47055 - Do the blessing and torment in the grave happen to both the body and the soul or to one of them only?

the question

if ur to be held accountable for ur deeds on the day of judgement for ur deeds,then y u start getting punishment before that in the grave.wot is the status of the SOUL at that time.if azab e qabar is true,then does a man suffers for his bad deeds inside a grave alongwith his soul.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

There is no doubt that the torment and blessing of the grave are real, as is indicated by the verses of the Qur'aan, the ahaadith of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the consensus of the salaf (early generations) of this ummah. Please see question no. 34648 for more details on this issue.

With regard to the question of whether the blessing and torment in the grave happen to both the body and the soul or to one of them only, the basic principle is that the torment and blessing of the grave happen to the soul, and the soul may connect with the body so that it will experience something of the torment or blessing.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: It should be noted that the view of the salaf (early generations) and imams of this ummah is that when a person dies he will be in a state of bliss or torment and that that will happen to both his soul and his body. After the soul departs from the body it will remain in a state of bliss or torment, and it may connect to the body sometimes, so the body will experience the bliss or torment along with it (at those times). Then on the Day of Resurrection the souls will be restored to their bodies and will be raised up from their graves to meet the Lord of the Worlds. All of this is unanimously agreed upon among

the scholars of al-hadith wa'l-Sunnah.

There are many ahaadith which speak of this matter, such as the hadith narrated by Abu Dawood (4127) and classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood, from al-Baraa' ibn 'Aazib (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: We went out with the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to attend the funeral of a man from among the Ansaar. When we reached the grave the lahd (niche) had not yet been made, so the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sat down and we sat around him as if there were birds on our heads. In his hand was a stick with which he scratched the ground. Then he raised his head and said: "Seek refuge with Allah from the torment of the grave," two or three times. Then he described how the soul is taken and how it is taken up to the heavens then brought back to (the body). Then he said: "And he hears their footsteps when they leave. Then it is said to him: 'O So and so, who is your Lord? What is your religion? Who is your Prophet?"

According to another version: "There come to him two angels who make him sit up and say to him: 'Who is your Lord?' He says: 'My Lord is Allah,' They say: 'What is your religion?' He says: 'My religion is Islam.' They say: 'Who is this man who was sent among you?' He says: 'He is the Messenger of Allah.' They say: 'How do you know?' He says; 'I read the Book of Allah and believed in it (or in him).' That is what Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

'Allah will keep firm those who believe, with the word that stands firm in this world (i.e. they will keep on worshipping Allah Alone and none else), and in the Hereafter. And Allah will cause to go astray those who are Zaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers), and Allah does what He wills' [Ibraaheem 14:27]

Then a caller calls out from heaven: 'My slave has spoken the truth. Provide him with furnishings from Paradise and clothe him from Paradise and open to him a door to Paradise.' Then there comes to him some of its breezes and fragrance, and (his grave) is expanded for him as far as his eyes can see. But the kaafir …" And he mentioned how the kaafir dies, and said: "His soul is returned to his body and two angels come to him and sit him up, then they say to him: 'Who is your Lord?' He says: 'Oh, oh, I don't know.' They say to him: 'What is your religion?' He says: 'Oh,

oh, I don’t know.’ Then a caller calls out from heaven: ‘My slave is lying. Provide him with furnishings from Hell and clothe him from Hell and open to him a door from Hell.’ Then there comes to him some of its heat and hot winds, and his grave compresses until his ribs interlock. Then there appears to him a blind and dumb man who has an iron mallet which, if he were to strike a mountain with it, it would turn to dust. He strikes him with it, giving a blow that is heard by everything that is between the east and the west, except the two races (of mankind and jinn) and he turns to dust, then his soul is restored to him.”

This hadith clearly indicates that the soul is returned to the body and that the ribs interlock. This clearly shows that the torment befalls both the soul and the body.

It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “When the believer’s (soul) is taken, the angels of mercy come to him with white silk and say: ‘Come out to the mercy of Allah.’ So it comes out like the best fragrance of musk and they pass it to one another and smell it until they bring him to the gate of heaven. They say: ‘What is this good smell that has come from the earth?’… Then they bring him to the souls of the believers who rejoice more than the family of an absent loved one rejoices when he returns… As for the kaafir, there come to him angels with a piece of sackcloth and say: ‘Come out to the wrath and anger of Allah,’ and it comes out like the foulest stench of a corpse…”

Narrated by Ibn Hibbaan, 7/284; its narrator said: its isnaad is saheeh.

This hadith and others like it indicate that the soul and the body will both experience the bliss or torment of the grave, and that the soul will experience bliss along with the body that is in the grave – in sha Allah.

With regard to the soul experiencing torment or bliss on its own, we have quoted above a report which indicates that. In Sunan al-Nasaa’i (2073) it is narrated from Ka’b ibn Maalik (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The soul of the believer is (like a bird) eating from the trees of Paradise, until Allah sends it back to his body on the Day of Resurrection.” Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh al-Nasaa’i.

These ahaadith indicate that the bodies that are in the graves will experience bliss or torment – if Allah wills that and as He wills it, and that the soul will experience bliss in Paradise by itself. Both of them are true. The ahaadith also indicate that the souls will continue to experience bliss or torment after they leave their bodies.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him) was asked: Does the torment of the grave happen to the body or to the soul?

He replied:

The basic principle is that it happens to the soul, because the rulings after death apply to the soul, and the body becomes a motionless corpse. Hence the body no longer needs nourishment in order to be sustained, as it neither eats nor drinks; rather it is eaten by the worms. So the basic principle is that it happens to the soul. But Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah said that the soul may be connected to the body so that it experiences torment or bliss along with it…. Based on that, the scholars said that the soul may be in contact with the body so the torment happens to both of them. Perhaps that may be indicated by the hadith in which the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “The grave compresses for the kaafir until his ribs interlock.” This indicates that the torment will happen to the body because the ribs are part of the body.

Majmoo’ Fataawa Ibn ‘Uthaymeen, 1/25

And Allah knows best.

See : Majmoo’ Fataawa Shaykh al-Islam, 4/282-299

Al-Qiyaamah al-Sughra by Shaykh ‘Umar al-Ashqar, 107

(This book is available in English under the title: The Minor Resurrection, published by International Islamic Publishing House, Riyadh).