

Lesson Twelve: The Ineluctable Final Moment of All Things

There can be no doubt that one day the world as it now exists will become the scene of a terrifying event. The world which has been the setting for man's unceasing efforts and triumphs throughout his existence, his endeavors that have extended from the depths of the oceans to outer space, this world will fall prey to a horrifying fate and dissolve in a single catastrophe.

The heavenly bodies will collide and collapse; neither light nor warmth be left in the heavens; lofty mountains will be uprooted; a fire will erupt as if a spark were to have fallen on a heap of cotton that has been built up over centuries; oceans will surge up and burst over the land; tombs will split open and merge with each other; and the earth itself, in obedience to divine command, will reveal and surrender all of its contents and the trusts that have been deposited in the course of many epochs. The whole world will be turned into a great cloud of dust, as if everything that existed were being ground in some gigantic mortar.

This simultaneous mingling and dispersion of all elements, in such a way that no phenomenon can any longer be distinguished, is the future destiny of our regular and well-ordered world.

The Noble Qur'an reminds man that the existing order of creation is of limited duration and that it will not last for ever:

“Have you not ever considered that God has created the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them in justice and for a set duration? Many are those who do not believe they will meet their Lord” (30:8).

The Qur'an also proclaims that the occurrence of this event is inevitable and that on the day when all creatures will be stripped of the garment of life only the Pure and Sacred Essence of the Creator will remain.

Let us hear the description the Qur'an itself gives of that terrifying day on which all things shall perish:

“O men, fear the wrath of your Creator! The earthquakes and explosions of resurrection will be mighty and awesome. On that day suckling mothers will forget their infants and pregnant women will be delivered of their burden. You will see men as drunken from the terror of that day, but they will not be drunken, for the doom of God is fierce and painful” (22:1-2).

“When the earth begins to move and shake violently, the mountains are torn asunder and scattered like atoms of dust ...” (56:4-6).

“Man asks: ‘When the day of resurrection will be?’ (Say:) ‘It will be the day when the sight of man is confounded in terror, when the moon is darkened and the sun and the moon are joined. On that day man will ask where he might flee and to what shelter’” (75:6-10).

“When the stars are put out, and when the heavenly bodies are scattered” (82:2).

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Flammarion, the well-known astronomer, says in his book *The End of the World*:

“The appearance of life in all its splendor is the result of the submission of the solar system to the universal pull of gravity and centrifugal motion. It is gravity that interrelates all the parts of the universe, from the atom to the star, and controls and regulates their movements with the aid of centrifugal motion. Thus a universal order comes into being throughout creation. This order will, however, inevitably collapse; the stars will die and the heavenly bodies will scatter like the beads of a broken necklace.”

As can be deduced from verses of the Qur'an and reliable narrations, the order of creation will suddenly collapse as the result of a happening the exact nature of which is unknown to us: the life of the sun, the stars and the whole of creation will come to an abrupt end.

Rill, the British astronomer, says:

“The universe came into being some ten or fifteen billion years ago as the result of an explosion. It used half of its energy or its matter to dispatch the stars to the depths of space, and the other half to assemble the galaxies and prepare them for the final explosion.”

The Qur'an says:

“On the day when We shall roll up the heavens like a scroll ...” (21:104).

“When the oceans shall be aflame ...” (81:6)

“On the day that the heavens shall be molten like brass...” (70:8).

The last two of these verses contradict the theory of many scientists of the past who maintained that the end of the world would come about as the result of a decrease in the heat of the sun and the freezing of all creatures. They tell instead of heat of the sun being intensified at the time of resurrection, in such a way that no living thing will be able to endure. Many prominent scientists now describe the coming of such a day in accordance with the relative knowledge they possess.

Thus Georges Gamoff writes:

“The radiation of the sun will increase over time, and once the amount of hydrogen in the sun has attained its maximum amount, the energy emitted by the sun will increase about a hundred fold. Our studies of the production of energy by the sun thus point to conclusions that contradict completely classical quasi-official theories on the subject.

“Instead of saying that everything will freeze one day as a result of a decrease in the activity of the sun, we must say that it will be as a result of the continuing intensity of the sun's heat, during the last stage of its development, that life is condemned to destruction.

