

*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 Sura Nazi'at and Abasa and Takwir

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No. 79 (46 Verses)



Contents of the Sura:

The theme in this Sura, like Sura Naba, is about Resurrection and, on the whole, can be divided into six parts:

1. It emphasizes on the certainty of the Great Day and lays stress on its occurrence by emphatic statements which relate to the Resurrection.
2. It points to one part of the frightening and dreadful incidents of that Day.
3. It precisely mentions the story of Moses and the end of the arrogant Pharaoh as a consolation for both the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and the believers, as well as giving a warning to the disbelievers, and also contains an indication to the fact that the denial of the Resurrection is the source of many sins.
4. It mentions a few of the countless Powers of Allah which exist in the heavens and on the Earth; themselves, being evidences of the possibility of Resurrection and the new life after death.
5. It describes another part of the horrible events, on that Great Day, and the painful end of the disbelievers in contrast to the rewards of the righteous.
6. At the end of the Sura, it emphasizes on the fact that no one knows the date of that Day, however, it is certain that it is near.

The name 'Naziat' is derived from the first verse of this Sura.

The Virtue in studying this Sura:

It is narrated that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: "For he who studies Sura Nazi'at the length of his stay and his reckoning on the Day of Judgment will last as long as the saying of a daily prayer and, thereafter, he will come into Paradise".(1)

A tradition from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) says: "He who studies it (Sura Naziat) will not pass away but satisfied, will not be brought into the Resurrection but satisfied, and will not come into Paradise but satisfied", (with the infinite Grace of Allah) .

The shocking verses of this Sura awaken the sleeping souls and draw their attention to their duties. Then, it is certain that only those who spiritually put the contents of this Sura into practice will receive these rewards; not those who content themselves with the mere reading of its words.

(1) Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 428

Commentary : Verse 1.2.3.4.5

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(1) عَرُفًا وَالنَّازِعَاتِ (1)

(2) نَشْطًا وَالنَّاشِطَاتِ (2)

(3) سَبْحًا وَالسَّابِحَاتِ (3)

(4) سَبْقًا فَالسَّابِقَاتِ (4)

(5) أَمْرًا فَالْمُدَبِّرَاتِ (5)

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. By those (angels) who tear out (the souls of the wicked) with violence;

2. By those (angels) who gently draw out (the souls of the Blessed) ;

3. And by those who glide along (on errands of mercy) ,,

4. Then press forward as in a race,

5. And those who manage the affair,

Commentary:

By The Angels Who Try Hard:

There are five important matters sworn to in the above verses and whose aim is to settle the rightfulness and certainty of the Resurrection.

"By those (angels) who tear out (the souls of the wicked) with violence,"

* * * *

"By those (angels) who gently draw out (the souls of the blessed) ";

* * * *

And by those(who glide along (on errands of mercy) ",

Then press forward as in a race,

* * * *

And these who manage the affair,

First, some particular terms used in these verses should be made clear before we proceed with the commentary of the verses.

The word /nazi'at/ is based on 'naza'a' which means 'to pluck out', or 'to draw out somewhat sharply, like drawing a bow to shoot arrows'. This word is sometimes used for spiritual matters, such as the detachment of enmity or love from the heart.

The term /qaraqqa/, according to many philologists, means 'to sink, the act of drowning' and sometimes it has been used in the sense of 'being entirely busy in an event or a disaster'.

Or, the term /qaraq/, according to Ibn-Manzur in Lisan-al-Arab, is a noun replacing the infinitive with the meaning of /iqraq/ 'to exaggerate' which originally means 'to draw a bow to the extreme possible point', hence, to exaggerate in anything.

This clearly shows that, in the above verse, the word does not mean 'to sink, or to drown', but it means 'to do something to the extreme end'.(1)

The term /nashitat/ is derived from /nasht/ which originally means 'to untie the knots which are easily unfastened'. 'A shallow well', from which the bucket can be drawn easily at one pull, is called /inshat/. 'A camel which is instigated by a subtle hint and moves very fast' is called /nashitah/ Therefore, this word is generally used in any case where a movement is fluently done.

The term /sabiha/ is based on /sabh/ which means 'a quick movement in water or air'. Hence, it is applied to swimming, or a swimming motion, or a swift gallop, or to perform a daily affair, quickly. The word /tasbih/ 'to praise Allah' is from the same root, as if the one who praises Allah goes quickly forward in worship of the Lord.

The term /sabiqa/ is derived from /sabqah/ which means 'to precede' and since the action is usually impossible without full speed, this term is sometimes used in the sense of 'speed', too.

(1) Kisan-al-Arab; Majma'-al-Bayan, The Commentary; Kashshaf, The Commentary; and Majma'-AL-Bahrayn.

The term /mudabbirat/ is based on /tadbir/ which means 'to mediate upon, or consider the end of an action', and since foresight causes one to arrange his affairs in a better manner, this word is used here in that sense.

Now, with due attention to what was explained about the words concerning the verses, we are going to proceed with the commentary.

To whom or to what do these five oaths refer? The oaths, at first sight, seem rather ambiguous, while at the same time this ambiguity stimulates us to mediate more deeply and thus causes our progressive thinking.

In this regard, commentators have given many different ideas and commentaries which mainly revolve around three points:

1. The oaths are aimed at 'angels' who are ordered to tear out the souls of the wicked and the pagan, violently; those souls who have never assumed to submit to the Truth and to the angels

who are appointed to draw out the souls of the blessed, gently and smoothly.

Then, it refers to the angels who move fast and fluently to carry out the Divine Command. And in so doing, they race each other to fulfill their errands.

Finally, they arrange the affairs according to Allah's plan.

2. The oaths refer to the 'stars' which continually set on one horizon and rise above another.

A group of them moves slowly, but another goes swiftly, from one place to another, with speed. They are floating above us in immense space, taking the lead one after another.

And finally, these stars, having their own influence and effects (like the effect of sunlight and moonlight on the Earth) , arrange the affairs according to Allah's plan.

3. The oaths are aimed at the fighters of 'Holy War' (Jihad) , or at their horses, and who leave their own houses and cities with expressive grief, but, then they smoothly and happily leave for the battlefield taking the lead one after another directing and running the affairs of war.

On occasion, some commentators have tried to combine these three ideas by choosing one part from one commentary and another part from another one, but the framework is the same. (1)

(1) A fourth point of probability cited refer' to the natural movements of creatures in the world.

There is no contrast, of course, among these commentaries and it is possible that the above verses refer to all of them. But, on the whole, the first commentary, regarding its suitability to the main theme, Resurrection, and with the traditions by the sinless Imams, seems to be the most fitting.

Commentary : Verse 6.7.8.9.10.11.12.13.14

(6) الرَّاجِفَةُ تَرْجُفُ يَوْمَ

(7) الرَّادِقَةُ تَتَّبِعُهَا

(8) وَاجْفَهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ قُلُوبٌ

(9) خَاشِعَةً أَبْصَارُهَا

(10) الْحَافِرَةَ فِي لَمْرُدُودُونَ أَنَّنَا يَفُوقُونَ

(11) نَجْرَةً عِظَامًا كُنَّا أَنبَدَا

(12) خَاسِرَةً كَرَّةً إِذَا تَلَّكَ قَالُوا

(13) وَاجِدَةً زَجْرَةً هِيَ فَإِنَّمَا

(14) بِالسَّاهِرَةِ هُمْ فَإِذَا

6. The Day on which everything that can be in commotion will be in violent commotion,

7. Followed by another mighty convulsion,

8. Hearts that Day will be in agitation,

9. Cast down will he (their) eyes.

10. They say (now) : What shall we indeed he returned to (our) former state?

11. What! when we shall have become rotten bones?

12. They said: That then will he a losing return.

13. But it :hall he only a single blast.

14. When, behold they shall he in the awakened state.

Commentary:

The Resurrection Will Happen with a Single Great Blast!

The occurrence of the Resurrection, in the aforementioned verses, was described as a certain event confirmed by five strict oaths. Now, in the present verses, some of the signs and incidents on that Great Day are described.

The Day on which everything that can be in commotion will be in violent commotion,

Followed by another mighty convulsion.

The term /rajifah/ is based on /rajf/ which means: 'an agitation or a violent quake'; and seditious news is called 'arajif' because it causes a society to become agitated.

The term /radifah/ is derived from /radf/ which means: 'a person or a thing streaming one after another'.

Many commentators believe that /rajifah/ refers to 'the first Blast of the trumpet' which is to precede the blast of the quake and the destruction of the universe, and the term /radifah/ refers to the second Blast after which the Resurrection will occur and the new life begins.

Therefore, this verse is somewhat similar to what was revealed in Sura Zumar No. 39, verse 68, thus: And the Trumpet will (just) be sounded, when all that are in the heavens and on earth will swoon, except such as it will please Allah (to exempt) . Then will a second one be sounded when, behold, they will be standing and looking on!

Some others have also said that the term /rajifah/ refers to 'the that will destroy the earth' and the term /radifah/ means: 'the quake that will wreck the sky'. However, the first commentary seems more appropriate.

Hearts that Day will be in agitation,

Being anxious for the Reckoning and penalty at the Judgment,

the hearts of the criminals, the sinners and the Unjust will severely tremble.

The term /wajifah/ is derived from /wajf/ which originally means 'to Move fast'; where the term /aujaf/ is used with the meaning of 'to make a horse or camel move briskly with a bounding pace'; and since a quick movement causes shaking and anxiety, this word is also used in the sense of 'violent agitation'.

This inner anxiety is so violent that its effects appear in the whole body of the sinners.

Cast down will be (their) eyes.

On that Day, the eyes will subside, coming to a stop and be dazed as if they are blinded by fear.

Then the scope of the speech changes from the Hereafter to this world.

"They say (now) : what! shall we indeed be returned to (our) former state?"

The term /hafirah/ is based on /hafr/ which originally means 'to dig' and the cavity resulting from this action is called /hufrah/ 'ditch'. The hoof is also called /hafir/ because it is usually used to dig the soil. In any event, the term /hafirah/ is metonymically used in the sense of 'a beginning, or original state, or former condition'.

what! when we shall have become rotten bones?

This is the very thing that the rejecters of the Resurrection always used to emphasize on and said that it was not believable that rotten bones could come to life, again, because they imagined that the distance between rotten bones of dust and living creatures was too far. They had forgotten that they had been created from that very same dust.

term /naxirah/ is based on /naxr/ which originally means: 'a rotten tree which is hollow and makes a whistling sound when the wind blows'; hence, a nasal sound is called 'naxir'; and, so, the word has been used for everything which is rotten and worn.

The disbelievers are not satisfied with the idea of Resurrection, so, they ridicule it.

They said: That then will be a losing return.

Commenting on the verse, another probability can come about which is that they expressed their view in a serious manner. If so, then, they want to say: 'If there is a return it will be a uselessly repeated one, which will be injurious'. If this life is good why does Allah not continue the same one, and if it is bad why is there a return?

Regarding the term 'hafirah' which means: 'a ditch', the sentence Shall we indeed be returned to (our) former state? can, also, be an evidence for this commentary. But, the first is a more well-known commentary.

It is worth noting that in the former verses the term /yaquluna/ denoted that they used to say their words repeatedly, but in the current verse the word /qalu/ shows that they did not always repeat the statement.

At the end of this part, the Resurrection and the occurrence of the Hereafter is again mentioned in a decisive and shocking tone.

But is shall be only a single blast."

When, behold, they shall be in the awakened state.

It means that the event of the Resurrection will not be the fruit of a difficult and complicated action for Allah. It only depends on His command and when the second blow of the Trumpet occurs all rotten

bones, which are scattered in the earth, will be gathered, revived and raised from their graves.

term /zajrah/ means 'to cry for moving', and, here, it means 'the second blast'. Regarding the content of the meaning of these two terms /zajratun - wahidah/ 'only a single blast', they denote that the Resurrection is a sudden happening and it is easy for Allah's Power that with a cry of an order by the angel of the Trumpet, all the dead come to life again and are present in the Hereafter for the Reckoning.

The term /sahirah/ is based on /sahar/ which means: 'to sit up at night', and since es frightful occurrence removes the sleep of night from the eyes and, moreover, since the land of the Hereafter is horrible, so, the gathering place, in the Hereafter, is called /sahirah/. The term is also used for any desert, since, all deserts are generally frightful and it seems that this fright takes the sleep from the eyes.

Commentary : Verse 15.16.17.18.19.20.21.22.23.24.25.26

(15) مُوسَىٰ حَدِيثُ أَتَاكَ هَلْ

(16) طُورِ الْمُقَدَّسِ بِالْوَادِ رَبُّهُ نَادَاهُ إِذْ

(17) طَعَىٰ إِنَّهُ فِرْعَوْنَ إِلَىٰ أَذْهَبْ

(18) تَزَكَّىٰ أَنْ إِلَىٰ لَكَ هَلْ فَكُنْ

(19) فَتَخَشَىٰ رَبِّكَ إِلَىٰ وَأَهْدِيكَ

(20) الْكُبْرَىٰ الْآيَةَ فَأَرَاهُ

(21) وَعَصَى فَكَذَّبَ

(22) يَسْعَى أَدْبَرَ ثُمَّ

(23) فَنَادَى فَخَشَرَ

(24) الْأَعْلَى رَبُّكُمْ أَنَا فَقَالَ

(25) وَالْأُولَى الْأَجْرَةَ نَكَالَ اللَّهُ فَأَخَذَهُ

(26) يَخْشَى لِمَنْ لَعِبْرَةٌ ذَلِكَ فِي إِنْ

15. Has the story of Moses reached you?

16. When his Lord called to him in the holy valley of Tuwa:

17. Go to Pharaoh, surely he has transgressed all bounds:

18. And say to him: 'Wouldst thou that thou shouldst be purified (from sin) ?'

19. 'And that I guide thee to thy Lord, so thou shouldst fear (Him) ?'

20. Then did (Moses) show him The Great Sign.

21. But (Pharaoh) rejected it and disobeyed (guidance) ;

22. Further, he turned his back, striving hard (against Allah) .

23. Then he collected (his men) and made a proclamation,

24. And said: I am your Lord, Most High.

25. So Allah seized him for an exemplary punishment in the Hereafter and in this life.

26. Surely in that is a lesson for him who fears (Allah) .

Commentary:

Pharaoh used to say: I am your Lord, Most High.

After a considerable description in the former verses about Resurrection and the rejection of the disbelievers, in the following verses the painful end of Pharaoh, one of the great arrogant blasphemers and rebels of history, is pointed out, to show Pagan Arabs that those who were stronger than them could not stand against Allah's wrath and punishment, and encourages the believers not to be afraid of the apparent strength of their enemies, because it is easy for Him to destroy them all.

Has the story of Moses reached you?

It is interesting that it addresses the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and begins with a question to attract the attention of the listener in order to make him ready to hear this wonderful story.

When his Lord called to him in the holy valley of Tuwa."

