

SURAH AS A STORY



Surah An-Naba

The Great News

The complete journey — the news they argue about —
told the way a loving elder shares it with a child



Surah No. 78 • 40 Ayahs • Meccan

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The Surah at a Glance

'Amma yatasaaa'aloon. 'Anin-naba'il-'azeem

1-2. About what are they asking one another? About the Great News —

Allazee hum feehee mukhtalifoon

3. that over which they are in disagreement.

Alam naj'alil-arda mihaadaa. Wal-jibaala awtaadaa

6-7. Have We not made the earth a resting place, and the mountains as pegs?

Wa ja'alnaa nawmakum subaataa

9. And We made your sleep a means of rest,

Inna yawmal-fasli kaana meeqaataa

17. Indeed, the Day of Decision is an appointed time.

Wa yaqoolul-kaafiru yaa laytanee kuntu turaabaa

40. And the disbeliever will say: oh, I wish I were dust!

Listen to the Arabic recitation of this Surah, ayah by ayah, with the Qari — free on nooraniilm.com (Read & Recite section).

The Question in the Air



Beta, this surah begins in a very unusual way — not with a command or a story, but by catching people mid-conversation: 'AMMA YATASA'ALOON — about WHAT are they asking one another?'

Picture Makkah in those days. The Quran had come, and the city could not stop talking about it. In the markets, around the Ka'bah, in the evening gatherings — everywhere, people were asking each other: what IS this? What is this man saying about a Day when the dead will rise? Some mocked, some doubted, a few were shaken.

And Allah, from above the seven heavens, listens to the whole city buzzing — and asks, almost with a touch of majesty: 'about WHAT are they asking?'

Then He answers His own question:

'ANIN-NABA'IL-'AZEEM — about the GREAT NEWS — ALLAZEE HUM FEEHI MUKHTALIFOON — over which THEY are in disagreement.'



Beta, notice how it is described. 'Naba' in Arabic is not just any news; it is momentous news, news that changes things. And it is 'azeem — GREAT. And then: they are 'mukhtalifoon' — in disagreement — because Allah's truth is one, and it is only human opinions about it that fracture into a hundred pieces.

And then a warning repeated for weight: 'KALLA SAYA'LAMOON. THUMMA KALLA SAYA'LAMOON — No! They are GOING TO KNOW. Then no! They are going to know.' Beta, feel the calm certainty in that. Allah does not argue with them here. He simply says: you will find out. There is no rush in the voice of the One who owns the outcome.

Twelve Signs In Your Everyday Life

And now the surah does something magnificent. Instead of describing the Day immediately, Allah lists the things we see every single day — and each one is quietly an argument that the Great News is true. Read them slowly, beta, and count them on your fingers:



'A LAM NAJ'ALIL-ARDA MIHADA — have We not made the earth a MIHAD?' A mihad, beta, is a cradle, a prepared bed. The earth is not merely a rock we live on — it is a bed, arranged with exactly the right temperature, air, water and food for a fragile creature that must lie down unconscious for eight hours a night.

'WAL-JIBALA AWTADA — and the mountains as PEGS?' Awtad are the pegs that hold a tent down. Beta, the mountains you see are only the visible part; their roots extend deep into the earth's crust, and modern geology describes them as stabilising the crust — a fact the ayah captured in one word centuries earlier.

'WA KHALAQNAKUM AZWAJA — and We created you in PAIRS.' Male and female — the design that keeps every species alive.

'WA JA'ALNA NAWMAKUM SUBATA — and We made your SLEEP a means of REST.' Beta, sit with this one, because we take it for granted every night. Once a day, your body switches itself off. You lie down helpless —



you cannot guard yourself, cannot see danger — and something inside you is repaired, sorted, reset. And who returns your soul to you each morning? That is why the Prophet ﷺ taught us to say on waking: 'al-hamdu lillahil-lazi ahyana ba'da ma amatana' — praise be to Allah who gave us life after He caused us to die. Sleep, beta, is a rehearsal for death — and waking is a rehearsal for resurrection, performed for you every single morning.

'WA JA'ALNAL-LAYLA LIBASA — and We made the night a GARMENT.' A garment, beta — it covers you, hides you, gives you privacy, wraps the world in darkness the way cloth wraps a body.

'WA JA'ALNAN-NAHARA MA'ASHA — and We made the day for LIVELIHOOD.' Light for work, darkness for rest — a rhythm no human designed.

