Tafsir Ibn Kathir
Alama Imad ud Din Ibn Kathir

Tafsir Ibn Kathir, is a classic Sunni Islam Tafsir (commentary of the Qur'an) by Imad ud Din Ibn Kathir. It is considered to be a summary of the earlier Tafsir al-Tabari. It is popular because it uses Hadith to explain each verse and chapter of the Qur'an...

Surah Al Inshiqaq

The Prostration of Recitation in Surah Al-Inshiqaq

It is reported from Abu Salamah that while leading them in prayer, Abu Hurayrah recited, إِذَا السَّمَاءُ اقتَفَثَ (When the heaven is split asunder) and he prostrated during its recitation. Then when he completed the prayer, he informed them that the Messenger of Allah prostrated during its recitation.

This was recorded by Muslim and An-Nasa'i on the authority of Malik.

Al-Bukhari recorded from Abu Rafi` that he prayed the Night prayer with Abu Hurayrah recited, إِذَا السَّمَاءُ اقتَفَثَ (When the heaven is split asunder) then he prostrated. So Abu Rafi` said something to him about it (questioning it). Abu Hurayrah replied,

"I prostrated behind Abul-Qasim (the Prophet), and I will never cease prostrating during its recitation until I meet him."

Surah Inshiqaq
(The Splitting Asunder)

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>إِذًا السَّمَاءَ اشْقَّتْ</td>
<td>When the heaven is split asunder,</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>وَأَوْتَتْ لَزَنْهَا وَحَقَّتْ</td>
<td>And listens to and obeys its Lord -- and it must do so.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>وَإِذًا الْأَرْضُ مَدَّتْ</td>
<td>And when the earth is stretched forth,</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>وَأَلْقَتْ مَافِهَا وَحَقَّتْ</td>
<td>And has cast out all that was in it and became empty.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>وَأَوْتَتْ لَزَنْهَا وَحَقَّتْ</td>
<td>And listens to and obeys its Lord -- and it must do so.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسَانُ إِنَّكَ كَازَحٌ إِلَىٰ نَّبِيٍّ كَانَ مَكَامَتُهُ</td>
<td>O man! Verily, you are returning towards your Lord with your deeds and actions, a sure returning, and you will meet.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>فَأَمَاتُ مِنْ أَوْلِيِّي كَتَابَةً بِيَمِينِهِ</td>
<td>Then as for him who will be given his Record in his right hand,</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>فَسَوَّفَ مِثْقَالَ حَسَابِهِ إِلَيْهِ</td>
<td>He surely will receive an easy reckoning,</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>وَيَتَعَلَّبُ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِ مِسْرٍ</td>
<td>And will return to his family Masrur (in joy)!</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>وَأَمَاتُ مِنْ أَوْلِيِّي كَتَابَةً بِيَمِينِهِ</td>
<td>But whosoever is given his Record behind his back,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. He will invoke destruction,

12. And he shall enter a blazing Fire, and made to taste its burning.

13. Verily, he was among his people in joy!

14. Verily, he thought that he would never return!

15. Yes! Verily, his Lord has been ever beholding him!

**Splitting the Heavens asunder and stretching the Earth forth on the Day of Resurrection**

Allah says,

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انفَقَتْ (١)

When the heaven is split asunder,

This refers to the Day of Judgement.

وَأَرْنَتْهَا... (٢)

And listens to and obeys its Lord,

meaning, it listens to its Lord and obeys His command to split apart. This will occur on the Day of Judgement.

... وَخَفَقَتْ (٢)

and it must do so.
meaning, it is right for it to obey the command of its Lord, because it is
great and cannot be rejected, nor overcome. Rather it overpowers
everything and everything is submissive to it.

Then Allah says,

وَإِذَا اذْرَعَ مَدَّتَ(٣)

And when the earth is stretched forth,

meaning, when the earth is expanded, spread out and extended.

Then He says,

وَأَلْقَى مَا فِيهَا وَتَحَلَّلَتْ (٤)

And has cast out all that was in it and became empty.

meaning, it throws out the dead inside of it, and it empties itself of them.

This was said by Mujahid, Sa`id, and Qatadah.

وَأَوْزِنَّ مَا لَبِثْتُهَا وَتَغَلَّبَتْ (٥)

And listens to and obeys its Lord, and it must do so.

The explanation of this is the same as what has preceded.

The Recompense for Deeds is True

Allah says,

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنسانِ إِنَّكَ كَارْحٌ إِلَيْ رَبِّكَ كَنُوحًا... (٦)

O man!

Verily, you are returning towards your Lord with your deeds and actions, a
sure returning,

meaning, `verily you are hastening to your Lord and working deeds.'

