

SURAH AS A STORY



Surah Ash-Sharh

The Relief

The complete journey — with hardship comes ease, twice —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 94 • 8 Ayahs • Meccan

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The Surah at a Glance

Alam nashrah laka sadrak

1. Have We not expanded for you your breast?

*Wa wada'naa 'anka wizrak. Allazeee anqada
zahrak*

2-3. And removed from you your burden, which weighed
upon your back,

Wa rafa'naa laka zikrak

4. And raised high for you your mention.

*Fa-inna ma'al-'usri yusraa. Inna ma'al-'usri
yusraa*

5-6. For indeed, with hardship comes ease. Indeed, with
hardship comes ease.

Fa-izaa faraghta fansab

7. So when you have finished, stand up (for worship),

Wa ilaa Rabbika farghab

8. And to your Lord direct your longing.

Listen to the Arabic recitation of this Surah, ayah by ayah, with the Qari
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The Companion of Ad-Duha

Beta, this surah is the twin of the one before it. Ad-Duha ended by telling the Prophet ﷺ what Allah had done for him and what he should now do for others. Ash-Sharh continues the same conversation — the same tenderness, the same style of questions, the same Voice.

And it opens with a question that is really a gift: 'A LAM NASHRAH LAKA SADRAK — HAVE WE NOT EXPANDED FOR YOU YOUR BREAST?'

'Sharh as-sadr', beta — the opening, widening and expanding of the chest. It has two levels, and both are true here. Physically: the hadith describe how his blessed chest was opened, his heart washed and filled with wisdom and faith — once in his childhood among the Banu Sa'd, and again on the night of Isra.

And spiritually — and this is the one that concerns us too, beta — sharh as-sadr means a chest that has room. Room for hardship without breaking. Room for people's rudeness without exploding. Room for truth, for



patience, for mercy, for hope.

Beta, think about the opposite state — a tight chest. Everything irritates you, small problems feel enormous, one careless remark ruins your day. That is 'dayq as-sadr', constriction. And Allah reminded His Messenger ﷺ, in the middle of his hardest years: I have EXPANDED your chest. You have been given capacity.

And this is a gift you can ask for too. When you are overwhelmed, do not only ask Allah to remove the problem — ask Him to expand your chest, as Musa (alaihis salam) prayed: 'Rabbish-rah lee sadree.' Sometimes He widens the vessel instead of shrinking the load.

The Burden Lifted, the Name Raised

'WA WADA'NA 'ANKA WIZRAK — and We REMOVED from you your BURDEN — ALLAZI ANQADA ZAHRAK — which WEIGHED DOWN your BACK.'



Beta, the word 'anqada' describes a weight so heavy that it makes a cracking, creaking sound — like a back about to break. The scholars explain the burden as the weight of the mission's early years and the distress of his people's condition — and Allah relieved it, lightened it, took it off his back.

And then: 'WA RAFA'NA LAKA ZIKRAK — and We RAISED HIGH for you your MENTION.'

Beta, sit with this ayah, because it was revealed at a time when his name was being dragged through the streets of Makkah. He was called a madman, a poet, a magician. Children were sent to throw stones at him. His name was an insult in his own city.

And Allah said: We have RAISED your mention.

Now look at what happened, beta. Fourteen hundred years later, in every corner of the earth, five times a day, from millions of minarets: 'ASHHADU ANNA MUHAMMADAR-RASOOLULLAH.' There is not a single moment in a twenty-four hour day when his name is not



being called out somewhere on this planet — as the sun moves and prayer times follow it around the world.

And more than that: Allah joined his name to His own. In the shahadah, in the azan, in the tashahhud of every prayer. Qatadah (rahimahullah) said about this ayah: Allah raised his mention in this world and the next — there is no speaker, no witness, no one who prays, except that he says: la ilaha illallah, Muhammadur-Rasoolullah.

Beta, when a person is despised and rejected but stays true to Allah, look what Allah can do with that person's name.

With Hardship — Ease. Twice.

And now, beta, the two ayahs that this surah is famous for, and which have carried millions of believers through the darkest hours of their lives:

'FA-INNA MA'AL-'USRI YUSRA — for indeed, WITH HARDSHIP comes EASE. INNA MA'AL-'USRI YUSRA —



indeed, WITH HARDSHIP comes EASE.'

