

# Tafseer Surah al-Qari'ah (القارعة)

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

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## Introduction

- This was revealed in the Meccan period
- The subject matter of this surah is the Day of Judgement
  - There are three types of deeds that will be weighed on that day
    - Good deeds
    - Bad deeds
    - Worthless deeds
      - These are deeds that carry no value and are meaningless. They may not be forbidden but also carry no reward
        - Ex: wasting time sleeping all day
- The surah asks a rhetorical question in the beginning and end of it
- This surah has a nice contrast with *Surah Az-Zalzalah* (chapter 99)
  - They both seem to complement each other

## Tafseer of the Verses

### 1. The Striking Calamity

- a. The Arabic word *al-Qari'ah* (striking calamity)
  - i. The root of the word means for something to be leveled or beat something to the point where nothing is left on it
  - ii. The word also refers to baldness
    1. Because there is nothing on the head of such a person
  - iii. The word is also used to describe the violent sound that is made when hitting something that is barren, hard, or stiff
    1. This is why it is also used to describe the sound that is made when someone is being hit with a stick on their skin
      - a. The skin has nothing on it as well
- b. In the context of this verse, it is being referred to the Day of Judgement, because the land that we stand on that day will be barren, empty, and stiff
  - i. Some said the Day of Judgement is called by this name because the enemies of Allah will be beaten that day

### 2. What is the Striking Calamity?

- a. Meaning, are you wondering what this Striking Calamity will be?
  - i. It's capturing the natural response of the listener who will not know what the phrase is referring to

### 3. And what can make you know what is the Striking Calamity?

- a. Meaning, you have no clue about how serious and horrifying that 'Striking Calamity' is, meaning the Day of Judgement
- b. Such a statement in the Arabic language is used to refer to something serious

### 4. It is the Day when people will be like moths, dispersed

- a. Why use the word moths?
  - i. They scatter in all directions and are attracted to the fire
    1. So it is as if Allah is saying that the people that day will be in complete chaos scattering all over the place and perhaps even into the Hellfire
- b. The Arabic word *mabsoos* (dispersed)
  - i. It means to take something that was once together and then disperse it
  - ii. It is also used for horses that were standing together and then unleashed on the battlefield towards the enemy
  - iii. The word also carries the figurative meaning of sadness. This is when someone is so overwhelmed with sadness that their mind becomes scattered and they cannot think straight nor focus
    1. Perhaps this word is used because the people that day will be so overwhelmed with sadness that their minds will be scattered

### 5. And the mountains will be like wool, fluffed up

- a. The Arabic word *al-'ihn* (wool)
  - i. This is used for something that looks to be solid but when you touch it, it turns out to be soft, weak, and crumbly
    1. So it gives the appearance of hardness. Wool is exactly like this because it looks solid but is actually very soft when you touch it
  - ii. In the context of this verse, it means that even though the mountains look strong, they will be easily crumbled up on the Day of Judgement
- b. The Arabic word *al-manfoosh* (fluffed up)
  - i. Linguistically, it refers to scattered possessions or could also refer to tearing parts of wool
  - ii. The imagery in the context of this verse is that mountains will be torn apart so easily on the Day of Judgement that it would be like they do not even carry any weight
- c. In this life, the mountains are used to indicate firmness, strength, and power, however, they will carry no significance on that horrifying day

### 6. Then as for one whose scales are heavy [with good deeds]

- a. The heaviness in this verse could be referring to the scales or the actual deeds being weighed
- b. Sometimes we use our tongues to say things which seem insignificant to us but may weigh heavy on the Day of Judgement
  - i. Ex: simple *adhkaar* like saying *SubhanAllahi wa bi hamdi, SubhanAllah hil adheem*, the *kalimah*, etc.

- ii. There are hadiths which indicate people getting into paradise for very minor good deeds, such as, giving water to a thirsty dog, removing something harmful from the street, etc.
- c. This is teaching us to give value to good deeds no matter how small, we do not know which one of them may lead us to our salvation
  - i. Having good intentions behind those deeds is just as important

### **7. He will be in a pleasant life**

- a. Meaning those who pile up good deeds in this life, no matter how bad their life may be going in this world, will be living happily in the afterlife
  - i. Good deeds will be the only currency, in combination with faith, that will matter on the Day of Judgement
- b. The use of the word 'pleasant' implies that they will be content and pleased
  - i. It will be a life of full of peace, rest, contentment, and tranquility

### **8. But as for one whose scales are light**

- a. Meaning those whose good deeds do not weigh heavy enough for them on the Day of Judgement to succeed
  - i. Perhaps because they led a reckless life not caring for their afterlife and focusing only on this life
  - ii. It could also be because they filled their scales with meaningless deeds that carry no weight at all, such as, wasting time with things which may not be prohibited but carry no reward as well

### **9. His home will be an abyss**

- a. The 'abyss' is in reference to the Hellfire in this verse
  - i. This will be their resting place. It is being described as a canyon that has no bottom

### **10. And what can make you know what that is?**

- a. Meaning you have no clue as to what that bottomless ditch is

### **11. It is a Fire, intensely hot**

- a. This is the answer to the question posed in the previous verse
- b. The Arabic word *haamiyah* (intensely hot)
  - i. Linguistically, it means the intense flame of the sun
  - ii. The fire of Hell is seventy times hotter than the fire of this world [*Tafseer Sa'adi*]
  - iii. The fire is heated up by the fuel that is put in it [*Tafseer al-Muyassar*]f
    - 1. In other verses of the Quran, we are told that the fuel of Hellfire are men and stones
  - iv. The word is also used to refer to prevention
    - 1. In the context of this verse, it implies that this fire will prevent any type of good reaching the person