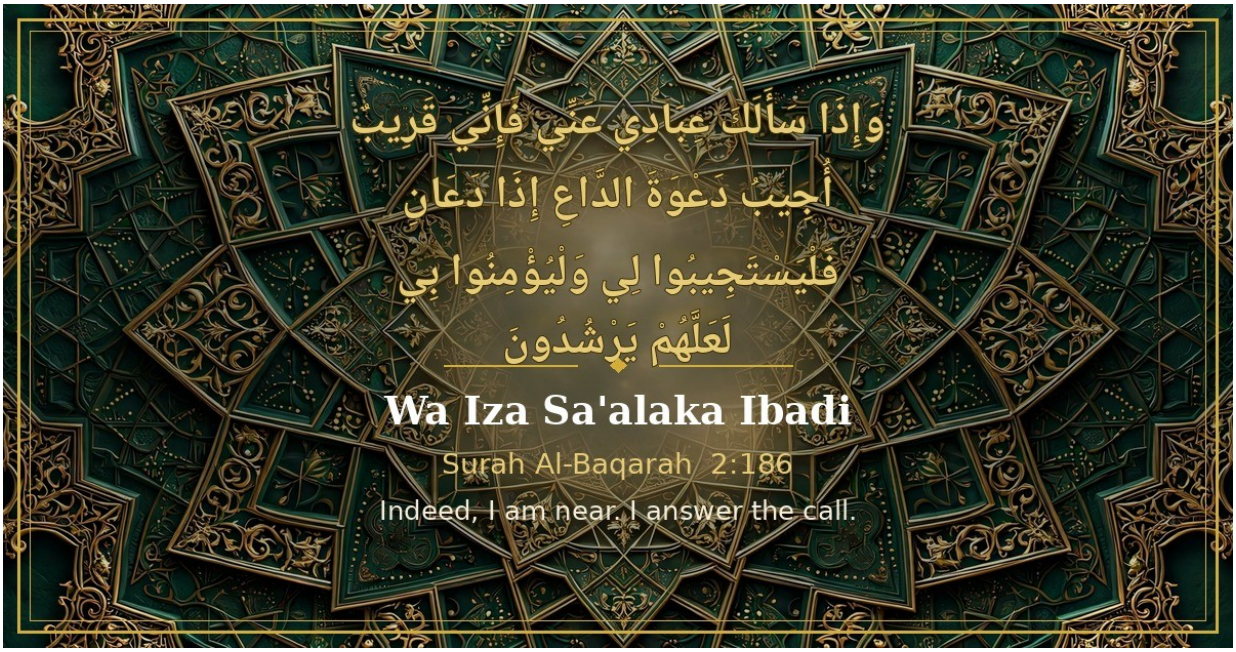


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Indeed, I Am Near

A Deep Guide to Surah Al-Baqarah 2:186

The question behind the verse. The missing word.
The roots of its words. The hadith gathered under it.
And a week of practice.

Tafsir • Language • Hadith • Practice

This guide goes deeper than the article on the same verse.
Read the article first for the meaning. Read this guide
when you want to understand why the verse says it this way.

How to Use This Guide

The article on 2:186 gives you the meaning, the transliteration, and a 90-second daily habit. This guide does different work. It slows the verse down. It asks what question made the verse come down, why one expected word is missing, what the Arabic roots carry, and what the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught about the dua this verse promises to answer.

You do not need Arabic to use it. Every Arabic line is followed by transliteration and meaning. The tables collect what the running text explains, so you can return to them without re-reading everything. The last pages are for practice: a seven-day plan, reflection questions, and space to write.

> One rule runs through this guide: a claim is only as strong as its source. Where a report is quoted, its book is named. Where a chain of narration was not graded in the sources checked for this guide, that is said plainly. Nothing here promises an outcome for a fixed count of recitations, because the Quran sets no count for this verse.

If you teach from this guide, teach the verse first and the reports second. The verse is certain. The reports about its occasion are helpful background, and they are presented here as reports, not as part of the verse itself.

The Verse, Slowly

Read the verse once in Arabic, even if you read slowly. Then read it in English. The rest of the guide is commentary on these two halves: Allah's half, and ours.

