

SURAH AS A STORY



Surah Al-Lail

The Night

The complete journey — two givers, two roads —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 92 • 21 Ayahs • Meccan

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The Surah at a Glance

*Wal-layli iza yaghshaa. Wan-nahaari iza
tajallaa*

1-2. By the night when it covers, and the day when it
appears in brightness,

Inna sa'yakum lashattaa

4. Indeed, your efforts are diverse.

*Fa-ammaa man a'taa wattaqaa. Wa saddaqa
bil-husnaa*

5-6. As for he who gives and fears Allah, and believes in
the best reward,

Fasanuyassiruhoo lilyusraa

7. We will ease him toward ease.

Wa ammaa mam-bakhila wastaghnaa

8. But as for he who withholds and considers himself
free of need,

*Wa sayujannabuh al-atqaa. Allazee yu'tee
maalahoo yatazakkaa*

17-18. But the righteous one will be spared it — he who
gives his wealth to purify himself.



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

Night, Day, and the Two Sexes

Beta, this surah opens with three oaths, and they are chosen with great care: 'WAL-LAYLI IZA YAGHSHA — by the NIGHT when it COVERS — WAN-NAHARI IZA TAJALLA — and the DAY when it APPEARS in brightness — WA MA KHALAQAZ-ZAKARA WAL-UNTHA — and by HIM WHO CREATED the MALE and the FEMALE.'

Notice the pattern, beta: three pairs of opposites. Night and day. Male and female. Covering and revealing. Everything Allah swears by here comes in twos — different from each other, and yet both necessary, both created by the same Hand.

And why? Because of what He is about to say about us: 'INNA SA'YAKUM LA-SHATTA — indeed, your EFFORTS are DIVERSE, scattered, going in different directions.'



Beta, look around at humanity and you will see the truth of this. Every person is running — but in a thousand different directions. One man exhausts himself for money, another for fame, another for a woman, another for revenge, another for Allah. Same energy, same twenty-four hours, completely different destinations.

So the surah asks the only question that matters: since we are all running anyway, which of these directions actually arrives somewhere?

Two Kinds of People, Two Kinds of Ease

And now, beta, Allah divides all of humanity into two types — and He does it by looking at their HANDS and their HEARTS:

'FA-AMMA MAN A'TA WATTAQA — as for he who GIVES and FEARS Allah — WA SADDQA BIL-HUSNA — and BELIEVES in the BEST (reward) — FA-SANUYASSIRUHU LIL-YUSRA — WE WILL EASE HIM TOWARD EASE.'



Three qualities, beta, and they come in a specific order. He GIVES — his hand opens. He has TAQWA — his giving is not for show, and it is from halal earning. And he BELIEVES IN AL-HUSNA — he is convinced there is something better waiting; he is trading a certain rupee now for an unseen reward later, and he trusts the promise enough to act on it.

And the reward: 'We will facilitate him toward ease.'
Beta, this is a law of the spiritual world that you can verify in your own life: obedience makes further obedience easier. The person who gives finds it easier to give the next time. The one who prays Fajr once finds the second morning less heavy. Allah smooths the road for the one already walking it.

'WA AMMA MAN BAKHILA WASTAGHNA — but as for he who WITHHOLDS and considers himself SELF-SUFFICIENT — WA KAZZABA BIL-HUSNA — and DENIES the best reward — FA-SANUYASSIRUHU LIL-'USRA — WE WILL EASE HIM TOWARD HARSHIP.'



Beta, feel the terrifying symmetry: 'sanuyassiruhu lil-'usra' — We will make DIFFICULTY easy for him. The road downhill also gets smoother. The first lie is hard; the hundredth is effortless. The first missed prayer stings; after a year, nothing. Sin removes its own resistance.

So the ayah pair is teaching a law, beta: whichever direction you take the first steps in, Allah smooths that road for you. That is both the most encouraging and the most frightening thing about habits.

And look at the three qualities of the second man, mirroring the first: he WITHHOLDS — the fist closes; 'istaghna' — he considers himself FREE OF NEED, meaning he does not feel he needs Allah; and he DENIES al-husna — he does not really believe anything better is coming, so why send anything forward?

