**Level of Faith by Nouman Ali Khan!**

**In todays ceremony, I would like to share with you some teaching from 64th surah of The Quran” Surah Tagabun”. Before I share you that ayat, I would like to reflect on it and want to share things about and want to put little bit background in place. This is a medina surah and most of you are familiar that there are two types of surah in the Quran, mecci and medina surahs, early surahs and later revelations. Later revelation for the most part are the ones that came to the prophet (s.a.w.) after he migrated to the city of medina and most Muslims that are familiar with the Quran know that in the medina Quran or the later Quran is where Allah has reveled most of his instructions for the community, things that are permissible, things that are not permissible. when we think of the medina Quran, we think of the rules and regulation of the Islam and when we think of the mecci Quran or the early revelation, we think of our fundamentals of our faith and which is two third of the Quran and deals with matter of faith and beliefs. But this surah is unique, even though it is medina surah in nature, later surah but it still deals with the matter of faith and it begs the question why?? there is a very particular purpose for the revelation of this surah and this is important to understand when we study the Quran or try to benefit from the Quran, what context or what background is Allah azzawajal giving this speech because every surah is the speech of Allah and speech are given at particular address and specially when it comes from a particular authority right like in politics we have the president, a senator, a governor. He is gonna give a press release at particular occasion and speeches are concern with the issues that are happening at that particular occasion. So it is very relevant for us to know when was the speech was given, who was the speech given to, what occasion was the speech given at and what made him to say what he said. Same things happen in the Quran, Allah himself is speaking so it’s really important to know when Allah said this. At least have some idea to whom it is originally did Allah actually talking to. So I want to lay little bit in couple of minute before we go in to the ayat then I want to share with you why it is there in this khutba I chose to talk to you about this surah.**

**You know in medina when the prophet migrated, becoming a Muslim became a lot easier. Begin a Muslim in mecca was a difficult thing because you were on the outskirts, you were the obscure new religion. Anybody who believe in this man of being a prophet is basically outcast immediately looked upon as weird, everybody around were cutting out off their own circle. The biggest thing would be you think about your nationality or citizenship nowadays that was tribal association back in the day. So they were basically ready to disavow their citizenship, cut you off the tribe if you became a Muslim and early on it was just words media propaganda if you will but later on they even became physical, it became extremely difficult for anyone to enter into Islam. But once the prophet(s.a.w.) migrated to medina and he came to a welcoming city where people were already waiting for him to arrive and before he even got there celebration happening that the prophet is coming, the atmosphere is totally different. He didn’t have to come and find it difficult to get an audience that wants to listen to him, this is what it happened in mecca. Every time he speaks people just walk away or start making noise *wal al ghaufihi* just make noise when he talks, just don’t listen to him(arabic), don’t listen to this Quran just make noise every time he speaks. Ignore hi, avoid him, insult him but that’s not the case in medina. In median he gets a warm welcome, he is honored from the very first day, people are even singing and praising before he arrives in to the city, that’s amazing but you know what also happened at that time, it became easier to become a Muslim. Its not like that when you become Muslim your house is in danger now, your family is in danger, you might lose everything you earned up till now, and you might lose you tribal association and you might get in to a serious trouble, people might stop doing business with you just because you have become a Muslim. You didn’t have those dangers in medina, you had those danger in mecca. So the reason I put this before you because the people of mecca, the companions of the prophet(s.a.w.) they sacrificed a lot to become muslims and when you sacrifice a lot for something, you have a lot of value for it, you have real appreciation for it. So this thing we say *lailaha illallaah muhammadur rasoolallah(s.a.w.)