

The Tafsīr of Sūrah Idhā Zulzilat (Az-Zalzalah) (Chapter - 99)

Which was revealed in Makkah

The Virtues of Sūrat Az-Zalzalah

Imām Aḥmad recorded from ‘Abdullāh bin ‘Amr that he said, “A man came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and said, ‘Teach me what to recite, O Messenger of Allāh!’ The Prophet ﷺ said,

«أَقْرَأْ ثَلَاثًا مِنْ ذَوَاتِ الرَّ»

«Recite three from those [which begin] with the letters Alif, Lām, Rā»

The man then said to him, ‘I have become old in age, my heart has hardened and my tongue has become harsh.’ The Prophet ﷺ said,

«فَأَقْرَأْ مِنْ ذَوَاتِ حَمْ»

«Then recite from those [which begin] with the letters Hā-Mīm.»

The man said the same thing as he had said before, so the Prophet ﷺ said,

«أَقْرَأْ ثَلَاثًا مِنَ الْمُسَبَّحَاتِ»

«Recite three from the Mūsābbihāt.»

The man again said the same thing as he had said before. Then the man said, ‘Rather give me something to recite that is comprehensive (of all of these), O Messenger of Allāh.’ So the Prophet ﷺ told him to recite

﴿إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا﴾

«When the earth quakes with its Zilzāl.»

Then when he (the Prophet ﷺ) finished reciting the Sūrah to

him the man said, 'By He Who has sent you with the truth as a Prophet, I will never add anything else to it.' Then the man turned away and left, and the Prophet ﷺ said,

«أَفْلَحَ الرُّوَيْجِلُ، أَفْلَحَ الرُّوَيْجِلُ»

«The little man has been successful, the little man has been successful.»

Then the Prophet ﷺ said,

«عَلَيَّ بِهِ»

«Bring him back to me.»

So the man came to him and the Prophet ﷺ said to him,

«أَمَرْتُ بِيَوْمِ الْأَضْحَى جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ عِيدًا لِهَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ»

«I have also been commanded to celebrate 'Id Al-Adhā, which Allāh has made a celebration for this Ummah.»

The man said 'What do you think if I am only able to acquire a borrowed milking she-camel – should I slaughter it?' The Prophet ﷺ said,

«لَا، وَلَكِنَّكَ تَأْخُذُ مِنْ شَعْرِكَ وَتَقْلَمُ أَظْفَارَكَ وَتَقْصُ شَارِبَكَ وَتَخْلِقُ عَانَتَكَ فَذَاكَ تَمَامُ أَضْحِيَّتِكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ»

«No. But you should cut your hair, clip your nails, trim your mustache, shave your pubic area and that will be the completion of your sacrifice with Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic.»^[1] Abu Dāwud and An-Nasā'ī recorded this Ḥadīth.^[2]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

﴿إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا﴾ ① وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا ② وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا ③ يَوْمَئِذٍ تُخْبِتُ أَعْيَارَهَا ④ بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا ⑤ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصْدُرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا لِيُرَوْا أَعْمَلُهُمْ ⑥ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ⑦ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ⑧

[1] Aḥmad 2:169. The majority consider this to be authentic. Al-Albānī said that the status of one of its narrators is not known. The rest of the scholars who commented on him consider him trustworthy.

[2] Abu Dāwud 2:119, and An-Nasā'ī in *Al-Kubrā* 16:5.



- ﴿1. When the earth quakes with its Zilzāl.﴾
- ﴿2. And when the earth throws out its burdens.﴾
- ﴿3. And man will say: "What is the matter with it?"﴾
- ﴿4. That Day it will declare its information.﴾
- ﴿5. Because your Lord will inspire it.﴾
- ﴿6. That Day mankind will proceed in scattered groups that they may be shown their deeds.﴾
- ﴿7. So, whosoever does good equal to the weight of a speck of dust shall see it.﴾
- ﴿8. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of a speck of dust shall see it.﴾

The Day of Judgement, what will take place during it, the Condition of the Earth and the Condition of the People

Ibn 'Abbās said,

﴿إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا﴾

﴿When the earth quakes with its Zilzāl.﴾ "This means that it will move from beneath it."^[1]

﴿وَأُخْرِجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَفْئَالَهَا﴾

﴿And when the earth throws out its burdens.﴾ meaning, it will throw forth that which is in it of the dead. More than one of the Salaf have said this and it is similar to Allāh's statement,

