

Preservation And Sustainability Of The Environment In The Holy Quran

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Abstract

Praise be to Allah, who revealed the Book to His servant and made no crookedness therein; a Book which is upright, warning of a severe punishment from Him, and giving glad tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds, that they will have a good reward. And complete peace and blessings be upon he whose chest Allah expanded, who was relieved of his burden, and whose mention was elevated, Muhammad, son of Abdullah, and upon his family and all his companions. As for what follows:

Indeed, Allah – the Exalted – created everything in this universe with measure, perfected in its creation. The Almighty said: "Indeed, We have created everything with a decree." (Al-Qamar: 49) And the Exalted said: "He created everything and ordained it most exactly." (Al-Furqan: 21) And He said: "Allah has set a measure for all things." (Al-Talaq: 3).

Meaning that Allah – the Exalted – created the universe and made everything within it organized and determined by a decree. He also chose, from all His creations, the human being and honored him with reason. He made the elements of the universe and its constituents at his service, assigning to him the great task and noble duty of cultivating and preserving it, and warned him against causing harm and mischief, saying: "And cause not corruption upon the earth after its rectification." (Al-A'raf: 85).

In many instances in the Book of Allah, we find that He has established a set of principles and values that encourage moderation in using resources and warns against the dangers of extravagance in dealing with these immense blessings. They are considered the real capital of humanity; hence, any imbalance or injustice in the investment of this natural capital will negatively impact people's lives and their future.

This might be one of the main reasons for choosing to write on this topic. In addition, since the beginning of this century, we have witnessed the world's preoccupation with numerous discussions on environmental and sustainability issues and climate change due to their importance and sensitivity. As a result, calls have been

made, summits and conferences held, and studies published here and there.

Therefore, after putting trust in Allah, I wrote this research trying to understand the approach of the Holy Quran and its methodology in advocating for environmental preservation and sustainability and highlighting human responsibility in preserving and protecting it from ruin and destruction.

Research Objectives:

This research aims to achieve the following:

1. Clarify the Quran's concept of the environment, its conservation, and sustainability.
2. Highlight the principles and rules referred to by the Holy Quran, through which we can extract the most important guidelines regulating the environment and its sustainability.
3. Develop environmental awareness among members of society.

Research Methodology:

Given the nature of the research, the researcher adopted the inductive-analytical approach, where he undertook an in-depth study of the Quranic verses related to the subject, then interpreted them through Tafsir (exegesis) books and other important references. He then applied these interpretations in a manner consistent with the topic of environmental preservation and sustainability.

Previous Studies:

Undoubtedly, the current study has benefited greatly from preceding studies. It sought to employ many of the previous efforts to arrive at a precise analysis of the Quranic verses related to the topic and to interpret them in a way that achieves the research objectives. Among the most important of these studies are:

- "The Environment from an Islamic Perspective" by the researcher Abdul Salam Al-Abbadi. This research was presented at the 15th General Conference of the Royal Al-Bayt Academy on 27-29 September 2010 in Amman, Jordan.
- "Environmental Values from an Islamic Perspective" by researchers Mohammad Ahmad Al-Khuzai and Nawaf Ahmad Samara. The research was published in the Al-Zarqa Journal for Research and Human Studies, Volume 9, Issue 2, Jordan – 2009. This study stood out because it sheds light on the Quranic verses related to the environment, understands the Quran's stance on environmental issues, and proves its precedence in providing guidelines that ensure the environment's safety and sustainability.

Research Structure:

The research, in general, comprises an introduction, a preamble, three main sections, a conclusion, followed by recommendations and references, as follows:

Section One: The Concept of the Environment Linguistically and Conventionally.

Section Two: The Stance of Religions on the Environment and the Call to Engage with It.

Section Three: The Elements of the Environment in the Holy Quran and Its Approach to Advocating for its Conservation.

Conclusion , Recommendations , References

blessings and peace be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and all his companions.

First Topic: The Environment Linguistically and Terminologically

To understand the concept of the environment, a researcher needs to address the origin of this word linguistically, and then explain its terminological meaning. The details are as follows:

A - The linguistic meaning of "Environment":

Linguistically, the word "environment" (بيئة) is derived from the past tense verb "بَاءَ" and "بَوَّأَ", and its present tense "يَبْوِئُ". One of the most relevant meanings relates to the verb "بَاءَ" with its present tense "يَبْوِئُ" which means "to settle down" or "reside".¹ In "Lisan al-Arab", the phrase "بَوَّأَهُمْ مَنْزِلًا" translates to "he settled them down at the foot of a mountain." The verb "أَبَّأْتُ الْمَكَانَ" means "I stayed in the place." The Quranic verse "أَنْ تَبْوَأَ لِقَوْمِكُمْ بِمِصْرَ بُيُوتًا" [Yunus: 87] translates to "settle down for your people in Egypt, in homes." This can also mean to make a place suitable for habitation. The term "تَبْوَأَ" can also mean "settled" and "مِباءة الغنم" refers to the place where the livestock sleep. This meaning of settlement or making a place habitable is also reflected in Arabic poetry: "She settled deep within her group, And within her people, she established her place." Meaning: She descended from nobility deeply rooted in lineage.

