

A GIFT FOR YOU · FROM DEEN2U.COM

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Al-Furqan

The Criterion · Makki · 77 ayat — reflections on surah
25 of the Qur'an

QURAN

deen2u.com

One-stop center for Islamic resources · free to share
September 2026 · v1.305.2

CONTENTS

Surah Al-Furqan

1	The surah in brief	What it is, when it came, what it sets out to do
2	Why it was revealed	3 occasions from the authentic collections
3	Its themes	5 threads running through the surah
4	Key verses	4 passages, with a reflection on each
5	Reading it closely	4 sections
6	Carrying it	4 things to take from it

الفرقان — Al-Furqan, "The Criterion". Surah 25 of 114, revealed in Makkah, 77 ayat. The full text and a recitation are on the web edition at deen2u.com/quran/25/.

ONE

The surah in brief

The Qur'an as the Furqan, the criterion distinguishing truth from falsehood, answering the deniers' objections about the Messenger and Resurrection, and closing with the humble, gentle traits of the true servants of the Most Merciful.

Al-Furqan is named for the Criterion that separates truth from falsehood, opening with praise of the One who sent it down to His servant as a warner to the worlds (25:1). It answers the objections of the deniers — why not an angel, why no treasure or garden — and exposes the emptiness of their idols and their arrogance. God then displays His signs in the lengthening shadow, the night as covering, the paired winds, and the two seas kept apart (25:45–53), before warning that the deeds of the faithless will scatter like dust (25:23). The surah closes with the portrait of the servants of the Most Merciful — the 'ibad ar-Rahman — who walk humbly, spend with balance, avoid falsehood, and pray for righteous families (25:63–77). Al-Sa'di treats this closing gallery as the practical embodiment of the guidance the Criterion demands.

OCCASIONS OF REVELATION

Why it was revealed

These are the occasions (asbāb al-nuzūl) that the authentic collections narrate for verses of this surah. An occasion explains a verse; it does not limit its meaning.

Qur'an 25:68

Ibn Mas'ud asked the Prophet which sin is greatest. He said setting up a rival to Allah, then killing one's child for fear it will share one's food, then adultery with a neighbour's wife. The verse was revealed confirming this.

"Then the following Verse was revealed to confirm the statement of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)"

'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud · Sahih al-Bukhari 4761

Qur'an 25:68

Some pagans who had killed and committed adultery many times asked the Prophet whether there was expiation for their past deeds. The verses of 25:68 came, and 39:53 was also revealed.

"we wish if you could inform us whether we can make an expiation for our (past evil) deeds." So the Divine Verses came"

Ibn 'Abbas · Sahih al-Bukhari 4810

Qur'an 25:70

When the verse in Surat al-Furqan was revealed, the Makkan pagans said they had killed, worshipped other gods and committed fornication. Allah revealed "Except those who repent, believe, and do good."

"When the Verse that is in Sura-al-Furqan was revealed, the pagans of Mecca said"

Ibn 'Abbas (via Sa'id ibn Jubair) · Sahih al-Bukhari 3855

TWO

Its themes

- The Qur'an as Criterion
- Answering objections to the Prophet
- Signs in creation
- Futility of rejected deeds
- The servants of the Most Merciful

THREE

Key verses

And We shall turn to whatever deeds they did (in this life), and We shall make such deeds as floating dust scattered about.

Qur'an 25:23

The good-seeming deeds of the faithless are turned to 'scattered dust' — Ibn Kathir explains that works without faith and sincerity have no weight before God.

It is He Who has let free the two bodies of flowing water: One palatable and sweet, and the other salt and bitter; yet has He made a barrier between them, a partition that is forbidden to be passed.

Qur'an 25:53

Two seas, one sweet and one salt, meet yet do not overrun each other by a barrier — al-Qurtubi presents this as a sign of a Power that holds opposites in perfect order.

And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace!";

Qur'an 25:63

The servants of the Merciful 'walk upon the earth in humility, and answer the ignorant with peace' — al-Sa'di reads their gentleness as strength governed by dignity, not weakness.

And those who pray, "Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous."

Qur'an 25:74

Their prayer for spouses and children to be 'a comfort of the eyes' shows, per the tafsir, that the righteous long for their households to be righteous too, not merely successful.

FOUR

Reading it closely

Context & character

Al-Furqan is a Makki surah revealed in the thick of the Prophet's ﷺ confrontation with the leaders of Quraysh. Its name — the Criterion — is drawn from the opening verse, which blesses the One who sent down the Furqan upon His servant to be a warner to the worlds (25:1). Furqan means that which separates truth from falsehood, and the whole surah is an exercise in separation: it lines up the objections of the disbelievers against the responses of revelation, sorting the real from the counterfeit, the guided from the astray.

The surah's character is that of a patient, dignified rebuttal. The Makkans hurl a series of complaints and mockeries at the Messenger ﷺ, and rather than answering with anger, the surah answers with argument, with scenes of the Day of Judgement, with the signs of creation, and finally with a serene portrait of what a true servant of God actually looks like. It moves from the noise of denial to the quiet of the believing heart, ending on the famous description of 'ibad al-Rahman, the servants of the Most Merciful — as if to say: this is the human being the Criterion is trying to produce.

How the surah unfolds

The surah opens by exalting the sender of the Criterion and immediately contrasts Him with the false gods the idolaters worship — powerless things that create nothing, are themselves created, and own neither harm nor benefit, nor death nor life

nor resurrection (25:1-3). Then it lays out the Makkans' accusations one by one. They call the Qur'an a forgery he invented with the help of others, and "tales of the ancients" he has had dictated to him morning and evening (25:4-6); the surah answers that it was sent down by the One who knows the secret of the heavens and the earth.

