

# Tafseer of Juz ‘Amma

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## Intro

My intention for picking this section of the Qur’an is because this is the most commonly memorized and most commonly recited portion of the Qur’an, so it is probably the most beneficial to the average Muslim.

What I would recommend to anyone who is listening, is to read at least one tafsir as you listen to this – such as Ibn Katheer’s rahimahullah. Ibn Katheer is available in English. InshaAllah what we will be sharing here is what complements what you have researched and read.

One of the fundamental purposes of these surahs is to demonstrate how every surah in the Qur’an has a cohesive argument; it is unified and its subject matter is presented in a cohesive fashion. This is an aspect often overlooked in tafseer. When you go so far in depth to each little thing, such as a grammatical nuance – which is great – you sometimes lose sight of the big picture. You must understand that this was originally recited without any tafseer.

First and foremost, we understand that Makkan Qur’an [Qur’an revealed during the beginning of Islam] was predominantly being recited to a non believing audience. [And the last juz is mostly Makkan.] We are going to try and explore some of the clarity of the Qur’an and the organization of ideas in each and every surah.

One of the common misconceptions – in my opinion – is translating the word *surah* as *chapter*. A chapter is basically one fundamental lesson; one central idea.

*A surah, however, can have many, many ideas. In academic discussions, the closest thing you have to a surah is a course of study. A surah is almost an independent study in and of itself, even though each of the surahs in the Qur’an is connected.*

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There are a few reasons why a surah isn’t really a chapter:

1. It covers more than one topic, as we mentioned.
2. A chapter has a chronological or numerical sequence. For example, if you learn something in chapter 4, you don’t have to repeat it in 5. If there is a need to refer back, the author will just say “refer to chapter 5.” In the Qur’an, Allah *does* repeat things.
3. In the Qur’aan, Allah calls a *surah* “*kitaab*” (such as in Suran An-Nur).
4. A *surah* is different from a chapter for linguistic reasons. The word *surah* comes from “the outer

walls of a city.” If you can visualize: in the old days, they didn’t have borders and signs saying

“Welcome to such-and-such city.” Rather, there were outer walls that you had to go through; it was a security measure. Inside of the city, there are a bunch of things happening – commerce, residences, markets, etc – but it is all connected. That is kind of what is going on in a *surah* – there’s a lot going on, but it’s all connected somehow.

Two things that we are also going to try and look at that are not documented very well in English literature:

- How the beginning of a *surah* and the end of it are connected. This is a consistent feature in the Qur’an. The beginning (*mafatihisoor*) and the end (*khawateen*) of every *surah* are somehow connected.
- Also, there is cohesion between the last thing you will read about in the previous *surah* and the first thing you will read about in the next *surah*. So the end of a *surah* and the introduction of the next are linked.

# Surah AnNaba`

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## Section 1: the Denial

### The Connection

The *surah* before it is *surah Mursalaat* (number 77). In *Mursalaat*, we found two groups of people. One group is the people of *taqwa*, the *mutaqeena fi dhalim ‘oyoon* (ayah 41). Also, the people who are mentioned over and over are the *mukadhibeen*. The oft repeated ayah of the *surah* is *way lil yowma idhil lil mukhadhibeen*: they are those who deliberately lie against truth and accuse those who do tell truth of wrong and try to invalidate their character. They are those who propagate falsehood.

Surah Naba` begins with the phrase *amma ya ta sa`aloon*.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Ayah 1:

عَمَّ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

*'amma yatasaa'aloona*

What are they asking (one another)?

Let's talk about *tasaa'u* to understand the connection. Allah is commenting on a discussion between three groups of disbelievers. There are three opinions about the tafseer of the word *yatasaa'alu* (they are asking one another).

1. It is a depiction of believers being asked by disbelievers.
2. This is a discourse that is taking place *between* the disbelievers.
3. Both the disbelievers and the believers are asking the Messenger of Allah.

The one that is most true and is supported by the text is #2 – the disbelievers asking one another.

In language, if you are asking one another a question, it could be done for one of two reasons. One could be because you are curious and don't know, so you're asking someone else – the question would have an inquisitive intent. Another intention could be to undermine or wage sarcasm at someone else. For example, the Messenger of Allah sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam presents these truths about the afterlife – the oceans boiling over, people coming back to life, etc. As a means of undermining him or making him look insane, they say, "Do you know what he's talking about?" -- "No." -- "Do you know?"

**This is a means of insulting the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. The previous surah talked about those doing *taqleed*. One of the most effective ways to do this is to undermine others by making sarcastic comments.**

### **The Disbelievers Mock**

Understand and appreciate this: the one responding to this is Allah. Obviously the Messenger and the believers who are making da’wah are part of this sarcastic conversation, but from the very beginning, Allah is the third party. What we learn in the beginning is that Allah has taken offense to their comments. Allah has taken offense to the way they speak about the akhirah. Allah says: “What are they asking one another?”

