

The Impact of Contemplation on the Noble Qur'ān in Shaping the Muslim Personality: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

This research explores the impact of contemplating the Noble Qur'ān on an individual's intellect, soul, and faith, as well as its role in fostering righteousness and societal advancement. Reflection (Tadabbur) is a divine command that enables Muslims to understand and internalize the Qur'ān's teachings, making it an essential practice for attaining true comprehension of divine guidance. Without sincere contemplation, the deeper wisdom and objectives of the Qur'ān cannot be fully realized. Using an inductive, analytical, and deductive approach, this study examines the significance of Tadabbur through historical examples from the lives of the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ companions and their successors. Their deep reflection on the Qur'ān shaped their character, strengthened their faith, and provided them with the moral and intellectual clarity necessary for personal and societal development. The research reached several key findings. First, contemplation guides a Muslim toward a righteous life by aligning worldly ambitions with the objectives of Islam, ultimately fulfilling the Qur'ān's vision. Second, it plays a fundamental role in shaping a Muslim's character, building it upon a strong foundation of goodness, morality, and piety. Third, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the ultimate role model in reflection and devotion, as demonstrated by his life and the examples of his companions and the righteous predecessors. Lastly, deep reflection on the Qur'ān is among the most powerful means of drawing closer to Allah, granting believers a clearer understanding of divine guidance, its methodology, and its purposes. By emphasizing the necessity of Tadabbur, this research highlights its transformative impact on individuals and societies. The study advocates for the promotion of Qur'ānic contemplation as a fundamental practice, ensuring that its spiritual and moral benefits extend to all aspects of Muslim life.

Keywords: Impact, Contemplation, Individual, Society, Noble Qur'ān

Introduction

Allah, the Almighty, has urged us to contemplate the verses of His wise Book, following the example of the Prophet ﷺ and the righteous predecessors, who engaged with the Qur'ān through recitation, contemplation, interpretation, and application. The Prophet's ﷺ recitation of the Qur'ān was one of deep reflection and thought. Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) described the ideal way a believer should recite, saying: "Do not recite the Qur'ān hastily like poetry, nor scatter it like dates falling from a tree. Pause at its wonders and let your hearts be moved by it" (Ibn Abi Shaybah, 1997: 2/256).

The recitation of the Noble Qur'ān yields numerous benefits, and through deep contemplation of its verses, these benefits multiply. Among the most significant effects are its positive influence on a Muslim's soul, behavior, and morals, as well as strengthening faith in Allah and solidifying one's creed.

Contemplation involves reflecting on meanings and consequences with insight and understanding, grasping and scrutinizing its messages to extract lessons for practical implementation. It embodies the fulfillment of Allah's purpose in sending messengers and revealing His divine scripture.

In *Adwa' Al-Bayan*, the renowned scholar Al-Shanqiti states: "To contemplate the verses of this great Qur'ān means to study them, understand them, comprehend their meanings, and act upon them" (Al-Shanqiti, 1995: 4/429).

Contemplation is the key to all goodness, righteousness, and prosperity in both individual and societal life. Its tangible benefits can be examined, documented, and analyzed to highlight its significance and encourage its application.

One of the highest forms of Qur'ānic recitation and recitation is through contemplation, a practice emphasized in both the Qur'ān and Sunnah, which extols its virtues and immense rewards. Through deep reflection, one uncovers the meanings of words and the objectives of verses, leading to the implementation of Allah's commands—the ultimate purpose of Qur'ānic recitation.

A review of research centers and public libraries revealed numerous studies and articles on the subject of "Contemplation of the Noble Qur'ān." Some of these studies focused on specific aspects, while others addressed the topic in a general sense. However, this research is distinguished by its objective study of "The Impact of Contemplation of the Noble Qur'ān in Building the Muslim Personality."

