

Divine Reward and Punishment in Islam

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According to the teachings of Islam, the **ultimate reward** is Eternal Bliss in Paradise. The **ultimate punishment** is Burning in Hell-Fire

- **General Rules:**

- **Individual accountability.**

“Whoever does righteousness - it is for his [own] soul; and whoever does evil [does so] against it. And your Lord is not ever unjust to [His] servants.” (Qur’an, 41: 46)

- **Reward for a good deed is at least ten-fold. Recompense for a wrong or evil deed is one.**

“Whoever comes [on the Day of Judgment] with a good deed will have ten times the like thereof [to his credit], and whoever comes with an evil deed will not be recompensed except the like thereof; and they will not be wronged. (Qur’an, 6:160)

- **The reward for a good deed may be multiplied unlimited times,** depending on the good deed, such as giving or spending money for the sake of God.

“If you loan Allah a goodly loan, He will multiply it for you and forgive you. And Allah is Most Appreciative and Forbearing,” (Qur’an, 64: 17)

- **The reward can, sometimes, be seven hundred-fold.** See Qur’an, 2: 261

”The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred

grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.” (Qur’an, 2: 261)

- **Bad/ wrong deed is penalized once.**

“But they who have earned [blame for] evil doings - the recompense of an evil deed is its equivalent...” (Qur’an, 10: 27).

- **Refraining from an intended bad deed is rewarded once**, according to Prophet Muhammed (PBUH). This means if one intends to do something wrong but does not do it one receives a reward for that.

- **Wrong against God is forgivable by Him.**

“Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (Qur’an, 39: 53)

- **Wrong against a human being** (such as backbiting or insulting him or causing him harm....) has to be forgiven by the person wronged, according to the teachings of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH).

- **Takfiir or kaffaarah (‘expiation/ atonement’)** is sometimes required for Divine Forgiveness. An example of such transgressions are involuntary manslaughter.

- "And never is it for a believer to kill a believer except by mistake. And whoever kills a believer by mistake then the freeing of a believing slave and a compensation payment [diyyah] presented to his [i.e., the deceased's] family [is required], unless they give [up their right as] charity. But if he [i.e., the deceased] was from a people at war with you and he was a believer - then [only] the freeing of a believing slave; and if he was from a people with whom you have a treaty - then a compensation payment presented to his family and the freeing of a believing slave. And whoever does not find [one or cannot afford to buy one] - then [instead], a fast for two months consecutively, (seeking) acceptance of repentance from Allah. And Allah is ever Knowing and Wise." (Qur'an 4:92)"

Narrated `Abdullah bin `Amr: The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whoever killed a Mu'ahid (a person who is granted the pledge of protection by the Muslims) shall not smell the fragrance of Paradise though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years (of traveling). (Sahih al-Bukhari 6914)

- Another example is false oaths; i.e. swearing to God falsely to convince others.

“Allah will not impose blame upon you for what is meaningless in your oaths, but He will impose blame upon you for [breaking] what you intended of oaths. So, its expiation is the feeding of ten needy people from the average of that which you feed your [own] families or clothing them or the freeing of a slave. But whoever cannot find [or afford it] – then a fast of three days [is required]. That is the expiation for oaths when you have sworn. But guard your oaths. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be grateful” (Qur'an, 5: 89)

- **Accumulation of rewards (Hasanaat):**

It is out of Allah's Mercy and Beneficence that accumulating rewards is very easy in Islam. For any kind of good act with good intention counts. This includes even smiling to a Muslim person, removing the simplest of obstacles in the street or road, accepting the pain caused by a thorn pricking a person, as well saying any kind of prayer glorifying God, expressing gratitude to Him or asking forgiveness from Him. In fact, multiple rewards (merits) are gained by even such simple acts or words.

- **Erasure of effects of sins:**

A Muslim's sins are absolved through repentance in words and action (including seeking forgiveness by relevant people, if necessary) and by doing good deeds after misdeeds. We read in the Qur'an: “And establish prayer at the two ends of the day and the early hours of night. Indeed, good deeds do away with misdeeds. That is a reminder for those who remember.” (Qur'an, 11: 114).

In the teachings of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) we read: “and follow a bad deed with a good deed. It will erase it.”

It is worth noting that the five daily prayers (Salawaat) are a means to clean one's record of sins. In the Hadeeth (Prophetic Traditions) we are told by Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) that performing the five daily

prayers are the like of bathing five times in running water, which guarantees the cleansing of a Muslim's record of sins.

The Scale of Deeds:

In the Qur'an and the teachings of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH we are told that on the Day of Judgment scales are set up to weigh people's good and evil deeds. A fortunate and successful person is the one whose scale tips in his favor; i.e. his good deeds outweigh his evil ones. This is referred to as 'heavy scale'.

"Then as for one whose scales are heavy [with good deeds], He will live a pleasant life.

But as for him whose scales are light, will have his home in a (bottomless) Pit. Ah, what will convey unto thee what it is! –It is a Fire, intensely hot."
(the Qur'an, 101: 6-11)