

*An Enlightening Commentary
into*

*The Light of
The Holy Qur'an*

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*The Holy Qur'an
Part 01*

The Light of The Holy Qur'an Interpretation of(Insan and Mursalat and Naba)

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Sura Insan (Human) No.76 (31 Verses)



In The Name Of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

(The Arabic meaning of 'Insan' is 'Human'. In the English language the words 'Mankind' and 'Man' are also used for 'Human' and we have used 'Man' in the text.)

Contents of the Sura:

In spite of its brevity, this Sura presents a deep, varied and comprehensive theme which can be divided into five sections:

1. Man's creation from a drop of mingled sperm; his guidance and his free-will.
2. The reward offered to the Righteous abrar (This part has a special occasion for its revelation in relation to the household of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) , ie. Ahlul-Bait; which will be discussed at a later point.)
3. The merits which cause one to deserve the rewards.
4. The importance of The Qur'an, the manner of conducting its principles and the demanding road of self-perfection.
5. The dominance of Allah's Will (even though man has limited free-will) .

There are different titles for this Sura. The most famous are "MAN" (Insan) , "TIME" (Dahr) and

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"HAS THERE COME" (Hal-ata) ; each of which is taken from one of the words at the beginning of the Sura; however, in the traditions we will discuss, here, about the virtue of the Sura, only Hal-ata is mentioned.

Was the Sura revealed In Medina?

The consensus of scholars and commentators is that all or at least part of the beginning verses, which explain the position or dignity of the Righteous and their good deeds, were revealed in Medina. The occasion of revelation about them, that is, the story of Ali, Fatima, Hassan, Hosain (P.B.U.TH.) and Fezza (their house-helper) ; and their vows, will be explained in detail at the appropriate time.

From among the famous scholars, we can mention Qartabi the well-known commentator who points out: " The consensus of scholars believe that the Sura has been revealed in Medina."(1)

In addition to this, we can also mention the following:

1. Hakim Ab-al-Qasim Haskani has, in detail, quoted from Ibn-Abbas the number of verses, which were separately revealed in Mecca and Medina. He has considered it as a Medinan Sura which has been revealed after Sura Al-Rahman and before Sura Al-Taha .(2) Prof. Ahmad Zahid, the writer of 'Idah', has also quoted the same from Ibn-Abbas. (3)
2. Abu 'Abdullah Zanjani, in his book, Tharikh-i-Qur'an (The history of the Qur'an) has quoted from 'Nazm-ad-Dorar wa Tanasiq-al-Ayat-I wa'l-Sowar' that a group of scholars have considered this Sura among the Medinan ones.(4)
3. From the same source, (Tharikh-I-Qur'an, quoting from Fihrist-I- Ibn Nadim) is quoted from Ibn-Abbaas that this Sura is considered the eleventh Medinan Sura.(5)
4. Suyuti, in his book 'Itqan' has quoted from Dalayl-al-Nabowwa by Beyhaqi, who has in turn quoted from 'Akrama that: " Sura Insan was revealed in Medina.(6)
5. In Durr al-Manthur, the same comment from Ibn-Abbas is quoted in different forms.(7)
6. Tafsir-i Kashshaf, a commentary, is where Zamakhshari has pointed out that the occasion of revelation, in the beginning verses, was about the vows taken by Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hosain (P.B.U.TH.) . (8)
7. There are still many other scholars, besides the aforementioned ones, who say that the

beginning verses are about Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hosain (p.b.u.h.) .(9)

(1) Tafsir-i-Qartabi, vol. 10, p. 6909.

(2) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 405.

(3) Ibid

(4) Tarikh Qur'an, p. 55.

(5) Ibid

(6) Al-Mizan, vol. 20, p. 221.

(7) Ibid

(8) Kashshaf, vol. 4, p. 670.)

(9) Ihqaq-al-Haqq, vol. 3, p. 157-170.

This verifies that the Sura has been revealed in Medina (since we know that Hassan and Hosain (p.b.u.h.) were born in Medina) . Among these scholars' books we can mention the master Vahidi's 'Asbas al-Nozul', Baqavi's 'Ma'alim-at-Tanzil', Sebt Ibn-Jouzi's "Tathkirah", Ganji Shafi'i's 'Kifayat-at-Ta1ib' and so on. This verification is so reputable and well known that Mohammad Ibn-Idris Shafi'i has referred to it in his poem:

"How longs, how longs. Up until when.

Will you reproach me my love For this Sentele man?

Was not Fatima marries but only to him?

And was not Hal-ata revealed

About only but him?"

There are many other evidences supporting these views, some of which, will be pointed out later, when the occasion of revelation of the verses is discussed.

In spite of these facts, some enthusiasts still insist on counting the Sura among Meccan ones and reject all the narrations about the revelation of the Sura being revealed in Medina as well as the revelation of this Sura being about Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hosain (p.b.u.h.) .

The Virtue in studying Sura Insan (Man)

There is a tradition from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) that says: "One who studies Sura Hal-ata will be rewarded Heaven and clothes of silk (in Heaven) by Allah." (1)

There is also a narration from Imam Baqir (p.b.u.h.) which says: "One of the rewards for a person who studies Sura Hal-ata every Thursday morning is that he will be with the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) on the Day of Judgment." (2)

(1) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 402.

(2) Ibid

Sura Insan (Human) No. 76 (verses 1-4)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَذْكُورًا شَيْئًا يَكُنْ لَمْ الدَّهْرِ مَنْ جِئِ الْإِنْسَانَ عَلَى أَتَى هَلْ (1)

بَصِيرًا سَمِيْعًا فَجَعَلْنَاهُ نَبْئَلِيْهِ أَمْشَاجٍ نُطْفَةٍ مِنْ الْإِنْسَانَ خَلَقْنَا إِنَّا (2)

كُفُورًا وَإِمَّا شَاكِرًا إِمَّا السَّبِيْلِ هَدَيْنَاهُ إِنَّا (3)

وَسَعِيْرًا وَأَعْلَآ سَلَاسِلًا لِلْكَافِرِيْنَ أَعْتَدْنَا إِنَّا (4)

1. Has there not been over Man a long period of Time when he was a thing not worth mentioning?
2. Surely We created Man from a drop of mingled semen, in order to try him: so We gave him hearing and sight.
3. Surely We showed him the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (is up to him) .

4. We have prepared Chains, Yokes and a Blazing Fire for the Rejecters.

Commentary:

We transformed the lowly mixture of sperm (and egg) into Man, then We made all the faculties of guidance available to him.

Though most of the details in this Sura are about Resurrection and the Blessings of Heaven, there is, at the beginning of the Sura, some discussion on the creation of Man. It becomes understood that if one takes note of the creation then one may be able to act cautiously in anticipation of the Resurrection.

The question is asked, " Has there not been over Man a long period of Time when he was a thing not worth mentioning?" The answer, undoubtedly, is in the affirmative.

For a long time the tiny essential particles of his being were scattered in different places. They could have been in the soil, among the tiny droplets of water in the seas, or in the atmosphere. In fact, each of these three environments was so vast that the particles were lost within them and were so small as not to be worthy of mention.

Does the term 'Man', in the first verse, refer to all the members of mankind or does it only refer to 'Adam'? The next verse continues: " Surely we created 'Man' from a drop of mingled semen..." so, we can say this is a clear indication that it is referring to all of mankind; {since it is a known fact that this is definitely how Man reproduces. and not by any other means. It is not a condition of coming into existence only for Adam.}

However, some commentators believe that the term 'Man', in the first verse, refers to 'Adam' and that 'Man', in the second verse, indicates 'mankind' as a whole. However, this seems to be a contradiction in thought and does not appear to be probable.

In the following sentence, "...he was considered a thing not worth mentioning?" , there are various ideas put forth on this issue and one of them is that when Man was but mingled sperm (and egg) , he was not worthy of mention, however, later when the entity possessed the higher stage of development it became a worthy being.

[It has been narrated from Imam Baqir (p.b.u.h.) . the fifth Imam, that Man's existence was known to Allah', even though he was not mentioned as being a worthy entity until Allah created him in the physical form.] (1)

Other interpretations indicate that the term 'Man', in this verse, means 'learned people' who were not recognized at first, but subsequently became so, after having obtained their knowledge. They were, then, mentioned everywhere, among all people, while they were alive and even after their death.

Now, we come to the process of the second stage which is the creation of Man and his becoming worthy of mention. The verse says, "Surely We created Man from a drop of mingled semen, in order to try him:so We gave him hearing and sight." The term /amshaj/ is the plural form of /mashaj/ or /mashij/ which means 'mingled' or 'mixed'. The creating of Man from 'mingled semen' probably refers to the mixture of sperm and egg and their unification, or (1) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10. p. 406.

it could refer to the various talents possessed by man through heritage; which exists in the genes, DNA, and Chromosomes that are in every sperm and egg. Or, perhaps it refers to a combination of all of the aforementioned cases. If so, the last idea is the most complete and suitable.

It may be possible that the term 'mingled' refers to the process of development, upon unification of sperm and egg; which leads the mixture to develop into a foetus and then into Man. With the term /nabtalih/"We try him...", we can understand that Man deserves the honor of duty, undertaking, responsibility, examination and trial, which is one of the greatest divine blessings Allah has gifted to Man.

Since duty and examination are not possible unless there is awareness; hence, hearing and sight are given to Man. This fact is mentioned at the end of the verse; making it clear for us that the former cannot exist without the latter.

Some commentators have also suggested that the intention for the examination is the process of developing the sperm to foetus and, then, to a complete Man. However, upon careful examination of the phrase "We try him..." and "Man", the first interpretation seems more suitable.

By accepting this definition, we can understand that the origin in all of the conception of 'Man' is in his sensational understanding. In other words, sensational understanding is the basis of all rationalities. Most Islamic philosophers support this idea and Aristotle, the famous Greek philosopher, approved of the idea, as well.

Since, in the duty and examination of 'Man', two more factors are required, that is, 'guidance' and 'free-will' are added to understanding; the next verse insists, then, that "Surely We guided him to the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (is up to him) ."

Guidance, it can be said, has a broad meaning containing the following three branches: divine guidance, natural guidance and religious guidance. This verse, of course, mostly intends to convey the third branch, i.e. 'religious guidance'.

Explanation:

Since Allah has created Man with a special goal in mind: 'examination and development' , He has prepared the necessary faculties for these fulfilments in his being. This can be considered 'divine guidance'.

Thereupon, He has made Man naturally eager to follow the Way and with the help of his natural inclinations, has shown him its direction. This can be considered natural guidance'.

Further, He has given a mission to some heavenly leaders and great prophets in order for them to train Man, show him the right direction and teach him the clear religious laws; so that he may perform his duty correctly. This can be considered 'religious guidance'. These three kinds of guidance, of course, are for all members of mankind; without any exception.

On the whole, this verse indicates three points which are important for the destiny in the life of Man: 'duty', 'guidance' and 'free-will'; all of which are both interdependent and complementary to each other. By the way, there will be no room for the case of fatalism to exist when it says: " Surely We guided him to the Way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (is up to him) ."

The terms /shakiran/ 'grateful' and /kafuran/ 'ungrateful' are the most fitting, here, because those who obey Allah and assume to follow His guidance are thankful, but those who disobey and do not follow the direction are sinners gone astray.

No one can be completely thankful for Allah's blessings, but those who repay this favor with ingratitude are the worst. They have neither appreciation for Allah guidance nor the many ways that He has provided this guidance; which are always available. (In Arabic, there is only one term used for those who are 'ungrateful' and for the 'unbelievers': /kafur/.The same is noted in Mufradat by Raqib) .

In the next verse, there is a short, but meaningful point that relates to the fate of those who are ungrateful; it says: "We have prepared Chains, Yokes and a Blazing Fire for the Rejecters.

The sense derived from the term /a'tadna/, " We have prepared... is, an emphasis on the existence of punishment; which is unavoidable for the rejecters. We know that preparation is for common people who are limited in their abilities and must make prior arrangements for their supplies, so that when they are in need they are sure that they will have everything ready. This is

not true when speaking of Allah because whenever He Wills something to "Be" , it will be done at once and preparation is meaningless. However, to show the certainty of the existence of punishment for the rejecters, He insists that there is a means for the punishment; it is ready-made and there is no doubt about it.

Further along in the sentence, we see that /salasil/ 'chains' is the plural form of /silsilah/ which, here, means: 1.) A flexible series of jointed links or rings usually of some kind of metal. 2.) That which binds, as a prisoner held in chains. The term /aqlal/ 'yokes' is the plural form of 'qul' 'yoke' which means: a wooden frame or bar with loops or bows at either end, used for harnessing together a pair of oxen, etc. Here, 'yoke', is a heavy iron ring held on the neck or hands and is fastened with a chain.

On the whole, chains, yokes and blazing fire, which are mentioned in this verse, indicate a great harmful punishment for the rejecters. This sense is also pointed out in several other verses of the Qur'an. They denote both captivity and torture as punishment.

Man's using his free-will for following after his lusts during his lifetime, in this world, will be the reason for that pain in the next life. In fact, that 'blazing fire' that man will encounter later, is the incarnation of the fire he, himself, has made by his evil deeds in this world.

Explanation:

THE FOETUS AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

We know that the human zygote is an entity formed by the unification of the male sperm and the female egg. The sperm, itself, its combination with the egg and the different steps of fetal development into Man is a great marvel in human existence. Some of the mysteries have been uncovered in the study of embryology, but there are some further areas yet to be discovered. A few of the above mentioned wonders are as follows:

1. Sperm: Floating in the semen of men is a very microscopic creature that has a head, neck and moving tail. (And what a miracle it is!: The tail propels it through the inhospitable environment, inside the vagina, on its journey to fertilize the egg. The environment of the vagina is very acidic and there are only a certain number of days in a month in which the platens are vertical, in the female secretions, so that the spermatozoa can travel the distance without hindrance. At other times the platens are in a hodge-podge array and this makes it virtually impossible for the sperm to move in a straight line. Also, some of the spermatozoa may be deformed and unable, themselves, to make the journey.)

Every time a man has an ejaculation, he discharges, in the seminal fluid, an average of 70 million sperm per milliliter or 100 million spermatozoa or more--this is equal to the population of several

countries, but only one of them, most usually, succeeds in entering the ovum so that fertilization can take place. (1) This number is very large because, as mentioned above, many of the spermatozoa will be destroyed on their long and arduous journey.

2. Egg: The wonderful characteristic of the egg is that it allows one sperm to enter it. (However, on rare occasions more than one sperm enters resulting in 'identical' twins or more than one egg is released from the ovum sac resulting in 'fraternal' twins) . Also, within the egg the miraculous cell division process takes place.

3. Uterus: The uterus is a muscular organ and serves as a place for reception, retention, and nutrition of the conceptus, which it expels during labor. It resembles a flattened pear in shape and the size varies depending on the age of the female. The remarkable ability of the cervix to dilate results from dissociation of collagen. The blood supply of the uterus is derived principally from the uterine and ovarian arteries.

4. Amnionic Fluid: The foetus is in a thick, essentially colorless, fluid in a sac called the 'placenta'. This fluid protects the foetus against the (1) Williams Obstetrics, 15th Edition, p. 87.

mother's various quick, sharp movements or any other violent disturbances. Moreover, it regulates the foetal temperature, so that the changes in the outside temperature cannot easily effect it. The most interesting point is that, most generally, the fluid keeps the foetus in a weightless state, which is very efficient and prevents limb stress.

5. Placenta and Cord: The foetus receives nourishment through the placenta and umbilical cord. The mothers' blood is accompanied by food materials and oxygen that arrives at the placenta and after a refining process goes to the foetus' heart through the umbilical cord and then moves through its body.

6. Conception: After fertilization, the mature ovum becomes a zygote, which then undergoes segmentation. Some biological scientists believe that the ovum carries positive electric charges and the sperm has negative electric charges, then they attract each other. However, when the sperms enter the ovum, the charge is changed to a negative charge. In so doing, the other sperms in the surrounding area will be repelled.

Other scientists maintain that when the sperm enters the egg, some chemicals will be released causing the remaining spermatozoa to move away. Whichever the case may be, in a couple of days the zygote attaches itself to the wall of the uterine cavity. From there, if there are no complications in the growth and development process, a new being will enter this world.

From the beginning of the fourth month, the foetus is capable of respiratory movement

sufficiently intense to move amniotic fluid in and out of the respiratory tract. (1) Air-breathing is initiated by the rapid replacement of bronchial and alveolar fluid by air. (2)

(1) Williams Obstetrics, 15th Edition, p. 158.

(2) Williams Obstetrics, 15th Edition, p. 385.

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(5) كَافُورًا مِزَاجُهَا كَانَ كَأْسٍ مِّنْ يَشْرَبُونَ الْأَبْرَارَ إِنَّ

(6) تَفْجِيرًا يُفَجِّرُوهَا اللَّهُ عِنَادُ بِهَا يَشْرَبُ عَيْنًا

(7) مُسْتَطِيرًا شَرُّهُ كَانَ يَوْمًا وَيَخَافُونَ بِاللَّذْرِ يُوفُونَ

(8) وَأَسِيرًا وَيَتِيمًا مَسْكِينًا حُبِّهِ عَلَى الطَّعَامِ وَيُطْعَمُونَ

(9) شُكُورًا وَلَا جَزَاءَ مِنْكُمْ نُرِيدُ لَا إِلَهَ لَوْجِهِ نُطْعِمُكُمْ إِنَّمَا

(10) فَمَطْرِيرًا عَبُوسًا يَوْمًا رَبَّنَا مِنْ نَخَافُ إِنَّا

(11) وَسُرُورًا نَضْرَةً وَلَقَاهُمْ الْيَوْمَ ذَلِكَ شَرَّ اللَّهِ فَوَقَاهُمْ

5." Verily, the Righteous drink of a cup; the mixture of which is (like) camphor."

6. " A fountain, where the servants of Allah drink, flows in abundance (wherever they wish) "

7." They fulfill (their) vows and fear a Day, the chastisement of which is widespread."

8. " And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive."

9. (Saying) : " We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks."

10. " We only fear from our Lord a Day, frowningly severe."

11. " Therefore, Allah will guard them against the evil of that Day, and will grant over them a Light of Beauty and a (blissful) joy."

The Occasion of Revelation:

A great evidence for the superiority and excellence of Ahlul-Bayt; the household of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) .

Ibn-Abbas says that Hassan and Hosain (p.b.u.h.) were sick The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and a group of followers came to visit them. They suggested to Hazrat Ali to take a vow for their recovery. So, Ali Fatima and Fezza (their house-helper) took a vow that if Hassan and Hosain recovered, they would fast for three days. (According to the same narration, Hassan and Hosain (p.b.u.h.) made the same vow.)

After a short while both of them recovered. Therefore, the family fasted for the first day, but, as they were in dire need for food stuffs, Hazrat Ali borrowed some barley and Hazrat Fatima ground one-third of it into flour and baked some bread.

With the onset of evening, when they were preparing to break their fasts, an indigent person came to their door and said, " Peace be upon you, the Household of Mohammad. I am a needy Muslim, so please give me some food. May Allah bestow upon you, in kind, from divine sustenance." All of them gave priority to him and gave him their shares. That night, they broke their fast with only water.

The following day they fasted again, but, like the previous day, an orphan came to the door. Once more, they forfeited their bread and ate nothing but water.

The next day, they fasted for the third time. This day a captive came to their house and they repeated their charity.

On the fourth day, All took Hassan and Hosain with himself to see the Prophet. When the Prophet observed their condition; they were trembling with hunger, he said, "It grieves me to see you in this condition." Then, he stood up and walked with them. When he arrived at their home, he found Fatima praying. Her stomach was sunk in to her back- bone and her eyes had become sunken, too. The Prophet was greatly affected. At this moment Gabriel descended and said, " O, Mohammad receive this Sura. Allah congratulates you for having such a family." And then Gabriel recited, to him, Sura Hal-Ata.(1)

(1) Al-Qadir, vol. 3, p. 107-111, Ihqaqal-Haqq, vol. 3, p. 157-171.

Commentary:

The Great Reward for the Righteous

In the aforementioned verses (1-4) human beings were divided into two groups; the grateful and the ungrateful and reference was made to the 'punishment and penalty' for the ungrateful. But, in these verses there is a recount of the 'Rewards' offered to the Righteous.

First, it says, " Verily, the Righteous drink of a cup; the mixture of which is (like) camphor

The term /abrar/ is the plural form of /barr/, which originally means 'broadness and expansiveness '. For this reason, dry land and vast deserts, as opposed to large bodies of water, are called /barr/. Thus, this term is applied to the Righteous (people who do good) , because their good deeds have extensive effects on the society.

The word /birr/ means 'to be pious', 'just', or 'to act justly'. It is said that making the distinction between /khayr/ and /birr/ is for the reason that the former has a general meaning of goodness while the latter has the specific meaning of 'goodness accompanied by intention'.

