

DOOMSDAY & LIFE AFTER DEATH



Atomic Scientist, Engineer

Sultan Bashir Mahmood

(Sitara-e-Imtiaz)

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With the Name of Allah, Ar-Rahmaan, Ar-Raheem

DOOMSDAY

AND

LIFE AFTER DEATH

A systematic study of the complex realities of life-after-death and the Doomsday; And comprehensive analysis of the ultimate fate of mankind and of the Earth, the Solar System and the Universe in the light of the Holy Quran and the latest scientific findings; pointing out new horizons of thought in developing a clear understanding of our own reality, and of our future on earth, for the believers and the non-believers alike.

Atomic Scientist, Engineer

SULTAN BASHIR MAHMOOD

(Sitara-e-Imtiaz)

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PREFACE

Acceptance of the reality of Doomsday, referred in the Holy Quran as Quaimat (قيامت), Sa'at (الساعة) and Youm (اليوم), is an essential part of the belief of every Muslim. There are hundreds of Ayaat in the Holy Quran that describe the various events of this great happening. Muslims, in general, believe in them without raising any question. However the current age of science and technology is the age of 'Doubt'. We cannot stop people from asking, "What is it?" and "How will it happen?"

For example, the Holy Quran tells us that during the period of Doomsday, the oceans will boil and catch fire 81(6), the crust of the earth will be overturned 99(1,2), the atmosphere will be filled with smoke 44(10,11); the mountains will fly 27(88); the moon will join the sun 75(8,9), the sun and the stars will be overthrown 81(1,2); the Universe will pulsate back to its original point of creation 21(104), the heavens and the earth will be recreated in different forms 14(48); and then there will be the Resurrection and the Day of Judgement. All this is true and we believe it to be so. But is there any logical explanation for such happenings?

Unfortunately there is hardly any book or paper available on the subject that can answer such questions in scientific terms, to appeal to those who have been trained to think rationally. I have been motivated by such forward looking bright Muslim young men and women in the writing of this book. It is principally to satisfy their quest for the unknown.

Another reason, though of lesser importance, that has motivated me in writing this book has been the worldwide scientific interest in knowing about the end of the Universe. A

great deal of research work is now going on about the death of stars, solar systems, galaxies, and the Universe. Hundreds of excellent research papers have appeared in scientific journals on these crucial issues in recent times. Nothing that the Holy Quran has been the first to describe these issues, I was impelled to invite the attention of the scientific world to this Divine Revelation, to tell them that what they were looking for now, was indeed first echoed in the deserts of Arabia over fourteen hundred years ago, by the unlettered prophet of Allah, May peace be upon him.

Not only did he do that; he also made clear the Divine purpose behind the creation and the end of the Universe. After all, science finds nothing illogical in nature, so why should it do so with the Doomsday?

While attempting to answer such fundamental questions, I have also discussed in this book the sensitive subjects of the human soul, life and matters related to life-after-death, which although currently fall outside of the scope of physics, are definitely of great importance in metaphysics. This book is thus an attempt to systematically study the complex realities of life, life-after-death and Doomsday, the ultimate fate of ourselves and of our Universe, in the light of the Holy Quran and the latest scientific thought, pointing out new horizons for science; and to develop a better understanding of the future, for believers and non-believers alike. However, there still remain many unknowns, waiting to be explored by more and more research workers. Therefore some of the conclusions in this book should be taken as the author's viewpoint only. May Allah forgive him where he has erred or failed to explain the Divine Message correctly (Aameen).

Sultan Bashir Mahmood (S.I)

REVIEWS

The Holy Quran is basically and primarily "Al-Huda", guidance for mankind. It guides the individual human person to behave morally and spiritually in this world so as to achieve salvation in the life Hereafter. As such, though replete with scientific references, it is neither a book of strict scientific knowledge nor of mere philosophical ideas. The Holy Book's guiding programme is two-fold: at the ideational level it imparts to man the conscious realization of true metaphysical realities, constituting "Iman" a term for which no single equivalent in the English Language is available. Far from being dogmatic or irrational, these metaphysical truths are apprehended and endorsed by the human intellect. At the operational level, it activates the moral sense inherent in human nature for its full fruition individually and collectively.

The Quranic references to physical and cosmic phenomena serve to support its typical theistic argument. It refers to physical phenomena as the "signs" (ayaat) of His Omnipotence, All-embracing Knowledge and Total Wisdom. The gigantic creation, the Universe, with all its uniformities of causal processes, is a prime "sign" (Ayaat) or proof of its Maker. In addition to cosmogony many of these Quranic references mostly relate to Physics, Astronomy, Geology, Embryology and Psychology, etc. The full meaning of these references could not be understood by early exegetical writers because scientific knowledge was extremely limited at that time. But now, as the vista of human knowledge in various branches of

physical sciences has expanded enormously, we can better appreciate these ayaat of the Holy Quran.

The process of re-focusing the attention of Muslims on the Quran started with Shah Waliullah of Delhi in the eighteenth century of the Christian era. After passing through many stages during the nineteenth century, it seems to be nearing its zenith at the present time. Allama Iqbal's "Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam" is an important landmark in this field, and he definitely added a new dimension to this process by endeavoring to assert and affirm Islamic faith on the basis of higher Physics and higher Psychology. Dr. Muhammad Rafiuddin carried his work forward especially in the realm of psychological theories in his "Ideology of the Future". More recently, the eminent French surgeon, Maurice Bucaille, has reasserted the veracity of Quranic references to biological phenomena, in particular, Embryology. In addition to this many authors have taken up the task of explaining Quranic References relating to the fields of Physics and Astronomy on the basis of recent research and discoveries. Indeed, as yet no scientific observation or theory has contravened any of the Quranic descriptions of physical phenomena. This is itself ample proof of the claim made by the Holy Book in Ayah 53 of Surah 41:

*"Soon will We show them Our signs
in the cosmos and within their
ownelves, until it becomes
manifest to them that this is the Truth".*

Belief in the ultimate end of man's earthly existence and in life in the next world (al-akhira) is central to all of the

Quranic teachings on eschatology. The basic message here is that there will come a moment, "The Hour" (Al-Sa'a), when every human being will be shaken into a unique and unprecedented self-awareness of his/her deeds. "*When the great cataclysm comes, that day man will recall what he had been striving for*" (79:34-35), is a typical statement of this great episode. Mr. Sultan Bashir Mahmood, the author of this book, has very ably put together the events that will, according to the Quran, lead up to Doomsday-the Day of final reckoning. What is commendable in his exposition of this theme is that he has presented it in the light of modern scientific theories and speculation, thus showing mostly the corroboration of Divine revelation with the scientific thought. In a book of this nature it is difficult to agree with the author on all minor points of detail and interpretation; but I do favourably appreciate the general plan and purpose of the book. May Allah (SWT) reward him for this noble task. I also congratulate him on the formation of the Holy Quran Research Foundation in Islamabad. Living in a scientific ethos, we surely need more studies and publications in this vein to kindle and rejuvenate genuine religious faith in the skeptical minds of our age. May Allah help the members of the foundation's governing body in their future projects.

August 1987, Lahore

DR. ISRAR AHMAD

Founder-President

Markazi Anjuman Khuddamul Quran Lahore

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The Holy Quran – the Word of Allah, revealed to the Holy Prophet, fourteen centuries ago, is not a book of science per se, and yet it has about 750 Ayaat which deal with scientific phenomena in one way or another. While some of these Ayaat are easily comprehensible, the contents of others are still beyond our grasp. As scientific knowledge builds up with rapid advancement in various fields, the extent of the wealth of knowledge contained in the Quran is dawning upon us.

It is a very encouraging sign that of late renewed vigor is being shown by Islamic scholars to understand the Quran in all of its multi-faceted dimensions. The book "Doomsday and Life after Death", authored by Mr. Sultan Bashir Mahmood, is a bold attempt in that direction. It is the outcome of his painstaking research study extending over several years. The most important aspect of the book is that it contains an analysis of selected ayaat by an engineer who has a deep understanding of Islam as well as a good grasp of engineering and the other sciences, especially astronomy. The author has chosen some very apt and powerful ayaat and has given their interpretation in various Surahs of the book in a simple and direct manner to help develop the main theme of his book. This analysis has been strengthened with the help of similes and interesting diagrams and pictures. The fact is that this work is so absorbing that the reader proceeds with increasing interest from the beginning to the end of the book. Once started, one does not like to stop before finishing it.

I am confident that this work will serve to encourage scholars of all schools of thought to embark upon in-depth analysis of the Quran from the various perspectives falling

within their fields of specialization, with the intent to acquire fuller understanding of the Quran. Each pause, word and Ayah call for careful attention, thinking and reflection; and this is where the men and women with vision can arrive at true understanding of the teachings of the glorious Quran, wherein lies the salvation not only of mankind, but also of what constitutes the Universe as a whole.

Karachi
August, 1987.

Salim Mahmood,
Chairman,
Pakistan Space & Upper Atmosphere
Research Commission,
Karachi.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful; I dedicate this work to the best of mankind, the last of the Prophets of Allah, Muhammad (Peace be upon him), on whom was completed the religion of Islam, the religion of all the previous prophets; and to whom the Holy Quran was revealed through the angel Gibraeel for the guidance of all mankind. In his holy name I dedicate this work to the Muslim youth, the proud beholders of his heritage; and to my father, the Late Ch. Muhammad Sharif Khan, and to my mother who taught me to believe in Allah and His Messenger; and to my wife Nasim Kaifi Mahmood for her encouragement in moments of despair in life; and lastly to my sons Asim, Ahmad and Shahzad with the prayers that may Allah lead all of us to the Right Path.

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I am extremely grateful to many Scholars of Islam, out of Pakistan, particularly Mr. Panga Dilan Daulay from Jakarta, Mr. T.D. Jamal-ud-Din, Tokyo University, Japan, Dr. M. Yousaf Sarajova, Mr. Ahmad Thomson London, U.K, for their valuable suggestions.

English translation of the Ayaat of the Holy Quran has been adopted from Allama Abdullah Yousaf Ali⁴², Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthal³⁹, and Muhammad Asad¹⁵. May Allah reward them all for their services to Islam.

Sultan Bashir Mahmood (S.I)

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PART – I
UNIVERSE AND ITS ULTIMATE FATE

INTRODUCTION

وَاللَّهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَمَا أَمْرُ السَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ

الْبَصْرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَلِيلٌ ۝

“And unto Allah belongs, the unseen of the Heavens and the Earth, and the matter of the Hour (of Doomsday) is, but as the twinkling of the eye, or it is nearer still. Lo, Allah is able to do all things”. 16(77)

All the religions of the world and also modern science believe that the World is going to end, but the question remains, “how”? When we look around at the vast skies studded with stars we cannot avoid asking, “What will eventually happen to all this”? In the heart of our hearts, each one of us is also concerned about one’s own existence. Believers and atheists are equally bothered by the thought “Is death the final goal of life?” “Is there something to look forward after passing through this beautiful World of ours?” “Is there any purpose in the Universe?”

These are indeed very pertinent questions, but hardly anyone can claim to know definite answer. Both Religion and science are divided on these issues. If the former has mixed it with mythology, the later has adulterated it with doubt. In this domain science and religion have differed more than any other thing, although both claim to seek “The Truth”. This book is an attempt to bring them closer with reference to science and the Holy Quran that is believed by the Muslims to be the Revelation from the

Creator of the worlds. It is an effort to probe into the Unknown, with the hope to at least partially satisfy the curiosity about the ultimate fate of ourselves and that of the Universe.

In the olden times, Greeks had advanced the hypothesis about the eternity of the Universe, i.e. it always existed like it. This notion, even now persists among some of the leading astronomers, who believe in the continuity of the Universe. According to this theory¹ matter creates more matter and the cosmos goes on expanding forever. They see no Beginning or the End of the Universe. However, this view has been rejected by a large number of scientists. Based upon their observations of the formation of galaxies, the expansion of the Universe, the decay of matter, and study of the behaviour of elementary particles, they propose a finite Universe, both in terms of space and time i.e. Universe has a "Beginning" and an "End".

The popular scientific views about the Universe were summed up in Geneva, during conference of cosmologists and particle physicists in November 1983. It was said, "what we look back on as the "Big Bang" was a time of very high but finite density, a state to which the Universe will precisely return through collapse after its present expansion phase is over. Out of the high density phase, it will be born again (with an exponential inflation phase) to repeat the cycle and infinitium².

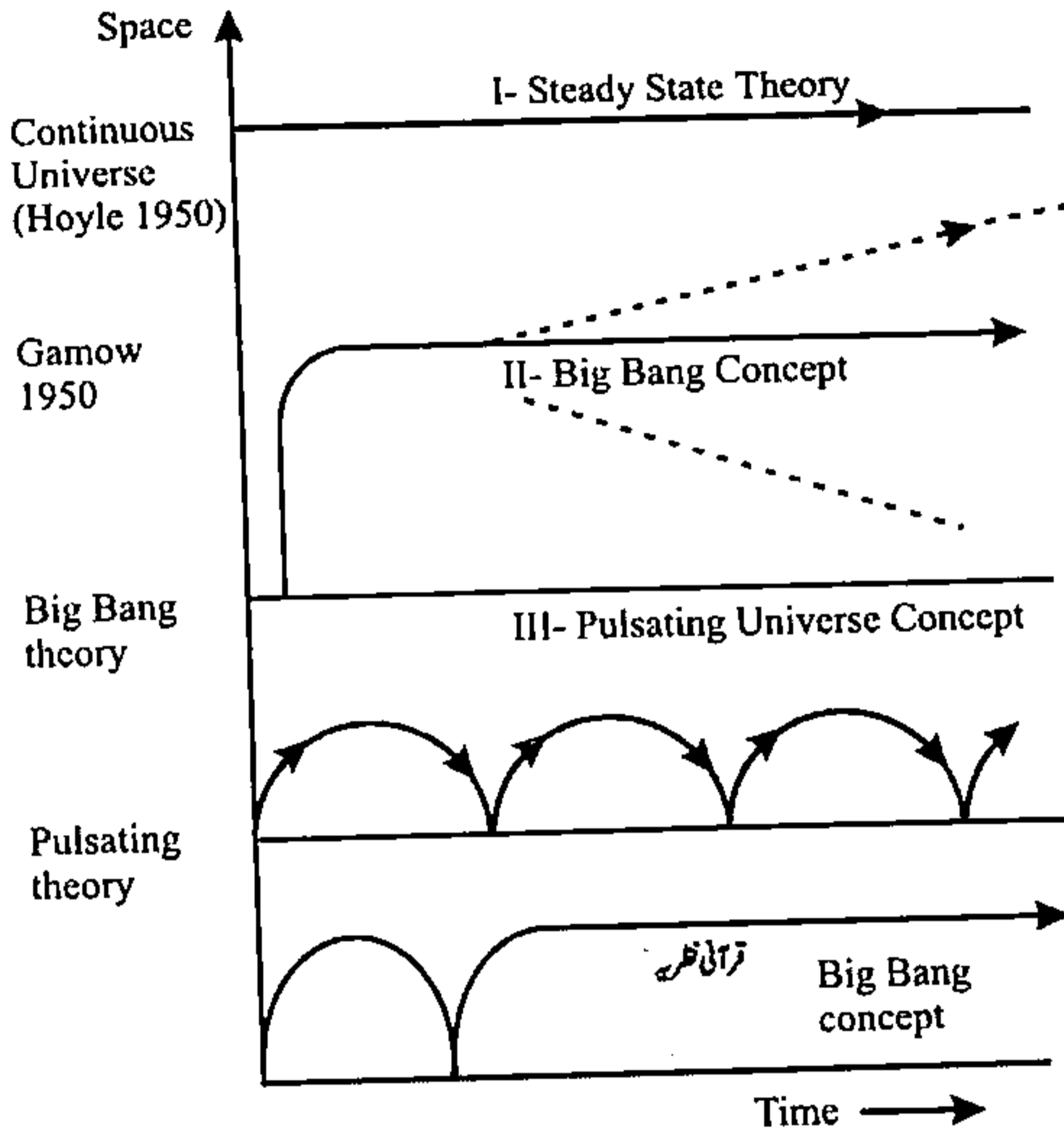
As regards the various religions, according to Paul Davies¹⁰, "they differ greatly in their conception of the moment and manner of this cosmic demise. Some warn of an imminent catastrophe of a world overtaken by an

apocalyptic destruction” when the sinful will be judged sternly. Others teach about a forthcoming kingdom of Heaven that will replace the harsh and uncertain world we now live in. Hinduism and Buddhism incline towards a cyclic system in which the end of the current world is followed by the rebirth of another world.

According to Clark,⁴⁸ Albert Einstein said, *“I claim credit for nothing. Everything is determined, the beginning, as well as the end, by forces over which we have no control. It is determined for the insect as well as for the star. Human beings, vegetables, or cosmic dust, we all dance to a mysterious tune, intoned in the distance by an invisible piper”*.

According to Paul Davies¹⁰, *“Mystery surrounds how order has emerged out of chaos in the Universe. The Present orderly structures and complex activity has somehow arisen from the featureless ferment of the big bang, in apparent defiance of the second law of thermodynamics which requires that order decreases, rather than increases, with time”*.

Fig. 1: Concepts of the Creation of Universe



Subject of the Doomsday is closely connected with the creation of the Universe. Greeks thought that Universe had always existed; an idea which figures out in the modern theory of Steady State Universe, postulated by Fred Hoyle¹, but this has been superceded by the more widely accepted theory by George Gamow³³, that the Universe had a beginning triggered by a great explosion called Big Bang; now it may last forever. A modification to the Big Bang theory is the pulsating Universe theory, that it keeps on repeating itself. More recent views are that Universe started with a Big Bang, it will fold itself back to its origin, and from there on, would restart in an exponential manner. This view is closer to the Quranic concept of the creation of the Universe.

However, on this subject the guidance received from the Holy Quran is most comprehensive and unparalleled in clarity. First of all, it tells that the Universe had a beginning. It is a created work in time and space, with a purpose; and Allah is its Originator Who says in the Holy Quran:

مَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ
وَأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى

“We have not created the Heavens and the Earth (Universe) And all that lies between them but with a definite purpose, and for a pre-fixed measurement of time”. 46(3)

Thus according to the Holy Quran, everything in the Universe has a purpose and a program. After this purpose of existence is fulfilled, it will be replaced by one's better suited for new demands. The ultimate scenario is given by the following Ayah:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ۝ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ
وَالْإِكْرَامِ ۝

“All that is there (in the Universe) will perish, except the Face of Your Lord, full of Majesty, Bounty and Honour”. 55(26-27)

Same theme is stressed in the Ayah:

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ
إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ ۚ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ۝

“And call not unto any other Allah along with Allah, There is no Allah save Him. Everything will perish, save His Countenance. His is the command, and unto Him you will be brought back”. 28(88)

From these ayaat we can derive that nothing can be everlasting. “Everything that has a beginning will have its end also”. This is the law from the Creator of the Universe.

On this principle, we can say that even the very stable particles such as neutrons and protons cannot have infinite life, they must decay with time. In the final analysis, whole of the Universe will be annihilated. The everlasting Reality is that of Allah alone, the Sole Cause of everything.

Then there is the principle of “Finiteness” which follows the Divine scheme of pre-programmed events, about which there are various ayaat in the Holy Quran. For example it says:

لِكُلِّ نَبَأٍ مُّسْتَقَرٌّ وَسَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

***“Every news (event) has an appointed time,
And you will come to know of it soon”.
6(67)***

This is a great prediction also. The rule that “Every event has an appointed time” was not known in the days of the Prophet of Allah. But the Holy Quran said, “You will come to know of it soon”. Now we know of it, even if not fully, at least, partially. An easily comprehensible example of this is decaying of radioactive elements at constant decay rates.

This principle also means that nature is logical in its design. Events would unfold themselves following a pre-set programme. This has been called Taqdeer in the Holy

Quran i.e. "Destiny", the in-built Divine measurement and design life of everything, which guides them to their natural ends. Following ayaat illustrate it further:

سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى ۝ الَّذِي خَلَقَ فَسَوَّى ۝ وَالَّذِي
قَدَّرَ فَهَدَى ۝

"Glorify the Name of your Lord, Most high, Who creates, and then proportions, Who measures then guides" 87(1-3)

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى ۝
"Our Lord is He Who, gave everything its nature, Then guides them (through their life cycle). 20(50)

The meanings hidden in the above ayaat are now easy to understand as science has seen the logic, measurement and predictable behaviour of things. It has discovered natural laws that determine the way events may happen. But the Holy Quran goes beyond that. It also says that all that is in the Universe has been documented beforehand. On this theme the following Ayah is highly thought provoking:

وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝
"And of all things, We have taken account in a Leader Book". 36(12)

From the above ayaat, we can clearly say that in the Universe nothing can be haphazard or illogical, because it is against the very nature of the Creator Who measures and then guides 87(2). Thus, if one can understand laws framed by Allah and analyze the effect of all the variables involved therein, then every event must be predictable. But, since

our reach in time and space is limited and Universe is so vast and complex, mankind may never know with certainty, of anything, about the Doomsday of the Universe. Sure knowledge can only be the Revelation from the Creator of the Worlds Himself.

The Holy Quran is that very Revelation, preserved word by word, nay syllable by syllable, in the purest form, exactly as was revealed by the Lord of the worlds on Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), the last of His Messengers towards the mankind, completing the Message of all the previous Prophets. It is the whole Truth, a guidance to lead a happy and satisfied life in this world and a code to prepare for the time to come after death.

Though primarily concerned with such higher truths of creation of Universe, life, soul and life-after-death, yet in many of its ayaat, The Holy Quran has described the events concerning the beginning and the end of the present order of existence in a precise but comprehensive manner, to make us understand our own destiny in time and space. When co-related, such ayaat of Divine Revelation give us a clear and comprehensive scenario of the events leading to the Doomsday of our world as well as that of the rest of the worlds in the Universe.

This book is an effort to understand this complex subject with reference to the Holy Quran and the recent scientific discoveries about the events related to the ultimate fate of the Universe. In this study we derive the hypothesis that Universal Doomsday is actually the culmination of various localized minor Doomsdays events that always keep occurring in the cosmos. Thus Doomsday is a relative phenomenon. There are minor Doomsdays and major

Doomsdays. Accordingly, even at this very moment, somewhere in space, there is some star or planet that is there now, but will not be there in the moments to come. In this scheme, time may not be too far off when our Earth and Solar system will also meet their Doomsday. No doubt, it would be a mighty event for us but for other Worlds, it may just pass over unnoticed in the vastness of the Universe. Finally, there will be the Day of the "Ultimate Fate" the final end of the entire order of the present existence. But even that is not really the end. It is to give birth to a "New Order of Existence", which will then remain forever; a future built on the shadows of the past, a world as a consequence of the present World; a place of refinement, reward and punishment for all those who had been ever there in the frame work of time and space. In that framework, the human personality or mind manifested by its soul will keep striving on the path that was traced by it during its previous worldly existence. There it will have consciousness but not the choice to change its course.

In this scheme Fig. 2 shows the various states of our existence, spread over three phases, history of which is found squeezed in the very opening of the Holy Quran. It says:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ○ مَلِكِ يَوْمِ

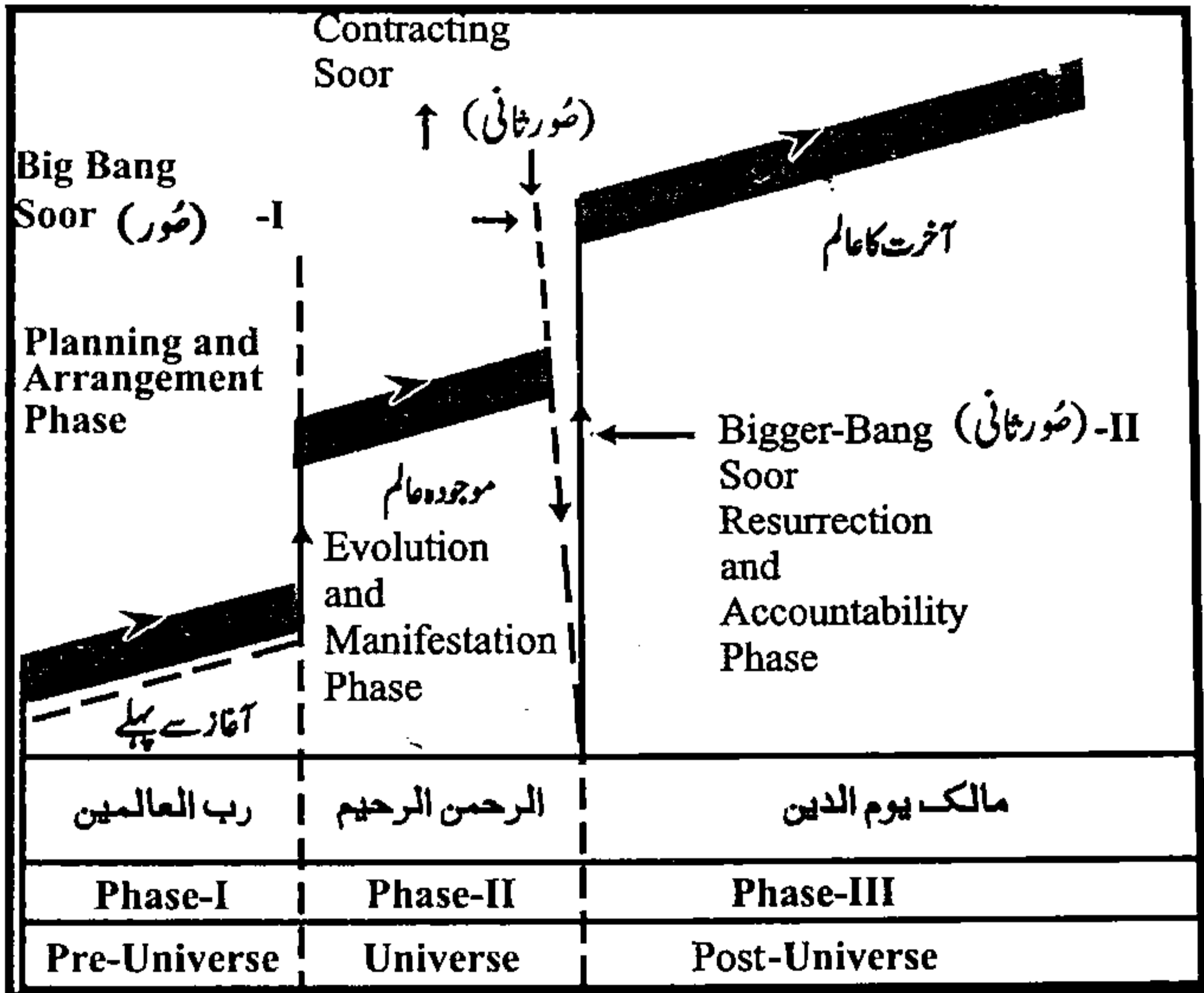
الدِّينِ ○

"All Praise is for the Rabb, (Who arranges for sustenance of things even before they happen) of all the Worlds, The Compassionate throughout; and Kind

always; The Sole Master of the Day of Judgment". 1(1-3)

In Fig. 2, phase one is the pre-*Universe* phase, existence of which is synonymous with the characteristics of *Rabb* of the Creator who pre-arranges all means of sustenance for the events to follow. Thus He created the pre-*Universe* and out of that the present *Universe* which is the Phase-II of our existence, a visible manifestation of His Compassion and Kindness all around. It will be followed by the 3rd and final phase of existence, that is the phase of Accountability, which is correlated with the Quranic description of the final Doomsday, the state when everything will return to Allah again. 53(42)

Fig. 2: Three Stages of the Existence:



From the events of life and death of a person, an individual World, or of the entire Universe, the lesson which Quran wants us to learn is that we must make the best use of the time while we live on Earth. Life is too precious to be wasted. Just as everything in nature has a purpose, man must also discover the purpose of his/her own existence. According to the Quran, "It is to serve Allah and His creations". When our time comes, each one of us will return to Him Who originated us in the first place. Perishable is body only. Our soul, the very "Me", "the Spiritual Being of us", is conserved forever. In this life we must develop it in the direction of our Creator as much as possible.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ ضَرْبٌ مَثَلٌ ۖ فَاسْتَمِعُوا لَهُ ۗ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ
 مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوا ذُبَابًا وَلَا يُكْمِلُوهُ ۖ وَسَلْبُهُمْ
 الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَا يَسْتَنْقِذُوهُ مِنْهُ ۖ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبُ وَالْمَطْلُوبُ ۝
 مَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ ۝ اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي
 مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ۝ يَعْلَمُ
 مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۗ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ ۝ يَا أَيُّهَا
 الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ارْكَعُوا وَاسْجُدُوا وَاعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمْ وَافْعَلُوا الْخَيْرَ
 لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝

"O Mankind! a similitude is coined, So pay you heed to it. Lo! Those on whom you call besides Allah cannot create (even) a fly, though they get together for this purpose; And if the fly took something from them, they could not rescue it from it; So weak

are (both) the seeker and the sought! They measure not Allah His rightful measure. Lo! Allah is Strong Almighty..... Lo! Allah chooses messengers from the angels and (also) from mankind. Indeed Allah is All-Hearing All-Seeing. He knows all that is before them and all that is behind them And unto Allah all things are returned. O'you who believe! Bow down and prostrate yourselves (before Allah) and worship your Lord, and do good deeds, that haply you may prosper". 22(73-77)

THE TYPES OF DOOMSDAY

إِنَّهُ هُوَ يُبْدِئُ وَيُعِيدُ ۝

“No doubt, it is He (Allah) Who creates and re-creates from the very beginning”. 85(13)

As we can see from the above Ayah the Holy Quran gives a dynamic view of the Universe highlighting that the process of creation and re-creation is a continuous activity since the very beginning. In this process, sometimes major shake-ups and revolutionary changes occur in nature also. Doomsday represents such changes. These may be classified into the following categories:

- i. Minor Doomsdays
- ii. Major Doomsdays
- iii. Ultimate Event, the Universal Doomsday
- iv. The Resurrection and Day of Judgement

In the following section is given a brief review of these Doomsdays which will be discussed in detail in subsequent chapters.

i. Minor Doomsday

Minor Doomsdays are of a routine nature and occur as part of the continuous Divine process of creation and re-creation. These represent changes in the evolution of the world. In their scope, these are generally limited to a particular earth. Even then may be localized affairs affecting a small region of the earth only. In this context death of an individual is not less than the Doomsday for

him. Depending upon severity, these can be further classified as follows:

a. Sub Events: These represent catastrophes on a national or global scale. Life continues normally after these have passed over. There have been many such events that wiped out entire civilizations in the past. For example, large scale The Flood of Nuh, (PBUH), the Ice ages and catastrophic fall of meteors etc. The Holy Quran points out many such events as a reminder for the people to reflect into the fate of the earlier generations of mankind on the Earth.

In the scheme of the Supreme Creator nothing is forever. Everything will perish at its turn and so will be the whole of the Universe. The same is true for the individuals and nations also as said in the Holy Quran:

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلٌ ۖ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ سَاعَةً

وَلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُونَ ۝

“And every nation has its term, and when its term comes they cannot put it off an hour, nor advance it”. 7(34)

The Holy Quran shows relationship between the fate of nations and their state of morality. The history of the Earth is witness to many such minor doomsdays, which fell upon individual nations who were wiped out suddenly we shall discuss their occurrence in detail in chapter 3.

- b. Overall Earth's Doomsday: This is relatively a major catastrophe that may fall on all people of the Earth. But on universal scale, even this will be of little significance. A glimpse of this event is visible from the following Ayaat. When it falls the inhabitants of the earth will be caught in surprise.

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝ مَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا
صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُونَ ۝ فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ
تَوْصِيَةً وَلَا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ۝

“Further, they ask, (about the Doomsday) when will this promise (come to pass), if what you say is true?” “They will not want for aught, but a single blast. It will seize them while, they are disputing among themselves, Then, no chance will they have, to dispose (of their affairs), nor even to return to their own people”. 36(48-50)

Universe will keep on even after this. Doomsday of other worlds will also come at their own turn in a similar fashion.

ii. Major Doomsday

Major events are those that happen on a cosmological scale and involve the destruction of complete solar systems figure 3-A. On some what larger scale as shown in figure 3-B these may also destroy a part or an entire galaxy. The following Quranic Ayaat speak of such a catastrophic event

that will destroy our Solar System and some parts of our galaxy as well.

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ۝

“What for the Day, when the Sun is folded up, when the stars fall, losing their light”.

81(1-2)

such verses, no doubt, refer to a large scale catastrophes destroying the entire Solar Systems and a parts of their galaxy. But still it is not the destruction of the whole Universe. In this respect the Quranic Ayaat 55(29-30) picture the universal dynamism with the proclamation that each moment in the life of the Universe is a day of new splendour for the Great Creator.

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ ۝

فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ۝

“Of Him seeks (their needs) each one in Heavens and the Earth. Every day, He is in the New Splendour. Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?”

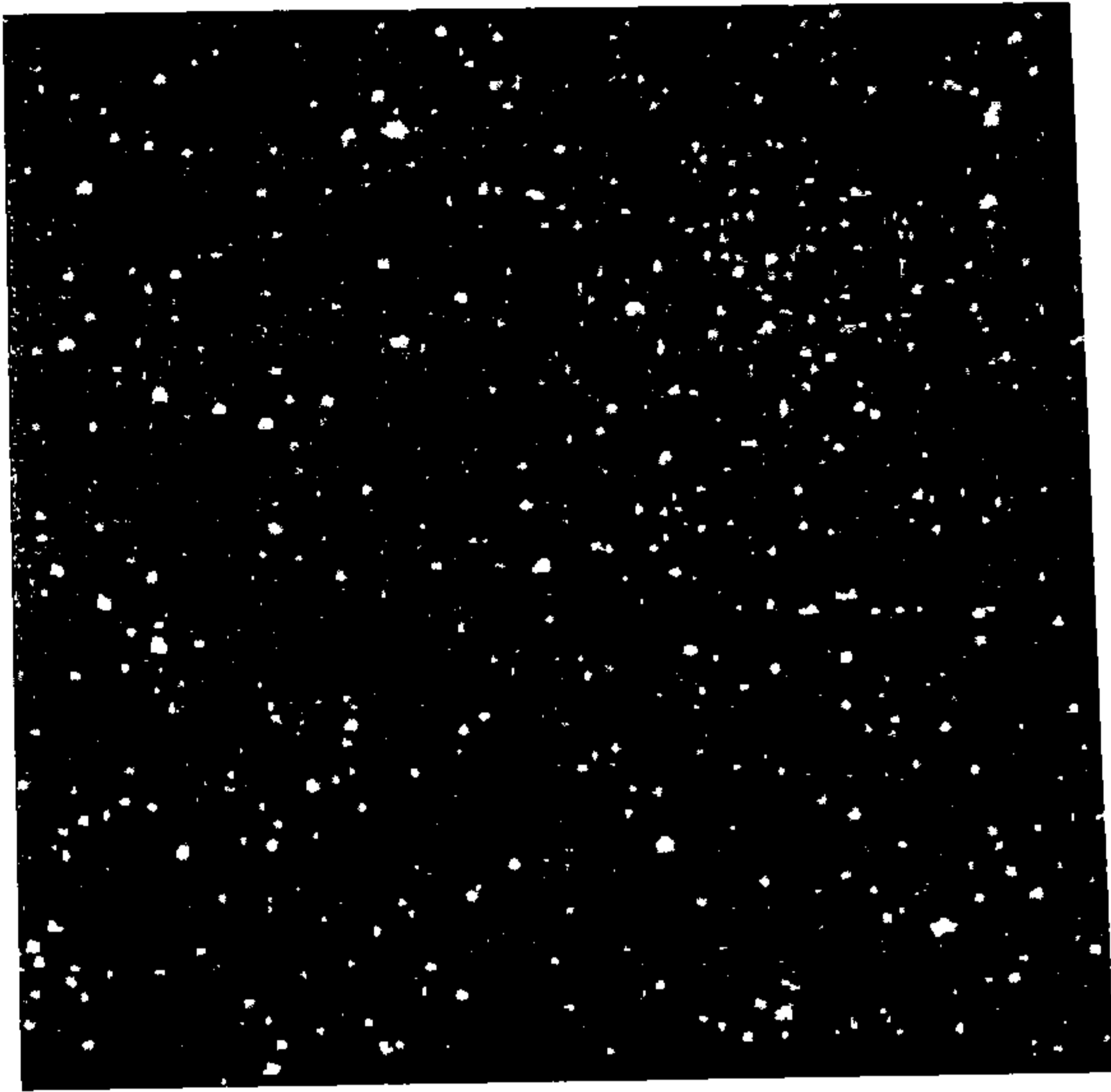
55(29-30)

It is to be noted that, saying “Of Him seek their needs each one in the Heaven and the Earth” means, there must be living beings in other heavenly worlds also. All of them beseech their Creator for sustenance. The phrase, “Every day, He is in new splendour” also means that Universe is not a passive organism, but a dynamic active system in which of creation and re-creation lead to more splendid creations. Cosmos is witnessing such Doomsdays in large numbers every day. Planets, solar systems and heavenly

worlds are being destroyed and re-created as a routine in the Universe.

The Prophet of Allah, Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) told that with the approaching ultimate end, frequency of such destructive happenings in the cosmos will increase beyond all proportions. He told that frequent showers of the meteorites will be a major indication of the coming of the major Doomsday.

Fig. 3-A:



Small scale Doomsdays of the stars, solar systems and of the planets are a routine phenomenon in the Universe which consists of millions of galaxies. Each galaxy may consist of trillions of heavenly bodies. Even by best telescopes we can only see a part of the Heavenly World. What is beyond that, nobody knows. But the astronomers have seen that Heavens are extremely dynamic organisms. Here thousands of stars are dying and many more get birth at the same time. The photograph of the Heaven taken with a 10 inch f/4,5 Telescope, by the Australian Chris Gloyd, shows part of the heavenly world only. Who can say that the bright nebula at the top right corner was not once a living World which is undergoing its Doomsday now?

Fig. 3-B



Colliding galaxies about 50 million light-years away. NGC 4038 and NGC 4039 are probably once-ordinary galaxies now emerging from a close gravitational encounter. Their interiors have clearly been disrupted. The tendrils are composed of a billion stars spilled out into intergalactic space. From beginning to end this collision occupied more than a hundred million years. Courtesy Hale Observatories.

iii. Ultimate Event, The Universal Doomsday

This will happen once and for all, involving whole of the Universe. That will be the end of everything but whom Allah may save. The following revelation of the Holy Quran predicts the total annihilation of the present cosmic order.

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ
إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ○

“And call not any other Allah along with Allah. There is no Allah save Him. Everything will perish except His Countenance, His is the Command, and Unto Him you will be brought back”. 28(88)

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ○ وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ○
“All that is there will perish, except the Face of your Lord, Full of Majesty, Bounty and Honour”. 55(26-27)

Thus the ultimate event means the end of the entire order of the present physical Universe, reversing back to the original state of the pre-Universe, when there was nothing but Allah alone”.

iv. The Resurrection and the Day of Judgement

This is the last event of the present phase of existence. All the minor and major Doomsdays will culminate in it. This will only happen once and mark the beginning of the New Universe, much larger than the entire order of present existence.

The Day of Resurrection will also be initiated suddenly as told in the following Ayaat of the Holy Quran:

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ

الْقَهَّارِ ۝

(Think of) the Day, "When the earth will be changed to other than the earth and also the heavens, and they will come forth unto Allah, The One, The Compeller". 14(48)

This revelation provides a very important piece of information about what will happen after the Universal Doomsday. It clearly tells, that after that great catastrophe, a new Universe will be born, possibly from the debris of the previous one. New Universe will have new types of life supporting bodies. The Holy Quran also informs that they may resemble in shape and style with the things of this World, but in reality will be different.

Then all the people of all the times will be brought back to life and judged according to the deeds performed in their previous lives. In the new Universe there will be Jannat the abode of the righteous, and Jahannam, the abode of the wicked. The following Quranic Ayah points out to some of the events of the Day of Resurrection:

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ ۝

"The Trumpet shall be sounded, when behold! from their graves mankind will then rush forth to their Lord". 36 (51)

The Day of Judgement will follow the Resurrection. It will be a Day, spread over, thousands, may be millions of our earthly years. Then each soul will be duly and justly

rewarded for its deeds performed in their previous lives, where they had the freedom to choose between the right and the wrong.

فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يُسْأَلُ عَنْ ذَنْبِهِ إِنْسٌ وَلَا جَانٌّ ۝ فَبِأَيِّ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمَا
تُكذِّبِينَ ۝ يُعْرَفُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ بِسِيمَاهُمْ فَيُؤْخَذُ بِالنَّوَاصِي
وَالْأَقْدَامِ ۝ فَبِأَيِّ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبِينَ ۝

“On that Day no question will be asked of mankind or Jinn as to their sins; Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny? For the sinners will be known by their marks, they will be seized by their forelocks, and their feet; Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?”

55(39-42)

After the announcement of rewards and punishments, people will be sent to their final abodes. Some will go to hell and some to paradise. Thereafter, there will be everlasting life about which Quran says:

هَذِهِ جَهَنَّمُ الَّتِي يُكَذِّبُ بِهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ ۝ يَطُوفُونَ فِيهَا وَبَيْنَ
حَمِيمٍ إِن ۝ فَبِأَيِّ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبِينَ ۝ وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ
جَنَّتَيْنِ ۝ فَبِأَيِّ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكذِّبِينَ ۝

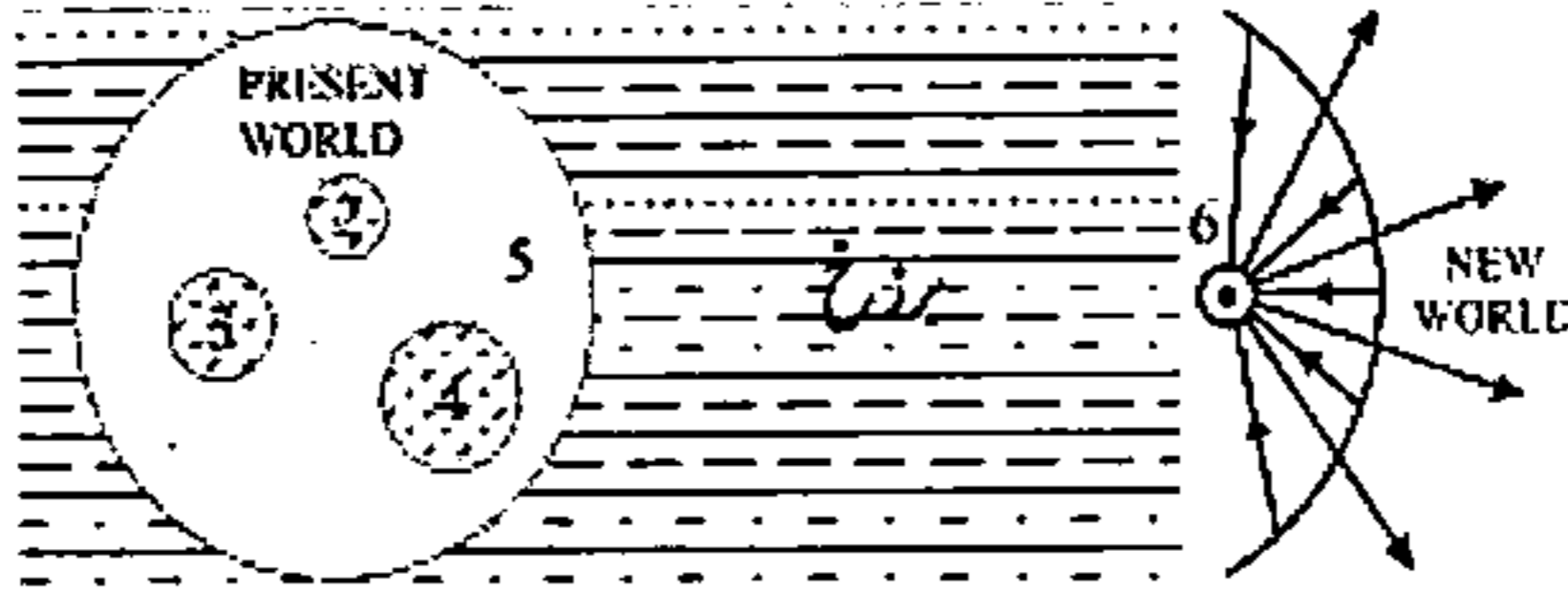
“This is Hell which the sinners deny, In its midst and in the midst of boiling hot water, where they will wander around; Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny? But for the one who fears while standing before his/her Lord, there will be two Gardens (Paradise). Then which of the

favours of your Lord will you deny?" 55(43-47)

Steps leading to universal Domsdays and resurrection are depicted in Figure 4.

Fig- 4: Steps Leading to the Universal Domsday

1. Death of the individual.
2. Earthly disturbances.
3. Complete destruction of the earth.
4. Doms day of the solar system.
5. The universal doomsday.
6. The resurrection.



The Prophet of Allah (PBUH) also told that dooms day of an individual begins with his death from the world.

In the Universe everything has a prefixed destiny and created for a finite period only. The Holy Quran says

مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَجَلٍ
مُسَمًّى وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ بِلِقَائِ رَبِّهِمْ لَكٰفِرُونَ ۝

"Allah created not the Heavens and the Earth and all that is between them, save with truth, and for a destined end. But truly many of the mankind are disbelievers in the meeting with their Lord" ... 30(8)

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CATASTROPHIC EVENTS AND MORAL DEGRADATION

Why there are sufferings? Why do catastrophes happen which kill thousands of people in no time? What is that Allah who punishes His own creations? These questions are not strange. Many put them boldly and many whisper in their hearts. The Holy Quran tells that, it is not Allah, but the man himself who is actually responsible for his misfortunes. Allah wrongs not even by the weight of an atom. The Holy Quran says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ ۖ وَإِنْ تَكَ حَسَنَةً يُّضْعِفْهَا

وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۝

“Lo! Allah wrongs not even by the weight of an atom And if there is a good deed, He will, double it, And will give (the doer) from His presence an immense reward”. 4(40)

How is the man responsible for his misfortunes, particularly when he is always greedy for his benefits? Why should he work for his own misfortunes?

In answer to these questions, the Holy Quran tells that in the overall scenario mankind really does not know what is ultimately good for them and what is bad. The man follows his ambitions blindly and often has pitfalls. Many a times he shuns from a thing that is really good for his own future. In this respect he is like a child. For example, though education is good for him, but if given choice, the

child will go for playthings. But his parents, knowing the worth of education, even force him to go to school and work hard on books. Similar is the case of the mankind. Their Creator knows what is the best for them in this life and in the life Hereafter. For their sake He has been sending His Prophets and Messengers in all ages to help them clearly see the right path. The last of this long series has been Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), who was sent with the Holy Quran, the last and the latest edition of the Divine guidance. If mankind acts upon its teachings they will always be on safer side.

The rule is that if an individual defies the moral laws of nature, he may escape punishment in this life. However, when majority of the members of a society or nation adopt callous attitudes to the dictates of the Divine Revelation, they are made to suffer collectively for their sins in this life also. The Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) had told, *“When Allah sends punishment on a nation, it befalls upon the whole population indiscriminately. However after death, they will be resurrected and judged according to their deeds”*. The Holy Quran links the national catastrophes with the moral degradation of the majority of the individuals of a nation. It repeatedly describes the fateful events of nations who had defied the Divine moral laws and ultimately wiped out from the face of the Earth. Then came the new generations who prospered as long as they followed the Divine laws but when downgraded morally they were also wiped out to give room for the better ones.

The hypothesis that human sufferings are caused by moral degradation, is of course, a radical concept which will be

difficult to grasp for those with a purely materialistic approach to life. However, fact of the matter is the same as told in the Holy Quran that “When a society becomes degraded and decays to such a degree that it loses its utility for a moral civilization, then its Domsday is hastened on it. Ultimately, it is wiped out from the physical framework of life.” The process happens in phases. In the first instance, they are served with minor warnings to understand and mend their ways. But as they reach the point of no return, the process of accountability is accelerated leading to ultimate destruction through catastrophic natural disasters. Examples of such catastrophes given in the Holy Quran are; large scale epidemics, national quarrels, social disorders, wars, earthquakes, volcanoes, wind storms, floods, strike by meteorites and other natural agents of destruction. History of the world is witness to these happenings, but historians analyze them differently.

To invite our attention to the real causes of the catastrophes we quote herein from the Holy Quran a few examples of punishments that fell on the wicked people in the past.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَلَبِثَ فِيهِمْ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ إِلَّا خَمْسِينَ
عَامًا فَأَخَذَهُمُ الطُّوفَانُ وَهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ۝

“And We sent Noah to his people and He lived with them a thousand years minus fifty, Then they were caught by the Deluge, for they were evil doers”. 29(14)

This was the case of an immoral nation destroyed by a big scale flood. In the following Ayah is given the plight of the sinners who were devastated by an earthquake:

وَالى مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۖ فَقَالَ يٰ قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ وَارْجُوا
 الْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَلَا تَعْتُوا فِي الْاَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ ۝ فَكَذَّبُوهُ
 فَآخَذْتَهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جِثْمِينَ ۝

To the Madyan (people) We sent their brother Shuaib. He said, O, people, worship Allah (alone), And be ready for the Day of Resurrection; Do not do evil. And create not mischief in the land. But they denied him and (ultimately) were seized by an earthquake, and lay overturned in their homes in the morning". 29(36-37)

Another example of the punishment is narrated in the Ayah 29(38). It is about the people of Aad and Thamud, who were powerful nations of their times, but in the end, were also destroyed by natural catastrophes due to their misdeeds.

وَعَادًا وَثَمُودًا ۖ وَقَدْ تَبَيَّنَ لَكُمْ مِّنْ مَّسْكِنِهِمْ لَدُنْ رَّزِيِّنَ لَهُمْ
 الشَّيْطٰنُ اَعْمٰلَهُمْ فَوَضَّعَهُمْ عَنِ السَّبِيْلِ وَكَانُوا مُسْتَبْصِرِيْنَ ۝
 "And Aad & Thamud, (their fate) will be clear to you from their habitation, (How they were destroyed) For Shaitaan had made their deeds look attractive to them, And turned them away from the path of (Allah) And yet they were a people with acumen." 29(38)

The following Ayah of the Holy Quran gives a general account of the different modes of punishment to bring about the premature Doom of immoral nations.