The term "environment" is a noun, and "استبَاءه" means to make it a place to stay. "تَبَوَّأَتْ مَنْزِلًا" means she settled in a home or made it her residence.²

In "Al-Sahah" by Al-Jawhari, "المِباءة" refers to the dwelling of people in any place. And it is said about every place where people stay, as quoted by Tarafa ibn Al-Abd: "Purify the dwelling, it's easy for them,

¹ Al-Zamakhshari, Mahmood bin Omar: "Asas al-Balagha" (The Foundations of Rhetoric), edited by Abdul Rahim Mahmoud, Dar al-Ma'arifa, Beirut, 1982, p. 33, entry "بَوَّأَ".

² Ibn Manzoor: "Lisan al-Arab al-Muhit" (The Comprehensive Arab Tongue), Dar Lisan al-Arab, Beirut, entry "بَوَّأَ", p. 284.

Paths if you wish in the wilderness and rugged terrains." The term "environment" refers to the place where humans and others reside. "الباءة" and "البيئة" is like the beehive in the mountain, "مَبْيُوءًا الولد" refers to the womb, and in "Al-Mu'jam Al-Waseet" (a dictionary), "بيئة" refers to both the dwelling and the state or condition. It's said there's a "natural environment" and a "social environment."³

B - Definition of the Environment Terminologically

The environment is defined terminologically as "the set of external conditions and factors in which living organisms exist and that influence the biological processes they undergo."⁴ The environment is also defined as "the sum of the external conditions and circumstances that affect a living organism at any stage of its existence." Additionally, the environment is recognized as the space in which humans conduct various life activities, and this includes all living beings, both animals and plants, with which humans coexist.⁵ Furthermore, a group of scholars has defined the environment as "the surrounding medium in which a human lives, encompassing all material and non-material aspects, both human and non-human. The environment signifies everything that is external to the human entity, and everything surrounding him. The air that a human breathes, the water he drinks, the land he inhabits and cultivates, and all living or non-living entities around him, are elements of the environment in which he lives and which constitute the framework within which he conducts his various life activities."⁶

³ See Al-Jawhari, Abu Nasr Ismail, "Kitab al-Sihah" (The Book of Correctness), entry "بِئًا", and "Al-Mu'jam al-Wasit" (The Intermediate Dictionary), Arabic Language Complex in Cairo, Vol. 2, p. 75.

⁴ Damascus University Journal, Volume 27, Issue 3-4, p. 901, 2001. Also see: Al-Deirbi, Abdul Aal, "International Protection and Its Dispute Resolution Mechanisms", p. 16.

⁵ Al-Qasimi, Khaled Mohammed and Al-Ba'ini, Wajih Jamil, "Protection of the Gulf Environment", Al-Maktab Al-Jami'i Al-Hadith (Modern University Office), Alexandria, 1999, p. 11, quoting Al-Deirbi p. 16.

⁶ Arna'out, Mohamed El-Sayed, "Humans and Environmental Pollution", Al-Dar Al-Masriya Al-Lubnaniya (The Egyptian-Lebanese House), Cairo, 1993, p. 17. Also see: Abdul-Wahab Mohammed, "Liability for Damages Resulting from Environmental Pollution", PhD thesis, Cairo University, 1994, p. 20. Also see: Karima Mahrouk, "Environmental Protection Between International Covenants and Islamic Law", Al-Ijtihad Journal for Legal Studies, Volume 09/Issue 02, 2020, p. 155. Also see: Dr. Ahmed Lakhal, "The Concept of the Environment and Its Status in Algerian Legislation", Faculty of Law and Sciences, University of Mohammed Khyder, Al-Fikr Journal, Issue 6, p. 20.

C - The Concept of Environment in the Holy Quran⁷

The term "environment" does not appear verbatim in the Holy Quran. However, if we take the concept of environment as referring to a place prepared for habitation in its simplest form, or as the boundaries within which humans live and from which they derive the essentials for life, or the life a believer leads in paradise in the Hereafter, we will find that the concept of environment, in this sense, is mentioned in numerous noble verses.

