

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

أَلْهَكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ ۚ حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ۚ

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ۚ ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ۚ

ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ۗ

1. **Rivalry in amassing wealth has made you negligent...**
2. **...until you reach the graves.**

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ

3. **Never! Soon you will come to know!**
4. **Never! Soon you will come to know!**

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ۚ

5. **If you had certain knowledge (you would not have preoccupied yourself with rivalry).**

ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ۚ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ۚ

6. **(By Allaah) you will definitely see Jahannam!**
7. **(By Allaah) you will then surely see it with the eye of certainty.**

ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ۗ

8. **Thereafter on that day you will definitely be questioned about the bounties.**

The Arabic word "takaathur" refers to mutual rivalry between people in amassing wealth, a trait which is commonly witnessed in many people. People vie with each other in amassing wealth and boast about their wealth to each other. Even though some people may not boast in front of others, this rivalry is ingrained in their mentality and they are always competing with others.

Allaah Ta'ala declares in Surah Hadeed, "Know that the life of this world is merely play, futility, decoration, boasting among each other and rivalry in wealth and children." [Surah 57, verse 20]

Being engrossed in competing with others in amassing wealth has caused man to neglect those actions that please Allaah and has also caused him to forget that he is heading for the grave. In this manner, people pass through this world steeped in negligence and, when they face the reality of the Akhirah, they are bewildered and lacking good deeds. Then the wealth they amassed will be useless to them. Allaah refers to this when He says,

أَلْهَكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ ۖ
حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ۗ

"Rivalry in amassing wealth has made you negligent until you reach the graves."

"Ma'aalimut Tanzeel" (Vol. 4 Pg. 520) has reported the following incident about this rivalry among the Arabs. Rivalry existed between the Banu Abd Manaaf bin Qusay tribe and the Banu Sahm bin Amar tribe of Makkah. On one occasion, both tribes boasted that they had a greater number of nobles and leaders. After counting, it was found that the number among the Banu Abd Manaaf tribe was higher. The Banu Sahm tribe submitted that their deceased should also be included in the count because these had been part of their tribe. When the dead were counted, the Banu Sahm emerged as victors by a few individuals. It was with reference to this that Allaah revealed the verse **"Rivalry in amassing wealth has made you negligent..."**

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۖ
ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۗ

Allaah continues, **"Never! (This rivalry will not benefit you) Soon you will come to know (the error of your ways)!"** Allaah then reiterates, **"Never! Soon you will come to know!"**

Allaah says, **"If you had certain knowledge (you would not have preoccupied yourself with rivalry)."** Allaah Ta'ala specifies "Ilmul Yaqeen" (**"certain knowledge"**) because knowledge is often uncertain as well.

Thereafter, Allaah asserts,

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ۖ
ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ۗ

you will definitely see Jahannam! (By Allaah) You will then surely see it with the eye of certainty." When man sees the reality of the Hereafter for himself, he will truly be convinced about the truth of it.

Describing the three levels of certainty, Ulema mention that every living person has "Ilmul Yaqeen" ("**certain knowledge**") about death. However, when man sees the angels of death approaching him, he experiences "Aynul Yaqeen" (seeing death with the "**eye of certainty**"). Finally, "Haqqul Yaqeen" ("**the irrefutable truth**"¹) is achieved once a person actually dies. ["Ruhul Ma'aani" Vol. 30 Pg. 260]

Several verses of the Qur'aan warn people against preoccupying themselves with the commodities of this world in a manner that their lives revolve completely around these things and they live and die for them. Allaah warns man that the consequence of such behaviour shall be that they will see Jahannam and finally enter it. These verses remind man that this world is not everything and that death and the Hereafter are soon to follow.

Allaah concludes the Surah by stating, **ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ** 

"Thereafter on that day you will definitely be questioned about the bounties."

"Ruhul Ma'aani" contains a lengthy discussion concerning this verse. The discussion centres around who will be questioned about Allaah's bounties and when will this questioning take place? Because this verse follows the previous verses, it seems that the subject matter is related. Therefore, this verse is also addressed to those people who will see Jahannam and who will be made to enter Jahannam. They will be questioned about Allaah's bounties to them to rebuke them for abusing these bounties and for not using these to please Allaah and to prepare for the Akhirah.

Hadhrat Anas (R.A) narrates that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) said, *"On the Day of Judgement, man will be brought forward like a lamb. He will then be presented before Allaah, Who will ask, 'Did I not grant you wealth and bounties? What did you do with these?' He will reply, 'I accumulated it and multiplied it until it flourished. Then I left it all behind. Allow me to return and bring it all before you."*

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) continued, *"Allaah will say, 'Show Me what you had sent ahead here (to the Akhirah (Hereafter)).' He will again reply, 'I accumulated it and multiplied it until it flourished. Then I left it all behind. Allow me to return and bring it all before you.'*

¹ Surah Waaqi'ah (Surah 56), verse 95.

