

Last Day 22 – Qur’aanic proofs for punishment in the grave

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

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

QUESTION: Does the Qur’aan mention that people can be punished in the grave?

ANSWER:

The Qur’aan does mention punishment in the Grave which occurs whilst the sinner or polytheist is “waiting” for the Day of Judgement to occur. We will discuss only two of those verses in this article for the sake of keeping things short, although there are of course many more that could be mentioned.

The first aayah (verse) mentions the people of Pharaoh:

So Allaah saved him from the evils that they plotted and an evil torment encompassed Pharaoh’s people.

The Fire! They are exposed to it morning and afternoon. And on the Day when the (Final) Hour is established (it will be said to the angels): “Make the people of Pharaoh enter the severest punishment!”

[Soorah Ghaafir (the 40th chapter) verses 45 to 46]

So this verse shows that the people of Pharaoh will be punished in the graves before the Day of Judgement and this punishment occurs as a result of the evil actions that these people fell into.

The second aayah mentions what will happen to the people of shirk and oppression at the time of death:

And if you could but see when the people of oppression and shirk are in the agonies of death while the angels are stretching forth their hands (saying),

“Deliver your souls! Today you shall be recompensed with the torment of degradation because of what you used to say against Allaah which was not true! And you used to deny His Signs out of arrogance!”

[Soorah al An’aam (the 6th chapter) verses 93]

This verse shows that these wrongdoing people will suffer punishment around the time of death.

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If this punishment were only to occur after the Day of Judgement (which will take place at some point in the future) in Paradise or Hell which, then the word al yawm - ‘today’ in Arabic - could not be used in this verse for the punishment occurring to the person who is dying or has just died.