

SURAH AS A STORY



# Surah Al-Muzzammil

*The Enshrouded One*

The complete journey — the night that builds the day —  
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 73 • 20 Ayahs • Meccan

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# The Surah at a Glance

*Yaaa ayyuhal-muzzammil. Qumil-layla illaa qaleelaa*

1-2. O you wrapped in garments! Stand in prayer through the night, except a little —

*Wa rattilil-Qur'aana tarteelaa*

4. and recite the Quran with measured recitation.

*Innaa sanulqee 'alayka qawlan saqeelaa*

5. Indeed, We will cast upon you a heavy word.

*Inna naashi'atal-layli hiya ashaddu wat'anw-wa aqwamu qeelaa*

6. Indeed, the rising by night is stronger in impact and more upright in speech.

*Wazkuris-ma Rabbika wa tabattal ilayhi tabteelaa*

8. And remember the name of your Lord, and devote yourself to Him completely.

*Wasbir 'alaa maa yaqooloona wahjurhum hajran jameelaa*

10. And be patient over what they say, and avoid them with a gracious avoidance.



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## Wrapped in a Cloak

Beta, this surah begins with one of the most tender forms of address in the entire Quran.

In the earliest days after revelation began, the weight of what had started was immense. The Prophet ﷺ would sometimes wrap himself in his cloak, seeking warmth and steadiness after the overwhelming experience of meeting the angel. And in that very state — wrapped up, resting — the sky called him: 'YA  
AYYUHAL-MUZZAMMIL — O YOU WHO ARE  
WRAPPED IN GARMENTS!'

Beta, feel the gentleness: Allah did not address him by rank or title. He addressed him by his condition at that moment, the way a mother might say 'O you under the blanket'. There is love in that.

But the words that followed were not 'rest well'. They were: 'QUMIL-LAYLA ILLA QALEELA — STAND the



night, except a little.'

Beta, that is the pattern of every serious calling: comfort is interrupted, and a mission begins. The blanket comes off — not harshly, but firmly. And what was the first duty assigned to the greatest man in history? Not a sermon. Not a battle. Not organising followers. Standing at night before his Lord.

## The Training Schedule

The instruction is remarkably specific: 'stand the night, except a little — NISFAHU AWIN-QUS MINHU QALEELA — HALF of it, or subtract from it a little — AW ZID 'ALAYHI — or ADD to it — WA RATTILIL-QUR'ANA TARTEELA — and recite the Quran with TARTEEL, measured, unhurried recitation.'

Beta, notice two things. First, the flexibility: half the night, or a little less, or more — Allah gives His beloved a range, not a rigid clock. Second, the emphasis on HOW to recite: tarteel. Not speed, not quantity — measured, clear, letter by letter, with the heart walking beside the



tongue.

Our mother Aisha and others described his recitation: he would recite slowly, distinctly, so that a surah would take longer than people expected. Ibn Abbas (radiyallahu anhum) said reciting one surah with tarteel is more beloved to him than reading the whole Quran hurriedly. Beta, this is a correction for our age: many people race through pages to finish a target. This ayah says the goal is not to finish the Quran — the goal is for the Quran to finish its work on YOU.

And then Allah explains WHY this night training was prescribed: 'INNA SANULQEE 'ALAYKA QAWLAN THAQEELA — indeed, We are going to CAST UPON YOU A HEAVY WORD.'

Beta, a heavy word was coming: revelation itself, whose weight made the Prophet's ﷺ camel kneel and made sweat pour from his forehead on a cold day; and with it, the heaviest mission in history — to face a hostile city, to be exiled, to lose children, to lead an ummah. Heavy



missions are not carried on empty tanks. So before the load came, the sky sent him to the fuel station: THE NIGHT.

## Why the Night?

And then Allah gives the reason in one of the most psychologically precise ayahs in scripture: 'INNA NASHI'ATAL-LAYLI HIYA ASHADDU WAT'AN WA AQWAMU QEELA — indeed, the rising by NIGHT is STRONGER in impact (wat'an — in treading, in firmness of footing) and MORE UPRIGHT in speech.'

Beta, think about what happens at night. The phone stops ringing. The shops are shut. Nobody is watching, so there is no audience to perform for. The noise that fills the daytime mind — bills, plans, arguments, notifications — settles like sediment in still water. And in that stillness, two things become possible: your worship treads FIRMLY on your heart, and your words become the TRUEST words your tongue ever speaks.



The dua you make at 3 a.m., beta, with no one listening, is the most honest sentence of your day.

And Allah adds the contrast: 'INNA LAKA FIN-NAHARI SABHAN TAWEELA — indeed, for you by DAY is PROLONGED OCCUPATION.' Beta, 'sabh' means swimming — the day is a long swim, one thing after another. Allah is not asking you to abandon the day's work; He is telling you that the day's swimming needs the night's anchoring.

Then two more instructions: 'WAZKURISMA RABBIKA — and REMEMBER THE NAME OF YOUR LORD — WA TABATTAL ILAYHI TABTEELA — and DEVOTE YOURSELF to Him with complete devotion.' 'Tabattul', beta, means to cut yourself off from everything else for Him — for a period. Not monasticism, which this deen rejects — but a window in your day when nothing else has your attention.

'RABBUL-MASHRIQI WAL-MAGHRIBI LA ILAHA ILLA HUWA FA-TTAKHIZ-HU WAKEELA — Lord of the east



and the west; there is no deity except Him, so take Him as your DISPOSER OF AFFAIRS.' Beta, what a combination: stand at night, recite slowly, remember His name, cut away distractions — and then hand Him the file of your whole life.