**They have been asking all over the Qur’an: “Are we going to be raised again, after we have been withered away in our graves?”**

When Allah said, “On the hell fire, nineteen guardians of the angels have been appointed.” One of the disbelievers said, “There are only nineteen? I can handle nineteen.” These were the kinds of criticisms and questions they had – they were poking at the Messenger sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. A lot of the time these days youth get caught up on these missionary sites trying to respond to these sort of things. This is not new; these sorts of allegations have always been made.

### **Naba` vs. Khabr**

## Ayah 2:

### عَنِ النَّبَاِ الْعَظِيمِ

*AAani-nnaba-i al 'atheem*

Concerning the Great News,

Then Allah continues: “Are they really asking about *naba` ul adheem*?” An *Naba`* means “news.” There are two words in Arabic for news: *naba`* and *khabr*. What is the difference? First of all, *Naba`* is a greater kind of news`. If the store closes at seven, that is *khabr*. If someone won the election or a war started, that would be *naba`*.

*Khabr* is used twice in the Qur'an; both in the same context. When Musa 'alayhis salaam is with his family in the dark and he sees a light from a distance, he tells them, “Maybe I'll get some *khabr* from there.” He doesn't know what the news will be. When Allah speaks of nations that were destroyed in the past, Allah speaks of the *naba`* - news – of those who came before.

*The second difference is that naba` always has some benefit for the person receiving it.*

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*Naba`* demands a reaction/action. When you hear it, it demands that you change something about yourself. For example, if you get the *naba`* of a fire in the building, it demands that you get out and also let others know that they should get out.

Finally, *naba`* has *bahool* in it, as the linguists argue. What that means is that it is a manifest event. There are abstract ideas and actual physical events. *Naba`* is a tangible thing. When Allah speaks of the resurrection as *naba`*, He is referring to its tangible nature. Some religions believe that the afterlife is just spiritual. We know that the *akhirah* [hereafter] is physical and real; it is not a state of mind. *Jannah* and *Naar* are actual places; they are not figments of the imagination.

“Are they really asking about this enormous *naba`*?” Even though *naba`* is already something important and big – the word *adheem* is still added as an adjective. Allah is asking them, in that sarcastic nature, are they *really* asking about this enormous event. And instead of preparing for it, they are ridiculing it.

## The Ayah in Ismiyya Form:

### Ayah 3:

الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ مُخْتَلِفُونَ

*Allathee hum feehee mukhtalifoon*

About which they are in disagreement.

Allah then adds another rhetorical question: “*Alladhee hum feehee mukhtalifoon.*” *Alladhi* is *mowsoof*, and *hum feehee mukhtalifoon* is called *silatul mowsoof* in grammar. So the whole of ayah #3 is actually an adjective of *naba`*. The first adjective was *al adheem* and the second adjective is the entire third ayah. A course translation is: “that which they themselves are in disagreement with.”

The way the ayah is structured is in the *ismiyya*, or the nominal, form. The benefit of this has is that we know this is something that they do all the time. Allah does not say *yakhtalifoon*; He says *mukhtalifoon*. The noun usage shows us something that is continuous, just like a noun is permanent and a verb is temporary.

Then the word *feehee* has been positioned between *hum* and *mukhtalifoon*. Instead of Allah saying, *Alladheen mukhtalifoona feehee*, which is norm in Arabic, Allah says it this way. This produces a shock, “Is it really about *that* which they are disagreeing about amongst themselves?”

### Ikhtilaaf

The word *ikhtilaaf* indicates two things: a manifest disagreement – an actual physical disagreement. Not only did they disagree about it, but they all had their own ideas of what is going to happen. Some of them thought that Allah has daughters that are the angels which would put in a good word for them. Others said, Allah has so many things going on, how does He have time to keep track of what I am doing? A’oothubillah. And so on and so forth.

*Ikhtilaaf* also means to have a friction or discord within one’s self. This implies that not only did they disagree with one another, but they had uncertainty within themselves. They weren’t adamant about being saved or there being no afterlife, but they were uncertain.

### Kalla!

#### Ayah 4:

كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ

*Kalla saya'lamoon*

Nay, they will come to know!

**Allah says: *kalla sa ya'lamoon, thumma kalla sa ya'lamoon*. This has been repeated. Often times, it is argued that this is done only for *mubalagha*, or in English, hyperbole – to emphasize something. In Old English, it is commonly translated as “nay!”**

**According to many grammarians from Basra, they say it has to do with “stop.” The disbelievers are running their mouths, and all of a sudden, Allah says “stop!”**

**If you say *kalla*, pause, and then continue, it means one thing. On the other hand, if you say it together, as it is in the ayah, it means something else. Some grammarians say that it is ok to read *kalla*, stop, and then continue. Meaning, “Stop! Stop this nonsense!”**

**On the other hand, if you continue and don't stop – which is the text of the ayah – then *kalla* is associated with *haqqan*. Which is, *truly* you are going to find out. For example, like we would say, “No,**

for real, I'm going to get in trouble.” We don't mean the “no.” We mean that we are *really* going to be in trouble – for sure! The reality is they are going to find out.

