

# Tafseer Surah An-Nazi'at (النازعات)

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

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## Introduction

- I. This *surah* was revealed in Mecca
- II. What does it mean when Allah swears by something in the Qur'an, which happens in this *surah*
  - A. There are two major opinions on it
    1. Allah wants to glorify the thing being swore by and give it honor
    2. Allah is trying to get our attention and usually connects it with a response later in the *surah*
      - a) Sometimes Allah will not follow it up with a response because it is understood

## Tafseer of the Verses

### 1. By those who extract with violence

- a. There are numerous opinions on what this is referring to. This determines the interpretation of the next four verses as well
  - i. Ust. Nouman said he found 39. Here are some of them:
    1. Angels pulling out souls of disbelievers at time of death
      - a. This is the most famous
    2. Stars
    3. People who have gone far from their religion
    4. Bow that pulls on the arrow
    5. A wild animal that captures a teeth and then pulls it by its teeth
    6. Horses of the Muslim soldiers diving into enemy forces and pulling at the reins of their horses
    7. Winds that yank the trees out of the ground
    8. Horses being ridden by bandits
      - a. Ust. Nouman is convinced of this so the next four verses will be interpreted based on this interpretation
      - b. In the Arab world at that time, there were bandits that used to rob a village in the middle of the night on horses and run off.
      - c. The first verse is in reference to bandits pulling on the reins of their horses right before pillaging a village

### 2. And [by] those who remove with ease

- a. Meaning they release the reins of their horses so they can begin the raid
- b. Those who interpret that it is in reference to angels say that it is in reference to angels when they take the souls of the believers

**3. And [by] those who glide [as if] swimming**

- a. This is in reference to the horses that are moving fast into the village and they look as if they are flying due to their speed
  - i. The horses are piercing through the land
- b. Those who interpret that it is in reference to angels say it is in reference to the angels who glorify Allah while descending and ascending from the earth

**4. And those taking the lead vigorously**

- a. Meaning they get to their destination super fast
  - i. They had their target in sight and they moved very quickly to it
- b. Those who interpret that it is in reference to angels say it is in reference to the angels who race with each other to execute the command of Allah

**5. And those who arrange [each] matter**

- a. Meaning this raid was meticulously planned and executed by the bandits
- b. It could also mean that the raid was so quick and successful that they are back at their residence planning who gets what from the captured goods
- c. The Arabic word *tadbeer* means to plan and execute
- d. Those who interpret that it is in reference to angels say it means those angels who implement the commands of Allah

**6. Consider' the Day 'when' the quaking Blast will come to pass**

- a. The quaking here is in reference to the earth shaking on the Day of Judgement and horrifying everyone
- b. Meaning here is that the earth wants to shake badly but Allah is holding it back and on the Day of Judgement He will let it go
  - i. The earth itself has become the raider
  - ii. The earth wants to react to the sins that are committed on it but Allah is holding it back until Judgement Day
- c. Some said it is in reference to the first trumpet that will be blown [*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
  - i. This will cause everyone to die except those few spared by Allah

**7. There will follow it the subsequent [one]**

- a. Meaning a second wave of attack will come on the Day of Judgement immediately following the first one in the previous verse
- b. Some said it means this is when the sky starts falling apart immediately after the shaking of the earth
- c. Some said it is in reference to the second trumpet that will be blown [*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
  - i. This will resurrect the dead

**8. Hearts, that Day, will tremble**

- a. Meaning people will be disturbed by all that they are witnessing on the Day of Judgement but deep inside they will all know why this is happening

**9. Their eyes humbled**

- a. Meaning their eyes will appear to show humiliation because of what they know in their hearts

- i. Their hearts are broken

**10. They are [presently] saying, "Will we indeed be returned to [our] former state [of life]?"**

- a. There are two interpretations:

- i. It is in reference to this life when the disbelievers say this to mock the believers
- ii. It is in reference to the Day of Judgement when they will say this to refer to their former state in the graves

- 1. Meaning they are asking to be returned to their graves

**11. Even if we should be decayed bones?**

- a. Meaning even though our bones would have decayed and become hollow, so how could we be resurrected?

