Surah Al-Qamar

Imagine yourself on an aeroplane. When you take off from the land you feel the awesome pull of the aircraft against the gravity as you leave behind the solid, secure earth and go higher and higher in the air. For some people, it is a thrilling joy to see everything getting smaller and smaller and for some of us, it can be a frightening experience.......but after a while you get used to the drone of the engines and as the view from the window is reduced to a blur, you start focusing on the things and people around you. The newspapers, magazines and eventually the food......distract your attention, and the realization that you are hanging in the air, is diminished....until you almost forget it. But as soon as the plane starts descending and the announcement is made that you are about to reach your destination, everybody is again alert, and start fastening the seat belts......the anticipation and anxiety creeps into your system.....until you land safely.

Similarly our life is also a journey on this earth, which is like a huge air bus travelling through space with unimaginable speed. We have a whole world full of people and things and activities to make our journey comfortable and meaningful but these distractions have succeeded in making us totally oblivious of our actual state of helplessness. And most of us have even forgotten where we are going, and what are we supposed to do before we disembark?

The first Ayat of Surah Al-Qamar is actually an announcement of the end of our flight......we are about to touch reality......
The Hour of Doom is drawing near, the moon has split asunder; (which is a clear proof that the same thing can happen to the earth.)

We have to understand the purpose of this journey, which is to worship only Allah and live our life according to His guidance, because we are going to meet Him at the end of this journey and face the consequences of all our actions. It is an illusion that this life seems so long and we think we will come back to the right path after we have satisfied our desires. But we just have been given a specific time and we have no idea how little that might be.

When Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) delivered the message of Allah to the people of Makkah, most of them strongly rejected the concept of resurrection. They refused to accept Him as being the Messenger of Allah and demanded that if this world is really going to come to an end then there should be some physical sign, some miracle that should be shown to them as a proof. So five years before the Hijrah (migration) of the Prophet (s.a.w) to Madinah, Allah made them witness a miracle; when one night they saw the moon split into two pieces and the two halves were so separated that each one appeared on either side of the mount Hira. After a moment the moon was again joined together. You would think that after seeing such a tremendous sign of Allah’s power, they would have accepted the truth; but it did not affect their attitude at all stubbornly they said that it was just some kind of magic and nothing else:

And when they see a sign, the unbelievers turn their backs and say: “This is an ingenious magic.”

Yet why do people persist in remaining ignorant of the truth? Why don’t they accept even such clear proofs? It is because their lives revolve
around their own desires and their false self image makes it almost impossible for them to admit that they were chasing the wrong ideals. Therefore they prefer to turn a blind eye to all those things which make them uncomfortably aware of the truth:

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وَكَذَّبُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءهُمْ وَكُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُّسْتَقِر

And they denied and kept on following their own fancies. Ultimately every matter shall be laid to rest.

The splitting of the moon was not the only sign of Allah's power; rather, the people of Makkah were also well informed about the nations which had been destroyed before them, because of rejecting Allah's message which the Prophets had brought to them.....

{وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُم مِّنَ الْبَنَاء مَا فِيهَا مُزْدَجَرٌ

There has already come to them the information of former nations containing enough deterrents

They could have learned a lot of wisdom from the lessons of history but it did not benefit them at all. It is a fact that when someone constantly rejects the truth then his heart becomes sealed:

{حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ فَمَا تُغْنِ النُّذُر

And profound wisdom to serve as a warning, but warnings are of no use to these people.

Allah has given us the choice to think and choose our way of life in this world but those who misuse this choice, and reject Allah's guidance should not forget that there will come a day when they will not be able to say "no" to the caller, who will call them towards the final Judgement:

{فَتَوَلَّ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ يَدْعُ الدَّاعِ إِلََ شَيْءٍ نُّكُرٍ

Therefore, O Prophet, let them be. On the Day when the caller will call them to a terrible event....
How helpless will be the state of people...........imagine all the seemingly powerful people, their arrogance, their affluent lifestyles, their pomp and splendour.....and then read the following words:

خُشَّعًا أَبْصَارُهُمْ يََْرُجُونَ مِنَ الَْْجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُّنتَشِرٌ {7}

They shall come out from their graves, like swarming locusts, with downcast eyes

The arrogant speeches and arguments against Allah and His Prophet (s.a.w) will all be forgotten and they will be rushing blindly towards their fate:

مُّهْطِعِينَ إِلََ الدَّاعِ ي َقُولُ الْكَافِرُونَ ىَذَا ي َوْمٌ عَسِيرٌ {8}

Rushing towards the caller and the same unbelievers will cry: “This is indeed an awful Day!”

But man is trapped in such an illusion that if he has any power or status he thinks he can insult anyone who dares to speak against his interests. Look at the way the people of Prophet Nuh (a.s) treated him when he brought to them Allah’s clear guidance:

كَذَّبَتْ قَبْلَهُمْ قَوْمُ نُوحٍ فَكَذَّبُوا عَبْدَنَا وَقَالُوا مََْنُونٌ وَازْدُجِرَ {9}

Long before them, the people of Nuh (Noah) disbelieved. They rejected Our servant, called him a madman and drove him out.

