

## Surah al-Haqqa, Chapter 69

(The Inevitable)

Section (juz') 29

Number of Verses: 52

### General Overview of the Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

#### *In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*

The blessed Chapter, revealed in Mecca, has 52 Verses. The designation of the Chapter derives from the opening Verse denoting the inevitable. The blessed Chapter mainly treats of Resurrection, its attributes, and three designations of it, the Inevitable (al-haqqa), the Striking Hour (al-qari'a), and the Event (al-waqi'a), and those of the Hell, the Paradise, and the people of the Hell.

### The Merit of Reciting the Chapter

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) as saying that one who recites Surah al-Haqqa, the burden of his sins shall be lessened. <sup>1</sup>

It is narrated from Imam Baqir (as) that it is incumbent upon Muslims to recite Surah al-Haqqa many a time, since its recitation in ritual obligatory and supererogatory prayers serves as a token of believing in God Almighty and His Messenger (S) and whoever recites it, his faith shall be intact until he meets his Lord's Countenance,<sup>2</sup> provided that he acts upon his religious obligations.

## Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 1-3

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*

الْحَاقَّةُ

مَا الْحَاقَّةُ

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ

- 1. The Inevitable [Day]!**
- 2. What an Inevitable Day it is.**
- 3. And what will make you know what the Inevitable is?**

The Arabic word al-haqqa, cognate with haqq ("truth"), implies something which is inevitable. The word is a designation of the Day of Resurrection, since it is something truly Inevitable. The majority of Qur'an exegetes maintain that the word implies the Day of Resurrection, since it is indubitable inevitable.

The similar designation, the Event is also attested in Chapter 56 and the blessed Verse 16 of the Chapter in question. They all reflect the inevitability of that Great Day. The expression "the Inevitable" implies the Greatness of that Day. Likewise, it is used in common usage when it is said that so and so is such a man, namely the description of his humanity is indescribable.

The expression

**"what an Inevitable Day it is"**

lays further emphasis on the Greatness of the Events to happen on that Great Day, such that the Noble Prophet of the Islamic faith (S) is addressed by saying that he is unaware of the qualities of that Day. It is true, since the prisoners in this world like us are incapable of understanding the Events to occur on the Day of Resurrection in the same manner that understanding the affairs of this world is incomprehensible

to the fetus in the mother's womb.

Some Qur'an exegetes maintain that the word al-haqqa implies the torments with which obdurate sinners and the vain disobedient are inflicted of a sudden. It is worthy of note, however, that the contextual meaning of following Verses stand in further harmony with the excruciating and destructive torments inflicted upon the peoples of 'Ad, Thamud, Lot, and Pharaoh.

In his exegetic work, 'Ali ibn Ibrahim also says that the word serves as a warning against sending down Divine torments like the one mentioned regarding the people of Pharaoh elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an<sup>3</sup>:

***"So Allah saved him from the evils that they plotted against him, while an evil torment (haqq) encompassed Pharaoh's people."***<sup>4</sup>

## **Surah al-Haqqa – Verse 4**

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ وَعَادٌ بِالْقَارِعَةِ

### ***4. Thamud and 'Ad peoples denied Divine destructive torment!***

The blessed Verse in question treats of the dire fates of the people who denied the Day of Resurrection and sending down Divine torment, saying that the peoples of Thamud and 'Ad belied Divine destructive torments.

## **Surah al-Haqqa – Verse 5**

فَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَأُهْلِكُوا بِالطَّاغِيَةِ

### ***5. As for Thamud, they were destroyed by an uncontrollable torment!***

the people of Thamud inhabited a mountainous region between Hijaz and Syria. Prophet Salih was Divinely appointed to call them onto obedience to God Almighty, though they never believed and rose against him and even asked him to send down the promised torment if he was true in his Prophetic Call.

Then, a destructive lightning was sent down on them. Their firmly built palaces and mansions trembled in a few moments and destroyed them all and their dead bodies were cast on the ground. It is worthy of note that the Holy Qur'an mentions an uncontrollable torment as the cause behind their destruction.

Such uncontrollable torment (al-taghiya) is also mentioned as

**"earthquake" (rajfa)**

in 7:78,

**"lightning" (sa'iqā)**

in 41:13, and

**"loud cry" (sayha)**

in 11:67 which all imply the same meaning, since lightning is accompanied by loud noises and makes the stricken place tremble and it is an uncontrollable torment.

## Surah al-Haqqa – Verse 6

وَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَأُهْلِكُوا بِرِيحٍ صَرْصَرٍ عَاتِيَةٍ

**6. And as for 'Ād, they were destroyed by a furious violent gale!**

The blessed Verse proceeds with the dire fate of the people of 'Ād who inhabited the land of Ahqaf in the Yemen in the Arabian Peninsula. They were tall of stature and robust and had verdant lands and fertile gardens. Their Prophet was Hud (as).

They were so disobedient that God Almighty sent them an excruciating torment, as mentioned in these blessed Verses, and caused their perdition.

The blessed Verse is saying:

*"And as for 'Ād, they were destroyed by a furious, violent, and venomous gale."*

The Arabic word sarsar is applied to cold, harsh, and venomous gales. The three meanings are mentioned by Qur'an exegetes and the word may imply their entirety. The Arabic feminine adjectival form 'atiya, deriving from '-t-w ("to be raging"), denotes raging (of storms and gales) and uncontrollable, disobedient to the norms of regular winds and breezes rather than disobedient to God Almighty.

## Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 7-8

سَخَّرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمَانِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ حُسُومًا فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَرْعَى كَأَنَّهُمْ  
أَعْجَازُ نَخْلٍ خَاوِيَةٍ

فَهَلْ تَرَى لَهُم مِّن بَاقِيَةٍ

**7. Which Allah imposed the [raging gale] on them for seven nights and eight days in succession and had you been there you would have seen those men lying overthrown and dead, as if they were hollow trunks of date palms!**

**8. Do you see anyone of them remaining?**

These blessed Verses make another depiction of the destructive gale, saying that God Almighty made it predominant over such people for seven nights and eight days consecutively. The Arabic adverb of manner husuman denotes destroying the remnants of something and at times it connotes cauterizing the wound.

The contextual meaning of the blessed Verse 7 reflects that the raging gale shattered eradicated the prosperous habitation of such great people in seven nights and eight days consecutively in the manner of a rotten and hollow trunk of a palm tree.

The similitude is of interest since it implies their high stature as well as their being eradicated and the hollowness and vulnerability against Divine torments, such that the harsh gales could easily move them. The Arabic adjectival form khawiya originally denotes empty and it is employed in the sense of hungry people, the stars devoid of rain (according to pre-Islamic Arabs), and empty walnuts.

The blessed Verse 8 poses a question:

**"Do you see anyone of them remaining?"**

There is no trace of the people of 'Ad and the ruins of their prosperous habitations, majestic edifices, and fertile farms.

## **Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 9-10**

وَجَاءَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَنْ قَبْلَهُ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَاتُ بِالْخَاطِئَةِ

فَعَصَوْا رَسُولَ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَهُمْ أَخْذَةً رَّابِيَةً

**9. And Pharaoh and those before him and the inhabitants of the shattered cities [of the people of Lot] who had committed grave sins.**

**10. And they disobeyed their Lord's Messenger, so He inflicted them with a strong chastisement.**

Following a reference made to the dire fate of the peoples of 'Àd and Thamud, the blessed Verses in question make mention of other peoples like those of Pharaoh, Lot so that the awakened may take lessons of them, saying that Pharaoh and those before them and the inhabitants of the shattered habitations (the people of Lot) had committed grave sins.

The Arabic word khati'a denotes mistake and error and it herein connotes different sins like polytheism, disbelief, wrong doing, and corruption. The plural nominal form mu'tafikat (sg. mu'tafika) implies revolution and undergoing drastic changes and it herein alludes to the habitations of the people of Lot which were shattered owing to a severe earthquake.

The phrase

**"before him" (min qablihi)**

alludes to the peoples antedating Pharaoh, like that of Shu'ayb and tyrants like Nimrod (Namrud).

The blessed Verse 10 is saying that they rose against their Lord's Messenger (as) as a consequence of which God Almighty inflicted them with a severe torment. The people of Pharaoh rose against Prophet Moses (as) and Aaron.

The inhabitants of Sodom rose against Prophet Lot (as). Likewise, other peoples disobeyed their Prophets (as) and each of them were inflicted with a different kind of severe torment: the people of Pharaoh were drowned in the Nile which was the source of life, blessing, and prosperity in their land; the people of Lot with a strong earthquake followed by a downpour of rocks leading to their perdition.

The Arabic word rabiya, cognate with riba' ("usury money, interest"), denotes increase and surplus and it herein connotes a very strong and severe torment.

## **Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 11-12**

إِنَّا لَمَّا طَغَى الْمَاءُ حَمَلْنَاكُمْ فِي الْجَارِيَةِ

لِنَجْعَلَهَا لَكُمْ تَذْكَرَةً وَتَعِيَهَا أُنْزُورًا

**11. When the water rose beyond its limits, We carried you on the floating Ark.**

**12. That We might make it an admonition for you and that it might be retained by the retaining**

## **ears.**

The blessed Verses allude to the fate of the people of Noah (as) and their excruciating torment, saying:

*"When the water overflowed its banks, we embarked you on the Ark."*

The water burst such that leaden clouds enwrapped the sky and heavy showers of rain were sent such that torrents were seemingly pouring down from the sky. Fountains appeared on the earth as well. Thus, everything was drowned, the gardens, farms, palaces, and the mansions of the disobedient people. The believers were only saved by embarking upon the Ark with Prophet Noah (as).

The verbal form

### ***hamalnakum ("we carried you")***

alludes to our ancestors, since had they not been saved, we would not have come into being.

The blessed Verse 12 makes a reference to the main goal behind such chastisements, saying:

***"That We might make it an admonition for you and that it might be retained by the retaining ears."***

In other words, God Almighty never willed to take vengeance, but the goal behind their being inflicted with torments is to lead people on the path of spiritual growth such that they tread the path of development and perfection and attainment to union with the desired object.

The Arabic verbal form

### ***ta'iyaha ("retain it")***

derives from w-‘-a originally denoting preserving something in the heart, but owing to semantic generalization, any vessel was termed as wa‘a, since it contains something. The verbal form is herein used in the sense of the ears listening to the truths and preserving them. In other words, one may at times hear something undesirable by one ear and the undesirable utterance instantly goes out of the other.

The idiomatic expression "it goes into one ear and out the other" implies the same sense in colloquial expressions. However, one may at times reflect upon something and preserve it in his heart and make use of it as the lamp shedding light on his life. The latter sense is intended herein.