Among the verses that indicate that the environment is a place of descent and settlement is the Almighty's saying: "And thus We established Joseph in the land to settle therein wherever he willed. We touch with Our mercy whom We will, and We do not allow to be lost the reward of those who do good." [Yusuf: 56]. The meaning here is that God prepared an environment and residence in the blessed land of Egypt for Joseph to dwell wherever he pleased. Another verse indicating that the environment is the prepared boundary for living and settling is: "And remember when He made you successors after the people of 'Ad and settled you in the land, [and] you take for yourselves palaces from its plains and carve from the mountains, homes. Then remember the favors of Allah and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption." [Al-A'raf: 74].

Another representation of this concept is: "Who made for you the earth a bed, and the sky a canopy; and sent down from the sky rain and brought forth thereby fruits as provisions for you. So do not attribute to Allah equals while you know [that there is nothing similar to Him]." [Al-Baqarah: 22] and also: "Who made for you the earth a bed and made for you upon it roads that you might be guided. And who sends down rain from the sky in measured amounts, and We revive thereby a dead land - thus will you be brought forth." [Taha: 53].

This means that God made the earth level, suitable for settlement, habitation, and work, paved numerous pathways upon it, sent down rain, and sprouted various types of vegetation with it. The concept of environment also implies the dwelling prepared by God for His believing servants in paradise, as a grace and mercy. God says, "And those who believe and do righteous deeds - We will surely assign to them of Paradise [elevated] chambers." [Al-Ankabut: 58]. This means that they will be given lofty residences in paradise.⁸

After reviewing the aforementioned Quranic verses, it is clear that the concept of the environment in the Holy Quran refers to the surroundings and framework that God, the Almighty, prepared with essential elements and components indispensable for life, such as water, air, soil, and many other vital elements for survival and stability.

⁷ See: "Environmental Ethics in Light of the Holy Quran and Prophetic Hadith", University dissertation by the researcher: Mustafa B. M., Department of Arabic Studies, Mahatma Gandhi University, India, 2014.

⁸ "The Indexed Dictionary of the Terms of the Holy Quran", by Sheikh Muhammad Fuwad Abdul-Baqi, Dar al-Fikr Publishing, Printing, and Distribution, 1401H - 1981 AD, entry "بُيُوتُ", p. 139.

Requirement Two: The stance of religions on the environment and the call to engage with it.

All religions agree that nature is an act of divine works, and it is necessary to engage and interact with it, respecting and preserving it and avoiding harm. For instance:

First - The Bahá'í Faith:

The Bahá'í Faith is one of the world religions. Their sacred writings, penned by Bahá'u'lláh such as the Most Holy Book, the tablets revealed after the Most Holy Book, the Book of Certitude, and others, are full of teachings about the importance of harmony between life and nature and the interconnectedness between them. Among the quoted texts on this:

- "Nature is the will of God and it is expressed in and through the contingent world."
- "Let us look... at the beauty in diversity, the beauty of harmony, and learn a lesson from the creation of plants... It's the diversity that forms its charm; every flower, every tree, every fruit, besides being beautiful in itself, stands out in contrast to the qualities of others, and appears to benefit from the particular love of all."⁹

Second - Buddhism: Buddhism is considered one of the major religions in the world, being the fourth largest religion after Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. The concept of karma alone, being an essential part of the beliefs, conveys the values of conservation and responsibility for the future. It is said that the ethics of our actions in the present will shape our character for the future, an idea closely related to sustainable development. Among the sayings of Gautama Buddha: "Like a bee - without harming the flower, its color, and its fragrance - takes its nectar and flies away, so should the sage pass through a village."¹⁰

Third - Christianity: There are approximately a hundred verses in the Holy Bible that speak about environmental protection. For example:
 A. "Do not pollute the land where you are. Bloodshed pollutes the land, and atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it."¹¹
 B. "When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, 'Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.'"¹²

⁹ Bahá'u'lláh, "The First Ishráq" [Ishráq means "Splendor" or "Radiance"], Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh (Brussels, Bahá'í Publishing House in Belgium, 1980). Also see: Bahá'u'lláh, "A Collection of Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh" (Brussels, Bahá'í Publishing House in Belgium, 1980), p. 75.

¹⁰ <https://www.youandinfo.com/2021/03/sayings-of-buddha.html>

¹¹ Book of Numbers 35:33

¹² Gospel of John 6:12

Fourth - Confucianism: There are principles in Confucianism related to the protection of nature and the environment, such as: "The harmonious and sustainable relationship between humankind and nature is not just a theoretical example, but a tangible guide to practical life."¹³

Fifth - Hinduism: There are numerous texts in the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and the Epics that contain references to divinity associated with nature, like rivers, mountains, trees, animals, and the earth, emphasizing their protection. One of the indicative quotes is: "There is an inseparable relationship between man and nature. For man, there cannot be existence away from nature."¹⁴

Sixth - Judaism: There are many sacred texts discussing environmental protection. For instance: God said, "I have given you every plant bearing seed on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food."¹⁵ And He also stated: "The land must not be sold permanently, for the land is mine; you are but aliens and my tenants."¹⁶

Seventh - Islam: As for Islam, there are hundreds of Quranic verses supporting the idea of environmental protection, preventing harm to it with the aim of conserving and sustaining natural resources. Details on this will be provided, God willing.

