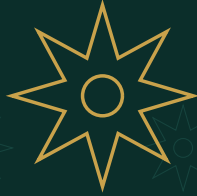


SURAH AS A STORY



Surah Al-'Adiyat

The Racing Horses

The complete journey — the horses that shame us —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 100 • 11 Ayahs • Meccan

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The Surah at a Glance

Wal-'aadiyaati dabhaa

1. By the racers, panting,

Fal-mooriyaati qad-haa

2. striking sparks of fire (with their hooves),

Innal-insaana li-Rabbihee lakanood

6. Indeed, man is ungrateful to his Lord,

Wa innahoo 'alaa zaalika lashaheed

7. And indeed, he is a witness to that.

Wa innahoo lihubbil-khayri lashadeed

8. And indeed, in his love of wealth he is intense.

Wa hussila maa fis-sudoor

10. And that which is in the breasts is obtained —

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

Five Oaths in a Cloud of Dust

Beta, this surah opens with one of the most cinematic passages in the Quran. Close your eyes and let the



sounds work on you, because even the Arabic words gallop.

'WAL-'ADYATI DABHA — by the RACERS, PANTING' — horses running at full speed, and 'dabh' is the specific sound of their heavy, forced breathing as they charge.

'FAL-MOORIYATI QADHA — striking SPARKS of FIRE.' Beta, iron hooves hitting rock at speed throw sparks — the horses are running so hard on stony ground that fire is flying from beneath them in the dark.

'FAL-MUGHEERATI SUBHA — and the raiders at DAWN.' Attacking at first light, at the moment the enemy is least prepared.

'FA-ATHARNA BIHI NAQ'A — stirring up thereby a CLOUD OF DUST — FA-WASATNA BIHI JAM'A — and PENETRATING into the MIDST of a gathering.' Beta, the dust rises, and the horses drive straight into the heart of the assembled enemy.



Five ayahs, and you can see, hear, and almost feel it: the panting, the sparks, the dawn, the dust, the collision.

Now, beta — why would Allah swear by war horses? Because of the quality He is highlighting. Look at what these animals are doing. They are running until their breath tears, striking sparks from stone, charging into danger — for a master who feeds them. Total obedience. Total exertion. The horse gives everything it has, for a human being who gives it only fodder and water.

And then Allah turns from the horse to the human.

Man Is Ungrateful to His Lord

'INNAL-INSANA LI-RABBIHI LA-KANOOD — indeed, MAN, to his LORD, is KANOOD.'

Beta, 'kanood' is a heavy word. The Arabs used 'kanood' for barren land that gives nothing back no matter how much rain falls on it. And al-Hasan al-Basri (rahimahullah) explained kanood as the one who counts the calamities and forgets the favours.



Sit with that definition, beta, because it is a portrait of us. Ask a person how his year went, and he will tell you about the illness, the loss, the disappointment, the person who wronged him. He will not mention the three hundred and sixty days he woke up breathing, the food that never ran out, the eyes that still see, the children who came home safe.

One hardship is remembered for years; ten thousand favours are invisible because they never stopped.

And now feel the sting of the comparison the surah has built. The horse exhausts itself for a master who gives it hay. The human being — given eyes, hearing, health, family, sustenance, guidance, and a Lord who forgives him again and again — is 'kanood'. Beta, the surah is saying, gently and devastatingly: the animal is more grateful than you.

'WA INNAHU 'ALA ZALIK LA-SHAHEED — and indeed, HE IS A WITNESS TO THAT.'



Beta, this is one of the most uncomfortable ayahs in the Quran. He himself is a witness to his own ingratitude. Meaning: deep inside, he KNOWS. Nobody has to prove it to him. The man who complains about his life knows, in his quieter moments, exactly how much he has been given. That inner knowledge will itself testify.

'WA INNAHU LI-HUBBIL-KHAYRI LA-SHADEED — and indeed, in his LOVE OF KHAYR he is INTENSE, violent, severe.'

Beta, notice the word Allah chose for wealth here: 'khayr' — GOOD. Because that is what we call it. We do not say 'my money'; we say 'my means', 'my security', 'my blessing'. And the love is described as 'shadeed' — fierce, unrelenting, gripping.

Beta, the ayah does not say wealth is evil. It says the INTENSITY of our love for it is the problem — a love stronger than our love for the One who gave it.

When What Is in the Chests Is Collected



And then the surah does what it always does — it lifts your eyes from the present to the end: 'A FA-LA YA'LAMU IZA BU'THIRA MA FIL-QUBOOR — does he not KNOW — when what is in the GRAVES is SCATTERED, turned out?'

Beta, 'bu'thira' — overturned, emptied out, the contents spilled. Everything the graves have swallowed, brought out into the open.

'WA HUSSILA MA FIS-SUDOOR — and that which is in the BREASTS is OBTAINED, collected, brought out.'

Beta, this is the ayah to carry away from this surah.

'Hussila' means to extract, to sift out, to obtain the essence of something — the way grain is separated from chaff, or gold is extracted from ore.

Look at the pairing: the graves give up BODIES, and the chests give up SECRETS. And which one does Allah mention as the real event? The second.



Because the true self is not the body in the ground, beta — it is what was in the chest: the intentions, the hidden pride behind a public charity, the quiet sincerity behind an unseen good deed, the grudge carried for twenty years behind a polite smile, the love of Allah nobody knew about.

In this world we are judged by our surfaces. People see the donation, not the motive; the prayer, not the presence of heart; the smile, not the resentment behind it. On that Day, beta, the surface is discarded and the CONTENTS are extracted.

'INNA RABBAHUM BIHIM YAWMA'IZIN LA-KHABEER — indeed, their Lord, about them, that Day, is fully ACQUAINTED.'

Beta, notice the Name: AL-KHABEER — the One acquainted with the innermost reality of things, the hidden details beneath the surface. And notice the phrasing: 'their Lord, ABOUT THEM, that Day' — He is not learning something new on that Day; the ayah



means His full knowledge will be MANIFEST that Day, made visible to all.

So the surah's journey, beta, is complete: it began with horses giving their absolute best for a master who gives them hay, and it ends with the human chest being emptied out before the Lord who gave him everything. Between those two points is the question the whole surah is asking you: what will be extracted from YOUR chest?

And here is how to answer it, beta — start counting favours instead of calamities. That single habit is the cure for 'kanood'. Every night, name three things Allah gave you that day. A grateful heart is the one thing you can put into your chest now that you will be glad to have extracted later.

What This Surah Teaches Us

1. A war horse exhausts itself for a master who gives it fodder — measure your own effort for the Lord who gave you everything.



2. 'Kanoood' is counting the calamities and forgetting the favours — the most common disease of the human heart.

3. You are your own witness: deep down, you already know how much you have been given.

4. Wealth is not the problem; the fierce, gripping intensity of our love for it is.

5. Graves give up bodies, but chests give up SECRETS — and the contents are what will be judged.

6. Purify your motives now, because on that Day the surface is discarded and the essence extracted.

7. Cure ingratitude with a daily habit: name three of His favours before you sleep.

Ya Khabeer, make our hidden selves better than our public selves, and save us from being ungrateful to the One who gave us all. 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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