Finally, it is narrated in many authoritative tradition and exegetic sources from the Noble Prophet (S) as saying that he invoked God Almighty to make ‘Ali’s (as) ears listen to the truths and preserve them.

Imam ‘Ali (as) is reported as saying:

*"Thereafter I never consigned to oblivion whatever I heard from Allah’s Messenger (S), but I*

remembered his words at all times."5

## Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 13-15

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ

وَحُمِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً وَاحِدَةً

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ

**13. Then, as soon as the Trumpet shall be blown with one blowing.**

**14. And the earth and the mountains shall be removed and crushed with a single crushing.**

**15. Then, on that Day shall the Event befall.**

Resuming the opening blessed Verses treating of the Day of Resurrection, the blessed Verses in question discuss the evens of such great Resurrection by moving and awakening expressions familiarizing man with the greatness of the events to befall in future.

The blessed Verse 13 is saying that

**"as soon as the Trumpet shall be blown with one blowing."**

As mentioned above, it is reflected in the Holy Qur'an that the end of this world and the beginning of the world to come shall be of a sudden accompanied by a very loud sound which is intended by

***nafkha sur* ("blowing of Trumpet"),**

deriving from blowing in the trumpet to marshal the army in alertness and dispatching them to their resting place by two different sounds: one for their rest and sleep and the other to be marshaled whereby they move in lines toward their garrisons and elsewhere.

The blessed Verse reflects that the end of this world and the beginning of the one to come against Divine Omnipotence is as easy as blowing in a trumpet and all the inhabitants of the heaven and the earth die of a sudden through one single Command and they will be raised and prepared to receive the Rewards and Chastisements of based on Record of deeds through another Command.

The qualities of the Trumpet, the manner of blowing in it, the times of blowing, and the interval between them were copiously treated above under 39:68, but it would solely suffice herein to make mention that the Trumpet shall be blown into twice: one for death and the other for being raised.

Qur'an exegetes are not unanimous concerning the reference herein to the former or the latter, since the some of the following blessed Verses stand in further conformity with the former and some with the latter. Generally speaking, these blessed Verses stand in further conformity with the former, i.e. blowing into the Trumpet to put an end to this world.

The blessed Verse 14 is saying that

***"when the earth and the mountains shall be removed and crushed with a single crushing."***

The Arabic word dakk denotes smooth land, but since leveling it requires crushing, it connotes severe crushing. Nonetheless, according to some lexicographical sources, the Arabic word literally denotes crushing and demolishing and since they entail leveling, the word connotes such sense.

At any rate, the word herein implies severe crushing of the mountains and uneven pieces of land such that they are demolished and leveled instantly.

The blessed Verse 15 is saying that

***"on that Day, a great event shall befall in the world and Resurrection shall be actualized."***

## **Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 16–17**

وَأَنْشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَهِيَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاهِيَةٌ

وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ عَلَىٰ أَرْجَائِهَا ۗ وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَانِيَةٌ

***16. And the heavens shall be rent asunder, for that Day it shall be frail and shall collapse.***

***17. And the angels shall be on the sides of the heaven [and shall be prepared for assignments], and eight angels shall, on that Day, bear the Throne of your Lord above them.***

The blessed Verse 16 is saying that not only the mountains and the earth shall be shattered, but the heavens shall be rent asunder and be frail. Such awe inspiring even shall affect celestial spheres and bodies, since they shall be shattered, scattered, and rent asunder in spite of their previous firmness.

It is mentioned elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an<sup>6</sup>:

*"Then, when the heaven shall be rent asunder and it shall be rosy like molten oil."*

In other words, the earth and the heaven shall be destroyed and instead another world, far better, exalted, and perfect, shall be established on the ruins.

The blessed Verse 17 says:

***"And the angels shall be on the sides of the heaven."***

The Arabic nominal form arja' is the plural form of raja' denoting "side." The singular nominal form malak ("angel") connotes plurality, as if on that Day, the angels shall be prepared like agents surrounding a field to receive orders to fulfill some assignment. They seemingly stand in lines surrounding the heavens expecting the Commands of the Truth.

The blessed Verse proceeds to say that

***"eight angels shall, on that Day, bear the Throne of your Lord above them."***

Such bearers of the Divine Throne are not explicitly specified to be angels or otherwise, but the contextual meaning of the blessed Verse reflects that they are angels, though it is not specified whether they are eight angels or eight small or large groups of them.

According to Islamic traditions, the bearers of the Divine Throne are four angels or four groups of them, but the number shall be twofold on the Day of Resurrection. In this vein, it is narrated from the Noble Prophet of the Islamic faith (S) that now they are four in number, though they shall be reinforced by a twofold increase thus making eight of them.<sup>7</sup>

What is the Divine Throne and who are these angels?

The Arabic word

***'arsh ("throne")***

does not herein denote a royal and hence material throne, but as it was mentioned above on the explanation of the word, it connotes the constituents of the world of existence as the Throne of Divine Sovereignty whose affairs are being fulfilled by the angels.

It would be of interest to make mention of a tradition as per which the eight bearers of Divine Throne on the Day of Resurrection will be four angels from the first ones and four from the last ones. The first four consist of Prophets Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (as) and the last ones are Muhammad (S), 'Ali, Hasan, and Husayn (as).<sup>8</sup>

The expression may reflect their exalted rank of intercession with God Almighty for the first and the last time, though interceding with God Almighty shall be on the behalf of those deserving the same; however, such interpretation reflects the semantically broad scope of the word

**"Throne."**

Now, if the eight bearers of the Divine Throne be eight groups, it may be the case that groups of angels and those of the Prophets and Friends of God Almighty be vested to fulfill the task. Thus, the affairs of the Day of Resurrection shall be vested with the angels and the Prophets, though they shall all rest on Divine Command.

