

1.8 Pondering The Qur'an For Deeper Understanding

Main Topics Covered

- **Introduction** (0:00 to 1:40)
- **Read It With Your Heart** (1:40 to 2:00)
- **Read It At Night** (2:00 to 3:10)
- **Repent from Sins** (3:10 to 4:13)
- **Find a Teacher** (4:13 to 5:54)
- **Stop and Reflect** (5:54 to 7:40)
- **How The Companions Memorized The Quran** (7:40 to 9:52)

Introduction

In this module, we will answer a question that might look simple, but it's actually a bit of a compound question:

How can I ponder on the Quran? What does it mean to have a deep understanding of the Quran?

Actually, this question has two sides that are very important to be addressed and be balanced in the mind and the heart of the believer. One side that has to do with the heart and the other side that has to do with the mind.

In Islam, we think with our hearts, we understand with our hearts. Yes, the mind is part of the functions of the heart, but it's more into the logic of the Quran.

What I am saying is that there is a side of meaning and spirit, feelings and emotions in reading and pondering upon The Quran. And there is another side of rationality, logic, understanding of history and science, and so on.

Both sides are connected, but often times, we kind of overlook or ignore the side that has to do with our hearts.

How to Ponder on the Quran?

Read It With Your Heart

First of all, read it with your heart.

How can I read it with my heart?

I read it with my heart by making it speak to my feelings and my emotions and my comprehension of my existence and the world.

How can I do that?

Read it at Night

By actually choosing the right place and the right time.

Are times different when we read the Quran?

Yes. Allah said in the Quran:

Indeed, the hours of the night are more effective for concurrence [of heart and tongue] and more suitable for words. (Quran [73:6](#))

When you read at night, it's more impactful on your heart and your self and your understanding will be more guided and more correct. Which means that if I start to read the Quran at night, and especially if I am standing in prayers at night trying to read and ponder, this is one of the major ways of pondering upon The Quran because you will have an impact and you will have thoughts and feelings that you might not have during the day, when it's noisy and everybody is busy.

Yes, you are reading The Quran and focusing, but not like when you are by yourself at night standing and reflecting. That is a very different kind of pondering.

Repent from Sins

You ponder on The Quran also better when you repent, when you clear your heart from the sins that are covering the heart. The Quran says:

No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning. ([83:14](#))

Part of pondering is to clear your heart from these sins, by repenting to Allah. You can't bring back time, but you can ask Allah to forgive you for the shortcomings and the sins...

You repent, you regret, you return the rights of people to them.

Basically, when you repent, you are opening your heart to the receiving of that message and to pondering on it more deeply.

Find a Teacher

The companions also show us another way of pondering upon the Quran is by learning from a teacher, because when they learned from Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), he took them to a different level. In a hadith, the companions said:

"When we are with you, we feel the Quran in a different way. When you read about Paradise and Hell, it's as if we're looking at them."

When you have a teacher who is teaching you the Quran, and the teacher has a good heart, that heart is going to impact your heart.

People develop different schools and institutes, groups and parties... regardless of which group you're in, whatever teacher you find through whatever means, it's important that that teacher has a good heart so that when they teach you The Quran, they're not teaching you logic, philosophy and history, but they're actually also teaching you how to feel The Quran, how to live that book properly; they would help you through the journey of living that book.

That journey is not a journey of traveling distances and countries, it's actually a journey of your heart taking steps towards Allah.

Stop and Reflect

So when you read and ponder, also stop in front of the existence of your life, the hereafter and what it means. Reflect upon that life in the hereafter, which we often forget. It will cleanse your heart and will allow you to ponder upon The Quran in a different way. Reflect upon your existence and the path that you're taking in this life until you journey to Allah after your death.

Think about that deeply. The Quran is going to give you a lot of knowledge about that.

Reflect upon what you have in hand, which is fine, but should not be in your heart. The Quran says that humans love wealth, children, and the desires of life... even if these things are in the area of lawfulness, you should know that what you have in your hand that is lawful is not the end of the story; there is a higher purpose that you are here for that is not what you have in your hand, that is what you do in life to help people who are destitute, homeless or hungry.

That is part of the message of The Quran; that is part of the mercy of Allah that He obligates us to be humans in the humane sense and to be merciful.

Pondering upon The Quran also means to activate these things in your life, in addition to the thinking of the mind and the logic.

How The Companions Memorized The Quran

The companions used to learn the Quran in a very interesting way: They would memorize a verse and then go and apply that verse in their lives, and then come back and memorize another verse. Then they don't memorize that new verse until they apply the verse.

Does every verse apply?

Yes. Even if the verse is talking about a story from the past, the hereafter, a simile or a metaphor... Every verse has a practical meaning.

When I read about the stories, they're not for entertainment; they're actually for meanings. So when I read a story in which there is honesty and integrity, I go and apply honesty in my life. There is a story in which there is mercy and forgiveness, let me apply mercy and forgiveness in my life first.

That is the true pondering upon The Quran.

Pondering upon The Quran is not just a logical and philosophical exercise, even though this is also important for the development of science and development of civilization, which is also a purpose of The Quran. But pondering upon The Quran is also important in terms of how my heart feels on The Quran.

When and where I stand and pray, read and memorize The Quran, not for the sake of repeating without understanding; don't memorize The Quran if you don't understand it, you have to understand what you memorize. You can't just be a *hafidh* (memorizer), but you have to be a person of reflection and understanding.

If you do the memorization while you are working on your heart and the application in your life, then that is the true pondering upon The Quran and the true benefit of The Quran.

We ask Allah to teach us, guide us and forgive us.

We ask Allah Heavens and whatever takes us to it including The Quran.