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## The Question Regarding the Children of Nonbelievers in Islam

### Abstract

The question regarding the children of nonbelievers or of non-Muslims who die before reaching puberty, is inextricably intertwined with the issue of predestination. Comprising the core of the problem is the dilemma whether these children will end up in Heaven or Hell. Verdicts given by the Prophet on the issue tend to pose dissimilarities. Motivated with the foremost of aim of setting the hearts and souls of those who had become Muslim anew firmly on the Quran and Islam, these verdicts, to a lesser extent, were also part of a strategy of safeguarding Muslim society from its enemies. Prioritizing this particular aspect of the issue, the research at hand pertains, therefore, to method. It is hoped, in the end, that there will emerge a better understanding and appraisal of both the relevant *aḥādīth* and the surrounding events. Otherwise, debates surrounding the issue will perpetuate, as has hitherto been the case, leaving the problem of interpreting the complexities between the relevant evidences derived from both the Quran and Sunnah unsolved. If the texts about the children of the nonbelievers are interpreted correctly, it means that the religion of Islam will be understood correctly about this issue and all people need this. Because Islam is the last and universal religion, that is, Islam is the religion of all people. So the rules of this religion should be for the benefit of all people. When the views about the children of the nonbelievers are explained correctly, it is possible that the non-Muslims will be more interested in the religion of Islam. Thus, it will be easier to convey the religion of Islam to non-Muslims. One of the important issues that is wanted to be explained in this article is to explain Islam, which is the common religion to people more accurately. In addition, the aim of this study is to end the differences of opinion on this issue among the Islamic sects and to provide a common opinion and belief. However, the texts in Islamic sources have been explained by Islamic researchers in accordance with the principles of their own sects. But when the texts in the sources are brought together in the historical process, only one view emerges: The children of the nonbelievers will be in Paradise like the children of the Muslims.

**Keywords:** Kalām, Child, Pagan, Paradise, Hell, Messenger, Decision.

### İslam'da Müşrik Çocukları Meselesi

#### Öz

Müşrik çocukları meselesi, başka bir deyişle gayrimüslimlerin akıl baliğ olmadan ölen çocuklarının ahiretteki durumu, kader konusu ile de iç içe olan bir meseledir. Bu çocukların Cennetlik mi yoksa cehennemlik mi olacağı hususu meselenin bu problemin özünü oluşturur. Bu mesele hakkında, Hz. Peygamber tarafından zaman zaman değişik hükümler verilmiştir. Bu hükümlerle, öncelikle yeni müslüman olan insanların yönlerini tam olarak Kur'an'a ve İslam'a çevirmeleri hedeflenmiş ayrıca da İslam toplumunun düşmanlarına karşı savunma stratejisi geliştirilmiştir. Konunun bu yönü esas alınarak yapılan araştırma, daha çok bir usul çalışması niteliği arz etmektedir. Neticede, bu konuda varit olan hadislerin ve yaşanan olayların daha doğru anlaşılıp daha kolay anlatılmış olacağına inanıyoruz. Aksi takdirde mesele hakkındaki tartışmalar bugüne kadar olduğu gibi sürüp gidecek ve hem Kur'an hem de Sünnet'ten türetilen deliller arasındaki karmaşıklıkların çözümlenmesi mümkün olmayacaktır. Kâfirlerin çocukları ile ilgili ayetler doğru yorumlanırsa, İslam dini daha doğru anlaşılacaktır ki bu tüm insanların ihtiyaç duyduğu bir şeydir. Çünkü İslam son ve evrensel dindir, yani bütün insanların dinidir. Dolayısıyla bu dinin kuralları tüm insanların yararına olmalıdır. Kâfirlerin çocukları hakkındaki görüşler doğru bir şekilde açıklandığında, gayrimüslimlerin İslam dinine daha fazla ilgi göstermeleri mümkündür. Böylece İslam dinini gayrimüslimlere ulaştırmak daha kolay olacaktır. Bu makalenin amacı, evrensel din olan İslam'ı insanlara daha doğru anlatmak, İslam mezhepleri arasındaki bu konudaki görüş ayrılıklarına son vermek ve ortak bir kanaat ve inanç sağlamaktır. Kanaatimizce tarihsel süreç içinde kaynaklardaki metinler bir araya

getirildiğinde ortaya tek bir görüş çıkmaktadır. O da kâfirlerin çocuklarının da Müslümanların çocukları gibi Cennet'te olacağıdır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kelâm, Çocuk, Putperest/Müşrik, Cennet, Cehennem, Peygamber, Azap.

### Introduction

The impending review of the emergence of question whether the children of nonbelievers are bound for Heaven or Hell, its subsequent place in the social agenda of Muslims and gradual development, will center on the time of the Prophet and around his policies. This perspective will, at once, cover both the sociological and psychological dimensions of the issue. What it will ultimately seek to illustrate is that in spite of the progressive stages it underwent, the outcome of the Prophet's relevant conduct is ultimately identical to the verdict inferable from Quranic evidence, meaning that the principle of gradualness has figured prominently with regard to the issue, as has been the case with numerous other jurisprudential rulings of Islam.

As intelligible as the subject matter may be when the successive phases that comprise the whole are viewed in their totality, scholars of *kalâm*, *ḥadīth* and *tafsīr* have predominantly handled the relevant scriptural evidence in isolation, delving, as a result, into gratuitously exhaustive detail. Excessive detail, it could therefore be said, has consequently seen the totality of the subject matter evaporate in its mist. Undertaken here in close view of this particular aspect is a study towards diagnosing a method, whose verdict is established from the beginning. Simpler put, the return of the conditions entails a return to the verdicts pertaining to those conditions.

Another aspect that needs to be pointed out concerns the standpoint espoused in regard to the evidences utilized. Comments and short evaluations of the Quranic verses that have been directly mobilized especially by exegetes as evidences in support of a solution to the problem are given at the end of the paper. Accordingly, I took the 15<sup>th</sup> verse of *al-Isrā* as direct evidence in clarifying the problem. Verses inferred as second degree evidences (*at-Tūr*, 52/21, *al-Waqi'ah*, 56/17, *al-Insān*, 76/19) have been cited in their relevant sections.

