

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

تفسير سورة النبأ

**Commentary of Surah An-Naba – The Great News -
Summarized**

Translation:

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

About what are they asking one another?

About the great news -

That over which they are in disagreement.

No! They are going to know.

Then, no! They are going to know.

Have We not made the earth a resting place?

And the mountains as stakes?

And We created you in pairs

And made your sleep [a means for] rest

And made the night as clothing

And made the day for livelihood

And constructed above you seven strong [heavens]

And made [therein] a burning lamp

And sent down, from the rain clouds, pouring water

That We may bring forth thereby grain and vegetation

And gardens of entwined growth.

Indeed, the Day of Judgment is an appointed time -

*The Day the Horn is blown and you will come forth in
multitudes*

And the heaven is opened and will become gateways

*And the mountains are removed and will be [but] a
mirage.*

Indeed, Hell has been lying in wait

For the transgressors, a place of return,

In which they will remain for ages [unending].

They will not taste therein [any] coolness or drink

Except scalding water and [foul] purulence -

An appropriate recompense.

Indeed, they were not expecting an account

And denied Our verses with [emphatic] denial.

But all things We have enumerated in writing.

*"So taste [the penalty], and never will We increase
you except in torment."*

Indeed, for the righteous is attainment -

Gardens and grapevines

And companions of equal age

And a full cup.

No ill speech will they hear therein or any falsehood -

[As] reward from your Lord, [a generous] gift [made due by] account,

[From] the Lord of the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them, the Most Merciful. They possess not from Him [authority for] speech.

The Day that the Spirit and the angels will stand in rows, they will not speak except for one whom the Most Merciful permits, and he will say what is correct.

That is the True Day; so he who wills may take to his Lord a [way of] return.

Indeed, We have warned you of a near punishment on the Day when a man will observe what his hands have put forth and the disbeliever will say, "Oh, I wish that I were dust!"

(Translation from www.quran.com)

Surah An-Naba was revealed in Mecca.

General information about the Surahs revealed in Mecca (that is, those revealed before the Hijra [Migration] to Al-Madina):

In Surahs revealed at Mecca, emphasis has been placed on three things in particular. These are: 1. Belief in Al-Tawheed (the Absolute Oneness of the Almighty God Allah). 2. Belief in the Prophethood of Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم . This necessitated the belief that whatever was conveyed by Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم was true because he was getting revelations from Almighty God Allah and didn't speak anything from himself. 3. Belief in the Day of Resurrection and Judgment and that is to inform the

people that they (mankind) are not free to live, eat, drink, and enjoy life and then die and become dust. Rather, we are accountable for our faith and deeds therefore surely there is coming a Day when all of us (mankind) will be resurrected and accounted in the Court of Allah and then admitted to Paradise or Hell according to one's faith and deeds.

Commentary of Surah Al-Naba:

As the Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم was informing the people of Mecca about the Everlasting Life after death, so the people were subjected to think about this issue and decide. Accordingly, the people were divided into groups having different thoughts and

beliefs. Some believed in the life after death; some were in doubt about it; and others denied it altogether. So Surah An-Naba النبأ (which means “The Great News”) was revealed. Surah An-Naba begins with a question: Regarding what are they questioning? Is it about the Great News – i.e. the News about Life after death, and the accounting of each and every individual and the existence of Paradise for the Righteous Believers and that of Hell for punishing Unbelievers and disobedient people?

Then Allah answers the Question by the words: “Not at all – they shall know. Again. Not at all – they shall know.”

This means that the matter is not as the people say. They say that it is not possible that a body which has become decayed and turned into dust can become alive again. But the truth is that what they are saying and thinking is not correct. This is because it is very easy for the Creator to recreate the same person again. So they will know when it happens.

Then Allah سبحانه و تعالى – The Mighty – reminds us His great Creative ability by mentioning the following, the statement being again in question form. Allah says:

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهَادًا

(78:6) Have We not spread the earth like a bed,

وَالْجِبَالَ أَوْتَادًا

(78:7) and fixed the mountains like pegs,

وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا

(78:8) and created you in pairs (as men and women),

وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا

(78:9) and made your sleep a means of rest,

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا

(78:10) and made the night a covering,

وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا

(78:11) and made the day to seek livelihood,

وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا

(78:12) and built above you seven strong firmaments,

وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجًا

(78:13) and placed therein a hot, shining lamp,

وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاءً ثَجَّاجًا

(78:14) and sent down abundant water from the
clouds

لِنُخْرِجَ بِهِ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا

(78:15) so that We may thereby bring forth grain and
vegetation,

وَجَنَّاتٍ أَلْفَافًا

(78:16) and gardens dense with foliage?

Thus, in these verses we can realize the Greatness of Allah, the Creator – the absolutely One and Only Creator. Surely all of the above things couldn't have come into being or managed by any other being except Allah, the Almighty, the All-Wise!

After that, we are left to think, reflect, and ponder over the cause and reason of all this creation and management. We must think: Allah Almighty made this beautiful universe and created such a wise creation (human being) to rule on the earth and to use and enjoy all the blessings of Allah. Has this been done for a special purpose or has it been done uselessly?

Particularly when we observe that the human being has been given a moral sense, a self-criticizing conscience, a sense of right and wrong and a sense of justice. Then there are some of the mankind who obey and follow the Messenger Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه و سلم and so live like honorable just people while others disbelieve in and disobey the Prophet صلى الله عليه و سلم and transgress the limits and live like cruel, wicked unjust people. So in case both of these kinds of people die and become dust forever – then where is the justice?

A killer and the killed one, if both of them become dust forever: that would mean justice has not been done. If we reflect on the Great Wise management of the universe and then assume that the Great Wise

Creator and Manager of all affairs has no sense of justice, therefore the killer and the killed one will both become dust forever, then it is a very wrong assumption. Therefore, it is obvious that justice is essential especially for such a Wise and Almighty and Caring, Loving Lord who provided for all our needs!

