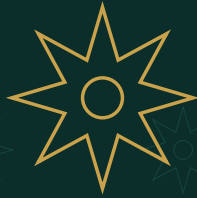


SURAH AS A STORY



Surah An-Nur

The Light

The complete journey — light upon light —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 24 • 64 Ayahs • Medinan

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The Surah at a Glance

Sooratu anzaalnaahaa wa faradnaahaa

1. A surah which We have sent down and made obligatory...

*Wa lawlaaa iz sami'tumoohu qultum-maa
yagoonu lanaaa an-natakallama bihaazaa*

16. And why, when you heard it, did you not say: it is not for us to speak of this?

*Wa laa ya'tali ulul-fadli minkum was-sa'ati
any-yu'tooo ulil-qurbaa*

22. And let not those of virtue and wealth among you swear not to give to relatives...

*Qul lil-mu'mineena yaghuddoo min absaarihim wa
yahfazoo furoojahum*

30. Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their chastity.

Allaahu noorus-samaawaati wal-ard

35. Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth.

*Rijaalul-laa tulheehim tijaaratunw-wa laa bay'un
'an zikril-laah*



37. Men whom neither commerce nor sale distracts from
the remembrance of Allah.

Listen to the Arabic recitation of this Surah, ayah by ayah, with the Qari
— free on nooraniilm.com (Read & Recite section).

A Surah Sent Down and Made Obligatory

Beta, this surah opens in a way no other surah does:

'SOORATUN ANZALNAHA WA FARADNAHA WA
ANZALNA FEEHA AYATIN BAYYINATIN LA'ALLAKUM
TAZAKKAROON — a SURAH which We have SENT
DOWN and MADE OBLIGATORY, and We have revealed
in it CLEAR VERSES that you might remember.'

Beta, 'faradnaha' — We made its rulings binding. From
the very first line, this surah announces that what
follows is not advice; it is law. And what it legislates is
the protection of something precious: the honour and
purity of a society.

Because a community, beta, is not destroyed only by
armies. It is destroyed when families break, when trust
between people collapses, and when reputations can be



shredded by rumour. This surah builds the walls that prevent that.

It begins by laying down severe penalties for those proven guilty of unlawful intimacy — and beta, notice something crucial: the standard of proof required in Islamic law for that offence is deliberately extremely high, requiring four eyewitnesses to the act itself. The scholars observed that the effect of this is that the crime is almost impossible to prove unless it is committed openly and shamelessly. The law's purpose is not to hunt people down; it is to keep indecency from becoming PUBLIC.

And in the same breath, Allah legislates against the opposite crime: 'WAL-LAZINA

YARMOONAL-MUHSANATI THUMMA LAM YA'TOO
BI-ARBA'ATI SHUHADA'A FAJLIDOOHUM

THAMANEENA JALDAH — and those who ACCUSE
CHASTE WOMEN and then do not produce FOUR
WITNESSES — lash them eighty times — WA LA
TAQBALOO LAHUM SHAHADATAN ABADA — AND DO



NOT ACCEPT THEIR TESTIMONY EVER AFTER — WA
ULA'IKA HUMUL-FASIQOON — and those are the
defiantly disobedient.'

Beta, look at how seriously Allah treats an attack on
someone's honour. The person who slanders and cannot
prove it is punished and permanently disqualified as a
witness — his word is never trusted again.

That tells you something, beta: in Allah's law, a
reputation is not a small thing to be thrown around in
conversation.

Why Did You Not Think Well?

And now, beta, the surah addresses a real incident that
shook Madinah — a false accusation spread against
Aisha (radiyallahu anha), the Prophet's ﷺ own wife, by
the hypocrites and repeated by some believers who
should have known better.

For a month, the household suffered while the rumour
circulated. And then Allah revealed her innocence from



above the seven heavens — a defence recorded in a Book recited until the end of time.

'INNAL-LAZINA JA'OO BIL-IFKI 'USBATUN MINKUM — indeed, those who came with the FALSEHOOD are a GROUP AMONG YOU — LA TAHSABOOHU SHARRAN LAKUM BAL HUWA KHAYRUN LAKUM — DO NOT THINK IT BAD FOR YOU; RATHER IT IS GOOD FOR YOU.'