The authenticity of the contrasting *aḥādīth* that consign the children of nonbelievers to Hell and those that leave the matter to Allāh, is indisputable. However, there has been reasonable controversy surrounding the authenticity of the *aḥādīth* voiced during what I have labeled 'the period of transition'. One may adduce, as examples, the Samurra *ḥadīth*, the Arasat *ḥadīth* and the *ḥadīth* that speaks of them as the servants of Paradise. As is the case with the latter report, however, these *aḥādīth* are nonetheless supported by relevant Quranic verses.

### 1. Concepts

To provide a better understanding of the subject matter, it will be helpful to recall a few key concepts, which primarily are:

***Mushrik and Kāfir***: Regarding the issue of the children of nonbelievers, *shirk* is, at times, used interchangeably with *kufir*. The terms *mushrik* and *kāfir* are likewise used synonymously. Attesting to the synonymous use of *mushrik* and *kāfir* is the view ascribed to the *imāms* of the schools that “if there remains no other option than to kill women and children in the war against the infidel (*kuffar*), then so be it”. In terms of its linguistic use, the expression ‘the children of the *mushrik*’ is hence considered identical with “the children of the *kāfir*”.<sup>1</sup> Insofar as our current discussion is concerned, their infinitive nouns *shirk* and *kufir* likewise partake in the same meaning. That the term *mushrik* has been more widely used stems from the fact that it was the *mushrik* of Mecca who lead the charge in defying and struggling against the first Muslims.

***Walad (ولد)***: This denotes a prepubescent child. Its plural is ‘*awlād*’. In the present context, “*awlād al-mushrikīn*” signifies the children of *mushrik* parents.<sup>2</sup>

***Tifl (طفل)***: In the plural form of ‘*atfāl*’, this term also refers to a prepubescent child. The expression ‘*atfāl al-mushrikīn*’ therefore carries the same meaning as ‘*awlād al-mushrikīn*’.

***Dhurriyah (ذرية)*** This word may be used to denote progeny in the broadest sense, irrespective of whether the referent is young or old, pubescent or not.<sup>3</sup> Yet, whenever *zarārī*, it’s plural, figures in the expression ‘*zarārīyy al-mushrikīn*’ in reference to nonbelievers’ children, it denotes children who have not reached either the age of discretion or puberty. None of the three terms have been subjected to a discrimination based on their differences of linguistic gender.

***al-Lāhin (اللاحين)*** In the *Hadhrāmawt* dialect, the word is synonymous with ‘*al-Walad*’ i.e. Child. Because their work is of the type of games and toys, and there is no intention.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, the word *lahīn* is used to mean a child who has not reached puberty, who is not able to commit sin on purpose, or who does not know about sin.

During his military expedition to *al-Tāif*, the Prophet was posed, by a Companion, with a question concerning the *lāhin*, specifically, whether it was permissible to slay them at war. The

<sup>1</sup> Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim Ibn al-Ḥajjāj Muslim, *Muslim Şerhi*, nşr. Ahmed Davudođlu (İstanbul: Sönmez Neşriyat, 1978), 8/475.

<sup>2</sup> Abū Muhammad Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aynī, *Umdah al-Qārī fī sharhi Sahīh al-Bukhārī* (Egypt: 1972), 7/133.

<sup>3</sup> Davudođlu, *Muslim Şerhi*, 8/474. The terms *awlād*, *atfāl* and *zarārī* are used interchangeably in the expression “the children of the *mushrik*”. See *Awlād*: Abū Abdullah Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī, *Sahīh al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Daru Ibn Kathir, 2002), “Janaiz”, 93; Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim Ibn al-Ḥajjāj Muslim, *Sahīhu Muslim* (Cordoba: Muessesetu Kurtuba, 1994), “Qadar”, 26; Abū ‘Abd ar-Rahmān Aḥmad ibn Shu‘ayb Alī al-Nasā‘ī, *Sunen-i Nasā‘ī* (Beirut: Dār al-Başār al-Islamiyya, 1994), “Janaiz”, 60; Abū Abdullah Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad* (Beirut: Muessese al-Risala), 2/259. *Atfāl*: Aḥmad ibn Hanbal, *Musnad*, 2/294. *Dharari/Dharariyyu*: Bukharī, “Janaiz”, 93; Bukhārī, “Qadar”, 3; Muslim, “Cihad”, 36, 37; Aḥmed Hanbal, *Musnad*, 4/28, 1215.

<sup>4</sup> Muḥammad Ibn Mukarram Ibn Manzūr, *Lisān al-‘Arab* (Cairo: Dar al-Ma‘ārif), “لَهُو” entry. لها – يلهو – لهوا. – لا; Abū al-Baqā‘ al-Kafawī, *al-Kulliyat* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risalah, 1998), 799; Shamsuddīn Abū Abdullah Qurtubī, *Tadhkira: at-Tedhkira fī Ahwāl al-Mawtā wa umūr al-Akhirah* (Beirut: s.n., 1985), 61.

Prophet did not answer him on the spot. On the return, however, he sent for the person who had asked him the question; and when the man appeared once again, he said, “Allāh knows very well what those children will do. They are *lāhin*...killing them is forbidden.”<sup>5</sup>

***Fitrah* (الفطرة):** The literal meanings of the term in the Arabic language is to cleave something longitudinally or the initial phase of the creation of something, its emergence and the quality assumed by a being in its original mode of creation.<sup>6</sup> The active agent, who brings something into emergence for the first time, is called ‘*fātir*’. When used for Allāh, it connotes ‘creating’, as is evident in the Quranic declaration “Allāh is the *Fātir* of the heavens and earth”.<sup>7</sup>

Apart from creation, the word *fitrah* conveys further meanings. Arabs use the word ‘*fattara*’ (i.e. it cleaved) to describe the eruption of another tooth behind the fourth tooth of a camel. There is another report narrated from Ibn Abbas where he confesses, “I never completely understood the meaning of the word ‘*fātir*’ up until two Bedouins came to me with a dispute regarding a well. One said to the other, ‘*Ana fātiruha*’, as in, ‘I was the one to dig up that well first and bring it out into the open’”<sup>8</sup>

***Fitrah* (الفطرة) (as a technical term):** This means the dispositional readiness to accept the true religion; and as such, it may also be called *khilqah al-asliyyah*, i.e. original creative disposition. In other words, *fitrah* refers, say, to the creation of ears in a way to hear all things audible and the eyes to see all things visible.<sup>9</sup> Since, all children are attributed as endowed with *fitrah*, their natural predisposition, at the time of their birth, it may well be argued that what is effectively meant by *fitrah* is Islam. A child receives this quality of *fitrah* from being born upon the naturally inherited state of ‘*Mīthāk*’, the ‘Oath’,<sup>10</sup> and is considered to remain upon that state until subjected to an alteration by her parents. Even in the case of an alteration, whether the child ends up rebellious or loyal is still considered an outcome of her *fitrah*.<sup>11</sup> In any case, however, that rebellion (*shaqawah*) should be considered as stemming from natural predisposition<sup>12</sup> begs further explanation.