فَكُلًّا أَخَذْنَا بِذُنُوبِهِ ۖ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنۢ أَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِ حَاصِبًا ۖ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنۢ
 أَخَلَّتُهُ الصَّيْحَةُ ۖ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنۢ خَسَفْنَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ ۖ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنۢ
 أَغْرَقْنَا ۖ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيظْلِمَهُمْ وَلٰكِن كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ۝

“So We seized each one of them (the wrongdoers) in his sin; Against some We sent a violent hurricane and of them was he who was overtaken by the awful cry; And some We submerged under Earth; And some We drowned; It was not for Allah to wrong them, but they wronged against themselves”. 29(40)

These types of catastrophes do happen nowadays also. If there was a Prophet he could clearly tell us about the causes. Since there is not going to be any more Prophets after Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), it is upto the intellectuals of each age to diagnose the real reasons of sufferings of mankind to search for the cure with reference to the Holy Quran.

In this respect the last part of the Ayah 29(40) is of great importance for mankind. It reassures that punishment of societies is due to their own faults. It is not for Allah to wrong them but they wrong against themselves. A nation will go on living happily as long as it follows the Divine social and moral laws expounded by the prophets of Allah. For our age these are clearly given in the Holy Quran, the last Divine Book for all mankind.

The ruling that misfortunes in the world are due to man's own wrong doings is not only true for the nations but also

for the individuals. This is seen very clearly from the following verse of the Divine revelation:

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ

“Whatever of good befalls you, it is from Allah, And whatever of ill befalls you, it is from yourself”. 4(79).

From the categorical Divine command of Ayat 29(40) that “It was not for Allah to wrong them, but they wronged against themselves;” And from the Ayah 4(79) that “Whatever of ill befalls you, it is from yourself”, we can say with certainty that directly or indirectly mankind itself is responsible for the misfortunes”.

In this context the sufferings may be classified into the following three types:

- i. Those caused by man due to his own carelessness, misdeeds, misjudgements, mismanagements, bad intentions and immoral practices etc.
- ii. Those caused by one individual on another individual. This is very often due to the man’s inherent greed, grudge and lust to enslave others. Hereditary diseases, bad customs and moral crimes of some of the parents and follies of society at large are generally responsible for misfortunes of the new generation.
- iii. The third and the biggest cause of inflictions are the overall follies of nations. An example of this is pollution of environment by which innocent as well wicked suffer together. In many cases, even the future generations suffer due to the misdeeds of the

gone-by generations. International wars are another example of such follies.

Relationship between Sufferings and Morals

Knowledge of the relationship between sufferings and the moral values should be of immense importance to the people keen for reformation and development. If they believe in Allah and His Messenger, then it is easy for them to realize that the spiritual and moral degradation is actually the final cause of misfortunes of their people. For them, the first step towards improving the lot of their nation is to strive for improving the moral standards of the individuals.

The message of the Holy Quran on this issue is of great importance for social scientists also. In the domain of cause and effect this is a revolutionary concept which needs to be further analyzed and understood by them to develop a relationship between natural catastrophes such as earthquakes, floods, hurricane, meteor showers, wars, epidemics etc. and the spiritual and moral degradation of a society.

In the materialistic scientific approach, reasons for occurrence of such events are attributed solely to physical laws. But with reference to the Divine Book we see a new dimension in the study of human sufferings. It is that all events are governed by the combined spiritual as well as the physical causes.

The Holy Quran also guides us to the fact that spiritual causes precede physical causes. In other words in the domain of social life of nations, physics cannot be separated from the metaphysics. Metaphysics governs the

physics. According to this philosophy, occurrence of events may be represented as follows:

Metaphysical causes + Physical causes → Events

or

Moral Causes + Physical causes → Events

This is to say that events first form in the minds of people, filthy minds give birth to filthy events while healthy minds give birth to healthy events.

Changing your Circumstances

If you want to change the course of events, you will first need to change the minds of people. The law of the Holy Quran is; “you cannot change your state unless you change what is hidden in your minds.”

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ

“Lo! Allah changes not the condition of a folk, until they first change, that which is in their own selves”. 13(11)

This is the fundamental social law for change applicable to the individuals, societies, nations, and the world as a whole. If you want to change your circumstances you must first change your own self. This is a reminder to science also which solely relies on the materialistic approach to life. It needs to learn from the Divine Revelation that there is a force beyond physics, which actually governs and controls the physical laws. This is what we call the “Mind”. On the microscopic level there is mind of an individual and on the macroscopic level there is also the collective mind of the society, of a nation and of the world as a whole. We may equate these as follows:

Sum of the minds of the individuals = Mind of the Society
Sum of the minds of the societies = Mind of the nation
Sum of the minds of the nation = Mind of the world

Collective mind force of the societies and of the nations determines their future and decides their rise and fall on the scene of the world. Thus cumulative mind is the greatest force in the world. If the cumulative "Mind Force" of a particular nation is greater than the "Mind Force" of the rest of the world, it can change the course of the history in its favour. A man whose individual "Mind Force" is greater than the cumulative mind force of the society, he can dominate and take the society along with him. He can move the physical laws in his favour as there is a mysterious relationship between the physical and spiritual laws, i.e. Mind overrides the Matter.

How does it work?

When the mind desires something, matter begins to react. For example, when a person makes up his mind, first of all the matter in his body receives the command of the mind. Then the matter around in support of his desire begins to adapt itself according to the mind of the individual. Similarly on a larger scale, the mind of the society shapes matter in a larger way. So is the Mind of the world.

It is the sum total of the minds of the nations collectively modifies the world affairs. Thus the relationship between metaphysics and physics relative to world affairs is like the master-slave relationship. In this case physics is the slave of the metaphysics.

Rationale behind this hypothesis that the mind is not intelligence but a characteristics of the human soul.

Immoral thoughts and deeds corrupt the soul and degrade the mind. Ultimately, to escape further frustration, tension and immorality, this may trigger the physical law to its own destruction. In this regard it matters little if it chooses a well planned suicide or an unplanned accident. The materialistics then sit down to investigate the cause of the calamity in terms of physical laws and assign the causes to such and such material reasons. What had actually triggered those physical conditions is generally ignored. Perhaps it was due to the sick soul of the individual or of the society or of the nation as a whole that influenced the physical forces to cause whatever had happened. This is overlooked.

A philosophic relationship between metaphysical and physical causes is shown in Fig. 5, according to which the former proceeds and on reaching a critical limit triggers the latter.

We also get a clue from Holy Prophet about this relationship who told that near the Doomsday, moral degradation and therefore afflictions will be at their climax

It is narrated by Abdullah and Abu Musa that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said "Near the Hour of Doom that will be the time when the religious ignorance will spread, knowledge will be taken away and there will be much Al-Harj which means large scale killing".

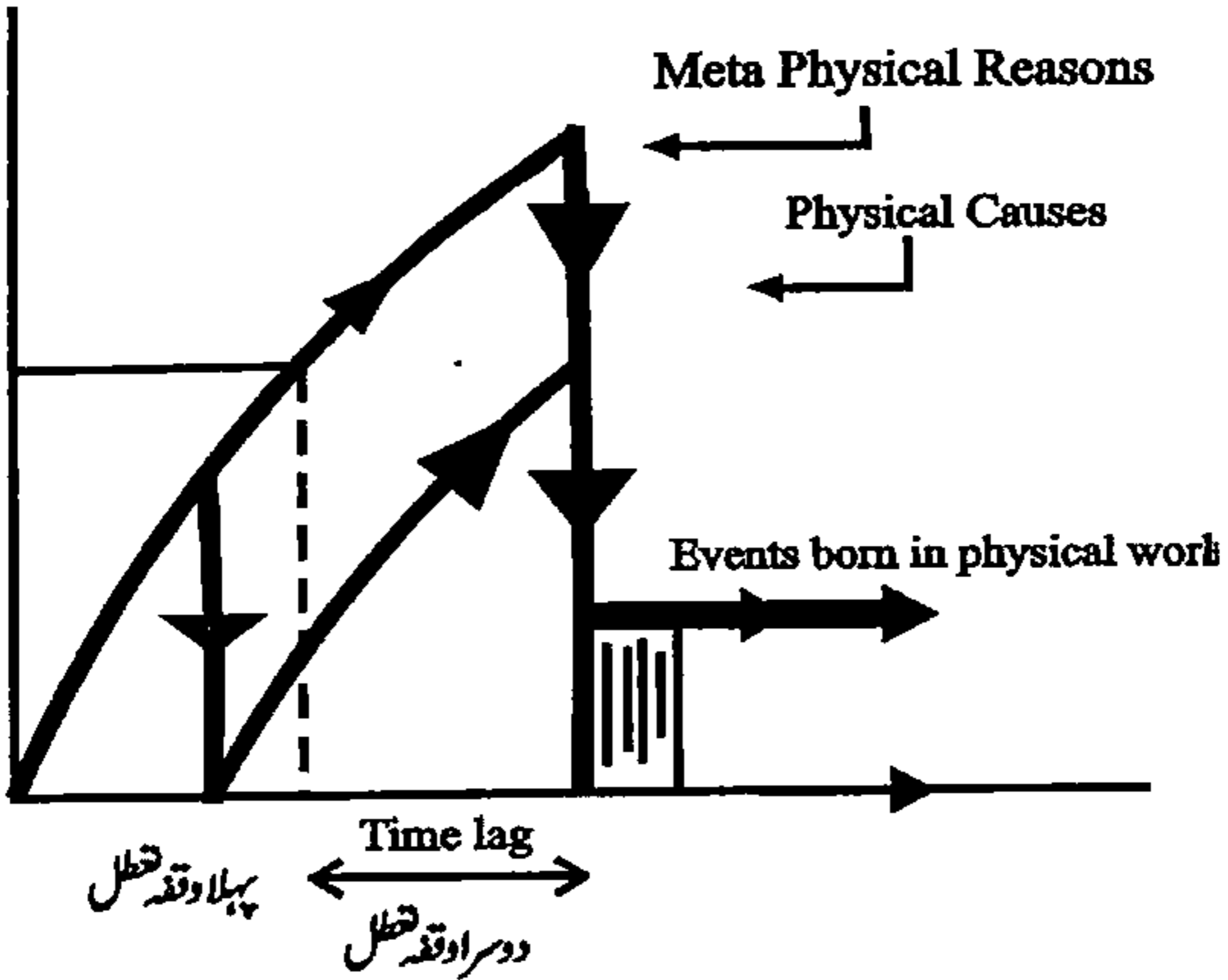
In another Hadith narrated by Abu Huraira the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said "Near the Doomsday time will pass rapidly because of indulging in the pleasures of the world and

forgetting one's duties towards Allah; good deeds will decrease, selfishness and miserness will be order of the day. Then afflictions will appear and there will be much "Al-Harj". Those in audience into the Prophet asked: "O' Allah's Apostle! What is Al-Harj? He said, "Killing! Killing!" These are the sufferings caused by the man upon the man, due to their bad deeds and intentions". (Al-Bukhari)

A further explanation of the hypothesis that why does metaphysics precedes physics, or why the physical causes are triggered by the metaphysical causes, may be seen later in Chapter 19 of this book, which proposes that each atom is not only a stable particle of matter but also the basic living unit of existence which has an elementary mind of its own. Thus an atom is not a lifeless building block of matter but an integration of "life, mass and mind." Through the faculty of mind of its atoms, the matter follows and obeys the laws of nature as established by Allah Subhana-Hu. Since human beings possess the most developed minds, they can interact with matter directly through metaphysics via the minds of things. Vice-versa, things are affected by the spiritual inclinations of human beings for their good or bad. Thus metaphysical values in the environment affect the physics of the world around i.e. metaphysical causes precede physical causes.

The Holy Quran summarizes this philosophy plainly and clearly in its revelations again and again, warning mankind to mend their ways to save themselves from the Doom in this World and the World Hereafter, as you may see it from the following Ayaat:

Fig.5: Metaphysical causes precede the physical causes.



Events trigger as the Metaphysical causes exceed a critical dimension. Nature of the events depends upon the state of mind. Change for the good needs good minds. Evil would only breed destruction and wrath of Allah.

*Spiritual causes lead to Physical causes
 Physical causes lead to Events
 Events lead to Consequences*

There is time lag between them. Events are first born in the Metaphysical World and after some time they appear in the Physical World. In this concept, Mind power overrides the Physical forces. Things first shape in the minds of people which shape their behaviour, which give shape to the events

فَأَصَابَهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا كَسَبُوا وَالَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ

سَيُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَاتُ مَا كَسَبُوا وَمَا لَهُمْ بِمُعْجِزِينَ ۝

“So there befell them the evils of that which they had earned. And those who go wrong, the evil that they earn will fall upon them. They cannot escape the consequences”.
39(51)

Then there is the warning:

إِنَّهُ لَا يَفْلِحُ الظَّالِمُونَ ۝

“Verily! The exploiters will not fare well”.
6(135)

Then comes the most serious warning:

فَقُطِعَ دَابِرُ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

“So of the people who committed cruelty and injustice they were cut off from the roots. All praise is unto Allah, The Lord of the worlds”. 6(45)

MECHANISM OF THE UNIVERSAL DOOMSDAY

اللَّهُ يَبْدُو الْخَلْقَ ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهُ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ۝

“Allah originates creation then He reverts it, Then in the end, unto Him you will be returned”. 30(11)

This revelation of the Holy Quran points out the process of creation and re-creation going on all the times in the heavenly Worlds. Things originate, grow and then decline. Finally, they are reverted back to their original state, the “state of nothingness by the Omnipresent Creator”. The same is true of the Universe as a whole. In the end, it will also revert to its Creator. Then, there will remain nothing but Him only. The process of reverting back to the “original state of the nothingness” is marked by the “Universal Domsday.”

After that great event the entire order of the present existence will come to an end. But that will not be the end forever. As discussed already a New World will be born to be followed by The Day of Resurrection.

According to current scientific thought, most of the cosmologists also favour the idea that the Universe is not forever. It had a distinct beginning sometimes in the remote past and some day it will see its end. Thereafter, a new beginning will take place. In essence, the latest scientific thoughts seem moving towards the Quranic concept of the

Universal Doomsday, which is the subject of discussion herein.

Scientific View about the Universal Doomsday

In these days, a scientist views the Universe as an expanding balloon, in which all heavenly bodies are receding from each other at very high speeds. But it is also being realized that the rate of expansion may already be slowing down, although reasons for it are not exactly known^{3,10, 13, 26}.

If the slowing down process continues, some day Universe will come to a halt. And when it halts, then steady state position will not be possible. Under its own gravity Universe will begin to contract. Ultimately, the entire mass of the Universe will converge into a point of infinite density. Since further compression will not be possible, it will bounce back and explode. The time period of change-over from expansion to contraction will depend upon the amount of unseen materials such as neutrinos, black holes, as well as unseen energy such as gravity wave in the Universe⁽¹⁰⁾. Since it is almost impossible to assess the overall density of the Universe, it is virtually impossible to predict the timing of the reversal as well.

The Holy Quran, the Divine Book from the Creator of the Universe, also appears to support the concept of halting of the Universe due to the unseen matter distributed in the spaces between heavenly bodies. In Ayah 16(77) it is termed as “Unseen of the Heavens and Earth” (غيب السموات والارض). This Ayah of the Quran is indeed a challenge to a scientific worker that how precisely the Holy Quran had referred to what we call now the frontier of knowledge.

وَلِلَّهِ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَمَا أَمْرُ السَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ

الْبَصْرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَلِيلٌ ۝

“And unto Allah belongs the UNSEEN of the Heavens and the Earth. And the matter of the Hour (of Doom) is but as the twinkling of an eye or it is nearer still. Lo! Allah is able to do all things”. 16(77)

This Ayah clearly indicates a direct relationship between the “Unseen of the heaven and Earths with the Doomsday of the Universe. And then the metaphor of the “Twinkling of an eye” implies that once the unseen matter overtakes, the hastening of the hour of the Doom will be at unthinkable speeds. This great revelation also reminds us of greatness of Allah, the Sole Cause and Master of Universe, to Whom is the Final Return. He is able to do all things.

Once the Universe comes to a halt, it will begin to contract in a manner¹⁰ that is the time reflection of its expansion phase. At first the contraction will be slow, but gradually the pace will accelerate. Galaxies that have been receding from one another will start rushing towards each other, gathering speed all the time. This will set the stage for a monstrous cataclysm, collisions over collisions and accidents after accidents.

According to Paul Davies¹⁰ when the Universe has shrunk to hundredth of its present size, the compression effect will have elevated the temperature of the cosmos to the boiling point of water and the Earth (if it has survived the Sun’s death) will become uninhabitable. As the intergalactic spaces close up further, shrinkage will raise the temperature

to the point where the sky will begin to glow like a furnace. Probably the Holy Quran refers to this very phase when it says:

إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيدًا ۝ وَنَرَاهُ قَرِيبًا ۝ يَوْمَ تَكُونُ السَّمَاءُ

كَالْمُهْلِ ۝ وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ ۝

“Lo! They see it indeed a far off (event), while We see it near; “That is the Day when the Heaven will look like molten copper And mountains (Planets) flying like the carded wool”. 70(6-9)

Now look into the scenario of Doomsday given by the present day science¹⁰:

“In the receding Universe, stars embedded in white hot space will start to boil, then explode. Thereafter the pace of events will quicken. All structures are vaporized and their atoms dispersed, in a few hundred thousand years or more, the very nuclei themselves will be smashed to pieces in the escalating temperatures. The time scale of events will then become frantic. The Universe will be shrinking appreciably in minutes, then seconds, then microseconds. Finally the cosmic contraction will end into an uncontrolled implosion, “Big Crunch”, setting the stage for a re-beginning”.

The Big Crunch will be like the Big Bang in reverse³⁰. Some scientists also call it “The Big bounce.” In it nuclear particles will break apart into quarks, all manner of subnuclear splinters will be created. In the twinkling of an eye, the entire Universe will shrivel into less than the space of an atom, where-upon, space-time will also disintegrate into “Singularity”.

Many physicists believe that the “Big Crunch” will represent the end of the physical Universe. Just as they believe that the Universe i.e. all space, time and matter came into existence in a “Big Bang” so they believe it will go out of existence in the Big Crunch. This will be total annihilation. Nothing will be left, no places, no moments, nothing.

This is the original “Singularity”, as all of existence succumbs to infinite destruction. In the words of Paul Davies¹⁰, “gravity, the midwife of the cosmos, is also its undertaker”. The Holy Quran also guides us to a similar description of the end, though the scientific concept of Singularity does not truly correspond to its description of Allah.

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ۝ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ
وَالْإِكْرَامِ ۝

“All that is there will perish, Except the Countenance of your Lord, Full of Majesty and Bounty and Honour”. 55(26-27)

However not all scientists are prepared to accept this spectacular demise of the Universe¹⁰. Some also argue that unknown physical forces will cause the Big Crunch to stop at some fantastic density, causing the Universe to ‘bounce’ back again into another cycle of expansion and contraction, followed by another and another, and so on, and infinitum. This is called the concept of Pulsating Universe. However, the Holy Quran does not support this type of repetition. According to it, after the end of the Universe, a new Universe will be created, which will remain forever.

Theory of the Slow End of Universe

Since science is a continuous process of seeking the truth by analysis, observation and experiment, its findings are never considered final. This is more so in case of the future of the Universe, because it is too big, too complex and too remote in the time and space. Therefore scientific views are bound to differ on this crucial subject. In the following is given another brilliant scientific exposition of this subject, which is also one of the latest efforts to understand this bizarre.

This account of the future history of the Universe will be interesting for any student of the Holy Quran because some of the scenes of the "Near End" of the current order of existence described in it seem directly coming from the Holy Quran, as we will see later in this book also. However, the concept of the slow linear end of the Universe in this description is not supported by the Holy Quran.

James Trefil ⁴⁴, a famous American scientist and author, in his book ("The Dark Side of the Universe" Published 1988 by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York), has given the account of the fate of the Universe at page 189 in following words:

"We can follow the course (leading to the end) of the Universe under the assumption that the laws of nature we now observe will always hold true in the future. From the standpoint of an observer on the surface of the Earth, the large-scale structure of the Universe makes very little difference to the appearance of the night sky, since distant galaxies are high, large and invisible to the naked eye. The

stars in the Milky Way (including the Sun) will continue to burn until they use up their store of hydrogen and helium fuel. In the Sun, the fuel will run out in about four billion years, at which point it will evolve into a red giant, a swollen star whose orbit extends past the orbit of Venus. To an observer on Earth, the Sun will appear to fill half the sky. At that time the oceans will boil and any life left here will perish. If the human race hasn't the sense to colonize the stars, this is the end".

"Following its red giant stage, the sun will collapse into a white dwarf, a star about the size of the Earth that slowly cools off, a cosmic cinder that has lost its source of fire. The stars in the sky will go out one by one, either with a spectacular explosion or with a whimper, like the Sun. Should there be an observer on our planet when the Universe is a quadrillion years old (a thousand times its present age), the sky would be dark indeed. Almost all the stars we now see would either be so dim as to be invisible or appear as faint points in a sea of blackness. Distant galaxies, never an important part of the night time display, would also be diminished".

"The slow cooling of the stellar cinders would go on for a long time, only relief being the falling of stars and gas into the black hole, believed to be at the center of the Milky Way. Occasionally a particle and an antiparticle would join and annihilate each other, adding to the expanding sea of radiation. The Universal expansion would continue, but the rate would slow down perceptibly as the ages passed".

There will be only two milestones to mark changes as time goes on. When the Universe is around 10^{36} years old----, long after all the stars have stopped shining—the protons

in normal matter will decay. Anything left around in the form of stellar cinders or lumps of rocks will disappear in a puff or radiation as its atoms fall apart. The Earth will disappear beneath our feet. Then, when the Universe will be approaching 10^{65} years of age, the black holes that have been collecting matter until this time will start to radiate away their mass in the form of enormous energy. They too will die. After this has happened, there will be nothing made up of normal matter left in the Universe. Instead it will be a cold, expanding sea of radiation interspersed with a few odd particles that have somehow escaped annihilation and are now too thinly spread to meet any fellow particles again”.

So no matter, whatever the route to the destruction of the Universe, the end will be the same – a cold, expanding sea of radiation from which all life has long since vanished, as the Holy Quran had said:

وَلَا تَدْعُ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ تَكُلُّ شَيْءٌ هَالِكٌ
إِلَّا وَجْهَهُ ۖ لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ۝

“And call not any other Allah along with Allah. There is no Allah save Him. Everything will perish except His Countenance, His is the Command, and Undo Him you will be brought back”.

28(88)

In the words of James Trefil⁴⁴, “confronted with this sort of scenario for the end of the Universe, both scientists and poets seem to be at a loss for words. Nobel laureate Steven Weinberg, closed his book (The First Three Minutes) with the comment “The more the Universe seems

comprehensible, the more it also seems pointless". Frustrated of finding any meaning with Universe, Trefil disappointedly said, "If billions of years in the future there is no life, no intelligence, no memory of the struggles of humanity, what point is there in existence?"

This feeling of frustration is there because they have no belief in Resurrection. But a believer knows that the End is not forever. In fact it is the Beginning of a much grander world where everyone who has been ever there in the time and space will meet together and rewarded for his/her struggle in the life of the earthly world, as a labourer gets his wages at the end of the day.

UNIVERSE AND ITS FATE AS REFERED IN THE HOLY QURAN

As discussed earlier, in its various revelations, the Holy Quran clearly speaks of the sudden termination of the present order. Moreover, it is evident from the Holy Quran that the final Hour is not that far off. However, similarities in the scientific account of the events and the scenario of the Doomsday as seen from the Holy Quran, should be of interest to both the scientists and the students of the Holy Quran. One should carefully reflect into the following Ayaat of the Divine Book and then look back into the account of James Trefil.⁴⁴ One wonders who has been the first in describing the end of the Universe; science of today or the Holy Quran revealed in the 7th century AD. It says:

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ
سُيِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ۝
وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْمَوْءِدَةُ
سُئِلَتْ ۝ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الصُّحُفُ نُشِرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا
السَّمَاءُ كُشِطَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْجَحِيمُ سُعِرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ
أُزْلِفَتْ ۝ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ ۝

(Think of the Event) When the Sun is folded up. When the Stars fall darken. And when the mountains (planets) loiter away from their positions. The ten months pregnant camel is abandoned. The wild

beasts stampede on the run. When the oceans surge and swell. When the souls are re-united. And when the infant girl buried alive is asked. For what crime she was put to death? When the ledgers are laid open. And when the sky is torn apart. And when the hell is lighted. And when the Jannah is brought near. Then every soul will know, what it has made ready. 81(1-14)

The following Ayaat depict another scenario of the impending fate.

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انشَثَرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا
الْبِحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ ۝ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا
قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ ۝

When the heaven is cleft asunder. When the planets are dispersed. When the seas are poured forth. When graves are overturned. A soul will know. What is has sent before. What left behind..... 82(1-5)

While describing these great realities of the coming fate. the beauty of the Holy Quran is that it never misses sight of its prime objective i.e. to warn mankind to save their souls from the stern realities of the life to come, the fate which entirely depends upon the way we pass the brief period of our stay in this World. The scene of the falling of Stars dispersal of Planets, overturning of graves, of heaven cleft asundering, folding of sun; is not less hair raising; but more so is the question, "What a soul has sent before and what left behind". Answer to this question is going to decide the

nature of our journey to infinity, once the things get resettled after the universal Doomsday.

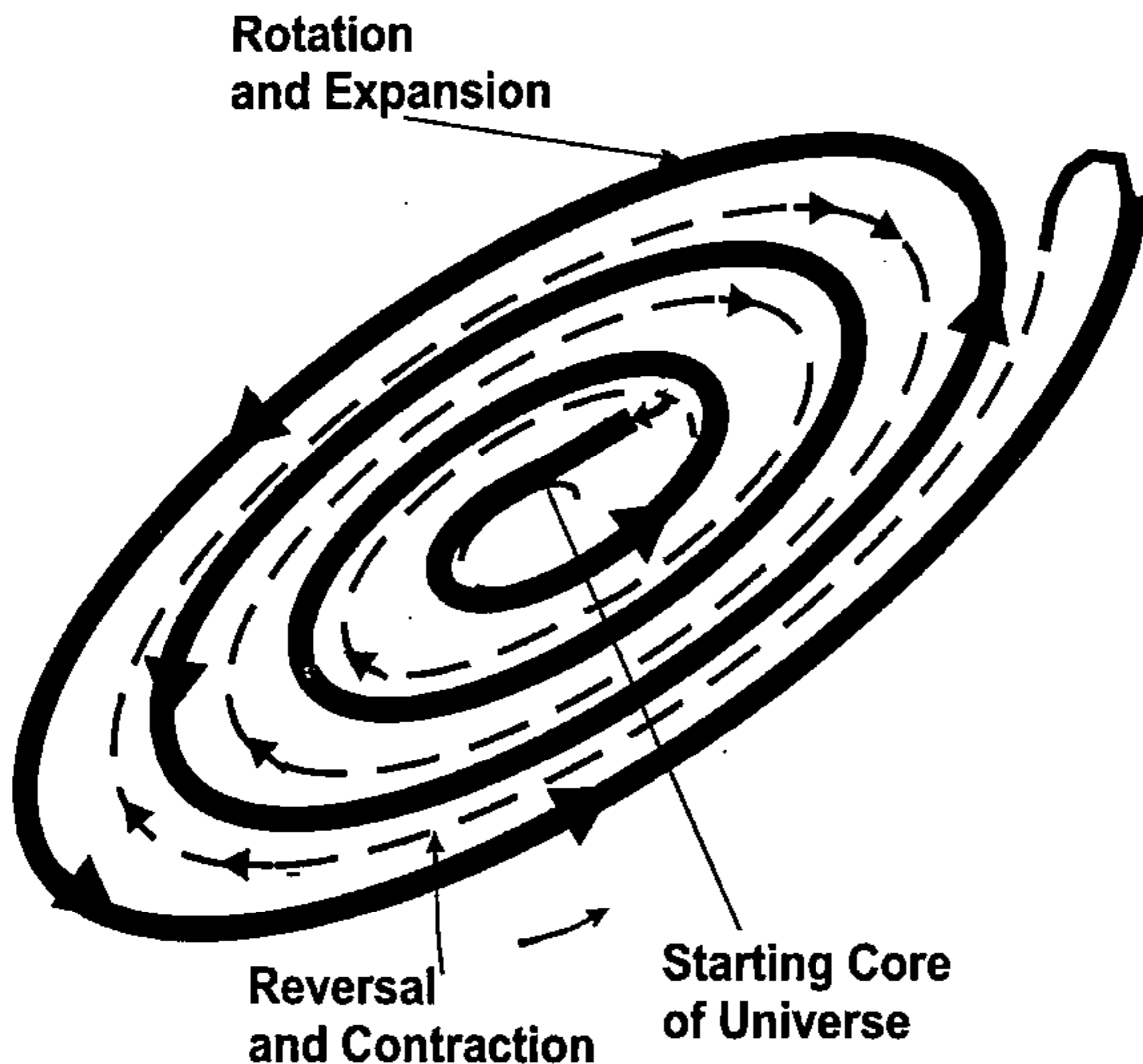
In the following section we shall analyze the subject of Doomsday with reference to the Holy Quran. Fundamentally, the scientific scenario of the expansion and contraction of the Universe is in line with the Divine revelation which tells us that ultimately whole of the present order of the Universe will be folded back. It has been expanding since the time of its creation through the sudden command of "Be! (كن) i.e Big Bang". Also at some time in future it will come to halt and recollapse.

The following ahaadith of Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) describe this great event in the following manner:

Narrated Abu Huraira Razi Allah Anho, the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) told about the coming of the Doomsdays with the analogy that on that Day "Allah will take the whole earth and will roll up the heaven in His Right Hand. (Al-Bukhari)

In this regard the Holy Quran points out that expansion will change into contraction. Then Universe will return to its original point of creation from where it will be re-created once again. However, the re-creation of the Universe will take place only once. It is not going to be a repetitive phenomenon as the philosophers of the oscillating Universe like to think.

Fig. 6. A concept of the Beginning and the End of the Universe as Seen from the Holy Quran



In the Quranic description of creation of the Universe, the Pre-Universe state consisted of a concentrated core of light. As it approached super criticality, it exploded with a Big Bang and Allah parted off nothingness into the pair of matter and anti-matter. Since then it has been expanding and rotating 51(47). This original spin has also given birth to the rotary motion of the galaxies and individual heavenly bodies, down to the very core of the atoms. Finally the Universe will begin to contract and fold back to its original shape. Then it will explode again to give birth to a much bigger Universe.

The following revelation is a pictorial account of the whole of the history of the Universe, from its creation to its end, condensed into few lines of the Holy Quran. It is a miraculous description of the total life of the Universe, out of which as scientists estimate, fifteen to twenty billion years have already passed. May be it is already halfway through or less.

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجِلِّ لِلْكُتُبِ ۗ كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ
خَلْقٍ نَعْنِدُهُ ۗ وَغَدَا عَلَيْنَا ۗ إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ۝

“Reflect into the Day, when We shall roll up the heaven’ like a recorder rolls up a written scroll. Likewise We began the first creation, So We shall repeat it. It is a promise (binding) upon Us. Lo! We are to perform it”. 21(104)

This Ayah of the Holy Quran indicates that start up of the Doomsdays will begin with the contraction of the heaven. The scenario “We shall roll up the heaven, like a recorder rolls up a written scroll “is a pictorial description of the complex phenomenon of contraction of the Universe.

In this scenario, the creation process is synonymous to an artist who paints on a scroll and goes on unfolding it, putting new ideas everywhere. Likewise, Allah has been unfolding the Universe, arranging and adding to it His new creations all the time, giving it more and more grandeur. The folding process will be the reverse of it, but equally dynamic. In fact, dynamism, is the inbuilt characteristic of the cosmos, as can be seen from the following Ayah quoted earlier as well.

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ ۝

“Of Him seeks (its needs) each one in Heavens and the Earth, “Everyday, He is a day of New Splendour. Then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny?” 55(29)

Recent discoveries in working of the cosmos are a witness to the fact expressed in this Ayah. A very hectic schedule of creation, re-creation and disposal of heavenly bodies, is going on all the time in the Heavens. Thus every day is a day of new splendour in the Universe. Even the contraction phase which may be termed as the gradual process of decommissioning of the Universe, is not going to be less grand but highly dynamic and marked with fireworks of exploding stars all around.

Now think of the second part of the Ayah 21 (104) quoted above, “As We began the first creation so We shall repeat it.....” It means that once the present order of the existence has been folded back to its original creation, it will definitely be repeated. With this Ayah of the Holy Quran in mind, if you review the scientific account of the origin and end of the Universe, both agree that the Universe began suddenly, i.e. with a “Big Bang” and finally it will repeat itself with a “Big Bounce”.

As for the sudden mode of the creation of the Universe and then its expansion, the following Ayah provides a vivid graphical account of this phenomenon. Volumes have been said in just six Divine words.

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ ۝

“We created the heaven with a Twist of the (Divine) Hand, and surely, We have been expanding it”. 51(47)

Metaphor of the **بَايِد**, translated by Abdullah Yousaf Ali³⁸ as the 'Twist of Hand' is very meaningful. It immediately provides the imagination with the answer, why the Universe is revolving. The adjoining statement **وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ** "Surely We have been expanding it", completes the picture. Simultaneous rotation and expansion of the Universe from the very beginning is because of its in-built genetics set up in the Big Bang.

In its journey to maturity, the phenomenon of expansion of the Universe has played the fundamental role in its stability and evolution of the heavenly systems. Initially, when it was a small scale Universe, entire materials of the heavenly bodies were contained in a narrow volume and thus in turmoil. This small scale Universe was the scene of chaos, collisions and accidents among the heavenly bodies condensing out of matter created in the Big Bang. The Holy Quran in its typical style wants us to understand the relationship between size of the Universe and equilibrium among the Heavenly Worlds and thus the importance of its expansion. Following revelation also describes this great truth of nature.

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ ۝

"And the Heaven, He raised high, and He set the balance (in it) thereof". 55(7)

Thus balance in the Universe came with its rise i.e. expansion. Heavenly order prevailed only after it had attained a certain critical volume in space and time. Before that it was full of turbulence. With the establishment of balance, began the process of formation of stable heavenly bodies like Earth and solar systems.

Causes of Contraction

Having known that scientific hypothesis about contraction of the Universe is supported by the Holy Quran, we shall now look into the mechanism of the death of the Universe. Logical question to ask is that, what will cause the halting of expansion and then the contraction of the whole of the present Universe. In this respect, the currently popular scientific hypothesis is that there possibly exists a large amount of unseen hidden matter in space in the form of neutrinos, which are extremely small particles, even smaller than electrons, having no charge. Thus hidden matter may pull the Universe into contraction phase¹³. We have already got the idea of the unseen things among the heavens called **غيب السموات والارض** in the Ayah 16(77) of the Holy Quran. It also indicates some sort of relationship between this "Unseen" and the coming of the Hour of Doom. Therefore, we can be quite sure of the truth of the hypothesis of the halting and the contraction of the Universe because of the unseen matter and energy in the cosmos. Force of gravity tries to pull things inward. A stage is expected to reach when the gravitational pull of the invisible matter will exceed the expanding forces to change the expansion into contraction.

In another explanation^{24,30} source of the possible brake to the Universe could be due to the massless wells of pure gravity called Black holes, the number and size of which may never be exactly known in the Universe. If they open up their mouths to swallow the matter, Universe will collapse back much earlier than science may think of at present.

The Quranic revelations speak of suddenness in the coming of the Doomsday. This is not in line with the scientific view of slow death of Universe. One way to explain the sudden occurrence of Doomsday could be that during its travel in the Heavens, a galaxy may come close enough to a massive black hole that will attract the entire galactic masses and destroy it in no time. This is like the pulling of a net by the fishermen, to catch the fish.

On the other hand, suppose, if black holes are moving bodies in space, then they can reach out to swallow the surrounding masses also. Such a process may set a chain reaction, pulling in every surrounding mass to annihilation. This can destroy the Universe at any time, far earlier than predicted by the linear decay theory of the Doomsday.

Revolving Universe

We have already discussed the expanding nature of the Universe from the Holy Quran in the preceding pages with reference to the latest scientific findings. Now we shall see in the light of the Book of Allah another important characteristic of the Universe i.e. it revolves. This great reality is pointed out in the following Ayah of the Divine Revelation, a miracle of brevity and comprehensiveness.

وَالسَّمَاءِ ذَاتِ الرَّجْعِ ۝

“And as for the Heaven rotation is its inbuilt characteristics”. 86(11)

This Ayah generalizes that besides the cosmos all other heavenly bodies must also be rotating. The simultaneous expansion and revolving of the Universe may be like the opening of a revolving disc spiral. If its opening rate is fast and the mass of the spring is large, then, when fully open, it

could coil back on itself due to its own residual momentum. Similarly, Universe will also collapse back on full opening Fig. 7 is a simplified representation of this account where solid lines represent the gradual opening of the Universe, which at a certain point revert to the contraction shown by the dotted lines.

Examples of spiral expansion have been observed in the construction of several galaxies also⁽⁵⁾. These are of two types, the normal spiral and barrel spiral. Normal spirals have lenses shaped central regions, from opposite side of which two arms emerge and coil around the center in the same sense and the same plane. A barrel spiral galaxy is in the shape of two coils starting abruptly from the ends of a bright bar, which projects from the opposite sides of the central region. Fig.8 shows the structure of some typical spiral galaxies.

Folding Rate

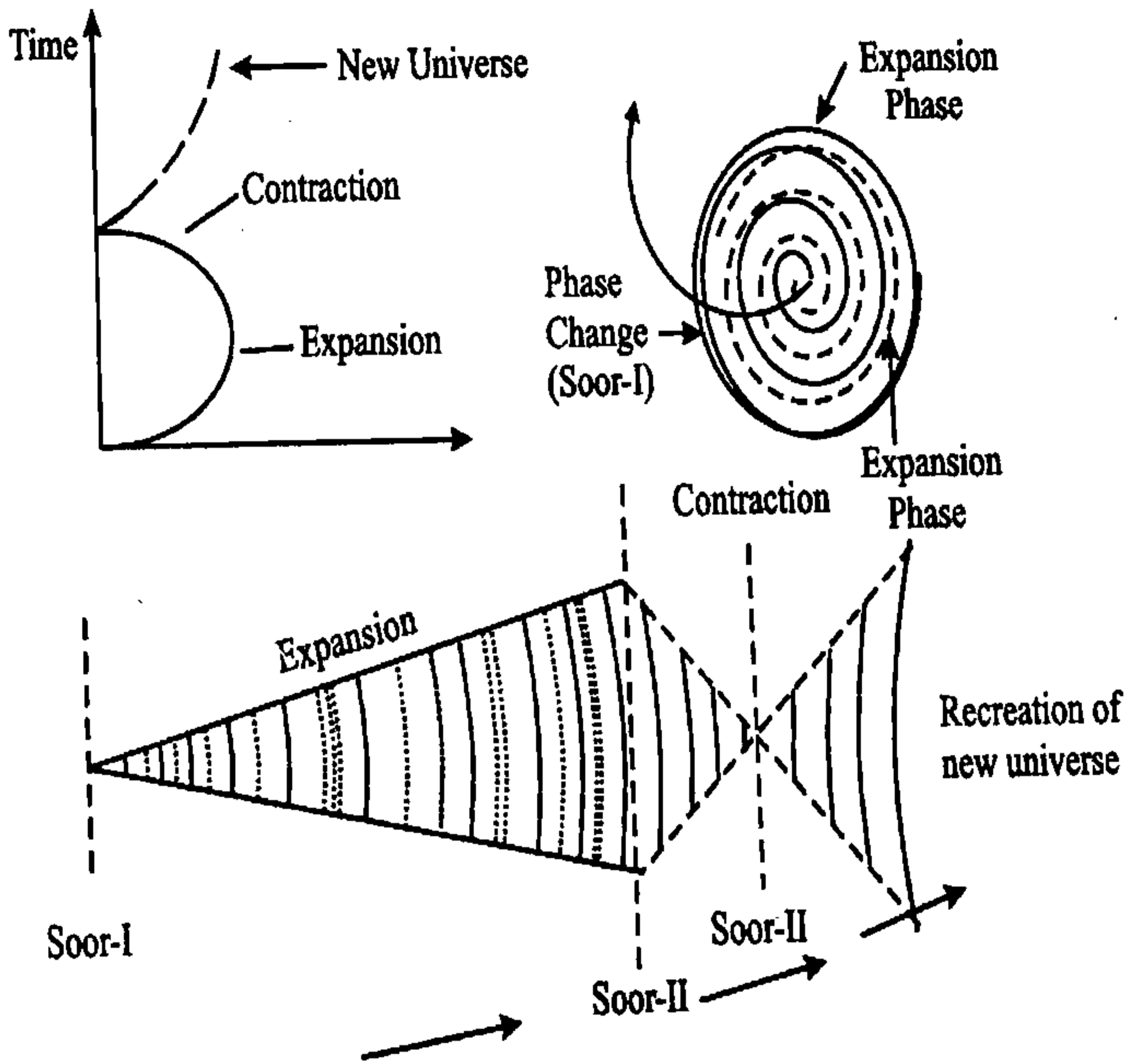
From the Quranic Ayah 21(104) one may also interpret that Universe as a whole may also be of a spiral shape which, after having opened up to its maximum limits, will coil back on itself under the influence of its own momentum.

This will mean that role of the invisible hidden matter in the contraction process of the Universe may not be the only important factor in determining its contraction. Since the pulling force of gravity is inversely proportional to the square of the distance between bodies, the rate of contraction of the Universe will be ever increasing.

Ultimately, all matter in the Universe, rushing in at tremendous speeds from all around will crash together and

Fig. 7:

Creation of the new Universe



Transition from the expansion into contraction, will be sounded by a great pressure wave termed as Soor (صوّر) in the Holy Quran, which will announce the beginning of the Doomsday. Phenomenon of first expansion and then contraction can be seen in the Ayah 21(104) quoted earlier.

be annihilated in a fire ball of energy, reversing to what it used to be at the outset of the first order of existence. Finally the only Reality to remain will be that of Allah Subhana-Hu Alone.

The Beginning and the End are thus two states of existence where all the secondary forms of existence are annihilated into the primary existence of the One and the only One, besides whom there is no other Allah. Now physicists also talk of "Singularity", which in their concept is the state at the Beginning and the End of the Universe. Of course, this singularity is not conceived of as being the Allah of the Holy Quran. But as we see from Ayah 57(3), "He is the First, and the Last" it does manifest the attributes of the Creator at the limits of Time and Space.

These two extreme states of existence are depicted by Ayaat 55(26-27) quoted already and what states needs linking also by the following Ayah, which speaks of Allah, as being the "First and the Last" Reality of existence:

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ ۝

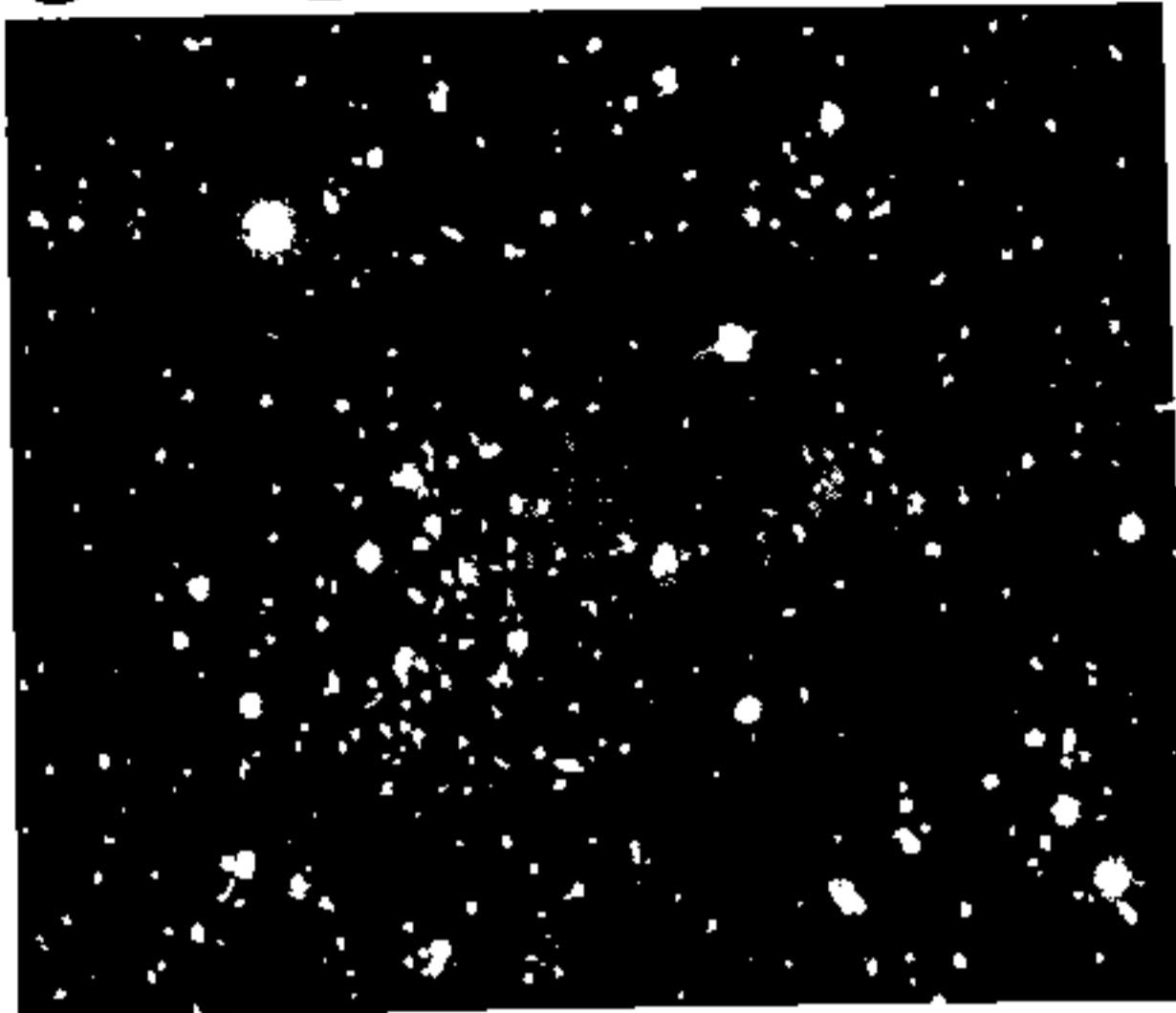
"He is the First, and He is the Last". 57(3)

"The Absolute Singularity" as we may see from Surah Al-Ikhlaas in the Holy Quran is an attribute of Allah Subhana-Hu:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝

*"Say He is Allah, the One and the only One. Absolute selfsufficient independent of all. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is absolutely none like Him".
112(1-3)*

Fig. 8 Spiral galaxies



NGC 1201 Type so



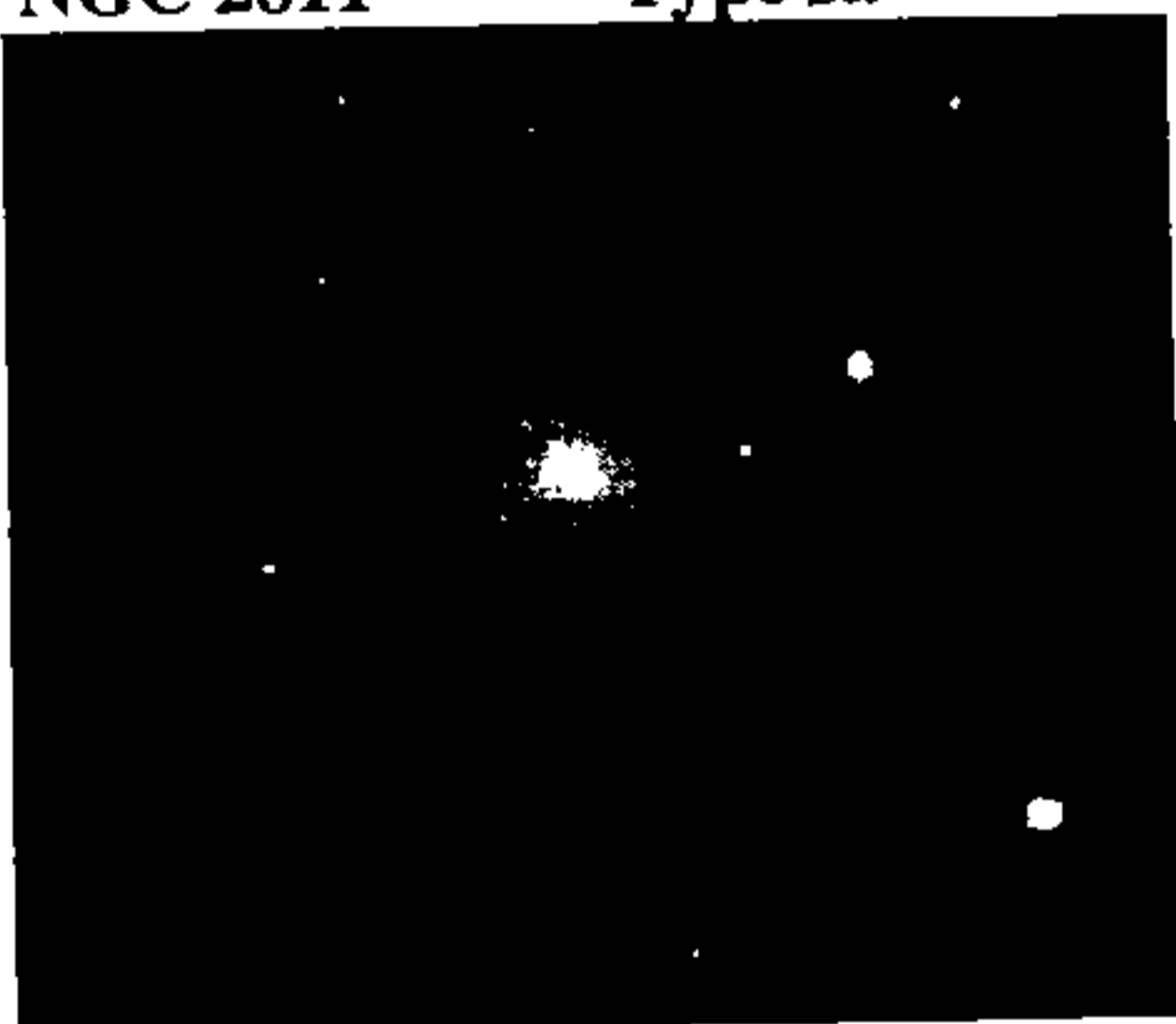
NGC 2841 Type sb



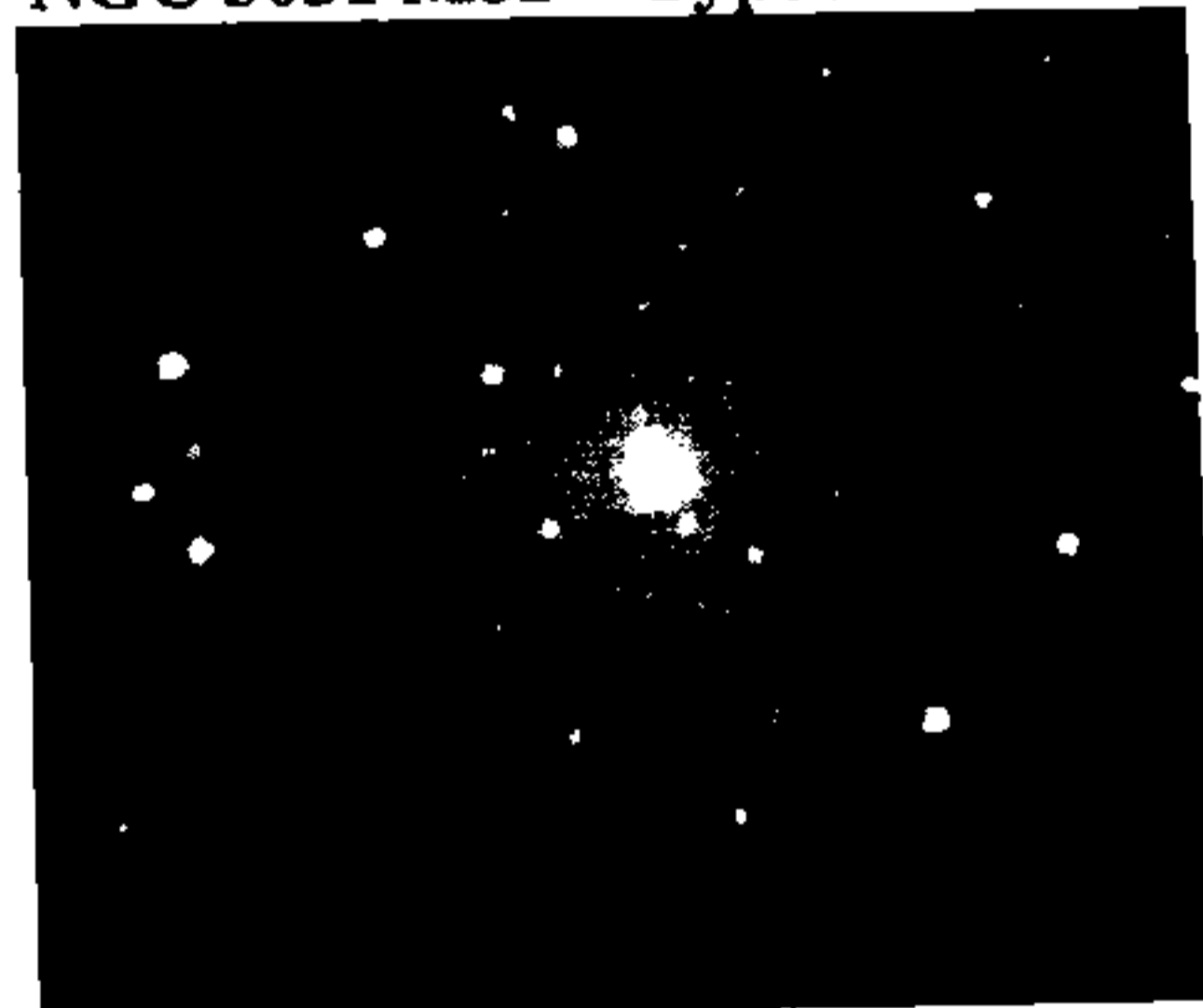
NGC 2811 Type sa



NGC 3031 M81 Type sb



NGC 488 Type sab



NGC 628 Type sc

Examples of different types of spiral galaxies. Note that the Nucleus is relatively smaller and the spiral arms more spread out. (Courtesy Palomar Observatory, California Institute of Technology).

