Exploring Al-Qur'an & Science

From a Drop of Water, All Things Live

Water, the Secret Origin of All Life



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

EXPLORING AL-QUR'AN & SCIENCE

FROM A DROP OF WATER, ALL THINGS LIVE

Water, the Secret Origin of All Life

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ حَىٍّ

"…and [We] made from water every living thing…"

SURAH AL-ANBIYA' 21:30

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praise belongs to Allah, who sends down water from the sky in due measure and gives life thereby to the dead earth, and who made from water every living thing. Blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who taught his community that there is a reward in every living creature, and that the best charity is giving water, and upon his family and Companions.

This eBook is dedicated especially to my beloved wife,

ZAHARAH MOHD LATIF;

my dear children,

MUHAMMAD HAFIZ, NOOR HAZWANI, ABDUL HAKIM, NOOR HIDAYAH, NOR AQILA and **NOR ATIQAH**;

and my sons- and daughters-in-law,

FAZILAH, MALEK, HANIN, FAIRIZAL and **FIRWAN**.

Whenever we take a sip of water, may we remember His words: ***"And have you seen the water that you drink? Is it you who brought it down from the clouds, or is it We who bring it down?"*** (56:68–69) — and may this eBook become *'ilmun yuntafa'u bih*, knowledge that is benefited from.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS EBOOK

The cover of this eBook shows ***a morning scene after rain in a Malay village***. Beneath a calm blue-green sky stretch ***paddy fields***, coconut palms, misty hills and a ***wooden house on stilts*** lit by the rising sun.

In the centre of the image, ***a single clear drop of water*** falls from the tip of ***a wet green leaf***, just before it touches ***a still pond***. Within the drop are reflected images of life: ***a seedling just sprouting***, ***small fish*** and ***a bird*** drinking. Ripples spread across the surface of the pond. The image symbolises Allah's words: ***"and [We] made from water every living thing"*** (21:30).

Note: This image is ***a symbolic illustration*** only. ***Two gold lines*** at the bottom frame the author's name.

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Colour guide: green box = verse of Al-Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; blue box = scientific finding; blue table = comparison. Narrator names underlined in blue can be clicked to open the narrator's page on sunnah.com.

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FROM A DROP OF WATER, ALL THINGS LIVE

Try to imagine a single day without water. No water to drink, no water for ablution, no water to cook or to wash. The paddy fields dry up, the trees wilt, and the livestock search in vain for a place to drink. Within just a few days, life begins to be threatened. Water is so close to us that we rarely realise how ***all of life depends on it***.

The Qur'an affirms this truth in a short verse whose meaning is vast: ***"and [We] made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe?"*** (21:30). Elsewhere, Allah mentions that ***every creature*** was created from water (24:45), and that ***human beings*** too were made from water (25:54).

Modern science, for its part, has found that ***water makes up a large part of the bodies of living things***, that the unique properties of water make life possible, and that scientists searching for life on other planets use the strategy ***"follow the water"***. This eBook explores the verses, authentic Hadith and scientific findings about water and life — honestly, distinguishing between firm harmony and forced interpretation.

WATER IN NUMBERS

Before exploring the verses of the Qur'an, here are some brief facts that will be explained in this eBook, together with their sources:

FACT	FIGURES AND SOURCE
Water in the adult human body	Up to ***60%*** (men ≈ 60%, women ≈ 55%); newborn babies ≈ ***78%*** (USGS).
Water in the brain and heart	About ***73%***; lungs ≈ ***83%*** (USGS).
Earth's water held in the oceans (saline)	About ***97.2%*** (USGS).
Fresh water stored in glaciers and ice	About ***three-quarters*** of all fresh water (USGS).
People in the world without safely managed drinking water	***2.2 billion*** people in 2022 (WHO).
NASA's main strategy for seeking signs of life on Mars	***"Follow the water"*** (NASA JPL).

Note: The translation of the Qur'anic verses in this eBook is that of Sahih International. The grade of each Hadith is stated in the Hadith box, with a link to sunnah.com. Every scientific finding is accompanied by a link to its original source. The topic of the rain cycle is discussed in a separate eBook, "The Formation of Rain in the Perspective of the Qur'an and Modern Science".

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FROM WATER, EVERY LIVING THING

This chapter discusses the core verse of this eBook, Surah Al-Anbiya' 21:30.

SURAH AL-ANBIYA' 21:30

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَنَّ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَٰهُمَاۖ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ حَىٍّۖ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them and made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe?

Translation: Sahih International — 21:30

EXPLANATION OF THE FIRST PART — THE HEAVENS AND EARTH JOINED TOGETHER

The first part of this verse mentions that the heavens and the earth were once ***joined*** (*ratqan*), and then Allah ***separated*** them (*fa fataqnāhumā*). Ibn Kathir quotes several interpretations of the early scholars. Among them is the interpretation of ***Ibn 'Abbas*** رضى الله عنهما that the sky once ***did not send down rain*** and the earth ***did not grow plants***; then Allah opened the sky with ***rain*** and opened the earth with ***vegetation***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 21:30

This interpretation is striking because it connects the first part of the verse with its second part: it is the ***water*** sent down from the sky that brings ***life*** to the earth. (A discussion of the heavens and earth being joined from a cosmological perspective can be found in the eBook ***"The Sky Raised Without Pillars"***.)

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EXPLANATION OF THE SECOND PART — "FROM WATER, EVERY LIVING THING"

Allah says: ***wa ja'alnā minal-mā'i kulla syai'in hayy*** — "and We made from water every living thing." Ibn Kathir explains that ***the origin of every living creature is water***. He quotes a narration of Imam Ahmad from ***Abu Hurairah*** رضى الله عنه, who said to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: "O Messenger of Allah, when I see you my heart rejoices and my eyes are comforted. Tell me about everything." He said: ***"Everything was created from water."*** Tafsir Ibn Kathir 21:30

The scholars explain that the meaning of "made from water" covers several aspects: ***water as a basic substance*** in the bodies of living things, ***water as a condition*** for survival (no living creature can endure without it), and for animals and humans, ***the fluid of procreation*** as the origin of their creation (see Chapter 2).

EXPLANATION OF THE CLOSE OF THE VERSE — "THEN WILL THEY NOT BELIEVE?"

The verse closes with a question: ***//afalā yu'minūn//*** — "then will they not believe?" The proofs of Allah's power are not hidden in some distant place; they are in ***every drop of water*** we drink and ***every living thing*** around us.

WATER IN THE LIFE OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ

Water also appears in important events in the life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. About ***the water of Zamzam***, he said: ***"It is blessed; it is a food that satisfies"*** (Sahih Muslim 2473). Sahih Muslim 2473

At Hudaibiyah, when the Companions were thirsty and there was no water except a little in a vessel, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ placed his hand into the vessel, and ***water gushed out from between his fingers*** like springs, until all who were present could drink and perform ablution. Jabir bin 'Abdullah رضى الله عنهما said that they numbered ***one thousand five hundred*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3576). This miracle shows that ***the Creator of water*** is able to bring it forth from wherever He wills. Sahih al-Bukhari 3576

REFLECTION — THE MOST ORDINARY THING

Water is the most ordinary thing in our lives. It falls from the sky for free, flows in the rivers, and comes out of the tap every day. Yet the Qur'an makes it ***the basis of all life***. Perhaps that is why we so often forget to be grateful — because the greatest blessings often come in the most ordinary form.

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ANIMALS AND HUMANS CREATED FROM WATER

The Qur'an not only mentions "every living thing" in general, but also specifically mentions ***animals*** and ***human beings***.

SURAH AN-NUR 24:45

وَٱللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَآبَّةٍ مِّن مَّآءٍۖ فَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِى عَلَىٰ بَطْنِهِۦ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِى عَلَىٰ رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُم مَّن يَمْشِى عَلَىٰٓ أَرْبَعٍۚ يَخْلُقُ ٱللَّهُ مَا يَشَآءُۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٤٥﴾

Allah has created every [living] creature from water. And of them are those that move on their bellies, and of them are those that walk on two legs, and of them are those that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.

