

Tafseer Surah Al-Haqqah (الحاقة)

Notes on Nouman Ali Khan's Concise Commentary of the Qur'an
(Additional Sources Used as Well)

By Rameez Abid

Introduction

- I. This *surah* is dominated by the idea of warning from the very beginning
- II. The purpose of this *surah* is the following [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]:
 - A. Certainty of the occurrence of the Day of Judgment
 - B. Promise of joy for the believers
 - C. Warning of loss for the disbelievers

Tafseer of the Verses

1. The Inevitable Hour!

- a. The subject is mentioned by itself without the predicate to draw suspense
- b. This is in reference to the Day of Resurrection which is most definitely going to take place for everyone [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

2. What is the Inevitable Hour?

- a. This is an emphatic rhetorical tool to bring attention to the greatness of the Day of Judgment and to increase scare [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer* and Sabuni]

3. And what will make you realize what the Inevitable Hour is?

- a. What will inform you of what it is? [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - i. Meaning it is so severely frightful that nobody can even imagine it [Sabuni]

4. 'Both' Thamûd and 'Âd denied the Striking Disaster

- a. The 'striking disaster' is in reference to the Day of Judgment [Sabuni]
- b. Prophet Salih was sent to the people of Thamûd and Prophet Hud was sent to the people of 'Âd [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - i. Both nations denied their prophets and the Day of Judgment, which will strike the creation with its horrors [Sa'di]

5. As for Thamûd, they were destroyed by an overwhelming blast

- a. It has been understood in two ways:
 - i. They were destroyed because of their rebellion
 - ii. They were destroyed by a severe punishment
 1. The Arabic word used for 'overwhelming blast' also refers to rebellion. It is as if just as they rebelled, Allah made the natural resources around them also rebel against them by which they were destroyed

- b. Some said the ‘overwhelming blast’ is in reference to a blast which is extremely powerful and terrifying. It split their hearts causing them to die [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer* and Sa’di]
 - i. Others said it is in reference to a terrible great earthquake which destroyed them [Sabuni]

6. And as for ‘Ād, they were destroyed by a furious, bitter wind

- a. The wind was extremely bitterly cold and it hit them over and over again
 - i. It was a severe cold stormy wind with a frightening sound. The intensity of its cold was lethal. It exceeded all limits. Ibn Abbas said, “Allah never sends wind or water except with [precise] measure except on the day the people of Nuh and ‘Ād were punished” [Sabuni]

7. Which Allah unleashed on them non-stop for seven nights and eight days, so that you would have seen its people lying dead like trunks of uprooted palm trees

- a. The wind was so rough and strong that it even destroyed their homes. The winds were doing so by Allah’s command because He has absolute power over all elements. He can make them do whatever He wants
 - i. This vicious wind remained for seven nights and eight days non-stop. Tornadoes can do massive damage in just a few minutes by completely uprooting buildings so imagine the damage this wind did for so many days
 - ii. At the end Allah tells us the result of the damage this wind caused: it killed everyone and their bodies were scattered all over the place. They looked like pieces of wood lying around
- b. Allah compared them to palm trees because they were tall and had huge bodies [Sabuni]

8. Do you see any of them left alive?

- a. Meaning do you see anyone among them remaining after the punishment afflicted them? [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

9. Also, Pharaoh and those before him, and ‘the people of’ the overturned cities ‘of Lut’ indulged in sin

- a. Meaning there have been other nations as well who disobeyed, disbelieved, and committed acts of injustice. The two examples given here are of Pharaoh, to whom Prophet Musa (pbuh) was sent, and the people of Prophet Lut (pbuh) who indulged in filthy practices [Sa’di]
 - i. Pharaoh claimed himself to be a god and would kill people at will, whereas, the people of Lut engaged in homosexual practices [Sabuni]
- b. The people of Lut were destroyed by the city being flipped over them [Sabuni]

10. Each disobeying their Lord’s messenger, so He seized them with a crushing grip

- a. Meaning the Pharaoh disobeyed Prophet Musa and the people of Lut disobeyed him, thus, they were given very harsh punishments which destroyed them. Their punishments were more severe than those before them because their crimes were worse [Sabuni]

11. Indeed, when the floodwater had overflowed, We carried you in the floating Ark 'with Nuh'

- a. This is in reference to the destruction of the people of Nuh, who were sent a great storm which covered the land with water destroying everyone [Sabuni]
- b. The word 'you' is used because we are all descendants of those who were on Prophet Nuh's (pbuh) ark
 - i. There is a reminder in this because in a way we are all survivors of that great flood. It is as if we were also saved on that day
 1. Prophet Nuh built the ark by Allah's command so that we would be carried in it [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

