart, this love dictates that he will love that which Allah loves. If he loves that which his Lord loves and he loves those who are the friends of Allah, this is love for the sake of Allah. So he loves His Messengers, Prophets, angels and close friends because Allah loves them, and he hates those who hate them because Allah hates those people.

The sign of the love and hatred for the sake of Allah is that his hatred for the one whom Allah

hates will not turn into love merely because that person treats him kindly, does him a service or meets some need he has; and his love for those whom Allah loves will not turn to hatred simply because that person does something that upsets or hurts him, whether it is done by mistake or deliberately, in obedience to Allah or because the person feels that he has a duty to do it for some reason, or because the person is a wrongdoer who may yet give up his wrongdoing and repent.

The entire religion revolves around four principles: love and hatred, and stemming from them, action and abstinence. The person whose love and hatred, action and abstinence, are all for the sake of Allah, has perfected his faith so that when he loves, he loves for the sake of Allah, when he hates, he hates for the sake of Allah, when he does something, he does it for the sake of Allah, and when he abstains from something, he abstains for the sake of Allah. To the extent that he is lacking in these four categories, he is lacking in faith and commitment to religion. This is in contrast to the love of things alongside Allah, which is of two types. One is diametrically opposed to the principle of Tawhid (Oneness of Allah) and is shirk; the other is opposed to perfection of sincerity and love towards Allah, but does not put a person beyond the pale of Islam.

- The first kind is like the love of the Mushrikun for their idols and gods. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allah as rivals (to Allah). They love them as they love Allah.” [Al-Baqarah 2:165]

These Mushrikun love their idols and gods alongside Allah as they love Allah. This love and devotion is accompanied by fear, hope, worship and supplication. This love is pure Shirk which Allah does not forgive. Faith cannot be perfected unless a person regards these idols as enemies and hates them intensely, and hates the people who worship them, and regards them as enemies and strives against them. This is the message with which Allah sent all His messengers and revealed all His Books. He created Hell for the people of shirk who love these rivals, and He created Paradise for those who strive against them and take them as enemies for His sake and to earn His Pleasure. Anybody who worships anything from the vicinity of the Throne to the lowest depths of the earth and takes a god and a supporter besides Allah and associates other beings in

worship with Him, will be disowned by the object of his worship when he is most in need of it [i.e., on the Day of Judgement].

- The second kind is love for the things which Allah has made attractive to people, such as women, children, gold, silver, branded beautiful horses, cattle and well-tilled land. People love them with a kind of desire, like the love of the hungry person for food and the thirsty person for water. This love is of three kinds. If a person loves them for the sake of Allah and as a means of obeying Allah , he will be rewarded for that; it will be counted as a part of love for the sake of Allah and a means of reaching Him, and he will still find enjoyment in them.

This is how the best of creation [i.e. the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)] was, to whom women and perfume were made dear in this world, and his love for them helped him to love Allah more and to convey His Message and fulfill His commands.

If a person loves them because they suit his nature and his own desires, but he does not give them preference over that which Allah loves and is pleased with, and he gets them because of his natural inclination, then they come under the heading of things which are permissible, and he will not be punished for that, but his love of Allah and for the sake of Allah will be lacking somewhat. If his sole purpose in life is to get these things, and he gives priority to that over that which Allah loves and is pleased with, then he is wronging himself and following his own desires.

The first is the love of al-Sabiqun (those who are foremost in Islam); the second is the love of al-muqtasidun (those who are average) and the third is the love of al-zalimun (the wrongdoers).” (Al-Ruh by Ibn al-Qayyim, 1/254)

For more, please see this category: Love of Allah

And Allah knows best.