

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: SŪRAT *Al-Hāqqa*, 69.

This Sūra belongs to the early middle period of Makkan Revelation. The eschatological argument is pressed home: 'the absolute Truth cannot fail; it must prevail; therefore be not lured by false appearances in this life; it is Revelation that points to the sure and certain Reality'.

Al-Hāqqa, or the Sure Reality.

*In the name of Allah, Most Gracious,
Most Merciful.*

1. The Sure Reality!⁵⁶³⁵
2. What is the Sure Reality?
3. And what will make
Thee realise what
The Sure Reality is?
4. The Thamūd⁵⁶³⁶
And the 'Ad people
Disbelieved in
The day of Noise and Clamour!⁵⁶³⁷
5. But the Thamūd,—
They were destroyed
By a terrible Storm⁵⁶³⁸
Of thunder and lightning!
6. And the 'Ad,—⁵⁶³⁹
They were destroyed
By a furious Wind,
Exceedingly violent;

سُورَةُ الْحَقِّقَةِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

لَمَّا قَدْ

مَا لَمَّا قَدْ

وَمَا أَذْرَكَ مَا لَمَّا قَدْ

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ وَعَادٌ بِالْقَارِعَةِ

فَأَمَّا ثَمُودُ فَاتَّخَذَ لِلْكَوَابِطِ أَطَاغِيَةً

وَأَمَّا عَادٌ فَاتَّخَذُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ صِرَاصٍ عَاتِيَةً

5635. *Al-hāqqa*: the sure Truth: the Event that must inevitably come to pass; the state in which all falsehood and pretence will vanish, and the absolute Truth will be laid bare. The questions in the three verses raise an air of wonder. The solution is suggested in what happened to the Thamūd and the 'Ād, and other people of antiquity, who disregarded the Truth of Allah and came to violent end, even in this life,—symbolically suggesting the great Cataclysm of the Hereafter, the Day of Doom.

5636. For these two peoples of antiquity, see n. 1043 to vii. 73, and n. 1040 to vii. 65.

5637. Another description of the terrible Day of Judgment. This word *Qāri'a* also occurs as the title of S. ci.

5638. The Thamūd were addicted to class arrogance. They oppressed the poor. The prophet Sālih preached to them, and put forward a wonderful she-camel as symbol of the rights of the poor, but they ham-strung her. See n. 1044 to vii. 73. They were destroyed in a mighty calamity, an earthquake accompanying a terrible thunderstorm.

5639. The 'Ād were an unjust people spoilt by their prosperity. The prophet Hūd preached to them in vain. They were apparently destroyed by a terrible blast of wind. See n. 1040 to vii. 65. See also xli. 15-16, n. 4483, and liv. 19, n. 5144.

7. He made it rage
Against them seven nights
And eight days in succession:
So that thou couldst see
The (whole) people lying
Overthrown in its (path),
As if they had been
Roots of hollow palm-trees⁵⁶⁴⁰
Tumbled down!

سَحَرَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعَ لَيَالٍ وَثَمَنِيَةَ أَيَّامٍ حُسُومًا
فَتَرَى الْقَوْمَ فِيهَا صَارَعِي كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَارٌ نَحْلٌ
خَاوِيَةٌ ﴿٧﴾

8. Then seest thou any
Of them left surviving?⁵⁶⁴¹
9. And Pharaoh,⁵⁶⁴²
And those before him,⁵⁶⁴³
And the Cities Overthrown,⁵⁶⁴⁴
Committed habitual Sin,
10. And disobeyed (each)
The messenger of their Lord
So He punished them
With an abundant Penalty.

فَهَلْ تَرَى لَهُمْ مِّنْ بَاقِيَةٍ ﴿٨﴾
وَجَاءَ فِرْعَوْنُ وَمَنْ قَبْلَهُ وَالْمُؤَنَّفِكَتُ بِالْخَاطِئَةِ ﴿٩﴾

فَعَصَوْا رَسُولَ رَبِّهِمْ فَأَخَذَهُمْ أَخْذَةً رَّابِيَةً ﴿١٠﴾

5640. A graphic simile. Dead men all lying about like hollow trunks of palm-trees, with their roots exposed! The 'Ād were reputed to be of a tall stature.