It is needless to say, however, that the events to befall on the Day of Resurrection may not be precisely known to us let alone the affairs of the bearers of the Divine Throne on that Day to us, the inhabitants of this limited and shadowy world. It would suffice to say that we merely behold the reflections from afar in the light of Divine Signs and Verses, though the Truth about such affairs shall be perceived on that Day.

## **Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 18-24**

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَىٰ مِنْكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ فَيَقُولُ هَٰؤُلَاءِ أقرءوا كِتَابِيَهٗ

إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلَاقٍ حِسَابِيَهٗ

فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ

فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ

قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ

## كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْخَالِيَةِ

18. *That Day shall everyone be brought to Divine Threshold, not a secret of you shall be veiled.*
19. *Then, as for him who shall carry his Record in his right hand shall say [happily and proudly]: "Here! Read my Record!"*
20. *Certainly, I did believe that there shall be the Resurrection Day and I shall meet my Record of Deeds!"*
21. *So he shall be in a life, well-pleasing.*
22. *In a lofty Paradise,*
23. *The fruits in bunches whereof shall near at hand.*
24. *Eat and drink at ease for the deeds you did in days past!*

It was mentioned above under the preceding blessed Verses that

### ***"blowing into the Trumpet"***

shall occur twice.

Upon the first blowing, all animate entities shall die and the world of existence shall perish; though it shall be upon the second that a new world shall be created and mankind and angels shall be revived.

As mentioned above, the opening of the blessed Verses reflect the first blowing where as the close thereof is indicative of the second. Proceeding with the same issue, the blessed Verses in question open by saying that on that Day, you shall be all brought before God Almighty and none of our deeds shall be concealed.

The passive verbal form

### ***tu'radhun ("you shall be presented")***

derives from '–r–dh denoting present or show something in commercial transactions or otherwise.

It is worthy of note that men and other creatures are permanently before Divine Threshold, though it shall be reflected with further clarity on the Day of Resurrection. For instance, Divine Sovereignty over the world of existence is everlasting, though such Sovereignty shall be in utmost clarity on that Day.

The clause

### ***"not a secret of you shall be veiled"***

may reflect that the secrets shall be revealed on that Day, as it is mentioned elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an9:

***"The Day when all the secrets shall be revealed,"***

thus disclosing all secret deeds, characters, and intentions.

Some Qur'an exegetes maintain that such event shall be even far greater than the shattering of the mountains and rending asunder of celestial spheres and bodies, since it shall be the Day of utter disgrace for the evil doers and unrivaled honor and glory for the believers, when men shall appear with disclosed secrets and intentions and nothing shall be concealed from anyone on that Day. It may so make a reference to Divine Omniscience on that Day. God Almighty knows best.

Thus, the blessed Verse 19 says:

***"Then, as for him who shall carry his Record in his right hand shall say [happily and proudly]:  
"Here! Read my Record!"***

He is seemingly quite happy that he is granted innumerable Bounties and Guidance.

He is totally grateful and utters

***"Praise be to Allah."***

Summarizing his greatest glory, in the blessed Verse 20 he says:

***"Certainly, I did believe that there shall be the Resurrection Day and I shall meet my Record of Deeds!"***

The Arabic past verbal form

***thanantu ("I did certainly believe")***

reflects that such person is saying that he has been rewarded Divine Bounties for his certitude regarding the Day of Resurrection.

It is true that belief in reckoning of the deeds on the Day of Resurrection imbues man with the spirit of fearing God Almighty and feeling the responsibility vested with him. It is the most significant factor in man's spiritual growth.

Some of these Divine Rewards are enumerated in the following blessed Verse 21:

***"So he shall be in a life, well-pleasing."***

Everything is included in the blessed Verse, though further clarification is to be found in the blessed Verse 22:

***"In a lofty Paradise..."***

so exalted that it is unimaginable, unseen, and unheard.

The blessed Verse 23 says:

***"The fruits in bunches whereof shall near at hand,"***

by which it is intended to say that there shall be no toil in picking the fruits, nor shall be any impediment to approaching the fruitful trees. All Divine Bounties shall be accessible to the people of Paradise. The Arabic word qutuf denotes picked fruit.

The blessed Verse 24 includes an affectionate address to the people of Paradise by God Almighty, saying:

***"Eat and drink at ease for the deeds you did in days past!"***

The point is that all these great Divine Bounties are well-measured bestowed upon people for their deeds done in this world and sent in advance. It is noteworthy of such insignificant deeds entail such Rewards in the light of Divine Graciousness and Mercy.

It is reflected in numerous traditions that the blessed Verse 19 concerns Imam 'Ali or him and his followers, though it is one of the obvious implications of the blessed Verse whose contextual meaning may not be restricted in semantic scope.