The “sa” in *sa ya'lamoon* is short for *sowfa*. It implies that whatever is coming is very close. Allah makes sure that we understand it is very close by the letter *seen* here and again at the end of the surah. It is a punishment that is *qareeb* (close).

## Repetition

### Ayah 5:

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَيَعْلَمُونَ

*Thumma kalla saya'lamoon*

Nay, again, they will come to know!

So let's talk about the repetition of the ayah now. There are two opinions amongst the scholars as to why the ayah is repeated twice.

The first opinion is that the ayah is repeated to stress the point or to show anger/tension/friction. For example, how we sometimes say, “I'm going to get you man! I'm going to get you!” Or “Wait! Wait!”

The other opinion, which a lot of the *mufasssiroon* favor is: there are two predominant things that the Qur'an warns of: resurrection and hell fire. It is believed that they will first know the truth at two separate times: first, in *qiyamah*. They will realize how obnoxious they were about the hereafter when they face *qiyamah*. And the second time, when they see the fire.

“Whoever dies, his *qiyamah* has already begun.” He doesn't have to wait for the signs of the Day of Judgment, the rising of the sun from the west, etc.

*'Ali radiyallahu 'anhu used to say, “The people are sleeping.” When they die, they wake up. In that sense, when a person dies, they will immediately find out the consequences of the words they were uttering.*

The first passage of the surah has just finished (which was the first five verses).

You'll notice a rhyming scheme in the Qur'an: there are “paragraphs” in each surah, according to the rhyming scheme. Until now, everything rhymed except for perhaps ayah number two. If you study the grammar of the ayah, you'll see that ayah is actually connected to the next ayah; it is one sentence.



*One of the remarkable features of the Qur'an is that the rhyming scheme tells where the paragraph begins or ends.*

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If you listen to the next few ayaat, you'll notice a new rhyme scheme.

## Section 2: Human Inability and the Power of Allah

### So Blessed Be Allah, the Best of Creators

Sometimes the transitions in the Qur'an seem unrelated to each other. But SubhaanaAllah the transitions are all related to one another, and we should understand and appreciate them.

There is a transition to another subject: "Did we not make the earth a smooth plain [*mihaad*] for you?"

#### Ayah 6:

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلِ الْأَرْضَ مِهَادًا

*Alam naj'alil-arda mihada*

Have We not made the earth as a wide expanse?

Another word related to *mihaad* is *mahd*. The word *mahd* is the cradle, or even the womb of the mother, or the cradle in which the child is comfortable. Allah says, “Didn’t We make the earth a place in which you would be comfortable?” In classical Arabic, *mihaad* is used for bed. This is a place where you find peace and tranquility.

Next, Allah talks about His favor. What does this have to do with resurrection and their criticism? A lot of their criticism has to do with the earth cracking open, and all of these things that are talked about in the Resurrection seem too monumental to them. What sort of God is capable of all of these things?

Human beings are aware of what they themselves are capable of: making a bed or a place of comfort for ourselves. Allah’s however, made the earth.

*Compare what we can do to just some of Allah’s creation and Allah’s ability.*

*No comparison.*

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### Ayah 7:

وَالْجِبَالِ أَوْتَادًا

*Waljibala awtada*

And the mountains as pegs?

Allah uses analogies and references in the Qur’an that the reader can relate to. In the old days, they would pitch tents; it was very common. Allah says He made the mountains as pegs. The tent is known by the most important element – the peg. Things are known by their most important element. For example, a soldier could be called a sword. What kind of pegs/tents does *Allah* put up? Mountains! Compare that to what we erect of tents.

These were all big things that we mentioned thus far, but now we're going to look at the creation of human beings themselves.

### Ayah 8:

وَخَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا

*Wakhalaqnakum azwaja*

And We have created you in pairs (male and female, tall and short, good and bad, etc.).

Allah says: "We created all of you in pairs." We didn't create ourselves in pairs. Man didn't create woman; women didn't create man. We're not even capable over our creation – our own gender!

### Ayah 9:

وَجَعَلْنَا نَوْمَكُمْ سُبَاتًا

*Waja'alna nawmakum subata*

And We made your sleep to be rest (to you),

Allah then says: "And made your sleep [a means for] rest..." *Nowm* is deep sleep. Allah says He made your sleep *subaata*. *Sabat* would be to cut a string. Literally, this *subaat* is that which cuts off. So Allah speaks of the night as something that cuts you off. What does it cut you off from? First of all, it cuts you off from your body – your soul departs from your body. It also cuts you off from daily affairs, business, tasks, family, etc. You're dead to the world. This foreshadows what Allah will talk about later – the resurrection. One essential feature of resurrection day: all human beings will be cut off from each other that day. A man will run from his family. The kind of cutting off that will be permanent, we will see later. But we experience a little something of that every single day.

*Sleep will overcome a man eventually; the power of Allah overcomes humans, even those who deny Him.*

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You are so adamant about disbelieving in Allah. Here are the powers Allah has over you and the powers of Allah over creation. You think that the One Who created *all of this* cannot create life again?

