

# Surah at-Takathur - (The *Rivalry* in world increase) [102]

[Miracle Dream Tafseer](#) - Nouman Ali Khan

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## Introduction:

Al Bica'i: When Allah concluded the matter of the hour of **al Qari'ah**, He mentioned a group of people who will enter in the fire. This surah will discuss such people.

So He started this surah to tell the reasons why they fell into the hellfire.

In the previous surah - **Allah was talking ABOUT them (3rd person)**. Allah starts this one in the 2nd person - a final piece of advice from Allah to such people.

We spoke before about a Cluster of 4 surahs': Zilzal, 'Aadiyat, **al Qari'ah**, and now Takathur. These surahs have a pattern of; *Akhirah* (Judgment Day), worldly life, *Akhirah* (Judgment Day) again, and worldly life.

Because of that sequencing - this surah has a connection with the few surahs' before it, and not just the one before it.

## Ayah 1:

أَلْهَاكُمْ التَّكَاثُرُ

*Alhakumu attakathur*

The Piling up of worldly things **diverts you,**

**alha** - *lahwan* (past tense) - **il-haa**. Literally means **Entertainment**.

That which **keeps you busy and distracts you from what you should really be doing**. This is the essence of *Lahw*.

il-haa - **to be distracted and pulled away from something**. This word means that you are **wasting your time on something which is less important**, when you could be doing something alot more important.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ  
O you who believe, do not **put** [*tu<sup>h</sup>ikum*] your wealth and children from the remembrance of Allah.

[al Munafiqun 69:3]

Our **wealth and children should make us remember Allah** and **not be a source of distraction** which distances us from Him. That lesson - we will learn in this surah.

Allah will tell us how to get the things which distract us of this worldly life, and think of them in a way which will bring us closer to Allah's remembrance.

أَلْهَاكُمْ التَّكَاثُرُ

*Alhakumu attakathur*

The Piling up of worldly things **diverts you,**

*It deluded you..*

What did? Al Takathur deluded you/distracted you.

**Takathur** - *kathra* - *katheer* = Alot / **Plentifulness**.

Meaning;

**1 - The desire of having alot - *distracts you*.**

*"i want more money, a better car, a bigger house"*.

**2 - Competing with others in getting alot.**

I.e. Competing in wanting to get a better job than someone else. Even in petty things like; Competing in wanting a better chair than another co-worker in the workplace.

Even in social issues; i.e. Weddings, *"we need to have a more expensive wedding than theirs."* Even amongst children; *"I want to have his toy."*

**3 - Taking Pride in the Fact that you have more:**

I.e. *"I just got that brand new car for a special offer before anyone else found out about the offer."* *"I've got that brand new house which everyone wanted."*

**4 - You want more and more:**

All of you have the same thing - not one of you wants less, you all want more and more. The **one thing that unites humans is the fact that you all always want more.**

Takathur [Tafa'ul] - Mufa'alla, Ta'adhun - competition

This attitude - it deluded you, it distracted you.

**il-ha** **أَلَهَا** - **distracted**. But *distracted you from What?* The word following il-ha has to have the word **'An** **عَنْ** after it.

Like in surah al Munafiqun;

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَنِ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ  
O you who believe, do not **put** [*tu<sup>l</sup>hi<sup>k</sup>um*] your wealth and children **from** [*'an*] the remembrance of Allah.

[al Munafiqun 69:3]

You have to usually Always say '*An* [from] **after** this word of **il-ha**.

But Allah does **not** say '*An* in this ayah. Why is this?

By leaving it open - it becomes (*itlaq*) - **Absolute**. Meaning: - '*You figure it out yourself*'.

Some scholars said it **Distracted you from**;

- The **truth**.

- The **One who sent the truth (Allah/God)**  
Your worldly affairs kept you away from Allah.

- **Looking into yourself**: "*What am I doing in life? What is my purpose?*" You waste your life in worldly pursuits, forgetting what your real purpose is.

