1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful." 4287

2. "Blessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things." 4288

3. Who has created death and life that He might try you— which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving. 4289

4. Who has created seven heavens in grades. 4 No incongruity canst thou see in the creation of the Gracious God. Then look again: Seest thou any flaw? 4290

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4287. Commentary:
See 1:1.

4288. Commentary:
The *Sūra* was revealed at Mecca when Islam was yet in its infancy and its enemies were straining every nerve to nip it in the bud. It opens with the mention of Divine attributes which are expressive of God's Power, Might and Majesty, and, appropriately the verse under comment implies a prophecy that the poor, persecuted and helpless Muslims would soon be granted the kingdom, not only of Arabia but of vast lands beyond its confines.

4289. Commentary:
The law of life and death works in all nature. Every living creature is subject to decay and death. Nations, like individuals, are subject to this inexorable law. The implication of the verse seems to be that with the advent of Islam God's decree has come into operation, that is to say that some nations will receive new life and others will decay and fall. This will show that God is Mighty. The linking together of the attribute "Most Forgiving" with the attribute "Mighty" may imply that when Islam will triumph the enemies of the new Faith will be at the mercy of the Holy Prophet who will forgive them. The prophecy was fulfilled in the Fall of Mecca.

"Death," as in vv. 2:29 and 53:45, has been mentioned in this verse before "life." The reason seems to be that death or non-existence, is the state before life, or perhaps because "death" is more important and is of greater significance than "life," because, it opens to man the portals of everlasting life and unending spiritual progress, while his life on earth is only a temporary sojourn and a preparation for a permanent and everlasting life beyond the grave.

4290. Important Words:
طبق (in grades) is derived from طبق. They
5. Aye, look again, and yet again, thy sight will only return unto thee confused and fatigued.\(^{4291}\)

6. And verily, We have adorned the lowest heaven\(^a\) with lamps, and We have made them the means of driving away satans, \(^b\) and We have prepared for them the punishment of the blazing Fire.\(^{4292}\)

\(^a\) 15 : 17 ; 37 : 7 ; 41 : 13 ; 50 : 7. \(^b\) 15 : 18 ; 37 : 11.

say تفوت (incongruity) is derived from تفاوت i.e., the two things were distinct or were different. تفاوت means, defect, fault, or imperfection; incongruity or discordance (Lane & Aqrab).

قفر (flaw) is derived from حفر. They say حفر i.e., God created it or brought it into existence for the first time, it not having existed before. حفر means, it became split, rent or cleft. حفر means, cleft; flaw; disorder (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Wonderful indeed is God’s creation. The solar system of which our earth is but a small member is vast, varied and orderly and yet this system is but one of hundreds of millions of systems, some of which are incalculably larger than it, yet the countless millions of suns and stars are so arranged and distributed in relation to one another as to produce everywhere harmony and beauty. The order that covers and pervades the universe is obvious to the ordinary naked eye, and is spread far beyond the range of disciplined vision, assisted by all the instruments and appliances which science and art have been able to invent (Flint).

4291. Important Words:

خاشى (confused) is derived from خشا which means, he was or became vile, despised and hated. خشا الرجل الكلب means, the man drove away the dog. خشا البصر means, the eyesight became dazzled or confused and dim. خشا when applied to a dog or a swine means, driven away and repelled, and when applied to a man means, contemptible, despicable, vile or confused; and when applied to the eyesight means, dazzled or confused and dim (Lane).

4292. Commentary:

For a detailed note on the subject, briefly stated in this verse, see 15 : 17-19.

The word السماء (heaven) may also signify the spiritual firmament and المصباح (lamps) Divinely-inspired Teachers and Reformers and شياطين may mean satanic people.
7. And for those who disbelieve in their Lord there is the punishment of Hell, and an evil resort it is.\footnote{4293}

8. When they are cast therein, they will hear it roaring as it boils up.\footnote{4294}

9. It would almost burst with fury. Whenever a host of wrongdoers is cast into it the wardens thereof will ask them, ‘Did no Warner come to you?’

10. They will say, ‘Yea, verily, a Warner did come to us, but we treated him as a liar, and we said: ‘Allah has not revealed anything; you are but in manifest error.’”

11. And they will say, ‘Had we but listened or possessed sense, we should not have been among the inmates of the blazing Fire.’

12. Thus will they confess their sins; but far away are the inmates of the blazing Fire from God’s mercy.\footnote{4295}

\footnote{4293. Commentary: When Divine Reformers appear in the world to remove distortions and interpolations that find their way into Heavenly Teachings, those who reject the Divine Reformers deserve and get God’s punishment. This is mentioned by implication also in the preceding verse.}

\footnote{4294. Important Words: powdered, pulverized; distant, remote.}

\footnote{4295. Important Words: (be far away) is derived from which means, it was or became distant or remote. means, he bruised or powdered or pulverized it; he destroyed it. means, powdered, pulverized; distant, remote. means, remoteness. curse; destruction (Lane & Aqrab).}
13. "Verily, those who fear their Lord in secret—for them is forgiveness and a great reward.

14. And whether you conceal what you say or say it openly. He knows well what is in your breasts.

15. Does He Who has created you not know it? He is the Knower of all subtleties, the All-Aware.

R. 2

16. He it is Who has made the earth even and smooth for you; so walk in the spacious sides thereof, and eat of His provision. And unto Him will be the resurrection.\[4296]

17. Do you feel secure from Him Who is in the heaven that He will not cause the earth to sink with you when lo! it begins to shake?\[4297]

18. Do you feel secure from Him Who is in the heaven that He will not send against you a sand-storm? Then will you know how terrible was My warning.

19. And indeed those before them also treated My Messengers as liars; then how grievous was My punishment!

\[d\] 6: 66; 16: 46; 17: 69; 34: 10; 17: 69.

4296. Commentary.
Journeying in the earth is recommended again and again in the Qur'an, because leaving one's home and travelling to other lands and countries helps to add to one's knowledge and experience.

The verse also recommends making full use of mountains, which may also signify entertaining high ambitions and lofty aspirations, as the word منكب which also means a lofty place, suggests.

4297. Commentary:
It is because punishment is generally spoken of in the Qur'an as coming down from heaven that God is referred to, here and in the next verse, as being in heaven; otherwise God is here, there and everywhere. "He is in the heaven and He is in the earth and He is where man is, even nearer to him than his jugular vein" (43: 85; 50: 17 & 57: 4).
20. Have they not seen the birds above them, spreading out their wings without moving them and then drawing them in to swoop down upon the prey? None withholds them but the Gracious God. Verily, He sees all things well.

21. Or who is he that can be an army for you to help you against the Gracious God? The disbelievers are only in deception.

22. Or who is he that will provide for you, if He should withhold His provision? Nay, but they obstinately persist in rebellion and aversion.

23. What! is he who walks groveling upon his face better guided or he who walks upright on the straight path?

4298. Commentary:

The verse as the context shows, refers to Divine punishment that is in store for disbelievers. It purports to say that if they continue to oppose truth, they will be destroyed by famines, earthquakes and particularly by wars, and the birds of the skies will feast on their dead bodies. The Merciful God grants them respite that they might accept the Heavenly Message and save themselves from Divine punishment. See also 16:80.

4299. Commentary:

The verse warns disbelievers that if on account of their persistent rejection of the Divine Message and opposition to, and persecution of, the believers they (believers) were allowed to take up arms against them, their armies will be entirely helpless against Heavenly forces that would come to the help of believers.

4300. Commentary:

The reference may be to the terrible famine that held Mecca in its grip for several years till the Meccans begged the Holy Prophet to pray for their deliverance from the scourge. See also 44:13.

4301. Commentary:

The verse means that disbelievers walk on the wrong path, hanging down their heads and grovelling in the darkness of doubt and disbelief, while believers, in the certainty of faith, go straight on the path of truth, holding their head high. Can the two be equal?
24. Say, 'He it is Who brought you into being, and made for you ears and eyes and hearts; but little thanks do you give.'

25. Say, 'He it is Who multiplied you in the earth, and unto Him will you be gathered.'

26. And they say, 'When will this promise come to pass, if indeed you are truthful?'

27. Say, 'The knowledge of it is with Allah, and I am only a plain Warner.'

28. 'But when they see it nigh, the faces of those who disbelieve will become grief-stricken, and it will be said, 'This is what you used to ask for.'

29. Say, 'Tell me, if Allah should destroy me and those who are with me, or have mercy on us, who will protect the disbelievers from a painful punishment?'

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2402. Commentary:
Disbelievers are told that God has given them eyes to see so that they might benefit from the Signs He has shown in support of Truth. He has given them ears to listen the Divine Message. He has given them powers of mind that they might understand and realize the Divine Message. People do not make use of these God-given faculties and choose to welter in the quagmire of doubt; شكر (shukr) meaning to make proper use of a thing.

2403. Commentary:
Man has been created that he may lead a purposeful life on earth and may achieve the grand object of his creation after which he will have to render an account of his deeds and actions.

2404. Commentary:
"This promise" may refer to the promise of Divine punishment made in 17—22 above.

2405. Commentary:
It is characteristic of disbelievers that as long as punishment does not overtake them, they boast and brag and hurl jibes and railleries at believers, but when they are face to face with it, they are seized with a sense of extreme frustration, dismay, and dejection.
30. Say, 'He is the Gracious God; in Him have we believed and in Him have we put our trust. And you will soon know who is in manifest error.'

31. Say, 'Tell me, if all your water were to disappear in the depths of the earth, who then will bring you pure flowing water?'

4306. Commentary:
The Divine attribute الرحمن (the Beneficent) has been repeatedly mentioned in the Sūra because all the Divine gifts and favours mentioned in it, whether pertaining to man's physical sustenance or his spiritual development, are the direct result of God's beneficence (الرحمانية).

4307. Commentary:
All life, whether physical or spiritual, depends on water,—the former on rain-water, and the latter on the water of Divine revelation.
CHAPTER 68

SŪRA AL-QALAM

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This Sūra is one of the first four or five Sūrās revealed at Mecca in the very beginning of the Call. According to some authorities it was revealed just after Sūra Al-'Alaq which was the first Qur'ānic Sūra to be revealed, but some other authorities place it after Sūrās Muzzammil and Muddaththir. There, is, however, no doubt that all these Sūrās were revealed more or less in consecutive order because there exists a strong likeness in their subject-matter. The Sūra takes its title from the opening verse, and deals principally with the Holy Prophet's claim as a Messenger of God.

Subject-Matter

Like the Meccan Chapters which mainly deal with matters of doctrine and belief, the present Sūra deals with the truth of the Holy Prophet's claim, and gives sound and solid arguments in proof of it. After this a large part of the Sūra is devoted to a discussion of the fight of disbelievers against truth, and to the evil end to which they ultimately come, giving reasons why they reject Truth and why they strive and struggle against it, and how, when their efforts appear to be on the point of bearing fruit they come to nought, and Truth, instead of going under, begins to prosper, prevail and predominate. The Sūra further declares complete frustration and disappointment to be the lot of the disbelievers; they burn in the fire of disgrace and humiliation. Towards the close, the Holy Prophet is enjoined to bear with patience and fortitude all the mockery, opposition, and persecution to which he was subjected, because his cause was bound to succeed.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. By the inkstand and by the pen and by that which they write.\textsuperscript{4308}

3. Thou art not, by the grace of thy Lord, a madman.\textsuperscript{4309}

4. And for thee, most surely, there is an unending reward.\textsuperscript{4310}

\textsuperscript{a}See 1:1. \textsuperscript{b}34:47; 52:30.

\textbf{4308. Important Words:}

\textit{والو} (by), means, I swear; I cite as witness or evidence. For the philosophy and significance of Quranic oaths, see 37:2; 51:2 & 91:2.

\textbf{Commentary:}

In this verse the inkstand, the pen and all the written material is cited as evidence to support and substantiate the statement made in the next three verses.

\textbf{4309. Commentary:}

The verse means that by whatever test of knowledge and learning the claim of the Holy Prophet is examined, he will be found to be not a maniac, as the disbelievers say, but the sanest and the wisest of men. It further says that all other Divine Messengers were also stigmatised as lunatics because, in view of very heavy odds against them and of their own helpless weak position, their claim that despite the great power, prestige and resources of their opponents they would succeed and their enemies would fail, appeared to the latter to be nothing better than the ravings of a madman. The next verse gives the reason why this charge is not only unfounded but also foolish and fantastic.

\textbf{4310. Commentary:}

This verse, along with the next, exposes the absurdity of the charge of madness. It purports to say that the actions of a madman produce no useful result, but that the Holy Prophet will eminently succeed in fulfilling the object of his Divine mission and in bringing about a wonderful revolution in the lives of his degenerate people. And this revolution will not end with his death. On the contrary, whenever in future his followers will deviate from the path of rectitude, God will raise among them Reformers who will regenerate them and will infuse in them a new life. And this process will continue till the end of time. This is the significance of the words, "and for thee is an unending reward."
5. And thou dost surely possess high moral excellences.\footnote{4311}

6. And thou wilt soon see and they too will see.

7. Which of you is afflicted with madness?\footnote{4312}

8. Surely, thy Lord knows best those who go astray from His way,\footnote{4313} and He knows best those who follow guidance.

9. So comply not with the wishes of those who reject the truth.

10. They wish that thou shouldst be pliant so that they may also be pliant.\footnote{4313}

\footnote{4311. Commentary: This verse constitutes a further eloquent commentary on the charge of madness imputed to the Holy Prophet. It purports to say that the Prophet, not only is not a maniac but is the noblest and sublimest of men possessing in full measure all those moral excellences that combine to make their possessor a perfect image of his Creator. The Holy Prophet's humanity was of the most perfect character. He was a complete embodiment of all good moral qualities that a man is capable of possessing. It is to this aspect of the Holy Prophet's greatness that his talented wife, 'A'isha, referred, when, on being asked to shed some light on the Prophet's habits and morals she said \textit{الله تعالى خلق للرّأي \ldots}, i.e., he possessed all those moral excellences which are mentioned in the Qur'an as the special marks of its true followers (Bukhari). See also 20:2 & 33:22.}

\footnote{4312. Commentary: The verse turns tables upon the accusers of the Holy Prophet, and tells them in challenging words that time will show whether it was he or they who suffered from madness, or whether his claim to be God's Messenger was the outpouring of a heated brain, or whether they themselves were so demented as not to read the signs of time and thus refuse to believe in him.}

\footnote{4313. Important Words: }

\textit{تَدُهم} (thou shouldst be pliant) is derived from دهم which means, he was or became weak. \textit{أَدْهِنُ فَلاَنَأ} means, he endeavoured to conciliate or make peace with such a one; he treated him with gentleness; he acted towards him with dishonesty or dissimulation; he pretended the contrary of what he concealed in his mind with regard to him; he strove to deceive him (Lane & Aqrab).

\textbf{Commentary:}

The verse may have special reference to the offers which the Quraish of Mecca had made to the Holy Prophet in order to tempt him away from his fixed purpose, or it may possess general application, since Truth is as firm as rock.
11. And yield thou not to any mean swearer,

12. aBackbiter, one who goes about slandering,\textsuperscript{4314}

13. bForbidder of good, transgressor, sinful,

14. Ill-mannered and, in addition to that, of doubtful birth.\textsuperscript{4315}

15. cThis is because he possesses riches and children.\textsuperscript{4316}

16. dWhen Our Signs are recited unto him, he says, 'Stories of the ancients!'

while falsehood has no legs to stand upon and gives way to pressure or temptation and is ready to make compromises.

\textsuperscript{4314. Important Words:}

\textsuperscript{ا}حِم (slander) is derived from نم (which means, he uttered calumny or excited discord. نم means, mischievous and malicious misrepresentation; calumny, slander (Lane & Aqrab).

\textsuperscript{4315. Important Words:}

\textsuperscript{عَتِنَ (ill-mannered) is derived from عَتِنَ (‘atala). عَتِنَ means, he dragged him or drove him along roughly. عَتِنَ means, a great eater who refuses to give; gross, coarse, rough or rude person; low, ignoble, mean; (Lane).

\textsuperscript{زَنَم (of doubtful birth) is derived from زَنَم (zannama) and زَنَم is conjoining anyone with a people or party to which he does not belong. زَنَم means, one adopted among a people to whom he does not belong, not being needed by them; base, ignoble, mean; the son of an adulteress or fornicatoress (Lane & Aqrab).

\textsuperscript{Commentary:}

The reference in this and the three verses preceding it may be to Wālid bin Mughira or Abū Jahl, etc. or to every leader of falsehood.

\textsuperscript{4316. Commentary:}

The verse signifies that all sin, vice and opposition to Truth is born of conceit or false pride which are maladies of one who manages to amass great wealth and who wields great power and influence. Or, the verse, in conjunction with those preceding it, may mean that base and vile man should not be shown consideration or respect, simply because he happens to possess wealth and influence.
17. We will brand him on the snout.\textsuperscript{4317}

18. We will surely try them as We tried the owners of the garden when they vowed that they would certainly pluck all its fruit in the morning.\textsuperscript{4318}

19. And they made no exception and said not, 'If God please.'\textsuperscript{4319}

20. "Then a visitation from thy Lord visited it while they were asleep;\textsuperscript{4320}

21. And the morning found it like a garden cut down overnight.\textsuperscript{4321}

22. So they called to one another at the break of dawn,

\textsuperscript{a3 : 118 ; 18 : 43.}

\textsuperscript{4317. Commentary :}

As, disbelievers, out of pride and a false sense of power reject the Divine Message, God will disgrace and humiliate them. "Branding on the snout" is a metaphor for disgracing a person.

\textsuperscript{4318. Commentary :}

Here the base, greedy and conceited disbelievers have been compared to the owner of a garden who would devour all its fruit and would not allow any share to those who had also put in their labour in developing the gardens and would defraud them of their just rights.

\textsuperscript{4319. Important Words :}

\textsuperscript{\textit{\textsuperscript{4319. Important Words :}}}

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\textsuperscript{\textit{\textsuperscript{4320. Commentary :}}}

The verse means that Divine punishment overtook the "garden" in a sudden and swift sweep.

