

A GIFT FOR YOU · FROM DEEN2U.COM

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah An-Nazi'at

Those Who Drag Forth · Makki · 46 ayat — reflections
on surah 79 of the Qur'an

QURAN

deen2u.com

One-stop center for Islamic resources · free to share

September 2026 · v1.305.0

CONTENTS

Surah An-Nazi'at

1	The surah in brief	What it is, when it came, what it sets out to do
2	Its themes	6 threads running through the surah
3	Key verses	5 passages, with a reflection on each
4	Reading it closely	4 sections
5	Carrying it	3 things to take from it

النازعات — An-Nazi'at, "Those Who Drag Forth". Surah 79 of 114, revealed in Makkah, 46 ayat. The full text and a recitation are on the web edition at deen2u.com/quran/79/.

ONE

The surah in brief

Swearing by the angels who wrench out souls, the surah affirms the resurrection the deniers mock, recalls how Pharaoh's arrogance before Musa brought his ruin, and warns that only those who fear standing before their Lord will find the Garden.

An-Nazi'at swears by the angels who tear the souls of the wicked out harshly and draw the souls of the believers out gently, moving quickly to the certainty of resurrection that the deniers mock. To steady the Prophet and warn the arrogant of Mecca, it retells Musa sent to Pharaoh with a gentle word, Pharaoh's boast "I am your lord, the most high," and his seizure as a lesson for whoever fears. It then turns to the sky, earth, and provision as fresh proofs, and to the overwhelming Hour when every person sees the fruit of their striving. Its heart is a single test: whoever feared standing before his Lord and reined in his desires has Paradise for a home.

TWO

Its themes

- Resurrection is certain
- The angels of death
- Musa and Pharaoh
- Tyranny and its end
- Restraining the soul's desire
- The nearness of the Hour

THREE

Key verses

Saying, "I am your Lord, Most High".

Qur'an 79:24

Pharaoh's claim to be the highest lord is the archetype of every ego that will not bow; his swift drowning answers the boast better than any words.

Verily in this is an instructive warning for whosoever feareth (Allah).

Qur'an 79:26

His downfall is called a lesson for whoever fears, turning an ancient tyrant's ruin into a mirror for our own smaller arrogances.

And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord's (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from lower desires,

Qur'an 79:40

The pivot of the surah: fearing the standing before one's Lord and holding the self back from craving is named the whole path to the Garden.

Their abode will be the Garden.

Qur'an 79:41

Paradise itself becomes the home of the one who mastered his appetites, so restraint now is not loss but the very address of eternal ease.

The Day they see it, (It will be) as if they had tarried but a single evening, or (at most till) the following morn!

Qur'an 79:46

On waking to the Hour they feel their whole life lasted only an evening or its morning; the world we cling to will shrink to a passing hour.

FOUR

Reading it closely

Context & character

An-Nazi'at ("Those Who Drag Forth") is a Makkan surah that opens with a series of forceful oaths — most commentators take them as sworn by the angels who wrest out the souls of the dying, some violently and some gently, and who then glide, race, and administer the affairs of the cosmos by God's command. From this arresting opening the surah moves to its single great argument: the Resurrection is real, and the proud who deny it will meet the fate of Pharaoh.

Its character is dramatic and admonitory. It juxtaposes the intimate terror of death (the soul being drawn out) with the vast terror of the final Overwhelming, and it plants at its centre the story of Musa and Pharaoh as the archetype of arrogant denial and its ruin. It closes by pressing the argument from creation and by refusing the deniers' mocking demand to be told exactly when the Hour will strike.

How the surah unfolds

The opening oaths (79:1-5) swear by those who drag out violently, those who draw out gently, those who glide swiftly, those who race ahead, and those who arrange the affair — a sweep from the taking of souls to the ordering of the heavens. On this the surah swears that the Resurrection will come. It then describes its onset (79:6-14): the Day the first blast convulses everything (al-rajifah), followed by the second (al-radifah); hearts that Day pounding, eyes downcast. The deniers scoff,

"Are we really to be restored to our former state, even after we are decayed bones? — that then would be a losing return!" The answer is swift: it will be but a single shout, and at once they are awake on the earth's surface, roused from their graves.