For a child born upon *fitrah* to maintain that chaste predisposition until reaching an age where she is able express her own choice, signifies creational (*khilqah*) predisposition, wherein

<sup>5</sup> ‘Ayni, *Umdat al-Qari*, 7/134; Ibn al-Asīr, *an-Nihayah* (el-Maktaba al-Islamiyya), 4/283.

<sup>6</sup> Raghīb al-Isfahānī, *Mufradāt* (Maktaba Nazar Mustafa al-Baz), “F-T-R”, entry; Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur’an Dili* (Istanbul: Eser Publications, 1962), 6/3972.

<sup>7</sup> Fāṭir 35/1.

<sup>8</sup> Abū Suleymān Mohammad ibn Ibrāhīm Khattābī, *Ma’ālim al-Sunan* (Humus, 1969-1974), 5/88.

<sup>9</sup> Ahmed Naim, *Tecrid-i Sarih* (Ankara: Başbakanlık Press, 1976), 4/531-532.

<sup>10</sup> al-A’rāf 7/172.

<sup>11</sup> Davudoğlu, *Müslim Şerhi*, 10/644.

<sup>12</sup> Davudoğlu, *Müslim Şerhi*, 10/645.

worshipping is irrelevant. Given that a child cannot receive rewards for what she does in such a circumstance, she is likewise inculpable for what she fails to do. In stark contrast is the predisposition of worship (*taabbudi*), prominent in which is actual worshipping. In effect, when the Quran declares, “And I created not the *jinn* and mankind except that they should worship me”<sup>13</sup> it is clear that the children of nonbelievers are regarded as being within the scope of mankind; and since they cannot make a legally valid counter affirmation, they have been regarded as part of the Muslim community.<sup>14</sup>

Irrespective of whether they are born of Muslims or not, be they *mushrik* or *kāfir*, all children are mutually endowed with the natural creational predisposition. Be that as it may, however, there seems a somewhat ostensible exception to the rule. The Quran in fact recounts the plea of prophet Nuh, where he asks, “My Lord! Leave not upon the land any dweller from among the nonbelievers; for surely if You leave them they will lead astray Your servants, and will not beget any but immoral (*fājir*), ungrateful (*kāfir*)”.<sup>15</sup> Still, it would be erroneous to consider this as contradicting the *ḥadīth* on the concept of *fitrah*. Spoken of in the verse are the people of prophet Nuh and an implicit reference to a circumstance peculiar to them. The prophet had previously been made aware that his people were to beget only nonbelievers, as had been divinely “...revealed to Nuh: That none of your people will believe except those who have already believed...”<sup>16</sup> Reinforcing his conviction all the more was his all but fruitless nine-hundred-and-fifty year long experience among his people. Divine foresight reinforced with his personal experiences thus led to Nuh to the certainty that only nonbelievers would be born from his people, culminating in his pertinent ‘curse’. Yet for having chosen the easy way out, unbecoming of a prophet, he repented and sought forgiveness from the Almighty.<sup>17</sup>

## 2. The Outlook of the Scholars of *Kalām* on the Issue

The emergence of the problem surrounding the children of nonbelievers, the successive phases it underwent and the rulings given on it are indubitably limited to the twenty-three year prophetic period, during which, it goes without saying, no schools or diverging opinions existed. This being the case, the schools and viewpoints which subsequently arose thereafter really ought to have appraised the subject matter within its strategy of implementation in the context of the *Sunnah*. This, however, was not the case. Each school assessed the problem within its own methodological nexus and passed judgment accordingly. Surfacing, as a result, were diverging

<sup>13</sup> al-Dhariyat 51/56.

<sup>14</sup> Abū Ca’fār Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Tahawī, *Mushkil al-Āthār* (Haydarabād, 1377), 2/165-166.

<sup>15</sup> Nūḥ 71/ 26-27.

<sup>16</sup> Hūd 11/36.

<sup>17</sup> Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr al- Kabīr* (Dār al-Fikr, 1981), 30/146.

rulings and practices. It would not be farfetched to assert that even if these views were to be evaluated in their entirety, one still would not be able to pick a coherent viewpoint to prefer over a plethora of others; safe to say that they have perhaps even served to further obscure a problem concerning the heart of Islam.

Citable as a few examples of these diverging views are the *Mu'tazilite* position that regards nonbelievers' children as Paradise bound, the *Khawārij* standpoint that consigns them to the Fire for being in the same boat, as it were, with their fathers, and the *Murjūite* predilection for *tawaqquf* i.e. recoiling from passing judgment on the matter and espousing a position of uncertainty by deferring the matter to Divine Knowledge.<sup>18</sup>

To a certain point, it could be deemed natural for the schools to assess the matter in line with their peculiar principles and submit corresponding viewpoints. A consideration, however, the historical journey of the matter in question would make it a lot easier to understand the Prophet's pertinent statements and verdicts. It would furthermore bring to view the entire picture by shedding light on the psychological and sociological factors which, during the call to Islam, exerted a significant influence especially on the recipients of that call. The perspective I personally adopt and seek to reflect onto the paper at hand in its main framework is a study on method as such. Many sources offer clear testimony to how delving into painstaking detail to simply gloss and commentate on the relevant *aḥādīth* and the Quranic verses without generating a methodological principle, lead to considerable confusion and divert attention away from the actual core of the matter itself. It is not awfully difficult to see how the copious proofs hitherto presented by the schools of *kalām* and their elaborate expositions have merely served to render the problem more convoluted than it ever was during the era of the Prophet.<sup>19</sup>

On the back of this diagnosis, we may now proceed to give details of the psychological factor behind the call to Islam within its period of emergence.

