

From Facebook to God's Book

By Maryam Amirebrahim

Many of us have an addictive relationship with Facebook. We check our accounts compulsively, multiple times a day. It is sometimes the last thing many of us do before we sleep and the first thing we do when we wake up; time flies when we're on it, and it can become obsessive.

Yet how many of us have an addictive relationship—have any relationship—with the Qur'an? This is the Book that transformed alcoholic, oppressive, baby-girl-burying people into callers for justice, defenders of the oppressed, soft-hearted, humble worshippers of the Lord of All the Worlds. If what is contained in this Book brought eternal peace to the hearts and freedom to the souls who were chained to the whims of their own desires, it undoubtedly can emancipate us from our own problems, heartaches and stresses. However, its ability to powerfully impact us may go a lifetime unrealized if we continue to decide that other relationships are more important.

Some of us want to establish a relationship with the Qur'an, but may find it... boring, difficult to understand, or simply not fast enough. We're used to status updates, pictures and vivid virtual conversations. We prefer fun captions and vivacious images. We prefer real people, an interchange of words and tangible friendships—or at least, Facebook friendships. A lot of us don't even really know the people we add as friends.

In reality, what we prefer is what the Qur'an already offers and more; it's just up to us to experience the paradigm shift, with God's help. Here are a few ways we can tangibly work to establish our relationships with the Qur'an and in doing so, elevate ourselves in this life and in the Next, by the will of God.

From Facebook to God's Book

What is it about Facebook or other forms of social or popular media that makes us come back, over and over, sometimes multiple times a day—at a minimum? Is it the novelty of reading ever-changing statuses or finding new pictures? Is it feeling appreciated when others comment on our posts? Is it the fun of having instantaneous

connections? Is it just boredom? Whatever it is, identify why we keep going back. Then, tweak our reasons for that connection and apply it to the Qur'an.

When we read stories about Noah, Moses, Jesus, Mary, Lot (upon all of whom be peace) — when we read about their struggles or the people who they called to the worship of God, recognize those as the Qur'an's updates. The conversations that God quotes in the Qur'an, the arguments of the people to their Messengers, those are all comments to posts in the Qur'an's feed.

Mary (peace be upon her) says something, then God Almighty responds. Jesus (peace be upon him) tells his disciples something and they all start liking and commenting his post. Moses (peace be upon him) posts on Pharaoh's wall; Pharaoh responds and tags his henchman and is finally completely deleted from Facebook—and the world—in its entirety. God's Book is more intense, exciting and novel than anything on Facebook. We just need to add it and tag it as our Best Friend.

Sometimes we find Facebook addicting because of our ability to interact with our friends. So let's find the Qur'an addicting because of our ability to interact with God. When we read God's Book and we want to like something, say Alhamdulillah (all praise is to God)! We'll get rewards and be increased in what's good (Qur'an 14:7). When we personally want to respond to a status, put up our hands and make du'a' (supplication)! Now, our comment allows for us to directly strengthen our connection with the One Who can hook it all up for us, Who can hear us and will answer us! When we read the descriptions of Paradise and Hell, know that Allah Most High is uploading images for us to focus on and be impacted by; when we're captivated or horrified by the image, comment through our actions! Do the actions which will include us amongst the ballers in Paradise and keep you from being in the excruciating fire. That type of commenting will bring everlasting results in this life and the Next and, God willing, Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala (exalted is He) will tag us as His homies in this life and the Hereafter.

Make the Qur'an Our Best Friend

Oftentimes, when we're sad or lonely, when we're bursting with joy or excitement, when we're apathetic or just need some down time, we post it. We let everyone know how we're feeling, what we're thinking, something that went down in our day or what we wished didn't go down. We often treat Facebook as a best friend; checking it and reconnecting frequently. Here's our opportunity to start shifting that connection; let's start calling Allah's Book our BEST FRIEND. With ourselves, let's start using the term, "Best Friend," for the Qur'an.

If we have a human best friend, think about the way we run to answer their call when we know they're about to tell us the outcome of a life-changing decision. Think about the way we laugh at inside jokes we post on each other's walls and comment on a million times over to the annoyance of all our other 'friends' whose feeds are overtaken by our conversations. Think about the way that we dial their numbers before anyone else's, knowing almost with certainty that they will pick up the phone and be there for our comfort.

