

The moral values of ignorance -2

Laziness

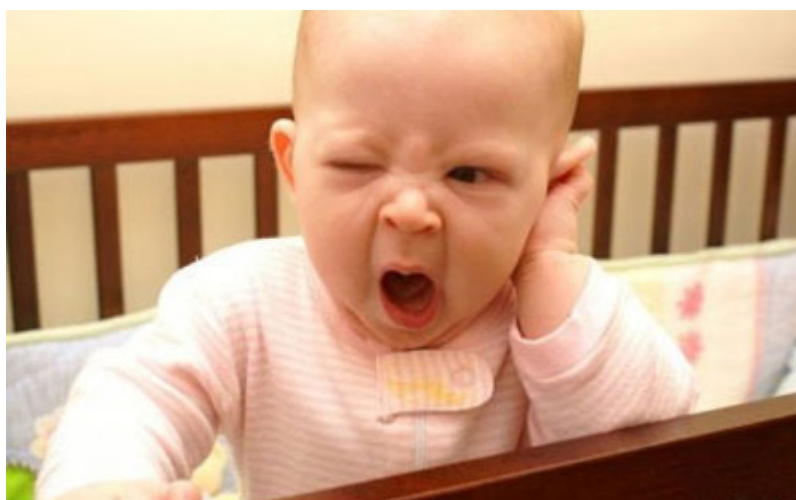
People consider laziness as having rather limited connotations. Mostly they never accept the idea that they, too, may be lazy. Laziness is only attributed to people who are relatively less sensitive to the undertaking of any responsibility as compared to the rest of the individuals in a society. This aside, what is meant by "laziness" here is a behavioural disorder, having serious negative consequences, both spiritual and material, on society. Ignorant people are very likely to have this "disorder."

There is one major harm laziness does to man: it is to put him into an idle state of mind. However, what imbues a man with the virtue of being a human being is his ability to think. If he never employs this ability, he becomes a mere mechanical being, completely bereft of wisdom and insight. Reduced to this level, the individual adheres to a rather static lifestyle, bound by given rules and principles. Making something different for the betterment of life becomes almost impossible for such a person. Rather than being scrupulous and committed to improving the current conditions, it is perceived as being easier to comply with the status quo without judging or questioning.

The influence of slothfulness over conscience and willpower is observable in all dimensions of life. Those who find pondering a burden never seek answers to some of the most essential questions such as: "Why do we exist in this world?" Though acknowledging the importance of these issues, they prefer other people to cogitate on their behalf. This state of mind may even at some point jeopardize a person's spiritual and material well-being.

He fails, for instance, to take measures to maintain perfect health. For instance, he delays seeing the doctor when he is suffering from a serious illness. Moreover, he makes every effort to avoid undergoing the treatment advised by his doctor.

Laziness keeps him away from enjoying himself, or having a good time. Rather than enjoy himself, he watches others enjoying themselves, since this does not require any effort.



Having the opportunity to prepare a comfortable place for himself, he prefers to live in an uncomfortable one, only because he finds it difficult to think.

Rather than cook healthy food, ignorant people prefer fast food, just because it is easy to obtain. They find it difficult to read and widen their horizons, and hence always confine themselves to a narrow way of thinking. They are very willing to earn a lot of money, yet rather than concentrate on honest ways of making money, they try effortless and illegal ways. Where they face a serious difficulty, they prefer suicide which is the easiest way out. Infinite examples can be given on this subject; the main idea here, however, is the ultimate aim of ignorant people to survive by making the minimum effort.

The best way to do this is to allow the status quo to perpetuate itself. This is why productivity and creativity continuously decline in ignorant societies. As well as on the personal level, such a regression takes place on the social level as a whole. No sooner does something gain popularity in one country than it also becomes fashionable in others. Songs, movies, commercials or propaganda methods are immediately copied. The main rationale lying behind this is surely "laziness", the lack of commitment to innovation.

As we have seen, laziness is one of the important "behavioural disorders" which ignorant people suffer from. However, it is interesting that this behaviour is never condemned in society; rather it is accepted as a normal trait. People who are involved in this system are not even aware of the detriment it brings into their lives and the beauties they miss. Therefore, they find no reason to change this situation.

Adherence to Qur'anic principles removes all these features which are peculiar to the ignorant. What makes a person take action is his belief in Allah and the Hereafter; this causes him to make serious efforts to engage in good deeds. For such a person there is no time to lose in this world. Every passing moment brings an opportunity to do good deeds. He has important targets to achieve. Therefore, rather than being lazy, he tries to be productive and demonstrates a relentless dedication to work. Allah states in the Qur'an that this is the type of person He appreciates:

vie with one another for forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden as vast as the heavens and the earth, which is in store for those who believe in Allah and His messengers. Such is the bounty of Allah, which He bestows upon whom He will. Allah is of Infinite Bounty. (Surah Al-Hadid: 21)

And whoever desires the Hereafter and strives for it with the effort necessary, being a believer for such, their effort shall find favour (with their Lord). (Surah Al-Isra: 19)

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