The Impact of Contemplating the Qur'ān on Building the Muslim Personality

Contemplating the verses of the Qur'ān strengthens the foundations of faith in the believer's heart. It "builds its structure, strengthens its pillars, and shows him the reality of this world, the Hereafter, Heaven, and Hell in his heart. It prepares him to engage with nations, makes him aware of the places of lessons, shows him Allah's justice and grace, introduces him to the essence of Allah, His names, attributes, and actions, what He loves and dislikes, His path to Him, and the rewards of those who follow it. It also reveals the obstacles and pitfalls on the path, and teaches him about the soul, its qualities, and the factors that corrupt or correct

deeds. It guides him towards the actions and qualities of the people of Heaven and Hell, their states, their marks, and the degrees of happiness and misery, as well as the divisions among creation and what they unite and divide over" (Ibn Qayyim, 1996: 485-486).

A Muslim possesses a unique character because of the belief that resides in their heart, guiding them towards good deeds and warning them against evil. Their perspective on life and the universe emerges from this deep-rooted belief, which nourishes their spirit, enlightens their mind, and refines their soul. The more a person increases in faith and knowledge of the divine revelation, the more this influences the building of their character in a righteous and balanced manner, shaping it psychologically, ethically, and socially (Al-Tarif, 2019: 14).

Thus, the relationship between contemplating the Qur'ān and building the Muslim personality is a profound one, as detailed in the following:

1. One of the most prominent features and advantages of the Muslim personality is that it follows the divine guidance revealed in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Muslim's connection to Allah's law and guidance grows as they contemplate the Qur'ān, understand its purposes, and strive to achieve its goals.
2. Among the positive effects that the Qur'ān plants in the soul of the Muslim is the improvement of their character, the alignment of their personality, the elevation of their traits, and distancing them from blameworthy qualities that contradict perfect faith. Good character is a sign of complete faith, while bad character is a sign of its deficiency, as the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "The most complete of the believers in faith are those who have the best character" (Ahmad, 2001: 12/364)
3. Allah mentioned the qualities of the believers in the Surah that carries this noble title (Al-Mu'minun), saying: "Successful indeed are the believers, those who humble themselves in prayer; those who avoid idle talk; those who pay alms-tax; those who guard their chastity; except with their wives or those 'bondwomen' in their possession, for then they are free from blame, but whoever seeks beyond that are the transgressors; 'the believers are also' those who are true to their trusts and covenants; and those who are 'properly' observant of their prayers; These are the ones who will be awarded; Paradise as their own. They will be there forever" (Qur'ān 23: 1–11). In these verses, Allah begins by mentioning humility in prayer, which is contemplation, the stillness of limbs and the heart from worldly distractions, and immersion in the worship. Allah mentions several traits of the Muslim character, indicating that humility and contemplation lead to all the virtuous qualities found in these verses (Al-Tarif, 2019: 16).
4. A person who contemplates the verses of the Qur'ān, feeling the grandeur of Allah's commands and prohibitions, will rise above vices and elevate their soul with truthfulness and sincerity in speech and action. Truthfulness is one of the greatest foundations of the Muslim personality. Therefore, the Qur'ān makes lying a characteristic of the hypocrites, as Allah says: "Surely the hypocrites seek to deceive Allah, but He outwits them. When they stand up for prayer, they do it half-heartedly only to be seen by people—hardly remembering Allah at all" (Qur'ān 4: 142). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: "There are four traits, whoever possesses them is a complete hypocrite, and whoever has one of them has one trait of hypocrisy until they abandon it: when entrusted, they betray;

when they speak, they lie; when they make a promise, they break it; and when they argue, they act wickedly" (Al-Bukhārī, 2002: 1/ 16).

