

Surah Infitar, Chapter 82

(The Cleaving Asunder)

Number of Verses: 19

Contents of the Surah

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In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

The theme of this Surah, similar to that of other Surahs of the last part of the Qur'an is about the Hereafter and points to five different subjects.

1. The preliminary events, which happen at the end of this physical world and just a little before that, the new Spiritual World is established.
2. A hint to the blessings of Allah that encompass man's entity, and the breaking of his pride, in order for him to be prepared for the Resurrection.
3. A reference to the angels who are appointed to record the deeds of man.
4. The end of 'the Righteous' and 'The wicked' on the Day of Judgment.
5. A part of the hardship on that Great Day.

A narration from Imam Sadiq (as) says:

"He who recites those two Surahs: Infitar and Inshiqaq and considers them present before his eyes in his obligatory and optional prayers, nothing will separate him from Allah and there will be no hindrance between him and Allah. He will be in the continuous presence of Allah and Allah will be looking over him

until all of the accounts he has with others are settled."

Surah Infitar, Verses 1-5

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ

وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انْتَثَرَتْ

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ

وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ

1. "When The Sky is cleft asunder."
2. "And when the planets are scattered."
3. "And when the seas burst forth,"
4. "And when the graves are over turned (emptied),"
5. "Every soul shall know what it has sent forward and (what it has) held back."

The Disturbance in Order and Symmetry

Again, at the beginning of this Surah, we are informed about a part of the horrible events that occur, throughout the world immediately before the Day of Judgment.

It says:

"When the Sky is cleft asunder".

"And when the planets are scattered."

The present phenomenal order will not last for ever. Then, constellations will lose their regularity and the order of this world will be disturbed. All stars and planets in the sky, revolving around special points, will leave their routine and, hitting each other, burst violently. All will be destroyed before the new Spiritual World is established.

The term /infatarat/ is based on /infitar/ which means 'being cloven asunder'.

It resembles the term used in some verses of the Qur'an, such as, Surah Inshiqaq, No. 84, Verse 1 which says:

"When The Sky is rent asunder".

And, it also resembles Surah Muzammil, No. 73, verse 18 which says:

"Whereon the sky will be cleft asunder?...".

The term /intatharat/ is basically derived from /nathr/ which means 'to disperse' and the term /intithar/ means 'to scatter', and, hence, scattered stars cause each one of them to be thrust in different directions, then many commentators have interpreted the term /intatharat/ as the 'falling of the stars' which is appropriate with the sense of 'scatter'.

The term /kawakib/ is the plural form of /kaukab/ which carries many meanings in the Arabic language, including: 'star', in the general sense, and 'Venus' in a proper sense: i.e. a white point in the eye, tall plants, blossoms, the shine of steel, a handsome lad, a sword, water, the chief of a group, etc.

However, it seems that the main meaning is 'a bright star' and other meanings are used metaphorically in relation to that meaning.

What factor or factors cause the stars to be scattered? Is it because of the disturbance of their polarization?

Does a mysterious power have an effect on them? Or is it the consequence of the world's gradual contraction, which is now approved of by the scientific community. No one knows the exact answer, but it is, at least, understood from them that when these great phenomena cannot resist and will be totally shattered then the position of man, a weak creature, is obvious.

This is an admonishment to man, in relation to the destruction of this phenomenal world, in order for him not to consider it immortal or not to be attached to it and avoid committing numerous sins for its sake.

After speaking about the sky the Surah says:

"And when the seas burst forth".

Although the seas and oceans (other than the lakes), on the Earth, are now connected to each other, it seems that prior to the Hereafter the mountains will turn to rubble, because of earthquakes, and will fill them up, entirely, so that water will cover all the lands, and the seas will join to each other as a single ocean which will overwhelm the whole planet (Earth); as Surah Takwir No. 81 verse 6 says:

"When the seas boil over swelling".

