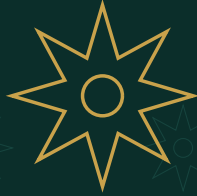


SURAH AS A STORY



# Surah Al-Mutaffifin

*Those Who Give Short Measure*

The complete journey — the small cheat and the great Day —  
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 83 • 36 Ayahs • Meccan

**NOORANI ILM**

[nooraniilm.com](http://nooraniilm.com) • free sadaqah jariyah ebook

# The Surah at a Glance

## *Waylul-lil-mutaffifeen*

1. Woe to those who give short measure —

*Allazeena izak-taaloo 'alan-naasi yastawfoon*

2. those who, when they take a measure from people,  
take in full,

*Wa iza kaaloohum aw wazanoohum yukhsiroon*

3. but when they measure or weigh for them, they give  
less.

*Yawma yaqoomun-naasu li-Rabbil-'aalameen*

6. The Day when mankind will stand before the Lord of  
the worlds.

*Kallaa bal raana 'alaa quloobihim maa kaanoo  
yaksiboon*

14. No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of what  
they used to earn.

*Khitaamuhoo misk; wa fee zaalika  
falyatanaafasil-mutanaafisoon*

26. Its seal is musk — and for this let the competitors  
compete.



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

## A Woe for a Small Thing

Beta, this surah opens with a threat — 'WAYLUN', woe, destruction — and you would expect the crime that follows to be enormous: murder, idolatry, oppression. Instead, Allah announces this woe for something most people would call a minor business habit.

'WAYLUN LIL-MUTAFFIFEEN — WOE to the MUTAFFIFEEN.' Beta, 'tatfeef' comes from 'tafeef' — something tiny, a trifle. It means shaving off a small amount — not stealing a sack, but taking a few grams extra when you buy and giving a few grams less when you sell. So small nobody notices. So small the man doing it does not even feel like a thief.

And Allah defines them precisely: 'ALLAZINA IZAK-TALOO 'ALAN-NASI YASTAWFOON — those who, when they TAKE a measure from people, take it IN FULL — WA IZA KALOOHUM AW WAZANOOHUM



YUKHSIROON — but when they MEASURE or WEIGH FOR them, they give LESS.'

Beta, notice: the sin is not that he cheats everyone equally. The sin is DOUBLE STANDARDS. He is extremely alert about his own right, and casual about the rights of others. When he is receiving — every gram, checked twice. When he is giving — 'chalta hai'.

And beta, understand how wide this principle runs, because it is not only about shopkeepers. The employee who demands his full salary to the rupee but gives half-attention to his hours is a mutaffif. The student who wants full marks but writes half-answers. The husband who counts every duty of his wife and forgets his own. The contractor, the landlord, the teacher, the manager — anyone who applies a strict scale to what he receives and a loose scale to what he gives.

The context of revelation confirms this reach: when the Prophet ﷺ arrived in Madinah, its people were known for defective measuring — and these ayahs came down,



and they reformed until they became among the best in fulfilling measure.

## The Day Mankind Stands

Then Allah asks a question that turns a marketplace habit into a matter of the Hereafter: 'A LA YAZUNNU ULA'IKA ANNAHUM MAB'OOTHOON — do such people not THINK that they will be RESURRECTED — LI-YAWMIN 'AZEEM — for a TREMENDOUS Day — YAWMA YAQOOMUN-NASU LI-RABBIL-'ALAMEEN — the DAY WHEN MANKIND WILL STAND BEFORE THE LORD OF THE WORLDS?'

Beta, feel the leap the surah has just made: from a few grams of grain to the entire human race standing before Allah. That is the Quran's method — it shows you that small dishonesty and great judgement are on the same rope.

And that ayah — 'the Day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds' — is one that made the pious tremble. It is reported that Ibn Umar (radiyallahu



anhuma) would recite this surah and, upon reaching this ayah, weep until he could not continue. The hadith describes people standing on that Day for so long, in such heat, that they will be sunk in their own sweat according to their deeds.

Beta, and here is the connection the surah is drawing: a man who cheats a customer of a few grams is a man who has forgotten that a Day of Standing exists. Every small dishonesty is, in truth, a small act of forgetting.

