(Tafsir Surah Al-Ma'arij (The Ways of Ascent

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.This sura descended at Mecca and it has 21 ayat in it

The contents and virtues of Surat-al Layl

As this sura descended at Mecca and it has the subjects similar to the chapters descended at Mecca. Its ayats are short and warm particularly about the scene of the judgment day and the divine rewards and punishment is the cause and source of it.

In the beginning after pledging the three vows, divided the people in two groups: those who spends in the charity and follow the pious life and the misers who denied the rewards of the resurrection day. The end of the efforts of first group is the ease, peace and happiness. And the end of the second group is hardships, ill fate and scarcity.

In the other part of this sura after indicating this subject that the guidance of the people is upon the Merciful God and warned each and every body by the blazing fire of the Hell.

In the last part about those who get burnt in this fire and those who get protected from that inferno are introduced by their qualities.

About the virtues of reading this sura from the great prophet peace be upon him who said: Those who read this sura the Benevolent God bestows him so much that he gets contented and save him from the hardships and the path of life becomes unproblematic for him.

بِسْمِ اللّهِ الرَّحْمـَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(Al-Lail (The Night

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى (92:1)

I swear by the night when it covers

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّى (92:2)

!And the day as it rises bright

وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى (92:3)

!Consider the creation of the male and the female

إِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتَّى (92:4)

;(Certainly, your efforts and deeds are diverse (different in aims and purposes

فَأَمَّا مَن أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى (92:5)

As for him who gives (in charity) and keeps his duty to Allah, fears Him, and guards (against evil),

وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى (92:6)

,(And believes in the truth of the ultimate good and the best (reward

فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَى (92:7)

And believes in the best [reward],We will make smooth for him the path of ease (goodness) .and the uncomplicated end

وَأَمَّا مَن بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَى (92:8)

.But he who is greedy miser and thinks himself self-sufficient

وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَى (92:9)

,[And denies the best [reward

فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَى (92:10)

;We will make smooth for him the path for evil

وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى (92:11)

.(And what will his wealth benefit him when he goes down (in destruction

All about its descent

Sha’n e nuzal of sura e Lail

The late scholar Tabrisi in the book Majma’ul Bayan quoted: There was a Muslim among the

Muslims; a branch of his date palm tree was hanging in the courtyard of his poor neighbour who happened to be the father and guardian of a large family. The owner of date palm tree whenever he was climbing the tree to pluck the dates, the dates used to fall down in the courtyard of the poor neighbour. His children used to pick and collect those dates. At that moment, the owner of the date palm was descending from that tree and grabbing the dates from the hands of the little kids. He was so much stone hearted and miserly that if he was seeing the dates in the mouth of one of the kids he used to insert his finger in their mouth and pull the date out.

The poor man complained to the Prophet peace be upon him and the great messenger said: At present it is better you go so that I can attend your matter. After that the prophet peace be upon him met the owner of the date palm and told him: the tree with its branches hanging upon the court yard of such a person, are you ready to give it to me? In the place of that tree I am ready to present you a palm tree in the heaven.

The man replied: I have many date palms; none of the dates are so much tasty like this palm tree. I am not at all ready to do a deal with you.

One of the companions of the prophet peace be upon him heard that conversation and stated: O messenger of Allah! If I buy this palm tree and give it to you then will you grant the tree to me which you offered him? The prophet peace be upon him replied: Yes.

The man went and met the owner of date palm tree and talked to him. The owner of date palm replied: Do you know the prophet Muhammad peace be upon him was ready to bestow the date palm in the heaven at the place of this palm tree but I rejected it as I relish greatly consuming these delicious dates. I have many date palms but none is tasty like the dates of this palm tree.

The buyer said: Do you want to sell it or not? The owner replied: I will not sell until someone pays me the prize I cannot imagine it. He asked: how much prize? The owner of the date palm replied: 40 date palms.

The buyer got surprised and said: what a heavy prize you demand, forty date palms for the palm tree which is curved down.

Then after a short silence, he added: Alright I will give you forty date palm trees.

The greedy seller said: If you are right then call some persons as the witnesses. Incidentally a group of people were passing from there he called them and took them as witnesses.

The he came to the prophet peace be upon him and said: O prophet of Allah! I had acquired the possession of that palm tree and I am gifting it to you.

The prophet of Allah peace be upon him went towards that poor family and told the owner of

that house, from today the dates of this palm belongs to you and your family. Here the sura e Lail descended and defined about the miserly and generous people. .According to some narrators the buyer's name was Abul Dahdah

Definitions:

Piety and the divine assistance

Once again we come across the three thought provoking vows regarding the creatures and the .creator of the universe, it said: I swear by the night when it covers the earth

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى

يَغْشَى

The above term means to cover may be it is for the reason that half of the earth is covered by the darkness of the night like a curtain and dress it like a cloak. The face of the day or the earth brightening sun by reaching the night it gets covered. Any way this indicates the importance of the night and its central role in the life of man, from the regulation of the sun's temperature to the relaxation and tranquilization of all the living creatures in its shadow and the worship of the night vigilante's awakened and well aware heart.

