It was We who created man and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him:

Introduction and Summary

We now come to group of seven Makkan Surahs (50-56), dealing with Allah's revelation through nature, through history, and through the mouths of the Prophets, and pointing to the Hereafter. We saw that the last group of three (47-49) dealt with the external and internal relations of the Ummah when formed. In the present group our attention is more particularly directed to aspect eschatological-the Future before us when this life is done.
This particular Surah belongs to the early Makkan period. After an appeal to nature and to the fate of wicked peoples in history, it removes as it were the will (verse 22) from the Future after death.

**Summary**- Skeptics can look up the heavens above and to Nature around them, as well as the fate of sin in the history of past: will they doubt Allah's Revelation when the veil is lifted? (59:1-29, and C. 224).

A vision of the Day of Recompense and the Day of Reality (50:30-45, and C. 225).

**C.224 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)**

(50:1-29)

*The prophet's credentials are the Revelation*

*He brings. Let them not wonder at the Message*

*Or at the News of the Hereafter. They have but*

*To look at the starry heavens and at Nature*

*Around them to see Allah's goodness and His power*

*To bring life out of the dead, and to punish*

*All wrong. Every deed, word, and thought are in*

*The eternal Record. Death will open*

*Your eyes and make you see Realities.*

*Then will every action bear*

*Its due fruit, and no soul can shift*

*Its responsibility on to another.*
1. Qaf.

**C4939.** This is an Abbreviated Letter. For Abbreviated Letters generally, see Appendix I.

This particular Abbreviated Letter Qaf occurs only here as a single letter, and in combination at the beginning of Surah 42, where I was unable to explain the full combination.

Here the Qaf is taken by several Commentators to represent Qudiyah al amr, “the matter has been,” with reference to the eschatological trend of the Surah. Allah knows best.

By the Glorious Qur'án (Thou art Allah's Messenger).

**C4940.** Majid (translated "Glorious") is one of the beautiful appellations of the Quran.

Its glory is that of the rising sun: the more it rises on your mental and spiritual horizon, the more you are lost in admiration of its glory.

Its meanings are manifest and inexhaustible. The greater your experience, the more light is your spiritual eye able to bear.

And in that glory is a beauty that none can tell who has not experienced it in his soul. It is in itself the proof of the mission of the Holy Prophet.

2. But they wonder ...

**C4941.** In a sense their wonder is natural: do we wonder at the glorious sun? In another sense it is unnatural: what should we say of a man who fails to see in broad daylight?
4. An 'aamīn musta'awwa wakāna 'ṭarā'aba...

3. "What! when we die and become dust, (shall we live again?)."

That is a (sort of) Return far (from our understanding).
Cf. 37:16.

4. We already know how much of them the earth takes away:
C4943. The earth only corrupts and takes away the body when they are dead; it has no power over the soul. The full account of the soul's doings is in Allah's Record.

C4944. If they deny what has been made clear to them, their minds must necessarily get into confusion.

All nature declares the glory and goodness of Allah. Revelation explains the inequalities of this life and how they will be redressed in the Hereafter. If they do not accept this, they are not in a logical position. They cannot reconcile the known with the unknown.

Aflam yinṭārawa 'a lla ilā sammā...
How We have made it and adorned it, and there are no flaws in it?

C4945. The greatest philosophers have found a difficulty in understanding the skeptical position when they contemplate the wonder and mystery of the skies with all the countless beautiful stars and planets and light in them, and laws of order, motion, and symmetry, that respond to the highest mathematical abstractions without a flaw. Can blind Chance give rise to such conditions?

C4946. Cf. 13:3; and 15:19 and n. 1955.

The earth is round, and yet it appears stretched out as a vast expanse, like a carpet kept steady with the weight of the mountains.


Sex in plants may be hinted at: see n. 1804 to 13:3.

C4948. For all these things go into his very heart and soul. He loves to contemplate them, to remember them for himself as evidence of Allah's goodness and glory, and to mention and proclaim them, in the form of Psalm, Hymns, or Dikrs. (R).