“If the temperature on the earth's surface comes to exceed the temperature at which water boils, rocks and the hard crust of the earth will probably not melt, but the oceans will certainly begin to boil, and since no highly evolved species can live in boiling water, most forms of life will come to an end. It is therefore probable that all the higher species will have died out before the temperature of the earth reaches an intolerable level.” (*Paydayish va Marg-i Khurshid*, p. 131)

Elsewhere the same writer remarks:

“It is expected that in the course of several hundred million years after the formation of the earth's crust, the volume of the sun will come to exceed that of Venus. Its light will be multiplied ten to thirty million times, and the oceans will be brought to boiling point.” (*Madda-yi Zamin va Asman*, p. 533)

[The Two Trumpet Blasts of Resurrection](#)

The Noble Qur'an describes the occurrence of resurrection as follows:

“They will blow on the trumpet and everything in the heavens and the earth will be swallowed up by death, save only that which God wishes to preserve. Then another trumpet blast will be sounded and all creatures will suddenly rise up to behold the plain of resurrection” (39:68).

There will be then two blasts on the trumpet. The first will be swift and of brief duration, like a roar in the heavens, a universal proclamation that will cause the whole expanse of creation to be folded up; the people of the world will suddenly fall to the ground while they are still engrossed in their daily struggles. This first blowing of the trumpet will bring about the death of all living beings, and all creatures in the heavens and on the earth, including even the angels.

The Qur'an says:

“On the day when the summoner (Israfil) summons mankind to awesome resurrection the unbelievers will come forth with their eyes humbled, like locusts scattered abroad, hastening to respond to the summoner to resurrection. The unbelievers shall say to each other: ‘This is the day of hardship!’” (54:6–8).

The second blast on the trumpet will be the awe-inspiring summons that brings men back to life and ushers in resurrection. Men will suddenly rise up from their graves and they will ask, their whole beings filled with fear:

“Who is it that thus raises us from our slumber?” (36:52).

Then they will open their eyes and say:

“This is none other than what God promised; the prophets indeed spoke the truth” (36:54)

Every now and then explosions take place in the heavenly bodies. Occurring in remote galaxies and the outer regions of space, these explosions do not disrupt the order of the universe or the norms of creation; their causes and effects remain, however, unknown.

It is a terrifying universal explosion that will cause the structure of the heavens and the earth to collapse, putting an end to the life of the world and its inhabitants together with the norms that have regulated creation. The powerful waves of sound, the death-bringing blast that is a means for the implementation of the divine command, will be so intense and overwhelming that in the shortest time conceivable it will bring to an end the existence of all living things.

This collapse of the world through the sound waves emitted by the trumpet of Israfil will take place at a time when people are going about their daily business and are unaware that such a terrifying event is about to occur.

The Most Noble Messenger, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, said:

“At that time, some people will be in their own homelands, and some will be traveling. Some will be swallowed up by death as they are about to place a morsel of food in their mouths. Some will be talking to their friends and their souls will be taken from them before they are able to complete their words. In the end death will have overtaken all human beings, but Israfil will continue blowing on his trumpet until all springs and rivers, all buildings, trees, mountains, and oceans, are intermingled and buried in the heart of the earth.

“As the dead fall to the ground, some will be on their backs, and other will lie face down. People will still have the food in their mouths the food that death gave them no chance to swallow.” (*Tafsir al-Burhan*, Vol. IV, p. 38)

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Israfil's blasts on the trumpet may be compared to the sounding of a horn that announces to an army the beginning of battle; it is like a command to get ready. The second blast is like a command to move off and attack the enemy. The trumpet has then two aspects: one of universal death and one of universal revival.

In the verses that speak of this utter reversal and transformation of the natural order, we see that terror and confusion overwhelm the whole of creation. The heavens and the earth, young and old, men and animals, all created things will be bewildered; fear will sunder all natural relations, and people will think only of themselves.

This will be the general state of all people. In addition, the impious and impure will be subject to their own special terror; they will fruitlessly desire to return to the earth in order to make up for their shameful past of disobeying God and His messengers.

But it will be too late; a fearful and majestic silence will embrace all things and none will be able to disobey God. All will set out for the divine presence in obedience to the divine summons.

God therefore calls on people to awake now in order to avoid the painful fate that ineluctably awaits sinners in the hereafter:

“O man what deceives you concerning your Lord and makes you impudently arrogant?” (82:6).

He also warns mankind as follows:

“Before resurrection occurs and you are compelled to return to your Lord answer the summons of your Creator. For on that day you shall have no shelter to protect you from your shameful punishment or to avert from you your well-deserved chastisement” (42:47).

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