

# The Quran and its Message

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سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

Salamun Alaikum (Peace be upon you)

## BOOK WORSHIP AND REVERENCE

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Religious scriptures remain the fundamental core of any religious thought or belief. Whether popular teachings remain consistent with the scripture is not within the discussion scope of this short article. However, what is pertinent is the observation how these religious scriptures often become the centre of extreme reverence, at times requiring ritual ablutions to touch, or appointed 'religious leaders' to read them.

**(Please see related article [1] below)**

It appears that scriptural 'reverence' is not a new concept exclusive to Islam. Rather, it can be consistently traced throughout history of different faiths and their followers.

Such reverence is one of the early steps in losing the connection with the spirit of the living message and relegating it to the dark confines of written or printed parchments which only 'certain people' who are clean can touch, comprehend and in time, interpret. In extreme cases, it becomes a somewhat dead dialogue only to be utilised during ritualised worship or celebrations. It also introduces an unnecessary barrier for the common man to the message's accessibility and delegates control to the 'appointed' clergy to interpret the scripture in a manner which they deem fit.

One notes a similar sentiment resonated in a rebuke made by the Quran with regards the Children of Israel.

**006:091 (Part)**

**"...Say: Who revealed the Book which Moses brought, a light and a guidance for mankind, which you make into scattered writings (into parchments) which you show while you conceal much?..."**

From the verse above, it is clear that committing guidance to parchments and 'written scripture' has always been a practice of 'appointed' religious authorities. However, it is clear from the above verse that it has also often been used as a tool by the clergy to 'control' its teachings.

Scripture and its message should be lived as a source of continuous guidance. It should be accessed freely by all, examined, scrutinised, pondered and researched by all mankind. No doubt it should be treated with utmost respect, but there must remain a fine balance between respect and overt reverence. The purpose of scripture has always been guidance and not its reverence.

It is significant to note that Prophet Moses <sup>(pbuh)</sup> **threw down** the Tablets on the ground in anger which God had Himself inscribed when he found his people abandoning the core message of his teachings. Instead, a section of his people had resorted to worshipping a golden calf during a mere 40 nights of his absence. **It is clear that Moses was not interested in Tablet worship but in its fundamental teachings.**

#### **007:150**

“And when Moses returned to his people, wrathful (and) in violent grief, he said: Evil is it that you have done after me; did you turn away from the bidding of your Lord? **And he threw down the tablets** and seized his brother by the head, dragging him towards him. He said: Son of my mother! surely the people reckoned me weak and had well-nigh slain me, therefore make not the enemies to rejoice over me and count me not among the unjust people”

This is also confirmed by the Old Testament:

#### **Exodus 32:19**

"When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain"

[1]

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## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

The Quran in a scriptural form too, is a living, 'breathing' document which is applicable for all societies and changes. The Quran is of no use if it lies dormant, its message abandoned or in the hands of the 'appointed' few to interpret. It lays out fundamental rules and structures for societies to develop on. It is not a short lived message applicable only for a certain Arabian audience of the 7th century. Rather, it remains a message for all mankind irrespective of time.

#### **Related Articles:**

- (1) [Do I Need to Perform Ablution \(Wudu\) Before I Can Touch the Quran?](#)
- (2) [Idolatry According to the Quran](#)

## **REFERENCES**

[1] The Bible, New International Version

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