They were flying so high in their arrogance that they forgot their own helplessness. Allah sent upon them a mighty flood which drowned everything except the boat carrying Prophet Nuh (a.s) and the few people who had believed in Allah:

وَحَملْنَا عَلَى ذَاتِ أَلْوَاحٍ وَدُسُرٍ {13

We carried him in an Ark built with planks and nails, which drifted on under Our care: a reward for him (Noah) who was denied by the unbelievers.
This shows Allah’s extreme mercy and compassion for His messenger and for the believers of truth……but at the same time His punishment for those who stubbornly reject His message, is also evident:

فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابِي وَنُذُرِ {16}

How terrible was My scourge and how clear My warning!

The only thing that can save us from such a fate is to live in a state of Allah consciousness. Whatever we do, wherever we go, there should always be an awareness that none of our acts should go against Allah’s desire. This is nothing new for us. Being Muslims we know all this, yet we see that there is a widespread confusion about what exactly is the right way of life. There have become so many sects within Islam that even those who want to follow it, are unsure of where to find it, in its real spirit? The reason for all this confusion is that we have deprived ourselves from the true source of Guidance……which is Quran……the word of Allah; most carefully preserved in its original form……for people of all times:

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِن مُّدَّكِرٍ {17}

We have indeed made the Qur’an very easy to understand and remember: but is there any who would remember (and take admonition)?

This is just a misunderstanding that Quran is only for scholars. Allah is saying in such clear words that He has himself made it easy for us to understand and now it’s up to us..........how we contemplate and receive its guidance. Apparently it might seem an awesome task to learn its language and understand its meanings, but those who have made an effort are witness to the pure simplicity of its teachings. This is the only book in the world which has been read by all sorts of people. Even illiterate people can benefit from its clear guidance because Allah has given such simple examples in it from everyday
life. Simultaneously we see that along with simplicity, there is an amazing depth in its words which stimulates the intellect of highly learned people too. Therefore everyone should study it with a desire to learn what Allah wants us to do......and Allah will open the doors of His guidance and inspiration.

Next Allah gives us some other examples from history where people of extraordinary talents and prosperity, refused to listen to the message of Allah's prophets and consequently faced a terrible end:

\[
\text{كَذَّبَتْ عَادٌ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عَذَابُ إِي بِي وَنُذُرُ} 18
\]

Likewise the people of 'Ad did not believe then how terrible was My scourge and how clear My Warning!

These people of 'Ad were extremely powerful, not only in skills but also in physical attributes; but when they continually rejected the message of Allah, He sent to them a severely cold wind which gave them a humiliating punishment:

\[
\text{إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي يَوْمِ نََْسٍ مُّسْتَمِرُ} 19
\]

\[
\text{تَنزِعُ النَّاسَ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نََْلٍ مُّنقَعِرٍ} 22
\]

\[
\text{إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا صَرْصَرًا فِي يَوْمِ نََْسٍ مُّسْتَمِرُ} 19
\]

\[
\text{تَنزِعُ النَّاسَ كَأَنَّهُمْ أَعْجَازُ نََْلٍ مُّنقَعِرٍ} 20
\]

We let loose on them a tornado, on the day of their bitter misfortune, which snatched them off like trunks of uprooted palm-trees.

Just imagine what a terrifying scene it would be when these powerful people were reduced to such humiliation......being tossed around like dead trees. But then the people of Thamud also made the same error. They were also very proud of their worldly success, and thought that the Prophet Salih (a.s) was just spreading some self created stories or lies. So they said:

\[
\text{أَأُلْقِيَ الذِّكْرُ عَلَيْهِ مِن بَيْنِنَا بَلْ هُوَ كَذَّابٌ أَشِرُ} 25
\]

Was he the only person among us to receive this warning? Nay! He is indeed an insolent liar."
Then they demanded for some miracle and Allah sent to them a she-camel, about which they had been warned not to give her any harm....but they killed it thinking that they could get away with whatever they desired. Consequently Allah gave them a painful end:

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ صَيْحَةً واحِدَةً فَكَانُوا كَهَشِيمِ الْمُحْتَظِرِ {31}

We let loose on them one mighty blast and they became like the trampled twigs used by a fence builder.

Again Allah says that He has made Quran so easy to understand so is there anyone who will try to understand?

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ {32}

We have indeed made the Qur'an very easy to understand the admonition, so is there any who would take admonition?

Allah’s guidance has always been clear and simple but people themselves choose to remain misguided, thinking in their arrogance that it is a sign of independent thinking that they should live by their own laws and not to follow the teachings of Prophets whom they perceive to be just ordinary people. Their tall egos don’t permit them to admit that the Messengers of Allah had more knowledge than anyone else, because the revelations which they received directly from Allah contained the complete truth which is required for our salvation.......But arrogance keeps most of us misguided.

