

Background and Meaning

Al-Inshiqaq describes the sky and earth obeying their Lord, then addresses the human being whose life of effort leads to the final meeting and account. Ibn Kathir explains the contrasting records through the happiness of an easy reckoning and the misery of the person who denied his return. Signs in twilight, night and the moon introduce the changing stages people must pass through. The parent should connect the creation's obedience with the invitation for human beings to receive the Qur'an in faith and humility.

Tafsir of the Surah

Ayat 1–6: Obedient creation and human striving. Ibn Kathir explains that the sky splits on the Day of Resurrection in obedience to Allah's command. The earth is extended and casts out those buried within it. Both respond to the Lord whose authority cannot be resisted. The human being is meanwhile striving towards a meeting. Ibn Kathir records explanations referring to meeting one's deeds and meeting the Lord who recompenses them; the two meanings belong together because everyone meets the outcome of what he has done.

Ayat 7–9: The easy account. Ibn Kathir explains the receiving of the record in the right hand as the beginning of a happy outcome. The easy account is a presentation of deeds rather than an exhaustive interrogation over every detail. His commentary cites 'A'ishah's report distinguishing this presentation from the reckoning in which a person is called to account in detail and faces punishment. The believer then returns joyfully to his family in Paradise, pleased with Allah's gift and mercy.

Ayat 10–15: The record behind the back. Ibn Kathir explains this through the record being given in the left hand from behind the person. He calls for destruction and enters the Fire. His earlier happiness was a heedless enjoyment that ignored what lay ahead. He assumed that he would never return to Allah, but the Lord who brought him into existence will restore him and judge his deeds. Allah's complete knowledge of him has never been interrupted by his denial.



Tafsir of the Surah · Continued

Ayat 16–19: Passing from stage to stage. Ibn Kathir records explanations of twilight, the night gathering what belongs within it and the moon when its light is full. The declaration that people will pass through successive stages is explained through changing conditions and the hardships of the Resurrection. His commentary records several early interpretations rather than reducing the expression to a single worldly event. The signs invite reflection on change and on the greater changes still awaiting the human being.

Ayat 20–25: Responding to revelation. Ibn Kathir explains the closing questions as a challenge to those who refuse belief and do not humble themselves when the Qur'an is recited. He records the Prophet's ﷺ prostration when this surah was read. Allah knows what the deniers conceal within their hearts, and their rejection leads to a painful punishment. Those who believe inwardly and do righteous deeds outwardly receive a reward that does not end. His commentary emphasises that entrance into Paradise remains through Allah's grace and mercy.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ أَنْشَقَّتْ

١

Memorised

When the sky is ruptured.

وَأَذْنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ

٢

Memorised

And hearkens to its Lord, as it must.

وَإِذَا الْأَرْضُ مُدَّتْ

٣

Memorised

And when the earth is leveled out.

وَالْقَتَّ مَا فِيهَا وَتَخَلَّتْ

٤

Memorised

And casts out what is in it, and becomes empty.

وَأَذْنَتْ لِرَبِّهَا وَحُقَّتْ

٥

Memorised

And hearkens to its Lord, as it must.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَادِحٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ
كَدْحًا فَمُلَاقِيهِ

٦

Memorised

O man! You are laboring towards your Lord, and you will meet Him.



Memorisation · Continued

فَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَ يَمِينِهِ



Memorised

As for him who is given his book in his right hand.

فَسَوْفَ يُحَاسَبُ حِسَابًا يَسِيرًا



Memorised

He will have an easy settlement.

وَيَنْقَلِبُ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا



Memorised

And will return to his family delighted.

وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ كِتَابَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ



Memorised

But as for him who is given his book behind his back.

فَسَوْفَ يَدْعُوا ثُبُورًا



Memorised

He will call for death.

وَيَصْلَىٰ سَعِيرًا



Memorised

And will enter the Blaze.



Memorisation · Continued

إِنَّهُ كَانَ فِي أَهْلِهِ مَسْرُورًا

١٣

☐ Memorised

He used to be happy among his family.

إِنَّهُ ظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ يَحُورَ

١٤

☐ Memorised

He thought he would never return.

بَلَىٰ إِنْ رَبُّهُ كَانَ بِصِيرًا

١٥

☐ Memorised

In fact, his Lord was watching him.

فَلَا أَقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ

١٦

☐ Memorised

I swear by the twilight.

وَالَيْلٍ وَمَا وَسَقَ

١٧

☐ Memorised

And by the night, and what it covers.

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا اتَّسَقَ

١٨

☐ Memorised

And by the moon, as it grows full.



لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَنْ طَبَقٍ

١٩



You will mount stage by stage.

فَمَا لَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

٢٠



What is the matter with them that they do not believe?

وَإِذَا قُرِئَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقُرْآنُ لَا يَسْجُدُونَ

٢١



And when the Quran is read to them, they do not bow down?

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَكْذِبُونَ

٢٢



In fact, those who disbelieve are in denial.

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُوعُونَ

٢٣



But Allah knows what they hide inside.

فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

٢٤



So inform them of a painful punishment.



إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا
الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ أَجْرٌ غَيْرُ مَمْنُونٍ



Except those who believe and do good deeds; they will have an undiminished reward.

Parent tafsir: adapted from Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, 84:1-25.

Arabic commentary: quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/katheer/sura84-aya1.html

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