Translation: Sahih International — 24:45

EXPLANATION OF VERSE 24:45 — EVERY CREATURE FROM WATER

Allah created ***every moving creature*** (*dābbah*) from water. From the same origin comes an astonishing diversity: some ***move on their bellies*** like snakes, some ***walk on two legs*** like humans and birds, and some ***walk on four*** like livestock. Ibn Kathir explains that this verse shows ***the perfection of Allah's power***: from a single origin, He creates different forms and shapes. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 24:45

The verse closes with: ***"Allah creates what He wills."*** The diversity of creatures is not limited to the three kinds mentioned; they are only examples from His countless creations.

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PLANTS TOO LIVE BY WATER

Besides animals and humans, the Qur'an describes in detail how ***plants*** are brought to life by water:

SURAH AL-AN'AM 6:99

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخۡرَجۡنَا بِهِۦ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَىۡءٍ فَأَخۡرَجۡنَا مِنۡهُ خَضِرًا نُّخۡرِجُ مِنۡهُ حَبًّا مُّتَرَاكِبًا وَمِنَ ٱلنَّخۡلِ مِن طَلۡعِهَا قِنۡوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ وَجَنَّٰتٍ مِّنۡ أَعۡنَابٍ وَٱلزَّيۡتُونَ وَٱلرُّمَّانَ مُشۡتَبِهًا وَغَيۡرَ مُتَشَٰبِهٍۗ ٱنظُرُوٓاْ إِلَىٰ ثَمَرِهِۦٓ إِذَآ أَثۡمَرَ وَيَنۡعِهِۦٓۚ إِنَّ فِى ذَٰلِكُمۡ لَأٓيَٰتٍ لِّقَوۡمٍ يُؤۡمِنُونَ ﴿٩٩﴾

And it is He who sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby the growth of all things. We produce from it greenery from which We produce grains arranged in layers. And from the palm trees - of its emerging fruit are clusters hanging low. And [We produce] gardens of grapevines and olives and pomegranates, similar yet varied. Look at [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening. Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe.

Translation: Sahih International — 6:99

This verse describes ***a chain of life***: rain falls, and then grow ***all kinds of plants***, then ***green shoots***, then ***grains arranged in layers***, low-hanging clusters of dates, and gardens of grapevines, olives and pomegranates. The verse closes with the call: ***"Look at [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening."*** Ibn Kathir explains that all of these are signs of Allah's power for those who believe. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 6:99

From ***the same water*** come fruits ***differing in form, colour and taste*** — some similar and some not. This diversity, born from a single source, is the same sign as the diversity of animals in 24:45.

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SURAH AL-FURQAN 25:54

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ مِنَ ٱلْمَآءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُۥ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا ﴿٥٤﴾

And it is He who has created from water a human being and made him [a relative by] lineage and marriage. And ever is your Lord competent [concerning creation].

Translation: Sahih International — 25:54

SURAH AS-SAJDAH 32:8

ثُمَّ جَعَلَ نَسْلَهُۥ مِن سُلَٰلَةٍ مِّن مَّآءٍ مَّهِينٍ ﴿٨﴾

Then He made his posterity out of the extract of a liquid disdained.

Translation: Sahih International — 32:8

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 25:54 AND 32:8 — HUMANS FROM WATER

Allah created ***the human being from water***, then gave him ***lineage*** (*nasab*) and ***ties of marriage*** (*sihr*). Ibn Kathir explains that what is meant is ***the weak fluid of procreation*** (*nutfah*), as in 32:8: the posterity of mankind is made from ***the extract of a liquid disdained***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 25:54

From a single drop of water that is looked down upon, Allah makes a human being who can think, speak and build civilisations. This is why the Qur'an repeatedly reminds man of his origin: ***so that he is not arrogant***. (Further discussion of human creation can be found in other eBooks in this series.)

REFLECTION — ONE ORIGIN, MANY FORMS

Consider a single field after rain. From the same water come the rice stalk, the coconut palm, the frog in the ditch, the egret in the paddy and the farmer who tends it all. None of them chose its form; each received it from its Creator. The verse ***"Allah creates what He wills"*** (24:45) invites us to look at this variety not as chance, but as the signature of a single, wise Maker.

When we notice how differently these creatures live — some crawling, some flying, some walking — and yet how all of them return to the same water each day, we begin to see the unity behind the diversity. That unity is a quiet pointer to ***the oneness of the One who created them***.

REFLECTION — A DROP THAT BECOMES A PERSON

Each one of us began from ***a single drop of water***. That drop knew nothing, owned nothing and could do nothing. Then Allah shaped it, breathed the soul into it, and gave it hearing, sight and a heart. Remembering this origin is the most effective cure for ***the disease of arrogance***.

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HIS THRONE UPON THE WATER

Water is not only the basis of life on earth. The Qur'an and Hadith mention water in the context of ***the beginning of creation*** itself.

SURAH HUD 11:7

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ فِى سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُۥ عَلَى ٱلْمَآءِ
لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا ۗ وَلَئِن قُلْتَ إِنَّكُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ مِنۢ بَعْدِ ٱلْمَوْتِ
لَيَقُولَنَّ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓا۟ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿٧﴾

And it is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days - and His Throne had been upon water - that He might test you as to which of you is best in deed. But if you say, "Indeed, you are resurrected after death," those who disbelieve will surely say, "This is not but obvious magic."

Translation: Sahih International — 11:7

EXPLANATION OF VERSE 11:7

Allah created the heavens and the earth in six days, ***"and His Throne had been upon water"***. Ibn Kathir explains that this verse shows that ***the water and the Throne were created before the heavens and the earth***, and he links it to the Hadith of 'Imran bin Husain in Sahih al-Bukhari (the First Hadith in Chapter 5). Tafsir Ibn Kathir 11:7

The verse also mentions ***the purpose of creation***: ***"that He might test you as to which of you is best in deed."*** Every blessing — including water — is not the goal, but ***a field of testing*** to see who is grateful and who is ungrateful.

CAUTION — A MATTER OF THE UNSEEN

The reality of the Throne and the water mentioned in this verse is ***a matter of the unseen***. We believe in it as Allah and His Messenger have informed us, without trying to equate it with the water we know or with cosmological theories. The early scholars laid down the principle: ***we believe in the wording, and leave its true nature to Allah***.

REFLECTION — THE PURPOSE BEHIND THE BLESSING

Verse 11:7 places the mention of water and the Throne in the same breath as the purpose of our lives: ***"that He might test you as to which of you is best in deed."*** This is a gentle reminder that the right question about any blessing is not only "where did it come from?" but also "what have I done with it?"

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A glass of water can be drunk with gratitude or with heedlessness; a river can be protected or polluted; a well can be shared or withheld. In each case the water is the same, but the deed is different — and it is ***the deed*** that will be weighed.

REFLECTION — WATER BEFORE EVERYTHING

Before the heavens and the earth existed, water was already there by Allah's permission. Before we were born, water was already waiting to give us life. And after we are gone, water will continue to flow. Water reminds us that ***we came later, and will leave sooner*** — only Allah remains.

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THE WATER YOU DRINK

The Qur'an invites mankind to look at ***the water they drink every day*** — and to realise that this blessing is entirely in the hand of Allah.

SURAH AL-WAQI'AH 56:68–70

أَفَرَءَيْتُمُ ٱلْمَآءَ ٱلَّذِى تَشْرَبُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

And have you seen the water that you drink?

ءَأَنتُمْ أَنزَلْتُمُوهُ مِنَ ٱلْمُزْنِ أَمْ نَحْنُ ٱلْمُنزِلُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

Is it you who brought it down from the clouds, or is it We who bring it down?

لَوْ نَشَآءُ جَعَلْنَٰهُ أُجَاجًا فَلَوْلَا تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾

If We willed, We could make it bitter, so why are you not grateful?

Translation: Sahih International — 56:68-70

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 56:68–70 — SWEET OR SALTY?