And in these verses Allah Almighty is informing us that Allah is the Greatest of Judges – so Allah has appointed a Day for Justice and that Great Day will come in the Life Hereafter.

The verses say:

إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَاتًا

Surely the Day of Judgment has an appointed time;

يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ أَفْوَاجًا

the Day when the Trumpet shall be blown, and you will come forth in multitudes;

وَفُتِحَتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَابًا

*and when the sky shall be opened up and will
become all doors;*

وَسُيِّرَتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا

*and the mountains will be set in motion and become
a mirage.*

Here Allah Almighty shortly describes the Calamity of the Last Day of this world. That is a Day appointed – the knowledge of its happening lies with Allah alone. It will start with a blow in the Trumpet by the Archangel Israfeel عليه السلام . That will be a terrible Day when a strong earthquake will destroy the whole Universe. The Heaven and heavenly bodies (stars, planets, sun, moon, etc.) will all be destroyed and the

mountains will be flying with the wind like dust. When the whole world is destroyed and everything is dead, only Allah will remain. Then Allah will give new life to all mankind who will be resurrected and so they will come out of their graves (or wherever their bodies may have lain after death) in crowds and will appear in the Court of Allah. Then accounting will be done on individual basis and final Justice will be passed so the unbelievers, the unjust, and the criminals and sinners will be admitted into Hell while the righteous Believers will be admitted into Paradise.

Then Allah Almighty gives a short description of the dwellers of Hell and that of the Dwellers of Paradise.

About Hell the statement is as follows:

إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا

(78:21) Surely the Hell is an ambush,

لِلطَّٰغِيْنَ مَآبًا

(78:22) a resort for the rebellious;

لَا يَبْتِثِنَ فِيْهَا أَحْقَابًا

(78:23) therein they shall abide for ages,

لَا يَذُوقُوْنَ فِيْهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا

(78:24) they shall taste in it no coolness, nor any

pleasant drink

إِلَّا حَمِيْمًا وَغَسَّاقًا

(78:25) save boiling water and wash of the wounds;

جَزَاءً وَفَآءًا

(78:26) a befitting recompense for their deeds.

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا لَا يَرْجُوْنَ حِسَابًا

(78:27) For indeed they did not look forward to any

reckoning,

وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا كِذَابًا

(78:28) and roundly denied Our Signs as false.

وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ كِتَابًا

(78:29) And everything have We recorded in a Book.

فَذُوقُوا فَلَنْ نَزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا

(78:30) So taste (the fruit of your deeds). We shall only increase your torment.

About Paradise, the following is stated:

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا

(78:31) Surely the state of triumph awaits the God-fearing:

حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا

(78:32) gardens and vineyards,

وَكَوَاعِبَ أَتْرَابًا

(78:33) and companions of like age,

وَكَأْسًا دِهَاقًا

(78:34) and an overflowing cup.

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِذَابًا

(78:35) Therein they shall hear no idle talk, nor any falsehood;

جَزَاءً مِنْ رَبِّكَ عَطَاءً حِسَابًا

(78:36) a recompense from your Lord and an ample reward

Then a verse about Allah's Greatness follows:

رَبِّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا
الرَّحْمَنِ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا

(78:37) from the Lord of the heavens and the earth and of that which is between them; the Most Merciful Lord before Whom none dare utter a word.

After that, a short statement about the Day of Judgment is given and the Greatness of Allah is again mentioned as follows:

يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الرُّوحُ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ صَفًّا لَا
يَتَكَلَّمُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَذِنَ لَهُ الرَّحْمَنُ وَقَالَ
صَوَابًا

(78:38) The Day when the Spirit and the angels are ranged row on row. None shall speak save he whom the Merciful Lord will permit; and he too will speak what is right.

That means: in this world although everyone can imagine the Greatness of Almighty God Allah by reflecting on His great creation like the heavens, earth, rain, sun, moon, day and night, and their regular course, but people still talk too much proudly and freely because here mankind has freedom to do and choose as he/she likes. But in the Hereafter the situation will be different. There human will not have freedom – rather they will be under arrest.

Then Allah says:

ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ
مَأْتَابًا

(78:39) That Day is sure to come. So let him who will seek a resort with his Lord.

The Surah ends with the following words:

إِنَّا أَنْذَرْنَاكُمْ عَذَابًا قَرِيبًا يَوْمَ يَنْظُرُ الْمَرْءُ
مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ وَيَقُولُ الْكَافِرُ يَا لَيْتَنِي
كُنْتُ تُرَابًا

(78:40) Lo! We warn you of a chastisement near at hand; the Day when a man will look on what his own hands have sent forth, and the unbelievers shall say: "Oh would that I were utter dust."

In these verses, once again Allah Almighty describes shortly but strongly the truth of that Day of Resurrection and Judgment and gives an indirect advice to mankind to choose the right path so that when he meets his Lord, he will succeed.

The last verse of the Surah is in words of great regret. Allah has fulfilled His responsibility to warn us about the wrath and punishment which is quite near. That's right. A criminal sees it right at the time of death and death is inevitable for everyone and may come at any time. And after death there is no time to reform.

On that Day – the Day of Judgment – everyone will see his / her deeds whether good or bad and a disbeliever shall wish to die to get rid of the severe punishment but will never die again.

End of Summarized Tafsir of Surah An-Naba

Questions:

1. Where was Surah Al-Naba revealed?
2. What does Al-Naba mean?
3. What were some common topics in surahs revealed at Makkah?
4. What was the subject the disbelievers were in disagreement about?
5. How was it shown that the Hereafter isn't an impossible occurrence?

Notes