

Last Day 25 - Denying the punishment of the grave

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

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

QUESTION: Are there people who deny the Punishment of the Grave?

ANSWER:

Yes, there are people who deny this, both Muslim and non Muslim. Obviously people who deny the existence of Allaah – atheists – do not accept that they will be taken to account by a Creator after they die.

But sadly, although not entirely unexpectedly, there are also Muslims who fly in the face of all the Qur'aanic verses and hadeeths mentioning the Punishment in the Grave by denying that it will occur.

All of this denial comes about due to a principle which we discussed a few emails ago: the idea that the intellect is given precedence over the texts from the Qur'an and Sunnah when deciding what to believe. In other words, "if it makes sense to me, I will accept it. If not, then I will not."

So the issue for these people then becomes: do my understanding and my intellectual faculties accept that there can be punishment in the Grave?

Quite clearly, if one were to exhume a body and look for signs of punishment or bliss on the person's body, then there would be none. If one were to go to a graveyard and listen out for sounds of the dead people laughing in joy or crying in unhappiness, they would not hear that.

This therefore constitutes a proof in their opinion that there is no punishment in the Grave.

Although they may try to come with more "sophisticated" proofs to show that the multiple evidences from the Qur'aan and the Sunnah do not in fact prove that people can experience bliss or punishment in the grave, the underlying basis for their rejection of this all stems from this principle of "intellect comes before text".

And as we mentioned in previous **Last Day** articles, the human intellect has no role in determining truth from fiction in issues of the ghayb (hidden and unseen) – issues such as how Allaah is, how the angels are, how the life after death will be, etc. All of this can only come from revelation.

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Ibn Taymeeyah, a scholar whom we have mentioned in the past, mentioned:

"So as for the hadeeths (mentioning) the punishment of the grave and the questioning by (the two angels) Munkar and Nakeer, then they are plentiful in number and reported by large numbers of people at each level of the chain of narration (going back) to the Prophet (may perfect peace and security be upon him)."