

World, Materialism

Life span of this world as compared to the span of the Hereafter

Surah Ar – Rum, 30:55

وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِثُوا غَيْرَ سَاعَةٍ كَذَلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ

Wa Yawma taquumus-Saa-‘atu yuqsimul-mujrimuuna maa labithuu ghayra saa-‘a: kazaalika kaanuu yu’-fakuun!

He it is who will cause you to die, and in time will resurrect you. And when the Last Hour dawns, those who had been lost in sin will swear that they had not tarried (on earth) longer than an hour: thus were they wont to delude themselves (all their lives)!

Surah Al – ‘Ankabut, 29:64

وَمَا هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَهُوٌّ وَلَعِبٌ وَإِنَّ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ لَهِيَ الْحَيَوَانُ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

Wa maa haazihil-hayaatud-dunyaaa ‘il-laa lahwunw-wa la-‘ib? Wa ‘in-nad-Daaraal-‘Aakhi-rata lahiyal – Hayawaan. Lau kaanuu ya‘-lamuun.

“And this life of the world is nothing but a sport and play; and as for the next abode, that most surely is the life, did they but know.

In this Divinely question two points are clear. One is that ‘life is a fact’ and the other is ‘it has a purpose’. Studying the purpose of life leads you towards the ‘fact of this worldly life’. In many places the Holy

Qur'an has made this point clear by giving examples of the past historic events. Wealth of Shaddad and Fir'aun (Pharoah) and persons of the categories perished. They left this world with their own deeds and they are tasting what they have done in this world.

The materialistic world has dragged mankind in the race to unlimited desire, to achieve more and more which results in a disgraceful life of homicide, genocide, drugs, child abuse, women abuse, and all family and social misbehaviour. Islam is undoubtedly the only solution for these problems, for, it teaches not only about this worldly life's achievements, but it also teaches mankind to be God conscious (Taqwa).

Man's obsession and attachment to this life

Surah At – Takathur, 102:1-8

أَلْهَاكُمْ التَّكَاثُرُ

'Al-haa-kumut- Takaathur

1. *You are obsessed by greed for more and more*

حَتَّىٰ زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ

Hat-taa zurtumul-maqaabir.

2. *until you go down to your graves.*

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

Kal-laa sawfa ta'-lamuun.

3. *Nay, in time you will come to understand!*

ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ

Thum-ma kal-laa sawfa ta'la-muun

4. *And once again: Nay, in time you will come to understand!*

كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ

Kal-laa lau ta'-lamuuna 'ilmal-yaqiin!

5. Nay, if you could but understand (it) with an understanding (born) of certainty,

لَتَرُونَ الْجَحِيمَ

Latara-wun-nal-Jahiim!

6. you would indeed, most surely, behold the blazing fire (of hell)!

ثُمَّ لَتَرُونَهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ

Thum-ma latara-wun-nahaa 'aynal-yaqiin!

7. In the end you will indeed, most surely, behold it with the eye of certainty:

ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ

Thum-ma la-tus-'alun-na Yaw-ma-'izin 'anin-na-'iim.

8. and on that Day you will most surely be called to account for (what you did with) the boon of life!

This Surah is one of the most powerful and prophetic passages of the Qur'an, illuminating man's unbounded greed in general, and more particularly, the tendencies which have come to dominate all human societies in our technological age. This verse highlights the greedily striving of mankind for an increase in benefits, be they tangible or intangible, real or illusory. It denotes man's obsessive striving for more and more comforts, more material goods, greater power over his fellow-men or over nature, and unceasing technological progress.

A passionate pursuit of such endeavours, to the exclusion of everything else, bars man from all spiritual insight and, hence, from the acceptance of any restrictions and inhibitions based on purely moral values – with the result that not only individuals but whole societies gradually lose all inner stability and thus, all chance of happiness. It is warning man that this unrestrained pursuit of “economic growth” is bound to bring – and has, indeed, brought in our time – frustration, unhappiness and confusion, and man will lose

all remnants of spiritual and religious orientation.

The occasion for the revelation of this Surah has been reported to be that the people of Bani Abde-Manaf, Bani Qusai and Ibne-Sahm Ibne Omar, got involved in a mutual contest of priding over each other, the strength, their number and the matter went to the extent of counting even the dead among them, to the sides and once when one of the parties fell short of one to win over the others, a grave was opened and the dead lying therein was counted. Then this Surah was revealed.

The last verse mentions the fact that man will be questioned about the bounties of God which has been granted to him. It is reported to have been told by the Holy Prophet (S) that man will not be questioned about three things:

1. The garment he used to cover his shame.
2. The food he took in hunger.
3. What he spent in the way of the Lord.

Consequences of Man's attachment to the materialistic world

Surah Al – Humazah, 104: 1-9

وَيْلٌ لِّكُلِّ هُمَزَةٍ لُّمَزَةٍ

Waylul-likul-li humazatil-lumazah

1. *Woe unto every slanderer, fault-finder!*

الَّذِي جَمَعَ مَالًا وَعَدَّدَهُ

'Al-lazii jama-'a maalahu wa 'ad-dadah,

2. *(Woe unto him) who amasses wealth and counts it a safeguard,*

يَحْسَبُ أَنَّ مَالَهُ أَخْلَدَهُ

Yahsabu 'an-na maalahuuu 'akhladah!