The term /kafur/ has various meanings; one of which is 'good smelling'. Another meaning is 'fragrant plant' or a plant which has a sweet fragrance. Also, it has the common meaning of 'a sharp odor' that has medical applications, e.g. for sterilizing or disinfecting. The other meaning has its importance as an extraordinarily white and cool substance, and it is famous, because of its coolness and whiteness.

Furthermore, this verse indicates that this purifying drink is so fragrant that it is enjoyed both through the senses of taste and smell. On the whole, /kafur/ has been considered as having the same value as musk and ambegris; the famous sweet fragrances.

Then, it refers to the fountainhead from which this cup of divine drink is filled; and says, "A fountain, where from the servants of Allah drink, flows in abundance (wherever they wish) ." This purified fountain is under their control in such a way that it flows wherever they wish.

It is worthy of mention that in a tradition from Imam Baqir (p.b.u.h.) it is quoted that in a description of the fountain he said that this fountain is placed in the house of the Prophet and from there it flows to the houses of the previous prophets (p.b.u.h.) and believers.

It is true that, as in this world, the fountains of knowledge and mercy flow from the Prophet's

house toward the servants of Allah and the righteous, and in the next world (which is a great illustration of this condition) the fountain of the divine pure drink will originate from his house and therefore, to the houses of other believers.

The term /yufajjirun/ is based on the word /tafjir/ which, itself, is derived from the root /fajara/ which means 'to cause water to flow' or 'to break' on a large scale, whether breaking the earth or anything else. When, as it seems, the light of the morning breaks the dark curtain of the night; this light is called /fajr/. Also, they call an evildoer /fajir/ (wicked) , because he breaks open the curtain of modesty and piety. However, in this verse it means 'the opening of the ground'.

It is remarkable that among the many blessings of Heaven, referred to in this Sura, the first to be mentioned is this 'special pure fragrant drink'. Perhaps, because after passing their account on the Day of Judgment and on their arrival into Heaven, by drinking this drink, they clear their hearts from any grief, discomfort and impurity. Then, they can benefit from the other divine blessings, while they are basking in the love of Allah.

In the following verses, the deeds and qualifications of the 'Righteous' and 'servants of Allah' are described. Their eligibility for such unparalleled blessings is reasoned through having five characteristics. It says: " They fulfill (their) vows and fear a Day; the chastisement of which is widespread ".

The terms 'they fulfill (their) vows' and 'fear Allah' (including some later sentences, which are all said infast, at the end of each day, but by only drinking water and their hea the present tense) indicate that this is their ever-existing, routine practice.

As was explained, earlier, regarding the occasion of revelation, the true essence of these verses is targeted at Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Hosain (P.B.U.TH.) , for they fulfilled their vows of fasting for three consecutive days, and did not break their rts were filled with the fear of Allah and the Day of Judgment.

The term /mustatir/ means 'vast', or 'scattered', which refers to the great and various punishments on that Great Day.

When they fulfilled their own vow, they definitely respected and fulfilled what Allah has made obligatory Their fear of the chastisement of the Great Day was due to their deep belief in the Resurrection, and to their intensive responsibility in regard to Allah's command.

They truly believed in the Resurrection and the penalties which are waiting for the wrong-doers. This belief is made manifest by their own sincere actions.

Then, referring to the third worthy deed of the Righteous, it says:

And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive."

Donating food at the time of severe self-need requires great generosity. It was not simply feeding someone, since their action demanded sacrifices at a time when they, themselves, were in the greatest need.

On the other hand, this has a broad implication which includes: the indigent, orphans and captives; and hence, their generosity covers a large variety of 'needy'. The embedded meaning in the Arabic text /'ala hubbihi/ refers to 'the food' and denotes the fact that they donated the food which they craved for. This conforms with the sense of Sura Al-i- 'Imran, No. 3, verse 92 which says: "By no means shall you attain righteousness unless you give freely (benevolently) of that which you love,..."

The meaning of /miskin/ 'indigent', /yatim/ 'orphan' and /asir/ 'captive' are clear, but, among the commentators, there is no agreement as to the exact meaning and the kind of /asir/ 'captive' , which is mentioned in the verse; but on the whole, the word 'captive' refers to one who was taken captive in the wars with atheists or polytheists.

According to the occasion of revelation, a captive had come to the door of Ali's house, when usually a captive would have been put in prison.

As we understand from history, the explanation is that at the time of Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) , there were no prisons at all The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) distributed the captives among the Muslims to guard, however, he told them to be kind to the captives and to take good care of them. At times when those Muslims had problems in providing for their captives, they asked for help from other fellow Muslims. The 'guards' went with the captive or they sent him alone to seek their help. It is known that at that period in history, Muslims had very difficult times. Later, as the Muslims' territory and rule spread and when the number of criminal captives increased, with the spread of government, jails were built and the expenses were paid from the Muslims' treasury.

In any event, we understand from the above verse that one of the best acts is feeding the poor and the needy; not only those of Muslims, but also the poor and the needy from other territories and even pagans are included as a matter of Islamic routine. It is so important that feeding them is considered one of the prominent good deeds of 'the righteous'.

It has been narrated that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) told the believers that they should treat the captives well and fair. When the Muslims heard this; giving priority to captives, they even, at times, donated their own food to them. (1)

The fourth prominent characteristic of the Righteous is considered to be 'purity and sincerity'; it says: "(Saying) : 'We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks.'

They behave, thus, not only in the case of feeding the needy, but what they do is also sincere and for the sake of Allah They desire no reward nor thanks from anyone.

Basically, in Islam, the value of an action is in its sincerity and pure immaculate intention, and hence, activities which have worldly motivations, whether they be hypocritical or for people's approval and appreciation or for lusts or for venal rewards, have no Islamic or moral value. A famous tradition from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) , which attests to this fact, says: " No deed is accepted unless (it is done) with the pure intention for Allah".

The term /wajh/ means literally 'face, countenance' then, the

(1) Kamil-i-Ibn-i-Athir, vol. 2, p. 131.

meaning of /wajh-i-Allah/ is 'The face of Allah', but we know that Allah does not have a bodily face. 'Face' is the symbol of personality or self, then the meaning is 'the essence of Allah' as we read in Sura Baqarah No. 2, verse 272: " ...when you spend not except in search of Allah's countenance...". And also from Sura Kahf, No. 18 verse 28, it says: "And restrain yourself along with those who call on their Lord morning and evening desiring His countenance..."

On the last characteristic of 'The Righteous' it says: "We only fear from our Lord a day, frowningly severe". This statement can be made by their own tongue or by their mute mannerisms. The term 'frowning' is usually used to describe the persons who are distraught , hence it is used for the Day of Judgment, since the Day and its events are so stern and distressful that not only people are frowning, but the Day, itself, is also frowning. The term /qamtarir/ has often been used in the sense of 'being stern and calamitous'.

Here, a question arises: The Righteous act only for the sake of Allah, then why are they afraid of His punishment? Does their divine motive match with the motive of fear of the punishments on the Day of Judgment? Paying attention to one point makes the answer to the question clear.

The Righteous do everything, in any case, for the sake of Allah. If they are afraid of the punishments on the Day of Judgment, it is because they are His punishments and if they love for the Blessings of Heaven, it is because they are His blessings.

This is the same fact that is discussed in Islamic jurisprudence about the intention of a devotional

act which says: devotional acts, for gaining Allah's affinity, do not contradict the desire of reward and the fear of punishment or even asking Allah for worldly gifts, such as the prayer of asking for rain, because all of them relate to Allah; though the high stage of a devotional act is that it is done totally only for the love of Allah, not for the desire of the Blessings in Heaven or for the fear of punishment in Hell.

The verse: "We only fear from our Lord a Day, frowningly severe" attests to the fact that this fear is also like having the fear of Allah.

It is noteworthy that the second and the fifth characteristics are both on the subject of fear, but with a difference, in that, the former only mentions the fear of the Day of Judgment, while in the latter it refers to the fear of Allah on that Day. At one point, 'Day' is described by 'the chastisement of which is widespread' and another time it is characterized as 'frowning and calamitous'. In fact, one shows its vastness and the other refers to its spiritual quality.

Verse No. 11 points to a part of the result of the good deeds and pure intentions of the Righteous. It says: "Therefore, Allah will guard them against the evil of that Day and will grant over them a Light of Beauty and a (blissful) joy."

The term /nadržah/ means 'a special refreshment and happiness resulting from the abundance of blessing and comfort'. Truly, their appearance shows their inner calmness and happiness on that Day. Therefore, if they feared the Day, because of their responsibility in this world, on that Day Allah would make them happy in return.

The term /laqahum/ 'they meet', used in this verse, is very interesting and meaningful. It shows that Allah receives them with His Grace, and places them in the Light of His Mercy and because of this, they are full of joy and happiness.

Feeding the starved is of the greatest good deeds.

Feeding the needy is one of the prominent good deeds of 'the Righteous' and 'the servants of Allah'. This is mentioned not only in the above verses, but it is also emphasized in many other verses of the Qur'an. Hence, it is understood that this good deed is particularly appreciated by Allah.

Nowadays, according to the news broadcasts, every year millions of people die from starvation in some parts of the world, while in some other parts, so much extra food is discarded as garbage. If we pay attention to this, two points will become very clear. First, the absence of morals in today's world, and second, the need for Islamic instruction.

There are many Islamic narrations that seriously refer to this subject, some of which are as follows:

1. A tradition from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) says: "One who feeds three Muslims, will be fed, by Allah, from three lush gardens in the dominion of the heavens.(1)

(1) Usul-i-Kafi, vol. 2, Chapter 'Feeding', Traditions 3 and 6.

2. A narration from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) says: "One who feeds a Muslim believer to his fill, will be rewarded on the Day of Judgment so much so that neither a man nor an angel nor a Prophet knows the amount except Allah, who is Lord for all."(1)

Another narration from the same Imam says: "I prefer to feed a needy believer than only to visit him and I prefer to visit him than to free ten slaves."(2)

Notice that the narrations do not emphasize on feeding only the needy and the starved, but some of them denote that feeding the believers is as important as freeing a slave even though the believer is not in need of the food. This shows that the main goal, besides feeding someone, is gaining the hearts and strengthening friendly relations. However, the opposite case is seen among many people today.

Sometimes two close friends or two relatives go to a hotel and each of them pays his own share, as if paying the expenses of the other is something unheard of, especially if the number of the guests is large.

Some narrations stipulate that feeding the starved, in general, (irrespective of believers or unbelievers) is of the best deeds. For example, a tradition from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) says: "One of the greatest deeds, in the sight of Allah, is to soothe the heartached and to feed the starved. By Him in Whose hand is Mohammad's soul; the Muslim who, being satisfied with food, sleeps at night while his Muslim brother or neighbour is hungry, has not really believed in me (my prophecy) !" (3)

Although the last part of the aforementioned tradition is about feeding the Muslims, the first part covers all the starved and the vastness of the meaning may cover even the animals.

(1) Usul-i-Kafi, vol. 2, Chapter 'Feeding', Traditions 3 and 6.

(2) Usul-i-Kafi, vol. 2, Chapter 'Feeding', Tradition 18.

(3) Bihar-al-Anwar, vol. 74, p. 369.

Sura Insan (Human) No. 76 (verses 12-22)

وَحَرِيرًا جَنَّةً صَبَرُوا بِمَا وَجَرَاهُمْ (12)

رَمَاهِيرًا وَلَا شَمْسًا فِيهَا يَرُونَ لَا الْأَرَانِكِ عَلَى فِيهَا مُتَكِبِينَ (13)

تَذَلِيلًا فَطُوفُهَا وَذَلَّلَتْ ظِلَالُهَا عَلَيْهِمْ وَذَانِيَةً (14)

قَوَارِيرًا كَانَتْ وَأَكْوَابِ فِضَّةٍ مِّن بَآئِنَةٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيُطَافُ (15)

تَقْدِيرًا قَدَّرُوهَا فِضَّةٍ مِّن قَوَارِيرَ (16)

زَنَجِيًّا مَرَاجِبًا كَانَ كَأَسَا فِيهَا وَيُسْقَوْنَ (17)

سُلْسَبِيلًا تُسَمَّى فِيهَا عَيْنًا (18)

مَنْثُورًا لَوْلَا حَسِبْتَهُمْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ إِذَا مُخَلَّدُونَ وَلَدَانٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَطُوفُ (19)

كَبِيرًا وَمُلْكًا نَعِيمًا رَأَيْتَ تَمَّ رَأَيْتَ وَإِذَا (20)

طَهُورًا شَرَابًا رَبُّهُمْ وَسَقَاهُمْ فِضَّةٍ مِّنْ أَسَاوِرَ وَخُلُوعًا وَإِسْتَبْرَقَ خَضِرٌ سِسْئَلٌ تِيَابُ عَلَيْهِمْ (21)

مَشْكُورًا سَعْيِكُمْ وَكَانَ جَزَاءَ لَكُمْ كَانَ هَذَا إِنَّ (22)

12. " And Allah will reward them for their patience, with a garden and clothes of silk (in Heaven) ."

13. " Reclining therein upon raised thrones, they will see (find) there neither the severe (heat of) the sun nor the hither cold (of the moon) ."

14. " And the shades of the (Garden) will come low over them, and the bunches (of fruit) , there, will hang low in humility (being easy to pick) ."

15. " And amongst them will be passed vessels of silver and goblets of crystal."

16. " (Bright as) crystal, made of silver; they will determine the appropriate measure."
17. " And they will be given to drink, there, a cup (of pure drink) mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger) ."
18. " (From) a spring, there, named Salsabeel."
19. " And round about them will (serve) youths of perpetual (freshness) : if you saw them, you would think them scattered pearls."
20. " And when you look, you will see a Bliss and a Realm Magnificent."
21. " Upon them will be Green Garments of fine silk and heavy brocade, and they will be adorned with Bracelets of silver and their Lord will give to them to drink of a Drink Pure and Holy."
22. " Verily this is a reward for you, and your endeavor is accepted and appreciated."

Commentary:

Great Rewards in Heaven

The aforementioned verses have a slight hint of the good and the Righteous and show that they are delivered from the evils and painful chastisements on Doomsday and are covered by Allah light of beauty and blissful joy. Now, the following verses refer to at least fifteen blessings in Heaven.

First, some Heavenly clothes and the settlement of the blessed ones, in Heaven, are spoken about. It says: " And Allah will reward them, for their patience, with a garden and clothes of silk (in Heaven) ."

Yes, Allah sets them in special gardens of Heaven and dresses them in the best clothes due to their constancy and their altruism, such as their loyalty to their vow, fasting and donating their food to the indigent, the orphan and the captive, at the time when they were in need of it and were preparing to break their fast.

Not only in this verse, but also in many other verses throughout the Holy Qur'an, this fact is stipulated: all rewards, in the Hereafter, are (paid) in full for Man's patience and constancy, i.e. patience for obedience, patience for avoiding sins, and patience for standing firm against difficulties and hardships.

Sura Ra'd No 13, verse 24 denotes that angels will receive the blessed ones, in Heaven, in the following manner: "Peace unto you for that you persevered in patience...". And in Sura Mo'minin, No 23, verse 111, it says: "I have rewarded them, this day, for their patience and constancy. They are indeed the ones that have achieved bliss.

It goes on to say: "Reclining therein upon raised thrones, they will see (find) there neither the severe (heat of) the sun nor the bitter cold (of the moon) ."

Usually when people want to have a rest they sit somewhere and recline and that is why the verse says: "Reclining therein upon raised thrones...". Then, to portray the complete comfort in the moderate weather, of Heaven, the end of the verse says: there is "...neither the severe (heat of) the sun nor the bitter cold (of the moon) ".

It does not definitely denote that the 'sun and moon' will not exist there, but, regarding the shade of the trees in the gardens of Heaven, the excessive heat of the sun will not exist.

The term /zamhariri/ is based on /zamhar/ which has the following meanings: 1. 'excessive cold' , 2. 'excessive anger' , 3. 'redness of eyes due to anger'; the first meaning, however, is understood here and there is a narration that says there is a place in Hell where the limbs shatter due to the excessive cold. (1)

The term /ara'ik/ 'thrones' is the plural form of /arikah/ 'throne' and originally means: 'a couch for the bride in the bride-chamber', but, here it means 'a seat covered with a canopy and highly decorated'.

Enumerating the blessings of Heaven, the next verse says: "And the shade of the (Garden) will come low over them, and the bunches (of fruit) , there, will hang low in humility (being easy to pick) " .. In the Garden, there will be no hindrance, not a thorn to pierce the fingers, nor a need to lift a finger to pick the fruit.

It is necessary to note, again, that the life in that world is very different from the life in this world. The blessings mentioned in these verses, as well as other verses in the Holy Qur'an, are only some slight, albeit meaningful, hints to the great benefits in Heaven; and according to some narrations, there are blessings there that no eyes have ever seen, no ears have ever heard, and no minds have ever considered.

Ibn-Abbas says that "The blessings the Lord has mentioned, in the Holy Qur'an, are those which their names we are only acquainted with." For instance, He mentions a 'pure drink mixed with Zanjabil (ginger) ' and 'ginger 'is an aromatic root which Arabs like for its smell.(2)

The next verse refers to the feast in Heaven, the furnishings and those who will entertain in those surroundings. It says: "And amongst them will be passed vessels of silver and goblets of crystal".

The vessels are "(Bright as) crystal, made of silver; they will determine the appropriate measure". The mentioned vessels will be full of

(1) Durr-al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 300.

(2) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 411.

various Heavenly foods and the crystal goblets will be full of pleasant aromatic drinks. The quantity will be as much as they wish and according to their taste and desires and will be served by Heavenly youths.

The term /aniyah/ is the plural form of /ana/, which means 'dishes of any kind', and the term /akwab/ is the plural form of /kub/ which means 'a water container without a handle,' which is sometimes called 'goblet'. The term /qawarir/ is the plural form of /qaruah/ which means 'containers made of crystal or glass'.

It seems strange that the vessels should be (bright as) crystal , but they are made of silver. In this world no one can find such a thing. Here, in this world, the crystal vessels are made of quartz. The stone is melted and then made into a crystal-type container. The Creator, Who makes it possible for us to change hard, dark stone into a clear, transparent glass, is capable of achieving the same'. results, for the next world, with a metal such as silver.

So, from this description we understand that the vessels, and the containers in Heaven, are both as bright as crystal and as beautiful and splendid as silver, so much so that the liquids contained therein can be clearly seen.

There is a tradition from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) which says: "Man, in Heaven, can see through silver just as he can see through glass and crystal in this world." (1)

We also know that, today, scientists have found special rays (such as X-ray) which pass through solid matter and show the inner properties, similar to the way we can see through glass or crystal. Continuing, it says: "And they will be given to drink there, a cup (of pure, drink) mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger) ".

Many commentators have said that Arabs were pleased with drinking wine mixed with ginger, because it made the wine tastier. Now, the Holy Qur'an speaks about 'a cup (of pure drink) ' which is mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger) , but it is obvious that this mixed drink is completely different

from that of wine. In other words, the difference between

(1) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 410.

these two kinds of drink is as far as the distance between this world and the next world.

It seems that Arabs, of the past, used to drink two kinds of wine in two forms: One of them was warm and stimulating, which was mixed with ginger; and the other one was cool and narcotic, which was mixed with camphor.

Since the other world's facts cannot be stated in worldly language, we are compelled to use our limited human vocabulary for explaining and trying to understand the sublime meanings to the wonderful facts found in the Holy Qur'an.

Commentators have given many different definitions for 'Zanjabeel' (ginger) , but most of them have said that it means: a tropical plant grown for its aromatic root used for flavoring food and drink.

These Heavenly cups of drink are filled "(From) a spring, there, named Salsabeel" and according to Arabic terminology, Salsabeel is a very enjoyable drink which flows easily into the mouth and down the throat; being quite refreshing.

To describe the happy feast, held in Heaven, the next verse speaks about those who entertain, there, and it says: "And round about them will (serve) youths of perpetual freshness) ; if you saw them you would think them scattered pearls".

The youths, themselves, their youthfulness, freshness, vigour, mirth and beauty are immortal, and, therefore, their entertainment would be eternal as well. This idea is understood from the terms /muxalladun/ 'of perpetual' and /yatuf-u-'alayhim/ 'round about them will serve'.

The term 'scattered pearls' shows both the attractive beauty and brightness of the youths, as well as their presence, everywhere, at the Divine feast. It, also, implies that the blessings in the New World cannot be explained exactly.

Then, the next verse is expressed very meaningfully: 'And when you look you will see a Bliss and a Realm Magnificent".

There are many commentaries on the word /na'im/ 'Bliss' and the terms /mul-kan kabi-ra/ 'Realm Magnificent'.

Among them are the following:

1. A narration from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) cites: "The verse means that it is an Estate (or Realm) that neither fades nor vanishes." (1)

2. The blessings in Heaven are so plentiful and various that no one can explain them.

3. A 'Realm Magnificent' is a place in Heaven where the angels enter by the permission of the Blessed, and greet them upon their arrival.

4. Whatever the Blessed wish for, there, they obtain.

5. The lowest Blessed (from the point of rank) , in Heaven, has so large a domain that when he (she) looks he (she) can see a thousand years' distance.