C4949. And We send down from the sky Rain charged with blessing, and We produce therewith Gardens and Grain for harvests;
10. And tall (and stately) palm-trees, with shoots of fruit-stalks, piled one over another --

C4949. A beautiful nature passage. How graphic and unforgettable to any one who has seen a spring and summer in an Arabian oasis!

11. As sustenance for (Allah's) Servants; and We give (new) life therewith to land that is dead: Thus will be the Resurrection.

C4950. Just the names of the peoples of Arabian tradition who were punished for their sins are mentioned; their stories will be found elsewhere.

For the People of Noah, see 11:25-48 and other passages.
For the Companions of the Rass, see 25:38 and n. 3094;

13. The 'Ad, Pharaoh, the Brethren of Lut, for the 'Ad and the Thamud, see 26:123-158, and other passages;
for Pharaoh and his People, see 2:49-50 and other passages;
for the Brethren of Lut, see 7:80-84, and other passages;
14. The companions of the Wood, and the people of Tubba;

for the Companions of the Wood, see 15:78-79, and n. 2000;

and for the People of Tubba', see 44:37 and n. 4715.

... كَلَّا كَتَبْ الرَّسُولُ فَحَقٌ وَعِيدٌ (۴۱)

each one (of them) rejected the messengers, and My warning was duly fulfilled (in them).

15. Were We then weary with the first Creation, that they should be in confused doubt about a new Creation?

C4951. Cf. 46:33, and n. 4812.

Section 2

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنسَانَ وَنَعْلَمَ مَا نُوْسَوْسُ بِهِ نَفْسَهُ

16. It was We who created man and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him:

C4952. Allah created man, and gave him his limited free-will. Allah knows the inmost desires and motives of man even better than man does himself. He is nearer to a man than the man's own jugular vein.

The jugular vein is the big trunk vein, one on each side of the neck, which brings the blood back from the head to the heart. The two jugular veins correspond to the two carotid arteries which carry the blood from the heart to the head.

... وَنَحْنُ أَقُرَّبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيرِدِ (۱۶)

for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein.
As the blood-stream is the vehicle of life and consciousness, the phrase "nearer than the jugular vein" implies that Allah knows more truly the innermost state of our feeling and consciousness than does our own ego.

17. Behold, two (guardian angels) appointed to learn (his doings) learn (and note them),

C4953. Two angels are constantly by him to note his thoughts, words, and actions.

... عن اليمين و عن الشمالي قعدًا (١٧)

One sits on the right and one on the left.

One sits on the right side and notes his good deeds and the other on the left, to note his bad deeds; corresponding to the Companions of the Right and the Companions of the Left mentioned in 56:27 and 41. (R).

18. Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him, ready (to note it).

C4954. Then each "word" spoken is taken down by a guardian (raqib).

This has been construed to mean that the guardian only records words, not thoughts which are not uttered.

Thoughts may be forgiven if not uttered, and still more if they do not issue in action. At the stage at which we clothe a thought in words, we have already done an action.

The Recorders mentioned in the last verse make a complete Record, in order to supply motives and springs of action, which will affect the degrees or status in the Hereafter.

The three together, individuals or kinds, make the honourable Recorders, Kiraman Katibin, (plural, not dual number) mentioned in 82:11.
19. And the stupor of death will bring truth (before his eyes):

**C4955.** What is stupor or unconsciousness to this probationary life will be the opening of the eyes to the next world: for Death is the Gateway between the two. Once through that Gateway man will realise how the things which he neglected or looked upon as remote are the intimate Realities, and the things which seemed to loom large in his eyes in this world were shadows that have fled. The things he wanted to avoid are the things that have really come to pass. Both Good and Evil will realise the Truth now in its intensity.

...ذلكَ ما كَنتْ مِنهُ تُحْيِدُ (۹)

"This was the thing which thou wast trying to escape!"

وَنَفَحَ في الصُّورِ ...

