

Section 5: The Resurrection Certain

Surah Maryam – Verses 66 – 67

وَيَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَإِذَا مَا مِتُّ لَسَوْفَ أُخْرَجُ حَيًّا

أَوَلَا يَذْكُرُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ يَكُ شَيْئًا

66. “And man says: ‘When I am dead shall I be raised up alive?’”

67. “Does not man remember that We created him before, when he was nothing?”

Occasions of Revelation

According to the attitude of a group of commentators, the first holy verse mentioned in the above has been revealed concerning 'Ubay-ibn-i-Khalaf, or Walid-ibn-i-Muqayrah, who had taken a piece of a rotten bone in the hand, crushing it with the hand, they scattered it in the wind so that every particle of it spread in a corner, and they said:

“Look at Muhammad! He thinks that, after dying and decaying our bones, like this bone, Allah will restore us to life again. Never such thing is possible!”

Then, these verses were revealed and gave them a sever answer, an answer which is helpful and instructive for all human beings in all centuries and ages.

Through former holy verses, a considerable discussion was mentioned upon Resurrection, Paradise, and Hell. The verses under discussion refer to the same matter, too.

In the first holy verse, the words of the hostile rejectors are restated as follows:

“And man says: ‘When I am dead shall I be raised up alive?’”

This interrogation, of course, is a positive interrogation with a negative sense, which means: ‘such thing will never be possible’.

Immediately after that, the Qur’an, with the same tone and meaning, answers this question, saying that whether man does not remember this fact that Allah created him before, and he was nothing at all.

The verse says:

“Does not man remember that We created him before, when he was nothing?”

The application of the word ‘man’, here, may point to this meaning that a person, with natural talent and intellect, should not remain silent in front of such a question. He himself ought to answer it by remembering the first creation, otherwise he has not utilized the reality of his own humanness.

These holy verses, similar to many other verses related to Resurrection, emphasize on resurrection of the body. Else, if it were assigned that only spirit to remain and the return of body to new life were not propounded, neither that question would have any room, nor this answer.

Once Imam Sadiq (as) was asked about the meaning of:

“... We created him before, when he was nothing”,

and he answered:

“It means that neither in the stage of predestination nor in the stage of creation he was anything.”

Then he (as) was asked about the meaning of /lamiyakun šay’an maḳkura/ (when he was a thing not worth mentioning),¹ and Imam (as) said:

“That is, it was predestinated, but there was not any name of it in the course.”²

Thus, these two verses speak about a couple of stages before the creation of man.

Another tradition narrated from Imam Baqir (as) indicates that upon the commentary of ‘before’, he said:

“There was no word about him either in the book or in the knowledge.”³

Surah Maryam – Verses 68 – 70

فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيَاطِينَ ثُمَّ لَنُحْضِرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا

ثُمَّ لَنَنْزِعَنَّ مِنْ كُلِّ شِيعَةٍ أَيُّهُمْ أَشَدُّ عَلَى الرَّحْمَنِ عِتِيًّا

ثُمَّ لَنَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِالَّذِينَ هُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِهَا صِلِيًّا

68. “So by your Lord, We shall surely muster them, and the Satans (with them), then We shall cause them to be present round Hell on their knees.”

69. “Then shall We pick out from every group whichever of them was more intensely rebellious against the Beneficent (Allah).”

70. “Again We do know best those who deserve most to be burnt therein.”

In the first holy verse, the Qur’an, with a very sharp tone, threatens the deniers of Resurrection and faithless sinners, when it says:

“So by your Lord, We shall surely muster them, and the Satans (with them)...”

In many occurrences of the Qur’an, Allah has sworn to His creatures, but, for the Resurrection, He has sworn to His Holy Essence.

Then, in this very verse the Qur’an continues saying:

“...then We shall cause them to be present round Hell on their knees.”

This verse denotes that the court of faithless persons and that of the sinners are nigh to Hell.

The Arabic term /jiiyya/ (regarding the fact that /jiiyy/ is the plural form of /jai/ which means a person who has sat on his knees) may refer to their weakness, disability, disgrace, and despicableness.

As if they have not ability to stand on their feet. This term, of course, has some other meanings, too. Among them is that some commentators have rendered the term /jiiyy/ into people ‘in crowds’, and some others have meant it into ‘masses’, and to be ‘heaped up’, like some soil and stones. But the first meaning is more fitting and more famous.

Since in that court of justice priorities are regarded, by the next verse the Qur’an implies that the most rebellious ones will be picked out first.