'Tuwa' may be the name of a sacred valley just below Mount Sinai, which was located in Sham (Damascus) between Madyan and Egypt, and where Moses, subsequently, received, in his heart, the first light of inspiration. The term is also mentioned in Sura Ta-Ha No 20, verse 12 where Moses hears a voice say: Verily I am thy Lord! therefore (in My presence) put off thy shoes: thou art in the sacred valley Tuwa.

Or, it has a descriptive meaning derived from the term /tay/ which means 'the act of rolling up', as if the land is rolled up in holiness and sanctity, or as Raqib cites: Moses should cover a long distance to be prepared to receive the inspiration, but Allah rolled up the way and made it near for Moses to reach the goal.

Then, in three short, but meaningful sentences, it refers to the message that Allah sent to Moses in that valley where He commanded:

"Go to Pharaoh, surely he has transgressed all bounds."

And say to him: 'Wouldst thou that thou shouldst be purified (from sin) ?'

And that I guide thee to thy Lord, so thou shouldst fear (Him) ?

And, since invitations should be accompanied by reasons, in the next verse it says: Then did (Moses) show him The Great Sign.

The Great Sign, whether being the 'white shining hand' or the rod that became a 'snake active in

motion' or both of them, has been one of the Great Signs that Moses relied on in the prime of his prophetic mission.

There are some interesting points in these four verses that should be noted:

1. It says that Moses is told to go to Pharaoh, because he has transgressed, and this shows that one of the great missions that the prophets had was to guide the rebels or to oppose them decisively.
2. This invitation to purity, by Moses, with those conciliatory words and in the most benevolent terms, to Pharaoh, where Allah tells Moses to go: And say (to him) 'Wouldst thou that thou shouldst be purified (from sin) ? ' is similar to the sense found in Sura Ta-Ha No.20, verse 44 which says: But speak to him mildly....
3. This meaning has a delicate hint to the fact that the goal of the prophecy of the prophets is to purify men and lead them to their real purified nature. By the way, it does not say 'I purify you', it says:...Wouldst thou that thou shouldst be purified?... , which indicates that purification should come about from inside and by one's own intention; not from an imposition from an outside source.
4. The statement of 'guidance' after mentioning the sense 'to purify' is a reason for showing that 'purification' is a preliminary step to 'guidance'.
5. The term /rabbika/'your Lord', indeed, is an emphasis on this fact that 'I take you to Him Who is your master and your cherisher. Why do you flee from the path of happiness? '.
6. 'Fear of Allah' is the fruit of guidance. Truly, those who are guided to monotheism feel responsible before Allah, the Almighty, because fear of Allah never appears without knowing Him. That is why in Sura Fatir, No.35, verse 25 it says: ..those truly fear Allah among His Servants, who have knowledge....
7. First, Moses appeals to Pharaoh's emotional guidance and then, he evokes his rational and logical guidance by showing him his Great Sign, his great miracle. The most effective way of preaching is by influencing emotions and, then, presenting the reasons and evidences.

Now, we will deal with Pharaoh and his reaction to so much affection and love and the beautiful, reasonable speech and the Great Sign that Moses showed him.

The fact is that many signs were given, but Pharaoh and his men were steeped in arrogance.

But (Pharaoh) rejected it and disobeyed (guidance) .

This shows that rejection is the primary step in transgression, as well as faith, and admitting the truth is paramount to obedience.

Pharaoh was not satisfied with only rejecting the guidance.

Further, he turned his back, striving hard (against Allah) .

Since the miracle of Moses threatened the whole devilish unity of Pharaoh, he sent some men to different cities to gather the sorcerers and he also ordered to announce people to come to see the challenge between the sorcerers and Moses.

Then he collected (his men) and made a proclamation.

Though the term /hashara/ is mentioned, here, alone, but with reference to the term /hasirin/ in Sura A'raf, No.7, verses 111-112 which say: ...and send to (the cities men to collect, And bring up to thee all (our) sorcerers well-versed, and also referring to the term /nada/ 'made a proclamation', though it is absolute, it points to the invitation of Pharaoh to the people to gather and watch the challenge; with the evidence from Sura Shuara No.26, verse 39 which says: And the people were told: Are you (now) assembled?

He did not quit with these plots and he made claims with the worst statements.

And said: I am your Lord, Most High.

Verily, it is amazing that these arrogant transgressors, when riding on the horse-back of pride, know no limit for their selfishness. They are not content with their claim of being Lord; they want to be 'Lord of Lords'.

This statement denotes that he says, If you worship idols, it is accepted. but I am the highest of all and I am your Lord.

And, it is interesting that Pharaoh, himself, was one of the idol-worshippers as Sura Araf, No.79 verse 127 attests to: ...wilt thou leave Moses and his people, to spread mischief in the land, and so to abandon thee and thy gods?, but here, he claims that he is their Lord, Most High, that is, he considered himself still higher than his own god; and this is in the vain statements of all transgressors.

And, more astonishing than this is that in Sura Qasas, No.25, verse 35 he claims ...No god do I

know for you but myself...; but in the current verse he goes further and says: I am your Lord, Most High and this is the manner of these air-headed rebels.

He reached the ultimate point of disobedience and deserved the most painful punishments. He and his corrupted surroundings should perish by the order of Allah that is why, in the next verse, it says:

So Allah seized him with an exemplary punishment in the Hereafter and in this life.

The term /nakal/ originally means 'weakness' and 'disability', so it is said of a person who fails to pay his debt and since the divine chastisement makes people weak and stops others from doing sin; it is called /nakal/.

The term /nakal-al-axirah/ means 'the chastisement of the Hereafter' which will envelop Pharaoh and his people and because of its importance it is mentioned first and the term /ula/ 'former life' which meant 'the punishment in this world', is mentioned second and is that which destroyed Pharaoh and all his followers in waters of the sea.

There is another commentary which says that /ula/ means 'the first word that Pharaoh said claiming to be a deity' (Sura Qasas, No.25. verse 32) , and 'axirah' refers to the last word that he said in which he claimed that he was their Lord, Most High. Then, Allah punished him for these two blasphemous statements, even in this life.

This very idea is narrated in a tradition from Imam Baqir who added that 40 years had elapsed between the occurrence of these two statements (meaning that Allah did not just punish him to complete the argument) . (1)

This commentary is more fitting with the term 'akhaza' which is a verb in the past tense, and indicates that the punishment was completely fulfilled in the present world. and also with the next verse that considers the event to be a lesson.

Surely in that is a lesson for him who fears (Allah) .

This verse clearly shows that learning a lesson from these events is possible only for those who, more or less, fear Allah and possess a feeling of responsibility in their hearts.

Yes, that was the destiny of Pharaoh, the blasphemer; an example to make other pagans and chiefs of the Arab disbelievers and all those who follow on the path of Pharaoh, in any age, understand the facts and know that Allah's law is always true, firm and unchangeable.

Explanation:

A Small Sample of the Elegance of Holy Qur'an.

Careful attention paid to the above eleven short verses is enough to show us the fine elegance and fluency of Qur'an; a summary of all the statements and activities concerning Moses and Pharaoh: the motive of prophethood. its aim, the means of purification, the manner of invitation, kinds of actions and reactions, the description of Pharaoh's plot, some examples of his vain claims, and, finally, the painful punishment of this arrogant blasphemer, which can, consequently, teach a lesson to all those who have insight, are illustrated.

(1). Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 432.

Commentary : Verse 27.28.29.30.31.32.33

(27) بَنَاهَا السَّمَاءَ أَمْ خَلْقًا أَشَدُّ أَنْتُمْ

(28) فَسَوَّاهَا سَمَكُهَا رَفَعِ

(29) ضُحَاهَا وَأَخْرَجَ لَيْلَهَا وَأَغْطَشَ

(30) نَحَاهَا ذَلِكَ بَعْدَ وَالْأَرْضِ

(31) وَمَرُّعَاهَا مَاءَهَا مِنْهَا أَخْرَجَ

(32) أَرْسَاهَا وَالْجِبَالَ

(33) وَلَا تَنعَمِ كُمْ لَكُمْ مَنَاعًا

27. Is the creation of you harder or the heaven He built?

28. He raised its vault and regulated it,

29. And He made dark its night and brought forth its daylight,

30. And the earth, after that He spread it out;
31. He brought forth from it its water and its pasture,
32. And the mountains, He set them firm,
33. For use and convenience to you and your cattle.

Commentary:

A REASON FOR THE RESURRECTION:

Are you more difficult to create or the heaven He built?

With the story of Moses and Pharaoh as a lesson for all transgressors and rejecters, our attention is turned to the Resurrection, again, and the statements are about some attributes of Allah's infinite Power, as a proof to the possible existence of Resurrection. These words convey the explanation of some of the unlimited blessings of Allah endowed to Man to evoke a sense of gratitude, in the soul, which is the origin of knowing Allah.

At first, it addresses the rejecters of the Resurrection and, in a scolding tone, questions:

Is the creation of you harder or the heaven He built?

This statement is, in fact, a reply to their words in the former verses, thus: They say (now) : What! shall we indeed be returned to (our) former state? Now, this verse says that those who have any degree of understanding know that the creation of this lofty sky, with so many celestial gigantic bodies and endless galaxies, is not comparable with the creation of Man. He who has this authority, how could He be unable to return you to life again?

He raised its vault and regulated it,

The term /samk/ originally means 'height, or altitude'. It has also been used with the meaning of 'ceiling'.

In Tafsir Kabir, a commentary by Fakhruddin Mohammad Razi it is said that when we measure from the top to the bottom of something it is called depth ('umq) , and when we measure it from bottom to top it is called height (samk) . (1)

The term /sawwaha/ is based on the term /taswiyah/ which means 'to make level or equal, to proportion something'. It refers, here, to the accurate regularity that dominates all the celestial

bodies; and, if /samk/ means 'ceiling' it refers to the thick atmosphere which, like a hard and safe shield, has surrounded the earth and protects it from the rush of meteorites and fatal cosmic rays.

Some have considered the above sense to mean the globular form of the atmosphere that covers all around of the earth. They believe that using the term, with the sense of 'equal', refers to the equal distance

(1) Tafsir Kabir, vol.31, p.46.

between the parts of the ceiling and its center, that is the Earth; and this cannot exist, but only by being globular.

It is also probable that the verse points to both the height of the sky and the extreme long distance of the celestial bodies from us, and the safe vault around the Earth.

In any case, this verse is similar to what Sura Mo'min, No. 40. Verse 57 says: Assuredly the creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater (matter) than the creation of men; yet most men understand not.

And He made dark its night and brought forth its daylight.

Each of these two has an extraordinary important role in the life of any living creature whether animal or plant. Man cannot live without sunlight, because all of his sustenance, his senses and movement depend on it, as well as his life is not possible without the darkness, which is the cause of his tranquility.

The term /aqtas/ is based on /qats/ with the sense of 'dark' hut, Raqib cites in his book, Mufradat, that its origin is 'aqtas' which means 'a person who has weak or dim eyes'.

The terms /wa duha/ means 'when the full brightness of the sun spreads in the heaven and over the earth.'

And the earth, after that He spread it out.

The term duha is derived from dahw which means 'to spread, to expand'. Some have also rendered it to mean 'to move something from its original place'. And since these two meanings are interdependent, they return to one root.

The objective meaning of /dahw-ul-ard/ is that, at first, the surface of the Earth was totally covered with water from the prime rainfalls, the water of which was gradually sucked down

through the holes and ditches in the ground, and, then, parts of the land appeared. It expanded little by little, until it formed its present state. (And this happened after the creation of heavens and the Earth.)

He brought forth from it its water and its pasture.

This idea shows that there was water stored in the layers of the earth. Then, it appeared flowing over the ground in the form of springs and streams and forming the seas and lakes.

The term /mar'a/ is a place-noun and means 'pasture'. It is originally derived from /ra'y/ in the sense of 'animal protection' from the point of view of foodstuff or, feeding cattle, or in other respects; then the term /mura'at/ has been used in the sense of protection and arranging the affairs. The known proverb: Each of you all is a shepherd and responsible, is, also, a reference to the necessity of people needing to be protected by each other.

Even though different factors, such as continuous storms, gravitational pull; caused by the sun or the moon having an effect on the surface of the land, and earthquakes; produced from the pressure of the inner molten lava of the earth, could disturb the peace and calmness of the ground, it became still and peaceful due to the existence of high mountain ranges throughout the earth.

And the mountains, He set them firm

For use and convenience to you and your cattle.

Yes, He raised the vault of the sky, and set the light and darkness regular. He expanded the earth, and put forth water and plants from it. He made the mountains over the face of the earth to protect it; preparing everything for the life of Man, so that all of them obey and are at His service.

The reason is that Man enjoys the bounties of life and should be grateful to Allah Who created them all, and obey His laws.

These affairs are, on the one hand, the kinds of power He has over the Resurrection and, on the other hand, they refer to some reasons and signs along the path of the existence of unity and knowing Allah.

Commentary : Verse 34.35.36.37.38.39.40.41

(34) الْكُفْرَى الطَّامَّةُ جَاءَتْ فَإِذَا

(35) سَعَى مَا الْإِنْسَانُ يَتَذَكَّرُ يَوْمَ

(36) يَرَى لِمَنِ الْجَحِيمُ وَبُرَزَتْ

(37) طَغَى مِنْ فَأَمَّا

(38) الدُّنْيَا الْحَيَاةَ وَآثَرَ

(39) الْمَأْوَى هِيَ الْجَحِيمَ فَإِنَّ

(40) الْهَوَى عَنِ النَّفْسِ وَنَهَى رَبِّهِ مَقَامَ خَافَ مَنْ وَأَمَّا

(41) الْمَأْوَى هِيَ الْجَنَّةَ فَإِنَّ

34. But when the great calamity comes,

35. That Day man shall remember what he strove for,

36. And Hell-fire shall be manifest for him who sees,

37. Then as for him who transgressed!

38. And had preferred the life of this world,

39. Then surely Hell-fire will be the Abode.

40. And as for him who feared his Lord's presence and restrained the soul from the low desires,

41. Then surely the Garden will be the Abode.

Commentary:

Those who restrain their soul from low desires.

To continue stating the details of the Resurrection, mentioned in the former verses, the following verses refer to the subject, again, and explain the destiny of those who fear Allah and of those who disobey and follow their low desires.

But when the great calamity comes

The term /tammah/ is derived from /tamm/ which originally means 'to fill' and anything which is in a high state is called /tammah/ hence, it is used for the great and difficult events and also for the grievous, disastrous happenings to come. Here, it refers to the Hereafter, which is full of horrible incidents. It is characterized by the word 'great' as an emphasis on the importance of this unique event.

That Day man shall remember what he strove for.

But what is the use of this remembrance? How could it be helpful to him? If he asks to return to this world to recompense the past, his request will be denied and the reply will be: 'Nay!'.

If he repents for the pardoning of his evil deeds, it will be useless, since it will be too late for it.

Then, he can do nothing, but regret and as the Qur'an says: The Day that the wrongdoer will bite at his hands.... (Sura Furqan, No. 25. Verse 27.)

It should be noted that the term /yatazzakkaru/ is a verb in the future tense, which usually expresses the constancy of an action, i.e. on that Day Man will constantly remember all his deeds because on that Day the hearts and the souls of men will be unveiled and all the hidden facts will be made manifest.