**12. They say, "That, then, would be a losing return."**

- a. Meaning the disbelievers make this statement with sarcasm

- i. They are trying to ridicule the belief of the believers

- b. Allah mentioned this statement of theirs to show that this is exactly what will happen to them on the Day of Judgement

**13. Indeed, it will be but one shout**

- a. Meaning the trumpet will only need to be blown once and that is all that would be needed to resurrect everyone on the Day of Judgement and face the horrors of that day

**14. And suddenly they will be [alert] upon the earth's surface**

- a. Meaning after the blowing of the trumpet, everyone will be immediately on the earth's surface alert and worried about their fate

**15. Has there reached you the story of Musa?**

- a. Story of Musa is brought up a lot in the Qur'an because it has many parallels to the story of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

- i. The Quraysh were like the Pharaoh and his people

- ii. The hypocrites in Medina were like the Israelites who disobeyed Musa

- iii. The Quraysh elite thought of themselves as quite powerful just like the Pharaoh

- b. The point of mentioning the story here is to tell Quraysh to not be like Pharaoh and to follow their Messenger, otherwise, the same fate could happen to them

**16. When his Lord called to him in the sacred valley of Tuwa**

- a. Tuwa

- i. Some said it is the name of the valley where Musa spoke to Allah

- ii. Some said it was only sacred that one night and not after

**17. "Go to Pharaoh. Indeed, he has transgressed**

- a. Pharaoh had crossed the line in many ways:

- i. He was killing people

- ii. He declared himself a god

- iii. He oppressed people

- iv. He enslaved an entire people (Israelites) for no reason

**18. And say to him, "Would you [be willing to] purify yourself**

- a. Musa is being told to say this to the Pharaoh softly

- i. This is the case even though Allah knew that the Pharaoh is never going to change

1. We learn from this that our job is only to deliver the message
- b. Meaning to purify himself from disbelief and sins [*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

**19. And let me guide you to your Lord so you would fear [Him]?"**

- a. Guidance fundamentally is attitude and some fundamental behavior
  - i. Knowledge, worship, etc. enhance guidance
- b. Meaning let me guide you to your Lord, who created you and takes care of you so that you fear Him by doing what He loves and keeping away from what angers Him [*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

**20. And he showed him the greatest sign**

- a. It could mean all the miracles that was shown to Pharaoh
  - i. Some said it means the miracle of the hand full of light while others said it is in reference to the miracle of the staff that turned into a large snake

**21. But Pharaoh denied and disobeyed**

- a. Meaning he denied the greatest sign and disobeyed what Musa was commanding him

**22. Then he turned his back, striving**

- a. Meaning he turned his back on Musa and went around making an effort against Musa's message and scheming against him
- b. Some also said that it means that when he saw the greatest sign, he turned his back and ran away out of fear

**23. And he gathered [his people] and called out**

- a. He forcefully gathered people to teach Musa a lesson in public in hopes of defeating him through the challenge with the magicians. Then he called out to his people saying the phrase in the following verse

**24. And said, "I am your most exalted lord."**

- a. Meaning he considered himself a high god and believed nobody else should be obeyed over him

**25. So Allah seized him in exemplary punishment for the last and the first [transgression]**

- a. The Pharaoh wanted to make an example out of the magicians who converted but Allah flipped the script and made an example out of the Pharaoh
- b. The second part of the verse means that for such people Allah will make an exemplary punishment for them not just in the afterlife but also in this life
  - i. His punishment in this life was that he was drowned and in the afterlife he will be entered into the most severe of punishments

**26. Indeed in that is a lesson for whoever would fear [Allah]**

- a. Meaning those who fear Allah and benefit from reminders will take heed in what happened to the Pharaoh by not behaving like him
- b. The Arabic word *'ibrah* (lesson)
  - i. A lesson so powerful that it moves you to tears
  - ii. A lesson in which you find great value
  - iii. A lesson which helps you cross to get to where you need to be
  - iv. To contemplate and think deeply about in yourself

**27. Are you a more difficult creation or is the sky? Allah constructed it**

- a. Now, we are entering a new subject

- b. It could mean a number of things:
  - i. Is Allah a better Creator or are you?
  - ii. Is creating you more difficult or the sky which Allah has built?
  - iii. Are you better at creating things or is the sky a more marvelous created thing under which you build all your things?