\textsuperscript{4321. Important Words :}

\textsuperscript{\textit{\textsuperscript{4321. Important Words :}}}

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\textsuperscript{Commentary :}

The owners of the "garden" greedily devoured the fruit of the labour of others and fed fat on it, excluding the latter from sharing it with them. Or, the verse may mean that they spent no part of their wealth for the benefit of their poor brethren. Or, it may signify that they were so sure of the successful outcome of their labours and were so certain of gathering in their harvest without any mishap that they completely forgot God, omitting to seek Divine protection by uttering the words "If God please."

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23. Saying, 'Go forth early in the morning, to your field, if you would gather the fruit.'

24. And they set out talking to one another in low tones,

25. Saying, 'Let no poor man today enter it against your will.'

26. And they went forth early in the morning, determined to be niggardly.

27. But when they saw it, they said, 'Surely, we have lost our way!'

28. 'Nay, we have been deprived of all our fruit.'

29. The best among them said, "Did I not say to you, 'Why do you not glorify God?'"

30. Thereupon, they said, 'Glory be to our Lord. Surely, we have been wrongdoers.

31. Then some of them turned to the others, reproaching one another.

32. They said, 'Woe to us! We were indeed rebellious against God.'

4322. Commentary:
The rich owners of the “garden” in the parable are compared to those selfish, cruel and greedy persons who, besides exploiting the labour of others, are so stingy that they do not spend any part of their ill-gotten gains for the needy and the poor.

4323. Important Words:

جرد (hardun) infinitive noun from جرد (harada) which means, he tended, repaired, or betook himself; (2) he sought, pursued or desired; (3) he prevented, hindered, prohibited, debarred; (4) he separated himself from others or he forsook his people (Lane).

Commentary:
The exploiters of the labour of others are a class by themselves. They seek and scheme to debar the latter from the benefits of what they earn by the sweat of their brow. They revel in wealth, while the poor grovel in dirt and squalor before their very eyes.

4324. Commentary:
Sooner or later Nemesis overtakes these exploiters and their contrivances to deprive others of the fruit of their labour fail altogether in their purpose.
33. 'Maybe, if we repent, our Lord will give us instead a better garden than this; we do humbly entreat our Lord.'

34. Such is the punishment of this world. 'And surely the punishment of the Hereafter is greater. Did they but know!'

R. 2

35. 'For the righteous, indeed, there are Gardens of Bliss with their Lord.'

36. 'Shall We then treat those who submit to Us as We treat the guilty?'
37. What is the matter with you? How judge ye!
38. Have you a Book wherein you read,
39. That you shall surely have in it whatever you choose?

4325. Commentary:
The parable of the owners of the "garden" may apply also to the leaders of the Quraish who had made life very miserable for the poor Muslims. They were sternly warned that all their designs against Islam would come to nought and all their efforts would prove abortive and they would be deprived of all their gardens and 'fruit.' But those who turn to God with true repentance would be rewarded many times more than what they will lose.

4326. Commentary:
The verse speaks of two kinds of punishment. The punishment referred to in the preceding several verses in the words "such is the punishment" is the chastisement which overtook the opponents of Islam in this life. Those of them who repented were received in God's grace and were blessed with worldly gifts many times more than what they had lost. But those who persisted in their opposition to Truth and died in disbelief, will have a great punishment in the Hereafter.

4327. Commentary:
The verse purports to say that while the rebellious owners of the "garden" (v. 18) will be deprived of it, the righteous believers will have "Gardens of Bliss" from their Lord.

4328. Commentary:
See next verse.
40. Or have you any covenant binding on Us till the Day of Resurrection that you shall surely have whatever you judge? 

41. Ask them which of them will vouch for that.

42. Or have they any ‘partners’ of God? Let them, then, produce those ‘partners’ of theirs, if they speak the truth.

43. On the day when the truth shall be laid bare and they will be called upon to prostrate themselves, they will not be able to do so.

4329. Commentary:

In vv. 36-39 above, it was stated that a person who severs all connection with God and defies and contravenes His laws, can never be treated like one who makes those laws a rule of life. Both these classes of men choose different ways of life and inevitably come to different ends. This is God's eternal and unchangeable law which cannot be altered to suit anybody’s wishful thinking. Further, disbelievers were asked whether there was any authority in any revealed Scripture that they would be allowed to choose a way of life of their own liking and would escape the consequences of their evil deeds. In the present verse they are told that if they possess no Scriptural authority to support their foolish ideas, and if reason and logic too, do not support them, have they then taken a covenant from God which will remain in force till the Day of Judgment that they will have whatever they like and do whatever they like and yet not suffer the consequences flowing from their actions? If they think so, the verse warns them, they are mistaken.

4330. Important Words:

**يكشف عن ساق** (truth shall be laid bare).

They say **كانت القوم على ساق i.e., the people were or became in a state of distress. The Arabic idiom كفت الحرب عن ساق means, the fight became vehement. ساق meaning i.e., severity or hardness, the expression كفت الأمر عن ساق is explained as meaning, when the affair became distressful or when the truth of the matter was laid bare (Lane, Kashshâf and Baidâwî). See also 27:45.

Commentary:

The verse may refer to the hardness and severity of the Day of Resurrection or to the lifting of the veil from all mysteries and coming to light of all secrets on that Day.

The words, “They will not be able to do so,” signify that the guilty will not be able to make amends for their sins of omission or commission, the time for repentance having passed long ago.
44. Their eyes will be cast down, and humiliation will cover them; and they were indeed called upon to prostrate themselves when they were safe and sound, but they obeyed not. 4331

45. So leave Me alone with those who reject this word of Ours. We shall draw them near to destruction step by step from whence they know not. 4332

46. And I give them respite; for My plan is strong. 4333

47. Dost thou ask a reward of them that they are as if being weighed down by its burden? 4334

4331. Important Words:

(cover them). (will cover him or it) reached or overtook him or it; he followed him and was about to overtake him; it covered him or it. (committed a sin). (debts covered him). (he constrained him to do a difficult thing) (Lane and Aqrab).

Commentary:

When disbelievers were in full possession of all their faculties and were enjoying peace, prosperity and security, they defied and violated Divine laws, but when, on the Judgment Day punishment will stare them in the face, they will beg to be allowed to repent and make amends, but then it will be too late.

4332. Commentary:

The verse shows that Divine punishment will overtake disbelievers by degrees and in stages and thus they will have ample opportunities to repent and make amends by accepting the Message of the Qur'an. The punishment began with the Battle of Badr and reached its culmination in the Fall of Mecca, extending over a period of about eight years.

4333. Commentary:

God grants respite to sinful people in order that they might repent and give up their evil ways. He is not in a hurry to punish because they are within His control and in His grip and cannot evade or elude the mills of God, which grind slowly but grind exceedingly small.

4334. Commentary:

The verse purports to say that God has granted respite to disbelievers that they may listen to and accept the Message of the Prophet who asks for no reward from them, but, on the contrary, actuated by sincere sympathy and solicitude for their spiritual well-being, preaches the Divine Word to them and suffers hardships for their sake.
48. "Have they the knowledge of the unseen so that they write it down?"\[4335\]

49. So be thou steadfast in carrying out the command of thy Lord, and be not like the Man of the Fish when he called to his Lord and he was full of grief.\[4336\]

50. "Had not a favour from his Lord reached him, he would have surely been cast upon a bare tract of land, while he would have been held to be blameworthy by his people,"\[4337\]

51. But his Lord chose him and made him one of the righteous.

52. And those who disbelieve would fain have dislodged thee from thy God-given station with their angry looks when they heard the Reminder; and they say, ‘He is certainly mad.’\[4338\]

53. Nay, it is naught but a source of honour for all the worlds.\[4339\]

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4335. **Commentary:**

The disbelievers do not know what is in store for them—what is and what is not good for them. The unseen has been revealed to the Prophet only. This is another reason why they should accept his Message.

4336. **Commentary:**

The Holy Prophet is here comforted not to lose patience or give way to disappointment just because his people do not believe in him and oppose him. The time was fast approaching when they will listen, and give their allegiance, to him.

4337. **Commentary:**

The verse may also imply a subtle hint to the Holy Prophet’s *Hijra* (Migration) to Medina.

4338. **Commentary:**

The verse appears to say to the Holy Prophet that disbelievers cast severe looks at him that might frighten a person of a lesser calibre into giving up his mission, but he has a Divine Message to deliver to the world and so he can hardly be intimidated into yielding to such pressure tactics. They call him a madman. But far from this, his Teaching contains the quintessence of wisdom; through it not only his own people—the Arabs—would be lifted from the lowest depths of degradation to the highest summits of greatness and glory, but it would also cleanse other peoples, freeing them from moral blemishes and raising their spiritual stature (v. 52).

4339. **Commentary:**

See the preceding verse.
CHAPTER 69
SŪRA AL-ḤĀQQAH

(Revealed before Hijra)

-General Remarks-

The Sūra, like its predecessor, was, as its subject-matter shows, among the earliest Chapters revealed at Mecca. It is almost devoted to the subject of inevitability of the Resurrection; and adduces the sure and certain success of the Holy Prophet against heavy odds as an argument in support of that hypothesis. As the Holy Prophet’s ultimate success, and the Resurrection were regarded by the disbelievers as impossible, the coming to pass of the one did indeed constitute an incontrovertible proof that the other would also happen. Thus the Sūra opens with a firm and emphatic declaration that enemies of Truth shall be routed, and disbelievers are warned that if they did not desist from their evil course, they will be punished like the people of Noah, the Ād and Thamūd tribes and the mighty hosts of Pharaoh. They “disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord, so He seized them—a severe seizing.” The Sūra draws a parallel between the destruction of the rejectors of Divine Message and the Resurrection, and proceeds to say that for disbelievers the “hour” of punishment will be most distressful and agonizing; for the believers it will be a time of perennial joy and happiness. The righteous servants of God “will have a delightful life in a lofty Garden,” and the deniers of truth “will be seized, fettered and cast into Hell.” The Sūra closes with a firm and emphatic declaration that both these events—the Resurrection and the success of the Prophet’s cause, will most surely come to pass, because what the Prophet says is God’s own revealed Word and not the bragging of a poet or the idle conjecture of a soothsayer, for, if he had forged a lie against God, he would have met with sure and violent death, because a forger is never allowed to prosper.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful."

2. The Inevitable!

3. What is the Inevitable?

4. And what should make thee know what the Inevitable is?

5. The tribe of Thamūd and the tribe of 'Ad treated as lie the sudden calamity.

"See 1 : 1.

4340. Commentary:

See 1:1

4341. Important Words:

احادية (the Inevitable) is derived from حق which means, it was or became suitable to the requirements of wisdom, justice or truth; it was or became established as a fact. حق الإصل means, he established it as a fact. حقية being syn. with حقية means, an inevitable event, reality or truth. See also 2:148, 181; 3:109; 23:63; 32:4 (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The word الحادية having the sense of an established or inevitable fact, or a catastrophe which is sure to happen, or according to some authorities, the final overthrow of disbelief, the verse may refer to the Day of Judgment or to a calamitous event that would befall disbelievers. The calamitous event may particularly refer to the Fall of Mecca when Islam became firmly and finally established in Arabia and idol-worship disappeared from the land for all time. The three brief opening verses of the Sūra embodied a great prophecy that the overthrow of disbelievers was inevitable. The inevitability of their doom was declared at a time when Islam was yet in its infancy and was fighting for its very existence. The Inevitable proved to be literally true, and thus set the seal on the inevitability of the Day of Judgment. See also 13:32.

4342. Important Words:

القاهرة (the sudden calamity) is derived from قرع رأسه بالعصا i.e., he struck his head with a stick. قرع الباب means, he knocked at the door. القاهرة means, a great calamity which strikes terror into the hearts of people (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Whereas, in the preceding three verses, the inevitability of the doom in store for the opponents of the Holy Prophet was emphasized, in the verse under comment the case of the 'Ād and the Thamūd tribes is cited to warn them that they should learn a lesson from the evil fate of these peoples, who in the remote past, flourished in their neighbourhood.
6. Then, as for Thamūd they were destroyed with a violent blast.\(^{4343}\)

7. And as for 'Ad, they were destroyed by a fierce roaring wind,

8. Which God caused to blow against them for seven nights and eight days continuously, so that thou mightest have seen the people therein lying prostrate\(^{4344}\), as though they were trunks of palm trees fallen down.

9. Dost thou see any remnant of them?

10. And Pharaoh, and those who were before him, and the overthrown cities persistently committed sins.\(^{4345}\)

11. And they disobeyed the Messenger of their Lord, therefore He seized them—a severe seizing.

12. Verily, when the waters rose high, We bore you in the boat.\(^{4346}\)

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\(^{4343}\) Commentary:
having been derived from طاغية which means, he exceeded the limits, signifies an extremely severe punishment. For the nature of the calamity which befell the tribe of Thamūd see 7:79; 41:18 & 54:32. It has been variously described in the Qur'ān as الصيبة (the violent cry); الرجة (the earthquake); and المساحة (the thunderbolt). In fact it was a severe earthquake.

\(^{4344}\) Important Words:
حسوماً (continuously) is derived from حسوم, which means, he cut it off entirely. حسمهم i.e., he caused them to perish completely. حسم في العمل means, he laboured hard and wearièd himself with continuous work. حسم الدابة means, I cauterized the beast by successive operations. الأيام الحسوم means, evil or unlucky days that are consecutive or permanent, or days preventing good or prosperity; disastrous days (Lane & Aqrab).

حرى (lying prostrate) is the plural of حر (lying down). They say حر i.e., he threw him down on the ground. حر means, thrown down or prostrated in the ground; affected with epilepsy or madness; slain. One would say رأيت شجرهم حر i.e., I saw their trees cut down (Lane & Aqrab).

\(^{4345}\) Commentary:
"The overthrown cities" were Sodom and Gomorrah. See also 11:83.

\(^{4346}\) Commentary:
The reference in the verse is to Noah's Flood.
13. That We might make it a reminder for you, \(^a\) and that retaining ears might retain it.

14. \(^b\)And when a single blast is sounded on the trumpet,

15. And the earth and the mountains are heaved up and then are crushed in a single crash.

16. On that day will the great Event come to pass.

17. And the heaven will cleave asunder, \(^c\) and it will be frail that day.

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4347. **Important Words:**

تَمِيمَة (might retain it) is derived from تَمِيمٌ. They say تَمِيمَة نُحِي i.e., he kept or retained the narrative in his mind or memory; he learned it by heart (Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

The various punishments which overtook disbelievers for their sins and opposition to Divine Prophets at different times have been mentioned as a standing and permanent reminder to those who defy God's laws and His Message, implying that opponents of the Holy Prophet would meet with no better fate if they did not repent and give up their evil ways.

4348. **Commentary:**

From this verse begins a description of the punishment that overtook the opponents of the Holy Prophet, namely, the fall of Mecca, their greatest stronghold and the centre of their power and glory. The Holy Prophet’s march on Mecca was so swift and sudden that the Meccans were taken completely by surprise. It came, as it were, a bolt from the blue.

The description may equally apply to the Day of Resurrection, when with the blowing of the trumpet both the righteous and the guilty will stand before God's Great Judgment Seat to render an account of their actions and deeds.

4349. **Commentary:**

The verse may also signify that the whole of Arabia will be shaken from one end to the other; leaders of Arab aristocracy and the common folk will feel the strong impact of the conquests of Islam and of the great and violent change it will bring about in their lives. الأرض والجبال may signify leaders of men and common folk.

4350. **Commentary:**

On that day Mecca, the great centre of idol-worship in Arabia will fall. The great event referred to here is also mentioned in 56 : 2, along with the results that flowed from it.

4351. **Important Words:**

وَاهِيّ (frail) is derived from وَاهِيٰ. They say وَاهِيٰ نُحِي i.e., the thing became worn out and weak. وَاهِي means, the wall was
18. "And the angels will be standing on the sides thereof, and above them on that day eight angels will bear the throne of thy Lord." \(^{4352}\)

19. On that day you will be presented before God; and none of your secrets will remain hidden.\(^{4353}\)

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**Commentary:**

The reference in the verse may be to some natural phenomenon which took the form of Divine punishment. Or the word "السماء" meaning the covering overhead, the verse may signify that the covering over the heads of disbelievers would cleave asunder, i.e., with the Fall of Mecca their political power would vanish and no protection or asylum will remain for them except that they should join the fold of Islam.

4352. **Important Words:**

For "السماء" see 7:55, 10:4 and 20:6. The word represents God's transcendent attributes (صفات تشبيهية) which are His exclusive prerogative. These attributes are manifested through God's attributes of similitude (صفات تشبيهية) which have been described in the verse as the bearers of God's Throne.

**Commentary:**

God's attributes of similitude which have been described here as the bearers of the Divine Throne are: "الرب العالمين" i.e., the Creator and Sustainer of the world; "الرحمن" i.e., the Gracious, Who fulfils all the needs of man, even before he is born and without any effort on his part; "الرحم" i.e., the Merciful, Who causes man's labours to produce the best possible results, and "مالك يوم الدين" i.e., Master of the Day of Judgment, to Whom all will have to render an account of their actions. These are the basic Divine attributes by which the world subsists and which mainly concern man's life and destiny. In view of their majesty, awfulness and greatness these four Divine attributes will have double manifestation on the Day of Judgment. And as Divine attributes are manifested through angels, therefore, eight angels are mentioned to be the bearers of the Throne of God on that Great Day. Or the verse may signify that on the day of Fall of Mecca the four basic Divine attributes will have double manifestation, as on that day the foundations of Islam, humanity's last and most perfect religious system, will be firmly laid and God's power and glory will be manifested through, and for the sake of, the Holy Prophet. The clause "the angels would be standing on the sides thereof" may also signify that when the heaven of Arabia would be cleft asunder i.e., when old order will vanish, the angels of God will lay the foundation of a new and better one. Or the words may mean that when the heaven will be cleft asunder i.e., when terrible punishment will overtake the Meccans, God's angels will take their stand on its sides in order to protect the Holy Prophet and the Muslims.

4353. **Commentary:**

Besides the meaning given in the text, the verse signifies that on the day of Fall of Mecca
20. "Then, as for him who is given his record in his right hand, he will say, 'Come, read my record.'