- **Paying Attention to this Message**: It was supposed to give you guidance in this life.

- In surah al Qari'ah; **This distraction distracted you from Judgment Day**: preparing for it.

Parallel between this Surah [at-Takathur] and 'Aadiyat:

1 - Allah says in surah Aadiyat;

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِرَبِّهِ لَكَنُودٌ

Indeed mankind, to his Lord, is ungrateful/unloyal.

وَإِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ لَشَهِيدٌ

And indeed, he is to that a witness.

وَإِنَّهُ لِحُبِّ الْخَيْرِ لَشَدِيدٌ

**And indeed he is, in love of wealth, intense.**

[al Aadiyat 100: 6-8]

Your **love for wealth is so intense** - it **distracts** you.

az-Zamakshari - this plentiness and desire kept you busy.

To show off and to be proud of it and say We have more, and others argue they have more, and they compete to get more and more.

ash-Shawkani: they show off of who has **more of money and children**.

When il-ha is mentioned in surah Munafiqun, He mentions what distracts us from Allah's remembrance;

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْهِكُمُ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَٰلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

O you who believe, do not **put** [*tu<sup>l</sup>hi<sup>k</sup>um*] **your wealth and children from** [*'an*] the remembrance of Allah.

[al Munafiqun 69:3]

So Allah is telling us that wealth and children distract people in their competing.

اعلموا انما الحياة الدنيا لعب ولهو وزينة وتفاخر بينكم وتكاثر في الأموال والأولاد كمثل غيث أعجب الكفار نباته ثم يهيج فتراه مصفراً ثم يكون حطاماً وفي الآخرة عذاب شديد ومغفرة من الله ورضوان وما الحياة الدنيا إلا متاع الغرور

Know that the life of this world is but amusement and diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children - like the example of a rain whose [resulting] plant growth pleases the tillers; then it dries and you see it turned yellow; then it becomes [scattered] debris. And in the Hereafter is severe punishment and forgiveness from Allah and approval. And what is the worldly life except the enjoyment of delusion.

[Hadeed 57:20]

So both wealth and children - we want more and more for them / of them.

Plentiness in terms of children does not necessarily mean having alot of children.

Infact, playing against Allah's commands can bring about harm:

The chinese would restrict the people to having one child per family out of fear the country will fall into economic crisis. However, now they are in another crisis because they do not have enough children for the future generation to support their boosting economy system.

When Allah says; تَفَاخُرُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرُ فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ *takathur fil amwal wal awlad* - competing in wealth and children [Hadeed 57:20] - it means My child should have more better goodness than other peoples children.

Ibn Abbas: He would recite an extra hamza (A) sound at the beginning of the ayah. This makes the ayah into a Question.

أَلْهَاكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ

*A al haakum at-takathiru..* - Does the *takathur*/ammasing distract you?!

Abu Muslim: It could be a shared sentiment amongst people.

There were two farmers, one had a better garden:

وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَنَا أَكْثَرُ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا

And he had fruit, so he said to his companion while he was conversing with him, "***I am greater than you in wealth and mightier in [numbers of] men.***"

[al Kahf 18:34]

وَقَالُوا نَحْنُ أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ

And they said, "**We are more [than the believers] in wealth and children, and we are not to be punished.**"

[Saba' 34:35]

People have always thought that alot of wealth and manpower [children] is a sign of strength and competition.

ash-Shawkanj; it distracted you but He didn't tell what distracted you. Rather He made it absolute because that makes it more eloquent when shouting and criticizing someone. By leaving it open - what distracted you is open to you.

By making it removed - it is general to the many distractions. As is established in (*ilm al bayan*) - the science of speech/eloquence. *Takathur* distracted you from everything, from the obedience to Allah and from working towards the next life.

## Ayah 2:

حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ

Hatta **zurtumu almaqabir**

Until you **visit** the **graves**(i.e. till you die).

زُر **zur** - zaara - ziyaara - **go to meet** someone.

In ancient arabic it also means to hug someone too.

