

Tafseer Surah al-Naas (الناس)

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

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Introduction

- The whole surah is actually one sentence and not multiple
 - This is an indication that verses should not be looked at separately but together as a whole
 - They all connect with each other and this helps us in understanding the Book of Allah better
 - Word Surah
 - Originally in Arabic it means a high floor on top of which there is another floor and on top of which there is another and so on. Therefore, not only the verses are connected to each other but also the surahs
- This surah was revealed together with Surah al-Falaq before it
- Allah is teaching us that we only turn to Him in times of need
 - Two most desperate needs that human beings have:
 - Protection of dangers from the outside
 - Protection of dangers from the inside
- The most valuable thing we take to Allah are our hearts
 - Surah al-Naas protects the heart (inside danger), whereas, Surah al-Falaq protects us from the outside dangers.
 - So the two surahs protect our religion (al-Naas) and our worldly life (al-Falaq)
- The three Names chosen by Allah for Himself in this surah point to His divinity and show to us our powerlessness, thus, our need for Him to help us overcome our *nafs* (lowly desires) and the whispers from the devil
 - The three Names are: Lord, King, and God
- The Quran ends with seeking refuge in Allah and begins with al-Faitha, which speaks about seeking help with Allah alone (Safwa al-Tafaseer)

Tafseer of the Verses

1. **Say, I seek refuge with the Lord of people**
 - a. The word *Rabb* (Lord) in Arabic means the following things:
 - i. Authority
 - ii. Owner
 - iii. Giver of gifts
 - iv. One who nurtures

- v. One who takes care or maintains
- b. The word *Rabb* entails that Allah is the Creator and Controller of all existence (Safwa al-Tafaseer)

2. The King of mankind

- a. He is the King of all creation including to those who rule and those who are ruled. It He who rules them, controls their actions, manages their affairs, grants them honor or humiliation, and makes them wealthy or poor (Safwa al-Tafaseer)

3. The God of mankind

- a. What sets us apart from animals is our pursuit of a Deity
 - i. Otherwise, we are not much different than animals: we eat, sleep, and pursue other needs of life
 - ii. When you remove the Deity from the equation, then we tend to cross the boundaries set by Allah. This is when you start pursuing whatever fulfills your desires because there are no restrictions left in place
 - 1. This is why we find many atheists who have been given much from the worldly life addicted to drugs and alcohol in order to escape reality. This is because they do not feel anyone really cares for them and they are lonely. They are seeking a *Rabb*
 - a. This is one of the down sides to Godlessness
- b. When we realize that Allah is in no need of anything or anyone and that everything else relies on Him, then we recognize that He alone deserves to be worshipped

4. From the evil of the retreating whisperer

- a. The Arabic word *sharr* (evil):
 - i. Comes from a word meaning when a bit of fire jumps out of a fire and touches you, a form of painful harm
- b. The Arabic word *waswaas* (whisperer):
 - i. It comes from a word meaning sound of the clanking of jewelry in a way that you barely hear it
 - ii. Also used to indicate when a hunter, who is perched in the deep grass while waiting for the animal to come on target, tells his hunting animal to stay put in a very low whisper
 - 1. So basically a sound made by the hunter before he catches his prey
 - iii. When you do not even notice when someone is giving you a suggestion
 - iv. When someone is really good at giving you subtle suggestions that you do not even realize it
- c. The Arabic word *khannaas* (retreating):
 - i. When a star flickers and disappears quickly
 - ii. A barely detectable gesture
 - iii. When someone sneaks away in a manner that it is like he was not even there to begin with
 - iv. It can also mean to distract someone in order to put them off their path or goal

- a. Humans have been given a restricted time on this planet and they need to use it to find their purpose and achieve it with Allah. Devil's job is to delay and distract you from it
- v. Allah is telling us that there are very powerful dangers that we do not recognize and He is informing us about them
- vi. There is a strong connection between what we hear and how that impacts our hearts
 - 1. This is why Allah sent us His words as a guidance for our hearts. At the end of the day it's the battle of words. Allah's words are a light and evil words are darkness. We have to decide what type of words we want to surround ourselves with

5. Who whispers [evil] into the breasts of mankind

- a. We all have a devil that is assigned to make evil suggestions to us as mentioned in a hadith
 - i. It is called a *qareen*
 - ii. He encourages you to do evil deeds and keeps you away from doing good ones
 - iii. He comes to make suggestions and disappears constantly
 - 1. He never takes a break
 - 2. One of the main suggestions he makes is to encourage us to delay good things with the hope of you eventually giving them up
- b. Ibn Abbas said that it is like the devil sits on top of your hearts waiting for an opening to enter
 - i. It is we who open it for him to enter. Once he enters, then evil deeds no longer seem bad and the person just does them out of habit. It gets to a point where the devil does not even need to suggest evil anymore

6. From among the jinn and mankind

- a. Those people who let the devil into their hearts eventually become the ambassadors of the devil himself
 - i. They transform into human devils. They become partners with the devils
 - ii. This is when these people begin giving you evil suggestions
- b. The word *shaytan* (devil) in Arabic:
 - i. Comes from a word meaning to let something burn for a long time. He is called this because he wants to burn something inside of you and keep it burning
- c. Another name for the devil in Arabic is *iblees*:
 - i. Comes from a word meaning to be cut off
 - 1. He cuts us off from good things
 - ii. It also means to be hopeless
 - 1. He makes us feel hopeless and guilty
 - a. Ex: He may suggest after you do an evil deed something like, "You are an evil person. You are probably not going to go to Jannah so just do whatever you want"
 - i. Sometimes the devils among mankind may also join in and tell you the same