And Hell-fire shall be manifest for him who sees.

Hell exists at the present time. Furthermore, according to Sura Ankabut No. 29. verse 54 But, of a surely Hell will encompass the rejecters of Faith!, however, the curtains of this world hinder it to be seen; hence, on the Day of Judgment, that is, the Day of the manifestation of everything, Hell becomes apparent and the most clearly visible.

The words /liman yara/ 'for him who sees' denote that Hell, on that Day, will be so visible that everyone who has the ability to see, and with no exception, will see it. It will be covert neither to the righteous nor to the evildoers, whose abode is Hell.

It is, also, probable that the words refer to those who have eyes to see with on that Day, because according to Sura Ta-Ha No. 20. verse 124, some will be blind then: ...and We shall raise him up

blind on the Day of Judgment. But the first meaning which is accepted by many commentators seems more fitting, because Hell, for the evildoers, is a punishment and a doubled penalty. That some of them will be blind, perhaps, occurs at some definite sites in the Hereafter, not everywhere.

Then, attention is paid to the status of sinners and disbelievers in the Hereafter and, in a few short, but meaningful sentences, both the destiny of theirs and its causes are expressed:

Then as for him who transgressed,

And had preferred the life of this world,

Then surely Hell-fire will be the Abode.

In the first sentence, their corrupted belief is referred to since transgression originates from self-complacency and self-conceit which, itself, is caused by the absence of knowledge of Allah.

One who knows Allah the Almighty, finds himself insignificant and never rejects his servitude.

The second sentence points to their corrupted deeds, because transgression causes man to consider the glitter of the lusts of this scintillating world his highest values and prefers it to everything else.

These two, in fact, are the 'cause and effect' of each other. Transgression caused by corrupted belief is the source of corrupted deeds and also preferring this fleeting life to all, brings about the blazing fire of Hell.

Hazrat Ali (p.b.u.h.) has said: He who transgresses, goes astray and Acts not reasonably. (1)

This is because of self-complacency in which Man acknowledges his low desires and conceives them as being valuable.

Then, through two short and extremely meaningful sentences, it characterizes the Blessed, thus:

And as for him who feared his Lord's presence and restrained the soul from the low desires.

Then surely the Garden will be the Abode.

Yes, the first condition of being 'blessed' is 'fear' caused by 'knowledge' knowing the presence of the Lord and being afraid of disobeying His command. The second condition, which is, indeed, the

fruit of knowledge and fear of Allah, is restraining the soul from rebellion, since, all the sins, corruptions and disasters, come from low desires which is the worst god worshipped in the world.

The means of Satan to influence in Man's entity, is still 'low desire'. It is this inner evil that opens the gate for the outer Evil to come in, or else this case would never be possible, as Sura Al-Hijr, No. 15 verse 42 says: For over My servants no authority shalt thou have, except such as pat themselves in the wrong and follow thee.

Explanations:

What is the meaning of the Presence of the Lord?

It is worthy to note that in Verse 40, of the current Sura, it says: ...as for him who feared his Lord's presence... but it does not say: 'as for (1) Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol.5, p.506, Tradition No.43.

him who feared his Lord'. Then, what is 'the 'Lord's presence'?

The following are some different commentaries to be considered:

1. It means 'the halting-places in the Hereafter' wherein Man stands in front of the Lord for Judgment. Therefore, 'the Lord's presence' is in the sense of 'his presence with his Lord', i.e. the standing of Man before his Lord.

2. It points to 'Allah's knowledge and His protection' for all human beings; as Sura Rad No. 11, verse 33 says: Is then He Who standeth over every soul (and knoweth) all that it doth, (like any others) ?

The next evidence to this commentary is the tradition that has been narrated from Imam Sadiq who said: He who knows that Allah sees him, hears what he says, knows what he does regarding good or evil, and this consciousness keeps him away from doing wrong, it is he who '...feared his Lord's presence and restrained the soul from the low desires'.

3. It means 'His Justice' since, His Holy Essence is not frightening. The fear is for His Justice. In fact, this fear is obtained from the comparison between our actions and His Justice. Criminals tremble when they see the just judge, and fear when they hear the words 'court and Judgment', while an innocent person feels no fear of any of them.

These three commentaries do not contrast with each other and all of them may be gathered in the meaning of the verse.

The Relation between the Rebels and Worldliness:

In fact, the above verses clearly and in a beautiful style illustrate the principles of both Man's happiness and adversity. The adversity of Man is considered in his worldliness, and his happiness is found in his fear of Allah and the absence of low desires; the whole of which is the extract and essence in the teachings of all Prophets and Saints.

A tradition from Hazrat Ali (p.b.u.h.) says: O' people what I fear most about you are two thin!: acting according to desires and extending of hope. As regards acting according to desires, this prevents from truth; and as regards extending of hopes, it makes one forget the next world.(1)

Low desires put a curtain over Man's mind, decorates his evil deeds to seem good in his sight, robs him of the sense of recognition; which is the greatest gift of Allah is the privilege of Man over animal,

(1) Nahj-ul-Balaqa, Sermon No.42 (Arabic Version) , No.47 (English Version) .

and makes him preoccupied with himself. This is the very thing that Jacob, the conscientious prophet, told his guilty children: ...Nay, but your minds have made up a tale (that may pass) with you, (Sura Yusuf, No. 12, verse 18) .

There are many things to say in this regard, but we will conclude this subject with two traditions from Ahlul-Bayt (P.B.U.H. th.) containing many facts.

Imam Baqir has said: Paradise is covered in pain and patience. Then he who shows patience in suffering and toils in this life, will enjoy Heaven. Hell is covered in (unlawful) pleasures and lusts. Then, he who leaves his soul in them, will enter into the fire." (1)

Imam Sadiq has said: Don't let the soul free in its low desires. Surely low desires cause the death of the soul, and if you leave the soul flee in its low desires, it causes pain for it, and keeping it apart from its low desires is a remedy for it. (2) Not only is the fire of the Next World the fruit of lusts and low desires, but, it is also the blazing fires of this world, such as: insecurities, chaoses, wars, murders, conflicts, hatreds and vengeances which totally originate from them.

There are only Two Groups.

In the above verses people are categorized in only two groups: the worldly rebels and the pious who fear Allah The permanent abode of the first group is Hell, and the eternal site of the second group is Heaven.

Of course, there is, here, a third group who are not mentioned in these verses. They are those guilty believers, of minor sins, through human frailty, who had repented and been forgiven and if they deserve it will join the blessed, and if not, will enter Hell, but, they will not be there for ever.

(1) Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol.5, p.507, Tradition No.46.

(2) Ibid, Tradition No.45.

Commentary : Verse 42.43.44.45.46

(42) مُرْسَاهَا أَيَّانَ السَّاعَةِ عَنِ يَسْأَلُونَكَ

(43) ذِكْرَاهَا مِنْ أَنْتَ فِيهِمْ

(44) مُنْتَهَاهَا رَبِّكَ إِلَيَّ

(45) يَخْشَاهَا مَنْ مُنْذِرُ أَنْتَ إِنَّمَا

(46) ضُحَاهَا أَوْ عَشِيَّةً إِلَّا يُلْبِثُوا لَمْ يَرَوْنَهَا يَوْمَ كَانَتْهُمْ

42. They ask you about the Hour, When will it come to pass?

43. Wherein art thou (concerned) with the declaration thereof?

44. With thy Lord is the limit fixed therefore.

45. You are but a Warner to him who fears it.

46. It shall seem to them on the day when they behold it, as though they tarred not (in their graves) but an evening or a forenoon.

Commentary:

Only Allah knows the Final Hour, the Resurrection.

In the aforementioned verses the Hereafter and the destiny of the righteous and the wrongdoers, on that Day, is described and, now, in the following verses the focus is on the common question of the rejecters of the Resurrection. It says:

They ask you about the Hour, When will it come to pass?

Answering this question, to make them understand that no one knows when the final Great Event will take place, the Holy Qur'an addresses the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and says:

Wherein art thou (concerned) with the declaration thereof?

When the date of the occurrence of the Hereafter is hidden even from the Prophet, then the status of others is obvious. This is of the knowledge which is hidden and exclusively belongs to Allah It is out of reach for all.

It is mentioned, repeatedly, that one of the things that are veiled for everyone is the exact time of the Hereafter whose training effect is not possible save being secret; since, if the exact time appointed for it were revealed and it were far away, everyone would sink deeply in negligence; and if it were near, avoiding sin would be done confusingly and far from free-will and intention, both of which are worthless from the point of training.

There have been other probabilities cited, also, and among them is that: 'you were not appointed in order to tell the time of the occurrence of the Hereafter but, you are appointed to inform others of its existence and that it will certainly happen'.

Moreover, 'your appointment shows that the Day of Judgment is coming nearer'. So, the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is reported to have said, showing his two forefingers: My appointment and the Hour are like these. (1) But the first commentary is the most appropriate.

With thy Lord is the limit fixed therefore.

It is only He Who knows the Hour. No man knows the mystery and no effort and endeavor is useful for finding the answer.

This is the same idea that Sura Luqman, No.31, verse 34 says: Verily the knowledge of the Hour is with Allah (alone)

And, again, from Sura A'raf. No. 7, verse 187: ...Say: 'the knowledge thereof is with my Lord (alone) ..

Some have said that the objective point of the above sentence is that the actual occurrence of the Hereafter is under His control, and the (1) Tafsir-i-Fakhr-i-Razi, The Commentary, vol.29, p.29. This matter is mentioned referring to Sura 49, verse 18 in Majma'-al-Bayan, Qartabi, Fizalal and others.

sentence is a statement for the cause of what is said in the previous verse. To combine these two commentaries is possible, too.

You are but a Warner to him who fears.

'Your duty is only to warn them and you are not responsible to tell them the final Hour.'

It is worthy to note that the warning referred to, here, is only to those who fear that Day and this is similar to what Sura Bqarah, No.2, verse 2 says: This is the Book; in it is guidance without doubt, to those who fear Allah . These kind of statements refer to the fact that when there is an absence in the soul for seeking the right and the truth and a lack of the sense of responsibility in front of Allah exists, then, Man neither goes in search of the heavenly books for information about the Resurrection nor does he listen to the warnings of the Prophets and Saints.

Finally, to express that there is not a great deal of time until the Day of Judgment, it says:

It shall seem to them on the day when they behold it, as though they tarried not (in their graves) but an evening or a forenoon."

The length of the life, in this world, is so short and the period of the intermediate state (Barzakh) passes so quickly, that when they rise, again, for the Day of Judgment the whole period seems to them as if it were only a few hours.

This idea, that the life in this world is short and fleeting, is both practical and true and, in comparison with the Hereafter and the life of the whole Universe, it is like a moment.

The term /ashiyah/ means 'evening', and /duha/ is used for 'a period when the sun has come up and its beam of light has spread'.

Some verses of the Qur'an indicate that on the Day of Judgment the sinners will talk about the length of their stay in partition (purgatory) or their life in this world, in this manner: In whispers will they consult each other: 'Ye tarried not longer than ten (days) ' (Sura Ta-Ha No. 20, verse 103)

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But those of them who think more soundly say: ...their leader most eminent in conduct will say: 'Tarred not longer than a day. (Sura No. 20, verse 104) .

In another Sura, it narrates the sinners idea: On the Day that the Hour (of reckoning) will be established, the transgressors will swear that they tarred not but an hour...(Sura Rum, No. 30, Verse 55) .

The difference between these various statements is that the sinners want to compare the shortness of this time with an approximate length of their stay, therefore, each of them states his own feelings, and they all have one thing in common which is that the shortness of life in this world is compared to the life in the Hereafter. This, of course, is a matter that shakes Man, and awakens him from the sleep of negligence.

Supplication:

O Lord! Gift us the calmness and tranquility on that Great Day, in partition (purgatory) and in this world.

O Lord! No one can erase the troubles of that Great Day, but by your Grace. Then, we seek your holy Grace.

O Lord! Lead us so that you put us among those who fear your presence and restrain their soul from low desires and will reside in eternal Heaven.

The End of Sura Nazia't (Those Who Tear Out)

Sura 'Abasa (He Frowned) No. 80 (42 Verses)

Contents of the Sura:

Sura 'Abasa is short, but contains various important subjects which especially emphasize on the Resurrection and can be summarized under five topics:

1. Allah's serious admonishment to the one who did not show suitable behavior to a truth-seeking blind man.

2. The importance of the Holy Qur'an.

3. Man's ungratefulness toward the blessings of Allah.

4. A partial description about His blessings in the field of nutrition for Men and animals in order to stimulate a sense of thankfulness.

5. Some hints about the terrible incidents of the Day of Judgment, and the fate of the believers and disbelievers on that Day.

The name of the Sura is derived from its first verse.

The Virtue in Studying this Sura:

A tradition from Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) says: One who studies Sura 'Abasa will arrive at the Gathering Place smiling and rejoicing on The Day of Judgment.

Commentary : Verse 1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9.10

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

(1) وَتَوَلَّىٰ عَصَٰبَ

(2) الْاَعْمٰی جَاۤءَهُۥ اَنْ

(3) یَّرْکٰی لَعَلَّهٗ یُدْرِیْکَ وَمَا

(4) الذِّکْرٰی فَتَنْفَعُهٗ یَذَّکَّرُ اَوْ

(5) اسْتَعْنٰی مِّنْ اَمَّا

(6) تَصَدَّیْ لَهٗ فَاَنْتَ

(7) يَزَكِّي أَلَا عَلَيْكَ وَمَا

(8) يَسْعَى جَاءَكَ مَنْ وَأَمَّا

(9) يَخْشَى وَهُوَ

(10) تَلَّهَى عَنْهُ فَأَنْتَ

1. He frowned and turned away,
2. Because there came to him the blind man.
3. And what would make you know that he might (spiritually) purify himself,
4. Or become reminded so that the reminder might profit him?
5. As to one who regards himself as self-sufficient,
6. To him do you address yourself
7. Though it is no blame on you if he would not (spiritually) purify himself.
8. But as to him who comes to you striving hard.
9. And he fears (Allah in his heart) ,
10. Of him wast thou unmindful.

The Occasion of Revelation:

These words show that Allah has blamed someone for an action which gave superiority to a man or men of wealth rather than to a blind man who was seeking the truth. But who was the admonished one? There are a variety of ideas on this subject, but, the most famous commentary among the scholars is the following:

Once the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was deeply engaged in trying to explain the Holy Qur'an to some pagan Quraish leaders such as 'Atabat ibn-i-Rabi'ah, Abu-Jahl, 'Abbas-ibn-'Abdul-Mutallib and Some others. He was hopeful that it would attract them to Islam, and in St) doing. surely a lot of others would come to Islam, too. and therefore. put an end to their sabotage. But, suddenly, he

was interrupted by a blind man,

'Abdullah-ibn-Ummi-Maktuum, who was apparently poor, so that no one took notice of him. He wanted to learn the Qur'an and asked the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) to teach him. He repeated his statement again and again, because he did not know exactly whom he was talking to.

The Holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) naturally did not like the frequent interruptions and this was seen on his face. These Arab leaders, he said to himself may think of Mohammad as a Prophet of the poor and the blind. Then he turned away from 'Abdullah and continued the work at preaching Allah's Message to them.

At that moment he received the new verses stated above, which admonished the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) for this action. Afterwards, he always held 'Abdullah in high honor, and whenever he saw him he used to tell him Hail to the one for whom Allah admonished me.

And, then, he questioned the man: Is there anything that I can do for you ?

The blind man became a true and sincere Muslim and as a direct appointment by the Prophet, himself, become a governor of Medina on two occasions when the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) went to battle.

A second opinion about this revelation is given for these verses, which is that a man from the Umayyads was sitting with the Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) when 'Abdullah-ibn Ummi-Maktum arrived. when this man saw 'Abdullah, he frowned and turned his back to him, as if he might become infected by him.

The aforementioned verses were about the man sitting with the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and the admonishment was for him. It has been narrated that Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) agreed with this opinion when he was asked about this occasion of revelation. The late Sayyed Murtaza, the great scholar of Islam, approved with this occasion of revelation, as well.

There is nothing, of course, in the verse, itself, to show clearly that the one who is addressed is Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) . The only sign may be found in verses 8 to 10 where they say: But as to him who comes to you striving hard, And he fear's (Allah in his heart) . Of him wast thou unmindful.

This is the matter that can be true about the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) more than anyone else. But, according to what 'Sayyed Murtaza' has said, there are some signs in the verses showing that 'the one' is not the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) . Some of them are as follows:

'To be frowning' was not one of the Prophets' character traits, especially for the Prophet of Islam.

He spoke gently and with a kind face even to his own enemies and was even more kind to the truth-seeking believers.

Moreover, paying attention to the wealthy people and neglecting the poor is not agreeable, at all, with what is said about him in Sura Qalam, No. 65, verse 4 which says: And thou (standst) on an exalted standard of character, (with the particular note that Sura Qalam had been revealed before the revelation of Sura 'Abasa) .

But, supposing the first occasion of revelation is true, this act is not more than 'leaving to the better' /tark-i-ula/ and there is nothing in it that contrasts with the state of spinelessness.

Since, first, the purpose of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was definitely to absorb the Quraish leaders in order to spread Islam and to stop their sabotage.

Secondly, it does not matter so much to frown at a blind man, because he cannot see. Moreover, 'Abdullah-ibn-Ummi-Maktum did not keep the rules of etiquette, since, he should not have interrupted the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) when he was busy talking to the people who were gathered there.

On the one hand, since Allah's emphasis is on love and affection for the poor and the afflicted, among the believers, it does not approve of the little amount of heedlessness from His prophet to that believing servant, so He admonishes him.

On the other hand, if we consider the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) as a true, great prophet, from these verses we see that they are almost a miracle, because the great leader of Islam mentions such important responsibilities in the heavenly Holy Book, about himself, that he finds the slightest 'leaving to the better' an option: i.e. the little amount of heedlessness to a blind truth-seeking believer, which Allah admonishes him for. This is an evidence for the fact that this Book is from Allah and he is a true prophet, because if the Book were not from Allah surely it would not have such content.

A more astonishing matter is that according to the above mentioned narration, whenever the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) saw 'Abdullah-ibn-Ummi-Maktum, he remembered the occasion and honored him very much.

The other aspect, which the verses contain, is that of the Islamic culture in relation to the behavior shown to the oppressed and to the arrogant: as to how it considers the blind, poor believer in comparison to those rich, powerful pagan Arab leaders. This clearly shows that Islam is a support for the oppressed and is against the arrogant.

In conclusion, we repeat that though the first thought about the occasion of this revelation is well-known among the commentators, it should be confessed that there is nothing vivid, in the verse, to prove the idea that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is the clear target of the admonition.

Commentary:

Harsh Admonition for Heedlessness Shown to a Truth-seeking Blind Man.

Keeping in mind what was said about the first idea regarding the occasion of revelation of the verses, we will now discuss the given commentary.

He frowned and turned away.

Because there came to him the blind man".

And what would make you know that he might (spiritually) purify himself".

Or become reminded so that the reminder might profit him?

The reminder can be, at least, an advice to him. If it does not affect him to be really virtuous, it may make him aware and this awareness would change him a little.

As to one who regards himself as self-sufficient To him do you address yourself.

And 'you' insist on guiding him, but he is entangled with pride due to his wealth and selfishness. It is the pride from which rebellion and disobedience originate, as Sura 'Alaq, No.96, verses 6-7 say: Nay, most surely man does transgress (all bounds) , For he thinks himself self-sufficient.

Though it is no blame on you if he would not (spiritually) purify himself'.

It is for 'you' only to deliver His message; they may take its advice or merely become annoyed. Therefore, you should not neglect the truth-seeking blind man or annoy him for the sake of the rich leaders, although you mean to guide them.

But as to him who comes to you striving hard,

And he fears (Allah in his heart)

The very motive, fear of Allah, has forced him to come to you in order to hear some truth and, thereafter, employ them in order to purify himself and grow in understanding.

Of him wast thou unmindful.

Indeed, the term /anta/ 'you, thee' is used to say that a person, such as the Prophet, should not divert himself, even for a moment, from such a truth-seeking man and should not pay attention to others although he definitely wanted to guide them, because the priority is given to that of the pure-hearted oppressed.

In any case, this reproachful speech, whether to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) or to anyone else, clearly states the fact that Islam and the Qur'an give a special high regard to the servants of Allah, particularly to those of the oppressed.

Also, Islam takes a severe position against those who are intoxicated and become proud from the abundance of Allah's blessings, so much so that Allah is not content if the least annoyance is caused to the truth-seeking oppressed, because of giving attention to the affluent.

The reason is clear: such a message works first amongst the simple and lowly, the poor and despised folk, and the mighty ones, of the earth, only come around when the masses stream in like an irresistible force.

The oppressed always support Islam, sincerely, helping the great leaders of the religion in their affairs, and are the candidates of the battle fields for martyrdom. As Imam Ali (p.b.u.h.) said in his famous order to Malik-i-Ashtar:... While the common men, the poor and apparently the less important section of your subjects are the pillars of Islam; they are the real assemblage of Muslims and the power and defensive force against the enemies of Islam. Keep an open mind for them, be more friendly with them and secure their confidence and sympathy.

Commentary : Verse 11.12.13.14.15.16.17.18.19.20.21.22.23

(11) تَذْكِرَةٌ إِنَّهَا كَلَّا

(12) ذَكَرَهُ شَاءَ فَمَنْ

(13) مُكْرَمَةٌ صُحُفٍ فِي

(14) مُطَهَّرَةٍ مَرْفُوعَةٍ

(15) سَفَرَةٍ بِأَيْدِي

(16) بَرَرَةٍ كِرَامٍ

(17) أَكْفَرَهُ مَا الْإِنْسَانُ قُنِيلٌ

(18) خَلَقَهُ شَيْءٍ أَيْ مِنْ

(19) فَقَدَّرَهُ خَلَقَهُ نُطْقَةً مِنْ

(20) يَسَّرَهُ السَّبِيلَ ثُمَّ

(21) فَأَقْبَرَهُ أَمَاتَهُ ثُمَّ

(22) أَنْشَرَهُ شَاءَ إِذَا ثُمَّ

(23) أَمْرَهُ مَا يَقْضِي لَمَّا كَلًّا

11. Nay surely it is an admonishment,

12. So let him who pleases mind it,

13. (It is) in Books held (greatly) in honor,

14. Exalted (in dignity) kept pure and holy,

15. In the hand of scribes,

16. Honorable and pious and just,

17. Cursed be man.' how ungrateful is he!

18. Of what thing did He create him?

19. Of a sperm-drop He created him, then molded him in due proportions;

20. Then He made the way easy for him,

21. Then He caused him to die, then assigned to him a grave,

22. Then, when it is His will, He will raise him to life again,

23. Nay but (man) has not done what He commanded him.

Commentary:

Only the Purified Ones Can much the Qur'an.

In connection with the aforementioned verses, which spoke about admonishing the one who was unmindful of a truth-seeking blind man, these verses are about the importance of the Qur'an, its pure origin, and the efficient effect it has on individuals.

Advising the one who was unmindful not to repeat this action again, it says: Nay, surely it is an admonishment.

'You' do not need to pay attention to those who are, apparently, gifted and self-sufficient and are, subsequently, proud, while neglecting the purified oppressed.

It is, also probable that the verse: Nay, surely it is an admonishment could be an answer to all accusations the pagans and the enemies of Islam uttered about the Qur'an. They called it 'a poetry', 'a magic', and sometimes 'a kind of soothsaying'. The Qur'an demands that none of them are right, but that these verses of Qur'an are reminders for acknowledgment, awareness and faith. It contains the proofs and documents in itself. The people who approach it can get the facts, themselves, except its enemies.

So let him who pleases, mind it. * * * *

This points to both the lack of obligation, and an evidence to exercise of free-will for everyone - that is, no one can obtain its merits unless one wishes to and makes the decision to follow its guidance.

(It is) in Books held (greatly) in honor,.

The term /suhuf/ is the plural form of /sahifah/ which means 'tablet' or 'sheet' or 'anything on which something can be written'. This shows that the verses of Qur'an had been written on some tablets before they were revealed to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) , and the angels of revelation possessed them, therefore, it means that the tablets were in a very high position.

Some views have held that /suhuf/ means 'the Books of earlier prophets (p.b.u.h.) ,' which does

not seem agreeable with its pre and post verses. Some have also said that it means 'the Preserved Tablet', but this idea does not seem suitable, either, because /suhuf/ is in a plural form and has not been used in the form of 'the Preserved Tablet'.

Exalted (in dignity) kept pure and holy.

It is beyond the reach of the aberrant ones; they cannot distort it; it is pure and kept far from tainted hands. Finally, it is pure from any contradiction, discrepancy and doubt.

Moreover, they are: In the hand of scribes, Who are: Honorable and pious and just.

The term /safarah/ is the plural form of /safir/ based on /safir/, which originally means 'to unveil a matter or a thing', so, one who comes unto people with a special mission; to remove their difficulties and uncover the ambiguous matters for them is called /safir/ 'an ambassador'. A writer is also called /safir/ since he or she uncovers the meaning of a matter.

Therefore, /safarah/ means 'the Divine angels who reveal Messages or write them down'.

A narration from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) says: One who learns the whole Qur'an by heart and acts accordingly is with the scribes, honorable and pious and just.

This clearly shows that those who know the Qur'an by heart, commentators, and those who act according to its instructions are in the same rank as the scribes. And it is a fact that when scholars and those who learn the Qur'an by heart, or preserve it, do something similar to what the angels and bringers of revelation do, then, they should be counted among them.

It is understood that, on the whole, any Muslim who tries to protect and keep the Holy Qur'an alive deserves a position as high as that of the 'honorable and pious angels'.

The term / kiram / is the plural form of /karim/ which means 'honorable, or beneficent' and refers to the greatness of the angels of revelation. It is sometimes said that it refers to their pureness of any sin, as Sura Anbiya, No 21, verses 26-27 say about the angels: ...Nay, they are honored servants, They do not precede Him in speech and (only) according to His commandment do they act.

The term /bararah/ is the plural form of /bar/ based on /bar/ which originally means 'vastness', then, 'a vast land' is called /barr/, and since good people's generosity is vast and benefits many others, they are called /bar/.

The term 'pious' used in this verse, of course, means 'obedient to His Command' and 'sinlessness'.

Thus Allah characterizes the angels in three ways: first, they are His agents for His revelations; second, they are naturally pious and honorable; and third, they are pure, obedient and sinless.

Though there are so many signs of guidance from Allah in His 'Books held (greatly) in honor' containing all kinds of reminders revealed by the angels, the ungrateful Man does not resign himself to Him, hence, it says: Cursed be man! how ungrateful is he!

The term /kufr/ may mean 'disbelief' or 'ingratitude' or 'any covering and denial of Allah', which can be suitable, here, because, in the last verses it refers to the signs of guidance and faithfulness, and in the next verses it mentions the different kinds of blessings from Allah.

In any case, the objective point of Cursed be man! is to express an intensive hatred toward the ungrateful ones.

Since the origin of disobedience and ungratefulness is generally pride, then to break it. the next verse says:

Of what thing did He create him?

Of a sperm-drop He created him, then molded him in due proportions.

Why does Man not think about the origin of his creation? Why does he forget his main source? Moreover, why does he not take note of Allah's ability in the creation of this strange creature from a sperm-drop? If he contemplated on his creation from a sperm-drop and then, about the formation of his body and its limbs, and his faculties and abilities and even his necessities of life being in a suitable proportion, it could be the best guidance for his theological and divine knowledge.

The term /qaddarahu/, 'He molded him in due proportions' is based on /taqdir/ which means 'the act of measuring and well-balancing'.

We know that there are more than twenty metals and metalloids in the human body, each of which is at a determined level from the point of quantity and quality. If these levels change to a lower or a higher degree. the regularity of the body's chemistry will be disturbed. Besides this, the condition of the body's structure and the relations between its organs, have exact limits. The intellect and instincts hidden in an individual, alone, and in human beings, all together, must be in a special arrangement to provide for Man's happiness.

Allah is He Who fulfilled all the above proportions for the worthless life-germ in the form of a sperm-drop. The life-germ is so small that if we gathered, together, as many of them as the

number of human beings, which exists today, they would not amount to a thimbleful. Yes, He designed so many colorful characteristics and embellishments on and in such a slight, tiny particle, and from this created a creature such as Man.

The term /taqdir/ has been defined as: 'to make ready' by some commentators. It is also probable that the meaning of /taqdir/ is 'to make the unworthy life-germ powerful'. How great is the Creator Who makes this feeble substance so powerful; Who puts the sky, the earth and the seas at his disposal, and enables him to conquer all the forces of his surroundings.

Of course, all three of the above comments can be considered, together, also.

Then He made the way easy for him.

Allah made the way for the foetus to develop in its mother's womb, and then made the way for moving to this world, easy for Man.

One of the wonders of Man's birth is that a few moments before the time of nativity the child is so located in the mother's womb that usually its head is right side up, its face is to the mother's back and its feet are toward the down side of the womb; but when the time of birth comes, the child turns upside down so that its head is downwards, and this very position makes the birth easier for both the child and its mother. There are, of course, exceptions where some children are born under various complications and, therefore, their mothers encounter many difficulties.

Allah has made everything easy for him: after his birth he grows during his childhood, then his human instincts grow, and after that he grows along the path of faith and spiritual perfection by way of guidance from the prophets (P.B.U.th.) and by his own reasoning.

Then He made the way easy for him. What a completely meaningful and interesting sentence this is! It is very short, but it alludes to so many facts!

Another point which is noteworthy is that it says: Then He made the way easy for him. It does not say: 'Then He forced him to go the way'. This is an emphasis, again, on Man's free-will.

Further, it declares the end of Man's life and says: Then He caused him to die, then assigned to him a grave.