20. And the Trumpet shall be blown:

**C4956.** The next stage will be the Judgment, heralded with the blowing of the Trumpet. Every soul will then come forth.

...ذلكَ يُوْمُ الْوَعْيَدُ (۱۰)

that will be the Day whereof warning (had been given).

وَجَاءَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ...

21. And there will come forth every soul:

...مَعَهَا سَاقِيٌّ وَشَهِيدٌ (۱۱)

with each will be an (angel) to drive, and an (angel) to bear witness.

**C4957.** Several interpretations are possible, leading to the same truth, that the Judgment will be set up; the Record will be produced; the good and bad deeds will speak for and against; and complete justice will be done, each act leading to its own due fruit.
• The (angel) to drive and the (angel) to bear witness may be the Recording Angels of the left and the right (verse 17); or

• it may not be angels, but the evil deeds will drive like task-masters, and the good deeds will bear witness for the soul on trial; or

• his misused limbs and faculties will drive him to his doom, while his well-used limbs and faculties will witness for him.

لاقَدْ كَنَّتْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ...

22. (It will be said:) "Thou wast heedless of this; now have We removed thy veil, and sharp is thy sight this Day!"

C4958. The clearness of vision will now be even greater:
see n. 4955 above.

وَقَالَ قَرِينُهُ هَذَا مَا لَدَى عَنْيَّ (٢٢)

23. And his companion will say: "Here is (his record) ready with me!"

C4959. Qarin: Companion.

If we take No. 1 of the constructions suggested in n. 4957, the Companion will be one of the Recording Angels mentioned above, in verse 21, perhaps the one that drives; or perhaps the third one mentioned in verse 18, for he has the Record ready with him.

If we take any of the other constructions mentioned in n. 4957, it will be the evil deeds or the misused faculties.

In any case it will be the factors on whose testimony his conviction will be based.
24. (The sentence will be:)

"Throw, throw into Hell every contumacious Rejecter (of Allah)!

**C4960.** The original for "throw", here and in verse 26 below, is in the dual number, which some Commentators explain by saying that the dual form is used for emphasis, as if the verb ("throw, throw") were twice repeated. Examples of this are found in Arabic.

But is it possible that the dual refers to the two angels mentioned in verses 17 and 21? In that case the Companion in verse 27 will be the third one mentioned in verses 18 and 23.

In any case the third one will be the one on whose Record the sentence will be passed.

25. "Who forbade what was good, transgressed all bounds, cast doubts and suspicions;

الذِي جَعَلَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَيْهَا أَخْرَ قَالِبٍاهَا فِي العَذَابِ السَّمِيدِ (٢٥)

26. "Who set up another god besides Allah: throw him into a severe Penalty."

قال قريئه... 

27. His companion will say:

**C4961.** See last note.

But some people understand by "Companion" here an evil associate in the world, an evil one who misled.

"Our Lord!

**C4962.** Our Lord. One man speaks: "I did not", etc. Yet he uses the plural pronoun in saying, -Our Lord". This is beautifully appropriate, as he is speaking so as to include the person to be judged: as if he were to
say. "Thou art my Lord, or the Lord of us angels or of all Creation, but Thou art his Lord also, for Thou didst cherish him and warn him, and he owed duties to Thee."

I did not make him transgress, but he was (himself) far astray."

C4963. Neither the Recording Angels nor the misused limbs and faculties, nor anything else whatever was responsible for the Evil: it was the personal responsibility of the Doer himself, with his free-will.

C4964. It is suggested that sinners whose Record is black, driven into a comer, accuse others of misleading them: the others may be the Recorders, or their faculties or opportunities or surroundings or their associates in the world, or anything but themselves. Such recriminations are not allowed in the Court of Judgment.

I had already in advance sent you Warning.

C4965. Besides, personal responsibility had already been clearly preached to them in Allah's Message, and they had been warned of the consequences.

"You" is in the plural number: 'all of you who are before the Judgment-Seat had clear warning of the consequences of your conduct.'

