

(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 20 – August 31

Topic: (N) Nature

The natural environment:

- “In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, and the ships that run in the sea with that which benefits mankind, and the water that Allah sends down from the sky, then gives life with it to the earth after its death and spreads in it all (kinds of) animals, and the changing of the winds and the clouds made subservient between heaven and earth, there are surely signs for a people who understand.” — 21:107

The uniformity that is clearly observed in the diversity of nature is constantly appealed to in the Quran as a sign of the Unity of the Maker.

- “And He it is Who sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth with it buds of all (plants), then We bring forth from it green (foliage), from which We produce clustered grain; and of the date-palm, of the sheaths of it, come forth clusters (of dates) within reach; and gardens of grapes and the olive and the pomegranate, alike and unlike. Look at the fruit of it when it bears fruit and the ripening of it. Surely there are signs in this for a people who believe!” — 6:99
- “And We made from water everything living.” — 21:30

While this statement reveals a remarkable truth in the physical world, a truth which science has established only recently, *that water is the source of all life*, it draws attention to the equally remarkable spiritual truth that it is only by Divine revelation, which is again and again compared with water in the Quran, that life is given to a world otherwise dead in sin and corruption.

- “And Allah has created every animal of water. So among them is that which crawls on its belly, and among them is that which walks on two feet, and among them is that which walks on four.” — 24:45

The various kinds of animal life are here divided into three classes: (1) The creeping things, the lowest and the first form in the development of animal life. (2) Those walking upon two legs, such as birds, the second form of the development of animal life. Man, though walking on two legs, is not included in them, because human life is the highest form of the development of animal life, and it is generally mentioned as quite distinct from all animal life. (3) Those which walk on four legs, and to this class belong most of the mammals.

Needs of all living creatures provided for by God:

- “And there is no animal in the earth, nor a bird that flies on its two wings, but they are communities like yourselves.” — 6:38

- “And the earth, He has set it for (His) creatures; in it are fruits, and palms having sheathed clusters, and the grain with (its) husk and fragrance.” — 55:10-12

1. The earth is for *all* creatures that exist on it.

2. The *husk* or the outer covering is generally considered to be a worthless thing. In speaking of it as one of the bounties of God it is hinted that even the husk can be turned into a useful and valuable thing.

- “And the earth — We have spread it out and made in it firm mountains and caused to grow in it of every suitable thing. And We have made in it means of subsistence for you and for those (creatures) for whom you do not provide.” — 15:19-20
- “Then let man look at his food —how We pour down abundant water, then split the earth, splitting (it) apart, then cause the grain to grow in it, and grapes and clover, and the olive and the palm, and thick gardens, and fruits and vegetation —a provision for you and your cattle.” — 80:24-32
- “And how many a living creature does not carry its sustenance! Allah sustains it and yourselves. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.” — 29:60

As in nature, sustenance for all creatures is provided for by God, so it is a duty of man to ensure that all creatures continue to receive their sustenance for their survival.

- “And there is no animal in the earth but *on Allah* is the sustenance of it, and He knows its abode and its repository. All is in a clear record.” — 11:6

This shows that provision of food and habitats for all creatures is a duty God takes upon Himself, and therefore man too must work in line with this Divine duty and not against it.

Importance of trees:

- “Who created the heavens and the earth, and sends down for you water from the cloud? Then with it We cause to grow beautiful gardens — it is not possible for you to make their trees to grow. Is there a god with Allah? Indeed, they are a people who deviate!” — 27:60
- “He is Knower of all creation, Who produced fire for you out of the green tree, so that with it you kindle.” — 36:79-80

This may refer to the process of photosynthesis. The *green* substance in tree leaves, chlorophyll, absorbs *sunlight* to produce carbohydrates and oxygen from water and carbon dioxide. This process is the basis of supporting physical life on earth. Similarly, light from the sun of Truth, the Holy Prophet (called *Yā Sīn* in this ch. 36), produces a higher life in those who follow him.