Then it proceeds towards the other vow and adds: swear by the day when it comes into view .and appears

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّى

And this happens from the moment when the morning brightness tears off the curtain of the night and throws behind the darkness of the night and rules the entire expanse of the blue sky and drowns everything in the lustre of the lights and illuminations. The light provides movement and it is a source of life and existence for all the living things.

The dignified Quran mostly paid its attention towards the matter of the light and the darkness and its effects upon the human life. As these two constant great blessings are the two chief signs of the Provider God.

It proceeds towards the last pledge and said: Swear by the one who created the sexes of male .and female

وَمَا خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى

As the existence of these two sexes in the human, animal and botanical world brings the revolutions from the moments of the coagulation till the birth. And the specifications of both these sexes hold according to their functions and programs. There are lot of secrets hidden in

the concept of both the sexes, the entire signs from the world of existence helps to make well aware the greatness of its creator.

At last it reaches the ultimate purpose of the vows and said: Your endeavours, efforts and struggles in life are different.

إِنَّ سَعْيَكُمْ لَشَتَّى

And its labours and results are totally different; it indicates that, any way you never get stagnant and inactive in your life and you are certainly continue in your efforts and hard work. Your strength in your existence is the god's gifted wealth; it is used in some purpose or another. You have to observe that in which direction it is utilizing, what is the result you are achievement? May be you sell your assets and talents in a very cheap prize or just waste it away.

شَتَّى

The above term means to disperse the crowd; here it indicates the difference of the people's efforts such as their characteristic, purpose and its result.

Then divided the people into two groups and analyse the specifications of each of them and said: The one who donates in the way of Allah and he had been virtuous and dutiful towards the Allah.

فَأَمَّا مَن أَعْطَى وَاتَّقَى

Have full faith in the divine virtues rewards.

وَصَدَّقَ بِالْحُسْنَى

We keep him in the unproblematic path and guide him towards the eternal heaven.

فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْيُسْرَى

أَعْطَى

The above term means to spend in the way of Generous God and support the poor and deprived people. And after that emphasised upon the piousness, It is possibly indicating the necessity of the clean intention and the unpolluted purpose at the time of spending the charity. And acquiring the wealth by legitimate method and spending it in legitimate way as well and without imposing any trouble and nuisance upon the others, these are the total qualities accumulated in the piousness.

Some stated, in addition that the term

أَعْطَى

This is the kind of worshiping with the help of wealth and the term

اتَّقَى

is pointing towards the other devotions and performing the obligatory divine duties and , leaving aside the illegitimate deeds but this term harmonizes with the first definition and the .Sha'n e Nuzul

الْحُسْنَى

the above term indicating the faith upon the great divine rewards as it is mentioned that Abul , Dahdah with full devotion upon the heavenly rewards spent his wealth.

In the ayat 95 of sura e Nisa we read: the Merciful God promised each of them the great celestial reward.

(An-Nisa (The Women

لاَّ يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُوْلِي الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ فَضَّلَ اللّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً وَكُـلاًّ وَعَدَ اللّهُ الْحُسْنَى وَفَضَّلَ اللّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (4:95)

Not equal are those of the believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame, etc.), and those who strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has preferred in grades those who strive hard and fight with their wealth and their lives above those who sit (at home). Unto each, Allah has promised good (Paradise), but Allah has preferred those who strive hard and fight, above those who sit (at ;home) by a huge reward

فَسَنُيَسِّرُهُ لِلْعُسْرَى

The above term possibly indicates the divine assistance and making easy to follow, upon those people. Or opening the doors of heaven before them and the angels and archangels welcoming them by wishing salam to all of them.

It is quite certain that those who choose to go upon the divine path by spending in the way of Benevolent God and by obeying a right way, for him the complications become uncomplicated for them. They possess a specific peace and tranquillity in the world and hereafter

Apart from that, possibly in the beginning, to give the charity may leave a feeling of burden upon the heart of man, may be they feel difficult to give the charity but by repeatedly and continuously open-handedly bestowing the charity, he gradually began to enjoy it.

There are charitable and big-hearted people who got happy by the presence of guests upon their meals spread and on the contrary if any day the guest does not comes to meet them they get restless. By this manner the Majestic God made easier their way to perform the rules of piety.

We must not ignore this point that, basically to believe in the judgement day and the great divine rewards, bless the human being a capability to tolerate any kind of hardship and it is made easy for him. Like this manner in the way of his devotion he put into stake not only his wealth, he set his life as well. And in the love of martyrdom he steps towards the battle field of holy war and enjoys his sacrifice.