22. So he will enjoy a delightful life.

23. In a lofty Garden,

24. Whereof clusters of fruit will be within easy reach.

25. "It will be said to the righteous believers, 'Eat and drink joyfully because of the good deeds you did in days gone by.'"

falsity of the idolatrous beliefs and practices of the Meccans will stand completely exposed.

4354. Commentary:

Elsewhere in the Qur'an (56 : 28) the righteous are called "fellows or companions of the right hand." To be given one's record in one's right hand is a Quranic metaphor for having passed the test successfully.

4355. Commentary:

The verse shows the firmness of the belief of the righteous believers in the Hereafter.

4356. Commentary:

This and the following several verses give a graphic description of the blissful life that the righteous would lead in Paradise. The blessings and gifts mentioned in these verses are physical representations in Paradise of actions and deeds the believers had done in the present life. Incidentally, the verses may apply to the life of comfort and the joy and peace the followers of the Holy Prophet came to enjoy after they had conquered the vast fertile valleys of the Persian and Byzantine Empires. Those who used to live in miserable hovels and huts, became, in a few years, the dwellers of stately palaces.

4357. Important Words:

قطف (clusters of fruit) is plural of قطف which is derived from يف . They say قطف i.e., he culled, plucked and gathered the fruit. يف means, he took hastily the thing or snatched it. يف means, a bunch of grapes; culled fruit (Aqrab).

Commentary:

Besides referring to the blessings and boons of Paradise, the verse may be taken also to refer to the worldly comforts that were at the disposal of the Holy Prophet's Companions.
26. aBut as for him who is given his record in his left hand, he will say, 'O! would that I had not been given my record!'4358
27. 'Nor known what my reckoning was!
28. 'O! would that death had made an end of me!4359
29. 'My wealth has been of no avail to me.
30. 'My power has gone from me.'
31. The angels will be commanded, b'Seize him and fetter him,
32. 'Then cast him into Hell.
33. 'Then put him into a chain the length of which is seventy cubits;4360

4358. Commentary:
To be given one's record in one's left hand, in Quranic terminology represents failure in a test. Elsewhere in the Qur'an (56 : 42) the guilty have been described as "fellows of the left hand."

4359. Commentary:
Disbelievers would wish death to be the end of all things so that there should be no other life and no rendering of account of their actions before God.

4360. Commentary:
It has repeatedly been explained in the Qur'an that life after death is not a new life but only an image and manifestation of the present one. In these verses the spiritual torture of the present world has been represented as a physical punishment in the next world. The chain to be put round the neck, for instance, represents the desires of this world which keep a man's head bent upon the earth, and it is these desires that will assume the form of a chain in the life to come. Similarly, the entanglements of this world will be seen as chains on the feet. The heart-burning of this world will likewise appear as the flames of burning fire. The wicked man in fact has in this very world within himself a hell of his passions and inextinguishable desires; he feels the burning of that hell in the failures he meets with in this life. When, therefore, he will see a never-ending despair before him in the new world, his desires will assume the shape of burning fire.

The "securing" of the sinful with the chain of a length of seventy cubits reveals the same secret. The limit of man's age may generally be fixed at seventy, and a wicked person often lives up to that age in his wickedness. Sometimes, he even enjoys seventy years.
34. 'Verily, he did not believe in Allah, the Great,
35. "And he did not urge the feeding of the poor." 4361
36. 'No friend, therefore has he here this day;
37. 'Nor any food save the washing of wounds,
38. 'Which none but the sinners eat.'
39. But nay, I swear by all that you see, 4362
40. And by all that you see not,
41. That it is surely the word brought by a noble Messenger;

excluding the periods of childhood and decrepitude. These seventy years, during which he could work with honesty, wisdom and zeal he wastes away in the entanglements of the world and in satisfying his sensual passions. He does not try to free himself from the chain of desires, and, therefore, in the next world the chain of desires which he indulged in for seventy years shall be embodied in a chain of a length of seventy cubits, every cubit representing a year, with which the wicked shall be fettered.

4361. Commentary:
The disbelievers did not befriend the poor and did not discharge their obligations to them. So they will have no friend at a time when they will stand in need of one on the Day of Reckoning, and will be given the washing of wounds to satisfy their hunger, because they did not feed the needy and the hungry in this life; their acts of omission in this life will take the form of the punishment described in these verses in next life.

4362. Commentary:
The things which we see in the physical world i.e., the visible facts of life, and the things which are hidden from our view i.e., human reason and conscience, have been cited in the verses 38-39 as proofs to establish the Divine origin of the Qur'an. Or the verses (38-49) may mean that the great Signs which disbelievers in the Holy Prophet's time witnessed with their own eyes, and the prophecies about the bright future of Islam which yet await fulfilment constitute an irrefutable argument, that Qur'an is God's own Word which He has revealed to His noble Prophet Muhammad. It deals with the hard facts of life and is not a poet's fond dream, nor the groping in the dark of a soothsayer. See also 26:225-227.
42. And it is not the word of a poet; little is it that you believe!

43. Nor is it the word of a soothsayer; little is it that you heed!

44. It is a revelation from the Lord of the worlds.

45. And if he had forged and attributed any sayings to Us,

46. We would surely, have seized him by the right hand,

47. And then surely, We would have severed his life-artery,

48. And not one of you could have held Our punishment off from him.

4362-A. Important Words:

"أقوال" (sayings) is the plural of قول which is the plural of قول which means, he said. "تاويل" means, he forged a lie against him (Aqrab).

4362-B. Important Words:

"يمن" (right hand) is derived from يمن which means, he came from the right side of the man. "مأمن" means, God made him blessed. "يمن" means, blessing, good luck; power, strength, right side (Aqrab).

4363. Commentary:

In vv. 38-39 above it was claimed that all visible and invisible things prove that the Holy Prophet is God's true Messenger and that the Qur'an is God's revealed Word and not the imaginary flight of a poet's mind or the wild conjectures of a diviner. In this and the preceding three verses another invincible argument is given to support his claim. The argument is to the effect that if the Holy Prophet had been a forger of lies against God, God's strong hand would have seized him by the throat and the Prophet would certainly have met with a violent death; his whole work and mission would have gone to pieces, because such is the fate of a false prophet. The claim and the arguments contained in these verses seem to be an exact reproduction of the following Biblical statement: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren (i.e. the Ishmaelites) like unto thee and will put My word in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. But the Prophet which shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak even that Prophet shall die" (Deut. 18:20).
49. And verily, it is a reminder for the righteous.\textsuperscript{4364}

50. And surely, We know that there are some among you who reject Our Signs.

51. And, verily, it will be a source of regret for the disbelievers.\textsuperscript{4365}

52. And surely, it is the true certainty.

53. "So glorify the name of thy Lord, the Great.\textsuperscript{4366}

\textsuperscript{4364} Commentary:

Only the righteous believers and those who have fear of God in their hearts will benefit by the arguments given in the above verse. Or the meaning is that the Qur'an would prove a potent means of raising those, who would believe in it, to great eminence—the root word تذکرة from which ذکر is derived meaning eminence.

\textsuperscript{4365} Commentary:

The verse means that disbelievers would some day regret the rejection of the Message of the Qur'an. Or it may mean that seeing the great boons and blessings bestowed upon Muslims as a result of following the teaching of the Qur'an, disbelievers would regret their rejection of it.

\textsuperscript{4366} Commentary:

That the Qur'an is God's revealed Word is certain truth which no honest man can deny. So, glory be to the Lord Who revealed it.
CHAPTER 70
SūRA AL-MAʿĀRIJ
(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

The Sūra derives its title from the 4th verse. It was revealed at Mecca about the 5th year of the Call, not later than the close of the early Meccan period. Noldeke, Muir, and some other eminent authorities, assign this date to the revelation of the Sūra.

In the preceding Sūra the disbelievers were warned that the great Calamity (الحاقة) would soon overtake them if they did not repent of their sins and accept the Divine Message. The present Sūra opens with a mention of the disbelievers' demand, viz., when will the threatened punishment be? They are told that it would soon be upon them, nay, it is at their door, and that when it comes, it would be so overwhelming and devastating that it would cause the mountains to fly like flakes of wool, and that the disbelievers would wish to part with their near and dear ones—their wives, children and brothers—as a ransom for themselves. Then it would be too late to repent and they would burn in Hell-fire which would strip off their skins. But God's righteous servants will enjoy perfect happiness and security in "Gardens"—honoured and loved by their Lord.

Towards the close of the Sūra, disbelievers are told again, that the Muslims now being few in number, and weak, the disbelievers consider prophecies about the glorious future of Islam as only the dream of a visionary, but the time was fast approaching when, their eyes cast down, they would hasten to the Holy Prophet to accept Islam. Then they would realize to their shame and sorrow that what the Prophet had foretold about their eventual defeat was only too true.
1. In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. An inquirer inquires concerning the punishment about to befall.  

3. The disbelievers, which none can repel.  

4. It is from Allah, Lord of great ascents.  

5. The angels and the Spirit ascend to Him in a day, the measure of which is fifty thousand years.

--- Commentary:

4367. The inquirer in the verse is taken by some Commentators to refer to Nâdar bin Al-Harith, or Abû Jahl. But it need not refer to any particular person. The disbelievers repeatedly had challenged the Holy Prophet to bring down upon them the threatened punishment (10:49; 21:39; 27:72; 32:29; 34:30; 36:49; 67:26). The demand was made in doubt and mockery. They had gone so far as to challenge the Prophet with the words, “O Allah, if this be indeed the truth from Thee, then rain down upon us stones from heaven or bring down upon us a grievous punishment” (8:33). The word “inquirer” may refer to all such questioners.

4368. The verse may mean that instead of demanding punishment the disbelievers should have accepted the Message of Islam and thus should have won the pleasure of God. Or it may mean that while the punishment that will overtake disbelievers will be highly destructive, the ascent of the believers to heights of spiritual perfection will also be without end. Or the verse may signify that as the attributes of God are manifested in stages, the punishment of disbelievers will also come in stages. The verse may also signify that the day when disbelievers will receive the most humiliating punishment in the form of the Fan of Mecca will be the most auspicious day in the Holy Prophet’s life—the day of his مرآج (Ascension), when he will be at the height of his power.

4369. الروح (Spirit) means, the human soul; spirit; the vital principle; inspiration; revelation; Word of God; the Qur’an; angel Gabriel; joy; happiness; mercy of God, etc. (Lane & Aqrab):

Commentary:

meaning human soul, the word may signify that development and progress of the
6. "So be patient with admirable patience."^4370

7. They see it to be far off,

8. "But We see it to be nigh.

9. The day when the heaven will become like molten copper,

10. "And the mountains will become like flakes of wool,"^4371

11. "And a friend will not inquire after a friend.

12. Though 'they will be placed in sight of one another, 'and the guilty one would fain ransom himself from the punishment of that day by offering his children,"^4372

13. "And his wife and his brother,

human soul will know no end. Or the verse may mean that Divine plans and programmes take thousands of years to mature. Or, the words "fifty thousand years" may have reference to the age of the world as estimated by some geologists from a study of the layers of earth. Or the reference may be to a specific cycle of fifty thousand years in which a great change was decreed to take place, because Divine prophecies have their fixed periods, epochs and cycles in which they are fulfilled.

^4370. Commentary:

Divine prophecies sometimes take thousands of years for their fulfilment. The Holy Prophet is enjoined to bear with patience the mockery and jibes of disbelievers because the hour of their punishment is delayed in order that they may have time to take heed, repent or make amends.

^4371. Commentary:

In this age of atom and hydrogen bombs flying of mountains like flakes of wool, is not an impossible occurrence.

These verses may also have metaphorical reference to the Fall of Mecca.

^4372. Commentary:

What an awe-inspiring picture of the Day of Judgment is given in these verses! Face to face with a calamity man is prepared to part with everything, even to sacrifice his dearest and nearest ones if only by doing so he can save his own skin.
14. And his kinsfolk who sheltered him,
15. And by offering all those who are on the earth, if only thus he might save himself.
16. But no! surely it is a flame of Fire,
17. "Stripping off the skin even to the extremities of the body." 4373
18. It will call him who turned his back and retreated.
19. And hoarded wealth, and held it. 4374
20. Verily, man is born impatient and miserly. 4375
21. "When evil touches him, he is full of lamentations,
22. But when good falls to his lot, he is niggardly.

4373. **Important Words:**

شوى (extremities) is derived from شوى (shawa). They say شوى اللحم i.e., he roasted meat. شوى means, the arms or hands and the legs or feet, or the fore and hind legs and the extremities collectively; (2) the head of a human being or the bone above the brain. It is also the plural of شوى which means, the skin of the head in which grow the hair (Lane & Aqrab).

4374. **Commentary:**

Hoarding of wealth, and not spending it in the service or promotion of good causes is very strongly condemned in these verses.

4375. **Important Words:**

عولع (impatient & miserly) is derived from عول which means, he was or became agitated, restless, seized with abject discouragement; he became hungry. عول means, one who becomes restless and easily agitated and discouraged when in difficulty; one who is greedy about wealth and miserly in spending it; one who is much grieved and loses patience when in trouble (Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

The words, "man is born impatient and miserly," mean that man by nature is impatient and miserly. For this meaning ofخلق see 21:38 & 30:55.
23. Save those who pray.

24. "Those who are constant in their Prayer,\(^{4376}\)

25. \(^{b}\)And those in whose wealth there is a recognized right.\(^{4376A}\)

26. For one who asks \textit{for help} and \textit{for one} who does not.\(^{4377}\)

27. \(^{c}\)And those who believe in the Day of Judgment to be a reality, \(^{4378}\)

28. And those who are fearful of the punishment of their Lord—

29. Verily the punishment of their Lord is not \textit{a thing} to feel secure from—

30. \(^{d}\)And those who guard their private parts—

31. \(^{e}\)Except from their wives and \textit{from} those whom their right hands possess; such indeed are not to blame;\(^{4379}\)

32. \(^{f}\)But those who seek to go beyond that, it is these who are transgressors—

33. \(^{g}\)And those who are watchful of their trusts, and their covenants.

\(^{a6 : 93 ; \ 23 : 10. \ \ b51 : 20. \ \ c37 : 53-54. \ \ d23 : 6. \ \ e23 : 7. \ \ f23 : 8. \ \ g23 : 9.}\)

\(^{4376. \ \ \text{Commentary :}}\)

Prayer is the best form of worship; it is an obligation which man owes to God, as "giving of wealth to the poor" is his obligation to his fellow-men. These two together constitute the quintessence of all religious teaching.

\(^{4376-A. \ \ \text{Commentary :}}\)

This verse shows that all things in the universe being the common property of all mankind, there can be no absolute ownership of anything vesting in any individual, the poor having a share in the wealth of the rich as of right.

\(^{4377. \ \ \text{Important Words :}}\)

المحروم may signify those persons who from a sense of dignity or from some infirmity would not ask for alms. The word includes animals also in its signification.

\(^{4378. \ \ \text{Commentary :}}\)

There could be no real sense of responsibility without a true and living belief in the Hereafter when man shall have to render account of his actions to his Lord and Creator. Belief in the Hereafter is the second cardinal belief of Islam, next to belief in the existence of God.

\(^{4379. \ \ \text{Commentary :}}\)

For a detailed explanation of this verse see 23 : 7 and 24 : 34.
34. And those who are upright in their testimonies,
35. And those who are strict in the observance of their Prayer.
36. “These will be in the Gardens, duly honoured.\(^{4380}\)
37. But what is the matter with those who disbelieve, that they come hastening towards thee,\(^b\)
38. From the right hand and from the left, in different parties?\(^{4381}\)
39. Does every man among them hope to enter the Garden of Bliss?
40. Never! We have created them of that which they know.\(^{4382}\)

\(^{4380}\) Commentary:
These verses (vv. 24-35) mention those seven special marks of a true believer the possession of which leaves nothing to be desired and renders him fully deserving of the highest reward—the love and pleasure of God—which in the Qur'an is termed as \(الجنة\) (23 : 12) or \(الفردوس\) (the Garden). See also 23 : 12.

\(^{4381}\) Commentary:
This and the preceding verse give a prophetic description of the coming triumph of Islam when the pagan tribes of Arabia, from every part of the country, hastened to wait in deputations upon the Holy Prophet, begging to be taken into the fold of Islam. Or the verses may refer to the highly alluring offers made by the leaders of the Quraish to the Holy Prophet, if only he should give up preaching against their idols. By some authorities, however, the verses have been taken to refer to the dangerous attacks that were made on the Holy Prophet in different forms by his opponents.

\(^{4382}\) Commentary:
Taken along with its predecessor, the verse would mean that by mere expression of a pious wish a man cannot hope to be received into God’s favour. He has first to discharge his obligations to God and his fellow-beings, and by making full use of God-given powers and faculties he has to traverse all the different stages of spiritual progress before he can hope to enter “the Garden of Bliss.” The word \(الفصل\) signifies natural powers and faculties with which God has endowed him.
41. But nay! I swear by the Lord of the Easts and of the Wests, that We have the power.

42. To bring in their place others better than they, and We cannot be frustrated in Our plans.

43. "So leave them alone to indulge in idle talk and play until they meet that day of theirs which they are promised.

44. The day when they will come forth from their graves hastening, as though they were racing to a target,

45. Their eyes cast down, humiliation covering them. Such is the day which they are promised.

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4382-A. Commentary:


4382-B. Commentary:

The opponents of the Holy Prophet are told here that it is an unalterable Divine decree that Islam shall succeed and prevail in Arabia and that if they rejected it, other people would enter its fold and inherit God's blessings. The old order would change and from its ruins would emerge a new and better order.

4383. Commentary:

The expression, "that day of theirs which they are promised," means the day of the final triumph of Islam in Arabia and the complete defeat and discomfiture of disbelief—the day of the Fall of Mecca.

4384. Important Words:

جَدَّة (graves) being the plural of جَدَة which means, a grave; a sepulchre (Lane), it stands here for the houses of the disbelievers who were spiritually no better than dead.

نصب (a thing set up; a mile-stone; a goal or target (Aqrab)).