... قَمْلَا تِبِيهٖ(٦)

and you will meet.

`Then you will meet that which you did of good or evil.'

A proof for this is what Abu Dawud At-Tayalisi recorded from Jabir, that
the Messenger of Allah said,
Jibril said, "O Muhammad!
- Live how you wish, for verily you will die;
- love what you wish, for verily you will part with it;
- and do what you wish, for verily you will meet it (your deed).

There are some people who refer the pronoun back to the statement "your Lord.''
Thus, they hold the Ayah to mean, "and you will meet your Lord.''
This means that He will reward you for your work, and pay you for your efforts. Therefore, both of these two views are connected.

Al-`Awfi recorded from Ibn Abbas that he said explaining, (O man! Verily, you are returning towards your Lord with your deeds and actions, a sure returning),

"Whatever deed you do, you will meet Allah with it, whether it is good or bad.''

The Presentation and the Discussion that will take place during the Reckoning

Then Allah says,

قَانِنُ مُنْ أَنْ تَكُنْ كُتَابَةً يَكْيِمِينَهُ (٧)
فَسْتَوَافَ يَكَاسِبُ حَسَأَبًا يَسِيرًا (٨)

Then as for him who will be given his Record in his right hand, he surely, will receive an easy reckoning,
meaning, easy without any difficulty.
This means that he will not be investigated for all the minute details of his deeds. For verily, whoever is reckoned like that, he will certainly be destroyed.
Imam Ahmad recorded from A'ishah that the Messenger of Allah said,

من لوقي الفيناسين غلاب

Whoever is interrogated during the reckoning, then he will be punished.

A'ishah then said, "But didn't Allah say, قُسُوتْ جَنَابَةَ تَبَيِّنَآ أَنْ تُؤْمَنَ بنوركَمَانِيَةَ القَيَامَةَ غَلَابَ (He surely will receive an easy reckoning),"

The Prophet replied,

ليس كاذباً في الفيناسين، ولست نذائكم الغرث، من لوقي الفيناسين هو القيامة غلاب

That is not during to the Reckoning, rather it is referring to the presentation. Whoever is interrogated during the Reckoning on the Day of Judgement, then he will be punished.

This Hadith has also been recorded by Al-Bukhari, Muslim, At-Tirmidhi, An-Nasa'i and Ibn Jarir.

In reference to Allah’s statement,

وَيَنْتَقِلَ لَيْلَيَّ اللَّهُ مَسْرُورًا (9)

And will return to his family Masrur!

This means that he will return to his family in Paradise.

This was said by Qatadah and Ad-Dahhak.

They also said,

"Masrur means happy and delighted by what Allah has given him."

Allah said;

وَأَلْفَ أُمَّامًا أَوْلِيَاءَ كَنَابُةٍ وَثُلُثُهُمْ وَتَرَاءَ ظَهْرَهُمْ (10)

But whosoever is given his Record behind his back,

meaning, he will be given his Book in his left hand, behind his back, while his hand is bent behind him.

قُسُوتْ يَدُ عِنْدَهُ ذَلِكَ (11)

He will invoke destruction,

meaning, loss and destruction.
And he shall enter a blazing Fire, and made to taste its burning. Verily, he was among his people in joy!

meaning, happy. He did not think about the consequences, nor feared what (future) was in front of him. His light happiness will be followed by long grief.

Verily, he thought that he would never return!

meaning, he used to believe that he would not return to Allah, nor would Allah bring him back (to life) after his death.

This was said by Ibn Abbas, Qatadah and others.

Allah then says,

Yes! Verily, his Lord has been ever beholding him!

meaning, certainly Allah will repeat his creation just as he began his creation, and He will reward him based upon his deeds, whether they were good or bad.

He was ever watchful of him,

meaning All-Knowing and All-Aware.

But no! I swear by Ash-Shafaq;

And the night and what it Wasaqa,

And the moon when it Ittasaq.
You shall certainly travel from stage to stage.

What is the matter with them, that they believe not

And when the Qur'an is recited to them, they fall not prostrate.

Nay, those who disbelieve deny.

And Allah knows best what they gather,

So, announce to them a painful torment.

Save those who believe and do righteous good deeds, for them is a reward that will never come to an end.

Swearing by the Various Stages of Man's Journey

Allah swears,

But no! I swear by Ash-Shafaq;

It has been reported from Ali, Ibn Abbas, Ubadah bin As-Samit, Abu Hurayrah, Shaddad bin Aws, Ibn Umar, Muhammad bin Ali bin Al-Husayn, Makhul, Bakr bin Abdullah Al-Muzani, Bukayr bin Al-Ashaj, Malik, Ibn Abi Dhi’b, and Abdul Aziz bin Abi Salamah Al-Majishun, they all said,
"Ash-Shafaq is the redness (in the sky).

