

4.5 Qiyamah (Day of Resurrection) and Accountability to Allah (SWT)

Two striking and miraculous events revealed in the Qur'an testify unambiguously to the occurrence of the traumatic event of Qiyamah or Day of Resurrection. One is the story of the Companions of the Caves who were put to sleep for over 300 years and brought back to life Surah Al-Kahaf(Chapter 18).The other is the story of Uzair (Ezra), who woke up after sleeping one hundred years. (Surah Baqah--Chapter 2:259):

Companions of the Cave:

The story of the companions of the cave is now an established historical fact mentioned even in Gibbon's "Decline and fall of the Roman Empire, Chapter 33 ." These Seven Christian companions were being persecuted by Roman pagans who in the first century AD had not yet converted to Christianity. These companions along with their dog escaped from persecution and hid themselves in the caves of Ephesus. It is located on the west coast of Turkey about 50 miles south of Smyrna. They were put to sleep for nearly 300 years and when they woke up, the Roman Kings had already converted to Christianity. This awakening after deep slumber for over 300 years reiterates the importance of the Day of Resurrection when all dead souls will be brought back to life to account for their deeds.(For details see Appendix 1, in Tafsir Majid Daryabadi Vol. III{English}, pages 65 to 69.)

The Story of Ozair (Ezra):

"Or take another example of the one Uzair (Ezra) who passed by a town, which had fallen down upon its roofs. He exclaimed "How can Allah bring this dead township back to life?" There upon Allah caused him to die and after one hundred years brought him back to life. Allah asked "How long did you remain here? Ezra replied "Perhaps a day or part of a day." Nay! You have remained here for over 100 years; now just have a look at your food and drink; they are not rotten; and then look at your donkey and see that his very bones have decayed. We have done this to make you a sign for mankind. Look to the bones of your donkey, how We bring them together, then clothe them with flesh

and bring him back to life! When this all was shown clearly to him, he said “Now I know Allah has power over everything.”(2: 259)

this verse described the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands Nebuchadnezzar in 599. Uzair wondered how a completely ruined city will ever be rebuilt and prosper again. Soon after he died and was brought back to life after 100 years and he witnessed a prosperous and flourishing Jerusalem full of life. These events should suffice to convince us that there will be a Day of Resurrection when all the dead will be brought back to life to account for their earthly deeds.

The Day of Resurrection and Accountability have been greatly emphasized in the Qur’an and no believer should have the slightest doubt about it. On this Day all dead bodies will be brought back to life and they will have to account for their deeds- good and bad. Those whose good deeds outweigh the bad deeds will be rewarded with a place in Heaven (Jannah) and those with preponderance of bad deeds will be punished in hell. The Qur’an categorically states that the entire mankind will be assembled together before Allah (SWT) on the Day of Resurrection: “Surely He will gather you together on the Day of Resurrection about which there is no doubt, And who is truer in statement than Allah” (An-Nisa 4:87). In another verse the Qur’an proclaims unambiguously that man will be produced before Allah to account for his deeds in this world. There should be no doubt about it, none whatsoever: “Did you think that We have created you without any purpose and that you would not be brought back to Us” to account for your deeds (Al-Muminun—23:115). That moment will certainly arrive.

Man Granted Free Will – No Predestination:

Man has been granted by Allah (SWT) capability to discern between right and wrong, good and bad. He, therefore, has the discretion to choose his own course of action. Consequently man has been made accountable for his earthly deeds. Allah (SWT) only shows the path to piety and warns against satanic deeds. This has been the role of all the Prophets also as “bearers of glad tidings and warners against evil deeds”. This is precisely the role of the Qur’an: “Verily, we showed him the way whether he be grateful or ungrateful” (Ad-Dahr- 76:3). In another verse the Qur’an categorically states that mankind has been shown to take two highways: one steep and difficult towards piety

and righteousness and the other easy one leading towards evil deeds. The choice has to be made by human beings. “And shown him two highways? But he has made no haste on the path that is steep” (Al-Balad – 90:10-11). The same point of full and free choice to human beings has been reiterated in another verse: “By the soul and the proportion or order given to it; and its inspiration as to its wrong or right. Truly he succeeds who purifies it and he fails who corrupts it” (Ah-Shams 91:7 to 10)

Adam and Eve were clearly warned to refrain from eating the fruit of a particular tree and not succumb to the temptations offered by the Satan. Despite warning Adam and Eve succumbed to Satanic temptations and were made to descend to Earth.

Man Constantly Under Divine Surveillance:

Human beings are constantly under surveillance of Allah and they are being continuously tested if they are doing good or bad deeds during their lifetime on earth. (Al-Mulk 67:2).

Nothing can be concealed from Him for “He is with you where-so-ever you may be. And Allah sees well all that you do” (Al-Hadid 57:4). “He is closer to us than our jugular veins” (Qaf – 50:16) Finally he has complete knowledge of all the secrets of the universe including the thoughts in the hearts of men. (Al-Fatir- 35:38)

All deeds of human beings are being continuously recorded by the Angels of Allah (SWT) (Al-Infitaar – 82:10 to 14). They will be preserved till eternity in the hard disc of the Divine Computer, to which no one has access and it cannot be erased. Eventually on the Day of Judgment a comprehensive and complete print out of each individual’s good and bad deeds will be presented to him/her to enable them to judge for themselves as to where they stand vis-à-vis Heaven and Hell. (al-Isra 17:13:14).

The Qur’an constantly warns that there is a purpose behind the creation of man, his existence on earth is for a limited period and eventually he will leave to account for his deeds before Allah (SWT) on the Day of Judgment. The following verses make it very clear and categorical:

“Did you then think that We had created you in jest, and that you would not be brought back to Us for account?” (Al-Muminun – 23:115)

Thus human beings should never ever ignore the fact that they will be raised again after their death: “in the end you will return to Him. Then He will show you the truth of all that you did.” (Al-Anam 6:60)

One must bear in mind that on the Day of Judgment the guilty will be punished. Neither their worldly status nor any amount of ransom, however large it may be, can save them from Hell-fire: “verily those who disbelieve, if they had all that is in the earth, and as much again therewith to ransom themselves thereby from the torment on the Day of Resurrection, it would never be accepted of them, and theirs would be a painful torment” (Al-Ma’diah – 5:36). There is no clause of the “Presidential Pardon” of the guilty in the Divine Law, which is just and fair to one and all without any discrimination. Qiyamah or Annihilation of the universe will be a catastrophic event of unimaginable magnitude when the whole universe will be in total commotion and all laws of universe will collapse. The mountains will be flattened into a plain surface; the earth will throw up its burden (Az-Zalzalah – 99: 1-2). The sun and the moon will be joined together (Al-Qiyamah 75: 8-9). And with a single blast the entire mankind since the days of Adam (PUBH) will be brought back to life (Ya’sin – 36:53)

The awakened mankind from their deep slumber of death will be collected together on the Day of Judgment (An Nisa 4:87). On that Day “The earth will shine with the glory of its Lord: the record of Deeds will be placed open, the Prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward; and a just decision will be pronounced between them and they will not be wronged (in the least). And every soul will be paid in full (the fruits of its deeds; and (Allah) knows best all that they do.” (Az-Zumar 39:69-70).

Hence in the final analysis we should be ever seeking the pleasure of Allah (SWT) and never deviate from the path of piety in the transitory life of this world in order to enjoy an eternal life of peace and harmony in the Heaven after death. This can be accomplished only if we are consistently in touch with the Qur’an, understand its meaning and significance and follow the path of piety and righteousness laid down in the Qur’an and Sunnah of the Prophet (saws).