

Tafseer Surah al-Inshiqaq (الإنشقاق)

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

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Introduction

- I. This *surah* is about the inevitability of judgment day. It masterfully builds on the themes introduced in *Surah At-Takwir* and *Al-Infitar* and ultimately shows how, no matter what we do, we will head back to Allah
- II. This is one of the *surahs* about which the Prophet (pbuh) said that those who want to visualize the Day of Judgement should recite it

Tafseer of the Verses

1. When the sky has split [open]

- a. This is a visualization of the finality and end of everything. There is no turning back
- b. Some said it means when the sky is cracked opened due to the descent of the angels from it [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

2. And has responded to its Lord and was obligated [to do so]

- a. It could mean that the sky is going to listen carefully to its Master (i.e. Allah) and submit by splitting open on the Day of Judgement
 - i. It is as if the sky was eager to crack open all along but was just waiting for Allah's permission to do so
 1. Why does it want to crack open? Because of our sins and disobedience to Allah
- b. Allah created some things that are by design meant to come to an end
 - i. It is as if the beautiful sky was purposeless until it finally split open which was its purpose
 1. The Arabic language used suggests it did it on its own with the permission of Allah

3. And when the earth has been extended

- a. Meaning the highs and lows of the planet are stretched out like leather
 - i. It will be stretched out by Allah and made into a large plain

4. And has cast out that within it and relinquished [it]

- a. Meaning all that is inside of it, the dead and treasures, will be made to come out
 - i. Nobody will care about the treasures on that Day
 - ii. There is nothing of treasure of body that will be left inside of the earth

5. And has responded to its Lord and was obligated [to do so]

- a. The earth is also responding to Allah like the sky and submitting by spitting out whatever is inside of it

i. It was also eager to do so but was awaiting Allah's permission

6. O mankind, indeed you are laboring toward your Lord with [great] exertion and will meet Him

a. Meaning we are all going closer and closer to our death and meeting our fate afterwards whether good or bad

i. It's like we're all on a conveyor belt and heading towards Allah

1. We're all heading the pace Allah wants us to head

b. The second part of the verse means that there is no doubt about meeting Him and that it is good as done. Then Allah will either reward or punish

7. Then as for he who is given his record in his right hand

a. There will be no choice on the Day of Judgement in which hand a person's book will be given, however, in this life we still have a chance to make sure it ends up in the right hand by abiding by His laws

b. The record being given in the right hand will be a sign of success on the Day of Judgement

c. The 'right hand' also represents dignity and honor and this why also they will be given the book in their right hand

8. He will be judged with an easy account

a. Meaning those mentioned in the previous verse will be given a very easy audit

i. These people will be dealt with lightly and no detailed interrogation will take place over their deeds

b. Some said the 'easy account' means that Allah will look at such a person's book of deeds and overlook his sins and [just] reward him for the obedience [*al-Waseef*]

i. It is a form of mercy and favor from Allah

9. And return to his people in happiness

a. Meaning he will return to his family in paradise happy and full of joy

i. The happiness is the kind that is deeply felt inside of you

b. Everyone will get along in paradise and there will be no ill feelings towards other family members even if in this life they did not get along

10. But as for he who is given his record behind his back

a. Their right hands will be chained to their necks and their left hand will be tied behind their backs

i. They will be made to march forward like prisoners

b. Their books will be given behind their backs in the left hand

i. It is as if they will not even be given the opportunity to look at it

11. He will cry out for destruction

a. This is because they will see the Hellfire and know it is their destination

b. Some interpreted it to mean that such a person will call out for death due to fear of going to the Hellfire

12. And [enter to] burn in a Blaze

a. Fire of Hell is called a blaze because its fire will be at its maximum and its fuel is humans and stones

13. Indeed, he had [once] been among his people in happiness

- a. This is in reference to those whose books were given in their left hand
- b. Meaning he used to be happy with himself among his people in the worldly life and did not think about the consequences of his disbelief and sins

14. Indeed, he had thought he would never return [to Allah]

- a. Meaning he never thought that after death he would be returned to his Creator alive for accountability
 - i. This is why he behaved the way that he did

15. But yes! Indeed, his Lord was ever of him, Seeing

- a. Meaning Allah had always constantly kept an observation on Him
 - i. Allah was watching him all along and was aware of his condition in this life and will be in the next as well

16. So I swear by the twilight glow

- a. It is that orange glow that appears in the horizon 20 minutes or so before sunset
 - i. It is an indication of the night coming

17. And [by] the night and what it envelops

- a. It envelops the entire planet like a blanket

18. And [by] the moon when it becomes full

- a. Meaning as it gets thicker and gathers more and more light with each phase until it becomes full

19. [That] you will surely pass from one state to another

- a. Meaning the Prophet (pbuh) is being told that he will pass through numerous levels/stages in his life
 - i. Badr, Uhud, Hdaybiyyah, etc.
- b. Some interpreted it to mean that human beings go through numerous stages in their life from conception to the resurrection

20. So what is [the matter] with them [that] they do not believe

- a. Meaning do these disbelievers not see all these signs around them and ponder? How can they not believe in Allah and the last day?
 - i. Because it should suffice as an evidence

21. And when the Qur'an is recited to them, they do not prostrate [to Allah]?

- a. Meaning why do they not react when the Qur'an is recited to them?
 - i. The Word of Allah should humble us

22. But those who have disbelieved deny

- a. The denial here is general and applies to all of it (Qur'an, prophet, etc.) and the reason is because it was getting in Quraysh's way

23. And Allah is most knowing of what they keep within themselves

- a. The Quraysh were making lots of money from the idol tourism industry that they had developed and this was also part of the reason they did not want to follow Islam
 - i. This is what they are keeping within themselves
- b. Some said it means that Allah is most knowing of what they hide in their breasts out of stubbornness, because deep inside they know that the Qur'an is indeed the truth
[*al-Tafseer al-Muyassar*]

24. So give them tidings of a painful punishment

- a. Meaning inform them of a painful punishment that is prepared for them due to their deeds

25. Except for those who believe and do righteous deeds. For them is a reward uninterrupted

- a. The exception could refer to those who convert, believe, and do righteous deeds or it could be in reference to those who have already believed and are doing good
- b. The phrase “reward uninterrupted” means that it is without end and will never be discontinued
- c. It could also mean that those who believe and do what Allah has obligated on them that for such will be a reward in the afterlife that is without end [*al-Tafseer al-Muyassar*]