6. A permanent immortal 'Realm' where the wishes are completely fulfilled.

The word /na'im/ 'Bliss' and the terms /mul-kan kabi-ra/ 'Realm Magnificent', referring to the vast gardens in Heaven, have such vast meanings that they can cover all the above commentaries.

To this end, some Heavenly blessings were pointed out such as: provinces, thrones, shades, fruits, drinks, vessels and those who entertain the Blessed, in Heaven. Then, attention is paid to some Heavenly ornaments of those who had just passed the great Event of Judgment and says: " Upon them will be Green Garments of fine silk and heavy brocade,..."

The term /sundus/ 'garment' means 'a thin silk cloth' while /istabraq/ 'brocade' means 'a thick silk cloth'. Some commentators say the latter is derived from the Persian term /setabr/ 'thick', but some others believe it is derived from the Arabic term /barq/ 'shining'. The verse continues: "...and they will be adorned with bracelets of silver..."

The silver, there, is so bright that it glitters like crystal and it is more beautiful than rubies and pearls.

The term /asawir/ is the plural form /aswarah/ 'bracelet' and is originally derived from /dastvar/ 'a bracelet', a Persian word, with some phonetical changes in Arabic, of course.

(1) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 411.

'Green' is the color of the Garments mentioned in the verse, because this color is the most refreshing to the eye; like the leaves on the trees, and fits in well with the 'Garden'. There are

several kinds of green color, of course, each of which has its own elegance.

In some other verses of the Holy Qur'an, we see that the Blessed are decorated with golden bracelets, as for instance; in Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 31, it says: "...they will be adorned therein with bracelets of gold,...." This does not contrast with the current verse in this Sura, because people may decorate themselves with a variety of ornaments.

The question may arise, "Aren't silver and gold bracelets used by women as ornaments, then, why are they both mentioned for all the Blessed, i.e. men and women?"

The answer is that among many groups of people, it is common for both men and women to use gold and silver for ornamentation, but the kind of bracelet is different (though in Islam using gold as an ornament, by men, is forbidden in this world) .

In Sura Zukhruf No.43, verse 53, it says: " Then why are not gold bracelets bestowed on him?..." and it is understood that golden bracelets, used by men, had been a sign of dignity among ancient Egyptian people.

Moreover, as we have frequently said, the facts of the other world cannot be described, exactly, with our very insufficient, limited human vocabulary.

And, finally, at the end of the verse, as to the best and greatest Heavenly Blessing of these kinds, it remarks: "...and their Lord will give to them to drink of a Drink Pure and Holy".(1)

In the preceding verses, among the blessings mentioned were Drinks and Cups; which were filled from the fountain of 'Salsabeel' and quenched the thirst of the Blessed. But, there is a considerable 'difference between those drinks and what is expressed in this verse.

On the one hand, the 'ones who serve' are "youths of perpetual (freshness) "; while, here, the 'one who serves' is Allah, Himself (and what a wonderful expression!) The word 'Lord' is especially stressed.

(1) Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol.5, p. 485. tradition 6.

The Lord Who has constantly cherished man and Who is his owner and trainer; Who has helped him to advance in the course of development until he has reached the last stage. And now, it is time to show the culmination of His Lordship and make the Righteous quenched and cheerful with the cup of Pure Drink, by His own mighty hand.

On the other hand, the word /tahir/ means something which is both pure and purifying. Thus, the

Drink purifies both man's body and soul from any taint and impurity.

It gives him such spirituality, brightness, and merriment that it is indescribable with our limited human vocabulary.

It is quoted from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) that, "(This drink) purifies man's heart and soul from everything except Allah".

It removes any ignorance, unveils any curtain over the truth and makes man worthy of an eternal presence in close proximity to Allah. The pleasure of this pure Drink exceeds any other blessing and is superior to any other gift.

While the filthy wine of this world obliterates Man's reason and takes him far away from Allah the pure Drink, which is given by the hand of 'the ones who serve', alienates him from everything, but Allah and makes him immersed in His Beauty and Glory.

In short, the favor which is included in this verse and in this blessing, is above anything else.

It is concluded from one of the traditions quoted from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) that the fountain of Pure Drink is at the threshold of Paradise then, with a sip of this Pure Drink, Allah purifies their hearts from envy (and any other vices) . Thus, the verse states: "...and their Lord will give to them to drink of a Drink Pure and Holy".

It is worth considering that the word /tahir/ 'pure' has been mentioned for only two items in the Holy Qur'an.

The first is about the 'rain' (Sura Furqan, No 45, verse 25) which purifies and revives everything. And, the second is in the current verse about the special Divine Drink, which is also purifying and reviving.

In the last verse, of this part, the last point on this subject is presented. It states that these great blessings and unique gifts are a recompense for your deeds; and your efforts, struggles and diligence are accepted and thanked. ("Verily this is a reward for you, and your endeavor is accepted and appreciated.")

Never should one think that these gifts and great rewards are unduly given. Indeed, all these are a recompense for Man's endeavors and deeds; and they are a reward for man's diligence, self-perfection and abandonment of pleasure in sin.

This point also mentions a particular pleasure that Allah Himself, or His angels address to man and tell him: "Verily this is a reward for you, and your endeavor is accepted and appreciated." And perhaps according to some commentators, this blessing, where Allah thanks Man, is superior to all other blessings.

The verb /kana/ 'was', which is in the past tense, perhaps refers to this point: that these blessings have been prepared for you (the Righteous) in advance. As when one pays careful attention to detail and prepares everything, in advance, for his guest.

Sura Insan (Human) No. 76 (verses 23-26)

تَنْزِيلًا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَيْكَ نَزَّلْنَا نَحْنُ إِنَّا (23)

كُفُورًا أَوْ آتِمًا مِنْهُمْ تُطِيعُ وَلَا رَبِّكَ لِحُكْمٍ فَاصْبِرْ (24)

وَأَصْبِيلاً بُكْرَةً رَبِّكَ اسْمَ وَادْكُرْ (25)

طَوِيلًا لَيْلًا وَسَبَّحَهُ لَهُ فَاسْجُدْ اللَّيْلِ وَمِنْ (26)

23. "Surely We, Ourselves, have revealed the Holy Qur'an to you, revealing (it) in stages."

24. "Therefore be patient and constant to the command of your Lord, and obey not from among them a guilty or an ungrateful one."

25. "And remember the name of your Lord morning and evening,"

26. And during the night prostrate thyself to Him; and glorify Him (a) long (part of the) night.

Commentary:

Five Great Instructions for the Fulfillment of Allah's Command

The aforementioned verses of the Sura are about the creation of Man and then about his rebirth

at the time of Resurrection Now, the verses are referring to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) , directly, with some emphatical instruction about the guidance of Man and his patience and constancy. In fact, these verses show the way of how to approach the incomparable immense blessings. This task is not possible except through taking hold of the Qur'an, following the Prophet's leadership and being inspired by his instructions.

At first it says: " Surely We, Ourselves, have revealed the Qur'an to you, revealing (it) in stages."

Some commentators have said that the term /tanzila/ 'revealing in stages', which has appeared as a direct object in this verse, denotes the gradual descent of the Holy Qur'an, whose effect on man's training is clear. Some others believe that it refers to the high position of this Heavenly book and emphasizes the fact that this book was sent down by Allah, in spite of those who accused the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) of being a necromancer, sorcerer, magician and calumniator of Allah.

Then, there are five important instructions given to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) The first is for patience and constancy, and says:

" Therefore be patient and constant to the command of your Lord,..."

Don't be afraid of the difficulties and the problems that occur in your way, the great number of your enemies or their obstinacy. Continue on your way and go forward.

It is noteworthy that, with regard to /f/ in the Arabic term /fasbir/ 'therefore be patient and constant', the instruction for patience is secondary to the revelation of the Qur'an by Allah. That is: since Allah is your supporter then do stay firmly on the way. The term /rabb/ 'Lord, Cherisher' points to the same idea.

And in the second instruction the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is warned not to listen to or obey the unjust. It says: "...and obey not from among them a guilty or an ungrateful one.

In fact, the second instruction is an emphasis on the first instruction, because numerous enemies tried, in different ways, to make the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) adapt to their way of thinking. It is said that 'Atabat-ibn-i-Rabi'ah' and 'walid-ibn-i-Muqayyarah' told the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) to leave his prophecy and they would give him as much wealth and the most beautiful ladies to marry as would satisfy him and other suggestions like this, hut the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) as a true, great leader, was instructed to be patient and constant against the evil temptations or the threats. which were made against him. He should not yield to either the allurements or the threats.

It is true hit the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) never yielded, and this is a sign for the greatness of his faith; an

eternal model for other leaders of the Way.

Although some commentators have said that the term 'sinner' refers to 'Atabat-ibn- i-Rabi'ah' and the term 'ungrateful' refers to 'Walid-ibn-i-Muqayyarah' or 'Abu Jahl; each of whom were among the pagan Arabs, it is clear that the terms have a vast meaning, which encompasses any sinner and unbeliever; but these three were the most vivid evidences of the words.

It is also noteworthy that 'sinner' has a general meaning which includes the ungrateful, too, then 'ungrateful' is a subdivision of 'sinner'.

However, since being patient and constant with many great difficulties is not easy to do and going on such a road needs two certain provisions, so, it says in the next verse: "And remember the name of your Lord morning and evening."

"And during the night prostrate thyself to Him; and glorify Him (a) long (part of the) night".

Under the light of 'remembering the Name of your Lord', and with 'prostration and glorification' you can build the necessary spiritual strength and sufficient support for overcoming the difficulties along the way.

The term /bukrah/ 'beginning of the day' is opposite to the term /asil/ 'evening, sunset', which is followed by praying at night and are mentioned in these two verses to show the necessity of continuous remembrance of Allah both day and night.

Some commentators have applied them to the five daily prayers; morning (Fajr) , noon (Zohr) , afternoon ('Asr) , sunset (Maqrib) and evening ('Isha) prayers, or in addition to the optional prayers after midnight. At any rate, it seems that these prayers are examples for this continuous remembrance of the Lord and glorification and prostration to Him.

The last two terms in the verse, /Laylan tawila/, refer to the glorification of Allah for a long part of the night. It has been narrated that Imam Ali ibn-Musa-ar-Reza (p.b.u.h.) was asked what 'glorify' meant and he answered that it meant 'optional night prayer'.(1)

It is probable !hat the above commentary is one of the clear evidences of 'glorification' because the optional night prayer is very effective in strengthening ones' faith and self-will for obeying Allah, and refining spirits.

It is worthy to note, here, that though the five instructions are addressed to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) , they are, in fact, models for all those who have a role in spiritual and humane guidance of societies.

They should know that, after being sure of their strong belief in their goal and prophetic mission, it is necessary for them to be patient and constant and not to be afraid of mass difficulties in their way; since, guiding populations has always been with great difficulties specially when faced with some unyielding ignorant enemies. And no prophetic mission of theirs will survive unless the leaders are patient.

In the next stage, they must strongly stand against evil temptations of the sinners and the ungrateful; those who try to lead astray leaders with all kinds of deceit and hypocrisy in order to make their prophetic mission fruitless. They should neither be deceived by allurements nor be afraid of threats.

In any case, every morning and evening, they should prostrate themselves before Him to obtain spiritual power, strong will and firm decision, especially when they get help in their supplications and night prayers; victory will surely be their own.

And, if it happens that they have a failure or misfortune at some point, along the way, it is possible to compensate for this under the light of these principles. The Prophet's life and his prophetic mission, throughout his career of inviting people to Islam, are good examples for those who wish to follow the straight path.

(1) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 413.

Sura Insan (Human) No. 76 (verses 27-31)

تَقْبِلًا يَوْمًا وَرَاءَهُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ الْعَاجِلَةَ يُجِيبُونَ هَوْلَاءَ إِنَّ (27)

تَبْدِيلًا أَمْثَالَهُمْ بَدَّلْنَا شَيْنًا وَإِذَا أَسْرَهُمْ وَشَدَدْنَا خَلْقَنَا هُمْ نَحْنُ (28)

سَبِيلًا رَبِّهِ إِلَى اتَّخَذَ شَاءَ فَمَنْ تَذَكَّرَ هَذِهِ إِنَّ (29)

حَكِيمًا عَلِيمًا كَانَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَشَاءُ أَنْ إِلَّا تَتَسَاوُونَ وَمَا (30)

أَلِيمًا عَذَابًا لَهُمْ أَعَدَّ وَالظَّالِمِينَ رَحْمَتِهِ فِي يَشَاءُ مَنْ يُدْخِلُ (31)

27. " They love the fleeting life and put away behind them a Day (that will be) hard and grievous."

28. " It is We who created them and strengthened their joints and when We will We can substitute the like of them (in their place) by a complete change".

29. " Surely this is an admonishment, that whosoever will, (taking this straight way) may take a path unto his Lord".

30. " Yet you will not, unless Allah Wills; surely Allah is All-knowing, All-wise".

31. " He will admit to His Mercy whom He will, but (as for the) evildoers, He has prepared a painful penalty."

Commentary:

This is an admonition; but it is you who choose the way

In the aforementioned verses, the Prophet was admonished and told that he should never be affected by offenders and pagans.

Historical evidences exist which confirm that there were some people who wanted to have an effect on Prophet's thoughts by alluring him to change his decision. They made offers of wealth, high social rank and beautiful women.

The following verse indicates the above and says: "They love the fleeting life and put away behind them a Day (that will be) hard and grievous.

The scope of their thought is open only to eating, sleeping and sensuality. These bodily enjoyments are their ideal. They weigh the Prophet's great soul with the same criterion. They are some blind-hearted people who are not aware of their future hard day. And what a hard day it will be! Hard from the point of punishment; hard from the point of reckoning, and hard from the point of the length of time of being dishonored and bearing the responsibility of spreading scandals for their vices.

In fact, they will have the day in front of them but, here, using the term /wara ahum/ 'behind them' instead of 'in front of them' is to denote carelessness, as if they put away the day behind them. But, some interpreters have said that the Arabic word /wara/ has the meaning of 'behind' in some texts and of 'forward' in some others.' (1)

In the next verse they are warned not to be proud of their strength, because it is Allah who gave it, and other faculties, to them so whenever He Wills He can take these back at once. Look again at the sentiments of the verse: " It is We Who created them and strengthened their joints and when We Will, We can substitute the like of them (in their place) by a complete change".

The term /asr/, in Arabic etymology, means: 'to fasten with a chain' and that is why 'captives' are called 'asir' in Arabic. In the old days, captives were fastened with chains. But, here in this verse, 'asr' means 'to firm the joints' of Man which strengthens him to move about and enables him to carry out his activities, efficiently.

Certainly, the Qur'an has touched on a most fascinating point: 'firming the different joints of Man' , which consists of small and large nerves; connecting tissues that hind muscles to each other; rope-like

(1) If the term /wara/ is added to the subject it means 'behind' and if is added to the object it means 'forward, front': (Ruh-al-Bayan, vol. 8, P. 439)

ligaments and the various muscles themselves.

Small and large pieces of bone, clothed in flesh, comprise the body and are so uniquely tied together that it totally forms a complete unit (Man) , which is able to do almost anything. On the whole, the statement is about man's strength.

This verse also makes it clear that Allah is self-sufficient (free from want) and is not in need of their faith and their obedience but, it is only to make them understand. If the verse insists on their faith, it is a grace from Allah's favor to them.

There is a similar sense in Sura An'am, No.6, verses 133, which says: 'And they Lord is self-sufficient', full of Mercy. if it were His Will, He could destroy you and in your place appoint whom He will as your successors....'

The next verse covers the general idea which the Sura conveys and, on the whole, it is a complete program for the happiness of Man: "Surely this is an admonishment, that whosoever will, (taking this straight way) may take a path unto his Lord".

It is for Us to show you the Way. There is no compulsion on you to choose it. It is you, using your wisdom, that must distinguish between right and wrong and of your own free-will decide which way to follow.

In fact, this is an emphasis on what was stated at the beginning of the Sura: "Surely We guided...", ie. 'We showed him the Way; whether he be grateful (and assumes it) or ungrateful'.

Since some feeble-minded persons may think of the verse as meaning absolute free-will for the servants, the next verse negates their claim by adding: "Yet you will not unless Allah Wills; surely Allah is All-knowing, All-wise". This is the confirmation of the principle of the medium status between fatalism and the idea of chaotic free-will.

On the one hand, it remarks that 'Allah shows the way, and choosing it is up to you'. On the other hand, there is another fact added to it that "Yet you will not unless Allah Wills"; that is, you are not completely independent, but your power and your free-will depends on Allah's Will. It is He who has given them to you and whenever He Wills, He can take them back.

Thus, there is neither an absolute free-will nor an absolute compulsion, but it is a fine, subtle line between them. In other words, there is a kind of freedom which depends on Allah's Will; that at any moment He can take it back, if He Wills. In such a way, the servants are able to fulfill their responsibility, which is the secret of their improvement, while at the same time, they do not feel any independence or self-sufficiency.

In brief, the reason for this idea is so that the servants will not feel independent divine providence, but are in need of His guidance and support. When they are making a decision to do something, they call on his support.

Some of the commentators who believe in fatalism have taken this verse as an evidence of their doctrine. Among them is Fakhr-i-Razi who said: "Take note that this verse is one of the verses in which the waves of fatalism surge." (1)

Yes, if we separate this verse from the former ones, this statement can be right, but paying attention to the fact that in one verse the possibility of the influence of Man's 'free-will' is pointed out, and in another one the recognition of Allah's Will is mentioned, the same 'variety of conditions' clearly approves these conditions, (a place between them; a place between two extreme ends) .

It is ironic that those who believe in free-will' have seriously taken to heart this verse, to denote absolute free-will, and those who believe in fatalism have taken stock in the next verse, which addresses only fatalism. Each of these two groups tries to explain away its own idea with that single verse that it has chosen, but, when a correct understanding of a statement in Qur'an (as in any other text) is read, it is meant to be read in relationship to the other statements around it, without any prejudice.

The sentence: "Surely Allah is All-knowing, All-wise" at the end of the verse, may be a point with the same understanding. Allah's knowledge and wisdom is necessary for the servants' freedom on their way to success, otherwise there must be a compulsory success which cannot be a lasting one. Furthermore, His knowledge and wisdom does not compel some individuals to do only good deeds and some others to

(1) Tafsir-Fakhr-i-Razi vol. 30, p.262

do evil, so that He would reward the former group and punish the latter one.

Finally, in the last verse, of this Sura, a short and meaningful statement refers to the happy end of the righteous and dreadful destiny of the evildoers. It says: "He will admit to His Mercy whom He will, but as for the evildoers He has prepared, for them, a painful Penalty".

It is worth noting that at the beginning of the verse it is said: "He will admit to His Mercy whom He will", but at the end of the verse it concentrates on the painful penalty for the evildoers. This shows that His Will for distributing pain, allows the individual's Will for seeking to commit sin and also the contrary is true: His Will for bestowing blessings, follows the individual's Will for perfecting their faith in Allah and in doing good deeds. This is the very thing that is expected from Allah.

Though these clear evidences are available, there are some persons, such as Fakhr-i-Razi who have taken the first part of the verse as an evidence for fatalism, and in so doing they have neglected the last part of the verse, which addresses free-will and the deeds of the evildoers.

Supplication:

"O Lord! Admit us to your mercy, and keep us away from the painful penalty prepared for the evildoers".

"O Lord! You showed us the way and we will follow. Please help us to stay firm and constant along Your way".

"O Lord! We may not be of the righteous, but we love them. Please count us among them".

The End of Sura Insan (Human)

Sura Mursalat (Those Sent Forth) No.77 (50 Verses)

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

Contents of the Sura:

This Sura belongs to the early Meccan period and its name, Mursalat is taken from the first verse. After making some oaths, the text refers to the horrors of the Hereafter for those who reject the Truth. The refrain, Ah woe, that Day to the Rejecters of Truth is repeated ten times in the Sura and every time follows a new topic.

In addition to the oaths, the Sura gives some information about the fervent Hereafter and its grievous events, and then repeats the same refrain: Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

In the second stage, we learn about the woeful story of the sinners of past generations.

In the third stage, it lets us know a little about the creation's specialties.

In the fourth stage, we are informed of some divine Blessings on the Earth.

In the fifth stage, there are some messages in which the rejecters are warned of their painful penalty.

In every stage there is also a hint to an enlightening point and then the refrain follows. Sometimes, the blessings of just men are mentioned to show that both rewards and penalties are found, but the former is used for justification and the latter is for warning.

The refrain, in this Sura, has an association with the refrain in sura Rahman, No. 55, but with the difference that: Sura Rahman speaks about the Blessings, but Sura Mursalat describes the rejecters' punishments.

The Virtue of Studying this Sura:

It is narrated from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) that: One who studies Sura Mursalat will be registered as a non-pagan.(1)

Another narration from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) cites that: if one studies this Sura, Allah makes him

familiar to Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) ". (2)

This reward is certainly for a person who studies it, thinks it over and acts accordingly. So, we see by a narration that some of the Prophet's close friends told him: "Oh Mohammad, how soon you have grown old!" He answered: "Hud, Vaqi'ah, Mursalat, and Naba brought old age upon me. (3)

It is worth considering that in all these Suras the circumstances of the Hereafter and the horrors of the Resurrection Day and Great Judgment are illustrated; and are the very things that affected the Prophet's (p.b.u.h.) holy soul.

