

**Last Day 21 – Life in the grave**

Based on the works of Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan (حفظه الله)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**QUESTION: Is there life in the grave before the Day of Judgement?**

**ANSWER:**

As with most aspects of Islamic belief, then this answer revolves around something which cannot be perceived with our eyes or ears. The issue of what happens in the grave is from the “ghayb” – an Arabic word meaning “the aspects of existence which are hidden from us and unseen by us”.

Examples of matters of the ghayb include the angels, Paradise, Hellfire – and of course Allaah himself. These matters, and many others, are in existence already but we cannot see or hear them.

However the Muslim believes in them based on various proofs, proofs which include what is contained in the Qur’aan as well as proofs which appeal to a person’s intellect.

The Muslim’s belief in these matters should then affect the way that he/she behaves towards Allaah, towards himself and towards others.

From these matters of the “ghayb” that a Muslim believes in is that a person is alive in his/her grave in a manner that is different from our existence. What we know about this life in the grave comes exclusively from the information in the Qur’aan and the authentic hadeeths.

Thus the information about the life in the grave is “tawqeefiyah” – restricted to information from the texts of Islam – and there is no role whatsoever for our limited minds to start theorizing about it.

Why mention this point?

As with so many issues in Islamic ‘aqeedah (creed and belief), philosophers and free thinkers have attempted to interfere with the Islamic teachings about life in the grave.

All of this interference and meddling has come about because of one faulty principle that these thinkers hold dear to their hearts:

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the principle that the intellect (in Arabic the 'aql) is given precedence over the authentic texts from the Qur'aan and the Sunnah (in Arabic known as the naql).

So if a particular Islamic belief “makes sense” to them, then they accept it. And if it does not, then they reject it.

Hopefully based on what we have discussed in the past, it can be appreciated that this wonky way of thinking is completely opposed to what Islam teaches. Yet, many Muslims in the past have rushed into philosophy and logic and rhetoric, but left alone the basic texts of their own religion – with disastrous results.

So we will discuss the issues about life in the grave in order to explain what Islam actually teaches, but also to learn about what Islam does NOT teach about it. As an Arab poet said:

I learned about the evil, not for the sake of the evil itself,  
But so that I could avoid it.  
And whoever cannot distinguish between the evil and the good,  
It is feared that he will (inadvertently) fall into it.