

SURAH AS A STORY



Surah Ash-Shu'ara

The Poets

The complete journey — seven messengers, one message —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 26 • 227 Ayahs • Meccan

NOORANI ILM

nooraniilm.com • free sadaqah jariyah ebook

The Surah at a Glance

*La'allaka baakhi'un-nafsaka allaa yakoonoo
mu'mineen*

3. Perhaps you would kill yourself with grief that they
will not be believers.

Qaala kallaa; inna ma'iya Rabbee sa-yahdeen

62. He said: No! Indeed, with me is my Lord; He will
guide me.

Wa iza maridtu fahuwa yashfeen

80. And when I am ill, it is He who cures me.

Wa laa tukhzinee yawma yub'asoon

87. And do not disgrace me on the Day they are
resurrected.

Illaa man atal-laaha biqalbin saleem

89. Except one who comes to Allah with a sound heart.

*Wa maaa as'alukum 'alayhi min ajr; in ajriya illaa
'alaa Rabbil-'aalameen*

109. And I do not ask you for any payment; my reward is
only from the Lord of the worlds.

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



Do Not Destroy Yourself With Grief

Beta, this surah opens with an ayah so tender that it tells you everything about the Prophet's ﷺ heart:

'LA'ALLAKA BAKHI'UN NAFSAKA ALLA YAKOONOO MU'MINEEN — PERHAPS YOU WOULD KILL YOURSELF WITH GRIEF THAT THEY WILL NOT BE BELIEVERS.'

Beta, 'bakhi'un nafsak' is a strong expression — to destroy yourself, to wear your own soul out entirely. Allah is describing a man so grieved that his own people were refusing guidance that it was consuming his health.

Think about that, beta. They mocked him, boycotted him, threw filth at him, plotted to kill him — and his grief was not for himself. It was that THEY would end up in the Fire.

And Allah, in effect, tells him: do not destroy yourself over this. 'IN NASHA' NUNAZZIL 'ALAYHIM



MINAS-SAMA'I AYATAN FA-ZALLAT A'NAQUHUM
LAHA KHADI'EEN — if We willed, We could send down
a sign from the sky, and their necks would remain
bowed to it in humility.'

Beta, meaning: forced belief was never the plan. Allah
could compel every neck to bow. He chose to let people
choose — and that is why guidance cannot be forced by
you either.

Beta, and there is comfort here for anyone in da'wah, or
any parent trying to guide a child: your grief for
someone's guidance is beloved to Allah — but it must
not destroy you. Do your work, and let Him carry the
outcome.

Musa: My Lord Is With Me

The surah then tells seven prophets' stories in sequence
— and beta, watch how the same pattern repeats,
because that repetition IS the message.



Musa (alaihis salam) was commanded to go to Firaun, and he raised honest objections: they will deny me, my chest tightens, my tongue is not fluent, and they have a case against me for the man who died. And Allah answered every one: 'KALLA FAZ-HABA BI-AYATINA INNA MA'AKUM MUSTAMI'OON — NO! Go, both of you, with Our signs; INDEED, WE ARE WITH YOU, LISTENING.'

Beta, 'inna ma'akum mustami'oon' — We are with you, LISTENING. Not merely watching. Present in the conversation.

Firaun's reply is the arrogance of a man who thinks favours create ownership: 'A LAM NURABBIKA FEENA WALEEDA — did we not RAISE YOU among us as a child? WA LABITHTA FEENA MIN 'UMURIKA SINEEN — and you remained among us for years of your life.'

Beta, the classic weapon of the manipulator: I did things for you, so you owe me your silence.



And Musa answered without denying the fact, but reframing it: 'WA TILKA NI'MATUN TAMUNNUHA 'ALAYYA AN 'ABBADTA BANEESRA'EEL — and is THIS a favour you hold over me — THAT YOU ENSLAVED THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL?'

Beta, magnificent. You raised one child in a palace — after killing thousands of children and enslaving a nation. Do not present that as generosity.

And then the exchange where Firaun asked 'and what is the Lord of the worlds?' — and Musa answered simply: Lord of the heavens and earth and what is between them; your Lord and the Lord of your forefathers; Lord of the east and the west. Firaun called him mad and threatened him with prison. Beta, that is the last argument of a man who has run out of arguments: the threat.

The magicians were gathered, and when they saw the truth they prostrated: 'AMANNA BI-RABBIL-'ALAMEEN, RABBI MOOSA WA HAROON —



we believe in the Lord of the worlds, the Lord of Musa and Harun.'

Firaun threatened to cut their hands and feet and crucify them. And their reply, beta, is one of the great sentences of faith: 'LA DAYRA INNA ILA RABBINA MUNQALIBOON — NO HARM! INDEED, TO OUR LORD WE WILL RETURN.'