## **Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 25-29**

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِشِمَالِهِ فَيَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُوتَ كِتَابِيهِ

وَلَمْ أُدْرِ مَا حِسَابِيهِ

يَا لَيْتَهَا كَانَتِ الْقَاضِيَةَ

مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّي مَالِيهِ

## هَلَاكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيَّةٌ

**25. But as for him who shall be given his Record in his left hand, he shall say: "I wish that I had not been given my Record!"**

**26. And that I had never known how my Account is!**

**27. "Would that it had been my end!"**

**28. "My wealth has not availed me;**

**29. "My power has gone from me!"**

The preceding blessed Verses treated of the people of the right hand (ashab yamin) whose record of deeds shall be given to their right hands proudly calling the people on the Day of Resurrection, requesting them to read their records, and finding their abode in the everlasting Paradise. Nonetheless, the blessed Verses in question treat of their opposites, i.e. the people of the left hand. A comparison between the two groups may shed further light on their situations.

The blessed Verse 25 is saying that one whose record of deeds will be given in his left hand will say:

*"I wish I had never been given my record of deeds!"*

According to the following blessed Verse, he will say:

*"I wish I had never been aware of my reckoning."*

It is in the blessed Verse 27 that he says:

**"Would that it had been my end!"**

He intends to say that thus he could put an end to his dire fate. Such person, upon witnessing that all his past vices are disclosed, cries regretfully on that Day of Disclosure (yawm al-buruz), the Day of Uncovering (yawm al-thuhur) and wishes that he could totally sever his ties with his vicious past. He wishes that God Almighty would put an end to his miserable life and thereby deliver him from such ignominious fate.

The same theme is also reflected elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an<sup>10</sup>:

**"We have warned you against an imminent torment; the Day when man shall see that [the record of his deeds] which his hands have sent forth and the disbeliever shall say: "Woe unto me! Would that I were dust [and never a man]!"**

According to the blessed Verses 28 and 29, he will say:

**"[Not only] has my wealth not availed me, but also my power has gone from me!"**

In short, neither wealth nor high positions shall be of any avail on that Day, since such miserable creatures shall stand with utmost ignominy and disgrace before Divine Just Tribunal. There shall be no source of aspiration, nor any means of deliverance from such dire fate.

The Arabic noun *sultan* used in the blessed Verse 29 is taken by some Qur'an exegetes in the sense of an argument leading to victory, namely the people of the left hand shall not be able to produce an argument to justify their past deeds before Divine Threshold.

Some exegetes also maintain that sovereignty and rule are not intended by *sultan* herein, since all the people who set foot in Hell were not rulers and *sultans*, but the word is indicative of checking one's self and having control over one's life. At any rate, the blessed Verses in question serve as lessons for those relying on wealth and positions despite having been entangled with vanity, neglect, and sins.

*O Lord, do not chastise us for our deeds!*

## Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 30-37

خُذُوهُ فَعَلُّوهُ

ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمِ صَلُّوهُ

ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ

إِنَّهُ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ

وَلَا يَحْضُرُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ

فَلَيْسَ لَهُ الْيَوْمَ هَاهُنَا حَمِيمٌ

وَلَا طَعَامَ إِلَّا مِنْ غِسْلِينَ

لَا يَأْكُلُهُ إِلَّا الْخَاطِئُونَ

- 30. [It shall be said:] "Seize him and fetter him;**  
**31. Then, throw him into Hell.**  
**32. "Then, fasten him with a chain whereof the length is seventy cubits!"**  
**33. He used not to believe in Allah, the Most Great,**  
**34. And urged not people to feed the poor.**  
**35. So no intimate friend has he here on this Day to protect him,**  
**36. Nor any food except pus and blood.**  
**37. None shall eat the food except the sinners.**

Resuming the treatment of the state of the people of left hand who receive their record of deeds in their left hand and moan and wish they had been dead, the blessed Verses in question make a reference to some of their torments on the Day of Resurrection. According to the blessed Verse 30, the angels of torment are commanded to seize and fetter him.

The Arabic verbal form

**ghuluhu ("fetter him")**

derives from gh-l-l ("fetter, shackle"). The angels are ordered in the following blessed Verse to throw him into hellfire.

The blessed Verse 32 says:

**"Then, fasten him with a chain whereof the length is seventy cubits!"**

The Arabic nominal for silsila denoting chain is cognate with tasalsul denotes trembling and shivering, since chains tremble and move.

The expression

**"seventy cubits"**

may connote multiplicity and multitude, since the number seventy oftentimes implies large quantity and massive amount. It may have been used in its literal sense. At any rate, on that Day, sinners shall be shackled by such long chains thereby enwrapping them.

Some Qur'an exegetes maintain that such long chains are not for individual sinners but each group will be fettered by one chain. Such chastisement following a reference to shackles and fetters stands in further conformity with the preceding blessed Verses.

The Arabic word dhira' denotes the length of finger tips to the elbow which equals approximately half a meter. Such natural unit of measurement was used by Arabs.

Nonetheless, some exegetes hold that such dhira' is different from commonly used units, such that the former is applied to far lengthier units and all the people of the Hell shall be fettered by the same. It is worthy of note, once again, that the affairs of the Day of Resurrection may not be fully depicted by us, the inhabitants of this world, though they are dimly depicted by Qur'anic Verses and traditions.

The Arabic adverbial form thumma herein reflects that following being thrown into Hell, the sinners shall be entangled with a chain measuring seventy cubits as another chastisement for them whose causes are enumerated in the following two blessed Verses, namely 33 and 34, saying:

***"He used not to believe in Allah, the Most Great, and urged not people to feed the poor."***

Despite being called by Messengers to believe in Allah, they belied them and thereby had severed their ties with their Maker.