Arabic: وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ

Transliteration: *Wa-idha sa-alaka 'ibadi 'anni fa-inni qareeb, ujeebu da'wata ad-da'i idha da'an, falyastajiboo lee wa-lyu'minoo bee la'allahum yarshudoon.*

English (Sahih International): And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided.

Urdu (Maududi, Tafheem-ul-Quran): اور اے نبیؐ، میرے بندے اگر تم سے میرے متعلق پوچھیں، تو اُنہیں بتا دو کہ میں ان سے قریب ہی ہوں۔ پکارنے والا جب مجھے پکارتا ہے، میں اُس کی پکار سنتا اور جواب دیتا ہوں۔ لہٰذا انہیں چاہیے کہ میری دعوت پر لبیک کہیں اور مجھ پر ایمان لائیں، شاید کہ وہ راہ راست پالیں۔

Hindi (plain meaning): और जब मेरे बंदे तुमसे मेरे बारे में पूछें, तो (बता दो कि) मैं निकट ही हूँ। पुकारने वाला जब मुझे पुकारता है, मैं उसकी पुकार का उत्तर देता हूँ। इसलिए उन्हें मेरी बात माननी चाहिए और मुझ पर ईमान लाना चाहिए, ताकि वे सीधे रास्ते पर चलें।

The verse has two halves joined in the middle. The first half is Allah speaking about Himself: I am near, I respond. The second half is the condition placed on us: respond to Me, believe in Me. The promise comes first. The condition follows. That order matters, and this guide returns to it more than once.

Two small words carry the whole verse. Qareeb means near. Ujeebu means I respond. Everything else in the verse explains those two words: who is near, to whom He responds, when, and what He asks in return.

The Question Behind the Verse

Reports say the verse came down because someone asked a practical question. A Bedouin asked the Prophet (peace be upon him): is our Lord near, so that we call Him quietly, or far away, so that we call Him loudly? In another wording, a visitor from a village asked the same thing. In a third, a group of the Companions asked it together. The Prophet (peace be upon him) remained silent, and Allah revealed the verse.

These wordings come from different books. The Bedouin wording is reported by Ibn Abi Hatim, and is cited in Al-Durr al-Manthur (2/469) and in Al-Tabari (2/158). The village-visitor wording is the one Ibn Kathir gives when he explains why the verse sits among the fasting verses. The group wording appears in Tanwir al-Miqbas, the tafsir attributed to Ibn Abbas. The chains of these reports were not graded in the sources checked for this guide, so they are presented here as reported background, not as established history with a grade.

What the three wordings agree on is the question itself, and it is a question about volume. Near or far? Whisper or shout? The verse answers the question by removing it. Allah is near. The caller does not need to raise his voice to reach Him, and he does not need anyone to carry the call. That is why Ibn Kathir explains the nearness here as nearness by knowledge: Allah hears, sees, and knows, and nothing about the caller is hidden from Him.

The same point is made in a second report that Ibn Kathir quotes in full. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari said that during a battle, whenever the Companions climbed a high place or went down into a valley, they raised their voices saying Allahu Akbar. The Prophet (peace be

upon him) said to them: be gentle with yourselves. You are not calling one who is deaf or absent. You are calling the All-Hearer, the All-Seer, and the One you call is closer to each of you than the neck of his mount. Then he taught Abu Musa a treasure of Paradise: La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah.

That report is recorded in the Two Sahihs, and similar wordings appear in Abu Dawud, Al-Nasa'i, Al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah. It belongs in this guide because it shows what the verse does in real life: it lowers the voice, and it raises the trust. A person who believes Allah is near does not perform his dua. He speaks it.

> Try it once, quietly. Say the need in your own words, at normal volume, with no one listening. That is the volume this verse was revealed for.

The Missing Word: Why There Is No “Say”

Surah Al-Baqarah is full of questions. The Companions asked, and Allah answered through the Prophet (peace be upon him) with the word Qul, Say. Read the questions around this verse and the pattern is unmistakable. Then read 2:186 again. The word Qul is not there. Allah answers in the first person, directly. The table below shows the pattern, and the break in it. Every quotation is from the Sahih International translation.

