

SURAH AS A STORY



Surah Al-Hijr

The Rocky Tract

The complete journey — the Book that is guarded —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 15 • 99 Ayahs • Meccan

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The Surah at a Glance

*Rubamaa yawaddul-lazeena kafaroo law kaanoo
muslimeen*

2. Perhaps those who disbelieve will wish that they had been Muslims.

*Innaa Nahnu nazzalnaz-Zikra wa Innaa lahoo
lahaafizoon*

9. Indeed, it is We who sent down the Reminder, and indeed, We will be its guardian.

Wa im-min shay'in illaa 'indanaa khazaaa'inhoo

21. And there is not a thing but that with Us are its depositories.

Inna 'ibaadee laysa laka 'alayhim sultaan

42. Indeed, over My servants there is for you no authority.

*Wa laqad aataynaaka sab'am-minal-masaanee
wal-Qur'aanal-'Azeem*

87. And We have certainly given you seven of the oft-repeated verses and the great Quran.

Wa'bud Rabbaka hattaa ya'tiyakal-yaqeen



99. And worship your Lord until there comes to you the certainty.

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Perhaps They Will Wish

Beta, this surah opens with the letters 'Alif Lam Ra', and then a sentence that carries an entire lifetime of regret inside it:

'RUBAMA YAWADDUL-LAZINA KAFAROO LAW KANOO MUSLIMEEN — PERHAPS THOSE WHO DISBELIEVE WILL WISH THAT THEY HAD BEEN MUSLIMS.'

Beta, 'yawaddu' is not a mild word — it means to WISH with longing, to desire something deeply. And the scholars explained that this wish comes at the moments when the truth becomes undeniable: at death, when the reality is revealed, and on the Day when the believers are taken to safety.



Beta, notice how the whole surah begins here — with the picture of a person wishing he had chosen differently. That is the frame for everything that follows.

'ZARHUM YA'KULOO WA YATAMATTA'OO WA
YULHIHIMUL-AMALU FA-SAWFA YA'LAMOON —
LEAVE THEM TO EAT AND ENJOY THEMSELVES AND
BE DIVERTED BY (false) HOPE, FOR THEY ARE GOING
TO KNOW.'

Beta, three words describe a whole way of living: eating, enjoying, and 'al-amal' — long-range hope, the endless assumption that there is time later. And the verdict: 'fa-sawfa ya'lamoon', they will find out.

'WA MA AHLAKNA MIN QARYATIN ILLA WA LAHA
KITABUN MA'LOOM — and We did not destroy any city
but that it had a KNOWN DECREE — MA TASBIQU MIN
UMMATIN AJALAHA WA MA YASTA'KHIROON — no
nation can precede its term, nor delay it.'

Beta, that applies to nations and to people. Nothing arrives early; nothing is late.



And the deniers mocked him ﷻ, saying: 'YA
AYYUHAL-LAZI NUZZILA 'ALAYHIZ-ZIKRU INNAKA
LA-MAJNOON — O you upon whom the message has
been sent down, YOU ARE MAD! LAW MA TA'TEENA
BIL-MALA'IKATI IN KUNTA MINAS-SADIQEEN — why
do you not bring us the angels, if you are truthful?'

And Allah's answer, beta: 'MA
NUNAZZILUL-MALA'IKATA ILLA BIL-HAQQI WA MA
KANOO IZAN MUNZAREEN — We do not send down
the angels except with truth, and they would not then be
given any respite.' Meaning: when the angels come as
you demand, the time for choosing is over.

We Will Guard It

And now, beta, one of the most important ayahs in the
entire Quran — a promise Allah made about His own
Book:

'INNA NAHNU NAZZALNAZ-ZIKRA WA INNA LAHU
LA-HAFIZOON — INDEED, IT IS WE WHO SENT DOWN
THE REMINDER, AND INDEED, WE WILL BE ITS



GUARDIAN.'

Beta, look at the emphasis packed into the Arabic: 'Inna' — indeed. 'Nahnu' — WE, stated separately for stress. 'Inna lahu LA-hafizoon' — and We will most certainly be its guardians.

And beta, think about what this promise has meant in practice.

Every other revelation before this was entrusted to people to preserve — and over centuries, portions were lost, altered, translated and re-translated until the original wording could no longer be recovered.

This Book, Allah took upon HIMSELF.

And the method He used is worth noticing. He did not preserve it only in writing — paper burns and ink fades. He preserved it in HEARTS. From the first generation until today, there have always been thousands upon thousands of people, across every continent, who carry the entire Quran in memory, letter by letter, in the same



order, with the same wording.

