

Tafseer Surah An-Naba (النبا)

Notes on Nouman Ali Khan's Concise Commentary of the Quran

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Introduction

- I. It is a Meccan *surah*
- II. Purpose of the chapter according to *Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*:
 - A. Confirmation of resurrection
 - B. Confirmation of recompense
- III. This *surah* can be divided into five parts
 - A. Disbelievers questioning Judgement Day
 1. They were being obnoxious about it
 - B. How this life was created in pairs and those pairs create new life
 - C. Judgement Day
 - D. Heaven and Hell
 - E. Humility on Judgement Day
 1. Those very disbelievers from the beginning of the *surah* are now humbled

Tafseer of the Verses

1. About what are they asking one another?

- a. This is in reference to the questioning that was being done by the idol worshipers in Mecca among themselves in a sarcastic manner
 - i. They were being condescending

2. About the great news

- a. The Arabic word *naba'*
 - i. It is a type of news that requires action on the listener's part
- b. The 'great news' is the Day of Judgement
 - i. They heard about it from the Qur'an

3. That over which they are in disagreement

- a. Meaning the idol worshipers in Mecca are in doubt concerning the resurrection and deny it [*Tafseer al-Muyassar*]
- b. The idol worshipers of the Quraysh differed over what the Qur'an is: magic, poetry, fables of the past, etc. [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

4. No! They are going to know

- a. Meaning absolutely without a doubt these deniers of the resurrection are going to realize the consequences of their denial
- b. Types of threats in the Qur'an
 - i. Threat to a nation to be destroyed if they do not listen

- ii. What will happen to people on judgement day
- iii. Threat of Hell

5. Then, no! They are going to know

- a. It is repeated for emphasis

6. Have We not smoothed out the earth

- a. Meaning Allah made the earth paved smoothly like a bed
 - i. This 'bed' that Allah made is much better than the one we make. All creatures sleep on it

7. And the mountains as pegs?

- a. Pegs were used in ancient Arab culture for tents in the desert so Allah is showing that His tents are mountains
 - i. When the wind blows, the tents of humans become unstable but not the mountains of Allah. It is to show the mighty creation of Allah

8. And We created you in pairs

- a. Meaning Allah made us into males and females [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
- b. It could also mean Allah made us in societies and groups

9. And made your sleep [a means for] rest

- a. Our bodies require rest and sleep, otherwise, we cannot function so Allah made sleep as a way for our bodies to rejuvenate

10. And made the night as clothing

- a. As we make clothes to cover our bodies, Allah made the night as a cover for the entire planet
 - i. This is to show the greatness of His creation compared to ours. We can turn on our lights but it will be nothing compared to the overwhelming darkness surrounding us at night
- b. The darkness of the night is like a cloth that covers us just like a cloth covers its wearer [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

11. And made the day for livelihood

- a. Meaning Allah made the day for our livelihood so that we may spread out in order to collect our sustenance and strive for what benefits us [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - i. People generally work in the morning hours and not at night

12. And constructed above you seven strong [heavens]

- a. Meaning the sky that is above us is like a high ceiling
 - i. It is far greater than our own ceilings in our buildings
 - ii. There are no cracks in it [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

13. And made [therein] a burning lamp

- a. The sun is like a lamp in the sky that keeps on giving the same amount of burning bright light
 - i. It is far greater than what we can create of fancy chandeliers

14. And sent down, from the rain clouds, pouring water

- a. Meaning Allah sends rain clouds that squeeze down abundant rain

15. That We may bring forth thereby grain and vegetation

- a. Meaning the rain turns the earth colorful with grains and greens from which people and animals eat
 - i. If there is no vegetation, then both animals and humans will die. So we need rain which is a blessing of Allah

16. And gardens of entwined growth

- a. Meaning luscious green gardens are also a result of that rain
- b. The imagery describes branches intertwining with each other in the garden

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

- a. Meaning the Day of Judgement is scheduled and can never be changed
 - i. Day of Separation is one of its names but why?
 - 1. Because people will be separated from their worldly status, family, wealth, friends, etc. Each person will be alone and on his/her own
- b. Allah followed this verse by first indicating different ways to showcase His power and blessings. This was to show that the One who can do all that was mentioned in the previous verses can also bring the dead back to life for accountability [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

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

- a. This is in reference to the second blowing of the horn by the Angel Israfil that will resurrect the dead
 - i. After it is blown, the people will rise and come submissively in massively large numbers

19. And the heaven is opened and will become gateways

- a. The sky will become like large massive opened gates for the army of angels to flood through