'WA MA YUGHNEE 'ANHU MALUHU IZA TARADDA — and what will his WEALTH avail him when he FALLS?' 'Taradda', beta — when he tumbles down, into the



grave, into ruin. The wealth he clutched will not reach out a hand.

Guidance Is Ours; The Fire Is Warned

'INNA 'ALAYNA LAL-HUDA — indeed, upon US is GUIDANCE.' Beta, Allah takes it upon Himself to show the way — through messengers, through this Book, through the fitrah in every chest. Nobody can complain that the map was withheld.

'WA INNA LANA LAL-AKHIRATA WAL-OOLA — and indeed, to Us belong the LAST and the FIRST.' Both worlds are His property — so the man who chased only the first was chasing something that belonged to Allah anyway.

'FA-ANZARTUKUM NARAN TALAZZA — so I have WARNED YOU of a Fire that BLAZES — LA YASLAHA ILLAL-ASHQA — none will burn in it except the most WRETCHED — ALLAZI KAZZABA WA TAWALLA — who DENIED and TURNED AWAY.'



Beta, note the mercy in the word 'anzartukum' — I have WARNED you. A warning is a kindness; it is given before, not after. The fire is described, its heat is announced, the road is marked — all in advance, so that nobody arrives there surprised.

The Man Who Gave to Purify Himself

And then the surah describes the one who will be kept far from that Fire — and beta, these ayahs have a beautiful story behind them:

'WA SAYUJANNABUHAL-ATQA — but the most righteous one will be kept AWAY from it — ALLAZI YU'TEE MALAHU YATAZAKKA — who GIVES his WEALTH to PURIFY himself.'

'WA MA LI-AHADIN 'INDAHU MIN NI'MATIN TUJZA — and NOT for anyone who has done him a FAVOUR to be REPAYED — ILLABTIGHA'A WAJHI RABBIHIL-A'LA — but only SEEKING THE FACE OF HIS LORD, THE MOST HIGH — WA LA-SAWFA YARDA — AND HE IS GOING TO BE PLEASED.'



Beta, the scholars of tafseer mention that these ayahs were revealed about Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq (radiyallahu anhu). He would buy weak and tortured slaves who had accepted Islam — Bilal among them — and set them free. Bilal was being dragged across burning sand with a rock on his chest, saying only 'Ahad, Ahad' — One, One. Abu Bakr bought him and freed him.

And people said: he is doing it for a favour, for a return, for prestige. So Allah revealed: he is not repaying anyone's favour — he is seeking nothing but the Face of his Lord, the Most High.

Beta, look at the phrase Allah uses for his motive: 'ibtigha'a wajhi Rabbihil-A'la' — seeking the FACE of his Lord. Not seeking Jannah, not even seeking reward — seeking HIM. That is the highest intention a human being can hold.

And then the promise, four words in Arabic and among the most beautiful in the Quran: 'WA LA-SAWFA YARDA — AND HE IS GOING TO BE PLEASED.'



Beta, Allah does not specify what He will give him. He simply says: he will be satisfied. Whatever it takes to make that man content — that much will be given, and more. It is the promise you make to someone you love: don't worry about the details; you will be happy.

So the surah that began with night and day ends with a man giving away his wealth in the dark, expecting nothing from anyone — and Allah announcing to the whole world, forever, that this man will be pleased.

Beta, remember: the surah opened by saying our efforts are scattered in every direction. And it closes by pointing at the one direction that ends in 'wa la-sawfa yarda' — and he shall be well pleased.

What This Surah Teaches Us

1. Everyone is exerting effort; the only question is direction — 'inna sa'yakum la-shatta'.
2. Three qualities open the easy road: an open hand, taqwa, and real belief that something better is coming.



3. Obedience makes obedience easier — and sin removes its own resistance. Guard the first steps.

4. 'Istighna' — feeling free of need from Allah — is the root of stinginess.

5. Warning is mercy: the Fire was described in advance so nobody arrives surprised.

6. Give without repaying favours and without expecting returns — seek only 'the Face of your Lord, the Most High.'

7. Aim for the four-word promise: 'wa la-sawfa yarda' — and he shall be well pleased.

Ya Allah, open our hands, ease us toward ease, and let us seek nothing but Your Face. 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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