Beta, in every era, from Morocco to Indonesia, a child who has memorised it can be tested against a child in another country he has never met, and the text matches. That is not a human achievement. That is a promise being kept.

And beta, this ayah is also a source of great calm. No matter what any generation does to this deen — misuse it, misrepresent it, attack it, mock it — the source text itself is beyond reach. Everything else can be argued about; the words cannot be changed.

The surah then comforts the Prophet ﷺ: 'WA LAQAD ARSALNA MIN QABLIKA FEE SHIYA'IL-AWWALEEN — and We had certainly sent messengers before you among the sects of the former peoples — WA MA YA'TEEHIM MIN RASOOLIN ILLA KANOO BIHI YASTAHZI'OON — and no messenger came to them except that they used to MOCK HIM.'



Beta, mockery is the oldest weapon against truth, and it is still the most common. It requires no argument and no evidence.

With Us Are Its Treasuries

The surah then turns to the sky and the earth, beta, and gives some remarkable ayahs.

'WA LAQAD JA'ALNA FIS-SAMA'I BUROOJAN WA ZAYYANNAHA LIN-NAZIREEN — and We have placed within the heaven great STARS and made them beautiful for the observers.'

'WAL-ARDA MADADNAHA WA ALQAYNA FEEHA RAWASIYA WA ANBATNA FEEHA MIN KULLI SHAY'IN MAWZOON — and the earth We have spread out and placed within it firm mountains, and caused to grow in it of everything IN BALANCED MEASURE.'

Beta, 'mawzoon' — WEIGHED, measured, proportioned. Nothing grows randomly; everything comes out in exact amounts.



'WA JA'ALNA LAKUM FEEHA MA'AYISHA WA MAN
LASTUM LAHU BI-RAZIQEEN — and We have made for
you therein means of living, AND FOR THOSE FOR
WHOM YOU ARE NOT PROVIDERS.'

Beta, note that: Allah provides for creatures YOU do not
feed — every bird, every insect, every fish in the depths.
And you were worried about your own provision.

And then, beta, an ayah worth writing on your heart:

'WA IN MIN SHAY'IN ILLA 'INDANA KHAZA'INUHU —
AND THERE IS NOT A THING BUT THAT WITH US ARE
ITS TREASURIES — WA MA NUNAZZILUHU ILLA
BI-QADARIN MA'LOOM — AND WE DO NOT SEND IT
DOWN EXCEPT ACCORDING TO A KNOWN MEASURE.'

Beta, absorb this. Everything you could ever need —
health, provision, knowledge, a spouse, a child, relief
from a difficulty — the STOREHOUSES of all of it are
with Him. Nothing is in short supply. Nothing has run
out.



And He releases it 'bi-qadarin ma'loom' — by a known, precise measure. Not less than you need, and not more than you could carry.

Beta, remember this the next time you feel a door has closed. The treasury did not empty; the release was measured.

'WA ARSALNAR-RIYAH LAWAQIHA FA-ANZALNA MINAS-SAMA'I MA'AN FA-ASQAYNAKUMOOH — AND WE SEND THE WINDS AS FERTILISERS, and We send down water from the sky and give it to you to drink — WA MA ANTUM LAHU BI-KHAZINEEN — AND YOU ARE NOT ITS RETAINERS.'

Beta, 'lawaqih' — the word carries the meaning of fertilising, causing pollination and pregnancy. The winds carry pollen between plants and drive the clouds that carry rain.

And 'ma antum lahu bi-khazineen' — you are not the ones who store this water. You did not fill the clouds or the aquifers. You are a guest at a table you did not set.



'WA INNA LA-NAHNU NUHYEE WA NUMEETU WA NAHNUL-WARITHOON — and indeed, it is We who give life and cause death, AND WE ARE THE INHERITOR (of all).'

The Refusal, and the Limits of the Enemy

The surah then recounts the creation of Adam, beta, with an unusually vivid description of the material:

'WA LAQAD KHALAQNAL-INSANA MIN SALSALIN MIN HAMA'IN MASNOON — AND WE DID CERTAINLY CREATE MAN OUT OF DRIED CLAY, FROM ALTERED BLACK MUD — WAL-JANNA KHALAQNAHU MIN QABLU MIN NARIS-SAMOOM — and the jinn We created before from SCORCHING FIRE.'

Beta, 'salsal' is dry clay that makes a sound when struck; 'hama'in masnoon' is dark, moulded mud. That is what you were formed from.