### Ayah 10:

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا

*Waja'alna al layla libasa*

And have made the night as a covering (through its darkness),

“And We made the night as a garment.” Why is the night a garment? Because it covers you up and takes over you as a blanket. A garment is something you hide underneath. Crimes take place at night. Secret, ambush and robbery are all associated with night. This is a *libaas* (cloth) that you are not capable of getting rid of or taking off. The night overcomes everyone just as the day does.

### Ayah 11:

وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا

*Waja'alna an-nahara ma'aasha*

And We made the day for seeking livelihood.

“We made the daytime a *means* of livelihood and a time of livelihood.”

This is particularly true in the desert because there are few places in the desert where there is farmland. That food is critical to feed everyone else; it will not grow until it has sunlight. Daytime is a means because you need the sun for agriculture. Also, the average work time is day time. Most people work during the day.

### Ayah 12:

وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا

*Wabanayna fawqakum sab'an shidada*

And constructed above you seven strong [heavens]

Then Allah speaks finally: “We constructed/built above you....” If you look at the other ayaat that just came, there was some implication (if indirect) of the human being. Everything comes back to us and our powerlessness even over the *creation* of Allah. Again, here Allah says “We made *above you* these seven heavens.” Human beings construct things to. Compare that to what Allah creates. SubhaanAllah It puts us in our place. We need to know how weak and powerless we are.

Ayah 13:

وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجًا

*Waja'alna sirajan wahhaja*

And We made a shining lamp,

And then, on top of this – “then We installed *siraaaj*.”

*Siraaaj* in Arabic refers to anything that emits light. In the Qur'an, it consistently refers to the sun. *Wahhaaja* means brilliant and blazing. Of all the fires we can kindle on the earth, or the chandeliers we create, what can compare to this creation of Allah? It is an illustration of the powerlessness of the human being.

### Ayah 14:

وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْمُعْصِرَاتِ مَاءً ثَجَّاجًا

*Wa anzalna minalmu'sirati maa'an thajjaja*

And have sent down from the rainy clouds abundant water.

**“Minal mu'siraat”** A'saara or l'saar is to squeeze. One opinion is that it is referring to the wind squeezing the clouds, then the clouds drip rain. It is also used for the clouds full of so much water that they drip rain.

**“Maa 'an thajjaaja”:** Thajjaaja means overflow of heavy rain, or profuse rain. The water overpowers humans by being too much or too less. If Allah doesn't send it, it can create death and famine. If it comes *too much*, then there can also be death and destruction. Allah is again illustrating His power over the human being. SubhaanAllah

### **The Mercy of My Lord**

Now, you will find a change in tone to the mercy of Allah and the favors He has given us.

### Ayah 15:

لَنُخْرِجَ بِهِ حَبًّا وَنَبَاتًا

*Linukhrija bihi habban wanabata*

That We may bring out thereby grain and growth,

**“By means of water, all kinds of grain and vegetation...”**

The word *habban* is used for all kinds of grain, wheat and crop. *Nabaat* is used for all kinds of grass or vegetation. Basically, it is all the sustenance of the earth. Without vegetation, there is no life on earth. Whatever we consume of animals and food consumes plant life.

### Ayah 16:

## وَجَنَاتٍ أَلْفَافًا

*Wajannaatin alfafa*

And gardens of luxurious growth

Beyond that – *lush* gardens. *Alfaaf* is the plural of *lafeef* (though there are other opinions), which means that which wraps around. So the idea is that the plants are intricately tangled. The plants are so lush and abundant that you can't tell where one begins or ends. That is the imagery being presented.

## Section 3 – That Which You Denied

### Al Fasl

So, to look back, the first section was about the denial of the hereafter. The second section was about human inability and the power of Allah. The third section, now that Allah has put everyone in their place, is about that which you denied.

### Ayah 17:

إِنَّ يَوْمَ الْفَصْلِ كَانَ مِيقَاتًا  
Inna yawma alfasli kaana meeqata

Indeed, the Day of Judgement is an appointed time -

*Al Fasl* is to take two things and separate them so much that they are clearly apart from one another. *Yowm al Fasl* is a day of clear separation. The ‘Ulamaa’ [scholars] commented that the Day of Judgment is the day truth will be separated from falsehood. The *mushrik* believed in Allah and other gods. People who do evil do some good and say, “Well, at least we’re doing such and such.” They mix truth with falsehood. That day, a person will be separated from their false hopes. A person will be separated from their false gods. Allah talks about followers being separated from their leaders (see *AlBaqarah*). Perhaps the most graphic separation: mother shall be separated from her child. May Allah save us on that day.

Allah says “this day of clear distinction has already been appointed.” This day of *fasl* has already been fixed. It has to strike. Many of the things Allah talks about – the creation of pairs, the sun, night and day – all have an appropriate, fixed time. Just like that, *this life is paired with something: that is the Hereafter*. *Yowm al fasl* is fixed. Whether you like it or not. “Human being, you better realize you are marching forward toward your Lord, minute by minute, second by second, without your knowledge, even, and you’re going to get to meet Him.” No matter what you do, whether you realize it or not, we’re heading towards our Lord.

