

Tafseer Surah at-Tariq (الطارق)

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

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Introduction

- I. This is a Meccan *surah*
- II. In this *surah*, Allah reminds us that as individuals we will be held accountable for actions we take within our sphere of influence
- III. Purpose of the *surah* according to *Mukhtasar fee al-Tafseer*:
 - A. Demonstration of Allah's penetrating surveillance and power

Tafseer of the Verses

1. By the sky and the night comer

- a. This is an oath by which Allah is drawing our attention
- b. Meaning of 'night comer'
 - i. Some said it is in reference to the shooting star(s) at night
 - ii. Some said it is in reference to the angels that visit at night

2. And what will make you realize what the nightly star is?

- a. Now Allah will begin to mention Himself what He means by it

3. It is the piercing star

- a. Some said it is in reference to Saturn
 - i. However, this is just an opinion because the verse itself is not explicit about it
- b. The idea being expressed here is the glowing light of the stars piercing through the darkness and reaching all the way to us
- c. It could also be said that these stars are representation of the angels that are witnesses over us and their watch and gaze over us piercing through
 - i. We are never left to our own devices, rather, we are under constant surveillance
- d. Some interpreted it to mean that it is in reference to the Qur'an, because its revelation brought a piercing light through the darkness of humanity

4. There is no soul but that it has over it a protector

- a. This is in reference to an angel entrusted to each one of us
 - i. Its jobs include:
 1. Writing down our deeds
 2. Guarding
 - a. It protects us as well as our recorded deeds which will be presented for accountability on the Day of Judgement

- b. If we internalize this properly, then belief in the afterlife and Day of Judgement will naturally occur, because they must be protecting us and our recorded deeds for some great purpose

5. So let man observe from what he was created

- a. Meaning let man ponder over his own creation in order to make it clear to himself the power of Allah and the powerlessness of man (*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*)
- b. Some said it means that let those among mankind who reject the resurrection look at their own creation and ponder, if Allah is able to make us the first time then He can definitely make us again a second time. In fact, it is easier to do it a second time (*al-Tafseer al-Muyassar*)

6. He was created from a fluid, ejected

- a. This is in reference to the sperm that gushes out and is put into the womb
- b. It is to draw attention to our insignificant origins
 - i. Despite such a lowly origin, Allah gave mankind honor

7. Emerging from between the backbone and the ribs

- a. This is in reference to the mother's womb and the baby during birth
 - i. The idea here is that man is not much different than how a plant comes out of the earth. The sperm is like a seed implanted in a woman's womb and when the baby is ready it comes out
- b. Some said it is in reference to the sperm
 - i. Ustaadh Nouman is convinced of the previous interpretation and not this one
- c. The objective again here is to show the insignificance of man based on his origin

8. Indeed, Allah, to return him [to life], is Able

- a. Meaning it is not difficult for Allah to bring man back to life again
 - i. On the Day of Judgement, Allah will send a rain that will bring mankind out of the graves and back to life
- b. Allah is refuting those who reject the resurrection

9. The Day when secrets will be put on trial

- a. Meaning Allah will bring to account everyone for their deeds including their intentions and motivations. Nothing will be hidden and everything will be put out in the open

10. Then man will have no power or any helper

- a. Meaning man will have no way to resist nor will anyone assist him in escaping the Day of Judgement. In other words, he will neither have offense nor defense

11. By the sky which returns [rain]

- a. Now we are going back to oaths to draw attention
- b. Rain is a reminder to us that we will be brought back to life because the cycle of rain repeats over and over again
 - i. Similarly, stars are a reminder that we are under surveillance

12. And [by] the earth which cracks open

- a. This is in reference to the Day of Judgement when the graves will spit out the dead and they will be given life again after rain
- b. Some said it is in reference to the plants, fruits, and trees that grow out of the earth as a result of the rain mentioned in the previous verse (*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*)

13. Indeed, the Qur'an is a decisive statement

- a. There is a correlation between the previous verse and this one. It means just as rain benefits the earth, the Qur'an benefits humanity
- b. Meaning this Qur'an clearly separates between truth and falsehood. Clear and articulate speech is able to separate and does not mix, thereby, causing confusion

14. And it is not to be taken lightly

- a. Meaning this Qur'an is not weak
- b. It is not a form of amusement or falsehood, rather, it is serious and the truth
(*Al-Mukhtasar*)

15. Indeed, they are planning a plan

- a. The disbelievers among the Quraysh were doing this because they understood that the Qur'an is something powerful
 - i. Their schemes consisted of trying to refute the Prophet's (pbuh) call to the truth and falsify his claims
 - ii. This is happening even today when those who do not like our religion try to make schemes to refute and falsify Islam

16. But I am planning a plan

- a. Meaning Allah has His own plan to refute and falsify them and make apparent the truth
 - i. So the Prophet (pbuh) does not need to worry about their efforts

17. So allow time for the disbelievers. Leave them awhile

- a. Meaning let these disbelievers be delayed for a little while and do not hasten to request their punishment and destruction
 - i. The Prophet's (pbuh) being told to give them a little more time and go easy on them despite their evil acts
- b. The Prophet (pbuh) was helped by Allah and he was able to escape to Medina. After that the Quraysh were constantly humiliated starting with Badr and ending with the conquest of Mecca
- c. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is being told that he will see them being eventually punished for their evil efforts (*al-Tafseer al-Muyassar*)