'FA-IZA SAWWAYTUHU WA NAFAKHTU FEEHI MIN ROOHEE FA-QA'OO LAHU SAJIDEEN — so when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, FALL DOWN TO HIM IN PROSTRATION.'

And all the angels prostrated — 'ILLA IBLEESA ABA AN YAKOONA MA'AS-SAJIDEEN — EXCEPT IBLEES; HE REFUSED to be with those who prostrated.'

He was asked why, and gave his reason: 'LAM AKUN LI-ASJUDA LI-BASHARIN KHALAQTAHU MIN SALSALIN MIN HAMA'IN MASNOON — I would not prostrate to a human whom You created from dried clay of altered black mud.'

Beta, notice: he keeps returning to the MATERIAL. That is all his argument ever was — a comparison of substances.

He was expelled, and asked for respite until the Day of Resurrection, and it was granted. And then he declared his plan:



'RABBI BIMA AGHWAYTANEE LA-UZAYYINANNA
LAHUM FIL-ARDI WA LA-UGHWIYANNAHUM
AJMA'EEN — MY LORD, BECAUSE YOU HAVE PUT ME
IN ERROR, I WILL SURELY MAKE (disobedience)
ATTRACTIVE TO THEM ON EARTH, AND I WILL
MISLEAD THEM ALL — ILLA 'IBADAKA
MINHUMUL-MUKHLASEEN — EXCEPT, AMONG
THEM, YOUR CHOSEN, SINCERE SERVANTS.'

Beta, note his stated method: 'LA-UZAYYINANNA' — I
will BEAUTIFY it, make it look attractive. That is his
entire technique. He does not force anyone; he cannot.
He decorates. He makes the harmful look appealing, the
wrong look reasonable, the delay look sensible.

And then Allah's reply, beta — and this is one of the
most reassuring statements in the Quran:

'QALA HAZA SIRATUN 'ALAYYA MUSTAQEEM — He
said: THIS IS A PATH LEADING STRAIGHT TO ME —
INNA 'IBADEE LAYSA LAKA 'ALAYHIM SULTANUN
ILLA MANIT-TABA'AKA MINAL-GHAWEEN — INDEED,



OVER MY SERVANTS THERE IS FOR YOU NO AUTHORITY, EXCEPT THOSE WHO FOLLOW YOU OF THE DEVIATORS.'

Beta, 'laysa laka 'alayhim sultan' — you have NO AUTHORITY over them. None. He cannot make you do anything.

Beta, understand what this means for your own struggles. Shaytan has exactly one power: suggestion. He can whisper, decorate, and remind you of an excuse. He cannot move your hand, open an app, speak a word with your tongue, or take a single step for you.

So when a person says 'shaytan made me do it', this ayah answers him. He offered; you accepted. And that is actually good news — because it means the decision was always yours, which means you can decide differently.

And notice the one group named as beyond his reach, beta — the same as in Surah Sad: 'AL-MUKHLASEEN', those made sincere and pure for Allah alone.



The surah then describes the gardens and springs for the righteous, and says: 'UDKHULOOHA BI-SALAMIN AMINEEN — ENTER IT IN PEACE, SAFE — WANA NAZA'NA MA FEE SUDOORIHIM MIN GHILLIN IKHWANAN 'ALA SURURIN MUTAQABILEEN — AND WE WILL REMOVE WHATEVER IS IN THEIR BREASTS OF RESENTMENT, so they will be BROTHERS, ON THRONES FACING EACH OTHER.'

Beta, look at what has to be removed before Paradise can be enjoyed: 'ghill' — grudges, resentment, the old bitterness we carry about each other. Allah takes it out of their chests.

And then they sit 'facing each other' — because you cannot sit comfortably facing someone you resent. Beta, why wait for Jannah for that operation? Start removing the ghill now.

'LA YAMASSUHUM FEEHA NASABUN WA MA HUM MINHA BI-MUKHRAJEEN — no fatigue will touch them therein, nor will they be removed from it.'



And then, beta, the balance this deen always keeps:
'NABBI' 'IBADEE ANNI ANAL-GHAFOORUR-RAHEEM
— INFORM MY SERVANTS THAT I AM THE
FORGIVING, THE MERCIFUL — WA ANNA 'AZABI
HUWAL-'AZABUL-ALEEM — AND THAT MY
PUNISHMENT IS THE PAINFUL PUNISHMENT.'

Beta, the two ayahs are placed side by side deliberately.
Hope without fear makes a person careless; fear without
hope makes him despair. A believer walks with both.

