

SURAH AS A STORY



Surah Muhammad

Muhammad

The complete journey — the two paths, and the test of giving —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 47 • 38 Ayahs • Medinan

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The Surah at a Glance

*Wal-lazeena aamanoo wa 'amilus-saalihaati wa
aamanoo bima nuzzila 'alaa Muhammad*

2. And those who believe and do righteous deeds and believe in what was revealed to Muhammad...

*Iny-tansurul-laaha yansurkum wa yusabbit
aqdaamakum*

7. If you support Allah, He will support you and plant your feet firmly.

*Afalaa yatadabbaroonal-Qur'aana am 'alaa
quloobin aqfaaluhaa*

24. Do they not reflect upon the Quran, or are there locks upon their hearts?

*Wa laa tahinoo wa tad'ooo ilas-salmi wa
antumul-a'lawn*

35. So do not weaken and call for peace while you are superior.

Innamal-hayaatud-dunyaa la'ibunw-wa lahw

36. This worldly life is only amusement and diversion.

*Wa in tatawallaw yastabdil qawman ghayrakum
summa laa yakoonooo amsaalakum*



38. And if you turn away, He will replace you with another people, and they will not be the likes of you.

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Two Roads, Announced at the Start

Beta, this surah is named after the Prophet ﷺ himself, and it opens by dividing humanity in two — with an ayah for each.

'ALLAZINA KAFAROO WA SADD OO 'AN SABELILLAHI ADALLA A'MALAHUM — those who DISBELIEVED and TURNED people AWAY from the path of Allah — He has made their DEEDS GO ASTRAY.'

Beta, 'adalla a'malahum' — He caused their deeds to wander, to lose their way. Picture a caravan of good works setting out and never arriving anywhere. They built, they gave, they achieved — and none of it reached a destination.



'WAL-LAZINA AMANOO WA 'AMILUS-SALIHATI WA AMANOO BIMA NUZZILA 'ALA MUHAMMADIN — and those who BELIEVED and did RIGHTEOUS DEEDS and believed in what was revealed to Muhammad — WA HUWAL-HAQUU MIN RABBIHIM — and it is the TRUTH from their Lord — KAFFARA 'ANHUM SAYYI'ATIHIM WA ASLAHA BALAHUM — He will REMOVE from them their misdeeds and IMPROVE their CONDITION.'

Beta, notice the two gifts to the believers: their sins are wiped, and their 'bal' — their state, their affairs, their condition — is set right. Not only forgiveness for the past, but improvement in the present.

'ZALIKA BI-ANNAL-LAZINA KAFARUT-TABA'UL-BATILA WA ANNAL-LAZINA AMANUT-TABA'UL-HAQQA MIN RABBIHIM — that is because those who disbelieved FOLLOWED FALSEHOOD, and those who believed followed the TRUTH from their Lord.'



Beta, the difference is stated as simply as that: everyone is FOLLOWING something. Nobody walks alone. The only question is what you are walking behind.

If You Support Allah

Then the surah addresses a community that had to defend itself — Madinah, under attack, having done nothing but believe. And after mentioning the discipline of that struggle and the mercy required within it, Allah gives a promise the believers have carried ever since:

'YA AYYUHAL-LAZINA AMANOO IN TANSURULLAHA YANSURKUM WA YUTHABBIT AQDAMAKUM — O you who believe! IF YOU SUPPORT ALLAH, HE WILL SUPPORT YOU and PLANT YOUR FEET FIRMLY.'

Beta, first understand the phrase 'in tansurullah' — if you SUPPORT Allah. Allah needs no support; He is Al-Qawiyy, the Strong. It means supporting His deen, His Book, His messenger's way — standing up for the truth when it costs you something.



And look at the two things promised in return. FIRST — 'yansurkum', He will support YOU. Beta, a stunning exchange: you help His cause with your small ability, and the Lord of the worlds enters your affairs on your side.

SECOND — and this one is often overlooked, beta — 'yuthabbit aqdamakum': He will PLANT YOUR FEET FIRMLY, make you steady, stop you from slipping.

Beta, that is a gift greater than victory. Because the greatest danger to a believer is not defeat — it is losing his footing: drifting away, cooling off, becoming the person who used to pray. Allah promises the one who serves His deen that He will hold him steady.