There is another probability, in commenting on these two verses, which interprets the term /fujjirat/ and /sujjirat/ in the sense of 'explosion in the seas which turns the seas into fire', because, as was said before, water is formed with a combination of two elements; both of which are combustible. If something chemically separates the water of the seas into oxygen and hydrogen, a small spark can ignite it into an overwhelming, blazing inferno.

Then, speaking about the Resurrection, where the dead are thrown out for reckoning, which is the stage for the rebirth of the dead and the world, it says:

"And when the graves are over turned (emptied),"

The term /bu'thirat/ means 'to turn upside-down' or 'to be scattered'. Raqib cites in his book 'Mufradat' that the word may be combined from two parts: /ba'th/ and /athirat/ where both meanings are gathered in it, (like /bismillah/ which is formed from /bismi/ and /allah/).

In any event, what is said in the above verse is similar to what Surah Zilzal No. 99 verse 2 denotes:

"And the Earth throws up her burdens (from within)".

Or, it resembles Surah Naziat No.79 Verse 13-14 which say:

"But it shall be only a single blast",

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

All these statements show that the rebirth, and the dead coming out from their graves, will occur suddenly and rapidly.

And, after pointing to some events that happen before and after the Resurrection; as a conclusion it says:

"Every soul shall know what it has sent forward and (what it has) held back."

Verily, on that Day, everything will be obvious to all and the curtains of arrogance and pride will be

removed, then, the full Reality will be manifested.

Man will see his deeds altogether, irrespective of good or evil, and understands what sort of deeds he had sent forth and what kind of deeds, together with their effects, remained in the world, whose result reached him later after his death; such as, acts of charity done, any remaining voluntary alms and/or pious foundations and endowments, or the books and works he had left behind; whether with good intention or evil ones, of which other persons used after him, and, also, the good or bad habits that remain among societies for generations.

These are some of man's deeds that their result reaches him after his death and they are the examples of the term /axxarat/ 'what it has held back', which is mentioned in the verse.

It is true that in this world everyone is, more or less, familiar with what he has done, but forgetfulness, selfishness, and self-love often prevent man from keeping all of his actions in mind and understanding the depth of their final result. However, on the Day when everything changes and there will be a revolution in all things in the world, including man's spirit; he will have a complete knowledge and a precise comprehension of what he has done in his life.

Or, more than that, he will see all of them in front of himself as Surah al-i-Imran, No. 3, verse 30 says:

"On the Day when every soul will be confronted with all the good it has done, and all the evil it has done..."

Some of the commentators have rendered the verse with some other interpretations, one of which is that it means the deeds that man has committed at the beginning of his life and the deeds that he has postponed to do at the end of his life. But, the first commentary is more appropriate in every respect.

By the way, the term

/nafs/ 'soul',

here, means every individual human spirit, and it includes all mankind, in general.

Explanations

Besides what is said in the above verses about the remaining result of man's deeds, there are some narration's which say that there may be some actions, fulfilled by man, whose effect; good or bad, lasts for many years or even forever, and he receives its fruit.

A narration from Imam Sadiq (as) says:

"There will be no reward for a man after his death except in three ways: the pious foundations that he has established in his life and that will continue after his death, a tradition of guidance for the benefit of

people according to which they behave after his death, and a believing good child who asks forgiveness from Allah for him". 1

The things that are beneficial for the believers after their death are six according to another narration: a pious child, the Qur'an that he studies, a well he has dug (for its water), a tree he has planted, providing water, and, finally, a good tradition that persists after him and is beloved by all.2

Some narrations focus on the science that a person leaves behind amongst people.3

There are numerous narrations that warn people to be especially careful about their behavior, because their behavior may cause their societies to have some good or bad traditions later.

The late Tabarsi cites a tradition corresponding with the above mentioned verses that states: once a person, who was attending with the Prophet (S), rose and asked people to help him with some financial matter. No one responded to him. At this moment, one of the Prophet's (S) companions gave the beggar something.