يُسْرَى

The above term means to place the saddle on the horse, to hold its reins and make it ready for the riding. Then it is defined to every kind of task which is trouble-free and comfortable.

In the next ayat defined the people who have the opposite character and said: And the one who is a miser and like this manner wants to become independent from the responsibility of others.

وَأَمَّا مَن بَخِلَ وَاسْتَغْنَى

And he rejects the most excellent divine rewards.

وَكَذَّبَ بِالْحُسْنَى

Soon we put him in the path of hardships

Here the term

بَخِلَ

The above term stands before the below term

أَعْطَى

The miser with the help of miserliness by accumulating the wealth wants to become rich and self reliant and in other words he feels himself self-sufficient of all the divine rewards. Opposite to the first group the one who always hopes for the generosity of the Compassionate God or the one who had freed himself from the obedience towards the Majestic God he constantly feels himself contaminated in the sins.

In the last ayat warns these blind faith misers and said: when he fell down in the hell or the grave his wealth will never provide him any gain.

وَمَا يُغْنِي عَنْهُ مَالُهُ إِذَا تَرَدَّى

He is unable to take it with him in the other world or in the case he is able to take it with him

.then it cannot prevent him by falling down in the hell

تَرَدَّى

The above term means to fall down that causes death. It means either to fell down in the grave or the hell or to get perished.

Like this manner the noble Quran in these ayat speaks about the two groups: a group of believers, pious and kind hearted whereas another group of unbelievers, the misers and those who mock. Like this way the example of both of them clearly defined in the above chapters. The first group with the Almighty's support pass their way with effortlessness and easiness where as the second group in the life faces plenty of sufferings. They safe abundant of wealth and left them in this world and go away. They did not achieve any gain and they cannot buy any asset except disappointment, regret, disgrace and the divine punishments.

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَى (92:12)

Truly! Ours it is (to give) guidance,

وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَى (92:13)

.(And in fact, to Us belongs the Hereafter and the first life (this world

فَأَنذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّى (92:14)

.So I have warned you of a Fire which is blazing

لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى (92:15)

.None will (enter to) burn there except the most wretched one

الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى (92:16)

.Who had denied and turned away

وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْأَتْقَى (92:17)

But the righteous one will be protected

الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّى (92:18)

,He who spends his wealth for increase in self-purification

وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِندَهُ مِن نِّعْمَةٍ تُجْزَى (92:19)

not as payment for favours he received,

إِلَّا ابْتِغَاء وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى (92:20)

but only longing for the countenance of his Sustainer Lord, the Most High,

وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَى (92:21)

And he is going to be satisfied.

Definition:

Infaaq(to spend upon the poor and needy)that keep the distance from the hell fire

Followed by the previous aayat which draw a line between the miserly and generous people and defined their fate and in the ayat under discussion first it pursued the subject that our duty is to guide you, not to force and pressurise you. It is your duty to decide and to convert into the righteous person. Besides that, stepping on that path is in your favour we need it not.

.It said: Certainly our duty is to guide

إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا لَلْهُدَى

The guidance by the way of natural instinct and wisdom (takvin) or with the help of book and tradition (Tashri') and we told you whatever are needed in this cause and committed our best towards it.

.Surely the judgment day as well as the world, belongs to us

وَإِنَّ لَنَا لَلْآخِرَةَ وَالْأُولَى

Your obedience and faith is not needed nor it gives us any profit or your disobedience does not gives us any loss. All these programmes are for your benefit and for your uplift. The intension of these two ayat is to encourage the generous believers and emphasise upon the subject that we guide them more. We make the paths easy for them in this life and hereafter, as both the world and hereafter belongs to us and we have full powers to execute it.

It is true that this world appears, previous to the hereafter but as the matter of importance and the ultimate purpose, the real aim is the hereafter only, for that reason priority is given it.

And one of the passages of guidance is the forewarning and admonition. In the next ayat it .adds: So I am warning you from the blazing fire

فَأَنذَرْتُكُمْ نَارًا تَلَظَّى

تَلَظَّى

The above term means untainted flame. And we know that the wholesome smokeless flames have more heat and temperature and sometimes the term of this word is applied for the hell. Then points towards the group who enters this burning inferno and said: the one who are the most unfortunate people enters in it.

لَا يَصْلَاهَا إِلَّا الْأَشْقَى

The definition of the word

أَشْقَى

It said: the one who denied the signs of Majestic God and turns his back to it.

الَّذِي كَذَّبَ وَتَوَلَّى

The decisive factor for the prosperity and misfortune is the faith and the unfaithfulness and the outcome of its practises. Truly those who overlooks those abundant signs of guidance and the facilities to gain the faith and piety, he is best proof of the

أَشْقَى

most unfortunate

The above ayat and the upcoming ayat said: to get rid of hell fire is exclusively for the pious people. It is expressing the two groups of the people. The first group is miser and unfaithful and the second group is big-hearted and extremely pious. The first group will enter the hell and the second group enters the heaven. Here the third is not defined.

