Surah Yasin is probably the most frequently read chapter of the Quran, in our country. Numerous benefits are associated with its reading, especially in the mornings or whenever there is any difficult situation; or if someone is critically ill; or just for barakah. You get invited for reading it in gatherings; like khatam-e-Quran, khatam-e-Yasin (reading it 41 or 71 times in one sitting) is a familiar and popular ritual, believed to be the remedy for all sorts of problems. Rarely does anyone pause to think that Surah Yasin like the rest of the Quran has a message in it for our guidance. Nobody bothers to find out what that message is. Mostly we prefer to treat this magnificent reminder like some magic words which will relieve us of our miseries. Whereas the truth is that if we read this Surah, just once but with proper understanding and apply its wisdom in our lives, it can truly relieve us of our misery of uncertainty and save us from the agony of going round and round in a senseless pursuit of worldly interests. Not only this but it can also help us throw away the burden of accumulated negligence regarding the hereafter, making us feel bright and optimistic about attaining the rewards of paradise.

We all want permanent and everlasting success and happiness, but unfortunately we try to find it in this world, where it was not meant to be. The life in this world is only a test and instead of
running after its illusions, the only thing that we need to pursue in this world is the straight path that will lead us to the fulfilment of our desires, in the hereafter, which is when our actual life will begin. That is why Allah has taught us the dua "Ihdinassirat al mustaqeem" (guide us to the Straight Way) which we read in each and every unit of our five daily prayers. But only praying for guidance is not enough; we need to have a role model to follow in whom we can trust. Therefore Allah sent Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w) as a perfect example for us to follow till the end of time. The Quran is the guide book and the life and personality of the Prophet (s.a.w) is the practical application of this guidance. Therefore Allah begins this magnificent Surah with the assurance that if we want success in both the worlds we need to believe and follow our Prophet(s.a.w) who is truly one of the Messengers and is on that straight path of guidance:

Ya Seen.

I swear by the Quran full of wisdom

Most surely you are one of the messengers

On a straight path
Next Allah tells us that this Quran is not just an ordinary thing. Now we might say that of course we know it’s a sacred book of Allah, and so we put it on high shelves, never putting anything on top of it, holding it above newly married couples and reading it when someone dies. We think this is it! We have done our duty by showing this book the proper respect and now we can live our lives according to our own desires and self created standards of goodness. What we don’t want to acknowledge is the fact that The Quran was not meant just to be placed on high shelves, rather it should have been given the highest place on our priority list. We take care not to put anything on top of it but when faced with any situation in life do we stop to consider whether we might be putting our own desires on top of its teachings? Holding it above the bride and bridegroom was never taught to us; it is our self created innovation for which we should seek forgiveness of Allah. But its spiritual protection should certainly be held above us as a refuge from shaitan and as a guide for our entire lifetime. And the way we neglect it in our life and so religiously read it for the dead, it seems as if we have forgotten that it’s a magnificent guide for the living and not just an offering for the dead. Why Allah continues to let us live in spite of our thankless attitude is because He is Al-Raheem: the repeatedly merciful. So He keeps giving us chances to come back to him. But we should not forget that He is also Al-Aziz; The overpowering!
(This is) a revelation of the Exalted in Might, the Merciful.

What is the purpose of the Quran? Why did Allah sent this revelation to the Prophet (s.a.w)? As a warning to a nation whose forefathers were not warned and so they had become heedless (ghafil). Primarily it refers to the people of Makkah to whom no messenger had come after Prophet Ismail (a.s) who was the son of Ibrahim (a.s) Now the teachings of the prophets had gradually been forgotten and although the Arabs called themselves the followers of Ibrahim and Ismail but in reality they had gone far away from the spirit of Islam, replacing Allah’s religion with a few self created rituals and worshipping idols made of wood and clay instead of worshipping the One and only Allah. If we compare it with our own situation, we find that there are amazing similarities of attitude. We also call ourselves Muslims and claim to believe in the Quran and the last Prophet of Allah but in reality there are only a handful of people who actually know what the Prophet’s life was all about and what were his teachings. Similarly there are some people who “read” the Quran but again only a few of them understand its message. We don’t worship Idols of course and believe in one Allah but let’s be honest; Do we really follow Allah’s commands in the way we plan and live our lives? Who are we following or “worshipping”? Our homes, our jobs, money, comfort, our own desires, or our own philosophies of life? As the Prophet (s.a.w) said in a Hadith:

“The worst Idol that is worshipped instead of Allah is the desire of the self”
What is the solution? What can bring us out of this ignorance and forgetfulness? What will save us from Allah’s punishment in the hereafter? It is definitely the Quran and nothing else. Not just in bits and pieces but a proper study, verse by verse, word to word. So that we might get in touch with our reality and our purpose of life and most of all we need to get in touch with Allah, our Creator and Sustainer:

латنذر قومًا مأَنذَر آباؤهم فهُم غافلون

That you may warn a people whose forefathers were not warned, so they are unaware.