The verse says:

“Then shall We pick out from every group whichever of them was more intensely rebellious against the Beneficent (Allah).”

The same impudent ones, that even forgot the merits of the Beneficent Allah, began rebelling and acting rudely before their Benefactor. Yes, such people are the most deserved ones to the Fire of Hell.

This meaning has been emphasize on again in the next holy verse, where it says:

“Again We do know best those who deserve most to be burnt therein.”

The Qur’an indicates that Allah (s.w.t.) will pick out them properly and no mistake may happen in this picking out.

The Qur’anic word /siliyy/ means both ‘to lighten a fire’, and ‘the thing which is burnt by means of fire’.

Surah Maryam – Verses 71 – 72

وَإِنْ مِّنكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا

71. “And (there is) not one of you but shall come to it (Hell). This is, with your Lord, a fixed decree.”

72. “Then We shall rescue those who kept from evil, and leave the unjust therein on their knees.”

The couple of verses mentioned in the above, also continue the discussion about the specialties of Resurrection and the people’s rewards and retributions.

At first, it has pointed to a matter about which most people may surprise to hear.

It says:

“And (there is) not one of you but shall come to it (Hell)...”

This is a certain matter and a decisive command with your Lord Who has decreed it.

The verse says:

“... This is, with your Lord, a fixed decree.”

“Then We shall rescue those who kept from evil, and leave the unjust therein on their knees.”

Commenting on these two verses, it must be remarked that all human beings, with no exception, will

enter Hell, whether they are good doers or evildoers, but Hell will be cold and safe for the good-doers, in the same manner that the fire of Numrud was for Abraham.

The reason of it is that Fire of Hell does not have any general resemblance to them. It seems the Fire gets away from them and runs away, and wherever they are, it dies out. But, the people of Hell, who correlate to Hell-fire, like an inflammable material when reaches a fire, will immediately inflame.

In fact, seeing Hell and its chastisements will be a preparation for believers that they enjoy the utmost pleasure from the bounties of Heaven, and on the contrary, the people of Hell, by seeing the safety of the people of Heaven, feel their punishment more painful.

Some Islamic Traditions

1. It has been narrated that some one asked Jabir-ibn-‘Abdillah’Ansari about the meaning of this verse. He pointed with his two fingers to his two ears and said:

“I heard a matter from the Prophet (S) by these ears of mine both of which may become deaf if I tell a lie. He (S) said: ‘Iwariduhā (come to it (Hell)) means ‘enter into it’. There will be no good doer and no evildoer but he will enter into it (Hell).

Then it (Fire) will be cold and safe for the believers, the same as it was for Abraham; so that ‘Fire’ or ‘Hell’ (Jabir was doubtful) will cry because of its coldness. Then Allah will rescue those who kept from evil, and leave the unjust therein on their knees’.”⁴

But, the compiler of the commentary of Atyab-ul-Bayan, upon the commentary of this verse, says:

It seems, and there are many Islamic tradition on it, and is among the self-evident knowledge of the religion that the question of ‘Sirat’ (path, way) is the ‘bridge’ of Hell, through which the people of Heaven must pass. Coming to this path is the same as entering into Hell and passing from it is a rescue. Thus, the meaning of

“And (there is) not one of you but shall come to it (Hell)”

is ‘entering on the Path’.

There is an expressive saying upon the bridge of the Path (Sirat) in Islamic traditions which denotes there is a bridge over Hell leading to Paradise which is thinner than a hair, sharper than the blade of a sword.

This meaning is another evidence for this commentary, and it has been verified and supported by a lot of the commentators of two great sects of Islam.⁵

2. Another tradition narrated from the Prophet (S) indicates that he said:

*“On the Day of Judgment, Hell–Fire will tell the believer ‘Pass quickly, O’ believer! Verily your light has extinguished my flame’.”*⁶

3. It has been cited in Tafsir–i–Tabari:

“One day, when ‘Abdullah–ibn–Rawahah was sick, he was crying and his wife, seeing him, began weeping. ‘Abdullah asked her why she was weeping. She answered it was because of his weeping. ‘Abdullah said that he was crying for this word of Allah Who said:

‘And (there is) not one of you but shall come to it (Hell)’.

*Our arrival is certain, but ‘Abdullah does not know whether he will rescue or not.”*⁷

4. The Messenger of Allah (S) said:

“On the Day of Hereafter, all human being (good and evil) will enter Hell, but Fire will not harm the believers, like Abraham for whom the fire became cold.”

