

(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 y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

For Fast 27

Chapter 57

- 16 Has not the time yet come for the believers that their hearts should be humble for the remembrance of Allah and the Truth that is revealed, and (that) they should not be like those who were given the Book before, but time was prolonged for them, so their hearts hardened. And most of them are transgressors.

Note: This verse speaks of the Muslims of a later age. It compares their case to those who were given the scriptures before them and then *a long time having passed over them*, their hearts hardened. Muslims are reminded here that after the passing of a long time, they will fall off from the high standard of the earlier generations, and their hearts will be hardened like the hearts of the earlier people.

- 17 Know that Allah gives life to the earth after its death. Indeed, We have made the signs clear for you that you may understand.

Note: Having spoken of the falling off of the Muslims of a later age, the good news is here announced that, after that, the dead earth will be generated with a new life, the life spiritual. The next verse then goes on to add that it will be through the sacrifices of a part of them that the Muslim nation will again be raised to eminence. These verses are a clear prophetic description of the present condition of Islam. A generous reward is promised to those who make these sacrifices, in the concluding words of v. 18.

- 18 The men who give in charity and the women who give in charity and set apart for Allah a goodly portion, it will be doubled for them, and theirs is a generous reward.
- 19 And those who believe in Allah and His messengers, they are the truthful and the faithful ones with their Lord. They have their reward and their light. And those who disbelieve and reject Our messages, they are the inmates of hell.
- 20 Know that this world’s life is only a sport and a play and an attraction and boasting among yourselves and a race in the multiplication of wealth and

children. It is as rain, whose causing the vegetation to grow pleases the tillers, then it withers away so that you see it turning yellow, then it becomes chaff. And in the Hereafter is a severe punishment, and (also) forgiveness from Allah and (His) pleasure. And this world's life is nothing but a source of vanity.

Note: (1) *This world's life* here stands for the material side of life. It is entirely a pursuit of *unreality*. Individuals as well as nations are racing for the transitory goods of this life, for means of adorning the outside, for riches and gaiety, to the utter neglect of the higher values of life which are pointed out in the next verse.
(2) The material side of life is here likened to the growth of vegetation which flourishes for a time and then decays. Even thus we see individuals and nations rising to prosperity and then falling back on evil days.
(3) Note how Divine forgiveness is constantly mentioned when punishment is spoken of, to show that the attribute of mercy is the predominant attribute of the Divine nature.

- 21 Vie with one another for forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden as vast as the vastness of the heaven and the earth — it is prepared for those who believe in Allah and His messengers. That is the grace of Allah; He gives it to whom He pleases. And Allah is the Lord of mighty grace.

Note: This shows clearly that heaven and hell are not the names of two places, but are really two conditions, because if paradise were the name of a particular place, hell could not exist, as paradise would according to these verses extend over the whole of space.

- 22 No disaster befalls in the earth, or in yourselves, but it is in a book before We bring it into existence — surely that is easy to Allah —

Note: The book here means Divine knowledge or laws of nature. After a disaster, when an investigation takes place into how it happened, we learn something of what was in this book.

- 23 so that you do not grieve for what has escaped you, nor exult in that which He has given you. And Allah does not love any arrogant boaster:
24 such as are miserly and enjoin miserliness on people. And whoever turns back, then surely Allah is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised.

Lailat-ul-Qadr **— as experienced by Maulana Muhammad Ali**

Mr Nasir Ahmad Faruqi writes in *Mujahid-i Kabir*, the biography of Maulana Muhammad Ali, as follows:

“ Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali was not in the habit of mentioning his spiritual experiences, and due to his humble nature he would rarely mention his visions, revelations and true dreams. The case of the men commissioned by God is different, as they proclaim their experiences and revelations by Divine command. As the Hazrat Maulana held no Divine office he would not himself mention his spiritual experiences out of humility, but if questioned on this matter he would say something.

Once I asked him if he had ever experienced *Lailat-ul-Qadr*. He replied:

‘Yes. Once in Dalhousie I was saying *tahajjud* prayers during the last ten days of Ramadan. When I was reciting *At-tahiyyat* suddenly a very bright light appeared in the window. At first I thought that on the road below some people were passing carrying gas lamps, but then I realized that no one would be out in these backwoods at 3 a.m. Then I looked through the window to see what the light was, and saw that it was illuminating even the trees on the mountain far ahead. That scene disappeared as I watched it. Then it occurred to me that it was the illuminations of *Lailat-ul-Qadr* that Allah had shown me.’

Once in Karachi in 1950, again during the last ten days of Ramadan, it was the night of the 29th. During *tahajjud* prayer I found myself deeply engrossed and felt as if my soul was melting away at Allah’s threshold. I was in the state that I did not want to rise up from *sajda*. During the pre-dawn meal, where the Hazrat Maulana was also present, I said to him that I thought this night had been the *Lailat-ul-Qadr*. He replied:

‘I think so as well. Last night when I was saying the ‘*Isha*’ prayer, after reciting the *Fatiha* the verse *inna anzalna-hu fi lailat-il-qadr* came again and again to the tip of my tongue but I recited some other verses. During *tahajjud* just now, when I was reciting the *darood*, suddenly a light spread in front of my eyes. I looked up and saw that the sky and the clouds were illuminated by this light. After a short while this scene disappeared.’ ”