

Ayah Reflection:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَارَهُمْ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ فِي إِمَامٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

“Verily we shall give life to the dead, and we record that which they send before and that which they leave behind, and of all things have we taken account in a clear book.” [Yasin, 36:12]

1. ﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ﴾ ‘**Verily we shall give life to the dead**’: Allah (swt) used the attached pronoun **إِنَّا** and the detached separating pronoun **نَحْنُ** to emphasise the fact that He (swt) will give life after death. This degree of emphasis was required because of the disbeliever's rejection of life after death. It is interesting to note that Allah (swt) mentioned ﴿نَحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ﴾ ‘**we shall give life to the dead**’ before ﴿وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَارَهُمْ﴾ ‘**and we record that which they send before and that which they leave behind**’ even though the recording of deeds takes place before the resurrection. This is because the previous verse already mentioned ﴿فَبَشِّرْهُ بِمَغْفِرَةٍ وَأَجْرٍ كَرِيمٍ﴾ ‘**glad tidings of forgiveness and a noble reward**’, which will happen in the life after death. Therefore, it was appropriate to mention ﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ﴾ ‘**we shall give life to the dead**’ first.

Also, the sequence of the verse indicates the order of importance: resurrection, accountability of deeds and then the effects of the deeds.

2. ﴿وَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَدَّمُوا وَآثَارَهُمْ﴾ ‘**and we record that which they send before and that which they leave behind**’: Here Allah (swt) establishes the fact that all actions we perform are recorded and sent forth creating the impression that your acts are waiting for you when you are resurrected. This is both a frightening and optimistic thought. It is frightening in the sense that all evil we do has already been sent on. This is similar to the record of a criminal which is sent on to the Judge for sentencing. At the same time we are optimistic that Ar-Rahman will reward us with the best of reward for all the good actions that we have sent.

3. Allah (swt) said: ﴿نَكْتُبُ﴾ ‘**we write**’ instead of ‘**we know**’. This is to emphasise to the owners of the deeds that they will definitely be shown their deeds no matter how big or small. When we know something is important we write it down. This is why it was said ‘**we record**’ to signify the importance.

4. Allah (swt) said: ﴿وَأَثَارَهُمْ﴾ **and their effects i.e. effects / traces of the deeds**. Not only are our deeds recorded but also their effects and consequences are recorded and there will be accountability for them too. Just pause to think about this! We are held accountable for the effects and consequences of our good and bad actions.

The Prophet (saw) said, «مَنْ دَلَّ عَلَى خَيْرٍ فَلَهُ مِثْلُ أُجْرٍ فَاعِلِهِ»، **“Whoever guides someone to goodness will have a similar reward.”** ([Sahih Muslim 1893](#))

The Prophet (saw) said: «إِذَا مَاتَ الْإِنْسَانُ انْفُطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلَّا مِنْ ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ» **“When a man dies, his acts come to an end, except three: recurring charity, or knowledge (by which people) benefit, or a pious son, who prays for him (for the deceased).”** ([Sahih Muslim 1631](#))

This raises a few important points:

Firstly, our actions affect others either positively or negatively. This means we must think carefully before we do the action, not only about the action but also its consequences. We are not isolated individuals, rather we have relationships in the society which we are also responsible for. For example, our actions as parents have effects on our children, our actions as teachers have effects on our students, etc. Therefore, this means Islam came to deal with the actions and their effects in society, which means that individual change is always

connected to the societal environment. Islam is not an individualistic religion but a collective one where the individual is integral to the society and community in which he/she lives. So any call to individual change without societal change is incorrect.

Secondly, the more responsibility and power you have the more accountable you are for the actions and their consequences. So the state, government and ruler have the most impact on society through their actions and their consequences. When creating a policy, the impact will affect all people in the country or even those in other countries. It is possible that the impacts are felt not only at that time but also for several generations afterwards. When the ruler applies the laws that prohibit alcohol, pornography and usury then numerous immoral acts will decrease or even disappear from public life. Similarly, when the ruler applies Sharia comprehensively and imposes strict sanctions to those who violate it, then it will certainly result in the obedience of the people to Allah (swt). It is not surprising then that the just rulers will get immense rewards.

The Prophet (saw) said, «سَبْعَةٌ يُظِلُّهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِي ظِلِّهِ، يَوْمَ لَا ظِلَّ إِلَّا ظِلُّهُ إِمَامٌ عَادِلٌ...» **“Seven (people) will be shaded by Allah by His Shade on the Day of Resurrection when there will be no shade except His Shade. (They will be), a just ruler...”** ([Sahih al-Bukhari 6806](#))

5. A quote from Imam Alusi's commentary on this verse is very insightful:

وَأَثَارُهُمُ الَّتِي أَبَقَوْهَا بَعْدَهُمْ مِنَ الْحَسَنَاتِ كَعَلْمِ عِلْمُوهُ أَوْ كِتَابِ أَلْفُوهُ أَوْ حَبِيسِ وَقَفُوهُ أَوْ بِنَاءِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى بَنُوهُ، وَغَيْرِ ذَلِكَ مِنْ وَجْهِ الْبِرِّ وَمِنَ السَّنَنَاتِ كِتَابِيَّاتِ قَوَانِينِ الظُّلْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَتَرْتِيبِ مَبَادِيئِ الشَّرِّ وَالْفُسَادِ فِيمَا بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ، وَغَيْرِ ذَلِكَ مِنْ فُنُونِ الشُّرُورِ الَّتِي أَحْدَثُوهَا وَسَنُّوهَا بَعْدَهُمْ لِلْمُفْسِدِينَ.

*'And their effects / traces which remain after them from good deeds such as, knowledge which they taught or a book which they wrote.....from evil deeds such as **establishment of OPPRESSIVE RULES** and the arrangement (promotion) of evil and corrupt principles amongst the principles and other than these types of evil which they brought about and enacted after them for corruption'.*

This is a clear warning against any corrupt regime and their evil influences. It is also a warning against participating in their corruption for which we will be responsible for.

6. **‘and of all things have we taken account in a Clear Book’**: There are some interesting points about the usage of the verb ﴿أَحْصَيْنَاهُ﴾ **‘we have taken account’**. Firstly, it did not say ‘we have written’ in a clear book. Why? It is because something which is written may be inaccurate or missing information. However, when it is written then counted then it ensures nothing is missing and it is complete.

Secondly ﴿أَحْصَيْنَاهُ﴾ is a past tense verb unlike وَنَكْتُبُ **‘we write’**. Why? It is because that which is counted is already in the ‘clear record’ ﴿فِي إِمَامٍ مُبِينٍ﴾ which means the preserved tablet (*Lawh al-Mahfooz*). The preserved tablet exists before the angels write the deeds, and who continue writing the deeds which is why the present tense verb وَنَكْتُبُ **‘we write’** was used.

7. Lastly, the expression ﴿إِمَامٍ مُبِينٍ﴾ **‘a clear book’** - uses the word إِمَامٍ which means to lead. This expression was used to indicate that which the angels are subordinate to of what has already been decreed in terms of provision, life and death.

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