Commentary:

See next verse.

4385. Commentary:

What a true and graphic picture of the leaders of the Quraish, after the Fall of Mecca, when they came to the Holy Prophet, completely dejected, dispirited and dismayed, their eyes cast down, and disappointment, and a sense of guilt and regret, writ large on their faces! They deserved very severe punishment, but the Holy Prophet forgave them out of magnanimity of heart which is unparalleled in history, not uttering even a word of reproach or taunt. That was their promised day—the day of their utter disgrace and humiliation.
CHAPTER 71

SŪRA NŪḤ

(Revealed before Hijra)

Title, Context, and Date of Revelation

As the Sūra records the spiritual experiences of the Prophet Noah, it has been named after him. Wherry gives 7th year of the Call as the date of its revelation, while Noldeke places it in the 5th year but according to other authorities it was revealed in the first Meccan period, about the time when some of the immediately preceding Sūrās were revealed.

Towards the end of the preceding Sūra it was stated that wicked people invariably reject the Divine Message; they oppose and persecute God’s Messengers till the hour of their punishment arrives, and they meet their deserved end. The present Sūra gives a brief account of the missionary activities of one of the great Prophets of antiquity—Noah—who was so bitterly and stubbornly opposed that he prayed to God: “Let not a single disbeliever remain alive in the land”. A very destructive flood engulfed the whole country, bringing in its wake utter ruin and devastation.

Summary of Subject-Matter

Noah’s account appears at several places in the Qur’ân—with some detail in Sūra Hûd (vv. 26—50). In the present Sūra, however, he pours out the agony of his heart before his Lord and Creator, in words full of extreme pathos. He preached to his people day and night, he says, and spoke to them in public and in private. He reminded them of the great favours and gifts that God had bestowed upon them. He warned them of the evil consequences of rejection of the Divine Message. But all his preaching and warning, his sympathy with and solicitude for, their well-being only met with ridicule, opposition and abuse; and instead of following one whose heart was full of love for them, they chose to follow those leaders who led them to destruction. When Noah’s exhortations and preachings of a whole lifetime proved a voice in the wilderness, he prayed to God to ruin and destroy the enemies of truth. The Sūra closes with this prayer of Noah.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. We sent Noah to his people, saying, 'Warn thy people before there comes upon them a grievous punishment.'

3. 'He said,' O my people! surely I am a plain Warner unto you,

4. 'That you serve Allah and fear Him and obey me.'

5. 'He will forgive you your sins and grant you respite till an appointed time. 'Verily, the time appointed by Allah cannot be put back when it comes, if only you knew!'

6. He said, "My Lord, I have called my people night and day,
7. "But my calling them has only made them flee from me all the more.

4386. Commentary:
The Holy Prophet represented in himself all the Divine Messengers that had gone before him. The account given in this Sūra of the Prophet Noah applies with equal effect to the conditions and circumstances through which the Holy Prophet had to pass. It is in this light that the meaning of the Sūra should be read and appreciated.

4387. Commentary:
Observance of Divine laws, discharge of obligations due to God, and obedience to the commands and behests of His Prophets constitute the sum and substance of all religious teaching.

4388. Commentary:
When a Divine decree is in active operation, repentance is of no use.
8. "And every time I called them that Thou mightest forgive them, they put their fingers into their ears, and covered themselves with their garments, and persisted in their iniquity, and were disdainfully proud. 4389

9. "Then, I called them to righteousness openly.
10. "Then I preached to them in public, and admonished them in private. 4390
11. "And I said, 'Seek forgiveness of your Lord; for He is the Great Forgiver.
12. 'He will send down rain for you in abundance,
13. 'And He will grant you increase of wealth and children, and He will cause gardens to grow for you and will cause rivers to flow for you.
14. 'What is the matter with you that you expect not wisdom and staidness from Allah? 4391
15. 'And He has created you in different forms and different conditions. 4392

4389. Important Words:
For a detailed discussion of تاب, see 74:5, and for استغفروا, see 11:6. The phrase استغفروا لياهم أسايعهم metaphorically means, they refused to listen to God (said Noah to his people) had conferred the Divine Message. They closed up all the avenues of their hearts against it.

4390. Commentary:
These verses signify that the Prophet Noah employed all means to make his people listen to the Divine Message. But they were equally determined not to listen to it.

4391. Important Words:
وقار (wisdom and staidness) is derived from وقأر, i.e., the man was or became grave, steady, wise, dignified, patient.

4392. Important Words:
الطوار (forms and conditions) is the plural of طور which, among other things, means, one time; quantity; measure; limit; state and condition; quality; capability; mode or manner. They say الناس اطور i.e., mankind are of
16. "Have you not seen how Allah has created seven heavens in perfect harmony,
17. And has placed the moon therein as a light, and made the sun as a lamp?
18. "And Allah has caused you to grow as a good growth from the earth,\footnote{4393}
19. Then will He cause you to return thereto, and He will bring you forth a new bringing forth.\footnote{4394}
20. "And Allah has made the earth for you a wide expanse
21. That you may traverse the open ways thereof.'
22. Noah said, "My Lord, they have disobeyed me,\footnote{9} and followed one whose wealth and children have only added to his ruin.
23. "And they have planned a mighty plan.

\footnote{65 : 13 ; 67 : 4.}{10 : 6 ; 25 : 62.}{23 : 20 ; 54 ; 67 ; 16 ; 78 ; 7.}
\footnote{7 : 26 ; 20 : 56.}{7 : 26 ; 20 : 56.}{f }{21 : 32.}{118 ; 54 10.}

divers sorts, of different conditions and forms; of various dispositions; capabilities; in different stages (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
The verse may refer to the different stages and conditions of development through which the foetus passes—from the stage of a drop of sperm to that of a fully developed human being. This development of the foetus is fully described in 23 : 14-15.

The verse may also signify that God has endowed different persons with different natural capacities and capabilities and that on this disparity of aptitudes and physical conditions depends the existence, growth and development of human society.

4393. Commentary:
The verse refers to the process of man’s creation from the earliest stage when he lies dormant in the form of dust. The inorganic constituents of the earth, through a subtle process of change, become converted into the life-germ through the agency of food which man eats.

4394. Commentary:
The reference in the verse is to the Resurrection. Man will get a new life in the Hereafter in which his works and actions done in this life will assume the form of rewards and punishments of Heaven and Hell.
24. 'And they say to one another, 'Forsake not your gods.' And forsake neither Wadd* nor Suwa*', nor Yaghuth* and Ya'q* and Nasr*.4395

25. "And they have led many astray; so increase Thou not the wrongdoers but in error."

4395. Important Words:

- **Wadd** *(Wadda)* is derived from **ود** *(Wadd).* They say *ود* *ءَوَد* i.e., he loved him or it. **ود** *(Wadd)* was an idol worshipped by the tribe of Bani Kalab in Daumat al-Jandal. It was in a man’s figure, representing manly power.

- **Suwā’** *(Suwa’)* is derived from **سَوَاعٍ** *(Swa’).* They say *سَوَاعٍ* i.e., the thing was wasted *(Lane).* **Suwā’** was an idol which the Banū Hudhail worshipped. It was in a woman’s shape, representing female beauty.

- **Yaghūth** *(Yaghūth)* is derived from **وَاغْنَة** *(Yagnat).* They say *وَاغْنَة* i.e., he aided or helped him. **Yaghūth** was an idol belonging to the tribe of Murād. Its votaries believed that it helped them when they called for help.

- **Ya’q** *(Ya’q)* is derived from **يَعَاق** *(Yaq’).* They say *يَعَاق* i.e., he hindered or prevented or withheld him from such a thing *(Lane).* **Ya’q** was an idol belonging to the tribe of Hamdān. It was in the shape of a horse, representing swiftness. Its votaries believed that it prevented the enemy from doing harm to its worshippers, and warded off calamities from them.

Commentary:

From time immemorial, man, in his ignorance, has worshipped forces of nature, idols made of wood or stone, and human beings. Noah’s people were steeped in idol-worship. They had many idols, the five mentioned in the verse under comment being the most popular. The Arabs, several centuries afterwards, are supposed to have brought them from Iraq; Hubal, their most famous idol, was brought from Syria by ‘Āmir bin Loḥay; their own principal idols being Lat, Manāt and ‘Uzza. Or the Arabs might have named their own idols after the idols of the tribe of Noah as the two peoples were not very distant from each other and there was general intercourse between them. There is nothing impossible or improbable in the two neighbouring idolatrous peoples having identical names for their idols.
26. "Because of their sins they were drowned and made to enter Fire. And they found no helpers for themselves against Allah.

27. And Noah said, 'My Lord, leave not on the land a single dweller of the disbelievers; 4396

28. 'For, if Thou dost leave them, they will only lead astray Thy servants and will not beget but sinners and disbelievers. 4397

29. "My Lord! forgive me and my parents, and him who enters my house as a believer, and the believing men and the believing women; and increase Thou not the wrongdoers but in perdition.'

4396. Important Words:

دار (dar) is derived from دار (dar) and means, one who lives in a house. They say ساف الدار دار (safa al-dar dar), i.e., there is no one in the house (Lane).

Commentary:

God's Prophets are full of the milk of human kindness. Noah's prayer shows that opposition to him must have been long, persistent and unremitting, and that all his efforts to bring his people to the right path must have been abortive, and that there had remained no possibility for any further addition to his small following, and also that his opponents must have exceeded all legitimate bounds in opposing and persecuting him and his followers, and in indulging in evil pursuits. Matters must have come to such a pass that a man of a compassionate disposition like Noah was constrained to pray against his people. In an identical situation the Holy Prophet's attitude to his opponents presents a vivid contrast. In the Battle of Uhud, the Holy Prophet had two of his teeth broken. He was badly wounded and bled profusely, and yet the only words that escaped his lips on that occasion, were, "How will a people get salvation who have wounded their Prophet and have smeared his face with blood, for no fault but that he calls them to God. My Lord! forgive my people, they know not what they do" (Zurqâni & Hishâm).

الارض (al-arr) in the verse signifies Noah's own land—Iraq—and not the whole earth. This word has been used at several places in the Qur'an in the sense of a particular land or country (5:27 & 28:82).

4397. Commentary:

Noah's prayer embodied in this and the preceding verse may be read as not against but for his people. Besides the meaning given in the text the prayer may signify that not a single disbeliever should remain in the land, i.e., all should become believers.
CHAPTER 72

SŪRA AL-JINN

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This Sūra is generally considered to have been revealed on the Holy Prophet's return from Ṭa'īf, where, after he was despised of the Meccans from whom he received nothing but ridicule, opposition and persecution, he had gone to preach his Message. The visit to Ṭa'īf took place two years before Hijra when the opposition to the new Faith had taken an ugly turn and the condition of the Prophet and his followers had become desperate in the extreme. If, as some authorities are of the view, the Sūra relates to an incident other than the one mentioned in Sūra Aḥqāf (46:30-33), then it might have been revealed much earlier. The context and contents of the Sūra seem to lend some weight to the latter view.

Subject-Matter

In the preceding Sūra it was stated that the lifelong preaching of the Prophet Noah had met with only jibes and jeers, and that only a few persons other than his near relatives had given him their allegiance—his son and wife taking an active part in opposition to him. In order to show that there existed a similarity between the circumstances which Noah had to meet with and the circumstances which the Holy Prophet had to face, it is stated that a party of the Jinn,—a people not known to the Prophet before—visited him, listened to the Qurān and at once believed in him. The Sūra gives a fairly long account of the beliefs and doctrines of these people, their conduct and outlook on life. They denounce as an extravagant lie the doctrine that God can ever take unto Himself a son or a wife, and the Sūra gives strong arguments in refutation of this doctrine.

Next, the Sūra emphatically affirms that it is impossible for anyone to distort or tamper with the revealed Word of God because, like a precious treasure, it is strongly guarded by Divine sentinels. Towards the close of the Sūra, it is stated that whenever a Divine Teacher calls men to God, the forces of evil try to stifle his voice, but the Teacher carries on his mission, undeterred by the machinations of evilly disposed people. The Sūra closes with an infallible criterion to test the Divine source of the Message of a Prophet viz., that it contains prophecies about great world events which human knowledge cannot foresee or foretell, and that the Prophet succeeds in delivering his Message because God “causes an escort of guarding angels to go before him and after him.”
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. Say, "It has been revealed to me that a company of the Jinn listened, and they said: ‘Truly’ we have heard a Qur’ān that is wonderful."

3. "It guides to the right way; so we have believed in it, and we will not associate anyone with our Lord.

4. ‘The truth is that the majesty of our Lord is exalted. ‘He has taken neither wife nor son unto Himself.'

4398. Important Words:

- جن (Jinn) is derived from جن (Janna) which means, it veiled, concealed, covered or protected him or it. جن (Jinn) means, such beings as remain aloof from the people concealing themselves; strangers; the main or chief part or body of mankind, etc. (Lane & Aqrab). See also 6:101, 129 and 27:18.

- Commentary:

The reference in the words “a company of the Jinn” may be to a party of Jews of Naṣibin. They were non-Arabs and being strangers they have been called جن (Jinn) which word among other things means, a stranger. The incident mentioned in the verse seems to be different from the one referred to in vv. 46:30-33, though the verse is taken by some authorities to refer to those verses; the words put in the mouth of “a company of the Jinn” mentioned in the present verse having a seeming resemblance with the words spoken by “a party of the Jinn” referred to in vv. 46:30—33.

The word جن also meaning a large body of mankind, the verse may be taken as embodying a prophecy that at some time in future large numbers of men from among the powerful nations of the world will accept Islam.

4399. Commentary:

This verse shows that “a company of the Jinn” were either Unitarian Christians or such Jews, as were closely associated with Christians, or being under their influence, were conversant with Christian beliefs.
5. 'And that the foolish amongst us used to utter extravagant lies concerning Allah.  

6. 'And we had thought that men and Jinn would never speak a lie concerning Allah.

7. 'And indeed some men from among the common folk used to seek the protection of some men from among the Jinn, and they thus increased the latter in arrogance;  

8. 'And indeed they thought, even as you think, that Allah would never raise any Messenger.  

9. 'And we sought to reach heaven, but we found it filled with strong guards and shooting stars'.  

4400. Important Words:

شطأ (extravagant lies) is derived from شاطأ which means, he transgressed or acted wrongfully or unjustly; he exceeded the legitimate bounds; he became removed far away from the right path.  

Commentary:

It appears from the relevant verses that "a company of the Jinn" were believers in Divine Unity.

4401. Important Words:

رهاق (arrogance) is derived from رهاق which means, he was or became stupid and frivolous; he did wrong, abominable things; he told a lie.  

Commentary:

The Jews had ceased to believe as early as in the time of the Prophet Joseph that no Divine Messenger would ever appear after him (40 : 35).
10. 'And we used to sit in some of its seats to listen. But whoso listens now, finds a shooting star in ambush for him.4403

11. 'And we know not whether evil is intended for those who are in the earth or whether their Lord intends guidance for them. 4404

ironically because guardians are sometimes found to be thieves (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse shows that when a Divine Reformer is about to make his appearance in the world, an unusual shooting of stars takes place. It is to this exceptional natural phenomenon that reference is made in this verse.

"Seeking to reach heaven," means, trying to steal the secrets of the unknown. See next verse.

4403. Important Words:

رصد (in ambush) is noun-infinitive from رصد (rasada). They say أرصده i.e., he watched or waited for him; lay in ambush for him. مرصد and مرصد all mean, a hiding place; an ambush. كن له بالمرصد or قد عهد له بالمرصد means, he lay in ambush for him. An Arab poet says: إن المنايا للرجال بمرصد i.e., verily deaths are lying in ambush for men (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Before the appearance of a Divine Reformer, soothsayers and diviners dabble in occult sciences, and with the help of their questionable practices seek to hoodwink simple people by posing to be able to have access to the secrets of the unknown, and as they are generally quite adept in the art of cheating they succeed in playing upon people's credulity. But with the advent of the Heavenly Reformer they are exposed and their counterfeit knowledge of the unseen becomes unmasked as only a superficial and fragmentary acquaintance with astrology. For a detailed explanation, however, of this and the preceding verse see 15: 17-19 and 37: 7-8.

The word الآن (now) is used here particularly with respect to the time of the Holy Prophet, but it may also signify the time of every great Divine Reformer.

4404. Commentary:

Whereas before the appearance of a Divine Reformer soothsayers and diviners ply their evil trade of prying into the unknown with impunity, with the appearance of such a one they practically confess their lack of knowledge of the unseen by giving up their evil practices. It is not given to these people to foretell what great changes in the world are decreed to take place. On the other hand, only God's great Messengers can foretell the future.
12. 'And some of us are righteous and some of us are otherwise; and we are sects following different paths.\textsuperscript{4405}

13. 'And we know that we cannot frustrate the plan of Allah in the earth, nor can we escape Him by flight.

14. \textsuperscript{b} And when we heard the Call to guidance, we believed in it. And he who believes in his Lord has no fear of loss or injustice.

15. 'And some of us submit to God and some of us have deviated from the right course.' And those who submit to God—it is these who seek the right course.

16. And as for those who deviate from the right course, they are the fuel of Hell.

17. 'And if they keep to the right path, We shall certainly provide them with abundant water to drink.\textsuperscript{4406}

\textsuperscript{a}55 : 34. \textsuperscript{b}46 : 32. \textsuperscript{c}46 : 33.

\textsuperscript{4405} Important Words:

\textsuperscript{COD} (sects following different paths) is the plural of \textsuperscript{COD} (\textit{qiddatun}) which is derived from \textsuperscript{COD}. They say \textsuperscript{COD} \textit{i.e.}, he cut it or cut it entirely, rent it. \textsuperscript{COD} means, pieces of a thing; parties, divisions, sects or distinct bodies or classes of men, holding particular tenets or body of tenets, creeds, opinions. \textsuperscript{COD} means, the people became divided into their states or conditions and their desires or erroneous opinions (Lane & Aqrab).