A Temporary visit.

**zurtum** - until you came to **greet** the **graves**.

When you meet someone - you are going to be temporarily with them. And this is why He says this word for graves and not for Paradise or Hell [which people will stay in forever]. Graves however, are a temporary location for before the Day of Ressurrection.

أَفَلَا يَعْلَمُ إِذَا بُعْثِرَ مَا فِي الْقُبُورِ

Doesn't he know when everything in the graves will be upturned.

[Aadiyat 100:9]

Quboor was used there for **grave**..

**Maqaabir** is used now (because it is more closer related to ziyaara - a visit). This is the *plural of maqbara* - and a noun prefixed with a **Ma prefix illustrates a Place** (makaan [a location]) = the **grave is a place**, which you will visit [*ziyara*].

So you **visit** (*ziyara*) the **maqaabir** - the **graves**. (because you will die and temporarily remain there, and after that Judgment Day will begin).

Another meaning;



## Competing in Remembering Heroes by Visiting their Graves

Some commented that there were tribes who would compete with everything; *we have more people than you, we have better weapons than you, and they would even say we have better dead people who are buried than your people.* They would then point at the graves and say - "do you have someone like that person?"

i.e. Like showing off about historical figures of their own.

Allah is telling us; **you should go to the graves and remember where you are headed.** So even the graves which remind you of death, you compete in them for worldly competition and pride! Don't you remember your own death?!

Which is why *al-ha* (past tense) has been alluded to show that *you are wasting your time in competing - when you should really be remembering death* by remembering that these heroes have died, that you don't even benefit from the dead as a reminder of your own end.

ash-Shawkani: they would visit the graves and they would take heroic pride in the people buried in them.

## Ayah 3 and 4:

Ayah 3:

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

*Kalla sawfa taAlamoon*

**Not at all!** (But) eventually you will know.

Ayah 4:

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

Thumma *Kalla sawfa taAAalamoon*

Again, **Not at all!** (But) eventually you will know.

**kal-laa** - for sure. (literally: **no! Not at all**).

When you wake up on the Day of Resurrection - you will be saying; *What have i done?*

Some people - you try to help them and remind them of death, but they won't listen to you. You think they're hopeless.

So Allah is saying - *kal-laa - No! They will soon come to know.*

This is after they have been buried.

**sa** - soon

**sawfa** - very soon.

**Ta'lamoon** - You [all] will know.

Ali bin Abi Talib; *"People are sleeping and when they die - they wake up."*

Man will only realise how they wasted their life away.

Some scholars said;

Ayah 3 was about; **When you enter the grave**, you will find out the reality.

Ayah 4 was; the second time **you come out of the graves on Judgment Day.**

The word *Thumma* [*Again!*] adds *takhfeem* (heaviness) to the first ayah.

Az-Zamakhshari: this is a warning, a benefit so the people wake up from their distraction. When a repeat occurs - the warning is more stronger and emphasises urgency in the situation. (i.e. "stop! Stop!")

The Qur'an is in the form of a Book, but the Qur'an was being revealed in speech - the Qur'an has more of an effect when you listen to it, even more than when you read it. Words are closer to the heart.

This is why the companions said;

يَقُولُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا - *sami'na wa atta'na* (an-[Noor 24:51](#)) - we Hear and obey.

## Ayah 5:

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ

*Kalla law taAlamoona Aailma alyaqeen*

No! If you only knew with knowledge of certainty...

**Kal-la** - no not at all.

**Laww** - expresses regret. **IF** you only knew.

'ilm al **yaqeen** - knowledge of **certainty**.

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ الْيَقِينِ

And indeed, it is the truth of **certainty**. [Surah al Haqqah 69:51]

**yaqeen** -

Raghib Isfahani: yaqeen is a kind of knowledge more than just 'knowing'.

yaqeen = **Solid conviction. Absolutely convinced**. Even stronger than Emaan.

Yaqeen is something you are so convinced of - that you are *fully sure of it*. As sure as yesterday. It is no doubt.