The Guests, and Two Ruined Peoples

The surah then tells of the guests who came to Ibrahim
(alaihis salam) — angels in human form — and how he
became apprehensive of them, and they said: 'LA
TAWJAL INNA NUBASHSHIRUKA BI-GHULAMIN
'ALEEM — DO NOT BE FRIGHTENED; WE GIVE YOU
GOOD TIDINGS OF A LEARNED BOY.'

And he asked, in wonder, how there could be good
tidings when old age had overtaken him. And they said:
'BASHSHARNAKA BIL-HAQQI FA-LA TAKUN



MINAL-QANITEEN — WE HAVE GIVEN YOU GOOD
TIDINGS IN TRUTH, SO DO NOT BE OF THE
DESPAIRING.'

And his reply, beta, is a line to remember: 'WA MAN
YAQNATU MIN RAHMATI RABBIHI ILLAD-DALLOON
— AND WHO DESPAIRS OF THE MERCY OF HIS LORD
EXCEPT THOSE ASTRAY?'

Beta, that is a strong statement, and it comes from a
prophet. To despair of Allah's mercy is not humility —
the Quran classifies it with going astray.

The angels then went on to the people of Lut (alaihis
salam), and his family was saved except his wife. And
the town was overturned, and stones of hard clay rained
upon it.

'INNA FEE ZALIKA LA-AYATIN LIL-MUTAWASSIMEEN
— indeed, in that are signs FOR THOSE WHO DISCERN.'
Beta, 'al-mutawassimeen' are those who read the signs
on the surface of things — people with insight, who look
at a ruin and understand what happened to a people,



and why.

'WA INNAHA LA-BI-SABEELIN MUQEEM — and indeed, those cities are on an established road.' Beta, meaning: the ruins are on a route people still travel past. The evidence is not hidden in a museum; it lies beside the highway.

And then, beta, the people who give this surah its name: 'WA LAQAD KAZZABA AS-HABUL-HIJRIL-MURSALEEN — and certainly did the COMPANIONS OF AL-HIJR deny the messengers.'

These were Thamud, the people of Salih (alaihis salam), who carved their homes into the faces of the mountains.

'WA KANOO YANHITOONA MINAL-JIBALI BUYOOTAN AMINEEN — AND THEY USED TO CARVE FROM THE MOUNTAINS HOUSES, FEELING SECURE.'

Beta, 'amineen' — feeling SAFE. And look at what they built for that security: not tents, not brick — houses cut into solid rock, meant to last forever.



'FA-AKHAZAT-HUMUS-SAYHATU MUSBIHEEN — SO THE SHRIEK SEIZED THEM AT MORNING — FA-MA AGHNA 'ANHUM MA KANOO YAKSIBOON — AND OF NO AVAIL TO THEM WAS WHAT THEY HAD EARNED.'

Beta, a sound. That is all it took. The mountain homes are still standing today, empty, in the north-west of Arabia — and the Prophet ﷺ passed by that place with his companions on an expedition, and he covered his head and urged them to hurry through, and told them not to enter the dwellings of those who wronged themselves except while weeping, lest what afflicted them afflict you.

Beta, learn from this: no structure protects you from Allah's decree. And ruins are not tourist attractions for a believer — they are warnings.

The Seven Oft-Repeated

And then, beta, Allah reminds His Messenger ﷺ of a gift greater than anything the deniers had:



'WA LAQAD ATAYNAKA SAB'AN MINAL-MATHANI
WAL-QUR'ANAL-'AZEEM — AND WE HAVE
CERTAINLY GIVEN YOU SEVEN OF THE OFT-REPEATED
VERSES AND THE GREAT QURAN.'

Beta, 'sab'an minal-mathani' — the seven oft-repeated
— is explained by the Prophet ﷺ himself as Surah
al-Fatihah. He told a companion that he would teach
him the greatest surah in the Quran before he left the
masjid, and then taught him al-Fatihah, saying it is the
seven oft-repeated verses and the great Quran that he
was given.

Beta, think about the placement of this ayah. It comes
right after the account of nations destroyed and right
before an instruction to stop grieving over what the
deniers possess.

'LA TAMUDDANNA 'AYNAYKA ILA MA MATTA'NA
BIHI AZWAJAN MINHUM — DO NOT EXTEND YOUR
EYES TOWARD THAT BY WHICH WE HAVE GIVEN
ENJOYMENT TO SOME GROUPS OF THEM — WA LA



TAHZAN 'ALAYHIM — AND DO NOT GRIEVE OVER THEM — WAKHFID JANAHAKA LIL-MU'MINEEN — AND LOWER YOUR WING TO THE BELIEVERS.'