5. Through contemplation, the Muslim avoids major sins such as adultery, theft, alcohol consumption, and all major sins, as Allah described the believers in His book: " those who avoid major sins and shameful deeds, despite 'stumbling on' minor sins. Surely your Lord is infinite in forgiveness" (An-Najm, verse 32).
6. Reflecting on Allah's creation is facilitated for the Muslim through contemplation of His signs, which lead them to know Allah and believe in Him by observing the greatness of His creation. Imam Ibn Qayyim said: "There is a clarification through the revealed, recited verses, and a clarification through the visible, witnessed signs. Both are proofs and signs of the oneness of Allah, His names, His attributes, His perfection, and the truth of what His messengers conveyed about Him. For this reason, He calls His servants to reflect on His visible signs, encouraging them to think about them. This clarification is what the messengers were sent with, and it was given to them and to the scholars after them. After that, Allah leads astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills" (Abd al-Ma'ruf, 2013: 13). Allah Said: "We have not sent a messenger except in the language of his people to clarify 'the message' for them. Then Allah leaves whoever He wills to stray and guides whoever He wills. And He is the Almighty, All-Wise" (Ibrahim, verse 4)
7. Contemplating the Qur'ān fills the Muslim with happiness in both soul and body, enabling them to balance their worldly and afterlife affairs, managing the interests of religion and the world. Allah says: " And glorify the praises of your Lord before sunrise and before sunset, and glorify Him in the hours of the night and at both ends of the day,¹ so that you may be pleased 'with the reward" (Qur'ān 20: 130). Allah also says: " We have not revealed the Qur'ān to you 'O Prophet' to cause you distress" (Qur'ān 20: 2), "But whoever turns away from My Reminder will certainly have a miserable life, then We will raise them up blind on the Day of Judgment" (Qur'ān 20: 124).
8. The Qur'ān is characterized by sublime principles and noble values that make it a strong foundation for educating individuals, organizing societies, and shaping human beings to fulfill the Creator's goals.
9. The miraculous Qur'ānic style guides the reader to contemplate the meanings, helping the person to find guidance through their intellect and moving their mind through Allah's creation and universe, ultimately leading them to the truth and the straight path (Al-Baghdadi, 2003: 167)
10. Purifying the soul from its diseases and evil traits such as hypocrisy, envy, stinginess, anger, arrogance, and replacing them with virtuous traits such as monotheism, sincerity, patience, trust in Allah, repentance, gratitude, hope, and love for good for others (Al-Mani', 2015: 77)
11. Implementing the Qur'ān is the primary goal and the greatest purpose of its revelation, as well as reciting it properly, contemplating its verses, and adhering to its limits. Allah says: "Those We have given the Book follow it as it should be followed" (Qur'ān 2: 121). It is said in its interpretation: "They follow it as it should be followed and act upon it as it should be acted upon" (Al-Tabari, 2001: 3/ 424)
12. Refining talents and developing intellectual capabilities, so the ability to observe grows, the capacity for thinking expands, and the person's ability to address issues improves, becoming a wise judge when opinions and thoughts differ (Kamal, 1995: 194), as Allah says: "O Prophet, Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" (Qur'ān 39: 9).

13. Contemplating the Qur'ānic verses increases the believer's certainty that it is from Allah, for there is no verse that contradicts another, nor is there a word that could be replaced with another. It follows a consistent pattern from beginning to end, and the one who reflects on it feels that it comes from a single source, that of the Wise and All-Knowing. Had it been from other than Allah, they would have found many contradictions. This certainty strengthens their faith, as Allah says: "Say, 'The holy spirit¹ has brought it down from your Lord with the truth to reassure the believers, and as a guide and good news for those who submit 'to Allah'" (Qur'ān 16: 102). Thus, the roots of faith are deepened in the heart, becoming more firmly established.
14. One of the greatest effects of contemplating the Qur'ān in building the Muslim personality is that it introduces them to their Lord, His great sovereignty, His power, and His immense favor upon the believers (Al-Ajurri, 2017: 18). This is what Imam As-Sa'di (may Allah have mercy on him) pointed out about the benefits of contemplation: "It introduces the worshiped Lord, His perfect qualities, and what He is free from in terms of deficiencies. It introduces the path that leads to Him, the qualities of its followers, and what they will receive when they reach Him. It also introduces the enemy and the path to punishment, the qualities of its followers, and the consequences they will face when the reasons for punishment occur. The more the servant reflects on it, the more their knowledge, deeds, and insight grow" (Al-Sa'di, 2000: 1/ 376-377).