The Third Requirement - Elements of the Environment in the Holy Qur'an:

The Qur'anic studies confirm that the verses of the Holy Qur'an have encompassed all areas of environmental science, which are the subject of research by scholars interested in environmental affairs. In a single verse from Surah Taha, we find a comprehensive and complete concept of the environment. This is the sixth verse where Allah says: "To Him belongs what is in the heavens and what is on the earth, and what is between them, and what is under the soil" [Surah Taha: 6]. Upon reflection, it includes the main elements of the environment. It mentions the heavens and their creatures and existences, the knowledge of which is only encompassed by Him, the Exalted. It then mentions the earth and its various elements (like water, plants, air... and living beings...) It also mentions "what is between them" i.e., between the heavens and the earth like the sun, air, winds, clouds, and many other elements that Allah has created, including various climatic elements. And in His saying "and what is

¹³ "International Confucian Ecological Alliance", 2015

¹⁴ Bhagavad Gita 13.13

¹⁵ Book of Genesis 1:29

¹⁶ Book of Leviticus 25:23

under the soil", it indicates everything inside the earth, including minerals, components, and ores. Thus, everything included in this noble verse is an important element of the environment. In this study, the researcher will focus on showcasing the two main elements: water and plants.

The First Element: Water

When considering the attention the Holy Qur'an gives to the subject of water, we realize the greatness of this blessing that Allah, the Exalted, has bestowed upon His creatures - as a favor and mercy. It's no surprise, for water is the essential component in the origin of life and the evolution of human civilizations throughout history. Without water, life wouldn't exist on the surface of the earth. Allah says, "And We made from water every living thing. Then will they not believe?" [Surah Al-Anbiya: 30]. Hence, all living beings, especially humans, realize that water is equivalent to life. If it diminishes or is scarce, it inevitably affects life negatively and sentences it to extinction.¹⁷

With humanity's realization of the importance of this blessing and the danger of its loss, observers have noted that the consumption and waste of this blessing have doubled annually, reaching six times during the last century. This is equivalent to twice the population growth, where now a third of the world's population is in a crisis due to water scarcity. The areas most affected by this are Africa, the Middle East, and some tropical regions like Indonesia. In Africa, more than 14 countries face a persistent crisis, and it's expected to reach 125 countries by 2025.

What complicates this problem further - besides wastage in consumption - is pollution. It has been noted to increase year after year, due to many factories dumping their chemical waste into freshwater rivers. This increases the load of solid materials and biological pollution levels, threatening life on this planet.¹⁸

Given the urgent need to find a solution to this life-threatening danger, we find in the Book of Allah, the Exalted, what can be considered as proposed solutions to address these issues. They can be summarized as follows:

Firstly, the Holy Qur'an emphasizes preserving water and warns against wastage:

This can be understood from His saying: "And eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He does not like those who commit excess".¹⁹ Here, He forbids us from all forms of wastage of water; because its

¹⁷ Eisner, Marc; Cadillac Desert: The American West and its Disappearing Water; pp. 438-442. [ISBN 0-14-017824-4](#)

¹⁸ "Introduction to Environmental Sciences", p. 379. Also see: "Environment and Its Preservation from an Islamic Perspective" by Nour El-Din Jum'a, p. 128. And, Dr. Abdel-Basit Al-Jamal, "The World of Life: Between the Quran and Science", Alam Al-Kutub (World of Books), Cairo, Edition 1: 1421H/2001AD, p. 119.

¹⁹ Surah Al-A'raf, Verse 3

scarcity affects the life of humans, plants, and animals, which in turn affects the environment in general.

Secondly - The necessity to regulate access to water and advocate for its proper distribution:

This can be understood from the saying of the Almighty (Each community knows its drinking place) which is in the context of His saying: (And [recall] when Moses prayed for water for his people, so We said, "Strike with your staff the stone." And there gushed forth from it twelve springs, and every people knew its watering place. Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption.) - Al-Baqarah 60. Al-Razi's interpretation states: As for His saying, (Each community knows its drinking place), we say: They only knew this because each person was commanded to drink only from a specified stream, to avoid disputes when they need water.