Then others followed suit and everyone gave him something to help him and the Prophet (S) said:

"He who leaves a good tradition behind himself one that others follow, will have his own reward and, in addition to this he will have a reward similar to his followers' rewards; without decreasing anything from that which they gained. And he who leaves an evil tradition behind himself and others follow it, will have his own sin plus a sin similar to his followers' sins, both, without decreasing from any of them".

At that moment Khathifah, one of the Prophet's companions (S), recited the verse:

"Every soul shall know what it has sent forward and (what it has) held back".4

Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali (as) says:

"What will your position be, then, when your affairs reach their end and graves are turned upside down (to throw out the dead)? There, every soul shall realize what it has sent before, and they shall be brought back to Allah their true Lord, and what they did fabricate (the false deities) will vanish from them". 5

These verses and narrations illustrate man's responsibility for his deeds, from the Islamic point of view, so that they may result in some good rewards or painful punishments for him even after the passing of thousands of years.

Surah Infitar, Verses 6-12

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ

الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ

فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ

كَلَّا بَلْ تُكذِّبُونَ بِالذِّينِ

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ

كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ

يَعْلَمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ

6. *"O man! What has seduced you (away) from your Lord, the Gracious?"*
7. *"Who created you and fashioned you, and proportioned you in perfection?"*
8. *"In whatever form He pleased, He constituted you."*
9. *"Nay! but you disbelieve in the (day of) reckoning"*
10. *"And surely there are Watchers over you,"*
11. *"Honorable scribes:"*
12. *"They know (and understand) whatever you do."*

O man! What Has Seduced You?

Concerning the previous verses about the Resurrection, the following verses; to awaken man and to direct his attention to the responsibility of that which Allah expects of him, the Qur'an kindly questions in an intensive scornful tone and says:

"O man ! What has seduced you from your Lord, the Gracious?"

Here,

'man'

is mentioned for the sake of his humanity, which is a privilege of his over all other creatures in the world. Then he is in the presence of Allah, Who is both Lord and Gracious.

Because of His Lordship He supports man and undertakes his training and improvement; and because of His Graciousness, He bestows innumerable material and spiritual blessings on him without expecting repayment or reward. He even overlooks his mistakes and forgives him.

Is it appropriate for this noble creature to be bold and disgraceful to such a great Lord?

Or, is it right for man to be neglectful of Him and not to obey His instructions that guarantee his own happiness?

That is why a narration from the Prophet (S) for this commentary of the verses says:

"His ignorance has caused him to be proud and neglectful."

This statement makes it clear that the main purpose is that by relying on His Lordship and Graciousness, the pride and negligence of man is removed.

The term /qarraka/ is based on the term /qurur/ which originally means 'negligence in wakefulness'; or, in other words, negligence where man should not be neglectful. Since negligence sometimes becomes the source of 'boldness' or the feeling of 'self-importance', the term /qurur/ has been interpreted in these senses. Satan is called /qarur/ because he seduces man with temptations and causes him to be neglectful and bold.

In commenting on the term /karim/, various interpretations have been cited:

Some have said that /karim/ is used for 'gracious one'; that all his actions are beneficent and he seeks for neither gaining benefit nor parrying loss.

Some others have said that /karim/ means 'one who donates what is for him to donate and what is not'.

Still others have said that /karim/ is 'one who pays a lot for a little'.

However, in fact, all of these commentaries are gathered together in the essence of the term when it refers to the utmost graciousness of one, such as Allah; the most Gracious, Who not only forgives the sinners, but also changes their sins into good deeds (for those who deserve forgiveness).

There are some wonderful statements from Amir-al-Mo'mineen Ali (as) in commenting on the verse.

In the following one, he says:

"The addressee (in this verse) is devoid of argument and his excuse is most deceptive. He is

holding himself ignorance.”

“O man! What has emboldened you to (commit) sins; what has deceived you about your God and what has made you satisfied with the destruction of yourself? Is there no cure for your ailment or no awakening from your sleep?

Do you not have pity on yourself as you have on others? Generally when you see anyone exposed to the heat of the sun you cover him with shade, or if you see any one afflicted with grief that pains his body you weep from pity for him. What, then, has made you patient over your own disease?