﴿يَتَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ أَفْئَادُ رَبِّكُمْ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

﴿O mankind! Have Taqwā of your Lord! Verily, the earthquake (Zalzalah) of the Hour is a terrible thing.﴾ (22:1)

This is also similar to His saying,

﴿وَالْأَرْضُ مَدَدَتْ وَأَلْقَتْ مَا فِيهَا وَفُطِنَتْ﴾

﴿And when the earth is stretched forth, and has cast out all

^[1] Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 8 :592.

that was in it and became empty.﴾ (84:3-4)

Muslim recorded in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«تُلْقِي الْأَرْضُ أَفْلَادَ كَيْدِمَا أُنْثَالَ الْأَسْطُورَانِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ، فَيَجِيءُ الْقَاتِلُ فَيَقُولُ فِي هَذَا قَطَعْتُ رَجُلِي، وَيَجِيءُ الْقَاطِعُ فَيَقُولُ فِي هَذَا قَطَعْتُ رَجُلِي، وَيَجِيءُ السَّارِقُ فَيَقُولُ: فِي هَذَا قُطِعَتْ يَدِي، ثُمَّ يَدْعُوهُ فَلَا يَأْخُذُونَ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا»

«The earth will throw out the pieces of its liver (its contents). Gold and silver will come out like columns. A murderer will come and say, 'I killed for this?' The one who broke the ties of kinship will say, 'For this I severed the ties of kinship?' The thief will say, 'For this I got my hands amputated?' Then they will leave it there and no one will take anything from it.»^[1]

Then Allāh says,

﴿وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا﴾

﴿And man will say: "What is the matter with it?"﴾ meaning, he will be baffled by its situation after it used to be stable, settled and firm, and he used to be settled upon its surface.

This refers to the alteration of the state of things and the earth moving and shaking. There will come to it inescapable quaking that Allāh prepared for it. Then it will throw out its dead people – from the first to the last generations. At that time the people will be baffled by the events and the earth changing into other than the earth, and the heavens as well. Then they will be presented before Allāh, the One, the Irresistible.

Concerning Allāh's statement,

﴿يَوْمَئِذٍ تُخَرِّجُ أَخْبَارَهَا﴾

﴿That Day it will declare its information.﴾ meaning, it will speak of what the people did upon its surface. Imām Aḥmad, At-Tirmidhi and Abu 'Abdur-Raḥmān An-Nasā'ī all recorded a *Ḥadīth* from Abu Hurayrah – and in the wording of An-Nasā'ī's version it states – that he said, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ recited this *Āyah*,

[1] Muslim no. 1013.

﴿يَوْمَئِذٍ تُخْبِرُ أَخْبَارَهَا﴾

«That Day it will declare its information.» Then he said,

«أَتَذُرُونَ مَا أَخْبَارُهَا؟»

«Do you know what is its information?»

They said, 'Allāh and His Messenger know best.' He said,

«فَإِنَّ أَخْبَارَهَا أَنْ تُشْهَدَ عَلَى كُلِّ عَبْدٍ وَأَمَةٍ بِمَا عَمِلَ عَلَى ظَهْرِهَا أَنْ تَقُولَ: عَمِلَ كَذَا وَكَذَا يَوْمَ كَذَا وَكَذَا، فَهَئِذِهِ أَخْبَارُهَا»

«Verily, its information is that it will testify against every male and female servant, about what they did upon its surface. It will say that he did such and such on such and such day. So this is its information.»

Then At-Tirmidhi said, "This Ḥadīth is Ṣaḥīḥ Gharīb."^[1] Concerning Allāh's statement,

﴿بِأَن رَّبِّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا﴾

«Because your Lord will inspire it.» It is apparent that the implied meaning here is that He will permit it (the earth). Shabīb bin Bishr narrated from Ṭkrimah that Ibn 'Abbās said,

﴿يَوْمَئِذٍ تُخْبِرُ أَخْبَارَهَا﴾

«That Day it will declare its information.» "Its Lord will say to it, 'Speak.' So it will speak."^[2] Mujāhid commented (on "inspire it"), "He commands it (i.e., to speak)."^[3] Al-Quraḏī said, "He will command it to separate from them."