Based on this, God's saying: (Each community knows its drinking place) establishes an important principle concerning the organization of water distribution among the inhabitants, in addition to ensuring sources that match the population size, and then delivering it to them for accessibility. This also prevents potential disputes and conflicts over water resources.²⁰

Thirdly - Rationalization and planning are necessary for conserving water:

This can be inferred from His saying (And inform them that the water is to be divided between them), which appears in the context of the story of Prophet Salih in the Holy Quran where He says: (This is a she-camel. For her is a time of drink, and for you is a time of drink, [each] on a known day.) [Al-Shu'ara 155], and also His saying: (And inform them that the water is shared between them; every drink will be noted.) [Al-Qamar 28].

Even though the verse revolves around the division of water between the she-camel and the people of Salih, they both point to the importance of regulating the utilization of shared water resources. This ensures that everyone benefits equitably without infringing upon the rights of others. The importance of planning can be inferred from His saying: (So they sent their water drawer, and he let down his bucket.) [Yusuf 19]. According to Al-Baghawi's interpretation, by "water drawer" it means the one who goes ahead of the group to prepare the buckets and ropes.²¹ Even though this verse appears in the context of Prophet Yusuf's story, a closer look at the water drawer's task indicates regulatory hints about the importance of specialization in this field. It emphasizes the significance of planning and preparation in ensuring the availability of this vital resource

²⁰ Al-Razi, Fakhr al-Din, "Al-Tafsir al-Kabir", Volume 3, p. 9

²¹ Al-Baghawi, "Ma'alim al-Tanzil", Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-Arabi, Volume 2, p. 481

before moving to a place or when initiating a new city, among other major projects.²²

Fourth - The call to preserve water as pure and clean as it descended:

This is stated in the Almighty's saying: "And it is He who sends the winds as heralds of good tidings, going before His mercy, and We send down from the sky pure water." (Al-Furqan 48). In Al-Qurtubi's interpretation, He said about the Almighty's phrase "(pure water)" that it's water used for purification, just as one would say "ablution water" for the water used for ablution. Every purifying element is pure, but not every pure element is purifying.²³ This indicates that the water sent down from the sky is inherently pure and purifies other things. This exaggeration implies that it's both inherently pure and has the ability to purify. As Allah also said, "And He sends down from the sky rain, thereby purifying you..." [Al-Anfal: 11]. Given that water is pure, it is considered a fundamental element in achieving purity and cleanliness in a person's clothing and residence. Therefore, it is most appropriate to maintain its purity to remain suitable for use.

Fifth - Cultivating an internal consciousness to value this blessing:

The Holy Quran emphasizes in many places that water is one of the greatest blessings of Allah to humans. It insists that all living creatures should be grateful for it and that part of showing gratitude is to appreciate and conserve it. To nurture this sense of value, the Quran adopts several methods, including:

A- Comparing life to water: The Holy Quran has compared life on earth to water in two chapters, Yunus and Al-Kahf. He says, "And present to them the example of the life of this world, [its being] like rain which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it and [then] it becomes dry remnants, scattered by the winds. And Allah is ever, over all things, Perfect in Ability." [Al-Kahf: 45]. And also, "The example of [this] worldly life is but like rain which We have sent down from the sky that the plants of the earth absorb – [those] from which men and livestock eat – until, when the earth has taken on its adornment and is beautified and its people suppose that they have capability over it, there comes to it Our command by night or by day, and We make it as a harvest, as if it had not flourished yesterday. Thus do We explain in detail the signs for a people who give thought." [Yunus: 24]. The Quran likens the entirety of worldly life to water due to their shared characteristics and interconnectedness. This means that the presence of water signifies

²² Study: "Sustainability of Water Resources in the Holy Quran" by Dr. Adel Abdel Rashid, a consultant in the General Authority for Meteorology and Environmental Protection, Saudi Arabia.

<https://www.aliqtisadalislami.net>

²³ Al-Qurtubi, Abu Abdullah Muhammad Shams al-Din al-Ansari, "Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an" (The Comprehensive [Compilation] for the Rulings of the Quran), Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyya (The Egyptian Book House), Cairo, 2nd Edition, 1964, Volume 3, p. 94.

the presence of life, while its absence implies the impossibility of life continuing.