Surely, the act of 'putting to death' belongs to Allah, but the act of covering the corpse, in a grave, apparently belongs to Man, however, the required intelligence, for this action and, also, the other necessary means for it have been supplied by Allah, and that is why the assigning of a grave has been attributed to Allah too.

Some commentators have also said that the objective point of attributing the action to Allah is that He has created a grave for Man which is under the ground, while some others have thought of it as a religious instruction, from Allah about the burial of corpses.

One of the graces of Allah to human beings is the very burial of corpses. If they did not know what to do with their corpses or if there were not any instructions issued about the burial of corpses, the corpses could humiliatingly remain putrid on the ground, and the beasts and birds would feast on them, which would be a horrible debasement. Therefore, Allah's graces are bestowed on Man; not only during his life time, but even after his death.

Moreover, the instruction for burying the corpses of people (after the ceremonial bath, shroud, and prayer) is an inspirational one, because it is to say that the dead bodies of human beings must be purified and respected, even more than their live ones, because live people have the responsibility of keeping themselves pure.

Another noteworthy point is that the situation of death, in this verse, is counted among the blessings of Allah. This is really true if we care to understand, because, first, death is a release from the troubles and imperfections of this world and a close to the probationary period, after which will dawn the full Reality in a world so much broader than this world. Secondly, the death of the present generations makes room for the later generations, and causes Mankind to continue to live and to improve, or else the human population would reach such extremes that would be impossible for them to live on Earth.

It is interesting that this very idea is delicately mentioned in Sura Rahman, No. 55, verses 26-28 thus:

Everything on earth will pass away; And there will endure the Face of your Lord, the Lord of Glory and Honor. Then which of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?.

There, again, according to these verses, death is one of the great gifts from Allah.

Yes, the world, with all its blessings, is a prison for a believer. Moving from this world to the next world is a release from this prison. Besides, the abundance of blessings, in this world, sometimes causes people to neglect their position, then, the remembrance of death may awaken them, therefore, from this point of view, too, it is a blessing. If all of the past events of life were always alive, it would certainly be tiresome to continue it, but the immortal life, on the contrary, will be thoroughly full of joy and happiness.

Then, our attention is turned to the Resurrection of the human race, and, it says: Then when it is

His will, He will raise him to life again.

The term /insharaha/ is based on /inshar/ which means 'to spread abroad after gathering'. It is an interesting point which shows that the life of Man is totally gathered up by death, but it will be spread out, again, through Resurrection in a higher and greater environment.

It is worthy to note that for 'death' and for burial' it says: Then He caused him to die, then assigned to him a grave, but for Resurrection it says: When it is His will, He will raise him to life again and this makes it clear that no one knows the time of the Great Event (The Resurrection) , but, it is only Allah Who knows it, and death is an inevitable event where everyone, after living a willy-nilly natural life, will die.

The last verse of this group says that although these blessings and stages have been provided by Allah's grace, for the good of Man, (from the time he was a lowly sperm-drop to the time he arrived in this world and went on the path of growth and, finally, passed away and was covered with dust in the grave) , unregenerate Man fails in carrying out the purpose of his creation and life:

Nay, but (man) has not done what He commanded him.

The term /lamma/ is usually used with a negative meaning when something is still expected. It touches on this sense that Man, having these divine gifts and the means of guidance, is expected to be earnest in obeying Allah and acting on His commands, but surprisingly he has not done it yet.

The following are two different ideas about the meaning of the term 'man' used in this verse:

The first idea says that it alludes to the persons who go the path of ungratefulness, denial, and injustice and corresponds with Sura Ibrahim, No. 14, verse 34 which says:... most surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful.

The second idea says that it refers to all of Mankind, because no one (irrespective of believers and unbelievers) has accurately carried out what Allah has commanded him to do, to the extent that it deserves the greatness of His glory and dignity; as a Persian poem says:

Servants of Allah should ask Him to excuse them for their short comings. Else, no one is Able to do according to His Lordship.

Commentary : Verse 24.25.26.27.28.29.30.31.32

(24) طَعَامِهِ إِلَى الْإِنْسَانِ فَلْيَنْظُرِ (24)

(25) صَبًّا الْمَاءِ صَبِينًا أَنَا (25)

(26) شَقًّا الْأَرْضَ شَقَقْنَا ثُمَّ (26)

(27) حَبًّا فِيهَا فَأَنْبَتْنَا (27)

(28) وَقَصَبًا وَعِنَبًا (28)

(29) وَنَخْلًا وَزَيْتُونًا (29)

(30) غُلْبًا وَحَدَائِقَ (30)

(31) وَأَبًّا وَفَاكِهَةً (31)

(32) وَلِأَنْعَامِكُمْ لَكُمْ مَتَاعًا (32)

24. Then let man look to his food,

25. That We pour down the water, pouring it in abundance,

26. And We split the earth into fragments,

27. And We produce therein corn,

28. And grapes and grasses,

29. And the olive and the palm,

30. And gardens, dense with trees,

31. And fruits and fodder,

32. Provision for you and for your cattle.

Commentary:

Man should look at his food!

Since the aforementioned verses allude to the Resurrection and the next verses also refer more vividly to this very matter, it seems that these verses are a proof for the Resurrection. By explaining Allah's authority over all things and, also, reviving the dead lands by sending down rain, which is a resurrection in itself for plants, proves the possibility of Resurrection.

By the way, since these verses mention the different kinds of nourishment that Allah has given to Man and his cattle, they call him to thank Allah and pay heed to the knowledge of Him.

First, it says: Then let man look to his food; and considers how Allah has produced it.

The closest exterior substance, to Man, is his food which, after some changes, is easily absorbed and becomes part of his body, therefore, if he cannot obtain it he will perish. That is why the Qur'an, among all things, puts emphasis on the nourishment; especially those produced from trees and plants.

It is clear that the aim of saying 'look to' is not a simple look, but it means with deep care and contemplating on the vital elements and wonderful structure of the nourishment, and the surprising effects they have on him, so, consequently, he should think about the Creator, Who has created them.(1)

There is the idea which says that it may mean 'a superficial look, a look which stimulates the salivary glands and, as a result, helps the digestion'. This seems improbable because, in comparison with its pre and post verses, the verse does not carry such a meaning at all; but some food scientists look at the contents of the Qur'an with their own narrow view points, then, it is natural for them to have an idea like that about the verse.

Some others believe it to mean that when one sits at the table to eat, one must look carefully at the foods to see how they are prepared;

(1) The term /fal-yanzur/ may originally mean that 'if Man is in doubt of his Creator and the Resurrection, then let him look to his food'.

whether they are permitted or forbidden, lawful or unlawful and, thus, one may consider the moral and religious aspects in eating.

In some narrations from the sinless Imams, the term /ta'am/ 'food', here, means 'knowledge', the

sustenance of Man's soul, then, one should be careful and 'look' at Whom he has taken it from. Among these is a narration from Imam Mohammad Baqir (p.b.u.h.) for the commentary of the above verse which says: Be careful from where and from whom you get your information.

Another narration, similar to this, has been quoted from Imam Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) .

Undoubtedly, the apparent meaning of the verse is about the bodily foods which are described in later verses, but the soul's sustenance can analogically be understood from it, since Man is a combination of soul and body; as his body needs bodily food so his soul requires spiritual sustenance, as well.

When Man should be careful about his bodily nourishment, and knows of its origin which, according to the next verses, is life-giving rain, he should also be careful about his spiritual nourishment, the Message revealed from above (like rain) to the Prophet's heart (p.b.u.h.) . The very place where the hearts of the sinless Imams got it from and store it like fountains of youth for others to make their own hearts fruitful with faith, virtue and morals.

Yes, one must completely be aware of the main origin of one's knowledge or one may call it 'spiritual nourishment', lest it may come from a corrupted source and, as a result, cause one's soul and body to become sick or die.

And the matter of things being lawful /halal/ or unlawful, /haram/, and permitted or forbidden can analogically be understood through the potential guidance, too.

This is also probable that the terms 'food' and 'look' both have 'vast meanings in this verse, hence all the three above commentaries can be gathered in it.

It is evident that the term 'man', used in the verse, includes all members of the human race whether they are believers or unbelievers. They must care about what they eat and, also, the wonder of its creation in order for the unbelievers, to find the right way, and for the believers to increase in their faith.

Verily, each article of food: fruits, nutritious seeds, and vegetables have some interesting properties which can be studied, separately, in our lifetime and many things can be learned from them to enlighten us and give us insight into the wonders that they contain.

Then, to explain the nourishments and their origins, it says:

That We pour down the water, pouring it in abundance.

The term /sab/ means 'to pour water over from above', and here it means 'sending down rain'. The term /sabba/ at the end of the verse, is used for emphasis and to note the abundance of water.

Water, which is very necessary for every living creature, often comes down sufficiently, because of Allah's grace. And we know that the essential source of water existing in rivers, streams, springs, subterranean canals and wells is rain, so that if it does not rain one year, all of them will dry up.

Thus, while studying articles of food, first and foremost, Man should refer to the importance of the regularity of rainfall. The sun shines over the seas where vapor, in the form of clouds, rises from and moves above the earth where winds scatter the clouds high in the sky. At cold points in the atmosphere, the clouds change into pure, harmless water again and fall gently on the ground in the form of droplets of rain or little pieces of snow that soak into the ground. Trees, plants and living things draw up water from the ground.

After mentioning water, which is an important factor in human life, it refers to another great factor; the earth, and says:

And We split the earth in fragments.

Many commentators have said that this splitting is the splitting of the land by plant seedlings. It is really wonderful that a little smooth seedling can break the hard, solid land and sometimes it shoots up through stone. What a surprising power the Creator has given to this tiny smooth seedling which enables it to do so!

Some others have said that the split may be the splitting of the land when man ploughs it or even when some worms burrow through it; a kind of ploughing for the purpose of some other life activities.

Ploughing is one of Man's activities, of course, but Allah has given him all its necessary means, therefore it relates to Allah.

The third commentary, which has been cited for the verse, and seems preferable for certain considerations, says that the meaning of 'splitting the earth' is 'the act of breaking the stone into pieces on the splitting of the earth.'

Explanation:

At first the surface of the earth was covered with a mass of stone. Heavy rains fell, continuously,

and cleft the stone asunder and spread its little parts onto the low lands and, thus, a mass of agricultural soil was formed, some of which is now carried to the seas by floods. But the new soil, produced by the succeeding rain and snow was replaced by it, otherwise Man would be faced with the lack of agricultural soil.

Then, the verse points to one of the miracles of the Qur'an, in science, when it says it rains, first, then the earth cleaves asunder and becomes fit for farming. This not only happened in the very early days, but also keeps occurring today.

This commentary seems more suitable, because the growth of plants and the production of grains are mentioned in the next verses.

Here, again, all three commentaries, together, can be probable.

After mentioning the two basic factors; i.e. water and soil, it refers to the eight items of plants which contain the main nutrients for Man and cattle. And We produce therein corn,.

Corn /habba/ is 'grain, the seeds of cereal grass; wheat, oats, rye or barely, or the plants producing them '. They are the essential sources of Man's and cattle's nourishments during the year, the lack of which, because of drought, causes famine and starvation, a great plague for the world.

The term /habban/ 'corn', in a general sense, shows the importance and the variety of the seeds. Some others have only meant it as 'wheat' or 'rye' which is not reasonable, because the term 'corn' can include all seeds, which was mentioned before.

And grapes and grosses

The term /inab/ which means both 'grapes and vine', in the verses of Qur'an, is mentioned, here, because it contains many nutrients, as a complete food and more than other fruits. It means only grapes in this verse.

The term /qathb/ originally means 'the vegetables which are cut several times', and, here, it means the different kinds of vegetables. Its occurrence after the term 'grapes' is for its importance as a food material.

Today, vegetables enjoy a high position in food science and are especially recommended.

The term /qathb/ is sometimes used with the meaning of 'to cut, or to pick'.

It is probable that /qathb/, used, here, in this verse, has a broader meaning which includes both vegetables and fruits.

And the olive and the palm.

It is clear that these two items are both from the most important articles of food which are useful, sound, and nutritious. This is why they are mentioned and emphasized on, here.

And gardens, dense with trees.

The term /hada'iq/ is the plural form of 'hadiqah' which is 'a garden surrounded by a wall', but originally it means 'a piece of land containing water for irrigation'. The word is derived from /hadaqah/ 'eye-socket' where water exists, constantly.

Since these kinds of gardens are usually fruit gardens, the word may hint to the kinds of fruits in Heaven.

The term /qulb/ is the plural form of /aqlab/ and /qulba/ which means 'thick-necked' and is originally derived from /qalaba/. Here, it means 'tail, thick trees'.

And fruits and fodder.

The term /abb/ means 'herbage not sown by men' or 'herbage prepared for pasture and for cutting'. Basically it means 'preparation' and, since these pastures are prepared for the usage, so, they are called /abb/.

Some others have also said that /abb/ is used for the fruits that are suitable for drying and storing to be used in winter, because they are always ready for use.

The late Mufid in his book, Irshad, has narrated from Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali (p.b.u.h.) that the word meant 'herbage as a pasture', and he added: What God said in the verse 'And fruits and fodder' is a divine gift for His servants that He created as a part of their food and for their cattle, from which their lives receive merit and their bodies are strengthened. (1)

In the former verses some special fruits were named, while here fruits, in general, are discussed. Moreover, the last verse spoke about 'gardens' which seemed to mean 'the fruits of gardens', then, how are the fruits dealt with, here, again?

The answer to this question is this: There, some definite fruits such as grapes, olives, and dates,

which are of great importance among all fruits, were named; but, here, fruits are mentioned separate from 'gardens', perhaps because, besides fruits, gardens have some more advantages, such as, fresh air, nice views, etc.

Moreover, the leaves of some trees and the twigs, the roots, and the barks of some others (for example: tea, cinnamon, ginger and the like) are among the edibles; in addition to the leaves of many trees which are suitable food for cattle. And it is a fact that the items stated in the aforementioned verses are edible for both human beings as well as their cattle.

For this reason, in the next verse, it says:

Provision for you and for your cattle.

The term /mata/ means 'anything that Man uses or enjoys'.

(1) Irshad-i-Mufid, from Al-Mizan, vol.20, p. 319.

Explanation:

Wholesome Nutriment

There are eight nutriment named, in these verses, for Man and cattle. It is interesting that all of them are from herbage and that is because of the importance of vegetables, grains and fruits in Man's diet, so, in other words, they are the true original nutriment, while meat, obtained from animals, is in the second position and in a lesser amount.

Also noteworthy is that food science, which is one of the wide spread and important sciences and has a broad field with a large scope of investigation, is an explanation for what is mentioned in these verses and shows the magnificence of the Holy Qur'an, especially when this science emphasizes on the value and the efficiency of these food materials.

In any case, taking note of these materials and thinking about the creator of them may cause Man's awareness of Allah grace and mercy to Mankind.

Yes, paying attention to one's bodily food and, then, the sustenance of the soul from the points of both its structural content and how one obtained it, can push one forward along the path of knowledge of Allah, righteousness, and self-perfection. Verily, Then let man look to his food, and what a meaningful sentence this short, single statement is!

