

Background and Virtue

Al-Falaq and al-Nas are known together as al-Mu'awwidhatayn, the two surahs of seeking refuge. Ibn Kathir gathers reports showing their place in the Prophet's ﷺ worship and supplication. 'A'ishah reports that before sleeping he would recite al-Ikhlās, al-Falaq and al-Nas, blow lightly into his cupped hands and wipe over his body, doing so three times. Al-Falaq teaches the believer to seek Allah's protection from harm. Its opening directs that request to the Lord of daybreak, who brings light after darkness.

Tafsir of the Surah

Ayah 1: Seeking refuge with the Lord of daybreak. Ibn Kathir records several explanations of al-falaq and identifies daybreak as the correct interpretation, also chosen by al-Tabari and al-Bukhari. To seek refuge is to turn to Allah for protection. The opening teaches both the request and the One to whom it is made: the Lord who causes the dawn to break.

Ayah 2: From the evil of what He created. Ibn Kathir explains this as seeking protection from the evil of all created things. The prayer is broad before the following ayat name particular kinds of harm. Its wording concerns the evil that may come from creation; it does not describe every created thing as evil. Allah, the Creator, is the One to whom the believer turns for safety.

Ayah 3: Darkness as it settles. Ibn Kathir records the explanation of Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid and others that this refers to night as its darkness comes. He also discusses the report about the moon and explains that it can be understood within the same meaning, since the moon is a sign of night. The ayah asks for protection from harm associated with the darkness when it spreads.

Ayah 4: Those who blow on knots. Ibn Kathir records the explanation of early commentators that this refers to sorcery involving blowing on knots. The verse directs the believer to seek Allah's protection from such evil. His commentary also records supplications for protection and healing. The response taught by the surah is dependence on Allah, rather than trusting in the power of those who intend harm.

Ayah 5: The envier when he envies. The closing ayah names another source of harm: envy as it turns against a person who has received a blessing. The surah moves from a general request for protection to specific evils, ending with this danger between people. Read as a whole, its ayat teach the parent to turn to Allah with both visible and hidden fears, trusting Him while using the words He has taught.



113 | Surah al-Falaq

سورة الفلق

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ



Say, "I take refuge with the Lord of Daybreak.

مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ



From the evil of what He created.

وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ



And from the evil of the darkness as it gathers.

وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ



And from the evil of those who practice sorcery.

وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ



And from the evil of an envious when he envies."

Parent tafsir: adapted from Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, 113:1-5.

Arabic commentary: quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/katheer/sura113-aya1.html

Recitation before sleep: Sahih al-Bukhari 5017; discussed in Ibn Kathir's introduction.

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