



Quran

YOUR GATEWAY TO A NEW WORLD

Living the Quran

Reading the Quran will be of little benefit to you, it may even bring misery and harm, unless you, from the first moment, begin to change and reconstruct your life in total surrender to God who has given you the Quran. Without the will and striving to act, neither the states of heart and enraptures of the soul, nor the ecstasies of mood, nor intellectual enrichment will be of any use to you. If the *Quran* does not have any impact upon your actions and if you do not obey what it enjoins and avoid what it prohibits, then you are not getting nearer to it.

Reading the Quran should induce faith inside your heart; that faith should shape your lives. It is not a gradual piecemeal process, by which you first spend years reading the Quran, then understanding it and strengthening your faith, and only *then* act upon it. All things take place simultaneously: as you hear or recite the words, they kindle faith inside you; as you have faith inside you, your life begins to change.

What we must remember is that to live by the Quran requires a major decision on our part: we have to completely alter the course of our life, irrespective of what may be the dominant thought-patterns around us, or what our society may be dictating, or what others may be doing. This decision requires major sacrifices. But unless we, as believers in the Quran being the word of God, are prepared to take the plunge, not much good will come out of the time spent with the Quran.

O people! There has come to you an exhortation from your Lord - a healing for what is in the hearts, a guidance and a mercy for the believers. Say: In this bounty of Allah, and in His mercy, in it, let them rejoice!" (10: 57-8)

Let us rejoice then and re-acquaint our selves with Allah through His Book.

Aids for further study:

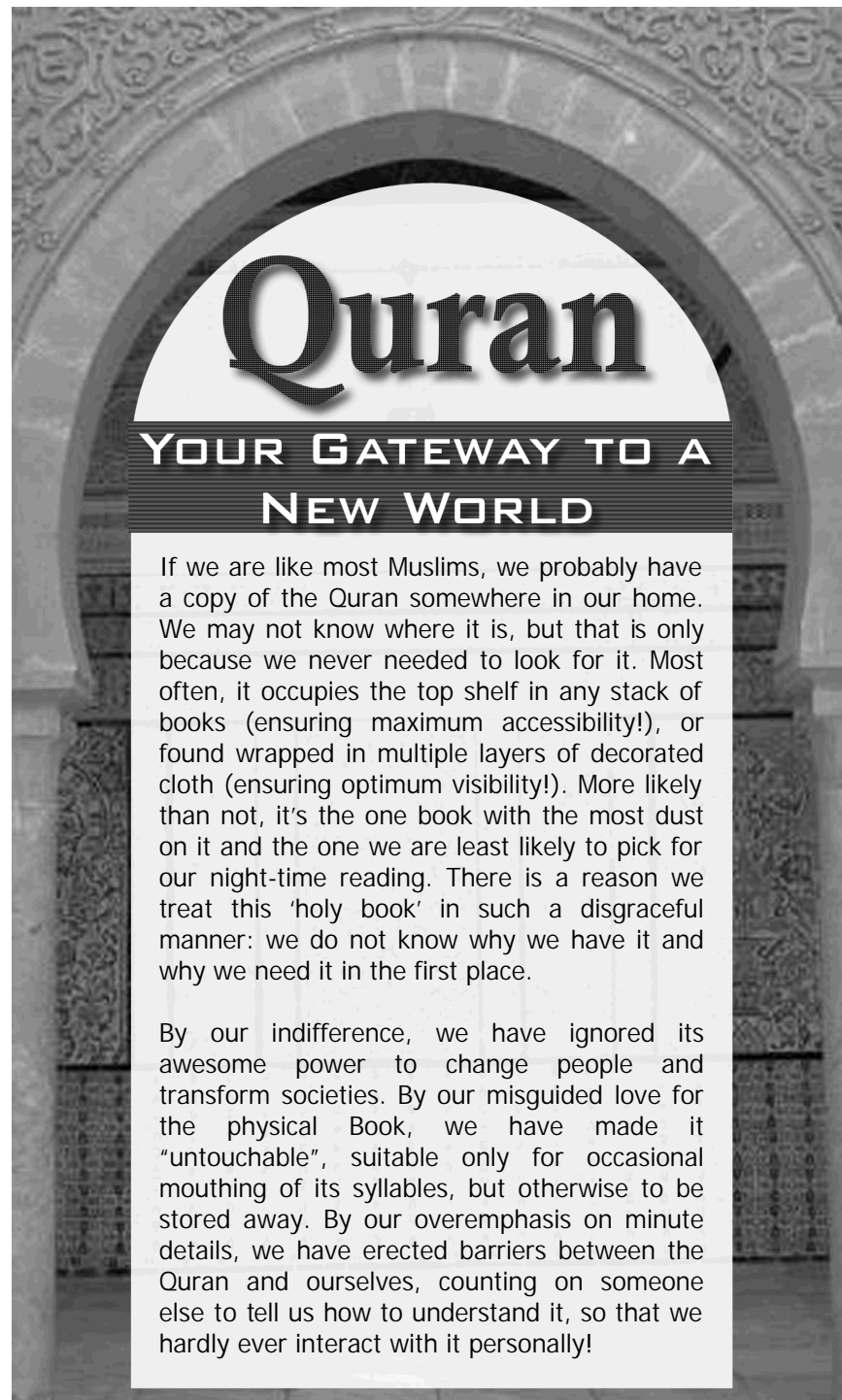
"The Holy Quran : Text, Translation and Commentary" by Abdullah Yusuf Ali