Beta, pause there. A month of agony, a family's honour attacked publicly — and Allah says: it is GOOD for you. Because out of that pain came permanent legislation protecting every believing woman's honour until the end of time, and a declaration of her innocence that no one can ever erase.

Beta, remember this ayah when something painful happens to you: 'la tahsaboohu sharran lakum bal huwa khayrun lakum'.

And then, beta, comes the ayah that should govern how we handle every rumour that reaches our phones:



'LAWLA IZ SAMI'TUMOOHU ZANNAL-MU'MINOONA
WAL-MU'MINATU BI-ANFUSIHIM KHAYRAN — WHY,
WHEN YOU HEARD IT, DID THE BELIEVING MEN AND
WOMEN NOT THINK GOOD OF THEIR OWN PEOPLE —
WA QALOO HAZA IFKUN MUBEEN — AND SAY: THIS
IS AN OBVIOUS FALSEHOOD?'

Beta, the expected response of a believer to a rumour
about another believer is not investigation first — it is
'this is obviously false'. Good opinion is the DEFAULT.

'WA LAWLA IZ SAMI'TUMOOHU QULTUM MA
YAKOONU LANA AN NATAKALLAMA BI-HAZA — AND
WHY, WHEN YOU HEARD IT, DID YOU NOT SAY: IT IS
NOT FOR US TO SPEAK OF THIS — SUBHANAKA HAZA
BUHTANUN 'AZEEM — GLORY BE TO YOU! THIS IS A
GREAT SLANDER!'

Beta, memorise that sentence: 'ma yagoonu lana an
natakallama bi-hadha' — IT IS NOT FOR US TO SPEAK
OF THIS. That single line, said when a piece of gossip
arrives, would stop most of the harm in our



communities.

'IZ TALAQQAWNAHU BI-ALSINATIKUM WA TAQOOLONA BI-AFWAHIKUM MA LAYSA LAKUM BIHI 'ILM — when you RECEIVED IT WITH YOUR TONGUES and said with your mouths that of which YOU HAD NO KNOWLEDGE — WA TAHSABOONAHU HAYYINAN WA HUWA 'INDALLAHI 'AZEEM — AND YOU THOUGHT IT WAS A LIGHT MATTER, WHILE IT WAS, WITH ALLAH, ENORMOUS.'

Beta, that is the whole disease in one phrase: 'tahsaboonahu hayyinan' — you thought it was NOTHING. A forwarded message. A remark at a wedding. Something said to fill a silence. Light on your tongue — enormous with Allah.

And Allah warns: 'INNAL-LAZINA YUHIBBOONA AN TASHEE'AL-FAHISHATU FIL-LAZINA AMANOO LAHUM 'AZABUN ALEEMUN FID-DUNYA WAL-AKHIRAH — indeed, those who LIKE THAT IMMORALITY SHOULD BE SPREAD among the believers



will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter.'

Beta, note the precision: those who LIKE that it spreads. Not those who did it — those who enjoy circulating it.

Let Them Pardon and Overlook

And now, beta, one of the most beautiful ayahs in the Quran about forgiveness — and its context makes it extraordinary.

Abu Bakr (radiyallahu anhu) used to financially support a relative who was poor — and that relative was among those who had spread the slander against Abu Bakr's own daughter. So Abu Bakr swore he would never spend on him again. Beta, who could blame him?

And Allah revealed: 'WA LA YA'TALI ULUL-FADLI MINKUM WAS-SA'ATI AN YU'TOO ULIL-QURBA WAL-MASAKEENA WAL-MUHAJIREENA FEE SABEELILLAH — and let not those of VIRTUE among you and those of WEALTH swear not to give to their



relatives and the needy and the emigrants for the cause of Allah — WAL-YA'FOO WAL-YASFAHOO — AND LET THEM PARDON AND OVERLOOK — ALA TUHIBBOONA AN YAGHFIRALLAHU LAKUM — DO YOU NOT LOVE THAT ALLAH SHOULD FORGIVE YOU? WALLAHU GHAFUORUN RAHEEM.'