Commentary : Verse 33.34.35.36.37.38.39.40.41.42

(33) الصَّاحَّةُ جَاءَتْ فَإِذَا

(34) أَخِيهِ مِنَ الْمَرْءِ يَفِرُّ يَوْمَ

(35) وَأَبِيهِ وَأُمِّهِ

(36) وَبَنِيهِ وَصَاحِبَتِيهِ

(37) يُغْنِيهِ شَأْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ مِّنْهُمْ أَمْرٍ لِّكُلِّ

(38) مُسْفِرَةٍ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَجُوهٌ

(39) مُسْتَبْشِرَةٌ صَاحِكَةٌ

(40) غَيْرَةٌ عَلَيْهَا يَوْمَئِذٍ وَجُوهٌ

(41) قَتَرَةٌ تَرَاهُفُهَا

(42) الْفَجْرَةُ الْكَفَرَةُ هُمْ أَوْلَاؤُكَ

33. And when the deafening cry comes,

34. The Day on which a man shall flee from his brother,

35. And his mother and his father,

36. And from his wife and his children,

37. Each one of them, That Day, will have concern enough to occupy him.

38. Some faces That Day will be bright,

39. Laughing, rejoicing .

40. And some faces That Day will be dust-stained,

41. Blackness will cover them:

42. Those are they who are disbelievers, the wicked.

Commentary:

The Resurrection Cry!

After describing a notable number of divine gifts and worldly blessings, the theme changes to talk about the resurrection and some of its happenings as well as the end of the believers and unbelievers. The purpose in this is to say that, firstly, these gifts, whatever they are, will have an end sometime; and secondly, they are some signs to prove the existence of Allah's authority which is over everything and, of course, over the Resurrection.

And when the deafening cry comes,

The term /sakhah/ is based on /sakh/ which originally means 'a very loud noise', so loud that it almost deafens the ears, or actually deafens them. It points, here, to the second sound of the blast of the trumpet, the very great cry which brings the dead to life again and makes them go forth to the gathering place for the final Judgment.

Verily, the cry is so loud and shocking that everyone forgets all but one's end resulting from one's own actions.

The Day on which a man shall flee from his brother.

The same brother who was loved sincerely, was helped in everything favorably, now he flees from that brother, abruptly.

And his mother and his father,

And from his wife and his children.

Thus, individuals not only leave the nearest and the dearest members of their family such as their brother, father, mother, wife, and children, but also flee from them. This statement shows that the horror and the fear of the Day is so much so that it makes individuals cease all their wishes and affections. In the probationary life, mother was loved by her child very much; father was

highly respected by his son; wife was eagerly beloved by her husband; children were the best for their father,

as the apples of his eyes; but now, in the eternal life, one flees from all of them!

The reason why he flees from them is stated in the next verse.

Each one of them, That Day, will have concern enough to occupy him.

The term /yaqniḥ/ 'makes him self-sufficient' shows that on That Day, Man is so busy with his affairs that he does not pay attention to anyone; and the events are so terrible and overwhelming as to occupy him and his mind, totally.

It has been narrated that some of the households of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) asked him if one would remember one's close friend on That Day, and he answered: There are three halting-places where no one remembers anyone. The first place is where the acts are weighed to see whether they are heavy (worthy) or light (unworthy) ; then, it is on the path where he wonders whether he can pass it (successfully) or not;

and then it is the time when he is given his Record to see whether it is given to his right hand or to his ! hand. In these three halting-places no one cares for any one else: his supporter, his comrade, his companion, his very true friend, his child, his parents, and this is the same thing that Allah says: 'Each one of them, That Day, will have concern enough to occupy him' .(1)

Then the situation of the believers and unbelievers is described when it says:

Some faces That Day will be bright.

Laughing, rejoicing,

And some faces That Day will be dust-stained,

Blackness will cover them.

The term /musfirah/ is based on /asfar/ which means 'to appear, or
(1) Borhan, Commentary, vol.4, p.439.

to glitter' like the light of the early morning at the end of the darkness of night; the term /qabarah/ is based on /qabar/ which means 'dust'; the term /qatarah/ originally is based on /qatar/ which means 'smoke'; the term /kafarah/and the term /fajarah/ are the plural forms of

/kafir/ 'a disbeliever from the point of view of belief and /fajir/ 'a sinner from the point of view of action'.

The look on the face shows the inner self (mood) , both physically and spiritually, good or bad.

It is understood from the verse that on That Day the faces show the righteousness or wickedness of persons during their lives in this world.

The dust on the faces of the sinners will be in contrast to the beaming light on the faces of the righteous; and the blackness (smoke) of the faces of sinners, who are sad and regretful, in contrast to the 'laughing, rejoicing' faces of the righteous.

On the whole, on That Day, the faces show the facts and it is enough to look at the faces to know who is a sinner and who is righteous; as it is said in Sura Rahman, No. 55, verse 41: (For) the sinners will be known by their faces.

Explanation:

SELF-PERFECTION:

The ideas set forth in the short and meaningful verses, of this Sura, are a good collection for individuals to use as a guidance to self-perfection.

1. On the one hand, it leads Man to refer to the origin of his creation to understand how he was created from a lowly sperm-drop in order that he should not be proud, because one of the greatest hindrances on the path of self-perfection is pride.
2. On the other hand, it introduces the divine leadership to Man as the best provision of his way including both the Prophet's guidance, originating from revelation, and the guidance led by rational thinking and the observation in the regularity of the created world.
3. Then, it orders Man to look to his food to see how it is created and prepared for him by the Beneficent and the Merciful Creator, and then, to obey Him in humility. Man should be careful to obtain his food, lawfully, because pure and lawful food is an important basis for self-perfection.
4. When he must be careful about his bodily food, then, he should certainly be careful about his soul's sustenance to see that it is not from a corrupted source; that which threatens his spiritual life.

It is surprising that some people are seriously careful about their bodily food, but they do not take

care about their soul's sustenance; they read any book and they learn the tutorship of any misleading education and observe no limits or conditions for the sustenance of their soul.

There is a narration from Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali (p.b.u.h.) that says: Why, I see that people light a lamp at night to watch what kind of food they eat, but they do not mind what is the sustenance of their soul. They do not enlighten their mind by (the) rational knowledge, if they do they will be safe from the bad results of ignorance and sinfulness in their beliefs and deeds.(1)

His son Imam Hassan- Mujtaba (p.b.u.h.) also said something along these lines: I wonder at some people who think about their bodily food, but do not care for their soul's sustenance. They avoid eating harmful food, but fill their hearts with fatal materials.(2)

5. One should remember that the Deafening Cry will raise up all from their graves, and everyone will be faced with one's Record. Then, the circumstances, there, will be so awful that one will forget all of one's dearest beloved. One should think about one's acts whether they be so

(1) Safinat-ul-Bihar, vol.2, p.84.

(2) Ibid.

good that one will deserve to have a 'laughing, rejoicing' and bright face That Day, or whether one will have an ugly, black and frowning face, then, and thus, will cause oneself to prepare for that Day.

Supplication:

O Lord! Make each of us successful in self-perfection.

O Lord! Do not deprive us from a good sustenance for our spirits.

O Lord! Make us conscious of our duties to fulfill them before the occurrence of the deafening Cry!

The End of Sura 'Abasa (He Frowned)

Sura Takwir (The Folding Up) No.81 (29 Verses)

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

Contents of the Sura:

This Sura is among the Meccan Suras and there is a variety of evidence to verify this fact. For instance, the Sura denotes that the enemies of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) called him mad and this treatment used to happen in the early periods of his prophecy in Mecca, when his enemies did not take his statements seriously and were quite careless about them.

This Sura can be divided into mainly two themes:

The first theme is pointed out in the beginning verses of the Sura; those which contain the signs about the Hereafter and the occurrence of some great changes regarding the end of this world and the beginning of the Next World; the Resurrection.

The second theme is in a mystical passage showing how the Great Qur'anic Revelation was true, and was revealed through the angel Gabriel, and which has a remarkable effect on Man's soul for his spiritual guidance. This part is accompanied by some enlightening oaths; full of meaning.

The Virtue in Studying Sura Takwir:

There are many traditions narrated about the importance of this Sura and studying it, such as a tradition from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) that says: " He who studies Sura 'Takwir' (The Folding Up) will be saved by Allah from being exposed to shame when the book of deeds will be laid Open." (1)

Another tradition from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) says:

" He who wishes to look at me on the Day of Judgment, should study Sura Takwir (The Folding Up) ".(2)

The tradition has also been narrated in another form, which says: " He whose looking at the Hereafter makes him glad (as if he sees it) , studies Sura 'Takwir'(The Folding Up) , 'Infitar' (Cleaving Asunder) , and 'Inshiqaq' (The Rending Asunder) . (Since, in these Suras, the signs of the Hereafter are illustrated so clearly that the reciter of them feels that the scene of Hereafter is in front of him) . (3)

It is narrated that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) was asked why he had grown old so early and he answered : Hud, Waqi'ah, Mursalal and Naba' made me old. (The reason is that the horrible events of the Hereafter are so clearly illustrated in them that it makes every conscious person prematurely old) .

(4) It is also narrated from Imam Sadiq who said: He who studies Sura Abasa and Takwir will be with the Mercy and Grace of Allah in the eternal Heaven and this is easy for Him when He wills. (5)

The items mentioned in this narration vividly show that the goal, by recitation, is to produce knowledge, faith, and action in the reciter.

(1) Majma-al-Bayan, vol.10, p.441.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Qartatbi, The Commentary, vol. 10, p.7017.

(4) Nur-uth-Thdqalayn. vol.5, p.513.

(5) Thawab-ul-amal. according to what is cited in the quotation of Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol.5, p.512.

Commentary : Verse 1.2.3.4.5.6.7.8.9

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(1) كُوِّرَتْ الشَّمْسُ إِذَا

(2) انْكَدَرَتْ النُّجُومُ وَإِذَا

(3) سُيِّرَتْ الْجِبَالُ وَإِذَا

(4) عُطِّلَتْ الْعِشَارُ وَإِذَا

(5) حُسِبِرَتْ الْأَوْحُوشُ وَإِذَا

(6) سَجَّرَتِ الْبِحَارُ وَإِذَا

(7) زُوِّجَتْ النَّفُوسُ وَإِذَا

(8) سُنِّتَتِ الْمَوُودَةُ وَإِذَا

(9) قُنِيَ دَنْبٌ بِأَيِّ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

1. When the sun is folded up;
2. And when the stars darken;
3. And when the mountains shall be set in motion;
4. And when the pregnant camels shall be neglected,
5. And when the wild beasts shall be herded together,
6. And when the seas boil over,
7. And when the souls are reunited (like with like) ,
8. And when the girl-child buried alive is asked,
9. For what sin she was slain.

Commentary:

The Day When All the Universe Will be Dissolved.

As it was mentioned earlier, the Sura opens with a series of highly mystical metaphors, with some short, but shocking hints, suggesting the break-up of the world, as we know it, and then, after the end of this world, the Resurrection. On the whole, eight signs out of all the Great Events are mentioned here. First, it says:

When the sun is folded up.

The term /kuwwirat/ is based on the word /takwir/ which, according to dictionaries and commentaries, originally means 'the act of folding up' and 'rolling or wrapping up something (like wrapping on a turban) ', and it is sometimes used with the sense of 'casting' and 'darkening', both of which seem to refer to the original meaning.

In any case, it means, here, the folding up the light of the sun, and the darkening and shrinking of its body.

We now know that the sun is a globe, extremely hot and blazing, surrounded by intense burning gases whose flames shoot out hundreds of kilometers, so that if the Earth were put in one of the flames it would change to ash and gas at once.

But, at the end of this world and at the threshold of the Hereafter this heat will end and the flames will be folded up, its light will be extinguished, and the sun itself will shrink. This is the meaning of the term /takwir/.

It is also a known fact, in modern science today, that the star; the sun, will darken gradually.

And when the stars darken.

The term /inkadarat/ is based on /inkidar/ which means 'to fall, or to scatter', and, it is derived from the root /kudurat/, meaning 'gloom and darkness'. Both of these two meanings can be combined for the commentary of the current verse, because at the threshold of the Hereafter, the stars will both lose their light, scatter and fall, and also the regularity of the Universe will be disturbed, as Sura Infitar, No. 82 verse 2 says: When the planets are scattered. In addition, Sura Mursalat, No. 77, verse 8 says: Then when the stars are extinguished.

And when the mountains shall be set in motion.

And, as it was mentioned earlier, it is understood from various verses of the Qur'an that close to the time of the occurrence of the Resurrection the mountains pass through different stages: at first they move, and, in the end change into scattered dust. (More explanation is given in the commentary of Sura Nabaa, No. 78, verse 20) .

And when the pregnant camels shall be neglected The word /ishar/ is the plural form of /ishra/ and basically means 'she-camel ten months with young', which is just about to be delivered of her young. That is, in the near future it will be delivered of another camel and, therefore, will possess much milk.

At the time of the revelation of these verses such a camel was considered the most valuable

property to the Arabs.

The term /uttilat/ is based on /ta'til/ which means 'to leave without care'.

It means that the intensity of the horror and fear, on that Day, is so much so that everyone leaves his most precious things unattended.

The late Tabarsi cites in Majma'-al-Bayan that some have said it means 'cloud!' and the term /uttilat/ means that 'they are want of rain', that is, on that Day the clouds appear in the sky, but do not rain. (The 'clouds' might be the ones which result from different gases or atomic clouds, or a mass of scattered dust produced from cleaving mountains at the threshold of the Hereafter, which contain no rain.

Some have also commented that /ishar/ means 'the houses or farming lands' that at the threshold of the Hereafter will be left in suspension.

However, the first commentary is the most popular.

When the wild beasts shall be mustered.

There are some animals which normally live far from each other and fearing each other, flee, but the terror and the alarm of the events, prior to the Hereafter, is so great that these animals will gather together and forget every fear. It seems as if they feel safer gathered together.

Consequently, a lot of commentators believe that this verse refers to the Resurrection of the wild animals and their presence in the Court of the Hereafter. They will be judged on their limits and according to their knowledge which relates to their own responsibilities, and will be recompensed if they transgressed. They have considered this verse similar to Sura An'am, No.6, verse 38 which says: There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings; but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have We omitted from the Book, and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end.

The first commentary is more fitting, here.

And when the seas boil over.

The term /sujjirat/ is based on /tasjir/ which originally means 'to Light fire and to inflame the fire '.

In the old days this meaning seemed odd to the commentators, but today it does not, because now we know that water is formed by Oxygen and Hydrogen; both of which are flammable. It is

not improbable that at the threshold of the Hereafter the water of the seas and oceans will be under such conditions that these two elements separate and turn totally into fire.

Some commentators have rendered the term in the sense of 'to fill', as a furnace full of fire is called /masajjar/. The earthquakes and the cleaving of the mountains asunder, nearly at the time of Resurrection, may cause the seas to fill and overflow, or meteorites to fall into them and their water flows over land, and then, everything would sink.

And when the souls are reunited (like with like) .