### The Day They Deny



## Ayah 18:

يَوْمَ يَنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ فَتَأْتُونَ أَفْوَاجًا

Yawma yunfakhu fee assoorifata'toona afwaaja

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

Now that the Day of Judgment has been introduced, the following ayahs will describe the event of that day. Allah says, “the day on which it will be blown.” The breath will be blow into the *soor* (trumpet). Literally, *soor* means horn – either the horn of an animal or the horn that is blown into.

“All of you will come forth as a result, in multitudes...” Allah began the surah using third person. Now Allah is talking *to* them. In the beginning, He was expressing His disgust at them by not even addressing them directly. This is called *tab'eed* in Arabic: to distance yourself from the one you are not happy with. This is done in Arabic to show disgust – at first not even addressing them and then turning to them and hitting them by surprise.

An example of this could be the classroom. Say a student failed a big exam. The teacher comes into the room and says, “Some of you didn’t do very well on your exam...” All of the students are on edge, and then suddenly the teacher turns to one student and singles him out.

Another place this happens in the Qur’an is when Allah is talking about them associating a son with him. Then Allah transitions to second person and addresses them directly.

*Ata ya`ti* doesn’t just mean to come. *Ata* means to submit. *Fa ta`toona afwaaja* – *not only will you come forward in multitudes, but you will give yourselves up. This is to show the contrast between how you are now and how you will be then.*

## Ayah 19:

وَفُتِحَتِ السَّمَاءُ فَكَانَتْ أَبْوَابًا

Wafutihati assamaa'u fakanat abwaba

And the heaven is opened and will become gateways

*Wa futihatissamaa`u fakaanat abwaaba*

Those same seven heavens that Allah talked about earlier, He has the power to destroy. He described their power in this surah, and then He is talking about those skies being ripped open, as though they were doors. What does it mean that they will be like doors? In construction – what is the loosest part of the room? The door is the loosest because it has hinges; it is the weakest part of the construction. Allah talks about this magnificent construction and then He says that it will *all* be as a door; very weak. You'll see cracks all over the place. This is in contrast with what we see now – we can keep looking and not see any flaws.

## Ayah 20:

وَسُيِّرَتِ الْجِبَالُ فَكَانَتْ سَرَابًا

Wasuyyiratil jibaalu fakanat saraaba

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

Allah then speaks of those same mountains whose magnificence He described before and how they will be *suyyirah*. *Suyyira* is talking about how the mountains will be easily moved. The last thing that you think of when you imagine something that is easily moved is mountains! SubhaanAllah.

Allah then says *Fakaanat saraaba*. This is talking about how the humans will see the mountains moving, and because such a sight is so unbelievable, they will think they are seeing a mirage.

This is the first reality that they would know about – the Day of Judgment – now Allah will depict for them the Fire which they will come to know of.

Again, They Will Know!

Ayah 21:

إِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ كَانَتْ مِرْصَادًا  
*Inna jahannama kanat mirsada*

Truly, Hell is a place of ambush,

“No doubt, the hell fire has always been waiting in ambush.” *Mirsaad* comes from *rasada*. *Mursad* is one who is trying to ambush. Allah describes hell fire as *Mirsaad*: a place ideal for ambush. It is designed with the only intent to hide and attack the enemy.

Hasan al Basri uses this ayah to explain “There is no one from you at all who will not go over it [the hell fire]” (Surah Maryam). We will get to experience what we have escaped. For the believers, they will be able to pass by, but the disbelievers will be ambushed by it.

Ayah 22:

## لِلطَّاغِينَ مَابًا

*Littagheena ma'aaba*

For the rebellious, a place of destination:

Who is it in ambush for – for *at Tagheen*.

So many other words could have been used, but Allah says *at Tagheen*. *Kufr is on the outside. Tughyaan is what is on the inside – rebellion*. On the outside, even the philosophy majors or atheists, etc don't want to acknowledge Islam or God. It is not because they have intellectual arguments, but because they want to live their life the way they want to live. They don't want to live according to a higher authority; they want to rebel. That is the root of this whole problem. It's not that they are curious about *an naba`* - it is their rebellion. And the Hell Fire is waiting for the rebellious.

It is *ma aaba* – a place that they will have to keep going back to. This illustrates they are going to try to escape, but they keep being sucked back in.

Ayah 23:

## لَا يَشِينُ فِيهَا أَحْقَابًا

*Labitheena feeha ahqaba*

In which they will remain for ages [unending].

It is a place of stay and stay itself.

They are going to be staying there for a very long time. That long period of time has been given a quantity – *ahqaaba*. *Ahqaaba* is the plural of *haqb*. According to 'Ali radiyallahu 'anhu and *aqb* is eighty years, every day of which is 1,000 years (and this is the most popular opinion). Regardless of what the time is, the number is finite. This led some *mufasiroon* to say that hell will eventually end. This opinion has been negated heavily. Hasan al Basri said that Allah did not say *haqb*; He said *ahqaaban*, which means they are multiple. The plural illustrates that there is no end to it.