Beta, look at the comparison being made. They have wealth, position, comfort. You have al-Fatihah and the Quran. Do not look sideways at what they were given — you were given something that cannot be bought.

And 'wakhfid janahaka lil-mu'mineen' — lower your wing to the believers, the same gesture of tenderness commanded toward parents. Be soft with your own people.

'WA QUL INNI ANAN-NAZEERUL-MUBEEN — and say: I am the clear warner.'

Until Certainty Comes

And the surah closes, beta, with three instructions and one promise — and every one of them is for a person under pressure.



'FASDA' BIMA TU'MARU WA A'RID
'ANIL-MUSHRIKEEN — SO DECLARE OPENLY WHAT
YOU ARE COMMANDED, AND TURN AWAY FROM
THOSE WHO ASSOCIATE OTHERS WITH ALLAH.'

Beta, 'fasda' means to split something open, to cut through — so: proclaim it clearly, without hedging. And at the same time, 'a'rid' — turn away from the argument-seekers. Speak the truth plainly, and do not get dragged into fights over it.

'INNA KAFAYNAKAL-MUSTAHZI'EEN — INDEED, WE
ARE SUFFICIENT FOR YOU AGAINST THE MOCKERS.'

Beta, what a promise. There were men in Makkah who made it their occupation to ridicule him — and Allah said: WE will handle them. You do not have to.

Beta, take that personally. You are not required to answer every insult or win every exchange. Some things you hand over.



'WA LAQAD NA'LAMU ANNAKA YADEEQU SADRUKA
BIMA YAQOOLOON — AND WE ALREADY KNOW THAT
YOUR BREAST IS CONSTRICTED BY WHAT THEY SAY.'

Beta, stop here for a moment. Allah does not tell him 'do not feel bad'. He says: WE KNOW that your chest is tight. He acknowledges the pain before prescribing anything.

And then the prescription: 'FA-SABBIH BI-HAMDI
RABBIKA WA KUN MINAS-SAJIDEEN — SO GLORIFY
YOUR LORD WITH PRAISE AND BE OF THOSE WHO
PROSTRATE — WA'BUD RABBAKA HATTA
YA'TIYAKAL-YAQEEN — AND WORSHIP YOUR LORD
UNTIL THERE COMES TO YOU THE CERTAINTY.'

Beta, look at the treatment given for a tight chest:
tasbeeh, sujud, and worship. Not distraction. Not
escape. Go to the ground.

And the final phrase, beta: 'hatta ya'tiyakal-yaqeen' —
until the CERTAINTY comes to you. The scholars are
agreed that 'al-yaqeen' here means DEATH — the one
thing nobody doubts.



So the last instruction of this surah is: keep worshipping until you die.

Beta, and there is something important in this. Worship has no retirement age and no graduation. There is no level at which a person has done enough and may stop. Some people imagine they will be religious later, or that they have already banked sufficient good. This ayah closes both doors: 'until the certainty comes to you.'

And beta, notice how this surah has come full circle. It opened with people who will WISH they had been Muslims — a wish that arrives too late. And it closes by telling the believer to worship right up to the final moment, so that when that moment comes, he is not among the wishers.

Between the two, it gave you everything you need: a Book that Allah Himself guards, storehouses that never empty, an enemy with no authority over you, and a Lord who knows exactly when your chest is tight.

What This Surah Teaches Us



1. A life of eating, enjoying and 'later, later' ends in one long wish — 'perhaps they will wish they had been Muslims'.

2. Allah took the preservation of this Book upon HIMSELF — and kept it in hearts, not only on paper.

3. The treasures of everything are with Him and never run out; He releases by a known measure.

4. Shaytan's only tool is decoration — he has NO authority over you; he offers, you accept.

5. Grudges are removed from the chest before Paradise is enjoyed — begin that removal now.

6. Despairing of Allah's mercy is not humility; the Quran places it with going astray.

7. When your chest is tight, He acknowledges it first — then prescribes prostration; and worship continues until 'the certainty' comes.

Ya Allah, guard our hearts as You guard Your Book, empty our chests of resentment, and let us be



worshipping You when the certainty arrives. Ameen.

— This is a simplified, faithful retelling for understanding, based on the Quran's translation and established tafseer (Ibn Kathir and others). For deeper study, always read with a qualified teacher. —

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