B- Indicating that water is the secret of life:

This is alluded to in the words of the Almighty: "{And He it is Who has created man from water, and has appointed for him kindred by blood, and kindred by marriage. And your Lord is ever Powerful to do what He will}" [Al-Furqan 25:54]. Not just humans, but it is also mentioned that everything that moves on the earth, in all its variety, was created from water, as the Almighty says: "{And Allah has created every animal from water. Of them there are some that creep on their bellies; some that walk on two legs; and some that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Verily! Allah is Able to do all things}" [An-Nur 24:45]. In the Noble Quran, the Almighty says: "{Do not those who disbelieve see that the heavens and the earth were a closed-up mass, then We opened them out? And We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?}" [Al-Anbiya 21:30]. These noble verses are evidence for what scientists say: that the bodies of living creatures were created from water, and that life was originally created in water and then on land. This is a precise and astounding verse that speaks of a universal truth as explained in the Tafsir of Al-Tabari regarding the verse "{And We made from water every living thing}" [Al-Anbiya 21:30]: "We gave life to everything with the water that We send down from the sky." As narrated to us by Ibn Abd Al-A'la from Qatadah regarding "{And We made from water every living thing}", he said: "Everything living was created from water."²⁴

C- Pointing to the role of water in reviving dead land:

The Almighty says: "{And Allah sends down water from the sky, and gives therewith life to the earth after its death}" [An-Nahl 16:65], and He also says: "{And Allah has sent down water from the sky and given life therewith to the earth after its death, and spread in it every kind of moving creature, and the directing of the winds and the clouds controlled between the heaven and the earth are indeed signs for a people who understand}" [Al-Baqarah 2:164]. The meaning is that Allah sends rain from the sky, giving life to the earth by producing plants after it was barren and dry. The act of sending rain from the sky and producing the plants of the earth is a clear sign of Allah's power for those who listen to God's words and reflect upon them.²⁵

D- Reminding that water is a cause for a comfortable life: This meaning is found in many Quranic verses, such as the words of the Almighty: "{And fear Him Who has provided you with what you know. He has provided you with livestock and children, and gardens and springs}" [Ash-Shu'ara 26:132-134]. Ibn Ashur says about the

²⁴Al-Tabari, Ibn Jarir Abu Ja'far, "Jami' al-Bayan", Volume 1, p. 260.

²⁵ "Al-Tafsir Al-Maysur", King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'an - Saudi Arabia, 2nd Edition, 1430H, Volume 1, p. 274.

meaning of the verse: "And He combined children with them because they are a great blessing as they provide comfort and aid in life and keep their memory alive after them, and multiplied their offspring. Gardens and springs were combined because they offer comfort and a broader provision and support for their livestock."²⁶

E- Highlighting that water is the foundation of a body's health: This can be inferred from His words, "{This is a wash with cool water and a drink}," mentioned in the context of the story of Prophet Job (Ayyub) peace be upon him. He, the Exalted, said: "{And remember Our servant Job, when he cried out to his Lord, 'Verily, distress has seized me, and You are the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy.' 'Strike with your foot: here is water for you to wash with and drink'}" [Sad 38:41-42]. In the Tafsir "Fath Al-Qadeer" by Ash-Shawkani for the verse, "{This is a wash with cool water and a drink}": The wash is the water used for bathing, and the drink is what is drunk from. It's also said: The wash refers to the place where one bathes. Qatadah said: "They are two springs in the Levant, in a land called Al-Jabiya. He bathed from one of them and God removed his external ailment, and he drank from the other, and God cured his internal ailment."²⁷

Sixth: Highlighting the role of water in supporting development:

There are many Qur'anic verses that link between "water" and "sustenance". For instance, the Almighty says, "And in the sky is your provision and what you are promised" [Adh-Dhariyat: 22]. And He says, "And Allah has sent down from the sky provision (rain) and brought the dead earth to life with it" [Al-Jathiyah: 5].

What's implied by "And in the sky is your provision" and "And Allah has sent down from the sky provision" is rain. The term "rain" has been omitted, and the term "provision" is used instead. Therefore, one of the most crucial factors for the success of development is the availability of water. There's no prosperity or growth without it. The researcher observes that the most prosperous countries are the ones abundant in water resources, meaning that sustenance in water is followed by sustenance in plant and agricultural outputs, among other outputs that are essential for development and comfortable living.

In conclusion, the sustainability of water equals the sustainability of life. So, how can humans dare to harm this blessing in all its forms and shapes, be it through wastage or pollution? One must be reminded that harming this blessing is a grave offense, as it infringes upon the lives of all people.

Second Element - Trees and Plants:

²⁶ Ibn 'Ashur, Muhammad al-Tahir, "Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir", Volume 19, p. 170.

²⁷ Al-Shawkani, Muhammad Ali, "Fath al-Qadir", Volume 4, p. 500.

