



IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS, THE MOST MERCIFUL

QUR'AN - HOW WE HAVE ABANDONED IT TODAY

INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an is so widely spread today and it can be downloaded online for free today alhamdulillah. The translations of the Qur'an can be found in many languages of the world. Even the English translation has been improved and modernised that the meanings are fairly accurate in a few translators who have been able to even make word by word translations of the Qur'an. In addition, it has been memorised much more worldwide that nowadays many young children have memorised the whole Qur'an. Yet, we find the Muslim world more divided than it was before. Many social problems such as corruptions and injustice are prevalent in countries with a majority Muslim population. Millions of people are starving and malnourished in Muslim countries. Political instability including senseless bombings, which are completely unislamic, are occurring in Muslim countries. Cheatings and lyings in markets are a common practice in Muslim countries.

All the above are occurring despite the number of Muslim population globally is increasing to over 1.8 billion.

So when we say the Qur'an is "abandoned" or "deserted" is not on the basis that the Qur'an is not available or that it is not read.

REASONS FOR THE ABOVE?

1. The Qur'an is present but serves just as a decoration for the house. They are put in top shelves, especially fanciful looking Qur'an.
2. The Qur'an has been wrongly interpreted.
3. People are more interested to listen to melodious reciters rather than try and understand the Qur'an.
4. The Qur'an is read like a ritual, but not understood, especially in Ramadan. Many Muslims are now living in non-Arabic speaking countries, where majority will have to read the translations in order to understand the meaning.

5. Allah simply does NOT Guide those who have read and understood the meaning of the Qur'an – especially to Arabic-speaking individuals who can easily understand what they read but the Qur'an does not go into their hearts.
6. The Qur'an has been read, understood but not pondered over. (tadabbur)
7. The Qur'an has not been implemented.

Other reasons:

1. Cultural practices are more prevalent than the teachings in the Qur'an.
2. The practice of Islam is taken as a ritual – praying, fasting in Ramadan, etc
3. The emphasis and misconception on the superiority of the western culture and the misconception of the “barbaric and backdated” Islamic practices – unislamic concerts, alcohol consumption, zina and casinos are increasing in Muslim countries
4. Shaytan
5. Wrong companions that one has
6. Delusional thinking that death is very far away
7. Prevalence of social media such as tik tok which serves to steer people away from the right path
8. Simply the heart is not purified to receive Allah's Guidance – perhaps because of sins and shortcomings on the Deen.

Many people fail to get the main purpose of the Qur'an, which is a guidance to you and I. It is not meant to be used as decorations or only in ceremonies such as weddings and funerals, or only in Ramadan.

We seek Allah's Guidance when we recite surah al Fatihah in our salah, and Allah Answered us and Pointed out very clearly in the beginning of surah al Baqarah, verse 2:

“This is the Book (the Qur'an), whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are *Al-Muttaqun*.”

Allah Reminded us:

تَخْشَعُ أَنْ آمَنُوا لِلَّذِينَ يَأْنِ أَلَمْ
مِنْ نَزَلَ وَمَا اللَّهُ لِيُذَكِّرَ قُلُوبَهُمْ
أَوْتُوا كَالَّذِينَ يَكُونُوا وَلَا الْحَقِّ
عَلَيْهِمْ فَطَالَ قَبْلُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ

وَكَثِيرٌ ۖ قُلُوبُهُمْ فَتَسَتْ الْأَمَدُ
فَاسِقُونَ مِنْهُمْ

“Has not the time come for the hearts of those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism) to be affected by Allah's Reminder (this Qur'an), and that which has been revealed of the truth, lest they become as those who received the Scripture [the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)] before (i.e. Jews and Christians), and the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened? And many of them were *Fasiqun* (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).” 57: 16

When we don't understand what we read, how can we be affected by the Qur'an? Yes, it sounds beautiful when we listen to the famous reciters, but how does it hit our heart when we listen to it? Shouldn't our faith increase so that inshaAllah we are able to be among those whom Allah labelled as a “Mu'minoon”?

