

Al-Fatiha

Notes on Nouman Ali Khan's Tafsir

I. Intro

- a. Words "verses" and "chapter" don't give justice to the words "Ayaat" and "soorah"
- b. Diff whether Basmalah part of the surahs or not
 - i. NAK view
 1. Basmalah not part of the soorahs

II. [All] praise and thanks is [due] to Allah, Lord of the worlds [1:1]

- a. Hamd
 - i. Combination of two things: praise and gratitude
 1. They don't always go together
 2. Praise: Madh; Gratitude: Shukr
 3. Why use one word (hamd) for both and not separate?
 - a. Best speech that which is little and gets point across
 - b. Separating two would make it seem as if Allah *sometimes* deserves thanks and at other times praise. It separates them when they always should be together towards him.
 - ii. Hamd is only done for the living and necessarily sincere
 1. Madh can be done without sincerity
 - a. Ex: Old poets praising kings
 - iii. It is a noun so it is timeless
 1. He ALWAYS deserves praise
 2. His praise is permanent
 3. Started with noun because its verb form needs a doer
 - a. Allah's praise doesn't need anybody
 - iv. Everything He does deserves to be praised
- b. Shukr
 - i. Show gratitude/appreciation for whatever He does for us in our lives
 - ii. Main problem with atheists is not appreciating God
 1. Can't get themselves to be grateful to Him
 2. Always complain about Him
- c. Used His Name Allah and not one of His Attributes
 - i. Because they're can be some confusion as to who exact it is by some people
 1. To clarify it that it is only Him and not false gods
 - ii. Mentioning an attribute only would seem we are only thanking Him for that one specific attribute
- d. Informational vs. emotional sentences
 - i. Emotional don't have true or false
 - ii. Word "inna" used for only informational sentences
 1. Hence Allah did not begin fatiha with it
 - a. Saying Alhamduillah is meant for both type
- e. Lillahi Al-Hamd means hamd only belongs to Allah and no body else!
- f. Word Rabb
 - i. Giver of gifts, care taker, maintainer (make sure something doesn't die), owner, etc. – secondary meaning
 - ii. Master – primary meaning
 1. Our main relationship with Him
 2. Summary of entire Qur'an: He is our master and we are His slaves

3. Usually masters punish immediately for not doing something they want you to do
 - a. Allah lets you keep going
 4. A slave is 24 hours unlike an employer whom you work for only a little while
- g. 'Alameen
- i. "Worlds" definitely not good translation
 - ii. Means
 1. Nations of people
 2. Ethnic groups of people
 3. Society of people
 4. Species of people (jinn, etc.)
 5. Peoples of the worlds
 6. Generations of people
 7. Surah is about people and fits better with the rest of the surah

III. The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful [1:2]

- a. Both words mean merciful
 - i. Origin is Rahmah
- b. Mercy to Arabs when you are completely covered and taken care of
 - i. Ex: Baby in the womb
- c. In Arabic both put together in one sentence to show the difference
 - i. Ar-Rahman [3 benefits meant here]
 1. Extremely Merciful
 2. Something happening right now
 3. Temporary (transient)
 - a. May be taken away if you do something right now
 - ii. Ar-Raheem [2 benefits meant here]
 1. Permanent – always there and never going to go away
 2. Is not necessarily happening right now
- d. Cannot imagine His Mercy, it is incomprehensible
- e. Both words used here to show that Allah is being Merciful to His creation right now as well as in the future
- f. Rahman for all creation, Raheem only for the believers

IV. Master of the Day of Judgment [1:3]

- a. Everyone will answer precisely
- b. "I am going to take care of account too"
- c. "I own that great day of precise 'audit'"
- d. Owner of that day and its king
 - i. Owner sees little things whereas king deals with big things
 - ii. Maalik means owner and Malik means king
 1. Both words meant here
 - iii. He owns every detail of that great day
- e. Two kinds of people on day of judgment
 - i. Those who receive His Mercy
 - ii. Those who receive His Justice

V. It is You we give ourselves to completely and You we ask for help [1:4]

- a. It is You we worship and You we ask for help
- b. The above three verses lead to this [His worship]
- c. We give ourselves to you in totality