This illustrates hopelessness. It is a means of psychological torture. They are given the hope that one *haqb* is ending, but then another beings.

### Ayah 24:

لَا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا

*La yathooqoona feehabardan wala sharaba*

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

“They will not get to taste in it neither coolness nor any kind of drink.”

*Lafha* is a warm breeze and *nafha* is a cool breeze. Allah speaks of the least punishment in hell and says that even if the *coolest* breeze of hell fire reached them, it is so hot that they will cry out over and over again: “Destruction has fallen upon us! We had continuously been the wrong doers!”

In desert life, the two joys you can have of relief from the desert are drinks and cool breezes. The expression in the Arabic language “his eyes became cool” is used for a man’s eyes getting relief after a sandstorm. Allah uses this expression to describe joy from wife and family. So we can see that coolness, in the Arabic culture, is a great pleasure. Allah will take that pleasure away in Hell.

### Ayah 25:

إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَغَسَّاقًا

*Illa hameeman wa ghassaqa*

Except boiling water, and dirty wound discharges.

Allah adds only two more things in place of those: boiling, scorching water and infected blood or pus of the other companions in hell.

Justice:

Ayah 26:

جَزَاءً وَفَاقًا  
*Jazaa'an wifaaqa*

An exact recompense (according to their evil crimes).

If you describe this to a non believer, what do you think they would say? “Man, this is pretty intense. Do you think somebody could deserve this?” The next ayah says: *jazaa an wifaaqa*. *Jazaa`* means payback; in it is included “you get what you work for.” But then Allah adds: *wifaaq*. The normal Arabic would expect *muqafiqun*. When you say *wifaaq*, it illustrates that there could be no punishment more appropriate. This is exactly – down to the last ounce – what they deserved. There is no torture or oppression; this is justice.

[Personal note by transcriber: If you read Jamal Az-Zarabozo’s explanation of the 40 hadith of An-Nawawi, under the explanation of the first hadith, he addresses a similar issue. Some people may ask, well, a disbeliever did not disbelieve for eternity, so how can he be punished for eternity? The answer is that, had he lived for eternity, he would have disbelieved for eternity. So he had the *intention* to do that as long as he lived. The same way if he had believed, he would be in Paradise for eternity, but he rejected that offer. Allah knows best.]

Ayah 27:

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا لَا يَرْجُونَ حِسَابًا  
*Inna hum kanoo la yarjoona hisaba*

Surely they did not hope for a reckoning,

What is it exactly that they did? They were the one who had no hopes of accountability. The wording is very careful. Allah does not say that they didn’t *expect* accountability; He says that they didn’t *hope* for it. If you don’t expect something, that means you had no idea. When you don’t hope for it, it means that you heard and knew about it, but you hoped it wouldn’t come. You let your false hopes that the accounting would not come delude you.

There are often Muslims even within our own families, that don’t want to talk about accountability. If you tell them, for example, “We’ll have to answer for how we earned

our money,” they may brush it off and say something like, “Don’t depress me. I want to talk about something else.” They want to stay in their false hopes.

### Ayah 28:

وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا كِذَابًا

*Wakaththaboo bi-ayatinaa kiththaba*

They called Our revelations false with strong denial.

This crime we just spoke of was inside of them. And that false hope led them to commit the second crime on the outside: they denied the ayaat. They did two things here: lied against themselves and then lied against the miraculous ayaat of Allah.

There are two types of ayaat: ayaat *kowniyya* (ayaat in existence) and Qur’aniyyah. This person refused to reflect on either of them. This includes lying against the Messengers, lying against the truth, character assassination, etc.

### Ayah 29:

وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ أَحْصَيْنَاهُ كِتَابًا

*Wakulla shay-in ahsaynahu kitaba*

And all things We have recorded in a Book.

“Don’t be shocked that each and every last thing We have completely encompassed.” ‘*Ad* means to count and *ihsaa* means to not only count it, but protect it and archive it. The scholars comment that this ayah of the Qur’an is the worse about ‘*adhaab* (punishment): every time they try to escape the punishment, they are entered into one that is worse than what they came out of.

### Ayah 30:

فَذُوقُوا فَلَنْ نَّزِيدَكُمْ إِلَّا عَذَابًا

*Fathooqoo falan nazeedakum illa'athaaba*

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

Allah says, "then go ahead and taste *all of you*." Allah is speaking to them.

This is showing His extreme anger with them. But Allah does not use His Name next to them.

According to other excerpts in the Qur'an, we learn that Allah will not even turn towards them or face them that day.

What will they be begging for? A little relief, a little drink, but all they will get is punishment. May Allah protect us from hell.

### The Muttaqeen:

### Ayah 31:

إِنَّ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ مَفَازًا

*Inna lilmuttaqeeena mafaza*

Verily, for the Righteous, there will be a success (Paradise);

There are two audiences in this Surah: the *kuffaar* and the *muttaqeen*. When Allah speaks to the *muttaqeen*, He speaks *to* them. Allah then addresses the people of *taqwa*. Why this particular title for them?