إِذَا الَّذِينَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِنَّمَا
وَإِذَا قُلُوبُهُمْ وَجِلَّتْ اللَّهُ ذِكْرَ
زَادَتْهُمْ آيَاتُهُ عَلَيْهِمْ تَلَيْتِ
يَتَوَكَّلُونَ رَبَّهُمْ وَعَلَىٰ إِيْمَانًا

“The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Qur'an) are recited unto them, they (i.e. the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone)” 8: 2

Allah also has Promised to Preserve the Qur'an:

وَإِنَّا الذِّكْرَ نَزَّلْنَا نَحْنُ إِنَّا
لَحَافِظُونَ لَهُ

“Verily We: It is We Who have sent down the *Dhikr* (i.e. the Qur'an) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption).” 15: 9

THE LEVEL OF ABANDONMENT

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) will complain to Allah on the Day of Judgment on how we have deserted the Qur'an:

قَوْمِي إِنَّ رَبِّيَا الرَّسُولُ وَقَالَ
مَهْجُورًا الْقُرْآنَ هَذَا اتَّخَذُوا

“And the Messenger (Muhammad, peace be upon him) will say: “O my Lord! Verily, my people deserted this Qur’an (neither listened to it, nor acted on its laws and orders).” 25: 30

Even though this verse specifically refers to those Quraysh who were making noise when the Qur’an was being recited, the mufasssireen explained that it covers those whom we described above.

(Extracts below taken from www.virtualmosque.com)

Muslims usually decorate its pages and outside cover and always place it on the highest shelf in their homes to signify its elevated status. Most Muslims begin the most important ceremonies of their lives with the recitation of its blessed words. Yet when it is recited, few are those who listen to it carefully and even fewer are those who understand it. Yet still fewer are those who ponder its meanings and dedicate their life to its study. A human would never abstain from the elements that are necessary for nourishing his body, yet so many humans go for extended periods of time depriving themselves from that which nourishes the hearts and the minds – the Holy Qur’an.

Ibn Masood (*radi Allahu `anhhu* – may Allah be pleased with him), a famous companion of the Prophet ﷺ (peace be upon him) said: “None of you needs to ask himself [about anything] except for the Qur’an: If he loves the Qur’an, he loves Allah, and if he detests the Qur’an, he detests Allah and His Messenger (Peace be upon him).” (Ibn Taymiyah, *al-Furqan*, p. 74)

Hence, there is a direct correlation between one’s relationship with Allah and his relationship with the Qur’an. This is the case because the Qur’an is our source of knowledge about the truth of all matters, what Allah (swt) likes and dislikes, and the nature of His essence and actions. It is our connection to Allah (swt) and that is why He ordered us to recite it in each of our daily prayers. Therefore, he who abandons the Qur’an has, in fact, abandoned his connection and relationship with Allah (swt). If a Muslim continues abandoning the Qur’an in his life, the faith in his heart begins to weaken, he becomes accustomed to disregarding Allah’s commands, and he begins to forget about Allah’s promise in the Hereafter and, instead, desires the pleasures of this temporal life. The connection with Allah (swt), that gives true life to the hearts of humans, becomes severed and the heart becomes a dark dungeon; the filth of sins veils it and no light of guidance penetrates it. This is why `Uthmaan ibn `Affan (ra) said: “If our hearts were really clean, we would never become satiated with the words of Allah.” (Ibn Taymiyah, *al-Furqan*, p. 74)

Al-Qurtubi (*rahimahu Allah*, may Allah have mercy on him) says: “It has been said that the Messenger’s saying ‘O my Lord’ will be said on the Day of Judgement.” (Tafseer al-Qurtubi)

Some scholars considered this verse to refer to the polytheists of Mecca who would make noise and speak loudly while the Qur’an would be recited to drown out its sound. They did this out of fear that those who would hear the Qur’an would be affected by its magnificence and also out of ridicule and disdain towards it. Informing us of their attitude towards the Qur’an, Allah (swt) says:

تَسْمَعُوا لَا كَفَرُوا الَّذِينَ وَقَالَ
فِيهِ وَالْغَوَا الْقُرْآنَ لِهَذَا
تَغْلِبُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
عَذَابًا كَفَرُوا الَّذِينَ فَلَنُذِيقَنَّ
الَّذِي أَسْوَأَ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ شَدِيدًا
يَعْمَلُونَ كَانُوا