They object to the messenger's very humanity: why does this messenger eat food and walk in the markets? Why is no angel sent with him, no treasure given him, no garden of his own (25:7-8)? The surah replies that all messengers before him ate food and walked in markets (25:20), and turns their demand back on them: on the Day they see the angels there will be no good news for the criminals (25:22). It then pauses on a series of Judgement-Day scenes — the wrongdoer biting his hands in regret over the friend who led him astray (25:27-29), the Messenger's ﷺ own complaint that his people took this Qur'an as a thing abandoned (25:30), the scattering of the disbelievers' deeds like dust (25:23).

Midway, the surah answers another mockery — why was the Qur'an not sent down all at once (25:32)? — with a profound reason: so that We may strengthen your heart by it, and We have recited it in gradual stages. Revelation came in installments because it was accompanying a living struggle, steadying the Prophet's ﷺ heart through each trial. The surah reassures him that no argument the enemies bring will fail to be met with the truth and a better explanation (25:33).

The central section then turns to the signs (ayat) as evidence and to the fate of earlier deniers (25:35–44): Musa and Harun, the people of Nuh, ‘Ad and Thamud and the people of the well, each destroyed for the same denial. It rebukes the man who takes his own desire as his god (25:43) and asks whether the deniers are any better than cattle — indeed more astray (25:44). Then it summons the great signs of creation as proof of the Creator's care and power: how He stretches out the shadow and then draws it in, how He made the night a covering and sleep a rest and the day a resurrection, how He sends the winds as heralds of His mercy and revives a dead land with rain, how He let the two seas flow — one sweet, one salt — with a barrier between them, how He created the human being from water and gave him lineage and marriage (25:45–54). These signs are the true "miracles" the deniers claimed to want.

The surah's final movement lifts its eyes to the Most Merciful enthroned above creation, ar-Rahman (25:59–60), and then closes with its crowning passage: the portrait of ‘ibad al-Rahman (25:63–76). Against all the noise of the deniers, here is the finished human being the Criterion produces — and the surah ends by declaring that Allah would not even concern Himself with humanity were it not for their call upon Him (25:77).

The major themes, in depth

The first theme is the answering of doubt — the surah as a manual of how faith meets objection. The Makkans' complaints fall into recognisable families: the Qur'an is man-made; the messenger is too ordinary to be a messenger; if this were true, wealth and angels and miracles would accompany it; and why

the piecemeal revelation? Al-Furqan does not dodge a single one. Its method is instructive: it exposes the emptiness of the false gods, it points to the precedent of all earlier prophets who were likewise human, it reframes the demand for miracles by pointing to the standing miracles of creation, and it reveals the wisdom in gradual revelation — the strengthening of a heart carrying an immense burden through time. The believer learns that doubts have answers, and that the answer is often a better and truer question.

The second theme is the reality of the false god within — desire. In 25:43 the surah asks the Prophet ﷺ to consider the man who has taken his own hawa, his craving, as his deity. This is the surah's diagnosis of disbelief beneath all its arguments: the deniers do not reject Muhammad ﷺ for lack of evidence but because submission would cost them their appetites and their status. Idolatry of stone is only the outward form; idolatry of the self is the root. This is why the surah repeatedly turns from argument to the heart, and why its resolution is not a knock-down proof but a transformed character.

The third and most beloved theme is that portrait of 'ibad al-Rahman. The servants of the Most Merciful walk upon the earth in humility (hawnan); when the ignorant address them, they reply, "Peace" (25:63). They pass their nights in prostration and standing before their Lord (25:64), fearing the fire of Hell as an abiding torment (25:65–66). They are balanced in spending — neither wasteful nor stingy, but firmly between the two (25:67). They do not associate partners with Allah, do not kill unjustly, and do not commit zina (25:68) — and then, strikingly, the door of mercy opens: except those who repent, believe, and do

righteous work, for Allah will transform their evil deeds into good (25:70–71). They do not bear false witness, and when they pass by frivolity they pass by with dignity (25:72); they do not receive the signs of their Lord deaf and blind (25:73); and they pray for righteous spouses and offspring and to be made leaders of the God-fearing (25:74). These are the ones rewarded with the highest chambers for their patience (25:75). The surah offers this not as an unreachable ideal but as the very shape the Criterion is meant to carve into a human life.

Points of reflection

Al-Furqan trains the believer to hold doubt without panic. Every objection the Makkans raised has been answered in the text; faith is not the absence of hard questions but the confidence that truth can meet them "with something better." When we encounter our own age's version of these objections, the surah's calm, reasoned tone is itself part of the lesson.

It asks each of us to examine which god we actually serve. The most dangerous idol is not carved from stone but shaped from our own desires and self-image. To take one's hawa as one's lord is a quiet apostasy that can coexist with outward religion, and the surah's cure is the humble, worshipful, self-disciplined life it goes on to describe.

Above all, al-Furqan hands the reader a portrait to become. The passage on 'ibad al-Rahman is a mirror held up to the soul: humility in bearing, gentleness under provocation, wakeful nights, balanced wealth, guarded tongue and body, and —

crucially — the open road of repentance for those who have failed. It closes the argument not by winning a debate but by showing what a won heart looks like, and inviting us in.

FIVE

Carrying it

1. Deeds unrooted in faith blow away like dust on the Day they are needed most.
2. The believer meets provocation with 'peace,' refusing to be dragged into folly.
3. Humility, moderate spending, and truthful speech mark the true servant of God.
4. Pray for your family's faith, not only their worldly comfort.

Where this reading draws from. Ibn Kathir, al-Sa'di, al-Qurtubi, al-Tabari. A summary is not a tafsir: for the verse-by-verse treatment go to the works themselves, or to the close studies at deen2u.com/tadabbur/.