The Holy Qur'an contains numerous verses that remind us of the blessing of plant growth and trees, drawing our attention to the significance of this blessing that demands our gratitude and praise. The Almighty says, "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. And We have placed therein gardens of date palms and grapes, and We have caused springs to gush forth therein. So they eat of its fruit while their hands did not produce it. Will they not be grateful? Exalted is He who created all pairs - from what the earth grows and from themselves and from that which they do not know".²⁸

Allah has made human life on this earth dependent on plants. Humans can't live without them. Wherever there's vegetation, there's life. In the absence of planting and trees, life ceases. Out of His mercy, Allah made crops and trees grow so that this earth becomes suitable for human life. He says, "It is He who sends down rain from the sky; from it is drink and from it (grows) vegetation on which you send your livestock to pasture" [An-Nahl: 10]. Meaning, you graze your cattle and livestock. And He also says, "He brings forth for you thereby crops, olives, palm trees, grapevines, and from all the fruits. Indeed, in that is a sign for a people who give thought".²⁹

If plants are one of the vital elements for humans, then it's a duty to conserve and protect them from pollution. This is done by surrounding them with regulations that maintain their health and safety, obligating people not to contaminate them in any way³⁰, whether by littering them with garbage, waste, using excessive chemical fertilizers, employing agricultural pesticides, or even mere overgrazing which leads to soil erosion, desertification, and loss of fertility. Islam combats and warns against such negative behaviors, as indicated by the honorable references in the Qur'an, which can be considered as principles for regulating and sustaining this blessing. The following provides an explanation:

First Principle: The Holy Quran calls for preserving this blessing by warning against extravagance during its use:

This meaning is derived from the words of the Almighty: "And He it is who produces gardens trellised and untrellised, and date palms, and crops of different shape and taste (its fruits and its seeds) and olives, and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and different (in taste). Eat of their fruit when they ripen, but pay the due thereof (its Zakat) on the day of its harvest, and waste not by extravagance. Verily, He likes not Al-Musrifun (those who waste by extravagance)" [Al-An'am 141]. This verse urges preserving this blessing, protecting it from all harm, and

²⁸ verses 33-36 from Surah Yasin

²⁹ Surah Al-Nahl (The Bee) 16:11

³⁰ "Environment from an Islamic Perspective" p. 144 And see also "Environmental Pollution: Incorrect Behaviors and How to Confront Them" by Hassan Ahmed Shehata, Dar Al-Arabia Printing, p. 119.

avoiding extravagance when dealing with it. Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, said about the verse (about trellised and untrellised gardens): "The trellised are those made for people, and the untrellised are the fruits that grow naturally in the mountains and wilderness."³¹

Second Principle: Elevating the status of agriculture in souls by pointing out its importance: The Holy Quran has shown its importance in many contexts, including:

A- Reminding that it is the main source of food for humans and animals, whether they are fruits, grains, or seeds. The Almighty says: "Do they not see that We drive water to the barren land and produce thereby crops from which their livestock eat and [they] themselves? Then do they not see?" [As-Sajda: 27]. And: "Then let man look at his food, that We poured forth water in abundance, And We split the earth in fragments, And produced therein grain, And grapes and clover plants (i.e. green fodder for the cattle), And olives and date-palms, And gardens, dense with many trees, And fruits and herbage, A provision for you and for your cattle." [Abasa: 24 - 32]. And also, "Eat and graze your cattle" [Ta-Ha: 54]. Ibn Al-Jawzi said: "Eat" means from the fruits We have produced for you; "graze your cattle" means let them graze in the pasture. This is a reminder of blessings.³²

B- Pointing to its importance in reducing temperature. Trees and plants cool the air and increase the humidity level. This is inferred from the words of God: "And Allah has made for you from what He created shadows" [An-Nahl: 81], meaning He made trees and other things to shade people. In another verse, He made a gourd tree to shade His prophet Jonah after emerging from the whale: "And We caused a plant of gourd to grow over him" [As-Saffat: 146].

C- Highlighting its role in preserving the soil from slipping, erosion, and washout. Trees and plants play a major role in stabilizing the soil. Dry lands without vegetation are easily affected by water. This is indicated in the verse: "It may be that my Lord will give me something better than your garden and send upon it a calamity from the sky, and it will become a smooth, dusty ground" [Al-Kahf: 40]. Meaning it'll turn into a flat, barren land.

D- Illustrating its importance in beautifying the environment. The Quran guides us that one of the functions of plants is to beautify the environment. The Almighty says: "It is He who sends down rain from the sky, and with it We bring forth vegetation of all kinds, and out of

³¹ Al-Tabari, "Jami' al-Bayan", Volume 8, p. 69.

³² Ibn Al-Jawzi, Jamal al-Din Abu al-Faraj, "Zad al-Masir", Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, Beirut, 1st Edition, Volume 3, p. 161.

it We bring forth green stalks, from which We bring forth thick clustered grain. And out of the date-palm and its spathe come forth clusters of dates hanging low and near, and gardens of grapes, olives and pomegranates, each similar (in kind) yet different (in variety and taste). Look at their fruits when they begin to bear, and the ripeness thereof. Verily! In these things there are signs for people who believe." [Al-An'am]. He commands us to look at and enjoy the beauty of the fruits, their colors, and appreciate their forms.