You **don't think about it again out of uncertainty**. (*sukoon an-nafs* - completely internally satisfied).

Yaqeen - a certainty - used in the Qur'an for **Death** (mawt.)

وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَكَ الْيَقِينُ

And worship your Lord until there comes to you the **certainty [yaqeen] (death)**. [Hijr 15:99]

**Death is something both the believer and disbeliever have yaqeen/certainty in.**

In the Qur'an - we know that people can understand the concept of Judgment Day, but they don't want to internalise it.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ وَالسَّاعَةُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا قُلْتُمْ مَا نَدْرِي مَا السَّاعَةُ إِنَّ نَظِيرَ إِلَٰظِنَا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمَسْتَبِقِينَ

"And when it was said that the promise of Allah was true, and that the Hour- there was no doubt about its (coming), you used to say, 'We know not what is the hour: we only think it is an idea, and we have no firm assurance.'"

[al Jathiyah 45:32]

There are 3 types of Yaqeen [Certainty]:

- '**Ilm al yaqeen** - certainty based on **knowledge**. I.e. Seeing smoke signifies a fire (even if we don't see a fire). Or wet grass is most likely due to rain.

- '**Ayn al yaqeen** - certainty based on **seeing**. I.e. Seeing the fire.

- '**Haq al yaqeen** - Certainty. **Feeling** the fire and it warms you or burns you = *haq al yaqeen*.

Allah gives us the two Yaqeen's in this life (*ilm* [knowledge] and *haq* [certainty] al yaqeen).

The Qur'an is 'Ilm al Yaqeen [Certain Knowledge]:

This perfect Book which is **not similar to any human Book** - is an '*ilm al yaqeen* [knowledge of certainty].

Describing the Qur'an;

وَإِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ الْيَقِينِ

And indeed, it is the truth of **certainty**. [Surah al Haqqah 69:51]

The disbelievers did not want *Ilm al yaqeen*, they wanted **Ayn al yaqeen** [Certainty of **Vision**].

An animal can be convinced with *Ayn al Yaqeen* [knowledge of Vision], but you were created of a higher level - you should be convinced by *Ilm al yaqeen* [Certainty of Knowledge] because of the high Intellect ('aql) Allah has given you.

Ayah 5:

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ

*Kalla law taAAalamoona AAilma alyaqeen*

No! If you only knew with knowledge of certainty...

'ilm al **Yaqeen** refers to;

Qatadah - knowledge of **death**. I.e. Your soul would want an answer to see what happens after death.

Even philosophers and intellectuals wish their name lives on; i.e. They name buildings and organisations and monuments in their name - the human wants to live forever, even if it's just by name.

The people want to live forever, through any means possible. They have this feeling because Allah has really made humans so they will live forever [either in Paradise or Hell]. Allah has placed this feeling in the human of wanting to live forever in the human *fitrah* (natural disposition).

Allah answered to it by making a next life.

## Ayah 6:

لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ

*La ta Rawunn\*a aljaheem*

Surely, You [all] shall see the blazing Fire (Hell)!

\*the *shadda* [(w) shape on top of the Noon] means there are 2 **Noon's**.

**Jaheem** - *Juhm* - the **stare of a lion when he is about to pounce on his prey**. The stare makes the animal petrified/horrified - so it can't move.

You will see - the stare of the hunting hell.

**La** - used to respond to an oath. It is a *qasam* - **for certainty**.

the *Lam* and **the 2 Noon's** are an emphasis each = **3 emphasis's in that ayah**.

**Surely**, you will **surely surely** see the blazing fire.

The ayah *could* be like this;

*la tarawwu al jaheem* - surely you will see hellfire staring at you as if it is going to pounce at you.

But this is how the Allah has said the ayah;

**la tarawuNNa al jaheem - surely you will Surely Surely** see **hellfire staring at you as if it is going to pounce at you**.

وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَىٰ رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَّقْضِيًّا

There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell); this is with your Lord; a Decree which must be accomplished.