What has made you firm in your own affliction, and what has consoled you from weeping for yourself although your life is the most precious of all lives to you? And why does not the fear of an ailment, that may befall you in the night, keep you wakeful although you travel on the road to Allah's wrath due to your sins?

You should cure the disease of languor in your heart by determination, and the sleep of neglectfulness in your eyes by wakefulness. Be obedient to Allah, and love Him in remembrance, and picture yourself, running away when He is approaching you. He is calling you to His forgiveness and conceding your faults with His kindness, all the while you are fleeing away from Him toward others.

Certainly, Allah is Great; the Powerful, Who is so generous, but how humble and weak are you and yet so bold to commit disobedience to Him although you live in His protection and undergo changes of life in the expanse of His kindness...”⁶

Then to awaken the neglectful man, in four steps it points to a part of Allah's, favor and says:

“Who created you and fashioned you, and proportioned you in perfection”.

“In whatever form He pleased, He constituted you.”

Thus, the Qur'an mentions four great stages in the Creation of man, viz: the creation itself, the fashioning of him, his proportion afterward, and, finally, the constitution of man.

The first stage in the creation of man is from the lowly life-germ in the darkness of the mother's womb.

The second stage is his fashioning in a just form and with appropriate limbs in an astonishing regular formation. Eyes, ears, heart, blood vessels, and other organs of the body are created so surprisingly that if man thinks about their structures and regularities and understands Allah's Beneficence to him, each of them will be illustrated as a world of knowledge and power that Allah granted man, because of His Favor and Graciousness.

These are the Divine gifts that natural scientists have been thinking over, working on, and writing about for thousands of years, but they are still at the threshold.

The third stage is proportioning man and adjusting his faculties as well as his organs, and then, their internal coordination's and relations with each other.

The parts of man's body are created mainly symmetrically: hands, feet, eyes, ears, some bones, vessels and muscles are in pairs on both sides of the body.

Besides, different organs and limbs cooperate with each other to accomplish their functions, for instance, the respiratory system complements the circulatory system and vice versa. In swallowing a little piece of food, teeth, tongue, salivary glands, and muscles, around the mouth and throat, work together until the morsel enters the digestive system.

Henceforth, too, many other coordinations occur until the food is digested and absorbed, and subsequently, the required nutrition and vitality is supplied.

These processes totally are reflected in the phrase

Ifa'adalakal 'and proportioned you in perfection'

Some have interpreted this phrase in the sense of man's 'standing erect', his virtue and rank in comparison with other kinds of animals, which corresponds more with the latter stage, but the former meaning is more comprehensive.

Finally, the formation and constitution of man in comparison with other living creatures comes forth. Comparing him with them, he has well-balanced features, good character and an awakened nature, which is alert and capable of accepting any training and knowledge.

Besides, the countenances of men are different as it is mentioned in Surah Rum No. 30 verse 22 which says:

"And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variation in your languages and your colors..."

In addition to the external differences, there are many internal ones, as well, such as talents and tastes which are organized and arranged in some forms that requires only His knowledge, to establish a safe and sound society, complete for all of them; to supply the required necessities, and the internal and external powers of men to be complements of each other.

On the whole, Allah has created man in the best of molds, as Surah Tin, No. 95 verse 4 says:

"We have indeed created man in the best of molds."

In short, through the above verses, as well as in many other verses of the Qur'an, Allah wants the forgetful arrogant man to try to know himself.

He should research his existence from the very beginning, which means his creation in his mother's womb to the time when he is born, and from then until he matures and develops, in order to understand that in every stage and at every moment he has been receiving abundant new blessings from his Great Lord, and not to be neglectfully arrogant; by accepting His Lordship, worships Him.

Then, the Qur'an refers to the origin of their neglectful arrogance and says:

"Nay! but you disbelieve in the (Day of) reckoning".

Neither Allah's generosity nor His kindness is the origin of your carelessness, but the lack of belief in the Day of Judgment is the main cause for your arrogance.