\textsuperscript{4406} Important Words:

\textsuperscript{GHDAIQ} (abundant) is infinitive-noun from \textsuperscript{GHDAIQ} (\textit{ghadiqa}). They say \textsuperscript{GHDAIQ} \textit{i.e.}, the spring or fountain abounded with water. \textsuperscript{GHDAIQ} means, the land abounded with herbage (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The verse points out that if people had accepted the Divine Message and had kept to the right path, God would have bestowed upon them worldly gifts and benefits in abundance. Water being the source of all life, "abundant water" signifies abundance of wealth and other material gains.
18. That We may try them thereby. And whoso turns away from the remembrance of his Lord—He will drive him into an overwhelmingly severe punishment. 4407

19. And all places of worship belong to Allah; so call not on anyone beside Allah. 4407-A

20. And when the Servant of Allah stands up praying to Him, they crowd upon him, well-nigh suffocating him. 4408

21. Say, 'I pray to my Lord only, and I associate no one with Him.' 4408

22. Say, 'I have no power to do you either harm or good.'

23. Say, 'Surely none can protect me against Allah, nor can I find any place of refuge besides Him.'

24. 'My responsibility is only to convey what is revealed to me from Allah, and His Messengers.' And for those who disobey Allah and His Messenger there is the fire of Hell, wherein they will abide for a long, long period.


4407. Commentary:

Wealth is a source of great trial and temptation. Instead of being grateful to God for His bestowing riches upon them, wealthy people generally are neglectful of their duties to God and man.

4407-A. Commentary:

In the foregoing verses it is declared that with the advent of the Holy Prophet, God's plan with regard to the establishment of His Unity has become manifest. The verse under comment states that mosques would henceforth be the centres from which the light of Truth will emanate and spread throughout the world.

4408. Important Words:

(share upon him suffocating) is derived from  لا شديد . They say لبد بالمكان i.e., he remained, stayed, continued to dwell in the house. لبد بالسنف means, the things became heaped one upon the other. لبد (labida) also means, he (a camel) became choked and suffered from a contortion in the chest and the throat (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

"The Servant of Allah" refers to the Holy Prophet, he being God's servant par excellence.

2700
25. "They will continue to disbelieve until they see that which they are promised, and soon they will know who is weaker as regards helpers and fewer as regards numbers.\(^{4409}\)

26. Say, 'I know not whether that which you are promised is nigh or whether my Lord has fixed for it a distant term.'\(^{4410}\)

27. "He is the Knower of the unseen: and He reveals not His secrets to anyone,\(^{4411}\)

28. Except to him whom He chooses, namely a Messenger of His. And then He causes an escort of guarding angels to go before him and behind him,\(^{4412}\)

These words may equally be applied to every Divine Messenger or Reformer. Whenever such a one calls men to God and invites them to give up their evil ways and adopt the path of virtue and righteousness, the sons of darkness place all sorts of obstacles and impediments in his way and harass him in every conceivable manner in order to stifle and smother his voice.

\(^{4409}\) Commentary:
Relying on their power, prestige and great numbers the Meccans rejected the Divine Message. They are warned here that when punishment will come upon them, these things will not in the least avail them. The punishment took the form of the Fall of Mecca.

\(^{4410}\) Commentary:
The Holy Prophet is enjoined to say to disbelievers that it is not for him to say when the threatened punishment will be, but come it must.

\(^{4411}\) Commentary:

\(^{4412}\) Commentary:

The verse embodies an incontestible criterion to distinguish between the nature and scope of the secrets of the unknown that are revealed to a Divine Messenger and those that are disclosed to other righteous believers. The distinction lies in the fact that whereas God's Messengers are granted dominance over the unseen; secrets revealed to other righteous and holy men of God do not enjoy this distinction. Moreover, revelation granted to God's Messengers, being under special Divine protection, is completely secure against
29. That He may know that they (Divine Messengers) have delivered the Messages of their Lord. And He encompasses all that is with them and He keeps count of all things. 4413

being distorted or tampered with by Evil Spirits, while secrets revealed to ordinary righteous men are not so safe.

4413. Commentary:

The revelation of Divine Messengers is granted security against being distorted or tampered with, because they have a great Divine mission to fulfil and a great Heavenly Message to deliver. It is also intended that people should realize that the Prophets would succeed in their mission and that obstacles and impediments placed in their way by disbelievers could not arrest or retard its progress.
CHAPTER 73
SūRA AL-MUZZAMMIL

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

A consensus of scholarly opinion assigns the revelation of this Sūra to the earliest period of the Call; some consider it to be the third Chapter to be revealed. It receives its title from the opening verse.

In the preceding Sūra (Al-Jinn) it was stated that angels descend upon Divine Messengers to guard the Word of God revealed to them from being distorted or tampered with. In the present Sūra the Holy Prophet is enjoined to devote a part of the night to Prayer and remembrance of God so that angels may descend upon him to help him against the evil plots and machinations of his enemies.

Like all Meccan Sūrās, this Sūra also deals mainly with the Divine mission of the Holy Prophet and with the truth of the Quranic revelation. It foretells, in brief but in very forceful words, the eventual triumph of the Holy Prophet and adduces the fulfilment of the prophecy as an argument in support of Life after death and the Resurrection. Particular emphasis has been laid on Prayer and remembrance of God which is a most effective means to draw Divine help and succour in preparation for the mighty task that lay ahead of the Prophet.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. O thou wrapped in thy mantle awaiting the grace of God\(^{4414}\)

3. "Stand up in Prayer at night except a small portion thereof\(^{4415}\)

\(^{a}\)See 1:1.  \(^{b}17:80; 50:41; 52:50; 76:27.

4414. **Important Words:**

"wrapped in mantle" derived from the root جَلَلّ جَلَلَ which means, he ran and went along quickly. جَلَلَ means, he bore or carried it, namely, a load. جَلَلَ على البَعْر means, he made him to ride behind him on the camel so as to counter-balance him. جَلَلَ فِي ثوبه means, he wrapped him in his garment. جَلَلَ himself. جَلَل (ordinarily جَلَل) means, a man wrapped in his garments; one bearing a heavy responsibility (Lane & Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

In view of different significations of the word جَلَل the verse has been variously interpreted. The simple explanation is the one given in Bukhari. After his first spiritual experience when the angel of God came to the Holy Prophet with Divine revelation he rushed home very much frightened. The fright was quite natural because the experience was quite novel. The Prophet asked to be wrapped in a mantle. As wrapping also implies the sense of joining together and unifying, the meaning of the verse may be something like this, "O thou who art to unite the nations of the world under one banner!" The Holy Prophet has been described in the Ḥadith as the Joiner and Uniter of the nations i.e., the Joiner and Uniter of the nations of the world (Bukhārī, *kitāb Manāqib al-Nabi*).

4415. **Commentary:**

In this and the next verse the Holy Prophet is told that praying to God in the stillness of the night will prepare him for the heavy task entrusted to him.
4. Half of it, or reduce it a little.

5. Or add to it a little—and recite the Qur'an, a good recital. 4416

6. Verily, We shall charge thee with a weighty Word. 4417

7. Verily, getting up at night for prayer is the most potent means of subduing the self and most effective in speech. 4418

4416. Important Words:

रत्ना (recite) is derived from रत्ना (ratila). They say रत्ना शीतले i.e., the thing was or became well arranged. रत्ना तनग or रत्ना देवत is means, the front teeth were or became even in their growth or separated one from another; were well set together and were white and lustrous.

रत्ना कांम (rattala) means, he put together and arranged well the component parts of the speech and made it distinct. रत्ना कांम in its original sense relates to the teeth, signifying their being separated one from the other, and when used with regard to a speech it signifies, putting together and arranging well its component parts and making it distinct.

रत्ना कांम means, I recited the Qur'an in a leisurely manner, deliberately, distinctly and well (Lane & Aqrab).

4417. Commentary:

रत्ना कांम may have any one of the following meanings: (a) The Qur'an is pregnant with the highest import. (b) It is too heavy to be displaced or dislocated i.e., the Quranic Teaching will continue to guide mankind and no other Teaching would ever take its place or improve upon it. (c) No word or letter of the Qur'an could be changed, altered or amended. (d) The Qur'an will break all opposition and (e) no single book or a collection of books could encompass all the knowledge contained in it. Briefly, the collective and concerted effort of all mankind will not be able to produce a Book like the Qur'an.

According to an oft-quoted hadith, the Holy Prophet, whenever a revelation descended upon him, went into a trance and felt a peculiar sensation so that even on an extremely cold day big drops of sweat fell from his forehead and he felt a dead-weight of his body (Bukhari). The Quranic revelation being “a weighty word,” his paroxysm was due to this sensation.

4418. Important Words:

वोला तनगल (subduing) is derived from वोला शीतले. They say वोला शीतले i.e., he trod under foot the thing. वोला शीतले means, he mounted the horse. वोला शीतले means, he entered the enemy's land (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

Getting up in the night for Prayer is a potent means of subduing one's self and
8. Thou hast indeed, during the
day a long chain of engagements. 4419

9. So remember the name of thy
Lord, and devote *thyself* to Him with
full devotion. 4420

of bringing under effective control one's evil
propensities and inclinations. It is a proved
experience of all spiritual wayfarers and
holy men that nothing conduces to one's
spiritual development so much as Prayers at
night. In the stillness and solitude of night,
a peculiar sort of peace prevails and all
nature is quiet, and man, being all
alone with his Creator, enjoys special com-
munion with Him, and becomes illumined
with a special heavenly light which he imparts
to others. The time is eminently suited
for man to develop strength of character
and to make his speech sane, solid and sound.
Effective speech and infinite capacity for hard
work are two very necessary qualifications for
a Reformer to succeed in his mission. Prayer
at night helps in the development of these two
qualities. Having acquired control over one's
mind and tongue one comes to exercise control
over others. This is the significance of the verse
under comment. The verse may also mean
that Night-Prayer causes the actions of man
to correspond to his words, which constitutes
another sure sign of the strength of his character
and the sincerity of his heart.

4419. **Important Words:**

- سَبَعَ (long chain of engagements) is derived
  from سَجَ، i.e., he swam in the water and took pleasure in it.
- سَجَ فِي الْجِبَالِ i.e., he went far into the land.
- سَجَ فِي حَوْاصِه i.e., he busied himself in the
  accomplishment of his needs. سَجَ (sabhu) also
  signifies the running of a horse in which the
  fore-legs are stretched forth well as are the
  arms of a man in swimming; being quick or
  swift (Lane & Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

The reference in the verse is to the
multifarious duties of the Holy Prophet
which he performed with alacrity, and took
pleasure in doing them. As Head of a newly-
established Republic, surrounded on all sides
by bitter foes and beset with the plots and
machinations of internal enemies, and as a
Divine Teacher and Reformer who had to
prepare a community, which was unacquainted
with even the rudiments of knowledge, to
become the leaders of nations in civilization and
culture, the Prophet's task was indeed very
difficult, which can better be imagined than
described, but which he performed with a success
which has baffled the world.

4420. **Important Words:**

- تَنَالَ (devote) is derived from تَنَالَ (batalla).
  They say تَنَالَ i.e., he severed it or separated
  it from another thing.
- بَنَالِيَةٍ بَنَالِيَةٍ means, he detached himself from worldly things
  and devoted himself exclusively and sincerely
to the service of God.
- بَنَالَيٍّ means, a woman
detached from worldly things and entirely
devoted to God (Lane & Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

In this verse the Holy Prophet is told that he
could accomplish his heavy task of reforming
a corrupt community and preparing it for the
leadership of the world by devoting himself
completely to God.
10. "He is the Lord of the East and the West; there is no God but He; so take Him for thy Guardian."

11. And bear patiently all that they say; and part with them in a decent manner.

12. And leave Me alone with those who reject the truth, possessors of ease and plenty; and give them a little respite.

13. Surely, with Us are heavy fetters and a raging fire.

14. And food that chokes, and a painful punishment

15. On the day when the earth and the mountains shall quake, and the mountains will become like crumbling sandhills.

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4421. Commentary:
The Holy Prophet is told here again that while preaching his Divine mission he will meet with bitter opposition and persecution. Therefore, he should, on the one hand, put his full trust in God, the Lord of the East and the West, and, on the other, bear with patience and fortitude the jibes, opposition and persecution of his enemies.

4422. Commentary:
Rejectors of Truth are reprimanded that instead of being grateful to God for "ease and plenty" provided to them they reject the Divine Message.

4423. Important Words:
"fetters" is the plural of which means, fetter, chain, bracelet, necklace; a kind of bridle.

4424. Important Words:
"choking" is derived from which means, the sitting place became choked with people. "choking" also means, he became grieved or disquieted in mind. "choking" means, a thing by which one is choked; choking wrath or rage; grief or disquietude of mind (Land & Aqrab).

4425. Important Words:
"crumbling" is derived from which means, a sand-hill heaped up by the wind (Lane).
16. Verily, We have sent to you a Messenger, who is a witness over you, even as We sent a Messenger to Pharaoh.\textsuperscript{4426}

17. But Pharaoh disobeyed the Messenger,\textsuperscript{b} so We seized him with a terrible punishment.

18. How will you then, if you disbelieve, guard yourselves against a day which will turn children grey-headed?\textsuperscript{4427}

19. \textit{On that day} the heaven will be rent asunder and His promise is bound to be fulfilled.\textsuperscript{4428}

20. This, surely, is a reminder.\textsuperscript{d} So let him, who will, take a way unto his Lord.\textsuperscript{4429}

\textsuperscript{4426} Commentary:
The reference in the verse is to the Day of Resurrection, or to the day of the Fall of Mecca, or to any calamitous day when catastrophic changes take place and deeply-rooted institutions totter and fall and very powerful and big and influential people are blown away like chaff before the wind.

\textsuperscript{4427} Commentary:
The reference in the verse is to the following Biblical prophecy about the appearance among the Ishmaelites of a great Prophet of God like unto Moses:

\begin{quote}
"I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My word in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My name, I will require it of him." (Deut. 18:18-19).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{4428} Commentary:
The promise referred to in the verse was the total defeat and destruction of the forces of evil followed by the triumph of Islam which was fully manifested in the Fall of Mecca, when the old corrupt order died and from its ruins emerged a new and better order. This may be the meaning of the words, "the heaven will be rent asunder."

\textsuperscript{4429} Commentary:
The verse contains an invincible argument in support of the Divine origin of the Quranic revelation. The \textit{Sura} was one of the
21. Surely, thy Lord, knows that thou standest up praying for nearly two-thirds of the night, and sometimes half or a third thereof, and also a party of those who are with thee. And Allah determines the measure of the night and the day. He knows that you cannot keep its measure, so He has turned to you in mercy. Recite, then, as much of the Qur'an as is easy for you. He knows that there will be some among you who may be sick and others who may travel in the land seeking Allah's bounty, and others who may fight in the cause of Allah. So recite of it that which is easy for you, and observe Prayer, and pay the Zakat, and lend to Allah a goodly loan. And whatever good you send on before you for your souls, you will find it with Allah. It will be better and greater in reward. And seek forgiveness of Allah. Surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful.
directed to the followers of the Holy Prophet, but being always desirous of following in his footsteps, they copied his example in this respect also.

The sentence “Allah determines the measure of the night and the day,” signifies that sometimes the nights are long and sometimes they are short and sometimes the day and the night are equal.

The words ان لن تحصوه may apply to Muslims in general. In this sense they are told that all of them would not be able to say night-prayer regularly and punctually. Or the words may signify that as Muslims are longing to win God's pleasure and attain nearness to Him, so they should read the Qur'an thoughtfully. In this way they would acquire knowledge of, and insight into, Divine attributes.

Besides the meaning given in the text, the expression ناوراً ما تيسر منه may mean: (1) recite of the Qur'an as much as you possibly can.
CHAPTER 74
SŪRA AL-MUDDATHTHIR
(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

By common consent this Sūra was one of the first two or three revealed at Mecca. This and the preceding Sūra (Al-Muzzammil) seem to be “twins” as they are closely linked as regards time of revelation and their tone and tenor. The present Sūra, in fact, complements the subject matter of its predecessor. The مزاممل (Muzzammil) of the previous Sūra, immersed in devotional prayers and contemplation, and passing through a period of intense preparation for the attainment of spiritual perfection, had developed from that into مدثث (Muddaththir) i.e., the Destroyer of sin and Vanquisher of the forces of evil, the Deliverer of mankind, their Leader, Guide and Warner. From that time onward, the Prophet’s life was no more his own. It was given to God, and to man. He preached the Divine Message with unswerving purpose, in the face of insult, opposition and persecution.

The Sūra opens with a firm command to the Holy Prophet to stand upright, proclaim the Truth he has and warn those who would not accept it—those whom wealth, power and position had rendered spiritually blind and deaf that the day of Divine punishment would be a day of extreme distress for them; they would burn in the fire of Hell. They are further told that they would suffer punishment because they did not offer Prayers or fed the poor—duties which they owed to God, and man—and because also they ignored the Divine Message and indulged in vain pursuits, persisting in the denial of the Day of Judgment till death overtook them. The Sūra ends on the note that the Qur’ān is but a Reminder and an Exhortation. He who will accept its Message will accept it for the betterment of his own soul and he who will reject it, would do so to his own detriment.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
2. O thou who hast covered thyself with a cloak,\(^{4431}\)
3. Arise and warn.\(^{4432}\)
4. And thy Lord do thou magnify.
5. And thyself do thou purify.\(^{4433}\)

\(^{4431}\) Important Words:

- الدادر (one who has covered himself with a cloak) is derived from دادر which means, it (a trace or mark) became effaced or obliterated.
- تدادر أو اددادر (tadaththara or iddaththara) means, he wrapped himself with a garment.
- دادر (daththara) means, he destroyed or obliterated him or it; he covered him with a warm garment.
- دادر الطائر (daththara) means, the bird adjusted, or put in order, its nest.
- دادر الفرس means, he leaped upon and rode the horse.
- دادر العدو means, he vanquished the enemy (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

According to the different meanings of the root-word, الدادر would mean: the effacer or obliterator; the reformer or the one who adjusts or puts things in order; the vanquisher; the one who is ready to leap up and ride the horse. The word has also been interpreted as one entrusted with bearing the heavy load of the responsibilities of a Prophet (Qadir). The word also means, one adorned with the best human natural powers and qualities and prophetical dignity (Rūḥ al-Ma‘āni). All these epithets fully apply to the Holy Prophet. Traditions show that after a few verses of the Sūra had been revealed, further revelation ceased for several months (Bukhāri). As revelation was a novel spiritual experience for the Holy Prophet, its cessation was intended to make the fright that had affected his mind wear away, and to attune him with the majesty and dignity of the Divine Word.