The good-doers with the good-doers the evildoers with the evildoers. the companions of the Right Hand with the companions of the Right Hand, and the companions of the Left Hand with the companions of the Left Hand, all will be like with like, in contrast to the world, today. where all of them are mixed. It sometimes happens that in the neighborhood of a believer there is an unbeliever, or the spouse of a good-doer is a wrong doer. But on the Day of judgment, which is also a 'Sorting Day' and 'a day of separation', these groups are quite apart from each other.

In commenting on this verse, some other probabilities are also suggested including the following:

1) the souls return to their bodies; 2) the souls in Heaven will unite with Heavenly maidens and the souls in Hell will unite with devils; 3) everyone will, again, be with his intimate companions after death has made them separate; or 4) everyone will unite with one's deeds.

However, the first commentary seems to be the most appropriate among all of them. This is what Sura Waqi'ah, No. 56, verses 7-10 verify:

And you shall be sorted out into three classes:

Then (there will be) the Companions of the Right Hand; What will be the Companions of the Right Hand?

And the Companions of the Left Hand, What will be the Companions of the Left Hand?

And those Foremost (in Faith) will be foremost (in the Hereafter) .

These will be those Nearest to Allah.

In fact, this verse, after mentioning six great incidents, which are the preliminary events to the Resurrection, refers to the opening sign of that Great Day, viz: the Day when everyone will be with his companions.

Then attention is paid to another event of the Resurrection, and says: And when the girl-child buried alive is asked,

For what sin she was slain.

The term /mau'udat/ us derived from /wa'd/ which means 'a girl who is buried alive'. Some commentators have said that this word means 'heaviness' since when girls were buried alive the soil that was poured over them was heavy.

Some narrations denote to a broader meaning for the verse. so Vast that it has been commented on as 'cutting the ties kinship', or 'cutting the friendship of the Prophet's household (p.b.u.th.) , (Ahl-ul-Bait) '.

In a tradition it is stated that once Imam Baqir was asked about the commentary of this verse, and he said that it meant this: The persons whom are killed for their friendship to us.

Another tradition says that the witness to this statement is the verse: ...Say: No reward do I ask of you for this except the love of these near of kin... , (Sura Shura, No. 42, verse 23) .

Of course, the apparent meaning of the verse refers to the first commentary, but the verse can, itself, carry a vast meaning.

Explanation:

The Practice of Female Infanticide:

One of the most dreadful and most savage actions of the pagan Arabs was female infanticide, which is made reference to, repeatedly, in the Qur'an.

Some commentators believe that this custom was committed only by one tribe of Arabs named 'Kindih', (or some other tribe) , but, surely it was not a rare phenomenon, otherwise, the Qur'an would not emphatically refer to it on frequent occasions. In any case, it is so terrible and cruel that even its rare occurrence is notable.

Commentators have said that the pagan Arabs, when their wives were going to give birth, used to dig a hole and sit above it waiting for the child to be born and then bury her if it was female, and keep him if it was male. The cause of this crime might be due to various reasons, such as the following:

1. The lack of value for women, in Mankind, by the pagan Arabs.

2. The problem of poverty among those people, especially, because females could not be as economically productive and beneficial as males, or were not able to take part in robberies like males were.

3. Also, that in the numerous quarrels between the tribes, of that time, women would be captured by the enemies which brought disgrace on their men. All of these excuses were seen as justified for committing this crime.

These factors contributed to the terrible custom of female infanticide and were committed under the guise of social plausibility in secret collusion. But, unfortunately this cruelty is also seen in modern societies in the form of 'the freedom of abortion' by which fetuses are legally cast-off in many 'civilized' countries. The pagan Arabs used to commit infanticide after delivery, but these civilized people, of our time, kill them in their mother's wombs and under the guise of miscarriage.

It is noteworthy that the Qur'an condemns this action and counts it so disgraceful and hateful that it considers the crime of prime accountability prior to the Records in the Hereafter or pleading for justice about other matters. In addition to the value of woman, it shows the Islamic view on the importance of the matter, especially regarding the innocent persons.

Another point, which is also noteworthy, here, is that the Qur'an does not say that the murderers will be asked of what crime they committed, but it says that the innocent female-children will be asked about what sin it was for which they were slain so cruelly and indefensibly. It seems that the murderers are not worth questioning. Besides that only the testimony of the murdered ones is enough.

Commentary : Verse 10.11.12.13.14

(10) نُشِرَتْ الصُّحُفُ وَإِذَا

(11) كُتِبَتْ السَّمَاءُ وَإِذَا

(12) سُعِّرَتْ الْجَحِيمُ وَإِذَا

(13) أَرْلَفْتَ الْجَنَّةَ وَإِذَا

(14) أَحْضَرْتُ مَا نَفْسٌ عَلِمَتْ

10. And when the scrolls (of the deeds of mankind) are spread,

11. And when the heaven shall be unveiled,

12. And when Hell is set ablaze,

13. And when the Garden is brought nigh for the righteous) ,

14. Every soul shall (then) know what it has produced (of its deeds) ".

Commentary:

The first stage; the events as a preliminary to the Resurrection, viz: the destruction of the world, was described in the former verses. Now, in the following verses, the second stage of the Resurrection is pointed out, that is, the appearance of the Next World with its record and reckoning.

,And when the scrolls (of the deeds of mankind) are spread.

The term /suhuf/ is the plural form of the term /sahifa/ meaning 'a thing spread open like a face, or pages of a book; a book on which something is written'.

In the Hereafter, the records are spread in front of their owners to view, read and count the deeds themselves, Sura Isra', No. 17, verse 14 says: Read thin (own) record: sufficient is thy soul this day to make out an account against thee.

It is also open before the eyes of others; that which is a praise for the good-doers and a pain and punishment for the astray evildoers.

And when the heaven shall be unveiled.

The term /kushitat/ is based on /kasht/ which as Raqib cites in his book Mufradat , originally means 'to remove, take off -- the covering or skin of an animal', and as Ibn-Manthur cites in Lisan-ul-Arab it means 'to remove a curtain from something' , then the sense, from verse 11, the 'cloud! separate and scatter' is derived from this word.

The term, in this verse, means that the curtains over the subjects hidden; such as angels, Heaven and Hell, which do exist, but are secret to people in this world, will be removed and Man can see the Reality of the existing Universe, and as the next verses denote, the blazing Hell and eternal Heaven are brought near.

Verily, the Day of Judgment is when the reality of everything will be made manifest and the heavens will be unveiled.

According to the above commentary, this verse points to the incidents of the second stage of the Resurrection in which the process of Mankind's rebirth will come forth and their new life will begin. The verses before and after it, also, confirm the same idea. Many commentators have meant it with the sense of 'folding up the heavens' which refers to the events of the first stage of the Resurrection, that is, the destruction of this world. This idea seems improbable, though, because it corresponds neither with the original meaning of the term /kushitat/ nor with the arrangement of the verses before and after it.

For this reason, in the next verse, it says:

And when Hell is set ablaze.

As Sura Taubah, No. 9, verse 49 says: ...And indeed Hell Surround the Unbelievers (on all sides) . Hell exists now, today, but, in this world, the curtains cover it and do not let us see it, as well as Heaven which, according to many verses of the Qur'an, is prepared for the Righteous, at this very moment. (1)

Also, for the same reason, the next verse says:

And when the Garden is brought nigh (for the righteous) .

This very idea is mentioned in Sura Shuara, No. 26, verse 90 with a difference that it contains the word 'Righteous' but, this verse does not.

The term /uzlifat/ is based on /zalf/ and /zulfa/ which means 'nearness, proximity, a near approach'. This nearness may be from the view point of 'place' or 'time' or from the view point of 'the means of preparation', or all of them, viz: Heaven is near to the believers both from the point of view of place and time of arrival and it is also easy for them to reach it.

It is worthy to note that it does not say that the Righteous approach Heaven, but it says 'Heaven is brought near for the Righteous' and this is the most honorable situation possible in this case.

As was mentioned earlier Heaven and Hell are present just now, but, on that Day, Heaven is brought nearer and Hell is set more ablaze.

Then, finally, in the last verse of the current section which is, indeed, complementary to the previous verses and is a substantive clause for the conditional clauses occurred in the former twelve verses, it says:

Every soul shall (then) know what it has produced (of its deeds) ,

This statement clearly shows that all the deeds of Man are present there, and Man's knowledge about them is a knowledge consisting of observation and self conviction.

This fact is mentioned in some other verses of the Qur'an, too, such as Sura Kahf, No. 18, verse 49: ...They will find all that they did', placed before them...; and Sura Zilzal, No. 99, verses 7-8 that say: So whoever has done an atom's weight of good shall behold it, And whoever who has done an atom '5 weight of evil shall behold it.

(1) Sura Al-i-'Imran, verse 133, Sura Hadid, verse 21.

This verse also makes reference to the personification of deeds. Our deeds apparently have an end and vanish in this world, but this will never be so. They will be personified (incarnated) in appropriate forms, in the next world, and present in the Hereafter.

Explanation:

The Order of the Verses.

In the current and prior verses twelve events, in relation to the Resurrection, are mentioned. The first six events relate to the first stage viz: the desolation of this world; and the second six events relate to the second stage, that is, the rebirth and new life after death.

In the first group of verses, the word is about the darkening of the sun and the stars, the movement and agitation of the mountains, the exploding of the seas, the negligence about wealth, and the fear in wild animals.

In the second group of verses, the statement is about: the different groups of Man coming into the Hereafter, the questioning of the girl-child buried alive, the spreading of the scrolls containing the deeds of Mankind, the removing of the curtains from the heavens, Hell being ablaze, Heaven being brought near, and finally, Man's full knowledge of his own deeds.

In spite of their brevity, these verses are so meaningful and awakening that they shake everyone and bring them into a thoughtful state such that they can visualize the end of this world and the circumstances of the Resurrection, in their minds, as if they see them with their very eyes. How nice and expressive the verses of the Qur'an are, and how impressive and meaningful its refined subtleties and pertinent details!

Will the Solar System and the Stars Darken?

First of all, we should know that the Sun is a star and a medium sized one among all stars, but by itself and in comparison with the Earth it is extraordinarily large. Its volume is more than 1,300,000 times that of the Earth, but since its mean distance from the Earth is nearly 93,000,000 miles (about 150,000,000 kilometers) we see it as it is now.

To understand the immenseness and greatness of the Sun it is enough to imagine that if the Earth and its moon, with the same distance that they have between them now, were transferred into the Sun; the moon could easily rotate around the Earth, inside the Sun, without protruding out from its inner surface.

The outside heat of the Sun is estimated to be about 6,000 C, and the heat of the inside is estimated to be several million degrees. (For additional data about the Sun, refer to page 87, Sura Nabba, No. 78, verse 13) .

If we want to express the weight of the Sun in metric ton, we should write the figure 2 with twenty seven zeros behind it.

The height of the flames from the Sun's surface shoot up to about 160,000 kilometers, so that our Earth can easily disappear in them because, the Earth's diameter is not more than 12,000 kilometers.

The heat and the brightness of the Sun, in spite of George Gamof's statement, do not originate from burning coal forming the Sun's body, but are from the energy produced by atomic decomposition and we know that this energy is extremely intense. Therefore, the atoms of the Sun are always changing into energy through decomposition and reduction. According to the calculations of scientists, every minute, the Sun loses 4,000,000 tons of weight, but its body is so huge that it does not show an apparent change even after thousands of years.

It is worth mentioning, here, that the very loss of weight is effective in the destruction of the Sun over a length of time, and by becoming thinner and thinner at last, this great world-illuminating-lamp will gradually darken. This fate is also true for the other stars.

Therefore, what is said in the aforementioned verses about the darkening of the Sun and the destruction of the stars is a fact that is in agreement with modern science. The Qur'an has stated these facts when, not only in the Arabian Peninsula, but in all scientific meetings held by scientists of the world, at that time, no one knew anything about these statistics.

Commentary : Verse 15.16.17.18.19.20.21.22.23.24.25

(15) بِالْخُنُوسِ أَقْسِمُ فَلَا

(16) الْكُنُوسِ الْجَوَارِ

(17) عَسْعَسَ إِذَا وَاللَّيْلِ

(18) تَنَفَّسَ إِذَا وَالصُّبْحِ

(19) كَرِيمِ رَسُولٍ لَقَوْلٍ إِنَّهُ

(20) مَكِينِ الْعَرْشِ ذِي عِنْدَ قُوَّةٍ ذِي

(21) أَمِينٍ نَّمَّ مَطَاعٍ

(22) بِمَجْنُونٍ صَاحِبِكُمْ وَمَا

(23) الْمُبِينِ بِالْأَفْقِ رَأَهُ وَلَقَدْ

(24) بِضَنِينِ الْغَيْبِ عَلَى هُوَ وَمَا

(25) رَجِيمِ شَيْطَانٍ بِقَوْلٍ هُوَ وَمَا

15. No, I swear by the orbiting planets,

16. That run their course, (and) set,

17. And (by) the night when it ends,

18. And (by) the morning when it breathes.
19. Surely it is the word of a gracious Messenger,
20. Endowed with power in the presence of the Lord of the Universe;
21. One (to be) obeyed, moreover faithful in trust.
22. And (O people) your companion (Our Messenger) is not mad.
23. Indeed he saw him (angel Gabriel) on the clear horizon.
24. And he does not withhold concerning the unseen,
25. Nor is it the word of the accursed Satan.

Commentary:

Gabriel, the Bringer of Allah's Message Descends to him.

In the previous verses the Resurrection and preliminary events, with some other incidents of that Great Day, were discussed. The following verses speak about the importance of the Qur'an, showing how the Qur'anic Revelation is true, was revealed through the angel Gabriel, and was not merely ravings or rhapsodies from one possessed. In fact, they confirm what was said about the Resurrection, in the former verses, and emphasize on the matter while giving some additional information.

No, I swear by the orbiting planets,

That run their course, (and) set.

The term /Khunnas/ is the plural form of /khanis/ based on /khans/ which originally means: 'shrink, hide away' and Satan is called 'khannas' because he hides himself at the name of Allah, as one tradition we find that it says: Satan tempts the servants of Allah and when His name is mentioned he slinks out of sight.

The term /jawar/ is the plural form of /jariyah/, which has the meaning: 'running'.

The term /kunnas/ is the plural form of /kanas/ based on /kans/ which means 'to lie in hiding', and the term /kinas/ from the same root word is called both 'the nest of birds' and 'the hiding place of

deer and wild beasts'.

Different opinions have been introduced for the meaning of these oaths. Many commentators believe that they refer to the five planets: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury, which are visible with the naked eye.

If we look to the sky over several nights in succession, we see that all of the stars gradually appear, but, they sit all together without having apparent change in the distance between them. It looks like a piece of black cloth on which a great number of pearls have been sewn having defined spaces, and the cloth is pulled up from one side and taken down from another side depicting day and night. Only five planets are exceptions to this regulation. They move through the stars as if there were five unsewn pearls on the cloth that move freely among the others.

On the one hand, the above mentioned five planets are the very ones which are among the family members of the solar system. We see their movements, because they are close to us in comparison with the other stars in the sky; which also have similar movements, but we can not see this because of their very far distances.

