Tracing the Scholars of Islam

Series 22

Ibn Sahl

The Optics Scholar of Baghdad Who Described the Law of Refraction



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TRACING THE SCHOLARS OF ISLAM

SERIES 22

IBN SAHL

The Optics Scholar of Baghdad Who Described the Law of Refraction

وَجَعَلَ ٱلْقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورًا وَجَعَلَ ٱلشَّمْسَ سِرَاجًا

"And made the moon therein a [reflected] light and made the sun a burning lamp."

SURAH NUH 71:16

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, the Light of the heavens and the earth, who made the sun a lamp and the moon a light. Blessings and peace be upon the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and upon his family and his Companions.

This eBook is specially dedicated 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**.

This twenty-second book of Tracing the Scholars of Islam tells the story of an optics scholar almost forgotten by history, until his treatise was rediscovered more than a thousand years later. May his story teach us that true knowledge will always shine.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS EBOOK

The cover of this eBook is an **image generated by artificial intelligence (AI)** — an ***imaginative depiction, not a real likeness*** of Ibn Sahl. This label is also printed on the cover. This time the picture is a **daytime close-up (macro)**, with the scholar blurred in the background.

In the centre is a **large glass lens** on a brass stand. **Sunlight** from the window passes through the lens, **bends**, and converges on **a single glowing point** on the paper — the meaning of a ***burning lens*** in his treatise. On the paper are **diagrams of light rays** and a **hyperbolic curve**, the lens shape Ibn Sahl designed.

Beside it are a **concave brass mirror** and a **glass prism** casting a small rainbow — symbols of the science of ***optics***, of the reflection and refraction of light.

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Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; brown box = history note (reports from the books of history and biography); blue table = comparison. Underlined blue narrator names can be clicked to open the narrator's page on sunnah.com.

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IBN SAHL

The twenty-second book of **Tracing the Scholars of Islam** tells the story of ***Abu Sa'd al-'Ala' ibn Sahl***, a mathematician and optics scholar in Baghdad in the 10th century CE. In ***984 CE*** he wrote a treatise on ***burning mirrors and lenses*** that describes the ***law of refraction*** — some ***600 years*** before the law was rediscovered in Europe.

His name was almost forgotten, until the historian of science ***Roshdi Rashed*** pieced his treatise back together in 1990.

Because so little is known about Ibn Sahl's life, this eBook focuses on ***the knowledge he left behind***: burning mirrors and lenses, the ***law of refraction***, ***conic sections***, phenomena of light in daily life and in the Qur'an, and the journey of optics all the way to the age of ***optical fibre and lasers***.

Note: The translation of Qur'anic verses in this eBook is that of Sahih International. The grading of each Hadith is stated in the Hadith box. Information from books of history and modern research is **biographical narration (not Hadith)** *and is placed in the brown "History Note" boxes. A cover image that shows the scholar is an AI-generated image and is marked as such. Ibn Sahl's years of birth and death are estimates.*

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THE SUN AS A LAMP

SURAH NUH 71:16

وَجَعَلَ ٱلۡقَمَرَ فِيهِنَّ نُورٗا وَجَعَلَ ٱلشَّمۡسَ سِرَاجٗا ١٦

And made the moon therein a [reflected] light and made the sun a burning lamp.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/71:16

Allah ***"made the sun a burning lamp"*** — a source of light — and the moon a reflected light. The Qur'an also speaks of light passing through ***glass***:

SURAH AN-NUR 24:35

ٱللَّهُ نُورُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلۡأَرۡضِۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِۦ كَمِشۡكَوٰةٖ فِيهَا مِصۡبَاحٌۖ ٱلۡمِصۡبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍۖ ٱلزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوۡكَبٞ دُرِّيّٞ يُوقَدُ مِن شَجَرَةٖ مُّبَٰرَكَةٖ زَيۡتُونَةٖ لَّا شَرۡقِيَّةٖ وَلَا غَرۡبِيَّةٖ يَكَادُ زَيۡتُهَا يُضِيٓءُ وَلَوۡ لَمۡ تَمۡسَسۡهُ نَارٞۚ نُّورٌ عَلَىٰ نُورٖۚ يَهۡدِي ٱللَّهُ لِنُورِهِۦ مَن يَشَآءُۚ وَيَضۡرِبُ ٱللَّهُ ٱلۡأَمۡثَٰلَ لِلنَّاسِۗ وَٱللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيۡءٍ عَلِيمٞ ٣٥

Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. And Allah presents examples for the people, and Allah is Knowing of all things.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/24:35

The parable of light within ***a clear glass*** shows that glass and light are signs worth reflecting upon. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 24:35.

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LIGHT OF ITS OWN AND REFLECTED LIGHT

SURAH YUNUS 10:5

هُوَ ٱلَّذِى جَعَلَ ٱلشَّمْسَ ضِيَآءً وَٱلْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَّرَهُۥ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا۟ عَدَدَ ٱلسِّنِينَ وَٱلْحِسَابَ ۚ مَا خَلَقَ ٱللَّهُ ذَٰلِكَ إِلَّا بِٱلْحَقِّ ۚ يُفَصِّلُ ٱلْءَايَٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ۝٥

It is He who made the sun a shining light and the moon a derived light and determined for it phases - that you may know the number of years and account [of time]. Allah has not created this except in truth. He details the signs for a people who know.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/10:5

Allah ***"made the sun a shining light and the moon a derived light"***. The exegetes note that the word ***diya'*** is used for the sun, while ***nur*** is used for the moon. Modern science confirms that the sun ***emits its own light***, while the moon only ***reflects*** the light of the sun (NASA: Moon). Tafsir Ibn Kathir 10:5.

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THE BLIND AND THE SEEING, DARKNESS AND LIGHT

SURAH FATIR 35:19–21

وَمَا يَسْتَوِي ٱلْأَعْمَىٰ وَٱلْبَصِيرُ ﴿١٩﴾

Not equal are the blind and the seeing.