Allah asks: ***"And have you seen the water that you drink? Is it you who brought it down from the clouds, or is it We who bring it down?"*** Then: ***"If We willed, We could make it bitter (//ujājā//), so why are you not grateful?"*** Ibn Kathir explains that Allah sends down water ***fresh and sweet***, which can be drunk and used for crops; had He willed, He could make it ***salty and bitter*** so that it would be of no benefit. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 56:68

This verse is deeply meaningful when we know that ***almost all the water on earth is salty*** (see Figure 2). The fresh water we drink is a very small portion — a blessing that must be met with gratitude.

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SURAH AL-MU'MINUN 23:18

وَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءًۢ بِقَدَرٍ فَأَسْكَنَّٰهُ فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَإِنَّا عَلَىٰ ذَهَابٍۭ بِهِۦ لَقَٰدِرُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

And We have sent down rain from the sky in a measured amount and settled it in the earth. And indeed, We are Able to take it away.

Translation: Sahih International — 23:18

EXPLANATION OF VERSE 23:18 — IN DUE MEASURE, SETTLED IN THE EARTH

Allah sends down water ***in due measure*** (*biqadar*) — not so much that it destroys, and not so little that it is insufficient. Then Allah ***settles it in the earth*** (*fa askannāhu fil-ardh*). Ibn Kathir explains that Allah makes that water ***stored within the earth***, then it emerges as springs and rivers. The verse closes with a warning: ***"And indeed, We are Able to take it away."*** Tafsir Ibn Kathir 23:18

SURAH AL-HIJR 15:22

وَأَرْسَلْنَا ٱلرِّيَٰحَ لَوَٰقِحَ فَأَنزَلْنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَسْقَيْنَٰكُمُوهُ وَمَآ أَنتُمْ لَهُۥ بِخَٰزِنِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

And We have sent the fertilizing winds and sent down water from the sky and given you drink from it. And you are not its retainers.

Translation: Sahih International — 15:22

EXPLANATION OF VERSE 15:22 — "YOU ARE NOT ITS RETAINERS"

This verse closes with a firm statement: ***//wa mā antum lahū bikhāzinīn//*** — "and you are not its retainers." Ibn Kathir explains: you are not able to store that water; it is Allah who keeps it for you in springs, wells and rivers, by His mercy. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 15:22

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SURAH AL-FURQAN 25:48–49

وَهُوَ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَرۡسَلَ ٱلرِّيَٰحَ بُشۡرَۢا بَيۡنَ يَدَىۡ رَحۡمَتِهِۦۚ وَأَنزَلۡنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً طَهُورًا ﴿٤٨﴾

And it is He who sends the winds as good tidings before His mercy, and We send down from the sky pure water.

لِّنُحۡـِۧيَ بِهِۦ بَلۡدَةً مَّيۡتًا وَنُسۡقِيَهُۥ مِمَّا خَلَقۡنَآ أَنۡعَٰمًا وَأَنَاسِىَّ كَثِيرًا ﴿٤٩﴾

That We may bring to life thereby a dead land and give it as drink to those We created of numerous livestock and men.

Translation: Sahih International — 25:48-49

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 25:48–49 — WATER PURE AND PURIFYING

Allah sends down from the sky ***pure water*** (*mā'an tahūrā*). The scholars of fiqh derive from this verse that rainwater is not only ***pure in itself***, but also ***purifies*** other things — which is why it is valid for ablution and the obligatory bath. Then Allah mentions the purpose of that water: ***to bring to life a dead land***, and ***to give drink*** to livestock and to many people. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 25:48

Notice the order in verse 25:49: the ***land*** is brought to life first, then ***animals***, then ***human beings***. The whole chain of life depends on the same water.

SURAH QAF 50:9–11

وَنَزَّلۡنَا مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً مُّبَٰرَكًا فَأَنۢبَتۡنَا بِهِۦ جَنَّٰتٍ وَحَبَّ ٱلۡحَصِيدِ ﴿٩﴾

And We have sent down blessed rain from the sky and made grow thereby gardens and grain from the harvest.

وَٱلنَّخۡلَ بَاسِقَٰتٍ لَّهَا طَلۡعٌ نَّضِيدٌ ﴿١٠﴾

And lofty palm trees having fruit arranged in layers.

رِّزۡقًا لِّلۡعِبَادِ ۖ وَأَحۡيَيۡنَا بِهِۦ بَلۡدَةً مَّيۡتًا ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ ٱلۡخُرُوجُ ﴿١١﴾

As provision for the servants, and We have given life thereby to a dead land. Thus is the resurrection.

Translation: Sahih International — 50:9-11

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EXPLANATION OF VERSES 50:9–11 — WATER AND THE RESURRECTION

Allah sends down from the sky ***blessed water*** (*mā'an mubārakā*), and grows thereby gardens, grain and lofty palm trees with fruit arranged in layers. Verse 50:11 closes with a profound comparison: ***"and We have given life thereby to a dead land. Thus is the resurrection."*** Ibn Kathir explains that just as Allah gives life to dry land with rain, so will He ***bring mankind back to life*** on the Day of Resurrection. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 50:11

Each time we see dry ground turn green after rain, we are in fact witnessing ***a small picture of the Day of Resurrection***. Water is not only the basis of life in this world, but also ***a sign*** of life after death.

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SURAH AL-MULK 67:30

قُلْ أَرَءَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَآؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَن يَأْتِيكُم بِمَآءٍ مَّعِينٍ ﴿٣٠﴾

Say, "Have you considered: if your water was to become sunken [into the earth], then who could bring you flowing water?"

Translation: Sahih International — 67:30

EXPLANATION OF VERSE 67:30 — IF YOUR WATER SINKS INTO THE EARTH

This last verse of Surah Al-Mulk poses a stirring question: ***if your water were to sink deep into the earth*** (*ghauran*), ***who could bring you flowing water?*** Ibn Kathir explains that no one is able to do so ***except Allah***; by His grace, that water gushes forth and flows. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 67:30

REFLECTION — THE WELL THAT RAN DRY

The older generation in the villages still remember the dry seasons when ***the wells ran dry*** and people had to carry water from far away. At such times, every bucket of water felt precious. Verse 67:30 invites us to feel that value ***before*** the water is gone — not after.

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EVIDENCE FROM THE HADITH

This chapter presents ***nine Hadith*** related to the theme of this eBook — ***water as a basis of creation and life***, ***the reward of giving drink***, ***the shared right to water***, and ***the etiquette of using water***. Each Hadith is presented in full with its Arabic text, its chain of narration linked to the narrators' pages on sunnah.com, its translation and its grade.

HADITH	THEME
Sahih al-Bukhari 3191	"Allah existed and there was nothing besides Him, and His Throne was upon the water."
Sahih al-Bukhari 2363	The man who gave water to a thirsty dog — "in every living liver there is a reward".
Sunan Abi Dawud 1681	The best charity is water.
Sunan Abi Dawud 3477	Muslims are partners in three things: pasture, water and fire.
Sahih al-Bukhari 2358	The warning for one who withholds surplus water from travellers.
Sahih al-Bukhari 201	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed ablution with one mudd of water.
Sahih Muslim 2028	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ took three breaths while drinking.
Sahih al-Bukhari 5630	The prohibition of breathing into the drinking vessel.
Sahih Muslim 2734	Allah is pleased with the servant who praises Him after eating and drinking.

