Surah Inshirah [94] - Dream Tafseer Notes - Nouman Ali Khan

سورة الشرح- (The Relief) مسورة الشرح-

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Ayah 1:

أَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ

alam nashrah laka sadrak.

Did We not expand for you, [O Muhammad], your chest?

Sharh = **Open** up the meaning of something which was before complex.

<u>Ibn Faaris</u> explaining Sharh: to open something, or to clarify something.

In Ilm al Bayaan - "sharaha Allahu lahu sadrahu" = Allah expanded his chest for him = **Allah put his mind at ease.**

The one whose chest has been opened/expanded - isvery pleased and very content and happy (whereas before they were in a state of unease and uncomfort). Allah's Messenger is completely content with what Allah has given to him.

<u>ash-Shawkani</u>; any barrier between the knowledge that Allah has given him, Allah has removed such barriers - so he has full and total understanding of the message. Recieving AND understanding a message pleases and relaxes the mind.

qarrarahu - a question on a negative statment- i.e. **Did We not** open your chest for you? This makes the one who recieved the favour feel even more grateful for the blessing/favour they recieved.

This sets the tone of the surah - Allah is going to support His Messenger with this surah by mentioning His favours.

Sadr - two situations when Allah's Messenger's chest was physically opened and cleansed. Once in his childhood when he was playing with the son of Haleemah as-*Sa'diyyah*. The 2nd time before he left for the journey of Israa' wal Mi'raaj [the Night to Palestine, and the Ascension to Allah above the skies].

Others disagree and say: Sharh is not used for cutting at all. So this opinion is weak.

We - NAshrah - WE opened (your sadr - chest)

In this surah - Allah is talking to His Messenger in 1st person by saying "We." This <u>1st person</u> speech is implying Allah's closeness to His Messenger.

Expansion of the chest (Inshirah as-Sadr) - is mentioned 4 times in the Qur'an.

There are 2 types of People:

- One person is **at unrest and stays in doubt** about the commandments of Allah, always questioning the wisdom of Allah's rules etc. without actually achieving much in obedience to Allah.
- The other is the **one who is always at rest/ease (tranquil with Allah's commands.** He may or may not understand the wisdoms, but he is at ease because he knows that Allah is the Wise, the All Knowing. That although the medicine of Allah's commands might taste bad, there is a cure and goodness in it.

The 4 Ayaat:

<u>1:</u> -

فَمَن يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَن يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ ۖ وَمَن يُرِدْ أَن يُضِلَّهُ يَجْعَلْ صَدْرَهُ ضَيِّقًا حَرَجًا كَأَنَّمَا يَصَّعَّدُ فِي السَّمَاءِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ يَجْعَلُ اللَّهُ الرِّجْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

So whoever Allah wants to guide - He expands his breast to [contain] Islam; and whoever

He wants to misguide - He makes his breast tight and constricted as though he were climbing into the sky. Thus does Allah place defilement upon those who do not believe.

[al-An'am 6:125]

(Allah opened his chest to doing acts of obedience to Allah.)

2: -

So is one whose breast Allah has expanded to [accept] Islam and he is upon a light from his Lord [like one whose heart rejects it]? Then woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance of Allah. Those are in manifest error.

[az-Zumar 39:22]

(Allah is providing a light for His believing slave, so he is walking with a bright guidance to lead his way, and the slave is pleased with that. [in comparison to a slave who does not know the wisdom behind Allah's commands, so he gives up and goes astray - for him there was no light to guide him along the straight way.])

The above 2 ayaat mean that Allah makes the chest/heart of His believing slave comfortable with Islam.

<u>3:</u> -

The 3rd opening of the chest is (in surah Taha) when Prophet Moses/Musa prayed to Allah;

My Master, **EXPAND** for me my Chest.. [Taha 20:25]

Prophet Musa has a stutter problem and has a strong temper, so when he calls Pharoah/Fir'awn to Islam, he hears many evil words from him. His chest feels constricted because he is angry and is stuttering. So he asks Allah to expand his chest for him.

This means that there is an expansion of the chest required for a Messenger of Allah. This Messenger experience is emotionally draining and very tough. So they need to be given this Divine emotional and secure support from Allah to make them at ease and calmness with their role as a Messenger from Allah.

1st Interpretation of Inshirah - Expansion of the chest for Comfort in Da'wah [Inviting to Islam]:

The 4th time is in this surah (surah Inshirah 94:1). Allah has given His Messenger Muhammad (sal Allah alaihi wasalam) the role of being the final Messenger, who has the role of conveying the message to the whole of humanity uptill the end of time.

