

Sura Qasas, verse 79

فَخَرَجَ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ فِي زِينَتِهِ ۗ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا يَا لَيْتَ لَنَا مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ قَارُونُ إِنَّهُ لَذُو حَظٍّ عَظِيمٍ

So he came out before his people in his finery. Those who desired the life of the world said, 'We wish we had like what Qarun has been given! Indeed he is greatly fortunate.'

Reflections

- how do the people react to what they see?
- God describes them as people who want the life of this world. What should they have thought of instead?
- Who is a truly fortunate person?

Tafsir

Those who are very wealthy, or own something that others don't have, love to show off to people. They want to make others feel inferior to them and make them feel jealous. They get satisfaction from how they create an impact and attract the attention of others. However most of the time this attention is negative. People - especially those whose goal is limited to the world - become envious and can begin to resent what they have. Showing off to others cannot create love and kindness in the hearts of others.

Such type of showing off has harmful effects in society. It breeds resentment and dissatisfaction. It can also motivate greediness, selfishness, etc. as people wish to get what they see others having.

Qarun came out in his finery - that means he put a lot of what he had on display. History narrates that he came out with a large group of servants all dressed in rich robes. They sat on beautiful white horses. They carried his treasures for all to see. He flaunted his wealth.

People who witnessed this show were of two types. One group - the ones who loved this world and desired it - were affected and wished they too had what Qarun had. They envied him for the life he had and wished they could change places with him, even for a little while. They thought he was very fortunate. Within themselves they talked about the pomp and riches of Qarun and asked each other if they had seen him.

This shows the shallow thinking of these people. They only saw outward glory and were deceived by it. They did not go beyond outer appearances. They did not ask what type of a character he had, or look into what he did with his wealth, how he had acquired it . . . etc. Such people

see the world as their main aim in life. They are oblivious of the riches of the Hereafter reserved for those who submit to their Lord.

Point to ponder:

Sometimes people like to show off the good deeds they do.

This is highly disliked. Good deeds should be done for the pleasure of Allah only.

Teachers could also discuss envy and its results.

See: <http://www.ezsoftech.com/stories/mis43.asp>

or <https://www.al-islam.org/forty-hadith-an-exposition-second-edition-imam-khomeini/fifth-hadith-envy-hasad>

Hadith

Allah shall not accept a deed, which has an atom's weight of showing off in it

Holy Prophet (s)

Tadhkeratul Haqa`iq, pg. 48

Important Lessons

- 1) Showing off is a sign of one who is intoxicated by what he has.
- 2) People who love this world do not see beyond outer appearances
- 3) Many people would like to change places with other people but they don't really know how their lives are.
- 4) Outer glitter is not a sign of happiness or success.

Practical Implementation

- 1) Do you show off your possessions, knowledge, experiences . . . ?
- 2) Do you get affected when others boast and show off? How can you prevent that?

Story

There once lived a worshipper who could never get himself to perform any of his deeds sincerely, and free from showing off.

Once, attempting to redress his problem, he said to himself: 'In the corner of the city there lies an abandoned mosque which is never frequented by anyone. It would be better if I go there in the night so that there is none to see me, and engage myself in worshipping Allah, in total sincerity.'

At midnight, in the darkness of the night, he stealthily set out for the mosque. The night was a rainy one with severe lightening and thunder.

Once inside, he engaged himself in worship. A short while later he suddenly happened to hear a sound and ecstatically said to himself: 'Surely, a person has entered the mosque.' With this in mind he increased the quality and quantity of his prayers and continued his acts of worship till daybreak. In the morning, as he was about to go out of the mosque, he looked behind with the corner of his eyes only to realize that there was no one there save a black dog that had sought shelter in the mosque from the rains, lightning and thunder.

This distressed him immensely, and repentant and shameful for having worshipped for hours for a dog, he rebuked himself: 'Woe unto me! I fled and came to this abandoned mosque so that I could worship Allah with sincerity, but I have ended up performing my acts of worship for a black dog, instead.

(<https://www.al-islam.org/anecdotes-reflection-part-3-sayyid-ali-akbar-sadaaqaat/46-showing>)

Possible Ideas for activities

- Act out the scene of Qarun displaying his finery and the reaction of the people.
- Mock interview - Children can interview the people who saw Qarun - 3 questions which you would ask them. Let children then interview others in class.
- who is a person of great good fortune? Children can brainstorm qualities that would make a person fortunate in this world. They can write, illustrate, make a card/poster etc.

Sources:

Āytaullāh Nāsir Makārim Shirāzī (ed), *Tafsīr-e Namūneh*;

Aghae Muhsin Qaraati, *Tafsire Nur*