

10 Character-builders from the last (Chapter) Juz of the Qur'an!

Genetics, upbringing, environment, family, wealth, and your social circle; how do they define your character? As believers, we know the importance of good manners and character, but have you ever reflected what is defining your character?

Qatadah reported: *I said to Aisha (RA), "O mother of the believers, tell me about the character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ." Aisha said, "Have you not read the Quran?" I said, "Of course." Aisha said, "Verily, the character of the Prophet of Allah was the Quran."* [Muslim]

Did you actively look in the Qur'an to seek guidance and let its Ayaat (verses) shape your character? Let's discover ten character-building actions points from the last Juz of the Qur'an to motivate us to better our relationship with Allah, the Most High and with others, by His will!

1. Dealing with hurtful words.

Therein they shall hear no idle talk, nor any falsehood. [Qur'an, 78:35]

لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا كِدَابًا

How many times have you been hurt by merely words? When you feel sad because people gossip about you, insult you, spread lies about you or say harsh words remind your heart that in Paradise there will be no ill speech at all. Supplicate sincerely to Allah, the Most High, to give you patience while dealing with hurtful words and don't answer to ill speech in the same manner.

2. Reminding you of Paradise.

But as for he who feared standing before his Lord and prevented the soul from [unlawful] inclination. Then indeed, Paradise will be [his] refuge.

[Qur'an, 79:40-41]

وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ

فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

We live in a time aimed at fulfilling our needs as quick as possible; a world of fast food, smart devices and easy access to about anything. This fast living exposes us to perhaps even more 'opportunities' to sin and indulge or access what isn't permitted for the sake of our own souls. Just think of what

your eyes see on a daily basis. Whenever you are tempted by something unlawful, or feel a desire leading to it, literally say to yourself: Paradise! Control yourself.

3. Resisting daily complaining.

It will be, on the Day [Judgment Day] they see it, as though they had not remained [in the world] except for an afternoon or a morning. [Qur'an, 79:46]

كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَاهَا

Can you remember a day you didn't complain about anything? Like, traffic, deadlines, the weather, food, mess at home and difficult people.

Sometimes we are so consumed with our micro-experiences that we need to remind ourselves of the macro, or larger picture. Whatever trial you are going through in this life, even if you were tortured every single day for hundred years; when you are standing on the Day of Judgment it will be like if you were in this world for only a few hours. Ask Allah, the Most High, to help you resist complaining on a daily basis.

4. Giving due to people's requests.

The Prophet frowned and turned away, Because there came to him the blind man, [interrupting]. But what would make you perceive, [O Muhammad], that perhaps he might be purified. Or be reminded and the remembrance would benefit him? [Qur'an, 80:1-4]

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى
أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى
وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزَّكَّى
أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الذِّكْرَى

Sometimes we might be interrupted by someone with a question, but we deem that person as not important enough. Always think twice about people's requests, it might be that giving attention to that one person who you thought was insignificant is your ticket to Paradise. Giving due attention to others in our daily interactions is becoming a lost skill; especially in an era of digitally distracted adults and children. Beg Allah, the Most High, to guide you and be pleased with your interaction skills.

5. Knowing you are responsible.

And you do not will except that Allah wills – Lord of the worlds. [Qur'an, 81:29]

وَمَا تَشَاؤُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Some people question: 'If Allah controls everything, why does he let us go on the wrong path?' or 'if it's already destined, I'm going to make a bad decision, it's not my fault.' Our personal will is encompassed in Allah's will- He knows each step we are going to take and each decision we make with His permission. This does not mean we are 'meant to make the wrong choices' anyway – Allah, the Glorified, gave us the ability to choose and it is our responsibility to take the right course/decision, every moment of our life. Plead to Allah, the Wise Judge, to guide us in taking our responsibilities.