It will then transpire that he was one who had not performed any good deeds on earth. He will then be flung into Jahannam.” [Mishkaat Pg. 443]

Although it seems as if the verse addresses those who are destined for Jahannam, the general nature of the words make it impossible to rule out the possibility that every person will be questioned about the bounties that Allaah blessed him with. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood (R.A) narrates from Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) that man's foot will be unable to move from the place of reckoning until he answers five questions. These questions shall be:

1. *In what way did he spend his life?*
2. *In what pursuits did he spend his youth?*
3. *How did he earn his wealth?*
4. *How did he spend his wealth?*
5. *Did he practise the knowledge he had? [Tirmidhi]*

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (R.A) narrates that the *first questions that Allaah will ask* man concerning bounties shall be: “Did I not give you good health?” and “Did I not quench your thirst with cold water?” [Tirmidhi]

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) always advised the Sahabah (R.A) to thank Allaah for His bounties.

Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam), Hadhrat Abu Bakr (R.A) and Hadhrat Umar (R.A) were once guests at the house of an Ansaari Sahabi (R.A). He served them a branch of a date palm on which there were ripe, dry and semi-ripe dates to choose from. He then slaughtered a goat and cooked the meat for them. When they had eaten dates and meat and drank water to their fill, Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) said to Hadhrat Abu Bakr (R.A) and Hadhrat Umar (R.A), *“I swear by the Being in Whose control is my life! You will certainly be questioned about these bounties on the Day of Qiyamah* (i.e. about whether you expressed gratitude for the bounty and whether you used the strength derived from the food for good or not). Hunger brought you out of your homes and Allaah has blessed you with these bounties before you could return home.” [Muslim]

Another narration reports that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam), Hadhrat Abu Bakr (R.A) and Hadhrat Umar (R.A) once met an Ansaari Sahabi (R.A) in his orchard. He served them a branch from a date palm from which they ate. When they asked for cold water, he served them some. Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) then told them that *they would be questioned about this bounty on the Day of Qiyamah*. Hearing this, Hadhrat Umar (R.A) dropped the branch from his hand, causing all the dates to be scattered about. He then asked, "O Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam)! *Will we be questioned about this?*" Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) confirmed that people will be questioned about every bounty except three. These are:

1. A small piece of cloth used to cover the private parts.
2. A piece of bread that appeases hunger.
3. A home to protect one from the heat and cold, which is so small that one has difficulty entering it. ["Mishkaat" Pg. 369]

Hadhrat Uthman (R.A) narrates from Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) that man has a right only to three things and to nothing else. *These are:*

1. *A house to live in.*
2. *Sufficient clothing to conceal his private parts.*
3. *Plain bread (without gravy) and water.* [Tirmidhi]

Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Shakheer (R.A) narrates that he entered the presence of Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) while Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) was reciting Surah Takaathur and saying, "Man says, '*My wealth! My wealth!*' whereas only three things are actually his.

- (1) The food that he ate and digested,
- (2) the clothing that he wore out, and
- (3) the charity that he spent and sent ahead (for the Hereafter)."

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah (R.A) has narrated the same hadith with the addition that a person will leave all else (besides the above three things) for his heirs. ["Mishkaat" Pg. 440]

Hadhrat Anas (R.A) narrates from Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) that a man will have three registers on the Day of Qiyamah. The first register will contain his good deeds, the second register will contain all his sins and the third will contain all the bounties that Allaah blessed him with.

Allaah will tell the smallest bounty to take its price from the person's good deeds. The smallest bounty will take all the good deeds and will submit that it has still not taken its full price. The person will then still have all the sins to account for and the rest of the bounties to pay for. However, when Allaah wishes to shower a person with mercy, He will tell him, *"O My slave! I have increased your good deeds and forgiven your sins."* The narrator of the hadith states that it was most probably on his occasion that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) added that Allaah will also say to the person, "I have given you all My bounties as a gift (i.e. without a price)." ["At Targheeb wat Tarheeb" Vol. 4 Pg. 398]

Allaah has granted every bounty to man without man earning them. Allaah can therefore question a person about how he used these bounties. Fortunate are those who engage in Allaah's Ibaadah, are grateful to Him and constantly fear retribution from Allaah. On the other hand, most wretched are those who have every bounty and do not even think of submitting to Allaah.

Allaah Ta'ala says in **Surah Ibraheem** [Surah 14, verse 34], ***"If you try to count Allaah's bounties, you will never be able to do so. Indeed, man is extremely unjust and very ungrateful."***

Man is extremely foolish. He humbles himself before people who give him things even though they may expect him to return the favour at some time. On the other hand, he refuses to humble himself before Allaah, Who grants him countless favours without asking anything in return. Man refuses to prostrate to Allaah and to fulfil His commands. Only Allaah gives one's good health and only He creates the cool water that slakes one's thirst.

NOTE: Hadhrat **Abdullaah bin Umar** (R.A) narrates that Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) once asked them, *"Is there any of you who is able to recite a thousand verses of the Qur'aan daily?"*

The Sahabah (R.A) replied, "Who can have the strength to recite a thousand verses daily?" Thereupon Rasulullaah (sallallaahu-alayhi-wa-sallam) said, *"Can you not recite 'Al Haakumut Takaathur' (Surah Takaathur)?"* This means that the reward for reciting Surah Takaathur equals the reward of reciting a thousand verses of the Qur'aan. ["Mishkaat" Pg. 190]