“And those who disbelieve say, ‘Do not listen to this Qur’an and speak noisily during [the recitation of it] that perhaps you will overcome.’ But We will surely cause those who disbelieve to taste a severe punishment, and We will surely recompense them for the worst of what they had been doing” (41:26-27)

Ibn Kathir (*rahimahu Allah*) states that this is one type, the worst form, of abandonment. Of the other forms, he says: “When he would recite the Qur’an to them, they would talk nonsense or speak about something else, so that they would not hear it. This is a form of forsaking it and not believing in it is also forsaking it, and neglecting pondering about it and understanding it is a form of forsaking it, and leaving behind the knowledge of it and complying with its orders and avoiding its prohibitions is from forsaking it, and turning away from it to any other thing such as poetry or sayings or singing or amusement or talking, or taking a path other than it is from forsaking it.” (Tafseer Ibn Katheer, trans., v.7, p. 167)

From the sayings of the scholars, it becomes evident that abandonment of the Qur’an is of different levels. The worst level of abandonment is to disbelieve in the Qur’an and prevent others from listening to it as did the pagan Arabs of Mecca in the Prophet’s time (Peace be upon him).

The second level of abandonment is to not seek out its message, as is the case with so many human beings who go all through life not giving any priority to God and hence they do not make any attempt to discover His true revelation.

The third level of abandonment is committed by those who believe in the Qur'an, that is: Muslims who do not even listen to the Qur'an. Listening is put before reading because it is easier and doesn't require any knowledge (of rules of recitation) on the part of the listener. This level of abandonment doesn't imply that the Qur'an is never recited in the presence of those Muslims, but rather it means that when it is recited, they do not concentrate on listening to it, at the very least, out of respect. Those who have abandoned the Qur'an in this way may even continue their idle conversations during the recitation of the Qur'an, feeling no shame or modesty in front of Allah (swt). They may even joke or laugh aloud while the Qur'an is recited, in complete contradiction to the mood of humility and contemplation that Allah (swt) has ordered us to assume when His words are recited. Allah says:

فَاسْتَمِعُوا الْقُرْآنَ قُرْئًا وَإِذَا
تُرْحَمُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ وَأَنْصِتُوا لَهُ

“So when the Qur'an is recited, then listen to it and pay attention that you may receive mercy” (7:204).

Therefore another part of abandonment in this level is to be silent while the Qur'an is recited while allowing the mind to wander, not pondering over the meanings of its verses.

An even worse level of abandonment would be listening to songs, music, poetry, or any other form of speech, instead of the Qur'an. The result of this has been mentioned in Ibn Masood's saying: “Remembrance of Allah causes faith to grow in the heart like water causes onions to grow, and songs cause hypocrisy to grow in the heart just as water causes onions to grow.” Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Furqn, p. 74

The fourth level of abandonment is to abandon reading of the Qur'an. This includes those who make no effort to learn the Arabic alphabet and vowels so as to be able to read the Qur'an. It also includes those who know how to read it, but make many mistakes out of carelessness, such as not pronouncing the letters properly while having the ability to do so, or not adhering to the most basic rules of *tilaawah* (rules of recitation), or reciting it so fast that one easily skips over certain vowels or the like. This doesn't refer to those who will make mistakes while learning; there is no sin on those who error while struggling to correct themselves and, in fact, they receive a double reward if recitation of the Qur'an is difficult for them. Bukhari, Muslim

Another aspect of this abandonment relates to some peoples' usage of the Qur'an for worldly gain. Imran ibn Husain (ra) narrated that when he came upon a reader who

was reciting the Qur'an and then asking for payment, he told the reader that he heard the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) say: "When anyone recites the Qur'an, let him ask reward for it from Allah, for (in the future) there will come a people who will recite the Qur'an and ask reward for it from men." Tirmidhi, hassan

The fifth level is abandonment of memorisation of the Qur'an. This could refer to those who go through life memorising only a small portion of the Qur'an, or those who memorise the Qur'an but allow themselves to forget it by not reviewing. As for those who don't memorise anything of the Qur'an or very little, the following narration refers to them. Ibn 'Abbas (ra) related that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said (what means): "One whose heart doesn't contain anything from the Holy Qur'an, is like a deserted house." Tirmidhi, hassan-sahih

In regard to those who do memorise, the following narration warns of the effort needed to preserve the Qur'an in one's mind and heart. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (ra) related that the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) said: "Preserve the Holy Qur'an in your hearts, by Allah in whose hand lays the life of Muhammad, it goes out of memory faster than a camel escapes from its rope." (Bukhari, Muslim) This or any level of abandonment usually comes from ignorance of the virtue of every aspect surrounding the Qur'an. In addition, if the youth knew how much they will regret not having taken advantage of the "golden" years, the stage at which the mind can memorise more easily, they would not delay memorisation of the Qur'an for one moment.