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَنَذَرُ الظَّالِمِينَ فِيهَا جِثِيًّا

Then We will save those who feared Allah and leave the wrongdoers within it, on their knees.

[Surah Maryam 19: 71-72]

Even the believers who will not go to hell - will see it - to be grateful to Allah that He has saved them from that.

**You will all see it.**

Some say it is specifically talking about those who were distracted in this worldly life

(mentioned in ayah 1).  
They will see it for sure.

## Ayah 7:

ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ

*Thumma la taRawunnahaa 'ayna al Yaqeen*

Then you shall most certainly see it with certainty of **sight**

**Thumma** - not just After that. But also means **Moreover**.  
You will be convinced because of *Ayn al Yaqeen* [certainty of **Vision**].

So if you will only believe it through seeing it - then you will see it, and **when you see it - that's when you will go into it.**

We come to the last ayah:

## Ayah 8:

ثُمَّ لَتَسْأَلَنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ

*Thumma la tus-alunna yawma-idhin AAaniannaAAeem*



Then certainly you will be asked - on that Day - you will be interrogated thoroughly about the comforts.

**tus'aloona** - you will be asked for sure.

**la** tus'aloona - you will **certainly** be asked.

la tus'alun-na (with a *shadda*) - certainly you will **certainly, certainly** be asked.

Definitely - Allah is angry, that is why He has emphasised 3 times that you will be interrogated thoroughly [*tus'aloona*].

Allah's Messenger said;

-ليس احد يحاسب يوم القيامة إلا هلك -  
*laysa yuhasib yawm al qiyamah il-la halak* -

There is none who is questioned/taken to account on Resurrection Day except [he] is destroyed.

In regards to **na'eem**

**na'eem** نَعِيمٌ - *ni'mah* (ni'am / an'um - plural).

Na'eem - has a Ya in it which means 'extra continuous comforts':

You will be asked because you were in a state of **continuous blessing**. *What did you do with them luxuries?*

The Prophet was starving with no food, and Abu Bakr and Umar were also starving. So they went to another wealthy Companions/sahabi's house. So they gave Salaam twice, and then they said it last third time. The door opened. The wife in the house told that they wanted to receive Salaam from Allah's Messenger three times.

So this companion gave them some food and water. And Allah's Messenger told the companion that he would be asked about this food [i.e. us humans will be asked about our luxuries.]

Imagine ourselves in comparison to them. We have a lot more blessings (na'eem) than the companions of Allah's Messenger).

**The less we have - the less we will be asked. The more you have - the more you will be asked on Judgment Day.**

And us Muslims have sadly started to compete with each other for blessings (na'eem). If we have more, we might say alhamdulillah [the praise is for Allah], but we should fear that we will be asked about the more we have too.

**Na'eem** (with a Ya in it) - a **constant blessing**. Continuous food, water, ability to see, hear etc.

The Beginning of the Surah and its Relation to its End:

ash-Shawkani: the surah began with the **worldly possessions** (*takathur*) distracted you, and if we remember the **blessings will be a form of questioning** - these **blessings will be a means by which we can get closer to Allah**.

The na'eem were given to us - so they are Allah's. They will be taken away - we will visit the **maqaabir/graves** [in death].

The *na'eem* [comfort] is also the; Qur'an and the Sunnah [ways] of the Messengers'. We will also be **asked about what we did with that knowledge** we received from the Messengers'.

Qatadah - Allah will question the people **about every blessing** Allah has given us.

Ibn Abi Hatim: the urge of plentifulness deluded us from the obedience of Allah **until we met the graves**, and no - we will soon find out. If only you had found out, had you known when you will come out of your graves and come on Resurrection Day, and **you will see hell before your eyes**; if you are a righteous Muslim - you will be pulled away from it, but **if you are a disbeliever - you will fall into it**. Then **you will be asked about your blessings**; the food, drink, the balance of your creation (left, right etc.) even the sleeps (*nawm*) that you take.