

Why people avoid the Qur'an - 2



Excessive Attachment to the Life of This World

Many people make the mistake of thinking that this life will never end; they become excessively attached to life and forget how short it really is. This heedlessness leads people to avoid thinking about the lessons taught in the Qur'an. It does not cross their minds that everybody will meet the Angel of Death, perhaps unexpectedly, and that they will be buried beneath the earth.

When the Angel of Death takes someone, that person will not be able to take with them the worldly goods he or she struggled to acquire throughout in life, nor the relatives and friends they held dear. On that day, when people come before Allah entirely alone, they will be confronted with everything they

have done. Everybody without exception will realise at that moment that life on earth was no more than a transient experience. Yet it will be too late. This is also mentioned in a hadith where the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) says, *"He is a bad servant who is led by greed. He is a bad servant who is misled by passion. He is a bad servant who is debased by worldly desire."* (Al-Tirmidhi)

People who do not consider these facts look on religion and earthly life differently from those who think about meeting their Lord. For the former, life consists only of education, marriage and work. These three things consume their minds, and are their benchmarks that guide their decisions. Their life is prioritised around questions such as: how to make money; how to succeed at work or in marriage; and what kind of future they will have. No doubt these are important matters requiring consideration, but the mistake is to forget life's most important reality: death. The Qur'an teaches us that people avoid thinking about death and turn back in their because **"Satan fills them with false hopes."** (Surat an-Nisa': 120) False hopes are to make long term plans, not for the sake of Allah, but for the sake of purely earthly pleasures, forgetting the true hope: life in Paradise.

The Qur'an is replete with verses reminding people to remember the hereafter. If only people would contemplate the Qur'an and its teachings they would become aware of Allah's truths, and would comprehend the importance and urgency of leading a life pleasing to Allah. They would thus benefit themselves and those close to them; they could hope to preserve themselves from the endless torment of hell. This understanding and hope are very important for every human being because the real destination is the eternal afterlife. In Surah Al 'Imran, Allah says :

To mankind the love of worldly appetites is painted in glowing colours: women and children, and heaped-up mounds of gold and silver, and horses with fine markings, and livestock and fertile farmland. All that is merely the enjoyment of the life of this world.

The best homecoming is in the presence of Allah. Say, "Shall I tell you of something better than that?" Those who guard against evil will have Gardens with their Lord, with rivers flowing under them, remaining in them timelessly, for ever, and purified wives, and the Pleasure of Allah. Allah sees His servants. (Surah Al 'Imran: 14-15)

People generally have a "way of life" that they live by, and that is formed by their environment and according to their understanding of the world. They are usually very attached to their established way of life, and reluctant to change, especially their view of the world, their "philosophy of life," because changing a lifelong philosophy also causes deep-seated changes in a person's lifestyle. This reluctance to change a lifestyle has often been at the bottom of people's resistance to the prophets' message. The story of the Prophet Shu'ayb (pbuh) is illustrative. The greatest fear of Shu'ayb's tribe was that of abandoning their lifestyle and goods.

They said, "Shu'ayb, do your prayers instruct you that we should abandon what our fathers worshipped or stop doing whatever we want to with our wealth? You are clearly the forbearing, the rightly-guided!" (Surah Hud: 87)

The Prophet Shu'ayb replied:

He said, "My people! What do you think? If I do possess a Clear Sign from my Lord and He has given me His good provision, I would clearly not want to go behind your backs and do something I have forbidden you to do. I only want to put things right as far as I can. My success is with Allah alone. I have put my trust in Him and I turn to Him." (Surah Hud: 88)

Up to that point, these people had been satisfied with their superstitious lives. They certainly did not want to change their way of life or the system they were used to. These people, described to us by the Qur'an as **"those who do not expect to meet Us and are content with the life of this world and at rest in it, and those who are heedless of Our Signs, their shelter will be the Fire because of what they earned."** (Surah Yunus: 7-8), thought they were on the right path.



However, the life of this world is only a fleeting benefit. On the Day of Judgement they will regret it: **"It may be that those who disbelieve will wish that they had been Muslims. Leave them to eat and enjoy themselves. Let false hope divert them. They will soon know"** (Surat al-Hijr: 2-3). As this verse maintains, by focusing only on life in this world these people are only increasing their losses. Allah tells us that those who are deceived by worldly life and forget the values of religion

will regret it on the Day of Judgment:

Those who took their religion as a diversion and a game, and were deluded by the life of this world. Today We will forget them just as they forgot the encounter of this Day and denied Our Signs. (Surat al-A'raf: 51)

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