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

- a. Meaning mountains will be made to sail until they are transformed into scattered dust. Those witnessing it will think it's a mirage because they would not be able to believe what is happening before their eyes
 - i. The very mountains that were like pegs representing stability in this world are being moved and turned into dust

21. Indeed, Hell has been lying in wait

- a. The Arabic word *jahannam* means a torture chamber and a place of filth
 - i. It's not an Arabic word originally but came to it over time
- b. Meaning Hell has been waiting in ambush for those that it wants to feed on
 - i. It's like a creature hiding for its prey to pounce on

22. For the transgressors, a place of return

- a. Meaning Hell is a place for those who transgress the limits set by Allah
 - i. Every time they try to escape, it will pull them right back in

23. In which they will remain for ages [unending]

- a. Meaning those mentioned in the previous verse will remain in Hell forever

24. They will not taste therein [any] coolness or drink

- a. Meaning the intensity of the fire of Hell will not wear off from them in any way nor will they be given anything delightful to drink

- i. Some said they will not taste any cold air to cool off the heat of Hell from them
[*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

25. Except boiling water and 'oozing' pus

- a. Meaning they will yearn for water but will only get extremely hot water and the dripping pus of the people of Hell in return to drink

26. An appropriate recompense

- a. Meaning this is an acceptable punishment for their disbelief and misguidance

27. Indeed, they were not expecting an account

- a. Meaning they did not care about the afterlife nor make any attempt to prepare for it
 - i. They did whatever they wanted following their desires
 - ii. They did not fear the accountability of Allah against them in the afterlife because they did not expect the resurrection

28. And denied Our verses with [emphatic] denial

- a. Meaning they did not just deny Allah's verses but mocked them

29. But all things We have enumerated in writing

- a. Meaning all of their deeds are recorded with Allah. So every evil deed that those discussed in the previous verses do is recorded
 - i. No detail escapes Him

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

- a. Meaning the only thing they will be given is more punishment and nothing else

31. Indeed, for the righteous is success

- a. Meaning those who complied with Allah's commands and abstained from His prohibitions will be rewarded with paradise

32. Gardens and grapevines

- a. Meaning large gardens and grapes

33. And full-breasted [companions] of equal age

- a. Meaning perfectly matched wives
 - i. Customized to your liking

34. And a full cup

- a. Meaning splashing drinks
- b. It will be a full cup of wine [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

35. No ill speech will they hear therein or any falsehood

- a. Meaning there will be no useless, hurtful, harsh, and false speech in paradise

36. A 'fitting' reward as a generous gift from your Lord

- a. Meaning Allah will reward the believers with generous gifts and blessings in paradise

37. The Lord of the heavens and the earth and everything in between, the Most Compassionate. No one will dare speak to Him

- a. This verse is telling us of Allah's Mercy that encompasses everything
- b. Nobody in the heavens or earth will be able to ask Him anything except if He permits them

38. 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

- a. The army of angels will be standing in straight rows with Angel Gabriel as their commander who is referred to in this verse the 'Spirit'
- b. This is when there will be a complete ban on speech and everyone will be silent
 - i. Only those whom Allah allows to speak will do so and they will only say what is upright. They will say exactly what needs to be said without addition or subtraction
 - 1. Meaning there will be no side commentary or unnecessarily dragging on a point
 - 2. Difference of opinion who these allowed individuals will be:
 - a. Some said it is in reference to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) when he will make intercession on behalf of everyone as mentioned in a [long hadith](#)
 - b. Some said it is in reference to an angel saying a statement and then becoming silent and then another angel doing the same and so on
 - c. It could also be in reference to people trying to make a case for themselves on the Day of Judgement. Even in such a case, they will say just the statement without any additional commentary, which means they may even say something false just to defend themselves
 - i. This is the trial setting of Judgement Day

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

- a. What is meant by the 'True Day'?
 - i. It could mean either:
 - 1. That Day will definitely take place and there is no doubt about it
 - 2. That Day rights will be given to those who deserve them
 - 3. That Day is the ultimate purpose for which humans were in this world
- b. The second part of the verse means that whoever wants can come back to Allah
 - i. Meaning whoever wants to be saved from Allah's punishment, then let him/her take the path of doing righteous deeds that please Allah [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

40. 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!"

- a. The 'near punishment' is in reference to the Day of Judgement
- b. Mankind that Day will get to realize what his/her deeds have done for him/her in the afterlife
 - i. We plant good deeds in this life hoping to see them bloom in the afterlife
- c. The disbelievers will wish to be dust that Day and desire to not exist so that they would not be judged for their evil deeds and end up in Hell
 - i. Some said this would be when they will watch the animals from this world that were resurrected along with mankind become dust [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]