The blessed Verse 34 is saying that they did not urge people to feed the needy and thus they had severed their ties with creatures. Thus, the main cause of their misery lies in the severance of ties with the Creator and the Creation.

The expression explicitly reflects that the majority of religious obligations, devotions, and injunctions may be summarized in the twain, thereby indicating the extraordinary significance of feeding the poor and the dependence of such great and humane act upon faith. In this vein, it is said that disbelief in the worst of beliefs and niggardliness is the worst of vices.

It is worthy of note that it is said:

***"he did not urge others to feed"***

rather than he did not feed, reflecting that firstly, feeding one in need may never solve the problems of the needy, but others are supposed to be urged to act likewise such that it turns into a customary practice to feed the poor and those in need; secondly, one may not afford to feed the needy but he may be capable of urging others to act accordingly; thirdly, the niggardly are not only unwilling to offer others some of their possessions, but they are uninterested in other people's liberality and generosity.

The blessed Verses 35 and 36 say:

***"So no intimate friend has he here on this Day to protect him, nor any food except pus and***

**blood."**

It is noteworthy that their deeds and chastisements stand in total conformity. It is owing to severing their ties with their Maker that they may not find any intimate friends there. Likewise, they are fed but pus and blood, since they refrained from feeding the needy in this world but they ate the most delicious food themselves.

In his Mufradat, Raghib says that the Arabic word ghislin denotes the water by which the disbelievers wash their bodies in Hell, but it is commonly accepted that the word is applied to the pus and blood oozing from the bodies of the people of Hell and Raghib might have intended the same.

The word

***ta'am*** ("**food**")

stands in conformity with the same sense.

The blessed Verse 37 says:

***"None shall eat the food except the sinners."***

Some exegetes maintain that the Arabic word khati' is applied to one who intentionally commits vices, but mukhatti' is one who intentionally or inadvertently commits evil deeds. Thus, such food served in Hell is for those who intentionally disobey God Almighty and tread the path of polytheism, disbelief and niggardliness.

In this vein, Sa'sa'a ibn Suhan, a companion of Imam 'Ali (as), is reported as saying:

*"An Arab came unto 'Ali (as) inquiring about the meaning of the blessed Verse*

***"None shall eat the food except the sinners,"***

*though instead of*

***khati'un*** ("**sinners**"),

*he said khatun ("walker, wayfarer").*

*Thus, he inquired:*

*"All people walk, but shall they be served the same food by Allah?"*

*The Noble Imam (as) replied smilingly:*

*"O Arab! The accurate form is khati'un ("sinners").*

The Arab asked:

"You are true. O Commander of the Faithful! Allah never chastises those who have not sinned."

The Noble Imam turned toward Abu al-Aswad who was a man of letters and said:

"Non-Arabs have converted to the Islamic faith. Take measures so that they may improve their knowledge of Arabic. Thus, Abu al-Aswad introduced nominative, accusative, and genitive markers (raf', nasb, jarr). 11

## Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 38-43

فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِمَا تُبْصِرُونَ

وَمَا لَا تُبْصِرُونَ

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ ۗ قَلِيلًا مَّا تُؤْمِنُونَ

وَلَا بِقَوْلِ كَاهِنٍ ۗ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَذَكَّرُونَ

تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

38. So, I swear by whatever you see,

39. And by whatever you see not,

40. That this Qur'an is the word of a noble Messenger.

41. It is not the word of a poet. Little is that you believe!

**42. Nor is it the word of a soothsayer. Little is that you remember!**

**43. But this is the word sent down by the Lord of the worlds.**

Resuming the discussions mentioned in the preceding blessed Verses regarding Resurrection and the fates of the believers and disbelievers, the blessed Verses in question clearly treat of the Holy Qur'an and Prophetic Call, so that the discussions on Prophetic Call and Resurrection complement each other.

The blessed Verses 38 and 39 say:

***"I swear by whatever you see and by whatever you see not."***

It is commonly held that the Arabic particle *la* in such instances are non-lexical and emphatic. Instances of swearing by Allah's Name and otherwise abound in the Holy Qur'an.

The clauses

***"what you see and what you see not"***

are of a broad semantic scope embracing whatever is seen or not seen by mankind. In other words, it encompasses all the world of "intuitive perception" and the "unseen."

Qur'an exegetes have suggested other possibilities regarding the exegesis of the twain blessed Verses, e.g.

***"what you see"***

and

***"what you see not"***

make references to the world of creation and the Creator, outward and inward Bounties, mankind and angels, bodies and spirits, or this world and the Hereafter. However, as it was mentioned above, the broad semantic range of the twain impedes the restriction of its contextual meaning.

Therefore, the visible and the invisible are embraced by the oath, though its reference to God Almighty is rather a remote possibility, since juxtaposition of the Creator and the creation would rather be unbecoming, particularly owing to the fact that the Arabic particle *ma* is applied to insensible beings.

It is worthy of note, however, that the expression clearly reflects that many a thing may not be seen by the outward eyes. Modern science supports the argument as per which intelligible constitute a limited number of entities and what lies beyond the horizon of perception, e.g. colors, sounds, tastes, and waves, exceed further in terms of number.

Astronomers maintain that approximately five thousand celestial bodies are visible, though the invisible

bodies exceed billions in number. The sound waves audible to man are limited, but there are thousands of sound waves inaudible to mankind. The colors perceptible to us are seven in number, though it is a proven fact that innumerable color spectra of ultraviolet and infrared imperceptible to human eyes.