وَلَا ٱلظُّلُمَٰتُ وَلَا ٱلنُّورُ ﴿٢٠﴾

Nor are the darknesses and the light.

وَلَا ٱلظِّلُّ وَلَا ٱلْحَرُورُ ﴿٢١﴾

Nor are the shade and the heat.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/35:19-21

Allah declares: ***"Not equal are the blind and the seeing"***, ***"Nor are the darknesses and the light"***. This verse is a parable for ***the disbeliever and the believer***, for ***misguidance and guidance***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 35:19.

LIGHT AS A CONDITION FOR SIGHT

From the standpoint of science, the eye ***cannot see*** without light. Vision happens when light is reflected from an object and enters the eye. In total darkness, even a healthy eye sees nothing at all. So it is with the heart: it needs the ***light of revelation*** to see the truth.

LESSON

Optics teaches that ***the eye and light*** need each other. Faith teaches that ***the heart and revelation*** need each other. Both are signs of Allah's wisdom.

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BACKGROUND: BAGHDAD UNDER THE BUYIDS

Ibn Sahl lived in Baghdad in the 10th century CE, when the power of the Abbasid caliphs had weakened. In ***945 CE***, the ***Buyid*** family from Persia took control of Baghdad, and the caliph became only a symbol.

> **HISTORY NOTE: 'ADUD AL-DAWLA AND LEARNING**
>
> The famous Buyid ruler ***'Adud al-Dawla*** (ruled in Baghdad 977–983 CE) patronised scholars and scientists. He built the ***'Adudi Hospital*** in Baghdad (982 CE), one of the largest hospitals of its time.
>
> This era also saw scientists such as ***Abu al-Wafa' al-Buzjani*** (see Book 23) and ***al-Quhi*** working in Baghdad. Ibn Sahl wrote his treatise on burning instruments around ***984 CE***, in an atmosphere where learning still flourished despite political instability.

LESSON

Knowledge kept growing even as political power changed hands. Sincere scholars ***do not wait*** for perfect conditions before they contribute.

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CONTEMPORARIES: AL-QUHI AND AL-SIJZI

Ibn Sahl worked among brilliant mathematicians in Baghdad. ***Abu Sahl al-Quhi*** (d. c. 1000 CE) was famous for his work on ***centres of gravity*** and the ***perfect compass*** for drawing conic sections, and he also led astronomical observations at the observatory built by the Buyid ruler.

Abu Sa'id al-Sijzi (d. c. 1020 CE) was a geometer and astronomer who wrote on conic sections and the astrolabe. Ibn Sahl wrote a commentary on al-Quhi's work, showing a ***culture of reading and commenting on each other's work*** among scholars.

The lesson: knowledge grows within a ***community***. Great scholars are usually surrounded by colleagues who read, critique and help their work.

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WHO WAS IBN SAHL?

Very little is known about Ibn Sahl's life. He is estimated to have lived around ***940–1000 CE*** and worked in ***Baghdad*** in the time of the Buyid rulers. He also wrote a commentary on Ptolemy's Optics.

HISTORY NOTE: A TREATISE REDISCOVERED

Ibn Sahl's treatise on ***burning instruments*** (*Kitab al-Harraqat*) was written around ***984 CE***. For centuries it survived only as scattered fragments of manuscripts.

In ***1990***, the scholar ***Roshdi Rashed*** reassembled those fragments from manuscripts in ***Damascus and Tehran***, and showed that Ibn Sahl had used the ***law of refraction*** correctly.

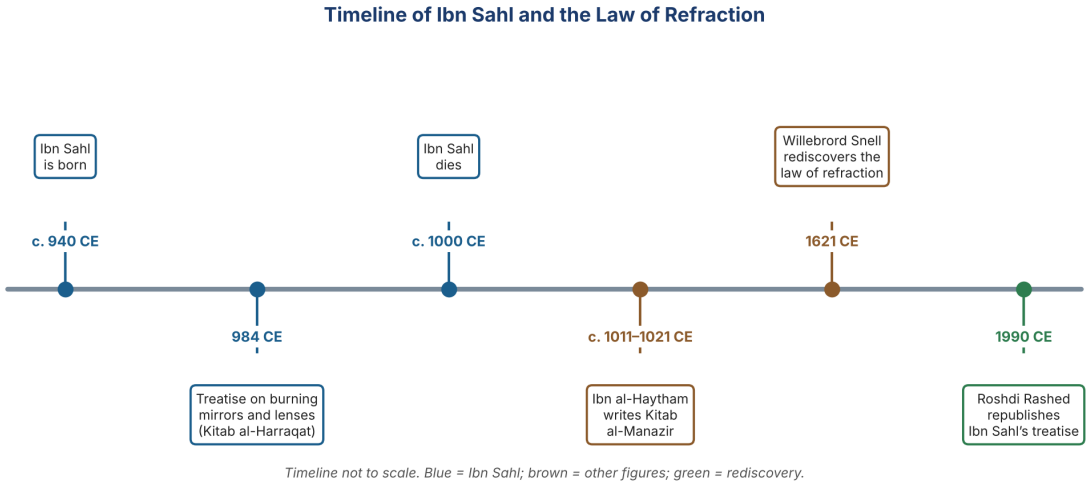


Figure 1: Timeline of Ibn Sahl and the law of refraction.

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THE KNOWN WORKS OF IBN SAHL

WORK	DESCRIPTION
Kitab al-Harraqat (c. 984 CE)	Treatise on burning mirrors and lenses; contains the law of refraction.
Commentary on Ptolemy's Optics	Proves that glass has a constant refractive property.
Commentary on a treatise by al-Quhi	On the "perfect compass" for drawing conic sections.
Geometrical treatises	Several short treatises on geometric problems, some now lost.

This list is short because ***most of Ibn Sahl's works have been lost***. Yet the little that survives is enough to place him in the history of science as a ***pioneer of the science of refraction***.