Verse	They asked about	The answer opens with
2:189	The new moons	Say: They are measurements of time for the people and for Hajj.
2:215	What to spend	Say: Whatever you spend of good is for parents, relatives, orphans, the needy, and the traveler.
2:217	Fighting in the sacred month	Say: Fighting therein is great [sin], but averting people from the way of Allah is greater.
2:219	Wine and gambling	Say: In them is great sin and [yet, some] benefit for people. But their sin is greater.
2:220	Orphans	Say: Improvement for them is best.
2:222	Menstruation	Say: It is harm, so keep away

Verse	They asked about	The answer opens with
		from wives during menstruation.
2:186	Allah Himself: near or far?	No “Say.” Allah answers directly: Indeed, I am near. I respond.

The difference is the subject of the question. The other questions ask about rulings: moons, spending, fighting, wine, orphans, menstruation. This question asks about Allah Himself. And when the question is about Him, He does not send the answer through a command to relay it. He speaks it Himself, in the first person. That is the point Ibn Kathir draws out when he notes that these questioners did not ask about any created thing of this world or the next. They asked about Him.

The direct answer also removes the middle step between the caller and Allah. Ibn Kathir's wording is plain: I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me, without any mediator or intercessor. Maududi makes the same point in his tafsir: no recommendation and no intercession is needed to place a request before Him, anywhere, at any time. The verse is not a ruling about dua. It is an open door, stated by the One behind it.

Count the first-person markers in the Arabic and the directness becomes visible on the page. Six times the verse turns to I or Me: anni (about Me), fa-inni (indeed I am), ujeebu (I respond), da'ani (he calls Me), li (to Me), bi (in Me). Six turns, in one short verse, all pointing the same way: the One being asked is the One answering.

What the Words Are Made Of

Arabic words grow from roots of three letters. The root carries the core sense, and the word's form adds the detail: who acts, when, and how. The roots in this verse are checked against the word-by-word entries of the Quranic Arabic Corpus for 2:186. The table gives the word as it stands in the verse, its root, and what the root carries into the meaning.

Word in the verse	Arabic	Root	What the root carries
Sa-alaka — ask you	سَأَلَكَ	s-'-l (س أ ل)	Asking. The verse opens with a human question, not a

Word in the verse	Arabic	Root	What the root carries
			command.
'Ibadi — My servants	عِبَادِي	'-b-d (ع ب د)	Servanthood. Allah calls the questioners Mine before He answers them.
Qareeb — near	قَرِيبٌ	q-r-b (ق ر ب)	Nearness, and kinship. Near in knowledge, hearing, and answering.
Ujeebu — I respond	أُجِيبُ	j-w-b (ج و ب)	Answering a call. Form IV: Allah Himself does the answering.
Da'wata — the invocation	دَعْوَةَ	d-'-w (د ع و)	Calling out. The same root gives the caller, al-da'i.
Al-da'i — the supplicant	الدَّاعِ	d-'-w (د ع و)	The one who calls. An active participle: calling is what he is doing.
Da'ani — he calls Me	دَعَانِ	d-'-w (د ع و)	The call lands on Me. The final ya, the Me, is kept by its kasrah.
Falyastajibu — let them respond	فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا	j-w-b (ج و ب)	The same root as I respond, turned back: respond to the One who responds.
Yarshuduna — be rightly guided	يَرْشُدُونَ	r-sh-d (ر ش د)	Right guidance. The verse ends where guidance begins: with the answer.

Two roots do the heavy work. The root d-'-w appears three times: the invocation, the supplicant, and the act of calling. Calling is the human side of the verse, and it is named

three times because the verse is about a caller. The root j-w-b appears twice, once in each direction: I respond, and let them respond. Allah's response comes first in the sentence, and ours answers it. That mirroring is the grammar of the whole verse: He responds, so respond. He is near, so come near.

The root q-r-b also carries kinship in the Quran. The near relative is al-qurba, from the same root. The verse does not say Allah is a relative. It says He is near, and Ibn Kathir explains that nearness as nearness by knowledge. But the root reminds the reader that nearness in this language is not cold distance measured in steps. It is the nearness of one who knows, hears, and is already turned toward you.

Read the verse with the roots in mind and one more detail stands out. The caller is called al-da'i, the supplicant, with no adjective attached. No rank, no title, no condition of wealth or learning. Anyone who calls is al-da'i. The verse's promise is addressed to the act of calling, not to a class of people.

