

SURAH AS A STORY



Surah Nuh

Noah

The complete journey — 950 years, and the treasure of Istighfar —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 71 • 28 Ayahs • Meccan

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The Surah at a Glance

*Innaaa arsalnaa Noohan ilaa qawmiheee an anzir
qawmaka min qabli any-ya'tiyahum 'azaabun
aleem*

1. We sent Nuh to his people: warn your people before a painful punishment comes to them.

*Faqltus-taghfiroo Rabbakum innahoo kaana
Ghaffaaraa*

10. I said: seek forgiveness of your Lord — indeed, He is ever Forgiving —

Yursilis-samaaa'a 'alaykum midraaraa

11. He will send the sky upon you in abundant rain,

*Wa yumdidkum bi-amwaalinw-wa baneena wa
yaj'al-lakum jannaatinw-wa yaj'al-lakum
anhaaraa*

12. and give you increase in wealth and children, and make for you gardens, and make for you rivers.

Maa lakum laa tarjoona lillaahi waqaaraa

13. What is with you, that you do not attribute to Allah due grandeur?



*Rabbigh-fir lee wa liwaalidayya wa liman dakhala
baytiya mu'minaa*

28. My Lord, forgive me and my parents and whoever
enters my house as a believer.

Listen to the Arabic recitation of this Surah, ayah by ayah, with the Qari
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Nine Hundred and Fifty Years

Beta, today's story is about the longest act of patience in human history — and the whole surah is told in the voice of the man who lived it.

'INNA ARSALNA NOOHAN ILA QAWMIHI AN ANZIR QAWMAKA MIN QABLI AN YA'TIYAHUM 'AZABUN ALEEM — indeed, We sent Nuh to his people: WARN your people before a painful punishment comes to them.' Notice, beta, that the mission begins in mercy: the warning is sent BEFORE the punishment, so that it may never be needed.

And how long did he warn? The Quran tells us elsewhere: he remained among his people 'a thousand



years save fifty' — NINE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS of calling. Beta, pause and try to hold that number. Not nine years. Not ninety. Nine and a half centuries of the same message, to the same stubborn people, with almost nobody responding.

And how did he begin? 'YA QAWMI INNI LAKUM NAZEERUN MUBEEN — O MY PEOPLE, I am a clear warner to you: that you worship ALLAH, and FEAR Him, and OBEY me. He will forgive you your sins and delay you for a specified term.' Beta, look at the tenderness of 'ya qawmi' — O MY people. Not 'you disbelievers'. Every prophet addressed the very people who abused him with words of belonging. That is the tone of true dawah: I am one of you, and I want good for you.

Every Method, Every Hour

Then Nuh (alaihis salam) submits his report to his Lord — and it is a masterclass in effort, beta. Listen to how many ways he tried:



'QALA RABBI INNI DA'AWTU QAWMI LAYLAN WA NAHARA — my Lord, I called my people NIGHT and DAY.' Then: 'THUMMA INNI DA'AWTUHUM JIHARA — then I called them PUBLICLY, openly.' Then: 'THUMMA INNI A'LANTU LAHUM WA ASRARTU LAHUM ISRARA — then I ANNOUNCED to them, and I spoke to them PRIVATELY, in secret.'

Beta, count the channels: day and night, public and private, announcement and quiet conversation. He changed his methods, his timings, his tone — everything except his message. That is the sunnah of every teacher, parent and reformer: be flexible in HOW you say it, and immovable in WHAT you say.

And their response? 'FALAM YAZIDHUM DU'A'I ILLA FIRARA — my calling only increased them in FLEEING.' And then a description so vivid you can see it: 'WA INNI KULLAMA DA'AWTUHUM LI-TAGHFIRA LAHUM JA'ALOO ASABI'AHUM FEE AZANIHIM — every time I called them so that YOU might FORGIVE them, they thrust their FINGERS INTO THEIR EARS —



WASTAGHSHAW THIIYABAHUM — and COVERED THEMSELVES with their GARMENTS — WA ASARROO WASTAKBAROO ISTIKBARA — and they persisted, and were ARROGANT with great arrogance.'

Beta, feel the tragedy in that middle line: he was calling them so that ALLAH MIGHT FORGIVE THEM — and they blocked their ears with their fingers and pulled their clothes over their heads. They did not merely refuse the message; they refused to HEAR it. Guidance's greatest enemy, beta, is not a strong counter-argument — it is a blocked ear and a raised chin. And its modern form is easy to recognise: the person who scrolls past the reminder, changes the subject when deen comes up, or leaves the room when advice begins.