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BURNING MIRRORS AND LENSES

Burning mirrors and ***burning lenses*** are instruments that focus sunlight to a single point until it can start a fire. Ibn Sahl studied ***parabolic and elliptical mirrors***, and ***plano-convex and biconvex lenses***.

His brilliance: he designed lenses with a ***hyperbolic curve*** so that ***all*** parallel rays converge exactly at one point — without blurring. This principle is used today in camera lenses, telescopes and spectacles.

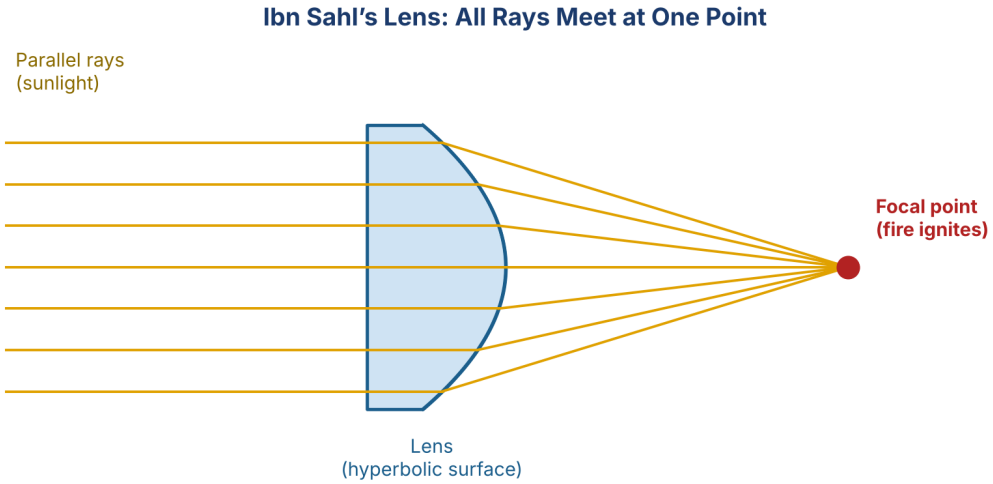


Figure 2: Ibn Sahl's hyperbolic lens focuses all rays to one point.

HISTORY NOTE: A LEGACY FROM THE GREEKS

The study of burning mirrors began in Greek times, including a treatise by ***Diocles*** (2nd century BCE). The story of ***Archimedes*** burning enemy ships with mirrors at Syracuse is a ***legend*** whose truth cannot be confirmed.

Ibn Sahl ***went beyond*** the Greeks by studying ***lenses*** (refraction), not only mirrors (reflection).

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PARABOLIC MIRRORS TODAY

The parabolic mirrors that Ibn Sahl studied are now used in many technologies: ***satellite dishes*** that gather signals to one point, ***car headlights and torches*** that send out parallel beams, ***reflecting telescopes*** that gather starlight, and ***solar cookers*** that cook food with the sun's energy (Britannica: parabola).

The principle is unchanged: every parallel ray striking a parabolic mirror ***meets at a single focal point*** — just as described in Ibn Sahl's treatise in the 10th century CE.

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GLASS IN ISLAMIC CIVILISATION

Ibn Sahl's study of lenses depended on ***clear glass***. Islamic civilisation was renowned for its advanced ***glass industry***, especially in ***Syria (Damascus and Aleppo)*** and ***Egypt***.

> **HISTORY NOTE: MOSQUE LAMPS AND COLOURED GLASS**
>
> Muslim glassmakers produced ***mosque lamps*** decorated with gilding and enamel, often adorned with the ***Verse of Light (24:35)***. These lamps are now displayed in the world's great museums.
>
> They also produced ***coloured glass***, ***perfume bottles*** and ***laboratory apparatus*** such as flasks and alembics (see Book 17). These skills were later learned by the glassmakers of ***Venice*** in Italy (Britannica: glass).

THE NICHE IN THE VERSE OF LIGHT

Verse 24:35 mentions the ***mishkat*** (niche), the ***misbah*** (lamp) and the ***zujajah*** (glass). Mosque lamps of the past, set within glass, became a ***visible symbol*** of this parable, showing how art and science were connected with the Qur'an.

LESSON

Science needs ***materials and craftsmanship***. Glassmakers and scholars complemented each other — without good glass, no lenses; without lenses, no optics.

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THE LAW OF REFRACTION

When light passes from air into glass, it ***bends***. Ibn Sahl showed that this bending follows ***a constant ratio*** for the same material. In the West, this law is associated with ***Willebrord Snell*** (1621) and is called ***Snell's Law***.

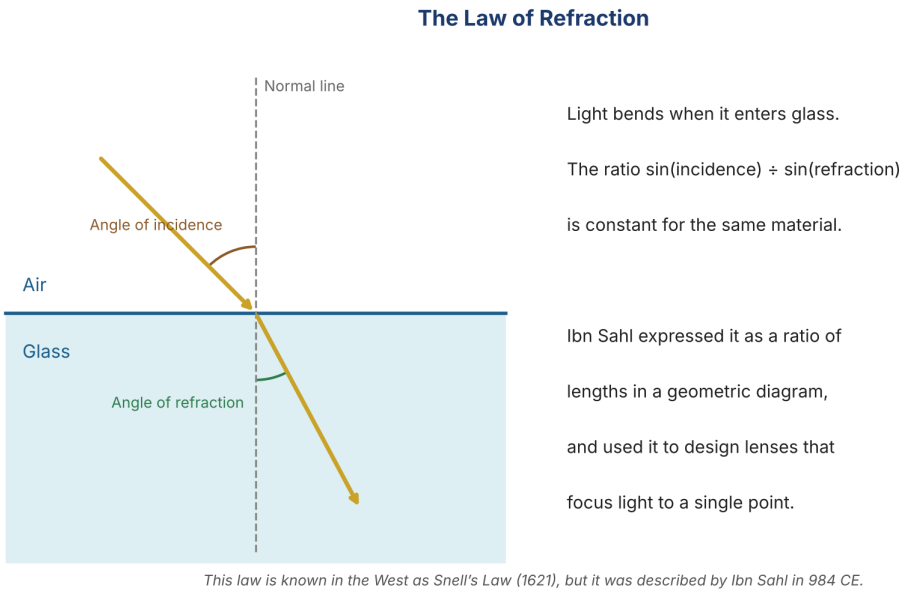


Figure 3: The law of refraction.