"The Meaning of the Quran" by Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi

"In the Shade of the Quran" by Sayyid Qutb Shaheed

"Way to the Quran" by Ustad Khurram Murad

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If we are like most Muslims, we probably have a copy of the Quran somewhere in our home. We may not know where it is, but that is only because we never needed to look for it. Most often, it occupies the top shelf in any stack of books (ensuring maximum accessibility!), or found wrapped in multiple layers of decorated cloth (ensuring optimum visibility!). More likely than not, it's the one book with the most dust on it and the one we are least likely to pick for our night-time reading. There is a reason we treat this 'holy book' in such a disgraceful manner: we do not know why we have it and why we need it in the first place.

By our indifference, we have ignored its awesome power to change people and transform societies. By our misguided love for the physical Book, we have made it "untouchable", suitable only for occasional mouthing of its syllables, but otherwise to be stored away. By our overemphasis on minute details, we have erected barriers between the Quran and ourselves, counting on someone else to tell us how to understand it, so that we hardly ever interact with it personally!



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The Quran as Reality

“Allah. There is no god but He, the Ever-living, the Self-subsisting [by whom all subsist]. He has sent down upon you the Book with the Truth ... as a guidance unto mankind” (3: 2-3)

For those who heard it for the first time from the lips of the Prophet, blessings and peace be on him, the Quran was a living reality. They had no doubt that, through him, Allah was speaking to them. Their hearts and minds were therefore seized by it. Their eyes overflowed with tears and their bodies shivered. They found each word of it deeply relevant to their concerns and experiences, and integrated it fully into their lives. They were completely transformed by it - both as individuals and as a community - into a totally new, alive and life-giving entity. Those who grazed sheep, herded camels and traded petty merchandise became the shepherds and leaders of mankind!

How do we make the Quran, again, a living, relevant force, as powerful for us now, 1420 years away, as it was then? Only by entering the world of the Quran as if Allah were speaking to us through it now and today, and by fulfilling the necessary conditions for such an encounter.

Encountering the World of the Quran

Firstly, then, we must realize *what* the Quran, as the word of God, is and what it *means* to us, and bring all the reverence, love, longing, and will-to-act that this realization demands. **Secondly**, we must read it as it asks to be read, as Allah's Messenger instructed us, as he and his Companions read it. **Thirdly**, we must bring each word of the Quran to bear upon our own realities and concerns by transcending the barriers of time, culture and change.

The New World that Awaits You

As you come to the Quran, you come to a new world. No other venture in your life can be so momentous and crucial, so blissful and rewarding, as your journey to and through the Quran.

It is a journey that will take you through the endless joys and riches of the words that your Creator and Lord has sent to you and all mankind.



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Here you will find a world of untold treasures of knowledge and wisdom to guide you on the pathways of life, to mould your thoughts and actions. In it, you will find deep insights to enrich you and steer you along the right course. From it, you will receive a radiant light to illuminate the deeper reaches of your soul. Here you will encounter profound emotions, a warmth to melt your heart and bring tears running down your cheeks.

Undertaking the Journey

To remain determined and steadfast on our road to its discovery, and to derive the maximum benefit from our undertaking of studying the Quran, we must approach it with certain convictions.

First, our lives will remain meaningless and ruined unless they are guided by the Quran, the word of God.

Second, the Quran, being the eternal guidance given by the Ever-living God, is as relevant for us, today; as it was fourteen centuries ago, and will remain so forever.

Third, we almost have a right, in some sense and measure, to receive its blessings today as its first believers did; provided, of course, that we come to it and move in it in a manner that may entitle us to share its rich harvest.

Fourth, every Muslim has a duty to devote himself to reading, understanding, memorizing and implementing the Quran.

Fifth, one must abandon oneself totally, in thought and deed, to whatever the Quran has to offer. Any pride, arrogance, sense of self-sufficiency, reservation, or ingenuity that can mistakenly be read into it, is fatal to its understanding and would shut the door to its blessings.

Sixth, the path of the Quran is the path of self-surrender, of practising what it tells you, even if one learns only one Ayah. One Ayah learnt and acted upon is better than a thousand explained beautifully but which do not impart any beauty to the reader's life.

Obedience, after all, is the real key to understanding.