- i. We're talking directly TO HIM
- ii. Declaration of dependence on Allah
 - 1. Only truly free when enslaved to Allah
 - a. All else forms of freedom are false
- d. Words "master" and "guidance" very frequently mentioned together in the Qur'an
 - i. Guidance is a set of instructions
 - 1. A master can only be a master if he is giving instructions else he is not a master
 - a. Hence Allah is our Master and He gives instructions to His slaves (guidance)
- e. The second part of the verse
 - i. Help in matters you are struggling with
 - 1. Specifically asking help in things you are already struggling with
 - a. Your telling Allah, "O Allah I am already *trying* to do this but struggling, so please help me because I cannot do it by myself."
 - i. If you are not making ANY attempts, you have no right to ask for His help
 - ii. Primary task: be His Slave and completely submit to Him
 - iii. Secondary task: Ask for His help
 - iv. Worship and Submission to Allah is for Him and the seeking His help is for us, hence, it is mentioned in that order
 - 1. The first qualifies for the second
 - a. If not submitting oneself to Him, then you are not qualified to be asking from Him
 - 2. Possible asking for help for the task declared before it [submitting oneself to Him and worshipping Him]

VI. Guide us to the straight path [1:5]

- a. Telling us this is number one thing we should ask for
- b. Why use We
 - i. Telling us we should ask TOGETHER
 - 1. By our selves, we won't survive
 - 2. Do things together and be a community
- c. Often repeated that we should ask for guidance
 - i. Because we should be desperate for it
 - ii. So important that we ask for it in every unit of prayer
 - iii. Because we need it so bad so we ask for it over and over again throughout our day

- d. We need it so we ask for it
 - i. We ask for things we need and not what we have
- e. Increase in knowledge does not mean increase in guidance
 - i. You have to ask for guidance and beg for it
 - ii. A person may have knowledge but not guidance
 - iii. Don't let knowledge become a fashion
- f. Siraat
 - i. From long straight sword
 - ii. Means one straight path which cannot have multiples
 - 1. Is only one
 - 2. Siraat does not have a plural because it is alone and can only be one
 - iii. It is wide, straight, long and dangerous due to attacks from shayateen, etc.
- g. Mustaqeem
 - i. Stand up straight
 - ii. Straight upwards
 - 1. It heads upwards to the heavens

VII. The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor [1:6]

- a. Those who are already gone and not the current alive ones because they can still go astray
 - i. Hence it is said in past tense
 - ii. They "graduated" with certificates of His pleasure
- b. "You have bestowed favor"
 - i. Allah MADE it easy for them
 - ii. 'anama
 - 1. Something soft and easy and also means cattle (because they just 'chill' and are real relaxed)
 - iii. Meaning this path becomes EASY if Allah MAKES it easy for them
- c. Used verb of past tense ('anamta) because they are already gone and not with us

VIII. Not of those who have evoked [Your] anger or of those who are astray [1:6]

- a. Maghdhoob 'alayhi
 - i. Someone whom everybody else is mad at
 - 1. He is receiving lots of anger
 - ii. Everybody may be Allah, believers, angels, etc.
 - iii. Allah also doesn't mention His Name because He doesn't even want to be mentioned with them. He is distancing Himself from them
 - iv. Such people knew better but still chose to go the wrong way. They had knowledge (Jews)
- b. Dhaalleen
 - i. Those who got lost
 - ii. They did not know any better and are ignorant (Christians)
 - 1. They're ignorance is not an excuse
- c. Used nouns because they always will be there

IX. Other points on Fatiha

- a. Guidance is when you follow knowledge with action
- b. Teaches us that don't be like those who have knowledge but no action nor those who have action but no knowledge. Rather, do both.
- c. Iyyaka na'budu is conclusion of first part and wa iyyaka nasta'een is the conclusion of the second part
- d. Three parts in this Surah

- i. Allah – start with noun sentence
 - ii. Us and Allah – mixture of both
 - iii. Us – start with verb sentence
- e. All of humanity in three categories
 - i. Those whom He favored
 - ii. Those with whom He is angry
 - iii. Those who got lost
- f. It talks of individual eemaan and collective action
- g. It is connected to Surah An-Naas and they both complement each other
- h. Opposite of guidance is being lost
- i. We should not consistently do things that we know are haraam
 - i. Can cause Allah to be angry with us and being lost as a punishment to the point that we can never get guidance again