When I look at the Quran and its amazing clarity and depth, I wonder how a nation who has this treasure of wisdom can ever deviate from the straight path. Also I find it shocking that most people think it is not important to study this Book. They are mostly the highly educated, intellectual people who deny the need to act upon Allah’s commands. Allah has stated the same thing in the next Ayat:

لقد حق القول علٰى أَكْثَرْهُمْ فَهُم لا يؤمنون

Already the word has come into effect upon most of them, so they do not believe.
Allah says that most people will not believe in it......but why? Hasn't Allah provided them with the resources to acquire knowledge and guidance? The fact is that the truth is obvious like the bright sun but they have their eyes closed to it.

Surely We have placed shackles on their necks, and these reach up to their chins, so they have their heads raised aloft.

The shackles in their necks are actually the pride of self importance that keeps their head high in the air, so that they cannot see their own reality of helplessness in front of the absolute authority of Allah. They think that the power they have in this world is going to remain with them forever and hardly think of dying or the hereafter. The glamour of this worldly life is like a wall in front of them which makes them totally forgetful of the Akhirah:

And We have made before them a barrier and a barrier behind them, then We have covered them over so that they do not see.

Imagine yourself in an elevator.........you have walls all around you without any window and a roof on top. As you move up or down you
can never know which floor you are on unless you see the
indicators. No matter how intelligent you might be, you cannot
perceive what is outside that enclosed space. Similarly the
majority of people are so immersed in their worldly pursuits that
they have erected invisible walls around themselves. Any talk of
Allah, or Quran or Islam just bounces off these walls without
touching them in any way. They have to lower these barriers
themselves so that the truth of Quran might penetrate their
hearts.

Allah is telling the Prophet (s.a.w) here, that if the people of
Makkah were not listening to him it was not because of any lack
of effort on his part. The fact was that their own pride and
prejudice was preventing them from acknowledging the truth. His
warning could benefit only those people who wanted to take
advice when it was given to them and who feared Allah:

إِنَّمَا تُنذَرُ مِنَ اتَّبَعَ الْذِّكْرَ وَحَسَبَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِغَيْبٍ فَبِشْرَةٍ بِعَفْرَةٍ
وَأَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ {11}

You can only warn one who follows the message and fears the Most Merciful
unseen. So give him good tidings of forgiveness and noble reward.

The remarkable point of this Ayat is that these people fear “the
Most Merciful”!!

How amazing it is that while some people use the same excuse for
their lack of commitment, that Allah is so compassionate so we
don't need to worry too much about the day of judgement; the
true believers fear Allah despite His Mercy.........It is for this kind of humbleness that Allah has given the good news of forgiveness and honourable rewards. The fear of accountability in the **Akhirah** is the most potent force which propels a believer towards purifying his heart and his actions. Because he knows that he is being watched all the time, and his thoughts and deeds are all being recorded by Allah. To reinforce this belief we need constant reminders otherwise we tend to get entangled in our day to day affairs and our life stretches out before us like an endless ocean. That is why Allah has sent us this following **Ayat** which acts as a most powerful reminder of the seriousness of our test in this world.

![Ayat text]

Surely We give life to the dead, and We write down what they have put forth and what they have left behind, and We have enumerated everything in a clear register.