*Taqwa is commonly translated as "fear", but that is not correct. That would be "khowf." Taqwa, here, refers to the precautions you take as a result of fear, the things you do because you are afraid. For example, locking your doors at night because you are afraid would be out of precaution. So taqwa is to take precaution. Taqwa is a feeling that results in some kind of action.*

What is waiting for them? *Mafaaz* has a lot of meanings wrapped up into it – success, the *place* of success (Jannah) and an appointed *time* when they enjoy success (it's coming, be patient).



### Ayah 32:

حَدَائِقَ وَأَعْنَابًا

*Hada-iqa wa'naaba*

Gardens and grapeyards;

Then Allah describes the place: gardens.

**Hadeeqa** is a garden with a tall fence, so it is a private type of garden ☺ No one else has access to it. **Hadaqa** is also related to the word **hadeeqa**, and it refers to the pupil of the eye, which in turn refers to the beautiful color surrounding it.

The food that is mentioned is grapes – and this is a two in one because it is a food that already has a drink in it ☺ SubhaanAllah.

### Ayah 33:

وَكَوَاعِبَ أُنثَرَاءَ

*Wa kawaA'iba atraba*

And full-breasted [companions] of equal age

**Kawaa'ib** is the plural of **kaa'ib**. **Kaa'ib** is a really gorgeous woman. They will be at the most compatible age for the believers.

### Ayah 34:

وَكَاْسًا دِهَاقًا

*Waka'san dihaqa*

And a cup full (to the brim).

***Ka`s* nowadays means a cup or glass, but in classical Arabic *ka`s* was only used when the glass was full of wine, or some expensive drink. So these glasses will be full of expensive and exotic drinks. The color of the drinks will be exotic, and it will also be splashing.**

### Ayah 35:

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِذَابًا

*La yasmaA'oona feeha laghwan wa laa kiththaba*

No ill speech will they hear therein or any falsehood -

Then Allah says they will not hear in those gardens *laghw* (useless talk) or *kidhaab* (when one person lies against another). Why does Allah mentioned these two specific things? In the beginning of the surah, the disbelievers are making useless talk. When they get to Jannah, the believers will not have to hear any of this. In Al 'Imran, Allah says you will have to endure a lot of painful words from the *kuffaar*. Even the messengers were told to have beautiful patience. Once in Jannah, the believers will not have to worry about any of this.

Also, believers are working for the deen constantly hear *kidhaab* – in the media. They hear people lying about the messengers, about the book of Allah, etc. In Jannah, they will no longer be tortured with these things.

### Ayah 36:

جَزَاءٌ مِّن رَّبِّكَ عَطَاءٌ حِسَابًا

*Jazaa'an min rabbika ataa'an hisaba*

A reward from your Lord, an ample calculated gift (according to the best of their good deeds).

*With the disbelievers, Allah said jazaa`an wifaaq – not more or less, but exactly what they deserve. Allah does not say wifaaq for Jannah, because He will give us more than what we deserve, subhaana wa ta'aala.*

Allah says *mir rabbika* (from their *rabb*). Allah is the One Who gives, provides, nourishes, creates, takes care of – all of these positive connotations are included inside of the word *rabb*. *Rabb* was not used with the disbelievers, because there was no mention of mercy with them.

Another way Allah mentions His Mercy is that He says *rabbika* – *your* Lord. Anywhere in the Qur'an where Allah speaks to His messengers, those are the most merciful places in the Qur'an. Allah adds on to that, saying 'ataa'. 'Ataa' is a grant/gift to someone who doesn't deserve it. So the believers will be showered with gifts.

Qataadah radiyallahu 'anhu explained hisaab saying that this is like a saying in Arabic, in which you give so much to a person that they say, stop, I can't take any more. May Allah make us worthy of this. Ameen.

### Ar-Rahmaan and Ar-Raheem:

#### Ayah 37:

رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا الرَّحْمَنُ لَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْهُ خِطَابًا

*Rabbi assamawati wal-ardi wamaa baynahuma arrahmani laa yamlikoona minhu khitaba*

[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 Lord of the heavens and the earth – that same Lord – is excessively merciful. Some things you should know about Ar-Rahmaan (which is used here) as opposed to Ar-Raheem:

*Ar-Raheem is potential. You can say a person is merciful. That doesn't mean he is always merciful, doing something merciful at every moment. When Allah is speaking of a mercy He is doing right in the moment, He doesn't use ar-Raheem; He uses ar-Rahmaan. When there is a specific mercy mentioned, ar-Rahmaan is used. Ar-Raheem is more general.*

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This special mercy of Allah is being given to the believers on the Day of Judgment. It is perfectly suited here because of all of the different levels of mercy Allah will bestow on the believers which were mentioned in the previous ayahs.

From the disbelievers' side – after hearing such a strong warning in this surah – may lose hope. Allah mentioning His Name, Ar-Rahmaan, gives hope to the disbeliever as well. Allah is exceedingly, unexpectedly merciful.