New Universe

Once the present order of existence is fully folded up, Allah will then set the stage for a new beginning, for a New World order which will be unimaginably larger than the present order of the Universe and which will not be reversed again. In this respect figure 7 attempts to show how expansion will change into contraction and they bounce back to create new world. This will be the fulfillment of the promise of Allah made in Ayah 21(104), that "He will surely repeat the creation of the Universe again". The new Universe, as you may note from Ayaat 14(48), 3(133) and given below, will be very much different in its dimensions, shape and style from what we know of the present world. Its earth will be different from our Earth and so will be the heavens also. It is revealed:

يَوْمَ تُبَدَّلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ

الوَاحِدِ الْقَهَّارِ ۝

"(There would be) The Day, when the Earth will be changed into another Earth; and Heaven, as well. All of them will stand before Allah, the one, the irresistible".
14(48)

The new Universe will be unimaginably larger than the present cosmos. Ayah 57(21) given below speaks about this reality:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَوَاتُ

وَالْأَرْضُ ۖ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

"And vie one with another, for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a paradise

(Jannah), which is as wide as all the Heaven and the Earth (put together). It is prepared for those who fear Allah". 3(133)

Another Ayah says:

سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ
السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۝

"Race one with another for forgiveness from your Lord, and a Jannah where the breadth is as the breadth of the Heavens and the Earth". 57(21)

Thus the re-created World is going to be extremely large, so large that even a portion of it will be larger than the entire present order of heavenly worlds. No doubt its significance is of great scientific value. How shall it be made possible; is an important subject of scientific research.

As per Ayah 14(48), the new World will have little resemblance with the present Universe. The Earth of that Universe is just a name in similitude. We can hardly guess about its real nature and size.

Overall Scenario of the Universe from the Beginning to the End

The phenomenon of creation, evolution and end of the Universe are integrated in the Divine plan. Figure 9 is a summary of the history of the Universe from its beginning to its end, derived by the author through his interpretation of the Holy Quran. The total scenario is a continuous chain of events in which the end is as important a reality as its beginning.

Fig. 9

Total Scenario of Universe

ALLAH
!
ORDER OF KUN
!
RELEASE OF TIME-SPACE ATTRIBUTES OF ALLAH
!
PRE-BIG BANG POINT UNIVERSE
!
REACHING TO SUPER CRITICALITY
!
BIG BANG
!
BIRTH OF ENERGY AND MATTER PAIRS
!
TRANSIENT STATE OF MATTER AND ENERGY
!
EXTREMELY HIGH PRESSURES AND TEMPERATURES
!
CREATION OF DENSER PARTICLES
!
BIRTH OF ELEMENTARY MATTER
!
UNIVERSE EXPANDS AND ROTATES
!
SPACE FILLED WITH HEAVIER GASES MATTER
!
UNIVERSE EXPANDS TO STABILITY LIMITS
!
COLD CONDENSATION OF MATTER BEGINS
!
BIRTH AND EVOLUTION OF HEAVENLY SYSTEMS
!
ROTATION AND EXPANSION CONTINUES
!

NEW MATTER IS ADDED ALL ALONG DUE TO
TIME/SPACE INTERACTION
!
CONTINUOUS CREATION AND RE-CREATION OF
HEAVENLY SYSTEMS
!
NEW MATTER ACTS AS BRAKE TO EXPANSION
!
ROTATION AND EXPANSION START SLOWING DOWN
!
ADDITIONAL MATTER ACTS TO STOP EXPANSION
!
UNIVERSE BEGINS TO FOLD BACK
!
CONTRACTION CONTINUES
!
UNIVERSE REYAAT TO A POINT SOURCE
!
IMPLODES
!
BIG BOUNCE
!
A MUCH LARGER UNIVERSE IS RE-CREATED
!
BEGINNING OF A NEW AND MUCH MORE SPLENDID
UNIVERSE
!
RESURRECTION

EVENTS LEADING TO THE UNIVERSAL DOOMSDAY

In the preceding Surah we have discussed with reference to the Divine revelation and the latest scientific findings that the day of the Universal Doomsday is a catastrophic event of great commotion when all creations will disintegrate and vanish into 'Nothingness'. It will be marked by the phase change from expansion into contraction. This transition would be so powerful that it will be felt everywhere in the cosmos. It has been denoted by the word Soor (صور) in the Holy Quran. This tremendous bang will spread a wave of fear throughout the Universe. Ayah 27(87) points out this awful reality in the following words:

وَيَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَفَزِعَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي

الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ وَكُلٌّ أَتَوْهُ دَاخِرِينَ ۝

“And (remind them of) the Day when the Soor will be blown and all who are in the Heaven’s and the Earth, will stare in terror, save him whom Allah wills, and all will come to Him humbled”. 27(87)

Thus the Soor (صور) will sound the start of the Universal Doomsday. It will be a tremendous event, shaking everyone, everywhere. Thereafter things will change from bad to worse. The Quran has called it a “Heavy Day” in the Heavens and the Earth, a period of chaos and turbulence which will approach suddenly.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسِتُهَا ۗ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ
 رَبِّي ۗ لَا يُجَلِّئُهَا لِوَفْتِهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ۗ ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
 وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ لَا تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً ۝

“They ask you of the (destined) Hour, when will it come to part? Say: knowledge thereof is only with my Lord, He alone will manifest it at its proper time. It is heavy (Day) in the Heavens and Earth, it comes not to you save unaware”. 7(187)

This Ayah also makes it clear that the Hour of the Doomsday cannot be predicted by the Human Beings. Its knowledge is with the Creator only. Scientific laws are not sufficient to predict this unusual event.

We also see from the Holy Quran that at the initiation of the Doomsday, control mechanism of the Universe will be relaxed and its equilibrium will be broken. The event is associated with great chaos. Stars will burst and planets will crash into one another. Calmness of the Heavens will appear as a thing of the past. It will be torn into pieces and cosmos will be filled with a smoky matter. The following Ayaat illustrate the state of turmoil on that day:

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْكَوَاكِبُ انْتَثَرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ

فُجِرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ ۝

“And (when) the Heaven will be cleft asunder, and the planets are dispersed, when the seas are boiled forth, And graves are overturned” 82(1-4)

The scene expressed in Ayah 25(25) is equally dramatic. It informs that near the Universal Doomsday, Heaven will be split asunder filling the space with dazzling white smoke. It is revealed.

وَيَوْمَ تَشَقُّ السَّمَاءُ بِالْغَمَامِ وَنُزِلَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ تَنْزِيلًا ۝

“A Day, when the Heaven splits asunder, with a dazzling white cloud, and the Angels ascend in continuous stream”. 25(25)

The use of word تَشَقُّ meaning splitting asunder in Ayah, 25(25), seems to signify that holding forces will no longer be enough to maintain balance in the heavenly bodies. The heavenly clouds in Ayah 25(25) may be taken to mean the cosmic gaseous matter, which now tends to cluster together to give birth to new heavenly system. Near the Doomsday it will start diffusing out in disorder, filling space all around. A regular small scale example of this is the solar flares which sometimes rush out by millions of miles from the surface of the Sun.

In the following are given some more Ayaat which describe the state of overall disorder in the Universe at the time of the Doomsday:

يَوْمَ تَمُورُ السَّمَاءُ مَوْرًا ۝ وَتَسِيرُ الْجِبَالُ سَيْرًا ۝

“On that Day, Heaven will heave with awful heaving and the mountains (planets) will fly hither and thither”. 52(9-10)

In this Ayah the heaving of the Heaven signifies the scene of an overall break of order in the Universe associated with shattering thunder and sounds. Flying of the mountains and planets is taken to indicate the asteroids and meteorites flying in Space. As the order breaks, planets will crash into

each other, throwing chunks of matter, roving disorderly in space which will then be littered with smoke, dust and pieces of solid bodies hurling all around. A pictorial view of such happening is shown in fig 10 and 11.

There will also be abnormal outbursts in the form of supernovae when stars will fall away from their stable positions. They will be crashing into each other thereby losing their energy reactions, causing gradual darkness all around. Ayaat 81(1-2) depict the starting scene in the following manner:

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ۝

“(Watch for the period) when the Sun is folded up, And when the stars fall, (from their equilibrium) losing their light”. 81(1-2)

All these Quranic Ayaat are highly thought provoking. They describe some of the more significant happenings in the Universe at times of its Doomsday. Mechanism of this disorder can be attributed to the contraction process of the Universe discussed already.

As the heavenly bodies draw closer, the pulling gravitational forces between them will exceed the internal forces holding the plasma of gases in the stars. This will result into excessive escaping of the hot gases in space, filling it with smoky matter.

From here on, the stars will tend to expand in volume, gradually reducing the internal pressure low enough to ultimately stop the energy generating nuclear fusion reactions within them. This will make them dull bright, then red and ultimately black bodies without light.

Possibility of some sudden accidents in the Heaven seems the best explanation of these happenings at the time of Doomsday. However the same can happen through the simple aging process of the stars leading to their natural death.

The general commotion and chaos prevailing during the Universal Doomsday is also highlighted by Ayaat 79(1-6), that depict the scenario of the excessive activity of the meteors and disorderly motions of stars in space during that fateful period in the life of the Universe:

The collapsing star ignites in a thermonuclear explosion and is destroyed as shown in Figs.12.1, 12.2 and 12.3.

وَالنَّزِعَاتِ غَرْقًا ۝ وَالنَّشِيطَاتِ نَشْطًا ۝ وَالسَّيْحَاتِ سَبْحًا ۝
فَالسَّيْقَاتِ سَبْقًا ۝ فَاَلْمُدْبِرَاتِ أَمْرًا ۝ يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ ۝

“By those who drag with destruction, By (the Meteors) rushing apart, By the (lone star’s) floating, by the (angels) hastening, and those who govern the events on the day. Everything that can be in commotion, will be in violent commotion, (commotion after commotion)”. 79(1-6)

It is interesting to note that scene of Doomsday depicted in these Ayaat is very close to the scientific view of the Doomsday by Paul Davies¹⁰, of the contracting Universe discussed already. In that state, the heavens will appear as a sea of molten copper sizzling in a furnace, as is said in the following Ayaat:

يَوْمَ تَكُونُ السَّمَاءُ كَالْمُهْلِ ۝
“The sky will look like molten copper”. 70(8)



Fig. 10

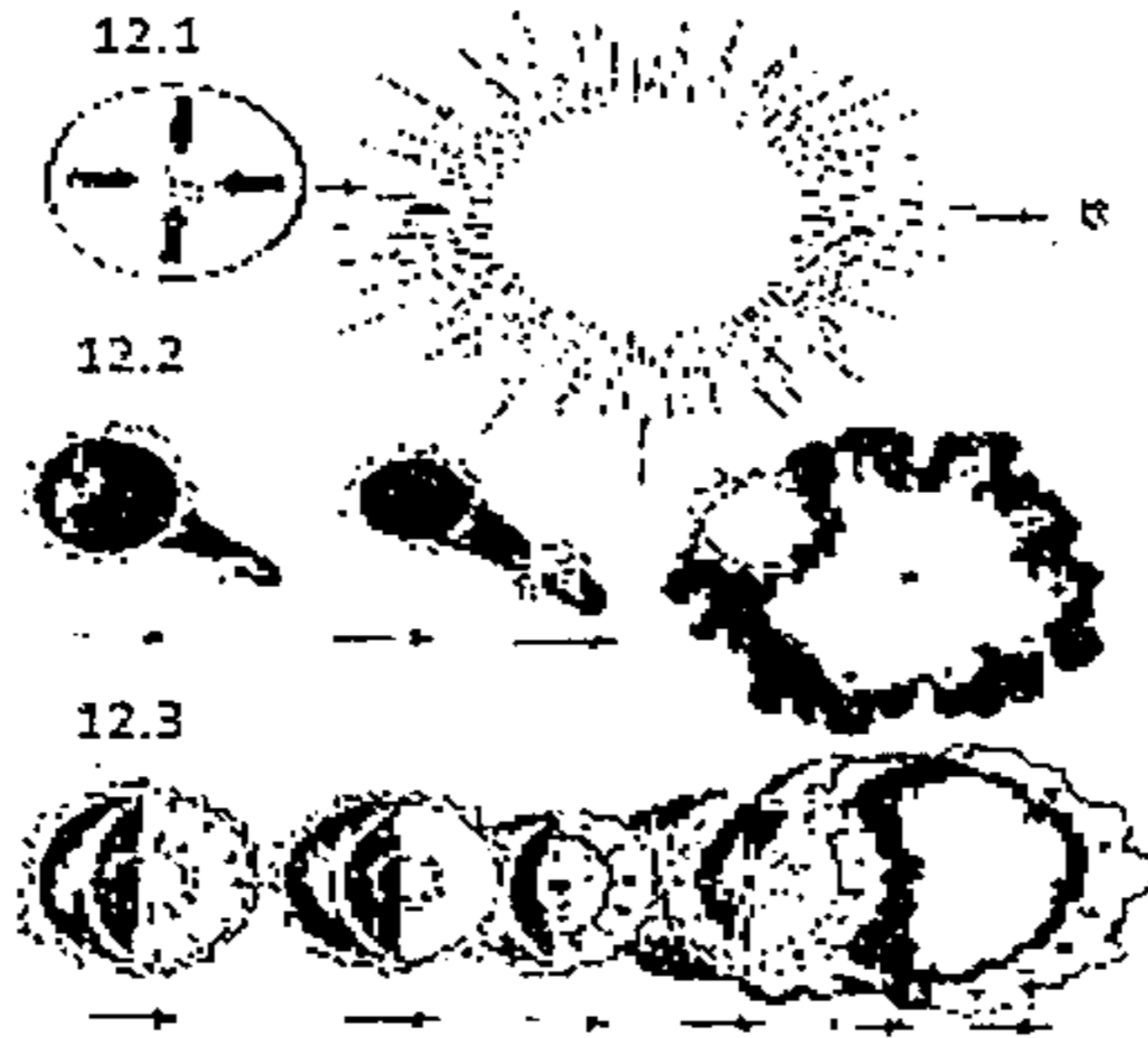


Fig. 11

The death of a Solar System. Schematic views of the loss of planetary atmospheres and the vaporization of worlds when the local Sun becomes a supernova. The shock waves we see propagate beyond the local system, compress the interstellar gas and dust, and lead to the formation of new planetary systems. Paintings by Adlof Schaller, Rick Sternbach and John Allison (Ref. CARL SAGAN: BOOK COSMOS)

Fig. 12

Different ways of the Death of Stars



Energy from the nuclear reactions in the core of a supergiant star prevent it from collapsing under the force of its own gravity. When the nuclear fuel is used up, the core collapses into a neutron star. A shock wave rebounds from the core in a huge explosion, leaving a brightly glowing and expanding cloud, as shown in the Fig. 12.1. The remainder may be a neutron star or a black hole.

Alternatively a companion star may become the cause of the Doomsday of a sun also. If one of the stars in a close binary system is a white dwarf (a dense, compact remnant of an ordinary star), its gravity can pull mass from a large companion. When the accumulating mass of the dwarf star reaches an upper limit, a catastrophic contraction begins.

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شُوَاظٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ وَنُحُوصٌ مِّنْ حَدِيدٍ ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا فِيهَا
الْآيَةَ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ ۚ فَإِذَا انشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ وَرْدَةً

كَالذَّهَابِ ۚ

“There will be sent against you both, smokeless flames of fire and (molten) brass, and you will not escape, then which of the favours of your Lord will you deny? And when the Heaven splits asunder and becomes red like a red hide”. 55(35-37)

The analogy of the heaven looking as a molten copper bath 70(8) or being rosy like a red hide 55(37) indicate that near the Doomsday space will be filled with high-temperature gases and dust.

A closer look into above quoted Ayaat 55(35-37) indicate that Doomsday will begin with the excessive outburst from stars, similar to the solar flares. This will be the time, when mankind everywhere will be seeking refuge from our Universe for safer places. But they will fail to find any such place because of the disorder prevailing everywhere. This will wipe out life all around. Later, the shooting of the high temperature plumes of gases and debris from the bursting stars will raise the overall temperature of the cosmos to such an extent that whole of it will appear as a molten copper bath or red hide. Eventually, it will be led to its final End about which it has been said:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ۚ وَيَبْقَىٰ وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ۚ

“All that is there will perish, except the Face of your Lord, Full of Majesty, Bounty and Honour”. 55(26-27)

That will be "The End" of the present story of existence. From here on, will be initiated the process of a new beginning, leading up to the Resurrection.

The Overall Scenario

If we summarize the above discussion, the following picture emerges from the Holy Quran about the Universal Doomsday. In general, it will be the scene of a contracting Universe, with everything rushing back to its origin. From the sayings of the Holy prophets and from many of the Ayaat of the Holy Quran quoted already, it is most likely that contracting phase of Universe may already be there. As a result, cosmos will be full of turbulence with heavenly bodies crashing into each other, stars spewing out hot plasma gases, space filling up with smoky dust, the skies littered all around with the debris of heavenly bodies. And mankind will be in panic, anywhere and everywhere helplessly witnessing its fast approaching Doom, trying to escape for the unknown destinies, thinking that the disorder is perhaps in their neighborhood only. By that time earthly man will have also attained the ability of travel to deep space. But alas, there will be no place of safety. Then there will come the final Hour, the Big Crunch, to commence the beginning of a new order of existence, much grander than the previous order of the Universe.

Pause to Think

As we study the latest scientific views on this subject, we are surprised to see that over the centuries, science has also been gradually moving towards the realities first pointed out in the Holy Quran. At this point one might like to ask, how is it that a book given to the world over fourteen

hundred years ago, could have been the first to express these scientific mysteries? This is especially surprising when we know that Prophet of Allah, who delivered the Holy Quran to the world, was living in Arabia, which was then the least knowledgeable land in the whole world. It was the period called "Age of Ignorance". In the face of this reality, a rationale mind is left with no option but to believe that Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) was inspired by the Creator of the Worlds and that the Holy Quran is the Divine Book for the guidance of all mankind for all times, in this life and the life Hereafter. It is the book of truths from Allah, the truth of the heavens and earth, the truth of our own self, and the truth of our Journey's end. Allah says:

خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ وَصَوَّرَكُمْ فَأَحْسَنَ صُوَرَكُمْ ۗ

وَالِيهِ الْمَصِيرُ ۝

"He has created the Heaven and the Earth, in accordance with Truth, and has shaped you, so well, and to Him is your journey's End". 64(3)

Discovery of such truths has been the cherished goal of all philosophers, scientists, poets and wise men throughout the history. The Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), expressed this urge in mankind with the similitude of pen, as narrated by Hazrat Abbas son of Thabit. He said:

"First of all, Allah created the Pen and said to it, "Write". The Pen said, "What should I write"? Allah told it to write all that was decreed by Him to happen till the Day of Judgement. Hence every

account is preserved forever in the Book of the Universe". (Al-Tirmizi)

Thus the Universe is actually the history of the Pen. Its new beginning will also be the work of the stroke of the Pen. All that is designed by Allah has passed through its head and only those who love the Pen can peep through the Truth; the Truth which illuminates the hearts of men. All that is in Heavens and in the Earth is the living testimony of that Truth. In the end, only the Truth will prevail.

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ
الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝ هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْكُمْ
كَافِرًا وَمِنْكُمْ مُؤْمِنًا وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝

"All that is in the Heavens and all that is on Earth exalts Allah's limitless Glory, and to Him all praise is due, and He has the Power to will anything. It is He Who created you, and among you are such as deny this Truth, and among you are such as believe (in this Truth) and Allah sees all that you do".
64(1-2)

PART II

DOOMSDAY OF THE EARTH AND THE SOLAR SYSTEM

أَلْقَارِعَةُ ۝ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ۝ وَمَا أَذْرَتْكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ۝ يَوْمَ يَكُونُ

النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ ۝ وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ ۝

“The (Day) of noise and clamour; What is the (Day) of Noise and clamour? And what will explain to You what is the (Day) of noise and clamour? (It is) a Day whereon mankind will be like moths scattered about, and the mountains will be like carded tufts of wool”. 101 (1-5)

INTRODUCTION OF THE DOOMSDAY OF THE EARTH AND THE SOLAR SYSTEM

اَقْتَرَبَ لِلنَّاسِ حِسَابُهُمْ وَهُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مُّعْرِضُونَ ۝

“Closer and Closer to mankind comes their reckoning, yet they heed not and they turn away”. 21(1)

This Ayah is a reminder to mankind that their Doomsday is not a too far off event, though they may not know it. We have already discussed that Earth's Doomsday is a separate event from the Universal Doomsday. This type of events is very much a routine happening, which keeps falling on individual worlds in the Universe. Sometimes they may be so severe as to engulf the entire solar systems, and sometimes they may involve only an Earth or part thereof. However this does not necessarily mean that any Earthly Doomsdays and Doomsday of the entire solar system must occur simultaneously. In our case also it seems from the Holy Quran, that Earth's Doomsday is likely to precede the Doomsday of our Solar System. However it will always remain an unpredictable phenomena. When its time comes, no one can avert the catastrophe. It is a predestined event in time and space and is bound to happen according to a pre-planned Design of Allah that we don't know. The rule is:

كُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُّسْتَقَرٌّ ۝

“Every event has its appointed time”. 54(3)

According to this law our world must meet its Doomsday at the end of its term as a part of the continuous Divine

activity of creation, re-creation and accountability. It is comforting that we are not the only one to have it in this extremely vast Universe. Allah has called Himself the Lord of the worlds (رب العالمين), because there are numerous worlds like ours in the Universe (See Surah 18 of this book). All these will have Domsdays on their respective turn. There have been worlds that have already passed through this experience, there are many worlds which are passing through it now and there remain many worlds which will meet a similar fate in future.

This is according to the Divine process of accountability. This is that when something loses its purpose of existence or has fulfilled its design aim, it must give in to the new demands of nature. Likewise when our earthly world has fulfilled its purpose of existence, it will be destroyed. Flowers wither when they have germinating seed in their wombs.

This is a reality that continually manifests itself in nature. When it happens on our Earth it will not be at all unique or an isolated happening in the Universe, but simply a part of the grand Divine scheme of accountability. Ultimately all of them will culminate into the universal Domsday. They are like the sub-sets of the super-set of the overall Domsday, which will be the final blow to end the present order of existence totally and wholly. As the Holy Quran says, *“Every event has its appointed time 54(3)*. In this process our small earthly World will also be destroyed someday unnoticed in the Universe. The warning of this pending fate is clearly given in the Holy Quran by the following Ayah of Sura Ar-Rahmaan.

يَسْأَلُهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ ۝

فَبِأَيِّ آيَةٍ رَبِّكُمْ تُكذَّبِينَ ۝ سَنَفْرُغُ لَكُمْ آيَةَ الثَّقَلَيْنِ ۝

“Whosoever is in the Heavens and Earth, ask Him (for existence) Each day He manifests Himself in new splendour. Which then, of your Sustainer’s Favour, can you deny? Soon We shall be free to take you to task also, O! You twin burdens (of the Earth)”. 55(29-31)

The first part of this revelation “Of Him seek existence all creatures in the Heavens and Earth”, clearly speaks of other beings in the cosmos who like us also beseech their Creator and Sustainer for their needs. The second part 55(30) of the same revelation point out that Universe is not a steady-state system but a highly dynamic organism where each Day Allah Subhana-Hu appears with new splendour. The next Ayah conveys the idea that this process of creation and re-creation is in fact a great favour to the living beings in the cosmos, because in it lies their own eternal good.

Rightly it is so, because the continuous upward evolution of the Universe has been possible only through the successive Doomsdays of stars. In the exploding supernovae, under very high temperatures and pressures, are produced higher elements and compounds which become the building blocks for the next generations of stars and planets, ultimately leading to the creation of new life^{11,30}

With reference to this chain of events, now reflect into the next Ayah 55(31) that says, “Soon We shall be free to take

you to task". This indicates the pre-occupation of the Sustainer of the worlds in some type of a similar event at this very time somewhere else in the cosmos. Whether it is the Doomsday of an individual earth or of the whole solar system, it matters little. But it is a warning that our turn on Earth is soon to come.

It is to be realized that orthodox religious scholars tend to make no difference between the Earth's Doomsday and the Doomsday of the Universe. This is however a simplified approach to a complex subject that cannot be considered wrong either. They talk of the super-set only without taking into account the events of the sub-sets. Otherwise as the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) had told, as one dies his Doomsday actually starts from that very moment. At that time he is cut off from the living worldly life and put in the phase of accountability that is connected with the Resurrection, an event even farther away than the Universal Doomsday. Similarly, the Doomsdays of individual earths and heavenly bodies are part of the Doomsdays of the total Universe, but separated in time and space. Ultimately they all merge together to complete the total scenario of annihilation.

EARTHLY DOOMSDAY

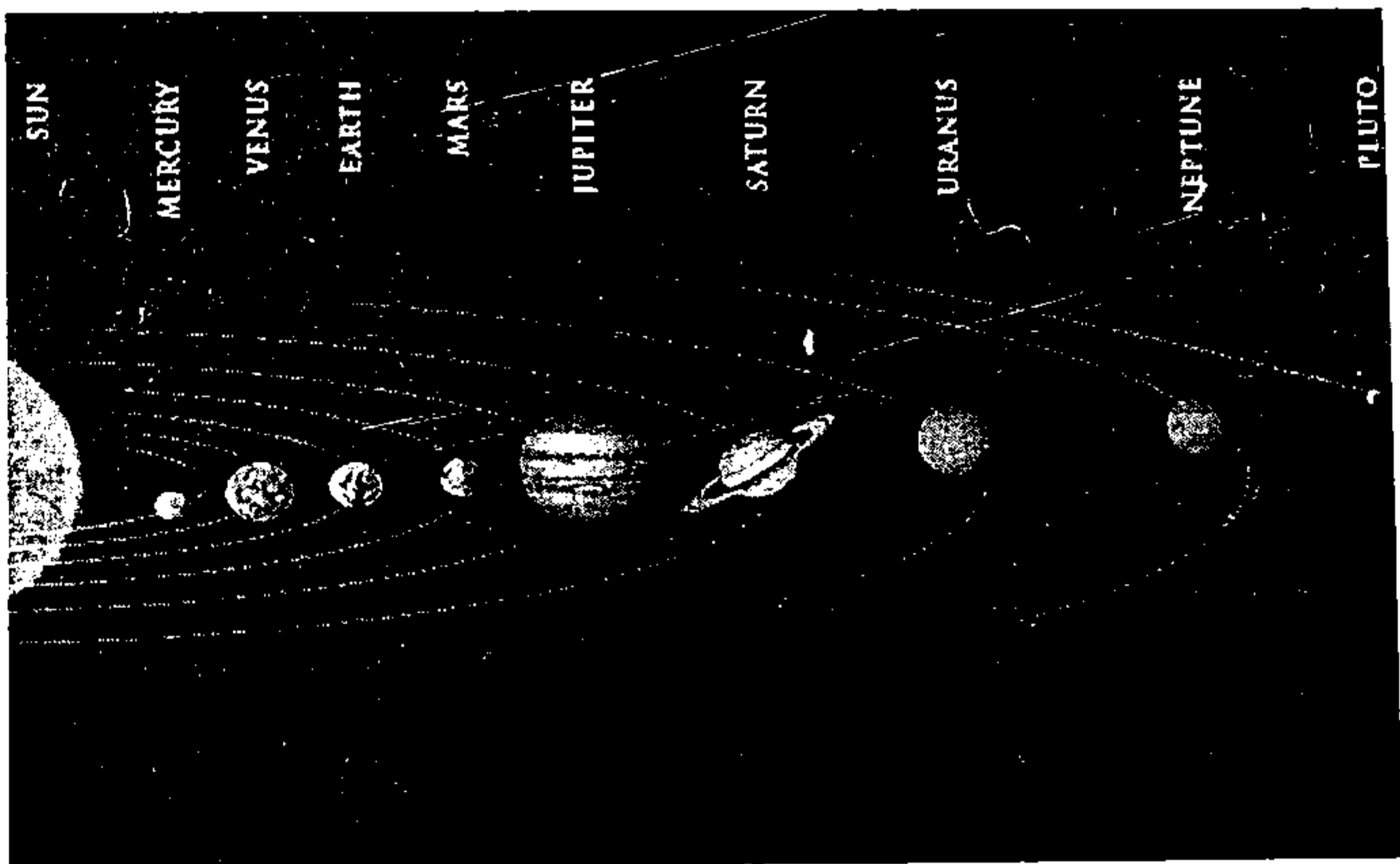
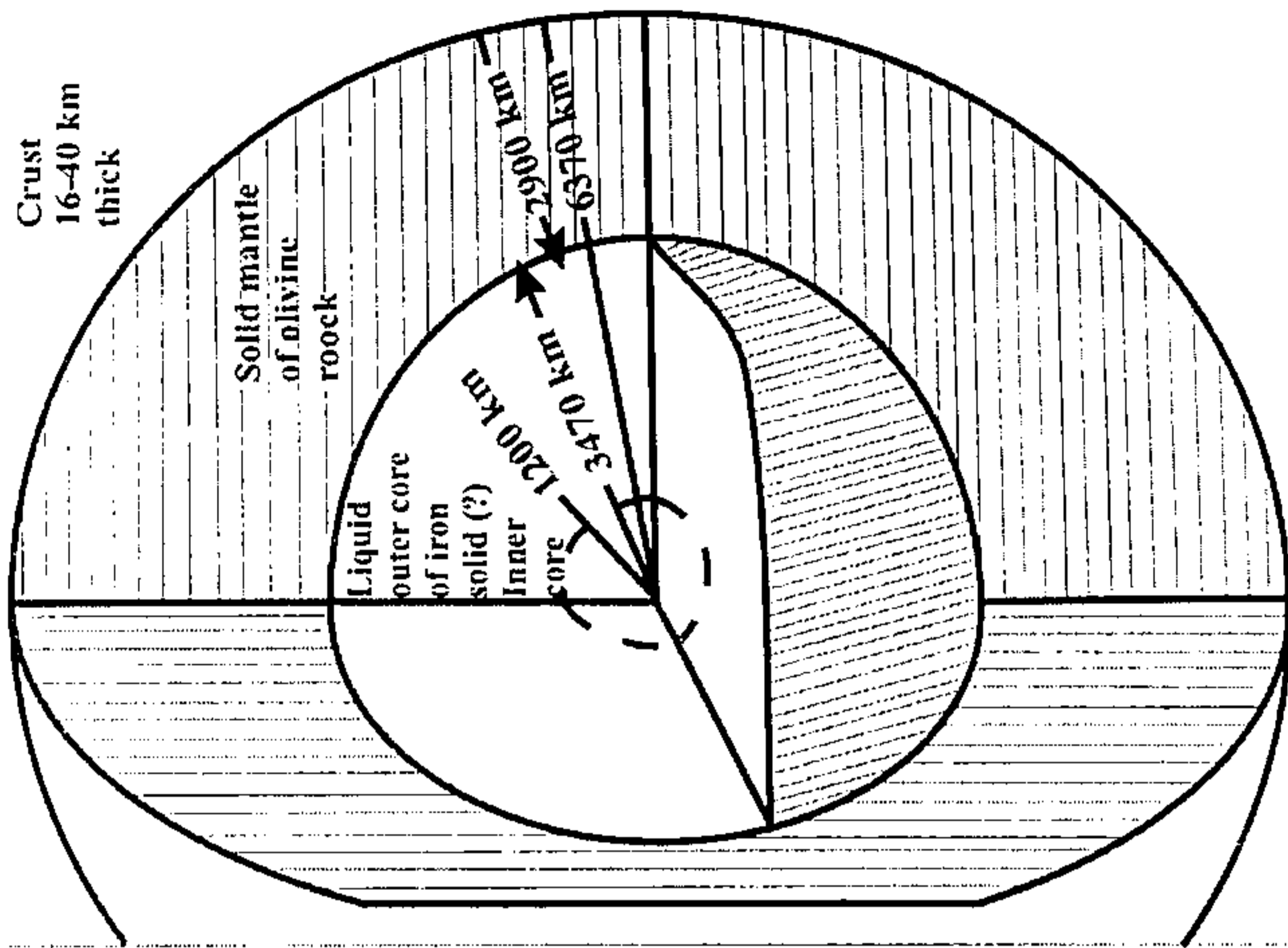
Let us first look into earth, our home planet figure 13. It has a core possibly of iron, highly compressed to a density of 10 to 12 times that of water, extending to about half its radius. Then there is a lava of an average density of 5.5 over 1000 miles thick overlaid with a rocky cover, perhaps 700 miles in thickness and density about 4.3. The outer crust is just about 25 miles or so in thickness and seems to float on the lower strata. The earth weighs about 6.6×10^{21} tons. Its central core is under pressure of about four millions of atmosphere.

In the Universe, we are rushing to some unknown destination at speeds at least 600 miles per second. Thus every day we leave behind about 5 million miles. In the galaxy, in company of the Sun, we are tracing a galactic path at about 200 miles per second, which mean tomorrow, we will be 1.7 million miles away from our today's position in the galaxy.

As seen from figure 14, what appears sitting in a comfortable home or office, actually we are moving round the axis of Earth at speeds faster than any aeroplane invented by man so far; at speed of 19 miles per second. So our Earth is rushing out in space, Allah knows, where; but all the times we are faced with the perils of accidents in this journey, for example, striking with a roaming asteroid in space. Our Doomsday, thus can be at any time.

However, it cannot be predicted by normal scientific laws. The following Ayaat of the Holy Quran speak about the

Fig. 13: Earth and its Place in the Solar System



The Solar System consists of 9 planets known so far. Earth is one of the smaller Planets, situated at a place where temperatures and gravity are just right for the evolution of life.

unpredictability of any type of Doomsday.

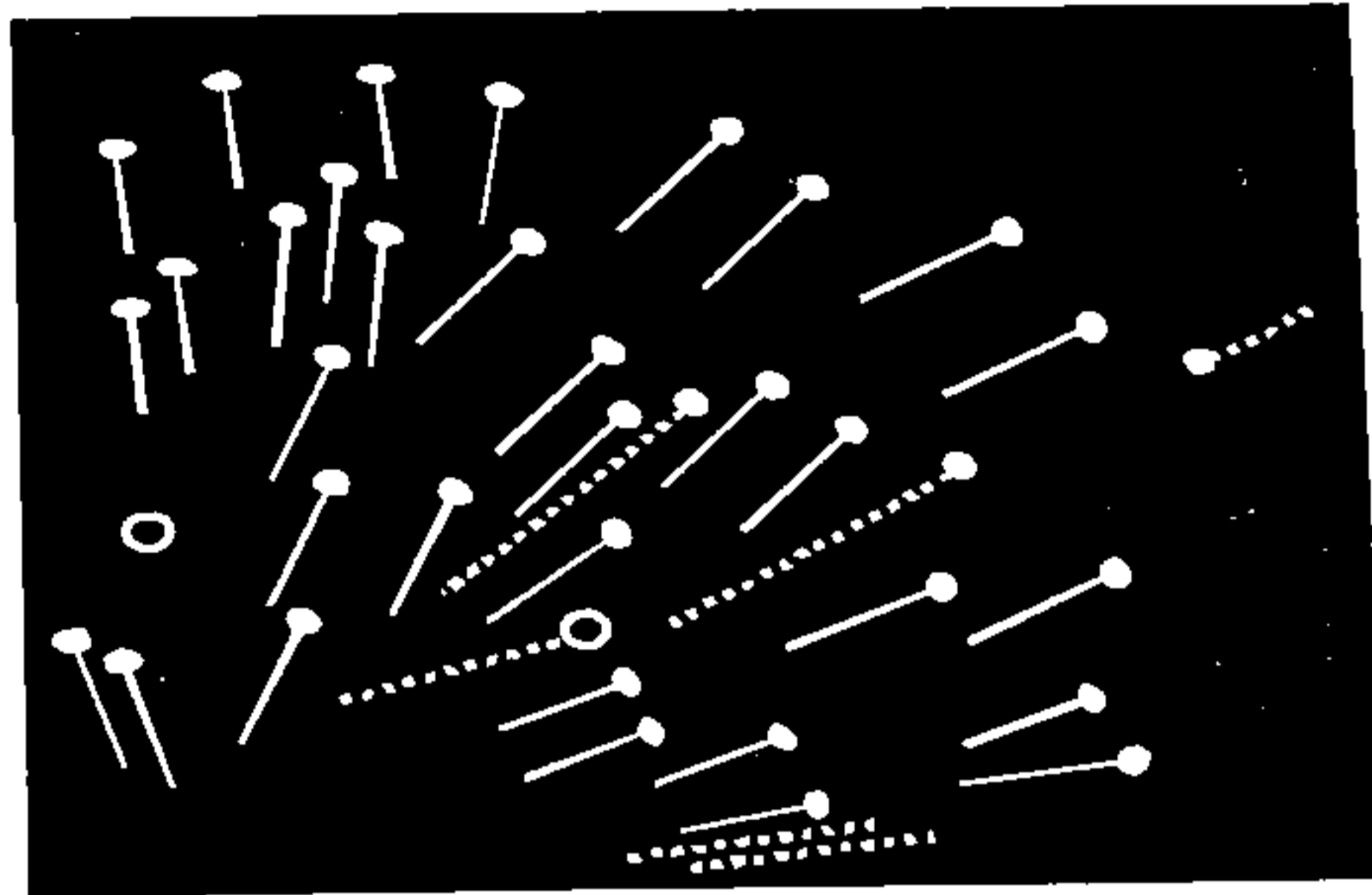
يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ السَّاعَةِ أَيَّانَ مُرْسِتُهَا ۗ قُلْ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُهَا عِنْدَ
رَبِّي ۗ لَا يُجَلِّئُهَا لِوَفِيِّهَا إِلَّا هُوَ ۗ ثَقُلَتْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ لَا تَأْتِيكُمْ إِلَّا بَغْتَةً ۝

“They ask you of the Hour, (of the Doom), when shall it come to pass? Say, knowledge thereof is with my Rabb (Allah) only, He alone will manifest it, at its proper time. It is heavy in the heavens and earth, It comes not upon them, But, suddenly”. 7(187)

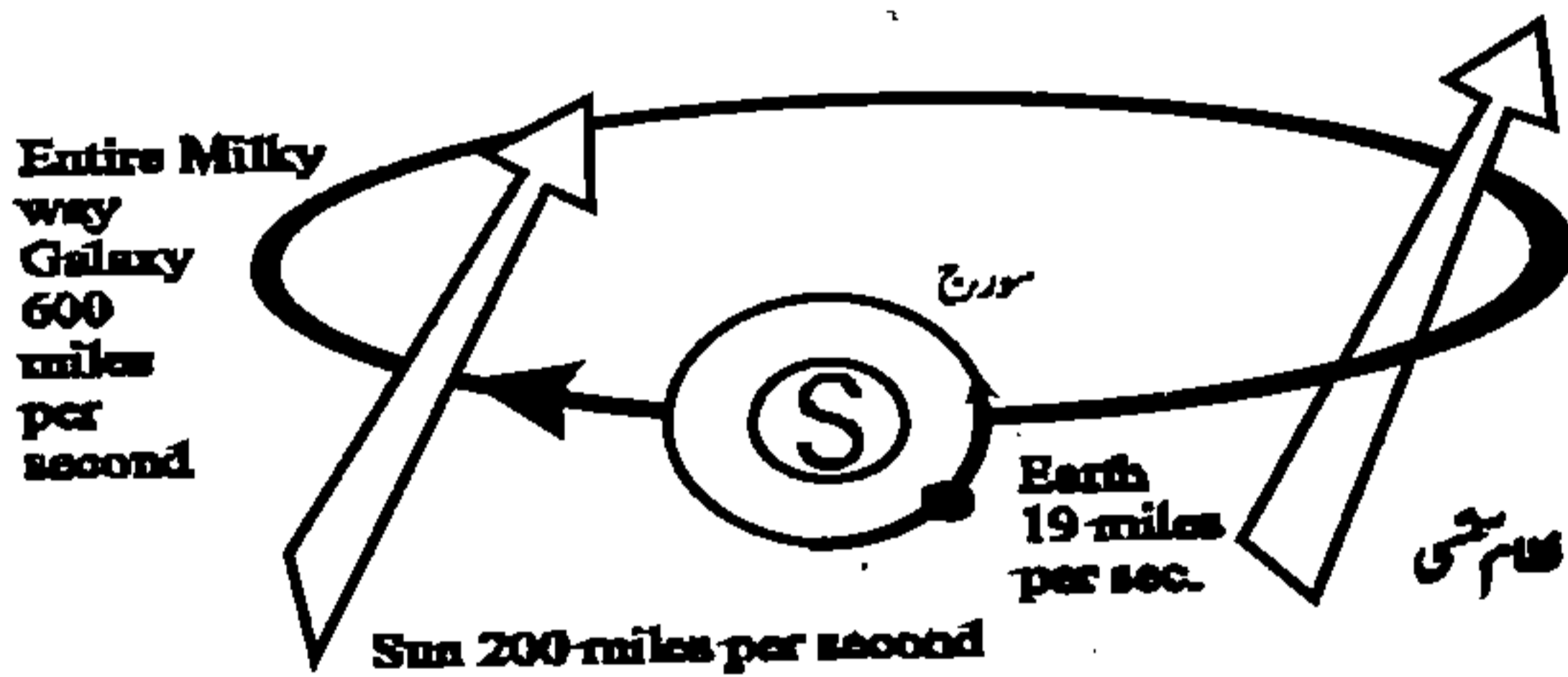
Ayah 7(187) specifically refers to the Earth’s Doomsday as an answer to the question from the non-believers, “When shall the Hour of Doom come to pass”? They are being told that no one can know about it exactly. Allah will manifest it at its proper time. Moreover, when it happens, it will happen suddenly. The Ayah 36(49) indicates that this will fall upon the people like a blast, giving no time for predictions. Ayah 7(187) further tells that it is not an ordinary event, but a great upheaval on the Earth and the space around.

It will be a sudden event marked by a great blast. May be, it will be due to some collision with a meteorite or it may even be initiated by some catastrophic man-made devices such as sudden detonation of a large number of nuclear bombs or may be due to any external cause like the accident in the solar system itself, or of an explosion within the body of the Earth. The Prophet of Allah, (صلى الله عليه), illustrated the sudden nature of Doomsday with the example that:

Fig. 14: Rushing Through The Universe



Galaxies moving en masse: a sample of the Universe, white circles suggest galaxies moving away, the dotted ones indicate opposite movements. Second figure shows the travel of our galaxy and our Solar System in Space.



Measurements of hundreds of distant galaxies suggest that they are rushing through space at about 400 miles per second, including the Earth and everything else in a vast region of space. Some astrophysicists believe that they may be drawn by the gravitational pull of some huge undiscovered mass, which may bring about their Doomsday when they crash into it.

When it comes, then the one who has a piece of bread in his hand, will not have time to put it in his mouth. (Al-Bukhari)

On this, the Holy Quran says:

مَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً تَأْخُذُهُمْ وَهُمْ يَخِصِّمُونَ
“They will not see it but one blast, which will surprise them, while they are disputing”. 36(49)

Although it is not possible to know exactly when the World will end, but the Holy Quran does tell us that it is not a far off event now. According to Muhammad Asad¹⁵ “The metaphor of the nearness of the Doomsday represents an indefinite length of time. It was frequently expressed by the Prophet of Allah that nearness of the Last Hour is nearness only in comparison with the countless eons of past cosmic history”.

As for its timing it will always remain a mystery till the time it actually falls on the Earth. The Holy Quran has given the account of some of the major events of the future history of the World before its Doomsday. The Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) has also told about many signs before the approach of the Earth’s Doomsday. A careful analysis of the past and the present history of the world shows that many of these predictions have already come true. Shadows of the remaining signs are also in sight, meaning that the promised Hour is not a far off event now.

Abu Hurraira (Razi Allah Anho), narrated that the Apostle of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) used to tell us that I have been sent as the last of the Prophets of Allah on the earth; and the Hour of Doom is as close as these two fingers of mine. (Al-Bukhari)

SIGNS OF THE APPROACHING DOOMSDAY AS REFERRED IN THE HOLY QURAN

A High Tech. Age

One of the most prominent indications about the coming of the earth's Doomsday given in the Holy Quran is that before that dreadful event, inhabitants on Earth will have attained very high degree of technical competency. It will be a High Tech Age. On this the Holy Quran says:

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَخَذَتِ الْأَرْضُ زُخْرُفَهَا وَازَّيَّنَتْ وَظَنَّ أَهْلُهَا أَنَّهُمْ
قَدِرُونَ عَلَيْهَا ۗ أَتَتْهَا أَمْرُنَا لَيْلًا أَوْ نَهَارًا فْجَعَلْنَاهَا حَصِيدًا كَأَن
لَّمْ تَغْنَبِ بِالْأَمْسِ ۗ كَذَٰلِكَ نُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۝

“(The Doomsday will not begin) Until when the earth, puts on its gold adornment, and has been embellished, and its people think they have gained mastery over it. Then comes down upon it Our judgment, by night or by day. And We cause it to become (like) a field mown down, as if there had been no yesterday”. 10(24)

Muhammad Asad¹⁵, in his commentary on Ayah 10(24) says that before its Doomsday, “People on earth would come to believe that they have gained mastery over nature with no conceivable limits to what they may yet achieve. Thus, whole of the above Ayah may be understood as

alluding to the artificial, illusory 'adornment' brought about by the man's technological efforts, not in collaboration with nature but, rather, in the hostile, confrontation with it".

The present age seems close enough to achieve the technical level referred in Ayah 10(24) when man would proudly say, "He is the master of the world". Already he has started controlling his environment and is freely exploiting earthly resources. Deserts are being converted into gardens and even far off areas are being developed into places of beauty, rockets are probing deep into space and Moon has been colonized. People have more wealth than ever. Even an average family enjoys better living standard than the kings of the past. All this points out that the end must be nearer.

Space Travel

Another important aspect of High Tech, development near the Doomsday is indicated by Ayaat 55(33-35) that before that Day, human beings on earth will have acquired the capability of space travel. So much so that they will be colonizing other worlds. Near the Doomsday as they see the worsening conditions on the Earth, they will take steps to leave it and try to seek refuge in other regions of the Universe. But even that will not be enough to save them. These developments have been predicted in Ayaat 55(33-34) of the Holy Quran given below. It is thought provoking that man on earth has already entered space age.

يَمْعُشِرَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ إِنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ تَنْفُذُوا مِنْ أَقْطَارِ
السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ فَانْفُذُوا ۗ لَا تَنْفُذُونَ إِلَّا بِسُلْطَنِ ۝
قَبَائِلِ آلِ رَبِّكُمْ تَكْذِبِينَ ۝

“O’ Company of Jinns and Mankind, if you have the power to penetrate the outer regions of heavens and the earth, Then penetrate them; you will never penetrate (them), save with power (Authority). Which of the favours of your Lord, will you then deny?” 55(33-34)

Ayah 55(33) predicts that near the Doomsday of earth mankind will have attained the power to leave the earth and penetrate deep into space. They will acquire this capability through the authority of technology.