12. So that We may make this a reminder to you, and that attentive ears may grasp it

- a. Meaning that storm was sent as a lesson and reminder to the creation pointing towards the vengeance of Allah towards disbelieving criminals and saving of the people of faith. Another reason is so that we may remember the warning and benefit from hearing what happened to them [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer* and Sabuni]

13. At last, when the Trumpet will be blown with one blast

- a. This is in reference to the second blowing that will resurrect all the dead on the Day of Judgment. There is a specific angel named Israfeel assigned with this duty [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
- b. Some interpreted this blowing to be the first one which will destroy the world and not in reference to the second one which will resurrect the dead [Sabuni]

14. And the earth and mountains will be lifted up and crushed with one blow

- a. The imagery is of huge piles of earth and mountains being lifted up and being smashed into one another. This will cause the mountains to turn into powder
- b. The crushing is going to be so strong and powerful that it does not even need to be repeated. Just one smashing will suffice for the mountains to be disintegrated. All of this will be taking place because of Allah's command [Sabuni]

15. On that Day the Inevitable Event will have come to pass

- a. On the day that all of this happens, the resurrection will take place [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

16. The sky will then be so torn that it will be frail

- a. The language used suggests that the sky was made to eventually crack
- b. Meaning the sky itself will crack that day due to the angels descending down from it. It would become weak that day after it used to be very tightly held together [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - i. Something very great would have to be happening for the sky to become this way [Sa'di]

17. With the angels on its sides. On that Day eight 'mighty angels' will bear the Throne of your Lord above them

- a. The angles will be standing on the side edges of the sky and even they will be frightened that day
- b. There will also be eight powerful angels who are assigned to holding Allah's Throne

- i. A hadith states, “*I have been permitted to tell you about one of Allah’s angels who bears the throne that the distance between the lobe of his ear and his shoulder is a journey of seven hundred years.*” [Abu Dawud]

18. You will then be presented ‘before Him for judgment’, and none of your secrets will stay hidden

- a. Everyone will be presented before Allah for judgment that day and nothing will be hidden from Him whether it relates to people’s bodies or deeds because Allah is aware and knows everything. Everyone will be gathered barefoot, naked, and uncircumcised. After the presentation, the people will be divided into two categories: the happy and the miserable. Each will be given a book in their hands [Sabuni and Sa’di]

19. As for those given their records in their right hand, they will cry ‘happily’, “Here ‘everyone’! Read my record!

- a. The word ‘those’ suggests it could be anyone even if they did not have power, influence, or wealth in this life
 - i. They will show off their results and be full of energy, excitement, and enthusiasm
- b. They will be happy and full of joy asking others to read their book of deeds [Sabuni]

20. I surely knew I would face my reckoning.”

- a. Meaning they were certain about the coming of this day so they prepared for it

21. They will be in a life of bliss

- a. Meaning they will be living it up in a good life and be pleased with it

22. In an elevated Garden

- a. Meaning there will be beautiful scenery for such people to enjoy
 - i. They will have tall palaces and fruits near by which they could easily reach to eat whether standing, sitting, or lying down [Sabuni]
- b. They will be in an elevated place and rank [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

23. Whose fruit will hang within reach

- a. Meaning they will never need to struggle to get the fruit. It will be ready for picking and close at hand

24. ‘They will be told,’ “Eat and drink joyfully for what you did in the days gone by.”

- a. This is because they left a good legacy behind in this world. The fruits of their labor are being given to them now in paradise
- b. There will be nothing there that will upset or bother them and they will have things no person has ever imagined [Sabuni]

25. And as for those given their record in their left hand, they will cry ‘bitterly’, “I wish I had not been given my record

- a. Meaning those who are given their book of deeds in their left hand will say this with regret [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]
 - i. This will be when they see their hideous deeds and evil punishment [Sabuni]

26. Nor known anything of my reckoning!

- a. Meaning they will wish that they were forgotten, not resurrected, nor held accountable [Sa’di]

27. I wish death was the end!

- a. Meaning they would wish that there was no resurrection for accountability and the death that they experienced in this world would be the end of their existence

28. My wealth has not benefited me!

- a. Meaning they will realize that they cannot use their wealth to get themselves out of the situation and evade Allah's punishment in any way. Their wealth in this world has no benefit for them on that day

29. My authority has been stripped from me."

- a. Meaning the authority that they used to have in this world has been taken away from them. They neither have the power nor the influence to escape the situation

30. 'It will be said,' "Seize and shackle them

- a. The angels will be commanded to seize them by chaining their hands to their necks like criminals

31. Then burn them in Hell

- a. Then they will be ordered to be thrown into the Hellfire for punishment

32. Then tie them up with chains seventy arms long

- a. Long chains will be connected to the chains around their neck from which they will be cast into the Hellfire
 - i. They will be wrapped in these iron chains in a way until they cannot move [Sabuni]

