

(*Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.*)

For Fast 29 – September 19

Chapter 69

18 On that day (of Judgment) you will be exposed to view — no secret of yours will remain hidden.¹

19 Then as for him who is given his book in his right hand, he will say: Here, read my book.

20 Surely I knew that I should meet my account.²

21 So he will be in a life of bliss,

22 in a lofty Garden,

23 its fruits are near.³

24 Eat and drink pleasantly for what you sent on ahead in bygone days.

25 And as for him who is given his book in his left hand — he will say: If only my book had not been given to me!

26 And I had not known what my account was!

27 If only (death) had made an end (of me)!

28 My wealth has not availed me.

29 My authority has gone from me.⁴

30 Seize him, then fetter him,

31 then cast him into the burning Fire,

32 then insert him in a chain the length of which is seventy cubits.⁵

33 Surely he did not believe in Allah, the Great,

34 nor did he urge the feeding of the poor.⁶

35 Therefore he does not have here this day a true friend,

36 nor any food except filth,

37 which none but the wrongdoers eat.⁷

Notes:

- 1 (v. 18) This verse speaks clearly of the manifestation of the hidden realities on the day of Resurrection. The inner qualities, good or bad, and the true inner self of a person will be open to view.
- 2 (v. 20) He lived his life knowing that he would account for his deeds one day. It also means that he held himself accountable to people for those of his actions which affected them.
- 3 (v. 23) These fruits are the manifestation of the fruits of righteous deeds. They are here spoken of as being near so that they are available in this life too. Here, these fruits are tasted *spiritually*, by man's inner self. In the life after death they appear as fruits.
- 4 (v. 29) In this life, a man believes that his wealth or his authority can save him from being held to account for his actions.
- 5 (v. 32) A cubit is an ancient unit of length, which was about one metre.

In these verses the spiritual torture of this world is represented as a physical punishment in the next. The chain represents the desires and entanglements of this world, and it is these desires that will assume the shape of a chain. The heart-burnings of this world will likewise be clearly seen as flames of burning fire. The wicked one has in this very world within himself a hell of the passions and inextinguishable desires of this world, and feels the burning of that hell in the failures he encounters. When, therefore, he is cast farther off from his temporal desires and sees an everlasting despair before him, his heart-burnings and bitter sighs for his dear desires assume the shape of burning Fire.

The casting into a chain of the length of seventy cubits is significant. Man's limit of age may as a general rule be fixed at seventy, and he may sometimes even enjoy seventy years excluding the periods of childhood and decrepitude. These seventy years during which he could work with honesty, wisdom and zeal are wasted away by the wicked one only in the entanglements of the world, and in following sensual passions. He does not try to free himself from the chain of desires, and therefore in the next world the desires which he indulged in for seventy years will be embodied into a chain of seventy cubits length, every cubit representing, as it were, a year.

- 6 (v. 34) This shows that a person's disregard for serving humanity will also subject him to the suffering of hell. "Feeding of the poor" must be taken in a general sense. The "poor" may be a human being belonging to any nation or religion.
- 7 (v. 37) The food bought with ill-gotten gains, and the food consumed with disregard for one's duty to the poor, is spiritually contaminated, no matter how fine and pure (and *halal*) it may be physically. That food appears in the next life in its real form of filth.

Once a holy man (Sahibzada Abdul Latif Shaheed) was visiting the house of a very wealthy man. On the table were laid out many sumptuous and pleasing dishes. To the astonishment of other guests, the saint declared that it was all excrement! The wealthy man then confessed that the feast had been prepared from ill-gotten gains. The saint saw the real nature of the food with his visionary eye.