

A GIFT FOR YOU · FROM DEEN2U.COM

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Al-Muzzammil

The Enshrouded One · Makki · 20 ayat — reflections
on surah 73 of the Qur'an

QURAN

deen2u.com

One-stop center for Islamic resources · free to share

September 2026 · v1.304.1

CONTENTS

Surah Al-Muzzammil

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

المزمل — Al-Muzzammil, "The Enshrouded One". Surah 73 of 114, revealed in Makkah, 20 ayat. The full text and a recitation are on the web edition at deen2u.com/quran/73/.

ONE

The surah in brief

Addressed to the Prophet wrapped in his cloak, the surah commands the night vigil and recitation of the Qur'an to strengthen him for his weighty mission, urges patience with the deniers, and later eases the standing to what is manageable alongside prayer, zakat, and charity.

Al-Muzzammil calls the Prophet, wrapped in his cloak, to rise for the night and stand in prayer, reciting the Quran slowly and with measure (tartil), for the night's stillness is when the heart and tongue are most attuned and the soul is prepared for a heavy word soon to be laid upon it. It sets the pattern of a servant strengthened for his mission by devotion at night, patient endurance of what the deniers say, and reliance on the Lord of the east and west. The surah recalls how Pharaoh's rejection of a messenger ended in ruin, warning Makkah of the like. Its long final verse then eases the command, acknowledging that the Prophet and his companions found the night vigil demanding, and prescribing what is manageable of recitation, prayer, zakat, and a goodly loan to Allah.

TWO

Its themes

- The night vigil (qiyam al-layl)
- Measured recitation (tartil)
- Bearing a heavy word
- Patience with rejection
- Ease and proportion in worship

THREE

Key verses

Stand (to prayer) by night, but not all night,–

Qur'an 73:2

Stand the night in prayer, except a little. Ibn Kathir explains the night vigil was the training ground preparing the Prophet's heart for the weight of his mission.

Or a little more; and recite the Qur'an in slow, measured rhythmic tones.

Qur'an 73:4

And recite the Quran with measured recitation (tartil). Ali explained tartil as clear, unhurried articulation; the aim is understanding and presence, not speed.

Truly the rising by night is most potent for governing (the soul), and most suitable for (framing) the Word (of Prayer and Praise).

Qur'an 73:6

The rising by night is stronger in impression and more upright in speech. Al-Sadi notes the stillness of night gathers the heart in a way the busy day cannot.

But keep in remembrance the name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him whole-heartedly.

Qur'an 73:8

Remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him completely. A call to a wholehearted turning, cutting away distraction to face Allah alone.

Thy Lord doth know that thou standest forth (to prayer) nigh two-thirds of the night, or half the night, or a third of the night, and so doth a party of those with thee. But Allah doth appoint night and day in due measure He knoweth that ye are unable to keep count thereof. So He hath turned to you (in mercy): read ye, therefore, of the Qur'an as much as may be easy for you. He knoweth that there may be (some) among you in ill-health; others travelling through the land, seeking of Allah's bounty; yet others fighting in Allah's Cause, read ye, therefore, as much of the Qur'an as may be easy (for you); and establish regular Prayer and give regular Charity; and loan to Allah a Beautiful Loan. And whatever good ye send forth for your souls ye shall find it in Allah's Presence,- yea, better and greater, in Reward and seek ye the Grace of Allah: for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 73:20

Your Lord knows you stand nearly two-thirds of the night, so recite what is easy of it, establish prayer, give zakat, and lend Allah a goodly loan. The verse relaxes the obligation, showing worship is calibrated to human capacity.

FOUR

Reading it closely

Context & character

Al-Muzzammil ("The Enshrouded One") is among the earliest Makkan revelations, addressed with striking tenderness to the Prophet ﷺ, who had wrapped himself in his cloak — perhaps to rest, perhaps overwhelmed by the weight of the first revelations. God calls to him by that very posture: "O you who are wrapped up" (73:1), and gently rouses him from the blanket to the night vigil. The surah marks the beginning of the Prophet's night-long spiritual training for the mission ahead.

Its character is intimate and preparatory. The bulk of it is a Makkan programme of night prayer, measured recitation, and patient endurance — the private disciplines that would make a man ready to carry "a weighty word." Its long final verse (73:20), however, is by scholarly consensus revealed considerably later, easing the demanding vigil after roughly a year; so the surah itself spans the arc from the intense first training to its merciful relaxation.