The Treasure Hidden in Istighfar

And now, beta, comes the passage that made this surah beloved to every believer with a tight chest, an empty pocket, or a childless home. Nuh (alaihi salam) reports the offer he made them:



'FA-QULTU-STAGHFIROO RABBAKUM INNAHU KANA GHAFFARA — I said: SEEK FORGIVENESS of your Lord; indeed He is GHAFFAR — ever, endlessly Forgiving. YURSILIS-SAMA'A 'ALAYKUM MIDRARA — He will send the SKY upon you in ABUNDANT RAIN. WA YUMDIDKUM BI-AMWALIN WA BANEEN — and He will give you increase in WEALTH and CHILDREN — WA YAJ'AL LAKUM JANNAT — and make for you GARDENS — WA YAJ'AL LAKUM ANHARA — and make for you RIVERS.'

Read that list again, beta: rain, wealth, children, gardens, rivers. These are the exact things people chase through a hundred doors — and Allah offers them all through ONE door: ISTIGHFAR. Sins, beta, are a drought over a life; forgiveness is the rain that ends it.

And this is not merely poetic. Imam Hasan al-Basri (rahimahullah) is famously reported to have been approached by different men in one gathering: one complained of drought, one of poverty, one of childlessness, one of barren land. To every single one he



said: 'Seek Allah's forgiveness' — and when asked why he gave one prescription for four illnesses, he recited these very ayahs.

And the Prophet ﷺ taught us: whoever CLINGS to istighfar — makes it constant — Allah will make for him a way out of every distress, relief from every anxiety, and provide for him from where he did not expect.

So beta, make istighfar the background music of your day: while walking, while waiting, while working. 'Astaghfirullah Rabbi min kulli zambin wa atoobu ilayh.' It costs nothing, and it opens skies.

Then Nuh asks them the question that explains their whole refusal: 'MA LAKUM LA TARJOONA LILLAHI WAQARA — WHAT IS WITH YOU, that you do not attribute to Allah due GRANDEUR?' Waqar, beta — dignity, weight, majesty. Their real problem was not lack of evidence; it was that Allah was SMALL in their hearts. And when Allah is small in a heart, beta,



everything else looks big: people's opinions, money, risks, embarrassment. Give Allah His due weight, and the whole world shrinks to its correct size.

Look at Yourself, Look at the Sky

Nuh (alaihis salam) then argues with them the way the Quran always argues — by pointing at what they already see: 'WA QAD KHALAQAKUM ATWARA — while He has created you in STAGES.' Beta, a drop, then a clot, then bones clothed in flesh, then a child, then youth, then old age — you yourself are a chain of miracles you did not arrange.

'A LAM TARAW KAYFA KHALAQALLAHU SAB'A SAMAWATIN TIBAQA — do you not see how Allah created seven heavens in LAYERS — WA JA'ALAL-QAMARA FEEHINNA NOORA — and made the MOON therein a LIGHT — WA JA'ALASH-SHAMSA SIRAJA — and made the SUN a LAMP?'

Beta, notice the precision that scholars have long pointed out: the moon is called NOOR — reflected light



— and the sun is called SIRAJ — a burning lamp, a source. The two are described with two different words, exactly matching their two different natures.

'WALLAHU ANBATAKUM MINAL-ARDI NABATA — and Allah has caused you to GROW FROM THE EARTH like a PLANT — THUMMA YU'EEDUKUM FEEHA WA YUKHRIJUKUM IKHRAJA — then He will RETURN you into it, and BRING YOU OUT again.' What a description of a human life, beta: you grew out of the soil that fed your parents, you will be returned to the soil, and you will be raised from it. Just like the seed you have watched sprout a thousand times — so why is your own resurrection hard to believe?

'WALLAHU JA'ALA LAKUMUL-ARDA BISATA — and Allah has made the earth for you a CARPET spread out — LI-TASLUKOO MINHA SUBULAN FIJAJA — that you may travel its broad paths.'

How Shirk First Entered the World



Then Nuh (alaihis salam) reports the refusal of the powerful: 'They disobeyed me and followed him whose WEALTH and CHILDREN only increased him in LOSS.' Beta, the crowd, then as now, followed the richest man in the room rather than the truest.