Such a role is extremely demanding, and having such a role is a very tough job which requires patience and perseverance.

So he goes ahead with conveying the message which Allah has given him, and as a result, what does he receive? He goes to the polytheists and the people of the Book - who curse him, who spit at him, they make fun of him, laugh at him, even attempt to kill him.

Imagine yourself telling someone about the benefits and wisdoms of Islam to someone in public, and instead of replying positively - the rejector starts to curse you, insult you, and laugh at you. Everyone in public is watching and begins to laugh at you too. You begin to feel humiliated, saddened, and you feel uncomfortable there. Your chest begins to feel tightened, constrained. You feel sad.

This is what Allah's Messenger had to experience on a daily basis.

ألمنشر خلكصندرك

Did We not expand for you, [O Muhammad], your chest?

2nd Interpretation of Inshirah [Expansion of the chest to Carry the Heavy Qur'an]:

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَا هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلِ لَرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيةِاللَّهِ ۚ وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ نَضْرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

If We had sent down this Qur'an upon a mountain, you would have seen it humbled and coming apart from fear of Allah . And these examples We present to the people that perhaps they will give thought.

[al Hashr 59:21]

Khashyah - become soft and vulnerable out of extreme fear.

The Qur'an however was not sent down upon a mountain, rather it was placed upon the heart of Allah's Messenger. Such a heavy Qur'an needed to be placed on something even stronger than a mountain.

[the Qur'an was revealed] Upon your heart, [O Muhammad] - that you may be of the warners -

[ash-Shu'ara 26:194]

The chest would have to be expanded - for the Qur'an to be revealed upon the heart of Allah's Messenger.

Since Allah says that this is a heavy Qur'an; قُوْلًا ثَقِيلًا a heavy word. (Muzzamil 73:5).

So we can conclude that the expansion of Allah's Messenger's chest was done due to the hardship involved in conveying the message everday non stop, and due to a a heavy Qur'an being sent down.

Comparison of Favours of Inshirah to the favours of Duha:

In Surah Duha, Allah mentions the favours He did for His Messenger;

Did He not find you an orphan and give [you] refuge? - أَلَمْ يَجِدُكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ Did He not find thee wandering and direct (thee)? - وَوَجَدُكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ And He found you poor, and made you rich (selfsufficient with selfcontentment, etc.)?

[Duha 93: 6-8]

All these favours were **before** and at the time of his revelation - preparing him for his responsibility of being the Messenger of Allah.

Surah Inshirah however - is getting him into the heart of the mission itself and in regard to the near future.

Here the future concerns of his Prophethood will be addressed. I.e.

- The <u>opening/expansion of his chest</u>. Since now he didn't need wealth, now he needed his chest to be expanded since he had the duty of being the Messenger of Allah.
- Prophet Moses had to ask for his chest to be expanded, whereas Allah gave it already to Prophet Muhammad.

أَلَمْنَشْر حُلَكُميَدُرَ كَيَ

Did We not expand for you, [O Muhammad], your chest?

alam nashrah <u>laka sadrak.</u>

Normally a sentence should be like this;

alam nashrah sadraka lak.

Did We not expand your chestfor you, [O Muhammad]?

However, the LAKA (for you) is placed earlier in the ayah as muqaddam i.e. To imply that the way Allah has expanded your chest (O Muhammad) - none ever before you or after you will ever get such an expansion/ease from Allah. This is a gift from Allah to His Messenger due to the great duty imposed upon him of conveying Allah's final message.

Ayah 2:

وَوَضَعْنَا عَنكَ وِزْرَكَ

..wa wadda'na anka wizrak

..Which pressed heavily upon your back,

[this ayah is continuing on in sentence structure from Ayah 1 due to the 'Wa' = ..and.]

wadda'a - something taken from (i.e. A table) and placed down (i.e. On the floor.)

Take off - from you ['anka], your wizr.

wizr - a great burden. Something which you are unable to carry, so heavy it could crush you.

is also - burden. But Haml is a burden which you <u>can</u> carry.

'anka - from you [muqaddam - placed earlier in sentence structure to imply that no heavy burden/wizr has ever been removed from anyone as much as Allah has removed it from His Messenger Muhammad (sal Allah alaihi wasalam).]

Ayah 3:

ظَهْرَكَ	أنقض	لَّذي
		_ ب

aladhee angadda dhahrak

Which had weighed upon your back

Naqada: to break, untie, i.e. breaking a contract.

Angada- place such a burden on something that its about to crack.

Dhahrak - on your back.

Majaaz - This is metaphorical.