Before we move on, let's take a moment and ponder upon this beautiful **Ayat** which reflects the truth of our existence. Allah is telling us in very clear words that He is definitely going to raise the dead.........which means that our life is not going to end just like that. We are going to be born again so that we might be given the due return for our deeds. That is why each and every action of ours is being recorded in a clear Book. These include the deeds
that we do and also the footsteps or impressions that we leave behind through our attitude and behaviour. How can we be careless after reading such a warning? Imagine that all around you are cameras, which are clicking away constantly day and night; capturing images of what you do, both alone and in company, recording the words that you say and the words that simply echo in your minds which we call “thoughts”. Not only that but these cameras are also recording something which might not be readily visible to human eye.............that is the impressions we create around us. The hidden effects of our deeds. For example if you write a book on Islam, it will not be recorded simply as the writing of one book , rather all the people who embraced Islam due to it, will also be counted in your favour. Similarly if you make a false accusation against someone, it will not be simply written as one mischief only, rather the damage created by that will also be counted against you. The examples could go on and on but the thing to understand is that whatever we do or say is not simply the act that appears at the time but it has an everlasting impact too. So we need to be very careful because apparently we might be doing great deeds of goodness but in such a way that it might drive a lot of people away from religion.

It makes me think that if we understand this one Ayat and really absorb its message then our environment would be so much better where everybody would be conscious about his own affairs and would be extra careful in his dealings with others. There would be no one hanging around without a purpose because there will be an awareness that we are going to have to answer for all our time on this earth. And the best thing about this is that no
one can ever be judgemental about themselves or others because we simply cannot count the effects of our deeds and personalities. So until the time we are declared free from hell fire and actually gain an entry into paradise we can never be quite sure of ourselves. What an eye opener it is for those who want to see!

To further illustrate this important concept, Allah states an example of a town where He sent two messengers. But the people of that town rejected them. So Allah sent a third messenger too but the people continued to blame them instead of believing that they had really brought the truth from Allah. It is human weakness that people don't want to be proved wrong so when they see that their lives are going totally against the message brought by the Messengers of Allah, they start finding faults with them instead of accepting their own mistakes and correcting themselves. Look at their rash comments:

قَالُوا إِنَّا تَطَيِّرُنَا بَيْنَكُمْ لَنْ نَتَّبِعَنَّكُمْ وَلَيْمَّسَنَّكُمْ مَنَا عَذَابٌ ٱلِّيَمِّ (18)

They said, "Indeed, we consider you a bad omen. If you do not desist, we will surely stone you, and there will surely touch you, from us, a painful punishment."

And while these people were busy trying to establish their superiority, by denying the truth, there came upon them a man
who had come running from the remote part of the city, calling to them:

“O My people! Follow these Messengers. Follow the ones who ask no reward of you and are rightly guided.”

Now, one might ask, who was this person? Allah doesn’t tell us his exact identity because it is not important for us to know who he was, rather what he said and did was so remarkable that it has been recorded for us as an eternal example of unquestioning and complete belief in Allah, acceptance of His message and Loyalty for His Messengers. It is apparent that he had not attended any regular lectures on Tauheed because he had come from the further part of the city. He hadn’t had any direct contact with the messengers, yet whatever he had heard of Allah’s message had had such a deep impact on him that he was ready to give up all his former beliefs and ideas, in order to enter completely into the religion of Islam. His humility and acceptance of his own reality before the creator is amazing; as is apparent from his words:

وَمَا لِيْ لَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ {22}

And what reason have I that I should not serve Him Who brought me into existence? And to Him you shall be brought back;

أَتَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةٍ إِنْ يُرْدَنَ الرَّحْمَنَ بِصَرْرٍ لَا تُغَنِّ عنِي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُنقِدُونَ {23}
Should I take other than Him [false] deities [while], if the Most Merciful intends for me some adversity, their intercession will not avail me at all, nor can they save me?

إِنَّيْ إِذًا لَنَفَى صَالَال مُّيِّنَ {24}

Indeed, In that case I shall most surely be in clear error:

Indeed, In that case I shall most surely be in clear error:

Just look at his logic and realistic attitude. He recognizes that since Allah had created him and has all the power then why should he worship anything else? It is not difficult for him to accept his helplessness before Allah; a reality which remains hidden from those people who cannot see beyond the walls of their false pride. He begs them to listen to him, one more time:

إِنَّي آمَنتُ بِرَبِّي كَمْ فَاسِمْعَونَ {25}

Indeed I have believed in your Lord, therefore listen to me.

Consequently they killed that man and as he died he found that he had been granted paradise:

قَبَلَ اذْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ قَالَ يَا لَيْتَ قُوْرِمْيَ يَعْلَمُونَ {26}

It was said, "Enter Paradise." He said, "I wish my people could know
Of how my Lord has forgiven me and placed me among the honoured."

He was honoured by Allah simply because of his true faith, and compassion for his people. Because even after being granted the paradise he is feeling sorry for his fellow men. If he would have been self-centred like the majority of people nowadays, he would have simply rejoiced in his good fortune and that’s it.