\(^{4432}\) Commentary:

Being fully prepared by devotional Prayers, deep contemplation, and long night vigils for the onerous task of reforming the world, the Muzzammil becomes the Muddaththir i.e., the leader and guide of mankind; and is commanded to rise up and proclaim the Divine Message and warn its rejectors of the evil consequences of rejection.

\(^{4433}\) Important Words:

- ثياب (garments) is plural of ثوب which means, a garment. The Arabs say, فلان نفى الثوب i.e., such a one is pure in heart, conduct or reputation. دنس الثوب means, vicious or perfidious; طاهر الثياب means, a righteous man who does good works. ثياب means, clothes; dependants or followers of a person;
6. And uncleanliness do thou shun.\textsuperscript{4434}

7. And bestow not favours seeking to get more in return,\textsuperscript{4435}

8. And for the sake of thy Lord do thou endure trials patiently.\textsuperscript{4436}

9. "And when the trumpet is sounded,\textsuperscript{4437}

Weapons. It also means, the wearer's body or self. They say خَلَقَكَ عَنْ يُبَيْيِكُ i.e., separate thyself from me. It also signifies, a person's works. إن الْمَيْتِ لَيَعْبُثُ فِي نَيَابِهِ الَّتِي يَمُوتُ فِيهَا means, the dead man will be raised according to the works with which his life ended (Lane, Aqrab & Steingass).

Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is enjoined that before entering upon his great mission he should prepare a body of followers, pure of heart, conduct and reputation. Or the verse may mean that he should himself be a paragon of piety, righteousness and pure conduct.

4434. Commentary:

الرجز meaning idol-worship (Lane) the verse may be taken as enjoining the Holy Prophet to spare no pains to exterminate idolatry. Idol-worship is the basic sin, but it takes different forms with different people, for instance, worship of idols made of wood or stone; worship of human beings; worship of one's desires, of old customs, usages, etc.

4435. Commentary:

God's Prophets serve, and suffer for, their peoples from no motive other than sincere concern and solicitude for their moral and spiritual well-being. "I ask of you no reward for it. My reward is only with the Lord of the worlds." (26:110), has always been the motto which has prompted and guided their noble efforts to redeem their peoples from the bondage of sin.

4436. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet is told in this verse that he will be opposed and persecuted by the forces of evil as the result of his missionary efforts. He should, therefore, be ready to bear all opposition and persecution with patience and fortitude, and with a loving and sympathetic heart.

4437. Commentary:

The words "When the trumpet is sounded" may mean; "When the hour of punishment of disbelievers arrives." The reference may be to the Fall of Mecca, when the Meccans, as if summoned by a bugle, stood as criminals before the Holy Prophet. Or, the verse may mean; when a Divine Reformer who is a Bugle by which God summons men to Himself makes his appearance and calls men to God. Or the verse may refer to the Holy Prophet's own call to his people.
10. *That day will be a distressful day.*

11. For the disbelievers it will not be easy.

12. Leave Me to deal with him whom I created alone.

13. And then I gave him abundant wealth.

14. And sons, abiding in his presence.

15. And I prepared for him all necessary things.

16. Yet he desires that I should give him more.

4438. Commentary:

“A distressful day” signifies the Day of Resurrection or the day of the final defeat of disbelief and the complete triumph of Truth. This and the following several verses (vv. 10-30) give a graphic description of the great material benefits which the enemies of Truth enjoy and as a consequence of which they reject the Divine Message, incurring punishment in this world and in the Hereafter.

4439. Commentary:

The verse, besides the translation given in the text, may mean: “Leave Me alone to deal with him whom I created,” or “leave Me to deal with him who, on account of the great wealth, power and position God has bestowed upon him thinks himself to be peerless among his compatriots, وحید meaning unique, incomparable.”

4440. Commentary:

Though the verse applies to every arrogant and conceited disbeliever, it may particularly apply to Walîd bin Mughîrah. He was an outstanding personality among the Quraysh, and was known among his fellow citizens by such high sounding titles as ريحان قريش (fragrance of the Quraysh). He was extremely handsome and was well known for his elegant poems and other accomplishments. He had 10 to 13 sons and was a very rich man.

The verse means that Mughîrah’s sons also commanded respect like him. They, too, were offered a distinguished place in the assemblies which he attended. Or, Mughîrah was so rich that his sons always kept company with him; not wanting to go anywhere to earn their living.
17. Certainly not! for he was opposed to Our Signs.4441
18. I shall soon impose on him an overwhelming hardship.
19. Lo! he reflected and calculated!
20. Ruin seize him! how he calculated!4442
21. Ruin seize him again! how he calculated!
22. Then he looked,
23. "Then he frowned and scowled,4443
24. Then he turned away and was disdainful,
25. And said, 'This is nothing but magic handed down:
26. 'This is nothing but the word of man'.
27. Soon shall I cast him into the fire of Hell.
28. And what will make thee know what Hell-fire is?
29. It spares not and it leaves naught.

4441. Commentary:
The verse purports to say that disbelievers entertain very high ambitions but those ambitions shall not materialize. On the contrary, they shall be punished; the particle ـلـ being used to reject the request of a person and to reprimand him for making it (Lane).

4442. Commentary:
Ruin seized Walid bin Mughira. Three of his sons, viz., Walid, Khalid and Hishām accepted Islam, others perished before his eyes. He suffered heavy financial losses and ultimately died in poverty and disgrace.

4443. Commentary:
When the Qurʾān was read to him, Mughīra—being himself a poet of distinction, said that it was not poetry, nor was the Prophet a liar, but only a magician. He frowned and scowled in disdain and went away in high huff.
30. "It scorches the face.

31. Over it are nineteen angels.\(^{4444}\)

32. And none but angels have We made wardens of the Fire. And We have not fixed their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve, so that those who have been given the Book may attain certainty and those who believe may increase in faith, and those who have been given the Book as well as the believers may not doubt, and that those in whose hearts is disease and the disbelievers may say, 'What does Allah mean by such an illustration?' Thus does Allah adjudge astray whom He pleases and guide whom He pleases. And none knows the hosts of thy Lord but He. And this is nothing but a Reminder for man.\(^{4445}\)

\(^{a70} : 17. \ ^{b13} : 28 ; 14 : 5. \ ^{c33} : 10 ; 48 : 5.\)

4444. Commentary:

"Nineteen", may refer here to man's natural powers and faculties which, according to some Sufis or mystics are nineteen in number. Proper use of these faculties or powers helps a person's spiritual development while their misuse causes his moral death. In consonance with these nineteen faculties, which constitute the real source or instrument of a man's good or bad actions, nineteen angels will be appointed to cleanse the guilty of their sins; each angel being entrusted with the duty of cleansing sins committed through one particular faculty. In fact, Hell as conceived by the Qur'an is a purgatory where the human soul, after being cured of its spiritual maladies, will resume uniform spiritual development.

4445. Commentary:

The apparently enigmatic "nineteen" may concern some great Divine design or purpose which, when unfolded, will, on the one hand, greatly add to the faith of believers and, on the other, to the embarrassment and mental confusion of disbelievers and of "those in whose heart is disease." Otherwise the number of God's angels is legion, beyond human count or computation, just as the stages of man's spiritual progress in the Hereafter are numberless.
33. Nay, by the moon.
34. And by the night when it retreats
35. And by the dawn when it shines forth. 4446
36. Verily, it is one of the greatest calamities. 4447
37. A warning to man,
38. To him among you who wishes to advance in virtue or hang back. 4448
39. Every soul is pledged for what it has earned; 4449

4446. Commentary:
This and the preceding two verses name the things mentioned therein as evidence to prove the Divine origin of the Quranic revelation and of the Holy Prophet’s claim as God’s Messenger—the two principal themes dealt with in this as in all other Meccan Sūras revealed in the early years of the Call. These things are the “moon,” the “retreating night” and the “bright dawn.” The “moon” may signify the Promised Messiah who, after borrowing heavenly light from the Holy Prophet had to spread it in the world; the “retreating night” may mean the night of spiritual darkness that would begin to retreat after the appearance of the Promised Messiah, and the “bright dawn” may signify his advent.

4447. Commentary:
The verse means that the rejection of the Holy Prophet is one of the greatest calamities that can befall man.

4448. Commentary:
The Message of Islam is intended equally for all men—for those who seek to develop their spiritual self and win God’s pleasure as well as for those who would wish to cling to the world.

4449. Important Words:
( is pledged) is derived from . They say i.e., he deposited the thing with him to be in lieu of that which he had taken or received from him; he deposited the thing with him as a security for a debt (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
The verse purports to say that every soul shall remain in pledge unless it will have paid for the sins it had committed i.e., unless it will have been cleansed of sins after suffering punishment for them.
40. Except those on the right hand.\(^a\)

41. They will be in Gardens enquiring.

42. From the guilty ones,\(^a\)

43. 'What has brought you into the Fire of Hell?'

44. They will say, 'We were not of those who offered Prayers,\(^b\)

45. 'Nor did we feed the poor\(^e\).\(^a\)

46. 'And we indulged in idle talk with those who indulge therein.

47. 'And we used to deny the Day of Judgment,\(^d\)

48. 'Until death overtook us'\(^e\).\(^a\)

49. So the intercession of intercessors will not avail them.\(^f\)

\(^a\)56: 28; 69: 20; 90: 19. \(^b\)75: 32. \(^c\)69: 35; 89: 19; 107: 4. \(^d\)75: 33.
\(^e\)15: 100. \(^f\)20: 110; 34: 24.

4450. Commentary:
The particle \(عَن\) also means, 'from' (Lane).

4451. Commentary:
Offering of Prayers and feeding the poor constitute the two pillars on which the whole edifice of Islam stands. They represent man's duties to God and to his fellow beings.

4452. Important Words:
\(تَحْقَّقَتْ\) (death) is derived from \(يَقِينُ\). They say \(يَقِينَ\) \(الْأَمَرٍ\), \(يَقِينَ بِهِ\) or \(يَقِينَتْ\) means, he knew it; he was or became certain or sure or he made sure of it, intuitively and inferentially. \(يَقِينُ\) means, certainty; security (Lane & Aqrab). It also means, death, because death is as certain as anything.

4452-A. Commentary:
The verse means that nobody will dare intercede for disbelievers, their sins of omission and commission being many and of a heinous character. Elsewhere the Qur'an says that sinners will not be allowed to approach near the threshold of God \(يَقِينُ\) \(الْأَمَرٍ\), \(يَقِينَ بِهِ\) or \(يَقِينَتْ\) means, he knew it; he was or became certain or sure or
50. Now what is the matter with them that they are turning away from the Exhortation,
51. As if they were frightened asses
52. Fleeing from a lion?
53. Nay, every man among them desires to have open sheets of revelation given to him.\textsuperscript{4453}
54. Never! verily, they fear not the Hereafter.\textsuperscript{4454}
55. Never! verily this is an exhortation.\textsuperscript{4455}
56. Let him, then, who will, remember it.
57. And they will not remember unless Allah so please\textsuperscript{a}. He alone is worthy to be feared and He alone is worthy to forgive.\textsuperscript{4456}

\textsuperscript{a}18: 25; 76: 31; 81: 30.

\textsuperscript{4453} Commentary:
The reference here may be to the impudent demand of disbelievers mentioned elsewhere in the Qur'an, viz., that they would not believe unless God spoke to them direct (2: 119), or unless the Prophet should bring down a Book for them from Heaven which they could read (17: 94).

\textsuperscript{4454} Commentary:
The disbelievers reject the Divine Message because they have no faith in the Hereafter where they shall have to render an account of their actions.

\textsuperscript{4455} Commentary:
The demand of disbelievers can never be accepted as the Qur'an has fully satisfied all needs and requirements of man. It is a Reminder and an Exhortation \textit{par excellence}, and through it the nations that will accept its Message and act upon its teaching will rise to great eminence.

\textsuperscript{4456} Commentary:
The verse may mean, as elsewhere stated, that disbelievers will not benefit by the Qur'an unless they make their will conform to the will of God, \textit{i.e.}, they subordinate all their desires to the Divine will (76: 31). Or it may signify that it is not possible for man to find the right way unless God sends down His Word for his guidance. The words "He alone is worthy to be feared," mean that we should take God alone as a shield for protection against sins (the root-word \textit{waq} meaning, to guard or shield oneself). Or it may mean, that God alone can grant forgiveness when a man falters or falls.
CHAPTER 75

SŪRA AL-QIĀMAT

(Revealed before Hijra)

General Remarks

This Sūra takes its title, القيامة (the Resurrection), from the opening verse. It wholly deals with the Resurrection. The Sūra is decidedly one of the earliest Chapters which were revealed at Mecca, because the Meccan Sūras specifically deal with God's Unity, Resurrection and Revelation.

Towards the end of the preceding Sūra it was emphatically stated that those people who will accept the Quranic Message will rise to eminence and will find an honoured place among the comity of great and powerful nations. The present Sūra opening with a discussion of the subject of Resurrection throws a broad hint that a great moral resurrection is going to be brought about among a morally degraded and degenerate people—the Arabs—through the ennobling teachings of the Qur'ān and the purifying example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

Subject-Matter

The Sūra opens with a solemn affirmation that the Resurrection undoubtedly will take place, and significantly enough adduces man's spiritual resurrection, as evidence in support of this affirmation. As a further proof, it swears by نفس لواءة i.e. the self-accusing spirit, which in action is the first stage of the process of spiritual regeneration. Then an oft-repeated objection of disbelievers is mentioned, viz., when they are dead and reduced to dust, how will they be raised again to life. The Sūra effectively rebuts this objection by saying that in their heart of hearts they know that man's sins never go unpunished and, therefore, there must be a day when they will be called to account for what they had done in this life. Then the collection of the Qur'ān and the Divine protection of its text are offered as further arguments in the same connection, since of all revealed Scriptures the Qur'ān has laid the greatest emphasis on the inevitability of the Resurrection. Next, a brief but graphic description is given of the agony of death and man's intense desire to be spared of it. This shows that at the moment of death the fear that one will have to render an account of one's actions gnaws at one's heart. Towards the close of the Sūra disbelievers are admonished that man has not been created without a purpose or without responsibility, and that he will have to account for his failure to discharge his duties to God and to his fellow-beings. Disbelievers are further reminded that man's physical development from a sperm-drop into a full-fledged human being, endowed with unique powers and faculties, constitutes an irrebuttable argument that his creation is intended to serve a sublime purpose and that his life will not end with the departure of the soul from its physical tabernacle.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. Nay! I call to witness the Day of Resurrection.\textsuperscript{4457}

3. And I do call to witness the self-accusing soul, \textit{that the Day of Judgment is a certainty}.\textsuperscript{4458}

\textit{a} See 1 : 1.

\textsuperscript{4457} \textbf{Commentary :}

For the nature, significance and philosophy of the Quranic oaths see detailed notes on 91 : 2 and 37 : 2. One object of oaths, however, is to lay emphasis on the importance of the subject about which an oath is taken.

\textit{لَا} (nay) is used in different senses. Here it may signify, "it is not like what they think." Sometimes, it is used as an answer to some objection or in repudiation of what is said before. In this and the next verse it is used to refute the disbelievers' assertion made in v. 4, about the impossibility of the Resurrection and also to emphasize the importance of the oath.

\textit{القيامة} (the Resurrection) signifying a great and calamitous occurrence, may refer to three events: (a) The death of a person is called \textit{القيامة الصغرى} \textit{i.e.,} the small resurrection. It is to this resurrection that reference is made in the famous \textit{hadith}, \textit{viz.,} من بات فقد قام عليه \textit{i.e.,} he who dies, his resurrection has indeed taken place. (b) The moral death of a whole people or nation. This is called \textit{القيامة الوسطى} \textit{i.e.,} the middle resurrection. (c) The Final Resurrection. The word \textit{قيامة} (resurrection) has been used in the Qur'an in all these three senses.

\textsuperscript{4458} \textbf{Commentary :}

The Qur'an has mentioned three stages of development of the human soul. The first stage is called \textit{الفساة الأمارة} \textit{i.e.,} the uncontrollable spirit or the spirit prone to evil, when the animal in man is predominant.

The second stage is that of \textit{النفس اللمامة} \textit{i.e.,} the self-accusing spirit, when man begins to be conscious of evil that is, when his awakened conscience upbraids him for doing bad deeds and restrains his passions and appetites. In moments of weakness of the flesh, in this stage, he may falter or fall, but will not perish, every failure bringing with it a fresh reproach and repentance. The human in man gets the upper hand in him. It is the beginning of his spiritual resurrection. \textit{ال نفس اللمامة} has been cited here in evidence of the Final Resurrection. If man has no responsibility, if he has not to account for his deeds in an after-life, why this pricking of conscience at the doing of an evil deed?

The highest stage of development of the human soul, however, is that of \textit{النفس المطمئنة} \textit{i.e.,} the spirit at rest. At this stage the human soul becomes practically immune to failure or faltering and is at peace with its Creator.
4. Does man think that We shall not assemble his bones? 4459

5. Yea, We have the power to restore his very finger-tips. 4460

6. But man desires to continue to send forth evil deeds in front of him.

7. He asks, "When will be the Day of Resurrection?" 4461

8. When the eye is dazzled, 4462

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4459. Commentary:

The objection of disbelievers viz., when they are dead and reduced to bones and dust how would they be given a new life, is repeatedly mentioned and effectively answered in the Qur'an. See 17:50-52 and 36:78-80.