Beta, that morning they were paid magicians looking for a bonus. By the afternoon they were willing to die. That is what seeing the truth clearly does to a heart — and it can happen in a single hour.

And then the sea. The Israelites came out at night, and Firaun pursued them with his hosts. 'FA-LAMMA TARA'AL-JAM'ANI QALA AS-HABU MOOSA INNA LA-MUDRAKOON — and when the two companies SAW EACH OTHER, the companions of Musa said: WE ARE SURELY TO BE OVERTAKEN!'

Beta, picture it: the sea in front, the army behind, nowhere to go. Mathematically, they were finished.



'QALA KALLA — HE SAID: NO! — INNA MA'IYA
RABBEE SA-YAHDEEN — INDEED, WITH ME IS MY
LORD; HE WILL GUIDE ME.'

Beta, memorise this sentence. 'Inna ma'iya Rabbee
sa-yahdeen.'

Look at what he did NOT say. He did not say 'I have a
plan'. He did not say 'the sea will split' — he did not
know that yet. He said only: my Lord is with me; He will
show me the way.

Beta, that is faith at its purest — certainty about Allah
without certainty about the method. And the very next
ayah: 'FA-AWHAYNA ILA MOOSA ANIDRIB
BI-'ASAKAL-BAHR — so We inspired Musa: STRIKE
THE SEA WITH YOUR STAFF.'

The way appeared AFTER the trust was declared, not
before it. Beta, say this sentence in your own dead ends.

Ibrahim: The Sound Heart



Then the surah turns to Ibrahim (alaihis salam), who asked his people the simple question: 'MA TA'BUDOON — what do you worship?' And they said: idols, and we remain devoted to them. He asked: 'HAL YASMA'OONAKUM IZ TAD'OON — DO THEY HEAR YOU WHEN YOU CALL? AW YANFA'OONAKUM AW YADURROON — or benefit you, or harm you?'

And their answer, beta, is the answer of every blind imitator: 'BAL WAJADNA ABA'ANA KAZALIKA YAF'ALOON — rather, WE FOUND OUR FATHERS DOING THUS.'

And then Ibrahim described his Lord, beta — and this passage is one of the most beautiful descriptions of Allah in the entire Quran. Read it slowly:

'ALLAZI KHALAQANEE FA-HUWA YAHDEEN — He who CREATED ME, and HE GUIDES ME — WAL-LAZI HUWA YUT'IMUNEE WA YASQEEN — and it is He who FEEDS ME AND GIVES ME DRINK — WA IZA MARIDTU FA-HUWA YASHFEEN — AND WHEN I AM ILL, IT IS



HE WHO CURES ME — WAL-LAZI YUMEETUNEE
THUMMA YUHYEEN — and who will cause me to die
and then bring me to life — WAL-LAZI ATMA'U AN
YAGHFIRA LEE KHATEE'ATEE YAWMAD-DEEN — and
who I HOPE will forgive me my sin on the Day of
Recompense.'

Beta, stop at the illness ayah, because the adab in it is
exquisite. He said: 'and when I AM ILL, HE cures me.' He
attributed the ILLNESS to himself and the CURE to
Allah.

He did not say 'when He makes me ill'. Beta, that is the
manners of a servant who knows that all good comes
from Allah, and that difficulty enters through our own
doorway. Learn to speak about your Lord this way.

And notice the last one: 'atma'u' — I HOPE. Even
Ibrahim (alaihis salam), the friend of Allah, spoke of
forgiveness as a hope, not an entitlement.

And then his dua, beta — the one to make your own:
'RABBI HAB LEE HUKMAN WA ALHIQNEE



BIS-SALIHEEN — my Lord, grant me wisdom and JOIN ME WITH THE RIGHTEOUS — WAJ'AL LEE LISANA SIDQIN FIL-AKHIREEN — and grant me a TRUTHFUL MENTION AMONG LATER GENERATIONS — WAJ'ALNEE MIN WARATHATI JANNATIN-NA'EEM — and place me among the inheritors of the Garden of Pleasure — WAGHFIR LI-ABEE INNAHU KANA MINAD-DALLEEN — and forgive my father; indeed, he was of those astray — WA LA TUKHZINEE YAWMA YUB'ATHOON — AND DO NOT DISGRACE ME ON THE DAY THEY ARE RESURRECTED.'

Beta, 'wa la tukhzinee' — do not humiliate me, do not expose me, on that Day. Say this dua. Every one of us has things we would not want displayed.

