

Qur'ānic Reflections

SESSION 7

تَسْبِيح
the tasbeeh project

Reminder:
Reflecting on
the Holy Qur'ān

“

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ...

Those to whom We have given the Book
read it as it ought to be read... ”

SŪRAH AL-BAQARAH (2:121)



Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (as): “They recite its verses **slowly**, and **understand** it, and **act** according to its orders, and **hope** for its promises, and are **afraid** of its threats, and take **lessons** from its stories, and **obey** its commandments, and **desist** from what it prohibits.”



**A truly immersive,
transformational
experience!**

Tafsīr and Tadabbur

Tafsīr: reveal the meaning of a verse. The task of the Holy Prophet (saw), his righteous successors and specialist scholars.

Tadabbur: reflection and pondering on the message of a verse, internalising the implicit meaning of the verse, taking admonition and making changes. An order for all - Surah Muhammad (47:24):

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

Do they not contemplate the Qur'ān, or are there locks on the hearts?

Session 7:

Surāh al-A'īā'

(87:16-17)

“

بَلْ تُوْثِرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ وَأَبْقَى

Rather you prefer the life of this world,
while the Hereafter is better and more lasting.

”

SŪRAH AL-A'LĀ' (87:16-17)

The *dunyā* is a temporary place of tests, trials and actions.

The *ākhirah* is a long lasting place of recompense.

To prefer or prioritise the *dunyā* over the *ākhirah* is foolish.

Meaning of *Dunyā*

The word *dunyā* comes from the root letters **د-ن-ي** meaning closeness or approaching. *Dunyā* refers to the temporal world, which is closer to us and lower than the hereafter. It also means any earthly concern or possession - wealth, children, status, fame, power, etc.

دُنْيَا



Life in this world
Something near,
less important or
ordinary

أَدْنَى



Closer or lower
Prophet Musa's
question to *Bani*
Isrā'īl (2:61)

دَانٍ



Near at hand
Description of the
fruit of *jannah* near
at hand (55:54)

دَانِيَهُ



Hanging near
Description of fruit
of *jannah* within
reach (69:23)

دَنَا



Approach
The Holy Prophet
(saw)'s station in
Mi'rāj (53:8)

Dunyā and Ākhirah

Dunyā (life before death)

- Transient and changing
- Represents the sphere of **actions**
- Enjoyments gradually lose their appeal
- Lower, rudimentary phase of existence
- Different parts of creation have different levels of sentience and intellect
- Not meant to be experienced for its own sake (it's a means to an end)
- The presence of God hidden for many.

Ākhirah (life after death)

- Permanent and constant
- Represents the sphere of **results**
- Enjoyments will not lose their appeal
- Higher, enhanced phase of existence
- Everyone raised at same level of sentience and intellect
- Meant to be experienced for itself (it's the final abode)
- God's presence acutely felt by all.

Dunyā in the Qur'ān

Transient and Fleeting

*O my people!
This life of the world is only a [passing] enjoyment, and indeed the Hereafter is the abiding home [dārul qarār].*

Ghāfir
40:39

Place of Tests and Trials

Indeed We have made whatever is on the earth an adornment for it that We may test them [to see] which of them is best in conduct.

Al-Kahf
18:7

Temporary Illusion

Know that the life of this world is just play and diversion, and glitter, and mutual vainglory... and the life of this world is nothing but the wares of delusion [matā'ul ghurūr].

Al-Hadīd
57:20

Diversion and Play

The life of this world is nothing but diversion and play, but the abode of the Hereafter is indeed Life, had they known!

Al-'Ankabūt
29:64

Beautified for the Faithless

Worldly life has been glamorised for the faithless, and they ridicule the faithful. But those who are Godward shall be above them on the day of resurrection...

Al-Baqarah
2:212

Dunyā in the Qur'ān

A Place for Punishment

As for the faithless, I will punish them with a severe punishment in the in the world and the Hereafter; and they will have no helpers.

Āl-i 'Imrān
3:56

A Place for Disgrace

...There is disgrace for them in this world, and there is for them a great punishment in the Hereafter.

Al-Baqarah
2:114

A Place for Reward

Whoever desires the reward of this world [should know that] with Allah is the reward of this world and the Hereafter and Allah is all-hearing, all-seeing.

Al-Nisā'
4:134

Limited in Enjoyment

...Say 'The enjoyment of this world is little and the Hereafter is better for the Godway, and you will not be wronged so much as a single date-thread.

Al-Nisā'
4:77

A Place to Strive

Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of the world, but lasting righteous deeds are better with your Lord in reward and better in hope.

Al-Kahf
18:46

Dunyā in Ahadith

Name

“The world has been named dunyā because it is **lower** than every thing, and the Hereafter has been named ākhirah because it contains **recompense and reward.**”

Aim

“Verily Allah, glory be to Him, has made this world for what is after it and has put its inhabitants to **trial** so that He may know who from among them has the **best deeds**, and **we have not been created for this world**, nor have we been commanded to strive for it.”

Warning

“Beware of the world, for verily with regards to its lawful things there is **accountability** and with regards to its unlawful things there is **punishment**, its beginning is **hardship** and its end is **annihilation.**”

“

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا

*By the means of what Allah has given you,
seek the abode of the Hereafter, while not
forgetting your share of this world...*

”

SŪRAH AL-QASAS (28:77)

Shows the importance of
balance in our relationship
with this worldly abode.

“The hereafter is
secured through
the world.”

This world is a means through which we enjoy the mercy and blessings of Allah (swt), reflect on His creation and signs, undergo tests, strengthen our faith, offer worship, show gratitude to Him and work towards our hereafter.

Imam 'Ali (as)
Mizān al-Hikmah
Hadīth 4492

“

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي
الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

And among them there are those who say, ”
‘Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the
Hereafter, and save us from the punishment of the Fire.’

SŪRAH AL-BAQARAH (2:201)

Verse 200: those who
prioritise this world will not
get the rewards of the
hereafter.

Verse 201: teaches the
balance – asking for
good in this world and
in the hereafter.

Verse 202: earned reward
promised for those who
ask for good in this world
and the hereafter.

Reflections

- ▶ What is my relationship with this world like? Am I maintaining a healthy balance or do worldly pursuits and concerns fill my time? Do I prioritise my *ākhirah* or my worldly life?
- ▶ The *dunyā* is a temporary abode, and I do not know when this phase of my existence will end. Am I making the most of the time I have in this world, and putting forward 'lasting righteous deeds' for my permanent abode?
- ▶ This world is a trial and I live in it without tests, which can include discomfort and pain. What is my reaction when I suffer? Do I take it as an opportunity to strengthen my faith and worship, or do I wish that I was left to live a carefree life in this world?
- ▶ I have not been created for this world, but for something that is far better. Do my thoughts, words and actions show that I understand this, or am I like those who sell my soul for something low, without understanding my true potential and ultimate aim?

Making a Change

- ▶ Tadabbur means reflection and pondering on the message of a verse, internalising the implicit meaning of the verse, taking admonition and making changes.
- ▶ **What changes will I make in my life as a result of our reflections on these verses?**

How will I make sure that my true focus is the permanent hereafter rather than this temporary world?