Nearness, Explained Carefully

Nearness is the word a reader can most easily misunderstand. Near in space would mean Allah is contained somewhere, close by like a neighbour. The Quran's own explanations point elsewhere: near by knowledge, near by hearing, near by answering. Three verses, read together, keep the meaning straight.

First, this verse: indeed, I am near, and Ibn Kathir's gloss, near to them by My knowledge. Second, Surah Qaf 50:16: We have already created man and know what his soul whispers to him, and We are closer to him than his jugular vein. Classical commentators, including Ibn Kathir and Al-Qurtubi, read that closeness as Allah's absolute knowledge of hidden thoughts and intentions. The vein is the nearest thing to a person's life. Allah's knowledge is nearer still. Third, Surah Al-Anfal 8:24: know that Allah intervenes between a person and his heart. Between a person and the very heart that thinks his thoughts, Allah knows and is present by His knowledge.

Put the three together and the picture is steady. Allah knows the whisper before it is spoken. He hears the call before it is finished. He answers from a nearness that no distance can weaken and no crowd can block. The verse does not invite the reader to picture Allah in a place. It invites the reader to speak, because the Listener is already nearer than the thought.

This guide follows Ibn Kathir's wording and goes no further. Questions about Allah's essence and attributes beyond what the Quran and the Sunnah state belong to scholars of creed, and a reader who wants that discussion should ask a qualified scholar. What this verse gives every reader, without any further study, is practical: speak. He is near. He hears. He answers.

> The nearness in this verse is a comfort and a check at once. A comfort, because no call is too quiet. A check, because no thought is hidden. Both belong together, and both come from the same word: qareeb.

What Ibn Kathir Gathers Under This Verse

Ibn Kathir does not explain this verse with definitions alone. He gathers reports under it, and the reports show how the first Muslims heard it. Five of them are given here, in the order he gives them, with their sources as he names them. Read them as a single argument: Allah is near, He answers, do not give up, and the fasting person's call has a special place.

1. Be gentle with yourselves — the Abu Musa report

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، ارْبَعُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ لَا تَدْعُونَ أَصَمَّ وَلَا غَائِبًا، إِنَّمَا تَدْعُونَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا، إِنَّ الَّذِي تَدْعُونَ أَقْرَبُ إِلَى أَحَدِكُمْ مِنْ عُنُقِ رَاحِلَتِهِ

> *O people! Be merciful to yourselves (do not raise your voices), for you are not calling a deaf or an absent one, but One Who is All-Hearer, All-Seer. The One Whom you call is closer to one of you than the neck of his animal.*

Reported by Imam Ahmad from Abu Musa al-Ash'ari; also recorded in the Two Sahihs, with similar wordings in Abu Dawud, Al-Nasa'i, Al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Majah, as noted by Ibn Kathir.

This report is the verse acted out. The Companions raised their voices on the hills, thinking volume would carry the call. The Prophet (peace be upon him) corrected the volume, not the call. The correction rests on the same fact as the verse: the One called is near. Loudness adds nothing when the Listener is closer than the neck of your mount.

2. I am as My servant thinks of Me — the Anas report

يَقُولُ اللهُ تَعَالَى أَنَا عِنْدَ ظَنِّ عَبْدِي بِي وَأَنَا مَعَهُ إِذَا دَعَانِي

> *Allah the Exalted said: I am as My servant thinks of Me, and I am with him whenever he invokes Me.*

Recorded by Imam Ahmad from Anas, as quoted by Ibn Kathir.

This report turns the verse into a mirror. The servant's expectation shapes his experience of the answer. Expect a Listener who is near and generous, and the call is made with hope. Expect distance and refusal, and the call weakens before it is finished. The verse commands no feeling, but the report shows why hope is part of the adab of dua: the One you call has told you how He meets the one who calls.

3. One of three things — the Abu Sa'id report

مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَدْعُو اللهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ بِدَعْوَةٍ لَيْسَ فِيهَا إِثْمٌ وَلَا قَطِيعَةُ رَحِمٍ، إِلَّا أَعْطَاهُ اللهُ بِهَا إِحْدَى ثَلَاثِ خِصَالٍ: إِمَّا أَنْ يُعَجِّلَ لَهُ دَعْوَتَهُ، وَإِمَّا أَنْ يَدَّخِرَهَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ، وَإِمَّا أَنْ يَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ مِنَ السُّوءِ مِثْلَهَا

> *No Muslim supplicates to Allah with a dua that does not involve sin or cutting the relations of the womb, but Allah will grant him one of three things: He will either hasten the response to his supplication, save it for him until the Hereafter, or turn an equivalent amount of evil away from him. They said: Then we will make many duas. He said: Allah has more.*

Recorded by Imam Ahmad from Abu Sa'id, as quoted by Ibn Kathir. A second wording from 'Ubadah ibn al-Samit, recorded by Al-Tirmidhi, gives two of the three: Allah either grants the request or averts an equal harm, as long as the dua involves no sin or cutting of family ties.

