

## Last Day 24 - Punishment in the grave for the person who is not buried after death

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

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**QUESTION:** Can this punishment in the grave occur to someone who is not buried in a grave after his death – for example, someone who drowns at sea or who is cremated?

**ANSWER:**

The phrase "punishment in the grave" – in Arabic, adhaab ul qabr – would seem to imply that a person has to be in the grave for it to occur to him. However this is not the case.

The questioning of the dead person by the two angels, and the punishment or bliss that the person experiences after that will occur to all people – whether they are buried, or burned, eaten by lions, drowned in the depths of the deepest sea or vaporised by a nuclear bomb, etc.

The issues of questioning and punishment/bliss in fact refer to a period of time called the 'Barzakh' in Arabic, which literally means 'gap' or 'barrier'. This barzakh is the time that occurs between this life and the Hereafter, and it is at this time that the questioning and punishment/bliss will occur.

The Qur'aan mentions:

**And behind them is a barzakh (a barrier) until the Day that they will be resurrected.**

[Soorah al Mu'minoon (the 23rd chapter) aayah 100]

The phrase punishment (or bliss) "of the grave" is used because in the case of most people, it will occur in the grave. All over the world, most people who die are buried.

In a well known hadeeth, Muhammad (may perfect peace and security be upon him) told of a person from the times of old who commanded his sons to burn his body after death and scatter the ashes over the land and sea since he thought that by doing that, he would escape the punishment of the grave.

However Allaah commanded the land and sea to put back together the ashes that had been thrown upon them, and this was done. The man was then brought before Allaah who asked him, **"What made you do that?"**

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The man replied, "Having fear and awe of you, o my Lord, and You know best."

So Allaah had mercy and forgave that man.

This hadeeth shows that trying to destroy the person's body after his death does not stop him experiencing the punishment of the Barzakh or its bliss.

In fact, it seems preposterous to assume that the One who created the body in the first place and who is able to do whatever He wishes would somehow be unable to put the body back together if something destroys it!

But as we will see in the next few ***Last Day*** articles, people continue to meddle in issues of the ghayb, such as life after death, with their intellects and "common sense" - when in fact common sense and intellect would tell a person that the life after death is something that is not like the life of this world, so the rules of logic and reasoning are not applicable there.