5641. The calamity was thorough. The 'Ād were destroyed, and then the Thamūd, and only the tradition of them was left behind. See the references in n. 5636.

5642. Pharaoh's Messenger was Moses. See the story in vii. 103-137 and the notes there. Pharaoh was inordinately proud, and his fall was proportionately great: it gradually extended to his dynasty and his people.

5643. If we follow the sequence of peoples whose sins destroyed them, as mentioned in vii. 59-158, we begin with Noah, then have the 'Ād and the Thamūd, then the Cities of the Plain, then Midian, then the people whose prophet was Moses (who occupies a central place in the canvas), and then the Pagan Quraish, to whom came the last and greatest of the prophets, our holy Prophet Muhammad. This is the chronological sequence. Here there is no details, nor even complete mention. But Noah is alluded to last, and the 'Ād and the Thamūd mentioned first, because the latter two belong to Arab tradition, and this is specially addressed to the Pagans of Makkah. Pharaoh is mentioned rather than Moses for the same reason, and any others are "those before Pharaoh".

5644. *The Cities Overthrown*: Sodom and Gomorrah, Cities of the Plain, to whom Lot preached: see ix. 70, n. 1330; and vii. 80-84, n. 1049.

11. We, when the water
(Of Noah's Flood) overflowed
Beyond its limits,⁵⁶⁴⁵
Carried you (mankind),
In the floating (Ark),
12. That We might
Make it a Reminder⁵⁶⁴⁶
Unto you, and that ears
(That should hear the tale
And) retain its memory
Should bear its (lessons)
In remembrance.⁵⁶⁴⁷
13. Then, when one
Blast is sounded
On the Trumpet,⁵⁶⁴⁸
14. And the earth is moved,
And its mountains,⁵⁶⁴⁹
And they are crushed
At one stroke,--

إِنَّا لَمَّا طَغَا الْمَاءُ حَمَلْنَا كُوفِي الْجَارِيَةِ ﴿١١﴾

لِنَجْعَلَهَا لَكُمْ ذِكْرًا وَنَعْبَهَا آذَنًا وَعِيَّةً ﴿١٢﴾

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ ﴿١٣﴾

وَحُمِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ فَدُكَّتَا دَكَّةً وَاحِدَةً ﴿١٤﴾

5645. It was a widespread Flood. Cf. vii. 59-64: also xi. 25-49. Noah was ridiculed for his preparations for the Flood: see xi. 38, n. 1531. But Allah had commanded him to build an Ark, in order that mankind should be saved from perishing in the Flood. But only those of Faith got into the Ark and were saved. As the Ark was built to Allah's command, Allah "carried you (mankind) in the floating (Ark)".

5646. It was a memorial for all time, to show that evil meets with its punishment, but the good are saved by the mercy of Allah.

5647. Cf. the biblical Phrase, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. xi. 15). But the phrase used here has a more complicated import. An ear may hear, but for want of will in the hearer the hearer may not wish, for the future or for all time, to retain the memory of the lessons he had heard, even though for the time being he was impressed by it. The penetration of the truth has to be far deeper and subtler, and this is desired here.

5648. We now come to the Inevitable Event, the Day of Judgment, the theme of this Sūra. This is the first Blast referred to in xxxix. 68, n. 4343.

5649. The whole of our visible world, as we now know it, will pass away, and a new world will come into being. The mountains are specially mentioned, because they stand as the type of hardness, size, and durability. They will be "crushed", i.e., lose their form and being at one stroke.

15. On that Day
Shall the (Great) Event
Come to pass,
16. And the sky will be
Rent asunder, for it will
That Day be flimsy,
17. And the angels will be
On its sides,⁵⁶⁵⁰
And eight will, that Day,
Bear the Throne⁵⁶⁵¹
Of thy Lord above them.
18. That Day shall ye be
Brought to Judgment:
Not an act of yours
That ye hide will be hidden.
19. Then he that will be
Given his Record
In his right hand⁵⁶⁵²
Will say: "Ah here!
Read ye my Record!

