Ramadan marks the revelation of the Quran, which places knowledge above all

GS: Ethics

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Many think that Ramadan is a month of fasting and giving charity. But is it just for that? What is the actual reason for believers being commanded to observe fasting during this month? These are important questions and their answers will help anyone to utilise this time in a way that will benefit both believers as well as all of humanity.

The Quran says that it was during Ramadan that its revelation took place: “The month of Ramadan is that in which was revealed the Quran, guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion.” 2:185

Important Points

- There is no Ramadan without the Quran. It is an anniversary of the Book of guidance, which transformed the illiterate Arabs into the most cultured and civilised people within a short period — the shortest in human history. There was no magic.
- There were the guidelines sent through the Quran by Allah. Its first command was not to perform five times prayer or any spiritual activity.
- It was: “Read in the name of thy Lord who has created..” 96:1 to 5
- The Quran, in another part, tells that those who have knowledge and those who do not have knowledge are not equal.
- The Quran deals with practically every subject related to human life and all branches of knowledge. Spending resources on the path to acquiring knowledge is encouraged as an act of worship.
- If one has to travel to seek knowledge, he can even combine and shorten his five prayers or postpone the compulsory fasting.
- The Prophet taught that the word of wisdom is the lost property of a believer and wherever he finds it, he is most deserving of it. This means that a believer should search for knowledge in every place possible.
- The following saying of the prophet encourages the pursuit of knowledge: “One who proceeds on a path in pursuit of knowledge, God makes him proceed therewith on a path to Paradise.
- And verily, the angels spread their wings for the seekers of knowledge out of delight.
- The learned are the heirs of the prophets, for the prophets did not leave behind a legacy of wealth but that of knowledge.”
- Teaching someone is considered as an “ongoing charity” — such a person gets rewarded continuously even after his death. Teachers and learned scholars are held in high regard in Islamic societies.
- The Quran doesn’t differentiate between worldly and spiritual knowledge.
- The longest verse in the Quran talks about the procedures to be followed and the importance of documentation while lending or borrowing money (2:282).
- There are many verses in the Quran that can be used as foundations for different branches of knowledge such as astronomy, economics, politics, law, ethics, philosophy, biology, environmental science, geography, zoology, sociology, history and medicine.
This is in addition to the guidelines and commands on spirituality and worship. Any branch of knowledge, as long as it benefits mankind, is considered holy. The Quran asks man to ponder and research the wonders of nature.

“Do they not observe the camels: How they were created? And the sky: How it was raised high? And the mountains: How they were fixed? And the earth: How it spread out?” 88: 17 to 20.

The Islamic world influenced medieval European life and culture in various fields. The European scholar Gerard of Cremona learned Arabic because of the “abundance of books in Arabic on every subject” and he translated 87 books from Arabic into Latin. Ramadan is the time to revisit the verses of the Quran and do more research on how to boost the world economy after the pandemic passes, as well as other issues facing the world.