Now, apply that same understanding of our best friend relationship to the Qur'an. If we take the Qur'an as our Best Friend, we'll run to it when we see it near, knowing it's calling us, ready to listen to whatever it wants to share for our own benefit, guidance and happiness. When we're distraught, feeling lonely or at loss, we'll go to your Best Friend, hold it to our hearts, open it and begin reading it, reciting from it, reveling in its mind-blowing empathy, its heart-warming sympathy, it's perfection of wisdom which relates directly to our situations. When we're excited beyond measure; ready to jump through the roof because we finally got into that school, got that job, regained our health, going to get married to that dream person or had the blessing of a child, we're going to pick it up and shed tears of joy or words of elation with it, knowing that in reality, we're going back to the One Who gave us all that we're excited about in the first place.

Like our best friends, we'll understand the Qur'an's inside scoop, its special messages and the guidance it shares with us because we have a special connection that no one else can gauge. Making the Qur'an our best friend begins with a paradigm shift; this is not simply a Holy Book; it's the pinnacle of our life, it's our first supporter, our constant companion, our guide, the keeper of our secrets—it's our Best Friend.

Building Our Relationship

Let's think about people we're friends with on Facebook; would we really know about all that's going on in their lives if they didn't choose to share pictures of their meals, their vacations, or post about their daily struggles and conversations? Would we really be able to keep up with that many people, some very close friends and some whom we may have met less than a handful of times, if we weren't in constant connection with them through social media- even if we weren't actually personally connecting?

But let's also consider our true best friends. The depth of our friendships likely didn't happen overnight; we become continuously attached to the person we've already connected with because of our consistent ability to reconnect and re-align.

Then what about the Qur'an? How can we expect to know our Creator if we do not even open the social media through which He reveals Himself to us? If we're willing to read through the posts of people we sometimes barely know, then what about reading through the posts of the One Who created us and all of those people? How can we develop a relationship if we are not willing to consistently converse with the One Who gave us the ability to speak (or sign) at all? How can we expect a depth of friendship to simply just happen with our loving Creator if we are not the ones taking any steps towards embellishing our relationship?

Yet despite the sometimes little attention we give it, the Qur'an's feed is always beasting, waiting to be our closest homie! Why? Because when we establish a relationship with the Qur'an, we are, in reality, establishing a relationship with the One Who created us and knows us best. He tells us, "I am as My servant thinks I am. I am with him when he makes mention of Me. If he makes mention of Me to himself, I make mention of him to Myself; and if he makes mention of Me in an assembly, I make mention of him in an assembly better than it. And if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a fathom's length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed," (Hadith Qudsi, Bukhari). When we think about God, when we make an effort to draw nearer to Him, He comes to us with speed. Therefore, let us run to Him through our relationship with the Qur'an!

Here is how we can start: We can set a certain amount of Qur'an that we must read, regardless of the circumstances, every day. Make sure this amount is in a language that we understand. If we can read Arabic and understand some of it, then read the Arabic but also read a translation. God revealed the Qur'an in the language of the Arabs for them to understand it so that they can live by and be transformed by it. Thus, let us read it in a language that will impact our lives, and let us do so daily. From 1 pages to 20, do whatever amount we can do consistently and stick with it because the Prophet ﷺ (peace be upon him) taught us that the best actions are those that are small, but consistent (Bukhari). Reading the Qur'an daily, year-round, is better than reading a ton only in Ramadan and then disregarding it. How can a relationship flourish to its fullest if it is only maintained once a year?

Facebook can be a great networking tool, but if used obsessively, we can become addicted to a media which often brings minute tangible benefits to our lives. Allah's Book is an incredible networking tool which will connect us to the Creator of the Universe, the One through Whom we can gain tangible benefit in this life and the

eternal hereafter. Let's go to Allah's Book—to our Best Friend—to the Qur'an—because the best “like” is when Allah (swt) likes your life.

“... Allah is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him – those are the party of Allah . Unquestionably, the party of Allah – they are the successful.” (Qur'an 58:22)