Obviously, reading without thinking and acting cannot be very fruitful.

(1) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10 p.414.

(2) Ibid

(3) Khisal-i-Saduq, Chapter 4 Tradition 10.

Sura Mursalat (Those Sent Forth) No.77 (Verses 1-15)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

عُرْفًا وَالْمُرْسَلَاتِ (1)

عَصْفًا فَأَلْعَاصِفَاتِ (2)

نَشْرًا وَالنَّائِبَاتِ (3)

فَرْقًا فَأَلْفَارِقَاتِ (4)

ذِكْرًا فَأَلْمُتَقَاتِ (5)

نُذْرًا أَوْ عُدْرًا (6)

لَوَاقِعُ نُوَعْدُونَ إِنَّمَا (7)

طُمِسَتْ النُّجُومُ فَإِذَا (8)

فُرِجَتْ السَّمَاءُ وَإِذَا (9)

نُسِفَتْ الْجِبَالُ وَإِذَا (10)

أُفَّتَتْ الرُّسُلُ وَإِذَا (11)

أُجِّلَتْ يَوْمَ لِأَيِّ (12)

الْفَصْلِ لِيَوْمِ (13)

الْفَصْلِ يَوْمَ مَا أَدْرَاكَ وَمَا (14)

لِلْمُكذِّبِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَيْلٌ (15)

In The Name of Allah The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. By those (Angels) (winds) sent forth one after another,
2. And those who move as a hurricane;
3. By those who scatter far and wide,
4. And those who separate (one from another) ;
- 5 And by those who reveal the (Divine) Reminder,
6. To justify or to warn;
7. Surely that which you are promised !or the Resurrection) will befall.
8. Then when the stars are extinguished;
9. And when the heaven is cleft asunder;
10. And when the mountains are carried away;

11. And when the prophets are called unto their time appointed (for witness) ;
12. For what Day is this (portent) deferred?
13. For the Day of Sorting out (right from wrong) .
14. What do you know about the Day of Sorting out?.
15. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth?.

Commentary:

Allah's Promises Surely Befall! Woe to the Rejecters of Truth!

At the beginning of this Sura, there are five oaths in five verses about which many comments have been made and they are:

By those (Angels) (winds) sent forth one after another,

And those who move as a hurricane;

And By those who scatter far and wide,

And those who separate (one from another) ;

And By those (the prophets) who reveal the (Divine) Reminder,

To justify or to warn;

Now, let us see what these mysterious oaths, which announce some great events, mean. Here are three known ideas:

1. All five parts mean winds and hurricanes, which have an effective role in nature. If so, the verses mean:

By the winds sent forth one after another,

By the violent hurricanes which move;

By those which scatter clouds and bring down, to Earth, the ively droplets of rain through the clouds,

By those which scatter clouds after falling rain;

By the very winds which remind men of Allah,

(Some others have said that the winds are of tormenting winds. This idea is opposite to the above, but it is also a reminder.)

2. If all the oaths are sworn to Angels, then, the verses would mean:

By the Angels sent forth (to the prophets) one after another, (or, the Angels sent forth with some definite known plans) ,

And by those who move, as a hurricane, to carry out their mission,

By those who deliver the heavenly verses and scatter them,

And those who, by this action, separate purity from evil;

And those who give Allah's Messages and instructions to prophets,

3. The first and the second oaths are about winds and hurricanes, but the third, the fourth and the fifth ones are about Angels and their mission: i.e. distributing the verses, sorting out the right from the wrong and revealing Alla's instructions to prophets for justice and warning.

The first factor, which caused the third idea to form and separated these verses into two groups, is the conjunction 'and' in two of the verses, and another form of relative juncture; the Arabic letter 'ف' (F) which occurs in the rest.

The second factor is the important sense that verse seven consists of. All the oaths are for the subject matter of this verse, that is, the reality of the Resurrection and the Hereafter.

We know that at the beginning of the Resurrection there will be many great happenings that will change the world. There will be violent storms, earthquakes, and some other shaking events on the one hand, and on the other hand, formation of the Great Judgment, where Angels divide the individuals' records, and separate the believers from Unbelievers, communicating Allah's decree

to them.

If the above five verses are stated according to this idea, they are suited to what they are sworn to, and, from this point of view, the last idea is superior to the first two.

The last word in verse five, /zikr/; 'Reminder', means either the knowledge bestowed upon the prophets, or the verses revealed to them. And we know that in the verses of Qur'an the word 'Qur'an', itself, means Reminder; as we see in Sura Al-Hijr, No. 15. verse 6, "And they say: O thou to whom the Reminder is revealed! Thou art indeed a mad man!".

Gabriel, who revealed the Message to the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) , was only one angel, but mulqiyat 'angels' is in a plural form. Since, according to some narrations, sometimes large groups of angels accompanied Gabriel to bring the verses; as in Sura 'Aabas, No.80, verse 15 which denotes that verses are revealed to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) "by the hands of Angels".

What are these oaths for? The next verse uncovers the secret:

"Surely that which you are promised (for) the Resurrection) will befall."

There is no doubt that resurrection and bringing man to life again, recompense and punishment, reckoning and retribution (judgment) are right and proper.

This verse demands that all of Allah's promises are sure irrespective of the promises to good-doers and evildoers in this world and in the Hereafter.

There is nothing mentioned about the Resurrection in this verse, but in the former verses there are some hints to Resurrection, which confirm that it exists. For example, giving life to the dead lands by sending down rain, which is an illustrative incident of Resurrection; revealing Allah's instructions to the prophets; and appointing Messengers, all of which would be meaningless without the Hereafter. Then, the promised Resurrection is bound to come.

Similar to that is Sura Zariyat, No 51, verse 22-23: "And in heaven is your sustenance,..." and "Then, by the Lord of heaven and earth, this is the very Truth..."

The oath to the Lord rabb the Owner, the Cherisher' denotes that our sustenance is seriously true, and it is the Lord's Wisdom which demands that sustenance be provided to the creatures.

Through the following three verses, the signs of that Day are pointed out: "Then when the stars are extinguished;"

And when the sky is cleft asunder;"

"And when the mountains are carried away;"

The word /tamasat/ is derived from /tams/ which means 'to efface' or 'to obliterate (to destroy all trace of) ', may refer to the extinction of the stars or their dissolution, but the first rendition is more fitting. A similar meaning is found in Sura Takwir, No. 81, verse 2: "And when the stars darken;"

The word /nasafat/ is derived from /nasf/ which originally means 'to winnow as chaff the act of winnowing', but here, it means: 'to reduce the mountains to powder and scatter them abroad'.

In general, from many verses of the Holy Qur'an it is understood that, at last, this physical world will end with some series of extremely horrible events, and its regularity will be terribly destroyed. Then the spiritual world will be substituted by a new order.

The events are so horrible and amazing that no single word or expression can describe them. Are the mountains which are reduced to powder and scattered abroad, and like events, describable?

Some commentators have said that, in comparison with these events, the greatest earthquakes Man has ever seen are like tiny firecrackers, which little boys explode for fun, and liken these horrifying events with the greatest atomic bombs.

At any rate, these meanings, in the Holy Qur'an, indicate the great difference between the physical world and the spiritual world

Then, in the following verse, one of the occurrences at the gathering place, on the Day of Judgment, is defined:

"And when the prophets are called unto their time appointed (for witness) "

The theme of this verse and that of Sura A'raf, No.7, verse 6 are similar: "Then shall We question those to whom Our Message was sent and those by whom We sent it."

And then it adds: "For what Day is this (portent) deferred?"

For the Day of Sorting out (right from wrong) .

This question, and its answer, shows the greatness of that Day, and what a clear and meaningful answer this is!: For the Day of Sorting out. It is the Day of sorting out right from wrong, believers

from unbelievers, good-doers from evildoers, and the Day of Judgment for all.

And then: What do you know about the Day of Sorting out?

What are we looking for when the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) , having such extensive and broad knowledge and keen insight; by which he was able to discover the secrets of that mysterious world, could not deeply appreciate all the dimensions of that Day?

As it was repeatedly mentioned before, it is impossible for us, prisoners in this world of a cage, to understand all the great secrets of the Hereafter; we may only see its silhouette, but we believe in it.

Then, the warning: Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

The term /wayl/ 'woe' is interpreted as 'punishment with destruction, any punishment, or, a site in Hell full of torment'. This word is usually said to anyone or anything for whom or that which falls into misfortune and on whom one does not wish Allah mercy to descend and, here, it is used for the painful fate of the rejecters on that Day.

'The rejecters of Truth' are those who do not believe in the Hereafter. And we know that those who reject the Day of Judgment and the Day of Reckoning easily commit any sin or corruption. But a firm belief in the reality of that Day demands virtue and responsibility in human beings.

Contents of the Oaths:

In the above verses, it swears to the winds and hurricanes. This is because they have an important structural role in nature: they move the clouds and take them over dead lands, pouring down rain, and then scattering them.

Winds scatter seeds far and wide, here and there, and produce forests. They fertilize many of the plants and flowers. They change the weather, hot and cold, or moderate it. They clear the air of epidemics: they take the fresh air from green fields and bring it into cities to substitute its polluted one. They cause the seas to undulate and oxygenate the water, which is essential to the developing processes of living creatures in the seas. Surely, winds and breezes are beneficial to man in the world.

Some other verses of the above group swear to angels by which Allah's Messages and revelations, that cherish virtue and humanity, were gradually conveyed to the prophets' hearts like the winds that come gently as harbingers with blessings of rain and fertility. Winds are in the physical world while angels are in the spiritual world. Then Allah's oaths are to both the physical cherishers and

the spiritual ones.

It is interesting to note that all the oaths are for the belief that His promise of mercy and justice in the Hereafter, 'the Day of Sorting out', is indeed true.

Sura Mursalat (Those Sent Forth) No.77 (Verses 16-28)

الأُولَئِكَ نُهِّلِكِ أَلَمَ (16)

الْآخِرِينَ نُنَبِّئُهُمْ ثُمَّ (17)

بِالْمُجْرِمِينَ نَفْعَلْ كَذَلِكَ (18)

لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَيْلٌ (19)

مَهِينٍ مَاءٍ مِّنْ نَّحْلُقُكُمْ أَلَمَ (20)

مَكِينٍ قَرَارٍ فِي فَجَعَلْنَاهُ (21)

مَعْلُومٍ قَدْرِ إِلَى (22)

الْقَادِرُونَ فَنِعْمَ فَفَقَدَرْنَا (23)

لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَيْلٌ (24)

كِفَاتًا الْأَرْضِ نَجْعَلِ أَلَمَ (25)

أَمْوَاتًا وَأَحْيَاءَ (26)

فُرَاتًا مَاءً وَأَسْفَيْنَاكُمْ شَامِخَاتٍ رَّوَاسِي فِيهَا وَجَعَلْنَا (27)

لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَيْلٌ (28)

16. "Did We not destroy the men of old ?

17. Then shall We make following (generations) follow them.

18. Thus do We ever deal with men of sin.

19. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

20. Did We not create you from a base fluid?

21. The which We placed in a safe abode; (firmly fixed) .

22. For a period (of gestation) determined?

23. For We determine; and We are the best to determine (and then Resurrection is easy for Us to portend)

24. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth!

25. Have We not made the earth (as a place) to draw together?

26. Both for the living and the dead,

27. And placed therein high mountains standing firm, and given you to drink (wholesome) sweet water?

28. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth!

Commentary:

They see these Signs of Power, yet they reject the Resurrection

Through these verses, Rejecters are warned in different ways and by various statements.

First, they are reminded of the old generation's fate: "Did We not destroy the men of old?"

In our own times we can observe relics of old civilizations. Generations such as those of the 'Ad, the Thamud, Noah's, Lot's and Pharaoh's were destroyed as punishment for their evil deeds; partly by flood, lightning and hurricane, and some generations by earthquakes and meteorites.

Then shall We make following (generations) follow them.

Allah's Law is always the same. Sin or corruption prepares its own destruction. Should some be punished for sinning while others not?

Thus do We ever deal with men of sin.

In fact, this verse is a confirmation to the destruction of the old generations and for the present and future generations, as well. Since Allah's punishment is neither for revenging nor settling His own personal account, it, therefore, depends on their own sinful deeds and on His superior wisdom.

Some believe that the word /awwalin/ 'old', in this verse, refers to the generations of Noah, 'Ad and Thamud; and the word /akharin/ 'following' refers to the generations after them; such as those of Lot and Pharaoh. But taking note of the term /nutbi'uhum/ ...shall we make follow (generations) follow them, which is in the future tense and /alamnuhlik/ Did We not destroy... , which is in past tense it, then, becomes clear that 'Old' refers to all the old generations who were destroyed by Allah's Will, and 'following' refers to the sinners of the Prophet's (p.b.u.h.) time or those who will come into being after that and will commit sins and corruptions.

And, so, the warning: Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth. The words 'That Day', here, means the Hereafter, when they will have their main punishment and retribution. The repetition of the verse is for emphasis, though they may have a chastisement even in this world.

Then, it attracts their attention to the period of gestation which shows them the power and the authority of the Creator and also the abundance of His blessings to Man. Consequently, they understand His force, in regard to the Resurrection, and, they, themselves, owe Allah for His numerous blessings and respect Him.

Did We not create you from a base fluid?

The which We placed in a safe abode, firmly fixed).

A place where all the conditions for life, growth and protection of the foetus exists. It is so amazing and interesting that it causes everyone to wonder.

For a period (of gestation) determined?

A period of time that no one knows, but Allah During this period many changes occur and every

day the foetus enters a new phase in its development in that abode.

For We determine; and We are the best to determine, (and then Resurrection is easy for Us to portend) .

This is the same reason for which the Qur'an has emphatically used in proving the possibility of the Resurrection. For example, in the beginning verses of Sura Hajj No.22, Mankind's attention is attracted to the process of their own physical growth; from lifeless matter to seed, fertilized ovum, foetus, child, youth, aged and death! How can they doubt that the author of all these wonderful stages in their lives, in this world, each of which is as important as the Resurrection, can also give them another kind of life after the end of this probationary life? How different is dust from sperm!

Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

Woe to those who see these numerous wonders of His power and yet they deny Him.

this respect, Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.) has said: "O creature who has been equitably created and who has been nourished and looked after in the darkness of wombs with multiple curtains. You were originated from the essence of clay and put in a quiet place for a determined length and ordained time. You used to move in the womb of your mother as an embryo, neither responding to a call nor hearing any voice".

"Then you were taken out from the place in which you stayed to a place that you had not seen, and you were not acquainted with awaiting its benefits. Who guided you to obtain your sustenance from the milk of your mother's breast? Who taught you to express your demands with your cries? Verily, when you cannot fully understand your own self how can you understand your Creator? It is impossible for you to understand Allah from the attributes which are meant only for His creatures.(1)

In another part of the verses, the external nature and His blessings, in this great world, are described. These are proofs for both His authority and Mercy, and for the reality of Resurrection, while the former verses were about the creation of Man, himself.

Have We not made the earth (as a place) to draw together?

Both for the living and the dead.

The term /kifat/ (2) 'a place where things are gathered together' is derived from /kaft/ which means 'to gather together', or 'to attach one thing to another'. 'Birds flying fast' is also called

/kifat/, since when they fly fast they gather their wings to their sides in order to move more quickly through the air.

It intends to say: Earth is a gathering place for all human beings; it gathers the living man and women over itself and gives them their needs totally, and envelops their dead bodies in its insides. If the

(1) Nahj-ul-Balaqa, Sermon No.162(Arabic Version) Sermon No.166 (English Version) .

(2) /Kifata/ is the second object for its verb, and is infinitive; used as a subjective noun.

ground were not fit for burial, the bad smell and various diseases would arise from the corpses and this would be a disaster for the living ones.

Yes, the land, like a mother who gathers her children around her, gathers individuals over itself, caresses them, feeds them, dresses them, gives them residence, gives them all their needs, keeps their corpses in its inside, dissolves them, and then causes their harmful effects to vanish.

Some commentators have used kifat in the sense of 'to fly quickly' and have said that the term refers to the Earth's rotation around the Sun, and other movements, all of which were not known by people at the time of revelation of the Qur'an.

In the next verse, that is: ...the living and the dead, it seems that the first meaning is more suitable. Particularly, if we consider the following narration from Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.) . When he was coming back from the Seffin Battlefield he reached a cemetery outside the gate of Kufa. He looked across it and said: This is the abode of the dead and where they dwell, and then he looked towards the houses of the city and said: This is the abode of the living . He wanted to tell others that there is not a long distance between the abode of the living and that of the dead, then, he recited the above verses: Have We not made the earth (as a place) to draw together? Both for the living and the dead. (1)

Then, the Qur'an mentions one of the great blessings of Allah on the earth:

And placed therein high mountains standing firm,...

These high mountains and their underlying formations united together, on the one hand, protect the earth, armor-like, against the inner pressures and the pressures resulting from gravity and, on the other hand, they prevent the air's friction with the land by providing a break in the airmass with their peaks, and thirdly, they control the violent winds and storms. Then, in this way, they afford peace and

(1) Tafsir-i-Borhan, vol.4, p.417.

comfort to the earth's dwellers.

And, at the end of this verse, another gift from the mountains is cited:

...and given you to drink wholesome sweet water?

The 'wholesome sweet water' is useful and lively both for 'you' and for 'your' animals, agriculture, and gardens.

It is true that all the sources of sweet water are from rain, but mountains play the primary role in supplying life with water: many headsprings and aqueducts stem from mountains; many of the rivers and streams originate from the heavy thick melting snow on the high mountains tops.

The tops of the mountains, because of their altitude, are the most useful for human beings, as they are far from the plains surface and they are always cold. They can keep the snow there for years and then the sun melts the snow, gradually, flowing into the streams.

The refrain is repeated: Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

It is they who see these signs and the types of His Bounty and Power; the blessings by which they are continually benefited and, yet, deny the Resurrection, His Justice and His Wisdom.

Sura Mursalat (Those Sent Forth) No.77 (Verses 29-40)

تُكَذِّبُونَ بِهِ كُنْتُمْ مَا إِلَىٰ انظَلُّوا (29)

شُعَبٍ ثَلَاثٍ ذِي ظِلٍّ إِلَىٰ انظَلُّوا (30)

اللَّهَبِ مَنْ يُغْنِي وَلَا ظَلِيلٍ لَا (31)

كَالْفَصْرِ بِشَرِّ نَرْمِي إِنَّهَا (32)

صُفُرٌ جَمَّالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ (33)

لِّلْمُكذِّبِينَ يَوْمِئِذٍ وَيْلٌ (34)

يَنطِفُونَ لَا يَوْمُ هَذَا (35)

فَيَعْتَذِرُونَ لَهُمْ يُؤذَنُ وَلَا (36)

لِّلْمُكذِّبِينَ يَوْمِئِذٍ وَيْلٌ (37)

وَالأُولَئِينَ جَمَعْنَاكُمْ الْفَصْلَ يَوْمَ هَذَا (38)

فَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا لَّكُمْ كَانَ فإِنْ (39)

لِّلْمُكذِّبِينَ يَوْمِئِذٍ وَيْلٌ (40)

29."(On that Day it will be said unto them:) Depart you to that which you used to deny.

30. Depart to a shadow falling threefold, (stifling smoke from fire) .

31. (Which yields) no relief, nor shelter from the flame.

32. Indeed it throws about sparks (as big) as castles;.

33. As if there were (a string of) yellow camels (marching swiftly) .

34. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

35. This is a day wherein they speak not, (they will not be in a position to put forward any valid defense or plea) ,

36. Nor will it be open to them to put forth excuses.

37. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

38. This is the Day of Sorting out (right from wrong) . We have brought you and the men of old together.

39. If you have a trick (to flee away from punishment) use it against Me!

40. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

Commentary :

They Can Neither Defend Themselves Nor Escape.

The final fate of the rejecters of the Hereafter and the Divine Judgment is stated in these verses: a statement that takes one into deep thought, indeed, because it makes clear the horrors of the Event. The command is:

(On that Day it will be said unto them) : Depart you to that which you used to deny.

Depart to the blazing fire (Hell) which you used to mock. Depart to the different kinds of punishment which you have prepared for yourselves in your previous life.

The term /intaliqu/ is based on intilaq which means: 'to depart, go one's way without stopping, to be free or loose'.

In fact, it is an explanation of their state in the Hereafter. They will be kept a long time for their account, then, being given leave, they will be told to go to Hell promptly without any pause.

The presenter of the case may be Allah Who commands them directly of the punishment to come, or it may be the angels. The tone of the statement is quite harsh, which is also a kind of torment.

Depart to a shadow falling threefold, (stifling smoke from fire) .

A column of smoke falls from above, another from the right side, and the third one from the left side. This black and thick hostile smoke surrounds them to envelop them completely.