And so a practical rule emerges, beta: the surest way to keep your OWN iman firm is to serve the deen of Allah in some way — teach a child a surah, help a masjid, support someone struggling, spread beneficial knowledge. You are not only helping them; you are buying your own steadiness.



The Rivers of Paradise, and the Boiling Water

Then the surah gives one of the most detailed descriptions of Paradise in the Quran:

'MATHALUL-JANNATIL-LATI WU'IDAL-MUTTAQOON — the description of the Garden promised to the God-conscious:'

'FEEHA ANHARUN MIN MA'IN GHAYRI ASIN — within it are RIVERS of WATER that does not spoil, does not become stale — WA ANHARUN MIN LABANIN LAM YATAGHAYYAR TA'MUH — and rivers of MILK whose TASTE never CHANGES — WA ANHARUN MIN KHAMRIN LAZZATIN LISH-SHARIBEEN — and rivers of WINE, delicious to the drinkers — WA ANHARUN MIN 'ASALIN MUSAFFA — and rivers of PURIFIED HONEY — WA LAHUM FEEHA MIN KULLIT-THAMARAT — and for them therein is every kind of FRUIT — WA MAGHFIRATUN MIN RABBIHIM — and FORGIVENESS from their Lord.'



Beta, notice how each river is described by the flaw it does NOT have. Water in this world goes stale. Milk turns. The wine of this world clouds the mind and ruins lives — the wine of Jannah is pure delight with no intoxication and no regret. Honey here has impurities — there it is 'musaffa', filtered pure.

Beta, that is the pattern of Jannah: everything you enjoy here comes with a defect attached — it spoils, it ends, it harms, it disappoints. There, the pleasure arrives with the defect removed.

And look at what Allah placed at the end of that list of rivers: 'wa maghfiratur min Rabbihi' — and forgiveness from their Lord. Beta, after four rivers and every fruit — forgiveness is mentioned as the crowning item. Because without it, none of the rest would ever be reached.

And then the contrast, in a single terrible line: 'KA-MAN HUWA KHALIDUN FIN-NARI WA SUQOO MA'AN HAMEEMAN FA-QATTA'A AM'A'AHUM — is that like



one who abides eternally in the Fire and is given scalding water to drink, which SEVERs their intestines?'

Beta, rivers of milk and honey, or boiling water. The Quran does not soften the choice.

Locks Upon the Hearts

And now, beta, an ayah every Muslim should hang in his heart — one of the most important in the whole Quran about our relationship with this Book:

'A FA-LA YATADABBAROONAL-QUR'ANA AM 'ALA QULOUBIN AQFALUHA — DO THEY NOT REFLECT UPON THE QURAN? OR ARE THERE LOCKS UPON THEIR HEARTS?'

Beta, 'tadabbur' — from 'dubur', the end or outcome of a thing. It means to look into something deeply, to follow it through to its meaning and its consequences. Not to skim, not merely to recite — to PONDER.

And notice what Allah offers as the only alternative explanation: if a person reads this Book and nothing



moves in him, then the problem is not the Book. There is a LOCK on the heart.

Beta, that should frighten us. How many of us have finished a whole recitation and felt nothing? Heard a mighty ayah about death and moved straight to breakfast?

And what makes those locks, beta? The ayahs around this one give the answer: turning away after guidance came, following what displeases Allah, hypocrisy, sins piled up unrepented. 'ZALIKA BI-ANNAHUM ITTABA'OO MA ASKHATALLAHA WA KARIHOO RIDWANAHU FA-AHBATA A'MALAHUM — that is because they followed what ANGERED Allah and DISLIKED His pleasure, so He rendered their deeds worthless.'

Beta, and there is a specific warning here about those who half-listen: 'WA MINHUM MAN YASTAMI'U ILAYKA HATTA IZA KHARAJOO MIN 'INDIKA QALOO LILLAZINA OOTUL-'ILMA MAZA QALA ANIFA — and



among them are those who LISTEN to you, until when they LEAVE you they say to those given knowledge: WHAT DID HE JUST SAY?'

Beta, they sat through the whole gathering and left without a single word retained. Physically present, entirely absent. Sound familiar? The khutbah we sit through while planning our afternoon; the reminder we hear while scrolling.