What Allah gives	What it means for the caller
The answer, hastened	The thing asked for arrives in this life, in Allah's timing.
The answer, stored	The reward is kept for the Hereafter, where it cannot be lost or spent.
An equal harm, turned away	Something bad that was coming is removed, equal in measure to the dua.

This report answers the hardest question a caller asks: what if nothing visible happens? The answer is that something always happens, within two conditions: the dua must not ask for sin, and it must not ask to cut family ties. Outside those two, every sincere dua lands in one of three places. The caller who sees nothing has not been refused. He has been answered in a form he cannot yet see. And the Companions' reply shows the right response to that news: then we will ask for more. The Prophet's answer closes the matter: Allah has more.

4. Do not become hasty — the warning against giving up

> *The supplication of the servant will be accepted as long as he does not supplicate for what includes sin, or cutting the relations of the womb, and as long as he does not become hasty.*

> *He was asked: O Messenger of Allah, how does one become hasty? He said: He says, I supplicated and supplicated, but I do not see that my supplication is being accepted from me. He thus loses interest and abandons supplicating.*

Recorded in Sahih Muslim, as quoted by Ibn Kathir. A shorter wording is recorded by Imam Malik from Abu Hurayrah and appears in the Two Sahihs: one's supplication will be accepted as long as he does not become hasty and say, I have supplicated but it has not been accepted from me.

Haste, in this report, is not speed. It is a sentence the caller says to himself: I asked and nothing happened. The sentence is the giving up. The report names the exact moment a dua dies: not when Allah refuses it, but when the caller stops making it. Keep the call going and the answer stays open. Stop, and the caller has closed the door himself.

5. Three whose call is not rejected

ثَلَاثَةٌ لَا تُرَدُّ دَعْوَتُهُمْ: الْإِمَامُ الْعَادِلُ، وَالصَّائِمُ حَتَّى يُفْطِرَ، وَدَعْوَةُ الْمَظْلُومِ، يَرْفَعُهَا اللهُ دُونَ الْغَمَامِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَتُفْتَحُ لَهَا أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ، يَقُولُ: بِعِزَّتِي لَأَنْصُرَنَّكَ وَلَوْ بَعْدَ حِينٍ

> *Three persons will not have their supplication rejected: the just ruler, the fasting person until breaking the fast, and the supplication of the oppressed person. Allah raises it above the clouds on the Day of Resurrection, the doors of heaven are opened for it, and Allah says: By My might, I will certainly grant it for you, even if after a while.*

Recorded in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad and the Sunans of Al-Tirmidhi, Al-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah from Abu Hurayrah, as noted by Ibn Kathir. Jami' al-Tirmidhi 3598 (numbering varies by edition; some editions number this report 2525).

The fasting person is in this list, and that is why the verse sits where it sits, between the fasting verses. The fast is not only hunger. It is a day spent in the state the verse describes: near, calling, and answered. The oppressed person's call is raised above the clouds, and the answer is sworn by Allah's might, even if after a while. Even if after a while: the delay is named inside the promise, so that delay is never read as refusal.

Why This Verse Sits Between Fasting Verses

The verse does not stand alone. Verses 2:183 to 2:185 command the fast of Ramadan. Verse 2:187 returns to the nights of the fast, eating, drinking, and marital relations, and to i'tikaf in the mosques. Verse 2:186 sits in the middle of that passage, like a spring of water on a road. Ibn Kathir draws two lessons from the placement, and both are worth keeping.

First, the fast is hard, and the verse makes the hardship bearable by naming the nearness. The commands are heavy: hunger, thirst, restraint, nights of worship. In the middle of

them, Allah says: I am near, I answer. The promise is placed where the effort is greatest, so that the effort is carried by the promise. A person who fasts with this verse in mind is not only obeying a rule. He is calling on a Listener who is near, all day long.