This shadow gives no comfort, nor coolness, since they themselves are from fire, so it says:

(Which yields) no relief nor shelter from the flame.

Some persons may think that a shadow is there which partly reduces the heat of the flame! of the fire, but this verse conveys the contrary idea. It suggests that this shadow is not of the kind that you think of, but it is a hot stifling one rising from the thick smoke of fire that reflects the heat of

flames, totally.

Sura Waqiah, No. 56, verses 41-44 attest to the mentioned subject and refer to the companions of the Left Hand:

The Companions of the Left Hand - What will be the Companions of the Left Hand?. (They will be) in the midst of a fierce Blast of Fire and in Boiling Water, And in the shades of Black Smoke. Nothing (will there be) to refresh, nor to please:

It has been said that the threefold shadow denotes a reflection of their present triple rejection to the principles of religion, i.e. monotheism, prophecy, and Resurrection; because, rejection of the Resurrection is not separate from the rejection of the other two.

But some others have said that it refers to the triple source of their faculties of anger, carnality, and suspicion. The triple shadows of smoke illustrates the black stains of sins.

The following is the translation of a Persian poem:

Keep away from anger and carnality

The smoke of which darkens the insight.

When anger appears, wisdom disappear;

And when lust dominates, the soul is impudent.

Indeed it throws about sparks (as big) as castles,

They are not like the sparks thrown off by a fire in our human world, which are sometimes very tiny.

The term /qasr/ 'castle' is meaningfully used here. Perhaps, it is more suitable to say: 'sparks like the mountains'. But it should not be forgotten that, as it was mentioned for the verses before, mountains are the origin of many blessings as well as the headsprings of the wholesome sweet water, while castles of the oppressors are the source of blazing hot fire.

The next verse conveys another form of descriptive explanation for the sparks of this blazing fire: As if there were (a string of) yellow camels (marching swiftly) .

The term /jimalah/ 'camels' is a plural form of /jamal/ 'camel' , and the word /sufr/ is a plural form

of /asfar/ which means: that which is yellow', because sparks of fire are usually a redish yellow.

In the former verse the sparks, from the point of view of size, were likned to castles and in this verse, from the point of view of number, color, and speed, they are likened to a number of yellow marching camels.

When the sparks are so, it is obvious what the blazing fire is! And, besides this, how many other punishments are there nearby? Supplication:

O Lord! Please protect all of us against it with Your Mercy.

At the end of this portion, once more, the same refrain is repeated: Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

Then another explanation about the characteristics of that terrible Day begins. It says: This is a day wherein they speak not, (they will not be in a position to put forward any valid defense or plea)

Yes, it is true that on that Day the sinners will be dumbfounded. This fact is also mentioned in Sura Yasin, No.36, verse 65 That Day shall We set a seal on their mouths... . And, also at the end of the same verse it says: But their hands will speak to Us, and their feet will bear witness to all that they did . And even more, in some other verses it is said that their skins will speak and bear witness to what should be said.

Nor will it be open to them to put forth excuses.

They are allowed neither to say anything nor to excuse and defend, because the facts will speak plainly enough, against them, and they do not need to speak. In the human world, this prevaricating tongue misused its freedom: falsely denied the prophets, mocked the righteous, canceled the right, and substituted the wrong in place of the right. So, in the spiritual world this tongue should be locked and shut as a punishment. The very state is a torment, too, because one cannot defend or excuse oneself.

There is a narration from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) in which he says: Allah is greater and more just than not to allow His servant to apologize to Him with his plausible excuse. But they have no plausible excuse, indeed, to bring up.(1)

From some of the verses, of course, it is understood that sinners can speak sometimes in the Hereafter, since, there are many halting places, therein, where some of their tongues are shut and their limbs bear witness, and in some others, their tongues are allowed to express their intensive begrudging, grief, and disaster.

Again it says: Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

Next, the sinners are addressed. To describe 'that Day' , it says: This is the Day of Sorting out (right from wrong) . We have brought you and the men of old together.

All members of the human race, from the earliest ones to the latest, with no exception, are gathered for reckoning and the Great Judgment.

If you have a trick (to flee away from punishment) use it against Me!

Can you escape from My domain?

Or, are you able to defeat My Power?

Or, can you ransom and redeem yourself?

Or, are you able to deceive the Accountants?

Do your best, but do know that you can do nothing.

In fact, this is a term used to show their inability and helplessness: the same demand as that which is made for the Holy Qur'an as we can (1) Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol.5, p.49

see in Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 23: And if you are in doubt as to what We have revealed (from time to time) to Our servant, then produce a Sura like it...

As Raqib says in Mufradat: /kayd/ means 'applying or thinking of a remedy; which is sometimes blameworthy and sometimes praiseworthy, though the former is more frequently used (as it is used in the above verse) .

On that Day, certainly, they can do nothing because, as we know, there is no means for Man, of any kind, to use for his defense, which Sura Baqarah, No. 2, verse 166 points out: ...and all relationsbetween them would be cut off .

It is interesting to note that, on the one hand, that Day is called the Day of Sorting out' and, on the other hand, it is said that: We have brought you and the men of old together ; both occurring in the same section. At first, all are gathered in the Great Court of Justice, then they are divided into different rows in accordance with their belief and their deeds. Even those who go to Paradise, having different rows of different degrees; the likes of which are those who go to Hell, having

different rows with various steps of descent.

Yes, that Day is the day of sorting out (right from wrong, and oppressor from oppressed) .

Again, the warning and enlightening verse is repeated: Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

Sura Mursalat (Those Sent Forth) (No.77 (Verses 41-50)

وَعُيُونٍ ظِلَالٍ فِي الْمُتَّقِينَ إِنَّ (41)

يَشْتَهُونَ مِمَّا وَفَوَاكِهَ (42)

تَعْمَلُونَ كُنْتُمْ بِمَا هُنِيئًا وَاشْرَبُوا كُلُوا (43)

الْمُحْسِنِينَ نَجْزِيكَ إِنْ (44)

لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَيَلُّ (45)

مُجْرِمُونَ إِنَّكُمْ قَلِيلًا وَتَمَتَّعُوا كُلُوا (46)

لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَيَلُّ (47)

يَرْكَعُونَ لَا ارْكَعُوا لَهُمْ قَبِيلٌ وَإِذَا (48)

لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ مَيِّبُونَ وَيَلُّ (49)

يَوْمَئِذٍ بَعْدَهُ حَدِيثٌ قَبَائِي (50)

41."The righteous are amidst shades and fountains (of Heaven) ,"

42. And fruits such as they desire.

43. Eat ye and drink ye pleasantly (until you are satiated) in return for what ye did.

44. Thus do We certainly reward the Doers of Good.

45. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

46. (O ye Unjust!) Eat and enjoy yourselves (on earth) a little while, (but be warned that an evil End in the Hereafter awaits you) for that ye are sinners

47. Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

48. And when it is said unto them: Bow down, they bow not down.

49. Ah woe, That Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

50. (If they do not believe in Holy Qur'an) then what statement, after that, will they believe in?

Commentary:

What statement will they believe in, if they do not believe in Holy Qur'an?

We know that the Qur'anic style generally couples warning with glad tidings, threats with encouragement, and the fate of the Righteous with that of the sinners, so that the affairs are better understood. On this basis, after describing various punishments of the sinners, in the Hereafter, in the aforementioned verses, there follows a short, but meaningful verse about the state of the Righteous on that Day: The righteous are amidst shades and fountains (of Heaven) .

Meanwhile, the sinners are in the shade of stifling smoke from fire, as it was understood from the previous verses. The Arabic word /zilal/ 'shadows' is the plural form of zill 'shadow' ; whether in the shade of a tree and the like, during the day, or in the shadows of the darkness at night, while fi is 'to cast a shadow by only a single source of light' such as the shadow of trees which intercepts the rays of the sun.

Then it says: And fruits such as they desire.

It is clear that fruits, shadows, and fountains are a small part of the Blessings that Allah will bestow on them: a small part, describable in human language, is in comparison with all the Blessings in Heaven, but so plentiful and beyond the imagination of the Earth's dwellers, that it is

indescribable.

It is interesting to note that they will be entertained so excellently and abundantly at Allah's feast that they are told: Eat ye and drink ye pleasantly (until you are satiated) in return for what you did. The statement which is said to them directly, whether by Allah or by Angels, is full of kindness and affection; clearly is a sustenance for their soul.

The phrase, for what you did, denotes that these gifts are not given to anyone undeserving, and nothing is obtained by raw claim or imagination but, is actually prepared by good deeds.

As Raqib cited in Mufradat: hani means anything that is wholesome and has no pain afterward. So, water and the daily meal are thus called and it is sometimes used for life, too.

Therefore, this shows that the fruits, foods and drinks, in Heaven, are not the same as those in this world; of which we sometimes suffer malnutrition, pain and undesirable effects.

Some commentators believe that this imperative sentence denotes the allowance of using these Blessings, lawfully, while some others believe that this is just a command.

But, on the whole, it should be understood that, at ceremonies, these commands are a kind of hospitality and the host's desire is that the guests would be asked to help themselves, as a kind of respect and dignity shown to them, because he likes that his meal will be eaten completely, by the guests, and this shows that they honor him.

The next verse emphasizes that these gifts are not undeservedly given: Thus do We certainly reward the Doers of Good.

Note that the first verse insists on 'righteousness' and 'devotion', then another verse is based on 'deed', and this verse emphasizes on 'doing good'.

'Righteousness' or 'virtuousness' means avoidance of any sin, corruption, paganism and the denial of Allah and 'doing good' is used for any good action; while 'deed' refers only to the activities which are piously done. So, the blessings bestowed by Allah are for these groups, not for the false claimants of faith and committers of various kinds of sin, though they appear to be among the faithful people.

At the end of this part, the refrain is, again, mentioned: Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth. Woe to those who are deprived of these blessings and affections. The pain of the regret of this deprivation is not minor to the blazing fire of Hell.

Since being busy with worldly pleasures and the desire of having unconditional freedom for following after carnality, is one of the factors of the denial of Resurrection, the next verse addresses the sinners and in a threatening tone says: (O ye Unjust!) Eat and enjoy yourselves (on earth) a little while, (but be warned that an evil End, in the Hereafter, awaits you) for that ye are sinners.

The term /qalila/ 'a little' can refer either to the short period of life in this world, or to the few blessings of this world in comparison with the countless, immense blessings of the next world.

In fact, the righteous are highly regarded in the Hereafter and are addressed with this affectionate sentence: Eat ye and drink ye pleasantly (until you are satiated) ...; but worldly men are addressed with this threatening sentence: (O ye Unjust) Eat and enjoy yourselves (on earth) a little while....

The Righteous are told: ...in return for what ye did, but the unjust are told: ..for that ye are sinners.

Further, it makes it clear that it is Man's sin, originating from faithlessness or lusts, that paves the way for Allah's punishment.

Then, the aforementioned warning is followed again by:

Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

Woe to those who were deceived by this scintillating world and its lusts, and consequently prepared Allah's punishment for themselves.

In the next verse another source of their disaster, that is: 'pride and self-conceit', is touched on where it says:

And when it is said unto them: Bow down, they bow not down Many of the commentators have said that this verse was revealed about the Thaqif tribe when the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) told them to say prayers and they answered that they would never bow; that it would be a disgrace for them. Then he (p.b.u.h.) said: Religion is worthless without bowing and prostration.

They not only refused bowing and prostration, but also had this quality of pride throughout their life and permeating their ideas. They resigned neither to Allah's Will nor to the Prophet's instructions nor to people's rights; they were humble neither to the Creator nor to other human beings. In fact, these two elements, 'pride and carnality', are the most important factors in committing crimes, sins, cruelties, and denial.

Then, finally, for the tenth time in this Sura, it says:

Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth.

In the last verse of Sura Mursalat, in a scolding tone and with profound astonishment, it questions:

(If they do not believe in Holy Qur'an) then what statement, after that, will they believe in?

One who does not believe in Qur'an; that which if it were sent down on a mountain, that mountain would humble itself and cleave asunder for fear of Allah would not resign to believe in any Holy Book or any rational logic, and this is a sign of enmity and obstinacy.

As it was mentioned, at the beginning of this Sura, the verse: Ah woe, that Day, to the Rejecters of Truth, is repeated ten times for emphasis on one important fact: Resurrection. Repetitions, like this one, are found in the statements of all eloquent speakers for what they want to emphasize on; whether it be prose or verse.

But some commentators believe that each time the verse is repeated, it means that it is about a new subject, and which comes just before the one that the rejecters deny; so, therefore, actually there is no repetition of the verse.

We conclude this Sura with a sentence from 'Ruh-al-Bayan' which says: This Sura was revealed to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) in a cave somewhere close to 'Qif Mosque' in Mina and I have seen the cave myself.

Supplication:

O Lord! Bestow on us Your Grace not to reject Your verses.

O Lord! Protect us against pride and carnal desires; the main sources of sin.?

O Lord! Set us in the Bliss of the Righteous among those who will be highly regarded at Your Feast.

The End of Sura Mursalat (Those sent Forth)

Sura Nabaa (The Great News) No. 78 (40 verses)

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

Contents of the Sura:

Most of the verses of the last part of the Qur'an were revealed in Mecca. The nature of these Suras is that they put emphasis on the Creation and the Resurrection, furnished with glad tidings and warnings; usually in a shocking and awakening tone. All the verses of the Suras, except a few, are short and full of implications. For the same reason, they affect, deeply, on any conscious person and they awaken some of the unaware, too. They give spirit to dead-like people and make the indifferent ones feel responsibility. On the whole, they have a specific case and an enthusiastic world of their own, full of enlightenment and attraction.

Sura Nabaa is not an exception to this general principle. It begins with an awakening question, and ends with a wonderful sentence full of warning.

The contents of the Sura can be divided into several parts:

1. The question that is stated in the first verse about the 'great News' /naba'-in-'azim/ or the Hereafter.
2. Examples of the types of Divine Power in the Heavens and on Earth, and also of men's lives and their gifts as evidences to the possibility of the Resurrection and the Hereafter.
3. Preliminary signs of the Resurrection.
4. Reference to the painful chastisement of the transgressors.
5. The encouraging gifts and blessings of Heaven.
6. Finally, the Sura ends with some intensive warnings about the dreadful punishment, and then, the sad destiny of the Unbelievers.

The name of the Sura, Nabaa, is taken from its second verse, but sometimes it is called /amma/, which is the first word in the first verse.

The Virtue in studying Sura Nabaa:

There is a tradition from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) which says: He who studies Sura Nabaa will be satiated, by Allah, with a cold drink in Heaven".(1)

Another tradition from Imam Sadiq says: He who continues studying Sura Nabaa, everyday, will meet the Holy Shrine at Mecca (Kaaba) before the year ends.(2)

Again, another tradition from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) says: He who studies it (Sura Nabaa) and learns it by heart, on the Day of Judgment, his reckoning will be concluded (so quickly) equal to the same length of time it takes to say a single prayer.

(1) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol.10, p.420.

(2) Tafsir-I-Borhan, vol. 4, p.419.

Sura Nabaa (The Great News) No. 78 (Verses 1-5)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(1) يَتَسَاءَلُونَ عَمَّ

(2) الْعَظِيمِ النَّبِيِّ عَنِ

(3) مُخْتَلَفُونَ فِيهِ هُمُ الَّذِي

(4) سَيَعْلَمُونَ كَلَّا

(5) سَيَعْلَمُونَ كَلَّا ثُمَّ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. O what do they ask (one another) ?

2. Of the Great News,
3. That in which they differ.
4. Nay! they shall soon (come to) know,
5. Nay indeed! they shall soon (come to) know.

Commentary:
The Great News!

In the first verse, it astonishingly questions: O what do they ask (one another) ? Then, without expecting them to reply, the Qur'an answers: Of the Great News.

That in which they differ.

For the meaning of /naba'-in-'azim/, the commentators have put forth different ideas. Some of them say it means: 'the Day of Resurrection' while some others have meant it as 'the revelation of the Holy Qur'an and still others have said it means: 'The whole Islamic Principles'. In some narrations it has been commented on to mean 'vicegerency and guardianship'; which will be dealt with later.

Paying careful attention to all verses of the Sura, especially to some points in the following verses and specifically to the sentence: Verily The Day of Sorting out is (a day) appointed, which has come after mentioning some Signs of Allah's Power in the heavens and on the Earth, and also paying attention to the fact that the most intensive opposition of the Unbelievers was about the existence of 'Resurrection': all in all most commentators approve of the first idea, that is, in the sense of 'Resurrection' for the phrase /naba'-in-'azim/.

As Raqib says in his book, Mufrad!, the term /naba'/ means: 'a great news which is useful and man is acquainted with it or has a strong conviction to it; and these three things are the conditions of /naba'/.

Therefore, the term /'azim/ 'great' is more emphatic and, on the whole, indicates that this news, about which some were doubtful, has been a known fact, great and full of importance, and therefore, its most appropriate meaning is 'Resurrection'.

The phrase 'they ask (one another) ' may refer only to the Unbelievers who used to ask each other

about the Resurrection: of course, not for their research and comprehension, but, due to their doubts.

It is also probable that the question is from the believers or from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) , himself.

Here, a question may arise that: if /naba'-in-'azim/ refers to the Resurrection, which apparently all the disbelievers denied, why does it say That in which they differ?

To answer this question, we say that: the denial of the Resurrection, in an absolute form, does not decisively exist even among the disbelievers, because many of them assume that there is the existence of the spirit after death, or in other words, 'the spiritual Resurrection'.

Some of them were doubtful about the bodily Resurrection as in Sura Naml, No. 27, verse 66: Still less can their knowledge comprehend the Hereafter: nay, they are in doubt and uncertainty regarding it, nay, they are blind thereunto!. And some of them completely denied the Resurrection and even said that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was mad, because of his claim about Resurrection; as in Sura Saba. No. 34, verse 7-8: The Unbelievers say (in ridicule) : Shall we point out to you a man that will tell you, when you are all scattered to pieces in disintegration, that you shall (then be raised) in a New Creation?. Has he invented a falsehood against Allah, or has a spirit (seized) him? Nay, it is those who believe not in the Hereafter, that are in (real) Penalty, and in farthest Error. Thus, their rejection of the Resurrection is certain.

It further states: Nay! they shall soon (come to) know.

Nay indeed! they shall soon (come to) know.

When they will be informed, they will cry and will be sorry for themselves; each of them saying: Lest the soul should (then) say: Ah! Woe is me! in that I neglected (my Duty) towards Allah (Sura Zumar, No. 39, verse 56) .

On the Day that they are surrounded by massive punishment, and they wish to return to their former life, they ask: Is there any way (to effect) a return?(Sura Shura, No. 42, verse 44.) .

Even when they, being at the point of death, are sure about the partition and Resurrection; because all the curtains will be removed, then, and the facts of the next world will become obvious, they cry saying: ...O my Lord! send me back (to life) , In order that I may work righteousness in the things I neglected..., (Sura Momin, No. 23, verses 99-100) .

The Arabic term saya' lamun 'they shall soon come to know', begins with " س " (S) which is usually used as a sign for near future, and denotes that the Hereafter is near; that this whole life is just a

fleeting moment in comparison to it.

Commentators have suggested different ideas about the twice repeated verse, mentioned above, which says the same facts for emphasis: To inform them that the Hereafter is in the near future, or to tell them two separate matters: (1) That they will see the punishment of this world in the near future, and (2) that they will see the next world's punishment after that (of which, the first idea seems more appropriate) .

It is also probable that this refers to the improvement and progress of Man's knowledge, when there will be so many reasons and evidences for the possibility of the Resurrection that even the disbelievers cannot afford to deny, but can only confess, the Reality.

However, the fault in this commentary is that this kind of knowledge is for the later generations of Mankind, which this verse refers to, and not for those who used to live at the Prophet's time (p.b.u.h.) and differed on the existence of the Hereafter.

Explanation:

The proposition of 'Vicegereny' and /naba'-in-'azim/ (The Great News) ';

As was mentioned earlier, it has been said that the phrase /naba'-in-'azim/ has several meanings: 'the Hereafter, the Holy Qur'an, the entire Islamic Principles', etc. But, the whole concept, taken from the verses altogether, leads us to 'Resurrection' as having the closest meaning.

There are a lot of narrations, some of which have been cited by the Household of the Prophet 'Ahlul-Bait'. (p.b.u.h.) , and some others by Sunni commentators, that say the phrase /aba'-in-'azim/ refers to Hazrat Ali's (p.b.u.h.) vicegerency and Imamate (the leadership of the Islamic community) , which is a matter of dispute among a group of Muslims, even today. Or it is interpreted as vicegerency, in general. Three of the narrations are as follows:

Hafiz-Mohammad-ibn-Mo'min - Shirazi, one of the scholars of the Sunni Community, has narrated a tradition from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) on the commentary of the first verse of this Sura, and he (p.b.u.h.) said: It means the vicegerency of Ali; about which everyone will be asked in the grave, and no one in the East or West, in the seas or over the land passes away without the angels asking him about the vicegerency of Amir-al-Mo'minin, and he will also be asked what his religion is, who his Prophet is, and who his Imam is.(1)

2. Another narration says that on the day of the Battle of Siffin, a man

(1) Risa'lat-ul-I'tiqad, Abu Bakr-Mohammad-ibn-i-Shirazi (Based on Ihqaq-ul-Haqq, vol.4, p.484)

from the troops of Sham (Damascus) , having his armor on and carrying a Qur'an with him, entered the battlefield while he was reciting Sura Naba. Then Ali (p.b.u.h.) , himself, faced him and questioned him: Do you know what /naba'-in-'azim/ (the Great News) , in which they differ, is?