Beta, and Abu Bakr said immediately: yes, by Allah, I love that Allah should forgive me — and he restored the man's support and said he would never withdraw it again.

Beta, look at the argument Allah uses. He does not say 'forgive him because he deserves it'. He says: DO YOU NOT WANT TO BE FORGIVEN?

That is the leverage. Every one of us stands before Allah hoping to be excused for things far worse than what we are refusing to excuse in others. Beta, forgiveness is not a favour to the offender — it is an investment in your own file.

Lower Your Gaze



The surah then gives society its rules of interaction, beta — beginning with permission before entering homes: 'LA TADKHULOO BUYOOTAN GHAYRA BUYOOTIKUM HATTA TASTA'NISOO WA TUSALLIMOO 'ALA AHLIHA — do not enter houses other than your own until you have ASKED PERMISSION and GREETED their occupants.'

Beta, privacy is legislated. A home is a sanctuary, and even a friend does not walk in unannounced.

And then the two ayahs that are the foundation of Islamic modesty — and beta, notice which one comes FIRST:

'QUL LIL-MU'MINEENA YAGHUDDOO MIN ABSARIHIM WA YAHFAZOO FUROOJAHUM — TELL THE BELIEVING MEN TO LOWER THEIR GAZE AND GUARD THEIR CHASTITY — ZALIKA AZKA LAHUM — THAT IS PURER FOR THEM — INNALLAHA KHABEERUN BIMA YASNA'OON — indeed, Allah is acquainted with what they do.'



Beta, the command begins with the MEN. Before anything is said about women's dress, the men are told to control their eyes. That order is deliberate, and it is often forgotten in our communities, where the entire burden of modesty is placed on women.

And note 'yaghuddoo MIN absarihim' — lower FROM their gaze. Not close your eyes and walk into walls; restrain, reduce, look away. The Prophet ﷺ told Ali (radiyallahu anhu): do not follow a glance with another glance; the first is for you, and the second is not.

Beta, the first look is the accident. The second is the choice.

And then: 'WA QUL LIL-MU'MINATI YAGHDUDNA MIN ABSARIHINNA WA YAHFAZNA FUROOJAHUNNA — and tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their chastity — WA LA YUBDEENA ZEENATAHUNNA ILLA MA ZAHARA MINHA — and not to display their adornment except what appears of it — WAL-YADRIBNA BI-KHUMURIHINNA 'ALA



JUYOOBIHINN — and to draw their head-coverings over their chests.'

Beta, and then a long list of family members before whom this does not apply — fathers, sons, brothers, and so on.

And the reason given for the whole system, in the men's ayah: 'ZALIKA AZKA LAHUM' — THAT IS PURER FOR THEM. Beta, note: purer FOR THEM, not for society's convenience. These commands are a protection given to the person following them.

And then a beautiful command that most people overlook: 'WA ANKIHUL-AYAMA MINKUM WAS-SALIHEENA MIN 'IBADIKUM WA IMA'IKUM — and MARRY OFF the unmarried among you and the righteous among your slaves and slave-women — IN YAKOONOO FUQARA'A YUGHNIHIMULLAHU MIN FADLIH — IF THEY ARE POOR, ALLAH WILL ENRICH THEM FROM HIS BOUNTY.'



Beta, look at this. Right after commanding modesty, Allah commands the community to make MARRIAGE EASY. Because a society cannot demand chastity from its young people while making marriage impossibly expensive and difficult.

And 'in yakoonoo fuqara'a yughnihimullahu min fadlih' — poverty is answered directly: do not delay a marriage out of fear of provision. Beta, tell that to families who demand impossible dowries and lavish weddings while young people wait for years.

Light Upon Light

And now, beta, we come to the ayah that gives this surah its name — one of the most beautiful passages in all of revelation. Read it slowly.

'ALLAHU NOORUS-SAMAWATI WAL-ARD — ALLAH IS THE LIGHT OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.'