The next Ayah 55(35) tells that, even this marvelous technical ability will be of no use to them at the time of the Doomsday. As they fly out they will encounter fatal radiations from which they will have no escape:

يُرْسَلُ عَلَيْكُمَا شَوَاظٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ وَنُحَاسٌ ۚ فَلَا تَنْتَصِرُونَ ۝
“There will be sent against you both, heat of fire and flash of brass, That you will not escape”. 55(35)

Great Scientific Age

Another thoughtful reflection of the coming High-Tech. civilization is evident from Ayah 41(53) of the Holy Quran. This concerns the scientific discoveries about the functioning of the human body, and its physical, mental and spiritual capabilities. Not only within himself, man

would have also made by then many discoveries in outer space beyond the horizons of the earth. It is revealed:

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ

أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ۚ

“Soon, We shall show them Our portents in the horizons, and within themselves, until it becomes manifest to them, that this (Quran) is the truth, Does not Your Lord suffice, since He is witness over all things”. 41(53)

It is no wonder that, as told in the Holy Quran over fourteen centuries ago, we have started witnessing the technical marvels, recent developments of the space age, biotechnology and the medical sciences. Regretfully, with the advent of the great scientific age, the ultimate future is also quite evident. One can say that the Doomsday of Earth is not a far off event now. Even then how unfortunate it is that most of the mankind is still hesitant to believe in the Truth of the Holy Quran, and is unmindful of the impending fate. The Holy Quran regrets this careless attitude of the mankind when it says:

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ فِي مِرْيَةٍ مِّنْ لِّقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ ؕ أَلَا إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطٌ ۚ

“How (sad) is it that they are still in doubt, about their meeting with their Lord? Lo! Is not He surrounding all things?” 41(54)

How sad it is that we are not serious about our life after death, which is as real as our birth. Earthly Doomsday may appear as a far off event but what about your Doomsday on the day of your death? Whatever our culture, faith, race or nation, this is our common fate. Is it not strange that during

the lifetime we don't want to die, but for the dead, many people think that they have perished forever?

How is it that those who have even a little knowledge of modern science, believe in the law of conservation of energy and matter but when it comes to themselves, they think that they will perish forever.

Therefore instead of waiting for the science to discover and make us believe; let us agree on what the Prophets of Allah (Peace be upon them) had told us. If one can shed away his/her prejudices, then it will be easy for him to feel and believe that the Holy Quran is indeed the Revelation of Allah.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئِينَ وَالنَّصْرِيَّةَ وَالْمَجُوسَ
وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى
كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ۝

“Lo! Those who believe (in the Holy Quran) and those who are Jews, and the Sabaeans and the Christians, and the Magians and the those who make partners with Allah, Lo! Allah will decide between them on the Day of Resurrection. Lo! Allah is witness over all things”. 22(17)

SIGNS OF THE EARTH'S DOOMSDAY AS TOLD BY THE PROPHET OF ALLAH (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم)

Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) is the last of the Messengers of Allah. He told us that before him, Allah had sent over one hundred and twenty four thousand Prophets in various times to different peoples of the world, to teach them about the purpose of life and to give them awareness of their Creator. He being the last of the Prophets, signifies that the Doomsday on earth is not a very far off event now. He said, "My coming is the news of the coming of the Last Hour" (Al-Tirmizi).

In the following section we shall describe some of the events predicted by the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) in the world before the actual coming of the Doomsday.

These are matters of common observation that do not need the brain of a scientist or the eye of a mystic to understand. All of us can see them alike. The only important thing would be whether we learn some lesson from them or keep our minds shut. As for the individual, everyone's death day is his/her doomsday.

It is narrated by Aisha (Razi Allah Anha), that some rough bedouins used to visit the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) and ask him, "When will the Hour (of Doom) be? He would look at the youngest of all of them and say, "If this one should live till he is very old, your Hour (of Doom), (the death of the people older than him)

will take place before him. He meant (by the Hour of Doom) their death. (Al-Bukhari)

Moral Degradation—General Signs before the Doomsday

The last of the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) told that earthly Doomsday will be preceded by the moral degradation, which will be the cause of many types of calamities falling on earth. As a result, all living beings will suffer together. If we carefully analyze the happenings in the world today, it will appear that our Doomsday is not a far off event now. Rising rate of calamities is an indication of it.

I. Ibn-e-Abbas (Razi Allah Anho) narrated that Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) gave us the news of the coming of the Doomsday by warnings that before it following will happen:

- 1 *Prayers will be neglected*
(Most of the Muslims do not care for them now).
- 2 *Carnal desires will be pursued*
(Present craze for higher and higher living standard speaks of it).
- 3 *Transgressors will become leaders*
(In most of the world particularly muslim countries that is the state of affairs)
- 4 *It will not be possible to distinguish the truthful from the false*
(Most people are hypocrites now a days)
- 5 *Telling lies will be desirable*
(That has become very common already)
- 6 *Payment of Zakat will be taken as a burden*

- (That is the sorry state of affairs now)
- 7 *The believer will be deemed the most disgraceful of people and he will be pained at seeing evils (all round) and his heart will melt as salt in water but he will not be able to say anything*
(This is the present state of affairs)
- 8 *Rain will do no good, for it will fall out of season*
(Climatic changes due to rising pollution level have already caused it)
- 9 *Males will commit adultery with males and females with females*
(It is very common in many countries nowadays. In USA and some European Countries Gay marriage are lawful)
- 10 *Women will dominate over men.*
(Look at the modern families everywhere)
- 11 *Off springs will disobey their parents*
- 12 *A friend will treat his friend badly*
- 13 *Sins will be taken lightly*
(Concept of sin in this age is dying down)
- 14 *Mosques will have external decorations and beauty. There will be worshipers too but there will be hypocrisy and mutual enmity in their hearts*
(That is the state of affairs nowadays)
- 15 *Then will appear a people from the West (Maghrib) who will dominate the weak amongst my people.*
(Has already happened since last few centuries)
- 16 *People will produce (copies of) the Holy Quran in letters of gold but will not act upon it*
(This is happening these days)
- 17 *The Quran will be recited in melodious way*
(This is fashion now)

- 18 *Usury will become rampant*
- 19 *Human blood will have little value*
(Look at individual and state terrorism)
- 20 *Religion will have no helpers*
(Particularly after 09/11/2001)
- 21 *Singing women will be on the increase*
(This is the state of affairs all over the world)
- 22 *The rich will perform the Hajj as to pass time. The people of the middle class will do so to conduct business and the poor to beg (for charity).*
(Statistics speaks of swelling number of people going for Hajj and Umra every year and that this prediction is already true).

Hazrat Anas (Razi Allah Anho) narrated from the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) about the following signs of the Doomsday.

- 23 *“Near the Doomsday knowledge (of Islam) will disappear, and ignorance will prevail all over the world*
(It is happening now)
24. *Then, there will be a great deal of adultery; wine will be consumed in large quantities*
(That is happening now)
25. *Near the Doomsday population of the females will increase over males, so much so that there may be (at some places) one man to fifty women”*
(Female population all over world is at an increase now). (Al-Bukhari, Al-Muslim)

On the same subject Hazrat Abu Hurraira (Razi Allah Anho) reported the following from the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم):

- 26 *Property given in trust is treated as spoils and Zaka'ah is looked on as a fine*
(This is the state of affairs in most muslim communities in these day)
- 27 *Learning is acquired for other than a religious purpose*
(It has already happened. Learning is mostly for job only)
- 28 *A man obeys his wife and is unmindful towards his mother, Brings his friend near and drives his father far off*
(This is unfortunately the state of family life in most societies)
- 29 *The most wicked member of a tribe becomes its ruler. The most worthless member of a people becomes its leader, A man is honored through fear of the evil he may do*
(Most of the Muslim countries suffer with this type of bad governance)
- 30 *Singing girls and string instruments (i.e. modern guitars and pop music) make their appearance,*
- 31 *Wines are drunk abundantly*
- 32 *The last members of the people curse the first ones*
(This has unfortunately happened)
- 33 *The Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) then warned. At that time look for: "Violent winds, earthquakes, metamorphosis, pelting rains, and (other similar) signs, like beads of a necklace falling one after the other when its string is cut".*

(Scientists have noted rising rate of occurrences of natural calamities since 1950. International Red Cross in its World Disasters Report 2002, estimates it four times since 1960).

(Al-Tirmizi, Shama-el-Mishkat Al-Masabih, Surah Fitnah).

Hazrat Anas (Razi Allah Anho) reported on the authority of the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم):

34 “Before the Last Hour, time will move so fast that a year will appear as a month; and a month as a week; and week as a day; and a day as an hour and an hour as a burst of fire” (Al-Tirmizi)

(It may refer to the very busy life style of most of the people as being witnessed nowadays. Pace of events is getting faster with time. Also, technical developments in the field of transport have shrunken distances and reduced time, from months to days, then from days to hours and now from hours to minutes. The process of accountability has also quickened now and people face the results of their doing in no time).

If we take this tradition in its literal meanings then it indicates faster motion of the earth around the sun or the shorter orbit of the earth, or its faster motion around its own axis. It is known that in its early history, a day on Earth used to be as small as a few hours¹⁹. Gradually, it has been slowing down, and the duration of the day has also been increasing accordingly. This process can reverse in future by the strike of some large meteorite.

Some Major Events before the Earthly Doomsday

With reference to some pertinent events it is narrated by Abu Huraira (Razi Allah Anho) that the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, "the Hour will not be established till:

- 1 *Two big groups fight each other where upon there will be a great number of causalities on both sides and they will be following one and the same religious doctrine*
(May refer to World Wars I & II)
- 2 *About thirty Dajjals (liars) appear, and each one of them will claim that he is Allah's Apostle*
(Many fraudulent persons have already claimed falsely of prophethood. Mirza Ghulam Ahmed Qadiyani was one of them in India)
- 3 *Religious knowledge is taken away*
(It is being replaced by secular curriculum in many muslim countries)
- 4 *Earthquakes increase in frequency*
(According to Munich Insurance Company rate of natural calamities has increased three fold since 1960)
- 5 *Time passes quickly*
(This may be the indication of very busy life style of people we see today)
- 6 *Riches is in abundance; so abundant that a wealthy person will worry lest nobody should accept his Zakat, and whenever he presents it to someone, that person will say, "I am not in need of it."*

(This type of behavior is observed in oil rich countries of Middle East)

7 *The people compete with one another in constructing high rising buildings*

(This is the fashion of today. Higher and higher buildings are under construction in every country)

8 *There will be a great deal of turmoil, murder and unrest, so much so that the living being will prefer to be dead. So much so, a man when passing by a grave of someone will say, "wish that I were in his place".*

(This indicates large scale unrest and killings, terrorist attacks, air raids etc. due to which frustrated people will prefer death over living)

9 *The Sun rises from the West*

(Metaphorically this might be the prediction about the great rise in material power of the western nations. (It may also indicate the effect of some great meteorite strike with earth that may change its direction of rotation. So people will see the Sun rising from the West).

10 *Then they will all believe but that will be the time about which Allah says in the Quran)*

لَا يَنْفَعُ نَفْسًا إِيْمَانُهَا لَمْ تَكُنْ آمَنَتْ مِنْ قَبْلُ أَوْ كَسَبَتْ فِي

إِيْمَانِهَا خَيْرًا ۝

"No good will it do to a soul to believe then, if it had not believed before, And had not earned good through his faith".....6 (158)

Finally the Hour will be established suddenly; so suddenly that two men spreading a garment in

front of them will not be able to sell it nor fold it up. (Al-Bukhari)

Some Predictions of Historical Nature

Hazrat Abu Huraira (Razi Allah Anho) narrates that Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) gave the news of the following special events before the Doomsday:

- 1 *“Last Hour will not come, until a fire emerges in Hijaz, so big and intense that the necks of the camels in Basra (Iraq) will be seen during the night in the light of that fire”.*

(Al-Bukhari, Al-Muslim)

[It has been reported that there was such a fire on the 3rd of 6th month of 654 Hijra, more than 650 years after its prediction near Madina-Tul-Munnawara which lasted for several weeks⁽⁴¹⁾.

- 2 *When Abdullah Bin Salam (Razi Allah Anho) asked the Prophet of Allah about the First sign of the last Hour, he said, “The first sign of the Last Hour will be a fire that will drive people from the East to the West”.* *(Al-Bukhari-Surah Fitnah).*

A big War in Middle East can bring about such exodus of population from East to West.

In his commentary on this Hadith Muhammad Asad¹⁴ says, “This appears to be an allegorical description of a social cataclysm which will destroy the foundation of Eastern cultures and will drive the people of the East towards a blind imitation of the West. It is described as a fire because, like fire, it will consume the remaining cultural

strength of the Eastern people and turn their past into dead history without connection with the present”.

- 3 *The Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) also told “Muslims near the Last Hour will follow the Christians and the Jews blindly, so much so that if they enter a hole with a deadly poisonous snake in it, they will not hesitate to follow them”. (Bukhari, Muslim)*

(Unfortunately domination and blind imitation of the Western cultures by the Muslim since last few centuries shows that it has already come to pass)

- 4 *With regards to specific events, once the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, “Before the Last Hour, the Muslims will fight with the Persians and beat them;*

(Happened in the days of the caliphate of Hazrat Omer (Razi Allah Anho),

They will fight with the Romans and will be victorious (happened in the days of Hazrat Omer (Razi Allah Anho).

“Descendants of the Kings of Persia and Rome will be their servants (Happened in the first 100 years of Islam).

- 5 *Then they will fall into false pride. The worst among them will be made the rulers of the Last of the people. That will be the first sign of the approach of the Last Hour (This is the state of affairs since last few centuries).*

- 6 *On another occasion he said, Domsday will not come upon good people.
(Al-Bukhari, Al-Tirmizi, Al-Muslim)”.*

- 7 Another very distinct sign of the coming of the Doomsday described by the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) is that unexpected sudden deaths will be very common. *He said, "Near the Doomsday unaccounted murders will be common, where the killer will not know his victim and the victim will not know why he was killed or who killed him". (Al-Bukhari)*

(Unfortunately we are now witnessing this state of affairs as well. Millions of people are dying suddenly every year through various types of accidents and diseases such as heart attacks. Many more people die as a result of terrorist attacks where the killers do not know their victims and likewise the people being killed through such means may have no personal enmity with their killers).

- 8 *About the Muslims the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, "Near the Doomsday, they will be many, but like floating scum on flowing water. They will have little weight". (Al-Bukhari)*

(Unfortunately since last few centuries this is the state of affairs for most of the Muslims on earth)

Prophecies in waiting

Hazrat Huzifah Bin Aussad (Razi Allah Anho) quoting the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), narrated the following signs of the approaching Doomsday which are yet to be fulfilled. (Al-Tirmizi, Al-Muslim).

- 1 *"DAJJAL" will appear. He will be an evil ruler enemy of the righteous everywhere, and will enjoy great authority and miraculous powers. He will have the means to travel from the East to the West*

in a day or a part thereof. He will have with him Jannah and Jahannum. Jannah for the reward to his followers and Jahannum for the punishment of his opponents. He will be able to make the dead living.

(From the nature of the authority of Dajjal, one can see that he will be a mischievous ruler equipped with high technologies which he will use for his evil ends. Present means of high speed travel and medical developments are seen as a step towards his coming).

2 Hazrat Imam Mahdi:

He will appear to fight with Dajjal and finally destroy him.

3 Hazrat Isa (A.S):

He will appear from the heavens and join army of Imam Mahdi and rule the world justly for 40 years after killing of DAJJAL, and will establish Islam all over the world.

4 Daba-Tul-Ardh:

A strange kind of creature will appear on the Earth. It will be an animal but speak like the humans.

(It may also be a High Tech product of bio-engineering or some kind of robot capable to reproduce itself. Present developments in the field of genetic engineering and neuron computers may result into the creation of such a creature).

- 5 Rise of Sun from West:
Finally there will be the event when Sun will appear to rise from the West, followed by a great upheaval.
- 6 Terrible frequent earthquakes:
Before the final Doomsday there will occur severe earthquakes due to which large tracts of earth will sink, first in the east, then in the west, and one in Arabia.
- 7 Sky Overcast and Red Wind Storms:
Finally the sky will become overcast with smoke. The whole Earth will experience catastrophic red windstorms, which may continue for years, killing every living creature from the face of earth.
- 8 Meteorite Showers:
During this period, the earth will also experience excessive meteorite showers falling on it like stones.
- 9 *Another feature of the coming Doomsday is that due to their evil deeds like moral corruption some of the human beings will mutate into animal like forms with moral bankruptcy.*

(It is to be noted that rate of mutated births after the World War-II have increased many times due to the nuclear radiation and fallout from the testing of the atomic devices).

Lessons to Learn

A careful reflection into predictions and signs given in the Holy Quran and events told by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ)

(عليه وآله وسلم), clarify beyond doubt that what was predicted more than fourteen hundred years ago, we are witnessing those signs today. This high technology civilization littered with tension, unrest, random murders, adultery and wine is inviting its own Doomsday at any time. As regards the state of Islam that the knowledge of religion will be lifted up and that the Muslims though too many in numbers, will not be of much significance in the world is apparent now. The prediction that they will imitate the Christians and Jews blindly is also a glaring reality.

What does all this mean? It is a warning to mankind that the Last Hour is not very far off now. A few hundred years, this way or that, is of little significance. The end is imminent. Who will then learn a lesson from this knowledge of impending fate and save himself from the wrath of the Hereafter? We cannot change the events, but we certainly have the free will to change ourselves. The Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, "Actions will be judged according to the intentions". At least, we may strive to have the right intentions to live according to the glorious example of the last Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) and follow the Holy Quran as the Road-Map of life.

THE TIMING AND THE LENGTH OF THE DOOMSDAY

When will the Earth meet its Doomsday? It is a secret of Allah Subhana-Hu. Except that it is not very far off event, we do not have more knowledge on this. From the sayings of the Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) and the revelations of the Holy Quran given already, it appears that the process of the Doomsday may continue for a very long period of time. A direct reference to this fact is found in the Sura Al-Maarij, where Allah says:

سَأَلَ سَائِلٌ بِعَذَابٍ وَاقِعٍ ۝ لِلْكَافِرِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُ دَافِعٌ ۝ مِّنَ
 اللَّهِ ذِي الْمَعَارِجِ ۝ تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ
 كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ۝ فَاصْبِرْ صَبْرًا جَمِيلًا ۝
 إِنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَهُ بَعِيدًا ۝ وَنَرَاهُ قَرِيبًا ۝ يَوْمَ تَكُونُ السَّمَاءُ كَالْمُهْلِ ۝
 وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ ۝ وَلَا يَسْئَلُ حَمِيمٌ حَمِيمًا ۝

“A questioner questions concerning the punishment which is sure to fall upon the disbelievers, which none can repel from Allah, the Lord of the ascending stages. The Angels and the Spirit ascend unto Him in a Day, the measure whereof is fifty thousand years”.

“Therefore be patient with a patience fair to see. They see (this Day) indeed as a far off (event) But We see it near, the Day when the sky will (look like) molten copper, and

the mountains will be (flying) like the carded wool, and no friend will ask after a friend” 70(1-10).

From these Ayaat ,it appears that the minimum length of the Day of Doom may be as much as 50, 000 years. For the man on the Earth, it is seemingly a long period, but for Allah, who is above time and space, it is no duration at all.

In one of its Ayaat the Holy Quran has indicated that one day of Allah is like thousand earthly years (365000 days). If one day is of 50,000 years of our reckoning, 32(5) the period of Universal Doomsday from the start to the end may be as long as 18 billion years of our earthly measure of time.

The Timing of the Doomsday

Correct knowledge of the timing of the Doomsday is virtually impossible. As studied already it is a secret of Allah Subhana-Hu alone. However, by carefully analyzing the events mentioned in the sayings of the Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) and of the signs highlighted by the Holy Quran discussed already, one may say that the stage for the Earth’s Doomsday has already been set. There are many signs through which the world is passing nowadays. But there still remain many more signs that are yet to come. For example, the appearance of Dajjal or the Daba-Tul-Ardh or the rising of the Sun from the West, etc. are some of those events which are yet in waiting.

Therefore, the most intriguing question “When will be the earthly Doomsday?” remains unanswered. However the advent of the last of the Prophets is itself the most striking

indications of its being close enough. It may be now at our very doorsteps.

In Ayaat 70(1-10), the Divine statement, "They see this Day as a far off event but We see it quite near" conveys the idea of its relative nearness, which depends upon the observer's perception. In Ayah 16(77), the remaining period before the World meets its approaching fate has been illustrated with the similitude of the period spent in the twinkling of an eye or even less than that. It is revealed:

وَمَا أَمْرُ السَّاعَةِ إِلَّا كَلَمْحِ الْبَصَرِ أَوْ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيُّ

كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝

"And the matter of the Hour (of Doom) is, but as the twinkling of an eye. Or it is nearer still. Lo! Allah is able to do all things". 16(77)

If we suppose "The twinkling of an eye" takes about one-fifth of a second, which is 1/432000 of the length of a 24 hour day then on this analogy, relative to the age of the Earth, which is estimated at 4.5 billion years, the remaining period before its Doomsday would be about 10, 000 years only.

There is another Hadith of the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) from which one can also derive a quantitative guess. The Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) had said; "Your stay in this world in comparison to the stay of nations before you is like the period between the Asr (afternoon) and Maghrib (sun set) prayer". (Al-Bukhari)

This period is about 2 hours out of 24 hours, Assuming that the human beings like us have been living on the Earth for

the last 50,000 years, which is the most likely guess by a contemporary scientist (Ref. W.L. Stokes – Essentials of Earth History”, published by Prentice hall inc. USA), then the period left for the end of the world at the time of the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) was about 4000 years. Out of this fourteen hundreds years have already passed. Thus the time left in the Doomsday of our world may be less than three thousand years from now.

According to another guess (The Computer Speaks Allah’s Miracles, Islamic World, Vol. 5, No. 2, April-June 1987), the remaining period before the end of the world is only about 300 years. This analysis is difficult to agree but it is claimed to be based on the Ayaat 15(85-87) of the Holy Quran. It is being argued that the Ayah 15(87) contains the key about the coming of the Hour of Doom, mentioned in the preceding Ayah 15(86). That key is the number 14, seven pairs which is the fourteen sets of Quranic initials (Muqatta’at) which prefix certain Quranic Surahs. These are shown to be intricately connected with the numeric code 19. By adding the numerical equivalents of the fourteen sets of Quranic initials, figure of 1709 lunar years has been quoted as being the period between Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) and earth’s Doomsday. This means that about 300 lunar years remain to the end of humanity.

We take all this playing with numbers as mere conjectures, suggesting that the subject of the timings of the Doomsday is a highly speculative subject and its true knowledge is with Allah only. With regard to belief in the Resurrection, it is not important to know about the timing of the Doomsday. When this unknown period is compared to eternity, then whether it is a hundred year or a million

years, makes little difference. Actually, as told by the Messenger of Allah, our Doomsday begins with the end of our life. Therefore for a believer it is more than enough to know that Doomsday is coming and that will make no difference for him or her whether he or she has already died or is still alive when the end of the world arrives. All will face it alike.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَحْيَاكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ

لَكَفُورٌ ۝

“And He it is, Who gave you life, then He will cause you to die, then He will cause you to rise again, Lo! Man is verily ungrateful”.
22(66)

SCIENTIFIC MODE OF THE EARTH'S DOOMSDAY

In the preceding Surahs, we saw in the light of the Holy Quran that Earth's Doomsday will be but once and for all, initiated by a terrible sudden blast. "One shout which will surprise the people, catching them unaware" 36(49). Thereafter, the process may be completed over a long period of time. Before this 'Big Event', the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) has also told about many smaller events of catastrophic nature as warning signs in the various regions of the Earth at various times. These are termed Azaab. The Holy Quran in its numerous Ayaat has mentioned about such minor Doomsdays falling on wicked nations in the shape of earthquakes, hurricanes, storms, shower of meteors, epidemics, wars and so on. They are pointers moving world gradually to its final Doomsday.

The Holy Quran has quoted many examples of the individual doomsdays of the nations before the total world doomsday. The process seems to be of continuous nature, as we can see from the following revelations:

فَاخَذْتُهُمُ الصَّيْحَةَ بِالْحَقِّ فَبَجَعَلْنَهُمْ عَتَاءً ۖ فَبُعْدًا لِلْقَوْمِ

الظَّالِمِينَ ۝ ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ قُرُونًا آخَرِينَ ۝ مَا تَسْبِقُ

مِنْ أُمَّةٍ أَجَلَهَا وَمَا يَسْتَأْخِرُونَ ۝

"So they were rightly ceased by a mighty blast, and We turned them into rubbish, a far removal for the wrong doers. Then after

*them We brought forth other generations.
No nation can outstrip its term, nor yet
postpone it". 23(41-43)*

In the category of minor Doomsdays, the geo-history of the Earth suggests that there have been at least five mass extinctions of living beings on this planet during the last 200 million years, perhaps triggered by extra-terrestrial causes(Fig15). One theory is that every 26 million years or so, a rain of comets bombards the Earth. Impact of large comets spews enough debris into the atmosphere to destroy living beings and plants on Earth. Some theories suggest that such catastrophes are caused by the asteroids that circle our Sun and sometimes crash on the Earth. Besides these, strike of meteors from outer space have also been the cause of many mini Doomsdays on the Earth.

As for the mechanism of the apparently clock work like regularity of crashes of heavenly bodies on the Earth, it is thought that these might have been brought about by a companion star of the Sun, which periodically comes close enough to it, to pull comets or asteroids out of their natural orbits, hurling towards the Earth. Some theories assign this role to the slow bobbing ride of the Sun through its journey in the Milky Way Galaxy, which is an island of 100 billion stars, shaped something like a sunny-side-up egg, 100,000 light years in diameter; with a bulge (the yolk) in the middle and three flat, dusty arms (the egg white) forming a circle around it. Like all its fellow stars, the Sun revolves around the galactic center, taking about 250 million years to complete a round trip. As it moves, it bobs up and down, through the central plane of the galaxy, where most of the stars and dust clouds are concentrated. In this hazardous

journey, the possibility of a crash is always there, which could happen at any time, initiating the act of the major Doomsday of the Earth, even of the Solar system as a whole.

Evidence in favour of the impact theory is thus rapidly accumulating. Scientific discoveries tend to conclude that comets do create trouble, but it is also possible, even probable, that astronomers may spot a random, incoming asteroid nudged by the gravity of an outer planet or star into a direct collision course with the Earth, bringing about its Doomsday much earlier than expected.¹⁰

An Alternative View of the Doomsday of the Earth

So far we have discussed the possibilities of sudden Doomsday of the Earth. Paul Davies¹⁰ has reviewed the scientific findings connected with the life of the Sun. The possible scenario of this awful event is given below:

“As far as our local region of the Universe is concerned, the fate of the Earth is intimately linked with the fate of the Sun. Earth life feeds on sunlight and any major disruption to the Sun’s present quiescence will spell disaster. There is no lack of possible solar twitches that could render the Earth uninhabitable. Any alternation in the Sun’s constant heat output could upset the Earth’s delicate climatic balance and plunge us into a catastrophic ice age. Changes in the magnetic patterns of the solar system might rock the planets in their orbits”.

“Even assuming that the Earth escapes all these unpleasant possibilities, it is clear that things cannot

continue as they are "forever and ever". The prolific radiation of energy by the sun has to be paid for in nuclear fuel and eventually its fuel reserves will start to run out. This scenario is shown in figure 16. Astrophysicists estimate³³ that this will not happen for another four to five billion years, which may seem a large length of time. However, in comparison to the age of the Universe which is estimated to be eighteen billion years, it is a small period only".

"As the fuel runs low, it is expected that the Sun will swell up, turning into the sort of a star that astronomers call a red giant. Gradually it will become large enough to engulf the inner planets; then the Earth's atmosphere will be stripped away. Gradually the Earth would become so hot that even solid rocks will be melted, even vaporized. However long before that, water in the seas will have boiled out, leaving them dry pits. Earth will become a lifeless planet".

"Thereafter, it is expected that the Sun will embark on a new and erratic career, in which the nuclear burning of hydrogen fuel, so prolific today, will be replaced by the less efficient burning of helium, and thence by heavier and heavier elements. When finally all the fuel is exhausted, the Sun will consist of moderately heavy elements such as iron. Any further fusions of nuclei will not result in the release of energy. During this phase of Sun's life, its central temperature will have risen steadily towards a billion degrees. Now, with all the fuel spent, internal pressure will fall and gravity will take command. The aged Sun will start to contract under its own weight, crushing the material within it so violently that the density will rise to a million grams per cubic centimeter, slowly fading and cooling, to end its career as a black dwarf star¹⁰".

Fig. 15: Life on the Earth has seen many global scale catastrophes. Disappearance of dinosaurs is only one such example.



The pre-historic world of the Dinosaurs may have had its Doomsday through the strike of some giant meteor that filled the atmosphere of the Earth with smoke and dust, barring the Sun's light, and causing an ice age so that the buzzing life was destroyed to give way to new types of living beings.

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This passive death scenario means that at present the Sun is expanding in volume, and after having reached a maximum is expected to slow down and finally it will begin to contract, ultimately disappearing into a black dwarf, a mini-black hole (Fig.16).

Looking back into our discussion on the universal Doomsday, there are striking similarities between the two accounts. This means that, may it be the fate of the individual star or that of the entire Universe, all follow the general principle revealed in the Quranic Ayah 21(104) quoted already that they first expand or grow and then in the end reaching prime of their life, they begin to contract. Finally they vanish into infinite well of gravity by their own mass. In this scenario the fate of the Earth is closely linked with aging of the Sun, which will destroy it even long before its own destruction.

Thus science considers the Doomsday of the Earth as an accepted reality, though there are questions about the ways in which it will take place. According to the theory of passive death of Sun, the Earth will have its Doomsday in about two to three billion years. But a crash or an accident in the Heavens can cause it any time.

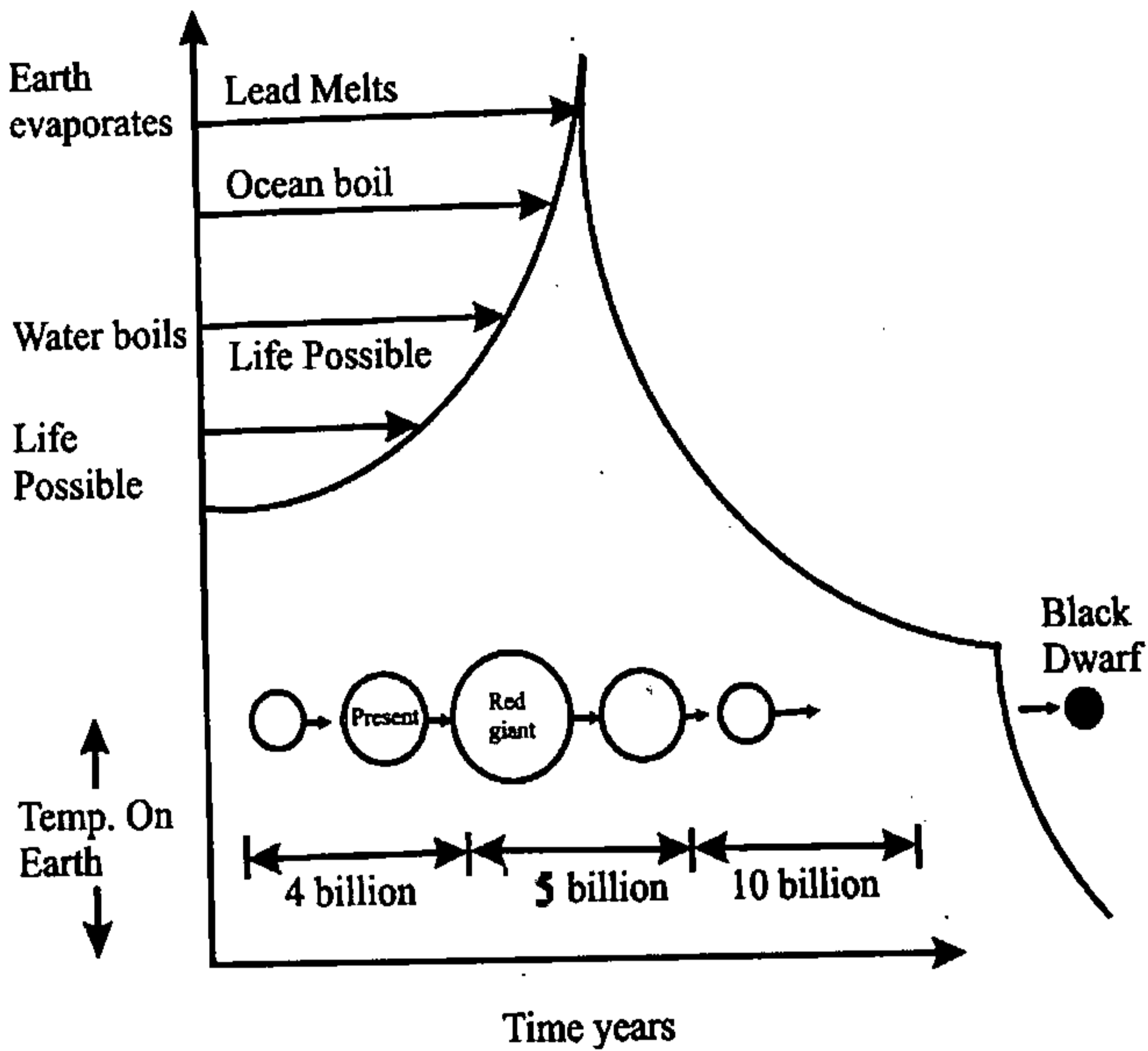
Above is a likely story, if the Sun is allowed to grow old comfortably. However chances of accident or collision in space are quite high. In that case, the Sun, along with its family members will die much younger.

The following Ayaat of the Holy Quran point out to this scenario.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۖ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ ۝
يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ
ذَاتِ حَمَلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَرَىٰ وَهُمْ بِسُكْرَىٰ
وَلَكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ ۝

“O, mankind! Fear your Lord. Lo! The earthquake of the Hour (of Doom) is a tremendous thing. On the day when you behold it, every nursing mother will forget her nursing, and every pregnant one will be delivered of her burden, and you will see mankind as drunken, yet they will not be drunken, but the Doom of Allah will be strong upon them”. 22(1-2)

Fig: 16. Life Cycle of the Sun: If all goes well and it is allowed to grow old undisturbed, it will end up as a black dwarf. Earth will be destroyed much earlier.



MECHANICS OF THE EARTH'S DOOMSDAY AS REFERRED IN THE HOLY QURAN

There are a number of Ayaat in the Holy Quran that vividly describe the events of great upheaval before the Earth's Doomsday. From this information, a scientific mind can work backward and analyze the actual mechanism of these events. It must however, be mentioned that mechanism described herein is based upon logical reasoning and is therefore subject to change and improvement.

Start of the Doomsday

We have discussed with reference to the Holy Quran that start up of the Earth's Doomsday is going to be in some sudden way. In Ayaat 69(13-15), it is to occur with a terrible intense sound, given the name "The Soor". What will be the mechanism of this sudden sounding of the Doomsday? This needs scientific reasoning. A careful analysis of the relevant Ayaat of the Holy Quran leads one to the following three possible mechanisms of this great event:

a) A Great Crash

Most likely the Earthly Doomsday will be initiated with the strike of some heavenly body from outer space such as a giant meteor. It is also possible that with the impact of such a large mass, the Earth will be pushed out of its orbit. Subsequently with each cycle it will come closer to the Sun

until it is finally destroyed by actually falling into it. This may also lead to a gradual upheaval of the solar system too. Such a severe impact is also likely to result into eruptions of super volcanoes and terrible earthquakes.

b) A Great Explosion

This represents a much more dramatic end to the Earth. Inside its body it contains molten lava under very high pressures. It has also been contracting in size since its inception³⁴. In the beginning it was probably, 10 times its present size. As the Earth contracts, internal pressure in its core is also rising. A stage may reach when it can no longer hold back that pressure and will explode like a pressure vessel and destroyed suddenly. This theory is backed by the general principle of Doomsday derived from Ayah 21(104) that is that Universe will see its end when its present mode of expansion changes into contraction.

c) Impact and Explosion

This scenario is the most catastrophic in which both the impact mechanism and the explosion mechanism may be part of the Earth's Doomsday. May be the impact of a foreign body becomes the cause of the explosion, which initiates the Doomsday.

In the following we shall discuss these issues in greater detail. It should be remembered that Allah has power over the physical laws. He can make anything happen in a way and at a time of his choosing as given in the Holy Quran.

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ۝

“Surely His command when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it “Be!” (KUN) and it is there”. 36 (82)

The Contraction of the Earth and Explosion

About the earth the Holy Quran gives us the revolutionary concept that it has been contracting from all its sides. This truth is seen from the following Ayah, which is particularly addressed to those who have come to know of this great secret of nature. Yet, to their misfortune they do not believe in Allah Who causes it and had revealed this fact more than fourteen hundred years ago, long before its discovery by science:

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَأْتِي الْأَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ

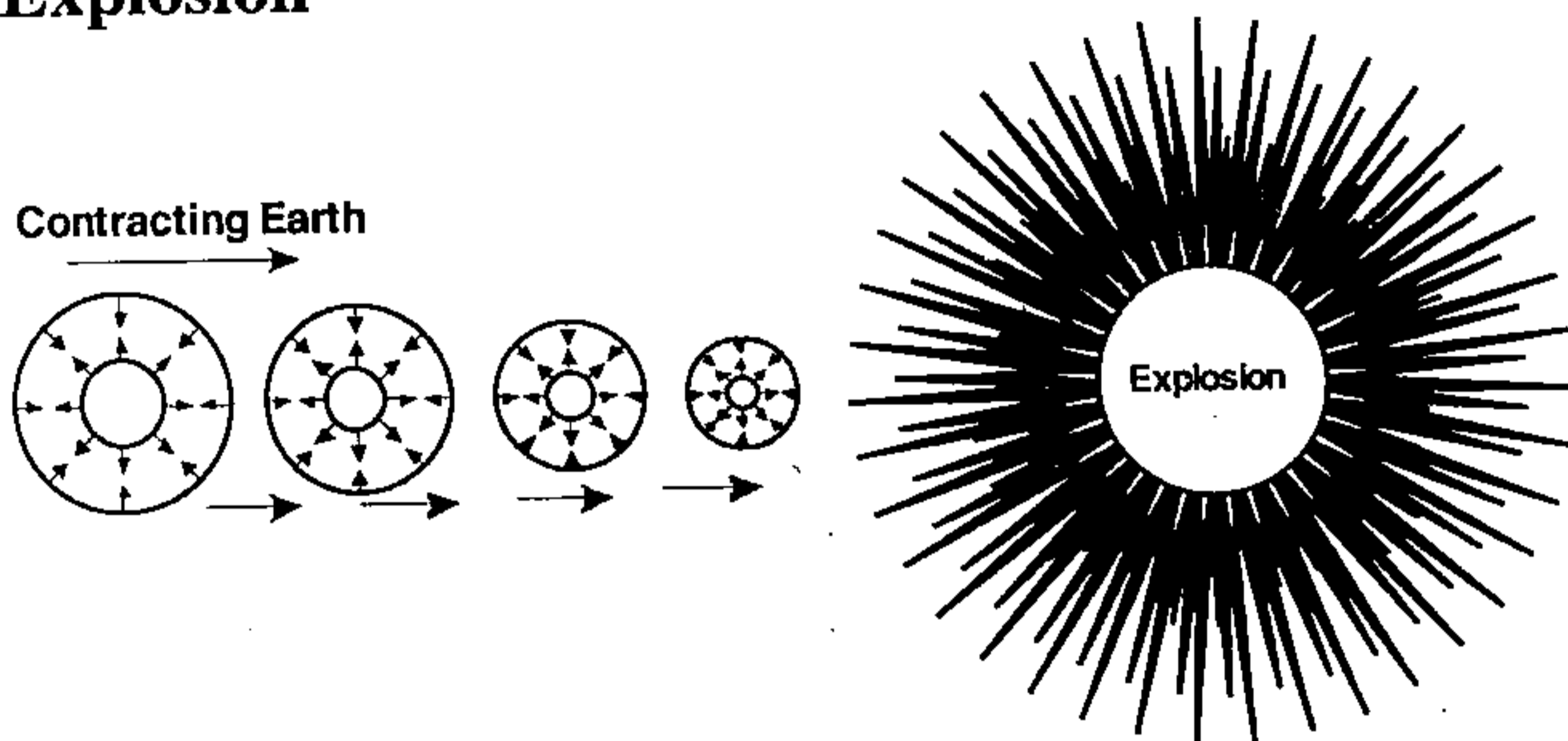
لَا مُعَقَّبَ لِحُكْمِهِ وَهُوَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ ۝

“Do they not see, how We are reducing the earth gradually, from its all sides? When Allah commands there is none to reverse His orders; And He is swift in taking accountability”. 13(41)

The earlier commentators of the Holy Quran had interpreted the words; “Reducing of the Earth” as indication of the spread of Islam over the globe. One may not deny this interpretation. However, since the Holy Quran is the word of Allah, having no ambiguities, the literal meanings of its Ayaat must be true. Anyway, the Ayah 13(41) points out a phenomena of great geological importance that, “The Earth has been gradually shrinking in size from all directions and the process continues”. This means that originally the Earth must have been much larger than its present size (Fig17.1).

When we review the latest scientific findings on the evolution of the Earth, one finds that geologists are shifting their position to this astonishing revelation of the Holy Quran. Some argue that in the beginning, Earth might have been at least 100 times larger in volume than it is now. Gradually it has shrunk to its present size over the past five billion years of its existence³⁴.

Fig. 17.1: Gradual contraction of the Earth and its Explosion



The Earth has been contracting in size since its inception. In the beginning it was probably 100 times its present size. As it contracts, internal pressure in its core also rises. A stage may reach when it can no longer hold that pressure and explode like a pressure vessel under stress.

There are several ways to explain the shrinkage of the Earth. The force of gravity seems to have played the principle role in this phenomenon. A concurrent cause is

thought to be the escape of volatile matter from the Earth, due to both the solar heat falling on its surface and the radioactive heat generated within its body. A small contribution to the shrinkage can also be associated with its gradual cooling down, which would mean that its crust has been increasing in thickness, with a simultaneous reduction in the size of its molten core.

Whatever the reason for this strange phenomenon, the fact remains that the Earth is shrinking in size from all sides. Now look into the tone of Ayah 13(41). Start of the Ayah "See they not!" is really mind jolting, indicating that this phenomenon must be of some extraordinary importance for mankind. However, they do not realize it.

One possible implication of this is that due to its contraction the Earth is moving towards its self destruction. With the contraction, pressure on the internal molten mass is increasing and a stage may reach when further increase of the pressure will bounce back in the form of violent explosion, like the failure of a super boiler. This will then automatically initiate other events associated with the Doomsday, such as violent eruption of volcanoes, terrible earthquakes, filling of smoke in the atmosphere, boiling of the oceans, disintegration of the mountains, etc. possibilities pointed out by the Holy Quran.

Collision with an External Body

An alternative mechanism of the initiation of the Doomsday as discussed already, is the impact of some external heavenly body crashing into the Earth. Ayaat 69(13-14) directly imply such a possibility. It will be a

great crash with an explosive noise, which will sound the beginning of the Doomsday. The revelation reads:

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ نَفْخَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ ۝ وَحُمِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبَالُ

فَذُكَّتَا ذَكَّةً وَاحِدَةً ۝

“As for the Doomsday, it shall come, when the Soor (trumpet) will be blown with a single blast. And the earth with its mountains will be lifted up, And crushed into pieces with a single stroke”. 69(13-14)

Earth will be Pushed out of its Orbit

The scenario of the crash depicted in Ayaat 69(13-14) indicates that it will be due to some extra-terrestrial mechanism, may be a giant asteroid or some other heavenly object with a large mass, which will strike the Earth and push it out of its present orbit around the Sun (Fig.17.2). How much the Earth will be lifted out of its present equilibrium depends upon the intensity and the orientation of the crash. In case it pushes the Earth toward the Sun, then the mutual gravitational pull will continue increasing with the decreasing distance between them, which will further accelerate the fall of the Earth in the Sun. New orbit of the Earth will thus be like gradual winding up of a spiral disc, pulling the Earth closer and closer to the Sun in each revolution.

The striking of the Earth by a giant asteroid is an open possibility always. Such cosmic catastrophe has been widely discussed recently (See for example D. Clark, G. Hunt & W. Mirea, New Scientist vol. 80, pp 861, 1978).

It is thought that the extinction of the dinosaurs and many other species simultaneously 65 million years ago, was caused by a 10 KM diameter asteroid hitting the Earth. (Reported in New Scientist Vol. 85.P.5, 1980).

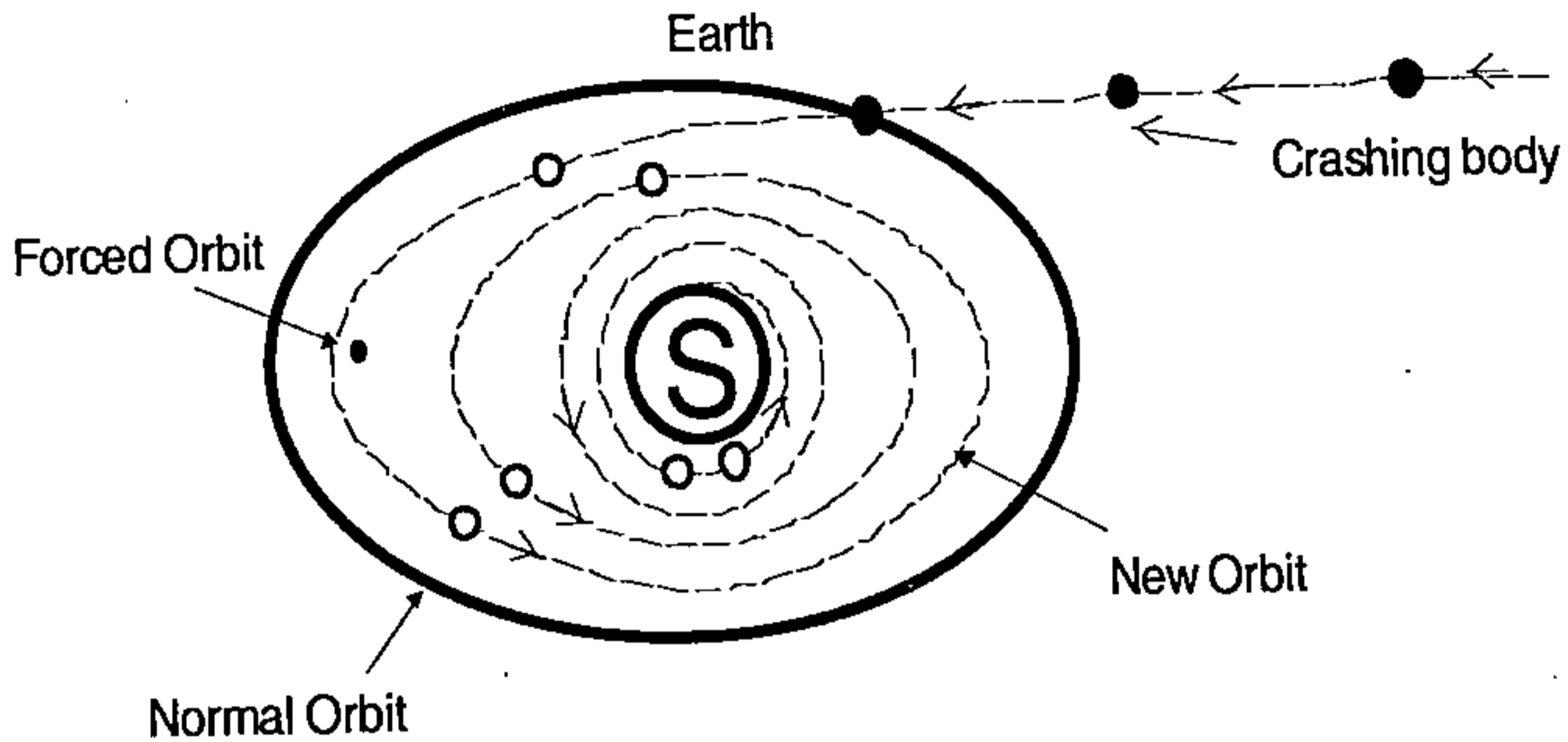
To eliminate life on the Earth entirely, an asteroid ten times larger than the one thought to have destroyed dinosaurs, might be sufficient.

Moreover, equilibrium of solar system is so sensitive to external happenings that even if a Supernova explodes at a distance of 10 light years from the Earth, it could seriously affect its stability. This means that destruction of a neighboring star can also send powerful ripples in the solar system that will upset all of its family members a great deal. This may cause the death of the whole of this system.

After the crash, as the orbit of the Earth around the Sun shrinks, its orbital velocity will increase in Ayah proportionality to its distance from the center of Sun. This will result in increased velocity of Earth around its own axis. This will also initiate a chain reaction of destructive events, like the falling beads of a broken necklace one by one. For example, enhancement of rotational velocities will result in the enhancement of centrifugal forces acting on the body of the Earth. Consequently, matter on the Earth, such as mountains, would separate and thrown into space. Water in oceans would rush out. With the further increase in rotation of the Earth, internal molten lava in its core will be subjected to extreme cyclic pressures, which might ultimately result into the bursting open of the interior of the Earth. Moreover, with the increasing velocities, the time period of the year and the day would decrease gradually, fulfilling the prophecy of the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه)

(وآله وسلم) that near the Doomsday, a year will be as if a month, a month as if a week, a week as if a day and a day as if an hour. (Al-Bukhari – Al-Muslim)

17.2: Crash with a giant asteroid and being pushed into sun



Crash of some heavenly body, say, a giant meteor may push the Earth out of its present orbit around the Sun. With each revolution in its new orbit it will get closer to the Sun. When too near, it will first lose its moon. As it gets nearer still, its atmosphere will be filled with solar smoke. Inside, the higher gravity of the Sun will pull out the molten matter in the core of the Earth, causing convulsion in its interior and excessive earthquakes and volcanic activity at the Surface. Ultimately the Earth will explode and destroy itself, falling into the Sun and annihilated forever.

Even if the crash puts the Earth, say 0.1 degree off its track toward the Sun, then with its present speed of rotation of 19 miles per second or 67,000 miles per hour, it may fall into Sun in about 100 years. But life on it may be roasted about 40 years after the crash. With the closing radius, the peripheral velocity of the Earth will also increase. This would result into greater centrifugal forces, resulting in disintegration of mountains and occurrence of continuous Earthquakes.