### 3. The First Call to Islam and Psychological Resistance

From the onset of the call to Islam through to end of its thirteen year Meccan period, the focal point of the tension with the Meccan idolaters (*mushrik*) and the grist for the mill of their stringent opposition was provided primarily by 'the belief in resurrection and the Hereafter'. For the most part, what the Quran brought to the fore during the pertinent period were matters that called for reflection like Judgment Day, creation, Divine knowledge, the prevailing justice and

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<sup>18</sup> Abū al-Husayn al-Mālātī, *Tanbīh* (Beirut: al-Ma'had al-almānī li al-Abhāth al-Sharqīyya, 2009), 33-34; W. Montgomery Watt, *Free Will and Predestination In Early Islam*, trans. Arif AYTEKIN (Istanbul: Kitabevi Press, 1996), 51, 52, 67, 99, 100, 135, 169; Rāzī, *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, 20/172.

<sup>19</sup> Yusuf Şevki Yavuz, "Çocuk (Kelâm)", *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (Ankara: TDV Press, 2002), 8/359-360.

compassion between the Creator and the created. To resort to the modern vernacular, matters of ontology, epistemology and ethics, which incidentally are the keystones of philosophy, were in full force. It could perhaps be contended that the attitude and challenge the Quran laid down with regard to the unforeseeable break out of Judgment Day, to spell an end to all temporal conditions and inaugurate the life of the Hereafter, activated the instinctual reflexes of the nonbelievers to protect their philosophy of life founded upon a concept of freedom in their life in the desert.<sup>20</sup> This could well have coerced the desert dweller to engage in a style of contemplative thinking he had never before embarked upon. Unable to live up to this difficult task, however, the desert man of the *Jāhiliyyah* equated the thought of resurrection and subsequently being called into account only for Divine Decree to dispatch him eternally into Hellfire, with an inconceivable condemnation.<sup>21</sup> The tendency for unlimited freedom and disdain for accountability he had developed in the desert climate lead the *mushrik* of Mecca to dread the very notion of a ‘Hereafter’; a fear that manifested in the form of violence against the Muslim, for the sake of a belief he could not even soundly defend. Using disproportionate force against Muslims during the Meccan era, the idolaters would not leave them alone even after their immigration to Medina, enraged with the desire to wipe them off the face of earth. Faced with these brutal assaults, Muslims had no other choice than to resort to a defensive strategy, where they begun conducting night raids against the enemy when the opportunity presented itself.<sup>22</sup> Fatalities during these raids, however, included, at times, women and children. The plight of the deceased children, especially, left a question mark in Muslim minds, leading to subsequent discussions.

Further anxieties began to surface concerning the children of Muslims who had passed away before their parents’ embracing of Islam and explanations were sought on whether these children were bound for Heaven or Hell. Answers were indeed provided, all of which were negative, however, albeit understandably valid under the circumstances.

As aforementioned, the problem related to the inadvertent deaths of nonbelievers’ children during the night raids Muslims were conducting in the Medinan era as part of a defensive strategy, had began occupying the Muslim agenda; a conundrum for which they consulted the Prophet for illumination, albeit only to receive a negative verdict regarding their eternal status. Thus, the innocence of these children was seemingly not enough to grant them eternal amnesty. True; so long as they were alive they were bound by their fathers’ conditions. But what was to become of them when dead? Were they to end up in Heaven or follow the footsteps of their

<sup>20</sup> Yā Sīn 36/77. (Note: There are plenty of verses on the subject).

<sup>21</sup> al-Nāzi‘āt 79/12. (Note: There are plenty of verses on the subject).

<sup>22</sup> On the night raids. See Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd* (Beirut: Muassah al-Rayyān, 1998), “al-Jihād”, 102 (No. 2638). (For the other extracted aḥādīth refer to the footnotes on the same page).



parents into Hellfire? Besides, who was responsible for the death of these innocent children? These and alike concerns puzzled Muslim minds, recurrently prompting them to seek answers. It was thus inevitable to provide necessary answers and, more importantly, to establish a specific strategic position in regard. The values that were to carry an absolute priority in solving the problem in a way conducive to safeguarding the future of Islam and Muslims given the present circumstances were to be only the limits set by *Allāh* and communicated by the Prophet.<sup>23</sup>

Inserted within that broader framework, the transitory yet unchanging response to the questions posed concerning the children of nonbelievers was to the effect that being the offspring of *mushrik*, the children were to be assessed under their terms.<sup>24</sup>

Consequent upon the verdict given by the Prophet, Muslims were cleared of their pangs of conscience and undertook, as a result, a resolute struggle against the *mushrik* at the latter's frustrating detriment. Had it not been for this resolution and had the conditions of the children been taken into account, the idolaters would have perhaps made the most of the opportunity and used their children as human shields against Muslims.<sup>25</sup>

On top of this, as already alluded to above, Muslims nonetheless carried additional concerns over their children who had passed away in the Meccan era, prior to their embracement of Islam. Probing Muslim anxiety over the fate of their deceased children was equally extended to their parents who had died during the days of *Jāhiliyyah*, unsure as to whether Heaven or Hell was their eternal abode. The Prophet's clear-cut answer was that "They were in Hellfire". The period that propelled Muslims into a relentless struggle against the *mushrik* was, by the same token, drawing a definitive line between belief-unbelief and believer-nonbeliever, turning the direction of Muslims unconditionally to Islam and its future. The same attitude held sway even for those closest to the Prophet. In fact, Khadijah had once asked about the situation of her two children, deceased, from her previous marriage. Being informed that they were both in Hell deeply distressed her as a mother, on which the Prophet said, "Your distress would be much greater if you were to see their current conditions".<sup>26</sup> This shows the underlying motivation to ensure Khadijah, the first Muslim, rid her heart of what ties she may have had to her children from the period of *shirk*. Again, two brothers who had just recently become Muslim were curious as to the

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<sup>23</sup> Bukhārī, "Jihād and Siyar" (No. 2790); Ahmed ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad* (No. 15827, 16061, 16085); Abū Bakr Ahmad ibn Husayn ibn Ali al-Bayhakī, "Kitāb al-Siyar" (No. 18603), *Sunan al-Kubrā* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 2003).