Beta, notice three things about these ayahs, because each one is a treasure.

FIRST — the word 'MA'A', not 'ba'da'. Allah does not say 'AFTER hardship comes ease'; He says 'WITH hardship, ease'. The ease is not waiting somewhere in the future — it is travelling ALONGSIDE the difficulty, packed inside it. Beta, think of your own past hardships: the illness that brought a family together; the failure that redirected your life; the loss that made you pray as you never had. The ease was inside the hardship, not after it.

SECOND — the REPETITION. Why say it twice? Because in Arabic, when a definite word is repeated, it refers to the same thing — 'al-'usr', THE hardship, is one and the same. But when an indefinite word is repeated, it refers to something new — 'yusran', an ease, and another ease. So the scholars derived from this, and it is famously reported from Ibn Abbas and Ibn Mas'ud (radiyallahu anhum): one hardship will never overcome two eases.



Beta, memorise that: ONE difficulty, TWO reliefs. Your problem comes alone; the ease comes in a pair.

THIRD — the sequence in the surah. Look at what came just before: I expanded your chest, I lifted your burden, I raised your mention. And THEN: with hardship comes ease. Allah first gave three examples of hardships He had already resolved in the Prophet's own life — and only then stated the general law. Beta, that is how faith is built: not by abstract slogans, but by remembering what He has already done.

So when the next hardship comes — and it will, because you were 'created in kabad' — hold these two ayahs. Not as a decoration on a wall, but as a fact: the ease is already inside this, and there are two of them.

When You Finish — Begin Again

And the surah closes with two short instructions that form a complete philosophy of a believer's life: 'FA-IZA FARAGHTA FANSAB — so when you have FINISHED, then STAND UP (in worship, exert yourself) — WA ILA



RABBIKA FARGHAB — and to your LORD DIRECT your LONGING.'

Beta, 'faraghta' — when you are free, when a task is done. And the instruction is NOT 'then rest'. It is 'fansab' — then labour, then exert yourself in worship.

The scholars explained it in several ways, all beautiful: when you finish your worldly work, turn to your prayer; when you finish one act of worship, move to the next; when you finish the obligatory, stand for the voluntary; when you finish your salah, raise your hands in dua.

Beta, understand the principle: a believer's life has no retirement. There is no point at which you say 'I have done enough deen for now.' Every ending is a doorway to the next beginning. Finished your work day? Then salah. Finished salah? Then dhikr. Finished Ramadan? Then the six of Shawwal. Finished Hajj? Then a changed life.

This is not exhausting, beta — it is the opposite. It is what keeps a person from the emptiness that follows



every completed goal. People who tie their happiness to finishing things are always briefly happy and then lost again. A believer moves from one act of connection to the next.

'WA ILA RABBIKA FARGHAB — and to your Lord direct your LONGING.' 'Raghbah', beta, is desire, yearning, wanting something badly. And Allah says: point that longing at ME.

Beta, you will want things all your life — that is how you are built. This ayah does not tell you to stop wanting. It tells you where to aim the wanting. Ask Him for the small things and the big things, the worldly and the eternal. Let your heart's deepest 'I wish' be directed at the One who owns everything you could wish for.

And see how the two surahs close, beta — Ad-Duha and Ash-Sharh together. One ended with: speak of your Lord's favour. This one ends with: and to your Lord direct your longing. Gratitude for what has been given, and longing for what is still to come — that is the



complete posture of a believer's heart.

What This Surah Teaches Us

1. Ask for sharh as-sadr — sometimes Allah widens the vessel instead of shrinking the load.
2. He lifts burdens that make the back creak — no weight you carry is unnoticed.
3. When you are despised for staying true, remember what Allah did with a name that was once an insult in Makkah.
4. The ease is WITH the hardship, not after it — look for it inside the difficulty.
5. One hardship never overcomes two eases — the difficulty comes alone, the relief comes paired.
6. A believer never retires: every finish line is the start of the next act of worship.
7. You will always long for something — aim that longing at your Lord.



Rabbish-rah lee sadree — Ya Allah, expand our chests,
lighten our backs, and let all our longing be for You.
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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