

Sura 77: Al-Mursalat (Those Sent Forth)

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

Verses 1 to 50:

1. *By those sent forth one after another;*
2. *Which blow violently;*
3. *And scatter (things) far and wide.*
4. *Then separate them, one from another;*
5. *And those who bring down the reminder,*
6. *To excuse or to warn.*
7. *Surely that which you are promised will befall.*
8. *When the stars are obliterated;*
9. *When the heaven is rent asunder;*
10. *When the mountains are blown away;*
11. *And when the Messengers' time has come.*
12. *For what day was it postponed?*
13. *For the Day of Judgment.*
14. *And what will explain to you what the Day of Judgment is?*
15. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
16. *Did We not destroy the former people?*
17. *Then caused the latter people to follow after?*
18. *Thus, We deal with the guilty.*
19. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
20. *Did We not create you from a base fluid?*
21. *Then We placed it in a secure resting place;*
22. *For a known term.*
23. *We determine; how excellent We determine?*
24. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
25. *Did We not make the earth a home?*
26. *For the living and the dead.*
27. *And We made therein firm and lofty mountains; and provided for you sweet water to drink?*
28. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
29. *(It will be said,) "Go to that which you used to deny."*
30. *Go to a shadow having three columns;*
31. *Offering no shade, and is of no use against the flame.*
32. *Indeed, it throws about sparks like castles;*
33. *As if they were yellow camels.*
34. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
35. *That Day they will not speak;*
36. *Nor will they be given permission to apologize.*
37. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
38. *This is the Day of Judgment. We have gathered you with the former people.*
39. *If you have a plot, then use it against Me.*

40. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
41. *The righteous will be amidst shades and fountains,*
42. *And fruits as they desire.*
43. *(It will be said) Eat and drink to your heart's content for what you used to do.*
44. *This is how We reward the doers of good.*
45. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
46. *Eat and enjoy yourselves for a little while, surely you are guilty.*
47. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
48. *And when it was said to them, "Bow down in prayer," they do not bow down.*
49. *Woe on that Day to the deniers.*
50. *In what message, after this, will they believe? (77: 1 -50)*

This Sura has very stern features, violent scenes and severe rhythm. The verses are like whips of fire. They are like sharp arrows carrying a series of queries, threats, and warnings directed to the heart. The Sura presents scenes from both this life and the Hereafter. The main argument of the Sura is about the inevitability of the Day of Judgment. It uses a similar style to that used in Surat Al-Rahman (Chapter 55). The verse, "*Woe on that Day to the deniers,*" is repeated at the end of each scene to maximize the impact of the scene on the psyche.

"By those sent forth one after another; which blow violently; and scatter (things) far and wide; then separate them, one from another. And those who bring down the reminder, to excuse or to warn, surely that which you are promised will befall." The Sura starts with this strong oath which emphasizes the inevitability of the Day of Judgment. The issue has been dealt with in many places of the Quran to address the denial of the idolaters of Mecca and because the belief in the Day of Judgment is an integral part of the doctrine of Islam. The oath is made with matters of the unseen. The words used in the oath are ambiguous which seem to convey the message that the unseen is beyond people's knowledge.

It has been narrated that the reference in these verses is to the angels, while there are other narrations which indicate that the reference is to the wind.

The verses then describe some of the terrifying scenes of the Day of Judgment, *"When the stars are obliterated; when the heaven is rent asunder; when the mountains are blown away; and when the Messengers' time has come. For what day was it postponed? for the Day of Judgment. And what will explain to you what the Day of Judgment is? Woe on that Day to the deniers."* These scenes were also mentioned in other places of the Quran. They all refer to the chaos that will occur on the Day of Judgment. All the cosmic phenomena that we are familiar with will be disturbed. This is the Day of Judgment, the Day which was appointed for the reckoning. This will be a terrifying day for those who denied the Message.

Some of the scenes from the history of humanity are then given, *"Did We not destroy the former people? Then caused the latter people to follow after? Thus We deal with the guilty. Woe on that Day to the deniers."*

Then the miracle of creation is reiterated, *“Did We not create you from a base fluid? Then We placed it in a secure resting place, for a known term, We determine; how excellent We determine? Woe on that Day to the deniers.”* God has determined everything according to a meticulous plan.

The verses take us on a tour of the earth, *“Did We not make the earth a home? For the living and the dead, and We made therein firm and lofty mountains; and provided for you sweet water to drink? Woe on that Day to the deniers.”* Did We not make the earth a home for people, during their lives and after their death? Did We not establish these huge firm mountains? These are matters that need power, planning and wisdom. How can they still deny?

The verses move to the scenes of the Day of Judgment, *“(It will be said,) ‘Go to that which you used to deny. Go to a shadow having three columns, offering no shade, and is of no use against the flame. Indeed, it throws about sparks like castles. As if they were yellow camels.’ Woe on that Day to the deniers.”* Go and seek that which you have denied before, you will see it in front of your eyes. It is the shadow of the smoke of the fire of Hell. Its flames are composed of three tongues. It is a shadow that does not provide shade, nor does it protect from the heat of the flame. It throws huge sparks like houses built of stone; one follows the other as if they were running camels.

“That Day they will not speak. Nor will they be given permission to apologize. Woe on that Day to the deniers.” On that Day they will neither be permitted to speak, nor will they be allowed to make excuses for their sins. As if it is said to them, you have been gathered today to receive the judgment for your deeds not to make excuses, *“This is the Day of Judgment. We have gathered you with the former people. If you have a plot, then use it against Me. Woe on that Day to the deniers.”* If you can still plot and scheme then bring it about your schemes.

The narrative turns to the side of the righteous, *“The righteous will be amidst shades and fountains; and fruits as they desire. (It will be said) Eat and drink to your heart's content for what you used to do. This is how We reward the doers of good. Woe on that Day to the deniers.”* They will enjoy food and drink and gardens with shade and springs. This is the reward for the good deeds that they used to do.

The narrative turned to address the guilty in this life, *“Eat and enjoy yourselves for a little while, surely you are guilty. Woe on that Day to the deniers.”* They can eat and drink in this fleeting life but it will only be temporary. The scenes of the Hereafter and the worldly life alternate as well as the address to the believers and the deniers. The juxtaposition of the two states brings forward the contradiction between them.

“And when it was said to them, “Bow down in prayer,” they do not bow down. Woe on that Day to the deniers. In what message, after this, will they believe?”