3. *thinking that his wealth will make him live forever!*

كَأَلَّا لِيُنْبَذَنَّ فِي الْحُطَمَةِ

Kal-laa la -yumba-zan-na fil-Hutamah.

4. Nay, but (in the life to come such as) he shall indeed be abandoned to crushing torment!

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحُطَمَةُ

Wa maaa 'adraaka mal-Hu-tamah?

5. And what could make thee conceive what that crushing torment will be?

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمَوْقَدَةُ

Naarul-laahil-muuqadah,

6. A fire kindled by God,

الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ

'Al-latii tat-tali-'u 'alal-'af'idah:

7. which will rise over the (guilty) hearts:

إِنَّهَا عَلَيْهِم مُّوَصَّدَةٌ

'In-nahaa 'alayhim-mu'-sadah

8. verily, it will close in upon them

فِي عَمَدٍ مُمَدَّدَةٍ

Fii 'amadim-mumad-dada.

9. in endless columns!

Reference in this verse is made to the back-biters and the hoarders of wealth, and in turn it is a warning too that whatever one possesses of materialistic values shall not remain with him forever, for he has to pass away from this world empty-handed as a destitute. Those who think otherwise are fooled by their imagination. Also if such acquirement is made lawfully, man is still accountable to the Lord about its proper disbursement and disposal.

Man will always be a loser due to his worldly attachments

Surah Al – ‘Asr, 103:1-3

وَالْعَصْرِ

Wal-‘Asri.

1. Consider the flight of time!

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ

’In-nal ’Insaana lafii khus-r,

2. Verily, man is bound to lose himself,

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ

’Il-lal-laziina amanuu wa ‘amilus-saa-lihaati wa tawaasaw bil-Haq-qi wa tawaasaw bis-Sabr.

3. unless he be of those who attain to faith, and do good works, and enjoin upon one another the keeping of truth, and enjoin upon one another patience in adversity.

Worldly attachments should not deter Man from remembrance of Allah (swt) and in giving charity

Surah Al – Munafiqun, 63 :9-11

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُلْهِكُمْ أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَمَن يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

Yaaa-'ay-yuhal-laziina 'aa-manuu laa tul-hikum 'amwaa-lukum wa laaa 'awlaa-dukum 'an Zikril-laah.
Wa may-yaf-'al zaalika fa-'ulaaa-'ika humul-khaasiruun.

. *O you who have attained to faith! Let not your worldly goods or your children make you oblivious of the remembrance of God: for if any behave thus – it is they, they who are the losers!*

وَأَنْفِقُوا مِنْ مَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَّ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي
إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُن مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

Wa'anfiquu mim-maa razaq-naakum-min-qabli 'ay-ya'-tiya ahada-kumul-Mawtu fa-yaquula Rab-bi
lau laaa 'akh-khar-tanii ilaaa 'ajalin-qariibin – fa-'as-sad-daqa wa 'akum-minas-Saalihiin.

10. *And spend on others out of what We have provided for you as sustenance, ere there come a time when death approaches any of you, and he then says, "O my Sustainer! If only Thou wouldst grant me a delay for a short while, so that I could give in charity and be among the righteous!"*

وَلَنْ يُؤَخِّرَ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِذَا جَاءَ أَجْلُهَا وَاللَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

Wa lan-yu-'akh-khiral-laahu nafsan 'izaa jaaa-'a 'ajaluhaa: Wal-laahu khabiirum-bimaa ta'-maluun.

11. *But never does God grant a delay to a human being when his term has come; and God is fully aware of all that you do.*

Surah At – Taghabun, 64: 15–18

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَأَسْمَعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَمَنْ يُوقِ

'In-namaaa 'amwaa-lukum wa 'awlaa-dukum fitna: wal-laahu 'indahuuu 'Ajrun 'aziim.

15. *Your worldly goods and your children are but a trial and a temptation, whereas with God there is a tremendous reward.*

شَحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

Fat-taqul-laaha masta-ta'-tum wasma-'uu wa 'atii-'uu wa 'anfiqū khay-ral-li-'anfusi-kum. Wa may-yuuqa shuh-ha nafsihii fa'ulaaa-'ika humul-Muf-lihuun.

16. Remain, then, conscious of God as best you can, and listen (to Him), and pay heed. And spend in charity for the good of your own selves: for, such as from their own covetousness are saved – it is they, they that shall attain to a happy state!

إِنْ تُقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُضَاعِفْهُ لَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ شَكُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

'In-tuqrizul-laaha qarzan hasanay-yuzaa-'ifuhu lakum wa yagfirlakum. Wallahu shukuurun haliim.