4460. Important Words:

بيبان (finger-tips) is the plural of بيبان which is derived from بن which means, he remained or stayed in a place. بيبان means, fingers; ends or extremities thereof; finger-tips; toes; all the limbs or members of the body; any part or all the limbs; arms or hands or legs or feet (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

At another place in the Qur'an (36:78-80), the objection of disbelievers about life after death has been answered by stating that Almighty Creator Who has created man from a mere sperm drop has the power to restore him to life after he is dead, but in the present verse the restoration of his finger-tips has been adduced as an argument to refute the same objection. In fact, the word بيبان represents man's power and strength, as by means of his hand he grasps an object and defends himself. In fact man's hands i.e., his fingers, are the most important members of his body. The word بيبان as given under Important Words may stand for the whole human body. Thus the verse signifies that God has the power to restore all the powers of man, or even of a whole people when, to all intents and purposes, they are dead and defunct.

4461. Commentary:

The question seems to have been asked in derision or doubt. In fact, doubt about the Hereafter gives rise to a mocking attitude on the disbelievers' part.

4462. Important Words:

برق (is dazzled) means, he feared so that he was astonished or amazed or stupefied at seeing the gleam of lightning; he was frightened, or he became perplexed or unable to see his right course. برق بصره means, his eye became dazzled or it became weak. برق قدماه means, his feet became weak (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:

The metaphor "when the eye is dazzled," signifies, "when the opponents of Truth are completely confused and baffled."
9. And the moon is eclipsed,\textsuperscript{4463}

10. And the sun and the moon are brought together,\textsuperscript{4464}

11. On that day man will say, 'Whither to flee?'

12. Nay! There is no refuge!\textsuperscript{4465}

13. With thy Lord alone will be the place of rest that day.

\textsuperscript{a}80 : 35.

\textbf{4463. Commentary:}

"Moon" being a symbol of the political power of the Arabs, the verse may mean: When the power of the Arabs will break and their glory depart. Or the darkening of the moon may mean the darkening of both the sun and the moon, as the moon borrows its light from the sun, so that when the moon is darkened it means that the sun also has become dark.

\textbf{4464. Commentary:}

The expression, "the sun and the moon are brought together" may signify that the whole solar system will be completely disrupted. Or the words may signify the destruction of the political power of the Arabs and of the Iranian dynasty, the moon being the symbol of the political power of the former and the sun that of the latter. Or the reference may be to the lunar and solar eclipses—a highly unusual phenomenon, which, according to a hadith was to occur in the time of the Promised Mahdi. The hadith is to the following effect:

\begin{quote}
 ان لمهمدينا آيتان لم تكونا منذ خلق السماوات والأرض الخ
\end{quote}

\textit{i.e., For our Mahdi there are two signs which have never been witnessed since the time when the heavens and the earth were created, viz., that the moon will be eclipsed on the first night and the sun on the second day in the month of Ramaḍān (Baihaqi). This meant that the day of the final triumph of Islam and that of the defeat and destruction of the forces of evil will dawn with the Mahdi's appearance in the world. Strangely enough, both the sun and the moon were eclipsed in the month of Ramaḍān in 1894 after Ahmad, the Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Movement had made the claim that he was the Promised Messiah and Mahdi.

\textbf{4465. Important Words:}

وزر (refuge) is derived from أوزر الشريف. They say أوزر الشريف \textit{i.e., he protected, guarded the thing; concealed it or took it away.} وزر الرجل means, he gave asylum to the man. وزر (wazarun) means, place of refuge; a high mountain; a mountain where one takes refuge (Lane & Aqrab).
14. That day will man be informed of that which he has sent forward and has left behind.\\(^{4466}\)

15. Nay, man is a witness against himself;

16. Even though he puts forward his excuses.

17. Move not thy tongue with this *revelation* that thou mayest hasten to preserve it.\\(^{4467}\)

18. “Surely, upon Us *rests* its collection and its recital.\\(^{4468}\)

\(^{a15:10.}\)

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4466. **Commentary:**

The words “that which he has sent forward and has left behind,” may mean, the evil deeds which man did but which he should not have done and the good deeds which he should have done but he failed to do, *i.e.*, his sins of omission and commission.

4467—4468. **Commentary:**

Bukhārī reports that in the beginning when a certain portion of the Qurʾān was revealed to the Holy Prophet, in his anxiety lest he should forget it, he would start hurriedly repeating it. It is this practice that the Prophet was enjoined in this verse to give up, because, as stated in the following three verses, God had taken upon Himself not only to safeguard the text of the Qurʾān from being tampered with but also to see that it was collected in the form of an immaculately arranged Book (see General Introduction) and that its Message was conveyed and explained to the whole world (15:10). Or the meaning may be that, because the preceding verses referred to a day of reckoning for disbelievers, the Holy Prophet was naturally anxious that the revelation bearing upon the promised punishment should come soon. He is here told that he need have no anxiety on that score, as it was God’s own responsibility, when a revelation should descend and what form the punishment should take, and that the Qurʾān should be collected, read and explained to the world. It may be convenient to set out here three quotations: “There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text (of the Qurʾān) which Muhammad himself gave forth and used” (Muir). “Efforts of European scholars to prove the existence of later interpolations in the Qurʾān have failed (Enc. Brit.). “The Qurʾān is perhaps the most-read book in the world. Certainly it is the most often memorized, and possibly it exerts the greatest influence on those who read it” (The Religions of Man).

Besides the meaning given in the text, the verse has also been interpreted as follows: “It is Our responsibility that We should explain the Quranic revelation through your tongue” (Rūḥ al-Maʿāni). This speaks volumes for the inviolability of the Holy Prophet’s *Sunnah* and its indispensability as a safe and sure guide, next only to the Qurʾān itself. For a detailed exposition, however, of this and the preceding verse see General Introduction and 15:10.
19. So when We recite it, then follow thou its recital.
20. Then upon Us rests the expounding thereof.
21. Nay, but you love the present life; 4469
22. And you neglect the Hereafter.
23. Some faces on that day will be bright,
24. Looking eagerly towards their Lord; 4470
25. And some faces on that day will be dismal. 4470-A
26. Thinking that a back-breaking calamity is about to befall them. 4471

4469. Commentary:
The particle كـ besides meaning, "your assertion that Resurrection will not take place is false," has been taken to mean, "it is as certain as anything that the Resurrection shall take place (Kabir).

4470. Commentary:
The verse means that the righteous believers will look to their Lord, expecting to be rewarded for the good deeds they had done in this world. Or the meaning may be that they will be endowed with special spiritual eyes to see God; but it does not mean that God has a body and that He can be seen with our physical eyes. "Eyes cannot reach Him and He reaches the eyes and He is Incomprehensible" (6:104). The sight of God will be a special Divine manifestation, which will be unfolded to the human soul untrammelled by its earthly raiment.

4470-A. Important Words:
بـ (dismal) is derived from صـ which means, he frowned; contracted his face; he grinned; he was gloomy or dismal. صـ means, he frowned or he contracted his face excessively or he looked with intense dislike or hatred (Lane & Aqrab).

4471. Important Words:
قـ (back-breaking) is derived from صـ which means, he stigmatized a man. صـ means, he made an incision in the nose of the camel. صـ means, the calamity broke the vertebrae of his back. صـ means, an act that breaks the vertebrae of the back; a back-breaking calamity. They say عمل به الـ i.e., he did to him that which broke his back (Lane & Aqrab).

Commentary:
The Fall of Mecca broke the back of the Quraishite power.
27. Hearken! when the soul of the dying man comes up to the throat.  
28. And it is said, 'Who is the wizard to save him?'  
29. And he is sure that it is the hour of parting;  
30. And one shank rubs against another shank in death agony;  
31. Unto thy Lord that day will be the driving.  
32. For he neither accepted the truth, nor offered Prayers;  
33. But he rejected the truth and turned his back;  

Commentary:

The verse may mean: (a) Who will ascend with the soul of the dying man, the angel of mercy who will take him to Paradise or the angel of punishment who will drag him to Hell? (b) Where is the wizard or charmer who will avert the approaching death or relieve the dying man of his agony?

Commentary:

The word sagh literally meaning shank, metaphorically signifies a calamity or affliction (27: 45 & 68: 43). The verse signifies that one affliction will be joined to another for the departed soul; the agony of leaving his near and dear ones behind will be joined to the agony of death and the punishment awaiting the disbeliever in the next world.

Commentary:

صدق (accepted the truth) stands for right belief and صل (offered Prayers) for good conduct, the two basic principles of the Islamic teaching. Prayer is the essence of عبادة which is total submission and conforming one's conduct to Divine laws. Thus the verse purports to say that both the mind and body of disbelievers rebelled against God.
34. Then he went to his kinsfolk, strutting along in pride.\(^{4476}\)

35. 'Woe unto thee! and woe again!'\(^{4477}\)

36. 'Then woe unto thee! and woe again!'\(^{4477}\)

37. Does man think that he is to be left to himself uncontrolled?\(^{4478}\)

38. 'Was he not a drop of fluid, emitted forth?'\(^{3}\)

39. Then he became a clot, then He shaped and perfected him.

\(^{a}18:38;36:78;80:20.\)

\(^{b}23:15;40:68;96:3.\)

4476. **Important Words:**

*صَفْطَانَ (strutting)* is from صاطئ. They say صاطئ الشناء, i.e., he stretched or lengthened the thing. صاطئ خذاء means, he behaved proudly. صاطئ خذاء means, he strutting along (Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

False pride, arrogance and conceit are, as repeatedly stated in the Qur’an, at the root of all disbelief and rejection of the Divine Message and of opposition to God’s Prophets and Messengers.

4477. **Commentary:**

These two verses speak of a double punishment—mental agony and physical punishment, or punishment in this world and in the next.

4478. **Important Words:**

*سُدَوِي (uncontrolled)* is derived from سد. سد (sadwun) which is inf. noun signifies going at random, heedlessly or in a headlong manner, without aim or object, not following a guide to the right course.

ذَهِبَ كَلَامَةَ سَدَوِي means, his discourse proved useless (Lane & Aqrab).

**Commentary:**

The verse reproachfully reminds the conceited and disdainful disbeliever of the grand object of his life and of his accountability before his Lord and Master in the Hereafter. Does man think that he has been created without an aim or object and that death is the end of all things, and that he will not be called upon to explain his conduct before his Lord in the next life? The whole idea is inconsistent with God’s Wisdom. It is inconceivable that God should have created man from an insignificant thing—from a sperm drop—and should have
40. Then He made of him a pair, the male and female.

41. Has not such a One the power to raise the dead to life?

Lord Who created him from such an insignificant beginning will give him a new life when he is dead and is reduced to crumbled bones and dust, to make spiritual progress which knows no end. This is the substance of the next four verses.

endowed him with such great natural powers and faculties as to make him the centre and pivot of all creation and then should have left him without control, to eat, drink and be merry. It is further clear from this verse that the
CHAPTER 76

SŪRA AL-DAHR

(Revealed before Hijra)

Introductory Remarks

This Sūra like its predecessor belongs to the early Meccan period and takes its title from the word Al-Dahr, occurring in its opening verse. It has also appropriately been called Al-Insān.

Towards the end of the previous Sūra it was stated that man's creation from an insignificant fluid and his development into a full-fledged human being, endowed with great natural powers, leads to the inescapable inference that his life has a Divine purpose to serve and that the Great God Who created him from a sperm-drop possesses the power to give him a new life after he is dead. The present Sūra is an extension of the same theme, viz., that man has been gifted with wonderful natural capabilities to rise to great spiritual heights.

Subject-Matter

The Sūra in its opening verses reminds man of his insignificant beginning by the words, “Has there not come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing spoken of?,” and proceeds to say that he has been endowed with reason and understanding, in order that, following the path shown to him by God's Prophets, he may make interminable spiritual progress and thus achieve the object for which he has been created. But when Divine Teachers appear to guide men to God, some of them reject God's Message and incur His displeasure, while others, more fortunate, respond to the Divine Call, follow the Teacher of the Age and earn great heavenly blessings. Then, the Sūra gives a beautiful description of the Divine favours which are bestowed upon the righteous believers, in this world and in the Hereafter, referring briefly also to the kind of punishment which the disbelievers receive for their wilful rejection of God's Message. The Sūra fittingly closes with the observation that God has revealed the Qur'ān, the most perfect Teaching to guide man to the path which leads to the Lord and Creator of all creation, but he can derive no benefit from the Divine Teaching unless he conforms his will to the will of God.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.

2. Has there not come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing spoken of.\textsuperscript{4479}

3. "We have created man from a mingled sperm-drop that We might try him; so We made him hearing, seeing.\textsuperscript{4480}

\textsuperscript{4479} Important Words:
- خِیَام (period) is derived from خِیَام. They say خِیَام i.e., the time of the thing came near, it happened. خِیَام means, time or a space or period of time, any time; a continuous time; an appointed time; time absolutely; the time when an event takes place; time without end (Lane & Aqrab).

- الْعَدْر (time) is infinitive noun from الْعَدْر. They say الْعَدْر i.e., an evil event befell the people. الْعَدْر means, time from the beginning of the world to the end; any long or unlimited period of time; a period of time whether long or short; time without end, differing from زِمان which means, time having end. الْعَدْر also means, an age; fate or fortune; an evil event or accident; a misfortune; a calamity; a desire; the end that one has in view; a custom or habit (Lane & Aqrab).

\textsuperscript{4480} Commentary:

- الإنسان (man) in this and the next verse does not mean human species as such, but every man. The verse means that before man is born, he is not mentioned, spoken of, or referred to; the reference being to his insignificant and unmentionable beginning.

- أمْشَاج is the plural of مَشْج which means, a mixture. Man is created from a sperm-drop which itself is a mixture of several things, the implication being that he has been endowed with various natural powers, faculties and attributes meant for his moral and spiritual advance. This process of the creation of man points only to a general rule of creation; not that in no case could it be otherwise. That man is gifted with insight and understanding signifies that he is a free agent, enjoying discretion and volition; therefore he is responsible for his actions. The belief in man's freedom of action and responsibility leads inevitably to the belief in the Hereafter.
4. We have shown him the Way, 
whether he be grateful or ungrateful.\textsuperscript{4481}

5. Verily, We have prepared for 
the disbelievers chains and iron-collars 
and a blazing Fire.\textsuperscript{4482}

6. But the virtuous drink of a cup, 
tempered with camphor—\textsuperscript{4483}

7. A spring wherefrom the servants 
of Allah drink, making it gush 
forth abundantly.\textsuperscript{4484}

8. They fulfil their vow, and fear a 
day the evil of which is widespread.\textsuperscript{4484-A}

\textsuperscript{4481}. Commentary
God has given man reason and understanding. 
He has made him responsible for his actions, 
and through His Messengers and Prophets has 
shown him the way that leads to God-realization. 
But it is for man to make right use of God- 
given faculties and opportunities (this being the 
meaning of شكر), and by submitting to Divine 
laws to achieve the object of his creation or by 
flouting them to bring about his spiritual death.

\textsuperscript{4482}. Commentary:
For a detailed explanation of the nature and 
significance of the punishments of Hell, see 
69:30-33. Briefly, the verse alludes to the 
fact that every deed which a man does is 
followed by a corresponding act of God. The 
etanglements of disbelievers in worldly affairs 
will take the form of chains in the next world, 
cares of the world will take the form of iron- 
collars, and greed and carnal desires that of 
Hell-fire.

\textsuperscript{4483}. Important Words:
\textsuperscript{4484-A}. Commentary:
Righteous believers will drink of cups which 
will be filled from springs which they have dug 
with great labour \textit{i.e.}, the deeds which they had 
done in the earthly life would appear in the 
next world in the form of springs. This is the 
first stage of spiritual evolution which requires 
hard and continuous striving on the part of 
believers, because unless man brings under 
control, and suppresses, his evil propensities, 
he cannot make any spiritual progress. The 
“spring” mentioned in the verse is the spring 
of God’s love and Divine realization.

Fulfilling “the vow” signifies discharging of 
man’s duties to God. Man’s obligations to his 
fellow-beings are mentioned in the next verse.
9. "And they feed, for love of Him, the poor, the orphan, and the prisoner, 4485

10. Saying, 'We feed you for Allah's pleasure only. We desire no reward nor thanks from you.' 4485-A

11. 'Verily, we fear from our Lord a frowning, distressful day.' 4486

12. So Allah will save them from the evil of that day, and will grant them cheerfulness and happiness.

13. And He will reward them, for their steadfastness, with a Garden and a raiment of silk,

4485. Important Words:

طعام (food) is inf. noun from طعام i.e., he tasted or ate. طعام means, food; wholesome and agreeable food which satisfies the eater. They say ما يطعم أكل هذا الطعام i.e., the eater of this food does not become satisfied (Lane).

Commentary:

The verse may mean: (1) Because they love God, so, in order to win His pleasure, they feed the poor and the captives. (2) They feed the poor for the sake of feeding them, i.e., they do the good act of feeding for the sake of doing good, seeking no reward, appreciation or approbation for what they do. (3) They feed the poor while they themselves need the money which they spend on others. The verse also signifies that the righteous believers give the poor wholesome and agreeable food, طعام meaning agreeable and wholesome food (Lane). This implies that the believers are expected to give in charity the things they love most. Elsewhere the Qur'an says: "You cannot attain to righteousness unless you spend in the way of Allah out of that which you love best (3:93).

4485-A. Commentary:

In everything that a believer does his whole attention is directed towards winning the pleasure of God—his highest ambition. He wants no return, reward or appreciation. His reward is with his Lord and Master.

4486. Important Words:

عبس (frowning) is derived from عبس وجه i.e., he frowned; he grinned, frowning or looking sternly or austerely. يوم عبس means, a distressful or calamitous day, or a day that makes one distressful (Lane).

قاطير (calamitous) is derived from قطر وقطر which means, it was or became distressful or calamitous. يوم قاطير means, a distressful or calamitous day, or a day that makes one knit the brow or contract the skin between the eyes. شر قاطير means, an intense evil (Lane).
14. Reclining therein upon couches, they will experience there neither excessive heat nor excessive cold.\footnote{4487}

15. And its shades will be close over them, and its clustered fruits will be brought within easy reach.

16. And vessels of silver will be passed round among them, and also goblets of glass,

17. Bright as glass but made of silver, which they will measure according to their own measure.\footnote{4488}

18. And therein will they be given to drink a cup tempered with ginger.\footnote{4489}

\footnote{4487}{Important Words:}

زمرد (excessive cold) is derived from زمرد (excessive heat). They say زمرد العين (excessive heat in the eye) i.e., the eye became red on account of anger. زمرد اليوم means, the day became intensely cold. زمرد وجه means, his face became contracted with a stern or morose look. زمرد means, cold or intense cold (Lane & Aqrab).

