

Sura 75: Al-Qiyama (The Resurrection)

In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy

Verses 1 to 40:

1. *I swear by the Day of Resurrection;*
2. *I swear by the self-reproaching soul.*
3. *Does humankind think that We cannot assemble his bones?*
4. *Yes, verily; We are able to reshape his very fingertips.*
5. *But humankind wants to deny what is ahead of him.*
6. *He asks, "When is the Day of Resurrection?"*
7. *So when the vision is dazzled,*
8. *And the moon is eclipsed,*
9. *And the sun and the moon are brought together;*
10. *On that day humankind will cry, "Where is the escape?"*
11. *By no means, there is no refuge.*
12. *With your Lord alone shall on that day be the final destination.*
13. *On that Day humankind will be informed of what he sent before and (what he) kept back.*
14. *Humankind will be a witness against himself,*
15. *Despite the excuses he will present.*
16. *Do not move your tongue with it to hasten with it.*
17. *It is upon Us to put it together and to recite it.*
18. *And when We recite it, follow its recitation.*
19. *It is for Us to explain it (and make it clear).*
20. *But you love the fleeting life,*
21. *And you disregard the Hereafter.*
22. *That Day some faces will be bright,*
23. *Looking towards their Lord;*
24. *And some faces, that Day, will be gloomy,*
25. *Knowing that a great calamity will befall them.*
26. *When it comes up to the throat,*
27. *And it is said, "Who is the healer?"*
28. *And he knows that it is (the time of) parting.*
29. *And when the legs are entwined together,*
30. *To your Lord on that Day shall be the drive;*
31. *For he neither accepted, nor prayed.*
32. *But he denied and turned back,*
33. *Then went he to his family, full of pride.*
34. *Woe to you, and woe.*
35. *Again, woe to you, and woe.*
36. *Does humankind think that he will be left aimless?*
37. *Was he not a drop of sperm emitted?*
38. *Then he became a leech-like clot; then God fashioned (him) in due proportion.*
39. *And made of him a pair, the male and the female.*
40. *Is not He able to give life to the dead? (75: 1 – 40)*

The short Sura amasses a huge amount of facts, emotions, images, and scenes that overwhelm the heart. The Sura starts with an oath, *“I swear by the Day of Resurrection; I swear by the self-reproaching soul.”* God takes an oath by the Day of Resurrection and by the self-reproaching soul. The nature of the self-reproaching soul needs to be explored. Different scholars had different interpretations for the term, “self-reproaching soul.” However, we chose the explanation provided by Al-Hassan Al-Basri. He said, *“The believer always reproaches himself for everything he does; what he says and what he eats. But the transgressor does not care about what he does.”* The self-reproaching soul is a soul which continuously examines its deeds and expresses its regret for the sins it committed. It is a soul which is always in state of alert, afraid of succumbing to human weaknesses.

The idolaters of Quraish always had a problem with the concept of resurrection. This verse addressed their doubts, *“Does humankind think that We cannot assemble his bones? Yes, verily; We are able to reshape his very fingertips.”* Not only God is able to bring their bones back together but He is also able to reshape their finger tips so that they get back their original finger prints. This is a figure of speech which indicates that God is capable of resurrecting humans and shaping them in a form which preserves all their minute physical details.

The idolaters denied the concept of the resurrection because they were transgressors; they resisted any force that tried to restrain their desires and whims, *“But humankind wants to deny what is ahead of him.”* The way they asked, *“When is the Day of Resurrection?”* indicates that they thought it was not going to happen. The response to their question was a quick and an unequivocal illustration of scenes for the events which take place on that Day, *“So when the vision is dazzled, and the moon is eclipsed, and the sun and the moon are brought together, on that day humankind will cry, ‘Where is the escape?’ By no means, there is no refuge. With your Lord alone shall on that Day be the final destination.”* Three phenomena will take place on the Day of Resurrection: the eyes will be dazed, the moon will be eclipsed, and the moon and the sun will be brought together. The astronomical system will be disrupted. The people will panic. They will look for an escape, but there will be no escape. Safety and security can only be found with God. On that Day, the people will be presented with their accounts of deeds. Each one will testify against his/her own self, *“On that day humankind will be informed of what he sent before and (what he) kept back. Humankind will be a witness against himself. Despite the excuses he will present.”*

The following four verses were addressed to the Prophet (PBUH) giving him instructions regarding how to receive the revelations, *“Do not move your tongue with it to hasten with it. It is upon Us to put it together and to recite it. And when We recite it, follow its recitation. It is for Us to explain it (and make it clear).”* In the beginning of his mission, the Prophet (PBUH) was worried that he will not be able to retain the Quran in his memory, as Gabriel (PBUH) was reciting it. God told him that he should not worry. God will make sure that he remembers the verses which Gabriel (PBUH) will recite to him. In addition, God promised to explain the meanings of its verses, so that the Prophet (PBUH) will understand what the verses mean.

The verses continue to describe the scenes of the Day of Resurrection, *“But you love the fleeting life, and you disregard the Hereafter. That Day some faces will be bright, looking towards their Lord; and some faces, that day, will be gloomy, knowing that a great calamity will befall them.”*

The verses reprimand the people for their love of the worldly life, ignoring the life of the Hereafter. The worldly life is only a fleeting life while the life of the Hereafter is the eternal life. On the Day of Resurrection there will be two groups of people. The group that worked for the Hereafter; their faces will be bright as they look towards their Lord. The people who preferred the fleeting life over the eternal life will have gloomy faces. They will be expecting a great calamity to befall them.

The narrative turns to another scene, the scene of a dying person, *“When it comes up to the throat; and it is said, “Who is the healer?” And he knows that it is (the time of) parting; and when the legs are entwined together, to your Lord on that day shall be the drive.”* When the soul reaches the throat, these will be the last moments of life. Those around the dying person will be trying to save him, *“Who is the healer?”* But there will be no healer. And when every method to save him has been tried and failed then he will be taken to the inevitable end. His deeds are then listed, *“For he neither accepted, nor prayed. But he denied and turned back, Then went he to his family, full of pride. Woe to you, and woe. Again, woe to you, and woe.”* It has been narrated that these verses referred to ‘Amr ibn Hesham (Abu Jahl). He used to assault the Prophet (PBUH) verbally and then go back to his family walking in arrogance. The verses mocked him and warned him of an evil ending.

Do people think that God created them in vain, *“Does humankind think that he will be left aimless? Was he not a drop of sperm emitted? Then he became a leech-like clot; then God fashioned (him) in due proportion; and made of him a pair, the male and the female.”* God created people to pursue certain objectives in life. This life is a period for humankind to be tested. Everyone will be held accountable for his/her deeds on the Day of Judgment. God created humankind from a drop of sperm. The verses then describe the stages of the development of the embryo. Finally, a well fashioned creature is born, sometimes it is a male and sometimes it is a female. Glory be to the Creator who created in the first instance. Is not He able to repeat the process again, *“Is not He able to give life to the dead?”*