Is Beauty Only Skin Deep?

O children of Adam, we have provided you with garments to cover your bodies, as well as for beauty. But the best garment is the garment of righteousness. These are some of God’s signs, that they may take heed. [7:36]

God has given everybody different qualities. He has also provided some people more than others. Some have become so self-indulgent that they spend much time and money on whatever they think will improve their appearance. This kind of superficial beauty is worthless unless it is accompanied by other qualities. Those who possess true beauty are the inner qualities that really matter. The other type of beauty is only skin deep and may reflect an inner ugliness.

In Quran we are told that one’s material possessions are temporary vanities of this world, and completely unimportant in the sight of God. The only thing that matters are the righteousness, and this is the only thing that will make you better than someone else. People who are ruthless, materialistic and uncaring about their fellow-man often enjoy temporary success, by God’s will. However, this is only in this world, and only temporarily. That outer garment is a vanishing entity. Yet, people spend an entire lifetime trying to improve it, protect it, beautify it. They spend little time nourishing their soul, the real person which will last through all eternity. Here are some verses from the Quran to reflect on:

Whatever you are given is no more than temporary material of this life. What God possesses is far better and everlasting, for those who believe and trust in their Lord. [42:36]

O people, we created you from the same male and female, and rendered you diverse peoples and tribes, that you may recognize one another. The best among you in the sight of God is the most righteous. God is Omniscient, Cognizant. [49:13]

You shall not covet the qualities bestowed upon each other by God; the men enjoy certain qualities, and the women enjoy certain qualities. You may inspire God to shower you with His grace. God is fully aware of all things. [4:22]

Do not be impressed by their money or their children; God causes these to be sources of misery for them in this world, and their souls depart as disbelievers. [9:35]

"Use the provisions bestowed upon you by God to seek the abode of the Hereafter, without neglecting your share in this world. Be charitable, as God has been charitable towards you. Do not keep on acquiring the earth, God does not love the complainers." [28:77]

He is the One who made you inhabitants of the earth, and He raised some of you above others in rank, in order to test you in accordance with what He has given you. Surely, your Lord is efficient in enforcing retribution, and He is Forgiven, Most Merciful. [3:165]

God has provided for some of you more than others. Those who are given plenty would never give their properties to their subordinates to the extent of making them partners. Would they give you God’s blessing? [16:71]

The life of this world is no more than illusion and vanity, while the abode of the Hereafter is far better for the righteous. [63:2]

Frank Yuejin

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Submitters Perspective

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A Pertinent Question From the Quran:
What is Wrong With Your Logic?

Many Muslims grew up with the traditional understanding that Islam rests on four sources: the Quran (God’s scripture), hadith and sunna (prophet Muhammad’s sayings and traditions), ‘ijma or the consensus of the scholars, and qiyas or analogy for anything else that was non-existent during the time of the prophet, is not valid. These four sources have supposedly been studied exhaustively by the Islamic scholars so that one would not contradict the others, let alone contradicting itself. Because of this assertion by the scholars, very few if any Muslims ever question the validity of this claim. This is not a phenomenon unique to the Muslims. Other communities have fallen into the same trap. Many people end up following in their parent’s footsteps blindly when it comes to religion, other people in the community undertake the duty of studying the religion, other people in the community are no longer required to labor in the subject. They are even led to believe that God will reward them just the same. Hence the power of religion to scholars in traditional Islamic societies.

The real reason to keep the Muslim masses relatively ignorant of the human-made sources is that they are full of contradictions. If one studies the whole collections of hadith, even the so-called six ‘sahih’ or genuine, hadith of Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawid, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah and al-Nasa’i, these contradictions will quickly become apparent. The same can be said of the Shitte’s collections of hadith from al-Kalunia, Ibn Babawayh, Jaafar Muhammad al-Tusi and al-Murtada (they mostly re-arrange hadith that passed through Ali, the prophet’s cousin and son-in-law). It is a historical fact that these hadiths were collected some two centuries to four centuries after the prophet’s death. They are essentially words and actions attributed to the prophet Muhammad long after he was gone. Many of these hadiths were recognized as fabrications to legitimate certain views and conditions at the time.

Hence, the Muslim’s ignorance of what the Quran really teaches is made even worse by their acceptance of human-made injunction that often contradicts the Quran said itself.