Abandonment of reflection is the sixth stage. This is mostly due to lack of understanding of the Arabic language. In an authentic *hadith* (narration), the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) said (what means): "The Arab is the one who learns Arabic." Obviously, Muslims of Arab decent do not have a monopoly on the Arabic language. Hence, negligence of the Arabic language is indicative of negligence towards understanding the Qur'an. It is not nationalistic or ethnic elitism that elevates the Arabic language, rather it is the fact that it is the language of Allah's Holy Book. In fact, Allah (swt) informs us in the Qur'an that He made it an Arabic book so as to facilitate its understanding and memorization. Allah (swt) says in Surat Yusuf:

عَرَبِيًّا قُرْآنًا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِنَّا
تَعْقِلُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ

"Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an that you may understand"
(Qur'an 12:2).

So one who sticks to the Arabic language and struggles to learn it has gained a high level of affinity for and understanding of the Qur'an and one who is close to the Qur'an is close to Allah (swt).

The last and most dangerous level is the abandonment of practice. The essence of this type of abandonment is illustrated in the following narration in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "...the Qur'an is either an argument for you or against you." (Muslim)

Imam an-Nawawi (*rahimahu Allah*) states in regard to the meaning of this *hadith*: "[It means] that you will benefit from it if you recite it and act by it, otherwise it will be an argument against you." This means that on the Day of Judgement, the Qur'an will be a proof or a testament against those who disobeyed Allah (swt) and did not follow the path He outlined in His Holy Book.

The very purpose of listening, reading, memorising, and reflecting upon the Qur'an is to be able to practice it and hence this is the gravest level of abandonment. Those who don't practice the Qur'an will be in ruin and this is true even on the level of nations and civilizations. `Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra) narrated that the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) said (what means): "Allah will elevate some nations through this book and degrade others with it." (Muslim)

This level of abandonment, when applied to nations, means their ruling by other than the Qur'an. The most potent example of how the Qur'an elevates nations is the example of the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) and his companions. `A'isha (ra), the Prophet's wife, described his character as being the Qur'an, itself. He embodied the perfect and complete practice of Qur'anic tenets in his life and his companions followed suit by emulating his character. Through their adherence to Allah's Holy Book, in a matter of no more than 23 years, a group of 40 oppressed and poor men and woman grew to become the most powerful force in the Arabian Peninsula. Muslims of today need not ask why they are now living a humiliating reality, even while not lacking in numbers or wealth. They need not look further than the Qur'an for the solution.

The levels of abandonment are, indeed, mere stages in the degradation of the *ummah* (community) and its individual members. The levels of abandonment are categorised in this order because each level builds upon the other and makes the problem of abandonment deeper and deeper. One who cannot read will find difficulty memorising and is more prone to make mistakes. And one who is not motivated by the desire to memorize the Qur'an will certainly not reflect upon it. And one who doesn't reflect upon the Qur'an could not conceivably practice it as a complete way of life.

Allah (swt) says:

نُقَيِّضُ الرَّحْمَنِ ذِكْرٍ عَنِ يَعِشُ وَمَنْ
قَرِينٌ لَهُ فَهُوَ شَيْطَانًا لَهُ

السَّبِيلِ عَنِ لَيَصُدُّونَهُمْ وَإِنَّهُمْ
مُهْتَدُونَ أَنَّهُمْ وَيَحْسَبُونَ

“And whosoever is blinded from remembrance of the Most Merciful – We appoint for him a devil and he is to him a companion. And indeed, the devils avert them from the way [of guidance], while they think that they are rightly guided.”
(Qur’an, [43:36-37](#))

May Allah Guide us to be among those who are firm on the Deen through the Qur’an. May He Forgive us for our shortcomings on our duties pertaining to the Qur’an and Increase our ability to understand the Qur’an and Implement all of His Commandments in the Qur’an