Likewise, the world is imbued with innumerable microscopic organisms thousands of which are contained in a drop of water. It would be quite unfortunate to be confined in the perceptible world unaware of or belying what lies beyond perception. The world of spirits, proven by rational and even experiential proofs, constitutes an expanse far greater than our physical world. Thus, how may one confine himself within the perceptible world?

The blessed Verse 40 treats of the apodosis of such great and unique oath, saying that this Qur'an is the word of a noble Messenger (S). The Arabic word *rasul* herein indubitably connotes the Noble Prophet of the Islamic faith (S) rather than Gabriel, since the following blessed Verse is clearly indicative of such implication.

We know that the Holy Qur'an is the Word of God Almighty, but the Noble Prophet (S) is the one who imparted it, hence the emphasis laid on his Prophetic Call. Thus, the Divine Message is conveyed by the Noble Prophet of the Islamic faith (S).

The blessed Verse 41 is saying that this Qur'an is not the word of a poet, though little is that you believe.

The next blessed Verse says:

***"Nor is it the word of a soothsayer. Little is that you remember!"***

These two blessed Verses refute the unfounded ascriptions to the Noble Prophet (S) by the polytheists and opponents in alleging that he is a poet and the Qur'anic Verses are poetry. They also claimed at times that he was a soothsayer intending to say that he was in contact with jinn and devils to whom they revealed the secrets of the unseen by words embellished by rhythm and rhyme.

By such unfounded claims they meant that the Qur'an contained intelligence regarding the unseen and it was adorned with rhythmical sentences. They were unaware of the fact that the words of the Noble Prophet (S) and those of soothsayers and poets were essentially different in nature.

It is also noteworthy that the clauses

***"Little is that you believe!"***

and

***"Little is that you remember!"***

herein ensure those who witness Divine Revelation through its clear tokens but call it poetry and poetry and fail to believe in it.

The blessed Verse 43 lays particular emphasis on the same by saying that this Qur'an is revealed by the Lord of the worlds, hence it is neither poetry, nor soothsaying, nor the product of the Noble Prophet's (S) thought, nor the word of Gabriel, but it is Divine Revelation sent down unto the pure heart of the Noble Prophet (S).

There are eleven Qur'anic attestations of the same theme with slight variations. It is also worthy of note that the Holy Qur'an was revealed in time, since the Arabic word tanzil implies the Revelation of the Holy Qur'an in time in its entirety within a period of twenty three years following its Revelation in its entirety unto the Noble Prophet's (S) heart on the night of Ordainment (qadr) wherewith Divine Injunctions were imparted to the people through the Noble Prophet of the Islamic faith (S).

## Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 44-47

وَلَوْ تَقَوَّلَ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضَ الْأَقَاوِيلِ

لَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُ بِالْيَمِينِ

ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنْهُ الْوَتِينَ

فَمَا مِنْكُمْ مِّنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حَاجِزِينَ

**44. And if he had forged a false saying concerning Us,**

**45. We would have certainly seized him,**

**46. And We would have certainly cut off his artery,**

**47. And none of you could have withheld Us from [chastising] him nor could he render him support.**

The Arabic verbal form

**taqawwala** ("he had forged a saying")

connotes false ascription of words. Watin the life artery and if it is severed, man will die instantly.

## **"Seizing by the right hand"**

connotes power, since the right hand is stronger than the left hand. The point raised herein is that when God Almighty mentions such Words about His Messenger, others are supposed to take lessons and stand in awe as to their words and deeds.

At any rate, resuming the discussions on the Holy Qur'an, the four blessed Verses in question (44–47) produce original evidence as to the originality of the Holy Qur'an as Divine Revelation, saying that had the Noble Prophet (S) had forged false sayings concerning God Almighty, He would have certainly seized him forcefully severing his life artery and no human being would have been able to impede the same nor could have anyone render him aid.

The Arabic nominal form hajizin is the plural for of hajiz ("impediment, obstacle").

## **Surah al-Haqqa – Verses 48–52**

وَإِنَّهُ لَتَذْكُرَةٌ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ

وَإِنَّا لَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مِنْكُمْ مُكَذِّبِينَ

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَسْرَةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ الْيَقِينِ

فَسَبِّحْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ

**48. And this is a Reminder for the God fearing.**

**49. And We know that there are some amongst you that belie it,**

**50. And it shall entail regret for the disbelievers.**

**51. And it is an absolute truth with certitude.**

**52. Thus, glorify the Name of your Lord, the Most Great.**

The blessed Verse 48 further emphasizes that the Holy Qur'an is certainly some admonition to the God fearing, since they are prepared to be absolved of their sins and tread the path of Truth, since they seek the Truth. However, those who have not attained to such degree of fearing God Almighty may never avail themselves of Qur'anic teachings. The profound and extraordinary impression engendered by the Holy Qur'an serves as further evidence of its veracity.

The blessed Verse 49 is saying that God Almighty is All-Aware that some people belie Divine Revelation, though such obdurate denial may never affect its veracity, since the God fearing and seekers of Truth are reminded by it and notice the reflection of Divine Signs in it and thereby tread steadfastly on the Path of Allah.

Thus, in the same manner that availing oneself of some brilliant light requires opening one's eyes, one is supposed to open up his heart in order to avail oneself of the Light of the Holy Qur'an.