### None Shall Speak:

#### Ayah 38:

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

*Yawma yaqoomu arroohu walmalaa'ikatusaffan la yatakallamoona illa man athina lahu  
arrahmanu waqaala sawaba*

The Day that Ar-Ruh [Jibrael (Gabriel) or another angel] and the angels will stand forth in rows, none shall speak except him whom the Most Beneficent (Allah) allows, and he will speak what is right.

They will have no control, no ability or power in regards to Him on that day – in terms of addressing Him or making a case. This is for the *kuffaar*.

But then Allah says: the day when *ar-Ruh* will stand and *malaa'ika*. There is almost *ijmaa'* [consensus] of the *mufasssiroon* [the scholars of tafseer] that *ar-Ruh* refers to Jibreel 'alayhis salaam (Gabriel) almost every time in the Qur'an. Usually in the Qur'an, we see the reverse order – the angels are mentioned first and then Jibreel. This is a reversal in the sequence. One of the scholars of *balaagha* [literary beauty?], sh-Sha`raabi, commented on this: whenever you find a lot of movement, then angels are associated with going up and down and being in constant movement. There, you find *malaa'ika* mentioned first. *When you find responsibility, Jibreel is mentioned first because he has the most responsibility.* That is why Jibreel is mentioned first.

Another benefit of knowing this is that one of the theories of the *mushrikoon* [polytheists] was that the angels would come and save them. Who is the greatest of the angels? Ar-Ruh [Jibreel/Gabriel]! And they will all be standing before Allah in straight rows, not uttering a single word. So if the disbelievers had some hope that the angels would save them, then they are mistaken. The angels will be standing silent as well.

Only to whom Allah gives permission will speak and he will say that which is true and upright. Allah was using present tense up until now, but He switches to past tense to show that even one

who does speak will be very brief. People will be spoken to rather than them speaking.

### Ayah 39:

ذَٰلِكَ الْيَوْمُ الْحَقُّ ۖ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ مَآبًا

*Dhalika alyawmu alhaqqu famanshaa ittakhatha ila rabbihi maaba*

That is without doubt the True Day, so, whosoever wills, let him seek a place with (or a way to) His Lord (by obeying Him in this worldly life)!

***Dhaalikal yowm al haqq.*** There are three ways to translate this:

1. “That is the true day”
2. “That day is in fact the ultimate the truth” – this is favored by most scholars.
3. “This is that true day which is coming”

### **You Have Been Warned:**

### Ayah 40:

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

*Inna antharnakum 'athaaban qareeban yawma yanthuru almar'u maa qaddamatyadahu wayaqoolu alkafiru ya laytanee kuntu turaba*

Verily, We have warned you of a near torment, the Day when man will see that (the deeds) which his hands have sent forth, and the disbeliever will say: "Woe/destruction to me! Would that I were dust!"

**“Then, whoever wants, let find *ma'aab* towards his Lord.” Whoever wants, let him hold**

on to a path that will lead towards his Lord. Allah already spoke about *jahannam* being *ma`aab*. Now He is speaking about another *ma`aab* – your goal in this life to return to your Lord. May Allah make us of those who return to their Lord. Ameen.

In conclusion of this surah, Allah says, *Inna andharnakum*. It is indeed *We* who have warned you. The *kaafir* thinks that Muhammad (sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) is warning him, but Allah is telling them that this is the Lord of the worlds Who is warning them. They see it far away, but *We* see it very close.

We said before that the “sa” in the beginning was for closeness. The conclusion is also closeness.

The day on which every single person will see whatever their hands have sent forward. This expression is often misunderstood in English. It requires some explanation: most of our actions are done by our hands. When our hands do an action, it is recorded and is then sent forward. Whatever we have done is archived and sent into archives. It will later be bought out of those archives and displayed before you on a day that is coming ahead. Every person will see what both his hands sent forward.

As a result, the disbeliever will say *la laytani* – and there are no words in English to translate this. In modern language, we are much less articulate. The closest thing in our times is: a person so sad and overwhelmed that you have no words. It is when you are speechless and dumbfounded. All you can do is sigh or scream. Destruction is upon them, but they can't say it. Allah is describing the emotion of that person. They will say, "If only I had been reduced to nothing but dust!"

Before this day, the arrogant *kaafir* was walking around in arrogance, thinking he had no accountability, but on that day he will wish he was dust. In Arabic tradition, dust was associated with humiliation. To put dust on someone or kick it in their face were expressions of humiliating someone. The last thing someone wants is to be associated with dust. He will face Allah and will wish he was that humiliated dust.

## The Cohesion of Beginning and End

How the beginning of this surah correlates to the beginning: in the beginning, the kuffaar were adamant and arrogant, in total disregard of the hereafter. In the end, their state will be that they will not be able to speak. Now, let them run their mouth, but a time will come when their mouth will be silent.

In the beginning they had disagreement over what would happen in the hereafter. That Day, there will be only one true opinion.

Finally, Allah warned them that they will know the consequences of their speech. In the end, they will say, "Oh, I wish that I were dust!"