Then Allāh says,

﴿يَوْمَئِذٍ يَصُدُّرُ النَّاسُ أَشْتَاتًا﴾

«That Day mankind will proceed in scattered groups (Ashtāt)»

meaning, they will return from the station of the Judgement in

^[1] Aḥmad 2:374, Tuhfat Al-Aḥwadhī 9:285, and An-Nasā'ī in Al-Kubrā no. 11693. This Ḥadīth rests upon a narrator whom many of the scholars consider unreliable. Al-Bukhārī said, "Munkar," Ibn Hajar said that he is "Feeble."

^[2] Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 8:592.

^[3] Aṭ-Ṭabari 24:548.

separate groups. This means that they will be divided into types and categories: between those who are miserable and those who are happy, and those who are commanded to go to Paradise and those who are commanded to go to the Hellfire. As-Suddi said, "Ashtāt means sects."^[1] Allāh said,

﴿يُسْرُوا أَعْمَلَهُمْ﴾

﴿that they may be shown their deeds.﴾ meaning, so that they may act and be rewarded for what they did in this life of good and evil.

The Recompense for Every Minute Deed

Therefore, Allāh goes on to say,

﴿مَنْ يَمَلَّ يَنْفَكَالَ دَرَّةً حَبِيرٌ يَمَلَّ وَمَنْ يَمَلَّ يَنْفَكَالَ دَرَّةً شَرًّا يَمَلَّ﴾

﴿So whosoever does good equal to the weight of a speck of dust shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of speck of dust shall see it.﴾

Al-Bukhāri recorded from Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«الْخَيْلُ لثَلَاثَةٍ، لِرَجُلٍ أَجْرٌ، وَلِرَجُلٍ سِتْرٌ، وَعَلَى رَجُلٍ وَزْرٌ. فَأَمَّا الَّذِي لَهُ أَجْرٌ فَرَجُلٌ رَبَطَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَأَطَالَ طِيلَهَا فِي مَرْجٍ أَوْ رَوْضَةٍ، فَمَا أَصَابَتْ فِي طِيلِهَا ذَلِكَ فِي الْمَرْجِ وَالرَّوْضَةِ كَانَ لَهُ حَسَنَاتٍ، وَلَوْ أَنَّهَا قَطَعَتْ طِيلَهَا فَاسْتَنْتَ شَرًّا أَوْ شَرَفَيْنِ كَانَتْ آثَارُهَا وَأَرْوَاهَا حَسَنَاتٍ لَهُ، وَلَوْ أَنَّهَا مَرَّتْ بِنَهْرٍ فَشَرِبَتْ مِنْهُ - وَلَمْ يُرِدْ أَنْ يَشْفِيَ بِهِ - كَانَ ذَلِكَ حَسَنَاتٍ لَهُ، وَهِيَ لِذَلِكَ الرَّجُلِ أَجْرٌ. وَرَجُلٌ رَبَطَهَا تَغْنِيًّا وَتَعَفُّفًا وَلَمْ يَنْسَ حَقَّ اللَّهِ فِي رِقَابِهَا وَلَا ظُهُورِهَا فَهِيَ لَهُ سِتْرٌ، وَرَجُلٌ رَبَطَهَا فَخَرًّا وَدِيَاءً وَنَوَاءً فَهِيَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ وَزْرٌ»

«The horses are for three. For one man they are a reward, for another man they are a shield, and for another man they are a burden. In reference to the man for whom they are a reward, he is the man who keeps them to be used in the way of Allāh. Thus, they spend their entire life grazing in the pasture or garden (waiting in preparation for Jihād). So whatever afflicts them during that lengthy period in the pasture or garden, it

[1] Ad-Durr Al-Manthūr 8 :593.

will be counted as good deeds for him. Then, if their lengthy period is ended and they are used for a noble battle or two, their hoof prints and their dung are counted as good deeds for him. When they passed through a stream from which they did drink, though he (their owner) does not intend to quench their thirst, yet, it would be counted as good deeds. Therefore, they are a reward for that man. A man who keeps them to maintain himself and to be independent of others (i.e., begging, etc.), and he does not forget the right of Allāh upon their necks and their backs (i.e., their Zakāh), then they are a shield for him (from the Hellfire). A man who keeps them in order to boast, brag and show off, then they are a burden for him (on Judgement Day).»