Meaning: Allah removed a crushing burden which weighed so heavily down on him (sal Allah alaihi wasalam/peace be upon him) - that it was about to snap/break his back.

What is this burden?

6 opinions:

<u>1:</u> - <u>Search for Truth & Purpose</u>: Allah's Messenger would always feel at uncomfort because he was pondering, reflecting, seeking the purpose in life.

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًا فَهَدَىٰ

Did He not find thee wandering and direct (thee)?

[Duha 93:7]

He was desperate for the truth, doing deep reflection (*tafakur*) within the cave of Hira. The search for truth weighed down upon him, to the extent it was going to break his back. So Allah sent him Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) with the truth.

<u>2:</u> - <u>Society</u>: He wanted to help society as a whole. I.e. He was involved in the *Hilf al Fudul* (Pledge of the Pure/blessed) - the pact to help the weak, and whenever he wanted to help the people - the society around him had so much corruption - that it was hard to gain much success in such a field.

So imagine helping alot of people, but realising that the harm and corruption increases - your efforts seem like they aren't getting anywhere. You care so much about your people but there isn't much achievement, and the sadness of that is almost crushing your back.

3: - Pause in Revelation [wahy]:

Your Lord has notforsaken you, nor has He become displeased, [Duha 93:3]

Wada'a = goodbye.

Allah's Messenger would give da'wah (call people to Islam) in the early stages after recieving the first revelations - but the revelation paused for a while. So the disbelievers (i.e. Abu Lahab's wife) started to insult and abuse and <u>said</u> that your Lord hates you, that's why He's stopped sending you the Qur'an. So Allah sent surah Duha.

This burden of waiting made the Messenger of Allah's chest feel tightened, since he had to wait patiently for the next revelation while hearing insults by the disbelievers.

Then when Allah did continue to send the revelation (*wahy*) - his chest felt at ease because of the reassurance from Allah.

4 - <u>Insults by Rejectors</u>: The Messenger of Allah is a very sensitive man, and **he would hear alot of harmful insults** against him by those who hated his call to Islam.

And We already know that your chest is constrained by what they say.

[al Hijr 15:97]

So <u>Allah removed his burden by giving him the prayer of Qiyam-ul-Layl/Tahajjud</u>. (Surah Muzzamil 73:2) So he would pray to Allah, and Allah would expand his chest/heart for him so he could be at ease and closeness to Allah.

5 - <u>Being the Final Messenger of Allah</u>: He is the final Messenger of Allah, so none other can come after him. If he was to fail in conveying the message, then mankind as a whole would be at loss, and no other Messenger from Allah would come to them. While he realised all this, the people would reject his message, and he only had a limited amount of time. So this responsibility of being successful was a heavy burden on him.

So Allah reassured His Messenger by saying:

.So remind, you are only a reminder - فَذُكِّنْ إِنَّمَا أَنتَ مُذُكِّنٌ

[al Ghashiyah 88:21]

6 - <u>Percieved Mistakes:</u> Allah would sometimes correct His Messenger (i.e. An example is in Surah Abasa). Allah covers/forgives those things which Allah's Messenger felt were sins. Whereas Allah was just raising the character of His Messenger. So Allah is removing any sense of guilt from His Messenger which might have weighed down upon him.

[These were not sins, but mistakes which he - Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him - felt were not pleasing to Allah. So Allah removed such doubts. (See <u>Surah al-Fath 48:2</u>)]

Ayah 4:

And We raised for you your remembrance?

wa rafa'na laka dhikrak.

Laka - For you, for your sake (O Muhammad) - We have raised your remembrance.

By elevating his mention, Allah has already made Islam victorious. He has made Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah's name high so the message is widespread and he is honoured and followed by many.

Abu Saeed al Khudri said: Angel Jibreel said to Allah's Messenger, that Allah said;

Do you know (O Muhammad) how I raised your mention? Qultu (I [the Prophet] said): Allahu ta'aala a'lam bihi [Allah the Most High knows]. Allah said; Whenever I am mentioned, you [O Muhammad] are mentioned with Me. (idha dhukirtu, dhukirtu ma'i)

Allah's Messenger is mentioned along with Allah's name in everything - In the; Shahadah [testimony of faith], Adhan [call to prayer], tashahud [in prayer], his name - Muhammad - is always mentioned next to Allah's name. A great honour.

Rafa'a (raised high) - total opposite/antonym of Wadda'a (take off) (mentioned in 2nd ayah).

Both words are in lexical proximity/closeness to enhance the rhetorical/linguistic beauty.

Dhikr = 2 things: Present something <u>on your tongue to remember</u> it, or <u>remembrance in your heart</u>.