On the other hand, these planets seem to have no retrograde and forward motion; apparently looking like they move forward for a length of time, then, they return a little and, again, continue moving forward. The causes for this status are discussed in astronomy.

The above verses may point to the same matter; that these planets move forward: /aljawar/, and along their way, they, apparently, and at last, in the morning at dawn, hide away: /kunnas/ like the deer which move in the deserts to find food at night, but conceal themselves in their hiding places; kunas, in the day time, from beast of prey.

It is probable that the meaning of /kunnas/ is that, when rotating round the sun, the planets hide or disappear completely at a point behind the sun, or are otherwise invisible. Astronomers call this case /ihtiraq/ in the Arabic language. This is a delicate point which can be understood with careful attention.

Some also believe that /konnas/ refers to the settlement of these planets in the Zodiac which resemble the deer concealing themselves in their brush-homes. It is obvious, of course, that the planets of the solar system are not limited to these five planets, but there are three more planets among them which are visible only by telescope and have been named Neptune, Uranus and Pluto. All of them, together with the Earth, form the nine planets of our solar system. (Of course, some of the nine planets have a moon or moons which are different from the planets themselves)

By the way, the term /jawari/, the plural form of /Jariyah/ (one of the meanings is 'ships in motion'), is a delicate analogy which compares the movement of these planets, in the ocean of sky, with the movement of ships on the surface of the oceans.

It seems that the Qur'an, by stating these meaningful oaths with a kind of ambiguity, tends to stir minds and make them contemplate and pay attention to the exceptional and various status of these planets from the millions of stars around them, in order to better understand the greatness of the Creator of this lofty establishment.

Others have suggested some commentaries on these verses which we will not mention here.

A narration, on the commentary of these verses, denotes that Amir-al-Mo'mineen (p.b.u.h.) said: They are five stars: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus and Mercury.

And (by) the night when it ends.

The term /'as'as/ is based on /'as'asah/ which originally means 'pale darkness' and since darkness is lesser at the beginning and at the end of the night this word is used for the coming and going of night, and that is why, in Arabic, 'he who goes round by night to keep watch', is called /'asas/.

Although, as was mentioned before, the term has two quite opposite meanings, here, and by the evidence of the next verse, it means the end of night. In fact, it is similar to the oath mentioned in Sura Muddathir, No.74, verse 33: And by the Night as it refreateth.

Night is one of the great gifts from Allah and it is both the cause of Man's spiritual and bodily tranquility, as well as an adjustment for the Sun's heat and, consequently, the continuation of vitality in living creatures. The emphasis put on 'the end of night' may be for the reason that night moves toward light and brightness and it is the best time for praying to and the worshipping of Allah. Dawn, in this world, is the beginning of movement and struggle for living creatures.

And (by) the morning when it breathes.

What an interesting analogy! Morning resembles a living creature whose first breath is dawn and blows vitality into all creatures, as if it had been captured in the grip of night and now with the first glow of day, becomes free and breathes.

This sense is similar to what is mentioned in Sura Muddathir. No.74, verse 34 which occurs after the oath to the night, which says: And by the Dawn as it shines forth. It is as though the gloom of night like a veil, has fallen on the face of morning which is removed now, at dawn, and the morning's glittering face, which is a sign of life, is shown to all in this world.

In the next verse, what all these oaths are for is mentioned:

Surely it is the word of a gracious Messenger.

This verse is an answer to those who accuse the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) by saying that the Qur'an is from him; not from Allah.

In this verse and the following verse there are five characteristics mentioned for Gabriel, the courier of Allah, which are necessary, indeed, for any qualified messenger.

The first attribute of Gabriel is that he is 'gracious' which shows his worthiness. Verily, he is a worthy creature with Allah the Great.

Then, another characteristic of Gabriel is mentioned; it says:

Endowed with power in the presence of the Lord of the Universe.

The term /thil'arsh/ 'the Lord of the Universe' refers to Allah. He is the Lord of all, but since the Universe, with whatever definition it has, is in a higher position than that of other things, so, He is characterized by the Universe.

The term /th-quwwah/ 'endowed with power' is used to characterize Gabriel for the reason that taking such a great Message and carefully communicating it needs a great power. And, as a matter of fact, any messenger should have an authority fitting with his mission or the message. He must be especially free from any forgetfulness of the message that he is responsible for.

The term /makin/ means 'one whose rank is firmly established' , and, basically, a messenger should be a great and outstanding person who can fulfill his mission and should be quite close and beloved. And, surely, the term /'ind/ 'in the presence of' does not have the meaning of a special presence, because Allah does not exist in any one location; but it is the 'rank presence' and 'spiritual nigh'.

One (to be) obeyed, moreover faithful in trust.

The term /Thumma/ moreover' points to the fact that the bringer Of Allah's Message, the Archangel Gabriel, has an angelic authority among angels and is obeyed there, and, beyond these, he is faithful to his trust in conveying the Message.

It is understood from some narrations that when Gabriel was conveying the revelation he was

accompanied by a large number of angels who obeyed him.

There is a tradition which says that when these verses were descended, the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) told Gabriel:

How well your Lord praised you when he said: 'Endowed with power in the presence of the Lord of the Universe, 'One (to be) obeyed, more over faithful in trust'. Then, what is your power? And what is your faithfulness in trust?

Gabriel answered him that his power was such that he was told to destroy the four cities of Lot's people, each of which had four hundred thousand fighters; excluding their children. He destroyed those cities and took them to Heaven, so that the angels of Heaven even heard the sound of the peoples' animals, then he returned them to the Earth and turned them upside down.

Gabriel continued, in this way, so that there was no instruction that he did not fully carry Out.

Furthermore, to tell people that the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is honorable and trustworthy, it says:

And (O people) your companion (Our Messenger) is not mad.

The term /sahib/ means 'companion, friend', and besides pointing to the humility of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), toward all people, and that he did not seek any superiority for himself, it appeals to the people to take note of their own 'companion', the Prophet, (p.b.u.h.) who had been born among them and had lived with them for many years. He was known to be a wise, honorable, truthful, and trustworthy man. How could he be mad? The only thing is that, with his Prophecy, he brought some instructions to teach 'you' but, they are disagreeing with 'your' prejudices, blind imitations and low desires. So, to flee from obeying his instructions 'you' accuse him of demonical possession.

According to the verses of Qur'an, all Prophets were accused, by their enemies, of being mad: Similarly, no apostle came to peoples before them, but they said (of him) in like manner 'A sorcerer or one possessed; Sura Zariyat, No. 51, verse 52) .

They thought the wise man was he who would fulfill their vices and follow their lusts, knew well on which side the bread was buttered, and would avoid any revolutionary development. Then, on this level, all the Prophets seemed, to them, to be mad.

For laying stress on the relation between the holy Prophet (p.b.u.h.) and Gabriel, it says: Indeed he saw him (angel Gabriel) on the clear horizon. The meaning of the terms /ufuq-il-mubin/ 'clear horizon' is the same as 'the highest part of the horizon', where the angels were made manifest

and where the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) saw Gabriel.

Some believe that Sura Najm, No. 53, verse 7 which says: While he was in the highest part of the horizon; is an evidence for this commentary, but this verse, as well as the other verses of that Sura, talks about another fact.

Also, some have said that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) saw Gabriel twice in his genuine appearance: once, at the beginning of his prophetic appointment, and whose greatness made him (p.b.u.h.) elated. He appeared to him (p.b.u.h.) on the highest horizon.

The second time was on the Nocturnal Journey of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) where he saw Gabriel in the high heavens, in his real appearance, to which the current verse refers.

It is also probable that it refers to the Prophet's observation of Allah through a vision of inspiration.

And he does not withhold concerning the unseen.

Whatever he has, he puts it within the reach of the people. He is not like those who insist on keeping secret an important fact which they have gained and is in their own control and it sometimes happens that they withhold it until they die.

The Prophet (p.u.b.h.) is not such a person. He gives what he has received, as revelation, to all the needy and even to those who stand in opposition to him and value him naught, in hopes that they may be guided to the right path.

The term /danin/ is based on /dinnah/ in the sense of 'stinginess for the precious things', which is a characteristic that Prophets never have, because the source of their knowledge is Allah; Who is infinite.

Nor is it the word of the accursed Satan.

These Qur'anic verses are not like the statements of necromancers and soothsayers who take them from the devils. Those statements are full of lies and mistakes, and based on their own wishes; which come with envy, spite, greed, or other vices, but these verses are full of clear truth, under divine inspiration whose signs are apparent in them. These two are completely different from each other, of course. It has been shown that the Qur'an is not the word of a mortal, but that it is full of divine wisdom; that its teaching is not that of a mad man, but from one sane to the core and in accordance with human needs.

The term /rajim/ is originally based on /rajm/ and /rijam/ which means 'stoned' and then, it is used in the sense of throwing stones in order to drive a person or an animal away. And it is used in the sense of any rejection or driving away. The Arabic term /shaytan ir-rajim/ means 'Satan who is driven away with stones from the rank of those close to Allah'.

Explanation:

The Characteristics of a Qualified Messenger:

The five characteristics, regarding the hierarchy, mentioned in the above verses for Gabriel, who was sent to the Prophet (p.u.b.h.) of Islam by Allah, are required for every messenger, regarding the hierarchy.

1. Graciousness is the first spiritual characteristic which respectfully makes Gabriel deserving of being a great Messenger.
2. Then his endowed power for the fulfillment of his responsibility comes forth which means that he is aloof from any weakness and feebleness or lassitude in bringing the Message.
3. His third highest rank, with the sender of the Message, is noteworthy in order to take all of the Message completely, and communicate them fearlessly.
4. If the Message is about an important thing, the messenger may have some assistants to help him on the errand; the ones who follow him obediently.
5. The fifth characteristic is that his messenger is qualified as being 'faithful in trust' so that the persons who are to receive the message, from him, trust in him and count on his words; the same as the words of the one who has sent them.

When someone is qualified with these five characteristics, he will be the most fitting messenger. The Prophet of Islam (p.u.b.h.) used to choose his messengers carefully from those who were qualified among them. A clear example of his messengers is that of Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali (p.u.b.h.) who was sent, under that difficult situation, by the Prophet (p.u.b.h.) to the pagans of Mecca to communicate the beginning verses of Sura Taubah, No.9.

Commentary : Verse 26.27.28.29

تَذُهِبُونَ فَأَيْنَ (26)

لِلْعَالَمِينَ ذِكْرٌ إِلَّا هُوَ إِنْ (27)

يَسْتَقِيمَ أَنْ مِنْكُمْ شَاءَ لِمَنْ (28)

الْعَالَمِينَ رَبُّ اللَّهِ يَشَاءُ أَنْ إِلَّا تَشَاؤُونَ وَمَا (29)

26. Whither then will you go?

27. Surely it (the Qur'an) is naught but a Reminder to (all) the worlds,

28. For whoever of you who would go straight.

29. But you cannot wilt, except as Allah wilts, the Lord of the Worlds.

Commentary:

O Neglectful Ones! Where are You Going?

In the previous verses it was made clear that the Holy Qur'an is the word of Allah. Its contents show that it cannot be from a devilish source, but from Allah, the Merciful, from Whom Gabriel the powerful, faithful carrier of Allah's revelation, brought it to the sane Prophet (p.u.b.h) who communicated and taught it, completely, to people and did not withhold anything of it.

The following verses condemn the rejecters for their disobedience to this great word, the Holy Qur'an. It reproachfully questions:

Whither then will you go?

Why have you left the straight path and gone astray? Why have you turned your back to this leading bright torch and gone toward darkness? Are you against your own happiness and safety?

Surely it (the Qur'an) is naught but a Reminder to (all) the Worlds.

It advises and warns all to be aware and not to be neglectful.

Since training and guidance need not only the 'act of the actor' but, also 'the fitness of the fit'

,then it says:

For whoever of you who would go straight.

It is noteworthy that the former verse says that the Qur'an is a reminder to all the worlds, but this verse says that it is for a special group of people; those who have decided to assume the truth and go on the straight way. The reason for this difference is that the first verse speaks about the generality of this divine gift, while the second one states the conditions for obtaining benefits from it. And all the blessings in the world are the same: they are basically general, but their usage depends on 'will' and 'decision'.

Sura Baqara, No. 2, verse 2 carries a similar sense: This is the Book, in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah.

In any case, this verse is one of the verses which shows that Allah has created Man free; possessing free-will. Then, it is Man who should decide which way to follow; the right way or the wrong one.

The term /yastaqim/ is used with an interesting sense which shows that the main road,- the one in front of Man, is the straight way to happiness and salvation and other roads are the false ones leading to aberration. All of Man's talents, along with his hidden and apparent powers and his natural capacities, are equipped so as to help him move forward on the straight way. When going to extremes, devilish temptations, and misleading propaganda do not interfere. Man, with the help of his nature, follows along the straight way, and we know that the straight way is always the nearest path to the goal.

It is possible, however, for Man to imagine that this free-will is so infinite that he can do whatever he wishes and that he is not in need of Allah's help to follow the straight way. The next and the last verse of the Sura points to the authority of Allah Will and says:

But you cannot will, except as Allah wills, the Lord of the Worlds

In fact, these two verses illustrate the mid-way for Man's limited will. On the one hand, it says that Man is free and can decide what he wills to do, but, on the other hand, it says: You cannot will, except as Allah wills. It means that you are created free, but this free-will is from Allah and He has willed that you be so.

Man is neither obliged nor completely free in his deeds. Neither 'fatalism' nor 'infinite freedom' is correct. Whatever Man possesses out of wisdom, intelligence, bodily ability and mental capacity for making decisions, all in all, are from Allah. It is this very fact that requires Man to be in need of

Him and, due to his freedom and his free-will, to be responsible for his own duties and actions.

The term /rabbul-'alamin/ 'the Lord of the worlds' shows, well, that Allah's Will follows along the path of Man's training and development throughout the world. Allah never wills that anyone should go astray or commit sin and lose the nearness to Himself. He, according to His Lordship, helps all those who decide to travel on the path of spiritual development.

It is surprising that fatalists have grasped the second verse while the 'adherents of infinite free-will' have assumed the first verse.

Separating these kinds of verses from each other often causes aberration and lands one in a state of being misled. Verses of the Qur'an should be considered inseparable and the benefits should be taken from all of them.

It is interesting that some of the commentators have said that when the verse: For whoever of you would go straight, was revealed, Abu-Jahl, who was actually one of the adherents of infinite free-will, said that it became a good chance for them and they had all the authorizations at their disposal. Then, following that, the second verse was revealed : But you cannot will, except as Allah wills, the Lord of the Worlds.

Supplication:

O Lord! We know that we cannot be on the straight way unless you help us, so we seek your help.

O Lord! We have decided to go on the guided way; we ask for your Divine Will, too.

O Lord! Your throne of Judgment, in the Hereafter, is very frightening, and our Records contain few good deeds. Please forgive us with Your Own Sublime Graciousness; not with your strict Justice.

The End of Sura Takwir (The Folding up)