The blessed Verse 50 is saying that the Holy Qur'an shall lead to the disbelievers' regret. They belie it today, but tomorrow, on the Day of Emergence or Day of Disclosure, which is the Day of Regret, they shall comprehend that they have lost such great Bounty owing to their obduracy and have thereby caused so many excruciating torments for themselves. They shall compare the exalted positions of the believers and their disgrace and shall regret, biting their own hands in a rage.

The same motive is attested elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an<sup>12</sup>:

***"And remember the Day when the wrong doer shall bite at his hands, saying: 'Would that I had taken a path with the Messenger.'"***

Impeding others from falsely imagining that entertaining doubts or belying of the opponents have a touch of certainty on their side, the blessed Verse 51 says:

***"And it is an absolute truth with certitude."***

The Arabic term

***haqq al-yaqin ("absolute truth")***

is regarded by some Qur'an exegetes as a genitive construction denoting reference to oneself, since the Truth is the essence of certitude ('ayn al-yaqin) and vice versa; as it is said masjid al-jami' ("mosque of congregation") and yawm al-khamis ("the fifth day, i.e. Thursday") which are instances of appositive genitive (idhafa bayaniyya).

However, it would be further befitting the contextual meaning to say that it is an instance of the relation between the qualified and the qualifier. In other words, the Holy Qur'an is Absolute Certitude. Certitude

consists of different degrees, at times engendered by rational arguments, an instance of which is some smoke observed from afar engendering the certitude as to the existence of fire, despite not having seen the fire per se.

This is termed knowledge by certitude (‘ilm al-yaqin). We may at times approach the fire and perceive its flames through our visual sense and thereby reinforce our certitude, which is termed the essence of certitude (‘ayn al-yaqin).

We may even approach further and touch the flames and thereby attain to a higher degree of certitude, termed haqq al-yaqin ("absolute truth"). Now, the blessed Verse in question is saying that the Holy Qur’an is of the last type of certitude, i.e. absolute truth, though it is denied by those blind in their hearts.

The blessed Verse 52 which is the closing Verse of the Chapter is saying that thus, glorify your Lord the Greatest and glorify him of any defect or flaw. It is worthy of note that the Holy Qur’an is depicted by four Attributes: it is sent down by the Lord of the Words; it is a Reminder for the God fearing; it leads disbelievers to regret their lost opportunities; and it is the absolute Truth. They address everybody, the God fearing, the disbelievers, and those close to God Almighty respectively.

Now, let us turn toward a few traditions concerning the greatness and significance of glorification.

According to a Prophetic tradition:

*"One of the most loved words before God Almighty is to say: 'Praise be to my Lord Who is Glorified.'"13*

It is narrated from the Noble Prophet (S) as saying:

*"One who glorifies God Almighty thirty times a times, He will remove seventy kinds of afflictions from him the least of which is poverty. 14*

In this vein, the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali (as) is reported as saying:

*"Saying 'Glorified is Allah' fills half of the scale of deeds, saying 'Praise be to Allah' brims the scale of deeds, and saying 'Allah is the Greatest' fills the distance between the heaven and the earth.'"15*

It is narrated from Allah’s Messenger (S) as saying:

*"One who utters 'Glorified is the Great Allah and Praised is He' makes a palm tree grow for him in Paradise."16*

It is also narrated from Allah’s Messenger (S) on the authority of ‘À’isha that Allah’s Messenger (S), before his demise, repeatedly uttered:

*"O Lord! Glorified are You! I praise You and ask You for forgiveness."17*

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1. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan, under the blessed Chapter in question.
  2. Ibid.
  3. 40:45
  4. 'Ali ibn Ibrahim's exegetic work, vol. 2, p. 383.
  5. Tafsir Qurtubi, vol. 10, p. 6743; Abu al-Futuh Razi's exegetic work as well as others, e.g. Majma' al-Bayan, Ruh al-Bayan, Ruh al-Ma'ani, and al-Mizan, under the blessed Verses in question. The tradition is quoted by Ibn Maghazili Shafi'i.

(Islamiyya edition, p. 265)

In this vein, 16 traditions are to be found in Ghayat al-Maram on the authority of Sunni and Shi'i transmitters. In his Tafsir al-Burhan, Muhaddith Bahrani, on the authority of Muhammad ibn 'Abbas, reports that 30 traditions have been narrated in this vein through Sunni and Shi'i transmission sources.

It is the great merit of the great leader of the Islamic faith, Imam 'Ali (as), that he was the treasury of the Noble Prophet's (S) secrets and the inheritor of his knowledge in its entirety.

Consequently, following the sad demise of Allah's Messenger (S), his proponents and opponents found in him a safe haven upon encountering scholarly issues in the Muslim community and asked him to provide them with solutions whose accounts are reported in details in historical sources.

6. 55:37
7. 'Ali ibn Ibrahim's exegetic work, vol. 2, p. 384.
8. Tafsir Majma' al-Bayan, vol. 10, p. 346.
9. 86:9
10. 78:40
11. Jalal al-Din Suyuti, Tafsir Durr al-Manthur, vol. 6, p. 263.
12. 25:27
13. Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. 1, p. 466.
14. Saduq's Amali, p. 55.
15. Makarim al-Akhlaq, p. 309.
16. Kanz al-'Ummal, vol. 1, p. 459.
17. Muslim's Sahih, vol. 1, p. 351.

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