So the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was then asked about the donkeys and he said,

«مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهَا شَيْئًا إِلَّا هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ الْفَائِدَةُ الْجَامِعَةُ ﴿مَنْ يَسَلْ وَيُنْفِكَالَ دَرَوُ خَيْرٌ بِرَمْلٍ﴾ وَمَنْ يَسَلْ وَيُنْفِكَالَ دَرَوُ شَرٌّ بِرَمْلٍ ﴿١﴾»

«Allāh has not revealed anything concerning them except this single, comprehensive Āyah: ﴿So whosoever does good equal to the weight of a speck of dust shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of speck of dust shall see it.﴾»^[1]

Muslim also recorded this Ḥadīth.^[2]

In Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī, it is recorded from 'Adī that the Prophet ﷺ said,

«اتَّقُوا النَّارَ وَلَوْ بِشِقْ تَمْرَةٍ، وَلَوْ بِكَلِمَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ»

«Fear (ward off) the Fire, even if by giving half a date in charity, and even by saying a single word of good.»^[3]

In the Ṣaḥīḥ as well, he ('Adī) narrated (from the Prophet ﷺ):

«لَا تَحْفِرَنَّ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ شَيْئًا وَلَوْ أَنْ تُفْرَغَ مِنْ دَلُوكَ فِي إِنَاءِ الْمُسْتَقِي، وَلَوْ أَنْ تَلْقَى أَخَاكَ وَوَجْهَكَ إِلَيْهِ مُتَبَسِّطٌ»

«Do not under rate any good act, even if it is offering drinking

[1] Faḥ Al-Bārī 8:598.

[2] Muslim 2:680.

[3] Faḥ Al-Bārī 3:332.

water from your bucket to one who is seeking a drink, or meeting your brother with a cheerful face.»^[1]

It is also recorded in the Ṣaḥīḥ that the Prophet ﷺ said,

«يَا مَعْشَرَ نِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، لَا تَخْفِرَنَّ جَارَةً لِّجَارَتِهَا وَلَوْ فِرْسَنَ شَاةٍ»

«O party of believing women! None of you should belittle a gift sent by your neighbor, even if it is a Firsan of a sheep.»^[2]

The word *Firsan* in this Ḥadīth means its hoof.

In another Ḥadīth he said,

«رُدُّوا السَّائِلَ وَلَوْ بِظُلْفٍ مُحْرَقٍ»

«Give something to the beggar, even if it is a burnt hoof.»^[3]

It has been reported from 'Ā'ishah that she gave a single grape in charity and then she said, "To how much dust is it equivalent?"^[4]

Imām Aḥmad recorded from 'Awf bin Al-Ḥārith bin Aṭ-Ṭufayl that 'Ā'ishah told him that the Prophet ﷺ used to say,

«يَا عَائِشَةُ، إِنَّا لِك وَمُحَقَّرَاتِ الذُّنُوبِ، فَإِنَّ لَهَا مِنْ اللَّهِ طَالِيًا»

«O 'Ā'ishah! Beware of the sins that are belittled, for indeed they will be taken account of by Allāh.»

This Ḥadīth was recorded by An-Nasā'ī and Ibn Mājah.^[5]

Imām Aḥmad recorded from 'Abdullāh bin Mas'ūd that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said,

«إِنِّي أَتَمُّ وَمُحَقَّرَاتِ الذُّنُوبِ، فَإِنَّهُنَّ يَجْتَمِعْنَ عَلَى الرَّجُلِ حَتَّى يُهْلِكَهُ»

«Beware of the sins that are belittled. For verily, they are gathered in a man until they destroy him.»

And indeed the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ made an example of them (sins that are taken lightly) by saying that they are like a people who settle in barren land. Then their leader comes and orders the men to go out one at a time and each bring back a

[1] Muslim 4:2026.

[2] *Fath Al-Bāri* 10:459.

[3] Aḥmad 5:381.

[4] *Al-Muwatta'* 2:997.

[5] Aḥmad 6:151, and Ibn Mājah no. 4243.

stick until they have gathered a large number of sticks. Then they kindled a fire and burned everything that they threw into it.^[1]

This is the end of the *Tafsir* of *Sūrat Idhā Zulzilat* (*Az-Zalzalah*) and all praise and thanks are due to Allāh.

[1] Aḥmad 1:402.