

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Al-Falaq

The Daybreak · Makki · 5 ayat — reflections on surah
113 of the Qur'an

QURAN

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Surah Al-Falaq

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الفلق — Al-Falaq, “The Daybreak”. Surah 113 of 114, revealed in Makkah, 5 ayat. The full text and a recitation are on the web edition at deen2u.com/quran/113/.

ONE

The surah in brief

A prayer for refuge in the Lord of the daybreak from every created evil — the darkness of night when it settles, the malignant blowers on knots (sorcery), and the harm of the envier when he envies.

Al-Falaq is the first of the two 'surahs of refuge' (al-Mu'awwidhatan), teaching the believer to seek shelter in the Lord of the daybreak. It names four evils to take refuge from: the harm of all created things, the darkness of night when it settles, the malice of those who blow on knots (sorcery), and the harm of an envier when he envies. It moves from broad, general evil to increasingly hidden and personal threats. The surah trains the heart to run to God as the sole protector against every seen and unseen harm.

TWO

Its themes

- Seeking refuge in God
- Lord of the daybreak
- Evil of creation
- The harm of night and sorcery
- The evil of envy

THREE

Key verses

Say: I seek refuge with the Lord of the Dawn

Qur'an 113:1

'Lord of the daybreak' — the One who splits darkness with dawn is the One who can split apart every darkness in your life.

From the mischief of created things;

Qur'an 113:2

Refuge is sought from 'the evil of what He created' — a sweeping acknowledgement that only the Creator can shield from creation's harm.

From the mischief of those who practise secret arts;

Qur'an 113:4

Protection is sought from those who blow on knots, affirming the reality of sorcery while teaching that its cure is refuge in God.

And from the mischief of the envious one as he practises envy.

Qur'an 113:5

The envier's harm is named last — the most hidden of evils, reminding us that hearts can wound and that God alone guards against them.

FOUR

Reading it closely

Context & character

Al-Falaq — 'The Daybreak' — is the first of the two surahs known together as al-Mu'awwidhatayn, 'the two surahs of seeking refuge,' the closing pair of the Qur'an. It is a short surah in which the believer is taught to take shelter in Allah from a series of external evils. It takes its name from its first verse: the Lord of al-falaq, the daybreak — the moment when the light splits the darkness and the world is cleaved open into a new morning.

Its occasion, reported in the authentic tradition, is connected to a time when the Prophet ﷺ was affected by sihr (a bewitchment worked by Labid ibn al-A'sam through knots tied in a cord), and Allah revealed the two Mu'awwidhatayn as a means of protection and cure. The Prophet ﷺ used to seek refuge with these two surahs, reciting them for himself and others, especially at night and in illness. The character of al-Falaq is that of a protective supplication — calm, ordered, and reassuring — teaching the believer to run to the Creator of the morning for shelter from the harms hidden in creation.

How the surah unfolds

The surah opens with the refuge itself: Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the daybreak (113:1) — a'udhu bi-Rabb al-falaq. The believer is taught to name the One in whom he takes shelter by a fitting title: the Lord of the falaq, the One who splits the darkness with the dawn. The commentators note the aptness —

the One who can cleave the thick night and bring forth light is the One who can bring relief and safety out of any darkness that threatens.

Then follow the things sought refuge from, arranged from the general to the particular. First, from the evil of what He created (113:2) — a comprehensive shelter from every harm in the whole of creation, so that nothing evil is left outside the scope of the refuge. Then three specific evils are named. From the evil of darkness when it settles (113:3) — ghasiqin idha waqab, the deep night when its darkness gathers and spreads, a time when harms both natural and hidden grow bolder.

Then from the evil of the blowers upon knots (113:4) — al-naffathat fi al-'uqad, understood by the commentators as those who practise sihr by tying knots and blowing on them with their incantations, the very kind of harm from which the surah was revealed to protect. And finally from the evil of an envier when he envies (113:5) — hasid idha hasad, the person whose envy, when it stirs and acts, seeks to strip another of the good Allah has given. The surah closes on this last, most intimate of external harms — the malice that comes from another human heart.

The major themes, in depth

Refuge with the Creator against His creation. The surah's foundational move is to seek shelter with Allah — 'the Lord of the daybreak' — from evils that lie within creation itself. Al-Sa'di draws out the logic: since all harm comes from created things, and Allah is the Creator and Master of all of them, He alone is the refuge that reaches every threat. The One who splits the

darkness to bring the dawn is powerful over every darkness. The surah thus teaches that protection is not found in amulets, strength, or cunning of one's own, but in turning to the Lord who holds all created things in His grasp — beginning with the broadest possible plea, 'the evil of what He created,' before narrowing to specifics.

The ordering of the harms. The three named evils move inward in a meaningful sequence. The darkening night (113:3) is an impersonal, environmental danger — the cover under which many harms operate. The blowers on knots (113:4) are a deliberate, hidden human malice working through sihr — an evil that intends harm and conceals itself. And the envier (113:5) is the most personal of all: a harm that can come from someone close, whose resentment of Allah's gift to another can seek to spoil or remove it. Ibn 'Ashur and others observe how the surah teaches the believer to be aware of harm on every level — the ambient, the covert, and the intimate — while entrusting protection from all of them to Allah.

The reality of envy and its danger. By ending on the envier, the surah gives particular weight to hasad — one of the diseases of the heart the Prophet ﷺ warned against as consuming good deeds. The verse specifies 'when he envies,' that is, when the envy moves from a feeling into an active wish or effort to harm. The commentators note the wisdom of seeking refuge from envy: it is a hidden malice that can operate silently and destructively, and the one who is its target may not even see it coming. The believer is taught neither to be paralysed by fear of it nor to dismiss it, but to place the matter with Allah, who alone can shield him from the harm of another's heart.

Points of reflection

Al-Falaq teaches the believer how to feel safe in a world that contains real dangers — not by denying that harm exists, but by relocating trust. The surah names darkness, sorcery, and envy plainly; it does not pretend the world is without threat. Yet it answers every threat with a single response: seeking refuge in the Lord of the daybreak. The heart that internalises this surah is neither naive nor anxious, but settled — aware of harm, and more aware of the One who guards against it.

There is also self-examination folded into the plea. In seeking refuge from the envier, the believer is reminded to purify his own heart of envy toward others, for the disease he shelters from is one that can grow in anyone. And in naming the 'Lord of the daybreak,' the surah offers a quiet hope: just as Allah brings light out of the deepest night without fail, He can bring relief out of any darkness the believer faces. To recite al-Falaq, as the Prophet ﷺ did each night, is to place oneself, again and again, under the protection of the One who owns the morning.

FIVE

Carrying it

1. Make seeking refuge in God a daily habit, especially morning and night.
2. Trust God as the only true protector against unseen harms like sorcery and envy.
3. Recognize envy as a real spiritual danger to guard against, in others and in yourself.
4. Draw comfort that the One who brings the dawn can dispel any darkness.

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