۞ إِنَّ كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ خِمْيُونَ ۝ يَحْسِرَةٌ عَلَى
 الْعِبَادِ ۞ مَا يَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا كَانُوا بِهِ يَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ۝ أَلَمْ
 يَرَوْا كَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنَ الْقُرُونِ أَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ۝ وَإِنْ
 كُلٌّ لَمَّا جَمِيعٌ لَدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ ۝

“It was no more than a single blast, and behold, they were (like ashes) quenched and silent. Ah! Alas for (My) servants, there comes not an apostle to them, but they mock him! See they not how many generations before them We destroyed? Even then they do not turn to (Allah). But each one of them will be brought before Us for judgment after Resurrection”. 36(29-32)

SOME DISASTROUS EVENTS OF THE EARTH'S DOOMSDAY AND THEIR POSSIBLE CAUSES

Approach of the Doomsday is a period of great upheavals on the Earth. In the following section we shall discuss some of them to understand this reality. An effort has also been made to assign causes to such events so as to help those who might like to pursue this research further.

i) Oceans will Boil

Holy Quran informs that at some phase of the Earth's Doomsday, oceans will boil over. A direct reference to this phenomenon is found in Ayah 82(3) given below.

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ فَجْرَت ۝

“(Consider), When the oceans boil (overflow)”. 82(3)

Boiling of oceans can happen in several ways. One possibility is the high temperatures on the Earth when it gets closer to the Sun as visualized by the impact theory discussed already. Under the combined effects of higher rotational velocity, temperature and gravitational pull, the Earth would begin to lose its atmosphere, reducing its atmospheric pressure. Consequently, the water in the oceans will begin to boil and ultimately lost to space.

A more likely cause of the boiling of oceans may be seen in the explosion theory. This will be due to the release of internal heat of the Earth. It may also be attributed to the

excessive volcanic activity as told by the Prophet of Allah, is going to be very frequent near the Doomsday. On a limited scale, the boiling of seawater due to the underwater volcanic activity is a well observed phenomenon even now.

Another possibility for the rise of temperature on Earth and subsequent boiling of seas could be the expansion of the Sun. According to one scientific hypothesis it is going to happen with the ageing of the Sun in Five to Six billion years. Its scenario has been shown in fig. 16. Thus we see that oceans could boil in many ways. One or a combination of these mechanisms could bring about this event near the Doomsday.

Another interpretation of Ayah 82(3) is that oceans will overflow. This can be possible due to global rise in temperature, which will melt ice at the poles and mountains and subsequent overflowing of the oceans on land masses. Already, scientific measurements suggest that temperature of earth is on the rise now, which in turn is causing the rise in sea level by few centimeters every year.

ii) Oceans Catch Fire

Oceans on fire is another dramatic event that may occur near the Doomsdays, as pointed out in the Quranic Ayah 81(6).

وَإِذَا الْبِحَارُ سُجِّرَتْ ۝

“(Consider) when the oceans would burst on fire”. 81(6)

One can imagine that the fire in the oceans could be due to some other reasons than the simple effect of higher

temperatures on the Earth. It is more likely to happen due to bursting of the Earth's interior, which is explainable in terms of the explosion theory discussed already. To a lesser degree, the same is possible by the violent release of red hot lava beneath the sea due to terrible large scale volcanic activity. This phenomenon has been noticed in the past also with submarine volcanic activity such as that of Karato.

iii) Hydrocarbons in the Interior of Earth

Knowing that water cannot catch fire easily, we may draw a very important corollary from Ayat 82(3), that the interior of the Earth may contain large amounts of hydrocarbons, like methane, which near the Doomsday will gush out from beneath the sea beds, and by catching fire will produce the effect of oceans being on fire. The same is possible through the split of under-sea petroleum reservoirs, which can occur with the break of Earth's crust beneath the seas by violent earthquakes during its Doomsday.

Theory of Hydrocarbons trapped in the interior of the Earth has great significance in solving the future energy needs of the mankind. Capability of deep drilling is a prerequisite to prove this theory.

iv) Earth's Atmosphere Filled with Smoke

The Holy Quran, in Ayaat 44(10-12) points out that one disastrous event of the Doomsday will be the overcasting of sky with thick smoky matter, making life highly painful for the living beings on the Earth. Ultimately, this smoke will fill the entire atmosphere. The following revelation speaks of this terrible event.

فَارْتَقِبْ يَوْمَ تَأْتِي السَّمَاءُ بِدُخَانٍ مُّبِينٍ ۝ يَغْشَى النَّاسَ ۗ هَذَا

عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۝ رَبَّنَا اكْشِفْ عَنَّا الْعَذَابَ إِنَّا مُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

“Watch you for the Day, when the Heaven will bring forth a kind of smoke, plainly visible. That will envelop the people. This will be painful torment. (Then they will say) Our Lord, “Relieve us of this torment! Lo! We are believers” 44(10-12).

There can be various possible causes to explain the overcasting of the sky with smoke mentioned in Ayaat 44(10-12). The simplest explanation could be that of excessive volcanic action near the Doomsday. In fact, history has recorded the sky overcast for months due to dust being released by huge volcanoes, preventing the sunlight from reaching the Earth, thus making its winters very cold. In case of a very large volcano, like that suggested by Explosion Theory, it could certainly fill the entire Earth's atmosphere with the smoke released from the inner core of the Earth, thereby making life extremely difficult for its people.

Clouding over of the skies with smoke can also be due to the crash of a huge meteor as discussed already in the Impact Theory. The same might also be due to some explosion in a nearby planet or due to large solar flares that might fill the space with plasma of hot gaseous matter around the Earth.

Scientific evidence suggests that Doomsday of Dinosaurs, some sixty million years ago, was brought about by the clouding over of the Earth's atmosphere with dust, caused by the impact of an asteroid of some 10 KM diameter on

the Earth. This released so much debris that Sunlight was prevented from reaching Earth for years. This was a pollution of the worst order that caused very low temperatures and darkness on Earth everywhere. Consequently, most of the living beings vanished in a matter of few years.

In the Ayaat 44 (10-12) origin of smoke is attributed to the heavenly causes. It is said, "*When the heaven will bring forth a smoke plainly visible that will overcast people*". This has two connotations. One, that smoke will be plainly visible with one's own eyes. Secondly, the smoke will emerge from outside of the Earth's atmosphere, and gradually fill the air, making it a painful torment for people, possibly due to suffocation.

A simpler reason of this phenomenon could be just an accumulation of pollution in the upper atmosphere due to man-made causes. Presently, these are slowly rising up. Near the Doomsday, these deadly man-made pollutions may begin to descend and overcast the whole of the Earth. A taste of this must have been noted by everyone living in large cities. Sometimes pollution looms over them for weeks. In Europe, they call it smog.

The smoky atmosphere may be attributed to large scale disturbances in the Sun itself. In this context science of astronomy is already familiar with the solar flares. Frequently, these shoot out from the Sun up to distances of hundreds and thousands of miles, scattering hot plasma into space around it. Figure-18 is one such representation. They are attributed to the effect of explosions within the body of the Sun. In case of large explosion these flares may

reach the Earth also. This explanation appears to be supported by Ayaat 75(7-11) given below:

فَإِذَا بَرِقَ الْبَصْرُ ۝ وَخَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ ۝ وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ

وَالْقَمَرُ ۝ يَقُولُ الْإِنْسَانُ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَيْنَ الْمَفْرُ ۝

“When the sight is confounded, and the Moon is eclipse, and the Sun and the Moon are joined together, on that day, Man will cry, “Whither to flee? Alas! No refuge” 75(7-10).

These Ayaat point out a number of features of the Earth's Doomsday that need careful analysis. For example, the confounding of people's sight might be due to the bright flash of huge solar flares that could subsequently envelop the Earth's atmosphere also. That will happen when moon is in eclipsed state. So much additional solar matter in near earth space will pull the Moon to Sun. Thus over a period it will be pulled by it. Under terrible state of affairs mankind will cry in utter despair, “Where to flee? Alas! There will be no refuge”. It is pointed out in Surah Ar-Rahmaan that in this terrible situation, they will try to leave the Earth in space vehicles, but even then they will not be able to escape the impending fate.

Fig. 18: Outbursts from the Sun

The Holy Quran in its Ayaat 44(10-11) points out that near the Doomsday, Earth will be overcast with smoke, which will fill the space all-around. Figure 18 show a photograph of the solar flares that explode out occasionally and throw the solar matter into space. These hot bursts of solar gases emerge explosively and rise to considerable heights. Normal prominences rise over a million miles from the surface of the Sun at speed of 450 miles per second. Presence of intense streams of radiation and particles throughout the solar system are of great concern to those responsible for manned space flights. During severe solar activity the dosages of radiation even as far as the Earth, can be dangerously high. From the Holy Quran, it may be deduced that the period of the Doomsday of the Earth might be a period of very intense solar flares also. Thus storms in the sun will cause bursts of very hot plasma gases as for as our Earth.



v) The Rising of the Sun from the West

As narrated earlier, in one of his traditions, the Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) is reported to have said that before the earthly Doomsday, Sun will rise from West instead of its normal appearance in the East. This Hadith has been interpreted by the Scholars of Islam as a metaphor pointing out to the rise of the western civilization near the end of the World. However, if taken literally, a severe strike on earth with a foreign body may explain this abnormal happening. The severity and direction of the strike may reverse the motion of the Earth on its own axis and thus the Sun will be rising from the West.

vi) Earthquakes and Great Commotion

Some of the most obvious calamities on Earth Doomsday, understood from the Holy Quran and from the sayings of the Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), are that it will experience terrible earthquakes, mighty convulsions and severe vibrations that will break its crust and destroy all structures and mountains. Concurrently volcanoes will burst over with the internal molten lava gushing out everywhere. This terrible scene is visualized from the following Ayaat:

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا ۖ وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ

أَنْقَالَهَا ۖ

“When the Earth is shaken again and again to her utmost convulsions, and it throws up her burden from within (its core)”. 99(1-2)

Description of the Earth being “shaken again and again” is understood to indicate a continuous series of earthquakes of severe magnitude. As said in the Ayah 99(2), i.e. “The Earth throws up its burden from within” Crust of the Earth will also break apart with tremendous volcanic activity. Even the heavier matter from the core of the Earth will burst out. Current scientific knowledge has established that earthquakes of intensity of about eight on Richter scale are highly disastrous for all types of man-made structures. At nine and over, Earth’s crust opens up with the breaking of mountains and the disappearance of rivers. With the repeated earthquakes of intensity over nine, the Earth will be leveled off, with everything upside down.

In AD 79, the volcano, known as “Vesuvius” became active and destroyed the populous cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum of Italy, the former under rain of ashes and dust, the latter under a flood of mud derived from the heavy volcanic rains. We may call it a small scale Doomsday for the inhabitants of those cities. Near its Doomsday, the Earth will experience too many of such volcanic eruptions.

A reflection into the Ayaat given below indicates that state of Earth during its Doomsday is actually going to be worse than what could be caused by the simple action of Earthquakes. It has been said:

يَوْمَ تَرْجُفُ الرَّاجِفَةُ ۝ تَتَّبِعُهَا الرَّادِفَةُ ۝

“On that Day everything that can be in commotion, will be in commotion, followed by oft-repeated commotion”. 79(6-7)

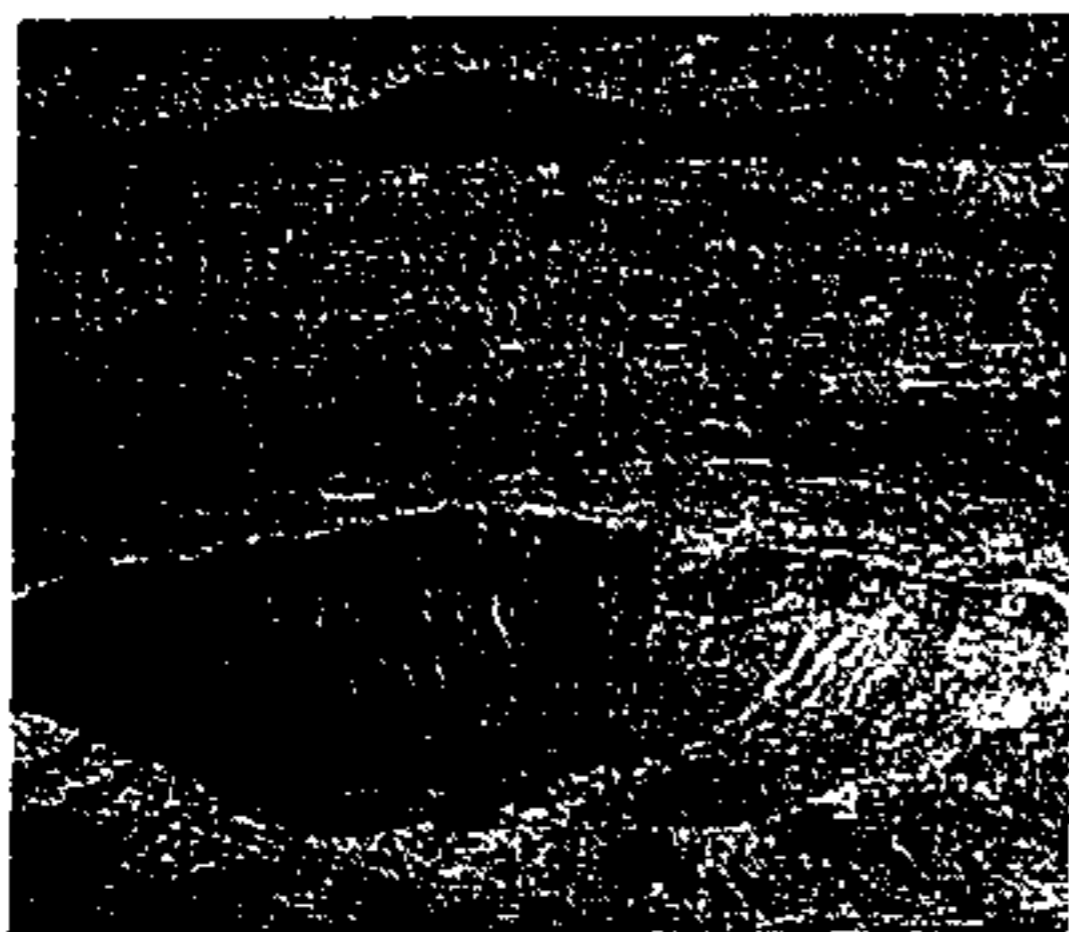


Fig. 19: Earthquakes are one of nature's great tools of change and destruction. They break apart land masses and cause large areas to sink and rise. For example, the Earthquake of March 27, 1964 in Alaska caused an area of approximately 30,000 square miles to sink as much as 6 feet and an adjacent area of 50,000 square miles was elevated in places as much as 35ft. Earthquakes have killed millions of people in matter of seconds. Earthquakes greater than 8.5 on Richter scale may level even the most massive man-made structures and break up mountains. Near the Doomsday of the Earth, there will be very high intensity earthquakes occurring all the time; shaking it to its depths.

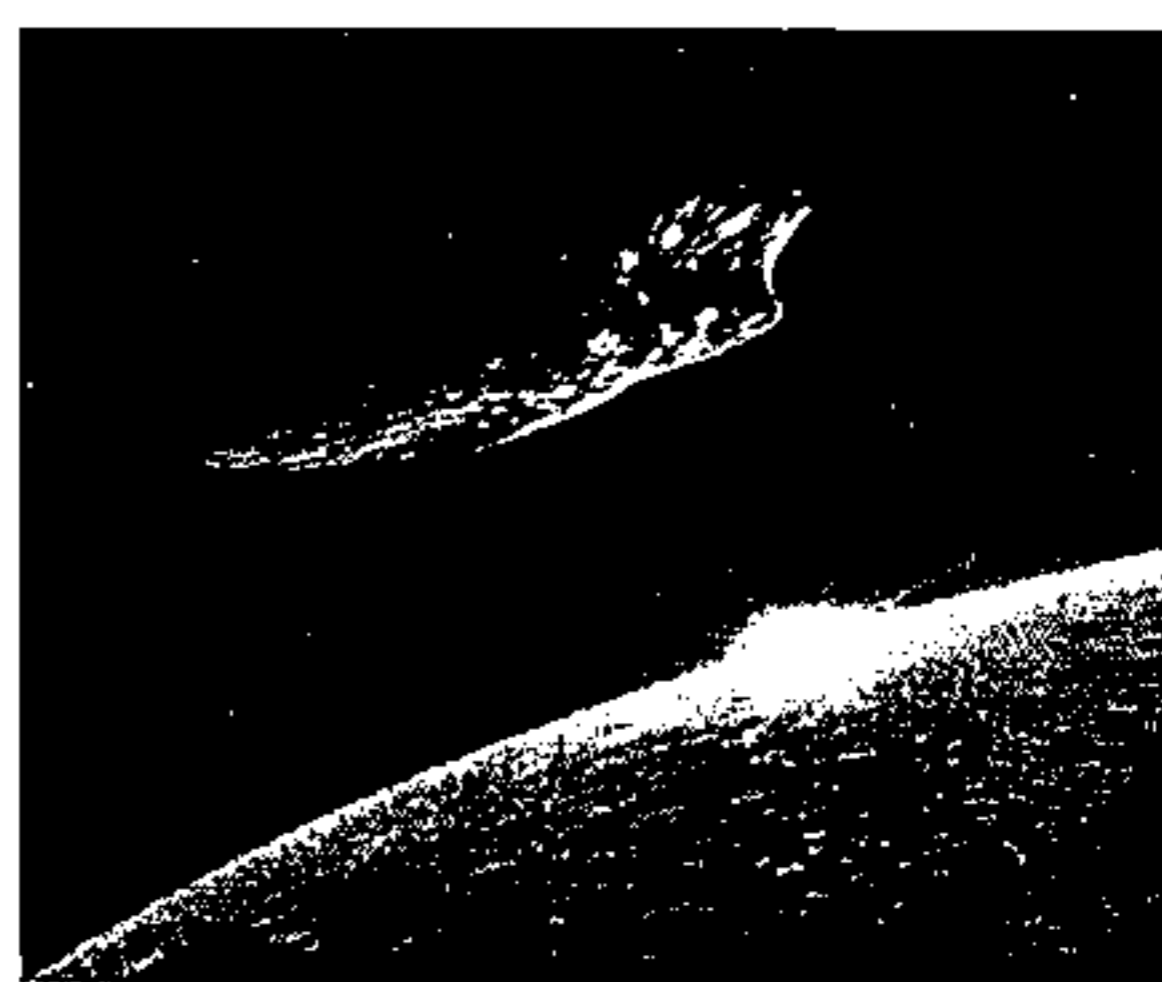
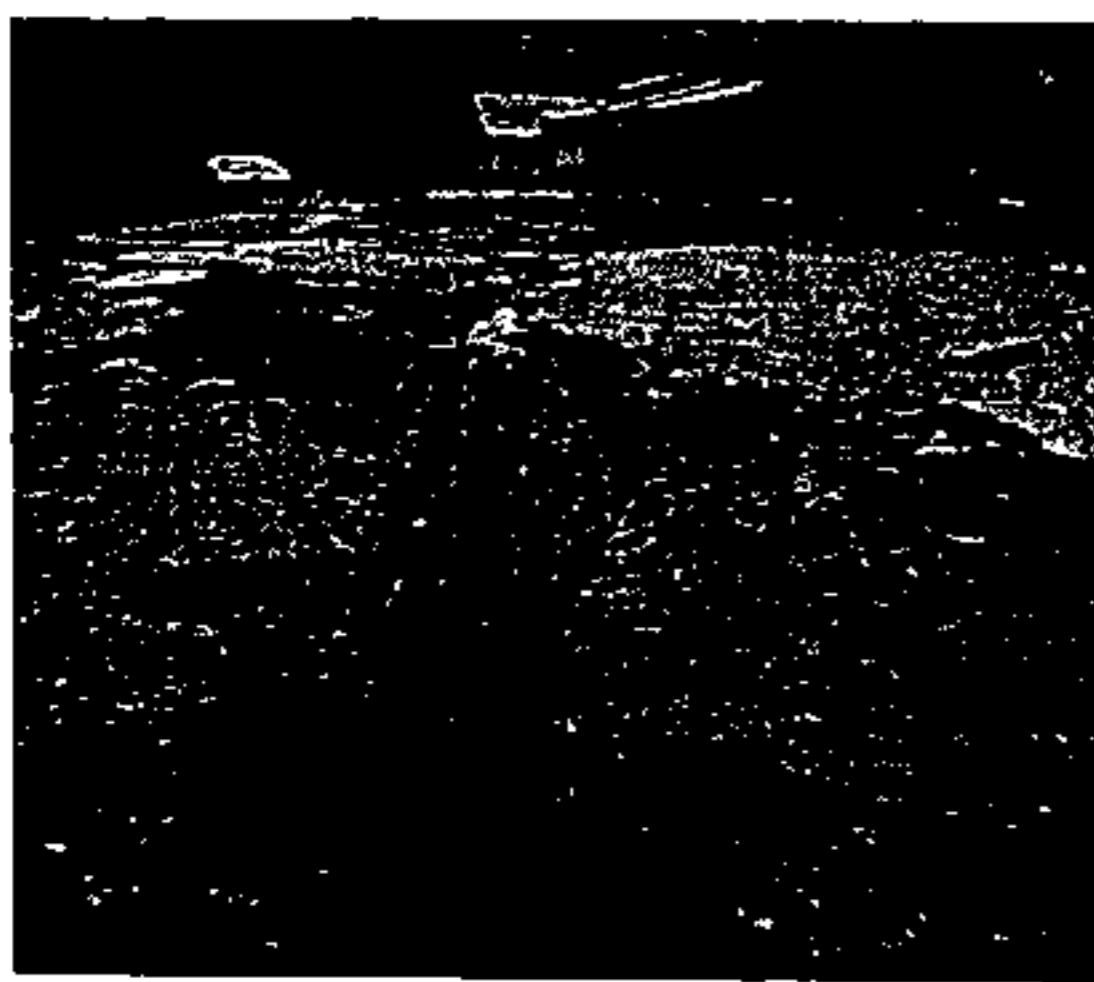


Fig.20 A meteor if hits the Earth can also break it apart. In case of a very severe strike it may even throw it out of its orbit. It might even change the direction of rotation around its axis, causing the Sun to appear to rise in the West.

Further to this, Ayah 89(21) points to the scene of the Earth breaking into small pieces:

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا ۝

“Nay! When the Earth is made to grind into powder, grinding over grinding”.
89(21)

The description in Ayah 89(21) reminds of the scene of a ball mill used in the crushing of rocks. It indicates a state of terrible shake up, vibration and disorder on the body of the Earth; being pounded by the crashing heavenly objects, from the outside, probably by continuous showers of meteors.

vii) Mountains turning into sand

Another dramatic feature of the Doomsday understood from the Holy Quran is that, during this phase, all high grounds, hills, mountains and valleys on the surface of the Earth will be leveled off, mountains turning into dust flying all around. Earth will then reduce into a barren mound of rubble. In this context the following Ayaat need careful analysis:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْجِبَالِ فَقُلْ يَنْسِفُهَا رَبِّي نَسْفًا فَيَذَرُهَا

قَاعًا صَفْصَفًا ۝ لَا تَبْقَىٰ فِيهَا جَبَابٌ وَلَا أَمْتًا ۝

“They ask you about the mountains. Say, my Lord will break them; and scatter them as dust. He will render (Earth) plain, smooth and level. Nothing crooked will you see in their place”. 20(105-107)

وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ ۝

“You see the mountains, and think them firmly fixed. But they shall pass away, as the clouds pass away”. 27(88)

The state of the Earth's Doomsday is explained very explicitly in the following Ayaat also:

إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ۚ لَيْسَ لِمَنْ يُوَفِّعُهَا كَذِبَةٌ ۚ خَافِضَةٌ رَّافِعَةٌ ۚ إِذَا

رُجَّتِ الْأَرْضُ رَجًا ۚ وَبُسَّتِ الْجِبَالُ بَسًّا ۚ فَكَانَتْ هَبَاءً مُنْبَثًّا ۚ

“When the invertible event (of Doom) will fall, There is no denying that it will not befall, Then some will be abashed and some exalted. Earth is shaken again and again, and the mountains will crumble with awful crumbling, becoming dust scattered”.

56(1-6)

How can we explain the meanings of these Ayaat? How are the mountains going to crumble? How is the Earth going to be shaken? Such questions need to be analyzed to understand the mechanics of the Earth's Doomsday.

Under ordinary circumstances, we are aware of the slow decaying process of rocks. Nature's agents, such as wind, rain, plants, temperature variations and chemical reactions, all help in breaking down of rocks. Sand and silt in rivers actually come from the crumbling of mountains. But the destructive scenario depicted by the above Ayaat has no proportion to any ordinary processes of decay. They take ages to complete. Therefore processes responsible for the consequences mentioned in the above quoted Ayaat must be much more powerful.

The Holy Quran gives us the idea that the mountains are the means of stabilizing the Earth against its inherent vibration 21(3). We can infer from here that as the mountains decay through the natural processes or they are destroyed by more dramatic events discussed already, equilibrium of Earth on its own axis will be adversely affected. This will act as a positive feed effect, resulting into even greater shakeups and disintegration of the Earth.

It has also been discovered that if the intensity and frequency of vibration to which solids are subjected increases above a certain thresh-hold level, they begin to crumble and disintegrate. Therefore the commotion referred to in Ayaat 79(6-7) may become the cause to render the mountains as dust.

However, the phenomenon of the shooting up of the mountains, like the carded wool, cannot be explained by the hypothesis of vibrations alone. This is more likely to happen with the increased centrifugal forces on Earth due to the increasing speed of rotation around its axis, as discussed already. First the mountains will break apart and then they will be thrown around like the projectiles from a potter's wheel.

THE FATE OF THE MOON

Moon is our closest neighbor, some 384,000 kilometers away, a thing of beauty. Its pull regulates the sea tides, thus helping marine life for us. It is supposed to be lifeless but sometimes volcanoes do erupt on it. It is also bombarded by meteorites that have covered it with dust and porous glassy matter. Capture hypothesis (1955) suggests that Moon was born somewhere far away from the Earth in the solar system. By chance it came nearer the Earth and was caught by it¹⁹. Thus it is an alien to the Earth. It is estimated that it happened about 5 billion years ago. Thereafter, it continued getting closer to the Earth and came closest about 1.2 billion years ago. At that time it is estimated that it was just 180,000 km from the Earth. Then it began to drift away from it. Now it is 384,000km away from us and its orbit is opening up at the rate of 3 cm a year. If it goes on like this, eventually the Earth will not be able to hold its Moon and it may fall into the Sun (Fig 21,22). This may take about four to five billion years from now but due to some external causes, this may be much earlier. The phenomenon of Moon joining the Sun has been predicted by the Holy Quran in its Ayaat 75(8-9) many centuries earlier than the scientific speculations of today.

The question is what will happen to the Moon during the Doomsday? Shall it remain intact or destroyed like the Earth? The Holy Quran is not silent on this question also. We find out from the Quran that Moon will not survive the Doomsday. In fact it might have met its final end even

before the Earth. In the following we shall look into the great upheavals related to the Moon before the actual Doomsday.

i) **The Catching of the Moon by the Sun**

A very special event of the Doomsday as discussed already is that the Moon will escape the gravitational pull of the Earth and caught by the Sun. On this Quranic revelation 75(8-9) is highly thought provoking, which says:

وَخَسَفَ الْقَمَرُ ۗ وَجُمِعَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ ۗ

“When the Moon is eclipsed, buried in darkness and, the Sun and the Moon are joined together”. 75(8-9)

The sequence of events given herein is that first, moon will be eclipsed, then buried in darkness, and later it will fall into Sun.

There could be several reasons for the Moon becoming dark. The simplest explanation could be of total moon eclipse. As far falling into the Sun, the plausible reason could be that the Earth will come too close to the Sun, which is explainable in terms of the Great Crash theory discussed already. After the impact, it will gradually slip out of its present orbit, adopting a spiral course. In each revolution it would draw closer to the Sun. Eventually due to its higher field of gravity, Sun will hijack the Moon from earth. It will thus become moonless.

Fig. 21: Earth as seen from moon

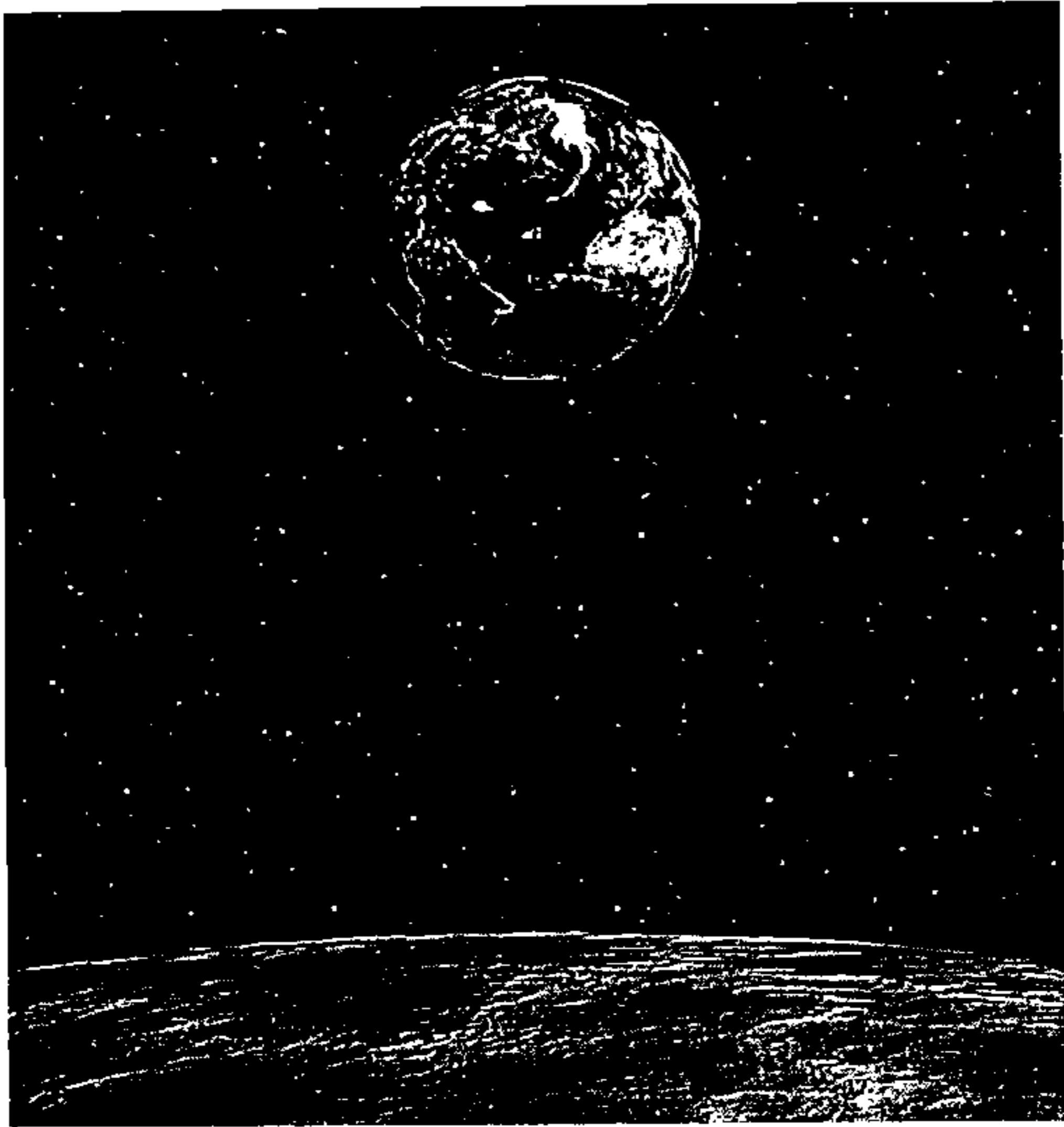
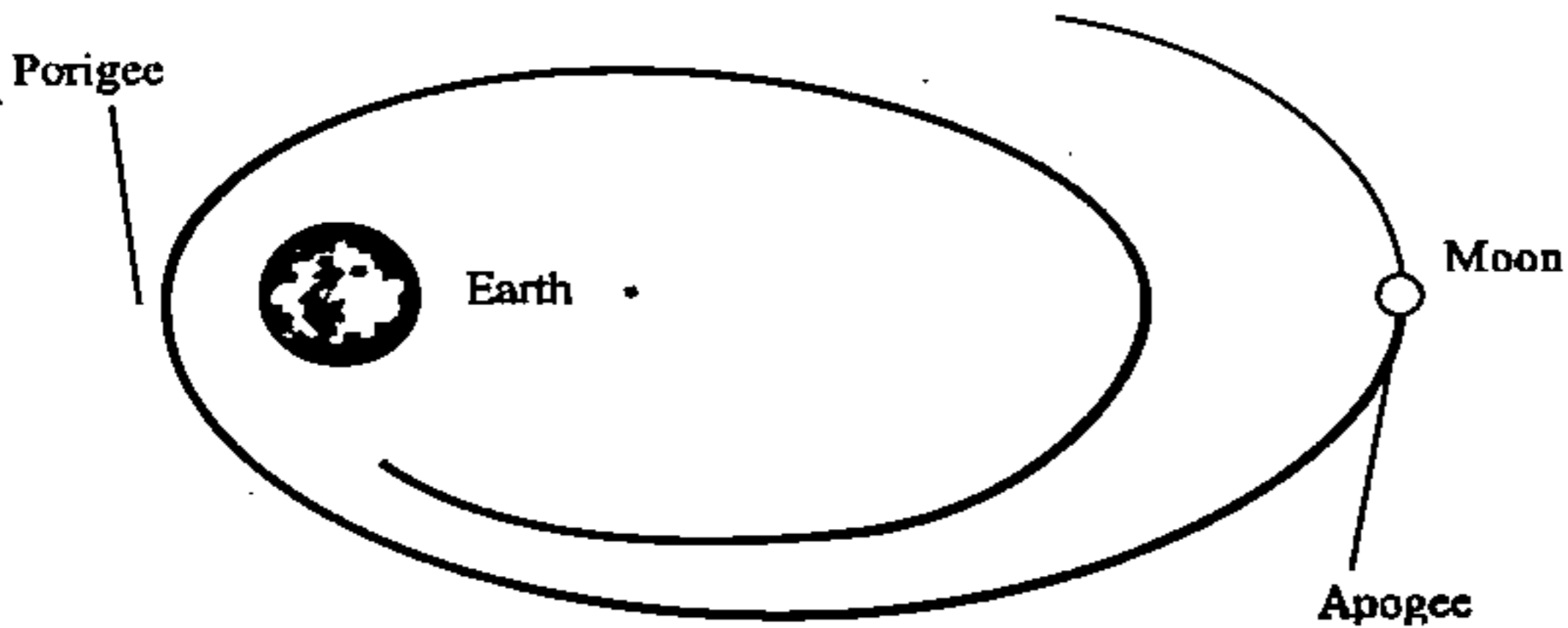


Fig. 22: The Moon is drifting away and ultimately may fall into the Sun



Another explanation of the Moon caught by the Sun may be found in the theory of the linear-death of the solar system. It has been scientifically known that the Sun is slowly expanding in volume and if it continues to do so for the next few billion years it will swell over to swallow both the Moon and the Earth.

iii) **Breaking of the Moon into Pieces**

Another significant event about Moon related to the Earth's Doomsday is revealed in Ayah 54(1), which is that during this period the Moon will split into pieces. This will be one of the great signs of the approaching end of the Earth also. It is revealed:

اِقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَاَنْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ ۝

“(Think of) Hour of the Doomsdays drawing near, and the Moon, split asunder”. 54(1)

Some commentators of the Holy Quran consider that event of “Moon split asunder” has already taken place. This was the miracle that the Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) showed to the disbelievers on their demand in Makkah sometimes around year 609 CE.

Several causes can also be assigned to this happening. For example, it might happen due to the strike of some large meteor from outside which would break it apart. It may also happen due to explosion within its own body. Or a violent Moonquake could break the Moon into two or more pieces, which of course may rejoin, due to gravitational pull.

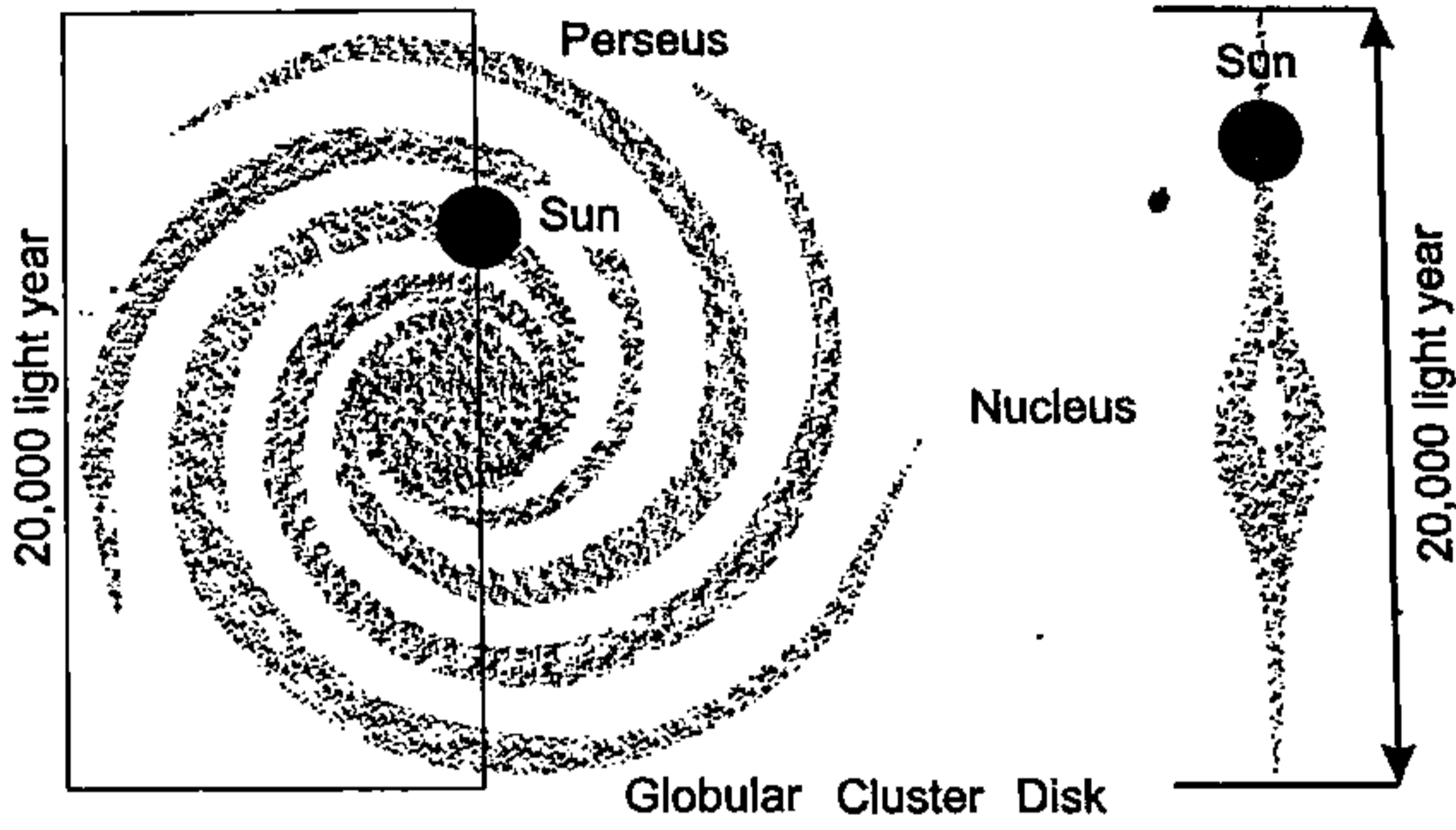
THE DOOMSDAY OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM

Doomsday of the overall Solar System is supposed to be a separate event from Earth's Doomsday. Probably, the most significant event related to it, as seen from the Holy Quran is that the Sun will drift away from its present orbit in the galaxy. This may be initiated with some nearby disturbance in space. Eventually, it may strike with some other heavenly body and destroyed forever.

It is worthwhile to note that a few centuries ago, people used to think of the Sun as a stationary object in the heavens. Even Copernicus had built his revolutionary theory of the Earth revolving around the Sun on the assumption that the Sun was stationary and men of science believed him for more than two centuries. However, it is surprising to see that the Holy Quran twelve centuries before Copernicus had clearly described the uninterrupted travel of the Sun in space in the following Ayah:

وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ
"And the Sun keeps on rushing (in space) on a pre-determined course, according to the measurement of The All- Mighty, The All- Knowing". 36(38)

Fig. 23: The Relative Speed and position of our Solar System in the Milky Way

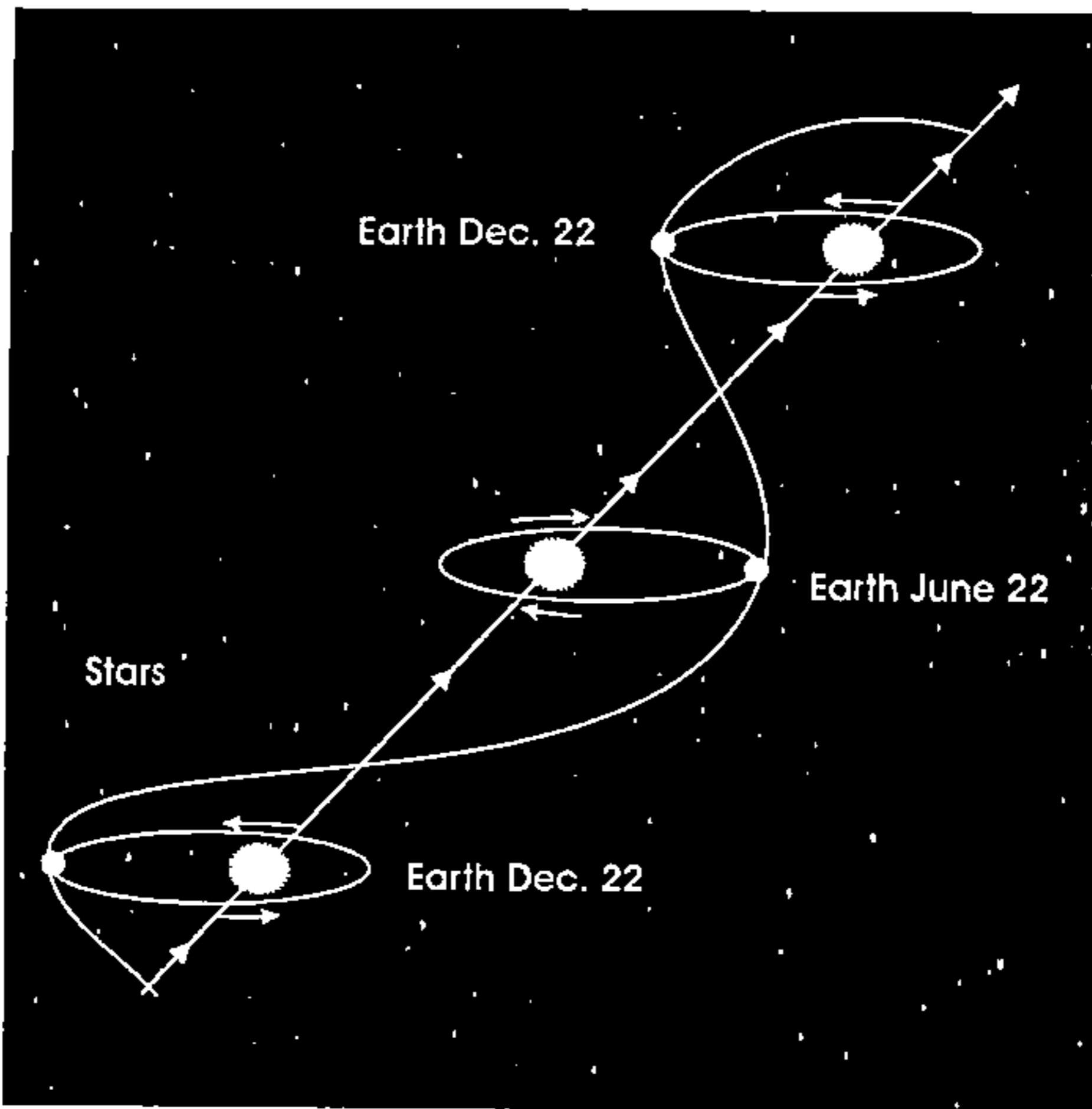


The Universe consists of millions of Galaxies. Our Milky Way is just one out of all those millions. In it are trillions of stars like our Sun. Each Sun has several planets. The Doomsday of each of these worlds is a separate event. The figure shows the main part of the Milky Way Galaxy, the nucleus halo and disk. The spiral shape shows that once all this mass was concentrated at the center of the galaxy. Some day it will roll back and destroy itself, following the general principle of creation, growth and destruction given in the Quranic Ayah 21(104).

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجِلِ لِلْكِتَابِ كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ
نَعِيدُهُ وَعَدَا عَلَيْنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ۝

“There will be a Day, when We shall roll up the heavens, like a recorder rolls up a written scroll; as We began the first creation, We shall repeat it, It is a promise upon Us, Lo! We are to perform it”. 21(104)

Fig. 24: The Journey of the Sun through Space.



The Sun keeps on rushing through space on its predestined course at a speed of about 200 miles per second, covering 6.3×10^9 miles a year that is 66 times the distance between the Earth and the Sun. Not much is known about the nature of this motion. Is it really a straight line or we are swinging around in some supper orbit, center of which is not yet known? In a way this is a hazardous journey in the heavens which houses as many as over a billion galaxies and trillions of stars, planets and other types of heavenly bodies. Possibility of a crash cannot be ruled out which may bring its Doomsday suddenly.

In its journey, the sun passes through various regions of space. Fig. 14& 24 show the complexity of this motion. According to the latest findings of astrophysics as reported by James Gleik³, all the galaxies with billions of stars within them, move through space like a vast celestial convoy, in which each element is subject to a multidiscipline system of motions. For example, while our Earth is revolving around the Sun at a speed of 19 miles per second, the Sun is streaming through the galaxy at about 200 miles per second; galaxy itself is rushing towards some unknown destination at more than 600 miles per second. All other stars have similar multi motion systems of their own. In the areas of high concentration of starry worlds, the situation might be much more complex than this simple picture of mob race. Therefore chances of inter-stellar collisions cannot be ruled out.

In this context the Holy Quran points out that near its Doomsday, something sudden will happen to Sun which will throw it out of its normal path, creating overall chaos in the nearby cosmos. This is seen from the following Ayaat.

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ۝ وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ۝

“(Consider the Day) when the Sun is overthrown, and when the stars fall losing their light, and when the mountains (planets), fly out of their positions”. 81(1-3)

The events mentioned in these Ayaat represent a catastrophe of great magnitude involving not only our Sun but many stars. It will be a great turbulence which once initiated will affect other nearby Solar System. It may even

set a chain reaction, where, star after star meet their Doomsday and destroyed.

If we try to explain the mechanism of this happening in the light of current thinking in astrophysics⁶, we could attribute it to the explosion of some nearby supernova. One type of such an explosion occurs when a massive star exhausts its nuclear fuel and collapses under its own weight. A shock wave bounces back with tremendous explosion that blows apart the star's outermost layers. When a supernova explodes, star's atmosphere may rush outwards at a speed as much as 100 million miles per hour. The energy released in one such explosion can be greater than several billion Suns. This can affect the nearby stars, at least by filling the space around with dust, making them invisible for a distant observer. "Star losing their light" in Ayah 81 (1-4) may be due to this cause.

There is also the possibility that one supernova may detonate another supernova, resulting in a series of heavenly explosions. Ayaat 81(1-3) seem to refer to this type of chain reaction in the Heaven at the time of the Doomsday of the Sun.

Scientific Scenario about the End of the Solar System

Above discussion is based on the assumption that the end of the Solar System will be sudden. Alternative to this hypothesis is the slow death theory based on the consumption of hydrogen in the Sun, which is its fuel. Thus even if nothing unusual happens, Doomsday of the Solar System is written in its fate due to the simple aging process¹⁰.

Briefly this scientific scenario means that at present the Sun is expanding in volume. After having reached a maximum, expansion is expected to slow down until finally the Sun will begin to contract and ultimately end as a black dwarf star. Referring back to our discussion of the universal Doomsday, there are striking similarities between these two accounts. Whether it is the fate of an individual star or of the entire Universe, both follow the expansion-contraction law of nature as revealed in Ayah 21(104) quoted already.

The death of the Solar System, however, will not be the end of the Universe. It will continue to exist for some more time unmindful of this tragedy, because for it, such happenings are part of a normal routine. But the Holy Quran says that nothing is everlasting and finally there will fall the "Ultimate Day" when the Trumpet will be blown and the Universe will collapse to its original point of creation. That will mark the completion of the Divine purpose of the first stage of transitory existence and the beginning of the new stage of everlasting existence.

THE SECOND BEGINNING: THE NEW UNIVERSE

It has been discussed in this book that the Doomsday of the Earth is but just one of a series of such catastrophic events that regularly occur among the innumerable worlds like it. On a Universal scale, such events may be taken merely as being minor disturbance in the vastness of the cosmos. In fact, the Earth's Doomsday will be of little significance even in our own Milky Way, which is but one out of billions of galaxies in heavens, each housing well over a trillions solar system like ours. Many of these are supposed to have a life supporting world like ours. Each one of them, on their turn, will have its day of accountability.

The general principle given in the Divine book is that process of change is the standing reality of the Universe. In this process, the unwanted ones are rooted out at their turn to give room to the new creations. It has been said:

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ إِنْ يَشَاءُ يُذْهِبْكُمْ
وَيَأْتِ بِخَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ ۚ وَمَا ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِعَزِيزٍ ۝

“Are you not aware of the fact that Allah has created the heavens and the earth in accordance with a Divine Reality? He can, if He so wills, do away with you, and bring forth an entirely new creation. It is not difficult for Allah”. 14(19-20)

Ultimately, the time will come when the whole of the present Universe will see its end. That will be the

beginning of the reversal of time and space, a phase change from expansion to contraction. That will mark the beginning of the “Ultimate Doomsday”, the implosion of which would result into re-explosion of the contracting Universe.

The process of rebuilding after ultimate Doomsday is pointed out in the following Ayah of the Holy Quran:

يَوْمَ نَطْوِي السَّمَاءَ كَطَيِّ السِّجِلِّ لِلْكُتُبِ ۗ كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ

نُعِيدُهُ ۗ وَعَدَا عَلَيْنَا ۗ إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ ۝

“(Look for) the Day We shall roll the Heaven, like of rolling written scroll. As We began the first creation, surely we shall repeat it. It is a promise upon Us. Truly, We shall do it”. 21(104)

It should also be of scientific interest that the re-created Universe will not be a replica of the present one, but a grand system of new and very much different heavenly bodies. The Earth will not be the same and neither would be the New Heaven like the Heaven of this world. In this respect the following revelation is highly meaningful:

يَوْمَ تَبْدُلُ الْأَرْضُ غَيْرَ الْأَرْضِ وَالسَّمَوَاتُ وَبَرَزُوا لِلَّهِ الْوَاحِدِ

الْقَهَّارِ ۝

“(On that day) the Earth will be changed, to another earth, and so will be the Heavens and they will appear before Allah, the One the Irresistible”. 14(48)

We also see from the Holy Quran that the new Universe will be divisible into three broad regions: Paradise, The Heights and Hell. Paradise will be the permanent abode of

the universal community of the righteous people from all the times and from all the worlds. In size, says the Holy Quran, it is unimaginably vast, may be as vast as the entire size of the present Universe. It has been said:

سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ
وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ أُعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۗ ذَٰلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ
يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝

“Rush for the forgiveness from your Lord and for Paradise whereof the breadth is as the breadth of the (present) Heaven and Earth, prepared for those who believe in Allah and His Messenger. This is blessing of Allah, He bestows on whom He wishes, And Allah is with great blessings”. 57(21)

In this Ayah, equivalence of the Paradise with the present heavenly worlds shows that its size is too big, bigger than our imagination.