* it is very easy for us to say but very difficult for them to say. So when they said it they paid, sometimes with blood, sometimes with tears and so they have a value for it but now the Muslims in medina though a lot of them in good number of them are extremely sincere, a good number of Muslim also started to come into Islam not realizing that this is some serious business, it requires a lot of sacrifice. They became Muslim kind in a convenient way not through difficulty but more conveniently therefore their faith and iman not really put to the test. The reason I chose this surah because in this surah Allah basically says to this Muslim community that is a mix of people who made a lot of sacrifices and there people that just came in to the religion. Some of them understood really well, some of them really not that well, some of them really don’t have very good intentions for being Muslim. They just see the Muslim as new rising power so might as well join the winning team and some of them have even come with not a good intention. Incidently the surah I am sharing with you, right before is the surah called surah munafikoon dedicated to subject of hypocrisy, people who came into Islam with the wrong reasons or their faith got corrupted over time. Now in this surah Allah talks to the entire Muslim community the strong believer, the weak believer, the mature believer, the fresh believer and even the corrupt ones, He is talking to all of them. Look we need to have a refresher on who Allah is, who have to go the faith 101 and take a refresher course on your iman. This is what the surah does, it talks to the Muslim community I put all of this in easier terms for all of us “it talks to a Muslim community whose faith is getting rusty”, their iman may be getting rusty and it’s time to clean it up and time to start from scratch again. So most of this teaching you don’t find them in medini Quran but you find them in mecci Quran. Allah dedicated this as a direct immediate and very relevant subject for the Muslim community, why did I bring this up as a matter of khutba? I was thinking, I was looking you know I generally give a khutba about a subject of iman about faith and I am gonna pick a passage from Quran that deals with the subject of faith but I said who am I talking to, I am talking to a bunch of Muslims including myself and for most of us muslims, have we made a lot of sacrifices to come into Islam, no we haven’t. actually for many of you who come from different parts of the world, your grandparent and your grandparent’s grandparents almost paid with their blood sometime they really did to hold on to *lailaha illallah* but we didn’t paid that price, our children didn’t paid that price and you know what? when you don’t pay a price for something you don’t have a value for it. May be you didn’t gave it a careful look before because it was always sitting there, you know when you give somebody a gift they look at it. You give a child a toy they look at it every single way; my daughter just got a gift from her grandmother on a road trip here, she played for the entire four hour looking at it, changing it this way because it is a new gift but if you look at her old gift, her old toys who were always sitting in the house, don’t get a good look, do they? They don’t get much attention. So there is something about being refreshed, having a new look and that’s what this surah does so let’s go and at least take few of these refresher that Allah is giving us in this surah.**

**He begins you *sabikulillah* very beautiful; this surah belongs to a group of surahs in Quran all of which have the same beginning, the same theme in the beginning. Allah compares the rest of the universe, the rest of everything He created on the one hand and human begins on the other. Everything is in one hand and human begins in the other, there is a comparison between these two. Of course the creator of both the things is Allah but he starts with everything else, “*the rest of everything I created*” He says ”*Yusabbihu lillahi ma fee alssamawati wama fee al-ardi”* everything in the skies and in the earth continues to declare GOD’s perfection, continues to declare the perfection of Allah. Everything in the skies and the earth continuously by the means of their existence is a praise of Allah himself and everything is fulfilling its purpose without taking a break. Now before we even go further, whose gonna be next human begins right, are human begin fulfilling their purpose the same way? That they are continuously by their very existence, continuously praising GOD’s existence, declaring his glory, praising Allah azzawajal, are they doing that? And you are supposed to be the greatest of all creation according to Allah himself *Laqad khalaqna al-insana fee ahsani taqweemin* the best possible way. So He says *Yusabbihu lillahi ma fee alssamawati wama fee al-ardi* now look at the attributes of Allah *lahu almulk*, He alone owns all kingdom. Let’s stop right there and understand something, after He mentions everything is constantly praising him and declaring his perfection then He lets us know that only true king is He, the only true governance is his, the only true sovereignty is his. You know when we think of government, king and authority whenever you think of these things the very next thing that comes in the mind of the listener is criticism. We criticize governments, people criticize their kings, and people criticize the authority. If there is one party to blame for all of your problems it must be the party that won the election last time that’s how it works, the party to blame is the party in power. Allah azzawajal declares him the owner of all power but