'MATHALU NOORIHI KA-MISHKATIN FEEHA MISBAH — the example of His light is like a NICHE within which



is a LAMP — AL-MISBAHU FEE ZUJAJAH — the lamp
 within GLASS — AZ-ZUJAJATU KA-ANNAHA
 KAWKABUN DURRIYY — the glass as if it were a
 BRILLIANT STAR — YOOQADU MIN SHAJARATIN
 MUBARAKATIN ZAYTOONATIN LA SHARQIYYATIN
 WA LA GHARBIYYAH — LIT FROM (the oil of) A
 BLESSED OLIVE TREE, NEITHER OF THE EAST NOR OF
 THE WEST — YAKADU ZAYTUHA YUDEE'U WA LAW
 LAM TAMSAS-HU NAR — WHOSE OIL WOULD
 ALMOST GLOW EVEN IF NO FIRE TOUCHED IT —
 NOORUN 'ALA NOOR — LIGHT UPON LIGHT —
 YAH DILLAHU LI-NOORIHI MAN YASHA' — ALLAH
 GUIDES TO HIS LIGHT WHOM HE WILLS.'

Beta, take the picture apart. A niche in a wall — it
 gathers the light and reflects it forward instead of letting
 it scatter. Inside it, a lamp. Around the lamp, glass so
 clear and polished that it shines like a star itself. And the
 fuel: oil from a blessed olive tree standing in the open,
 catching sun from every direction all day, so pure that it
 seems to glow before it is even lit.



And the result: 'noorun 'ala noor' — LIGHT UPON LIGHT.

Beta, the scholars applied this to the believer's heart. The niche is his chest. The glass is his heart — and how much light it gives depends on how CLEAN it is; a smudged glass dims even the brightest lamp. The oil is his fitrah and his sincerity, so pure that goodness almost shines out of him before any teaching reaches him. And the lamp lit within is the guidance of revelation.

So light upon light, beta: the light of a pure natural disposition, meeting the light of revelation.

And that is why two people can hear the same ayah and one is transformed while the other feels nothing. The lamp is the same. The glass is not.

Beta, so your work is the glass: clean it. Every sin is a smudge; every istighfar is a wipe.

Houses Allah Permitted to Be Raised



'FEE BUYOOTIN AZINALLAHU AN TURFA'A WA
YUZHARA FEEHASMUHU — IN HOUSES which Allah
has ORDERED TO BE RAISED and that His NAME BE
MENTIONED THEREIN — YUSABBIHU LAHU FEEHA
BIL-GHUDUWWI WAL-ASAL — glorifying Him within
them in the morning and the evening.'

'RIJALUN LA TULHEEHIM TIJARATUN WA LA BAY'UN
'AN ZIKRILLAHU WA IQAMIS-SALATI WA
EETA'IZ-ZAKAH — MEN WHOM NEITHER COMMERCE
NOR SALE DISTRACTS FROM THE REMEMBRANCE OF
ALLAH and establishing prayer and giving zakah —
YAKHAFOONA YAWMAN TATAQALLABU
FEEHIL-QULOUBU WAL-ABSAR — they FEAR A DAY IN
WHICH HEARTS AND EYES WILL BE OVERTURNED.'

Beta, notice carefully: it does not say men who have no
business. It says men whom business does not
DISTRACT. They trade, they buy and sell, they work
hard — and when the call comes, they go.



Beta, that is the balance Islam asks for. Not abandoning the world; not being swallowed by it.

And then the contrast — the deeds of those who deny: 'WAL-LAZINA KAFAROO A'MALUHUM KA-SARABIN BI-QEE'ATIN YAHSABUHUZ-ZAM'ANU MA'AN — and those who disbelieved — their deeds are like a MIRAGE IN A LOWLAND, which a THIRSTY ONE THINKS IS WATER — HATTA IZA JA'AHU LAM YAJID-HU SHAY'A — UNTIL, WHEN HE COMES TO IT, HE FINDS IT IS NOTHING.'

Beta, what a devastating image. A man dying of thirst, running toward shimmering water — and arriving at dry sand. That is a life of achievements built without iman: it looked like water the whole way.