That is why some historians of science suggest the law should also be known as ***Ibn Sahl's Law***.

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THE LAW OF REFRACTION IN MODERN FORM

Today the law of refraction is written as $n_1 \sin \theta_1 = n_2 \sin \theta_2$, where ***n*** is the ***refractive index*** of the material and ***θ*** is the angle of the ray (Britannica: refraction). Ibn Sahl expressed the same relationship in ***geometric*** form, using ratios of line lengths.

MATERIAL	APPROXIMATE REFRACTIVE INDEX
Air	c. 1.00
Water	c. 1.33
Ordinary glass	c. 1.5
Diamond	c. 2.42 — which is why diamonds sparkle

The higher the refractive index, the more light is ***bent***. The index of the glass Ibn Sahl used was determined geometrically in his treatise.

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CONIC SECTIONS: THE MATHEMATICS BEHIND THE LENS

To design mirrors and lenses, Ibn Sahl used ***conic sections*** — curves produced when a cone is cut at different angles. This field was developed by the Greek mathematician ***Apollonius*** and continued by Muslim mathematicians.

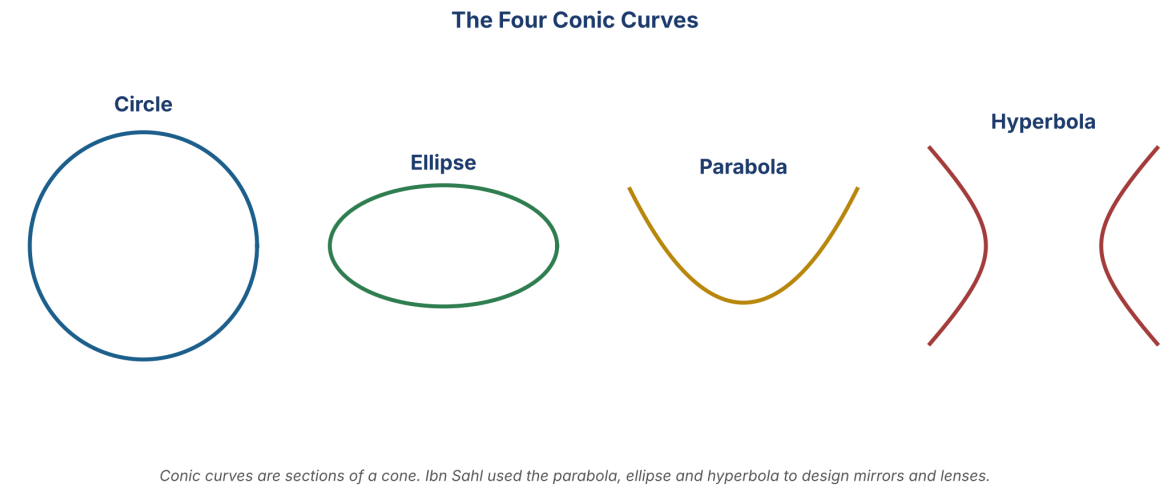


Figure 4: The four conic sections.

CURVE	USE IN OPTICS
Parabola	A parabolic mirror focuses parallel rays to one point; used in satellite dishes and car headlights.
Ellipse	Light from one focus of an ellipse is reflected to the other focus.
Hyperbola	A hyperbolic lens focuses rays without blurring; studied by Ibn Sahl.

LESSON

Ibn Sahl combined ***pure mathematics*** with ***practical problems***. Curves that look abstract on paper became tools that could ***start a fire*** and that now ***aid the sight*** of millions of people.

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REFRACTION IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Refraction of light happens all around us every day:

PHENOMENON	EXPLANATION
A spoon looks bent in a glass of water	Light bends as it leaves water and enters air.
A pool looks shallower	Refraction makes the bottom of the pool appear closer than it really is.
Rainbow	Sunlight is refracted and reflected in raindrops, separating into colours.
Spectacles and contact lenses	Lenses refract light so the image falls exactly on the retina.
Mirage	Hot air above a road bends light so it looks like water.

THE MIRAGE IN THE QUR'AN

SURAH AN-NUR 24:39

وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ أَعۡمَٰلُهُمۡ كَسَرَابِۭ بِقِيعَةٖ يَحۡسَبُهُ ٱلظَّمۡـَٔانُ مَآءً حَتَّىٰٓ إِذَا جَآءَهُۥ لَمۡ يَجِدۡهُ شَيۡـٔٗا وَوَجَدَ ٱللَّهَ عِندَهُۥ فَوَفَّىٰهُ حِسَابَهُۥۗ وَٱللَّهُ سَرِيعُ ٱلۡحِسَابِ ٣٩

But those who disbelieved - their deeds are like a mirage in a lowland which a thirsty one thinks is water until, when he comes to it, he finds it is nothing but finds Allah before Him, and He will pay him in full his due; and Allah is swift in account.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/24:39

The Qur'an uses this phenomenon as a parable: the deeds of the disbelievers are ***"like a mirage in a lowland which a thirsty one thinks is water"***. Science explains the mirage as the ***refraction of light*** in layers of hot air (Britannica: mirage). Tafsir Ibn Kathir 24:39.