Verily, when we seek deep into the souls of most neglectful arrogant ones we find doubt and denial of the Hereafter within them, while all their other words and deeds are mere excuses. That is why the more the basis of faith and belief in the Resurrection, in those hearts, are strengthened, the less this negligence and carelessness will remain there.

The term /din/, in this verse, means 'punishment' and the 'Day of Reckoning' and that some have suggested 'Islam' as a probable meaning of it seems inappropriate, because the main theme of the verses, here, is Resurrection.

Then, in order to remove the factors effective in arrogance and carelessness and to strengthen the belief in the Resurrection, it says:

"And surely there are Watchers over you,"

"Honorable scribes."

"They know (and understand) whatever you do."

The term /hāfiẓīn/, used in the above verse, means 'some special angels who are scribes for the good and evil deeds of men, and with protection preserve them'; the ones who are called

/Iraql' 'watcher, guardian',

and

'atid' 'ready'

in Surah Qaf, No. 50, verse 18 which says:

"Not a word does he utter, but that there is a sentinel over him, ready (to note it)".

And, also, in the same Surah verse 17 says:

"When the two receivers (guardian angels) receive (his doings and note them) one sitting on the

right and one on the left..”

Some other verses of the Qur'an point to the existence of these guardian angels, too.

Undoubtedly, Allah, sooner and better than anyone else, is a watcher and a witness to Men's deeds, but, for emphasis and to make men feel their responsibility more acutely, He has appointed, over them, a number of angels that witness, some of which are the very ones that we have spoken about.

In addition to them, there are other protectors who have surrounded man from every side, all of whom, by the name of 'witnesses of the Hereafter, ' are categorized in seven divisions:

The first witness is Allah Who says:

“...and whatever deed ye (mankind) may be doing, We are Witnesses thereof...”⁷.

The second are the prophets and the vicegerents of the prophets:

“How then if We brought from each Prophet a witness, and We brought thee O a witness against these (people)”⁸.

Then, the tongue, hands and feet or man's limbs, in general, are witnesses:

“On the day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet will bear witness against them to their actions”⁹.

Another witness is man's skin:

“They will say to their skin: ‘Why bear you witness against us?’”¹⁰.

Angels are witnesses as stated in¹¹, and as the verse above denotes.

The land on which man lives and commits good or evil deeds is a witness:

“On that Day will she (the Earth) recount (all) her news”¹².

And the final classification of witnesses is the time when the actions are done. It bears witness, against Men, that they have committed certain deeds in their life.

Tabarsi cites in his book ‘Ihtijaj’ that once someone asked Imam Sadiq (as) what the reason was that there are some appointed angels for scribing man's good and evil deeds when it is known that Allah is aware of all things irrespective of their being obvious or hidden.

He answered:

“Allah invited those angels to His worship and appointed them as witnesses over His servants in order

that they be the most careful of their obedience to Allah and least committers of sin because of the angel's presence.

There is many a servant who decides to commit a sin, but when he remembers their presence he stops and says:

'My Lord sees me and the angels are appointed to witness the deeds.'

*Moreover, Allah, with His Grace, kindly appointed them, by His leave, to protect the servants from stubborn Satans by banishing them and also to keep the servants safe from numerous harmful animals and pests of the land, which are not seen until the time when Allah orders it and the end of their lives has come."*¹³

It is clearly understood from this narration that angels, in addition to being scribes for man's deeds, protect him against unpleasant events, pests, and Satans' temptations.

It is noteworthy that in the above verses these angels are characterized as 'Honorable Scribes' in order to make man aware of being more careful about his own deeds, because the higher position the watchers of man's deeds have, the more careful man is before them and is more ashamed of Committing sins.

The term

'scribes',

used in this verse, is for emphasis, in that they are not satisfied with only memorizing the actions, but they also record them all precisely and then nothing will be left unrecorded or omitted; from the smallest item to the largest.