\footnote{4488}{Commentary:}

The vessel from which the righteous will drink will be as white as silver and as bright and crystal-clear as glass, and they will receive the paradisiacal drink in quantity according to the measure of the good deeds they had done in this life.

\footnote{4489}{Commentary:}

زنجبيل (ginger) is a compound of زن (meaning to ascend) and جبل (meaning mountain). The compound word زنجبيل therefore means, “he ascended the mountain.” زنجبيل or ginger is the root of a plant, very useful in promoting the natural heat of the body. The name given to it points to this property, for it gives strength to and generates heat in the weak body so as to enable a person to ascend precipitous heights. These two verses in which كافور (camphor) and زنجبيل (ginger) are respectively spoken of call attention to the two stages through which a believer has to pass in order to make advance, from the low position of slavery to passion, to the heights of virtue and righteousness. The first stage is that in which poisonous materials are suppressed and the flood of passions begins to subside. This we term the كافور (camphor) stage; for in this stage what is effected is only the suppression of poisonous matter, just as كافور has the property of nullifying the strong effect of passion. But the spiritual power which is required to overcome all difficulties is acquired in the second stage which is called the زنجبيل stage. The spiritual ginger (زنجبيل) which has the effect of a tonic on the spiritual system is the manifestation of Divine Beauty and Glory which affords nourishment to the soul. Braced with this manifestation, the spiritual wayfarer is able to traverse the dreary deserts and to climb the
19. There will be a spring herein named Salsabil.  

20. And there will wait upon them youths who will not age. When thou seest them thou thinkest them to be pearls scattered about. 

21. And when thou seest wilt see there a bliss and a great kingdom. 

22. On them will be garments of fine green silk and thick brocade. And they will be made to wear bracelets of silver. And their Lord will give them to drink a pure beverage.  

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steep heights to be met with on his spiritual journey. To make men understand these two spiritual stages two words have been employed by the Qur'an, viz., كافور or that which suppresses poisonous matters and زمبيل or that which gives strength to ascend spiritual heights and overcome all difficulties in the spiritual journey. Whereas at the كافور (camphor) stage the righteous will themselves drink the wine of God's love, at the much higher زمبيل (ginger) stage they will be served with this elixir.

4490. Commentary:  
The word سسلبيل literally meaning "enquire about the way," the verse purports to say that at the زمبيل (ginger) stage the spiritual wayfarer becomes so much intoxicated with Divine love that, in his overbearing anxiety to meet God, he enquires everywhere and of everyone about the nearest and speediest approach to the Divine threshold.

4491. Commentary:  
In addition to the spiritual kingdom that the righteous believers have been promised for the Hereafter, they were given mastery of the great empires of the time in this very life.

4492. Commentary:  
At the كافور stage of spiritual journey the God-intoxicated wayfarer is described as himself seeking to drink the wine of God's love (v. 6) and at the زمبيل stage, he is served by others with the lifegiving beverage (v. 18), but at the last or سسلبيل stage God Himself gives him to drink the elixir of everlasting life.
23. "This is your reward, and your labour is appreciated." 4493

24. Surely, We have revealed unto thee the Qur'an piecemeal. 4494

25. So wait patiently for the judgment of thy Lord, and yield not to any sinful or ungrateful one among them.

26. And remember the name of thy Lord morning and evening.

27. And during the night prostrate thyself before Him, and extol His glory for a long part of the night.

28. Verily, these people love the present life, and they neglect a heavy day before them. 4495

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2735

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**Commentary:**

For a full discussion of the nature, form and scope of the paradisiacal blessings, see Chapters 52, 55 & 56. This verse and those preceding it may also apply to the great Divine favours that were bestowed upon the followers of the Holy Prophet in this very life.

**Commentary:**

The Qur'an was revealed gradually and piecemeal. Its revelation spread over a period of 23 years. This gradual process served two great purposes. It helped believers to learn, remember and assimilate it and to mould their lives in accordance with its teaching. The gradual process was also intended to meet the increasing needs of changing circumstances and to strengthen the belief and conviction of Muslims, since, during the interval, they had opportunities to witness fulfilment of prophecies made earlier in the Qur'an. The piecemeal revelation of the Qur'an also fulfilled the following Biblical prophecy viz., "For it is precept upon precept; line upon line, here a little and there a little: for with strange lips and another tongue will he speak to this people" (Isaiah 28:11). The construction of the verse and the words used in the Biblical prophecy are expressive of Divine purpose in the gradual revelation of the Qur'an.

**Commentary:**

The verse purports to say that the hopes and fears of disbelievers are confined to this world. They have no thought for the Hereafter. They want to see promises of prosperity and progress made to Muslims and of those of punishment to themselves fulfilled here and now. But God is not in a hurry to punish. The Holy Prophet is enjoined to pay no heed to their demand for punishment but to prepare himself and his followers morally and spiritually by
29. We have created them and strengthened their make; and when We will, We can replace them by others like them.\footnote{4496}

30. Verily, this is a Reminder. So whoever wishes, may take a way unto his Lord.

31. But you will not unless Allah so wills. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, Wise.\footnote{4497}

32. He causes whom He pleases to enter His mercy, and for the wrong-doers He has prepared a painful punishment.\footnote{4498}

\text{a}56:62. \text{b}0:4; \text{73:20; 74:55; 80:12. c}18:25; \text{74:57; 81:30. d}48:26.

night-Prayer and glorification of God.

"Heavy day" may mean the Resurrection Day or the Day when disbelievers are punished in this life.

\textbf{4496. Commentary:}

This verse, in conjunction with the verses preceding it, means that Truth will spread gradually, either that there will come about a great moral revolution in the lives of the people or if they refused to benefit by the Quranic teaching they will be replaced by another people who will carry out Divine will and plan. God is not in a hurry to punish them because He "has created man in the best make" (95:5) that he may develop and manifest in himself Divine attributes and not that he may incur His displeasure and be punished.

\textbf{4497. Commentary:}

Besides the meaning given in the text, the verse may also mean: (1) It is God's will that you should exercise your will "to take a way unto your Lord," and so be admitted into His mercy. (2) You cannot "take the way unto your Lord" unless you subordinate and conform your will to the will of God. (3) You should have subordinated your will to the will of God, but you seem not to have done so.

\textbf{4498. Commentary:}

The verse may also mean that God admits into His mercy him who himself wishes to be admitted into God's mercy by obeying Divine commandments; ٱلسَّلِيْمَا ٱلْيَتَّبِعُونَ being the subject of the verb يشاء.
CHAPTER 77
AL-MURSALĀT
(Revealed before Hijra)

Noldeke and Muir assign the revelation of this Sūra, probably correctly, to the 4th year of the Call. Ibn Masʿūd, one of the earliest Companions of the Holy Prophet, however, is reported to have said that one day when they were sitting with the Holy Prophet in a cave near Minā, this Sūra was revealed. At that time a snake appeared but before they could kill it, the reptile disappeared. Upon this the Holy Prophet said that they had remained safe from the snake as the snake had been safe from them (Qadīr). The Sūra receives its title from the first word of the opening verse.

Subject-Matter

Like other early Meccan Chapters, this Sūra also deals with the subject of the Resurrection, and as an argument in support of it, adduces the great spiritual revolution that is brought about by Divine Messengers among their peoples, especially the marvellous moral change that the Holy Prophet wrought in the lives of the degenerate and decadent Arabs. The advent of Divine Prophets has been compared in the Sūra to the day of decision when bad men are separated from good men or, to use a beautiful metaphor, when grain becomes sifted from chaff. On that Day of Judgment the guilty are punished and the righteous receive the rewards of their good deeds. The Sūra gives very apt and adequate description of the punishment—fittingly corresponding to their evil deeds—that will be meted out in the Hereafter, to the defiers and violators of Divine laws and goes on to describe the blessings and boons of Paradise which will be bestowed upon those who regulate their lives and conduct in accordance with them. In support of the doctrine of the Resurrection, the Sūra also alludes, quite convincingly, to the development of the sperm-drop into a properly shaped human being, equipped with great natural powers—in itself a wonder of creation. Towards the end, the Sūra brings home to disbelievers the untenability of their rejection of the Quranic revelation which has so effectively proved, by drawing attention to man's own creation and to the forces that work in the physical and spiritual worlds, that there is and there must be a life after death in which man shall have to explain his conduct.
1. "In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
2. By those who are sent forth with goodness, \(^{4499}\)
3. Then they push on with a forceful pushing, \(^{4500}\)
4. And by those who spread the truth, a good spreading, \(^{4501}\)

\(^{4499}\) Important Words:

(by). For the philosophy and significance of Quranic oaths see 37:2 & 91:2.

‘arafa (goodness) is derived from عرف which means, he knew it or he knew it by means of any of the five senses, also by mental perception. urfun (acknowledgment or confession; goodness or a good action or quality; gentleness; beneficence, a benefit or bounty; common parlance or usage. They say جاء اليوم عرفنا i.e., the people came one after another (Lane).

Commentary:

The things, agencies or beings mentioned in this and the following four verses have been taken by various authorities to refer to winds; angels; God’s Messengers and their followers; and particularly and very appropriately, to the Companions of the Holy Prophet. As referring to the Companions of the Holy Prophet the verse would mean that in the beginning of Islam the Companions of the Prophet spread the Message of Truth slowly and gently; as referring to Divine Messengers it means that they appear one after the other with the Message of Truth which they spread with love.

\(^{4500}\) Important Words:

forceful pushing means, he was quick or swift. the wind blew violently or vehemently. means, he cut the corn from its stalks or before its maturity. means, straw or broken straw (Lane).

Commentary:

In view of the different meanings of the verse may be taken to mean that after the initial difficulties in the preaching had been overcome, the Companions of the Holy Prophet were able to proceed much faster and carry on the Quranic Message with great vigour; or that, with the help of the Quranic teaching, they scattered before them falsehood and the forces of evil as broken straw is carried before the wind.

\(^{4501}\) Commentary:

The verse means that they proclaimed and spread the Message of Truth far and wide, or scattered the seeds of goodness everywhere.
5. And then they distinguish fully between good and evil.\footnote{4502}

6. Then they carry the exhortation far and wide.\footnote{4503}

7. To excuse some and warn others.

8. "Verily, that which you are promised must come to pass.\footnote{4504}

9. So when the stars are made to lose their light,\footnote{4505}

10. And when the heaven is rent asunder,\footnote{4506}

11. And when the mountains are blown away,\footnote{4507}

12. And when the Messengers are made to appear at the appointed time—\footnote{4508}

\footnote{4502} Commentary: With the dissemination of the Quranic Message, Truth became distinct from falsehood and good men from bad men.

\footnote{4503} Commentary: Divine Messengers, or the Companions of the Holy Prophet, spread the Divine Message in order to warn people and also to establish the fact that they had conveyed the Message and thus had discharged the duty entrusted to them.

\footnote{4504} Commentary: The promised event is either the final triumph of Truth over falsehood, or the Resurrection.

\footnote{4505} Important Words:

- فَخَلَفَتْ (are made to lose their light).
- فَخَلَفَتْ (means, it became effaced or obliterated).
- فَخَلَفَتْ (means, the star lost or became deprived of its light).
- فَخَلَفَتْ (means, the clouds concealed or covered the stars. (Lane & Aqtab). See also 10 : 89

\footnote{4506} Commentary: The verse means, when a new revelation begins to be sent down, or when great calamities and miseries befall the world.

\footnote{4507} Commentary: The purport of the verse is: When great changes take place, or when powerful and influential men are brought low; or when old and time-honoured institutions are destroyed, root and branch. In short, when the whole corrupt order changes. For جبال see 14:47.

\footnote{4508} Commentary: The meaning is: When prophecies concerning the second advent of various Messengers will be
13. To what day have these portents been deferred?\textsuperscript{4509}

14. To the Day of Decision.

15. And what should make thee know what the Day of Decision is!—\textsuperscript{4510}

16. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!\textsuperscript{4511}

17. "Did We not destroy the earlier peoples?

18. We will now cause the later ones to follow them.

19. Thus do We deal with the guilty.\textsuperscript{4512}

20. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!

21. Did We not create you from an insignificant fluid,\textsuperscript{b}

22. And We placed it in a safe resting place,

23. For a known measure of time?

\textsuperscript{a6 : 134.} \textsuperscript{b23 : 14 ; 32 : 9 ; 36 : 78.}

fulfilled with the appearance in the world of a great Heavenly Reformer who will come in the power and spirit of such Messengers, clad, as it were, in the mantles of all of them.

\textsuperscript{4509.} Important Words:

أجل (deferred) is derived from أجل (ajila) which means, it was or became delayed, postponed, kept back or it had a term or period appointed for it at which it should fall due or come to pass. أجل الشني (ajjala) means, he delayed or postponed or deferred the thing or he appointed a period or term for it. (Lane & Aqrab).

\textsuperscript{4510.} Commentary:

The day of decision may mean the day of the triumph of Islam over all other Faiths in the time of the Promised Messiah. Or it may mean the Resurrection Day.

\textsuperscript{4511.} Commentary:

The reference in the verse may be to the disbelievers in the Holy Prophet's time or in that of the Promised Messiah.

\textsuperscript{4512.} Commentary:

The guilty never go unpunished, and the punishment, in the time of a Divine Messenger, takes place on a larger scale, involving whole communities and nations.
24. "Thus did We determine and what excellent Determiner We are!\(^{4513}\)

25. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!

26. \(^{b}\)Have We not made the earth so as to hold\(^{4514}\)

27. The living and the dead?

28. \(^{c}\)And We placed therein high mountains, and gave you sweet water to drink.\(^{4515}\)

Commentary:

This and the preceding three verses refer to the extremely subtle process of development of the sperm-drop in the womb into a full-fledged human being, which indeed is a great wonder of creation. This process of creation is advanced as an argument in support of the Resurrection. The Qur'ān has repeatedly used this argument, for there exists a beautiful parallelism between the two, the mother's womb being likened in the Qur'ān to man's life on earth and his birth to the Resurrection.

Important Words:

- \(^{a}\) كَفَّانَ (so as to hold) is derived from which means, he or it hastened or was quick or swift. They say كَفَّاهُ الْمُتحِبَاللهِ i.e., he drew the thing together to himself and contracted, grasped or took it. كَفَانَ is a place in which a thing is drawn together or comprehended and collected or congregated. The words المَفْعُولُ النَّفَاقُ كَفَانَا أَحْيَاءٍ وَأَمْوَاتٍ mean: “Have We not made the earth a place which comprehends the living and the dead, or which draws to itself the living and the dead, or which is quick in its motion” (Lane & Aqrab).

- \(^{b}\) كَفَّانَ (high) is derived from which means, it was high or lofty. كَفَّاهُ أَنْفُسَهُ i.e., he exalted himself, he was proud or behaved proudly جَبَلُ شَامِخ means, a high or lofty mountain. كَفَانَ means, a proud or high lineage. (Lane & Aqrab).

- \(^{c}\) رَاسِيَةٌ (mountains) is the plural of رَاءِيَةٌ جِبَالٍ رَاسِيَةٍ means, firm mountains (Lane).

Commentary:

All mortals live on earth, and when they are dead their remains in one form or other abide in the earth. The verse may also refer to the law of gravitation or to earth's motion on its axis or round the sun. The word كَفَانَ may also signify that all the physical needs of man have been met in the earth.

4513. Commentary:

4514. Important Words:

4515. Important Words:
29. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!

30. 'Now move on towards that which you treated as a lie,

31. 'Aye, move on towards a three-pronged shadow,'\(^{4516}\)

32. 'Neither affording shade, nor protecting from the flame?\(^{4517}\)

33. It throws up sparks like huge castles,\(^{4518}\)

34. As if they were yellow camels.\(^{4519}\)

35. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!

36. This is a day when they shall not be able to speak'.\(^{4520}\)

\(^{a}\)36 : 66 ; 78 : 39.

**4516. Commentary:**

(Shadow), as given under Important Words, serves three main purposes: it is cool; gives protection and is a means of comfort. As is mentioned in the following two verses disbelievers will be denied all these three things. The verse may also have reference to the wrong beliefs; evil deeds; usages, and practices of disbelievers which would take the form of three-pronged shadow in the next world. Or, according to some authorities, Ibn ‘Abbas being prominent among them, the reference in the verse may be to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. Or the verse may mean that disbelievers will be punished from the right, the left and from above.

**4517. Commentary:**

See 56 : 43-44.

**4518. Commentary:**

As disbelievers sought ease and comfort and took pride in castles and stately buildings, their sins and transgressions will take the form of flames of fire rising high like huge castles.

**4519. Commentary:**

The Arabs took pride in their camels of yellow colour which formed the greatest source of their wealth.

**4520. Commentary:**

See 36 : 66.
37. "Nor shall be permitted to offer excuses." 4521

38. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!

39. "This is the Day of Decision: We have gathered you and all the earlier peoples together.

40. 'If now you have any stratagem, use it against me.' 4522

41. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!

42. The righteous will be in the midst of shades and springs,

43. And fruits, such as they will desire.

44. 'Eat and drink pleasantly as a reward for what you did.'

45. Thus surely do We reward those who do good.

46. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!

47. 'Eat and enjoy yourselves a little while in this world, O rejectors of truth: surely you are the guilty ones.'

48. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!

49. And when it is said unto them, 'Bow down,' they do not bow down. 4523

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4521. Commentary:

The guilt of disbelievers having been fully established, they will not be allowed to offer any excuse or explanation.

4522. Commentary:

The Holy Prophet's enemies have been challenged to do their worst against him.

4523. Important Words:

ركع (do not bow down).
50. Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth!

51. In what discourse then, after this, will they believe? i.e., he who worships God alone, the Creator of the world, will have a good plea and will get salvation.

4524. Commentary:
The verse purports to say that as these ill-fated people have refused to accept such an infallible Book as the Qur’ān, they will never listen to truth or find the right path.