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ﴿١٥﴾

وَانشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فِي يَوْمِئِذٍ وَاهِيَةً ﴿١٦﴾

وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ عَلَى أَرْجَائِهَا وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ

يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَنِيَةٌ ﴿١٧﴾

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُعْرَضُونَ لَا تَخْفَى مِنْكُمْ خَافِيَةٌ ﴿١٨﴾

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أَوْفَى كِتَابَهُ بِرَيْمِيهِ فَيَقُولُ

هَؤُلَاءِ أَقْرَأُ وَأَكْتَنِيَةٌ ﴿١٩﴾

5650. The whole picture is painted in graphic poetical images, to indicate that which cannot be adequately described in words, and which indeed our human faculties with their present limited powers are not ready to comprehend. The angels will be on all sides, arrayed in ranks upon ranks, and the Throne of the Lord on high will be borne by eight angels (or eight rows of angels). That will be the Day when Justice will be fully established and man be mustered to his Lord for reckoning.

5651. The number eight has perhaps no special significance, unless it be with reference to the shape of the Throne or the number of the angels. The Oriental Throne is often octagonal, and its bearers would be one at each corner.

5652. Cf. xvii. 71, where the righteous are described as those who are given their record in their right hand at Judgment. In lvi. 27, 38, and other passages, the righteous are called "Companions of the Right Hand".

20. "I did really think⁵⁶⁵³
That my Account would
(One Day) reach me!"

إِنِّي ظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي مُلَاقٍ حِسَابِيَّةٍ ﴿٦٩﴾

21. And he will be
In a life of Bliss,

فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ﴿٧٠﴾

22. In a Garden on high,

فِي جَنَّةٍ عَالِيَةٍ ﴿٧١﴾

23. The Fruits whereof⁵⁶⁵⁴
(Will hang in bunches)
Low and near.

قُطُوفُهَا دَانِيَةٌ ﴿٧٢﴾

24. "Eat ye and drink ye,
With full satisfaction;
Because of the (good)
That ye sent before you,⁵⁶⁵⁵
In the days that are gone!"⁵⁶⁵⁶

كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَهْنِيئًا مِمَّا أَسْلَفْتُمْ فِي الْأَيَّامِ
الْخَالِيَةِ ﴿٧٣﴾

25. And he that will
Be given his Record
In his left hand,⁵⁶⁵⁷
Will say: "Ah! would
That my record had not
Been given to me!"

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ بِشِمَالِهِ فَيَقُولُ يَلَيْتَنِي
لَمَّا أُوتِ كِتَابِيَّةٌ ﴿٧٤﴾

5653. The righteous one rejoices that the faith he had during this world's life was fully justified, and is now actually realised before him. He quite understood and believed that good and evil must meet with their due consequences in the Hereafter, however much appearances may have been against it in the life in the lower world, "in the days that are gone".

5654. The description is that of ripe, luscious grapes, hanging low in heavy bunches, so near that they could be gathered and enjoyed in dignified ease. Cf. also lv. 54; lxxvi. 14.

5655. Cf. ii. 110: "Whatever good ye send forth for your souls before you, ye shall find it with Allah: for Allah sees well all that ye do."

5656. It will be a wholly new world, a new earth and a new heaven, when the blessed might well think with calm relief of "the days that are gone". Cf. xiv. 48, and n. 1925. Even Time and Space will be no more, so that any ideas that we may form here will be found to have become wholly obsolete by then.

5657. This is in contrast to the righteous ones who will receive their record in their right hand. Cf. lxix. 19, n. 5652. The righteous are glad when they remember their past: their memory is itself a precious possession. The unjust are in agony when they remember their past. Their memory is itself a grievous punishment.

26. "And that I had never
Realised how
My account (stood)!

وَلَمْ أَدْرِمَا حِسَابِيَّ ﴿٦٩﴾

27. "Ah! would that (Death)⁵⁶⁵⁸
Had made an end of me!

يَلَيْتَهَا كَانَتِ الْقَاضِيَةَ ﴿٧٠﴾

28. "Of no profit to me
Has been my wealth!

مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنِّي مَالِيَّ ﴿٧١﴾

29. "My power has
Perished from me!"...⁵⁶⁵⁹

هَلَكَ عَنِّي سُلْطَانِيَّيَّ ﴿٧٢﴾

30. (The stern command will say):
"Seize ye him,
And bind ye him,"⁵⁶⁶⁰

خُذُوهُ فَغُلُّوهُ ﴿٧٣﴾

31. "And burn ye him
In the Blazing Fire.

ثُمَّ لَنَجْجِمْ صُلُوهُ ﴿٧٤﴾

32. "Further, insert him
In a chain, whereof⁵⁶⁶¹
The length is seventy cubits!

ثُمَّ فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ﴿٧٥﴾

33. "This was he that
Would not believe⁵⁶⁶²
In Allah Most High,

إِنَّهُ كَانَ لَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٧٦﴾

5658. The death as from this life was but a transition into a new world. They would wish that that death had been the end of all things, but it will not be.

5659. The intensest agony is when the soul loses power over itself, when the personality tries to realise itself in new conditions and cannot: this is life in death.

5660. Perhaps the word for 'bind' should be construed: 'bind his hands round his neck, to remind him that his hands when they were free were closed to all acts of charity and mercy': Cf. xvii. 29.

5661. The sinful men who will be given their record on the Day of Judgment in their left hands will be in utter despair. Their power and authority which they misused to perpetrate injustice and oppression will be gone. The wealth that had made them turn a deaf ear to the call of Truth will be no more. They will cry out in agony: "O would that we were never raised again! O would that death had obliterated us once for all". But these cries will be of no avail. They will be seized, bound in chains and thrown into the Blazing Fire for their crimes against Allah and man.

5662. The grip of sin was fastened on sinners because they forsook Allah. They ran after their own lusts and worshipped them, or they ran after Allah's creatures, ignoring Him Who is the cause and source of all good.

34. "And would not encourage⁵⁶⁶³
The feeding of the indigent!

وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمَسْكِينِ ﴿٣٤﴾

35. "So no friend hath he
Here this Day.

فَلَيْسَ لَهُ الْيَوْمَ مِنْهُمْ حَاجِمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾

36. "Nor hath he any food
Except the foul pus⁵⁶⁶⁴
From the washing of wounds,

وَلَا طَعَامُ إِلَّا مِنْ غَسَلِينَ ﴿٣٦﴾

37. "Which none do eat
But those in sin."

لَا يَأْكُلُهُ إِلَّا الْخَاطِئُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾

SECTION 2.

38. So I do
Call to witness⁵⁶⁶⁵
What ye see

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِمَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾

39. And what ye see not,

وَمَا لَا تُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٣٩﴾

40. That this is
Verily the word
Of an honoured messenger;⁵⁶⁶⁶

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ رَسُولٍ كَرِيمٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

5663. Cf. cvii. 3; lxxxix, 18. The practical result of their rebellion against the God of Mercy was that their sympathies dried up. Not only did they not help or feed those in need, but they hindered others from doing so. And they have neither friend nor sympathy (food) in the Hereafter.

5664. They wounded many people by their cruelty and injustice in this life, and it is befitting that they should have no food other than "the foul pus from the washing of wounds."

5665. This is an adjuration in the same form as that which occurs in lvi. 75, lxx. 40, xc. 1, and elsewhere. Allah's Word is the quintessence of Truth. But what if someone doubts whether a particular Message is Allah's Word communicated through His Messenger, or merely an imaginary tale presented by a poet, or a soothsayer's vain prophecy? Then we have to examine it in the light of our highest spiritual faculties. The witness to that Word is what we know in the visible world, in which falsehood in the long run gives place to truth, and what we know in the invisible world, through our highest spiritual faculties. We are asked to examine and test it in both these ways.

5666. *Honoured messenger*: one that is worthy of honour on account of the purity of his life, and may be relied upon not to invent things but to give the true word of revelation which he received.

41. It is not the word

Of a poet:⁵⁶⁶⁷

Little it is

Ye believe!