Abdur-Razzaq recorded from Abu Hurayrah that he said,

"Ash-Shafaq is the whiteness."

So Ash-Shafaq is the redness of the horizon, either before sunset, as Mujahid said or after sunset, as is well known with the scholars of the Arabic Language.

Al-Khalil bin Ahmad said,

"Ash-Shafaq is the redness that appears from the setting of sun until the time of the last `Isha' (when it is completely dark). When that redness goes away, it is said, Ash-Shafaq has disappeared."

Al-Jawhari said,

"Ash-Shafaq is the remaining light of the sun and its redness at the beginning of the night until it is close to actual nighttime (darkness)."

Ikrimah made a similar statement when he said,

"Ash-Shafaq is that what is between Al-Maghrib and Al-Isha'."

In the Sahih of Muslim, it is recorded from Abdullah bin Amr that the Messenger of Allah said,

\[ \text{وقت المغرب ما يتبقى من الشفق} \]

the time of Al-Maghrib is as long as Ash-Shafaq has not disappeared."

In all of this, there is a proof that Ash-Shafaq is as Al-Jawhari and Al-Khalil have said.

And by the night and what it Wasqa,

Ibn Abbas, Mujahid, Al-Hasan and Qatadah, all said that, "What it gathers."

Qatadah said, "The stars and animals it gathers."

Ikrimah said,

"What it drives into due to its darkness, because when it is nighttime everything goes to its home."

Concerning Allah's statement,
And by the moon when it *Ittasaqa*.

Ibn Abbas said,

"When it comes together and becomes complete."

Al-Hasan said,

"When it comes together and becomes full."

Qatadah said,

"When it completes its cycle."

These statements refer to its light when it is completed and becomes full, as the idea was initiated with "The night and what it gathers."

Allah said,

You shall certainly travel from stage to stage.

Al-Bukhari recorded from Mujahid that Ibn Abbas said,

"Stage after stage. Your Prophet has said this."

Al-Bukhari recorded this statement with this wording. Ikrimah said, طيِّبًا عن طيِّبٍ (From stage to stage).

"Stage after stage. Weaned after he was breast feeding, and an old man after he was a young man."

Al-Hasan Al-Basri said, طيِّبًا عن طيِّبٍ (From stage to stage).

"Stage after stage.
- Ease after difficulty,
- difficulty after ease,
- wealth after poverty,
- poverty after wealth,
- health after sickness, and
- sickness after health."
The Disapproval of Their Lack of Faith, giving Them Tidings of the Torment, and that the Ultimate Pleasure will be for the Believers

Allah said,

فَعَما هُمُّ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

وَإِذَا قَرَأْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ الْقُرْآنَ لَا يُسَجَّدُونَ

What is the matter with them, that they believe not? And when the Qur'an is recited to them, they fall not prostrate.

meaning, what prevents them from believing in Allah, His Messenger and the Last Day, and what is wrong with them that when Allah's Ayat and His Words are recited to them they do not prostrate due to awe, respect and reverence.

Concerning Allah's statement,

بَلِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَيُّكُمْ يَكُونُ

Nay, those who disbelieve deny.

meaning, from their mannerism is rejection, obstinacy, and opposition to the truth.

وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ يَمَاتَوْنَ

And Allah knows best what they gather,

Mujahid and Qatadah both said,

"What they conceal in their chests."

فَبِيْشْرَهُمْ يَعْدَادًا بَلْ أَلَّهِمْ

So, announce to them a painful torment.

meaning, `inform them, O Muhammad, that Allah has prepared for them a painful torment.'

Then Allah says,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمَلُوا الْصَّالِحَاتِ

Save those who believe and do righteous good deeds,
This is a clear exception meaning, `but those who believe.'
This refers to those who believe in their hearts.
Then the statement, "and do righteous good deeds," is referring to that which they do with their limbs.

for them is a reward,
meaning, in the abode of the Hereafter.

that will never come to an end.
Ibn Abbas said,
"Without being decreased."
Mujahid and Ad-Dahhak both said,
"Without measure."
The result of their statements is that it (the reward) is without end.
This is as Allah says,

A gift without an end. (11:108)
As-Suddi said,
"Some of them have said that this means without end and without decrease."

This is the end of the Tafsir of Surah Al-Inshiqaq. All praise and thanks are due to Allah, and He is the giver of success and freedom from error.

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