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FIRST HADITH — HIS THRONE UPON THE WATER

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3191

حَدَّثَنَا عُمَرُ بْنُ حَفْصِ بْنِ غِيَاثٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي، حَدَّثَنَا الأَعْمَشُ، حَدَّثَنَا جَامِعُ بْنُ شَدَّادٍ، عَنْ صَفْوَانَ بْنِ مُحْرِزٍ، أَنَّهُ حَدَّثَهُ عَنْ عِمْرَانَ بْنِ حُصَيْنٍ ـ رضى الله عنهما ـ قَالَ دَخَلْتُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم وَعَقَلْتُ نَاقَتِي بِالْبَابِ، فَأَتَاهُ نَاسٌ مِنْ بَنِي تَمِيمٍ فَقَالَ «اقْبَلُوا الْبُشْرَى يَا بَنِي تَمِيمٍ». قَالُوا قَدْ بَشَّرْتَنَا فَأَعْطِنَا. مَرَّتَيْنِ، ثُمَّ دَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ نَاسٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْيَمَنِ فَقَالَ «اقْبَلُوا الْبُشْرَى يَا أَهْلَ الْيَمَنِ، إِذْ لَمْ يَقْبَلْهَا بَنُو تَمِيمٍ». قَالُوا قَدْ قَبِلْنَا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، قَالُوا جِئْنَاكَ نَسْأَلُكَ عَنْ هَذَا الأَمْرِ قَالَ «كَانَ اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ شَىْءٌ غَيْرُهُ، وَكَانَ عَرْشُهُ عَلَى الْمَاءِ، وَكَتَبَ فِي الذِّكْرِ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ، وَخَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ». فَنَادَى مُنَادٍ ذَهَبَتْ نَاقَتُكَ يَا ابْنَ الْحُصَيْنِ. فَانْطَلَقْتُ فَإِذَا هِيَ يَقْطَعُ دُونَهَا السَّرَابُ، فَوَاللَّهِ لَوَدِدْتُ أَنِّي كُنْتُ تَرَكْتُهَا.

TRANSLATION:

'Imran bin Husain رضى الله عنهما said: I went in to the Prophet ﷺ and tied my she-camel at the door. Then some people from Banu Tamim came to him, and he said: "Accept the good tidings, O Banu Tamim." They said: "You have given us good tidings, so give us (wealth)," twice. Then some people from Yemen came in, and he said: "Accept the good tidings, O people of Yemen, since Banu Tamim did not accept them."

They said: "We accept, O Messenger of Allah. We have come to ask you about this matter (the beginning of creation)." He said: ***"Allah existed and there was nothing besides Him, and His Throne was upon the water, and He wrote everything in the Reminder (al-Dhikr), and He created the heavens and the earth."*** Then someone called out: "Your she-camel has run off, O Ibn al-Husain!" So I went, and it had gone far beyond the mirage. By Allah, I wished I had left it (and stayed to listen).

CHAIN Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Umar bin Hafs bin Ghiyath, from his father (Hafs bin Ghiyath), from al-A'mash, from Jami' bin Shaddad, from Safwan bin Muhriz, from 'Imran bin Husain رضى الله عنهما.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Beginning of Creation, Chapter on the words of Allah "And it is He who begins creation", Hadith No. 3191.

GRADE: SAHIH — narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:3191

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

First: This Hadith explains verse 11:7: before the heavens and the earth were created, ***the Throne of Allah was upon the water***. It is a matter of the unseen, believed in without imagining its true nature.

Second: Notice the regret of 'Imran bin Husain رضى الله عنهما: he would rather have lost his camel than miss ***knowledge from the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ. Such was the value of knowledge for the Companions.

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SECOND HADITH — IN EVERY LIVING LIVER THERE IS A REWARD

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2363

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، أَخْبَرَنَا مَالِكٌ، عَنْ سُمَيٍّ، عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ «بَيْنَا رَجُلٌ يَمْشِي فَاشْتَدَّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَطَشُ، فَنَزَلَ بِئْرًا فَشَرِبَ مِنْهَا، ثُمَّ خَرَجَ فَإِذَا هُوَ بِكَلْبٍ يَلْهَثُ، يَأْكُلُ الثَّرَى مِنَ الْعَطَشِ، فَقَالَ لَقَدْ بَلَغَ هَذَا مِثْلُ الَّذِي بَلَغَ بِي فَمَلأَ خُفَّهُ ثُمَّ أَمْسَكَهُ بِفِيهِ، ثُمَّ رَقِيَ، فَسَقَى الْكَلْبَ فَشَكَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ، فَغَفَرَ لَهُ». قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَإِنَّ لَنَا فِي الْبَهَائِمِ أَجْرًا قَالَ «فِي كُلِّ كَبِدٍ رَطْبَةٍ أَجْرٌ». تَابَعَهُ حَمَّادُ بْنُ سَلَمَةَ وَالرَّبِيعُ بْنُ مُسْلِمٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ.

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"While a man was walking, he became very thirsty. So he went down into a well and drank from it. Then he came out, and there was a dog panting and licking the moist earth out of thirst. The man said: 'This dog has suffered the same thirst that I suffered.' So he filled his leather sock with water, held it in his mouth, then climbed up and gave the dog a drink. Allah thanked him for it and forgave him."***

The Companions asked: "O Messenger of Allah, is there a reward for us in (kindness to) animals?" He said: ***"In every moist liver (every living creature) there is a reward."***

CHAIN Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah bin Yusuf, from Malik bin Anas, from Sumayy, from Abu Salih, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Watering, Chapter on the virtue of giving water to drink, Hadith No. 2363. (This narration is also supported by Hammad bin Salamah and al-Rabi' bin Muslim from Muhammad bin Ziyad.)

GRADE: SAHIH — narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2363

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

First: The expression ***"every moist liver"*** (*kulli kabidin ratbah*) means every living creature — because a living creature has a body ***moist with water***, while the dead becomes dry. This expression is in close harmony with the verse ***"from water, every living thing"*** (21:30).

Second: A drink of water for a dog became a cause of ***Allah's forgiveness***. If such is the value of giving water to an animal, what then of giving water to a thirsty human being?

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THIRD HADITH — THE BEST CHARITY

HADITH — SUNAN ABI DAWUD, NO. 1681

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ كَثِيرٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا إِسْرَائِيلُ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ، عَنْ رَجُلٍ، عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ عُبَادَةَ، أَنَّهُ قَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ أُمَّ سَعْدٍ مَاتَتْ فَأَىُّ الصَّدَقَةِ أَفْضَلُ قَالَ «الْمَاءُ» . قَالَ فَحَفَرَ بِئْرًا وَقَالَ هَذِهِ لأُمِّ سَعْدٍ .

TRANSLATION:

Sa'd bin 'Ubadah رضى الله عنه said: "O Messenger of Allah, Umm Sa'd (my mother) has died. What charity is best (for her)?" He said: ***"Water."*** So Sa'd dug a well and said: ***"This is for Umm Sa'd."***

CHAIN Narrated by Imam Abu Dawud: from Muhammad bin Kathir, from Isra'il, from Abu Ishaq, from an unnamed man, from Sa'd bin 'Ubadah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Abu Dawud in Sunan Abi Dawud, Book of Zakah, Chapter on the virtue of giving water to drink, Hadith No. 1681.

GRADE: HASAN — graded hasan by al-Albani (as recorded on sunnah.com) on the basis of other supporting narrations; the chain here contains an unnamed narrator.

Source: https://sunnah.com/abudawud:1681

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

First: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ chose ***water*** as the best charity — because its benefit is all-embracing: humans, animals and plants all need it, and ***no living creature can survive without it***.

Second: The well of Sa'd bin 'Ubadah became ***an ongoing charity*** (*sadaqah jāriyah*) whose reward continues for his mother. Today, sponsoring water filters, wells or clean water supplies in areas of need is among the most valuable forms of ongoing charity.

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FOURTH HADITH — SHARING WATER

HADITH — SUNAN ABI DAWUD, NO. 3477

حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْجَعْدِ اللُّؤْلُؤِيُّ، أَخْبَرَنَا حَرِيزُ بْنُ عُثْمَانَ، عَنْ حَبَّانَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ الشَّرْعَبِيِّ، عَنْ رَجُلٍ، مِنْ قَرْنٍ ح وَحَدَّثَنَا مُسَدَّدٌ، حَدَّثَنَا عِيسَى بْنُ يُونُسَ، حَدَّثَنَا حَرِيزُ بْنُ عُثْمَانَ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو خِدَاشٍ، - وَهَذَا لَفْظُ عَلِيٍّ - عَنْ رَجُلٍ، مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ غَزَوْتُ مَعَ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم ثَلاَثًا أَسْمَعُهُ يَقُولُ «الْمُسْلِمُونَ شُرَكَاءُ فِي ثَلاَثٍ فِي الْكَلإِ وَالْمَاءِ وَالنَّارِ» .