in human experience whenever we think of power and authority the very next thing is oh! they are not doing their job, the authority is not doing what it is suppose to do, what does He say right after that, He says *lahu almulk walahu alhamd* He alone deserve all praise and all gratitude. This is the one authority the only thing you can say about him is praise and gratitude, you are not going to find this in any other authority, whenever you find an authority you will find something to criticize about. A lot of you have minimal authority for example you have a boss, your boss has an authority over you. Some of you have to run out of here almost when you say salam alekum wa rahmatullah there is gonna be a dash, you notice some people before they even finish their salam they are gonna be in sprint to the door you know, last on in first on out and even then they take two and a half hour break from their boss, they spend 30 minutes here and the rest of I don’t know but it’s the religious break because it is Friday. So lots of people do that, that’s fine and they still complain about their boss, ah! My boss is too tough, my teacher aah! Gives too much of homework you know, the government, the cop, the this, the that. Always you think of authority you think of blaming and here Allah says he owns all the authorities and he alone owns all praise and all gratitude, this is what Allah is. Let me tell you when iman, faith gets rusty people start complaining about Allah, people start saying how come Allah does this? How come Allah does that? How come this could happen? How does Allah doesn’t change our state? They start asking question about Allah, forgetting Allah deserves all praise not criticism, and He already owns all this. This is the basic lesson but sometimes Muslim forget that lesson, so they need to be reminded too *lahu almulk walahu alhamd* and after mentioning *walahu alhamd* He says** ***wahuwa aala kulli shay-in qadeer* He is in complete control over all things, obviously we already know that He is in complete control over all things He said that many times in the Quran even before but this is a new lesson because Allah is saying look I will do what I will and whatever I do is worthy of praise and gratitude and by the way I have the power to do whatever I want so Allah does whatever he wants but we are still not going to criticize and only going to have praise and gratitude for him *aala kulli shay-in qadeer.* Don’t you think that he has to submit to your standards and what you think is a good idea, and what you think is a bad idea, he is the master and you are slave know your place, he will make his decisions whether you get or not, whether you understand them or not and whatever decision he make are the best decision and they still deserve praise, this is what Allah is. *Huwa allathee khalaqakum* He is the one who created all of you *faminkum kafir waminkum mumin* He created you and out of you are some who disbelieve. The word *kafir* in Arabic also means ungrateful,** ***kafir* in Arabic just doesn’t means a disbeliever but also someone who is ungrateful; so it is the opposite of iman and kufr also shukran and kufr are also the opposites in the Arabic language. So it is Allah though saying that he is the one who created you and there are among you those are grateful and grateful for what? For having being created and on top of it having being shown the straightway and then there are those of you who are disbeliever, they don’t believe what was revealed and on top of that they are not even grateful for being created. I have met young people even Muslim sometimes and people of other faith they say I didn’t ask to be created by GOD then why did he create me, I didn’t wanna be created, I didn’t own him any thanks. So Allah says ya! you will find out idiots like that too, Allah just says it. He says *faminkum kafir waminkum mumin* he created you and you will find disbelievers and you will find a lot of them and at the same time says you will find a lot of ungrateful people they won’t even appreciate the fact that he created them and people that will find their faith *waminkum mumin.* Every time I meet a person like that I say Allah spoke the truth *faminkum kafir waminkum mumin* and then He adds something really beautiful whether you realize or not, whether you believe in GOD or not, whether you grateful or not one thing is always true the camera is always on, the surveillance is always going on, the record is constantly being written *wa-Allah-hu-bimatamaluna basir* and Allah is of full view of what you are up to. You know *rukiya* and *basira* are two different things in Arabic, *rukiya* is you see something, you saw something but *basira* in Arabic is you got a full view of something, you know what is going on in the front, in the back every side, you got a full view. So everybody can see a building but maybe somebody can see oh! I know what kind of foundation they poured, I know what kinds of building material were being used, I know how deep this building goes, How far; that’s *basira.