

Surat Yaasin verse 68

Learning Objectives

To reflect on verse 68 of Surat Yaasin and understand:

- The process of weakness in our body and mind in our old age
- How we must cherish our youth before our old age makes us weak

Value your youth before old age!

{68} وَمَنْ نُعَمِّرْهُ نُنَكِّسْهُ فِي الْخَلْقِ أَفَلَا يَعْقِلُونَ

And whomsoever We cause to live long, We reduce (him) to an abject state in constitution; do they not then understand?

This verse refers to an example of these changes concerning the aged persons. It points to the man's situation at the end of his life from the point of weakness and inability of both mind and body, so that it can be both a warning unto those who postpone choosing the path of guidance from today to tomorrow, and an answer to those who take the short of life as a cause for their faults, and it can be an evidence for the might of Allah indicating that as He is able to return a strong and powerful man to the weakness of his childhood, He is able to bring forth the Resurrection and also make the sinners blind and unable to move.

From the very beginning of his creation, man is weak and then gradually he grows and develops. During the foetus course, every day he passes some new stages and new growth. After his birth he will swiftly continue the path of development from the point of body and spirit, and the God-given strengths and talents, which are hidden inside his entity, will appear one after another.

The course of youth, and next to it, the course of expertness approach, and man will be seated in the climax of bodily and spiritual development. Here, sometimes, the body and the spirit separate their way from each other. The spirit will continue its path of development, while the body begin retardation.

But, at last, the man's intellect, too, will begin the downward march, and little by little, and sometimes quickly, that stages of childhood return. The childish movements begin, and thinking, and even one's pretext seeking will be like those of children.

The bodily weakness will also come along with them, with this difference that these movements and spiritualities are sweet and attractive when they are from the side of children, because they are some glad-tidings unto their future hopeful lives and that is why they are completely tolerable. But in relation to the old persons, they are pungent, not beautiful, and, sometimes, hateful, or pitiful. Verily, there will come some days which will be very painful, so much so that the depth of its inconvenience is hardly considerable.

However, the Qur'anic sentence "do they not then understand" gives a wonderful remark in this regard and it tells men: if this strength and power that you have were not temporary it would not be taken from you so easy. Do know that there is another might over you which is capable of doing everything.

You must be careful of yourself before reaching that stage, and before that the laughter and beauty turns into sadness and withered state, make the best of it and provide the provision of the path of the next world in this world, since in the term of weakness, senility, and wretchedness mostly you are able to do nothing.

So, one of the five things that the Prophet (S) recommended Abuthar to be careful of this very thing when he said:

“Do avail five things before five things: your youth before your senility, your health before your sickness, your richness before your poverty, your ease before your affliction, and your life before your death.” Bihar, Vol. 77, P. 77 – (<https://youtu.be/K5JOzllGv08>)

Important Lessons:

- Man’s situation at the end of his life, weakness and inability, are a warning not to leave for tomorrow the guidance that you can take on today.
- All strengths and talents given at every stage of life are God-given.
- We have to develop our spiritual selves before it is too late in life and before we are too old to be able to achieve that which we wish we would’ve achieved when we were younger.

Discussion/Reflection points:

- How does man’s bodily and spiritual strength compare in each stage of life? Are both exponentially growing?
- At what stage of life is it vital for us to set the ground work for spiritual development? Why is it a challenge at this time?

Activity ideas:

- Draw a diagram showing your bodily progression in life and how your spiritual progression should compare
- Take time for self-reflection and contemplate on whether your spiritual progression is at its ideal best. Write a letter to yourself motivating your spiritual self and stating where you’d like to be 2 years from today. The teacher will provide you with envelopes in which you’ll seal the letter and address it to yourself.

Reference:

<https://www.al-islam.org/enlightening-commentary-light-holy-quran-vol-15/section-3-allahs-bounties-signs-guidance-mankind>

<https://www.al-islam.org/the-heart-of-the-quran-commentary-of-sura-yasin-ayatullah-dastaghaib>

<http://hadith.academyofislam.org>

Maulana Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epOJPEwTk_k&list=PL86DY_kRm-OfGPhQ1vKJ6sfFmSJmDbcDK&index=2