

Section Six: How To Be Benefited By The Qur'an

Now that you have got acquainted with the subjects and the objectives of the Divine Book (the Qur'an), you will have to take into consideration an important point, as by doing so the door of being benefited by it will be opened to you, and the passage to knowledge and wisdom will be wide open to your heart. This point is to look at this Glorious Book as an educational one, a teaching book by which you should be benefited, regarding it your duty to learn from it.

By learning, teaching, benefiting and being benefited we do not mean its different literary, syntactical and morphological aspects, nor its eloquence and rhetoric and other stylistic points, nor being interested in its stories, tales and episodes from the historical point of view in order to get information about the past nations. None of these is included in the objectives of the Qur'an, and they are, in fact, far away from the main objective of this divine Book.

The fact that our advantage from this great Book is quite small is because we usually do not take it to be a book of teaching and education. We recite the Qur'an just for its reward. So, we pay attention only to our intonation when reciting it. We want our recitation to be perfect and correct so as to obtain its reward, and then we stop at that and feel satisfied with it. Thus, we spend some forty years reciting the Qur'an without being benefited by it, except the reward for reciting it.

If we do look at its teaching and educational side, we concern ourselves with its eloquence and syntax and its miraculous aspects, or even somewhat higher, we engage ourselves with its history, the occasions of the revelation of the *āyahs*, the times of their revelation, which *sūrah* or *āyah* was revealed in Mecca and which in Medina, the differences in recitations and in the exegeses of the Sunnis and the Shā'ah and other secondary affairs which are outside the main objective and they themselves cause us to be barred from the Qur'an and to neglect remembering Allah. Even our great commentators of the Qur'an are very much concerned about one or another of the said affairs, without opening the door of learning to the people.

The writer believes that so far no *tafsīr* [exegesis] has yet been written to the Book of Allah. Generally, to write a *tafsīr* for a book means to explain the objectives of the book and to draw the attentions to

what its author wants to say. This noble Book, which Allah, the Exalted, testifies to be a book of guidance and teaching, and the light of the road of man's journey, its exegete should find in each one of its stories, or even in each *āyah*, a directive guiding to the invisible world, so as to show to the learner the road to happiness, to knowledge and to humanity.

A *mufassir* (commentator or exegete) is the one who tells us what was the “objective” of the revelation, not the “occasion” of the revelation as is explained in the exegeses. In the very story of Adam and Eve and their affairs with *Iblīs*, from the very moment of their creation till their descent to the earth, story of which is repeated by Allah several times in the Qur'an, there are so many overt and covert teachings [*ma'rif*] and admonitions, and it reminds us of so many of spiritual faults and Satanic characters, as well as many perfections of the soul and human knowledge which it introduces to us, whereas we still disregard them.

In short, the Book of Allah is a book of knowledge and ethics, and an invitation to happiness and perfection. So, its exegesis should also be a book of gnosticism and ethics, explaining the gnostic and ethical points of view, and other aspects of inviting to its happiness [*sa'dat*]. The commentator who neglects these points, disregards them or attaches no importance to them, is actually neglecting the objective of the Qur'an and the main aim of revealing the (divine) books and sending the messengers.

This is a grave mistake that has prevented the *ummah* for many centuries from being benefited by the Glorious Qur'an, and it has blocked the road of guidance in their faces. We have to learn the objective of the revelation of the Qur'an disregarding the intellectual and argumentative aspects, which show us the goal by themselves from the Qur'an itself. The author of a book knows better his own objective.

So, let us have a glance at what the author of this Book Himself says concerning the affairs of the Qur'an. He says:

“This is the Book, wherein is no doubt, a guide for the muttaqīn (those who fear Allah).”¹

He describes His Book as being a book of guidance. In a short *sūrah* He repeats saying:

“We have made the Qur'an easy for remembrance, but is there any one who will mind?”²

He says:

“... We have revealed to you the Reminder that you may explain to mankind what has been sent down to them and that haply they will reflect,”³

And

“A Book We have revealed to you, blessed, that they may ponder over its āyahs and that men of understanding may remember,”⁴

And many other noble *Qiyahs*, to restate which would be lengthy.

This opinion of ours is not intended to criticize the *tafsirs*, as every one of their authors has taken great pains and striven hard in order to write a noble book, so, may Allah bless them and grant them good reward. We intend just to say that the door must be open before the people to be benefited by this Book, which is the only one leading to Allah and the only one for educating the souls with the divine disciplines and laws, the greatest means of connection between the created and Creator, the strong handle and the firm cord of adhering to the Might of Divinity.

Let the scholars and commentators write Persian and Arabic exegeses with the aim of explaining the gnostic and ethical teachings and instructions, showing the way of connecting the created to the Creator, and expounding the migration from *Dār al-Ghurūr* (the House of Conceit = this world) to the *Dār as-Surūr wal-Khulūd* (the House of Pleasure and Eternity)], according to what has been deposited in this noble Book.

The author of this Book is not as-Sakkākī or the Shaykh, whose objectives were eloquence and rhetoric, nor is He Sībawayh or al-Khalīl, whose objectives were grammar and syntax, nor is He al-Mas'ūdī or Ibn Khillakīn, whose objectives revolved around the history of the world. This Book is not like the stick of Moses or his White Hand, nor is it like the breath of Christ who could raise the dead (by Allah's permission), to have been sent down only as a miracle to prove the true prophethood of the Holy Prophet.

This divine Book is, as a matter of fact, a book of enlivening the hearts with the everlasting life of divine knowledge. It is Allah's Book that invites to divine affairs. So, the commentator has to teach these divine affairs to the people, and the people have to refer to his commentary to learn those affairs, so that they may attain its advantage:

“And we reveal of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers, and it adds only to the perdition of the wrongdoers.”⁵

Which perdition is graver than that we keep reciting the Divine Book for thirty or forty years and refer to the exegeses, and yet we do not get its real objectives?

“Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If you do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we shall certainly be of the losers.”⁶

1. Sūrah al-Baqarah 2:2

2. Sūrah al-Qamar 54:17

3. Sūrah an-Nahl 16:44

4. Sūrah Sād 38:29

5. Sūrah al-Isrā' 17:82

6. Sūrah al-A'rāf 7:23

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