

SURAH AS A STORY



Surah Al-Bayyinah

The Clear Proof

The complete journey — the best and worst of creation —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 98 • 8 Ayahs • Medinan

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The Surah at a Glance

*Lam yakunil-lazeena kafaroo min ahlil-kitaabi
wal-mushrikeena munfakkeena hattaa
ta'tiyahumul-bayyinah*

1. Those who disbelieved among the People of the Book and the polytheists were not to depart until there came to them the clear proof —

*Rasoolum-minal-laahi yatloo
suhufam-mutahharah*

2. A Messenger from Allah, reciting purified scriptures.

*Wa maaa umirooo illaa liya'budul-laaha
mukhliseena lahud-deen*

5. And they were not commanded except to worship Allah, sincere to Him in religion,

Ulaaa'ika hum sharrul-bariyyah

6. Those are the worst of creatures.

Ulaaa'ika hum khayrul-bariyyah

7. Those are the best of creatures.

Raziyal-laahu 'anhum wa razoo 'anh

8. Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him.



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A Deadlock That Needed Breaking

Beta, this surah opens with a long, carefully constructed sentence — and its structure is the message.

'LAM YAKUNIL-LAZINA KAFAROO MIN AHLIL-KITABI
WAL-MUSHRIKEENA MUNFAKKEENA HATTA
TA'TIYAHUMUL-BAYYINAH — those who disbelieved
among the PEOPLE OF THE BOOK and the POLYTHEISTS
were NOT going to DEPART (from their ways) UNTIL
there came to them the CLEAR PROOF.'

Beta, 'munfakkeen' means to be separated, detached, to break away from something you are stuck to. So Allah is describing a deadlock: two groups, both stuck. The People of the Book — Jews and Christians — held scriptures that had been altered over centuries and were divided into sects. The mushrikoon of Arabia were sunk in idolatry so deep that they worshipped stones they carved themselves.



And neither group was going to break free on its own. Not by philosophy, not by reform movements, not by time passing. Humanity was stuck — and only one thing could unstuck it: 'al-bayyinah', the CLEAR PROOF.

And what is that clear proof? Allah defines it in the next ayah: 'RASOOLUN MINALLAHI YATLOO SUHUFAN MUTAHHARAH — a MESSENGER from Allah, RECITING PURIFIED SCRIPTURES — FEEHA KUTUBUN QAYYIMAH — within which are CORRECT, UPRIGHT writings.'

Beta, notice: the clear proof is not a book alone — it is a MESSENGER reciting a book. Because a book without a living teacher gets interpreted a thousand ways; but a Messenger shows you what the words look like when a human being lives them.

And note the word 'mutahharah' — PURIFIED scriptures. Pure from alteration, pure from human insertion, pure from the errors that had crept into what came before. And 'kutubun qayyimah' — writings that



are straight, that stand upright, that correct what was bent.

They Split After the Proof Came

Then comes an ayah that overturns a common assumption: 'WA MA TAFARRAQAL-LAZINA

OOTUL-KITABA ILLA MIN BA'DI MA

JA'AT-HUMUL-BAYYINAH — and those who were given the Scripture did NOT SPLIT UP until AFTER the clear proof had come to them.'

Beta, read that carefully, because it is surprising. You would expect people to divide because guidance had not reached them. Allah says the opposite: they divided AFTER it came.

Why? Because before the truth arrives, disagreement is honest confusion. After it arrives, disagreement becomes a CHOICE — a refusal, driven by envy, by status, by unwillingness to follow someone else's leadership. The scholars point out that many of the People of the Book recognised the description of the final Messenger in



their own scriptures — and rejected him because he did not come from their nation.

Beta, this is a warning for us too. Our own ummah's divisions are rarely about the truth being unclear. They are usually about ego, loyalty to a group, and the refusal to accept evidence when it comes from someone we do not like.

Everything Ever Commanded, in One Ayah

And now, beta, comes an ayah that scholars have called a summary of all revealed religion: 'WA MA UMIROO ILLA LI-YA'BUDULLAHA MUKHLISEENA LAHUD-DEENA HUNAFI' — and they were NOT COMMANDED except to WORSHIP ALLAH, being SINCERE to Him in religion, INCLINING TO TRUTH — WA YUQEEMUS-SALATA WA YU'TUZ-ZAKAH — and to ESTABLISH PRAYER and GIVE ZAKAH — WA ZALIKA DEENUL-QAYYIMAH — and THAT is the UPRIGHT religion.'



Beta, count what is in this one ayah:

ONE — worship Allah. TWO — 'mukhliseena lahud-deen': with IKHLAS, sincerity, for Him alone. THREE — 'hunafa': inclining away from falsehood toward pure monotheism, as Ibrahim (alaihis salam) was. FOUR — establish salah. FIVE — give zakah.

And then: 'that is the upright religion.' Beta, every prophet from Nuh to Muhammad ﷺ came with this core. The details of law differed between nations, but the trunk was always the same: worship Allah alone, sincerely, and connect that worship to prayer and to giving.

Notice especially the pairing that runs through the whole Quran, beta: SALAH and ZAKAH. Your relationship with Allah, and your relationship with His creation. The prayer mat and the open hand. Islam never allowed one without the other.

