

(Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

## For Fast 17 – August 28

### Topic: (L) Light

*Light brought by the religion of Islam:*

- “Allah is the *light* of the heavens and the earth. A likeness of His *light* is as a pillar on which is a lamp — the lamp is in a glass, the glass is as it were a brightly shining star<sup>1</sup> — lit from a blessed olive-tree, neither eastern nor western,<sup>2</sup> whose oil gives *light*, even though fire does not touch it — *light upon light*.<sup>3</sup> Allah guides to His light whom He pleases. And Allah sets forth parables for mankind, and Allah is Knower of all things — (that *light* is) in houses<sup>4</sup> which Allah has permitted to be exalted and His name to be remembered within them.” — 24:35-36

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1. Allah is called here the *light of the heavens and the earth* because He has manifested hidden things and brought them into existence. *Mishkāt* means a *niche*, but it also has the meaning of *pillar*. In this parable, Islam is represented as a likeness of the Divine light, a light placed high on a pillar so as to illuminate the whole world; a light guarded by being placed in a glass, so that no puff of wind can put it out; a light so resplendent that the glass itself in which it is placed is as a brilliant star.

2. The *blessed olive*, from which that light is lit, and which stands here for a symbol of Islam, as the fig stands for a symbol of Judaism (see 95:3), belongs neither to the East nor to the West. Even so is Islam, which must give light to both the East and the West, and which, therefore, does not specially belong to either of them. The reference seems to be to the welding together of the East and the West in Islam.

3. If *light* is taken to refer to the Holy Prophet, this points to the fact that even before he received Divine revelation his life was a life of purity and devoted to the service of humanity and light emanated from him even before the light from on High came to him in the form of Divine revelation, so that when revelation came to him it was *light upon light*.

4. The light of Allah, the light of Islam, comes into, and emanates from, houses of those people who are morally exalted and remember God’s name.

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- “Is he whose heart Allah has opened to Islam so that he follows a *light* from his Lord (like the hard-hearted one)?” — 39:22
- “O people, manifest proof has indeed come to you from your Lord and We have sent down to you a *clear light*. Then as for those who believe in Allah and hold fast by Him, He will admit them to His mercy and grace, and guide them to Himself on a right path.” — 4:174-175
- “And thus did We reveal to you (Prophet) an inspired Book by Our command. You did not know what the Book was, nor (what) Faith (was), but We made it a *light*, guiding with it whom We please of Our servants. And surely you guide to the right path.” — 42:52

- “Is he who was dead, then We raised him to life *and made for him a light by which he walks among the people*, like him whose likeness is that of one in darkness from which he cannot come forth?” — 6:122

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These words explain what is meant by the raising of the dead to life through the prophets. Through the Quran the dead were raised to life *and given a light* by which they showed the way to others.

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*The Prophet brings people into light:*

- “A Book which We have revealed to you (Prophet) that you may bring forth people, by their Lord’s permission, *from darkness into light*, to the way of the Mighty, the Praised One, of Allah, Whose is whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth.” — 14:1-2
- “Allah has indeed sent down to you a Reminder — a Messenger who recites to you the clear messages of Allah, so that he may bring forth those who believe and do good deeds *from darkness into light*.” — 65:10-11

*Light of faith of believers, seen visibly in the next life:*

- “O you who believe, keep your duty to Allah and believe in His Messenger — He will give you two portions of His mercy, and *give you a light* in which you shall walk, and forgive you. And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” — 57:28

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By the *two portions of mercy* are meant their portion *in this world* and their portion *in the Hereafter*. A Muslim is thus required to enjoy the worldly benefits but not to the neglect of his moral responsibilities.

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- “On that day you will see the believers, men and women, their light gleaming before them and on their right hand. Good news for you this day! — Gardens in which rivers flow, to abide in them! That is the mighty achievement.” — 57:12

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The light of faith, which was given through the Prophet, will become manifest on the day of Resurrection. Notice the mention of both *men and women* as having the light gleaming before them and on their right hand.

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- “O you who believe, turn to Allah with sincere repentance. It may be your Lord will remove from you your evil and make you enter Gardens in which rivers flow, on the day on which Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believe with him. Their light will gleam before them and on their right hands — they will say: Our Lord, *make perfect for us our light*, and grant us protection; surely You are Powerful over all things.” — 66:8

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Paradise is not only a place to enjoy the blessings and reap the reward of one’s previous good deeds, but it is also the starting-point of a never-ceasing spiritual advancement. The prayer for the perfection of the light is an unceasing desire for perfection, showing that spiritual progress in that life will be endless.

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