TRANSLATION:

A man from among the Muhajirun, a Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, said: I went on campaign with the Prophet ﷺ three times, and I heard him say: ***"The Muslims are partners in three things: pasture, water and fire."***

CHAIN Narrated by Imam Abu Dawud: from 'Ali bin al-Ja'd al-Lu'lu'i, from Hariz bin 'Uthman, from Hibban bin Zaid al-Shar'abi, from a man from Qarn, from a Companion from among the Muhajirun.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Abu Dawud in Sunan Abi Dawud, Book of Hire (Book of Transactions), Chapter on the prohibition of withholding water, Hadith No. 3477. (Abu Dawud also narrated it through Musaddad, from 'Isa bin Yunus, from Hariz bin 'Uthman, from Abu Khidash.)

GRADE: SAHIH — graded sahih by al-Albani (as recorded on sunnah.com). An unnamed Companion does not affect authenticity, because all the Companions are trustworthy in the view of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/abudawud:3477

FIFTH HADITH — WITHHOLDING SURPLUS WATER

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2358

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى بْنُ إِسْمَاعِيلَ، حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْوَاحِدِ بْنُ زِيَادٍ، عَنِ الأَعْمَشِ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا صَالِحٍ، يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ يَقُولُ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «ثَلاَثَةٌ لاَ يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَلاَ يُزَكِّيهِمْ، وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ رَجُلٌ كَانَ لَهُ فَضْلُ مَاءٍ بِالطَّرِيقِ، فَمَنَعَهُ مِنِ ابْنِ السَّبِيلِ، وَرَجُلٌ بَايَعَ إِمَامًا لاَ يُبَايِعُهُ إِلاَّ لِدُنْيَا، فَإِنْ أَعْطَاهُ مِنْهَا رَضِيَ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطِهِ مِنْهَا سَخِطَ، وَرَجُلٌ أَقَامَ سِلْعَتَهُ بَعْدَ الْعَصْرِ، فَقَالَ وَاللَّهِ الَّذِي لاَ إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ لَقَدْ أُعْطِيتُ بِهَا كَذَا وَكَذَا، فَصَدَّقَهُ رَجُلٌ» ثُمَّ قَرَأَ هَذِهِ الآيَةَ {إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلاً}

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"There are three whom Allah will not look at on the Day of Resurrection, nor purify, and for them is a painful punishment: (1) a man who had surplus water by the road and withheld it from the traveller;*** (2) a man who gave his pledge of allegiance to a leader only for worldly gain — if he is given, he is pleased, and if not, he is angry; and (3) a man who displayed his goods for sale after 'Asr and swore: 'By Allah, besides whom there is no god, I was offered such-and-such for it,' and a man believed him."

Then he recited the verse: ***"Indeed, those who exchange the covenant of Allah and their [own] oaths for a small price…"*** (3:77).

CHAIN Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Musa bin Isma'il, from 'Abd al-Wahid bin Ziyad, from al-A'mash, from Abu Salih, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Watering, Chapter on the sin of one who withholds water from the traveller, Hadith No. 2358.

GRADE: SAHIH — narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:2358

LESSONS FROM THE FOURTH AND FIFTH HADITH

First: Water is ***a shared blessing*** that may not be monopolised in a way that wrongs others. Withholding surplus water from those in need is among ***the major sins*** threatened with punishment.

Second: Today, when ***2.2 billion people*** still lack safely managed drinking water (WHO), this principle is highly relevant: protecting water sources, not polluting them, and sharing surplus water are religious responsibilities, not merely environmental issues.

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SIXTH HADITH — ABLUTION WITH ONE MUDD

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 201

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو نُعَيْمٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مِسْعَرٌ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي ابْنُ جَبْرٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَنَسًا، يَقُولُ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَغْسِلُ - أَوْ كَانَ يَغْتَسِلُ - بِالصَّاعِ إِلَى خَمْسَةِ أَمْدَادٍ، وَيَتَوَضَّأُ بِالْمُدِّ.

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه said: ***The Prophet ﷺ would bathe with one sa' up to five mudd of water, and perform ablution with one mudd.***

CHAIN Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu Nu'aim, from Mis'ar, from Ibn Jabr, from Anas bin Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Ablution, Chapter on performing ablution with one mudd, Hadith No. 201.

GRADE: SAHIH — narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:201

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

First: A ***mudd*** is the measure of the two cupped hands together — the scholars estimate it at roughly ***two-thirds of a litre*** (the estimate differs slightly among scholars). Imagine: the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed ablution with less water than a small bottle of mineral water.

Second: This Hadith teaches ***frugality*** in using water, even for worship. If we are taught to be economical even during ablution, how much more in our daily affairs. Leaving the tap running during ablution is a habit that needs to be corrected.

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SEVENTH HADITH — THREE BREATHS WHILE DRINKING

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2028

وَحَدَّثَنَا قُتَيْبَةُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، وَأَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا وَكِيعٌ، عَنْ عَزْرَةَ بْنِ ثَابِتٍ الأَنْصَارِيِّ عَنْ ثُمَامَةَ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَنَسٍ، عَنْ أَنَسٍ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم كَانَ يَتَنَفَّسُ فِي الإِنَاءِ ثَلاَثًا .

TRANSLATION:

Anas رضى الله عنه narrated that ***the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would breathe three times while drinking*** (that is, drinking in three gulps, breathing outside the vessel).

CHAIN Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Qutaibah bin Sa'id and Abu Bakr bin Abi Shaibah, from Waki', from 'Azrah bin Thabit al-Ansari, from Thumamah bin 'Abdullah bin Anas, from Anas bin Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Drinks, Chapter on the dislike of breathing into the vessel and the recommendation to breathe three times outside it, Hadith No. 2028 (the first narration in this chapter on sunnah.com).

GRADE: SAHIH — narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2028a

EIGHTH HADITH — DO NOT BREATHE INTO THE VESSEL

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 5630

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو نُعَيْمٍ، حَدَّثَنَا شَيْبَانُ، عَنْ يَحْيَى، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «إِذَا شَرِبَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلاَ يَتَنَفَّسْ فِي الإِنَاءِ، وَإِذَا بَالَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلاَ يَمْسَحْ ذَكَرَهُ بِيَمِينِهِ، وَإِذَا تَمَسَّحَ أَحَدُكُمْ فَلاَ يَتَمَسَّحْ بِيَمِينِهِ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Qatadah رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"When one of you drinks, let him not breathe into the vessel.*** When one of you urinates, let him not touch his private part with his right hand. And when one of you cleans himself, let him not do so with his right hand."

CHAIN Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu Nu'aim, from Shaiban, from Yahya (bin Abi Kathir), from 'Abdullah bin Abi Qatadah, from his father, Abu Qatadah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Drinks, Chapter on the prohibition of breathing into the vessel, Hadith No. 5630.

GRADE: SAHIH — narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5630

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LESSONS FROM THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH HADITH

First: Islam teaches ***an etiquette of drinking*** that preserves cleanliness and health: not breathing into the vessel, and drinking slowly in several gulps. The scholars mention its wisdom: protecting the water from being soiled by the breath, and being more comfortable for the body.

Second: We practise this Sunnah because it is ***the teaching of the Messenger of Allah*** ﷺ, not because we are waiting for laboratory confirmation. Yet the cleanliness preserved by this etiquette is in harmony with commonly known principles of public health.