The man replied: No, I do not know.

Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.) said: I am, by Allah, the very /naba'-in-'azim/ (the Great News) that you differ in and you quarrel against my vicegerency. You turned away from my vicegerency after you had pledged allegiance to it, and only on Dooms Day will you really comprehend, once more, what you had understood about it before. (1)

3. A narration from Imam Sadiq says: 'The Great News' is the same as Vicegerency .(2)

To gather the contents of these narrations and the commentary of the verse, in the same sense as 'Resurrection', which was previously mentioned, is possible in two ways: (1) The phrase /naba'-in-'azim/ has a broad meaning which includes all of the meanings previously given, though when these verses were revealed the Qur'an insisted on 'Resurrection' more than anything else.

Still, this does not hinder us from finding more interpretations, of the verse, other than the above and (Tafsir-i-Borhan, vol.4, p.419, Tradition 3.) as we know and as it has been mentioned repeatedly, the Qur'an has various meanings; that is, a verse may have several meanings, in different dimensions, among which only one is obvious by the apparent words and the other meanings are hidden, but they can be found with the help of other explanations and are not clear to anyone except 'the distinguished ones'.

This is not the only verse that has obvious and hidden meanings. There are many other verses, in the Holy Qur'an, of which the Islamic narrations contain different commentaries.

But, we emphatically state that it is not possible to understand the hidden meanings of the Qur'an without the clear explanations or commentaries from the Prophet or sinless Imams (P.B.U.H.th) , and the

(1) Tafsir-i-Borhan, vol.4 p.420, Tradition 9.

(2) Tafsir-i-Borhan, vol.4 p.419, Tradition 3.

existence of hidden meanings, in the Qur'an, should not be a possible way of misusing it by the mischief-makers who comment on the verses in whatever way they wish.

Why Is the Resurrection emphasized on so much?

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It was mentioned, before, that the most important thing which is emphasized on and spoken about, in the thirtieth part of the Holy Qur'an; whose Suras are mostly Meccan, is the Resurrection and Man's state in the Hereafter.

This is so because, for the improvement of Man, the first step is to know that there is a Reckoning Day. And there is a flawless Court in which nothing is hidden from its Judges; a Court where you can find no transgression, no oppressor, and no mistake.

Neither recommendations nor bribes are useful therein. No one can tell a lie or deny the Truth. In short, there is no way to flee from the grip of punishment, there; the only way is staying away from sin, here; in this world.

The belief in there being such a Court shakes Man, awakens the sleeping souls, makes the spirit of piety and responsibility come alive, and invites human beings to be careful of their duties.

Generally, the main factor in the appearance of corruption, in any environment, is one of two following points: (1) the weakness of the watchmen, or (2) the weakness of judicial organization.

If the watchful guards look over the deeds of Man, and careful courts verify the offenders' crimes and let no mischief leave without penalty, then, in such a safe and sound environment, surely inequity, corruption, transgression, and rebellion will decrease to the minimum.

When the worldly life, under the control of its watchmen and courts is so, then Man's divine spiritual life is obvious.

Belief in an Omnipresent Unity that: ..from whom is not hidden the least little atom.... (Sura Saba No. 34, verse 3) , and belief in the existence of Resurrection, which according to Sura Zi1al No. 99, verses 7-8: So, whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall behold it!. And whoever has done an atom's weight of evil shall behold it, nothing will be forgotten and everything will be in front of Man. This kind of belief supplies such a piety in Man that can guide him to the path of charity and goodness throughout his life.

Sura Naba (The Great News) No. 78 (Verses 6-16)

- (6) مِهَادًا الْأَرْضَ نَجْعَلِ أَلَمَ
أُوتَادًا وَالْجِبَالَ (7)
أَزْوَاجًا وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ (8)
سُبَاتًا نَوْمَكُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا (9)
لِيَاسًا اللَّيْلَ وَجَعَلْنَا (10)
مَعَاشًا النَّهَارَ وَجَعَلْنَا (11)
شِدَادًا سَبْعًا فَوْقَكُمْ وَبَنَيْنَا (12)
وَهَاجًا سِرَاجًا وَجَعَلْنَا (13)
تَجَاجًا مَاءَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مِنْ وَأَنْزَلْنَا (14)
وَنَبَاتًا حَبًّا بِهِ لِنُخْرِجَ (15)
أَلْفَافًا وَجَنَاتٍ (16)

6. Have We not made the earth as a (wide) expanse?

7. And the mountains as pegs

8. And We created you in pairs,

9. And We made your sleep for repose,

10. And We made the night as a covering

11. And We made the day for (seeking) livelihood,

12. And We built above you seven firmaments

13. And We made (therein) a blazing lamp,

14. And We sent down from the clouds water in abundance

15. That We may bring forth thereby grain and plants,

16. And gardens of luxurious growth?

Commentary:

These verses are, in fact, an answer to the questions of the rejecters of the Resurrection, and those who differ on /aba'-in-'azim/ 'the Great News' since, these verses mention a portion of the wise order of this world of being and its reasonable gifts, which have a very effective function in Man's life. They are, on the one hand, a few of the clear Signs of Allah's power over all things; including the rebirth of the dead, and on the other hand, they point to the fact that this Wise order cannot exist in vain since, if with the end of this material world all other things end, too, this life will certainly be in vain.

Thus, these verses can be considered as some reasons for the Resurrection from two points of view: (1) Through the 'reasoning of power', and (2) through the reasoning of knowledge'.

In these eleven verses, twelve important blessings are pointed out, mixed with grace and affection and accompanied with reasoning and stimulation of the sentiments. As bare rational reasoning is not quite sufficient, sentiments and affections are needed.

first, it begins with the earth and says: Have We not made the earth a (wide) expanse?

The term /mihad/, as Raqib cites in his book, Mufradat, means 'a level and tidy place'. It is derived from the term mahd 'a bed, cradle'. Some commentators and philologists have rendered it to mean 'bed', which is both soft and comfortable.

The use of this term, for the earth, is full of meaning because, on the one hand, most parts of the land are so smooth and level that man can build houses thereon and prepares gardens and farms thereabout.

On the other hand, all his necessities are found over the Earth or hidden on its insides in the form of raw materials and valuable mines.

And, then again, the earth swallows up man's refuse, and the corpse of the dead are burned in it;

(because of their dissolution and the absorption of their various microbes in the soil) , to be vanished by the wonderful properties of dust.

Furthermore, the Earth, itself, rotates and then rotates around the Sun by which the days and nights and the four seasons of the year appear and these, too, play an important role in Man's life.

In addition, the earth stores up, under its surface, much of the water that falls down from heaven and then, gradually, distributes it through springs and subterranean canals.

In short, everything useful for the comfort of the creatures living on the land, is supplied on this smooth bed; the Earth. The importance of this great blessing will be made clear only when some slight changes happen to it.

Then, in order that the importance of the mountains may not be forgotten, in contrast to the smoothness of the surface of the Earth, it says: And the mountains as pegs?.

Mountains have deep and expanding formations joined together under the ground. They, armor-like, protect the Earth's surface against the inner pressure caused by the central molten lava, and the outer pressure resulting from the moon.

Also, mountains stand as lofty walls in the way of terrible storms, and as safe abodes for men to rest, therein. If they were not so, Man's life would be quite uncomfortable under the constant strikes of violent storms.

In addition, mountains are the source of sweet water as well as different precious mines.

Adding, still, to all of the above, the mountains' peaks; like gears of a wheel, restrain, by friction, the thick air mass around the globe, as if dragging it along with themselves.

Some scientists say that if the surface of the Earth were a flat plain, then, when the globe turns, the air would slide over it and great storms would develop. This constant turmoil would make the surface too hot and uninhabitable.

After mentioning these two phenomenal blessings of Allah, it refers to the spiritual signs of Allah and says: And we created you in pairs.

The term /azwaj/ is the plural form of the term /zauj/ which means 'mate, companion, a couple, and gender (husband or wife) ' from which not only is a man created and through which his generation survives, but also his spouse is counted as the reason for his spiritual tranquillity, as Sura Rum, No. 30. verse, 21 says: And among His Signs is this, that He created for you males from

among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts)

In other words, the genders (masculine and feminine) are the complement of each other then, they become complete and this makes them a whole.

Since the term /azwaj/ also means: 'kinds, species, and classes', some commentators have rendered it to mean: 'the variations in Man from the point of color, race, language, different spiritual levels and talents'; which are signs of Allah's greatness and the cause of perfection in societies.

Then, it refers to 'sleep' a grand divine gift to Man, and says: And We made your sleep for repose,.

The term /subat/is derived from /sabt/which originally means 'discontinue, rest' and then it was used for the 'suspension of work' for the purpose of resting, and that the term 'Saturday' in the Arabic vocabulary is called /yaum-us-sabt/ because it had been affected by the custom of the Jews who stopped working on Saturday.

Thus, the term /subat/ narrowly refers to the stopping of most of Man's physical and mental activities when he sleeps. The very temporary stopping of activity causes refreshment and improvement for the tired organs, strengthening the soul and the body, renewing one's pleasure, removing any fatigue and uneasiness, and consequently, making Man ready to start working again.

Though one-third of the human beings' lifetime is occupied by sleep and they have always been entangled with the question of 'dreams', still they wonder about the mysteries of sleep. Even yet, it is not exactly known why that at a special moment the mind fails to work well, the eyelids droop and all the limbs come to a peaceful state.

But, one thing is definitely known and that is: sleep is of great importance to one's health, and that is why psychiatrists try to make their patients' sleep normally and regularly, because it is impossible to cure them without it.

Those who do not sleep enough are pale, withered, nervous, and dull. On the contrary, those who sleep normally, when they rise they feel, in themselves, much pleasure and vitality.

After a tranquil sleep, study progresses very quickly and mental activity and physical endeavors are often more successful. These facts show the important functional role of sleep in Man's life.

There are few tortures, for a person, that are as painful as compulsory sleeplessness. Experiments

have shown that Man's tolerance for lack of sleep is very little and soon he loses his health and becomes sick.

The aforementioned statements about the importance of sleep mean, of course., a balanced sleep, because, over sleeping, like gluttony, is one of the graceless behaviors which causes various sicknesses.

It is interesting that there is not a certain time limit for the natural length of sleep in all persons, but everyone should find the amount of sleep that one needs regarding his physical and mental activities and according to one's own experience.

And stranger still is when human beings are placed in a difficult situation where they must stay awake for a long time. Their perseverance for sleeplessness increases, temporarily, so that sometimes they decrease their sleep to one or two hours, but it has often happened that when the circumstances have changed, Man, both spiritually and bodily, has demanded the recompense of that sleeplessness and has taken it back.

There are, of course, a few rare individuals who are able to go without continuous sleep, for months at a time. In contrast, there are some people who fall asleep even when they are walking on the street or when they are speaking with another person. Surely, this state is very dangerous for them, especially if there would be no one to look after them. Obviously, these kinds of people are sick and sooner or later they will be faced with physical and spiritual difficulties.

In short, this wonderful characteristic, which appears in Man and is called 'sleep', contains many mysteries and is perceived as a 'miracle'.

Although the above mentioned verse is about 'sleep', as a divine blessing, it seems that death, and wakefulness could, also, symbolize Resurrection, so the verse could be a hint to both of them.

Then, again, concerning sleep, it speaks about the blessing of 'night' and says: "And We made the night as a covering".

Following immediately after that, it says: And We made the day for (seeking) livelihood.

Contrary to the dualists (because of being uninformed about the secrets of Creation, where they thought that the light of day is good and the darkness of night is evil and they believed in a separate god, for both of them, while thinking that the former originated from 'God' and the latter from Satan) we should give a bit more thought to it, then we will recognize that both of them are great blessings and are the origin of other blessings, as well.

According to the above verses, the gloom of night is a cloth and covering over the body of the Earth and over all living creatures residing on it. Night, compulsorily, stops the exhausting activities of the life and makes the gloom of darkness, which is actually peace, calmness, and tranquillity, dominate over everything in order to give the tired limbs a chance to recover and the gloomy spirit a chance to revive, since a good and quiet sleep is more likely to be obtained in the dark.

Besides this, when night comes, the sunshine disappears. If the sun were to shine continuously, all plants and animals would die from its heat, and the Earth could not be a dwelling place for them.

For the same reason, the Holy Qur'an has frequently emphasized on this matter. Once, it says: Say, see you? If Allah were to make the Day perpetual over you to the Day of Judgment, what god is there other than Allah who can give you a Night in which you can rest?... (Sura Qasas, No. 28, verse 72) . And after that it adds: It is out of His Mercy that He has made for you Night and Day, that you may rest therein, and that you may seek of His Grace..., (Sura Qasas No 28, verse 73) .

It is noteworthy that, in the Holy Qur'an, many great things have been made oath to, once, but night' has been made oath to seven times, which illustrates the importance of the darkness of night, since we know that an oath is made for important affairs.

Those who make the night bright with artificial light and sit up all night long and sleep during the daytime, instead, become rather afflicted and sickly.

People, in villages, who sleep soon, at night, and get up early in the morning, lead healthier lives.

Night has other useful advantages, too. For instance, the period after midnight and before dawn is the best time to pray and supplicate to Allah and a very good occasion for self-perfection and devotional acts as Sura Zariyat, No.51. verse 18, about the qualities of the Righteous, says: And in the hours (wee hours of the morning) of early dawn, they (were found) praying for forgiveness.

The light of the day, too, is a unique blessing. It produces movement, such as, preparing Man for effort and endeavor, and causing the plants and animals to grow under its rays. Then, the above sentence which says: And We made the day for (seeking) livelihood, is truly so complete and meaningful that it does not need any further explanation.

In conclusion, the duration of the day and night and the precise regularity of their gradual changes, is one of the Signs of Allah in Creation. Moreover, it is counted as a natural calendar for the arrangement of Man's life timetable.

Then, from the Earth our attention is turned to the heavens and it says: And We built above you

seven firmaments.

The number 'seven', here, may be a multiplication figure which refers to the numerous celestial spheres, groups of systems, galaxies and the different firmaments, in the existing universe, which have a firm nature and are created massive and strong. Or, it may be a figure of quantity in the sense that what we see from the galaxies belongs to the first sky, as Sura Saffat No 37, verse 6 states: We have indeed decked the lower heaven with beauty (in) the stars', and beyond that there are six more skies that are far from Man's reach.

It is also probable that the phrase /sab'an sidada/ 'seven firmaments' refers to the several layers of the atmosphere surrounding the Earth which, in spite of being apparently transparent, is so dense that it protects Earth from the continually falling meteorites. As soon as one of them enters Earth's atmosphere it becomes hot enough to burn, because of its violent contact with the protecting layers and then it turns to ash and comes down slowly over the land. If this layer of atmosphere did not exist, our cities and farms would be exposed to the invasion of these meteorites day and night.

Some scientists have calculated the denseness of the atmosphere, surrounding the Earth, as being more than one hundred kilometers thick, and equal to a steel ceiling ten meters thick! And this is only one of the commentaries for the phrase /sab'an sidada/ 'seven firmaments'.

After a short description about the creation of the heavens, attention is paid to the Sun, the great world-illuminating gift, and says: And We made (therein) a blazing lamp.

The term /wahhaj/ is based on the term /wahaj/ which means 'light and heat' issuing from fire. Therefore, the term with this sense 'brightly burning' used for the Sun, points to a couple of great blessings that are the origin of all material gifts of this world, that is 'light' and 'heat'.

The light of the Sun not only lights Man's surrounding environment and the whole solar system, but also is very effective in the growth of living creatures.

Its heat, in addition to the effect that it directly has on the lives of human beings, animals and plants, is the main cause of the existence of clouds, winds, and rainfall necessary for the irrigation of dry lands.

Because of its ultraviolet rays, the Sun is very useful in destroying microbes. If it were not, generations of living creatures would perish in a short time.

The Sun constantly illuminates the whole world, free of charge, with its warm, bright light and from an appropriate distance. It is neither so hot and burning, nor so cold and dim; and it offers

itself to all of us.

If we compare the value of energy, produced by the Sun, with the price of other sources of energy, it adds up to a very large sum. Let us assume that we grew an apple tree with artificial light and energy. Each apple would cost an extraordinary amount. But now, indeed, we receive this worldly productive light, freely, from /siraj-an-wahhaj/ 'a blazing lamp'.

The Sun is the star nearest the Earth, whose mean distance from it is nearly 93,000,000 miles (about 150,000,000 kilometers) ; its diameter is about 865,000 miles; its mass is about 322,000 times, and its volume more than 1,300,000 times, that of the Earth, and its density is about one-fourth that of the Earth. Its outer heat is about 6,000C.(10,000F) . (The Kelvin temperature scale uses a degree of which the unit of measurement equals the centigrade degree, but it is numbered from absolute zero, which is -273.16 C.) . All of these are arranged, in such a way. so that if they were a little more or a little less than what they are, it would be impossible for life to exist on the Earth.

Following the description of the gifts of 'light' and 'heat', it speaks of another important matter, about life, which closely relates to the subject of sunshine and says: And We sent down from the clouds water in abundance.

The term /musarat/ is the plural form of the word /mu'sar/ which is based on the term /asr/ in the sense of 'pressure' and the term is used with the meaning of 'clouds emitting or pressing out rain', as if to press itself to pour water.

Some others have said that it means ' the clouds that are ready to rain', because the form of the word used in Arabic texts denotes to readiness for something'.

Some commentators have said that /mu'sarat/ is not an adjective for the word 'clouds', it is an adjective for the word, 'winds' which press on the clouds from every side in order for it to rain.

The term /thajjaj/ is based on /thajj/ which means 'to pour abundant water, continuously' and also it is used, here, in the Arabic intensive form. So, on the whole, the meaning of the verse is that: 'We sent down, continuously, abundant water from the clouds emitting rain'.

Rain, by itself, has some benefits and merits when it falls: it makes the air fresh, it washes the dirt away, it decreases the heat of the weather; it even moderates the cold weather, it decreases the cause of diseases and it brings Man spirit and joy. But the following verses point to three other great benefits of rain; it says: That we may bring forth thereby grain and plants".

And gardens of luxurious growth.

Raqib cites in his book, Mufradat, that the term /alfaf/ denotes that the trees of this garden are so thick and entangled that they are joined to each other.

In fact, in those two previous verses, all of the foodstuff that grows on the land and which men and animals use have been pointed out, because a great part of it is compiled of grains /habba!, the vegetables and roots /nabata/ and, thirdly, fruits /jannat/.

It is true that in these two verses only three outstanding benefits of rain are mentioned, but its benefits, undoubtedly, are not limited only to these. Seventy percent of Man's bodyweight is made up of water; the main origin of all living creatures, as the Qur'an says: ...We made from water every living thing... (Sura Anbiya, No. 21, verse 30) . Therefore, water acts as the essential property in the life of living creatures, especially Man.

Not only Man's body, but also many factories are paralysed without water, and a lot of manufactures would fold, too, without the availability of water.

The beauty and the livelihood of nature is due to water, and the best commercial and economical trade routes, of the world, are waterways.

Explanation:

The Relation Between These Verses and the Resurrection:

Through the above eleven verses, the greatest divine gifts and the most basic necessities of Man's life are pointed out, i.e. light, darkness, heat, water, land, and plants.

The statement about this precise regularity, on the one hand, is a clear proof of Allah's power over everything. Therefore, there would be no doubt for anyone as to how Allah can bring the dead to life again; as the Qur'an says, very clearly, for an answer to the rejecters of the Hereafter: is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like thereof?. Yes indeed! for He is the Creator Supreme, of skill and knowledge (infinite) ." (Sura Yasin, No. 36, verse 81) .

On the other hand, this great and lofty establishment certainly has a definite goal, which undoubtedly cannot be construed as the mere 'life of this world' or being satisfied by simply eating, drinking, and sleeping, but Allah's knowledge requires an aim higher than this goal and, in another sense, the first life is an admonishment for the Next Life, and is a stopover on Man's long journey, as Sura Mo'minun, No. 23, verse 115 verifies: Did you then think that We had created you in jest and that you would not be brought back to Us (for account) ?.

And, too, sleeping and wakefulness can be seen as a kind of death and rebirth, and the dry and dead lands that are revived by falling rains again and again, every year, are before our very eyes the incidents that refer to the Resurrection. They illustrate the Hereafter and the life after death. Sura Fatir No. 35, verse 9 attests to this idea. It, after pointing to the revival of the dead lands by rain, says: ... even so (will be) the Resurrection!.