## Beautiful Avoidance

Then comes the instruction for dealing with the mockers — and it contains one of the most elegant phrases in the Quran: 'WASBIR 'ALA MA YAQOOLONA — and be PATIENT over what they say — WAHJURHUM HAJRAN JAMEELA — and AVOID them with a GRACIOUS AVOIDANCE.'

Beta, 'hajran jameela' — a beautiful parting. Not a slammed door. Not insults returned. Not a public feud or a cold war of glares. It means: step back with dignity, keep your tongue clean, do not stoop to their level, and keep the door of their guidance open in your heart.

This is one of the most practical instructions in the Quran for our daily lives — with a rude relative, a



hostile colleague, a friend who has turned mocking. Withdraw, but withdraw beautifully. And notice, beta, WHERE this instruction is placed: right after the command to stand at night. Because only a heart that has been filled at night can withdraw beautifully during the day. Without that filling, our reactions become bitter.

And Allah takes the burden off him: 'WA ZARNEE WAL-MUKAZZIBEENA ULIN-NA'MAH — and LEAVE ME with the deniers, those of ease and luxury — and give them a little time.' Beta: leave them to ME. What a relief in those words for anyone who has been wronged and cannot respond.

Then a reminder of the seriousness of it all: 'INNA LADAYNA ANKALAN WA JAHEEMA' — chains and a Blaze; a Day when 'the earth and the mountains will convulse, and the mountains will become a heap of sand pouring down.' And a warning drawn from history: 'Indeed, We sent to you a Messenger as a witness upon you, just as We sent to Firaun a messenger. But Firaun



DISOBEYED the messenger, so We seized him with a RUINOUS seizure.' Beta, the lesson: every generation gets its messenger and its choice — and the choices have consequences that history can verify.

## The Mercy at the End

And now, beta, the final ayah of this surah — the longest ayah in it, revealed later, and it is a masterpiece of divine mercy.

For about a year, the believers followed the night-standing so seriously that, as the ayah says: 'INNA RABBAKA YA'LAMU ANNAKA TAQOOMU ADNA MIN THULUTHAYIL-LAYLI WA NISFAHU WA THULUTHAHU WA TA'IFATUN MINAL-LAZINA MA'AK — indeed, your Lord KNOWS that you stand nearly two-thirds of the night, or half of it, or a third of it — and a GROUP of those with you.'

Their feet swelled. They struggled. And Allah — who knows exactly what He has placed in each body — said: 'WALLAHU YUQADDIRUL-LAYLA WAN-NAHAR — and



Allah DETERMINES the night and the day. 'ALIMA AN LAN TUHOOHU — He knows that you will not be able to keep count of it — FA-TABA 'ALAYKUM — so He has TURNED TO YOU IN MERCY. FAQRA'OO MA TAYASSARA MINAL-QUR'AN — so recite what is EASY of the Quran.'

Beta, feel the compassion in that: 'faqra'oo ma tayassara' — recite what is easy for you. The obligation was lifted; the door remained wide open. Night prayer became the voluntary honour of whoever wants more — and to this day, tahajjud is the private wealth of those who love Him.

And look at the reasons Allah Himself lists for lightening it: "ALIMA AN SAYAKOONU MINKUM MARDA — He knows that there will be among you those who are SICK — WA AKHAROONA YADRIBOONA FIL-ARDI YABTAGHOONA MIN FADLILLAH — and OTHERS TRAVELLING THROUGH THE LAND SEEKING OF ALLAH'S BOUNTY — WA AKHAROONA YUQATILONA FEE SABEELILLAH — and OTHERS FIGHTING IN THE



## CAUSE OF ALLAH.'

Beta, notice who is mentioned in the same breath as the mujahid: the SICK, and the person out EARNING A LIVING. The man working his shift to feed his family is named by Allah in the ayah of concessions alongside the man on the battlefield. Halal work, done for the right reason, is that honourable in this deen.

And then the closing instructions, a complete programme for a believer's life: 'So recite what is easy of it, and ESTABLISH PRAYER, and GIVE ZAKAH, and LOAN ALLAH A GOODLY LOAN. And whatever good you put forward for yourselves — you will FIND IT with Allah; it is BETTER and GREATER in reward.

WA-STAGHFIRULLAH — and SEEK FORGIVENESS OF ALLAH; indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.'

Beta, look at the beautiful design of this ending. The surah began by asking for the hardest thing — most of the night in prayer. It ends by asking for what is easy, and then closes with ISTIGHFAR — as if to say: even



after all your standing and reciting and giving, do not stand before Me with a bill of accomplishments; stand with a request for forgiveness. That, beta, is the manner of a true servant: work like everything depends on you, then ask forgiveness for the shortcomings of that very work.

## What This Surah Teaches Us

1. Big responsibilities need night fuel: begin a small, fixed portion of qiyam or pre-Fajr Quran and never abandon it.
2. Tarteel over speed — the goal is not for you to finish the Quran, but for the Quran to finish its work on you.
3. The night's stillness gives your worship firm footing and your words their truest form — guard a window of tabattul, undivided attention.
4. Practise 'hajran jameela' — withdraw from harm with dignity, never with bitterness; leave the rest to Allah.



**5.** Only a heart filled at night can respond beautifully by day — bitterness in our reactions often means emptiness in our nights.

**6.** Allah's deen is merciful and realistic: He lightened the command Himself, and He honoured the sick and the earner alongside the mujahid.

**7.** End every act of worship with istighfar — the servant offers his effort, then asks pardon for its shortcomings.

Ya Allah, grant us a portion of the night with You, make the Quran the spring of our hearts, and forgive the flaws in our worship. 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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