C4966. "'Abd" has two plurals:

- 'Abid, as here, means all Servants of Allah, i.e., all his creatures;
'Ibad has the further connotation of Servants of Allah, devoted to his service; I have translated it in many cases by the word "devotees".

The Sentence before the Judgment-Seat is pronounced with perfect justice; it does not change, and requires no change; the inevitable consequences of sin must follow; the time for Mercy is past.

C.225 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

(50:30-45)

As Goodness has possibilities unlimited,
So has Evil in the opposite direction.
To those who bring a heart unsullied
And to Allah devoted, will be Peace,
Security, and Eternal Life-the Rays
From Allah’s own Presence. Adore ye Allah
And pay no heed to worshipers of Doubt
And Evil: these must vanish at Judgement,
When Truth and Justice reign supreme.

Section 3

...ويوم تنقول لجهادم هل امتلتا...

30. One Day We will ask Hell,
"art thou filled to the full?"

C4967. As the capacity of Reward is unlimited, so is the capacity of Punishment- unlimited. Hell is personified and asked, "Art thou sated to the full?"

...وتنقول هل من مزيد (30)...

It will say, "are there any more (to come)?"
It replies, "If there are more to come, let them come." It is not satisfied.

31. And the Garden will be brought nigh to the righteous -- no more a thing distant.

C4968. In this life, the ideas of the spirit, the accomplishment of the things in our hearts and our hopes, seem to be ever so far, seem even to recede as we think we come nearer. Not so in the Hereafter. The fruits of righteousness will no longer be in the distance. They will be realized. They will seem themselves to approach the Righteous.

32. (A voice will say:)
"This is what was promised for you, for everyone who turned (to Allah) in sincere repentance, who kept (his law).

C4969. The description of the Righteous is given in four masterly clauses:

1. those who turned away from Evil in sincere repentance;

2. those whose new life was good and righteous;

3. those who in their innermost hearts and in their most secret doings were actuated by Allah-fearing love, the fear that is akin to love in remembering Allah under His title of "Most Gracious"; and

4. who gave up their whole heart and being to Him.

C4970. Cf. 36:11 and n. 3952; and 35:18, and n. 3902.
... وَجَاءَ بَقَلْبٍ مُّنِيبٍ (٣٣)
and brought a heart turned in devotion (to Him):

اِذْخَلْنِهَا بِسَلَامٍ ...

34. "Enter ye therein in Peace and Security;

**C4971.** The true meaning of Islam: peace, security, salutation, and accord with Allah's Plan in all Eternity.

... ذَلِكَ يَوْمُ الْخَلْوَاتِ (٤٣)
this is a Day of Eternal Life!"

لَهُمْ مَا يَشَاءُونَ فِيهَا وَلَدَنَا مَزِيدٌ (٣٥)

35. There will be for them therein all that they wish, and more besides in Our Presence.

**C4972.** To get all that our purified wishes and desires comprehend may seem to sum up final Bliss; but there is something still wanting, which is supplied by the sight of Allah, the Light of His Countenance.

وَكَمْ أَهْلَكْنَا قَبْلَهُمْ مِنْ قَرَنٍ هُمْ أَشْدَدُ مِنْهُمْ بَطْشًا...

36. But how many generations before them did We destroy (for their Sins), stronger in power than they?

**C4973.** While virtue and righteousness will accomplish their final goal, what will be the End of Sin?

Let the past tell its story. Many powerful and arrogant generations were swept away, to stray in the paths of misery, without any way of escape from the consequences of their sin. This was already seen in the life of this world. In the world to come, it will be worse, as already stated in verses 24-26 above.

فَقُلُوهَا فِي الْبَلَادِ هَلْ مِن مُّحِيصٍ (٣٦)
Then did they wander through the land: Was there any place of escape (for them)?
37. Verily in this is a Message for any that has a heart and understanding or who gives ear and earnestly witnesses (the truth).

C4974. As Christ said (Matt. 11:15), "he that hath ears to hear, let him hear".