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NINTH HADITH — PRAISING ALLAH AFTER DRINKING

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2734

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، وَابْنُ نُمَيْرٍ - وَاللَّفْظُ لاِبْنِ نُمَيْرٍ - قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ وَمُحَمَّدُ بْنُ بِشْرٍ عَنْ زَكَرِيَّاءَ بْنِ أَبِي زَائِدَةَ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ، عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَيَرْضَى عَنِ الْعَبْدِ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ الأَكْلَةَ فَيَحْمَدَهُ عَلَيْهَا أَوْ يَشْرَبَ الشَّرْبَةَ فَيَحْمَدَهُ عَلَيْهَا» .

TRANSLATION:

Anas bin Malik رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: ***"Indeed, Allah is pleased with a servant who eats a morsel of food and praises Him for it, or drinks a sip of drink and praises Him for it."***

CHAIN Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu Bakr bin Abi Shaibah and Ibn Numair, from Abu Usamah and Muhammad bin Bishr, from Zakariyya bin Abi Za'idah, from Sa'id bin Abi Burdah, from Anas bin Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Remembrance, Supplication, Repentance and Seeking Forgiveness, Chapter on the recommendation to praise Allah after eating and drinking, Hadith No. 2734 (the first narration in this chapter on sunnah.com).

GRADE: SAHIH — narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2734a

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

First: Even a sip of water deserves to be met with ***"Alhamdulillāh"***. This very light deed brings ***the pleasure of Allah*** — a blessing far greater than the water itself.

Second: This Hadith answers the question in 56:70: ***"so why are you not grateful?"*** Gratitude begins with a tongue that praises, a heart that acknowledges, and limbs that use the blessing in its proper place.

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WHAT MODERN SCIENCE SAYS

This chapter presents scientific findings about water and life — from the water in our bodies and the unique properties of water, to the search for life on other planets. Every fact is supported by a source that can be checked, with a link.

A SIMPLE EXPLANATION — WHY DOES LIFE NEED WATER?

Every living thing is made up of ***cells***. Inside every cell, thousands of ***chemical reactions*** take place every second: food is digested, energy is produced, waste is removed. Almost all of these reactions take place ***in water***. Water dissolves the substances needed, carries them to the right place, and removes the waste.

That is why ***not a single known living thing*** on earth — from the smallest bacterium to the largest whale — can live and reproduce without water. Some creatures can "sleep" in a dry state for a long time, but they only ***come back to life*** when they receive water.

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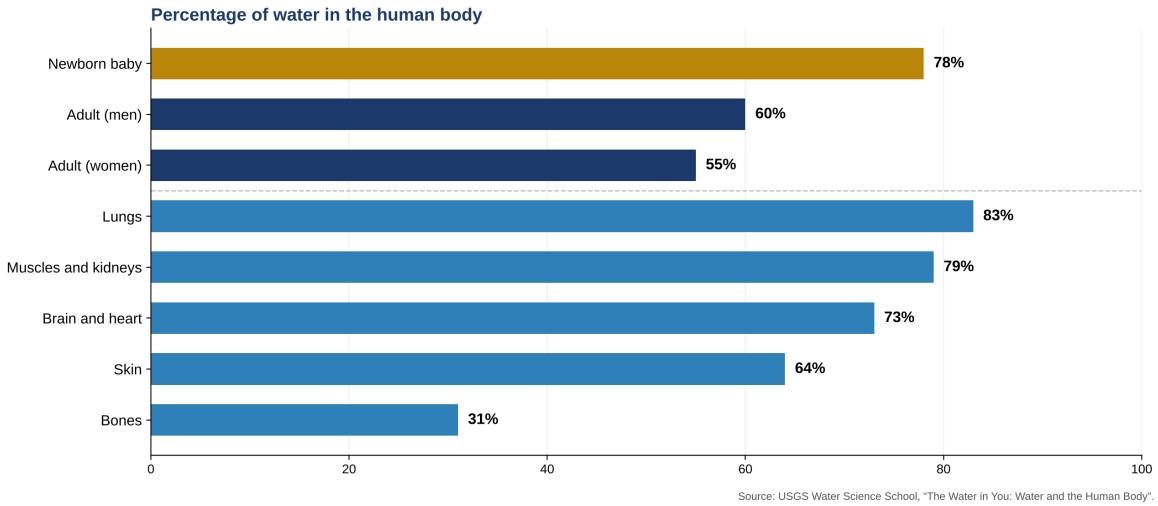


Figure 1: The percentage of water in the human body by age and by organ. A newborn baby contains about 78% water; the lungs about 83%; even the bones contain about 31% water.

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: THE WATER IN OUR BODIES

According to the ***Water Science School of the United States Geological Survey (USGS)***, ***up to 60%*** of the adult human body is water — about ***60%*** for adult men and ***55%*** for adult women (since women generally have more fatty tissue). Babies are born with about ***78%*** water, which falls to about ***65%*** by the age of one.

By organ: ***the brain and heart*** are about ***73%*** water, ***the lungs*** about ***83%***, ***the skin*** 64%, ***the muscles and kidneys*** 79%, and even ***the bones*** contain about ***31%*** water (Figure 1). This makes the Hadith expression ***"every moist liver"*** (Bukhari 2363) deeply meaningful: living things are indeed ***"moist"*** with water.

RESEARCH REFERENCE:

USGS Water Science School. The Water in You: Water and the Human Body. https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school/science/water-you-water-and-human-body

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THE UNIQUE PROPERTIES OF WATER

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: THREE PROPERTIES OF WATER THAT PROTECT LIFE

The USGS lists several extraordinary properties of water. ***First***, water is the ***"universal solvent"*** — it dissolves ***more substances than any other liquid***, carrying chemicals, minerals and nutrients through the ground and through our bodies.

Second, ***ice is less dense than liquid water***, which is why ice floats. Most substances become denser when they freeze; water does the opposite. As a result, when a lake freezes in winter, the ice forms ***at the surface*** and acts as a "blanket", while the water beneath stays liquid — allowing fish and other life to survive.

Third, water has ***a high specific heat***: it absorbs a great deal of heat before it gets hot. This property helps ***stabilise air temperatures***, especially near the oceans, and also stabilises the body temperature of living things.

RESEARCH REFERENCE:

USGS Water Science School. Facts About Water. https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school/science/facts-about-water

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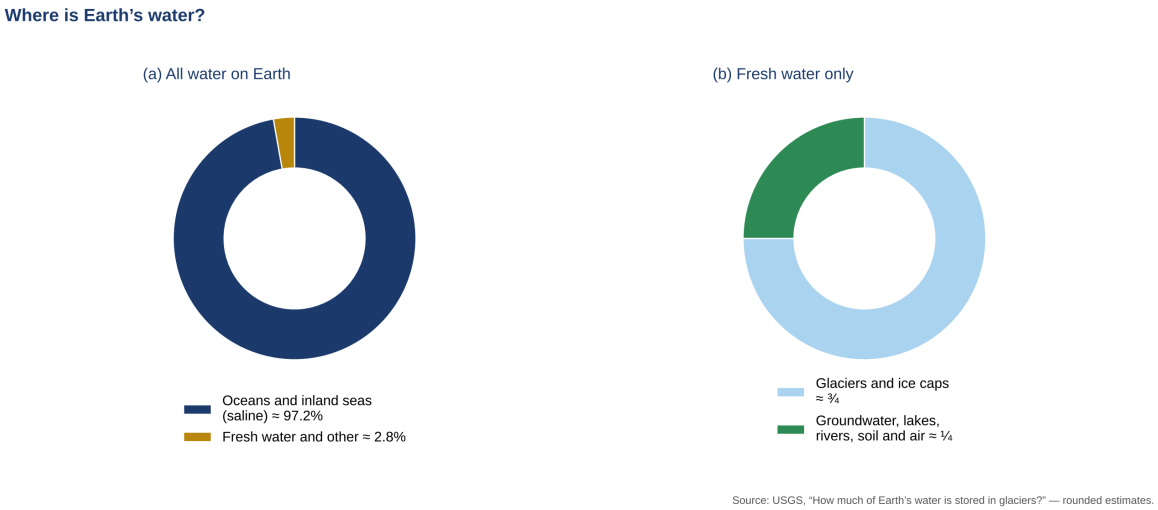


Figure 2: (a) Almost all of Earth's water is in the oceans and is salty. (b) Of the small share of fresh water, about three-quarters is stored as glaciers and ice. The fresh water we can easily use is only a very small portion.