## **Sijjeen, and the Rust on the Heart**

The surah then speaks of the records: 'KALLA INNA KITABAL-FUJJARI LA-FEE SIJJEEN — NO! Indeed, the record of the WICKED is in SIJJEEN — WA MA ADRAKA MA SIJJEEN — and what will make you know what Sijjeen is? — KITABUN MARQOOM — a written register.' Sijjeen, beta, from 'sijn' — a prison: a low, confined, sealed place where the records of the wicked are locked away.



'WAYLUN YAWMA'IZIN LIL-MUKAZZIBEEN — woe,  
that Day, to the DENIERS — ALLAZINA  
YUKAZZIBOONA BI-YAWMID-DEEN — who deny the  
Day of Recompense. WA MA YUKAZZIBU BIHI ILLA  
KULLU MU'TADIN ATHEEM — and none denies it  
except every TRANSGRESSOR and SINNER.'

Beta, look at that diagnosis: denial is not usually born in the mind — it is born in the behaviour. First a man transgresses; then he needs the Day to be false, so he denies it. The lifestyle comes first, and the philosophy is invented afterward to justify it.

'IZA TUTLA 'ALAYHI AYATUNA QALA  
ASATEERUL-AWWALEEN — when Our verses are  
recited to him, he says: legends of the ancients!' And  
then Allah gives the real explanation, in one of the most  
important ayahs in the Quran about the human heart:

'KALLA BAL RANA 'ALA QULOBIHIM MA KANOO  
YAKSIBOON — NO! Rather, the RAN — the STAIN, the  
RUST — has covered their hearts because of what they



used to EARN.'

Beta, 'ran' is the layer of rust and grime that builds on metal. And the Prophet ﷺ explained this ayah himself: when a servant commits a sin, a BLACK SPOT is placed on his heart. If he leaves it, repents and seeks forgiveness, his heart is polished clean. But if he returns to it, the spot increases until it covers his whole heart — and that is the 'ran' which Allah mentioned.

Understand the process, beta: nobody's heart hardens in one day. It happens spot by spot, small sin by small sin, each one unrepented. And when the surface is fully covered, the same person who once felt guilty feels nothing at all — he hears the Quran and calls it old stories, not because his mind found a flaw, but because his heart has rusted shut.

That is why tawbah must be immediate, beta. Not because one sin is fatal — but because an unpolished spot invites the next one. And what is the polish? Istighfar, salah, Quran, tears, and returning quickly.





'KALLA INNAHUM 'AN RABBIHIM YAWMA'IZIN LA-MAHJOOBOON — NO! Indeed, from their Lord, that Day, they will be VEILED.' Beta, this is the greatest loss in existence — and its opposite is the greatest gift. In Surah Al-Qiyamah you read of faces 'looking at their Lord'; here are those veiled from Him. Imam ash-Shafi'i (rahimahullah) used this ayah as proof: because Allah threatened the wicked with being veiled from Him, it means the believers will SEE Him — otherwise the threat carries no distinction.

## **'Illiyoon, and a Seal of Musk**

And then the surah turns, and everything becomes light: 'KALLA INNA KITABAL-ABRARI LA-FEE 'ILLIYYEEN — NO! Indeed, the record of the RIGHTEOUS is in 'ILLIYYEEN.' Beta, from 'uluww' — height, elevation. The wicked's record is locked below in a prison; the righteous's record is raised high — 'a written register, WITNESSED BY THOSE BROUGHT NEAR' — the closest angels themselves attend it.



'INNAL-ABRARA LA-FEE NA'EEM — indeed, the righteous will be in PLEASURE — 'ALAL-ARA'IKI YANZUROON — on adorned couches, OBSERVING. TA'RIFU FEE WUJOOHIHIM NADRATAN-NA'EEM — you will RECOGNISE in their FACES the RADIANCE of pleasure.'

Beta, what a detail: their joy will be visible on their faces. And is that not true even now? A heart at peace with Allah shows on a face — there is a light in the faces of those who pray at night that no cosmetic reproduces.

'YUSQAWNA MIN RAHEEQIN MAKHTOOM — they will be given to drink of a PURE WINE, SEALED — KHITAMUHU MISK — its SEAL is MUSK.'