- **1** We elevated your mention and remembrance in the heart of the people for your sake (*laka*).
- 2 Only for you. This elevation has happened for you.

<u>A Wonderful example of Allah raising the mention of His Messenger</u> (sal Allah alaihi wasalam);

At Fajr salah/namaz - the sun rises so a Mu'adhin (caller to prayer) says "ash hadu anna Muhammadun RasoolAllah." [I witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.] 2 minutes later, the sun is higher, so the time for Fajr has started in the next town. A Mu'adhin (caller to prayer) says "ash hadu anna Muhammadun RasoolAllah."

The Fajr sunrise gradually reaches the next country, a Mu'adhin (caller to prayer) says "ash hadu anna Muhammadun RasoolAllah."

The Fajr sunrise adhan spreads half way around the Earth, and when at half way - the prayer for Dhuhr/midday has begun on the other side of the Earth, a Mu'adhin (caller to prayer) says "ash hadu anna Muhammadun RasoolAllah."

There doesn't cease to be a moment when Allah's Messenger is not mentioned on Earth. And whenever he is mentioned, there is someone asking Allah to send salat (prayers/blessings) and salaam (peace) upon him after hearing his name.

And did We not raise for you your remembrance (O Muhammad)?

al Aloosi says: Allah honoured His Messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him) by;

1) Making following the Messenger equal to following Allah.

He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah; but those who turn away - We have not sent you over them as a guardian.

[al Nisa 4:80]

2) He also <u>sent Salat [blessings] and Salaam [peace] upon him</u>, and the angels did, and He told the believers to also.

Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.

3) He also <u>called him by loving (ilqaab) names</u>:

Ya ayuhal muddathir [O you who covers himself [with a garment]], , Ya ayuhal Muzzamil [O you who wraps himself], Ya ayhun-Naby [O Prophet], Ya ayuhar-Rasool [O Messenger!].

In comparison, Allah says to His Messengers'; Ya Adam [O Adam], Ya Musa [O Moses], Ya Yahya [O John (the Baptist)], Ya Eesa! [O Jesus], but He never even says Ya Muhammad once! He only calls him by respectable titles. This is an amazing honour, because whenever Allah does mention the name Muhammad/Ahmad, He will always accompany it with the honorable title *Rasool* [Messenger] next to it. The only exception to this is in surah Muhammad itself [Muhammad 47:2].

4)<u>Allah mentioned in the previous scriptures the mention of His final Messenger</u>
<u>Muhammad</u> (sal Allah alaihi wasalam.) He ordered the previous Prophets that if he did come within their life, they would support him, and that even their followers would follow him. (see al Ahzab 33:7).

The quantity of his mention is great indeed, a gift from Allah to His Messenger.

<u>Ayah 5</u>:



So surely, with the hardship, there is relief (i.e. there is one hardship with two reliefs, so one hardship cannot overcome two reliefs). fa ina ma'al 'usri yusran.

Fa = So.. (due to Allah having given you so much favours)

Ina = Surely

ma'a = with - this word <u>combines two things</u> together in closeness (simultaneously/at once) or <u>places two things together.</u>

'usr- difficulty or time of difficulty.

Yusran - easy / smooth / without effort.

Surely, with the hardship, there is relief (right next to it).

The **AL** after ma'a signifies <u>only</u> <u>one hardship</u>, and the <u>AN</u> (tanween/noon at the end of yusr<u>ANlots</u> of eases.)

By <u>not placing a AL before Yusr</u> = Its not limited to just 1 ease, but yusr<u>AN</u> - <u>many eases</u> (after that 1 hardship).

Ayah 6:

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Surely, with the hardship, there is relief (i.e. there is one hardship with two reliefs, so one hardship cannot overcome two reliefs). *Ina ma'al 'usri yusran*.

[Refer to Ayah 5 for word by word explanation.]

The **AL** again implies the <u>same one difficulty</u> being referred to in the previous ayah.

So with every one difficulty, there are 2 big eases.

The word *Inna* in this ayah (*Ismu inna*) - HAS to have a noun come after it.

The only noun in the ayah which requires all the attention is Yusran. Since that is the point which the conclusion is being referred to.

ma'al 'usri yusrAN - incredible ease will only follow some difficulty. (The Main topic being focused on is ease, and you will get that ease after this little difficulty.)

The Benefit of mentioning the Ayah Twice:

- <u>Ease</u>: One for the past and one for the future. (i.e. You had ease when you were young, then the one hardship you face now will bring about alot of good in your near future).
- One ease for this life and one ease for the next. (for facing this one hardship).
- Repetition is for love. ("it will be okay, it will be okay.." This is done for reassurance.)