<sup>24</sup> Muslim, "Jihād and Siyar" (No. 3281, 3282, 3283); Abū 'Abdillāh Muḥammad ibn Yazīd Ibn Mājah, *Sunan Ibn Majah* (Damascus: al-Resalah al-A'lamiyah, 2009), "Jihād" (No. 1829); Abū 'Isā Muḥammad ibn 'Isā as-Sulamī al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī* (Damascus: al-Resalah al-A'lamiyah), "Siyar" (No. 1495).

<sup>25</sup> Taking aim at children during battle in a situation where they are employed as live shields, is a matter of dispute. See Davudoğlu, *Muslim Şerhi*, 8/474-475.

<sup>26</sup> Qurtubī, *Tadhkira*, 609-610. Also see al-Tawba 9/113.

situation of their mother who had died in the days of *Jāhiliyyah* and requested the Prophet to inform them whether she was in Heaven or Hell. “She is in Hell” was the Prophet’s reply. Leaving the scene in a dejected state of mind, the brothers were soon called back by the Prophet. They optimistically returned, with the hope that they may perhaps be given some promising information after all. With the obvious aim of sharing their psychological burden and offering a consolation, however, the Prophet instead said, “Your mother and my mother, too...”<sup>27</sup> Once again, this must have been underlain by the patent desire to have them sever, in no uncertain terms, their emotional ties with and inner attachments to the period of *shirk*.

Another aspect that may be mentioned as part of the drive to have Muslims sever all their ties with the period of *shirk*, and effectively their pasts, and divert their sole focus on Islam and the Quran, is the temporary prohibition of grave visiting.<sup>28</sup>

As the sensitive periods of the struggle against the *mushrik* were slowly being left behind, verdicts concerning the children of nonbelievers began entering a process of modification. The concepts of punishment, innocence and justice, however, continued to retain their vitality.

Now, from the vantages of both Divine Predestination and human responsibility, what was to become of the deceased children of Muslims and nonbelievers alike? After all, Islam did make entrance into Heaven dependent upon belief and righteous deeds; and in similar vain, punishment in the Fire was only in return for unbelief and sin.<sup>29</sup> All these considered how was the situation of children to be explained?

Consequent upon the *ḥadīth* “Every child born is born upon *fitrah*”, as well as several others uttered in relation to natural predisposition, it has been accepted that children born from Muslim parents who die before puberty, are bound for Heaven, insofar as they are subjected to and treated under their parents’ conditions and are unsullied by sin. Based again on the statements of the Prophet, children born from *mushrik* parents were bound for Hell, since they are, too, subjected

<sup>27</sup> Ahmed ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad* (No. 1134); Qurtubī, *Tafsīr*, al-Tūr 52/21; Abū al-Fiḍā ‘Imād Ad-Din Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Umar ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr* (Beirut: 1970), 9/4712, 13; Qurtubī, *Tadhkira*, 610.

<sup>28</sup> Ahmed Naim, *Tecrid-i Sarih*, 6/374: “...As a behavior reminiscent of the period of *Jahiliyyah*, people retained a penchant to boast with their past through their dead. Their inner connections with their past therefore remained ever so strong. Recalling that, at the time, there were only a few Muslim graves to visit and that Islam had not yet been fully established, there must have been some presumable concern that visiting a handful of Muslim graves would have ineluctably been accompanied by a visit of the graves of the deceased *mushrik* relatives. Indeed, when this no longer proved a threat, the ban on grave visiting was lifted. Meaningful is the fact that the Prophet announced the lifting of the ban whilst on the way to the conquest of Mecca, near Abwā, in Medina, by the side of his mother’s grave. It marked the time when Muslims had gained an incontestable upper hand on both *shirk* and the *mushrik*. Henceforth, it was out of the question for Muslims to be affected by nonbelievers, their beliefs and pasts and to come under the grip of related fears. As for the nonbelievers, they had forever lost hope in vanquishing Muslims.”

<sup>29</sup> Abū Dāwūd, “Jihād”(No 2614, 2672); Tahawī, *Mushkil al-Āthār*, 2/163, 166.

to and treated under the conditions of their parents.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the consideration that children are bound by the conditions of their parents provides the basis of both rulings.

As it turned out, however, a follow-up question was posed in regard to both cases: “Will they enter Heaven or Hell without offering/committing any deeds?” The Prophet’s response was, “Allāh knows, much better, the deeds they would have offered/committed”<sup>31</sup>; in other words, Allāh knows the way they would have turned out had they lived. As is discernible, the key concept and determining factor in the words of the Prophet is “Divine Knowledge”. Since through His impeccable and eternal knowledge the Almighty knows everything in the form of a present ‘moment’, He knows un-lived moments as if they have been lived, knowing thereby the nature of the deeds that would have steered the deceased children to either Heaven or Hell had they lived. It could be said that the fact that the ‘un-lived’, which is beyond human knowledge, was fastened to ‘Divine Knowledge’, was motivated by the aim of drawing attention to the living present. After all, had these children ended up living, humans would have also become aware of their awaiting destination.

Since Divine Knowledge is the main force in determining human predestination compliant with impending experiences, it is evident that human beings exercise free will and freedom in their voluntary actions. Viewed from this perspective and in close relation to the subject matter being discussed, ‘predestination’ does not amount to a dark force that entails oppression vis-à-vis human beings.