Second, Ibn Kathir notes that the verse hints that a dua made at the completion of a fast is accepted, and that a person should be very particular about making dua at that time. Reports mention that 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar would gather his family around him at the time of iftar and pray. The fasting person's dua is one of the three never rejected, as the report above shows, and a second report names the moment directly: the fasting person has, at the time of breaking his fast, a supplication that is not rejected (Sunan Ibn Majah 1753, graded hasan).

The dua the Prophet (peace be upon him) said at iftar is short, and it is worth learning word for word. Dhahaba al-zama'u, wabtallat al-'urooqu, wa thabata al-ajru in sha'a Allah. The thirst has gone, the veins are moistened, and the reward is confirmed, if Allah wills. It is narrated by Ibn 'Umar in Sunan Abi Dawud 2357 and graded hasan. Say it first, slowly, and then make your own dua in your own words. The fast has ended. The call has not.

There is one more link between the fast and the verse. Fasting teaches the body what the verse teaches the heart: need is constant, and the One who meets it is near. A fasting person feels his need by midday. The verse tells him where to take it. Not to a person, not to a shrine, not to a loud performance. To Allah, directly, quietly, before the fast is broken and after.

The Two Conditions, Worked Out

The verse ends with two commands: let them respond to Me, and let them believe in Me. They are not the price of the promise. They are the shape of the life that receives it. Responding means answering Allah's call the way He answers ours. Believing means holding the promise true while the answer is still on its way. Each condition has a daily form, and each is simpler than it sounds.

Respond: answer the call you have already received

Allah's call reaches a person long before he calls. It reaches him in the Quran he can open, the prayer he can pray, the parent he can honour, the debt he can repay, the lie he can stop telling. Responding means answering those calls, in small things, on ordinary days. It does not mean perfection before prayer. It means direction: when Allah calls, the servant

turns. When the servant calls, Allah answers. The turning goes both ways, and the verse names both in one breath.

One condition of answered dua is named outside this verse and belongs here. Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: Allah is Pure and accepts only what is pure. Then he described a traveller, dishevelled and dusty from a long journey, raising his hands to the sky and saying O Lord, O Lord, while his food was unlawful, his drink unlawful, his clothing unlawful, and his nourishment unlawful. How can his supplication be accepted? (Sahih Muslim 1015.) The traveller has every outward sign of a sincere caller: long journey, dusty clothes, raised hands, repeated calling. What blocks him is inward and practical: what he lives on. Responding to Allah includes earning honestly and living on what is lawful. The dua of a person who fixes that has one less barrier between his call and its answer.

Responding also means asking only for what is good. The three-ways report draws the line clearly: no sin, and no cutting of family ties. A dua that asks for harm to an innocent person, or for a family to be broken, is outside the promise. That is not a punishment. It is protection. The Listener who answers every call would not be merciful if He granted every request, including the ones the caller would regret.

Believe: hold the promise while the answer travels

Believing, in this verse, is not a feeling. It is a decision to keep calling after the first call, the tenth, and the hundredth. The Anas report gives it a name: think well of Allah. The servant who thinks well of Allah expects a near Listener and a generous answer, and that expectation keeps the dua alive. The servant who thinks Allah has already refused him stops calling, and the hasty-dua report names that stopping as the only real failure.

Belief also means trusting the form of the answer. The three-ways report says the answer may arrive now, may be stored, or may arrive as a harm turned away. All three are answers. A caller who only counts the first form will read the other two as silence. The verse's last word is yarshuduna, that they may be rightly guided. Guidance is itself an answer, and sometimes the first answer: the caller asked for a thing, and was guided to something better, or guided to see the thing differently, or guided to stop asking for what would harm him.

> Respond in the small things. Believe through the long silences. The verse asks for both, and promises that the pair leads aright.

Five Mistakes That Quietly Stop a Dua

Most duas do not fail for lack of words. They fail for reasons the reports above name plainly. Five are worth naming, because each one has a fix that takes a minute.