Therefore, the verse under discussion, which announces that the arrival of all into Hell is certain, does not contrast the verses which indicate believers are far from Hell, because, on one side they enter Hell, and, on another side, by the grace of Allah, no harm reaches them.

Moreover, Allamah Tabatabaie cites in Al–Mizan: there will be none of the righteous and the unjust but soon will be on the edge and precipice of Fire, then Allah will rescue the pious ones and will let the unjust remain in it.

O’ Allah! By Your Grace and Mercy, and by the grandeur of the rank of the Prophet (S) and Ahl–ul–Bayt (as) with You, count us not among the people of Hell, and assign no Fire upon us, but by Your beneficence and Your forgiveness count us among the people of Paradise!

Surah Maryam – Verses 73 – 74

وَإِذَا تُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتُنَا بَيِّنَاتٍ قَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَيُّ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ خَيْرٌ مَّقَامًا وَأَحْسَنُ نَدِيًّا

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرْنٍ هُمْ أَحْسَنُ أَثَانًا وَرِعْيًا

73. “And when Our clear revelations are recited unto them, those who disbelieve say to those

who believe: 'Which of the two parties is better in station and fairer in assembly'?"

74. "And how many a generation have We destroyed before them, who were better in equipment and outward appearance!"

The Arabic term /nadiyy/ is applied for any assembly, or for the assembly of consultation, derived from which is /dar-un-nudwah/ with the meaning of 'a deliberative assembly'.

Following the discussion about the faithless unjust people, mentioned in the former verses, here the verse refers to a part of their logic and their fate.

It is known that the first group who believed in the Prophet of Islam (S) were the pure-hearted oppressed people who were poor.

Since the criterion of value in the ignorant society of that time, like any other ignorant society, was wealth and force, money and rank, and the outside appearance, the cruel rich persons prided themselves to the poor believers.

They told them that the sign of their own personality was with them, and the sign of the believers, which was their poverty and deprivation, was with them, too. That itself, they said, was the evidence to their rightfulness and the lack of rightfulness of the poor ones.

The Qur'an in this regard says:

"And when Our clear revelations are recited unto them, those who disbelieve say to those who believe: 'Which of the two parties is better in station and fairer in assembly'?"

But the Qur'an, with a complete reasonable statement, and in the meantime, with a decisive and mighty tone, answers them as follows that as if they have forgotten the past history of human.

It says:

"And how many a generation have We destroyed before them, who were better in equipment and outward appearance!"

Could their money, their plenty of wealth, their glorious assemblies, their costly clothing, and their fine appearances hinder the divine punishment?

Explanations

1. The Arabic word /'aa/ means 'furniture' and the possibilities and comforts of life. The word /ri'ya/ is used for 'that which pleases the eye'. The Qur'anic term /qarn/ is applied for 'a group of people who live for a long time with together'.

2. The historical changes have been based on the ordinances that Allah has assigned.

3. The material possibilities are neither the sign of happiness nor hinder the wrath of Allah.
4. Wealth and possibilities are often the factor of pride, negligence, inordinacy, and, finally, perdition.

Surah Maryam – Verse 75

قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الضَّلَالَةِ فَلْيَمْدُدْ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ مَدًّا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا رَأَوْا مَا يُوعَدُونَ إِمَّا
الْعَذَابَ وَإِمَّا السَّاعَةَ فَسَيَعْلَمُونَ مَنْ هُوَ شَرٌّ مَكَانًا وَأَضْعَفُ جُنْدًا

75. “Say: ‘Whoever goes astray, the Beneficent (Allah) will prolong his span of life until, when they see what they were promised, whether it be the chastisement (in this world), or the Hour (of Doom), then they will know who is worse in position and weaker in hosts.’”

The Arabic terms /madd/ and /’imdad/ are used with the same sense, but, as Raqib says, the term /’imdad/ is usually used for some praiseworthy and pleasing actions, and the term /madd/ is usually used for some disagreeable and indecent deeds.

Allah respites all those who choose a vice and go astray. This respite is for the sake that they may repent, or some righteous offspring from them come into being. But some misguided people misuse this respite and commit some more vice by which they increase their own punishment. However, Allah respites them and prolongs their lifetime.

The structure of this sentence in Arabic in imperative form denotes to the certainty of the performance of the affair.

The sentence has been stated in an imperative form in order that there remains no pretext for the misguided one, since he has been given a length of lifetime during which he might think of a way.