Sura Nabaa (The Great News) No. 78 (Verses 17-20)

مِيقَاتًا كَانَ الْفَصْلُ يَوْمَ إِنَّ (17)

أَفْوَاجًا فَتَأْتُونَ الصُّورَ فِي يُنْفَخُ يَوْمَ (18)

أَبْوَابًا فَكَانَتْ السَّمَاءُ وَفُتِحَتْ (19)

سَرَابًا فَكَانَتْ الْجِبَالُ وَسُيِّرَتْ (20)

17. "Verily the Day of Sorting out is (a day) appointed,

18. "The Day when the Trumpet shall be blown and you shall come forth in groups".

19. "And the heaven shall be opened and become (wide as) gates,

20. "And the mountains shall be set in motion as if they were a mirage".

Commentary:

Finally, the Promised Day Will Come.

There were some various evidences for Resurrection referred to in the previous verses. Here, as a consequence, the first verse says: Verily the Day of Sorting out is (a day) appointed,.

The phrase /yaum-al-fasl/ 'the Day of Sorting out' is a very meaningful one which speaks of isolations on that Great Day: The separation of Good from Evil, the separation of the believing good-doers from disbelieving sinners, the isolation of parents from child, and brothers from each other.

The term /miqat/ is based on the term /waqt/ 'time' which means 'The certain places, where the pilgrims to Kaaba put on their pion appointed tune'. Igrimage dress, are called /miqat/ because they gather there at an appointed time.

Then, some of the specialties and the events of that Great Day are detailed: The Day when the Trumpet shall be blown and you shall come forth in groups.

It is well understood, from the verses of the Holy Qur'an, that two great events will happen ...when the Trumpet shall be blown. In the first incident, the order of the universe becomes disturbed and all the people, over the earth, and those who are in the heavens will die. In the second case the world will be renewed, the dead will return to life and the Resurrection will occur.

The term /nafkh/ means 'blow' and the term sur means 'trumpet' which is usually sounded for stopping or starting the caravans or troops, and the people, in them, understand this from its two different sounds whether they should stop or start.

This is a delicate point referring to those two great events. And what is said in the above verse, is a hint to the 'second blast', when the dead are revived and the Resurrection occurs'.

This verse says that on that Day, ...you shall come forth in groups, while Sura Maryam No. 19, verse 95 says: And every one of them will come to Him singly on the Day of Judgment and, also, Sura Asra, No. 17, verse 71 says: One day We shall call together all human beings with their (respective) Imams....

To collect these senses together, we see that 'people being in groups' is not in contrast with 'every group enters the Resurrection with its respective Imam'. And 'every one of them will coming singly' is stated for the reason that there are several stopovers in the Hereafter. People ay come in groups with their respective leaders; leading or misleading, at the first halting places, but when they stand before the throne of Justice, they stand individually, or as Sura Qaf, No.50, verse 21 says: And there will come forth every soul: with each will be an (angel) to drive, and an (angel) to bear witness.

It is also probable that they come one by one, because they are separated from their friends, partners and supporters. Since, in the Hereafter, everyone is alone with one's own deeds.

And the heaven shall be opened and becomes (wide as) gates.

What are the meanings of 'be opened' and 'gates'?

Some commentators have said that it means that the doors of the 'unseen world' will be opened to the intuition world' where the curtains will be removed, thus making the world of angels open to the world of Man.(1)

Some others think that this verse points to what is said in other verses of the Holy Qur'an, such as in sura Inshiqaq, No. 84, verse 1 which says: 'When the Sky is rent asunder', and on another occasion in relation to the same sense, but using another word it says: 'When The Sky is cleft asunder' (Sura Infitar, No. 82, verse 1) .

In fact, there will appear so many clefts in the celestial spheres that it will seem as if they have changed into open gates.

There is another probability that Man, in the present conditions of this world, cannot venture through the heavens, and if it were possible for him to, it would be strictly limited, as if, the present circumstances had shut the gates of the skies to him. But, in the Hereafter. Man will become free from the earthly world and the gate-ways to the heavens will be opened to him, and then the necessary conditions will become available.

In other words, on that Day, the skies will be 'cleft asunder' and after that new skies and earth will be substituted, as Sura Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 48 says: One day the Earth will be changed (into) a different Earth and so will be the heavens... On this occasion the gates of the skies are opened for the earthly men to go through and follow their ways: the righteous go into Heaven whose doors will be opened to them: ...until behold, they arrive there; its gates will be opened; and its keepers will say: Peace be upon you...'. (Sura Zumar No. 39. verse 73) .

It is in the same place that angels come to them from every door and congratulate them: ... and angels shall enter unto them from every gate (with the salutation) . (Sura Ra'd, No. 13. verse 23) .

And the doors of Hell will be opened to the Unbelievers: 'TheUnbelievers will be led to Hell in crowds: until when they arrive there, its gates will be opened.... (Sura Zumar, No. 39, verse 71) .

And, thus. Man arrives in a place where the width is as wide as

(1) Al-Mizan, vol. 20, p. 265 (Farsi Translation)

the phenomenal earth and heavens: ...and for a garden whose width is that (of the whole) of the heavens and of the earth... (Sura Al-i-'Imran. No. 3, verse 133) .

And finally, the next verse, explaining the events of the Hereafter, illustrates the status of the mountains and says: And the mountains shall vanish as if they were a mirage.

As it is understood from all the different verses of the Qur'an about 'the end of the mountains in the Hereafter', that mountains will go through stages: at first they will move: And the mountains are in motion, (Sura Tur, No. 52, verse 10) .

Then they will be taken off and crushed: "...and the earth and mountains are lifted up and crushed with a single blow", (Sura Haqqah, No. 69. verse 14) .

And after that they will be as a poured heap of sand: ...and the mountains become a slipping heap of sand,(Sura Muzzmmil, No. 73, verse 14) .

Then, they will change like fibers of teased or carded wool which can be moved about by the winds: 'And the mountains will be like carded wool', (Sura Al-Qari'ah, No. 101. verse 5) .

They will turn to dust, then, and scatter about: And the mountains shall be crumbled to atoms, Becoming dust scattered abroad, (Sura Waqi'ah, No. 56. Verses 5-6) .

And finally, as the current verse denotes, there will remain only a trace of them as a mirage.

Thus, mountains will disappear throughout the earth at last, and the land will be level: They ask you concerning the Mountains: say, My Lord will uproot them and scatter them as dust; He will leave them as plains smooth and level, (Sura Ta-ha No. 20, verses 105-106) .

The term /sarab/ is based on the term sarab and means: 'a mirage', a deceitful appearance as of water in the desert. Then anything that has an appearance, but is nothing, indeed, is called 'mirage'.

In fact, the mountains will turn into dust and will be scattered in the air in a state like a mirage. When high solid mountains will have a destiny like this, the state of other changes in the world and, also, the state of people of great authority, in this life, will be obvious there; a mere mirage.

The following question may arise: Do these events happen with the 'first blast', which is the end of this world, or with the 'second blast', which is the beginning of the Resurrection?

Since the verse "The Day when the trumpet shall be blown and you shall come forth in groups"

certainly relates to the first blast', when people survive and arrive at the Hereafter in groups, this verse must be concerned with the same blast, too, but its beginning (the movement of the mountains) may occur with the first blast' and its end (changing as a mirage) with the 'second blast'.

There is another probability that all the stages of the mountains relate to the first blast, however, since the range of these two blasts are almost close to each other, they are mentioned together, as in some other verses of the Qur'an. The events of the first blast are mentioned with the events of the second blast (as in Sura Takwir and Infitar) .

It is noteworthy that in the former verses mountains were referred to as 'pegs' and the earth as a 'cradle'; but in these verses it is said that on the Day when the order of the destruction of this world will be issued, that cradle will be disturbed and those great pegs will be leveled and, hence, their tangible matter will become decomposed and shattered.

Sura Naba (The Great News) No. 78 (Verses 21-30)

مِرْصَادًا كَانَتْ جَهَنَّمَ إِنَّ (21)

مَا بَا لِلطَّاعِينَ (22)

أَحْقَابًا فِيهَا لَا يَبِينُ (23)

شَرَابًا وَلَا بَرْدًا فِيهَا يَذُوقُونَ لَا (24)

وَعَسَاقًا حَمِيمًا إِلَّا (25)

وَفَاقًا جَزَاءً (26)

حِسَابًا يَرْجُونَ لَا كَانُوا إِنَّهُمْ (27)

كَذَابًا بِآيَاتِنَا وَكَذَّبُوا (28)

كِتَابًا أَحْصَيْنَاهُ شَيْءٌ وَكُلَّ (29)

عَذَابًا إِلَّا تَزِيدُكُمْ قَلْنَ فَذُقُوا (30)

21. Surely Hell lies in ambush'.
22. 'For the transgressors a destination'.
23. 'To abide therein for ages'.
24. Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink'.
25. Except a boiling fluid and pus'.
26. A fitting recompense (for their evil) '.
27. Surely they used not to look forward to the reckoning (for their deeds) '.
28. And they rejected Our Signs with strong denial'.
29. And everything have We recorded in a book'.
30. So taste you (the fruit of your deeds) ; for no increase shall We grant you, but in punishment.

Commentary:

Hell is a Great Ambush!

After presenting some of the evidences of Resurrection and a part of its incidents, attention is paid to the destiny of the Unbelievers and says:

Surely Hell lies in ambush,

For the transgressors a destination'.

To abide therein for ages.

The term /mirsad/ is a place-noun which means 'a place of observation, or of ambush'. Raqib cites

in his book Mufradat: /marsad/ and /mirsad/ both mean the same thing with a slight difference; that /mirsad/ is called a place that is made especially for an ambush'.

Some commentators have said that the term is in the Arabic intensive form, with the same sense as that of a person who lies in ambush, continuously. Of course, the first meaning is both more common and more appropriate.

The question of 'Who is lying in wait, in Hell, for the transgressors?', has been answered with the angels of chastisement ', because according to Sura Muryam, No. 19. Verse 71 the whole of mankind, good or evil, will pass by the fire of Hell or over it, thus: 'Not one of you but will pass over it: this is with the Lord, a Decree which must be accomplished'. In this companion passage, the angels of chastisement are lying in wait to catch the transgressors.

If we comment on the term with the meaning of its Arabic intensive form, Hell is lying in wait and each of the transgressors, who passes by, will be absorbed inside, and in this passage it can be seen that none of them will be safe from fire since, either the angels of chastisement or the intensive absorption of Hell, will capture them.

The term /ma'ab/ means: 'a place of return ', and sometimes means: 'residence'. It is used here, with the latter meaning.

The term /ahqab/is the plural form of /huqb/ with the sense of 'a long space of time '.The 'space' has been commented on, differently, as to being 'forty' seventy' or 'eighty' years. In any case, this sense denotes that the transgressors will remain in Hell for a long time, but it will end at last. This contrasts with the verses that denote the eternity of chastisement for them.

The commentators have followed different tracks in commenting on this, for example:

Among the consensus of the commentators, a well-known commentary says the term /ahqab/1 in this text, means that 'some long spaces of time will pass one after another without having an end; with each one that passes, another substitutes'.

In some traditions, it is said that this verse is about those evildoers who will finally be free from the fire, not about those who will be in Hell forever. (1)

Then, to point to a small part of the great punishments in Hell, it says: Nothing cool shall they taste therein, nor any drink'.

'Except a boiling fluid, and pus.

And also, of course, the thick hot smoke mentioned in Sura Waqi'ah, No. 56, verse 43 thus:"And in the shades of Black Smoke".

The term /hamim/ means 'a boiling water' and the term /qassaq/ means 'pus' flowing from a wound or sore, and some have commented on it to mean 'bad-smelling fluids '.

The Righteous, in contrast with them, drink the wholesome pure drinks from the heavenly springs gifted by Allah:and their Lord will give them to drink a Drink, Pure and Holy, (Sura Insan, No. 76, verse 21) . And there are some drinks for them, in nice heavenly containers, which are sealed with musk: 'Whose seal is musk..., (Sura Mutaffifin, No. 53, verse 26) . What a contrast between the righteous and evildoers!

Since these grave and dreadful punishments may seem surprising

(1) Tafsir Nur-uth-Thaqalayn. vol.5, p. 494 Tradition 23 and p. 495, Tradition 26 to some, in addition to this, it says: A fusing recompense for their evil) '.

And why not? Those who were cruel to the oppressed, in the world, and had no mercy on anyone; tyrannically branding all the hearts and spirits so that it seemed that they burnt their victims, violently, deserve to suffer painful punishments like that and their drinks should, also, be so.

Basically, as we have mentioned repeatedly, it is understood from the verses, of the Qur'an, that at least many of the chastisements in the Hereafter are the incarnation of men's deeds in this world. For instance, Sura Tahrim, No. 66, verse 7 says: 'O you Unbelievers! Make no excuses this Day! You are being but requited for all that you did!' (And now you see them in front of you) .

* * * * To explain the cause of these punishments, it says: 'Surely they used no' to look forward to the Reckoning (for their deeds) '.

* * * * And the same carelessness paid to the Reckoning and the Day of Judgment was the cause of their rebellion, tyranny, and cruelty which resulted in this dreadful destiny for them.

In fact, the lack of Faith, about the Reckoning, is a certain cause of rebellion; that which is the cause of those grave chastisements.

The term /layarjun/ is derived from /raja'/ which means both 'hope' and 'lack of fear and terror'. In principle, when one hopes and expects a penalty, naturally he fears, and if he does not expect it, he does not dread it, and these two correlate with each other. Then, those who do not have hope in the Reckoning do not fear, either.

The term /inna/ shows emphasis; the term /kanu/ is a sign for the past continuous tense; the term /hisaba/ which has been used in an indefinite form, here, after the negative sign of /la/ means 'reckoning' and in general, all point to the fact that they, the transgressors, never expected any Reckoning or the Record, at all. Or, in other words, they had forgotten about the Day of Judgment and they left no room for it in their lives. It is natural that such persons who become the doers of any great evil and sin will finally be involved in these painful punishments.

And they rejected Our Signs with strong denial'.

Their low desires had become so strong in them that they denied all the Signs of Allah in order to continue going astray and accomplish their unlawful wishes.

It is obvious that these verses carry some broad meanings, so that they include the verses consisting of the unity of Allah prophecy, divine legislation, creation, the prophets' miracles, precepts, and traditions. And, regarding the denial of the extensive Divine Signs and evidences, that have covered the world of creation and divine legislation, we should accept the punishment for these people as 'a fitting recompense' and just penalty.

Then, as a warning to these rebels and also for the emphasis on the balance of 'sin' and 'penalty', and the authority of a fitting recompense (for their evil) , it says: And everything have We recorded in a book.

We accept this warning so that we, therefore, would not imagine that something of our deeds will be left unrecorded and that we will not be punished for it, and also, that we would never consider the painful punishments as unjust.

Many of the verses, of the Qur'an, certify the fact that all of Man's deeds, irrespective of small or great, apparent or hidden, and even intentions and beliefs, are recorded.

Once it says: 'All that they do is noted in (their) Books (of Deeds) ': 'Every matter, small and great, is on record, (Sura, Qamar, No. 54, verse 52-53) .

Another time it says: '...Verily, Our messengers record all the plots that you make!' (Sura Yunus, No.10, verse 21) .

In addition, it says: '...and We record that which they send before and that which they leave behind...' (Sura Ya-Sin, No. 36, verse 12) .

And then, when the records of the evildoers will be handed to them, they will cry saying: 'Ah! Woe to us! What a book is this! It leaves out nothing small or great, but takes account thereof' (Sura

Kahf, No. 18, verse 49) .

Undoubtedly, the person who believes in this fact with all his heart, will be very careful in his deeds and the very belief creates a lofty wall between him and sin and is counted as one of the important factors, effective in good training.

In the last verse, of this portion under discussion, the style of speaking is changed from the third person to the second person, addressing them directly and in a threatening tone: So taste you (the fruit of your deeds) ; for no increase shall We grant you, but in punishment'.

Whatever you cry, whenever you say 'Ah woe to us', or ask to return to the world to do good instead of evil; all are in vain and you gain nothing, hut your punishment.

This is the penalty of those who, when they were faced with the Prophets' kind invitation to faith and piety, used to say: It is the same to us whether you admonish us or be not among (our) admonishers!' (Sura Shu'ara, No. 26. verse, 136) .

And again, this is the penalty of those who, when the messages of are recited get nothing from it: ... but it only increases their flight (from the Truth) !' (Sura Bani Israil, No. 17, verse 41) .

And finally, this is the penalty of those who avoided no sin and were fond of no act of charity.

It is narrated that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: 'This verse is the most intensive one in the Qur'an about those who deserve Hell'.(1)

Why shouldn't it be so!? When the Merciful and Beneficent Allah addresses them with wrath and says: ..for no increase shall We grant you, but in punishment', to make them completely hopeless.

(1) Tafsir-i-Kashshaf, vol. 690 and Ruh-al-Bayan. vol.10, p.307.

Sura Naba (The Great News) No. 78 (Verses 31-37)

مَفَازًا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِنَّ (31)

وَأَعْنَابًا حَذَائِقَ (32)

أَتْرَابًا وَكَوَاعِبَ (33)

دِهَاقًا وَكَأْسًا (34)

كِدَابًا وَلَا لَعْوًا فِيهَا يَسْمَعُونَ لَا (35)

حِسَابًا عَطَاءً رَبِّكَ مِّنْ جَزَاءِ (36)

خِطَابًا مِنْهُ يَمْلِكُونَ لَا الرَّحْمَنُ بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا وَالْأَرْضِ السَّمَاوَاتِ رَبِّ (37)

31. Surely for the Righteous there is a victory,

32. Gardens enclosed and vineyards

33. And comely maidens, with the freshness of youth, equals in age.

34. And a cup overflowing.

35. No Vanity shall they hear therein, nor Untruth,

36. A reward from your Lord, an award sufficing,

37. Lord of the heavens and the earth and all between the two, the All-merciful, with Whom none shall have power to argue.

Commentary:

Some Great Rewards for the Righteous.

The former verses were about the destiny of the rebels and about some of their painful punishments and the causes of their rebellion. The following verses are about the opposite group; the true believers, the Righteous, and some of their rewards in the Hereafter: compare them with each other so that the facts can be understood more clearly. This is the style, in the Qur'an, which sets the opponents facing each other and makes their state clear by showing the contrasts in their positions.

At first, it says: Surely for the Righteous there is a victory. The term /mafaz/ is a place-noun which is derived from /fauz/ in the sense of 'gaining goodness safely' and also means: salvation and victory' which is necessary for 'gaining the goodness safely'. Regarding the term mafaz/, which is used in an indefinite form in this text, it means 'gaining a very great victory and salvation'.

Then, describing this felicity and salvation, it says: Gardens enclosed and vineyards.

The term /hadaiq/ is the plural form of /hadiqah/ which is a garden planted with trees surrounded by a wall. Ra4ib cites in his hook, Mufradat, that /hadiqah/ originally means: 'a piece of land containing water for irrigation', like /hadaqah/, 'the eye-socket', where water exists, continuously, for lubricating the eye.

It is interesting to note that, among all the fruits, grapes are emphasized on, here, because of their extra advantages in comparison with the other fruits. Since, according to statements of the scientists of nutrition, grapes are not only a complete food, from the point of their nutritive value, but are, also, counted as an article of foodstuff closely similar in comparison to mothers' milk. They produce calories, in the body, twice as much as meat does. Grapes have so many useful properties that they could be called 'a natural pharmacy'.

Further to this, they possess the characteristic of being antitoxins; useful in blood purification. They work as a remedy for rheumatism and gout, and are a factor in controlling the level of nitrogen in the blood.

In addition to these, grapes strengthen the nerves, bring happiness, and because of containing different kinds of vitamins, make man able-bodied and powerful.

se are only a few of the qualities of grapes. And hence, it has been related that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) has said: Grapes are your best fruits.

Then, referring to another gift, in Heaven, for the Righteous, it says: And comely maidens, with the freshness of youth, equals in age The term /kawaib/ is the plural form of /kaib/ which means 'a damsel entering puberty' which illustrates their prime youth. And the term /atrab/ is the plural form of /tirb/ which means 'persons of the same chest', which is used mostly for the feminine gender. Some others have said that the term is originally based on /tara'ib/ meaning: 'ribs of the chest', which are very similar to each other.

It is probable that the maidens of Heaven, themselves, are 'equals in age, or they are 'equals in age' with the wives of the Righteous, for only by this standard can complete sympathy and understanding be figured. However, the first commentary seems more appropriate.

Then, the fourth gift, allocated to the Righteous, is mentioned:

And a cup overflowing.

It is not a drink like the worldly wine; which is filthy and makes man drunk, unconscious and descends him lower than the lowly animals, but it is a drink that increases the wisdom and refreshes the spirit and soul.

The term /ka's/ means 'a cup full of drink', and it sometimes means the container, itself.