Similarly, sizes of Hell and The Heights are also very vast. Thus the size of the entire order of the new Universe will be simply infinite.

This brings us to the important question as to whether new Universe will also repeat itself after reaching its age. The answer we have from the Holy Quran is “No; the new Universe is forever”. There are a number of Quranic Ayaat which promise the ever living state of the residents of Paradise and of Hell, so the next order of existence is not going to repeat itself.

The scientific reason for the non-repetitive nature of the new Universe may be found in its infinite size. Scientific

laws do not apply to infinity. It has been estimated that if its overall density had been lower than a certain critical value, the present Universe may also go on expanding forever. The same reasoning might be applicable to the ever living character of the new Universe.

As for the questions, that how life will begin again; how will the dead be brought back to life; how will the Resurrection take place; the Holy Quran tells that it will happen the same way as it happened for the first creation by the simple order of Allah "Be" and it was there. If the present order of existence had come out of nothing then why not the second beginning? Ayah 31(38) provides answer to this fundamental question in the following words:

مَا خَلَقُكُمْ وَلَا بَعَثُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةً ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ۝
"Your creation and your Resurrection is but like that of a single self; Verily Allah is the All-Hearing and Seeing". 31(28)

Most people on the Day of Resurrection will think that they had been sleeping for a while, and suddenly woken up. An example of this is our own worldly life. As we look back to the past, it seems but a very short period.

The Holy Quran illustrates this with the following conversation among the people after their Resurrection:

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ۗ مَا لَبِثُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ ۗ
 كَذَلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ ۝ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَالْإِيمَانَ
 لَقَدْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْبَعْثِ ۖ فَهَذَا يَوْمُ الْبَعْثِ
 وَلَكِنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

“The guilty will vow that they did tarry but an hour, But those to whom knowledge and faith, are given, will say: The truth is, you have tarried by Allah's decree until the Day of Resurrection. So this is the Day of Resurrection, but you used not to believe”. 30(55-56)

The Day of Resurrection is the Day of garnering together of all the generations of mankind from all the worlds, from all the times. That is the Day of Accountability also. The Holy Quran repeatedly warns mankind of their Resurrection and their Accountability in the life-after death. Surah -77, "The Emissaries" of the Holy Quran, is a powerful reminder of the scenario of the Day of Resurrection and the life-after-death. It says:

هَذَا يَوْمُ الْقَضَاءِ جَمَعْنَاهُ وَالْأَوَّلِينَ ۝ فَإِنْ كَانَ لَكُمْ كَيْدٌ
فَكِيدُونِ ۝ وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝ إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي ظِلِّ
وَعُيُونٍ ۝ وَقَوَائِكَ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ ۝ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا هَنِيئًا بِمَا
كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝ إِنَّ كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝ وَيْلٌ
يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝ كُلُوا وَتَمَتَّعُوا قَلِيلًا إِنَّكُمْ مُجْرِمُونَ ۝
وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ ارْكَعُوا لَا يَرْكَعُونَ ۝
وَيْلٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ ۝ فَبِأَيِّ حَلِيْبٍ بَعْدَهُ يُؤْمِنُونَ ۝

“This is the Day of Decision: We have brought you and the men of old together. If now you have any wit, outwit Me. Woe unto the repudiators on that Day. Lo! Those who kept their duty are amid shade

and fountains, and fruits such as they desire. (Unto them it is said:) Eat, drink and welcome, O you blessed, in return for what you did. Thus do We reward the good. Woe unto the repudiators on that Day! Eat and take your ease (on Earth) a little. Lo! You are guilty. Woe unto the repudiators on that Day! When it is said unto them: Bow down, they bow not down! Woe unto the repudiators on that Day! In what statement, after this, will they believe?" 77(38-50)

LIFE IN OTHER WORLDS

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ

كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا ۝

“Say you: If the ocean were to become ink (to write with) the words of my Lord, the ocean would surely exhaust before the words of my Lord exhausted, Even though “We brought forth another like therefore for support”. 18(109)

Is there life anywhere, up there? This has been a subject of interest to human beings for a long time and many best-seller science fiction stories have been written about it. Recently, this subject has acquired serious scientific interest as well. At first, the planet Mars was considered a popular candidate for life. But space probes have ruled out this possibility even of the most elementary forms of life not only on Mars but also anywhere in our solar system. With the exception of the Earth, the rest of the solar system is now supposed to be lifeless, dead and barren. However as regards the whole Universe, many scientists believe that intelligent living beings must be present, not just at one place but in millions of places in the countless solar systems and heavenly worlds around us.

It should not be a surprise that on this subject, current scientific thinking is quite in line with what is in the Holy

Quran, which being a revelation from the Creator of the Universe, fourteen hundred years ago pointed out that life is not the sole possession of our Earth. At its very opening it was revealed:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ ۝ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝

“All praise is for Allah, The Sustainer and Nourisher of the Worlds, The Beneficent (throughout the Universe) throughout, and Merciful Always (from beginning to end)”. 1(1-2)

Thus at its very beginning, the Holy Quran shattered the age-old-idea of the uniqueness of the Earth by introducing the concept of the plurality of the worlds. The same fact is described even more explicitly in Ayah 45(37) which declares:

قُلِّلِىْهِ الْحَمْدُ رَبِّ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَرَبِّ الْاَرْضِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْنَ ۝

“All praise be to Allah, Sustainer and Nourisher, of the heavens; and Sustainer and Nourisher of the earth; Sustainer and Nourisher of all (other) Worlds”. 45(36)

In this Ayah the whole scenario of existence has been classified into three categories i.e. the heavens, the earth, and other worlds. Allah nourishes and sustains these worlds as He sustains and nourishes our earthly world. Since nourishment is associated with life, therefore, one can conclude from Ayah 45(36) that our earth is not the only living world in the Universe. There are many more worlds that have living beings, needing nourishment from their Creator. He nourishes them and sustains them as He looks after our needs on the earth.

As for the nature of these worlds, from Ayah 65(12) it appears that they are similar to our earth:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ
الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ
قَدْ أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ۝

“Allah it is, Who has created, seven heavens, and of the earth, the like thereof, The Commandment descends among them gradually so that you may know that Allah is able to do all things, and that Allah surrounds all things in knowledge”. 65(12)

It is obvious from this Ayah that just as there are many heavens, similarly there are many Earths. "The commandment descends among them gradually", means that all of them follow the same pattern of evolution and development at their turn.

In his interpretation of this Ayah, Maulana Abul Aalaa Maududi⁸ writes in his Tafhīm-ul-Quran that "Ibn-e-Abbas (Razi Allah Anho), a great Scholar of the Holy Quran and a close companion of the Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him), in the first century of Hijra, believed with confidence that there are many more earth-like bodies in the heavens. However, he would not say this openly that people may get confused. He not only thought that such earths are inhabited by intelligent beings but also that their people are exactly like us on Earth. He even went as far to say that they may have had a Adam, like our Adam, a Noah, like our Noah, an Ibrahim like our Ibrahim, and a Jesus like our Jesus (peace be upon

them)". Thus according to Abdullah Ibn-e-Abbas, the pattern of creation is similar, everywhere else in the Universe. Imam Muhammad Ghazali pointed out in 11th Century A.D. people in some of these heavenly worlds have learnt to travel and communicate with each other. (Ref: Rasail رسائل Imam Ghazali)

The idea that there is life elsewhere in the Universe, was got from the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) when he told Muslims, "when you sit down in the prayer for the Attahiyat and say: "peace be upon us and on the righteous servants of Allah;" you actually send peace on all the righteous people living on the Earth and in the Heavens" This clearly implies that all type of people, good and bad live in the Heavenly worlds as they live on this Earth.

Another very clear reference to life in Heavenly Worlds is found in Ayah 42(29), which says:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ ؕ

وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا يَشَاءُ قَدِيرٌ ۝

“Among His signs, is the creation of the Heavens and the Earth, and the living creatures, He has dispersed there in, and He is able to gather them together when He wills”. 42(29)

This Ayah leaves no doubt that there are living creatures in the Heavens as they are on the Earth. All these worlds have their doomsdays on their respective terms. On the Day of Judgement, people from everywhere will be gathered together.

In the Ayah 42(29) word, Daabba دَابَّةٌ, which means "living being" implies that cosmos has living worlds like our earth with all type of life therein.

Presence of the intelligent living beings in the outer space is also evident from Ayah 55(29), which informs that everyone, that is in the Heavens and the Earth seek their needs from Allah:

يَسْتَلُّهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلُّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ ۝

"Of Him seeks (its needs) each one in the Heavens and the Earth. Everyday, He appears in new Splendor". 55(29)

"Every day He appears in New Splendor" means that, Universe is highly dynamic and new Worlds are continuously being added to it, befitting for carrying life. They all depend on Allah for their living and in their turn, each one of them will have its own Doomsday. In the end, all of them will be gathered together at the time of the Resurrection.

In Ayah 65(12), quoted already, the statement, "that the Commandment descends down among them gradually" is also of great significance. It means that development in the earth like systems is a slow evolutionary process. Turbulence is basically a feature of the hot and active systems such as the Nebulae. But once a heavenly body is destined to become the life supporting body, the process of change is slowed down.

The nearest example of this slow change is our own earth. According to the current scientific thought, it is about 4 to 5 billion years old and has slowly evolved to

its present state. It is thought that first signs of life appeared on it after several billion years of its existence. Even after that, it took hundreds of millions of years for life to mature on it.

The reason given for slow evolutionary development in Ayah 65(12) is that, mankind may know Allah is able to do all things. If processes of change were too quick many intermediate developments would have remained hidden from them. Since the process has been slow, each stage can be clearly identified and understood to comprehend the Allah's ways of creation.

Ayah 65(12) also gives the hope that someday mankind on the Earth will also come to know of other similar worlds in space. In this process they will also come to understand the working of their Creator more clearly at cosmic level. Thus it will be easier for them to comprehend His Greatness.

The concept that other earths are like our Earth also implies that their development in the Universe is guided by a similar set of rules. This must be so, because Allah Who is the maker of all scientific laws, is One and the Same everywhere.

A multiplicity of living worlds will also be a feature of the new Universe to come after the ultimate doomsday of the present Universe. One of these worlds is called Jannah (abode of the righteous ones in the Hereafter). Though in similitude only, some features of this world can be recognized from the following Ayaat of the Holy Quran:

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وَعَدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ أُكُلُهَا
دَائِمٌ وَظِلُّهَا ۝

“A similitude of the Jannah, which is promised unto those who keep their duty is that underneath it rivers flow. Its food is everlasting, and so is its shade”. 13(35)

As for the inhabitants of the Jannah, the Holy Quran tells us:

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَبَوَّأُ مِنَ

الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ ۖ فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ ۝

“They will say, praise be to Allah, who has truly fulfilled His promise to us, and has given us the land in our inheritance, We can dwell in the Janna as we will, How excellent a reward for those who work righteously”. 39(74)

The Holy Quran in Other Worlds

We have already seen from the Holy Quran that other earths are like our earth. If the other worlds have human beings like us, then naturally their social life should be similar to us on the earth. On the basis of the interpretation of Ayah 65(12) by Ibn-e-Abbas (Razi Allah Anho), we can say that inhabitants of these worlds must have their religions like ours and so the Holy Books. They all come from the same “Supreme Source” from where the Holy Quran originated for us on the Earth. It is also evident from the following Ayah:

وَٱلْكِتَٰبِ ٱلْمُبِينِ ۝ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْءَانًا عَرَبِيًّا لَّعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ۝ وَإِنَّهُ

فِي أُمِّ ٱلْكِتَٰبِ لَدَيْنَا لَعَلِيَّ حَكِيمٌ ۝

“By the Book which makes things clear, We have made it a Reading (Quran) in Arabic, that you may be able to understand it. And truly, it is in the ‘Mother of the Books, In Our presence, high, full of wisdom’”. 43(2-4)

This means that the Holy Quran is derived from the “Mother of the Books, source head of all knowledge, full of wisdom; the supreme moral code of nature, preserved in the knowledge of Allah of the Universe. Ayaat 56(77-80) refer to this source of wisdom as a “Book well Guarded:

إِنَّهُ لَقُرْءَانٌ كَرِيمٌ ۝ فِي كِتَٰبٍ مَّكْنُونٍ ۝ لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا ٱلْمُطَهَّرُونَ ۝

تَنْزِيلٌ مِّن رَّبِّ ٱلْعَالَمِينَ ۝

“This is indeed a Quran, most honorable, (Preserved) in “a Book well-guarded”, which none shall touch but those, who are purified and clean, a revelation from the Lord of the worlds’”. 56(77-80)

“The Book Well-guarded” referred in Ayah 56(78) is the same book that has been referred as the Mother of the Books in Ayah 43(2-4) above. This is the original source of revelation to all the prophets sent by Allah Subhana-Hu to people on Earth and the Holy Quran from the Lord of the worlds, the final book of guidance for all mankind everywhere.

“Quran” is in fact the generic name of Allah’s revelations, a “Reading” designed for the moral and spiritual development of mankind throughout the Universe. Since

mankind is the same everywhere, their Quran must be the same also containing universal moral principles, best suited to the well being of mankind everywhere.

Ayaat 81(27-29) throw further light on this reality and declares that the Quran is no less than a "Message to All the Worlds". Thus all that is given in this book is universally true.

إِن هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ۝ لِّمَن شَاءَ مِنكُم مِّنْكُمْ أَن يَسْتَقِيمَ ۝ وَمَا تَشَاءُونَ

إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝

"Verily this (Quran) is no less than a Message, to all the Worlds, For everyone, whosoever of you wills to go straight, And you shall not will this unless it is willed by Allah, the Cherisher of the Worlds". 81(27-29)

This proves that Holy Quran, which literally means "The Reading" is actually the Divine Book of cosmic moral order, a universal code of guidance suitable for intelligent beings. It has an absoluteness and purity of style and theme that take it beyond the bounds of the relativity of time and space, rendering it a suitable reading for all people, of all times, of all the worlds. Unlike any other book "Read it and re-read it for hundreds of times, it never causes any weariness in the faithful", says, Muhammad Mormaduke Pickthal³⁵. In fact every repetition makes it still more attractive, fresh and beloved.

Social Life in Other Worlds

The evidence of the presence of living beings in the outer space and similarity between their social life and ours has been discussed already. It is also apparent from the

dialogue that took place between the angels and the Creator at the time of the creation of the first Human Being on our Earth. The Holy Quran tells:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّىْ جَاعِلٌ فِى الْاَرْضِ خَلِيْفَةًۙ

قَالُوۡا اَتَجْعَلُ فِىْهَا مَنْ يُّفْسِدُ فِىْهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَآءَ ۗ

“And when Your Lord said to the angels, I will create a vicegerent on earth, (at this) the angels said, will You place therein, one who will make mischief therein, and shed blood?” 2(30)

It could be argued that this bold assertion by the angels about the man, who was yet to be created, could not be made without their observation of the behavior of earlier human species elsewhere in the Universe because they could not have ventured to predict something baselessly. For them creation of Man on the Earth was not the first event of its kind in the Universe. The angels may have already seen man like living beings in other worlds which were mischievous creations shedding blood of each other. True, man is the crown of creations when he obeys Allah, yet becomes worse than animals when he falls down

Mankind in other places in the cosmos should not be different from us, because Allah’s pattern of creation is the same everywhere. Their psychological and social behavior pattern must be like ours. Like us, they have their times of peace, disputes, battles, wars and peace again. Like us, their worlds are also perishable. Ultimately, at the Resurrection, mankind of all the worlds will be assembled together in the New Universe.

Meeting with Living Beings of Other Worlds

More than fourteen hundred years ago, the Holy Quran also pointed out that time will come when the living creatures in the various parts of the Universe will come closer together, possibly through actual contacts or by inter-galactic communications, physically or spiritually. The following revelation holds a great promise and a message of hope for those who are looking for the living beings in the outer space:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ
وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ جَمْعِهِمْ إِذَا يَشَاءُ قَدِيرٌ ۝

“And among His signs, is the creation of the Heavens and the Earth, and the living creatures, that He has scattered throughout them, and He has the power to gather them together, when He wills”. 42(29)

We can hope that in this life or in the life after death, mankind shall meet and communicate with their fellow brothers and sisters living in other parts of the cosmos.

Life in Interplanetary Space

We have seen from the various Ayaat of the Holy Quran quoted earlier that life is a widespread phenomenon in the Universe. In all probability, life-bearing heavenly bodies are the earth-like planets. However, a more striking thing seen from the Holy Quran is that life also exists in spaces between the planets and stars, though most scientists generally regard it as only a lifeless vacuum.

Uptill now it has been established by the scientists that inter-planetary space is permeated with stellar gases, sub-atomic particles and some forms of subtle matter. This seems to be the first step towards the acknowledgment of the truth expressed in the Holy Quran that there are creations of Allah present everywhere, a fact which is clear from the following revelations also:

رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرَّحْمَنُ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا
“He is the Nourisher and Sustainer of all things in the Heavens and the Earth, and all that is in between them, the Beneficent, with Whom none can converse”. 78(37)

The following revelation further explains this theme:

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَى
“Unto Him belongs, whatsoever is in the heavens, whatsoever is in the earth, and whatsoever is in between them, and whatsoever is beneath the soil”. 20(6)

Here four categories of things are mentioned in the cosmos.

- Those living in the heavenly bodies.
- Those living on the Earth.
- Those living in spaces between the heavenly bodies.
- Those living in the depths of the body of the earth.

It should be noted from these Ayaat that living things are not only present in interplanetary worlds, but they are present beneath the soil also. They may even be present in the hot lavas in the depths of the Earth.

Since these things are in need of nourishment and maintenance from Allah, it means they will also be growing and multiplying. As far as understanding the

nourishment of things on the earth, it is well understood. However we know a little about the nourishment of things existing in space between the heavenly bodies as things beneath the surface of the earth. One can suppose that interspaced life forms may be some kind of energy life, which survives on cosmic radiation. If this is true, then, there is a need to exercise great caution, particularly in the field of space research and exploration, because if such living organisms are carried back to earth by spacecrafts there is an obvious danger of polluting our environment with unknown life forms.

According to some scientific views about life on other places in the Universe¹¹, even space is seeded with micro-organisms in the form of spores. They travel through the stellar worlds, puffed by radiation pressure, and can survive both the cold and vacuum of space indefinitely. Hoyle¹ and Wiker-Man-Singhe think that life is created and generated in the centers of comets that are gently heated by chemical reactions to temperatures suitable for generation of life. They further argue that viruses such as influenza may be reaching the earth from comets.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌ وَهُوَ الْحَكِيمُ
 الْعَلِيمُ ۝ وَتَبَرَّكَ الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا
 بَيْنَهُمَا وَعِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ ۝

“And it is He (Allah) Who in the Heaven is Allah, and in the earth is Allah; He is the absolute Wise and the Knower. Blessed is He, unto Whom belongs the sovereignty, of the heavens and the earth (Universe), and all that is in between them; and with Him, is the knowledge of the hour of Doomsday; and unto Him you will be returned”. 43(84-85)

PART III

HUMAN SOUL AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Hazrat Ali bin Abu Talib, (May Allah be pleased with him), has said that the Messenger of Allah told: "The world is going backward and the Hereafter is coming forward, and each of the two has children; so you be the children of the Hereafter, and you don't be the children of this world; for today there is action (good or bad) but no accounts; and tomorrow there will be accounts, but no deeds to be done". (Al-Bukhari)

Narrated "Abu Huraira (Razi Allah Anho), the Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, "The Hell fire is surrounded by all kinds of desires and passions, while Paradise is surrounded by all kinds of disliked undesirable things". (Al-Bukhari)

INTRODUCTION TO ETERNAL LIFE

The following section is an attempt to understand in rational terms the highly complex, subtle and sensitive subject of the human soul, the nature of the life-after-death and Resurrection. It is based upon the author's own understanding and interpretations of the Holy Quran and of the sayings of the Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم). As such there is ample room for difference of opinion and also for improvements. May Allah guide us on the right path and forgive where we err.

The story of each one of us is as infinite as is the Universe itself. In fact, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) told that Universe is created for man. He is its design basis. Man existed in the Great Creator's Idea before the Big Bang. The matter, we are composed of has taken many turns since then and seen many worlds. Once it lived in the cosmic dust. Then it resided in the Stars. When stars exploded as supernova, it was once again scattered in the galactic worlds. From there on it collected together in the planets, the meteorite and the Sun of ours.

Thus the carbon, the water and other elements composing our bodies have traveled through hundreds of millions of trillions of miles in the Universe. They have passed through the countless worlds of stars and are older than our sun and the earth. After living through the ages and passing through the infinity of spaces, matter has come all along to give us the body. Thus history of our body is the history of all sorts of happenings in the Universe. After death, matter

of our bodies gets scattered in the earth and will be gathered again to form another 'US' at the time of the Resurrection.

Scenario of the man's existence from the "Big Bang" to the "Big Bounce" is visible from the following Ayah of the Holy Quran:

وَالْقَمَرَ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ ۝ لَتَرَكُنَّ بَطِيقًا عَنْ طَبِقٍ ۝

*"And (think of) the Moon, as it alters her fall,
The Man is surely being carried onward, from
stage to stage". 84(18-19)*

This Ayah points to the stage by stage existence of Man with reference to the analogy of the appearance of the new Moon, its growing to the maximum size, then dwindling to disappearance, and then reappearance on the horizon as new Moon. In this Ayah, the Holy Quran invites us to recall our previous state of existence, the present life, and there from the future stages of existence.

If we ask, where did we exist before our birth? Our answer could be that we had existed in the genes of our fathers. Where before that? Answer could be, we were in the genes of our grandfather and in the genes of all our forefathers; stage by stage. And before them in the genes of earlier creations and ultimately in the Big Bang. Thus in one way or the other, we have been there at the stage of Universe always. As said already according to the Quranic wisdom, in fact Man is the very reason of its creation. Everything in it is made for us.

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ

فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ ۚ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

“It is He Who has made for you all that is there in the Earth, and directed Himself towards the Heavens and arranged it into seven Heavens (for you). He has perfect knowledge of everything”. 2(29)

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ جَمِيعًا لِّنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ اٰيٰتِنَا ۗ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَآيٰتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّتَفَكَّرُوْنَ ۝

“He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the Heaven and in the Earth. Behold, in that one signs, indeed for those who are thoughtful”. 45(13)

Thus Man, as an Idea of Allah, as the reflection of His soul lives on from the “Pre-Big Bang” to the “After-Big Bounce” and so will continue forever, as the Holy Quran reveals:

وَيَقُوْلُ الْاِنْسَانُ اِذَا مَاتَ لَسَوْفَ اُخْرَجُ حَيًّا ۝ اَوَلَا يَذْكُرُ الْاِنْسَانُ اَنَّا خَلَقْنٰهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَلَمْ يَكُ شَيْئًا ۝ فَوَرَبِّكَ لَنَحْشُرَنَّهُمْ وَالشَّيْطٰنِ ثُمَّ لَنَحْضُرَنَّهُمْ حَوْلَ جَهَنَّمَ جِثِيًّا ۝

“And Man says what! When I am dead, shall I then be raised up alive? But does not Man call to mind that We created him before, and he was nothing. So by your Lord, without doubt, We shall, gather them (evil ones) together, and also the Shayateen. Then We shall bring them forth on their knees around the Hell”. 19(66-68)

In these Ayaat the Holy Quran invites us to recall our previous existence and there from the future stages of

existence. This history of the man's existence from the infinity to the infinity, was described in the 10th century by the famous Muslim philosopher and Sufi Poet Mulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi (1184 – 1252) in his highly thought provoking poem, translated in English by Allama Muhammad Iqbal²⁷.

Souls depart from their bodies at the time of their worldly death at varying degrees of development. From here they go to world of Qaboor also called Burzakh. There they continue their journey with the momentum on the direction which they had lived in their worldly life. Third phase of their existence is after the ultimate Doomsday, the Resurrection. After that some will pass into Jannah, the abode of happiness and satisfaction and some will pass into Jahannam, the abode of misery and frustration. In fact Jahannam primarily is a place of purification and cleansing. As they have been healed and purified, out of His immense Bounty Allah may transfer them from here to Jannah also (Fig.25)

Therefore, in the overall context the period of life spent in this world is the most valuable period. It is the respite for us where we can develop our souls. If we indulge in things disapproved by Allah (Subhana-Hu), then we will reduce our souls to the lower side, and become like animals due to the lust and greed for the personal gains only. Such unfortunate souls engrossed for their earthly desires make Jahannam their destiny. One can learn a lot from the following sayings of the Holy Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم).

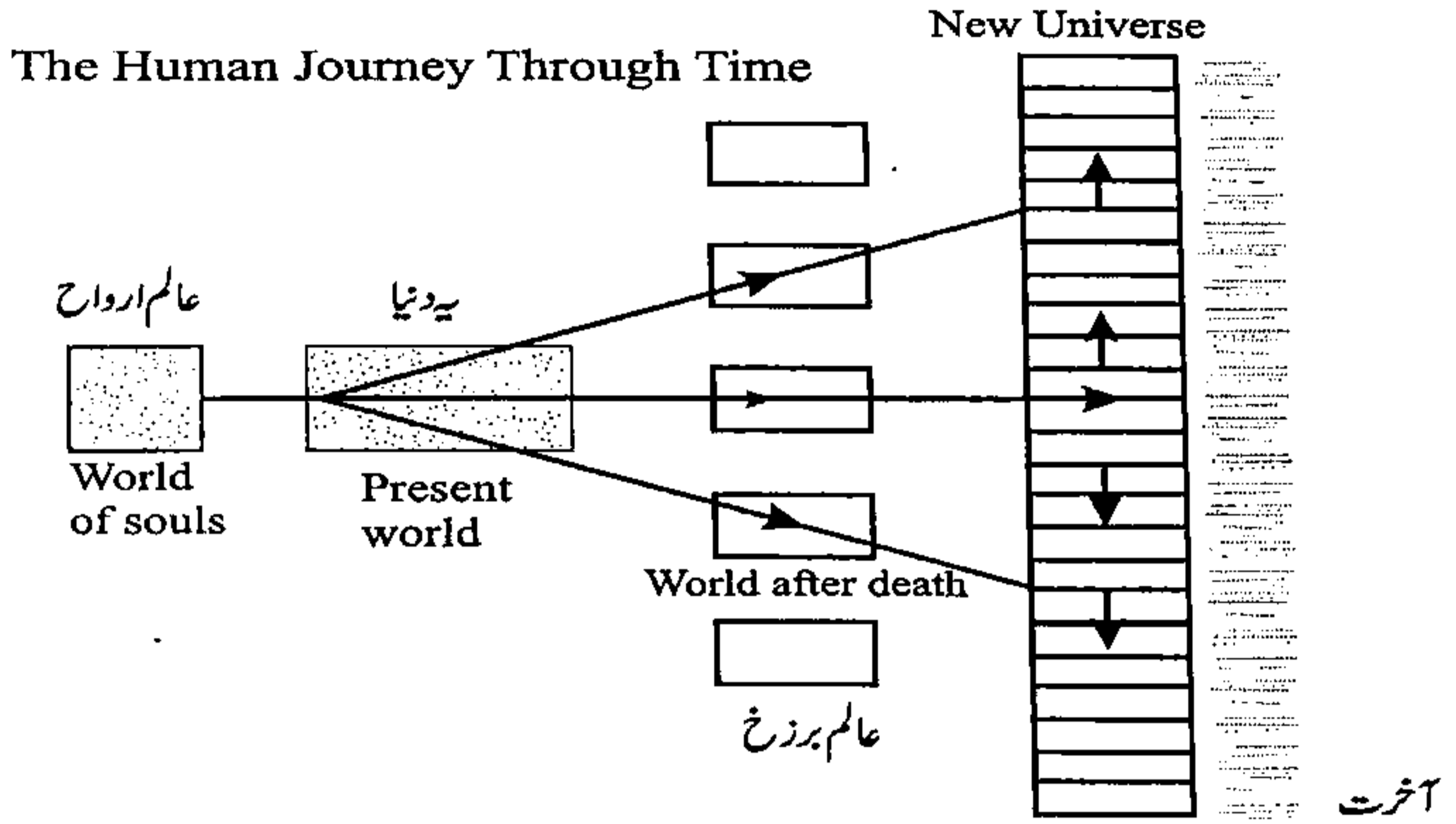
*

THE ETERNAL LIFE

*“First man appeared in the class of inorganic things;
Next he passed there from into that of plants;
For years he lived as one of the plants,
Remembering naught of his inorganic state so different:
And when he passed from the vegetative to the animal state,
He had no remembrance of his state as a plant,
Except the inclination he felt to the world of plants,
Especially at the time of spring and sweet flowers,
Like the inclination of infants toward their mothers,
Which know not the cause of their inclination to the breast:
Again the Great Creator as you know,
Drew man out of the animal state, into the human state.
Thus man passed from one order of nature to another,
Till he became wise and knowing and strong as he is now.
Of his first souls he has now no remembrance,
And he will be changed again from his present state.*

** Poem by the poet Jalal-ud-din Rumi translated by Sir Muhammad Iqbal²⁷.*

Fig.25: The Human Journey Through Time



Soul is an "Intelligent Being", from Allah that possibly had its existence in the pre-Universe period. From the dormant world of souls it takes birth into the dynamic Earthly world, with the human, body as its carrier. Worldly life is a period of free choice for it and an opportunity for self- development as Allah says in the Holy Quran:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ ۝ ثُمَّ رَدَدْنَاهُ أَسْفَلَ
 سَفِيلِينَ ۝ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَلَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ
 مَمْنُونٍ ۝

"We have indeed created Man, in the best status, then We reduced him to the lowest of the low, save those who believe and do good works, and there is a reward unfailing for them". 95(4-6)

It is narrated that the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) drew a square and then drew a line in the middle of the square, and let it extend outside it, and then drew several small lines attached to that central line and said, "This is the similitude of human beings and this (the square) is his base of life that encircles him from all sides, and this line which is outside the square are his desires, and these small lines are calamities and troubles (which may befall him due to his desires) and if one misses him, another will snap and overtake him, and if the other misses him, a third will take over him". (Al-Bukhari)

THE SECRET OF LIFE

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِذَاذًا لِكَلِمَتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ

كَلِمَتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا ۝

“Say you: If the ocean were to become ink (to write) the Words of my Lord, the Ocean would surely exhaust before the words of my Lord exhausted, Even though “We brought forth another like therefore for support”. 18(109)

In order to comprehend the phenomenon of the Life-After-Death, we need to understand the secret of life, the baffling riddle in every civilization. What is life, and for that matter, what is it like to die? This is a question that many people have been asking ever since the beginning of the human race on the earth. This is the crucial issue concerning the destiny of the human beings in this life, and after this life. Poets, philosophers and scientists, have all said something about it. But the puzzle remains unanswered?

A popular view has been that life came to the earth from outer space. Probably, it was carried over by some meteorite and delivered to the earth. While this view still persists, there is also the hypothesis that life began right here on it. They say, in the beginning the earth was very hot and unable to support any life. Later, as it cooled and had an appropriate atmosphere, consisting chiefly of

13 methane, ammonia, hydrogen and water vapors; in the presence of ultraviolet radiations, cosmic radiations and lightening storms, which are thought to have been very severe then, amino acids were generated in the atmosphere of the Earth. From the amino acids proteins were formed and somehow they gave the kick of life to the dead matter of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and phosphorus etc.

In 1957, the American scientist John Miller simulated these conditions in laboratory and was successful in showing that traces of amino acids were produced in this process. Since these are the essential components of proteins in the cells of living beings, it was said that life might have evolved on the Earth from its own resources.

Whatever the explanation of the source of life on the Earth, the basic question still remains that what is life? How do the lifeless elements combine together to become living? There is no definite answer to this question. As yet even there is no agreed answer to the relatively simple question, "what is living and what is not living?"

Answer to the question "what is living and what is not living?" depends upon how we define the life. According to one definition¹¹ "essence of the living organisms is their beautiful organization in time and space, their energy giving reactions and their ability of ordered repetitive reproduction." Thus microbes are the living organism because they can multiply themselves. However, the atoms and molecules constituting the microbes are considered non-living; which means that the Living are actually the Non-living plus Design. If so, can we then say that life is Design? The mystery remains unresolved.

On the other hand, concept of life as seen through the Holy Quran is much more basic and very much clearer. We find in the Holy Quran that the essence of life is the obedience and response to the Will of Allah. In modern terminology, this is denoted by the "Laws of Nature." Thus life can be defined as the "Ability of things to recognize laws of nature." This definition means that everything is living, difference being only in the degree of the level of life only.

According to this hypothesis, atom could be the basic unit of life, because all natural laws operate through it. Molecules that are composed of atoms possess a higher degree of life because they are composed of more than one atom. A microbe will be at still higher stage of life, difference being that life of the microbe is in the dynamic state, with some degree of freedom and life of the atoms and molecules is static. Thus higher life manifests itself in higher degree of freedom and intelligence, which give them the ability to respond, to reproduce and to grow. The lower the degree of life, the lower is the freedom of choice and intelligence.

Following are some of the fundamental realities of nature as seen from the Holy Quran and are the basis of our hypothesis about the life and mind at atomic scale:

i. Recognition of the Creator

According to the Holy Quran the very fundamental characteristic of things is that they recognize the Will of Allah and obey His Commands. This is the essence of life. The following revelations describe this truth:

وَلِلّٰهِ يَسْجُدُ مَنْ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَظَلَلْتَهُمْ
بِالْغُلُوِّ وَالْاَصَالِ ۝

“And unto Allah prostrates, whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and (as) their shadows, in the morning and the evening hours”. 13(15)

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَسْجُدُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ وَالنُّجُومُ وَالْجِبَالُ وَالشَّجَرُ وَالدَّوَابُّ
وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنَ النَّاسِ ۝

“Have you not seen, unto Allah prostrate in adoration whatsoever is in the Earth, and the Sun, and the Moon and the stars, and the mountains, and the trees, and the beasts, and many of the mankind?” 22(18)

Such Ayaat of the Holy Quran prove that all things recognize their Creator and adore Him. This is their instinct. May it be an atom or smaller than that, or bigger than that, all things obey Him according to the laws framed by Him. Exception can be among the mankind, who for a limited period of their stay on the earth are bestowed with the free will to believe or not to believe.

The Ayah 17(44), further clarifies this common characteristic of things in the following fashion:

تَسْبِيحٌ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا
يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ خَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ۝
“The seven heavens and the Earth, (whole of the Universe) and all that is therein, praises Him; and there is not a thing but celebrates His praises, yet (it is another matter that) you do not understand their

praise, Lo! He is Ever Clement and Forgiving” 17(44)

This Ayah makes it absolutely clear that without exception, all things possess the ability to recognize their Creator and as a manifestation of this recognition they hymn His praises. The statement; “There is not a thing but celebrates His praises” is very significant. It means that irrespective of their nature and form everything is conscious of their Creator’s Glory.

To have some idea of the mechanics of praises by things of their Lord, we may think of the science of sounds and hearing. We know that all sounds are due to vibrations produced by matter. The range of such vibrations is extremely vast, from a fraction of a cycle to billions of cycles per second. The hearing is the ability to recognize these vibrations. Human ear can recognize sounds only from about 20 cycles to 20, 000 cycles per second. Some animals can listen to sounds of many times higher and lower frequencies. Thus the limitation of listening is merely due to the available tools. Otherwise, we could hear everything, since all things in nature, from the elementary particles of an atom, to the giant heavenly bodies, keep vibrating at their own natural frequencies. If man can invent tools to recognize their sounds, he may come to know the way they hymn the praises of their Creator also.

ii. Fear of Allah

Besides glorifying the praises of Allah, Ayah 2(74) tells us that things also fear their Lord:

وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَنْ يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

“And indeed there are (rocks), which fall down for the fear of Allah. And Allah not ignorant of what you do”. 2(74)

Falling of rocks due to the fear of Allah means that they must have a mind conscious of their Creator. In this respect Ayah 13(13) points out that even the energy systems such as thunder, lightning and angels recognize Him, fear Him and praise their Lord.

وَيَسْبِحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ ۝

“And the thunder hymns His praise, And (so do) the angles, for awe of Him”. 13(13)

iii. Obedience to the Laws of Nature

Another striking characteristic of the things is their obedience to the laws framed by the Creator of the Universe. The following revelation shows that each thing has its own characteristic nature and a built-in guidance system:

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى ۝

“He said, our Lord is He who gave to each thing, its form and nature, and then guided them”. 20(50)

Ayah 54(3) quoted below points out that working of everything is also regulated according to a pre-determined destiny, programmed in the conscience of things.

وَ كُلُّ أَمْرٍ مُسْتَقَرٌّ ۝

“Every matter has its appointed time and course”. 54(3)

Essence of Life

From the above Ayaat, following realities about the nature of things are quite obvious. These are the essence of life.

- a) All things have the ability to recognize their Creator, they praise Him and fear Him.
- b) Allah has built basic characteristics within all things that guide them in their functions and give them conscience to recognize other things.
- c) Obedience to the Divine laws by each and every bit of the Universe is the very nature of things and they are conscious of it.

This has been confirmed by the scientific discoveries in the 20th century that obedience to the laws of nature is ingrained in the very nature of matter. Each and every move, even at the level of the very elementary particles is governed by these laws. Their ability to recognize the dictates of the natural laws, and being conscious of obeying them, is the essence of life. Accordingly everything is living. They differ in their degree of life only.

Unit of Life

Let us now try to define the smallest possible unit of life. That will be the step towards quantifying the life itself. What we have discussed so far is that living beings are a combination of matter and life. In this combination, matter carries an intelligent-being on it that we may call, soul of matter that gives it conscience and ability to recognize.

Together that may possibly be some sort of transient existence. Electrons are one example of this. At rest they have a definite mass and while in motion, they are quanta

of energy, having definite electric charge, irrespective of the element it belongs to. They are dynamic in nature, a transient stage between the matter and energy. Around the nucleus of the atom there are orbits of electrons; their position being determined in accordance with their energy levels. If we can excite them externally by giving energy, they move to the next higher orbits. But they never do so haphazardly. They know where to land. During the period of jump they disappear as if they were not there and suddenly reappear at their new destination. Thus to some degree they show a "Will" of their own also.

Electrons are also one of the most active agents of nature. All chemical reactions are due to the electrons, for as if they know, how to react in different situations and form different compounds between elements.

Electricity is also due to the flow of the electrons. Neural energy of the plants, animals and Humans is also nothing but the ordered movement of the electrons. Functions of brain and movements of the body parts are also all due to the electron's activity. Magnetism and electromagnetic radiation are also due to the dynamic behaviour of the electrons.

In fact, existence of the Universe in its present form is due to the definite properties of the electrons. For example, if the electrons lose their charge around the nuclei of their elements, then whole of the Universe due to the attractive force of gravity would immediately collapse inward and reduce to no more than the size of a tiny planet like the earth. Thus existence of the Universe is also due to the electron shells around the nuclei of their atoms.

Such Importance of the electrons in the functioning of nature warrants that they could be considered as the primary unit of life. All higher life types are made of the orderly combination of electrons only. As a first assumption, laws related to their characteristics may be considered applicable to the life reactions also.

However, we also know that an electron cannot exist independently for long. Stable electron-systems exist only in association with the atoms of elements. Therefore, it may be more appropriate to say that "Atom is the fundamental unit of life, which has a Mind residing in the electrons cloud around the nucleus".

Manifestation of Life

Life of the plants, animals and of the human beings is the outcome of the order in the atoms comprising their molecules, cell structures, and their combinations into their body forms. What we call death, is the disintegration of this order. An analogy of this is a nuclear reactor. In it although, each particle of uranium all the times radiates energy, but reactor as a whole begins to generate large amount of energy only when a critical mass of uranium is arranged in a certain order.

We may also understand this with the analogy of the magnetic field of individual iron molecules. Normally in an iron bar these particles are haphazardly distributed. Thus on the whole, bar does not show any magnetism. But as soon as they are arranged in an orderly manner by a process called magnetizing, it becomes a magnet producing magnetic field all around. If somehow, say, by heating, we re-create the disorder in the particles though individually

the molecules in the bar material still remain magnetic, but on the whole, it loses its field. The same applies to life. It is also an orderly arrangement of the atoms and electrons. Death is the name of the disorder.

In this concept we may say that the "measure of entropy in a system is the measure of the degree of its living." The lesser the entropy, the higher is the level of its life, because entropy in thermodynamics, is proportional to the disorder of the system. All those processes, in which entropy is reduced, will thus be the life giving processes.

According to the above reasoning, atoms in a combination of elements can be arranged in such an order that entropy of the system becomes minimum. Then the systems under reference would start manifesting life. It should therefore be possible to produce artificial life in laboratory also. In nature all systems are formed such as to increase in entropy with time. Therefore death is their common lot, as the Holy Quran says, "Everything in the Universe will perish in the end".

As for creation of the artificial life, it appears from the Holy Quran that it is not an impossible task for the man. It quotes the example of some of the Prophets of Allah, who had actually performed the supernatural feats of creating life out of the so-called non-living things. These were of course miracles specific to them only and cannot be repeated by anybody else. But they do indicate that man had created life. Most outstanding story is of the great Prophet, Jesus Christ (Peace be upon him), who showed the miracle of making living birds out of the clay, as the proof of his being the true Prophet of the Allah. The Holy Quran quotes him saying:

أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِّنَ الطِّينِ
 كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۝

“I have come to you (O’ people) with a sign from your Lord. In that, I make for you out of clay, as it were a figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and then it becomes a (living) bird” by Allah’s leave”. 3(49)

The great Prophet Ibrahim (عليه السلام) also had shown the miracle of creating life in the dead slain birds. The Prophet Moses (عليه السلام) also showed the miracle of changing his staff into a serpent. Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) also made the pebbles to testify, *“We stand witness to the fact that there is no Allah but Allah; and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah”*.

No doubt above examples relate to supernatural events called miracles, which cannot be explained by the ordinary scientific laws. However, they do show that man had (since all the Prophets were human beings) produced artificial life. Prophets did it through the power of the spirit; scientists might do so through the power of human intellect. Man, as the Holy Quran says, is the vicegerent of the Creator of the Universe. Therefore it should not be surprising at all that some day he may also be able to create life out of the elements of the earth. After all, life is hidden in the very core of their atoms, the fundamental living entities, with the mind and consciousness.

Degrees of Life

The hypothesis that atom is the fundamental unit of life, can explain the basis of the life, for no combination of dead

atoms could create life by themselves. In this concept different manifestations of life at various levels of development are actually the outcome of different design combinations of atoms. Accordingly, complex molecules are at higher states in the manifestation of life than the simpler ones and organic compounds are more living than the inorganic ones. Within range of the organic compounds also, molecules of the more complex compounds represent a still higher degree of existence. Amino acids which are made of complex combination of atoms represent further higher states of existence.

A living cell is a marvel of design, complexity and sophistication and therefore, it is more dynamic than the amino acids. Similarly, the cells of animals are more sophisticated in design than the cells of plants and the cells of a man are much more developed than the cells of animals. Thus, each one is relatively at a higher degree of life. But in every case, the resultant life is the outcome of the unit lives of their atoms. Fig. 26 shows this pyramid of relative life.

Mind of the Matter

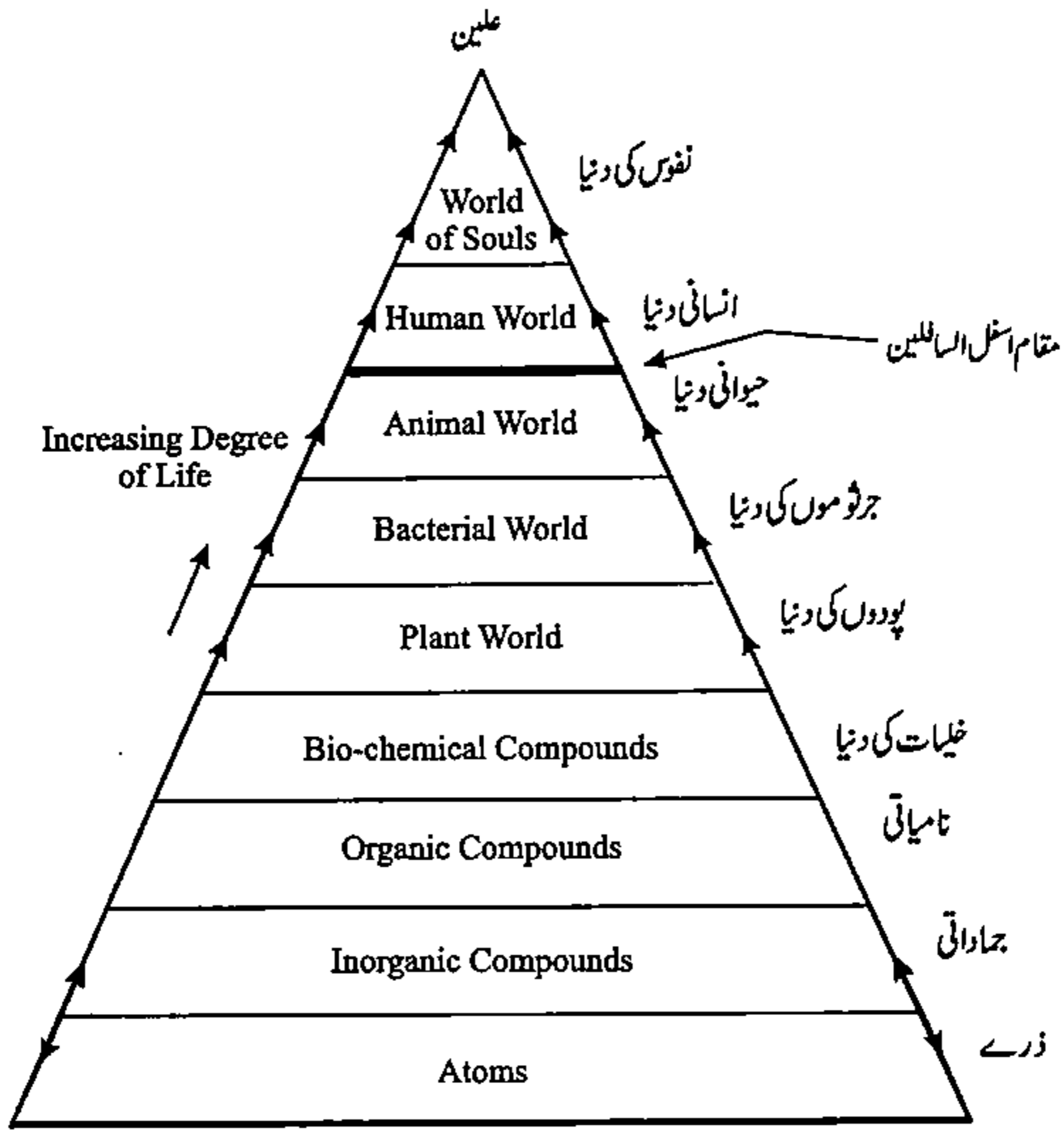
Now we come to another basic question What forces matter to obey the rules of nature? For example, why do Hydrogen and Oxygen under the given conditions, always react together to produce water? Same can be asked for every other chemical reaction. Can it be that matter at its very elementary levels knows what to do under the given conditions? As we have discussed earlier, all things, small or big, do recognize their Creator, and are conscious of His will i.e. the laws imposed by Him on His Creations.

This means that matter at all levels has a “Mind” of its own for recognition and awareness of the laws of nature. Characteristics of a thing are the manifestation of its ‘Mind’. Universe is an organism each component of which the smallest and the biggest, has a built-in mind, which governs its behavior and gives it nature and form. The Holy Quran hints upon this by saying:

قَالَ رَبُّنَا الَّذِي أَعْطَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَىٰ ۝

“Our Lord is He, who gave each thing, its form and nature, and gave it guidance”.
20(50)

Fig.26: Relative Increasing Degrees of Awareness



In absolute terms everything in the nature is living. The lowest living unit of life may be assumed as the atom itself. It has intelligence and a mind of its own, which gives it its characteristics and controls its interactions with other atoms. Suitable design combinations of atoms can give birth to higher degrees of life. Thus the state of living and the state of so-called non-living things is only relative to each other. Human beings manifest the highest degree of life.

Control of Events

The hypothesis of "Mind of Matter", leads one to the trinity of "Time, Space and Mind" as the regulating mechanism in the Universe. To understand this let us realize that nothing is possible without the input of time and space. An event will take place only if you give it time to happen and space to contain. Thus "Time and Space" allow events to happen, but what controls the various forces leading to the occurrence of that event, is the mind of the matter, the mind that knows the laws of nature and guides the things to their natural behavior. Together, the interaction of "Time-Space and Mind" produces the events. Fig. 26 shows the way these three interact with each other. In absolute terms since Time, Space and Mind belong to Allah, therefore it is He Who controls everything.

Let us illustrate this idea with the example of formation of water. In this example, given the input of time and space, hydrogen and oxygen can react together, but it is the Mind of these atoms that under the given conditions directs, H_2 and O_2 to form water and not any other thing (over them is the Mind of the person who decided to carry out this experiment). Same logic is true for every other compound of matter. Thus mind of matter is the ability of a thing to recognize laws of nature and react to the environment around according to a program called laws of nature. Things at higher stage of living have higher degree of mind. At the highest degree it is manifested by the characteristics called "Free Will". The higher animals have relatively higher free will, and Man who is the supreme among the living beings, has the highest degree of free

will, i.e. the most developed mind among all the things on the earth.

Interaction of "Time-Space and Mind" is going on since the very beginning. In absolute terms, these three are the characteristics of Allah, manifestation of which is the Universe. In the first place, with a Big Bang, He parted off nothingness of Pre-Universe into pair of negative and positive charge of energy; thereafter He transformed it into matter to make this Universe. Thus through the interaction of Time, Space and Mind everything is connected with the Provident.