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DARKNESS IN THE DEEP SEA

SURAH AN-NUR 24:40

أَوْ كَظُلُمَٰتٍ فِي بَحْرٍ لُّجِّيٍّ يَغْشَىٰهُ مَوْجٌ مِّن فَوْقِهِۦ مَوْجٌ مِّن فَوْقِهِۦ سَحَابٌ ۚ
ظُلُمَٰتٌۢ بَعْضُهَا فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ إِذَآ أَخْرَجَ يَدَهُۥ لَمْ يَكَدْ يَرَىٰهَا ۗ وَمَن لَّمْ يَجْعَلِ
ٱللَّهُ لَهُۥ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُۥ مِن نُّورٍ ﴿٤٠﴾

Or [they are] like darknesses within an unfathomable sea which is covered by waves, upon which are waves, over which are clouds - darknesses, some of them upon others. When one puts out his hand [therein], he can hardly see it. And he to whom Allah has not granted light - for him there is no light.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/24:40

This verse describes ***"darknesses, some of them upon others"*** in a deep sea, beneath waves and clouds. Modern science has found that sunlight is ***gradually absorbed*** by seawater: red disappears first, then yellow and green, and below about ***1,000 metres*** there is almost no sunlight at all (NOAA: How far does light travel in the ocean?).

The absorption and scattering of light in water is part of ***optics*** — the field studied by Ibn Sahl and the scholars after him. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 24:40.

LESSON

The Qur'an uses natural phenomena as ***spiritual parables***: a heart without faith is like a dark, deep sea. Knowledge about light adds to our ***understanding*** of the beauty of this parable.

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LIVING LIGHT IN THE DEEP SEA

Verse 24:40 ends with: ***"he to whom Allah has not granted light - for him there is no light"***. Remarkably, in the dark deep sea Allah created many creatures that ***produce their own light*** — a phenomenon called ***bioluminescence*** (NOAA: bioluminescence).

Deep-sea fish, squid and plankton use this light to ***find food, communicate and avoid predators***. Even in the darkest place, light exists only by ***the permission and creation of Allah***.

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LIGHT IN THE QUR'AN AND IN WORSHIP

Light is not only a physical phenomenon, but also a symbol of ***guidance*** in the Qur'an:

SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:257

ٱللَّهُ وَلِيُّ ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ يُخۡرِجُهُم مِّنَ ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِ إِلَى ٱلنُّورِۖ وَٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوٓاْ
أَوۡلِيَآؤُهُمُ ٱلطَّٰغُوتُ يُخۡرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ ٱلنُّورِ إِلَى ٱلظُّلُمَٰتِۗ أُوْلَٰٓئِكَ أَصۡحَٰبُ ٱلنَّارِۖ
هُمۡ فِيهَا خَٰلِدُونَ ٢٥٧

Allah is the ally of those who believe. He brings them out from darknesses into the light. And those who disbelieve - their allies are Taghut. They take them out of the light into darknesses. Those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:257

Allah ***"brings them out from darknesses into the light"***. The word ***darkness*** appears in the plural (*zulumat*), while ***light*** is in the singular (*nur*) — for the paths of error are many, but the path of truth is one. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 2:257.

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The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also distinguished between ***nur*** (light) and ***diya'*** (radiance):

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 223

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ مَنْصُورٍ، حَدَّثَنَا حَبَّانُ بْنُ هِلاَلٍ، حَدَّثَنَا أَبَانُ، حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى، أَنَّ زَيْدًا، حَدَّثَهُ أَنَّ أَبَا سَلاَّمٍ حَدَّثَهُ عَنْ أَبِي مَالِكٍ الأَشْعَرِيِّ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الإِيمَانِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلأُ الْمِيزَانَ. وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلآنِ - أَوْ تَمْلأُ - مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالأَرْضِ وَالصَّلاَةُ نُورٌ وَالصَّدَقَةُ بُرْهَانٌ وَالصَّبْرُ ضِيَاءٌ وَالْقُرْآنُ حُجَّةٌ لَكَ أَوْ عَلَيْكَ كُلُّ النَّاسِ يَغْدُو فَبَائِعٌ نَفْسَهُ فَمُعْتِقُهَا أَوْ مُوبِقُهَا».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Malik al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Purification is half of faith. Alhamdulillah fills the scale. Subhanallah and Alhamdulillah fill what is between the heavens and the earth. **Prayer is light (nur), charity is proof, and patience is radiance (diya').** The Qur'an is an argument for you or against you. Every person goes out in the morning and sells himself — either freeing himself or destroying himself."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Ishaq ibn Mansur, from Habban ibn Hilal, from Aban ibn Yazid al-'Attar, from Yahya ibn Abi Kathir, from Zayd ibn Sallam, from Abu Sallam Mamtur, from Abu Malik al-Ash'ari رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Purification (Kitab at-Taharah), Hadith No. 223.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

Source: https://sunnah.com/muslim:223

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Scholars say ***diya'*** is light accompanied by heat, like sunlight — for patience is heavy yet illuminating. ***Prayer*** is a light that brightens the path of life. Optics studies the light of nature; faith gives light to the heart.

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THE BLESSING OF SIGHT

Optics is the science of light and ***vision***. The eyes are a tremendous blessing, as Allah says in a Hadith Qudsi:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 5653 — HADITH QUDSI

حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ يُوسُفَ، حَدَّثَنَا اللَّيْثُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي ابْنُ الْهَادِ، عَنْ عَمْرٍو، مَوْلَى الْمُطَّلِبِ عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ «إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَالَ إِذَا ابْتَلَيْتُ عَبْدِي بِحَبِيبَتَيْهِ فَصَبَرَ عَوَّضْتُهُ مِنْهُمَا الْجَنَّةَ». يُرِيدُ عَيْنَيْهِ. تَابَعَهُ أَشْعَثُ بْنُ جَابِرٍ وَأَبُو ظِلاَلٍ عَنْ أَنَسٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صلى الله عليه وسلم.