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: FRESH WATER: A BLESSING VERY SMALL IN QUANTITY

According to the USGS, about ***97.2%*** of Earth's water is in ***the oceans and inland seas*** — salt water that cannot be drunk without treatment. Of the remaining fresh water, about ***three-quarters is stored in glaciers*** and ice caps.

This means that the fresh water in rivers, lakes and underground that serves as humanity's drinking water is only ***a very small portion*** of all Earth's water (Figure 2). Reflect again on Allah's words: ***"If We willed, We could make it bitter, so why are you not grateful?"*** (56:70).

RESEARCH REFERENCE:

USGS. How much of Earth's water is stored in glaciers? https://www.usgs.gov/faqs/how-much-earths-water-stored-glaciers

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SEARCHING FOR LIFE BY SEARCHING FOR WATER

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: "FOLLOW THE WATER" — NASA'S STRATEGY ON MARS

Since the early 2000s, NASA's Mars exploration programme has used the main strategy of ***"follow the water"***, as stated by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in 2002. The logic is simple: ***where there is liquid water, there may be life***.

This strategy shows that scientists themselves, when searching for life beyond the earth, begin by ***searching for water***. It is in harmony with the truth mentioned in 21:30 — although that verse speaks of the living things Allah has created, not of methods of space exploration.

RESEARCH REFERENCE:

NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory (2002). Roving the Red Planet: Current and Future Missions. https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/roving-the-red-planet-current-and-future-missions

SCIENTIFIC FINDING: WHY WATER? — A CAREFUL SCIENTIFIC VIEW

The report of the ***United States National Research Council (2007)***, *The Limits of Organic Life in Planetary Systems*, explains why liquids such as water are so important for life: a liquid ***facilitates chemical reactions*** because dissolved substances can meet one another, and it provides ***a stable environment***.

Yet the same report is also ***cautious***: its authors discuss the possibility of other solvents (such as ammonia) for forms of life not yet known, and state that water is not necessarily the only option in theory. This reminds us: ***all the life we know depends on water***, but science remains open about other possibilities in the universe.

RESEARCH REFERENCE:

National Research Council (2007). The Limits of Organic Life in Planetary Systems. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press (Chapter 6: Why Water?). https://www.nationalacademies.org/read/11919/page/69

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SCIENTIFIC FINDING: THE WORLD'S DRINKING WATER CRISIS

According to the ***World Health Organization (WHO)***, in 2022 about ***6 billion*** people (73% of the world's population) used safely managed drinking-water services. This means that ***2.2 billion*** people still lacked them.

Of these, about ***115 million*** people still collect untreated water directly from ***lakes, ponds, rivers and streams***. For them, every drop of clean water is a daily struggle — and for us, it is a reminder to ***be grateful, be frugal and give charity***.

RESEARCH REFERENCE:

World Health Organization (2023). Drinking-water (fact sheet). https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/drinking-water

REFLECTION — THE SCIENTIST AND THE BELIEVER

The scientist studying the properties of water and the believer reflecting on 21:30 are, in a sense, looking at the same thing from two windows. One measures and describes; the other ponders and gives thanks. Islam does not ask us to close either window. The more carefully we understand how water sustains life, the more reason we find to say ***"Subhānallāh"***.

At the same time, a believer does not need to wait for every scientific finding before affirming the truth of revelation. Science changes and grows; the words of Allah remain. Our task is to hold both with honesty — to welcome sound knowledge, and to avoid forcing either the verse or the science to say what it does not say.

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THE STORY OF THE WELL AT THE EDGE OF THE VILLAGE

Imagine a village in Pasir Mas in days gone by. At the edge of the village stands ***an old well*** dug by a righteous man for his late mother. Every morning the mothers come to draw water for cooking; the children drink on their way home from Qur'an class; the farmers wash their feet after working in the paddy fields; even the goats and chickens drink from the puddles beside it.

The man passed away long ago, but the well has continued to give drink to ***people, animals and plants*** for decades. Every sip drunk from it is a reward flowing to him and to his mother — like the well of Sa'd bin 'Ubadah رضى الله عنه: ***"This is for Umm Sa'd."***

That well teaches a great truth: ***water given sincerely never runs dry of reward***. ***"And [We] made from water every living thing"*** (21:30) — and with water too, Allah keeps alive a servant's deeds after his death.

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BETWEEN HARMONY AND CAUTION

The table below summarises an assessment of claims often heard about water, the Qur'an and science.

POPULAR CLAIMS AND THEIR ASSESSMENT

COMMONLY HEARD CLAIM	ASSESSMENT
"Verse 21:30 proves that life began in the ocean."	***Caution is needed.*** The verse states that living things were made ***from water***; it does not mention ***where*** or ***how*** the first life began. The origin of life is still debated in science.
"Verse 21:30 states that the body is 60–70% water."	***Harmony for reflection.*** The fact that the bodies of living things are largely water (USGS) is in harmony with the general meaning of the verse, but the verse does not mention a percentage.
"The early scholars did not understand this verse until modern science came."	***Not accurate.*** Ibn Kathir and the early scholars already understood that ***the origin and survival*** of every living thing depends on water. Science adds detail; it does not correct their understanding.
"Life is impossible anywhere in the universe without water."	***More accurately:*** all ***the life we know*** depends on water. Some scientists discuss the possibility of other solvents (NRC, 2007). Verse 21:30 speaks of the living things Allah created, without negating His wider knowledge.
"The Throne upon the water (11:7) means the universe began as an ocean."	***A forced interpretation.*** The Throne and the water in this verse are matters of the unseen. We believe in them without equating them with cosmological theories.
"Water over which certain verses are recited changes its molecular structure ('water memory')."	***There is no solid scientific evidence.*** Such claims are not supported by reliable studies. Authentic ruqyah does not need to lean on pseudo-scientific claims.

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THREE QUESTIONS ABOUT WATER AND LIFE

Question 1: Does "every living thing" include angels and jinn? The scholars explain that this verse refers to the living things ***witnessed by mankind*** on earth — humans, animals and plants. The Qur'an states specifically that the jinn were created from ***fire*** (55:15), and an authentic Hadith states that the angels were created from ***light*** (Sahih Muslim 2996). So the generality of this verse is understood within its context.

Question 2: Why is something as vital as water given for free? Because it is ***the mercy of Allah***. Rain falls without a bill; rivers flow without demanding payment. What we pay for is only the cost of treating and distributing it. The most important blessing is made the easiest to obtain — so that ***all creatures*** receive a share.

Question 3: How can a Muslim contribute to the world's water problems? By ***being frugal*** (Bukhari 201), ***not polluting*** water sources, ***sharing*** surplus (Bukhari 2358), and ***giving water in charity*** to those in need (Abu Dawud 1681). The small deeds of one individual, if done by millions of people, bring about great change.

REFLECTION — WHY THIS CAUTION MATTERS

The verse ***"from water, every living thing"*** is already majestic enough without needing exaggerated claims added to it. When we distinguish between ***the meaning of the verse***, ***harmony with science*** and ***personal reflection***, we protect the honour of the Qur'an and invite readers to a faith ***built on knowledge and honesty***.

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A DROP OF WATER IN DAILY LIFE: PRACTICES AND GUIDANCE

Knowledge about water is not merely to be admired, but to be ***practised*** in worship, etiquette and social responsibility.

PRACTICE	EVIDENCE AND GUIDANCE
Saying the basmalah and praising Allah when drinking	Allah is pleased with the servant who praises Him after drinking (Muslim 2734).
Drinking in three gulps, not breathing into the vessel	The Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (Muslim 2028; Bukhari 5630).
Being frugal in ablution and bathing	The Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed ablution with one mudd (Bukhari 201). Turn off the tap while washing the limbs of ablution.
Giving water to animals	"In every moist liver there is a reward" (Bukhari 2363). Put out a bowl of water for birds and cats in hot weather.
Giving water in charity	The best charity is water (Abu Dawud 1681) — for example, sponsoring a water filter or a well.
Not withholding or polluting water	The warning for one who withholds surplus water (Bukhari 2358); water is a shared right (Abu Dawud 3477).
Reflecting while drinking	"And have you seen the water that you drink?" (56:68).