And then the ayah, beta, that names the only thing that will matter:

'YAWMA LA YANFA'U MALUN WA LA BANOON — THE DAY WHEN NEITHER WEALTH NOR CHILDREN WILL BENEFIT — ILLA MAN ATALLAHA BI-QALBIN SALEEM



— EXCEPT ONE WHO COMES TO ALLAH WITH A SOUND HEART.'

Beta, everything a person spends his life accumulating is named and dismissed in half an ayah: wealth and children — the two things people work hardest for. Neither one will help.

And what will? A 'qalbun saleem' — a SOUND heart.

The scholars explained 'saleem' as: sound and safe from shirk, free of hypocrisy, free of hatred and envy toward the believers, pure in its intention for Allah. The word is from the same root as 'salamah' — safety, wholeness — and 'Islam' itself.

Beta, notice that the heart is what is examined, not the CV. Not how much you did — what condition your heart was in while doing it. A person can carry an enormous record of deeds inside a heart full of pride and grudges, and arrive with nothing.



So the work of a lifetime, beta, is not only adding deeds — it is CLEANING the container. Forgive the person you have not forgiven. Remove the envy you are nursing. Purify why you do what you do. That is the luggage that passes inspection.

Five More Messengers, One Sentence Repeated

And now, beta, the surah does something remarkable. It tells the stories of Nuh, Hud, Salih, Lut and Shu'ayb (alaihimus salam) one after another — and each one contains almost the same words:

'IZ QALA LAHUM AKHOOHUM... ALA TATTAQOON — when their BROTHER said to them: WILL YOU NOT FEAR ALLAH? — INNI LAKUM RASOOLUN AMEEN — INDEED, I AM TO YOU A TRUSTWORTHY MESSENGER — FATTAQUILLAHA WA ATEE'OON — SO FEAR ALLAH AND OBEY ME — WA MA AS'ALUKUM 'ALAYHI MIN AJRIN — AND I DO NOT ASK YOU FOR ANY PAYMENT — IN AJRIYA ILLA 'ALA RABBIL-'ALAMEEN — MY



REWARD IS ONLY FROM THE LORD OF THE WORLDS.'

Beta, five prophets, different centuries, different nations, different languages — and the same five sentences.

And notice each is called their 'BROTHER' — 'akhoohum'. They were not foreigners imposing something; they were from among their own people, who cared about them as a brother cares.

And notice what each one emphasised: 'I ask no payment.' Beta, this is repeated so many times in this surah that it cannot be an accident. It is the mark of a true caller to Allah, and it is the test the Quran gives you for anyone claiming to guide people: what is he taking from you?

And each nation's objection was also similar. Nuh's people objected that only the LOWEST class followed him — and he answered: 'WA MA 'ILMEE BIMA KANOO YA'MALOON — what knowledge have I of what they used to do? IN HISABUHUM ILLA 'ALA RABBEE —



their account is only with my Lord — WA MA ANA BI-TARIDIL-MU'MINEEN — AND I AM NOT ONE TO DRIVE AWAY THE BELIEVERS.'

Beta, he refused to remove poor believers to attract rich ones. That is integrity in da'wah.

Hud's people were building monuments and fortresses, and he asked: 'A TABNOONA BI-KULLI REE'IN AYATAN TA'BATHOON — do you construct on every high place a landmark for VANITY? WA TATTAKHIZOONA MASANI'A LA'ALLAKUM TAKHLUDOON — and take for yourselves strongholds AS THOUGH YOU WILL LIVE FOREVER? WA IZA BATASHTUM BATASHTUM JABBAREEN — and when you strike, you strike as TYRANTS.'

Beta, three symptoms of a corrupt civilisation, named in three lines: building for show, building as though death will not come, and using force without mercy.

Salih warned Thamud not to obey 'the command of the transgressors, who cause corruption in the land and do



not reform'. Lut confronted his people's transgression. And Shu'ayb — beta, note his particular concern — spoke about BUSINESS: 'AWFUL-KAYLA WA LA TAKOONOO MINAL-MUKHSIREEN — GIVE FULL MEASURE AND DO NOT BE OF THOSE WHO CAUSE LOSS — WA ZINOO BIL-QISTASIL-MUSTAQEEM — AND WEIGH WITH AN EVEN BALANCE — WA LA TABKHASUN-NASA ASHYA'AHUM — AND DO NOT DEPRIVE PEOPLE OF THEIR DUE.'

Beta, a prophet sent primarily about honest weights and measures. That tells you how seriously this deen takes commercial honesty. Your shop counter is a place of worship or of ruin.

And after each story, the same closing: 'INNA FEE ZALIKA LA-AYAH — indeed, in that is a SIGN — WA MA KANA AKTHARUHUM MU'MINEEN — but most of them were not believers — WA INNA RABBAKA LA-HUWAL-'AZEEZUR-RAHEEM — AND INDEED, YOUR LORD — HE IS THE ALMIGHTY, THE MERCIFUL.'