How the surah unfolds

The opening call (73:1–8) commissions the night: rise in prayer through the night, all but a little — half, or a little less, or a little more — and recite the Qur'an slowly, distinctly, with tartil. The reason is then given: "We are about to cast upon you a weighty word" (73:5) — a revelation so heavy that only a soul disciplined by the night could bear it. The night rising, God says, is more

effective in tread and more upright in speech; for the day is full of long occupation. So devote yourself to your Lord's name and cut yourself off to Him completely.

The middle movement (73:9–14) widens from private worship to the posture toward opponents. God is Lord of the east and the west — there is no god but He — so take Him alone as your guardian. Bear patiently what the deniers say, and part from them with a graceful, dignified separation (*hajran jamilan*). Then God takes the deniers into His own hands: "Leave to Me the deniers, those possessors of ease and luxury, and give them a little respite" (73:11) — for with Him are heavy fetters, a raging fire, food that chokes, and a painful punishment, on a Day the earth and mountains convulse and the mountains become a heap of shifting sand.

The surah then draws the parallel that frames the whole mission (73:15–19): "We have sent to you a Messenger as a witness over you, just as We sent a Messenger to Pharaoh" — and Pharaoh disobeyed that Messenger, so God seized him with a devastating grip. If you disbelieve, how will you guard yourselves against a Day that turns children grey, on which the sky itself is split apart? God's promise stands fulfilled. "Indeed this is a reminder, so whoever wills may take a path to his Lord."

The long closing verse (73:20) is the merciful revision. Your Lord knows you stand in prayer nearly two-thirds of the night, or half, or a third, as does a group of those with you; God measures the night and the day and knows you cannot sustain its full count, so He has turned to you in mercy: "Recite, then, what is easy of the Qur'an." He knows some among you will be ill, others

travelling the earth seeking God's bounty, others fighting in His cause — so recite what is manageable, establish the prayer, give the purifying alms, and lend God a goodly loan; whatever good you send ahead for yourselves you will find with God, better and greater in reward. And seek God's forgiveness, for God is ever-forgiving, most merciful. The obligatory night-long vigil is thus lifted, and the five daily prayers and zakat come into view.

The major themes, in depth

The foremost theme is the night vigil as the forge of the soul. The Qur'an here reveals its own theory of spiritual formation: the qiyam al-layl is prescribed precisely because "We are about to cast upon you a weighty word." The heaviness of revelation — and of prophetic responsibility — requires a heart tempered in the stillness and sincerity of the night, when distraction falls away and "the tread is firmer and the speech truer" (73:6). Long, unhurried recitation with tartil is part of the same discipline: the Qur'an is to be absorbed slowly, chewed and pondered, not rushed. This passage is the scriptural root of the whole tradition of tahajjud as the private engine of a devoted life.

A second theme is beautiful patience and dignified separation from opponents. The Prophet ﷺ is told both to endure what the deniers say and to withdraw from them "with a graceful parting" (73:10) — neither capitulating nor descending into their hostility — while entrusting their reckoning entirely to God, who reserves for them fetters, fire and choking food. The pairing is instructive: inward strength is built by night worship, and it expresses itself outwardly as composed, non-retaliatory perseverance, leaving vengeance where it belongs.

A third theme, carried by the final verse, is the mercy and realism of the Law. Having demanded so much, God then measures His servants' capacity — illness, travel, jihad, the sheer limits of human strength — and lightens the load, replacing the near-mandatory all-night vigil with "what is easy," alongside the established prayer and zakat. Al-Sa'di and others note how the surah models a God who legislates according to ability and welcomes what His servants can sustainably offer, framing charity as a "goodly loan" to God that returns multiplied. The heaviest early discipline gives way to a durable, lifelong practice.

Points of reflection

Al-Muzzammil invites every believer into a smaller version of the Prophet's own training. We too carry weights — of responsibility, of hardship, of a faith we must live under pressure — and the surah's counsel is the same: draw strength from the night. Even a little standing in prayer while others sleep, a little slow and attentive recitation, reorders the soul for the demands of the day.

It also teaches a mature way of bearing opposition: patience without bitterness, distance without cruelty, and a deliberate handing-over of the account to God rather than carrying grudges ourselves. And in its final verse it offers a gentle reassurance about religion itself — that God asks for what we can bear, values the easy and consistent over the crushing and short-lived, and treats every act of worship and charity as a loan He will repay "better and greater." Worship, rightly understood, is investment in one's own soul.

FIVE

Carrying it

1. Draw strength for your duties from prayer in the quiet of night.
2. Recite the Quran slowly enough to feel and understand it.
3. Meet criticism with patience and trust in Allah.
4. Worship steadily within your capacity; Allah lightens the burden.

Where this reading draws from. Ibn Kathir, al-Sa'di, al-Qurtubi. 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/.