TRANSLATION:

Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه said: I heard the Prophet ﷺ say: **"Allah said: If I test My servant with (the loss of) his two beloved ones and he is patient, I will compensate him for them with Paradise."** He meant his two eyes.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from 'Abdullah ibn Yusuf, from al-Layth ibn Sa'd, from Ibn al-Had, from 'Amr, the freed slave of al-Muttalib, from Anas ibn Malik رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Sick, Hadith No. 5653.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:5653

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Allah calls the two eyes His servant's ***two beloved things***. Optics helps people understand how the eye sees, and later led to lenses that aid vision. Being grateful for sight includes ***using it for knowledge and goodness***.

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SPECTACLES: A BLESSING FOR THE SHORT-SIGHTED

The first spectacles are believed to have appeared in ***Italy in the late 13th century CE***, using convex lenses to help the elderly read (Britannica: eyeglasses). Those lenses work on the principle of ***refraction*** studied by Ibn Sahl and Ibn al-Haytham.

VISION PROBLEM	LENS USED
Short-sightedness (myopia)	Concave lens, to spread light before it enters the eye.
Long-sightedness (hyperopia)	Convex lens, to converge light.
Age-related (presbyopia)	Convex lens for reading.

Today millions of people can ***read the Qur'an and pursue knowledge*** with the help of spectacles — one of the fruits of optics.

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THE EYE: A MARVELLOUS CREATION

SURAH AN-NAHL 16:78

وَٱللَّهُ أَخۡرَجَكُم مِّنۢ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَٰتِكُمۡ لَا تَعۡلَمُونَ شَيۡـٔٗا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ ٱلسَّمۡعَ وَٱلۡأَبۡصَٰرَ وَٱلۡأَفۡـِٔدَةَ لَعَلَّكُمۡ تَشۡكُرُونَ ٧٨

And Allah has extracted you from the wombs of your mothers not knowing a thing, and He made for you hearing and vision and intellect that perhaps you would be grateful.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/16:78

Allah gave us ***"hearing and vision and intellect"*** so that we would be ***grateful***. A baby is born without knowledge, but with the tools to seek it. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 16:78.

PART OF THE EYE	FUNCTION
Cornea	The transparent front layer of the eye that refracts light the most.
Lens	Changes shape to focus light at near or far distances.
Iris and pupil	Control how much light enters, like a camera aperture.
Retina	Contains millions of rod and cone cells that turn light into nerve signals.
Optic nerve	Carries signals to the brain, where the image is "seen".

The human retina contains about ***120 million rod cells*** and ***6 million cone cells*** (Britannica: eye). The eye uses ***refraction*** — the same principle Ibn Sahl studied — to form a sharp image.

LESSON

Every time we open our eyes, millions of cells work without our noticing. Optics increases our ***gratitude*** for a blessing so often forgotten.

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THE EYES OF A FRIEND OF ALLAH

Sight also has a spiritual dimension. In a Hadith Qudsi, Allah ***guards the sight*** of a servant who draws near to Him:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 6502 — HADITH QUDSI

حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عُثْمَانَ، حَدَّثَنَا خَالِدُ بْنُ مَخْلَدٍ، حَدَّثَنَا سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ بِلاَلٍ، حَدَّثَنِي شَرِيكُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي نَمِرٍ، عَنْ عَطَاءٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم «إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَالَ مَنْ عَادَى لِي وَلِيًّا فَقَدْ آذَنْتُهُ بِالْحَرْبِ، وَمَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَا يَزَالُ عَبْدِي يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتَّى أُحِبَّهُ، فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ، وَبَصَرَهُ الَّذِي يُبْصِرُ بِهِ، وَيَدَهُ الَّتِي يَبْطِشُ بِهَا وَرِجْلَهُ الَّتِي يَمْشِي بِهَا، وَإِنْ سَأَلَنِي لأُعْطِيَنَّهُ، وَلَئِنِ اسْتَعَاذَنِي لأُعِيذَنَّهُ، وَمَا تَرَدَّدْتُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ أَنَا فَاعِلُهُ تَرَدُّدِي عَنْ نَفْسِ الْمُؤْمِنِ، يَكْرَهُ الْمَوْتَ وَأَنَا أَكْرَهُ مَسَاءَتَهُ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه said: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “Allah said: Whoever shows enmity to a friend (wali) of Mine, I declare war on him. My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to Me than what I have made obligatory upon him. My servant keeps drawing near to Me with voluntary deeds until I love him. **When I love him, I become his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees**, his hand with which he grasps, and his foot with which he walks. If he asks Me, I will surely give him; if he seeks My refuge, I will surely protect him. I do not hesitate in anything I do as I hesitate over the soul of a believer: he dislikes death, and I dislike to hurt him.”

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Muhammad ibn ‘Uthman, from Khalid ibn Makhlad, from Sulayman ibn Bilal, from Sharik ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Abi Namir, from ‘Ata’ ibn Yasar, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Softening the Heart (Kitab ar-Riqaq), chapter on humility, Hadith No. 6502.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: https://sunnah.com/bukhari:6502

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Scholars explain that Allah ***guides*** that servant’s hearing, sight, hands and feet to what pleases Him. A scholar close to Allah uses ***his eyes and knowledge*** for good.

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IBN SAHL, IBN AL-HAYTHAM AND SCIENTIFIC METHOD

HISTORY NOTE: IBN SAHL AND IBN AL-HAYTHAM

Ibn Sahl lived in the generation before ***Ibn al-Haytham***, the father of modern optics, who wrote ***Kitab al-Manazir*** around 1011–1021 CE. Historians believe Ibn al-Haytham knew some of Ibn Sahl's work.

Ibn al-Haytham proved that vision occurs when ***light enters the eye***, and used ***controlled experiments*** — including the ***camera obscura*** (dark room) — to test his theory.

SCIENTIFIC METHOD

Ibn al-Haytham is often regarded as a pioneer of the ***scientific method***: observing, forming a hypothesis, testing by experiment, and checking again. Ibn Sahl's work, combining ***mathematics and observation***, paved the way for this approach (Britannica: Ibn al-Haytham).