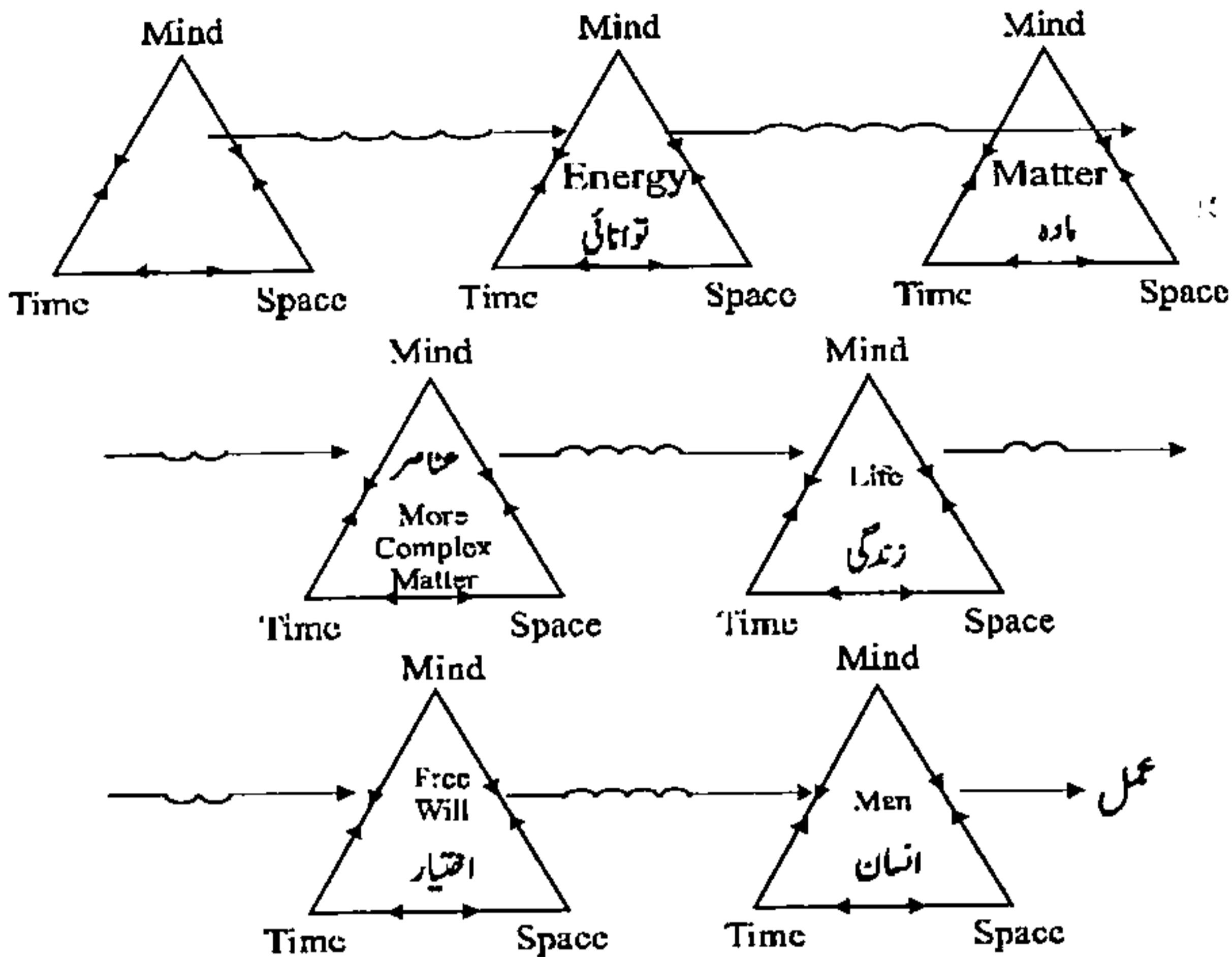
هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ ۗ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝

"He is the First, and the Last, (i.e. He is the total Time Himself) He is the Outermost, and the Innermost, (i.e. He is the total Space Himself) and He knows everything in absolute terms (He is the Super Mind)".

57(3)

That the time is an attribute of Allah (Subhana-Hu). it is narrated by Abu Huraira, (Allah be pleased with Him), that Allah's Apostle told us, *"Allah says," The off springs of Adam (mankind) curse the Dahar (Time) and I am the Dahar (Time). In My Hand are the night and the day. (Al-Bukhari)*

Fig. 27: The Trinity of Time, Space and Mind



Mind gives awareness that guides things to their natural behaviour; Time and space provide them with the basics of their existence. Events thus first take shape in the Mind of a man and there from are transformed into physical forms. A superior mind can guide an inferior mind. Human Beings who have the most developed mind has the potential to guide all other things. Thus predominance of mind over matter explains why metaphysical causes control physical causes and how the physical misfortunes and catastrophes that befall individuals, societies and nations, are triggered by their moral degradations and wicked deeds? They are reaction of a disturbed mind to the breaking of moral laws of the Creation.

RECORD KEEPING OF THE DEEDS AND WITNESSING

A very radical idea about nature, derived from the Holy Quran is that all things are observant of the events happening around them. They have a memory system of their own with which they go on recording the events and by proper means, these could possibly be deciphered also. On the Day of Judgment even our own body atoms and the atoms of the environment we live in, will be witness on us.

In this respect the Holy Quran points out that our voices, movements and actions are printed in the surrounding environment. Earth is the custodian of our history, which will relate it on the Day of Judgment. Thus nothing will remain hidden. Although Allah knows, sees, and hears everything concerning each one of us, on the Day of Judgment, He will call our surroundings in life in the World as witness upon us, leaving no excuse for complaint. In this regard following Ayaat are highly meaningful. In their light we will analyze the possibility of how our deeds are being recorded and on the day of accountability, how these will be brought forth as witness against us.

إِذَا زُلْزِلَتِ الْأَرْضُ زِلْزَالَهَا ۝ وَأَخْرَجَتِ الْأَرْضُ أَثْقَالَهَا ۝

وَقَالَ الْإِنْسَانُ مَا لَهَا ۝ يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا ۝ بِأَنَّ

رَبِّكَ أَوْخَىٰ لَهَا ۝

“When earth is shaken, to her utmost convulsions, and the earth yields up her burdens, and Man says, “What is the matter

with her; On that Day, she will relate her chronicles, because Your Lord inspires her accordingly". 99(1-5)

The Holy Prophet, Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), in explanation to this Ayah told, "Earth is the witness of our deeds. It has no eyes but can see, it has no pen but writes, it has no brain but remembers". (Al-Bukhari – Al-Muslim)

The following Ayaat of the Holy Quran highlight that even our limbs, hands, feet and skin are spies on us, which keep on recording our deeds and will relate them on the Day of Judgment.

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ

بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ۝

"On that Day, We shall seal up their mouths, and their hands will speak out, and their feet will bear witness, to what they used to earn". 36(65)

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا مَا جَاءُوهَا شَهِدَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَمْعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَارُهُمْ

وَجُلُودُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ۝

"At length, when they reach their Judgment, their hearing, their sight and their skins, all will bear witness against them". 41(20)

Possible Mechanisms

Witness by our own body parts against us is no more an incomprehensible thing in these days. Importance of finger prints in criminology is an old art and well known. But the

recent developments in the study of the human bones, hair, blood, tissues, secretions etc. are highly startling. A wealth of information can be obtained about an individual from the study of very small samples of these things taken even from the dead body. For example human hair is already being used as a tell-tale even thousands of years after death. It has been discovered that it holds a permanent record in chronological order of all chemicals that a person had taken. For example, using his hair, it has been found that the 19th century famous English poet John Keats was an opium user.

The most outstanding advancement about the knowledge of the self is in the study of the genes of the living beings. Although they are too small to be seen even by the powerful electronics microscopes; less than a micron in diameter i.e. $15/10000000$ cm, but each one of them is the complete human personality in itself. It is like a computer and also a power house. It burns amino acids and carbohydrates as fuel and produces energy to survive. An individual comprises about 10^{14} (i.e. 100,000,000,000,000) such cells. However, each one of them is sufficient to describe the complete history of his master. Given the right environment, it may be possible to preserve them for hundreds of thousands of years. Modern science believes, although it has not yet been possible to demonstrate it, that an individual's body cell may be cultured just as a seed is cultured in moist soil, to reproduce the individual. Techniques are already developed for the culture of plant tissues that could be said as a beginning to this end. It may not be too far off now when handful of earth taken from the degenerated bones of the dead body will reproduce him in the laboratory.

As for as the record keeping by the inanimate things, this might have been incomprehensible to the man of the past, but it is no more a puzzle for the modern man. We know that each second, trillions of neutrinos and cosmos radiations are showered from the outer space towards the Earth. They are so powerful that most of these penetrate across the body of the Earth as easily as the light passes through a clear sheet of glass. From our knowledge of photography, we also know that molecules of certain materials are sensitive to radiation. Since neutrinos and some other cosmic radiation particles are smaller than the size of the atom, they can strike the nucleus of the atoms of the Earth and imprint on them the events, which they have passed through. May be some day, mankind will find a way to decipher it and read the prints of the world history in the memories of the atoms.

Moreover, in these days everyone knows about the computer memory chips made of silica, each one of which is able to store millions of information bits forever. And each new day rises with the new miracles of information storage. They now talk about the ability to record all the volumes of the Encyclopedia of Britannica on the head of a paper pin. Therefore, idea of recording of human deeds by the atoms of our own bodies or remotely by any other means should not be surprising any more.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HUMAN SOUL

“We have not created the heavens and the Earth, and all that is in between them, purposeless, only those who deny (the truth) imagine so.”

There are several Ayaat in the Holy Quran emphasizing in the creation and the end of the Universe, there is a purpose and meaning. In fact there is a Divine purpose behind everything. Nothing is created for nothing.

According to this principle, Doomsday will actually be the fulfillment of the purpose of the creation of the whole Universe. This is one reason that the Holy Quran does not call it “The End” but an “Event” to transform one state of existence into another. As has been said, the whole process follows the calculated scheme of “Divine Will” and no case is a haphazard accident of nature. In fact it is a revolution in the long chain of evolution of the Universe to bring it to its logical conclusion to create a new World as a direct consequence of the present one. This purpose of the Doomsday is revealed in the following Ayah:

إِنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ أَكَادُ أَخْفِيهَا لِتُجْزَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا تَسْعَىٰ ۝

“Verily the Hour (of the Doom) is to come; My Design is to keep it hidden, for every soul to receive its reward, by the measure of its endeavor”. 20(15)

Resurrection will thus be the Day of accomplishment, Reward and Punishment for all those who have ever been

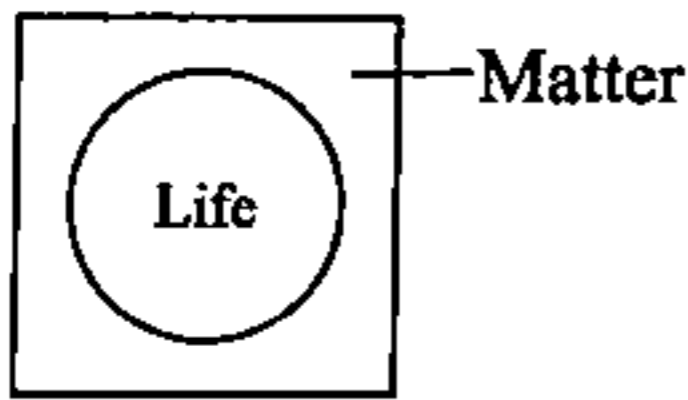
in the Universe, in our world or any other world. In this regard, the Holy Quran provides guidance about the continuation of the human soul, death being only a transformation for it.

The Human Soul and the Human Life

Imam Al-Ghazali¹², the famous Muslim Scholar of the 11th century A.D. differentiated between the human soul and human life; the latter being the result of bio-chemical reactions between different elements, and therefore, perishable with their disorder. However soul is a “Being”, other than life, which determines the human personality. It is the very “Me”, distinct from the material elements of the body, something inspired into the fetus at a certain stage of its development in the womb of the mother. The soul is not a static being but a dynamic living being that develops over the passage of time. Fig. 28,29 and 30 give a graphical representation of the different phases in the development of the human soul.

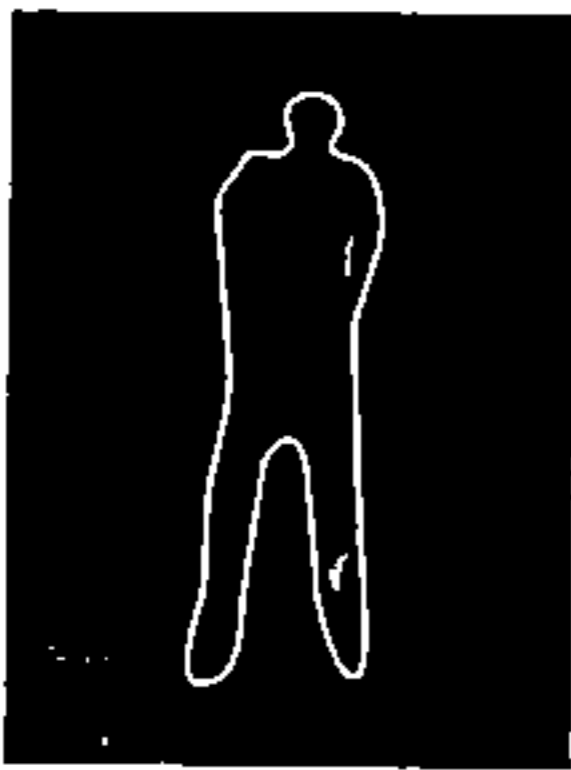
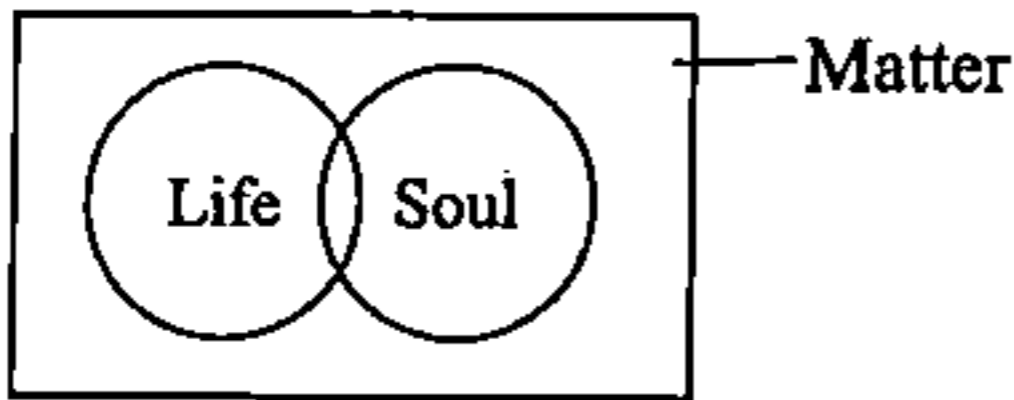
Figure 29 shows four stages of development of soul from its dormant state of the pre-birth-existence to the final departure from the earthly world. The human body is a vehicle of development for it. In its worldly existence it rises or falls, from its zero level of entry stage to the level of its competence and effort. After the death of the body, it loses ability of further development, but continues its journey on the path it had traced for it in its previous life. In this phase it is incapable to modify its course of action. The Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) had said that reward in the Hereafter would depend on your spiritual state at the

Fig.28: Soul vs Life and its Development



All living things are set of life and matter.

All human beings are the set of life, matter and soul.



Soul and life are two different things. Life is due to the biochemical combinations of atoms, the basic units of life. All living beings have life, the degree of which is manifested by their knowledge of environment, dynamism and free will. Soul is unique to human beings only; it gives them their character and personality; the ability to choose between good and bad; conscience and inspiration. Whereas life finishes with death, the soul lives on. As you can strengthen your body or weaken it, same is the case of Soul. But it needs a different type of treatment. Allah sent his prophets to mankind. By following their teachings we can also develop our souls. Muhammad (Peace be upon him) was the last of His messengers and in this respect, a model for all humanity; and the Holy Quran being the latest and the last edition of Allah's revelations, replaces all the revealed books given to earlier prophets. By following its teachings you can develop your soul and best prepare for the life to come.

time of death. All is well that ends well.

As for the question about the real nature of the soul, the Holy Quran says:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ
مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ۝

“They ask You of the soul, say, “The soul is from an Order of my Lord, you have been given not, but only a little knowledge of it”.
17(85)

According to this Ayah, soul will always remain a mystery and beyond the complete comprehension of the human mind. However the situation is not totally dismaying also. The statement “You have been given not but only a little knowledge of it” means that even though not fully, yet to some extent we have the capability to understand the working of soul. In this regard the Prophet Muhammad, (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, “Whoever knows himself, shall know his Lord.” Our “Self” is our Soul. To the extent we understand our self we shall understand our soul. Indeed most people know very little of their inner self.

In the Holy Quran, Allah has said, “We have indeed created all things in due measures” 54(49). This means that Will of Allah follows a balanced system. He further tells us in the Holy Quran, “With Him is the Mother of the Book” 13(39). Thus the laws of nature represent His unchanging written Will. Accordingly, the human soul must also be comprehensible to some extent, follow some measurable processes and as a consequence be understandable. It is quite possible that our instruments

may never be able to measure it, but with our inner light we should at least be able to feel it.

It is obvious from the Holy Quran that souls are different from matter. They relate to the category of beings like the angels and jinns, which are metaphysical realities, have definite personalities bestowed with conscience, mind and individuality, but are not made of elements of the Earth.

From the Holy Quran we also find that they were in existence even before the creation of man on the earth; may be even before the material Universe. We also know from the Holy Quran that in their nature they are 'Noor' i.e. some sort of "Light". Thus they may be a kind of energy being without material bodies. As such they do not have the limitations of mass and inertia associated with the body.

There is another type of the energy beings also, called the Jinns, created out of fire, (the plasma of hot gases) as can be seen from Ayaat 15(26-27).

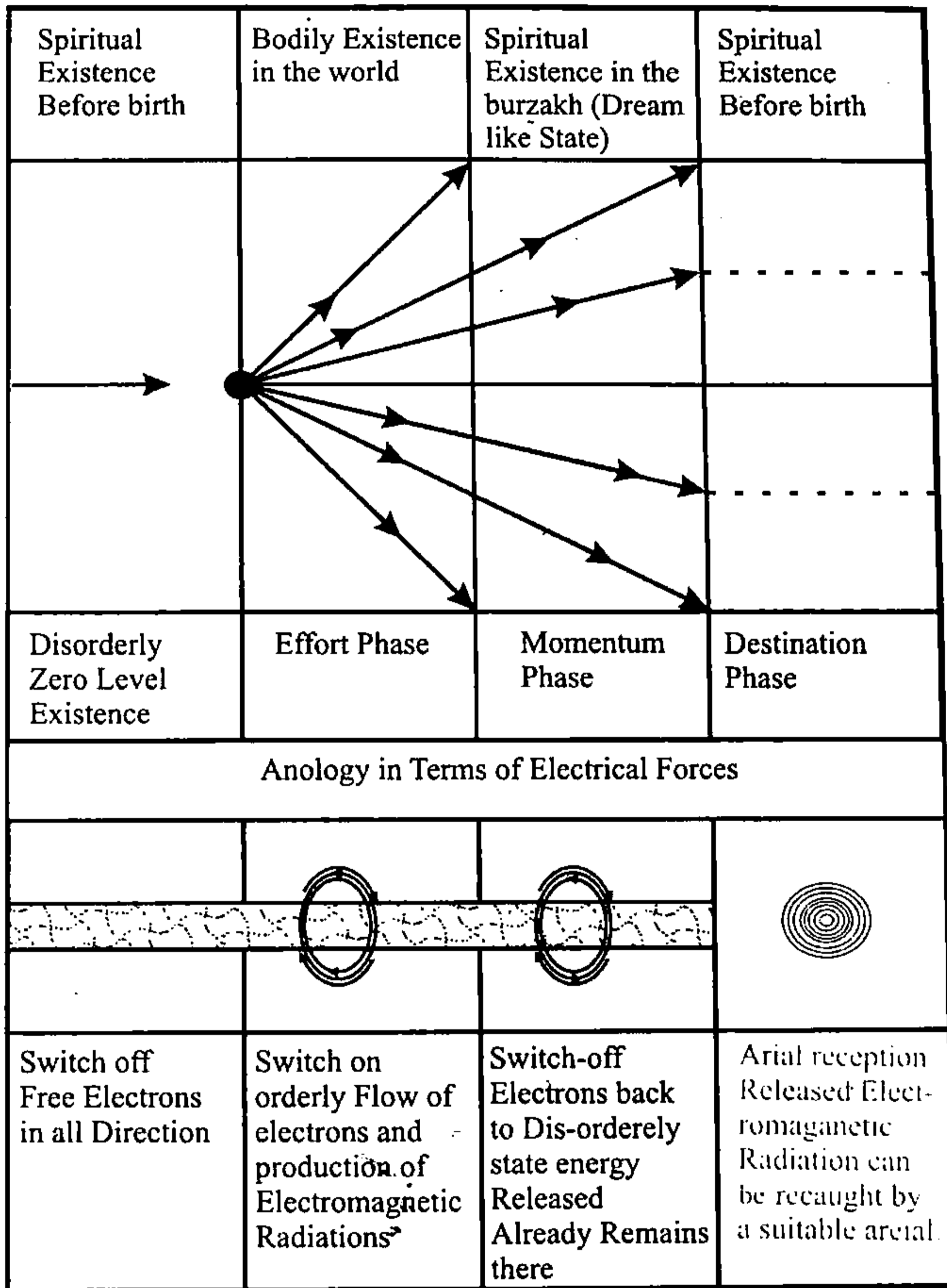
وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَإٍ مَسْنُونٍ ۝ وَالْجَانَّ

خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ مِنْ نَارِ السَّمُومِ ۝

"Indeed! Man, We created from mud transformed, and before that We had created the Jinns, from intense radiating fire". 15(26-27)

Angels constitute another type of energy, which is finer and more subtle than fire, called by the name of "Nur" in the Holy Quran. As for the souls, the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said "Souls are also made from "Nur", and that before their transfer to the world, it is reported that they live in some other plane of existence as a community.

Fig.29: Different states in the existence of the Human Soul



Those who were spiritually close to each other there, remain close to each other here also; those who were at distance from each other there, also feel little affinity for each other here". (Al-Bukhari)

When we examine modern literature on the subject of the soul, life and mind, we find a growing appreciation among scientists that neither mind, nor life, need be limited to only organic matter. In a recent extremely speculative but nevertheless* thought-provoking book, "Life Beyond Earth⁽¹⁰⁾," the possibilities of extra terrestrial life are reviewed by the physicist Gerald Feinberg and the biochemist Robert Shapiro. They argue the case for life forms based on plasma, electromagnetic field energy, magnetic fields, neutron and a variety of other bizarre life systems. One easily comprehensible example of human being in the form of electromagnetic radiation is of picture being transmitted from T.V. station on its way to the receiver in your home.

According to Paul Davies⁽¹⁰⁾, "Consciousness and intelligence are software concepts; it is only the pattern of organization that counts, not the medium for its expression." This is very much like review of Imam Ghazali⁽¹²⁾, who in the 11th century argued that body is just a vehicle for the soul, as a horse is for the rider; it is the soul that determines our journey in this life, just as the rider guides the travel of the horse in the land.

Therefore, accountability is for the rider and not for the horse. Man is responsible for his actions through his soul and not the body that is perishable. The Prophet Muhammad, (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) had said, "Actions will be judged according to intentions". The reason being that

intentions are formed in the souls of people, whereas action is simply their manifestation. Consequently, at the time of death, it is the soul which carries the cumulative effects of all deeds performed during the life time in this world. The Holy Quran says:

أَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ ۖ وَأَنْ لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنْسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَىٰ ۖ
 وَأَنَّ سَعْيَهُ سَوْفَ يُرَىٰ ۖ ثُمَّ يُجْزَاهُ الْجَزَاءَ الْأَوْفَىٰ ۖ وَأَنَّ
 إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ ۖ

“That no one who carries a burden bears another’s load; And that a man receives only that for which he, strives; And that his endeavors will be seen, and only then, will he receive his recompense in full; and that to your Lord is your final return”. 53(38-42)

There are many people in the world who still do not believe in the continuity of the soul or life after death. Their argument is that they cannot comprehend anything like that. However we must acknowledge that the soul is not the only secret of nature that we do not fully comprehend. There is a great deal in the whole lot of unseen world around us about which we have little knowledge. The wise acknowledge it as a reality, while the fools contest it. We should appreciate what the great scientist Newton had said, that his knowledge of the Universe was like a drop in the ocean. And before him, the great Greek philosopher Aristotle had said, “I know only that I know not.”

As for as the continuity of existence is concerned, it is not at all a strange thing. Even in this life we come across hundreds of things that have been continuing since time immemorial. We hardly ever think that hydrogen in the

water we drink is actually as old as the Universe itself. The carbon in our bodies has come from the explosion of some remote stars of which we have no idea. In every square centimeter of space, solid or vacuum alike, at least 150 particles of neutrinos pass through it every second without our knowledge. Solar energy that helps to sustain our lives had its origin in the fusion of hydrogen, which was created in the first second of the life of the Universe, about 15 billion years ago.

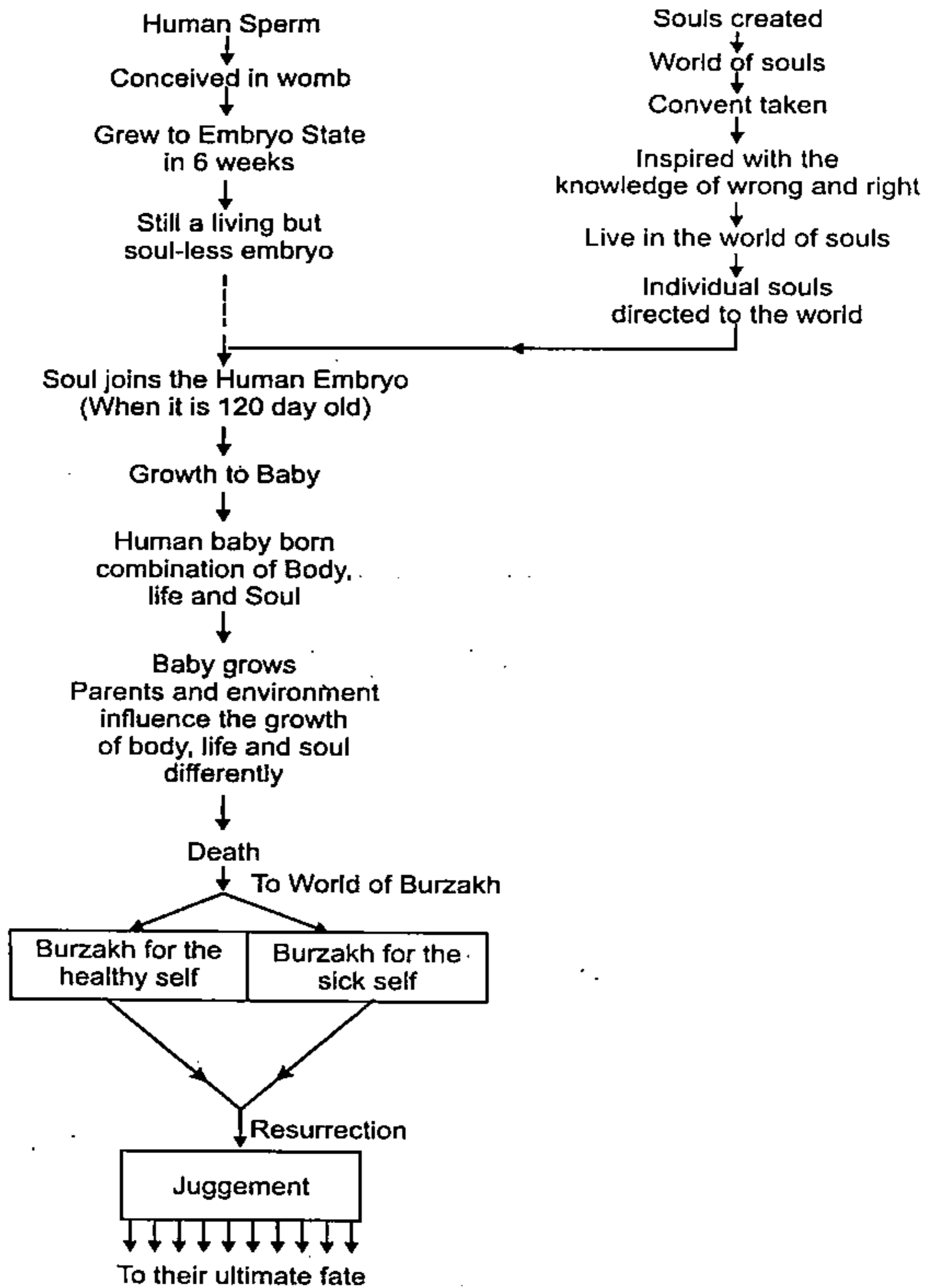
In fact, there is an unending list of things about which we have little knowledge but which have always been there since the very beginning of the time and space. The mystery of human soul is therefore, not the only mystery in nature. If we reject it, we also ought to reject all that we do not see or comprehend with means of research. Would we then say, that nothing exists beyond that we know. If its answer is no, then there should not be any hesitation in accepting the existence of the soul. Similarly it should also be accepted that in the end the Creator will gather all of us together at the Day of Resurrection. The truth is that:

وَمَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ ۚ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ
 مِنْ دُونِهِ ۗ وَنَحْشُرُهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَىٰ وُجُوهِهِمْ عُمِيَآ وَبُكْمًا
 وَصُمًّا مَّا وَتَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ ۚ كُلَّمَا خَبَتْ زِدْنَهُمْ سَعِيرًا ۚ ذٰلِكَ
 جَزَاؤُهُمْ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالُوا إِذَا كُنَّا عِظَامًا وَرَفَاتًا إِنَّا
 لَمَبْعُوثُونَ خَلْقًا جَدِيدًا ۝

“He whom Allah guides, he alone has found the Guidance, whereas for those whom He lets go astray, you will never find anyone to protect them besides Him And

(He says) We shall gather them on the Day of Resurrection; Fallen on their faces, blind and dumb and deaf, with Hell as their goal. Every time the fire abates, We shall increase for them its blazing flames. Such will be their requital for having rejected Our Message and having said; "After we would have become bones, and dust, shall we really be raised from the dead, as a new creation?" 17(97-98).

Fig.30: Before Life and After Life Scenario of the Human existence.



LIFE AFTER DEATH

Some Experiences

Ubada bin As-Samit narrated, The Prophet of Allah told that "When the time of the death of a believer approaches, he receives the good news of Allah's pleasure with him and His blessings upon him, and so at that time nothing is dearer to him than what is in front of him. He therefore loves meeting with Allah, and Allah (too) loves the meeting with him. But when the time of the death of a disbeliever approaches, he receives the bad news of Allah's torment and His Requital, where upon nothing is more unpleasant to him than what is before him. Therefore he dislikes the meeting with Allah, and Allah too dislikes the meeting with him". (Al-Bukhari)

The question of life after death is one of the most intriguing riddles concerning the human beings, which though believed by most of them, but hardly understood. Even the most primitive societies, like the Aborigines of Australia believed in ancestral spirits and beseech them for help while in distress. Among the major religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam this is one of the fundamental concepts of their teachings. Hindu religion believes in the reincarnation of the soul, where this life is the result of its performance in its previous life. Same is true for the beliefs of Chinese, Japanese and other

civilizations of mankind. In short, there is no society on the earth that, in one way or another, is without its concept of life-after-death. This is such an intriguing concept that may never be verified in terms of physical measures, though occasionally we do read astonishing stories in the press concerning the spirits. We also often hear about people who die and then later, after few hours or so, come back to life again. In this respect, study of Dr. Raymond Moody²², reported in his book "Life after Life" is highly thought provoking. In this book, he has investigated the cases of about 150 persons who were clinically declared dead but later, miraculously came back to life. The book is the account of the interviews with such persons. Experiences that he has studied fall into the following three categories:

- 1) The experiences of persons who were resuscitated after having been thought, adjudged, or pronounced clinically dead by their doctors.
- 2) The experiences of persons who, in the course of accidents or severe injury or illness, came very close to physical death.
- 3) The experiences of persons who, as they died, told to other people who were present. Later, these other people reported the content of the death experience to the author.

Dr. Raymond Moody summarizes his findings in the following words:

"Despite the wide variation in the circumstances surrounding close calls with death and in the types of persons undergoing them, it remains true that there is a striking similarity among the accounts of the experiences themselves. In fact, the similarities among various reports

are so great that one can easily pick out about fifteen separate elements that reoccur again and again in the mass of narratives that I have collected. On the basis of these points of likeness, let me now construct a brief, theoretically "ideal" or "complete" experience which embodies all of the common elements, in the order in which it is typical for them to occur:

A man is dying and as he reaches the point of greatest physical distress, he hears himself pronounced dead by his doctor. He begins to hear an uncomfortable noise, a loud ringing or buzzing. At the same time he feels himself moving very rapidly through a long dark tunnel. After this, he suddenly finds himself outside of his own physical body, but still in the immediate physical environment. He sees his own body from a distance as though he is a spectator. He watches the resuscitation attempt from this unusual vantage point and is in a state of emotional upheaval.

After a while, he collects himself and becomes more accustomed to his old condition. He notices that he still has a "body", but one of a very different nature and with very different powers from the physical body he has left behind. Soon after, things begin to happen. Others come to meet and to help him. He glimpses the spirits of relatives and friends who have already died, and a loving, warm spirit of a kind he has never encountered before – a being of light – appears before him. This being asks him a question, non-verbally, to make him evaluate his life and helps him along by showing him a panoramic, instantaneous playback of the major events of his life. At some point he finds himself approaching some sort of barrier or border, apparently representing the limit between earthly life and the next life.

Yet, he finds that he must go back to the earth, that the time for his death has not yet come. At this point he resists, for by now he is taken up with his experiences in the afterlife and does not want to return. He is overwhelmed by intense feelings of joy, love, and peace. Despite his attitude, though, he somehow reunites with his physical body and lives." unquote. (Ref. Raymond A. Moody, Life after Life (Book) Pub. 1975, Covington, Georgia Mockingbird, USA).

Kenneth Ring of the University of Connecticut also interviewed 120 people who had come close to death through illness, accident or suicide attempts. Of those almost half reported experiences which conformed in an obvious way to Moody's description (Ref. Kenneth Ring, "Life At Death", Pub., Coward, Mccann and Geoghegan, New York, 10016). Kenneth Ring categorized five stages of the near death experience: "peace, body separation, entering the darkness (or tunnel), seeing the light", and entering the light. Not only did those five stages tend to unfold in order, but the first stage was more common (60 percent of his sample reported peace) and the last least common (10 percent)."

According to Kenneth Ring (Page 169-170)

It is not "merely" coming close to death that tends to convince one that there is life after death. It is a apparently, the core experience itself that proves decisive. The testimony here is unambiguous. A woman who suffered a heart attack said as a result of her experience:

I believe beyond any question of a doubt that there is something beyond [this life]⁽⁴⁾.

A man who was badly injured in a racing car accident said his experience changed his view of death.

My attitude toward death is that death is not dying; death is being reborn. You're reborn to a new peaceful life that, you'll be able to experience when you die (73).

A man who suffered a cardiac arrest during surgery stated:

I would say—and not being religious at all—that there must be something after death, which I never believed in before. I always believed that when you were dead, they put you in the ground and you stayed there. But I am not too sure about that anymore (48).

A man who appears to have died “clinically” during open heart surgery also became convinced in life after death through this experience.

Well, it [his experience] gave me the idea that I think there's life after death. I believe that now. Before I believed that if you died, you were just dead. But now I really believe that there is some kind of life after death (33).

The woman who had a cardiac arrest when undergoing a tonsillectomy said that prior to her operation:

I had a doubt. (How do you feel about it now?) Oh, I am positive now, completely convinced (24).

Finally, a man who nearly died in a diving accident said that before his accident:

I thought it was all a bunch of baloney (How about now—is there life after death?) Sure. Definitely (77).

Comments like these are quite typical of core experiencers. For most, the idea of life after death becomes not merely highly probable, but a veritable certainty. Non-experiencers, on the other hand, are not only significantly less convinced that life after death is a reality, but remain relatively unaffected by their near-death episode in this regard.

Let us not forget that experiences of Moody and Ring concern those persons who reached near death state only. In these experiences man is separated from this world into another, from where he can never come back.

Concept of the living soul is as old as the birth of the human beings on the earth. From the fossil of flowers in the graves of Wecinder (Turkey) it appears that people who probably lived there more than 30 thousand years ago, even they believed in the accountability of their souls. Babylonians and Egyptians, five thousand years ago, used to bury their dead with their belongings in the tombs, in the hope that they will need them in their second coming to life. Hindus have always believed in the re-incarnation of souls since the time immemorial.

Plato (428-348 BC), one of the greatest minds of all times, believed and preached the continuity of life after death, Raymond Moody²² in his book reproduces Plato's belief in the following words:

“Plato's writings are full of descriptions of death experiences which are precisely like those which were discussed in the previous Surah. For instance, Plato defines death as the separation of the incorporeal part of a living person, the soul, from the physical part, the body. What is

more, this incorporeal part of man is subject to many fewer limitations than is the physical part. Hence, Plato specifically points out that time is not an element of the realms beyond the physical, sensible world. The other realms are eternal and, in Plato's striking phrase, what we call time is but the "moving unreal reflection of eternity".

"Plato discusses in various passages how the soul which has been separated from its body may meet and converse with the departed spirits of others and be guided through the transition from physical life to the next realm by guardian spirits. He mentions how some might expect to be met at the time of their death by a boat that takes them across a body of water to "the other shore" of their after-death existence. In Plato both the dramatic setting and the thrust of the arguments and words used drive home the point that the body is the prison of the soul and that, correspondingly, death is like an escape or release from that prison. While, as we saw in the first Surah, Plato (through Socrates) view death as a sleeping and a forgetting, he does so only ultimately to disavow it and, indeed, to turn it around 180 degrees. According to Plato, the soul comes into the physical body from a higher and more divine realm of being. For him it is birth which is the sleeping and the forgetting, since the soul, in being born into the body, goes from a state of great awareness to a much less conscious one and in the meantime forgets the truths it knew while in its previous out-of-body state. Death, by implication, is an awakening and remembering. Plato remarks that the soul that has been separated from the body upon death can think and reason even more clearly than before, and that it can recognize things in their true nature far more readily. Furthermore, soon after death

it faces a "judgment" in which a divine being displays before the soul all the things-both good and bad – which it has done in its life and makes the soul face them."

Dr. Raymond Moody further says: *"Concept of continuity of soul after death has also been clearly held by the sages of Tibet and China from antiquity. Some of them even acquired the capability to release their soul temporarily out of their bodies, which they termed as prison of the soul. They experienced that when free of the burden of the body, soul is extremely light which has the immense capabilities in the domain of space and time; where it can travel in the forward and backward, thus surpass the bounds of future and past, and go to regions of space not at all otherwise possible. Raymond Moody has also quoted from the "Tibetan book of Deads" said to be a remarkable work compiled from the teachings of sages over many centuries in prehistoric period, and passed down through these early sources by word of mouth. It was finally written down, apparently in the 8th century A.D.*

"The Tibetan Book of Deads, contains a lengthy description of the various stages through which one goes after physical death. The correspondence between the early stages of the death which it relates and those which have been narrated to me (Moody) by those who have come near to death is nothing short of fantastic".

These experiences of human souls from the prehistoric to the present age can mean only one thing that man is not a simple living being of matter and life, but it has an extra dimension, a permanent dimension, which you may call Mind, Soul, Spirit, Consciousness, Personality, Ego etc., give it any name, but it is there.

Impact of experience of dying and then coming back to life, according to Kenneth Ring heightened inner religious feeling in the core experiencers. He writes:

In general, then, core experiencers tend to state that they feel closer to Allah afterward rather than closer to their church; they are more prayerful and privately religious than religious in an external, denominational way. In some cases this kind of religious feeling fades after a few months or years, but for most respondents it appears to represent a lasting transformation of their religious orientation.

Several distinctive aspects of this heightened religious feeling together constitute its principal features. A number of respondents mentioned that they became more prayerful afterward and/or felt a greater awareness of Allah's presence.

I did find that for a while after the experience I did become more religious. I was praying a lot. [Eventually, she ceased to pray so frequently, but she remained more religious than she had been before her near-death experience] (7).

[Afterward] I never prayed so much in my life (6).

My faith in there being a power higher and greater that is somehow controlling my life has been heavily reinforced (82).

I rely a great deal more on Allah. I know that very definitely He is there (26).

I have become very religious since this experience. More and more so. I spend a great deal of time in prayer every morning (4).

Well [afterward], I felt closer to a—a Allah. that I had not for years. [Before] I was an agnostic, I didn't know. (Do you now feel you know?) I feel much closer that I know. I find myself praying sometimes to [pause] an unknown Force (19).

It is more or less that there's something in me that I can call on. I almost feel like there's a supreme being in each one of us that we can call on. Whether that's Allah or not, I don't really know. [She described herself, however, as being much more religious afterward] (29).

It is kind of strange, after leaving the hospital; it started crossing my mind to go into religion. I don't know. I will tell you one thing: I find myself praying or maybe thinking of Allah or a Superior Being more often now than I have in the past (45).

After the incident I felt like I had more faith, a lot more faith than before. [This change lasted only a couple of months, however] (99).

I have become a lot more religious. I pray every night. I have been asking for other visions in my prayers (79).

Another component of the religious attitude of core experiencers has to do with a feeling that organized religion may either be irrelevant to or interfere with the expression of this inward sense of religiousness.

[Before I was] fairly religious, but in a superficial way. I was more or less caught up in the ritual and the trappings of religion. And afterwards, for the short period after, I realized that the ritual and all that [pause] really meant

nothing. It was the faith and the deep-down meaning that was of importance (99).

It [the experience] gave me a lot of questions, a lot of questions. I began to question the need for church. [She went on to elaborate that she no longer feels the need of a building to be religious. A minister told her that she carries a church within her]. [Now] I don't need the church (30).

I am not such a follower of the church anymore. Like they say, "You have to do this; you have to do that". I don't do that. Because I have to do what I think is right now. I rely more on my feelings than on their commands. I don't believe in their commands (24).

I have always had difficulty with religions anyway. And, after this experience, as time went on, as this progression was going on, I found that the need to go to communication, confession, to a place to pray, observe Good Friday, or any of these kinds of things, not only weren't necessary, but they were blocking what was really supposed to be happening. So that's why I have no affiliation (77).

Although indifference or even contempt for organized religion is sometimes expressed by core experiencers, it is usually stated within a context that implies an overall religious tolerance for all ways of worship. From this point of view, there is no one religion or religious denomination that is superior or "true"; rather, all religions are expressions of a single truth. It is smug sectarian quality of some religious groups to which core experiencers tend to object, not to the basics of religious worship itself.

All of the religions are more or less blending in together now. The little minor points—you don't believe in this saint or this blessing—these things are really very insignificant (24).

I don't think of religion as a religion any more. Allah is above all religions. Allah is the religion, so, therefore, the various religions have no effect whatsoever on me (28).

I am not really involved in any one religion. I think they all have something in common. I am not really an advocate of any one of them in particular (99).

I believe in the basics of all religions. They're all connected as far as I am concerned (77).

I feel welcome in any church. But . . . no one certain church . . . Each person is judged by his own doings. So there's not any man that's going to walk up to me and tell that, say, the Baptists are going to be the only people who will ever see heaven (68).

I know that I can go to a Catholic church, an Episcopalian church, a Baptist church, I don't care where you go, it is all the same. There is no difference. It is just a different world (20).

STATE OF DEATH AND AFTERWARDS

In the case-histories studied by Dr. Raymond Moody and Kenneth Ring, discussed earlier, the dead persons had come to life soon after their clinical death. Although even these are very rare occurrence, but after real death, there is no turning back. Soul leaves the body till the time of Resurrection, which will happen after the universal doomsday, may be billions of years away.

Death is the gateway between the probationary life on the earth and the intermediate spiritual world of the Hereafter called "Burzakh". Final resting place will be after Resurrection. Once out of this gateway man sees with certainty the hollowness of his cherished goals of life and the weightage of the spiritual side of his living that he might have unfortunately taken lightly. Unless allowed to come back to life, like in some cases discussed already, it will be too late to mend, even to repent.

In the following we shall discuss the events related to the permanent death state in the light of the Holy Quran and Ahaadiths of the last of the Messengers of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) on earth.

Nature of Death

Holy Quran terms death as an act of creation like the life. Thus it is not "being reduced to nothingness" but a created state as revealed in the following Ayaat:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۗ وَهُوَ
الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ ۝

“(Allah is) He Who created the death and the life that He may try which of you is best in deeds. And He is the All-Mighty, the oft-Forgiving” 67(2)

And

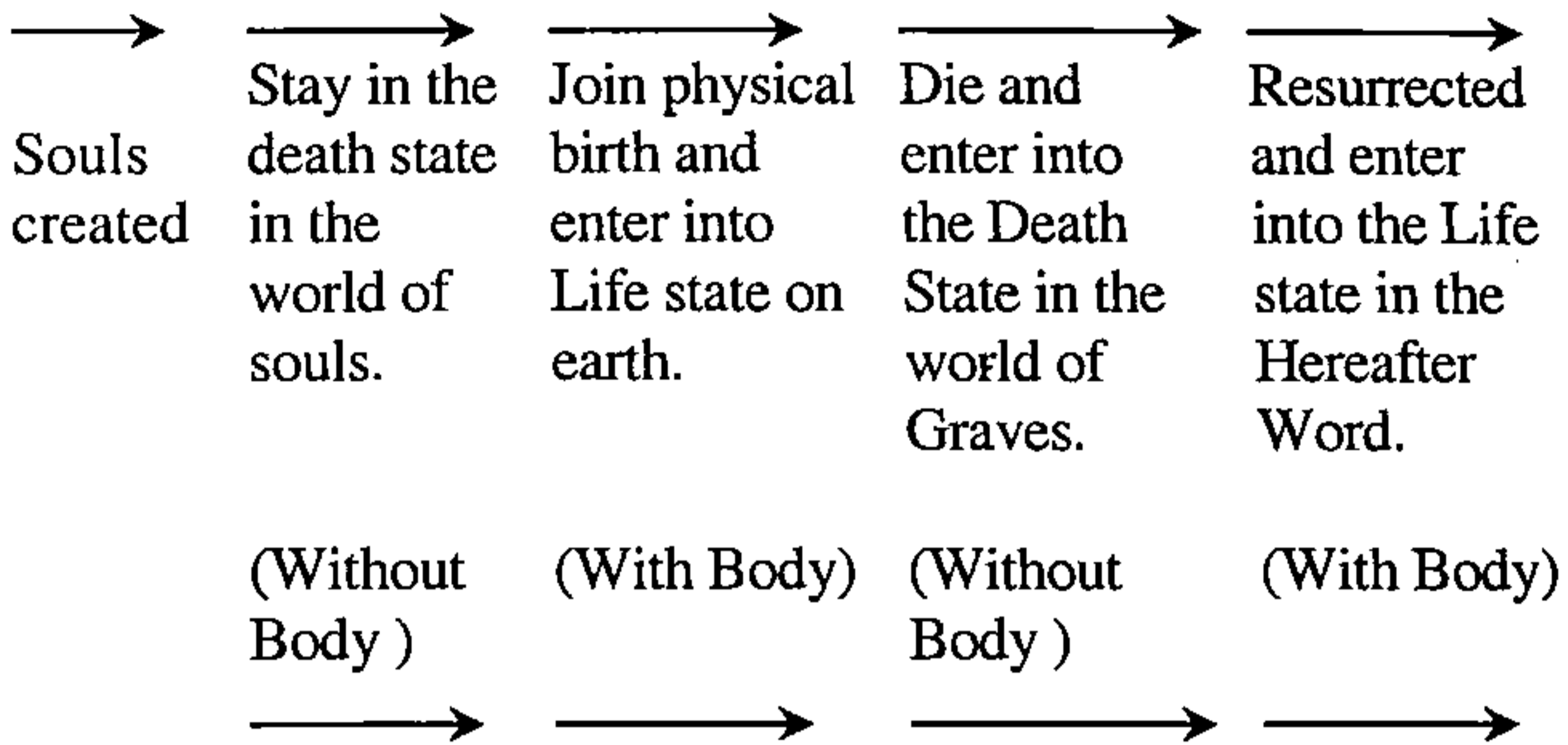
قَالُوا رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِأَنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ وَأَحْيَيْتَنَا أَنْتَ يَا رَبَّنَا فَأَعْتَرَفْنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا فَهَلْ إِلَى خُرُوجٍ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ ۝

“(At the time of Resurrection) They will say, Our Lord, twice, you gave us death, and twice You gave us life. Now we have recognized our sins. Is there any way out?” 40(11)

From the above, following observations may be derived on the life and the death:

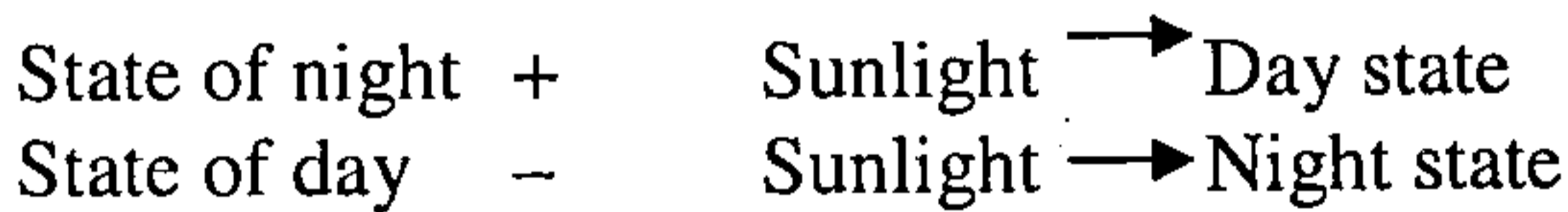
- i. Death is a created state as is the reality of life.
- ii. It is not “nothing” but “some form of existence of the soul.”
- iii. Even before our physical appearance on this earth, we had existence in the state of death; and from there on, will pass on to the state of life, thus each one has two deaths and two lives.
- iv. Death is the bodiless state of existence. One before we were born on this world, the second when we pass away from this world to the world of graves.

In this context our journey of life and death states may be represented by the following:



Trying to understand death before life, a similitude in the working of semi-conductors may help. In it are “holes” and “electrons”, where “hole” is a state of absence of electron, but in itself it is also a definite reality.