**28. He raised its ceiling and proportioned it**

- a. Meaning Allah created the sky as a high ceiling and it is stable
  - i. There are also no cracks or deficiencies in it
- b. The idea here is to remind us of the beauty of the scenery that we see above us and to realize that it is Allah who built it

**29. And He darkened its night and extracted its brightness**

- a. This is in reference to the setting and rising of the sun
  - i. It gets dark after sunset and brightens after sunrise

**30. And after that He spread the earth**

- a. Meaning Allah removed the unevenness of the earth
- b. It could also mean that Allah made the world smooth in order to make it easy to travel
- c. It could also mean that after Allah created the sky, He spread out the earth and placed in it its benefits [*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

**31. He extracted from it its water and its pasture**

- a. Meaning He extracted from the earth its water turning them into flowing springs and He grew on the earth vegetation which animals use for pasture [*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

**32. And the mountains He set firmly**

- a. He made mountains firmly set into the ground
  - i. The structures of the pharaohs are nothing compared to it

**33. As provision for you and your grazing livestock**

- a. Meaning the things mentioned in the previous few verses were made as a benefit for our animals and us
  - i. We need water, vegetation, animals, etc. to survive. We also need the day to be able to see and work
- b. The connection between humans and animals is drawn in a number of places in the Qur'an. It is as if Allah wants to say that as animals are to us, we are to Allah
  - i. Meaning Allah has mastery and complete control over us
- c. Another implication from the verse is that the One who created all of the above is not incapable of bringing us back again from the dead for resurrection

**34. But when there comes the greatest Overwhelming Calamity**

- a. Meaning when all of a sudden the Day of Judgement arrives
- b. It is a day that will immerse everything in its shock [*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

**35. The Day when man will remember that for which he strove**

- a. Meaning on that horrifying day mankind will remember everything that it did in this life whether good or bad
  - i. It is a day when we will reap what we sow

**36. And Hellfire will be exposed for [all] those who see**

- a. Meaning Hell will be made apparent and nobody will be able to deny it

- i. Everyone will see it and know right away what it is. There will be no doubt about it
- ii. It will be a horrifying scene!

**37. So as for he who transgressed**

- a. Meaning those who crossed the limit into misguidance [*Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
- b. It also means those who are rebellious, inconsiderate, and oppressive
  - i. Which means it could include Muslims as well

**38. And preferred the life of the world**

- a. Meaning the person preferred the life of this temporary world over the eternal next world
- b. This world in which we live is the lowest life. So those who prefer this lowly life are being criticized

**39. Then indeed, Hellfire will be [his] refuge**

- a. This is a form of sarcasm because how could a place of intense punishment be a refuge?!

**40. But as for he who feared the position of his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination**

- a. First part has three meanings:
  - i. The one who feared standing before Allah
  - ii. The one who will be terrified of the place they will be standing before Allah
  - iii. The time you have to stand
- b. Because of such a person's fear of standing before his Lord, he prevented himself from following desires
  - i. They fought their urges to follow desires that contradict Allah's religion

**41. Then indeed, Paradise will be [his] refuge**

- a. Meaning those who are mentioned in verse 40 will be seek shelter in paradise

**42. They ask you, [O Muhammad], about the Hour: when is its arrival?**

- a. This is in reference to the disbelievers who kept obnoxiously asking the Prophet (pbuh) about when it will occur
- b. One of the names of the Day of Judgement is "the Hour" because there is no other hour like it

**43. In what [position] are you that you should mention it?**

- a. Here Allah is telling Muhammad (pbuh) that he has not been given knowledge of it, therefore, he cannot answer their question from the previous verse. The Prophet's only job is to prepare them for it and warn them about it

**44. To your Lord is its finality**

- a. Meaning only Allah alone knows about when it will happen

**45. You are only a warner for those who fear it**

- a. Meaning you are a warner to only those who fear the Day of Judgement and benefit from your warning

**46. It will be, on the Day they see it, as though they had not remained [in the world] except for an afternoon or a morning thereof**

- a. Due to the terror of what the people witness on that day, this life will feel as if it passed by too quickly