### **The Period of Transition**

- a. The Prohibition of Killing Nonbelievers’ Children
- b. The Ban Reciprocal Financial Inheritance between Nonbelievers’ Children and their Parents
- c. The Suspending of the Question Regarding Their Eternal Future

1- It was their *mushrik* fathers who were held responsible for the unavoidable deaths of their children during the night raids, for recoiling from a truce with Muslims. Muslim raiders were thereby absolved of their pangs of conscience and removed from what doubts they may have entertained with regard to the night raids. But once the constrictive circumstances began making way, the Prophet voiced an apt discontent over the killing of children. A gratuitous and reckless use of a license justified only by constrictive circumstances could, after all, not be allowed. The Prophet in fact scolded his Companions over an instance of such recklessness, exclaiming, “What

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<sup>30</sup> Bukhārī , “Jihād and Siyar” (No. 2790); Muslim, “Jihad and Siyar”, 3281. (The Khidr Hadith)

<sup>31</sup> Bukhārī , “Qadar” (No. 6108, 6109); Id, “Janaiz”, 1294; Muslim, “Qadar”, 4810; Nasāī (No. 1925); Abū Dāwūd, “Sunnah” (No. 4088); Ahmed ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad* (No. 2999, 3195, 4810).

is wrong with these people that they kill children?” Upon a few Companions remarking, as a pretext, “Are they not the children of the *mushrik*, Messenger of Allāh?” the Prophet replied, “Are not the best of you children of the *mushrik*?”<sup>32</sup> Killing the women and children of nonbelievers, even during battle, was categorically prohibited thereafter.<sup>33</sup>

2- Consequent upon the revelation of the verdicts on inheritance and the command for Muslims to embark upon *jihad*, came the acceptance of the invalidity of the hitherto notion that the children of nonbelievers were born upon their fathers’ religion. Based on the report of *Abū Ubayd* via *Muhammad ibn al-Hasan* (189/805), *Tahawī* (321/933) rejects the conception that consigns a deceased child of a nonbeliever to the religion of her father, arguing instead that she is a Muslim at the time of her death and therefore bound for Heaven. In other words, accepted as having a predispositional faith, the child is therefore considered a Muslim. But this state of being upon Islam lasts only until she reaches puberty, whereupon she must affirm her belief verbally.<sup>34</sup>

3- Providing an important clue as to how the pendulum swung in favor of *mushrik* children is the contrast between the aforementioned answer given to Khadijah and that given to Aisha. The lengthiest interval of this process is situated between the initial response that relegated them to Hell and the ultimate which, in due course, delivered them to Heaven. This interval is epitomized by the statement “Allāh knows what they would have offered/committed”, an attitude referred to as *tawaqquf*.<sup>35</sup>

Verdicts given on the children of nonbelievers from this period of transition, which exercised a vital role in swinging the nature of the verdicts in their favor, up until this day, may be enumerated under six main headings:

- 1- Their outcomes are left to Allāh to decide.
- 2- They are to be treated like their fathers.
- 3- They will wait on the plane of resurrection (*arasat*).
- 4- They will be servants to the dwellers of Heaven.
- 5- They will be made to go through a test.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Ahmed ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, (No. 15162); *Tahawī*, *Mushkil al-Āthār*, 2/163-164.

<sup>33</sup> Abū Dāwūd, “*Jihad*” (No. 2614, 2672); *Tahawī*, *Mushkil al-Āthār*, 2/163-164.

<sup>34</sup> *Tahawī*, *Mushkil al-Āthār*, 2/164, 165.

<sup>35</sup> Ibn Hājar al-Asqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī* (Beirut: Dār al-M’arifah, n.d.), 3/244, 247; ‘Aynī, *Umdah al-Qārī*, 7/133, 134.

<sup>36</sup> Arguments presented in favor of the thesis that nonbelievers’ children are to be subjected to a further test, do not explain much apart from a granting of insight into whether or not they will have obeyed the Divine Decree had they lived and thereby justly overrule any possible excuses they will have otherwise raised. Besides, insofar as the Hereafter is not a place of offering deeds and being tested, the formula ‘test’ has

6- They are bound for Heaven.<sup>37</sup>

These six grades of response could really be reduced to three and be made more intelligible:

1- That they are bound for Hell.

2- The attitude of *tawaqquf*.

3- That they are bound for Heaven.<sup>38</sup>

In view of the principle that verdicts may undergo change with the elapse of time and change of conditions, espousing the standpoint of considering the fate of nonbelievers' children on one level alone and by the practical exclusion of the rulings implemented upon the return of the specific conditions, declaring them as downright bound for Heaven, would conceivably grant Muslims an enormous leeway in communicating Islam.

Notwithstanding what has been explained thus far, schools that have emerged in the Muslim world have retained a firm grip on their peculiar views to this day, despite a majority of these views having the least to do with the rationale and gradualness embedded in the rulings and their implementation during the time of the Prophet.

The Azariqah branch of the Khawārij, for instance, have remained steadfast in their conviction that the deceased children of nonbelievers, being subjected to their fathers conditions, are bound for Hell, while Muslim children are destined for Heaven by the same token. Though they have cited prophet Nuh's curse of nonbelievers as evidence,<sup>39</sup> they have taken little care to pay attention to the special circumstance between the prophet and his people. There is also a patent disregard of the fact that the *Hadīth* declaring that the children of nonbelievers are to be judged in line with their fathers' conditions was in fact uttered amid the state of war.

Qadariyya, on the other hand, have used the aforementioned *Fitrah Ḥadīth*, which singles out the parents as the active agent in the Christianization, Judaization and Magification of the child, as evidence that evil cannot be ascribed to Allāh. Yet, according to Imam Malik, the very same *ḥadīth* in fact disproves their standpoint, since the fact that Allāh knows what the child

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received due scrutiny and criticism. See Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 3/4707, 4710, 4711; 'Ayni, *Umdah al-Qārī*, 7/135, 136; Mohammed Cerīr al-Tabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān* (s.l.: Dār al-Hicr), 15/41.

<sup>37</sup> 'Ayni, *Umdah al-Qārī*, 7/135, 136. (For another classification, refer to Ibn Hājar, *Fath al-Bārī*, 3/246, 247. Enumerated there are ten grades, the eighth of which places them in Heaven. Used as evidence is the verse, "We never punish until We have sent a messenger." As for the distinctive grades given mention there, they are: they will be reduced to earth, they are to enter Hell, *tawaqquf* and *imsāk* i.e. they are to be withheld.

<sup>38</sup> For another tripartite classification. See Ahmed Naim, *Tecrid-i Sarīh*, 4/594.

<sup>39</sup> Ismāīl ibn Muhammad al-Ajlūnī, *Kashf al-Khafā* (Egypt: Maktaba al-Qudsī, 1351) (No. 393); 'Ayni, *Umdah al-Qārī*, 7/135 (The footnote concerning the scholars of *kalām*).

would have done had she lived, alludes to the certain and unchangeable nature of events, and no less, that everything is preceded by Divine Knowledge.<sup>40</sup>

On the ground established by what has been delineated thus far, we may now proceed more comfortably to expound the final position on the matter.

