

Background and Meaning

Ibn Kathir identifies al-Qari'ah as a Makkan surah. Al-Qari'ah is one of the names of the Day of Resurrection, alongside other Qur'anic names describing its overwhelming reality. The opening questions magnify the event before the surah depicts the condition of people and mountains. Its second part describes different outcomes according to the weight of deeds. The parent should read the striking images and the weighing together: the passage is a warning about the final return and the consequences of how a person has lived.

Tafsir of the Surah

Ayat 1–3: The striking calamity. Ibn Kathir explains al-Qari'ah as a name for the Resurrection. The repeated questions emphasise its gravity and the terror of its occurrence. They prepare the reader for an event beyond the ordinary disturbances of worldly life. The surah then explains its meaning through scenes of humanity and the earth's most apparently solid features transformed.

Ayah 4: People like scattered moths. Ibn Kathir describes people spreading out, separating, coming and going in confusion. The image of scattered moths conveys their bewilderment at what confronts them. He connects it with another Qur'anic description of people resembling scattered locusts. Those who once moved with familiar purposes now face a reality that overwhelms their ordinary sense of direction and control.

Ayah 5: Mountains like fluffed wool. Ibn Kathir explains al-'ihn as wool, and the image as wool loosened and beginning to disperse. Mountains, whose strength and stability were so evident in worldly life, no longer remain in that condition. This second image complements the first: the people are scattered, and the great mountains are rendered light and broken apart. The surah then turns from these scenes to the outcome of human works.

Ayat 6–9: The weight of deeds. Ibn Kathir explains the heavy scales through good deeds outweighing evil deeds, and the light scales through the reverse. The pleasant life is life in Paradise. For the other outcome, he records explanations of hawiyah as the Fire that becomes the person's abode, as well as an explanation involving falling into it headfirst. The passage describes lasting consequences after the deeds have been weighed.

Ayat 10–11: The explanation of hawiyah. The final question is answered by the description of an intensely hot Fire. Ibn Kathir explains its fierce heat and cites authentic reports distinguishing the Fire of the Hereafter from the fire people know in this world. The ending completes the warning begun by the opening questions. The Day is overwhelming, and its outcomes are real; the surah directs attention to the deeds whose weight will then be shown.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Shocker.

أَلْقَارَعَةُ



☐ Memorised

What is the Shocker?

مَا أَلْقَارَعَةُ



☐ Memorised

What will explain to you what the Shocker is?

وَمَا أَذْرَكَ مَا أَلْقَارَعَةُ



☐ Memorised

The Day when the people will be like scattered moths.

يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ



☐ Memorised

And the mountains will be like tufted wool.

وَتَكُونُ الْجِبَالُ كَالْعِهْنِ الْمَنْفُوشِ



☐ Memorised

As for him whose scales are heavy.

فَأَمَّا مَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ



☐ Memorised



فَهُوَ فِي عِيشَةٍ رَّاضِيَةٍ



He will be in a pleasant life.

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ



But as for him whose scales are light.

فَأُمُّهُ هَاوِيَةٌ



His home is the Abyss.

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا هِيَهٗ



Do you know what it is?

نَارٌ حَامِيَةٌ



A Raging Fire.

Parent tafsir: adapted from Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, 101:1-11.

Arabic commentary: quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/katheer/sura101-aya1.html

Hadith on the Fire's heat: Sahih al-Bukhari 3265, cited by Ibn Kathir.

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