The Positions of the Companions and the Early Generations in Contemplating the Qur'ān

Contemplating the Qur'ān is a great act of worship that elevates the soul and causes it to flourish. It has a profound effect on our lives and actions. Therefore, we must pause to reflect on its noble verses, contemplate their meanings, purposes, and objectives, following the example of the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) and the righteous predecessors (Salaf). Allah, the Almighty, has emphasized the value of this contemplation and its impact on the life of a Muslim. He made the primary purpose of the Qur'ān's revelation to be its contemplation, as He says: *"This is a blessed Book which We have revealed to you 'O Prophet' so that they may contemplate its verses, and people of reason may be mindful"* (Qur'ān 38: 29). Allah also rebuked those who do not reflect upon it and do not strive to understand it, likening them to those who have closed their minds, hearts, and understanding, as He says: *"Do they not then reflect on the Qur'ān? Or are there locks upon their hearts?"* (Qur'ān 47: 24).

Here are some examples of the contemplation of the Qur'ān by the Companions and the Salaf, and how they interacted with Allah's verses:

1. Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: "When 'Uyaynah ibn Hisn ibn Hudhayfah came to Medina and stayed with his nephew Al-Hurr ibn Qays, who was one of the men whom 'Umar ibn al-Khattab would bring near, he asked his nephew if he could speak to the leader. Al-Hurr sought permission from 'Umar, and 'Umar allowed 'Uyaynah to come in. Upon entering, 'Uyaynah rebuked 'Umar harshly, saying, 'You don't give us enough and you don't judge us fairly!' 'Umar became angry and was about to strike him, but Al-Hurr intervened and reminded 'Umar of the verse: *Be gracious, enjoin what is right, and turn away from those who act ignorantly*' (Qur'ān 7: 199). As soon as 'Umar heard the verse, he stopped and did not exceed the bounds, for he was a man who always paused at the Book of Allah" (Al-Bukhārī, 2002: 6/60).

2. Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) reported: "Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) built a mosque in his house, where he would pray and recite the Qur'ān. As he did so, the women and children of the disbelievers would stand outside, marveling at his recitation. Abu Bakr was known for being deeply moved, and he would weep uncontrollably while reciting the Qur'ān" (Al-Bukhārī, 2002: 3/93).
3. Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: "Abu Bakr said to the Prophet (peace be upon him): 'O Messenger of Allah, I have grown old.' The Prophet replied: 'The surahs of Hud, Al-Waqi'ah, Al-Mursalat, An-Nazi'at, and others have aged you'" (Al-Tirmidhī, n.d: 5/402). These surahs contain powerful reminders of the afterlife and the consequences of human actions).
4. Abdullah ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) freed his servant, Rumiṭah, saying: "I heard Allah say in His Book: *You will never achieve righteousness until you donate some of what you cherish* ' (Ali 'Imran 92). And indeed, I love you, so go free for the sake of Allah" (Al-Asbahani, 1974: 1/295).
5. A servant of Ali ibn al-Husayn (may Allah be pleased with him) was pouring water for him to perform wudu, but the pitcher slipped and hit his face, causing a wound. The servant recited the verse: *'And those who control their anger'* (Ali 'Imran 134). Ali replied: 'I have suppressed my anger.' The servant then recited: *'And those who pardon others'* (Ali 'Imran 134). He responded: 'May Allah forgive you.' The servant continued: *'And Allah loves the good-doers'* (Ali 'Imran 134), and he said: 'You are free for the sake of Allah" (Ibn Kathir, 1999: 9/107).
6. Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: "One night, I was praying when I was overcome with emotion and began to weep heavily. My family became concerned and asked what happened, but I could not explain. They sent for Abu Hazm, and when he arrived, I told him I was moved by a verse: *'for they will see from Allah what they had never expected'* (Az-Zumar 47). Abu Hazm began to weep with me, and we both wept profusely" (Al-Dhahabi, 1985: 5/355).
7. Ubaydullah ibn Wahb (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "I heard Muhammad ibn Ka'b al-Qurazi say: 'I would rather spend a night reflecting on the two verses *'When the earth is shaken with its quake'* and *'The Great Calamity'* (Qur'ān 99: 1; Qur'ān 101: 1), pondering them over and over, than to hastily recite the entire Qur'ān" (Al-Asbahani, 1974: 3/214).
8. Al-Harith ibn Sa'id (may Allah have mercy on him) reported: "We were sitting with Malik ibn Dinar when someone began to recite the verse *"When the earth is shaken 'in' its ultimate quaking"* (Qur'ān 99: 1). As soon as the verse was recited, Malik began trembling and everyone in the gathering started weeping loudly until they reached the verses: *So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, And whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it'* (Qur'ān 99: 7-8). Malik cried out loud and fainted" (Ibn al-Jawzi, 2000: 2/165).
9. Muhammad ibn Najiyah (may Allah have mercy on him) reported: "I prayed behind Al-Fudayl, and when he recited *'The Inevitable Hour'* (Qur'ān 69: 1), upon reaching the verse *'Seize and shackle them'* (Qur'ān 69: 30), he began to weep, and his son fell unconscious from the emotion" " (Al-Dhahabi, 1985: 8/444).
10. Hafsa ibn Humaid narrated: "Ziyad ibn Jirir asked me to recite to him. I recited the verses *'Have We not uplifted your heart for you 'O Prophet', relieved you of the burden; which weighed so heavily on your back,'* (Qur'ān 94: 1-3). Ziyad began to weep like a child and could not continue" (Al-Muqaddim, 2004: 4/217).