#### 4. The Ultimate Verdict on the Issue and Its Underpinnings

Before peering into the evidences of the ultimate verdict pertaining to what awaits the children of nonbelievers in the Hereafter, we must first highlight two key concepts that, through the conception of *tawaqquf*, pave the way thereto.

**The Concepts ‘Servant’ and ‘Limbo’ (*arāf*):** The statement ascribed to the Prophet that “The children of nonbelievers are servants of the dwellers of Heaven”<sup>41</sup> and again their acknowledgement as being amongst those ‘awaiting in limbo’, show how the gates of Heaven had slowly begun parting for them. It goes without saying that those waiting in limbo will, in the final reckoning, enter Paradise.<sup>42</sup> That the *mushrik* children will wind up in Heaven is suggested equally by the Samurrah *Ḥadīth*.<sup>43</sup> Sharing the same fate as the children of Muslims, they are considered to remain true on their pre-eternal ‘Oath’,<sup>44</sup> simply due to the fact that they were devoid of the power to renege. Had they lived, Allāh would have known that their prospective circumstances would have proved to be congruent with their predispositional faith, in accordance with which they are placed in Heaven. The standard here is ‘predispositional faith.’<sup>45</sup>

The view that those who lived and died during the prophet-less period of Interregnum, as a mentally disabled or during childhood will have their possibly deviant intentions and prospective deeds shown to them by Divine Knowledge in order to dismiss all possible excuses that may come from their way,<sup>46</sup> is incompetent in throwing light on the issue, to say the least. As Qurtubī (656/1258) quotes from *Halīmī* (403/1012), the Hereafter is not so much a place of trial as it is a place of receiving the revenue of that trial, be it in the form of reward or punishment. The

<sup>40</sup> Ibn Hājar, *Fath al-Bārī*, 3/247, 250.

<sup>41</sup> Abū Ya’lā al-Mawsilī, *Musnad-i Abi Ya’la* (Beirut: Muassasah al-‘Ulūm al-Quran, 1988) (No. 4090); Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 9/4706; Qurtubī, *Tadhkirah*, 613.

<sup>42</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 9/4713.

<sup>43</sup> Ahmed Naim, *Tecrid-i Sarih*, 4/595 and the footnote on 599.

<sup>44</sup> It must be noted that the view which alleges that the nonbelievers’ children only unwillingly uttered the affirmation ‘*bala*’ (i.e. yes, certainly) during this ‘Oath’. See Ibn Hājar, *Fath al-Bārī*, 3/250. Begs further explanation.

<sup>45</sup> Qurtubī, *Tadhkirah*, 614, 615.

<sup>46</sup> ‘Aynī, *Umdah al-Qārī*, 7/135.

need to assess these three classes independently from the case of the nonbelievers' children is hence transparent.<sup>47</sup>

In view of the concepts 'servant', 'limbo' and 'trial', gateway concepts delivering the children of nonbelievers from the period to *tawaqquf* to Heaven, it could be said that an auspicious approach of the kind may provide a basis for psychological interaction in assuaging nonbelievers and warming their hearts to Islam through the mediation of their children - on the condition that criticism of the authenticity of the relevant *ḥadīth* that puts hearts at ease regarding the issue are kept in mind.<sup>48</sup>

Punishment is wrought by a rejection or contravention of things one is rationally and religiously obliged to comply with. The determinants of these obligations are reason and prophethood. Only a pubescent person can be responsible for the laws communicated by a prophet. That a person, who has never been a subject to a '*rasūl*' i.e. 'messenger', is exempted from punishment is therefore acknowledged as an overriding principle. In fact, among many a verse of the Quran which declares that "...no sinner is to bear the burden of another",<sup>49</sup> only its rendering in chapter *al-Isrā*, the 15<sup>th</sup> verse to be precise, is coupled with the principle, "We never punish until we have sent a messenger." Considering that it is the pubescent who are exempted from punishment provided that they were never encountered by a prophet, the prepubescent *mushrik* children would have first and foremost priority. For the pubescent, 'Interregnum' proves an obstacle and a valid excuse. The obstacle children are faced with, on the other hand, is that they have not yet passed puberty. This must be regarded as a far more valid excuse. Meriting attention, at this point, is the key concept of this question, namely '*rasūl*'.

In a situation where an agent, from among humans, has not been designated to make fellow human beings acquainted with Allāh, it has been said that reason acts as a 'messenger' (*rasūl*), through which a person can establish a bond and become acquainted with the Creator. Had there not been a messenger in the form of 'reason', the message brought by the human messenger i.e. the prophet would have remained inconceivable. Reason, then, is a fundamental 'messenger' existent in the human being, an envoy and a bond.<sup>50</sup>

The Divine Declaration that exempts the insane from punishment for being dispossessed of reason is *ipso facto* valid for prepubescent *mushrik* children. Punishment appears only as a

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<sup>47</sup> Qurtubī, *Tadhkirah*, 611.

<sup>48</sup> Qurtubī, *Tadhkirah*, 613, 614. (Reports in favor of the *ḥadīth* declaring nonbelievers' children as 'the servants of Paradise' as well as the relevant interpretations are given in the backdrop of the recommended reasoning to be endorsed concerning the issue).

<sup>49</sup> al-An'ām 6/164; al-Isrā' 17/15; Fāṭir 35/18; al-Zumar 39/7; al-Najm 53/38.

<sup>50</sup> Rāzī, *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, 20/172, 173.

corollary of abandoning an obligatory action. Being obliged is irrelevant for a person whom the *sharī'ah* has not reached. Simpler put, punishment cannot precede *shariah*, lest it leaves open a window of objections against Divine Justice.<sup>51</sup>

The first man was a prophet. Inaugurated with a prophet, the institution of prophethood consistently yet intermittently continued to figure in the life of humankind. There were hence cases of long intervals between two succeeding prophets. During this interlude referred to as the period of 'interregnum', mankind became distant from Divine realities to the point of even contesting the very existence of the Divine. Allāh declares to have broken this interval by sending messengers with the required communications, lest people raise the objection that they were never met with "a bearer of glad tidings and a warner".<sup>52</sup> In the relevant verse, a *rasīl* is described as a bearer of glad tidings (*bashīr*) and a warner (*nadhīr*). Understandable from the verse is that both are defined as *reason* and a *messenger*. The concepts *bashīr* and *nadhīr*, as they feature in the 24<sup>th</sup> verse of chapter *Fātir*, can therefore be appraised within the said context.