The imperative verb may be taken in the sense of invocation in which he has asked Allah to give him a respite, or He may let him live in the world as long as he desires, because his lifetime is of no avail for him.

The verse says:

“Say: ‘Whoever goes astray, the Beneficent (Allah) will prolong his span of life...’”

Allah will prolong the life of such people in order that they see with their own eyes what they have been promised.

His promise may either be the chastisement of this world: that the Muslims overcome them and, by

killing them or capturing them, punish them, or that they be involved with the chastisements of Hereafter.

At that time, they will realize that they have considered wrongly, i.e. their position is worse and their troop is weaker than that they thought, and they used to say that they would have a higher position and a better assembly.

The verse continues saying:

“...until, when they see what they were promised, whether it be the chastisement (in this world), or the Hour (of Doom), then they will know who is worse in position and weaker in hosts’.”

Abu-Basir narrates a tradition upon the phrase:

“...until when they see what they were promised...”

from Imam Sadiq (as) who said:

*“It is the promise of the advent of Hadrat Gha’im (as), and ‘worse in position’ means that on the day of the raise of Gha’im it will be known who in an indecent and weak position is.”*⁸

Surah Maryam – Verse 76

وَيَزِيدُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا هُدًى وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ
مَرَدًّا

76. “And Allah increases in guidance those who are guided aright, and the everlasting good deeds are better with your Lord in reward, and better in return.”

The Arabic word /awab/ means the recompense of man’s deed which returns to him, whether it is good or evil, but it is often used for a good deed.⁹

The previous verse referred to the fate of the oppressors and those who were deluded by the dazzling glare and lusts of the world, while this verse refers to situation of the believers and those who are guided.

It says:

“And Allah increases in guidance those who are guided aright...”

It is evident that guidance has some degrees. When the beginning degrees of guidance are practiced by a person, Allah may help him to gain some higher and higher degrees of it. Similar to a fruitful tree,

which develops to a new stage of growth and perfection every day, these guided ones, too, in the light of their Faith and good deeds, promote to some higher stages every day.

At the end of the verse, the Qur'an gives an answer to those who have relied on their fleeting ornaments in this life and have taken it as a means of boasting to others. It implies that the end and the value of the righteous deeds is better with the Lord.¹⁰

The verse says:

"...and the everlasting good deeds are better with your Lord in reward, and better in return."

However, some Islamic traditions indicate that the purpose of the phrase:

'the everlasting good deeds'

is the invocation saying:

"Glory be to Allah; Praise belongs to Allah; and there is no god save Allah. Allah is the greatest."¹¹

Surah Maryam – Verses 77 – 80

أَفَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لَأُوتِينَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا

أَطَّلَعَ الْغَيْبَ أَمْ آتَّخَذَ عِنْدَ الرَّحْمَنِ عَهْدًا

كَلَّا سَنَكْتُبُ مَا يَقُولُ وَنَمُدُّ لَهُ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ مَدًّا

وَنَرِثُهُ مَا يَقُولُ وَيَأْتِينَا فَرْدًا

77. "Have you seen him who disbelieves in Our revelations and says: 'I shall surely be given wealth and children (abundantly)?"

78. "Has he got the (knowledge of) Unseen, or has taken from the Beneficent (Allah) a promise?"

79. "No, We will write down what he says and We will prolong for him the chastisement."

80. "And We will inherit what he talks of, and he shall come unto Us all alone."

Leaving hold of Allah and refuging to wealth and children is a false and superstitious cogitation.

Some people think that faith, sincerity, and piety are not favourable to them and they cause the world to set them a side, and when they live without Faith and piety the world will look upon them with favor so that their wealth will increase.

This imagination, whether it can be as a result of simple-mindedness and following superstitions, or as a cover for fleeing from religious responsibilities and promises, whatever it may be, is a dangerous consideration.

Sometimes it happens that these superstitious persons have based the wealth of some faithless people and the poverty of a group of believers as an evidence to prove this superstition.

But, we know that neither the properties gained by means of transgression, disbelief, and abandoning the foundations of piety are the source of honour, nor is the Faith, piety, and virtuousness a hinder on the way of legitimate and lawful activities.

However, at the time of the Prophet (S), like our time, there were some ignorant people who had such a consideration or, at least, they pretended to have that sort of consideration.

In connection with the former discussion, stated about the fate of the disbelievers and transgressors, in these verses the Qur'an points to this kind of imagination and its end.