E- Mentioning its significance in bringing joy to human souls.

Trees and plants, in addition to their other functions, bring joy and happiness to the soul. This has been mentioned in several instances in the Book of Allah, including His saying: "And you see the earth barren, but when We send down upon it rain, it quivers and swells and grows [something] of every beautiful kind." [Al-Hajj:5]. And in Surah Qaf: "And the earth - We spread it out and cast therein firmly set mountains and made grow therein [something] of every beautiful kind," [Qaf: 7]. Also, "Or who created the heavens and the earth and sent down for you rain from the sky, causing to grow thereby gardens of joyful beauty" [An-Naml: 60]. And another verse says, "And the palm trees with hanging clusters," [Qaf: 10]. These verses highlight the wisdom of Allah in making trees and plants a source of joy and happiness for His servants.

Second Principle: The Holy Qur'an's reference to the foundations of agriculture.

This is inferred from His saying in Surah 'Abasa: "Then let mankind look at his food - How We poured down water in torrents, then We broke open the earth, splitting [it with sprouts], and caused to grow within it grain and grapes and herbage, olive trees and palm trees, gardens of dense shrubbery, and fruits and fodder, a provision for you and your livestock." ['Abasa: 21-31].

These verses indicate the fundamental components and mechanisms upon which this agricultural system stands:

A - The presence of water: "We poured down water in torrents". The verse simplifies all these factors into their natural consequence, which is the rainfall.

B - Soil factors: "We broke open the earth, splitting [it with sprouts]". The verse points to the role of soil in the whole agricultural system and the methods of plowing and tilling.

C - Plants: "We caused to grow within it grain..." This third fundamental factor determines the success of the agricultural process, covering the conditions for germination and the type of seeds used. As stated, "And of His signs is that you see the earth stilled, but when We send down upon it rain, it quivers and grows. Indeed, He who has given it life is the Giver of Life to the dead. Indeed, He is over all things competent." [Fussilat: 39]. Meaning that among the signs indicating His greatness, oneness, and ability to resurrect, is that you observe the earth barren, but when We send down rain, it stirs due to the growth of seeds hidden within. The One who gives life to this dead land with vegetation is surely the One who gives life to the dead and resurrects them for accountability and recompense. He is capable of everything.

These three factors determine the success of any agricultural process. They form a three-element equation: water, soil, and plant. This fact, affirmed by this verse 14 centuries ago, is currently studied in universities as a fundamental principle of agricultural engineering.³³

In conclusion, it has become evident the care the Holy Quran gives to this important element of the environment. Its approach and methodology in urging people to preserve and protect it is clear, and it warns against tampering with it by cutting or damaging it.

Conclusion:

"And after... all praise be to Allah, the Lord of all worlds, for granting success in studying such important topics. Through the previous study, the following results can be observed:

- The research conclusion determined that the environment is the framework in which a living being exists, affecting and being affected. This environmental setting should be healthy, clean, and suitable for life, enhancing its continuity. Each individual must commit to preserving it, resist anything that harms it, and be moderate in coexisting with it.
- The environment, with all its components, is a blessing among the significant blessings that Almighty Allah has provided for humans. One must show gratitude towards it and should not confront it with ingratitude or denial.
- The verses of the Holy Quran and its noble indications have drawn a comprehensive methodology for how humans should deal with environmental components in a manner that ensures their investment and benefit while maintaining and preserving them.
- Many Quranic verses point to the beautification of the environment and its importance to humans. They speak of

³³ Cited from a research titled "Agriculture in the Qur'an and Sunnah" by Muhammad Fu'ad Muhammad, Ahmad Adel Zayed.

<http://elneel.sudanagri.com/posts/191415>

gardens and orchards, and how these gardens bring joy and pleasure to those who look upon them.

- The Holy Quran views the environment as created in specific proportions and with particular attributes, ensuring its ability to provide suitable living conditions for humans and other living beings, provided they use it well and enjoy it.
- Among the blessings of Almighty Allah is that He made water pure and clean, and He made it a cure. This adds double importance to the blessing of water, in addition to being the essence of life. Hence, it's imperative for humans to appreciate water, maintaining its purity as Allah created it and not polluting or corrupting it. This means considering environmental aspects when using water, which is one of the sustainability aspects.

Recommendations: Based on the results reached, the study recommends the following:

- It's essential to encourage research related to environmental developments both foundationally and fundamentally.
- Directing various media outlets to raise environmental awareness and intensify their programs advocating for environmental conservation.
- Increase the publications, research, and specialized periodicals that carry the theme of guidance and advice for dealing with the environment, to produce a generation enriched with environmental education and considerate of it."

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