And notice 'mukhliseena' — because this is the ayah's heart. Worship without ikhlas is theatre. A person can



pray for years and give for years and have it all count for nothing if the audience he wanted was human.

The Worst of Creatures, the Best of Creatures

And now, beta, the surah does something it does nowhere else in the Quran with this exact wording: it names both extremes of humanity using the same phrase.

'INNAL-LAZINA KAFAROO MIN AHLIL-KITABI
WAL-MUSHRIKEENA FEE NARI JAHANNAMA
KHALIDEENA FEEHA — indeed, those who disbelieved
among the People of the Book and the polytheists will be
in the Fire of Hell, abiding eternally therein — ULA'IKA
HUM SHARRUL-BARIYYAH — THOSE are the WORST
OF CREATURES.'

'Bariyyah', beta, means everything Allah brought into existence — all created things. So they are called worse than the animals, worse than the insects, worse than the stones. Why? Because those creations never refused



what they were made for. A bee does its work; a mountain holds its place. Only a human, given intellect and choice and a clear proof, refuses.

And then, immediately: 'INNAL-LAZINA AMANOO WA 'AMILUS-SALIHATI ULA'IKA HUM KHAYRUL-BARIYYAH — indeed, those who BELIEVED and did RIGHTEOUS DEEDS — THOSE are the BEST OF CREATURES.'

Beta, sit with this. The BEST of everything Allah has created. Better than the mountains, better than the oceans, better than the angels — and the scholars discussed that last comparison at length; many held that the righteous believers of mankind surpass the angels in this respect, because the angel obeys without any pull toward disobedience, while the human obeys while carrying desires that pull the other way.

So here is the astonishing truth of these two ayahs, beta: the same species — the same body, the same origin from a drop — can be the worst thing Allah ever created, or



the best. Nothing else in creation has that range. And what decides it? Not intelligence, not wealth, not lineage. Just two things: iman, and righteous action.

Pleased With Him, and He With Them

And the surah closes with the reward — and beta, the last line is the most precious part of the whole surah:

'JAZA'UHUM 'INDA RABBIHIM JANNATU 'ADNIN
TAJREE MIN TAHTIHAL-ANHARU KHALIDEENA
FEEHA ABADA — their reward with their Lord will be
Gardens of PERPETUAL RESIDENCE, beneath which
rivers flow, abiding therein FOREVER.'

Beta, 'Jannatu 'Adn' — gardens of permanent dwelling. And then Allah repeats permanence three times in one sentence: 'adn (perpetual), khalideen (abiding), abada (forever). Because the human heart's deepest fear about happiness is that it will end — and Allah answers that fear three times over.



'RADIYALLAHU 'ANHUM WA RADOO 'ANH — ALLAH IS PLEASED WITH THEM, AND THEY ARE PLEASED WITH HIM.'

Beta, of everything in Jannah — the rivers, the gardens, the eternity — this is the summit. That Allah, the Lord of the worlds, is PLEASED with a servant. Ibn al-Qayyim and others wrote that no pleasure of Paradise compares to the moment Allah announces to the people of Jannah: I am pleased with you, and I will never be displeased with you after this.

And look at the two halves, beta: 'radiyallahu 'anhum' — He is pleased with them; 'wa radoo 'anh' — and they are pleased with Him. It is mutual. And it works backwards into this life too: whoever is pleased with Allah HERE — with His decree, His timing, His giving and His withholding — earns His pleasure THERE.

'ZALIKA LI-MAN KHASHIYA RABBAH — THAT is for whoever FEARED his Lord.'



Beta, the final word of the surah is 'khashiya' — fear. And notice what kind: khashyah is not the fear of a monster; it is the fear that comes WITH knowledge and love — the fear of losing someone you revere. The scholars said khashyah is the fear of the one who knows Whom he is fearing.

So this surah, which began with a stuck humanity, ends with the way out: a Messenger came with a clear proof; worship Allah sincerely, pray, give — and you move from being 'sharrul-bariyyah' to 'khayrul-bariyyah', from the worst of creation to the best.

And beta, one last note of honour: the Prophet ﷺ said to Ubayy ibn Ka'b (radiyallahu anhu): 'Allah has commanded me to recite to you: Lam yakunil-lazina kafaroo...' Ubayy asked: He mentioned me by name? He ﷺ said yes — and Ubayy wept. This is a surah Allah wanted recited to a beloved companion, by His Messenger, personally.

What This Surah Teaches Us



- 1.** Humanity does not unstick itself: guidance had to come down — and it came as a Messenger reciting purified scriptures.
- 2.** Division usually comes AFTER clarity, not before it — check whether your disagreements are about evidence or about ego.
- 3.** All revealed religion fits in one ayah: worship Allah sincerely, incline to truth, establish salah, give zakah.
- 4.** Ikhlas is the difference between worship and theatre — audit who you are performing for.
- 5.** Never separate the prayer mat from the open hand: salah and zakah always travel together.
- 6.** The same species can be the worst of creatures or the best — and only iman and action decide which.
- 7.** Aim for the summit: 'Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him' — be pleased with His decree now to earn His pleasure then.



Ya Allah, make us of khayrul-bariyyah, sincere in worship, and grant us Your pleasure and the ability to be pleased with 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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