

71175 - What is the situation in the grave of a child who died before adolescence?

the question

If a young child who did not reach the age of accountability dies, i.e., he was about 10 or 11 years old, what is his fate in al-barzakh with regard to the following:

Will he be subjected to the trial of the grave (the questioning of Munkar and Nakeer)?

Will he be subjected to the torment of the grave?

Will this child really intercede for his parents to be admitted to Paradise?

I heard that the Prophet of Allah Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) is the one who is responsible for taking care of the children of the Muslims who die at this age. What I know is that Sayyiduna Ibraaheem is in the seventh heaven, so does this mean that the child who dies is living in the seventh heaven or is he in the grave under the ground?

Is no one spared the squeezing of the grave, not even children?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The squeezing of the grave is the first thing that happens to the deceased when he is placed in his grave. In the texts it indicates that this is something that happens to everyone who is placed in the grave, and no one is spared it. And Allah is the One Whose help we seek.

Ahmad (6/55, 98) narrated that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The

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grave has squeezing. If anyone were to be saved from it or spared it, Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh would have been spared it." Al-Albani said in al-Saheehah (1685): This hadith, when its isnaads and corroborating reports are all taken into account, is undoubtedly saheeh. We ask Allah to make the squeezing of the grave easy for us, for He is the Most Generous.

It was narrated from Abu Ayyoob (may Allah be pleased with him) that a boy was buried, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "If anyone were to be spared the squeezing of the grave, this boy would be spared." Narrated by al-Tabaraani in al-Mu'jam al-Kabeer (4/121); classed as saheeh by al-Haythami (3/47) and by al-Albani in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah (2164).

Secondly:

The scholars differed as to whether children will be questioned in the grave or not. There are two views:

1 - That they will be questioned. This is the view of some of the Malikis and some of the Hanbalis. It was the view favoured by al-Qurtubi and also by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, as is narrated from him in al-Furoo'.

See: al-Furoo' (2/216); Sharh al-Zarqani, 2/85.

Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said in al-Rooh (87-88):

The proof of those who say that they will be questioned is that it is prescribed to offer the funeral prayer for them and to say du'aa' for them and to ask Allah to protect them from the torment of the grave and the trial of the grave.

It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) offered the funeral prayer for a boy, and he was heard praying: "O Allah, protect him from the torment of the grave." Narrated by

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Malik (536) and Ibn Abi Shaybah (6/105).

They also quoted as evidence the report narrated by 'Ali ibn Ma'bad from 'Aa'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), that the funeral of a small boy passed by her and she wept. It was said to her: "Why are you weeping, O Mother of the Believers?" She said: "This boy; I am weeping out of compassion for him because of the squeezing of the grave."

They said: Allah will make them mature so that they will understand the situation they are in and they will be inspired to answer the questions that they are asked. End quote.

2 - That they will not be tested or questioned in their graves. This is the view of the Shaafa'is and some of the Malikis and Hanbalis.

Ibn Muflih said in al-Furoo' (2/216):

This is the view of al-Qaadi and of Ibn 'Aqeel. End quote.

The evidence for this view was explained by Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him), and it seems that he was inclined towards this view, when he said in al-Roo'h (87-88):

The others said:

The questioning is only for the one who is mature enough to understand the message sent by Allah to His Messenger; he will be asked whether he believed in the Messenger and obeyed him or not? It will be said to him: "What did you say about this man who was sent among you?" With regard to the child who has no understanding of these issues, how could he be asked what do you say about this man who was sent among you? If his reasoning is restored to him in the grave, he would not be asked about something he could not understand or have knowledge of, and there would be no point in this questioning.

With regard to the hadith of Abu Hurayrah, the torment in the grave does not mean that the child

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is being punished for not obeying or committing sin, for Allah does not punish anyone for a sin he did not do.

Rather the torment of the grave refers to the pain that is felt by the deceased for other reasons, and it is not a punishment for something that he did. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The deceased is tormented because of his family's crying for him," i.e., he feels pain and suffers because of that; he is not being punished because of the sin of the living.

Undoubtedly there is pain and misery in the grave which may affect the child and cause him pain. So it is prescribed for the one who is offering the funeral prayer for him to ask Allah to protect him from that torment. And Allah knows best. End quote.

Thirdly:

With regard to where the children who have died are – are they in the seventh heaven with Ibraaheem (peace be upon him) or in their graves?

What has been narrated concerning that is the hadith of Samurah ibn Jundub (may Allah be pleased with him) who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) often used to say to his companions: "Has anyone among you seen a dream?" and whoever Allah willed would tell him what he had seen. One day he said: "Last night two people came to me and made me get up, and they said to me: 'Let's go.' So I set off with them..." He mentioned things that he had seen, then he said:

"We set off, and we came to a verdant garden, in which were all the colours of spring, where there was a man who was so tall that I could hardly see his head in the sky. Around the man was the largest number of children I had ever seen..." Then among things that the two angels explained to him was: "As for the tall man who was in the garden, that was Ibraaheem. As for the children who were around him, these are all the children who died in a state of fitrah." One of the Muslims said:

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“O Messenger of Allah, what about the children of the mushrikeen?” He said: “And the children of the mushrikeen.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari (7047).

This hadith indicates that whoever dies before reaching the age of puberty is in Paradise under the care of Ibraaheem (peace be upon him), not that he is in the seventh heaven.

See: Sharh Muslim by al-Nawawi, hadith no. 2657.

Fourthly:

There are many ahaadeeth from the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) which speak of children interceding for their parents on the Day of Resurrection, such as the following:

It was narrated that Abu Hassaan said: I said to Abu Hurayrah: Two sons of mine have died. Will you not narrate to us a hadith from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that will comfort us in our loss?

He said: Yes, their children are the little ones of Paradise, and one of them will meet his father – or his parents – and take hold of his garment – or his hand – as I am taking hold of the edge of this garment of yours, and he will not let go until Allah admits him and his father to Paradise. Narrated by Muslim (2635).

And Allah knows best.