SUPPLICATION WHEN RAIN FALLS

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها narrated that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw rain, he would supplicate: ***"Allāhumma sayyiban nāfi'ā"*** — O Allah, (make it) beneficial rain (Sahih al-Bukhari 1032). This supplication teaches us that the water falling from the sky is not merely a weather event, but ***a mercy whose benefit we ask for***. Sahih al-Bukhari 1032

Make this supplication a family practice: whenever rain begins to fall, invite the children to recite it together — so that they grow up with a sense of ***gratitude and dependence*** on Allah in the matter of water.

FAMILY ACTIVITY: A HOME WATER AUDIT

Step 1: For one week, record the household water meter reading every morning. How many litres of water are used per day?

Step 2: Measure how many litres of water are used for one ablution with the tap left running, then compare it with ***one mudd*** (about two-thirds of a litre).

Step 3: List three ways to save water at home, such as turning off the tap while brushing your teeth or reusing rice-washing water to water the plants.

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Step 4: Read together verses 56:68–70 and the Hadith of Bukhari 2363. Discuss: ***"Whom can we give a drink to this week?"***

REFLECTION — THE GLASS ON THE TABLE

Look at an ordinary glass of water on your dining table. Before reaching you, that water travelled a long journey that you did not arrange: it rose from the sea, was carried by the winds, fell as rain, settled in the earth, and flowed to your home. At every stage, it was in the hands of Allah, not ours. The next time you lift that glass, let the moment before the first sip be a moment of remembrance.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

LESSONS FROM THIS EBOOK

First: Water is the basis of life. From water, Allah made every living thing (21:30).

Second: From one origin, an astonishing diversity. Creatures that move on their bellies, on two legs and on four — all from water (24:45).

Third: Remember the origin of creation. Man began from a single disdained drop of water; so there is no room for arrogance (25:54; 32:8).

Fourth: Water is a blessing kept by Allah. He sends it down, stores it, and is able to take it away (23:18; 15:22; 67:30).

Fifth: Be grateful for sweet water. Almost all of Earth's water is salty; the water we drink is a mercy (56:70).

Sixth: Water is charity and a shared right. Giving drink brings forgiveness (Bukhari 2363); withholding it brings a warning (Bukhari 2358).

Seventh: Be courteous and frugal. Follow the Sunnah in drinking and in ablution (Muslim 2028; Bukhari 201).

SUMMARY: VERSES, MESSAGES AND SCIENTIFIC REFLECTIONS

THE VERSE AND ITS MESSAGE	REFLECTIONS FROM SCIENCE
21:30 — From water, every living thing.	All known life depends on water; the adult human body is up to 60% water (USGS).
24:45 — Every creature from water.	Water is the solvent for the chemical reactions in every cell (NRC, 2007).
56:68–70 — Sweet water, not salty.	About 97.2% of Earth's water is salty; three-quarters of fresh water is in glaciers (USGS).
23:18 — Sent down in measure, settled in the earth.	Fresh water is stored in glaciers, underground, lakes and rivers (USGS).
67:30 — If your water sank into the earth.	2.2 billion people still lack safely managed drinking water (WHO, 2023).
Bukhari 2363 — "Every moist liver."	Living things are indeed "moist": the brain 73%, the lungs 83% water (USGS).

REFLECTION — GRATITUDE THAT FLOWS

Water teaches gratitude by its very nature: it flows downward, to the lowest places, and gives life wherever it goes. A grateful heart is like that water — it does not keep the blessing to itself, but lets it flow on to others: a drink to the thirsty, a kind word to the weary, a share of what Allah has given. Perhaps this is one of the deepest lessons of water: ***a blessing is completed when it is shared***.

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PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

• ***Today:*** Each time you drink, begin with the basmalah, drink in three gulps, and end with "Alhamdulillāh".

• ***This week:*** Carry out a home water audit with your family.

• ***This month:*** Put out a bowl of water for birds or animals in your yard.

• ***This year:*** Join or sponsor a water charity project — a well, a filter or a clean water supply.

• ***For life:*** Reflect on every drop of water as a sign of Allah's power, and a reason to be grateful.

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CONCLUSION

The Qur'an states a truth that is brief yet majestic: ***from water, Allah made every living thing***. The scholars understood that the origin and survival of every living creature depend on water, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ taught that in ***every moist liver*** there is a reward. Modern science, for its part, has found that water makes up a large part of the bodies of living things, that its unique properties protect life, and that scientists search for life on other planets by ***searching for water***. At the same time, the fresh water we drink is only a very small portion of Earth's water — a mercy that must not be taken lightly.

So each time we drink a glass of water, perform ablution or watch a raindrop at the tip of a leaf, let us remember that this water was sent by Allah in due measure, stored by His mercy, and can be withdrawn at any moment. ***"And have you seen the water that you drink? … If We willed, We could make it bitter, so why are you not grateful?"*** (56:68–70).

In sha' Allah, the series Exploring Al-Qur'an & Science will continue with the title ***"The Skin That Holds the Pain"*** — on the skin as the centre of the sense of pain (4:56) — with the same method: the Qur'an, the Hadith and science, with honesty and caution.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM	BRIEF MEANING
Mā'	Water in the Arabic language.
Ratq and Fatq	Joined together and separated (21:30).
Dābbah	Every creature that moves or creeps on the earth (24:45).
Nutfah	A drop of procreative fluid, the origin of human creation.
Ujāj	Water that is very salty and bitter (56:70).
Ghaur	Water that sinks deep into the earth so that it cannot be reached (67:30).
Mudd and Sa'	Measures of volume in the time of the Prophet ﷺ; one sa' equals four mudd.
Ongoing charity	Charity whose reward continues after death, such as a well (*sadaqah jāriyah*).
Universal solvent	A title for water because it dissolves more substances than any other liquid.
Specific heat	The amount of heat needed to raise the temperature of a substance; water has a high specific heat.
Density	Mass per unit volume; ice is less dense than water, so it floats.
Glacier	A large mass of ice on land, storing about three-quarters of Earth's fresh water.
Astrobiology	The branch of science that studies the origin and possibility of life in the universe.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

• Why does the Qur'an close verse 21:30 with the question "Then will they not believe?" What is the link between water and faith?

• What does the expression "every moist liver" in the Hadith of Bukhari 2363 mean, and how does it relate to the science of water in the body?

• Why did the Messenger of Allah ﷺ choose water as the best charity? What forms of water charity are suitable today?

• How do we distinguish between harmony of a verse with science and a forced interpretation? Give one example from this eBook.

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• If the water in your home were cut off for a week, what would you miss most — and how would it change the way you give thanks?

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SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:261

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتۡ سَبۡعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٖ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٖۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٦١

The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:261

SURAH SABA' 34:39

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقۡدِرُ لَهُۥۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَهُوَ يُخۡلِفُهُۥۖ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ٣٩

Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:39

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ، حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

From Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه, from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said: "Charity does not decrease wealth. Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him in rank."

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CHAIN: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship, Chapter: The Encouragement of Forgiveness and Humility, Hadith No. 2588.

ريوايت إمام مسلم دالم صحيح مسلم، كتاب البر والصلة، حديث نومبور ٢٥٨٨

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:2588

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1631

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَعِيدٍ - وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - هُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « إِذَا مَاتَ الإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ ثَلاَثَةٍ إِلاَّ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

From Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه, that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: a continuing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who prays for him."

CHAIN: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurairah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Wills, Chapter: The Reward That Reaches a Person After His Death, Hadith No. 1631.

ريوايت إمام مسلم دالم صحيح مسلم، كتاب الوصية، حديث نومبور ١٦٣١

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:1631

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