Allah is telling us here that rejection of truth is not a new phenomenon:

كَذَّبَتْ قَوْمُ لُوطٍ بِالنُّذُرِ {33}

(Another example is) the people of Lut (Lot) who disbelieved Our warning.

Prophet Lut (a.s) had warned them of Allah’s wrath but they did not listen:
Lut did warn them of Our scourge but they doubted his warnings.

They were the first people to indulge in homosexuality, and it had blinded their senses to such an extent that when the angels came to the Prophet's house in the guise of young men, these people rushed to have them.........nothing mattered to them except the fulfilment of their lust:

They even sought to snatch away his guests from him but We blinded their eyes, and said: "Now taste My punishment and the result of disbelieving My warning."

So they were crushed beneath a painful torment:

At daybreak they were overtaken by a lasting punishment.... as if to say: "Now taste My punishment and the result of disbelieving My warning."

What can be easier to understand than these stories full of admonition and wisdom?

We have indeed made the Qur'an very easy to understand the admonition, so is there any who would take admonition?

The same thing happened to Pharaoh, when he thought himself to be indestructible:

My warnings also came to the people of Fir'on (Pharaoh).
He thought he could easily wipe out Musa (a.s) and his followers, but Allah saved them and caused the mighty pharaoh and all his troops to drown helplessly in the sea........not even a soul was saved:

They disbelieved all Our signs. Consequently, We seized them with a seizure of the Mighty, Powerful.

Now Allah asks those who disbelieve in Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w), that are they better than the disbelievers of earlier times? Or is there any other reason for their arrogance?

(O Quraish) are your unbelievers better than they were, or have you been granted immunity in the Sacred Books?

How can they delude themselves when Allah has sent such clear warnings?

Soon will their multitude be routed and put to flight. Nay! The Hour of Judgment is the time promised to deal with them. That hour will be the most grievous and bitter.

Those who persist in their disbelief and do not bother to read the Quran or follow the teachings of Prophet (s.a.w) should know that they are committing a terrible crime, even if they are in any illusion of being “good people”:

Yet, surely the criminals persist in error and madness

In this world they made fun of the believers that they were being overly concerned with the torment of Hell.......their constant claim is
that Allah is so merciful and He cannot burn anyone.....but Allah is warning them that this fire will definitely touch those who made fun of it, and made no effort to save their souls from it:

\[
\text{يومَ يُسْحَبُونَ في النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوعِهِمْ ذُوقُوا مَسَ سَقَرَ} \quad 48
\]

On that Day when they will be dragged into the fire with their faces downwards, We shall say: "Feel the touch of hell!"

Everything in this universe has been created with a specific purpose and a perfect measure, whether it’s the universe with all the countless stars and galaxies, or the plants and animals with their amazing structures and movements......

\[
\text{إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ} \quad 49
\]

Surely We have created everything in perfect ordainment (*destiny and purpose*).

It doesn’t take Allah any time to implement His decisions. It was no big deal for Him to create all the worlds and likewise its destruction will also happen within the blink of an eye:

\[
\text{وَما أَمَرْنَا إِلَّا وَاحِدَةٌ كَلَمْحٍ بِالْبَصَرِ} \quad 52
\]

We command but once and Our will is done in the twinkling of an eye.

So instead of making guesses about when that time will occur, we should be more focused on our deeds......because these actions of ours during this journey of life will be like a ticket to our next destination. And remember that we will not be able to make any false claims over there; as each and every thought, word and deed is being recorded:

\[
\text{وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَعَلُوهُ فِي الرَّيْبِ} \quad 52
\]

\[
\text{وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ مُسْتَطَرٌ} \quad 53
\]
All that they do is being added to their record books: every action, small and big is being noted down.

And so at the end of this Surah, Allah is showing us the glimpse of the splendid gardens of delight........the beautiful paradise, which He has prepared so lovingly for the ones who remained faithful to Him in the worldly life. These people willingly sacrificed their egos and desires for the sake of Allah......so He will give them this wonderful reward where all their desires will be fulfilled eternally:

\[
\text{إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِِ جَنَّاتٍ وَنَهْرٍ}
\]

Surely the righteous will be in the midst of gardens and rivers,

In addition to all the comforts and pleasures of life, one thing which we all desire is honour. But true honour is only for those who are true in their commitment with Allah and who honour His religion, and His Quran and His Prophet (s.a.w)........Not only in this world but also in the hereafter, Allah will honour these truthful people:

\[
\text{فِِ مَقْعَدِ صِدْقٍ عِندَ مَلِيكٍ مُّقْتَدِرٍ}
\]

a place of true honour, in the presence of Almighty Sovereign.

Just imagine the beauty of Paradise and then to be given a seat of honour near Allah Subhanahu wa Ta’ala...... Can there be any honour superior to this? So are we willing to Honour His words? Are we willing to give Him the most precious place in our hearts? Are we willing, to worship Him in the true sense of the word?

May Allah make us of those who reflect on these superb reminders and warnings, and live up to the true guidance, Ameen