

Sura 92: Al-Lail (The Night)

In the name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy

Verses 1 to 21:

1. *By the night as it covers,*
2. *And the day as it shines,*
3. *And He who created the male and the female,*
4. *Indeed, your endeavors are diverse.*
5. *As for him who gives and is conscious of God,*
6. *And believes in goodness,*
7. *Surely, We will ease his way to the state of ease.*
8. *But as for him who hoards and deems himself independent,*
9. *And denies goodness;*
10. *Surely, We will ease his way into adversity.*
11. *His wealth will not profit him when he perishes.*
12. *Verily, it is upon Us to guide,*
13. *And verily, to Us (belong) the Hereafter and the first (life).*
14. *Therefore, I warn you of a flaming Fire,*
15. *In which only the most wretched will burn,*
16. *He who denied and turned away.*
17. *But those most devoted to God will avoid it,*
18. *He who spends his wealth for self-purification,*
19. *Seeking no favor in return,*
20. *Only seeking the countenance of his Lord Most High;*
21. *And he will be well-pleased.*

The Sura consists of two sections. The first section is comprised of the first eleven verses; and the second section is comprised of the verses twelve to the end. The Sura uses a framework of the scenes of the universe to emphasize the relationship between deeds and compensation.

“By the night as it covers, and the day as it shines, and He who created the male and the female.” God makes an oath using the two signs: the night and the day; mentioning their inherent characteristics. The night covers, and the day shines. The day and night are two opposites. Another couple of opposite characteristics are the male and female. The night and day are two comprehensive phenomena. They affect the human heart. The cyclical rotation of the day and night drives the human being to reflect on the universe and its mysteries; raising the questions of who controls these changes and who controls the universe?

The oath emphasizes that the people have different endeavors in life. These endeavors differ in their nature, they differ in what motivates them, and they differ in their end results. Consequently, people will be rewarded differently, depending on their different endeavors, *“Indeed, your endeavors are diverse. As for him who gives and is conscious of God and believes in goodness, surely, We will ease his way to the state of ease. But as for him who hoards and deems himself independent, and denies goodness; surely, We will ease his way into adversity.*

His wealth will not profit him when he perishes.” People can generally be classified into two categories. Those who give and are conscious of God, and believe in goodness; and those who hoard and deem themselves independent, and deny goodness. These two categories have different endeavors in life. They will be rewarded differently. God will ease the way of the first category to achieve a state of ease while He will ease the way into adversity for the second category. The lives of the members of the first group will run smoothly, they will be secure, content, and successful. They will join the easy way that has been awarded to the Messenger of God. All their affairs will be processed easily. Members of the second group will find everything difficult. Each step they make will take them away from guidance. Their wealth which they hoarded and refused to spend in the way of God will not benefit them.

The destiny of each group in the Hereafter is outlined, *“Verily it is upon Us to guide, and verily to Us (belong) the Hereafter and the first (life). Therefore I warn you of a flaming Fire, in which only the most wretched will burn, he who denied and turned away. But those most devoted to God will avoid it, he who spends his wealth for self-purification, seeking no favor in return, only seeking the countenance of his Lord Most High; and he will be well-pleased.”* God made it incumbent on Himself to instill guidance in the initial natural disposition of humankind. He also gave humankind guidance through His Messengers and His Message. No one has an excuse for denying guidance; and God will not treat anyone unjustly. God has absolute control over the life of the world and the Hereafter. People have been warned of a flaming fire in which the wretched will burn. Who is the wretched? It is he who denied the truth and turned away from guidance. But the God conscious will be saved. He used to spend his money seeking God’s acceptance. He never expected a worldly reward in return; he was only seeking his Lord’s acceptance. This person will be well pleased with what he gets in the Hereafter.