

Fast 9: Humanity-wide approach of *Surah Fatiha* — “Master of the Day of Judgment”

- The next verse of *Surah Fatiha* consists of the following attribute of God:

“Master of the day of Recompense.”
(1:3)

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝

The original words here are: *Mālik-i yaum-id-dīn*. The word *Mālik* means ‘Master’, and *yaum-id-dīn* is the day on which recompense, requital, reward or judgment is dispensed for deeds done. Usually the “day” here is taken to mean the final Day of Judgment in the Hereafter.

- As *Raḥmān* God out of His mercy gave man the resources he needed for his development, and as *Raḥīm* God out of His mercy made those people progress who used those resources for the right purposes. As *Mālik* God passes His judgment on what they did, and gives them their due for their good and bad deeds.
- The recompense or judgment is not, in fact, postponed to the final Day of Judgment, but takes place every moment. The word *yaum*, as used in the Quran, can mean any period of time, however long or short. Therefore, while there will be a final Day of Judgment for human deeds, that day will show openly what judgment had already been passed.
- The word *Mālik* indicates that God has absolute power, and is not, like a judge in a court, or an examiner marking papers of students, bound to give only a specified reward or necessarily apply a penalty and punishment.
- The judgment of God is based purely on justice and facts, and is not in any way coloured by favouritism, prejudice or discrimination:

“And We will set up a just balance on the day of Resurrection, so no soul will be wronged in the least.” (21:47)

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ
فَلَا تَظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ۝

“...and judgment is given between them with justice, and they are not wronged. And every soul is paid back fully for what it did, and He knows best what they do.” (39:69–70)

وَقَضَىٰ بَيْنَهُمُ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ
۝ وَوَفَّيْتُ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ وَهُوَ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ ۝

“And the judging on that day will be just; so as for those whose good deeds are heavy, they are the successful. And as for those whose good deeds are light, those are they who ruined their souls because they disbelieved in Our messages.” (7:8–9)

وَالْوَزْنُ يَوْمَئِذٍ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ
مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٨﴾ وَ
مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ
خَسِرُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا
يَظْلِمُونَ ﴿٩﴾

It will be noticed that there is no mention of Muslim or non-Muslim here, but just “soul” (*nafs*). And the judging is according to the weight of the good deeds, whoever may be the doer. To be precise, the words here are: “whose balance is heavy ... whose balance is light”. By “balance” (*mawāzīn*, موازين) is meant the balance of good deeds over misdeeds.

- The law of God relating to rewarding good deeds and punishing wrong deeds is as follows:

“Whoever brings a good deed will have tenfold like it, and whoever brings an evil deed, will be recompensed only with the like of it, and they shall not be wronged.” (6:160)

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ عَشْرُ مِثَالِهَا
وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى إِلَّا مِثْلَهَا
وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ ﴿١٦٠﴾

“For those who do good is good (reward) and more (than this). ... And those who earn evil, the punishment of an evil is the like of it...” (10:26–27)

لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ ...
وَالَّذِينَ كَسَبُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ جَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ
بِمِثْلِهَا

“Whoever brings good, he will have better than it; and whoever brings evil, those who do evil will be recompensed only for what they did.” (28:84)

مَنْ جَاءَ بِالْحَسَنَةِ فَلَهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْهَا
وَمَنْ جَاءَ بِالسَّيِّئَةِ فَلَا يُجْزَى الَّذِينَ
عَمِلُوا السَّيِّئَاتِ إِلَّا مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

The “tenfold” mentioned in 6:160 is in fact the minimum reward for good deeds. There is a saying of the Holy Prophet that the reward for a good deed **actually done** is from tenfold to seven-hundredfold, and the reward for a good deed **which is intended** but not done is equal to the deed which was intended (Bukhari, Book 81: *Ar-Riqāq*, hadith 6491). The punishment for evil is **at the most** in proportion with the misdeed committed; otherwise it is lesser, or the evil may even be pardoned.