Then it is told about the people who are away from the burning hell fire and said: Soon the most pious people will be kept away from the blazing fire.

وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْأَتْقَى

The one who spends his money in the way of the Holy God and his intention is just to please the Protector God, purify his inner self and achieve the clean and uncontaminated wealth.

الَّذِي يُؤْتِي مَالَهُ يَتَزَكَّى

يَتَزَكَّى

The above term in fact indicating the sincere intention and nearness to the Great Forgiver God whether it means to acquire the spiritual gains and the growth of wealth, or to acquire the purity in riches, as the term

تزکیه

means the growth as well as the cleansing

(In the ayat 103 Sura e Tauba we read: At-Tauba (The Repentance

خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِم بِهَا وَصَلِّ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ صَلاَتَكَ سَكَنٌ لَّهُمْ وَاللّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (9:103)

Take, (O, Muhammad), from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase, and appeal to (Allah's blessings) upon them. Indeed, your invocations are a source of security for them. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing.

Then to emphasise the matter of the genuineness of intention in the giving the charity, it added: No body have the right in the blessing, with help of that charity he should not expect the .(reward in return (from the human being

وَمَا لِأَحَدٍ عِندَهُ مِن نِّعْمَةٍ تُجْزَى

And have in his mind no favour from anyone for which a reward is expected in return, .But his intention is only to obtain the divine favour of great provider God

إِلَّا ابْتِغَاء وَجْهِ رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى

Or in another words most of the charities among the people is the reply to the similar charity which is previously given to them by the person. Certainly gratitude and the respond to the favours is the best attitude. But its version is different from the charity given in sincerity by the pious.

The above ayat says: the charity of the pious people is not out of hypocrisy and not even for the response of the service previously provided to them. But it is a motivation, only and only to gain the favour of Honourer God and this is the reason which turns out valuable those .charities

وَجْهِ

Here the above term means the Great and All Aware God and it signifies the pleasure and .blessing of his pure and clean entity

رَبِّهِ الْأَعْلَى

This term reveals that the charity is donated, by completely getting in touch with the Loving God and the person is in the state when he is all aware of the Provider God and knows about the divine magnificent position. And go against every kind of negative intention such as the charity given to gain the fame and attract the people and obtain the social status and likewise.

Finally in the last ayat of this sura defined the great and matchless reward of this group in a very short sentence, it said: And soon this man will get pleased and satisfied.

وَلَسَوْفَ يَرْضَى

Yea as he worked hard to please the Merciful God, the Gracious God too makes him contented. The complete and wide-ranging satisfaction without any terms and condition, the pleasure carrying great weight and the extreme blessings enclosed in it, the satisfaction which is impossible for us to imagine. None of the blessings can be imagined above that divine gift. Yea the reward of the Great God is great as well. Nothing is imaginable more than the entire contentment of the human beings.

The virtues of charity in the way of Allah

Charity in the way of Allah and the material support to the deprived people particularly respectable persons, with sincerity. These are the acts in the verses of Quran are repeatedly and frequently emphasised upon it and it is defined as the signs of faith.

The Islamic narrations too fully emphasise about this subject to the extent that in the Islamic culture the charity must be along with the gaining of the favours of Benevolent God and without any hypocrisy, imposing, demonstrating and commanding the trouble upon the person who receives the charity. In that case it is the most excellent act.

We come to the conclusion of this discussion by stating some narrations.

1- In a hadis regarding imam Baqir alaihis salam we read: the most favourite act before the Beneficent God is to delight a heart of a needful believer, to satiate his hunger and to help him pay his debts.

2- In a narration from prophet of Allah peace be upon him: The good temperament and giving food to the people and sacrificing the cattle in the way of Generous God are among the best deeds.

3- In another hadis from the imam Baqir alaihis salam it is mentioned who said: No good deed is compared to visit a believer, to give food to a believer, it is a duty upon the kind God to bestow that kind of charitable man, the food of the heaven.

4- In another hadis from the prophet of Allah peace be upon him. When a man grasped the rein of the prophet's horse upon which he was riding and said: O prophet of Allah which is the most paramount act among the human deeds? He replied: to give food to the people and to be soft spoken to them.

5- At last in a narration from the prophet of Allah peace be upon him we read: the one who becomes a host of a Muslim family for a day and a night, the Benevolent God forgives his sins.

O the Praise worthy God! Bless us the ability to step upon the great deeds.

O The Provident God! Increase our sincerity in the intentions in the practise of the good deeds.

O the Firm and Strong God! We want from you to bless us such blessings and favours that we get delighted with you and you too get pleased with us.