- **Asking loudly to be heard by people.** The verse was revealed to end this. Allah is near. Volume adds nothing. The fix: lower the voice, and mean the words.
- **Asking once, then stopping.** The hasty-dua report names this as the failure. The fix: ask again tomorrow, in the same words, without embarrassment.
- **Asking for sin or for a family to break.** The three-ways report excludes these. The fix: reword the request. Ask for the good inside it, and leave the harm out.
- **Asking through others as if Allah needs a carrier.** Ibn Kathir's gloss is without any mediator or intercessor. The fix: call directly. Others may pray for you, and that is good, but your own call needs no carrier.
- **Treating dua as the last resort.** A caller who tries everything else first and calls only when nothing works has reversed the verse. Allah's answer comes first in the sentence. The fix: call first, then act. The 90-second habit in the article is built for this order.

None of these mistakes makes a person a bad caller. Every caller makes them. The verse's answer to each one is the same: I am near, I respond, come back and call again.

A Seven-Day Nearness Practice

The article gives a 90-second habit for one moment. This plan stretches the same verse across a week, one focus a day, so that the verse is lived in, not only read. No fixed counts. No promised outcomes. Each day takes a few minutes, and each day ends with the same short call: O Allah, You are near. Hear me.

Day	Focus	Do this
1	Whisper	Make one dua at normal volume, alone, in your own words. Notice that no volume was needed.
2	One need	Name a single need plainly, without dressing it up. Ask for the good inside it.
3	The fast	If you fast, make your main

Day	Focus	Do this
		dua in the last minutes before iftar. If not, make it before a meal, grateful and quiet.
4	Someone else	Make a dua for one person who cannot repay you. Ask for them by name.
5	The unanswered	Write down one dua that seems unanswered. Beside it, write which of the three ways it may have been answered.
6	The small response	Answer one call you have been ignoring: a prayer on time, a debt, an apology, a parent's request.
7	Teach it	Tell one person the verse, in your own words. Teaching it is how it stays yours.

At the end of the week, read the verse once more, slowly, in Arabic if you can. You will hear it differently. The words will not have changed. The caller will have.

Duas the Prophet Named, for the Moments in This Guide

Three short duas belong with this verse. Each is verified, each is short, and each fits a moment this guide describes. Learn one at a time.

At iftar — the thirst has gone

ذَهَبَ الظَّمَأُ، وَابْتَلَّتِ الْعُرُوقُ، وَثَبَتَ الْأَجْرُ إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ

> *Dhahaba al-zama'u, wabtallat al-'urooqu, wa thabata al-ajru in sha'a Allah. The thirst has gone, the veins are moistened, and the reward is confirmed, if Allah wills.*

Narrated by Ibn 'Umar in Sunan Abi Dawud 2357, graded hasan. Say it at the breaking of the fast, then make your own dua.

From inside difficulty — the dua of Yunus

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ

> *La ilaha illa Anta, subhanaka, inni kuntu min al-zalimin. There is no god but You, glory be to You, indeed I was among the wrongdoers. (Surah Al-Anbiya 21:87.)*

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: No Muslim supplicates with it for anything, ever, except Allah responds to him. Jami' al-Tirmidhi 3505, graded sahih (Darussalam).

A treasure of Paradise — taught to Abu Musa

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللهِ

> *La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah. There is no power or strength except from Allah.*

Taught by the Prophet (peace be upon him) to Abu Musa al-Ash'ari in the report quoted in this guide, and called a treasure of Paradise.

Keep these three with the verse. The iftar dua marks the moment the fast ends. The dua of Yunus marks the moment difficulty closes in. La hawla wa la quwwata illa billah marks the moment strength runs out. All three say the same thing the verse says: the One called is near, and the call is enough.

Reflection: Write It Down

A verse that is only read stays in the book. A verse that is written about starts to live in the reader. Answer in a sentence or two. There are no right answers here, and no one else needs to read them.

What did I ask Allah for this week, in my own words, and what happened next?

_____

_____

_____

Which of the three ways might an old, seemingly unanswered dua have been answered?

_____

_____

_____

What is one small call from Allah that I have been slow to answer?

_____

_____

When do I raise my voice in dua, and what am I hoping the volume will do?

What would change if I believed, for one week, that Allah is nearer than my own thought?

Questions Readers Ask About This Verse

These questions go beyond the article's questions. They are the ones readers ask after the meaning is clear and the deeper reading begins.

Does “near” mean Allah is everywhere in creation?