* Allah doesn’t see one angle of what we do, he sees it from all the angles; why did you do what you did? When did you do it? Who did you do it to? What were your intensions?What was the quality of you work? The inside and outside of everything we do, we cannot present to Allah half baked excuses. I am reminded of that in my role as a teacher, one of my jobs is to be a teacher and it is a lot easier because now I am teaching adults but when I used to teach children it was a lot tougher. Children talking at the back and when I say why are you talking they say no no ,I was discussing the homework, I was not talking I was just asking a question about the homework. I have no way of knowing, I don’t have the full view of what just happen, I just got ok, fine; I don’t have the full picture, I don’t have the full event. Allah does have that and when someone has the full view you are not able to make excuses in front of them. The benefit of the word *basira* in the ayat is we are no longer left with excuses, I am grateful or not my entire deed and motives are on record *Khalaqa alssamawati waal-arda bialhaq* and he mentions this for those who are not clear in their faith. If you really know who is Allah so far and how he has introduced himself, he says he created the skies, the earth with a purpose *bialhaq;* what did he say, what did he created in the previous ayat he created all of you; when he said he created all of you he said some of you believe and some of you don’t believe. In the next ayat he says he created everything else has a purpose, what do you think he created you without a purpose. Did you forget you have a purpose too? How can you not understand that your life is headed towards a questioning? You need to understand that you and I have a reason for which we are alive, there is a reason why Allah has given us a few thousands of days to live on this earth, these few years that we are gonna be on this earth, there is a reason for which Allah has put us here, you need to understand your purpose, everything Allah does is with a purpose so you too. In another place in the Quran He says** ***Afahasibtum annama khalaqnakum Aabathan* did you assume we created you with no point, just out of play. I was bored and I created human being no no no I made you with a real reason and by the way you will find the most ungrateful people saying GOD is just playing games, He just made us whatever you know, that’s how they talk. They will fulfill Allah’s word to the tee, this is what they will say and they will say it. Allah even tells us what’s gonna come out of their mouth, back in the Arabian Desert and today sitting in the philosophy class in the university, what comes out of their mouth Allah already knew and what will come is nothing new, you listen to it and if you really know your book then you will know that Allah does spoke the truth; this guy by spilling his poison will fulfill the word of Allah, subhanallah. So *Khalaqa alssamawati waal-arda bialhaqqi wasawwarakum faahsana suwarakum* what a beautiful transition, He molded you. Allah says he created the rest of the skies He could have added He created you too but He has already said that before, He changed it, He said *suwarakum* He molded you. *Suwarakum* in Arabic is to fashion something, to mould something, to sculpt something, to make a sculpture that is beautiful, Allah himself says that I did a really good job making you, He himself is telling us. He takes pride in how beautifully he made us, you know what the ungrateful says that why I am so fat? Why I am so skinny? Why I am so short? Why don’t I have freckles? Why do I have this? Why I don’t have that? How do I am not smart like my brother? How come that one is rich and I am poor? How come I can’t have this? How come I can’t have that? And you know what happens in this society especially in modern society and it is happening globally not just in America, people start getting old and the hair start going, start turning grey little bit right then you notice wrinkles on your skin so this entire multimillion dollar industry to make sure that you look like you did when you were in your 20’s and end up looking like a zombie but they will put hair implants on you and they will stretch your skin for you and will struck you belly in for you and do all these thing for you so you can pretend yourself that you are still 25. Allah says except the way you are, I think you are beautiful why do you think you are ugly, why do you have to be so unhappy about yourself, *faahsana suwarakum* He did a beautiful job with you and molding is not just in the physical sense even in our personalities, our capabilities Allah has given each and every one of us certain strengths, certain abilities, certain talents, He is the one who gave to us so when we don’t appreciate what we have been given then we are not appreciating Allah himself because He is the one who gave just like somebody gives you gift and you do not appreciate it, its disrespect for the person who gave you the gift. All of the thing we are given is the gift from Allah azawajal *faahsana suwarakum* and if you don’t recognize that *wa ilayhi almaseer* you all be going back to him anyway. Whether you take advantage of these gifts or not they will have to be returned to the original owner, to him is the final return eventually.