What is our attitude when we see someone heading towards self destruction? We think well he deserves punishment and Oh thank God, I am such a pious person, Alhamdulillah.......... Do we feel any pain of his disbelief? Do we feel sorry for the countless people who do not have any awareness of what’s going to befall them in the hereafter? If not, then what kind of faith is this?

If we ponder upon it, this is really the ideal combination; belief in the Creator and tenderness towards His creation. One is not acceptable without the other. We need to work upon both, even though it is difficult to shove off our natural tendency of hoarding everything good for our own self and simply not caring about others. It will be sheer folly to think that we will please our Lord just by having perfect belief in Him, if we are not loving and compassionate towards other people. And similarly it is not good enough to do charitable deeds for mankind if we don’t have the right Aqeedah.
As for those who disbelieve even after seeing all the signs and hearing all the true warnings, Allah doesn't need any armies to destroy them all. He is compassionate and merciful but His punishment is also very swift:

 إن كَانَتِ إِلَّا صَيْحَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ فَإِذَا هُمْ خَامِدُونَ

It was not but one shout, and immediately they were extinguished.

And it doesn't end here, because the actual day of reckoning has yet to come when the due rewards and punishments will be dealt out to all. No one can escape that day:

 وَإِن كُلُّ لَمَّا جَمِيعُ لَدَيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ

And Indeed all of them shall surely be brought before Us.

The disbelievers could not come to terms with the idea of resurrection. They said it was not possible for dust and bones to be turned again into human beings. And the sad thing is that nowadays even the Muslims have become so detached from the Quran that their faith in the hereafter has also become blurred. Allah wants us to look carefully and contemplate on the signs which He has placed for us in this world so that we might realize that it is not difficult for Allah to give life to the dead:
And a sign for them is the dead earth. We have brought it to life and brought forth from it grain, and from it they eat...

Most of us have become so absorbed in the race of materialism that we ignore the numerous blessings of Allah. We take these things for granted although each one of these is a miracle of Allah. Why is Allah telling us about it in the next Ayat? Because when we think about the amazing beauty of Allah’s creation, then it makes us feel aware of Allah’s love and mercy. The heart becomes soft and fills up with awe and admiration for this Supreme Creator who made such fabulous things for us:

And We make therein gardens of palms and grapevines and We make springs to flow forth in it,

That they may eat of the fruit thereof, and their hands did not make it; will they not then be grateful?
What has caused us to be so blind to the beauty of nature? It is mainly because of an ever growing struggle for material gains. Look at the overcrowded streets of over populated cities and see the restlessness in the expressions of people. Their way of talking, their manner of driving, their dealing with each other is like they are in some kind of mad race, in which no one knows where they have come from or where they are headed to........

All this comes to a halt when the day turns into the night, so softly and imperceptibly that we hardly notice it. The whole world seems to be covered by a dark comforting blanket. Isn't it a miracle in itself? But only if we contemplate.....

And a sign for them is the night. We remove from it [the light of] day, so they are [left] in darkness.

Next Allah talks about the Sun and Moon, how each of them orbits in its own path, with its own speed, never deviating from their path, nor obstructing the other. Their obedience is so focused unlike us Human Beings, forever deviating from the right track, interfering into other's affairs, wasting time and energy on non productive issues:
Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day; and all float on in a sphere.

Another amazing sign of Allah's control over everything is the way He enables us to move across waters in ships. It is a miracle, because we know that even a small needle cannot hold itself on top of the water, and just look at the huge ships that remain floating? Who has caused it to happen except Allah?

And a sign to them is that We carried their offspring in the laden ship.

And in the middle of that endless expanse of water who can save us from drowning except Allah. But the ungrateful people don't acknowledge the greatness of Allah and go on living as if they are the masters of their own lives. So if they are reminded that they should fear Allah, they remain totally unmoved:
And when it is said to them: Beware of what is before you and what is behind you, so that mercy may be had on you.

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ 

And no sign comes to them from the signs of their Lord except that they are from it turning away.

The main reason for their arrogance is that they don't believe in the Akhirah. Their mockery is obvious in the way they ask about it:

وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَى هَذَا الْوَعْدُ إِن كُنتُمُ صَادِقِينَ 

And they say: When will this threat come to pass, if you are truthful?