LESSON

Knowledge grows as a ***chain***. Ibn Sahl laid the mathematical foundation, and Ibn al-Haytham built it into a complete science of optics. Every contributor, even one whose name is little known, is ***an important link***.

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CAMERA OBSCURA: FROM DARK ROOM TO CAMERA

A ***camera obscura*** (dark room) is a dark room or box with a single small hole. Light entering through the hole forms an ***inverted image*** of the scene outside on the opposite wall.

> **HISTORY NOTE: THE WORK OF IBN AL-HAYTHAM**
>
> Ibn al-Haytham described the camera obscura carefully in his study of ***solar eclipses***, using the image of the sun formed through a small hole.
>
> He used this experiment to prove that ***light travels in straight lines*** — a foundation of optics and later of photography (Britannica: camera obscura).

FROM CAMERA OBSCURA TO SMARTPHONE

A modern camera is an improved camera obscura: the hole is replaced by a ***lens*** (like Ibn Sahl's lens) and the wall by a ***digital sensor***. Every photo we take today uses principles studied by Muslim scholars a thousand years ago.

LESSON

Great discoveries often begin with ***simple observation*** — a beam of light entering through a small hole.

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THE RAINBOW AND THE COLOURS OF LIGHT

One of the most beautiful phenomena of refraction is the ***rainbow***. A nearly correct scientific explanation of the rainbow was given by the Muslim scholar ***Kamal al-Din al-Farisi*** (d. c. 1320 CE), who wrote a commentary on Ibn al-Haytham's book.

HISTORY NOTE: EXPERIMENTS WITH A GLASS SPHERE

Al-Farisi used a ***glass sphere filled with water*** as a model of a raindrop, and observed how light is ***refracted and reflected*** inside it. At almost the same time, ***Theodoric of Freiberg*** in Europe made a similar study.

They showed that the rainbow results from ***two refractions and one reflection*** in each drop of water.

MODERN SCIENCE

White light is made up of many ***colours***, and each colour is refracted at a slightly different angle. This is why the rainbow shows colours from red to violet (Britannica: rainbow).

LESSON

The beauty of the rainbow becomes more amazing when we understand ***the precision of the laws of light*** that Allah has set.

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BLUE SKY AND RED SUNSET

Why is the sky blue by day and red at sunset? Blue light has a short wavelength and is ***scattered*** more by air molecules, filling the sky. At sunset, sunlight passes through a ***thicker*** layer of air, so the blue is scattered away and what remains is ***red and orange*** (Britannica: Rayleigh scattering).

This red twilight glow is called ***shafaq*** in Islamic jurisprudence — the sign that the time of Maghrib has ended and the time of 'Isha' has begun. Optics helps us understand ***the signs of the prayer times*** mentioned in the Sunnah.

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THE COLOURS OF CREATION AND THOSE WHO KNOW

SURAH FATIR 35:27–28

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ ٱللَّهَ أَنزَلَ مِنَ ٱلسَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِۦ ثَمَرَٰتٍ مُّخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَٰنُهَا ۚ وَمِنَ ٱلْجِبَالِ جُدَدٌۢ بِيضٌ وَحُمْرٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهَا وَغَرَابِيبُ سُودٌ ﴿٢٧﴾

Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby fruits of varying colors? And in the mountains are tracts, white and red of varying shades and [some] extremely black.

وَمِنَ ٱلنَّاسِ وَٱلدَّوَآبِّ وَٱلْأَنْعَٰمِ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَٰنُهُۥ كَذَٰلِكَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى ٱللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ٱلْعُلَمَٰٓؤُا۟ ۗ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

And among people and moving creatures and grazing livestock are various colors similarly. Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/35:27-28

Allah mentions the many colours in His creation: fruits, mountains with tracts ***"white and red of varying shades"***, as well as people and animals. Then Allah declares: ***"Only those fear Allah, from among His servants, who have knowledge"***. Tafsir Ibn Kathir 35:28.

THE SCIENCE OF COLOUR

The colour we see depends on the ***wavelength of light*** reflected by an object. Leaves look green because they ***reflect green light*** and absorb other colours for photosynthesis (Britannica: color).

LESSON

This verse places ***knowledge of nature*** — including colours, mountains and animals — in the context of ***fearing Allah***. True science should ***increase khashyah*** (awe and reverence) for the Creator.

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MODERN OPTICS: FROM LENSES TO OPTICAL FIBRE

The principle of refraction described by Ibn Sahl is now the basis of many modern technologies.

TECHNOLOGY	LINK TO REFRACTION AND LENSES
Cameras and smartphones	Aspheric lenses (including hyperbolic shapes) produce sharp images.
Telescopes and microscopes	Combinations of lenses magnify distant or very small objects.
Optical fibre	Light is totally reflected inside glass fibres, carrying internet data across continents.
Lasers and eye surgery	Light is focused precisely to reshape the cornea.
Concentrated solar power	Lenses and mirrors focus sunlight to generate energy.

Optical fibre works by ***total internal reflection***, a direct consequence of the law of refraction (Britannica: optical fiber). The messages we send every day travel as ***light*** inside undersea cables.

LESSON

Ibn Sahl's burning lens of the 10th century CE has become ***camera lenses and internet cables***. Precise knowledge is never wasted.

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SOLAR ENERGY: LIGHT AS A BLESSING

Ibn Sahl's burning lens concentrated sunlight to produce ***heat***. Today, the same principle is used in ***concentrated solar power***, while ***solar panels*** convert light directly into electricity. Tropical countries such as Malaysia receive abundant sunlight all year round — a ***blessing*** that can be harnessed for clean energy (Britannica: solar energy).

Using solar energy wisely is part of ***fulfilling our trust over the earth*** and being grateful for the sun that Allah made a ***lamp*** (71:16).

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KNOWLEDGE REDISCOVERED

Ibn Sahl's story teaches us how important it is to ***preserve manuscripts of knowledge***. His treatise was almost lost, and could only be reassembled from ***manuscript fragments*** in two different cities.