** ***Yalamu ma fee alssamawati waal ard*** ***wayaalamu ma tusirroona wama tuaalinoona* He knows whatever goes in the skies and the earth this the constant comparison between the universe and us in this surah. Look at the skies, how much is happening in the skies, look how much is happening in the universe; He knows the every mille second and every mille meter of what’s happening in the sky in every atom and every sub atomic particle He knows it directly, He knows it himself, He doesn’t know where you up to? *wayaalamu ma tusirroona wama tuaalinoona* He knows the things you keep secrets and He knows the thing you expose, there is a very powerful expression in the Quran, it demands a little bit attention in the few minutes I have. Allah knows the thing we keep secret Allah knows the thing we make public; what Allah is telling us that sometimes people really have deep problem in their faith but they cover it up with some other words. So what they are saying with their mouths is not exactly what they have in their heart so Allah says I know what you keep inside and I know what are you saying with your mouth and I know the contradict between the two. There will be a person, I’ll give you an example I call it out by a means of a short example, there is a young student who has got friends that are non Muslims and they are trying drugs and they offer him some, first time he says its haram, second time he says its haram, third time shaitan comes and says to him hey! Come on its not that haram go ask the imam that I have a friend who says that drugs aren’t haram. He won’t say that I am having a thought or my shaitan just gave me the was wasa, i have a friend who thinks drugs are ok because they are not mentioned in the Quran; pharmaceutical products by their name are not mentioned in the Quran therefore it is ok? It is ok to try some of the pharmaceutical products and the answer is no its not ok. Then he will go around and he will say you know what that are imam they are so backwards, they don’t understand modern society and modern chemistry and therefore they have these out dated fatwas and he will give a whole ranked about that but what’s really going on inside I really want to try that drug, I really want to try that, what’s so wrong with dating anyway, what’s so wrong with having some fun, what’s so wrong with having this or that. You will say in the nice way outside but the real whispers of shaitan that you have submitted to inside; Allah knows. You can cover them up on the outside, when you talk to me you are somebody else even you can cover them up from yourselves but Allah knows that you are even lying to yourselves, you can’t be honest to yourselves *waAllahu aaleemun bithati alssudoor***

***Alam yatikum nabao allatheena kafaroo min qabl* what is wrong with you people, haven’t you seen the news, the events of those who came much before you and how they *fathaqoo wabala amrihim* and tasted the consequences of their behavior, that news haven’t come to you. Allah asks that question in medina Quran, I told you how much of the Quran revelaed is already; two third. Meccan Quran is full of stories of previous prophets who came and warned their people and people made fun of them then they dies and destroyed and on top of that they are eternally punished in the hell fire and the muslims are being asked now you think these stories are for non Muslim to read haven’t it come to you *Alam yatikum nabao allatheena kafaroo min qabl* haven’t you heard the news of those who disbelieved before. The irony here is Allah is talking to the muslims, medina Quran talks to muslims and he is saying aren’t you afraid those of those who disbelieved in the past, don’t you think you will end up in that place. Why would Allah talk to us as though we are non muslims? Why is He talking to us like that? Because Allah is warning us of very serious problem- faith on the tongue and disbelieve in the heart and He just in previous ayat said I know what is going deep inside your chest, so He is interrogating there and saying look they disbelieved with their mouth what I can see disbelieve on the tongue and I can also sense disbelieve, I also know disbelieve when it is in the heart and it never makes it to the mouth, I even know that one. Take warning of those nations, they tasted the consequences of their decision *walahum aathabun aleem* and the last ayat I want to share because time is up** ***Thalika biannahu kanat tateehim rusuluhum bialbayyinat* listen to it , it is such a powerful advice from allah azzawajal. This is by the way, I consider this surah the surah of fruits, the benefits of faith; first half of this surah is the summary of our faith, the practical summary of our faith and the next half of the surah is what are the advantage of being a believer, what good comes in your life if you are a believer? I didn’t get to share you this time but at least I want to tie up the first part. Allah describes, summarizes basically one of the most common reasons people refuse to accept guidance from Allah, one of the most common reasons but not the only reason** ***Thalika bi-annahu kanat tateehim rusuluhum bialbayyinat* that is messengers came to them, they continuously