

The Grave torture

In the name of Allah the most gracious the most merciful

The Imam's talk this week is a continuation of his last Friday's talk about the journey of the human being from this life to the next. Last week the Imam talked about the moments of death; the moment when the spirit or soul exits the body. Today the Imam will talk about life in the grave.

As the spirit leaves the human body, the body starts to decay, spoil and rot. Those who are close and those who used to hug and kiss this individual; now they no longer can stand to be close to him or her. They start eagerly work to get the process of burying on the way. Burying in the ground and covering with earth. Only earth can take the dead body. Earth is from which the body was created and to which it does return.

The grave is a gloomy, narrow place which one moves into from a spacious accommodation where one may have lived. In a grave one lies on earth and a place shared with worms and crawlies. You shall not be allowed to bring anything with you; except may be for the mere cloth which may cover your body. Life in the grave is NOT permanent; it is a temporary stage between the death and the resurrection.

One night you may be with your family, children and loved ones, chatting; playing and having fun; and the next night one may be laying in a grave; with worms; with darkness; and with an unknown state of well being or a state of punishment.

It is in the grave that great temptation and the tough test start. Some people will be winners and some people will be losers. The prophet may peace be upon him pointing at a grave said "It is for this that you should get ready and be prepared". He was also reported saying "The grave is the first state of the next life. He who

is saved in it; what follows is easier. And for he who is not saved in it; what comes next is even worst". The grave is a pointer to what is to come.

The grave is a strange place. In it, the individual is asked three questions. Not all can answer such questions. Answering does not depend on how much education one has received in this life. The grave only recognizes one currency; and that is: Good deeds; Good deeds which were done purely for the sake of Allah; which also is in agreement with Allah's teachings and the prophet's guidance. This who has this currency will enter the grave and answers those three questions. Who does not have such currency will not be able to answer.

The prophet's speech describing the stages of death we started last Friday goes on to saying: "When the spirit of a believer is brought to the seventh heaven, Allah says: write my slaves record into an elevated place; and return him/her back to earth. It is from earth I created them; and back to earth I return them and from earth I shall bring them out again. The spirit is returned into the body. Two angels approach him/her; set him/her up and ask: Who is your Lord? He/she shall answer: my lord is Allah. The angels ask: What is your religion? He/she says Islam. They ask: and who is this man sent to you by Allah? He/she will answer: He is the messenger of Allah. They ask: and what have you learnt? He/she answers: I read the book of Allah, I believed in it and I found it truthful. A caller calls in heavens that my slave has told the truth. Lay for him/her beddings from paradise, dress him/her with clothes from paradise; and open for him/her a door to paradise so he can see his future place in paradise. He/she will then get fragrance and breeze of paradise; the grave will be as wide as the eye can see; and a human like creature with good face and great smell will approach and says: Good tidings with what makes you happy. This is your day that you were promised. What we call the dead person will ask: Who are you? You bringer of good news!. The man answers: I

am your good deeds. Then dead individual will say: God, let the hour of the resurrection happen now, I want to go to what is mine, to my people”

The unbeliever’s soul on the other hand as we said last Friday will be prevented from elevating into heavens. Allah says: Write him/her down into the lowest in earth. His spirit is thrown down and is returned into the body. The two angels approach and ask him the same questions to which the unbeliever shall answer with “I don’t know, I don’t know”. A caller calls in the heavens that my slave has lied. Lay for him/her beddings from hell; and open for him/her a door to Hell fire. He/she will then feel its heat and poisons; the grave will shrink until the ribs are put out of place. A man with an ugly face and filthy and smelly clothes approaches and says: There is only bad news for you. This is the day you were promised. “Who are you” the unbeliever will ask, “You bearer of bad news”. The man answers: “I am your bad deeds” The unbeliever says “God do not start the day of resurrection.”.

Allah says: “Those who believe; Allah will keep firm, with the word that stands firm in the worldly life and in the hereafter. And Allah will cause to go astray those who are wrong-doers, and Allah does what he wills”

Indeed there is punishment in the grave even before the day of resurrection. Allah Says about Ferros:” The hellfire; they are exposed to it in the mornings and evenings; and when it is the day of resurrection; enter Ferro and his follows the toughest of punishment”. The prophet may peace be upon him in indicating how horrifying the punishment in the grave is; said: “if not for you may stop burying your dead, I would’ve asked Allah to make you hear what happens in the grave”. The prophet recommended for us to often fortify ourselves against the torture in the grave. As often as; after each prayer; by saying: “Allah my Lord, I fortify my self with you against the torture of hell, against the torture in the grave,

against the temptation of life, temptation of death and bad temptation of the false Messiah.”

What may save us from the torture of the grave are:

- 1) Regular prayers of asking for protection by Allah.
- 2) Avoiding what causes the grave punishment and repenting.
Some of those causes are: not performing prayers in the appropriate time, making false accusations and lying against people, dealing with interest (Reba), adultery, a woman hurting her husband or neighbours, not fasting a day in Ramadan with out a reason, ill feelings and the spreading of rumours against people.
- 3) Reciting the chapter (surah) “Al-Mulk”, learning it and understanding its meanings. The prophet may peace be upon him said: “There is a chapter in the Quran of 30 Ayas, it keeps mediating for its reader until he/she is forgiven” and he read “تبارك الذي بيده الملك . .”.
- 4) Shahada, dying while striving in the way of Allah.
- 5) Dying while on a watchful eye in way of Allah. It was reported that the prophet said: “staying up as a guard for a day and a night is better that all the fasting and praying for a entire month. And if one dies doing that; one will be guarded just as he/she were doing; his/her deeds will continue to add up; and he/she will be safe guarded from the temptation of the grave”
- 6) Death by internal or abdominal causes.
- 7) Death on the day; or the evening of a Friday.

We do ask Allah to keep us right by word and deed, in this life and in the life after. We ask our Lord to protect us and you against the punishment in hell and punishment in the grave, from the temptations in life and death and the temptation of the false Messiah.