'WA BANAYNA FAWQAKUM SAB'AN SHIDADA — and We built above you SEVEN STRONG ones — WA JA'ALNA SIRAJAN WAHHAJA — and made a BLAZING



LAMP.' A ceiling above and a lamp hung in it, beta — and that lamp burns at exactly the distance that permits life.

'WA ANZALNA MINAL-MU'SIRATI MA'AN THAJJAJA — and We sent down from the RAIN CLOUDS water POURING ABUNDANTLY — LI-NUKHRIJA BIHI HABBAN WA NABATA — that We may bring forth thereby GRAIN and VEGETATION — WA JANNATIN ALFAFA — and GARDENS of thick, tangled growth.'

Beta, look at what Allah has just done. Someone said: 'how can the dead be raised?' And Allah replied by pointing at a bed, a tent-peg, a night's sleep, a sunrise, and rain falling on dead soil until it bursts into gardens. His argument is not in a laboratory, beta — it is in your bedroom, on your plate, and outside your window every rainy season. The One who does all of this daily is not going to struggle with resurrection.

An Appointed Time



Then, having laid out the evidence, the surah announces the verdict: 'INNA YAWMAL-FASLI KANA MEEQATA — indeed, the DAY OF DECISION is an APPOINTED TIME.'

Beta, 'meeqat' means a fixed appointment — like the meeqat where a pilgrim must enter ihram; a place and time that cannot be negotiated. That Day is not a possibility floating in the future; it is a scheduled appointment already in the diary of existence, and every one of us is booked into it.

'YAWMA YUNFAKHU FIS-SOORI FA-TA'TOONA AFWAJA — the Day the Horn is blown and you will come forth in CROWDS.' Beta, 'afwaja' — in throngs, wave after wave, nation after nation.

'WA FUTIHATIS-SAMA'U FA-KANAT ABWABA — and the sky is OPENED and becomes DOORWAYS' — the whole sky turning into gates; 'WA SUYYIRATIL-JIBALU FA-KANAT SARABA — and the MOUNTAINS are set in motion and become a MIRAGE.' Beta, what an image: the mountains — the very definition of solidity, the pegs



of the earth — reduced to shimmering air, to a mirage that looks like something and is nothing. Everything we called permanent will be revealed at its true weight.

Then the description of Jahannam: 'INNA JAHANNAMA KANAT MIRSADA — indeed, Hell is LYING IN WAIT — LIT-TAGHEENA MA'ABA — for the transgressors, a place of return' — where they remain for ages; 'LA YAZOOQOONA FEEHA BARDAN WA LA SHARABA — they will taste therein no COOLNESS and no DRINK — ILLA HAMEEMAN WA GHASSAQA — except scalding water and a filthy discharge — JAZA'AN WIFAQA — an APPROPRIATE recompense.'

Beta, that phrase — 'jaza'an wifaqa', a perfectly fitting recompense — is important. Nothing there is arbitrary or excessive; it is exactly matched to what was earned. And why? 'INNAHUM KANU LA YARJOONA HISABA — indeed, they did not EXPECT an ACCOUNT — WA KAZZABOO BI-AYATINA KIZZABA — and they DENIED Our verses with emphatic denial. WA KULLA SHAY'IN AHSAYNAHU KITABA — and everything We have



ENUMERATED in a RECORD.'

Beta, that last ayah should reorganise your day: everything — every word, every glance, every hidden kindness, every private sin — enumerated, written, filed. Nothing evaporates.

A Place of Success

And then the surah turns, and the language turns with it — from harshness to beauty: 'INNA LIL-MUTTAQEENA MAFAZA — indeed, for the God-conscious is MAFAZ — a place of SUCCESS, of ESCAPE, of ATTAINMENT.'

Beta, 'mafaz' carries both meanings at once: escaping what you feared, and attaining what you hoped. That is the definition of true success — and notice that Allah reserves that word for the muttaqoon, not for the wealthy or the celebrated.

'HADA'IQA WA A'NABA — gardens and grapevines — WA KAWA'IBA ATRABA — and full-grown companions of equal age — WA KA'SAN DIHAQA — and a full cup.'



'LA YASMA'OONA FEEHA LAGHWAN WA LA KIZZABA
— they will hear therein NO IDLE TALK and NO LYING.'

Beta, pause on that. Of all the pleasures listed — gardens, fruit, companions, drink — Allah highlights something we rarely value: a place with no useless chatter and no lies. Think how much of our own exhaustion in this world comes from exactly those two: pointless talk and dishonesty. Imagine an entire eternity where every word spoken to you is true and worth hearing.