came to them, they used to come to them with the clearest arguments, with the clearest proofs *faqaloo abasharun yahdoonana* and they would say in response, flesh and bone, this human being, this guy who looks like us, he is going to guide us, you want me to listen to him, have you look at him, have you look at his house, have you look with who he hags out -with all these poor people that have become Muslims with him, do you know who you are talking to, you want me to become a believer because of this guy; This is how they would talk about prophets. Pharos would say about moses(peace be upon him) look at him, he can’t even speak properly, he stammers, he cannot even open his mouth, you wan tme to listen to him. People would come Noah (peace be upon him), he would walk by him and they would pull their clothes in like don’t touch me, you old man you are dirty; that’s how they talk about Noah (peace be upon him). Other messengers would come, give their message and they would says that I want to listen to you but I am a billionaire, I have a certain appearance to keep up and you keep all these poor people and homeless people, these believer around you why don’t you get rid of them then we can have a meeting in the executive office because I don’t want to see whiff craft near me, I don’t want to seen with the low class you know the cumulus society, I don’t want to be seen with them; get rid of them and maybe I’ll listen to you. The criticism is always the same another human begin is gonna guide me, he is just like us. What did they say about Jesus (peace be upon him)-what is this messenger? And they said about the prophet (peace be upon him) too- well look at this messenger he goes shopping, he walks around like everybody else, he eats food too I saw him having lunch the other day; how can he be a messenger? That was the argument. In another words and this is what I am tying up with one of the most common reasons people refuse to accept guidance because they don’t see that they are submitting to GOD they say why there is a messenger in between? He is just like me, I can have relation with GOD by myself, I don’t need a messenger in between and Allah says that is the very source of arrogance. Iblis was not asked to make sajdah to Allah, he was asked to make sajdah to Adam (peace be upon him) because it was the test of arrogance. He didn’t directly showed arrogance to Allah, he actually showed arrogance to Adam (peace be upon him), he said he is made up of clay I am made up of fire, I am better than him. Nobody is going to say that he is better than Allah but Allah wants to see that are you going to say that I am better than xyz? I am better than these messengers, I don’t have to follow them they are just human beings, they make mistakes, they do this, and they do that. That is the very essence of arrogance from the very beginning of creation even iblis said *albashr* – a human begin are you kidding me, have you looked at my resume, I am gonna follow him it’s not gonna happen. That is the same exact pride that comes, the mutant of that pride that pride is still amongst today. Somebody tries to give me advise first thing that goes in my head- who are you to give me advise? Who do you think you are? I am the khatib today, after the salat somebody comes and says to me brother I don’t like what you said today, I will say do you know who are you talking? I am on YouTube you know; you know who you are dealing with yet; that is the very definition of arrogance; that is the very definition of negating guidance. Allah says that nations of the past were destroyed because they couldn’t take guidance from another human being. If the messenger is not with us today his words, his instructions, his teachers who were his students and teach on his behalf are here today, the scholars are here today, the daees are here today you know, the people of reminder are here today he could be your father giving you advise, he could be your brother, your cousin giving you advise but you look at him and say dad you are always saying the same thing, leave me alone, you don’t understand. You tell your son who are you? You are gonna tell me I used to change your diaper, you don’t talk to me, get out of here and you can’t take advise from your son. This is the same exact thing that keeps people away from guidance- refusal to take advice from others because pride gets in to the way. May Allah azzawajal remove the prides from our hearts and may Allah make us a people that really truly believe for the sake of Allah and can put their ego aside especially when advice is given. May Allah azzawajal revive in us the iman that Allah intends to revive by means of the majestic Quran. All of you In sha Allahutalah is assured a short home work assignment, when you go home today with your family recite surah tagabun surah no.64. Recite it, read it a little bit even with the translation read it with your family remind them some of the things you heard about today and refresh that in your heart In sha Allahutalah just a page and a half so even memorizing it in a week is not difficult for anyone of you. Do that and slowly you can get closer and closer to the Quran**

**Assalam aleikum!**