It is not very often that one encounters more than a few hadiths at a time on a given subject, because of their conflicting nature. The following example, however, is an exception. It is quoted from a recent posting in one of the many Islamic bulletin boards on the Internet, the computerized “information superhighway.”

The original author of this posting was apparently trying to enlighten other “netters” on the virtue of eating and drinking the Islamic way, using the hadith as a reference. The readers can judge for themselves whether enlightenment or confusion will result upon reading the following quote:

1. From Ibn Abbas, he said, “I gave the Prophet (pbuh) the zamzam water, and he drank it while standing up.” (Bukhari & Muslim).

continued on the next page...
2. From Nazazi ibn Sabran, he said, 'I came through the front gate of the masjid's courtyard, then he drank while standing up. When I said, 'Venil, I had seen the Prophet (pbuh) did what I just did.' (Bukhari).

3. From Ibn Umar, he said, 'During the Prophet's (pbuh) lifetime, we used to eat while standing up and drink while standing' (Tirmidhi).

4. From Amr ibn Shubab, from his father, from his grandfather, he said, 'I had seen the Messenger of God (pbuh) drink while standing up and (at other times) while sitting down (Tirmidhi).

NOTE: Eating and drinking are worldly affairs; any means of doing them are halal (permissible) originally. Eating and drinking while standing up are one of the ways, which due to circumstances at the time, are permissible. Therefore, you can do these things while standing up if the circumstances dictate. However, try to eat and drink while sitting down because of the following hadiths:

5. From Anas, from the Prophet (pbuh), he forbade anyone eating while standing up. Qatadah said, 'Then I asked Anas: 'what about eating?' Anas said, 'Eating while standing up is not.'

6. From Abu Hurairah, he said, 'The Messenger of God (pbuh) said: "God-given common sense will know he quoted earlier. If, instead of I am after reading the posting of neighbors, one must be commanded to disregard these narrations, the Messenger of God (pbuh) would never have allowed these narrations to be recorded in the Quran. He gave us the ultimate form of the Quran's divine source in the form of a mathematical pattern which contains the whole fabric of the book. Hence, when He says that the Quran is the only source of religious guidance and nothing shall abrogate it, the Muslims should say, 'We hear, and we obey.'"

After all, God Himself asserts that the Quran is complete, fully detailed and leaves out nothing. This is the only source of religious guidance as any open-minded person will conclude, after careful study, and in it there is no contradictions (please check 18:27, 63:14-15, 4:82).

They must realize the cause of the back-wardness and misery that have been haunting them for too long. From the time of Prophet Muhammad until several centuries onward, history was marked by rapid growth in power and influence of the Islamic empire. The Muslims were on top of the world politically, economically and culturally. Was it a coincidence that the vibrant period in the Muslims' history was the same period when they still upheld the Quran alone as their moral compass? The rigid, human-made laws and regulations were being slowly canceled and debated two hundred years after the prophet, but it was not until centuries later that they finally had a firm grip on the society. Then the Muslims were in disarray, their dynamism and optimism outlook gone. In their place came apathy, fatalism, superstition, and a "fol-low without question" attitude brought about by the "closing of the door to jihadi" (systematic original thinking) introduced by jurists such as Imam Shafi'i. From the world's just rulers, the Muslims became the world's oppressors and the oppressed. It was this trading away of God's revelations for human-made, Satan-inspired regulations that caused the Muslims' downfall. Indeed, the Muslims have a treasure in their hands, yet they have been duped to trade it away for a cheap price. This is precisely the point of prophet Muhammad's anguish for a cheap price. This is precisely the quran. He gave us the ultimate form of the Quran in the Quran. When he will say, "These are God's revelations that we recite from Him. Hence, when He says that the Quran is complete, fully detailed and leaves out nothing. This is the only source of religious guidance and nothing shall abrogate it, the Muslims are commanded to disregard these narrations. We have permitted the enemies of every religion to spread their beliefs everywhere, and to trade it away for a cheap price. This is precisely the Quran, (Audio cassette) (video).

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God willing, the 9th Annual International Conference of United Submitters will be taking place in Bellingham, Washington, July 15-17. Attendance is by invitation and prior registration only. If you would like to attend the conference but did not receive the registration form, please contact us immediately.

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