

**Shayla:** If I do the best I can, will I go to heaven?

**Meforshim:**

Our best is simply not good enough. God is simply too pure, too holy. We have no hope of ever meeting His standard on our own. The only recourse is to simply call on Him for mercy.<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to be perfect. Who among us has never lied? Who among us has never felt envy, or unrighteous anger, or jealousy? We are all sinners and our best attempts are poor imitations of holiness at best.<sup>2</sup> Our works are useless. The only way to get to heaven is if God graciously grants our entrance and that's not going to happen unless we do what He says. What He says is that we need to be "reborn" through the power of the Spirit and submit to His Son.

- John 3:5-7 Jesus replied, "The truth is, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit.<sup>6</sup> Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives new life from heaven.<sup>7</sup> So don't be surprised at my statement that you must be born again.
- John 3:36 And all who believe in God's Son have eternal life. Those who don't obey the Son will never experience eternal life, but the wrath of God remains upon them."

So, though our salvation should drive us to imitate God's holiness and Jesus' good works out of sheer gratitude, we can never hope to earn salvation through our works.

- Ephesians 2:8-10 HCSB For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift-- not from works, so that no one can boast. For we are His creation--created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them.

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 64:6-7

<sup>2</sup> Romans 3:19-22; Galatians 3:10-11