وَمَا هُوَ بِقَوْلِ شَاعِرٍ قَلِيلًا مَّا تُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

42. Nor is it the word

Of a soothsayer:⁵⁶⁶⁸

Little admonition it is

Ye receive.

وَلَا يَقُولُ كَاهِنٌ قَلِيلًا مَّا نَذْكُرُونَ ﴿٤٢﴾

43. (This is) a Message

Sent down from the Lord

Of the Worlds.

نَزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٤٣﴾

44. And if the messenger

Were to invent

Any sayings in Our name,

وَلَوْ نَقُولُ عَلَيْنَا بَعْضُ الْأَقَاوِيلِ ﴿٤٤﴾

45. We should certainly seize him

By his right hand⁵⁶⁶⁹

لَاخْذًا نَّامِتَهُ بِالْيَمِينِ ﴿٤٥﴾

46. And We should certainly

Then cut off the artery

Of his heart:⁵⁶⁷⁰

ثُمَّ لَقَطَعْنَا مِنهُ الْوَتِينَ ﴿٤٦﴾

47. Nor could any of you

Withhold him⁵⁶⁷¹

(From Our wrath).

فَمَا مِنكُم مِّنْ أَحَدٍ عَنْهُ حَاجِزِينَ ﴿٤٧﴾

5667. A poet draws upon his imagination, and the subjective factor is so strong that though we may learn much from him, we cannot believe as facts the wonderful tales he has to tell. And the poet who is not a Seer is merely a vulgar votary of exaggerations and falsehoods.

5668. A soothsayer merely pretends to foretell future events of no profound spiritual consequence. Most of his prophecies are frauds, and none of them is meant to teach lessons of real admonition. Such admonition is the work of an honoured prophet.

5669. The right hand is the hand of power and action. Any one who is seized by his right hand is prevented from acting as he wishes or carrying out his purpose. The argument is that if an impostor were to arise, he would soon be found out. He could not carry out his fraud indefinitely. But the prophets of Allah, however much they are persecuted, gain more and more power every day, as did the holy Prophet, whose truth, earnestness, sincerity, and love for all, were recognised as his life unfolded itself.

5670. This would effectually stop the functioning of his life.

5671. The protection which the prophets of Allah enjoy in circumstances of danger and difficulty would not be available for impostors.

48. But verily this
Is a Message for
The God-fearing.

وَإِنَّهُ لَنَذِكْرٌ لِّلْمُنْقِبِينَ ﴿٤٨﴾

49. And We certainly know
That there are amongst you
Those that reject (it).

وَإِنَّا لَنَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مِنْكُمْ مُّكَذِّبِينَ ﴿٤٩﴾

50. But truly (Revelation)
Is a cause of sorrow⁵⁶⁷²
For the Unbelievers.

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَسْرَةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٥٠﴾

51. But verily it is Truth⁵⁶⁷³
Of assured certainty.

وَإِنَّهُ لِحَقُّ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٥١﴾

52. So glorify the name⁵⁶⁷⁴
Of thy Lord Most High.

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٥٢﴾

5672. The Message of Allah is glad tidings for those who believe in Him and follow His Law, for it is a message of Mercy and Forgiveness through repentance and amendment. But in the case of the wicked it is a cause of sorrow, for it denounces sin and proclaims the punishment of those who do not turn from evil:

5673. All Truth is in itself certain. But as received by men, and understood with reference to men's psychology, certainty may have certain degrees. There is the probability or certainty resulting from the application of man's power of judgment and his appraisal of evidence. This is '*ilm-ul-yaqin*, certainty by reasoning or inference. Then there is the certainty of seeing something with our own eyes. "Seeing is believing." This is '*ain-ul-yaqin*, certainty by personal inspection. See cii. 5, 7. Then, as here, there is the absolute Truth, with no possibility of error of judgment or error of the eye, (which stands for any instrument of sense-perception and any ancillary aids, such as microscopes, etc.). This absolute Truth is the *haqq-ul-yaqin* spoken of here.

5674. As Allah has given us this absolute Truth through His Revelation, it behoves us to understand it and be grateful to Him. We must celebrate His praises in thought, word and deed.