'JAZA'AN MIN RABBIKA 'ATA'AN HISABA — as a REWARD from your Lord, a GIFT, well-calculated.' Beta, note the balance: it is 'jaza' — a reward that is earned — and also "ata" — a GIFT, given freely. Both at once: you work for it, and yet when you receive it you know it was always a gift far beyond what your work deserved.

The Day No One Speaks Without Permission



Then the surah rises to describe the majesty of that gathering: 'RABBIS-SAMAWATI WAL-ARDI WA MA BAYNAHUMAR-RAHMAN — the Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them, AR-RAHMAN — LA YAMLIKOONA MINHU KHITABA — they possess NOT from Him the power of ADDRESS.'

'YAWMA YAQOOMUR-ROOHU WAL-MALA'IKATU SAFFA — the Day the SPIRIT (Jibreel) and the ANGELS will stand in ROWS — LA YATAKALLAMOONA ILLA MAN AZINA LAHUR-RAHMANU WA QALA SAWABA — they will NOT SPEAK except for the one whom AR-RAHMAN PERMITS, and who says what is CORRECT.'

Beta, absorb the scene. The mightiest angels of creation, standing in rows — silent. Not one syllable without permission. In this world, everyone talks over everyone; on that Day, even Jibreel waits to be allowed. And notice the Name used twice here: AR-RAHMAN. In the middle of this terrifying stillness, He is naming Himself the Most Merciful — because the permission to speak, and



the intercession that follows, will come only from His mercy.

'ZALIKAL-YAWMUL-HAQQ — that is the Day of TRUTH — FA-MAN SHA'A-TTAKHAZA ILA RABBIHI MA'ABA — so whoever WILLS, let him take toward his Lord a way of RETURN.'

Beta, 'ma'ab' — a place of return, a homecoming. The door is described as still open, right here in the middle of all this warning: whoever wants, may come back. That invitation is standing open for you tonight.

I Wish I Were Dust

And now the final ayah, beta — one of the most haunting endings in the Quran: 'INNA ANZARNAKUM 'AZABAN QAREEBA — indeed, We have WARNED you of a punishment that is NEAR — YAWMA YANZURUL-MAR'U MA QADDAMAT YADAH — the Day a man will LOOK AT WHAT HIS HANDS HAVE SENT FORTH — WA YAQOOLUL-KAFIRU YA LAYTANI KUNTU TURABA — and the disbeliever will say: YA



LAYTANI KUNTU TURABA — OH, I WISH I WERE DUST!'

Beta, think about what that wish means. Here is a human being — the creature Allah honoured above all creation, given intellect, speech, choice, a soul — and on that Day, looking at his own record, he wishes he had been DUST. Soil under people's feet. Nothing. No consciousness, no accountability, no memory.

The scholars mention that when the animals are dealt with justly on that Day and then returned to dust, the disbeliever, watching, will cry this wish. Beta, the honour of being human — which we spend our lives enjoying — will become unbearable to the one who wasted it.

And notice the surah's design: it began with people ARGUING about the Great News — talking, debating, mocking, asking each other — and it ends with one of those same people looking at his own hands and wishing he had never existed. All that discussion, and the answer



was written in his own deeds all along.

'The Day a man will look at what his hands have sent forth' — beta, that is the only question this surah is really asking. Not 'what do you think about the Day?' but 'what have your hands sent ahead for it?' Whatever we are sending today — a prayer, a lie, a kindness, a betrayal — is being packed and shipped ahead of us, and one day we will stand and look at the delivery.

What This Surah Teaches Us

1. The truth is one; only opinions fracture — and about the Great News, Allah's answer is calm: 'they are going to know.'
2. Read the daily signs as arguments: a cradle-earth, mountain-pegs, night as a garment, the blazing lamp, rain reviving dead soil.
3. Sleep is a nightly rehearsal for death and waking a daily rehearsal for resurrection — thank Him each morning.



4. The Day of Decision is a fixed appointment (meeqat) — you are already booked into it.

5. Everything is enumerated in a record: nothing you do — good or bad, seen or hidden — evaporates.

6. Value what Allah highlighted in Jannah: no idle talk, no lies — and start reducing both in your own gatherings now.

7. The door of return (ma'ab) is open tonight — before the Day when a wasted human wishes he had been dust.

Ya Rahman, let our hands send forward what will gladden us when we look at it, and grant us a way of return to You. Ameen.

— This is a simplified, faithful retelling for understanding, based on the Quran's translation and established tafseer (Ibn Kathir and others). For deeper study, always read with a qualified teacher. —

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