# **Surat Al-Zilzal**

Heeding the Day of Judgment, on the basis of good deeds

# **Prologue**

Remember the times of extreme failures when you have been terribly shaken; because your ivory tower had been collapsed into ruins. Then you are distressed and anxious. you think of past deeds and evaluate them; faults, defects, points of strength, obstacles, energies and etc. ramble into your mind. This is the characteristic of all earthquakes.

# **Studying Surat Al-Humazah**

Surat Az-Zalzalah (The Earthquake) - سورة الزلزلة

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

99:1

99:1

When the earth is shaken with its [final] earthquake

[99:2](http://quran.com/99/2)

99:2

And the earth discharges its burdens

[99:3](http://quran.com/99/3)

99:3

And man says, "What is [wrong] with it?" -

[99:4](http://quran.com/99/4)

99:4

That Day, it will report its news

[99:5](http://quran.com/99/5)

99:5

Because your Lord has commanded it.

[99:6](http://quran.com/99/6)

99:6

That Day, the people will depart separated [into categories] to be shown [the result of] their deeds.

[99:7](http://quran.com/99/7)

99:7

So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it,

[99:8](http://quran.com/99/8)

99:8

And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.

# **The first step: thinking about the events and subjects in the Surah**

This surah reminds us of a significant event in our lives and informs of the Unseen. Giving information of this kind is specific to Quran and man cannot attain it by studying. But, he can ponder upon it once he has been informed about an event. The role of pondering and thinking is very crucial at such moments, because man is thinking about events which he cannot see or relate to.

To study the subject matters and the Unseen mentioned in the surah we begin with studying the meaning of the words and their examples.

## **Studying the words**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Shake, Zal’za’la (zil’zal) | Shaking lightly, zalzalah shows continuity and intensity of the shake |
| Heaviness and Weight, Thighl (athghal) | The opposite of light weight, spiritually or physically |
| Speak, Ha’da’tha (tu’ha’di’thu) | Appearance or making of something new. (informing others of something new or of what they don’t know about) |
| The news, Kha’bar (akh’baar) | Precise information and exact knowledge of all details about something |
| Inspire, command, Wa’ha’ya (aw’haa) | Inspiring something into someone, whether in genesis or by sending it into the heart |
| Depart, Separate, Sha’ta’ta (ash’tat) | Separation and deportation of the components of something, both spiritually or physicaly |

## **Visualizing the words**

For each of the above words, some examples have been offered in dictionaries. Let’s visualize these words and try to think of other examples for these words.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| word | image | Another example |
| Zal’za’la, shake | Earthquake |  |
| Bring forth, Akh’ra’ja | Pour out |  |
| weight, thighl | Heavy objects |  |
| particle, Mith’ghaal | Scale |  |
| Tu’ha’di’thu | Speaking and talking to others |  |
| news | Informing others of something |  |
| Wa’ha’ya | Secretly talking to someone; inducing someone |  |

## **Relationships between the words**

This surah opens with ‘ithaa’ meaning ‘when’, which is used to refer to time and a condition; therefore, some of the concept are offered for the conditional and others for the time clause. The surah also closes with ‘man’ meaning ‘whoever’; it is again a conditional clause. So, the whole surah consists of conditional structures, main clauses and conditional clauses. To discover the relationships in the surah we begin with looking at the role of the words in the surah and then the images of these words.

### **1.** **Parts of speech of the words in verses**

### **2. Visualizing the words in combination**

* Occurrence of events, in a time when the earth is terribly shaking.
* Some truth being revealed after a long time of hiddenness.
* The day when the earth bursts into talks and reveals whatever she has witnessed.
* The day man realizes that whatever he has done, has been recorded.
* A widespread anxiety, distress, and disorder.
* Uninformed people who are asking each other ‘what’s up?’, but there is no answer.
* A terrible event which makes people review some memories.
* An exact scale and something for measurement.
* People looking for something to make the scale heavier, even if it is dust.
* …….
* ……
* ……

# **Second step: writing logical statements**

We complete the statements based on the conditional sentences of the surah.

## **Logical statements from the surah**

When the earth is shaken with its [final] earthquake

And the earth discharges its burdens

And man says, "What is [wrong] with it?" -

That Day, it will report its news

Because your Lord has commanded it.

That Day, the people will depart separated [into categories] to be shown [the result of] their deeds.