This guide follows Ibn Kathir's wording: near by His knowledge, hearing, seeing, and answering. The verse itself does not describe a place or a direction. Questions about Allah's essence beyond what the Quran and Sunnah state should be taken to a qualified scholar, and this guide does not settle them. What the verse settles is practical and complete: call, and He hears.

I have asked for years and nothing changed. Was I refused?

The three-ways report says no, within its two conditions. An answer may be hastened, stored, or given as a harm turned away. Years of asking with no visible change can still be years of being answered in the second or third form. The report that warns against haste adds the other half: do not stop. The caller who keeps calling has not been refused. He is still in the conversation the verse opened.

Can someone else's dua replace mine?

Others praying for you is a mercy, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed for his Companions. But nothing in this verse needs a carrier. Allah says He answers the supplicant when he calls. Your own call, in your own words, in your own language, reaches Him directly. Ask others to pray for you as well, and call yourself too.

Why is this verse in the middle of the fasting rules?

Ibn Kathir gives two reasons, and this guide follows them: the promise makes the hardship of the fast bearable, and the verse hints that the dua of a fasting person, especially at the breaking of the fast, is accepted. The placement is the teaching. The hardest command carries the nearest promise.

Sources

Every source below was checked in the preparation of this guide. The verse text is Sahih International. The Urdu wording is Maududi's Tafheem-ul-Quran as shown on surahquran.com, and the Hindi is a plain meaning written for the article on this verse. Both still need checking against a printed edition by a reviewer, as noted in the review note kept with this guide. No scholar byline is added to this guide, because none was supplied.

- Quran 2:186, Sahih International translation; Arabic text with tashkeel; word-by-word entries for 2:186 in the Quranic Arabic Corpus (roots q-r-b, '-b-d, j-w-b, d-'-w, r-sh-d).
- Quran 50:16 and 8:24, Sahih International, for the nearness passages in the nearness section.
- Tafsir Ibn Kathir on 2:186, via Alim: near by knowledge, without mediator or intercessor, the Abu Musa report, the Anas report, the Abu Sa'id three-ways report, the 'Ubadah wording, the hasty-dua reports, and the three-persons report.
- Tanwir al-Miqbas min Tafsir Ibn 'Abbas on 2:186, via QuranX: close when it comes to answering; obey and believe before asking.
- Al-Jalalayn summary on 2:186, via QuranX: near in knowledge, answer by granting the request, respond by obedience.
- Tafheem-ul-Quran by Maududi on 2:186: quite near, hears and answers, no recommendation or intercession needed.
- Reports on the occasion of revelation: Ibn Abi Hatim (Bedouin wording), cited in Al-Durr al-Manthur 2/469 and Al-Tabari 2/158; Ibn Kathir's village-visitor wording; Tanwir al-Miqbas group wording. Chains not graded in the sources checked; presented as reports.
- Ma'arif-ul-Quran on 2:186: the iftar hint, and the reported practice of 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar gathering his family at iftar.
- Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3598, the three-persons report (numbering varies by edition). Sunan Ibn Majah 1753, the fasting person's dua at iftar, graded hasan. Sunan Abi Dawud 2357, the iftar dua, graded hasan. Jami' al-Tirmidhi 3505, the dua of Yunus, graded sahih (Darussalam). Sahih Muslim 1015, the traveller with unlawful earnings. Jami' al-Tirmidhi 2969, the supplication is the worship, on Ghafir 40:60.

- For further reading: Tafsir Ibn Kathir on 2:186 at Alim, all tafsirs on 2:186 at QuranX, word-by-word grammar of 2:186 at the Quranic Arabic Corpus), Sahih Muslim 1015 at Sunnah.com, Jami' al-Tirmidhi 3598.

A note on honesty: this guide quotes tafsir summaries in plain English. The Arabic of the tafsir books is longer and more detailed than any summary, and a reader who wants the full wording should open the books named above. Where this guide gives its own reading, such as counting the six first-person markers, it says so by showing the count in the text itself, so the reader can check it against the Arabic in a minute.

Keep Reading on currentislam.com

- knows what is in the breasts
- how to make dua with adab
- overcoming modern anxiety
- dua to break the fast
- Sovereignty belongs to Allah alone
- whoever relies on Allah
- dua after every prayer
- Tasbeeh Fatima after prayer
- last two ayat of Surah Al-Baqarah