### 5. An Analysis of the Quranic Verses Utilized as Evidence in Works of Exegesis

Running a short analysis of the verses supporting the case that the children of nonbelievers are bound for Heaven -even bringing to attention the 15<sup>th</sup> verse of *al-Isrā* alone- will suffice to proffer a clearer understanding of the aḥādīth narrated in relation.

The verses I will shortly evaluate have been used, in many sources, as evidences disproving the case of a looming punishment for *mushrik* children. The common denominator that essentially binds all these verses together is the principle "no sinner (*wāzīrah*) shall bear the sin of another (*wāzīrah*)." The key concepts common to all these verses is 'wizr', literally sin. As it is the feminine form of the word 'sinner' that features in these verses, no discrimination of linguistic gender will be made. We may now proceed to the explanations of the verses:

1- "Say: What! shall I seek a Lord other than Allāh? And He is the Lord of all things; and no soul earns evil but against itself and no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another; then to your Lord is your return, so He will inform you of that in which you differed." (al-An'ām, 6/164). Clearly enough, the verse dwells on the impossibility of sane adults avoiding responsibility, based on their inherent capability to perform volitional acts. Since the responsibility emphasized here hinges on sanity and pubescence, it is inconceivable for it to target children and comprise them in its scope.

<sup>51</sup> al-Nisā' 4/165; Ṭā Hā 20/134; al-Qaṣaṣ 28/47. (The '*rasul*' referred to in these verses is the messenger who conveys the commands and prohibitions of Allāh; in other words, a prophet. The objectors do not claim 'to have no power of reason').

<sup>52</sup> al-Mā'ida 5/19.



2- “And a burdened soul cannot bear the burden of another and if one weighed down by burden should cry for another to carry its burden, not aught of it shall be carried, even though he be near of kin. You warn only those who fear their Lord in secret and keep up prayer; and whoever purifies himself, he purifies himself only for the good of his own soul; and to Allāh is the eventual coming.” (Fātir, 25/18) Accordingly, to each his own burden; it cannot be relocated on the shoulders of anyone else, even if they be kindred. The verse accentuates the responsibilities of liable human beings. Yet, although this verse has been used as evidence supporting the case that nonbelievers’ children are bound for Heaven, it nonetheless does not pertain to the innocence of children in general.

3- “If you reject Allāh, truly Allāh has no need of you (*of your believing in Him. He will lose nothing from your unbelief*). But He likes not ingratitude from His servants: if you are grateful (*as is demanded by a lively belief*), He is pleased with you (*and consequently, you will be rewarded. Draw a decisive line between gratitude and ingratitude and avoid rebelling and thereby burdening sin. Take your precaution; for he who departs earth with sin will bear it personally. Do not forget that*) No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another (*Those who fool you with the false promise of burdening your sins may end up burdening sins as great as yours; but you will still burden your own*). In the end, to your Lord is your Return, when He will tell you the truth of all that you did (*as to who deceived who, who rejected, who believed and among the believers, who returned the gift of belief with due thanks*) for He knows well all that is in hearts.” (al-Zumar, 39/7). Disclosed here is that Allāh will call each person to account over what she did and nothing, in relation, will remain a secret. Quite clearly, this pertains only to those who are sane and pubescent. Thus, however much it may have been used in some works of Quranic exegesis in support that the children of nonbelievers are destined for Heaven, the verse cannot be used as evidence in relation to the innocence of children.

4- “That no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another. And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for; and that his striving shall soon be seen. Then shall he be rewarded for it with the fullest reward. And that to your Lord is the goal.” (al-Najm, 38-41) The scope of the verse comprises the sane and pubescent. Left outside the scope are children, including the children of the *mushrik*, insofar as children do not commit sin. Equally evident, therefore, is that children may not be dubbed sinners (*wāzirah*).

5- “(Since each will fill his own book of deeds on earth, let it be known from now that) Whoever goes aright, for his own soul does he go aright; and whoever goes astray, to its detriment only does he go astray: nor can the bearer of a burden bear the burden of another, nor do We chastise (*for whatever a person may or may not have done*) until We raise a messenger.” (al-Isrā, 17/15; also see Taha, 20/134). Children head the list of exemption from punishment for not having been sent a messenger, regardless of whether this messenger is in the form of reason or a prophet.

## Conclusion

One may not be punished for what she does or fails to do before being made aware of what she is responsible with. This brings to mind the concept ‘interregnum’ and its eponymous period as experienced in history. A child’s interregnum is her childhood. This natural period is at the same time a natural impediment,<sup>53</sup> signifying the fact that she has not been sent a messenger. A child deprived of a messenger in the form of ‘reason’ or from the ability to grasp a messenger in the form of a ‘prophet’ may therefore not be punished. Be that as it may, reason verifies the responsibility, to a certain degree, of a sane adult who lives in the period of ‘interregnum’. He is at least obliged to acknowledge the existence and oneness of the Creator. This responsibility, however, does not extend to the particular religious obligation. He is therefore spared from punishment provided that he acknowledges the former. Children, who do not merit punishment, are bound for Heaven, since they are born upon a predispositional belief and die before they ever get to sin.

From what can be gathered, the declaration that nonbelievers’ children were destined for Heaven was postponed until Islam and Muslims found enough strength to establish an order of life. As attested to by Aisha’s narration from Khadijah, every child is born upon the predisposition of Islam. The children of nonbelievers, who die before pubescence, are therefore bound for Paradise. The children of nonbelievers, who die before pubescence, are therefore bound for Paradise.

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<sup>53</sup> Literally ‘*rasūl*’ is the opposite of ‘*imsāq*’ i.e. withholding; it thus denotes clearing the way and removing an obstacle. See Rāghib al-Isfāhānī, *al-Mufradāt fī gharīb al-Quran* (Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 1412), “R-S-L”, entry.

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