* The Earth has a special destructive quake which brings out whatever is laid into the Earth.
* What is meant by the quake of the Earth is the beginning of the Judgment on Doomsday.
* The Earth has recorded the deeds of every one, and she will witness them once she is asked to. Therefore each piece of the Earth is a witness for our deeds.
* If man realized that the earth is an honest witness, he wouldn’t do any wrongs.
* The Earth witnesses man’s deeds because of Allah’s Revelation. That is, the Earth also receives Allah’s Revelation; a Revelation which enables her to report the events.
* Man would see his deeds before he goes to the Heaven or the Hell.
* Viewing our deeds after the Shake and the Judgment is a reason for the Heaven and Hell being genetical and shaping based on our deeds.
* The Earth has thing hidden deep inside, and different in weight. The Earth is very honest and would not betray anyone.
* When the Earth begins to shake everyone asks for the reason. But, this question is asked for different reasons based on different ranking of people.
* The Earth has such an status that Allah talks about a special Shake, special weights, special news, and special Revelation regarding the Earth.
* …………
* …………
* …………

So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it,

And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.

* Every deed we have done is recorded and we will see it.
* Our deeds are weighed with a suitable scale so that their weight is known. In fact, for each deed there is a criteria.
* None of our deeds is wasted, and we will see all of them, whether good or bad.
* Good and bad deeds are observable. Our deeds being Good or bad depends on our choice and our intention.
* ………..
* …………
* ………….

## **Logical statements from Tafsir Al-Mizan**

# **Third step: reflection on surah, getting closer to its intention**

After studying the surah and thinking about its concepts, we study those points which can be taken as the main concepts of the surah:

1. The Earth is so conscious in recording man’s deeds and presenting them that the tiniest good or bad deed would not get lost in it and man would definitely see it.
2. After the destructive changes on the face of the Earth, man also changes in a different status to be able to receive the result of his deeds.
3. Forethoughtfulness is the state of considering the Day of Judgment in which each deed is evaluated based on Truth and each deed is presented to man based on Truth.
4. …………

# **Fourth step: purification for reflection (purifying ourselves based on some aspect of the surah)**

To enjoy the purification offered by Zilzal Surah, the following are suggested:

1. Paying attention to the recording of our deeds by the Earth

To improve our consciousness and understanding that every moment we are seen by Allah, we should become aware that the Earth is recording our deeds. Therefore, when we intend to accomplish our duties in place we are aware that it would be recoded then and there. Whatever we are doing on a piece of the Earth, we are entrusting it to the Earth.

1. Paying attention to good deeds and sincerity in doing them

What is useful for making the scale of our deeds heavier, is sincerity in doing them. To do so, we avoid telling others about our deeds as far as possible. Moreover, it is necessary to intend to draw Allah’s affection by our deeds.

See the following supplication by Imam Ali (PBUH) to get sincerity in doing our duties:

اللّهمّ إنّى اسئلُك العافيةَ من جُهدِ البَلاءِ و من شَماتَةِ الأَعداءِ اللّهمّ أغفِر لى ذَنبى و زَكِّ عَمَلى و أغسِل خطاياىَ فانِّى ضعيفٌ الّا ما قَوَّيتَ و اُقسِم لى حِلماً تَسُدُّ بِه بابَ الجَهدِ و عِلماً تُفرِّجُ به‏ الجَهالاتِ و يقيناً تُذهِبُ بِهِ الشّكَّ عنِّى و فهماً تُخرِجُنى به من الفِتَنِ المُعضِلاتِ و نوراً امشِى به فى النّاسِ و أهتدَى به فى الظُّلُماتِ اللّهمّ أَصلِح لى سَمعى و بَصرى و شَعرى و بَشَرى و قلبى صَلاحاً باقياً تُصلِحُ بها ما بَقِىَ من جسدى اسألُكَ الرّاحَةَ عندَ الموتِ و العفوَ عندَ الحسابِ اللّهمّ انِّى اسئلُكَ اىَّ عملٍ كان احبَّ إليك و اُقربَ لَديكَ أن تَستَعمِلَنى فيه أبداً ثمّ لَقِّنى اُشرفَ الأَعمالِ عِندَك و اتِنى فيه قُوَّةً و صدقاً و جدّاً و عزماً منك و نَشاطاً ثمّ اجعَلنى اَعمَلُ ابتِغاءَ وجهِكَ و معاشاً فيما اَتيتَ صالحِى عبادِك ثمّ اجعَلنى لا اَشتَرى به ثمناً و لا اَبتَغِى به بدلاً و لا تُغَيِّرُه فى سَرّاءَ و لا ضَرّاءَ و لا كَسِلاً و لا نِسياناً و لا رِياءً و لا سُمعةً حتّى تَتَوفّانى عَلَيه و ارزُقنى أشرَفَ القَتلِ فى سبيلِكَ أنصُرُكَ و أنصُرُ رسولَك اَشتَرى به الحيوةَ الباقيةَ بالحياةِ الدّنيا و اعِنِّى بمَرضاةٍ مِن عندِكَ‏...