Beta, why does Allah repeat this refrain after every single story? Because the surah opened with a Prophet ☐ grieving himself to death over his people's rejection. And Allah is showing him, seven times: this has always been the pattern. Most did not believe. You are not failing — you are walking a road every messenger walked.

The Truthful Spirit, and the Poets

The surah then affirms the source of the revelation: 'WA INNAHU LA-TANZEELU RABBIL-'ALAMEEN — and indeed, it is the revelation of the Lord of the worlds — NAZALA BIHIR-ROOHUL-AMEEN — the TRUSTWORTHY SPIRIT has brought it down — 'ALA QALBIKA LI-TAKOONA MINAL-MUNZIREEN — UPON YOUR HEART, that you may be of the warners — BI-LISANIN 'ARABIYYIN MUBEEN — in a clear Arabic tongue.'

Beta, note: 'upon your HEART'. It was not merely dictated to his ears; it was placed in his heart.



'WA INNAHU LA-FEE ZUBURIL-AWWALEEN — and indeed, it is (mentioned) in the scriptures of former peoples — A WA LAM YAKUN LAHUM AYATAN AN YA'LAMAHU 'ULAMA'U BANEE ISRA'EEL — is it not a sign to them that the SCHOLARS of the Children of Israel RECOGNISE IT?'

And then, beta, Allah answers the accusation that gives this surah its name. They had called the Prophet ﷺ a poet — because his speech was powerful and moved people.

'WA MA TANAZZALAT BIHISH-SHAYATEEN — and the devils have not brought it down — WA MA YANBAGHEE LAHUM WA MA YASTATEE'OON — it is not allowable for them, nor are they able.'

'WASH-SHU'ARA'U YATTABI'UHUMUL-GHAWOON — AND THE POETS — THE DEVIATORS FOLLOW THEM — A LAM TARA ANNAHUM FEE KULLI WADIN YAHEEMOON — DO YOU NOT SEE THAT THEY WANDER IN EVERY VALLEY — WA ANNAHUM



YAQOOLONA MA LA YAF'ALON — AND THAT THEY SAY WHAT THEY DO NOT DO?'

Beta, look at the two charges. 'They wander in every valley' — they follow whatever mood or subject moves them: today praising a man, tomorrow attacking him; today celebrating virtue, tomorrow glorifying vice. No fixed direction.

And 'they say what they do not do' — the gap between the beautiful words and the actual life.

Beta, that is the exact opposite of a prophet, whose whole authority rests on saying what he DOES do.

And then the exception, beta — and this is important, because Islam did not condemn poetry itself:

'ILLAL-LAZINA AMANOO WA 'AMILUS-SALIHATI WA ZAKARULLAHA KATHEERAN WANTASAROO MIN BA'DI MA ZULIMOO — EXCEPT THOSE WHO BELIEVE AND DO RIGHTEOUS DEEDS AND REMEMBER ALLAH OFTEN, AND DEFEND THEMSELVES AFTER THEY WERE WRONGED.'



Beta, the Prophet ﷺ had poets among his companions — Hassan ibn Thabit (radiyallahu anhu) defended him in verse, and he ﷺ supported him and prayed for him. So the pen is not condemned; the DIRECTION it points is what is judged.

And that applies to every art in every age, beta: the writer, the speaker, the one with a large audience. Do you wander into every valley chasing what performs — or do you have a fixed direction? And do you live what you publish?

The surah closes with a warning to the wrongdoers, and a final line: 'WA SAYA'LAMUL-LAZINA ZALAMOO AYYA MUNQALABIN YANQALIBOON — AND THOSE WHO HAVE WRONGED ARE GOING TO KNOW TO WHAT RETURN THEY WILL BE RETURNED.'

What This Surah Teaches Us

1. Grieve for people's guidance, but do not destroy yourself over it — Allah could have forced every neck to bow and chose not to.



2. 'Inna ma'iya Rabbee sa-yahdeen' — certainty about Allah does not require certainty about the method; the way appeared after the trust.

3. Do not let anyone weaponise past favours to buy your silence about present wrong.

4. Speak of Allah with Ibrahim's adab: 'when I am ill, HE cures me.'

5. Neither wealth nor children will help — only a sound heart. Clean the container, not just the record.

6. Test any caller by what he takes from you: every messenger said 'I ask you no payment'.

7. Do not wander into every valley, and never say what you do not do — the pen is judged by its direction.

Ya Allah, grant us a qalbun saleem, do not disgrace us on that Day, and let us say only what we live. 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. —



Noorani Ilm • nooraniilm.com • Free to share — sadaqah jariyah