And then the surah records something of enormous importance — the names of the very first idols in human history: 'WA QALOO LA TAZARUNNA ALIHATAKUM — and they said: do NOT abandon your gods; and do not abandon WADD, nor SUWA', nor YAGHOOTH and YA'OOQ and NASR.'

Now, beta, listen carefully to how these idols came into existence, because this explanation — reported from Ibn Abbas (radiyallahu anhum) and recorded in Sahih al-Bukhari — is one of the most important lessons in the entire Quran.

These five names, he explained, were the names of RIGHTEOUS MEN among the people of Nuh. When they died, shaytan whispered to their people: erect statues in



the places where they used to sit, and name them after them — so you will be inspired to worship as they did. And they did. And in that first generation, NOBODY worshipped those statues. They were only reminders, memorials of good people.

But then that generation died. And the next one grew up seeing the statues without knowing their purpose. And when knowledge was lost — as the narration says — those statues were worshipped.

Beta, absorb this deeply. Shirk did not enter the world through evil people or through hatred of God. It entered through LOVE — exaggerated love of the righteous — and through TIME, and through the LOSS OF KNOWLEDGE. Three innocent-looking ingredients.

That is exactly why this deen guards even the small doors: why the Prophet ﷺ forbade taking graves as places of prayer, why he warned against excessive praise — 'do not over-praise me as the Christians over-praised the son of Maryam; I am only a servant, so say: the



servant of Allah and His Messenger.' Beta, honour the righteous, love them, follow them — and never let that love slide one inch toward worship. The road from a memorial to an idol was not built in a day; it was built by generations who each took one small step.

The Dua That Still Shelters Us

After centuries of calling, only a few believed. And finally Nuh (alaihis salam) made a dua that Allah accepted — and the surah records it: 'RABBI LA TAZAR 'ALAL-ARDI MINAL-KAFIREENA DAYYARA — my Lord, do not leave upon the earth from among the disbelievers a single inhabitant. INNAKA IN TAZARHUM YUDILLOO 'IBADAK — indeed, if You leave them, they will mislead Your servants — WA LA YALIDOO ILLA FAJIRAN KAFFARA — and will not beget except the wicked and disbelieving.'

Beta, this was not personal revenge — it was the verdict of a man who had studied those hearts for nine and a half centuries. Allah had already informed him: 'none of



your people will believe except those who have already believed.' So the flood came, and the ark carried the believers, and the earth was washed.

And then, beta, look at the beautiful ayah with which this surah of long struggle ends — his final dua, and it includes YOU:

'RABBIGH-FIR LEE WA LI-WALIDAYYA — my Lord,
FORGIVE ME and MY PARENTS — WA LIMAN
DAKHALA BAYTIYA MU'MINA — and whoever
ENTERS MY HOUSE as a BELIEVER — WA
LIL-MU'MINEENA WAL-MU'MINAT — and ALL THE
BELIEVING MEN AND ALL THE BELIEVING WOMEN.'

Beta, that last line reaches across thousands of years and touches you, reading this today. A prophet who lived before recorded history asked forgiveness for every believing man and woman until the end of time — and you are inside his dua.

And notice the order he taught us: himself first, then his parents, then the people of his house, then the whole



ummah of believers. Begin close, then widen the circle. And notice what he asks for them — not wealth, not victory, not comfort, but MAGHFIRAH. After 950 years of experience, beta, the wisest man of his age concluded that the greatest gift you can ask for anyone is forgiveness.

What This Surah Teaches Us

1. Measure your dawah, parenting and work by CONSISTENCY, not by visible results — 950 years, and he never stopped.
2. Be flexible in method and immovable in message: night and day, publicly and privately, but always the same call.
3. Struggling with rizq, rain, children or relief? Make istighfar constant — it is the Quran's own prescription for many illnesses at once.
4. Give Allah His due grandeur — when He is great in your heart, everything else shrinks to its correct size.



5. Read yourself as evidence: created in stages, grown from the earth, returned to it, raised from it — like the seed you have seen sprout a thousand times.

6. Guard the small doors of shirk: the first idols were memorials of GOOD men — love the righteous without ever letting love slide toward worship.

7. Pray as Nuh prayed: forgiveness for yourself, your parents, your household, and every believing man and woman — you are already inside his dua; keep the chain going.

Rabbigh-fir lee wa li-walidayya wa lil-mu'mineena wal-mu'minat — Ya Allah, send us the rains of Your forgiveness, and make us constant in seeking it.
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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