

Islamic Hell: Absurdity of Science and Logic

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The Qur'an, like the Bible, teaches that God (called 'Allah' by Muslims) sends those who displease Him to Hell. However, one wonders if the concept of Hell is rational or logical. Does Hell really exist? The arguments offered here can also be applied to Christianity, but this article will focus on Islam, as theological issues are not confronted in Islamic areas as much as they have been by critical thinkers in Christian countries.

The scientific problem

To discuss Hell with a Muslim is an exercise in futility that quickly becomes an exhibition of Islamic idiocy. Muslims are quick to proclaim scientific miracles within their texts, even though they have no desire to really discuss science at all. While they try to portray their texts as being compatible with modern secular science, they ignore the many scientific errors in their text, or claim that the critic of such texts does not know the true interpretation.

The idea of Hell is both illogical and scientifically absurd. How can eternal fire be any kind of divine punishment that one should fear? You cannot be burned for eternity. Your body only offers a given and finite amount of fuel for fire. Eventually there will be nothing left to burn.

Trying to get around such arguments, the believer in Hell will claim Hellfire consists of "smokeless fire" and that it "burns, but does not consume". If the fire does not consume one's flesh, there is no pain! Pain is caused by neural receptors in the brain alerting you to cells being destroyed. If the fire does not consume one's flesh, no cells are destroyed, and thus there is no pain!

Perhaps some supporters of the Hellfire theory will offer the idea that your "soul" is sent to Hell and not your body. If one is without their body, they are without cells, without neural receptors, and therefore without pain. These are scientific facts about pain that primitive cultures were not aware of. Those who believe Hell exists can only describe eternal damnation as a "phenomenon which science cannot explain".

While such a description makes belief in Hell something of the realm of fantasy, there are still stern arguments against such a concept. Whether there is pain or not, eternal flames is not a true punishment to be feared. If it is eternal, there is ample time to grow accustomed to one's environment. Surely eternity is enough time to develop a higher tolerance of pain. There have been examples of human beings who reached a mental state where they do not feel pain. An example would be Buddhist monks in Viet Nam who could set themselves on fire, and show no reaction while burning to death. Such people would have nothing to fear from Hell.

Who is sent to Hell?

In Islam people are sent to Hell for not believing in God. Unfortunately this is a vague reason, as in Islam it is not immediately clear who is a believer and who is not. Different schools of

thought offer different explanations as to what qualifies one as a believer. The following verse from the Qur'an may shed some light on the issue:

Surely, those who believe, those who are Jewish, the Christians, and the converts; anyone who (1) believes in GOD, and (2) believes in the Last Day, and (3) leads a righteous life, will receive their recompense from their Lord. They have nothing to fear, nor will they grieve. (Qur'an 5:69)

While Shia, Sufi, and Submitter schools of thought agree that the above verse proves Jews and Christians can go to heaven, Sunnis strongly disagree. Most Sunnis will state that the above verse has been abrogated by the following one:

And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers. (Qur'an 3:85)

While Rashad Khalifa, founder of the Submitter sect, argued that Islam was Arabic for "submission (to God)" and therefore included Jews and Christians, Orthodox Sunni Muslims rejected such a possibility. Furthermore, teachers of Sunni law have argued that "Islam" means Sunni Islam only, and sects such as Shia, Ahmedi, Sufi, Qadianni, et cetera, will also be sent to Hell. In trying to explain why all the other sects are displeasing to Allah, Sunnis offer the following verse from the Qur'an:

Do not be like those who split up their religion and became sects, they invented new things in the religion (bid'ah) and followed their vain desires, each sect rejoicing in that which is with it.? (Qur'an 30:31-32)

Sunnis make up roughly 90% of all Muslims, and have thoroughly oppressed the much smaller sects. Rashad Khalifa himself was murdered in 1990 while visiting a Mosque in Arizona. Shias are the targets of much violence in Pakistan, and it is actually against the law to be a Shia in Malaysia! Many Islamic Sheikhs speak out against Sufi Islam, and countless Sunni religious leaders openly preach violence against those of the Ahmedi and Qadianni sects. Such oppression is easily accepted by Sunnis, as they believe they are punishing heretics, whom God himself hates. This is especially true of Shias, as many Sunnis believe that Shia Islam was started by the Jews.

Why send people to Hell?

Regardless of sectarian politics, all Muslims agree that those who do not believe in the God of Abraham will be sent to Hell. This includes Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, and of course Atheists. Most Muslims also now feel that Christians who worship Jesus as God (which is the vast majority of Christians) will be sent Hell also. The question is why are all these people sent to Hell?

According to Islam, God (Allah) has ordained a very specific path for mankind. Those who stay on the path are rewarded with paradise, while those who stray from the path are severely punished (with Hellfire). Apparently Allah is very concerned about who is worshipping Him. So concerned, that He uses bribery and coercion to keep people in line.

The contradiction between the concept of a merciful God, and one that sends disbelievers to Hell, is one that cannot be reconciled. While Muslims, and the Qur'an, refer to God as Ar-Rahman (The Most Merciful), Allah is not very merciful at all. The God of Islam punishes

those who do not recognize His dominance and acknowledge His superiority. This depicts Allah as being insecure, and having an inferiority complex. Psychologists could say a lot about Allah's aggressive nature, and desperate need to be worshipped.

In short Islam is a spiritual dictatorship. Allah is not loved by His followers, but feared. No person is allowed to live their life the way they want to. Fortunately for mankind, Allah is an impotent dictator. He is no longer able to carry out His punishments, and the iron fist with which He rules has grown soft. All that is left are His henchmen: Muslims, the pawns of the oppressor hurling hollow threats of a mythical place called Hell.

These comically misguided mercenaries patiently await the day Allah will come and destroy the infidels, and create an Islamic paradise for the faithful. Sadly they do not realize that their violent desert deity is a myth. The concept of Hell was created by a primitive society who's understanding of how a God should act was based on the behavior of the oppressive rulers of that time. While primitive cultures were terrorized by the thought of such a place, those who can think rationally should discard belief in such absurdities.

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