Beta, in this world a bottle is sealed with wax, and nobody cares how the seal smells. In Jannah, the seal itself is musk — the last, least important detail of the drink is a fragrance more precious than anything on earth. That is the standard of that place: even its packaging is perfume.



And then Allah says something remarkable — He commands competition: 'WA FEE ZALIKA FALYATANAFASIL-MUTANAFISOON — and FOR THIS let the COMPETITORS COMPETE.'

Beta, we are told again and again not to compete over dunya — not to look at those above us in wealth. And here Allah says: compete! Race! Push! But over THIS. Over Jannah, over that sealed drink, over the radiance on those faces. Human beings are built with a competitive drive, and Allah does not ask us to kill it — He redirects it toward the only race worth winning.

And their drink is mixed from TASNEEM — 'a spring from which those brought NEAR drink.' Note, beta: the abrar (righteous) get it as a mixture; the muqarraboos (those brought near) drink it pure. Ranks upon ranks — because the effort of people is not equal, and neither is the reward.

## Who Laughs Last



And the surah ends with a scene of poetic justice, beta  
— and it will make you smile.

'INNAL-LAZINA AJRAMOO KANOO MINAL-LAZINA  
AMANOO YADHAKOON — indeed, those who  
committed crimes used to LAUGH AT those who  
believed — WA IZA MARROO BIHIM  
YATAGHAMAZOON — and when they passed by them,  
they would EXCHANGE WINKS.'

Beta, that is the mockery of every age, described with  
perfect accuracy: the laughter, the nudge, the wink  
between friends when a practising believer walks past.  
'WA IZAN-QALABOO ILA AHLIHIM-U-NQALABOO  
FAKIHEEN — and when they returned to their own  
people, they would return JESTING' — telling the stories  
at home, entertaining the family with mockery. 'WA IZA  
RA'AWHUM QALOO INNA HA'ULA'I LA-DALLOON —  
and when they saw them, they would say: indeed,  
THESE people are astray!'



And then Allah's quiet comment: 'WA MA URSILOO 'ALAYHIM HAFIZEEN — but they had not been sent as GUARDIANS over them.' Beta — nobody appointed you as a supervisor over other people's guidance. And how often are the loudest critics of religious people exactly this: self-appointed inspectors of a matter that was never assigned to them?

And then the turn: 'FAL-YAWMAL-LAZINA AMANOO MINAL-KUFFARI YADHAKOON — SO TODAY, those who believed are laughing at the disbelievers — 'ALAL-ARA'IKI YANZUROON — on adorned couches, OBSERVING.'

Beta, the same verb — 'yadhakoon', laughing — used for both. The mockers laughed for a few years in a passing world; the believers laugh in a Garden that never ends. And they are 'observing' — watching, from their couches, exactly as the ayahs earlier described the couches of the righteous.



And the final line, a question with a smile in it: 'HAL THUWWIBAL-KUFFARU MA KANOO YAF'ALOON — have the disbelievers been REWARDED for what they used to do?'

So the surah that began with a merchant shaving a few grams off a scale ends with the perfect balancing of every scale in existence. Beta, that is the whole message: Allah is Al-'Adl. Not one gram taken wrongly, not one mockery endured, not one patient believer overlooked. Everything, finally, weighed exactly.

## What This Surah Teaches Us

1. Beware the double standard: strict when receiving, loose when giving — that is 'tatfeef', and it earns a 'woe'.
2. This applies far beyond shopkeepers — to employees, students, spouses, landlords and managers alike.



- 3.** Every small dishonesty is a small forgetting of the Day when mankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds.
  - 4.** Denial usually follows behaviour, not evidence: first the transgression, then the philosophy to justify it.
  - 5.** Guard against 'ran': hearts rust spot by spot through unrepented sins — polish immediately with istighfar and return.
  - 6.** Redirect your competitive drive: 'let the competitors compete' — for the sealed drink whose very seal is musk.
  - 7.** You were never appointed a guardian over others' guidance — and the last laugh belongs to the patient believer, not the mocker.
- Ya Allah, keep our scales honest in what we give, polish our hearts before they rust, and let us compete for what is worth competing for. 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