And the sentence:

'They know (and understand) whatever you do'

is also another emphasis on this fact that they are perfectly vigilant of everything you do and their record is completed according to the same knowledge.

By the way, all these details denote to man's free-will, because if man were not free there would be no reason or aim for appointing these guardian angels or for their records which contain so much information and warnings for him.

On the other hand, all of the details make this fact clear that the divine punishments and rewards are very severe and serious, since Allah has counted them extremely important for mankind.

Regard for this fact and believing in it are enough to train man and make him familiar with his

responsibilities and, consequently, keep him far away from evils and corruptions.

Explanation: The Angels; the Scribes

Not only in the above verses, but, also in many other verses of the Qur'an and in Islamic narrations, this idea has come to light that Allah has appointed some angels to protect man and to scribe his deeds, both good and evil, preparing his record for the Day of Judgment.

In the Islamic narrations there are some meaningful qualities mentioned about these angels as a warning to man, among which are the following:

1. Someone asked Imam Musa–ibn–Ja'far (as),

“Are the two angels, appointed for recording man's deeds, aware of his retention and inner decision when he wants to do a good or an evil action?”

“Is the odor of sewage and perfume the same?”

Imam (as) asked him and he answered:

“No”.

Imam (as) then told him:

“When a person decides to do a good action, his breath becomes sweet. The angel on his right (the scribe of the good deeds) tells the angel on his left to stand up, because he has intended to do good; and when the person fulfills it his tongue, as a pen, and his saliva, as the ink, are used by the angel to record it.

But, when he decides to do an evil action his breath becomes fetid, and the angel on his left tells the angel on the right to stand up, because he has intended to do evil. And when he concludes the act his tongue, as a pen, and his saliva, as the ink, are again used by the angel to scribe it.”¹⁴

This tradition clearly indicates that man's intention affects his whole entity and angels will be informed of his inner secrets by his outer signs. Certainly, they could not scribe the deeds correctly if they were not aware of man's intentions, because the value of an action relates fully to the kind of intention man has. The Prophet (S), too, in his famous tradition likewise concurred.

Another thing that is understood from the above tradition is that some means, which are used for man, are taken from himself.

2. The guardian angels are to note down a good deed on the record when the person intends to do good, and when he fulfills it they scribe it ten-fold, but when he intends to commit sin they will not note it down until he fulfills the act, then they scribe only one strike against him.¹⁵

This shows the Grace and Mercy of Allah for man. He forgives him his intention of doing sin and the punishment of the sin is equal according to Justice, but He gives him a good-deed for each intention of obedience, and rewards him according to His Graciousness not to His Justice. This encourages man to do good.

3. Another tradition from the Prophet (S) says that he, after pointing to the two Guardian angels who scribe each good action of a servant ten-fold, said:

"When a person does an evil, the angel on the right tells the angel on the left not to hasten in scribing the sin, he may do a good action which covers the sin, since Allah says:

'...these things that are good remove those that are evil...'¹⁶,

*or he may repent... Then the angel appointed to scribe evils waits about seven hours to see whether he does a good action or repents, if not the angel on the right tells him to note the evil action down in his record".*¹⁷

4. Another narration from Imam Sadiq says:

*"When the believers are sitting in a private meeting and speaking together, the Guardian Angels tell each other that we should leave them alone. Perhaps the believers are discussing something secret that Allah has concealed".*¹⁸

5. Hazrat Ali (as) advises people toward piety (taqwa) and says:

*"Know, O' creatures of Allah! that your ownself is a guard over you; your limbs are watchmen and truthful vigil-keepers who preserve (the record of) your actions and the numbers of breaths you take. The gloom of the dark night cannot conceal you from them, nor can closed doors hide you from them. Surely tomorrow is close at hand...".*¹⁹

Surah Infitar, Verses 13-19

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِي نَعِيمٍ

وَإِنَّ الْفُجَّارَ لَفِي جَحِيمٍ

يَصَلُّونَهَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ

وَمَا هُمْ عَنْهَا بِغَائِبِينَ

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ

ثُمَّ مَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمُ الدِّينِ

يَوْمَ لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا ۚ وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ

13. ***"Surely the Righteous shall be in Bliss,"***
14. ***"And surely the Wicked shall be in blazing Fire,"***
15. ***"Which they shall enter on the Day of Reckoning,"***
16. ***"And never shall they be absent therefrom",***
17. ***"And what makes you know what the Day of Reckoning is?"***
18. ***"Again, what makes you know what the Day of Reckoning is?"***
19. ***"The Day on which no soul shall have aught for (another) soul, and the command that Day shall be (wholly) Allah's."***

On That Day, No One Does Anything for Anyone

Concluding the previous discussion about recording the deeds of men by the angels, the following verses speak about the account of man on the Day of Judgement and the end of the Righteous and the Wicked.

It says:

"Surely the Righteous shall be in Bliss",
"And surely the Wicked shall be in blazing Fire".

The term /abrar/ is the plural form of /bar/ and /barr/ in the sense of 'a pious person' and the term /berr/, which means any piety, here means both 'pious beliefs', 'good intentions' and 'good deeds'.

The term /na'im/ is singular and means 'a good thing, a blessing', and, here, it means 'Heaven, Bliss, Eternal Gardens'. The term is mentioned in an indefinite form, in Arabic texts, to show its greatness and vastness of which no one knows, but Allah. The Arabic special grammatical form of the term, which is

used here, is for emphasis and denotes to the resistance and perpetuity of this great Blessing.

The term /fujjar/ is the plural form of /fajir/ which is originally based on the term /fajr/ meaning 'to open wide' and the phrase /tulu'-i-fajr/ is used for 'day-break' as if the curtain of the gloom of the dark night is torn wide open by the dawn; and the term /fujur/ 'wickedness' is used for the actions of those who tear away the curtain of piety and follow the path of sin and corruption.

The term /jahim/ is derived from the term /jahm/ which means 'to light a fire', and then /jahim/ is 'a burning-fire' which, in the Qur'an, generally means 'Hell'.

And by the Surah saying

'that the Righteous are in Bliss and the Wicked are in blazing Fire'

it may mean that even now they are in Bliss and blazing fire, and in this world, too, Heavenly blessings and Hellish punishments encompass them, as Surah 'Ankabut, No.29, verse 54 says:

"...But, of a surety, Hell will encompass the rejecters of Faith".

Some scholars have said that these ideas are for an avoidable future and in Arabic literature things which are sure to happen in the future are said in present tense and sometimes the past tense of the verb is used. (The first interpretation is more appropriate with the appearance of the verse, but the second one seems better.)

The next verse further describes more about the destiny of the Wicked.

It says:

"Which they shall enter on the Day of Reckoning".

If the previous verse means that they are now in the blazing fire, this verse may mean that they will have more blazing fire stronger than this, on the Day of Reckoning. They will feel the perfect practicality of its heat, then.

The term /yaslaun/ is based on /saly/ which is cited with the meaning of 'entering the fire and suffering its roasting burning pain', and since in Arabic texts the verb is in the form of future tense, it denotes to continuity and being in the constant company of it.

And, again, for more emphasis, it says:

"And never shall they be absent therefrom".

Many of the commentators have considered this verse as an evidence for the continuity and eternity of the Wicked's punishment. Then they have concluded that 'the Wicked', mentioned in these verses, are

'the Unbelievers', because eternity and continuity of the fire is only for the Unbelievers.

Therefore, the Wicked are those who do not care for piety, because of lack of faith in the Hereafter and rejecting the Day of Judgement, not because of the force of base desires all the while having Faith.

This verse is stated in the present tense, which is an emphasis on what was said before: that these kinds of people are not far from the blazing fire; their life, itself, is a Hell and their graves, according to some Islamic traditions, is a ditch of fire. Thus, the Hell of this world, the Hell of the partition and the Hell of the next world all are now prepared for them.

By the way, this verse depicts that the blazing fire of Hell never fades, and they will never escape it even for a moment.