But the fact is that the day of judgement will come on its appointed time whether we believe in it or not, whether we fear it and prepare accordingly or prefer to close our eyes to it:

إِن كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ فَإِذَا هُمُ جَمِيعُ لَدُيْنَا مُحْضَرُونَ 

It will not be but one blast, and at once they shall all be brought before Us;

That is going to be another world and things will be totally different there. There will be no illusions that day. And no injustices:
فَالَيْوَمَ لاَ تَظْلِمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَلَا تَجْرُوْنَ إِلَّا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ {54}

So this day no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and you will not be recompensed except for what you used to do.

Next we have the beautiful picture of paradise. The hardships one might face in this world in order to remain true to Allah, are nothing when you view it from the perspective of the Hereafter. What are a few years of sacrifice as compared to the eternal bliss of Paradise?

إِنْ أُصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ الْيَوِّمَ فِي شَغْلٍ فَاكِهُونَ {55}

Surely the companions of Paradise, that Day, will be amused in [joyful] occupation -

هُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ فِي ظَلَالٍ عَلَى الْأَرْوَاحِ مُتَكِّزُونَ {56}

They and their shall be in shades, reclining on raised couches.

لَهُمْ فِيهَا فَآكِهَةٌ وَلَهُمْ مَا يَدْعُونَ {57}

They shall have fruits therein, and they shall have whatever they desire.

Who are these lucky people? Do they live on any other planet, in some other environment, where it’s “easy” to follow Islam? Where there are no temptations? Where there is no shaitan? No they are right here with us but we hardly pay any attention to them. So the believers in spirit and the believers in name, live side by
side. The truthful and the liar might be brothers, living in the same house, the honest and the criminal might be working as colleagues. No one knows where he stands in the sight of Allah. The sincere Momin and the hypocrite might be offering their Salat in the same mosque shoulder to shoulder, But on that day they will no longer be intermingled:

وَامْتَازُوا الْيَوْمَ أَيْهَا الْمُجْرِمُونَ {59}

[Then He will say], "But stand apart today, you criminals.

What happens when you point out someone in a gathering, telling him he has done something wrong? The first reaction is shame and it is immediately followed by defensive arguments. But in that world of the hereafter, the criminals will not be allowed to offer any false excuses:

الْيَوْمَ نُخْتَمُ عَلَى أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكْلِمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ {65}

On that day We will set a seal upon their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness of what they earned.

Today it might seem impossible that our hands and feet could be speaking against us. But if you think about it, if Allah could teach
our tongues to speak, then how can He not put the same capability in our limbs? After all He is the one who created us, but the sad truth is that we have forgotten the Creator:

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الإِنسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ نَطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ هُوَ خَصِيمُ مُبِينٍ {77}

Does man not consider that We created him from a [mere] sperm-drop - then at once he is a clear adversary?

Allah is asking such a simple question here, from all those who have doubts about the resurrection:

أَوْلَٰٰئِكُم الَّذِينَ خَلَقْنَاهُمْ مِنْ نَطْفَةٍ وَالْأَرْضِ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَى أَنْ يَخْلُقَ مَثَلَهُمْ

بَلَٰٓ لَّوۡ هُوَ الْخَلَاقُ الْعَلِيمُ {81}

Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Yes! [it is so] and He is the Knowing Creator

We really need to focus our hearts and minds on the presence and Power of Allah who is the Creator, Owner and Provider of all things. The more we learn about Him, the easier it will be to understand His message and to follow the true path of Success. Nothing is difficult for Him to accomplish. If we are living here in spite of disobeying Him, it doesn’t mean that we can get away with it. It’s just Allah’s Mercy and Compassion that He has given us a life span in which we have the means to acquire guidance and
can turn towards him in sincere repentance. But if we don’t change our ways then we are going to have to pay for our wrong doings. It was so easy for Allah to make this universe and it is equally easy for Him to destroy it all in the blink of an eye or even sooner than that. What will save us then, except our good deeds that we did in the hope that Allah might accept them and have mercy on us. Thus ends Surah Yasin, telling us once again in very clear words that Allah is the Absolute Owner of everything and we all have to return to Him. What other words will wake us from our heedlessness if not these?

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يُقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونَ

His command, when He intends anything, is only to say to it: Be, so it is.

فَسُبْحَانَ أَلْلٰهِ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ مَلْكُوْتُ كُلٌّ شَيْءٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

Therefore glory be to Him in Whose hand is the kingdom of all things, and to Him you shall be brought back.