'AW KA-ZULUMATIN FEE BAHRIN LUJJIYY — or like DARKNESSES within an UNFATHOMABLE SEA — YAGHSHAHU MAWJUN MIN FAWQIHI MAWJUN MIN FAWQIHI SAHAB — covered by waves, upon which are waves, over which are CLOUDS — ZULUMATUN



BA'DUHA FAWQA BA'D — DARKNESSES, ONE ABOVE
ANOTHER — IZA AKHRAJA YADAHU LAM YAKAD
YARAH — WHEN HE PUTS OUT HIS HAND, HE CAN
HARDLY SEE IT — WA MAN LAM YAJ'ALILLAHU LAHU
NOORAN FA-MA LAHU MIN NOOR — AND HE FOR
WHOM ALLAH HAS NOT MADE LIGHT — FOR HIM
THERE IS NO LIGHT.'

Beta, layers of darkness: deep water, then waves, then
more waves, then cloud blocking even the stars. And a
man holding his own hand in front of his face and
unable to see it.

That is what a life without guidance is like from the
inside — not evil-feeling, just DARK. No direction, no
way to judge, unable to see even what is closest to you.

And the conclusion is absolute, beta: 'wa man lam
yaj'alillahu lahu nooran fa-ma lahu min noor'. There is
no alternative source. So ask Him for it — as the Prophet
ﷺ used to ask, putting light in his heart, his hearing, his
sight, before him, behind him, above and below him.



Obey, and He Will Establish You

The surah then gives a promise to a community that lives by this: 'WA'ADALLAHUL-LAZINA AMANOO MINKUM WA 'AMILUS-SALIHATI LA-YASTAKHLIFANNAHUM FIL-ARDI — Allah has PROMISED those who believe and do righteous deeds that HE WILL SURELY GRANT THEM SUCCESSION in the land — WA LA-YUMAKKINANNA LAHUM DEENAHUMUL-LAZIR-TADA LAHUM — and He will surely ESTABLISH FOR THEM THEIR RELIGION which He has approved — WA LA-YUBADDILANNAHUM MIN BA'DI KHAWFIHIM AMNA — AND HE WILL SURELY EXCHANGE, AFTER THEIR FEAR, SECURITY — YA'BUDOONANEE LA YUSHRIKOONA BEE SHAY'A — (for) they worship Me, not associating anything with Me.'

Beta, note the condition attached at the end: they worship Him alone. Establishment in the land follows tawheed and righteous action — not the other way round.



And the surah teaches even domestic manners, beta — it instructs that children and servants seek permission before entering at three times of privacy: before Fajr, at midday rest, and after 'Isha. Beta, look at how detailed the mercy is: even inside one household, there are moments that belong to a person alone.

And it closes: 'ALA INNA LILLAHI MA FIS-SAMAWATI WAL-ARD — unquestionably, to Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth — QAD YA'LAMU MA ANTUM 'ALAYH — HE KNOWS WHAT YOU ARE UPON — WA YAWMA YURJA'OONA ILAYHI FA-YUNABBI'UHUM BIMA 'AMILOO — and the Day they are returned to Him, He will inform them of what they did — WALLAHU BI-KULLI SHAY'IN 'ALEEM — and Allah is Knowing of all things.'

Beta, 'qad ya'lamu ma antum 'alayh' — He knows exactly what state you are in. Right now. Including the things nobody else knows about you.



And that is the perfect ending for the surah of LIGHT: the One who is the Light of the heavens and the earth is the One in whose sight nothing about you is in shadow.

What This Surah Teaches Us

1. An honour is not a small thing: false accusation carries a punishment and permanent loss of credibility.
2. The believer's default response to a rumour is 'this is obviously false' — good opinion comes first.
3. Learn the sentence: 'it is not for us to speak of this.' What is light on your tongue is enormous with Allah.
4. Forgive because you want to be forgiven — 'do you not love that Allah should forgive you?'
5. The command to lower the gaze begins with MEN — and society is commanded to make marriage easy, not costly.
6. The lamp is the same for everyone; the difference is the cleanliness of the glass. Clean it with istighfar.



7. A life without guidance is darkness upon darkness — and there is no light except from Him, so ask for it.

Ya Allah, place light in our hearts, guard our tongues from people's honour, and make our homes among the houses You permitted to be raised. 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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