Then to illustrate the importance of that Day, it says:

"And what makes you know what the Day of Reckoning is?"

"Again, what makes you know what the Day of Reckoning is?"

When the Prophet (S), with his vast and profound knowledge about the Hereafter and the extraordinary insight he had about the Creator and the Resurrection, about the great and terrible events of that Day and its considerable horror governing there, was not well acquainted with the Hereafter, the situation of others is obvious.

This statement denotes to the fact that the horrible events of the Hereafter are so great and vast that it cannot be described with our present vocabulary. As we, the dwellers on earth, do not know well about Heaven and its abundant blessings, we cannot grasp the full concept of the punishment in Hell, and in general, of the Final Judgement, as well. The question is repeated twice to emphasize this difficulty.

In the next verse, a simple but, complete and meaningful answer to the above question is suggested which points to one of the qualities of that Day.

The answer is suggested by a negative proportion:

"The Day on which no soul shall have aught for (another) soul; and the command That Day shall be (wholly) Allah's."

Surely, everything in this world, too, is with Allah, but, we all depend on one another in proximity, human law and institutions may hold large masses of mankind in their grip. Here, there are, apparently, worldly rulers, owners, and powerful members with whom some superficial persons, sometimes, consider the source of independent power. But, this period will be all over.

Then the ownership is totally His Own and is so perfected that their wills will be in complete consonant with Allah's Universal Will, the Absolute Command, on everything and more evident than ever,

thenceforward will be wholly with Allah.

This is the same fact that is mentioned in many other verses, of the Qur'an, such as Surah Mo'min, No. 40, verse 16, which says:

"..Whose will be the Dominion that Day? That of Allah, the One, the Irresistible!"

As a matter of fact, everyone, on that Day, is so occupied with himself that if he had any power, he would not pay attention to anyone else; as Surah 'Abasa, No. 80, verse 37 confronts it:

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

A tradition from Imam Baqir (as) says:

*"The command that Day and today is wholly Allah's, ...but on the Day of Judgement all the rulers and owners will be removed and there will be no sovereignty except Allah's."*²⁰

A question may arise such as: 'Does that state contrast with the intercession of prophets, saints, and angels?'

The answer simply is this: many verses of the Qur'an verify that intercession is also done by His leave for those who are allowed,

"And they offer no intercession except for those who are acceptable..."²¹.

Supplication

O Lord! On that horrible Day, everyone hopes for your generosity and, today, we rely on You.

O Lord! We seek Your Grace in this world and the Next World: please do not deprive us.

O Lord! The absolute command is Yours: save us from polytheism and relying on others.

1. Bihar-ul-Anwar, vol. 71, p 257.

2. ibid.

3. maniyal-ul-Mured, p. 11

4. Majma'-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 449

5. Nahj-ul-Balaqa, Sermon No. 226 (Arabic Version).

6. Nahj-ul-Balaqa, Sermon No 223 (Arabic Version), No 227 (English Version)

7. Surah Yunus., No. 10, verse 61

8. Surah Nisaa, No. 4. verse. 41

9. Surah Nur. No. 24, verse 24

10. Surah Ha-Mim, No. 41. verse. 21

11. Surah Qaf. No. 50, verse 21

12. Surah Zilzal. No. 99, verse 4

13. Nur-uth Thaḡalayn", vol. 5, p. 522.
14. Usul-i-Kafi, vol. 2, Chapter Good or Evil Action, Tradition 3.
15. Ibid., Traditions 1 and 2.
16. Surah Hud 110. No. 11. verse 114
17. Usm-i-KliDI, vol. 2, Chapter: (food or Evil Action, Tradition 4.
18. Ibid., based on Nur-uth-Thaḡalayn, vol. 5, p. 110.
19. Nahj-ul-Balaqa, Sermon Iqo. 157 (Arabic Version), No. 160 (English Version).
20. Majma¹-al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 450.
21. Surah Anbiya, No. 21, verse 28

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