> **HISTORY NOTE: THE WORK OF ROSHDI RASHED**
>
> The Egyptian–French scholar ***Roshdi Rashed*** spent years studying Arabic scientific manuscripts in the world's libraries. In 1990 he published a study showing that Ibn Sahl was ***a pioneer of anaclastics*** (refraction).
>
> This discovery changed the history of optics: the law of refraction turned out to have been known in Baghdad ***more than six centuries*** before Snell.

Beneficial knowledge continues to bring reward to its author even after death. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

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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:

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

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

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Wills (Kitab al-Wasiyyah), chapter on the reward that reaches a person after death, Hadith No. 1631.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, the second most authentic book of Hadith after Sahih al-Bukhari.

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

LESSONS FROM THIS HADITH

Ibn Sahl died more than a thousand years ago, yet his knowledge benefits people again today. Every writer, translator and keeper of manuscripts can hope for ***continuing reward*** from beneficial knowledge.

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ESTABLISHED REPORTS AND POPULAR STORIES

The table below separates what is established from what needs checking about Ibn Sahl.

STORIES AND THEIR STATUS

POPULAR STATEMENT	STATUS
Ibn Sahl wrote a treatise on burning mirrors and lenses around 984 CE.	Established. The manuscripts were reassembled by Roshdi Rashed (1990).
Ibn Sahl described the law of refraction before Snell.	Established according to Rashed's research; stated in geometric form, not the modern sine formula.
Ibn Sahl invented the lens.	Incorrect. Lenses and burning glasses already existed; he designed them by mathematical methods.
Ibn Sahl was Ibn al-Haytham's teacher.	No evidence. Ibn al-Haytham may have known his work, but no source mentions a teacher–student link.
Ibn Sahl's life is known in detail.	No. Almost nothing is known about his life.
Archimedes burned enemy ships with burning mirrors.	An unestablished legend; historians doubt it was feasible.

REFLECTION — KNOWLEDGE THAT IS NOT LOST

Ibn Sahl's work was almost lost for a thousand years, yet it was finally rediscovered. True knowledge, even when hidden, will ***shine again*** — by the permission of Allah.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

LESSONS FROM THIS EBOOK

First: The sun is a lamp and the moon a light — signs of Allah's power (71:16; 10:5).

Second: Light and glass are signs worth reflecting on (24:35).

Third: Allah brings the believers out of darkness into light (2:257).

Fourth: Prayer is light and patience is radiance (Sahih Muslim 223).

Fifth: Be grateful for the blessing of sight and use it for knowledge (Sahih al-Bukhari 5653).

Sixth: A servant close to Allah uses his sight for good (Sahih al-Bukhari 6502).

Seventh: The reward of beneficial knowledge keeps flowing (Sahih Muslim 1631).

Eighth: Mathematics and observation combine to produce useful knowledge.

Ninth: Precise knowledge will shine, even if long hidden.

Tenth: Those with knowledge fear Allah the most (35:28).

Eleventh: Be grateful for hearing, sight and intellect (16:78).

CONCLUSION

Ibn Sahl died around 1000 CE, but his hyperbolic curve still shines in every modern lens. The next book of **Tracing the Scholars of Islam**, in sha Allah, will tell the story of ***Abu al-Wafa' al-Buzjani***, the mathematician of trigonometry. Wallahu a'lam.

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GLOSSARY AND REFLECTION QUESTIONS

GLOSSARY

TERM	MEANING
Refraction	The bending of light as it passes between two materials of different density.
Reflection	Light bounced back by a surface such as a mirror.
Refractive index	A number showing how much a material bends light.
Lens	A piece of glass or transparent material that refracts light.
Conic sections	Circle, ellipse, parabola and hyperbola — curves from slicing a cone.
Focal point	The point where light rays meet after passing through a lens or reflecting from a mirror.
Mirage	An illusion of water caused by refraction of light in hot air.
Optical fibre	A thin glass cable that carries data as light.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between the light of the sun and the light of the moon according to the Qur'an and science?

2. Why is Ibn Sahl's hyperbolic lens better than an ordinary lens?

3. How does the parable of the mirage in verse 24:39 teach a lesson about deeds?

4. What lesson can we learn from the story of Ibn Sahl's nearly lost treatise?

5. How can we show gratitude for the blessing of sight in daily life?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Put a pencil into a glass of water. Notice how the pencil appears bent. Explain it using the law of refraction.

Activity 2: Use a magnifying glass in sunlight (with adult supervision) to see the focal point on paper. Be careful — the focal point can start a fire.

Activity 3: Make a simple camera obscura with a shoebox: pierce a small hole in one side and tape tracing paper on the opposite side. Point it at a bright window and observe the inverted image.

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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:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ 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."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: 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 Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

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:

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

CHAIN OF NARRATION: 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 Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

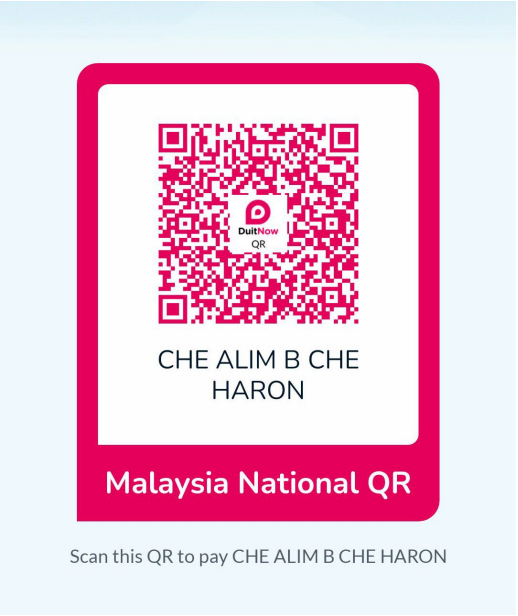
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GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

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

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