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ

So when you have finished [your duties], then stand up [for worship].

fa idhaafaraghta fansab.

On one hand the Messenger of Allah is talking to Allah, while on the other he is talking with the worst of people on Earth. [i.e. Moses spoke to Allah, then he would speak to Pharoah after that].

When you have (*idhaa*) finished (**faraghta**) - your duty, of giving da'wah (calling people to Islam all day).

faNsab - then stand yourself up/exhaust yourself for prayer.

Since Allah's Messenger desired this so much - standing up in Qiyam-ul-Layl/Tahajjud and praying infront of Allah.

Nasaba-peg yourself/exhaust ones self.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), was praying at night and his feet had swelled up [due to standing up for so long in tahajjud], Aa'isha asked him; Do you pray while Allah has forgiven you your past and future mistakes?

So he said: "Oh Aa'isha, should I not be a thankful slave?"

Sharh Saheeh al-Bukhari (10/183, 184).

Ayah 8:

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وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَب
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And to your Lord direct [your] longing.

wa ilaa rabaka faRqhab - and only to your Master be completely lovingly devoted.

raghab - **Raghiba** - to be relieved of one task. your job will never be done. Whenever you're free from one task, move to the other.

now you've been advised of the tremendous ease coming your way, always devote yourself to your Master lovingly. Even in his sleep - Allah's Messenger - was in the dhikr/remembrance of Allah.

So when Allah's Messenger had given dawah [call to Islam] all day, he was relieved at night and was devoted to his Master in prayer/tahajjud.

The Final Devotion:

Once the religion of Allah has been established on Earth by Allah's Messenger - إِلَىٰ رَبِّكُ ... to your Master direct [your] longing.

If we study the final days of the life of Allah's Messenger, we see that he is preparing and devoted to returning to his Master.

"A slave was given a choice to stay in this world, or to be with the Master, and the slave chose the Master."

Abu Bakr started crying because he knew the slave who was given the choice was Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (sal Allah alaihi wasalam.)

So what are the last words of Allah's Messenger before he moved on to the next life? **Allahuma ar-Rafeeq al A'la** (Oh Allah, in the Highest friends company).

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فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانصَبْ وَإِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ فَارْغَب
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So when you have finished [your duties], then stand up. And to your Master direct [your] longing.

Allah will Defend His Messenger:

We live in a time when people insult Allah's Messenger publically. Insulting Allah's Messenger is as useless as spitting at the sun - it will only come back and hit your face.

Are these the first people to insult Allah's Messenger? No, many insulted him with much worse within his own lifetime.

But Allah has replied;

And We raised for you your remembrance.

His remembrance and praise is much more greater than any insults against him.

History has proven that whenever the people insult Allah's Messenger, it only increases his awareness infront of the people, it makes many non-practising Muslims return to following his Sunnah, and it makes his followers even more firmer in following his way.

<u>Ibn Taymiyah says</u> "Many Muslims, trust worthy, people of expertise and Fiqh spoke many times about their experiences when they surrounded castles and cities in Sham and surrounded the Christians.

They said we would surround the castle or the city, for a month or more and our besieging of them is doing nothing, and we are almost going to give up and leave. Then when the people of that town or castle, would start cursing the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) suddenly it would fall in our hands, sometimes the **delay would not be even a day or two** and it would be opened by force. So we would take it as a glad tiding when we would hear them curse the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) even though our hearts would be filled with hatred but we would see it as a glad tiding because it is a sign of our coming victory."

And that is the meaning of the ayah in Surah al Kawthar:

إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الأَّبْتَرُ

"Indeed your enemy is the one who is cutoff!"

[Surah al Kawthar 108:3]

So Allah Almighty will cutoff the enemies of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Allah also revealed two other surahs' - al Kawthar [108], and Nasr [110]. These Surahs' made Allah's Messenger pleased with an upcoming victory:

Both these Surahs' made Allah's Messenger pleased (وَلَسَوْفَ يُعْطِيكَ رَبُّكَ فَتَرْضَى - And your Lord is going to give you, and you will be satisfied.- [Duha 93:5]

Surely We have given you al-kawthar (the Abundance) [Kawthar 108:1]. - إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ

In Surah Nasr [the Victory] - إِذًا جَاءَ نَصْنُ اللّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ - When the help of Allah, for His Prophet (sal Allah alaihi wasalam), against his enemies, comes together with victory, = 2 eases/yusran.

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth - to manifest it over all religions, although the polytheists dislike it.

[Tawba 9:33]