In the Holy Quran reality of the life and death are sometime mentioned analogous to the phenomenon of night and day. Both are successive events in the time plane. State of night and day is differentiated only by the absence or presence of an external function that is light derived from the Sun, which never sets in. The light is analogous to the human soul. In this example we may visualize the life and death with reference to cycle of night and day as follows:



In both cases medium for manifestation of day and night is on the earth otherwise in the upper space light is always present. On the same analogy;

(State of death + body) ---- Life state
 (State of life - body) ---- Death state

In this case, manifestation of death and life is due to a living human body.

Soul is made to enter our body during the embryonic stages, it is taken away at the time of the biochemical death of the body to go into 2nd transformation in the journey to eternity. We come from Allah and go back to Him. Quran says:

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَنَبَلُّوكُم بِالشَّرِّ وَالْخَيْرِ فِتْنَةً ۗ وَإِلَيْنَا تُرْجَعُونَ ۝

“Every soul shall have a taste of death, and We try you with evil and with good, by way of trial, and unto Us you will be returned”.
 21(35)

Taking Out of Soul

The Holy Quran also informs that each soul has a protector angel over it. During lifetime it watches over man's actions and records his deeds. At the time of death the soul is taken out by this angel as told in the following Ayaat:

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَفِظَةً ۗ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَ

أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ تَوَفَّتْهُ رُسُلُنَا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْرِطُونَ ۝ ثُمَّ رُدُّوا إِلَىٰ

اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمْ الْحَقِّ ۗ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ ۗ وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَاسِبِينَ ۝

“He is the omnipotent over His slaves, He sends guardian over you until, when death comes unto one of you, Our messengers (angels) receive him, and they neglect not. Then they are restored unto Allah, their

Just Lord. And He is quick in reckoning”.
6(61-62)

After death, soul is taken away from the dead body permanently by the angles. This is described in the Holy Quran in following manner:

قُلْ يَتَوَفَّنُكُمْ مَلَكُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي وُكِّلَ بِكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُمْ
تُرْجَعُونَ ۝

“Say, the angel of death, put in charge of you will (duly) take your souls. Then shall you be brought back to your Lord”. 32(11)

Also,

إِذْ يَتَلَقَّى الْمُتَلَقِينَ عَنِ الْيَمِينِ وَعَنِ الشِّمَالِ قَعِيدٌ ۝ مَا
يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ ۝ وَجَاءَتْ سَكْرَةُ
الْمَوْتِ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ مَا كُنْتُمْ مِنْهُ تَجِيدُونَ ۝

“And when the two receivers receive (the soul), seated on the right hand and on the left, he (the dying man) utters no word but there is with him an observer ready. And the agony of death comes in truth, (and it is said to him). This is that which you wanted to shun”. 50(17-19)

Pain in Death

Death is always painful for body. However, it is also painful for the souls of the rebels of Allah. The following ayaat of the Holy Quran describe the state of a sinful soul after the real death from where there is no comeback.

وَلَوْ تَرَىٰ إِذِ يَتَوَفَّى الْمَيِّتَ كَفَرُوا ۗ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَضْرِبُونَ
 وُجُوهُهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ ۗ وَذُوقُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ ۝ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا
 قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِّلْعَبِيدِ ۝

“If you could see when the angels take away the souls of the unbelievers (how) they smite their faces and their backs (saying), taste the penalty of the blazing fire. This is because of your deeds that your hands sent forth. Indeed Allah is never unjust to His servants”. 8(50-51)

The souls who had acted in their worldly period according to the Divine instructions, are received with love and affection as said in the Holy Quran:

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّيهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ ۖ يَقُولُونَ سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ
 ادْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

“Those whom angels cause to die (and they are) good, they say, “Peace be on you, enter you the Junnat, because of the good you used to do (in the world)”. 16(32)

If we carefully reflect into the above Ayaat, following points are evident:

- a) Souls are drawn out from the human body at the time of the death by our guardian angles.
- b) Dying is a time of real agony and a painful process for every one Ayaat 50(17-19). Souls of the sinners and rebels of Allah are subjected to punishment after the death.

- c) In Burzakh, souls come to know the hidden realities concerning their life, such as recording of the deeds, angels and they also see the glimpses of Hell and Paradise etc.
- d) After Resurrection souls will get their bodies for the second life Ayaat 32(11).

Graves – The Disposal Place (Burzakh)

Whereas Grave is the place of disposal for the dead body, it is the state of living for the soul. Whether the body is buried in earth, burnt on pyre, eaten by the beasts, drowned in sea, whatever the case may be, souls live in the State called Burzakh till the Resurrection. It means 'cover'. It has its own Jannah and Jahannam.

Following Ayah of the Holy Quran describe few stages of man's journey from birth to Burzakh.

مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ ۖ مِنْ نُّطْفَةٍ ۖ خَلَقَهُ فَقَدَرَهُ ۖ ثُمَّ السَّبِيلَ

يَسَّرَهُ ۖ ثُمَّ أَمَاتَهُ فَأَقْبَرَهُ ۖ ثُمَّ إِذَا شَاءَ أَنشَرَهُ ۖ

“From what thing did He create him. From a sperm drop He has created him (mankind) and fashioned him, and made him in due proportions; then does He make his path smooth for him, then He causes him to die and puts him in his grave. Then, when it is His will, He would raise him up (again)”.

80(18-22)

The above Ayaat indicate that grave is a disposal state for the soul from the time of his departure from worldly life to the Day of Judgment, a state between the death and the Resurrection.

For some people life in graves (Burzakh) is of happiness, for some it is a period of frustration and for some it is like the sleep to be awakened at the time of the Resurrection only. About this Quran says:

وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُمْ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنْسِلُونَ ۝

قَالُوا يَا وَيْلَنَا مَنْ بَعَثَنَا مِنْ مَرْقَدِنَا ۝

“The Trumpet is blown and Lo! From the graves they will come rushing, unto their Lord, crying: Woe upon us. Who has raised us from our place of sleep?” 36(51-52)

Comfort or discomfort in the state of graves (Burzakh) for souls is according to the faith and deeds performed during the earthly stay. It is not an easy period for the rebels and sinners. For example, in the case of Pharaoh, who called himself Allah and had fought with Prophet Moses (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), the Holy Quran describes his painful state in his grave in the following words:

النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ۝

أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ ۝

“To them (Pharaoh, and his companion) is shown the Fire in the morning and evening, and on the Day of Doom; (it will be said) “Cause Pharaoh’s folk to enter the most awful doom”. 40(46)

Also,

وَإِذَا الْقُبُورُ بُعْثِرَتْ ۝ عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ وَأَخَّرَتْ ۝

“And when raised from graves, a soul will know what has it sent before it, and what left behind”. 82(4-5)

Reward and Punishment in the State of Graves

Although the final accountability is going to be on the Day of Judgment as said already, souls of rebels of Allah like Pharaoh, are exposed to torture soon after their death 40(46) and 8 (50-51). On the other hand those who have done exceptionally good deeds see the pleasure of Paradise during the period of graves also 16(32). However for majority, state of the graves is like the state of sleep as pointed out in 36(51-52). They will not even know how long they had been in that state after their death. Punishment or reward in such cases is like the dreams; good dreams or dreadful dreams, depending upon their deeds. In case of declared rebels, Judgment is immediate. In Pharaoh's people it is told:

مِمَّا خَطِيئَتِهِمْ أُغْرِقُوا فَأَدْخَلُوا نَارًا فَلَمْ يَجِدُوا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ

اللَّهِ أَنْصَارًا ۝

“Because of their sins, (it was ordered) drown them and made them to enter a Fire, and they found, they had no helper in place of Allah”. 71(25)

From Ayaat 102(1-2) we also see that souls in graves come to know about their past and future, which keeps them happy or unhappy till the Day of Judgment. Following is the description of the life of sinners in graves:

الْهَنْكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ ۝ حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ ۝ كَلَّا سَوْفَ
 تَعْلَمُونَ ۝ ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝ كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ
 الْيَقِينِ ۝ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ۝ ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ۝ ثُمَّ
 لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ۝

“Rivalry of worldly gains distracts you, until you come to grave. Nay, surely you will come to know Nay, again surely you will come to know. Nay, you would know with sure knowledge, then indeed you will see the Hell fire, then you will behold it with sure vision. Then surely, on that Day, you will be asked, concerning the enjoyments of (worldly) pleasures”. 102(1-8).

In his various sayings, the last of the Allah's Apostle (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) has explained the state of graves and its trial. He told that period of graves is of great trial. One will live in that state till Resurrection, which may be billions of years away. That means, sinners due to their own deeds will experience the torture of uncertainty in the graves for all that period. Knowing that Allah is Merciful and Compassionate, one can hope from His Mercy that, majority of the humanity may be forgiven for their sins but waiting period in the graves, for billions of years must be very horrifying, frustrating and tiring for the non-believers.

The Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) told, “Grave is the first encounter with the events leading to the Resurrection. If one finds it easy, his future will also be secure, but if this is not good for him, then the remainder

events of the Resurrection might be even worse for him". (Al-Tirmizi)

On another occasion as narrated by Hazrat Abdullah bin Omar (Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, "When anyone of you dies, he is shown his likely abode after resurrection in the morning and in the evening. If he has done deeds deserving him paradise, he is shown Paradise and if he performed deeds of the dwellers of Hell, he is shown hell twice daily. He is then told, this is your permanent place after the Day of Judgment. Sight of this scene keeps him happy or unhappy all that period". (Al-Tirmizi)

From His various sayings it is also clear that as a man is taken for burial, his guardian angels go with his body in company of his soul. In this journey the soul sees all those going with the dead body and listens to the wails of the relatives and talks of the friends. When they are burying the dead body, quietly it watches all the ceremony. After burial, the guardian angels allow the soul to see off his departing relatives and friends. As soon as they have left, his guardian angels take him to the grave, treat him the way he deserves and ask him questions about his belief and knowledge. The prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) is reported to have said:

"Two angels called Munkar and Nakeer show him the face of the beloved Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) and ask him if he knew of this man. A believer says, "I stand witness to the fact Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) is the last of the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) of Earth." At this correct answer, he/she is shown his place in Jannah. However, when any hypocrite or a disbeliever is asked the

same question, he will not be able to reply correctly, thus he will be shown his peace in the hell fire". (Al-Bukhari)

"Hazrat Osman (Razi Allah Anho) narrated that Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) after the burial of the dead, would stand by the grave and ask us to pray for the forgiveness and steadfastness of our muslim brother/sister because then he/she is put to questions concerning what he/she did in life time". (Al-Bukhari)

All this means that death is a name of another beginning in the life of the soul. Its performance in the next world would depend upon its preparations made in this world. It is like a baby who is born with some genetic defects and suffers in his life. On the other hand if he is born genetically superior then he has advantage over others. In this life advantages or disadvantages of life are the tests for mankind, to see how do they fair in the given conditions according to the criteria of Truth of Allah's revelation to His Prophets. Those who satisfactorily pass this test are the successful ones and those who fail will be the doomed ones.

Our real selves are our souls only. Even in this world, body keeps on changing throughout our lives. Each hour, millions of cells die and are replaced by the new ones. Over the lifetime of soul in this world, replacement of the entire body parts is many times. Thus what is "Me" is my "Soul" only, body being like housing leased for a specific period, temporary residence to interact with the physical world around. Should then we live for our eternal betterment or for the temporary pleasures of the body? This is the big question that we must settle to set the right priorities of our life. If we can do that then the reward would be

tremendous. One glimpse of which may be seen in the following Ayaat of the Holy Quran.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۖ ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً

مَرْضِيَّةً ۖ فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ۖ وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي ۖ

To the righteous believer it will be said: “O (you) Soul, in (complete) rest and satisfaction! “Come back to Your Lord, well pleased (Yourself), and well-pleasing(unto Him) “Enter-you, then, among my devoted servants! “ Enter My Jannah (It is reserved for you)”. 89(27-30)

THE RESURRECTION AND LIFE IN THE NEW UNIVERSE

One of the fundamental articles of the faith of a Muslim is the belief in the Resurrection after death. According to Islamic teachings, life after the Resurrection is a time of refinement, of reward or punishment, depending on the state of spiritual development of the individual. For the souls at peace with their Creator, there is a place called "Jannah", a place of fulfillment and satisfaction; only longing there will be to draw closer and closer to the Creator, forever and ever.

Alongside the state of Paradise, there is the opposite order of existence called Jahannam i.e. Hell, a place of burning refinement, a melting pot for the purification of souls. In it, although the process is painful, souls will gradually be purified from the pollutions that had shut off the light of their Creator for them. Sinners with Mercy of Allah, the most forgiving will remain there for different periods according to the Divine Judgement. Thus with time, even the sinners will keep moving up from Jahannam to the ultimate peace of Paradise with the Mercy of Allah.

In between these two states there is also a Neutral State of existence, a state of preparation to enter the Paradise, called al-Aaraf that is Heights. People in Aaraf will experience pain of Hell and peace of Paradise at the same time.

Life in the New Universe will also be of great activity and full of purpose. Each one will have higher plans before him

to achieve. In our present world we have inclinations to gain and surpass in riches and recognition, but in the next world, the yearning of soul would be to achieve nearness to Allah. Prophet of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, "Ultimate state of satisfaction in the Paradise will be to enter into the Noor of Allah; the very Cause of the heavens and the Earth and of everything therein." Effort, struggle and the urge for the betterment will thus continue forever with man, both in the Hell and in the Paradise.

The Day of Resurrection would be sounded by the Soor, a call for the rising of the dead from their state of Burzakh 23(100). For most people in the Burzakh, there was no real reward or punishment but only thoughts of the past deeds and reflections on the impending fate which kept one happy or sad according to one's deeds. According to narrations in the book of Ahaadith, the graves will be wide and spacious, full of light for the believers but narrow and dark for the rejecters. The former will be at peace, and the latter will be in torment in their graves. This state will end suddenly on the call of the Resurrection, the second Soor (صور), a mighty blast that might be the very sound of the great implosions. The Holy Quran puts this in the following manner:

فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ زَجْرَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ ۖ فَإِذَا هُمْ بِالسَّاهِرَةِ ۝

"Surely it will need but one shout, So they will be awakened, (out of their graves)".

79(13-14)

All people, of all generations, of all times, from all over the Universe, will come rushing out at this call, swarming to the place of their ultimate Judgement. This scene is depicted in Ayah 101(4) which says:

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ ۝

“It is a Day on which, all mankind will come like thickly scattered moths”. 101(4)

This Day is the state of waiting in the court of the Judge, Who cannot be cheated, who knows everything, All-Powerful, the Ultimate sovereign, the Creator of time and Space, and the Compassionate one. In anguish, people will be reflecting on their past lives and passing judgments on themselves. The very thought of their misdeeds will be horrifying, putting their selves into shame. Following Ayaat provide us with some of the vivid reflections of the last-Hour of the Day of Judgement:

قُلُوبٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاجِفَةٌ ۝ أَبْصَارُهَا خَاشِعَةٌ ۝

“On that Day, Hearts beat painfully, with eyes down cast”. 79(8-9)

وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا ۝ وَجِئَءَ يَوْمَئِذٍ بِجَهَنَّمَ ۝
“Your Lord shall come, with angels, rank upon rank; and the Hell will be brought near that Day”. 89(22-23)

وَإِذَا الْجَنَّةُ أُزْلِفَتْ ۝

“And Paradise is brought near”. 81(13)

عَلِمَتْ نَفْسٌ مَّا أَحْضَرَتْ ۝

“Every soul will know, what it has made ready”. 81(14)

فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ۝ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ

مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ۝

“Whosoever does good, an atom’s weight, will see it then, and whosoever does evil, an atom’s weight, will see it then”. 99(7-8)

And then:

فَأَمَّا مَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ۖ فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَاضِيَةٍ ۖ وَأَمَّا مَنْ
خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ ۖ فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ ۖ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا هِيَ ۖ نَارٌ
حَامِيَةٌ ۖ

“As for him, whose scales are heavy (with good works) He will live in a pleasant state, but as for him whose scales are light, the bereft and hungry will be his abode, ah, what will convey You, what she is; a raging fire”. 101(6-11)

It is in view of this impending fate that, the Holy Quran advises mankind in their highest interest to prepare for the unending years to come and enter the next life with a properly developed soul. Your journey's end will very much depend upon your take off point in Burzakh. In our journey of existence, life period in this world is very important for entry into Jannah in the next world.

It is strange that while we plan so much for the future in this world we forget the future after death. We direct all our efforts toward our bodily comforts, we neglect the soul which is our real self. All those who get birth, know that death is their common lot, yet most of the mankind will do everything for the temporary life of the world at the cost of the permanent life in the Hereafter. Thus we betray our selves and work against our own eternal interests. Think of it, if one has to go even for a day away from his home, one plans ahead of the journey, but when it comes to the journey to the eternity, he bothers not? How is that?

The reason is simple. We may spend years of our life time to learn some skill for feeding body, unfortunately have no time to learn how to feed our soul, our real selves. Alas! We hardly spare a few moments to know about the world to come? We believe in professors of physical sciences, but doubt the prophets, our beneficent and well wishers who spent the whole of their lives in preaching the eternal truths.

We believe in the law of conservation of matter and energy, but fail to appreciate the eternity of our soul. If matter lives, then this means that atoms of our body are not going to be destroyed. If energy is eternal then how are our souls mortal?

Those who wish to know their Inner reality, are fortunate to have the Holy Quran the Divine Revelation, exactly as it was delivered to the world more than fourteen hundred years ago to guide mankind on the way that leads to the Creator. Bible is another religious book, but it has been so much changed by men after Jesus (PBUH) that it cannot be relied upon.

Not only the Holy Quran, we have also available with us the complete record of the life of the last of Allah's Messengers with all its details. He was the living Quran. Those who follow his footsteps will have no fear of going wrong those who follow their own whims, have all the chances to go astray. They want to reinvent the wheel, but they have no time for that. The Holy Quran says:

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُمْ زِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ
 فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاتُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ
 فَتْرَتَهُ مُصْفَرًّا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَامًا ۗ وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ۗ
 وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ ۗ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَمَتَاعٌ الْغُرُورُ ۝

“Know that the life of this world is, but play and amusement, pomp and show between you, It is competition, and rivalry for wealth and children. Here is a similitude (of this life). It is like the vegetation after rain, whereof the growth is pleasing to the tillers, soon it withers, and you see it turning yellow and then it is reduced to pieces. (For those who waste life in useless pursuits), in the hereafter, there is a grievous punishment for them (However, life on earth provides you an opportunity to seek) forgiveness from Allah, and His good pleasure. And (remember) life of this world is a mere deception”. 57(20)

Now compare it with the life of Jannah which waits for the righteous ones:

سَابِقُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَرَجْنَةٍ عَرْضُهَا كَعَرْضِ السَّمَاءِ
 وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ أَعِدَّتْ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۝

“Therefore, race one with another, for forgiveness from your Lord, and for Paradise, whereof the breadth is as of the breadth of the heaven and the earth (the

entire Universe), prepared for those who believe in Allah and his messengers". 57(21)

As for the questions, that how life will begin again how will the dead be brought back to life; how will the Resurrection take place; the Holy Quran repeatedly says this will all happen in the same manner as out of nothing was brought into existence the first creation in the first instance. If the present order had been created from nothing, then why not the second beginning? Ayah 31(38) provides answer to this fundamental question in the following words:

مَا خَلَقَكُمْ وَلَا يَعْثُبُكُمْ إِلَّا كَنَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ ۝

"Your creation and your Resurrection is but like that of (creation of) a single self; Verily, He is the All-Hearing and Seeing" 31(28).

People on the Day of Resurrection will think that they had been sleeping for only a while. And it will be a controversial issue for them. An example of this is in our own worldly life. If we look back, it seems but a very short period.

The Holy Quran illustrates this with the following description of the type of conversation among the people at their Resurrection:

مَا لِبَشَرٍ أُغْيِرَ سَاعَتَهُ كَذَلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ ۝ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ وَالْإِيمَانَ لَقَدْ لَبِئْتُمْ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْبَعْثِ فَهَذَا يَوْمُ الْبَعْثِ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

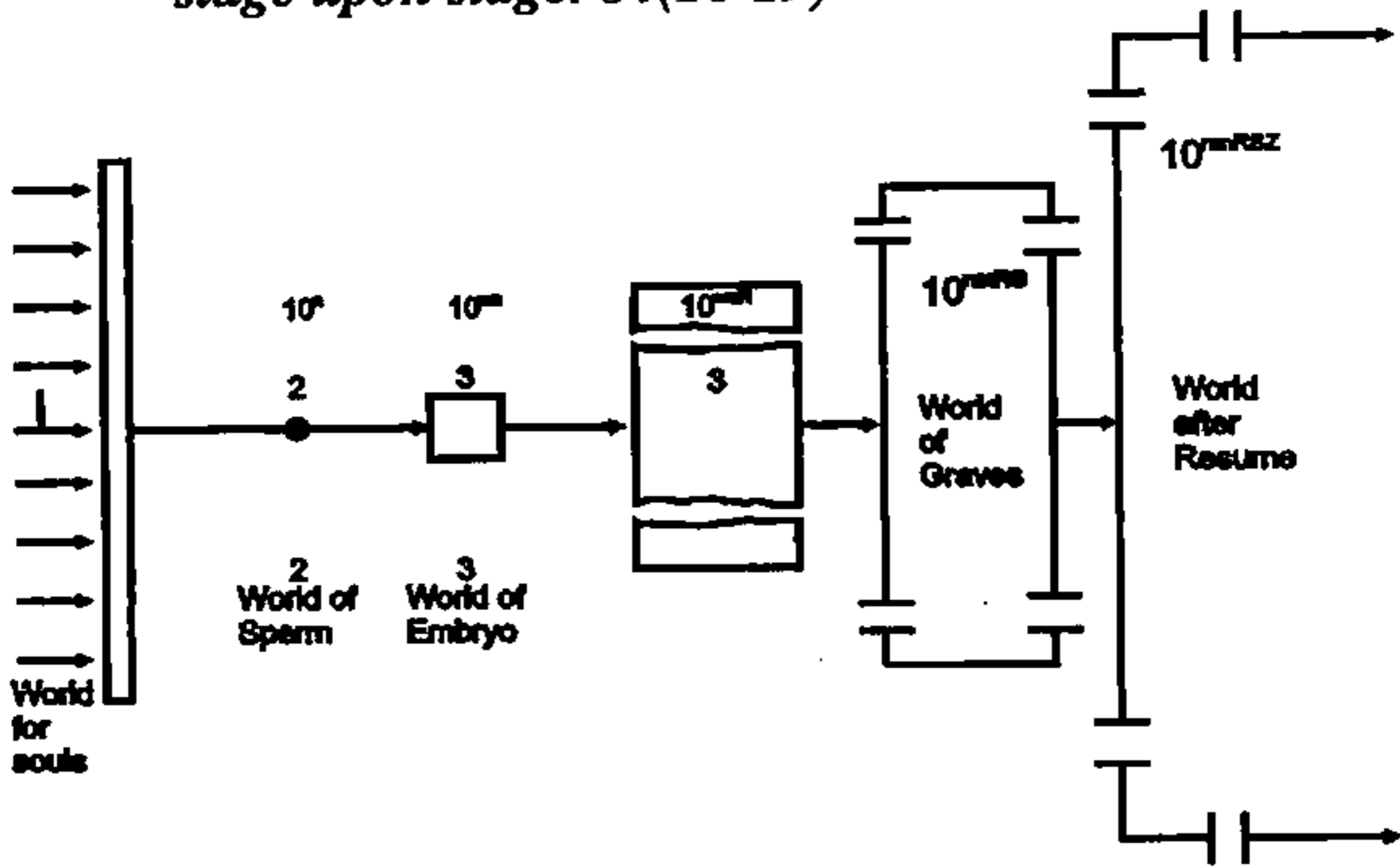
“The (guilty) will vow (in doubt), that they did tarry but an hour but those to whom knowledge and faith, are given, will say, The truth is, that you have tarried by Allah’s decree until the Day of Resurrection. This is the Day of Resurrection, but you are the one who do not know”. 30(55-56)

The Day of Resurrection is also the Day of gathering together of all the generations of mankind from all the worlds, from all the times. It is the Day of accountability also. The Holy Quran repeatedly warns mankind of their Resurrection and their Accountability in the life-after-death.

Fig.31: Our Journey Through Time

فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ ۝ وَاللَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ ۝ وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ ۝
لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَن طَبَقٍ ۝

I swear by the example of afterglow of the Sunset, And by the night; and that which it drives together, And by the example of the Moon, Look at its altering stages, Surely, likewise, (Oh Mankind) You shall ride stage upon stage. 84(16-19)



The figure above is an effort to show different style of the journey of man in time and space, starting with the pre-Universe then from the world of Souls, into the world of the womb of his mother, which he once may have imagined the only reality; then into the world of the Earth; which is infinitely larger than the womb. From here on, he passes into the new world of Hereafter, which will be infinitely larger than the present world. How to reach there successfully? The Holy Quran provides its Road Map:

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE DAY OF RESURRECTION AS TOLD BY THE PROPHET OF ALLAH

Our world is entirely different from the world of Resurrection. Therefore, we have no words to describe the actual state of the life therein. At best there can be analogies and metaphors only.

State of the Day of Resurrection has been illustrated by the last of the Prophets in his various sayings in a language easily understandable to us. Some of these "sayings" are narrated below:

Narrated Abu Saeed Al-Khudri (Razi Allah Anho) we said, "O Allah's apostle! Shall we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?"

He said, "Do you have any difficulty in seeing the Sun and the moon when the sky is clear?"

We said, "No". He said, "So you will have no difficulty in seeing your Creator on that day".

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) then said, "Somebody will then announce, "Let every nation follow what they used to worship".

So the companions of the Cross will go with their Cross, and the idolaters (will go) with their idols, and the companions of every god (false deities) will go with their gods. Till there remain those who used to worship Allah

both the obedient ones and the mischievous ones, and some of the people of the Scriptures.

Then Hell will be presented to them as if it were a mirage.

Then it will be said to the Jews, "What did you worship?" They will reply, "We used to worship Ezra, the son of Allah." It will be said to them, "You are liars, for Allah has neither a wife nor a son.

Then it will be said to the Christians, "What did you use to worship?" they will reply, "We used to worship Messiah, the son of Allah." It will be said, "You are liars, for Allah has neither a wife nor a son. What do you want (now)?"

They will say, "We want you to provide us with water." It will be said to them, "Drink" and they will fall down in Hell (instead).

When there remain only those who worshiped Allah (alone), both the obedient ones and the rebellious ones it will be said to them, "What keeps you here when all the people have gone?"

They will say, "We parted with them (in the World). When we were in greater need of them than we are today. We heard the call of one proclaiming, "Let every nation follow what they used to worship", and now we are waiting for our Lord".

Then the Almighty will come to them in a shape other than the one that they saw the first time and He will say, "I am your Lord", and they will say, "You are our Lord".

And none will speak to Him then but the Prophets and then it will be said to them, "Do you know any sign by which you can recognize Him?"

They will say, "The Nur' (Light) and so Allah will then uncover His Light whereupon every believer will prostrate before Him.

And there will remain those who used to prostrate before Him just for showing off and for gaining good reputation. These people will try to prostrate but their backs will be rigid like single plank of a wood (so they will not be able to prostrate).

Then the Bridge will be laid across Hell.

We, the companions of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, "O Allah's Apostle! What is the Bridge?"

He said, "It is a slippery (Bridge) on which there are clamps and hooks like a thorny bush that is wider at one side and narrow at the other and has thorns with bent ends. Such a thorny bush is found in Najd and is called "As-Sa dan". Some of the believers will cross the Bridge as quickly as the wink of any eye, some others as quick as lightning, a strong wind, fast horses or she-camels. So some will be safe without any harm; some will be safe after receiving some scratches, and some will fall down into Hell (Fire). The last person will cross by being dragged (over the bridge).

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said, "You (Muslims) cannot be more pressing in claiming from Me a right that has been clearly proved to be yours in interceding with the Almighty for their brothers, when they say, "O Allah! (Save) our brothers (for they) used to pray with us, fast with us, and also do good deeds with us."

Allah will say, "Go and take out (of Hell) anyone in whose heart you find faith equal to the weight of one (old) Dinar."

Allah will forbid the Fire to burn the faces of those sinners. They will go to them and find some of them in Hell (Fire) upto their feet, and some upto the middle of their legs. So they will take out those whom they recognize and then they will return.

And then Allah will say, "Go and take out (of Hell) anyone in whose heart you find faith even equal to the weight of an atom" and so they will take out all those whom they will recognize. Abu Said (Razi Allah Anho) said: "If you do not believe me then read the Holy Ayaat":

"Surely! Allah wrongs not even of the weight of an atom but if, there is any good (done) He doubles it and will give (the doer) from His presence the immense reward". 4(40)

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) added, "Then the Prophets and angels and the believers will intercede, (The last of all) the Almighty Allah will say, "Now remains My Intercession".

He Will then hold a handful of the Fire from which He will take out some people whose bodies have been burnt and they will be thrown into a river at the entrance of Paradise, called the "water of life". They will grow on its banks as a seed carried by the torrent grows".

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) explained, "You have noticed how it grows beside a rock or besides a tree, and how the side facing the Sun is usually green while the side facing the shade is white."

Those people will come out (of the River of Life) like pearls and they will have (golden) necklaces and then they will enter Paradise.

Whereupon the people of Paradise will say, "These are the people emancipated by the Benefactor. He has admitted them into Paradise without them having done any good deeds and without sending forth any good (for themselves)".

Narrated Aysha (the Mother of the believers), may Allah be pleased with Her, that Last of the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) said:

"Do good deeds properly, sincerely and moderately and know that your deeds will not make you enter Paradise (except with Allah's mercy) and that most beloved deed to Allah is the most regular and constant, even though it were little" (Al-Bukhari).

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

"I simply believe that some part of the Human self or soul is not subject to the laws of Space and Time¹⁰" (Carl Gustar Jung)

we are not human beings having a spiritual experience: we are spiritual beings having a human experience.

Inspite of all arguments and proofs there are still many people who find it difficult to believe in the life after death and the Resurrection. For them, this life is the only life and there is nothing after death. Ironically, holders of such beliefs try to justify this on the basis of common sense and science. In this regard they consider themselves more progressive and forward looking than others and give those who do not share their views, names such as old fashioned, traditionalists and backward looking. They never realize that disbelief is as old as the belief itself. Even at the time when the Holy Quran was being revealed, there were people who did not believe in life after death. Their arguments were also similar to those of the so-called progressive minds of today. The Holy Quran says:

وَقَالَ الْمَلَأَمِنْ قَوْمِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِإِلْقَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ
وَأَطْرَفْنَهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مَا هَذَا إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُكُمْ لَا يَأْكُلُ
مِمَّا تَأْكُلُونَ مِنْهُ وَيَشْرَبُ مِمَّا تَشْرَبُونَ ۝ وَلَئِنْ أَطَعْتُمْ
بَشَرًا مِثْلُكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا لَخَسِرُونَ ۝ أَيْعِدْكُمْ أَنْكُمْ إِذَا مِتُّمُ

وَكُنْتُمْ تُرَابًا وَعِظَامًا أَنْتُمْ مُخْرَجُونَ ۝ هِيَ هِيَ هِيَ هِيَ لِمَا
تُرْعَلُونَ ۝ إِنَّ هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا نَحْنُ
بِمَبْعُوثِينَ ۝

“Said the chiefs of his nation who did not believe in him, and denied meeting Allah (after death), those whom We had given pleasures of this world “He (the prophet) is nothing but a man like you, he eats what you eat and drinks what you drink. If you obeyed a man like you indeed you will be in sheer loss. He tells you that when you have died and you have been reduced to dust and a mere skeleton of bones you are going to get out (of your graves alive). What are you being promised (by him) is very strange Life is nothing but of this world only. We live here and die here and we are never going to be Resurrected”. 23(33-37)

Thus modern ignorants and disbelievers are as old fashioned as they were 1400 years ago. Let them realize that Man has a unique position in the Universe. Everything, without exception is there to serve him. He is the design basis of everything. Look at the Sun “It is there to serve the mankind, trees are for him, birds live to give him pleasure and benefit. Thus each and every thing is to serve his purpose in one way or the other.

وَسَخَّرَلَكُمْ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا لَهُ ۝ إِنَّ
فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ۝

“He (Allah) has made for your use, all that is in the Heavens, and all that is in the Earth, Behold. Herein verily are signs, for those who think”. 45(13)

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَكُمْ خَلَائِفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ كُفْرُهُ

“He it is, who has made you, vice-regents in the Earth, so he who disbelieves, His disbelief is on his own head”. 35(39)

Modern science also proves that the ultimate purpose of everything in the World is to serve the mankind. Question arises, then what is the purpose of man’s existence? Have you ever given it a thought? A straight answer would be if everything is made to serve Man then his purpose should be nothing else but to serve the Cause of their Creator. One way of fulfilling this obligation is to serve other creations of Allah. Thus establish and maintain peace and harmony in nature. On this the order from our Creator is:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا ۝

“Do not make mischief in the Earth, after it has been set right”. 7(85)

Thus the life of a faithful servant would be for the pleasure of his Master. If he ignores, disobeys or rebels against His commands then there can be nothing for him but punishment. The wise, try to know their rights and obligations within the commands of their Master. On the other hand, fools ignore all this and live a purposeless life.

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ

خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ۝

“He grants wisdom to whom He pleases;

And he to whom wisdom is granted receives indeed a benefit overflowing; And none will grasp the Message but the Men of understanding only". 2(269)

Indeed! Let us pray for the wisdom to know what is really good for us to do and what is bad to avoid!

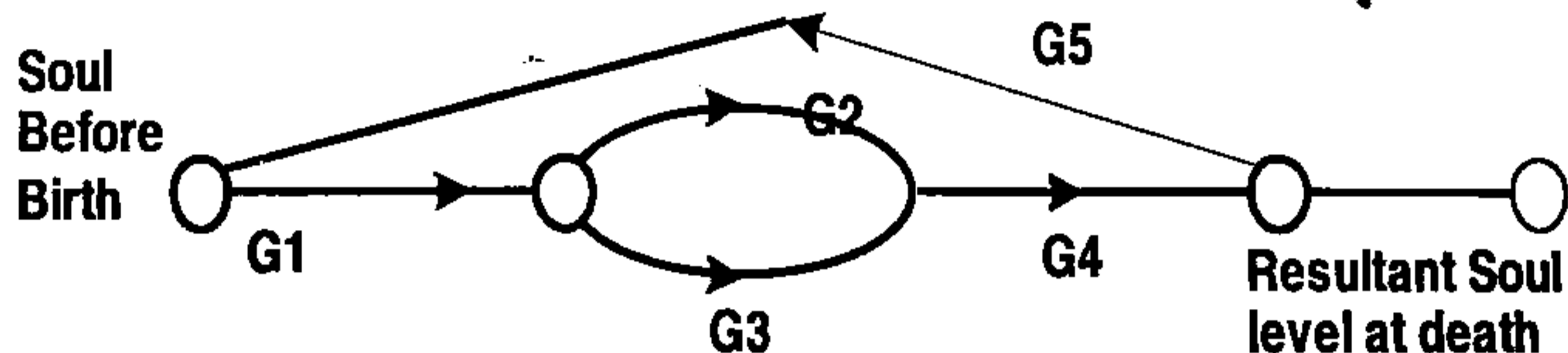


Fig. 32: Arrow Diagram showing various influences on Life and the Resultant Transformation.

G1 = Genetic Influences

G2 = Acquired behavior from Society

G3 = Acquired Guidance from revelation

G4 = Effort and Choice

G5 = Review effects

$$\frac{\text{Out put}}{\text{Input}} = \frac{G_1 G_4 (G_2 + G_3)}{1 + G_1 G_4 G_5 (G_2 + G_3)}$$

Man's life is a feedback system, influenced by his internal genetic code and the influences of the outside social, religious, educational forces etc. His personality is the result of all such influences. A successful life is one of which the soul is in peace with its Creator. All is well that ends well.

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا ۝ فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا ۝ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن
زَكَّاهَا ۝ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا ۝

“The Soul and Him Who perfected it And inspired it with Conscience of, what is good for it, and what is wrong for it He is indeed successful who causes it to grow and he is indeed a failure, Who stunts it....”.

91(7-10)

PART – IV

**A Comprehensive
Index of 425 selected Ayaat of the
Holy Quran about Doomsday, the
Resurrection and Life after
Death under 70 Heads.**

AN INDEX OF THE AYAAT OF THE HOLY QURAN ON THE SUBJECT OF DOOMSDAY

Sr. No	Subject	Ayaat
1	Doomsday is inevitable.	4(87), 6(135), 15(85), 18(21), 18(98), 22(7), 29(5), 30(43), 34(3), 40(59), 42(18), 42(47), 45(26), 45(32), 51(5), 31(6), 51(8-12), 52(7-8), 54(46), 56(1-2), 59(15), 70(1-3), 77(7), 56(95), 84(6).
2	Sudden coming of the Doomsday.	6(31), 7(187), 12(107), 22(55), 43(66), 47(18), 21(40), 10(45).
3	It is a secret.	20(15), 7(187), 12(107), 22(55), 43(66), 47(18), 21(40), 10(45).
4	It is a mighty event, and highly destructive.	8(67-68), 54(46).
5	It will come at its own time, a fixed time.	34(30), 78(17), 44(40), 54(46), 78(17), 11(104), 77(12-13).
6	It is (relatively) near. Signs of the Doomsday	21(1), 21(97), 33(63), 42(17), 53(57-58), 54(1), 70(6-7), 47(18).
II. Purpose		
7	It is a step toward meeting Allah.	32(23)

- 8 Those who reject it are doomed. 77(15), 77 (19, 24, 28, 34, 37, 40, 45, 49,)
- 9 Full Justice, Reward and Punishment are inevitable 13(40, 51(6), 78(39), 88 (26).
- 10 It is a pre-requisite for the Resurrection. 58(6), 64(7), 17(51).
- 11 All the people of all the Worlds will be gathered at the Resurrection. 2(148), 2(203), 3(9, 25, 158), 4(87, 172), 5(96, 109), 6(12), 6(29), 6(51, 62, 72, 128), 7(57), 8(24), 9(24), 10(4, 28), 45(26), 11(7,18,103), 14(21), 15(25,36), 17(49-51, 98,99), 18(47,99), 19(85), 20(55), 23(79,82,100, 115), 24(64), 25(17), 26(87), 29(57), 30(11), 34(26,40), 36(32),36(53), 37(16,17), 40(16), 42(15), 43(85), 44(40), 45(26,27), 50(44), 51(42,43), 53(42), 56(47-50), 58(9), 64(9), 67(15-24), 75(12), 77(38), 79(23), 80(22), 83(4-5).
- 12 The Day of Judgement will be over in a short time. 16(77), 31(28), 54(50)

III. Objections of Non Believers about the Resurrection

- 13 They say that this life is the only life. 6(29), 23(37), 44(34-35), 45(24).

- 14 They say that the Resurrection is only the mythology of people from long ago. 13(5), 17(49-98), 23(35-36, 82-83), 27(67-68), 32(10), 36(78), 37(16-17, 53), 75(3,4,5,6), 79(10-11), 82(9).
- 15 They say that life after death is simply a belief of Sorcerer. 11(7).
- 16 They doubt the meeting with Allah. 22(5), 41(54).
- 17 They say that the Resurrection is an illogical thing. 50(3).
- 18 They bet that life after death is not possible. 16(38, 39).

IV. Great Events During the Earth's Doomsday

- 19 The Soor, a trumpet-like sound, which will make people unconscious, and later raise them again. 18(49), 20(102), 23(101), 27(87), 30(25), 36(51-53), 38(15), 39(68), 50(20), 50(42), 69(13), 74, (8), 79(13-14).
- 20 An animal will emerge from the ground that will speak with people. 27(82)
- 21 The Earth will burst. 36(51-53), 50(44), 54(7), 70(43), 79(13-14), 82(4), 99(6), 100(9).
- 22 The mountains will fly like carded wool. 18(47), 20(105-107), 27(88), 52(10), 56(5-6), 69(14-15), 70(9), 72(10),

		73(14), 77(10), 78(20), 81(3) 101(5).
23	Continuous Earthquakes	22(1), 56(4), 73(14), 79(6-7), 99(1).
24	Sunlight will be folded up.	81(1)
25	The Earth will be pounded over and over again.	56(4), 69(14), 89(21).
26	The Earth's crust will burst apart.	84(4,5), 99(2,3).
27	The Earth will divulge its secrets.	99(4,5), 86(9), 100(10).
28	The Earth will be leveled flat.	18(4), 84(3).
29	The Wall of Zulqarnain will fall.	18(98).
30	Ya-Jooj Ma-Jooj will spread over the Earth.	18(99), 21(96).
31	The oceans will boil over.	81(6), 82(3).
32	Beasts and pregnant camels will wander around master less.	81(4), 81(5).
33	The Earth will be made barren.	18(8)
34	The Sound of the Soor will be heard	20(108), 36(53), 50(41), 54(6).
35	The Moon will be eclipsed (for ever)	75(8).
36	The Moon will join the Sun.	75(9).
37	There will be light that will dazzle the eyes.	75(7)
38	Pregnant mothers will miscarriage.	22(2)

- 39 People will be rendered unconscious. 2(22).
- 40 People will scatter like moths. 54(7), 101(4).
- 41 Man cannot imagine the full destructive nature of the Doomsday. 69(1-3), 77(14), 82(17-18).

V. The Events in the Heaven's Doomsday

- 42 Doomsdays of worlds other than the Earth. 55(31).
- 43 The heavens will be split asunder. 25(25), 55(37), 69(16), 73(18), 77(9), 78(19), 82(1), 84(1-2).
- 44 The stars will lose their light and disintegrate. 77(8), 81(2), 82(2).
- 45 The atmosphere will be destroyed. 81(11).
- 46 The heavens will look like molten copper. 70(8), 55(37).
- 47 The heavens will tremble. 52(9).
- 48 The heavens will be filled with smoke. 44(10), 39(68).
- 49 The sound of the Soor will make everyone in the heavens and the Earth unconscious, except what Allah wills. 22(2), 27(87), 39(68), 52(45).

VI. The New Universe

- 50 The heavens and Earth will be rolled back together like scroll of paper. 21(104), 39(67).
- 51 In the reconstruction, the present heavens and Earth will be changed into some other form. 14(48).
- 52 Ultimately, before the Resurrection everything will be destroyed. 55(26).

VII. The Resurrection and Universal Justice

- 53 Everyone will be brought back to life again, even if fossilized to stone, iron or something harder. 17(51).
- 54 The Resurrection is the responsibility of Allah. 53(47).
- 55 At the Resurrection, people will rise from their graves. 2(28), 2(73,203, 259, 260), 6(36), 6(60), 7(14), 7(24), 7(36), 16(21-38), 22(5-7,66), 23(16), 26(81-87), 27(65), 30(19, 25,40,50,56), 31(28), 36(52-79), 37(144), 38(79), 42(9), 5 8(6-18),

- 64(7), 67(15), 71(18),
72(7), 83(4-6), 89(25),
101(9).
- 56 The Resurrection is easy for Allah. It is like the first creation. In the Resurrection people will assemble in groups and nations. 4(7), 18(48), 21(104), 30(14), 78(18), 99(6), 45(28), 81(7).
- 57 The (New), Earth will shine with the Light of its Lord. 39(69).
- 58 Each one will have a driver and a witness with him or her. 4(41), 28(75), 50(21).
- 59 People will perceive the total life of World as the duration of an evening or morning. 110(45), 23(112-114), 30(55), 46(35), 79(46).
- 60 Those who know will say it has been a long period. 30(56), 20(104).
- 61 There will be two main groups, the righteous and the accused ones. 11(105), 30(43).
- 62 People will recognize each other. 10(45).
- 63 Each one will be concerned only about his or her own fate and will run away from relatives. 16(11), 80(37), 80(34-36)
- 64 It will be a very difficult day for the rejecters. 25(26), 54(8), 73(17), 74(9-10), 76(10).
- 65 The rejecters will be recognized by their 55(40-41).

foreheads and skins.

- 66 The believers will have no fear. 21(103), 27(89), 43(68-69).
- 67 No one will bear the burden of another. 6(164), 17(15), 35(18), 39(7), 53(38), 82(19).
- 68 No excuse will be accepted. 34(31-33), 38(61), 40(47-50), 50(27-28)
- 69 All deeds and thoughts will be presented and accounted for with complete justice. 21(47), 2(81), 2(110), 7(8-9), 23(102-103), 101(6-11), 3(25,16,185), 7(147), 52(16), 53(41); 76(22).
- 70 No one will be wronged. 2(272,281), 3(25,161), 4(40,49), 6(160) 10(54), 11(109,112), 16(111), 17(71), 18(49), 19(60), 20(112), 21(47), 23(62), 36(54), 39(69), 40(17), 45(22), 46(19), 52(21).

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TEHREEK-E-NOOR
INTRODUCTION TO THE HOLY QURAN
RESEARCH FOUNDATION

“And indeed We have displayed for mankind, in this Quran all kinds of similitudes, but most of mankind refuse (the truth and accept nothing) but disbelief”.
17(89)

The Holy Quran Research Foundation, established in September 1986, is a nonsectarian, religious voluntary body set up with the aim of carrying out in-depth study of the Holy Quran; with reference to the scientific and social subjects of importance to the modern age to understand Islam and propagate it as far as possible.

It is based upon the conviction that the Holy Quran is the Word of Allah, available to us in its purest form, exactly as it was revealed to the last of His Prophets, Muhammad, may the Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him. As such it needs no proof for its veracity and if any branch of the existing body of human knowledge, science and philosophy does not correspond with it, or falls short of it, then it is the latter which needs to be reviewed and corrected. The Foundation is thus dedicated to the dissemination of the Message of Allah and to the promotion of human knowledge, in the light of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) for the benefit of mankind.

Mode of Operation

The Foundation hopes to achieve its objectives by identifying a broad range of topics and extending an open invitation to students of the Holy Quran from all walks of life to carry out research into them. Invitation to carry out research is not limited to religious scholars alone, but is extended to all persons who may otherwise be engaged in any material profession but who are keen to disseminate the message of the Holy Quran.

The Foundation and its associated bodies then select a suitable number of scholars to carry out research on assigned topics; provide an institutional framework for the scholars; assist and co-ordinate their research work; hold periodic discussion groups, brain storming sessions, seminars and review meetings; and on approval by a panel of experts, they undertake the publication and distribution of these research works on a worldwide basis.

Accounts

All accounts of the Foundation, which are audited annually, are maintained in the name of "Holy Quran Research Foundation, National Bank of Pakistan, F-6/2 Branch, Islamabad". The sources of funds are voluntary contributions, proceeds from the sale of its books and membership fees.

Governing Body

All affairs of the Foundation are decided mutually by a Governing Body, consisting of ten executive members, including the chairman, treasurer, secretary and joint secretary as per the approved rules and by-laws of the Foundation.

Membership

Membership of the Foundation is open to all Muslims of the world who share the objectives of the Foundation and who wish to work for the pleasure of Allah and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم), for the dissemination of knowledge of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah on a world-wide basis; and who firmly believe that the process of Divine revelation was completed on the Holy Prophet and that the Holy Quran is the last of the revealed books, which confirms and completes the Truth of all the earlier Prophets, (May peace be upon them). As such there remains neither the need, nor even the possibility of any other prophet after him, and if any one claims or has claimed to be prophet, then he must be a liar.

Member's Privileges

All members are kept posted of the activities of the Foundation and are provided with library facilities, research papers and scholarly works about the Holy Quran on a regular basis. They are also provided with an institutional framework to enable deeper study of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet of Allah; and are encouraged to write their findings and publish them after review and approval by the Foundation.

Membership Fees

Membership fees are on an annual basis, by cheque, in the name of the Holy Quran Research Foundation, Islamabad, according to the following rates:

For Pakistan: Rs.5000/-per annum.
For other countries: U.S.\$ 500 or equivalent
currency per annum.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author, who retired from the post of the Director General, Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, is basically a Nuclear Engineer, with specialization in Nuclear fuel and Reactor technology. Born in 1941, after a brilliant academic career, he joined the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission in 1962. Since then he has served in various capacities at both national and the international levels in the field of Nuclear Science & Technology. In 1969 the U.K. Atomic Energy Authority applied for two patents applications in his name on Nuclear Reactors. During 1972-74, while working in the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant, he actively participated in the teething troubles of the Plant and invented some highly sensitive and original devices for remote detecting and controlling of heavy water leaks from the reactor faces. On three occasions he has been appointed Chief Investigator for research projects, by the International Atomic Energy Authority, Vienna. He has been an active member of various national and international bodies engaged in the development of science and technology, with particular interest in achieving self-reliance for Pakistan in the field of high technologies.

In October 1975, he was assigned the job to establish Pakistan's Centrifuge Project for Uranium Enrichment; where it continued for two and a half year and brought the project to the level from where it could be successfully completed. Later he had also the unique honour of being the Chief Designer and Project Director of the Pakistan's first Plutonium producing nuclear reactor, which was also successfully completed by him. His expertise has been design, development, construction and management of high

tech nuclear projects indigenously, and thus he has contributed considerably to the civil and military applications of Nuclear Technology in Pakistan. Besides, he authored four voluminous books about the scientific and engineering potential of Pakistan and has written numerous papers on subjects related to nuclear engineering, quality assurance, and transfer of technology. He has also been visiting professor and examiner in the subjects of advanced electronics and control systems for some of the leading engineering universities in the country.

In 1987 he established "The Holy Quran Research Foundation", a non-sectarian, scholarly, religious, voluntary organization: for the worldwide propagation of Islam on the basis of scientific aspects of the Holy Quran. In this respect he has several papers and over twenty books on the Holy Quran with reference to the latest scientific discoveries and problems related to the contemporary civilization, thus bridging gap between religion and science.

After his retirement from Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission in year 2000, he established an NGO namely Umma Tameer-e-Nau (UTN) dedicated to the renaissance of Islamic world with the power of faith and use of science and technology to develop their resources indigenously. As a test case, UTN started helping Amaraat-e-Islamia Afghanistan for the rehabilitation of their technological infrastructures, schools/colleges, and development of power and mineral sectors. Besides, it also built new industries such like the 250 times daily wheat milling industry, and development of agriculture forms for their self-sufficiency in food. After nine-eleven WTC incident when USA attacked Afghanistan UTN was also declared a

terrorist organization. Sultan Bashir Mahmood and all other directors of UTN were held and grilled by USA,s intelligence agencies for 52 days. Finally they were released as being innocent but Sultan Bashir Mahmood even ten years after that horrible incident, is still labelled as terrorist. His bank accounts are frozen and he is on exist control list of the Govt. of Pakistan.It proved to be a blessing in disguise. Isolated Sultan Bashir Mahmood has all the time to work on the Holy Quran and related subjects.

DOOMSDAY & LIFE AFTER DEATH



Atomic Scientist, Engineer

Sultan Bashir Mahmood

(Sifara-e-Nation)