And then the beautiful contrast:

'WAL-LAZINAH-TADAW ZADAHUM HUDAN WA
ATAHUM TAQWAHUM — and those who are GUIDED
— He INCREASES them in GUIDANCE and gives them
their RIGHTEOUSNESS.'

Beta, guidance compounds. Take one step toward it sincerely, and more is given. The lock and the key are both described in the same passage: reflection opens, and turning away closes.

So how do you get tadabbur, beta? Read less and think more. Take one ayah and sit with it. Ask: what is Allah



telling ME here? What must change in my week because of this line? A page read with a present heart is worth a juz read with a locked one.

The Test of Giving

The surah then turns to a very human test — and beta, it exposes something uncomfortable about all of us.

'HA ANTUM HA'ULA'I TUD'AWNA LI-TUNFIQOO FEE SABEELILLAH — HERE YOU ARE, being INVITED to SPEND in the way of Allah — FA-MINKUM MAN YABKHAL — but AMONG YOU are those who are STINGY. WA MAN YABKHAL FA-INNAMA YABKHALU 'AN NAFSIH — and whoever is STINGY is only STINGY TOWARD HIMSELF.'

Beta, read that last phrase again: the miser is not withholding from Allah — Allah is 'al-Ghaniyy', the Free of Need, as the ayah then says: 'WALLAHUL-GHANIYYU WA ANTUMUL-FUQARA' — and ALLAH is the RICH, and YOU are the POOR.'



Beta, feel the reversal. We imagine that giving means we lose and someone else gains. The Quran says: when you refuse to give, the only person you are depriving is yourself — because the reward was yours, and you declined it.

And then the warning that closes the surah, beta, and it is one of the most sobering in the Quran: 'WA IN TATAWALLAW YASTABDIL QAWMAN GHAYRAKUM THUMMA LA YAKOONOO AMTHALAKUM — and IF YOU TURN AWAY, He will REPLACE YOU WITH ANOTHER PEOPLE — AND THEY WILL NOT BE THE LIKES OF YOU.'

Beta, absorb this. Allah's deen does not need any particular group of people. If one generation abandons the work, He will bring another — and the ayah says pointedly: they will not be like you. Meaning they will be BETTER: more willing, more grateful, more obedient.

It is reported that when this ayah was revealed, the companions asked who these replacements would be —



and the Prophet ﷺ placed his hand on Salman al-Farisi (radiyallahu anhu) and said words to the effect that they would be from his people, the Persians. And beta, look at history: a great share of the scholars of hadith, fiqh and Arabic grammar who served this ummah came from those lands.

So the honour of serving this deen is an OPPORTUNITY, not a possession. It can be handed to someone else.

And one more ayah near the end, beta, which puts the whole world in perspective:

'INNAMAL-HAYATUD-DUNYA LA'IBUN WA LAHW — this worldly life is only PLAY and AMUSEMENT — WA IN TU'MINOO WA TATTAQOO YU'TIKUM UJOORAKUM WA LA YAS'ALKUM AMWALAKUM — and if you believe and fear Allah, He will give you your rewards and NOT ASK YOU FOR YOUR WEALTH.'

Beta, notice the gentleness: He does not demand everything you own. He asks for a portion — and gives you full reward. And He knows exactly how hard even



that is for us: 'IN YAS'ALKUMOOHA FA-YUHFIKUM TABKHALOO — if He were to demand ALL of it and press you, you would WITHHOLD, and He would expose your ill-will.'

Beta, that is Allah describing our weakness with perfect accuracy — and then legislating a religion that is within our capacity anyway. That is mercy.

What This Surah Teaches Us

- 1.** Everyone follows something — falsehood or truth; nobody walks alone.
- 2.** Support Allah's deen and He supports you AND plants your feet firmly — serving the deen is how you protect your own iman.
- 3.** Every pleasure of Jannah is the same pleasure with its defect removed — and forgiveness crowns the whole list.
- 4.** If the Quran moves nothing in you, the problem is a lock on the heart, not the Book.



5. Do tadabbur: read less, think more — one ayah with a present heart beats a juz with an absent one.

6. The miser is stingy toward HIMSELF — Allah is Al-Ghaniyy and you are the poor one.

7. Serving this deen is an opportunity, not a possession — turn away and it will be handed to a people better than you.

Ya Allah, open the locks on our hearts, plant our feet firmly, and let us never be replaced in Your service. 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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