

SURAH AS A STORY



Surah Az-Zalzalah

The Earthquake

The complete journey — the earth tells its story —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 99 • 8 Ayahs • Medinan

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The Surah at a Glance

Izaa zulzilatil-ardu zilzaalahaa

1. When the earth is shaken with its (final) earthquake,

Wa akhrajatil-ardu asqaalahaa

2. and the earth discharges its burdens,

Yawma'izin tuhaddisu akhbaarahaa

4. That Day, it will report its news,

Bi-anna Rabbaka awhaa lahaa

5. because your Lord has inspired it.

*Famany-ya'mal misqaala zarratin
khayrany-yarah*

7. So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it,

*Wa many-ya'mal misqaala zarratin
sharrany-yarah*

8. and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it.

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

The Ground Itself Convulses



Beta, this surah is only eight ayahs long, and the Prophet ﷺ said that it equals half the Quran in meaning. Read it slowly and you will see why.

'IZA ZULZILATIL-ARDU ZILZALAH — when the EARTH is SHAKEN with ITS earthquake.'

Beta, notice the possessive: 'zilzalaha' — ITS OWN earthquake. Not an earthquake, but THE earthquake belonging to the earth — the one it was always going to have, the final and complete one. Every tremor in history has been a small warning; this is the whole planet convulsing at once.

'WA AKHRAJATIL-ARDU ATHQALAH — and the earth DISCHARGES its BURDENS.' 'Athqal' means heavy loads. And what are the earth's heavy loads, beta? Everything it has been carrying inside itself since the beginning: the buried dead of every nation, the hidden treasures, the concealed evidence, the bodies nobody ever found. All of it thrown out.



'WA QALAL-INSANU MA LAHA — and MAN will say:
WHAT IS WRONG WITH IT?'

Beta, there is something almost pitiful in that reaction. The human being — who has been warned about this Day in every scripture, by every messenger, for thousands of years — will look at the earth heaving and ask, bewildered: what is happening to it? As though it were unexpected. That is what a life of heedlessness does: it makes the most predicted event in history come as a surprise.

The Earth Gives Its Report

And now, beta, comes an ayah that should change how you behave in every place you set foot: 'YAWMA'IZIN TUHADDITHU AKHBARAHA — THAT DAY, IT WILL REPORT ITS NEWS.'

The earth will SPEAK. It will give its report — 'akhbar', its news, its account of everything.



The Prophet ﷺ explained this ayah directly. He recited it and asked: do you know what its news is? They said: Allah and His Messenger know best. He said: 'Its news is that it will testify against every servant, male and female, about what he did upon its surface. It will say: he did such and such, on such and such a day. That is its news.'

Beta, absorb that. The ground you are sitting on right now is taking notes. Every place has a memory: the floor of the masjid where you prayed at night, and also the room where you said what you should not have said. The street where you helped someone, and the spot where you cheated. On that Day, each patch of earth will stand and testify: this happened here, on this date.

This is why some of the salaf would pray in many different spots, and why it is said that a believer should leave behind him places on earth that will speak in his favour.



'BI-ANNA RABBAKA AWHHA LAHA — because your LORD has INSPIRED it, commanded it, revealed to it.' The earth is not testifying on its own initiative, beta — Allah gives it permission and instructs it. Inanimate things speak when their Creator tells them to.

Scattered Groups, Shown Their Deeds

'YAWMA'IZIN YASDURUN-NASU ASHTATAN LI-YURAW A'MALAHUM — that Day, the people will DEPART SEPARATED, in scattered groups, to be SHOWN their DEEDS.'

Beta, 'yasduru' is the word used for people leaving a watering place — coming away from a well after drinking. So picture humanity emerging from the graves the way crowds leave a well: pouring out in groups, but 'ashtatan' — separated, sorted, each with its own kind.

In this world, beta, we are all mixed together: the honest and the corrupt sit in the same office, ride the same train, live on the same street. That Day, the mixing ends. Every soul goes with its own kind, and the sorting is



done by deeds, not by surnames or passports.

'LI-YURAW A'MALAHUM' — TO BE SHOWN their deeds. Not to be told about them — to be SHOWN. Beta, this is what makes that Day so exact. No summary, no argument, no version of events. The deed itself is displayed. Every human being will watch his own life played back.

An Atom's Weight

And now, beta, come the two ayahs which the scholars call 'the most comprehensive verses in the Quran' — Ibn Abbas (radiyallahu anhum) said no ayah in the whole Book is more comprehensive than these two:

'FA-MAN YA'MAL MITHQALA ZARRATIN KHAYRAN YARAH — SO WHOEVER DOES AN ATOM'S WEIGHT OF GOOD WILL SEE IT — WA MAN YA'MAL MITHQALA ZARRATIN SHARRAN YARAH — AND WHOEVER DOES AN ATOM'S WEIGHT OF EVIL WILL SEE IT.'



Beta, 'mithqala zarrah' — the weight of the smallest particle, a speck of dust visible in a sunbeam. And Allah says: even THAT is recorded, kept, and shown to you.

Now think about what these two ayahs do to a life. They abolish the idea of a deed being 'too small to matter'.

On the good side, beta — this is the most encouraging ayah for ordinary people. You may never build a masjid or free a nation. But you moved a stone from the path. You smiled at a tired shopkeeper. You gave someone water. You picked up a piece of glass so a child would not step on it. You made dua for a person who will never know. You held your tongue when you had a devastating reply ready.

Every single one of those is an atom's weight of good, and every single one will be there — visible, counted, waiting for you.

And on the other side, beta — it abolishes the excuse of 'it's only a small sin'. The glance you kept for two seconds too long. The sentence about someone's honour



that you added to the conversation. The small lie that made the story better. The extra amount added to the bill. Small — and shown.

The Prophet ﷺ warned about exactly this: 'Beware of the small sins that are belittled, for they gather upon a man until they destroy him.' He compared them to a group of travellers in a valley, each bringing one stick — until they have enough to cook their food. One stick is nothing; the pile is a fire.

Beta, and there is a mercy hidden in the order of these two ayahs. Notice which comes FIRST: the atom of GOOD. Allah mentioned the reward before the punishment — as He so often does. Even in an ayah about total accountability, He begins with the good news.

And this is why, when a bedouin heard the Prophet ﷺ recite these two ayahs, he said: 'This is enough for me' — and left. He understood everything.



So this is the surah, beta, in one thought: the ground is recording, the earth will testify, your deeds will be shown, and NOTHING is too small to appear. Live as though every atom counts — because Allah has told you it does.

What This Surah Teaches Us

1. The most predicted event in history will still catch the heedless by surprise — 'what is wrong with it?'
2. The ground records: every place you use will testify about what you did there. Leave behind earth that speaks well of you.
3. The mixing of good and bad ends that Day — each soul departs with its own kind, sorted by deeds alone.
4. You will be SHOWN your deeds, not merely told — there will be no arguing with the footage.
5. No good is too small to count: a smile, a removed stone, a silent dua — all recorded, all waiting.



6. No sin is too small to appear: beware the belittled sins that gather like sticks until they become a fire.

7. Allah mentioned the atom of good FIRST — begin your accounting with hope, then act with care.

Ya Allah, make the earth testify in our favour, multiply our atoms of good, and forgive the small sins we belittled. 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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