6. Questioning yourself.

O mankind, what has deceived you concerning your Lord, the

Generous. [Qur'an, 82:6] يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ

Bring yourself to account, before you are brought to account. Do you spend at least a minute at the end of the day to seek forgiveness for your mistakes that day? How many of us live a life disconnected from Allah and don't have the need to better their character?

The Prophet ﷺ said: *“Verily, bad character spoils deeds just as vinegar spoils honey.”* [Al-Muntakhab]

And Allah Himself is asking us: *What has deceived you, what has distanced you from your Lord, the Generous?* Take in this mind-blowing, confronting question. Allah chose to use His Name *Al-Kareem* here – when you feel far away from Allah, truly reflect on His Beautiful Name *Al-Kareem* and let it pull you towards Him in awe.

7. Visualize the effects of your mistakes.

No! Rather, the stain has covered their hearts of that which they were earning. [Qur'an, 83:14]

كَلَّا بَلْ رَانَ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ

People have different types of (spiritual) hearts; the heart that is alive, diseased or even dead. The state of your heart will reflect in your character; how do you feel and act after doing bad deeds? Does it bother you? Does it

make you feel guilty and consequently snappy at others? Part of our characters should be that we can be humble after committing sins and don't take things out on those around us. Each time you sin, a black dot appears in your heart. Try to visualize this when you are sinning and polish away those stains with *Istighfaar* (seeking forgiveness), repentance and good deeds.

8. Strengthen your identity.

They punished them for nothing but that they believed in Allah, the All-Mighty, and the Worthy of All Praise. [Qur'an, 85:4]

فُقِّلَ أَصْحَابُ الْأَخْدُودِ
وَمَا نَقَمُوا مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ

Take the lessons of the people of the trench and study the story of the Boy and the King (Tafseer *Surah Al-Burooj*)- it will strengthen your Muslim identity and steadfastness, by the will of Allah.

9. Seeing the struggle.

On that day (many) faces will be downcast. In hard labor, worn out/ exhausted. [Qur'an, 88:2-3]

وَجُوهٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ خَاشِعَةٌ
عَامِلَةٌ نَاصِبَةٌ

It's so easy to give up and give in to distractions. How hard is it to give money in charity, if there are so many things around you, you'd like to buy instead? How difficult is it to pray, when there are so many 'fun' things to and others around you don't pray? How challenging is it, to sacrifice your free time to help others, while you hardly have any time for yourself?

10. Give active thanks for your sight and speech.

Have We not made for him two eyes? And a tongue and two lips? [Qur'an, 90:8-9]

أَلَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُ عَيْنَيْنِ
وَلِسَانًا وَشَفَتَيْنِ

How many times do we use our sight and speech for that which doesn't benefit, or even harms us? It's amazing how Allah, the Most Generous, gives us the most priceless, unprecedented gifts, without us even needing to ask for them. Yet gratitude – simply recognizing what you have and being thankful for it – is something a lot of people's characters are lacking.

Daily thank Allah for your sight and ability of speech and ask Him to guide you to use them for His sake.

Finally, learn and use below supplication for good character and teach it to others, by Allah's will. Ali ibn Abi Talib (RA) reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

اعْفِرْ لِي ذُنُوبِي يَا رَبِّي، فَاللَّهِمَّ أَنْتَ الْمَلِكُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، أَنْتَ رَبِّي وَأَنَا عَبْدُكَ، ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَاعْتَرَفْتُ بِذُنُوبِي أَنْتَ جَمِيعًا، إِنَّهُ لَا يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ، وَاهْدِنِي لِأَحْسَنِ الْأَخْلَاقِ، لَا يَهْدِي لِأَحْسَنِهَا إِلَّا أَنْتَ.

“O Allah, You are the King. There is no Allah but You. You are my Lord and I am Your servant. I have wronged myself and acknowledged my sins, so forgive all of my sins. Verily, none forgives sins but You. Guide me to the best of character, for none guides to it but You.” [Muslim]

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JazakAllah Khair

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