In the first verse, it says:

“Have you seen him who disbelieves in Our revelations and says: ‘I shall surely be given wealth and children (abundantly)?”

Then, the Qur'an answers them as follows:

“Has he got the (knowledge of) Unseen, or has taken from the Beneficent (Allah) a promise?”

Only the one who has the knowledge of Unseen can predict such a thing and may introduce a relation between infidelity and having property and children, because we do not see any relation between these two. Or, that the one would have taken a promise from Allah in this regard. Such a statement is also meaningless.

Then, with a serious and decisive tone, the Qur'an implies that it is not such, and never disbelief and infidelity causes the wealth and children of a person to be increased.

The verse says:

“No, We will write down what he says...”

Yes, these baseless sayings, which may cause some simple-minded persons to go astray, will all be recorded in their file of deeds.

The verse continues saying:

“...and We will prolong for him the chastisement.”

This part of the verse may be a hint to the continuous eternal chastisement of Hereafter. It may also be a hint to the punishments which encompass them in this world as a result of infidelity and faithlessness. This probability is also notable that the wealth and children, which are the source of their pride and aberration, may themselves be a continual punishment for them.

The verse says:

“And We will inherit what he talks of, and he shall come unto Us all alone.”

Yes, at last, he will leave all these material facilities and pass away, and he will attend in that Divine court of Justice without any righteous work with him, while his book of deeds is recorded with sins wholly. It is in that place that he will see the fruit of his baseless sayings in the world.

Surah Maryam – Verses 81 – 82

وَاتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ آلِهَةً لِيَكُونُوا لَهُمْ عِزًّا

كَلَّا سَيَكْفُرُونَ بِعِبَادَتِهِمْ وَيَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ ضِدًّا

81. “And they have taken gods besides Allah that they might be for them a glory.”

82. “No, soon they (gods) shall deny their worship, and become adversaries against them.”

This verse points to another motive of the idolaters in worshipping idols when it says:

“And they have taken gods besides Allah that they might be for them a glory.”

They worship idols in order that they intercede for them with Allah and help them in their difficulties; but what a vain and wrong imagination!

Never it is such that they imagined. The idols not only do not create honour for them but also cause their disgrace and painful punishment, and soon, i.e. in Hereafter, these idols will deny their worship and repudiate them, and they will be some enemies against them.

The holy verse says:

“No, soon they (gods) shall deny their worship, and become adversaries against them.”

It is narrated from Imam Sadiq (as) who has said:

“On Hereafter Day the gods, which they had taken besides Allah, will be against them and will repudiate them and their worships.”

That is, these idols, by the command of Allah, will be able to speak on the Day of Judgment and will repudiate from pagans and the worshippers of them. It is interesting that there has been cited a short and expressive sentence below this tradition about the reality of worship.

It says:

“Worship is not (only) prostration and bowing, but the reality of worship is to obey men. Whoever obeys a mortal in disobedience to Allah, he has obeyed him.”

(And, therefore, his fate will be the same as the fate of pagans and idolaters.)¹²

1. Surah Insan, No. 76, verse 1

2. Usul-i-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 147

3. Bihar-ul-Anwar, vol. 5, p. 84

4. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 353

5. At-Tafsir-ul-Munir, p. 145; Zad-ul-Masir, Commentary, vol. 5, p. 256; Rauh-ul-Ma'ani by 'Alusi, vol. 16, p. 133; Tafsir-i-Safi, p. 290, Tafsir-i-Jami'-ul-Bayan, p. 110, Tafsir-i-Mazhari, vol. 6, p. 112; Tafsir-i-Jawami'-ul-Jami', narrated by Ibn-Mas'ud, Hassan Basri, and Ibn-Abbas, Tafsir-i-Tha'alibi, vol. 3, p. 17;

6. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 353 and vol. 5, p.572

7. Recorded in the most commentary books of the Sunnite

8. At-Tafsir-ul-Burhan, vol. 3, p. 20; Tafsir-us-Safi, vol.3 p. 291; Al-Kafi, vol. 1, p. 431

9. Al-Mizan, the Commentary

10. The Arabic word 'marad' is either 'an infinitive' with the sense of 'to pass, to return', or it is a 'noun of place' with the sense of 'the site of return', which here means Paradise.

11. Tafsir-i-Nur-uth-Thaqalatn; and Tafsir-i-Burhan

12. Nur-uth-Thaqalayn, vol. 3, p. 357, and Tafsir-ul-Burhan, Tafsir-us-Safi

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