These are matters of high moment. Many spiritual lessons can be learnt from these things by any one who has the heart and understanding to apply to Allah's teaching and can give genuine thought to what he sees, as a witness does who has to swear to the facts on his oath.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا فِي سَبْعَةَ أَيَّامٍ ...

38. We created the heavens and the earth and all between them in Six Days,

C4975. Allah's creation of the heavens and the earth in long stages or periods of time, as we count time, shows how things evolve in their own good time. We must therefore be patient if Good does not seem to come to its own according to our ideas. Our will should merge itself in Allah's Will, and we should praise Him, realising that He is All-Good, and that all adjustments will be in the Hereafter.

C4976. Cf. 7:54, n. 1031; and 41:12. n. 4477.

nor did any sense of weariness touch Us.

C4977. Cf. 35:35.

فَاصِبْ عَلَى مَا يَفْوِلُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قُبْلَ طَلْعَ الشَّمْسِ وَقُبْلَ الْغَرْمِ (39)

39. Bear, then with patience, all that they say, and celebrate the praises of thy Lord, before the rising of the sun and before (its) setting,
C4978. Allah should be remembered at all times. But the best time for individual adoration is:

- early in the morning before sunrise,
- late in the day before sunset, and
- a portion of the night, when there is stillness in the air, and man's spirit loves to commune with things spiritual.

Those who would connect this with the five canonical prayers, instituted at a later stage in Madinah, would take:

- the Fair for the prayer before sunrise,
- the Zuhr and, the Asr for the afternoon prayers before sunset and
- the Magrib and the Isha for the night prayers.

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَسْبَحَهُ وَأَدَبَّرَ السُّجُودِ (٤٠)  

40. And during part of the night, (also,) celebrate His praises, and (so likewise) after the postures of adoration.

C4979. The general meaning of "after the postures of adoration" would be the contemplation and remembrance of Allah after prayers.

Those who would connect this passage with the five canonical prayers understand these further prayers "following the sujud or prostration to mean the extra or supernumerary prayers known as nafl, also the use of the Rosary or the fingers in remembering the Names of Allah.

وَاسْتَمِعِ يَوْمَ يُنَادِيٓ الْمَنَادِيٓ مِنْ مَكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ (٤١)  

41. And listen for the Day when the Caller will call out from a place quite near --

C4980. The Day of Resurrection, when the Call to the souls to arise and come to the Judgment-Seat will be immediately answered, and they will all arise and come forth.

Cf. 36:49-53, and notes 3997 and 3999.
C4981. In the life of this world it seemed all so remote. In the new life at the Resurrection it will all be so near; for there will be neither time nor space as we know them here.

42. The day when they will hear a (mighty) Blast in (very) truth:

C4982. The word "Al Sayhatun" (mighty Blast) is used for the Resurrection (as here) or for the sudden punishment of the guilty on this earth, as in 11:67, where see further references.

43. Verily it is We Who give Life and Death; and to Us is the Final Goal --

C4983. Men will hurry out from all corners of the earth to answer the call, and the earth itself will be rent asunder.

In 25:25 the imagery used was the heaven being rent asunder, and angels coming out in ranks: see n. 3082. Cf. also 84:1-4.

C4984. It may seem to our material imaginations a difficult task to collect together the souls of all sorts of men, who died in all sorts of conditions at different times, but it will be a different kind of world and creation altogether, and to Allah all things are not only possible but easy.
45. We know best what they say; and thou art not one to overawe them by force.

**C4985.** People may throw all sorts of doubts about the Judgment and the Hereafter. The Prophet's task is not to force them to accept anything. His task is to deliver the Message of the Quran, and admonish those who are spiritually fit and ready to receive admonition and to prepare themselves for the new and higher life destined for man.

...فَذَّكَرْ بِالْقُرْآنِ مَنْ يَخافُ وَعِيدٍ (۵٤)

So admonish with the Qur'an such as fear My Warning!