33. For they never had faith in Allah, the Greatest

- a. Now Allah is giving the reasons for why they are being given such a painful punishment [Sabuni]
- b. They disbelieved in Allah by being stubborn towards His messengers and rejecting whatever they brought with them of the truth [Sa'di]

34. Nor encouraged the feeding of the poor

- a. Forget about doing it themselves, they never even encouraged others to give to the poor
- b. Allah mentioned two of their crimes: disbelief in Allah and stinginess. Their hearts are empty of faith and mercy [Sabuni]

35. So this Day they will have no close friend here

- a. Meaning there is neither a close friend or a relative that day that can protect them from the punishment [Sabuni]

36. Nor any food except 'oozing' pus

- a. This disgusting thing is the food of the people of Hellfire
 - i. It is extracted from the bodies of the people of Hellfire. It will be dripping from their injuries [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer* and Sabuni]

37. Which none will eat except the sinners."

- a. The 'sinners' is in reference to those who intentionally commit sins [Sabuni]
 - i. They deserve this punishment because they pursued the path of Hell [Sa'di]

38. So no, I do swear by whatever you all see

- a. It starts with the 'no' to emphasize a rejection of all the ideas and wrong beliefs of the disbelievers about the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), afterlife, etc.

- b. The 'seeing' here is in reference to the destruction of the previous nations which the Arabs could see with their eyes. It could also be in reference to the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his behavior which they could all see

39. And whatever you cannot see!

- a. The 'cannot see' here is in reference to Judgment Day and all of the horrific things that will occur on that frightening day. It could also be other things related to the unseen, such as, Allah, angels, paradise, Hell, etc.

40. Indeed, this 'Quran' is the recitation of a noble Messenger

- a. This is the answer to the oath being made in the previous two verses
- b. Allah does not use the word 'speech' to refer to the Qur'an here but 'recitation' because it is being delivered through the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who is reciting and delivering Allah's speech to the people

41. It is not the prose of a poet 'as you claim', 'yet' you hardly have any faith

- a. Meaning this Qur'an is not the speech of a poet because its prose is different from that of a typical poem. This Qur'an is extremely magnificent and outside the ability of any human [Sabuni]

42. Nor is it the mumbling of a fortune-teller, 'yet' you are hardly mindful

- a. Meaning this Qur'an also at odds with the speech of the fortune-tellers [Sabuni]
- b. This verse and the one before it are responding to the accusations of the enemies of Islam towards the Qur'an. Their two main arguments were that it is either the words of a poet or a magician. This is because they lacked faith and were not being mindful. If they had faith and were mindful, they would see what benefits them and harms them. In fact, if they had looked at the Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) qualities and manners, it would have been clear to them that he truly is a messenger from Allah [Sa'di]

43. 'It is' a revelation from the Lord of all worlds

- a. Meaning this Qur'an is a revelation sent down by the Lord of all existence [Sabuni]

44. Had the Messenger made up something in Our Name

- a. Meaning had the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) added something to the Qur'an on his own which was not transmitted by Allah

45. We would have certainly seized him by the right hand

- a. Meaning Allah would seize the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in retaliation by His power and ability [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

46. Then severed his aorta

- a. Meaning Allah would have cut off the vein that connects with his heart which causes the person to immediately die [Sabuni]

47. And none of you could have shielded him 'from Us'!

- a. Meaning nobody would have been able to stop Allah from doing it
- b. A very graphic and frightful picture is depicted as to what would happen if the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) added something to the Qur'an [Sabuni]

48. Indeed, this 'Quran' is a reminder to those mindful 'of Allah'

- a. Meaning the Qur'an is a reminder for those who are mindful of their Lord by complying with His commands and abstaining from His prohibitions [*al-Mukhtasar fee al-tafseer*]

49. And We certainly know that some of you will persist in denial

- a. Meaning there will be people who will continue to call the Qur'an a lie despite the clarity of its verses and the nature of its inimitability [Sabuni]

50. And it will surely be a source of regret for the disbelievers

- a. The disbelievers among the Quraysh suffered the regret in this life and will also suffer it in the afterlife
 - i. In the afterlife, this would especially be the case when they see the reward of the believers and their happiness in paradise [Sabuni]

51. And indeed, this `Quran` is the absolute truth

- a. Meaning there is without a shadow of doubt that this Qur'an truly is from Allah and no reasonable person would be uncertain about it [Sabuni]

52. So glorify the Name of your Lord, the Greatest

- a. We can connect this to verse 33 above. The disbelievers did not have faith in Allah who is the Greatest so the believers are being told here to glorify Him by His Name so that they may be saved from His punishment
- b. We can also say that Allah is telling us that we should glorify Him by believing in His book and His Messenger (pbuh). If we did not believe in them, then we would not be glorifying Him