11. Al-Hasan (may Allah have mercy on him) was brought a cup of water to break his fast, and when he brought it close to his mouth, he began to weep. He said, 'I remembered the wish of the people of Hell: *'Aid us with some water or any provision Allah has granted you'* (Qur'ān 7: 50), and I remembered what has answered them: 'Allah has forbidden both to the disbelievers' (Qur'ān 7: 50).

These examples show the deep connection the Companions and the early generations of Muslims had with the Qur'ān, reflecting upon it, being moved by it, and acting according to its teachings.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research has reached several critical conclusions that highlight the profound impact of reflection (Tadabbur) on a Muslim's life. The most significant of these findings is that reflection serves as a guiding force, steering a Muslim towards the correct path that harmonizes worldly pursuits with religious objectives. This alignment enables an individual to fully embody the vision and messages of the Qur'ān, ensuring a life rooted in purpose, morality, and spiritual fulfilment.

Furthermore, reflection plays an essential role in shaping and strengthening a Muslim's character. By engaging in deep contemplation, a believer builds their ethical and moral foundation upon solid principles, leading to a life filled with righteousness and virtue. Reflection is not merely an intellectual exercise; rather, it is a transformative process that refines the heart and mind, fostering sincerity, humility, and a heightened awareness of one's purpose in both this world and the hereafter.

The life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) serves as the ultimate example of reflection and humility. His practice of deep contemplation, as well as the reflective habits of his Companions and the righteous predecessors, demonstrates the profound impact of Tadabbur in developing strong faith, wisdom, and moral excellence. Their lives serve as a timeless testament to the power of reflection in achieving true devotion to Allah and righteous living. Moreover, reflecting on the Qur'ān is one of the greatest means to draw closer to Allah, as it grants a deep understanding of His guidance, wisdom, and divine purposes. Through sincere contemplation, a Muslim strengthens their relationship with the Creator, gaining insight into the eternal truths that govern life and the hereafter. Tadabbur is not just a scholarly pursuit but a spiritual necessity that fosters clarity, inner peace, and unwavering faith.

In light of these conclusions, the researchers recommend the following:

1. Conducting a comprehensive study on the narrations of the Prophet's Companions and the righteous predecessors regarding Tadabbur, extracting lessons from their reflections to highlight its positive impact on individuals and society.
2. Incorporating the study of Qur'ānic reflection into educational curricula for young students, ensuring that they develop a habit of contemplation from an early age. Additionally, translating works on this subject into multiple languages to make them accessible to diverse communities, thereby promoting moral and social reform.
3. Establishing periodic journals dedicated to publishing personal experiences and scholarly insights on Qur'ānic reflection, documenting its transformative effects on character, behavior, and societal well-being.

By implementing these recommendations, the practice of Tadabbur can be further enriched and widely embraced, allowing individuals and societies to benefit from the wisdom and guidance of the Qur'ān. Ultimately, sincere reflection leads to a life of purpose, moral integrity, and spiritual fulfillment, bridging the gap between knowledge and action in the pursuit of divine success.

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