The term /dihāq/ is rendered as 'overflowing' by many commentators and philologists, but in 'Lisan-ul-Arab' by Ibn-i-Manzur, two more meanings are cited for it: 'successive(ly) , repeated(ly) ' and 'limpid, clear'.

Therefore, if we consider all these senses, the verse means: 'in Heaven, overflowing cups of pure, limpid drink are brought, repeatedly, for the Righteous'.

In speaking about 'cup' and 'drink' reference is made to the disgusting association of the two in this world, while the heavenly drink is just the opposite to that devilish worldly wine. Subsequently, the next verse says: No Vanity shall they hear there, nor Untruth.

Two probabilities are suggested regarding the pronoun in /fiha/ and as to which noun it refers to. The first says it refers to 'Heaven' and the second, that it refers to 'cup'.

According to the first commentary the verse means that: 'they hear no foolishness or falsehood in Heaven', as was said in Sura Qashia, No.88, verses 10-11: In a Garden on high, Where they shall hear no (word) of vanity.

And, according to the second commentary the verse means: 'there will not appear any deceit or worthlessness as a result of having that cup of drink'; as was said in Sura Tur, No.52, verse 23: 'They shall there exchange, one with another, a (loving) cup free of frivolity, free of all taint of ill.

In any case, one of the great spiritual bounties for the Righteous, in Heaven, is that they hear no vanity, no falsehood, no slander, no rejection of the truth, no justification of the unjust, and no worthless talk such as are usually associated with this earthly world which is indulged in by some corrupted people and causes pain to the hearts of the Righteous. Verily, how nice and comfortable the environment where this kind of unbecoming speech is not found therein, and according to Sura Maryam, No.19, verse 62: 'They will not there hear any vain discourse, but only salutations of Peace:

In counting the bounties in Heaven, for the Righteous, a spiritual gift is mentioned, at the end, which excels the others and says: A reward from your Lord, an award sufficing'.

What blessing and reward can be better and has a higher standard than that of a powerless servant, favored with the grace and love of his Great, Gracious Lord. Allah rewards him, honors him, and gives him a liberal and bountiful gift. This is the true Salvation, which is so delightful for the Righteous that no other blessing can match it.

The term /rabb/ 'Lord' followed by ka', the second person singular pronoun (addressee) , together with the 'term /'ata/ 'an award' are all signs of His superior favor which are involved in these rewards.

The term /hisaba/ according to many commentators, means 'sufficient', like /hasbi/ ; 'enough'.

A tradition from Hazrat Ali (p.b.u.h.) says that in the Hereafter Allah takes careful count of each good deed, of the Believers, and awards them, for every good deed, ten to seven hundred times more, as he has cited from the Qur'an: "A reward from your Lord, an award sufficing".(1)

It is understood from this narration that though Allah's rewards are paid out generously or bountifully as awards, they are based on the account of good deeds, i.e. His awards are in proportion with men's good deeds. Hence, the term /hisaba/, in the above verse, can be commented on by its common meaning. 'account'. This meaning and the previous meaning, then, can be used interchangeably.

Then, in the last verse of this part, it says: Lord of the heavens and the earth and all between the two, the All-merciful,....

Truly, the One Who is the owner of the great universe, and is its Creator, too, Whose Grace is seen everywhere and covers everyone, does, indeed, award the Righteous, abundantly, in the Hereafter.

This verse, without doubt, points to the fact that if Allah promises the Righteous such rewards, then a small part of it, in the form of His general Grace, has been shown to those in the heavens as well as to those on the earth in this world.

And at the end of the verse, it says: ... With Whom none shall have power to argue.

The pronoun of the term /layamlikun/, 'none shall have', may refer to all creatures in the heavens and on the earth, or to all the Righteous and the rebels gathered in the Hereafter for the Reckoning and recompense. Whichever it may be, it points to this fact, that on that Day no one

has the right to protest against the Record, because it is so precise and the recompense so just that no one can say anything.

Besides, no one has the right to offer intercession, but by Allah's leave: "... Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permitteth?...", (Sura Baqarah, No.2, verse 255) .

(1) Nur-uth-Thaqalayn vol.5. p. 495. Tradition 29.

Explanation:

The Rewards of the Righteous and the Recompense of the Rebels:

There is an interesting comparison between the rewards of the Righteous, in these verses, and the chastisement of the disbelieving rebels in the former verses.

The contrast is between /mafaz/ 'a place of salvation' for the Righteous and /mersad/ 'a place of ambush'.

The Upright will have and enjoy ' gardens enclosed, and vineyards', but the transgressors will have fire to abide therein for ages'.

The Righteous are awarded 'pure drinks' in 'cups overflowing', but the evildoers are recompensed 'a boiling fluid and pus'.

The Righteous, are 'awarded sufficiently' by Allah; the All-merciful, but the rejecters receive 'a fitting recompense' from Him; the Just.

The rewards are increased for the Righteous, but there is an increase of punishment for the rebels.

In short, these two groups are in contrast with each other in every respect, because they are different from the point of belief and action.

The Pure Drinks in Heaven.

In different verses of the Holy Qur'an, the heavenly drinks are well-defined and specified. Studying these verses shows that those who drink these drinks attain such an ecstasy that no human language can describe it.

In Sura Insan, No. 76, verse 21 the drink is characterized as pure drink': And their Lord will give to

them to drink of a Drink, Pure and Holy.

On some other occasions it is emphasized that this clear white drink is a drink that brings no headiness nor intoxication: 'Round will be passed to them a Cup from a clear-flowing fountain', 'Crystal-white, of a taste delicious to those who drink (thereof) ', ' Free from headiness; nor will they suffer intoxication therefrom', (Sura Saffat, No.37, verse 45'-47) .

And in another Sura it says: Verily, the Righteous drink of a cup;

the mixture of which is (like) camphor', (Sura Insan, No.76, verse 5) .

Also, it says : And they will be given to drink there of a cup (of pure drink) mixed with Zanjabeel (ginger) , (Sura Insan No.76, verse 17) .

In the current verse, it says: And a cup overflowing. But most important is that it is Allah Who offers and serves them the drinks with His Favor and Grace: "...and their Lord will give to them to drink..." (Sura Insan, No.76, verse 21) .

Supplication:

"O Lord! We pray that You will give us the pure drink, also.

Sura Nabaa (The Great News) No. 78 (Verses 38-40)

صَوَابًا وَقَالَ الرَّحْمَنُ لَهُ أَذِنَ مَنْ إِلَّا يَتَكَلَّمُونَ لَا صَفًا وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ الرُّوحُ يَفْعُونَ يَوْمَ (38)

مَأْتِيًا رَبِّهِ إِلَى اتَّخَذَ شَاءَ فَمَنْ الْحَقُّ الْيَوْمَ ذَلِكَ (39)

تُرَابًا كُنْتُ لَيْتَنِي يَا الْكَافِرُ وَيَقُولُ يَدَاهُ قَدَمَتُ مَا الْمَرْءُ يَنْظُرُ يَوْمَ قَرِيبًا عَذَابًا أَنْذَرْنَاكُمْ إِنَّا (40)

38.The Day on which the Spirit and the angels shall stand arrayed, they shall speak not except whom the All-merciful gives leave, and (who) speaks what is right.

39 That Day is certain; whoever then desires may take refuge with his Lord.

40. Surely We have warned you of a Punishment near, the Day when man shall see what his two hands have sent forth and the Unbeliever shall say: O! would that I were dust'.

Commentary:

The Unbeliever shall say: "O' would that I were dust".

A noticeable part of the chastisement for the transgressors and the reward for the Righteous on Dooms Day, were mentioned in the previous verses.

Verses 38 to 40 introduce That Great Day', and expound on some of its events, by saying: 'The Day on which the Spirit and the angels shall stand arrayed, they shall speak not except whom the All-merciful gives leave, and (who) speaks what is right.

Undoubtedly, the act of the Spirit and the angels on that Day ; 'to stand arrayed and speak not except those whom the All-merciful gives leave', is only because of their obedience to Him. In this world, too, they fulfill His Will and serve His commands. Of course, their fulfillment, in that world, will be more apparent, more clear and more extensive.

What does the Spirit' mean, here? Commentators have yielded several interpretations for it, some of which, extend to eight probabilities. The following meanings are the most important ones: (1)

1. 'The Spirit' is a creature other than the angels and greater than all of them.
2. 'The Spirit' is the angel Gabriel who is the greatest angel because he is charged, especially, with bringing Messages from Allah to the human Apostles.
3. 'The Spirit' may be the souls of men, collectively, that rise with the angels.
4. 'The Spirit' is an angel of the highest standard, higher than all angels, and greater than Gabriel. It is the very angel who was with all prophets and the sinless Imams (P.B.U.H. Th.) and remains so.

It is noteworthy that, in the Qur'an, 'the Spirit' is sometimes simply mentioned alone and without any definition. In this case, it is often equivalent to the angels, as in this verse: The angels and the Spirit ascend unto Him..., (Sura Maarij, No 70.verse 4) .

Or; The angels and the Spirit descend therein by their Lord's leave for every affair (Sura Qadr, No. 97. verse 4) .

In these two verses, 'the Spirit' is mentioned after 'the angels', and in the current verse it is mentioned before 'the angels', therefore, it may indicate the greatness of a distinguished one.

But in many verses of the Qur'an 'the Spirit' is mentioned with something else or with a specification. For example, /ruh-ul-qudus/ 'Holy Spirit' in Sura Nahl, No. 16, verse 102 says: Say, The Holy Spirit has brought the revelation from thy Lord in Truth..., or /ruh-ul-amin/ 'the Spirit of Faith and Truth' in Sura Shuraa, No. 26, verse 193 says: With it came down the Spirit of Faith and Truth'.

(1) Qartabi, The Commentary, vol. 10. p. 6977.

In some verses Allah designates the word 'Spirit' for Himself as in the following: ...and breathed into him of My Spirit..., (Sura Al-Hijr, No. 15 Verse 29) . And in another verse it says: ...Then We sent to her Our Spirit..., (Sura Maryam, No. 19, verse 17) .

It seems that the term 'Spirit', which is stated differently in these verses, may have different meanings whose explanations are stated, appropriately, under each of them in the commentary.

But, among these various commentaries, what seems the most fitting, to the current verse, is that 'the Spirit' , here, refers to one of the great angels of Allah that, according to some narrations, is even higher than Gabriel, as a tradition from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) says: He is an angel greater than Gabriel and Michael.(1)

And, it is cited in Ali-ibn-Thrahim's commentary that: 'The Spirit' is an angel, greater than Gabriel and Michael, and he was with the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) as well as with the Imams.(2)

Although in some narrations quoting Ahiul-Bait, it is cited that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) has said: The Spirit is an army from Allah's armies, who are not angels and have a head, hands and feet and, then, he (p.b.u.h.) recited: The Day on which the Spirit and the angels shall stand arrayed, and said: " These are an army and those are of another army. (3)

In any case, as it was pointed out earlier, the great creature of Allah whether it be among the angels or is another kind of creature, will be with the angels in the Hereafter; all of them ready to obey Allah command.

In the Hereafter, everyone is so terrified that no one is able to say a word or offer intercession except by Allah's leave. They praise Him, or intercede, as He permits, only for those who are

deserving.

It is cited, in a narration, that once Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) was asked about this verse and he said: ,By Allah, on the Day of Judgement, we will be given leave for them and we will speak.

The narrator asked him (p.b.u.h.) what he would say on that Day, and he answered: We praise our Lord, and send blessings on our Prophet,

(1) Majma'-al-Bayan vol.10, p! 427.

(2) Tafsir-i-Ali-ibn-Ibrahim, vol.2, p.402.

(3) Durrual-Manthur, vol.6, p. 309.

and intercede for our followers and our Lord does not refuse us'.(1)

It is understood from this narration that on the Day of Judgement the Prophets and the sinless Imams will be in the row of angels and 'the Spirit' who will be given leave to speak will praise Allah and intercede.

The term /sawab/ 'what is right' is an evidence that angels the Spirit, prophets, and Saints will intercede for those who are deserving and their intercession will not be undue.

Then, it points to that Great Day which is the Day of resurrection for both men and angels, as well as The Day of Judgement for the transgressors, where they will be given their recompense and the Righteous will be rewarded, and it says: That Day is certain.

The term /haqq/ means: 'a thing that surely happens' and 'that which is right and proper, just and true'. This meaning is completely right for the Dooms Day, where the rights of everyone will be given to him; the oppressed's rights will be taken from the oppressors, the 'rights' and 'the hidden secrets' will be manifested, and hence, it will be 'right' in all respects.

Since recognition of this fact can be the most effective motive for men to move towards the path of Allah and obeying him, then immediately after the previous sentence. in this verse, it says: "...whoever then desires may take refuge with his Lord.

That is, all the means of this divine motion are prepared: right and wrong have been introduced; prophets have said enough about the Truth and Divine Reality; wisdom, which is an inner apostle, has clearly defined the end of the transgressors and the Righteous, and the court, the Judge, and the Judgement have been known. The only remaining thing is Man's firm decision that should be

made with free-will; which Allah has bestowed on him, to go forth on the right path.

The term /ma'ab/ means 'a place of return' and it is also cited with the sense of 'road' and 'way' .

Then, as an emphasis on the sinners' punishment, and as a warning to those who think that the Great Day is very far from them or

(1) Majma'-al-Bayan vol. 10, p. 427.

it is on credit, stating that it is very near it says: Surdy We have warned you of a punishment near...

The life of this world, however long it may be, is as a mere moment in comparison with the life of the Next World. According to an Arab proverb: 'Everything that is certain to come, is near' . Then, for the same reason, Allah, in Sura Ma'arij, No. 70, vcrscs 5-7 tells His prophet: Therefore do thou hold patience, a patience of beautiful (contentment) '. They see the (Day) indeed as a far-off (event) : But We see it (quite) near .

Amir-al-Momineen Ali (p.b.u.h.) , also in this regard, says: Whatever is certain to come, iv near.(1)

It is near because the main source of men's divine chastisement is their own deeds, which are always with them as we see from Sura Ankabut, No. 29. verse 54: ...and most surely hell encompasses the unbelievers.

Since on that Day a great number of people, being full of grief and sorrow, will be regretful of their actions, which, then, of course, will be quite useless. Following that warning, it says: ...the Day when man shall see what his two hands have sent forth, and the Unbeliever shall say: O! would that I were dust'.

Some commentators have considered the term /yanzur/ in the same sense of /yantazir/, that is: 'on that Day, men will wait for the recompense of their deeds' .

And some others have considered it to mean: 'looking at the Record and observing the good and evil actions' .

And it has also been construed as meaning: 'to see the reward and the penalty of the deeds' .

These commentaries originate from the idea that they have paid little attention to the existence of the embodiment of Man's deed, on that Day, otherwise, the meaning of the verse is clear and no interpretation would be needed.

From the different verses of the Qur'an and Islamic narrations, it is understood that on that Day the deeds of Man will be personified in

(1) Nahj-ul-Balaqa, Sermon No. 103 (Arabic Version) . Sermon No 106, (English Version) .

some appropriate forms and will appear in front of him. In fact, he will truly see his own deeds, himself, and when he observes his evil actions he will be both sorry and regretful, and when he observes his good actions he will be happy and delighted. As a matter of fact, one of the best rewards for the Righteous, and one of the worst punishments for the evildoers is the very personification and incarnation of their deeds, which will follow them everywhere.

a Kahf, Mo. 18, verse 49 says: ...they will find all that they did, placed before them... . And Sura Zilzal, No. 99, verses 7-8 say: So, whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall behold it. And whoever has done an atom's weight of evil shall behold it.

So, these are some of the wonders of the Hereafter that the deeds of Man will be personified and the powers will be changed into a tangible substance and become a living thing.

The sentence /maqaddamat yadahu/ 'what his two hands have sent forth', is so stated because, Man usually does most of his actions with his hands, but, surely they are not limited only to those actions which are performed by the hands. The actions which are done by the tongue, eyes, and ears are included, too.

Verse 40, of this Sura, has warned us about the matter before we reach that Day and it says: ..And let every soul look at what (provision) he has sent forth for the morrow. .

When the disbelievers see the deeds of their lifetime in front of them, they will be so sorry that they will say: 'O! would that I were dust' , and from it would never have been created as a human being.

Of course, they know that dust is better than themselves, because dust is not only harmless but also useful for all: it takes a single grain and makes a return of sometimes more than one hundred plants, instead. But humans have been the source of corruption in different forms.

In some verses of the Qur'an it is said that when the Unbelievers and the sinners see the Hereafter and the throne of Divine Judgement, therein, and the recompense of their deeds, they will react differently, all of which relates to the intensive grief they have.

Sometimes, they say: ...Ah! woe is me! in that I neglected (my duty) towards Allah.

And sometimes they say: Now then send us back (to the world) : we will work righteousness: for

we do indeed (now) believe.

And further still they say: Would that I were dust! , which was discussed in the current Sura.

The Clear Solution for Fatalism and Free-will:

This controversy is one of the oldest cases which has been discussed among the scholars, some of whom believed in Man's free-will and some in another philosophy; each have stated some reasons to prove their ideas.

It is interesting to note that the fatalists and those adherents to the idea of 'free-will' have both approved the principle of free-will, in practice and have accepted it. In other words, their scientific conflicts are bound only to the circle of their discussions and not in practice. This clearly shows that the principle of free-will exists in the nature of all men, and by refusing the various temptations, everyone agrees with the principle of free-will.

One of the most clear evidences to free-will is the common conscience or the general nature of men that appears in Man's life in different forms. Since, if Man thought that deeds were obligations and did not believe in free-will, then why:

1. Do they sometimes repent of their behaviour, for what they have done, or the actions they have not done, and decide to take benefit from their former experiences in their future conduct?
2. Condemn the evildoers. If they are obliged why are they scorned?
3. Are the good doers praised?
4. Do people try to train their children, so that they can gain felicity and be happy. If all are obliged, what is the use of training?
5. Do all the scientists, without exception, try to increase the standard of morals in societies? Why?
6. Does Man repent of his errors? If the principle of fatalism is accepted, what does 'penitence' mean?
7. Does Man become sorry about his negligences in carrying out his duties? Why?
8. Are criminals and evildoers, all over the world, strictly interrogated and tried in courts? The action beyond the limit of Man's Will does not need interrogation and trial.

9. Throughout the world and among all sects, whether they are polytheist or materialist, do they believe in punishment for criminals? Then is it a penalty for the deed that they were obliged to do?

10. Do even the fatalists, when their interests and honour is violated by someone, protest and call him as an offender in the court?

In short, truly, if Man is not free in Will, then why should he have feelings of regret?

What is blame and scorn? Can a person whose hand is trembling, unwillingly, be blamed?

Why are the good doers praised? Do they have a free will of their own to continue doing good?

In fact, when the effect of training and education is accepted, fatalism will be meaningless.

Besides, morals, without assuming free-will, have no sense at all. If we are obliged to do things, what is the meaning of repentance?

What is regretting for? Then, the trial of an obliged person is the most cruel thing, and punishing him is worse than that.

All these point to the fact that the principle of free-will' is in human nature and it fits in with the general conscience of mankind. Not only the common people, but also all special classes and all philosophers are like that in their deeds, and then, even fatalists are actually free in Will.

It is an interesting fact that the Qur'an has frequently emphasized on this situation. It says: ...whoever then desires may take refuge with his Lord. Not only in these verses, but also in many other verses of the Qur'an, stress has been put on Man's Will, however, to discuss this here, will deviate us from our topic of discussion, so, suffice it to mention only three of them, thus:

Surely We guided him to the way: whether he be grateful or ungrateful (is up to him) (Sura Insan, No. 76, verse 3) .

Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it) , (Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 29) .

"Surely this is an admonishment, that whosoever will, (taking this straight way) may choose a path unto his Lord, (Sura Insan, No. 76, verse 29) .

Discussing fatalism and free-will is very time consuming and many books and articles have been

written about these subjects. What we have mentioned, here, was only a small sample on the subject, from the point of view of the Qur'an and the conscience, which we will end on this important point:

The adherence to fatalism, from the view of some men, is not only for the philosophical discussions and the reasoning out of problems, but it is for some other important psychological and social matters, as well, which are undoubtedly factors in its appearance and continued popularity.

Many persons have assumed that the belief in 'fatalism' or 'fatal destiny' or 'Fate' in the sense of fatalism, have a common source: to escape from personal responsibility, or to use it as a cover-up for the defeats and failures resulting from their negligence and carelessness, and/or due to their low desires.

Sometimes, colonizers, to break the perseverance of people and to extinguish the nation's fire of wrath, imposed this idea on them saying that their fate has been the same from the beginning, so, they can do nothing, but accept it.

Assuming that this belief is correct the whole behaviour of all criminals is permissible and the vice of all sinners becomes excused, then, there will be no difference between an obedient person and a criminal.

Supplication:

O Lord! Protect us from these misled ideas and their consequences.

O Lord! On the Day that Hell lies in ambush for the transgressors and Heaven is a victory for the Righteous, we all have hope in your Grace.

O Lord! On the Day when all see their deeds in front of them, do not put us to shame.

The End of Sura Nabaa (The Great News)