17. If you offer up to God a goodly loan, He will amply repay you for it, and will forgive you your sins: for God is ever responsive to gratitude, forbearing,

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

'Aalimul-ghaybi wash-shahaa-datil-Aziizul-Hakiim.

18. knowing all that is beyond the reach of a created being's perception as well as all that can be witnessed by a creature's senses or mind – the Almighty, the Wise!

Good deeds weigh heavier than worldly adornments (wealth & children)

Surah Al – Kahf, 18:46

الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا

'Al-maalu wal-banuuna ziinatul-hayaatid-dunyaa: wal-baaqiyaa-tus-saali-haatu khay-run 'inda Rab-bika thawaa-banw-wa khayrun 'amalaa.

46. Wealth and children are an adornment of this world's life: but good deeds, the fruit whereof endures forever, are of far greater merit in thy Sustainer's sight, and a far better source of hope.

The Holy Prophet (S) said:

“ There will be three kinds of people among my followers i.e. the Muslims :

1. Those who do not at all covet to own any wealth and earn only as much as they need for their livelihood. These are those about whom God has said: “Neither there is any fear for them nor shall they grieve.”

2. Those who like owning wealth and earn it through legal means and spend it in doing good to the others. They shall have to render account of their earnings and their spending. For the good they do, they will be rewarded and for the failures on their part they will be punished or pardoned.

3. Those who covet to own wealth and in owning it, they have no regard for the right or wrong or the legal, or the illegal means of gathering it, they do not pay from it even the prescribed share to the poor and the needy. They spend it in evil and forbidden ways. The Hell-fire will be their reward.”

Allah (swt), His Apostle & Jihad are more important than all worldly relations, pleasures & possessions

Surah At – Tawbah, 9:24

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِنُ تَرْضَوْنَهَا أَحَبُّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

Qul 'in-kaana 'aabaaa-'u-kum wa abnaaa-'ukum wa 'ikh-waanukum wa 'azwaa-ju-kum wa 'ashii-ratukum wa 'amwaaalu-niq-taraf-tumuuhaa wa tijaaratun takh-shawna kasaa-dahaa wa masaa-kinu tarzaw-nahaaa 'ahab-ba 'ilay-kum-minal-laahi wa Rasuulhii wa Jihaadin-fii Sabiilihii fatarab-basuu hat-taa ya'-tiyal-laahu bi-'Amrihii. Wal-laahu laa yahdil-qawmal-faasiqiin.

24. Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your spouses and your kinsfolk and property which you have acquired, and the slackness of trade which you fear and dwellings which you like, are dearer to you than Allah (swt) and his Apostle and striving in His way, then wait till Allah (swt) makes manifest His Will; and Allah (swt) does not grace iniquitous folk with His guidance.

Punishment for hoarding of wealth

Surah At – Tawbah, 9:34-35

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْأَحْبَارِ وَالرُّهْبَانِ لَيَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَيَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ

اللَّهُ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ

Yaaa-'ay-yu-hal-laziina 'aa-manuuu 'in-na kathiiram-minal-'ahbaari war-ruh-baani li-ya'-kuluuna 'amwaa-lan-naasi bil-baatili wa yasud-duuna 'an-Sabii-lil-laah. Wal-laziina yak-nizuu-naz-zahaba wal-fiz-zata wa laa yunfiqoo-nahaa fil Sa-biilil-laahi fabash-shirhum-bi-'azaabin 'aliim –

34. *O you who believe! most surely most of the doctors of law and the monks devour men's possessions and turn (others) away from the path of God; and (as for) those who hoard up gold and silver and do not spend it in Allah's way, announce to them a grievous chastisement (in the life to come).*

يَوْمَ يُحْمَى عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَتُكْوَى بِهَا جِبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَذَا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنُزُونَ
لَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنُزُونَ

Yawma yuhmaa 'alay-haa fii Naari Jahan-nama fatukwaa bihaa jibaahu-hum wa junuu-buhum wa zuhuu-ruhum. Haa-zaa maa kanaz-tum li-'anfusikum fa-zuuquu maa kuntum tak-nizuun.

35. *On the day when it (the hoarded wealth) shall be heated in the fire of hell, then their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded with it; (those sinners shall be told) “this is what you hoarded up for yourself, therefore taste what you hoarded.”*

The degree to which Islam abhors unlawful acquisition of wealth and its hoarding and the strength with which the punishment is announced for those who do it. While Islam does not stop any one from acquiring wealth but what is dealt with here in this verse is the hoarding of wealth and not spending it in the way of God. Hoarding of wealth stops circulation and the society suffers.

Under Islam the owner of wealth is only a trustee; he has in his earnings the share of God, of the Holy Prophet (S), of his own self, as well as the share of his family, his children and by way of benefiting the others, the share of mankind in general among them, the orphans, the needy and the wayfarers. This is a clear condemnation of those who do not regularly and faithfully disburse 'Zakat' and 'Khums' from their well-earned wealth.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/excerpts-from-the-holy-quran-an-eternal-guidance-to-mankind/world-materialism>