The surah then turns to the story of Musa and Pharaoh as a case study (79:15–26). Has the account reached you? His Lord called him in the sacred valley of Tuwa: "Go to Pharaoh — he has transgressed — and say, Would you purify yourself? And let me guide you to your Lord, so that you would fear Him." Musa showed him the greatest sign, but Pharaoh denied and disobeyed; then he turned away, striving against the truth; he gathered his people and proclaimed, "I am your lord, the most high" (ana rabbukum al-a'la). So God seized him with the punishment of the Hereafter and of this world. "Surely in that is a lesson for whoever fears" (79:26).

The surah then returns to argue the Resurrection from creation itself (79:27–33): Are you harder to create, or the heaven He built — He raised its ceiling and proportioned it, darkened its night and brought forth its morning brightness; and the earth after that He spread out, bringing from it its water and its pasture, and the mountains He set firm — all as provision for you and for your grazing animals. The One who fashioned this immense order can surely raise a human being.

The final movement unveils the great Overwhelming (79:34–46). When the supreme Catastrophe (al-tammah al-kubra) comes, on that Day man will remember all he strove for, and Hell will be brought into view for whoever can see. Then the two verdicts: as for the one who transgressed and preferred the life of this

world, Hell is his refuge; but as for the one who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained his soul from base desire, Paradise is his refuge. Finally, they ask about the Hour — when will it anchor? — and the Prophet ﷺ is told he is in no position to declare it; its final knowledge rests with your Lord; he is only a warner to those who fear it. On the Day they see it, it will seem as though they had lingered in the world but an evening or its morning.

The major themes, in depth

The central theme is resurrection argued from the greater to the lesser. The deniers mock the idea that decayed bones could live again (79:11), and the surah answers with the argument from cosmic creation: "Are you harder to create, or the heaven?" (79:27). The One who raised the sky's ceiling, ordered night and dawn, spread the earth and drew from it water, pasture and mountains, has already accomplished something far more immense than reviving a single human frame. Denial of resurrection, the surah shows, is not scepticism but a failure to reason from the evidence one sees overhead every night and underfoot every day.

A second theme is arrogance as the essence of denial, embodied in Pharaoh. The surah's centrepiece is not chosen at random: Pharaoh is the man who "transgressed" and topped his rebellion with the ultimate claim, "I am your lord, the most high" (79:24). Against this stands the gentleness of the invitation Musa was told to bring — "Would you purify yourself?" (79:18) — offered even to a tyrant. The contrast is the lesson: God's call comes softly and with dignity, but pride refuses it, and the

same pride that says "I am the highest" is precisely what God seizes "with the punishment of this world and the next." Pharaoh is the perpetual warning that the root of disbelief is often not the mind but the swollen self.

A third theme is the decisive criterion of the two destinies (79:37-41). The surah reduces the whole moral life to a single fork: the one "who transgressed and preferred the life of this world" against the one "who feared the standing before his Lord and restrained the soul from desire." Salvation, in this crisp formulation, turns on two linked disciplines — keeping alive the awareness that one will stand before God, and, on the strength of that awareness, reining in the self from its cravings. It is one of the Qur'an's most compact definitions of taqwa in action.

Points of reflection

An-Nazi'at begins with death precisely so the reader will feel the personal edge of its argument: the same angels who "drag forth" souls today will one day drag forth ours. Meditating on that private, certain moment is the surface on which the surah's vast cosmic drama becomes intimate and urgent.

Its enduring gift is the pairing at verses 40-41: fear the standing before your Lord, and restrain your soul from its base desires. This is a portable measure for daily choices — in the instant of temptation, to recall the maqam (the standing before God) and to hold the nafs back. And Pharaoh stands over the whole surah as a warning against the pride that will not say "Would that I purify myself," while its close reminds us that however long this life feels, on the Day we see the Hour it will seem no longer than a single evening — so the time to restrain the soul is now.

FIVE

Carrying it

1. Guard the two things the surah joins: fear of standing before Allah, and the daily discipline of denying the self its forbidden cravings.
2. See in every arrogant power, ancient or modern, the shape of Pharaoh and the certainty of the same reckoning.
3. Weigh the world by its true length, an evening compared to eternity, and let that shrink its pull on your heart.

Where this reading draws from. Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, al-Tabari, Jami' al-Bayan, al-Sa'di, Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman. A summary is not a tafsir: for the verse-by-verse treatment go to the works themselves, or to the close studies at deen2u.com/tadabbur/.