

Caring for Our Common Home: Climate Change and Faith

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Revelations in the Quran regarding the natural world address all humanity

Verses in the Quran are explicit about the diversity of people and religions. Verses addressed to all humanity (believers and non-believers) starts with “O People..” and “O People of Adam”, or contain pronouns that refer to all humans. The context of these verses revolves around:

(1) the creation of humans from a single soul and their diverse nature:

Quran 4:1 - O Mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single *nafs* (Adam) and from it He created its mate (Eve), and from them both He created many men and women.

Quran 49:13 - O people! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is the most pious. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.

(2) creation of the natural world:

Quran 55 - 1. It is the Lord of Mercy; 2. Who taught the Quran; 3. He created mankind; 4. and taught him to communicate; 5. the sun and the moon follow their calculated courses; 6. the plants and the trees submit to His designs; 7. He has raised the sky. He has set the balance: 8. so that you may not exceed in the balance: 9. weigh with justice and do not fall short in the balance. 10. And the earth He has put for the creatures. 11. Therein are fruits, date-palms producing sheathed fruit-stalks (enclosing dates). 12. And also corn, with (its) leaves and stalk for fodder, and sweet-scented plants.

The word “balance” in the above verse could be interpreted in light of our scientific understanding of how the ecosystem work to suggest the inherit interconnectedness of natural elements.

(3) how humans should view the natural world

Quran 51:20, 21 - There are certainly signs in the earth for people with certainty; and in yourselves. Do you not then see?

Quran 6: 38 - All the creatures that crawl on the Earth and those that fly with their wings are communities like yourselves”

Quran 41:37 – The night, the day, the sun, the moon, are only a few of His signs. Do not bow down in worship to the sun or the moon, but bow down to God who created them, it is truly Him that you worship.

Quran 22:18 - Do you not realize [Prophet] that everything in the heavens and earth submits to God: the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, and the animals? So do many human beings.

Quran 17:44 - The seven heavens and the Earth and everyone in them glorify Him. There is not a single thing that does not celebrate His praise, though you do not understand their praise: He is most forbearing, most forgiving.

In the Quran, coupling faith with righteous/beneficial action is encouraged:

Quran 7:31 – Children of Adam, dress well whenever you are at worship, and eat and drink [as We have permitted] but do not be extravagant: God does not like extravagant people.

Quran 17: 26,27 - Give relatives their due, and the needy, and travellers – do not squander your wealth wastefully: those who squander are the brothers of Satan, and Satan is most ungrateful to his Lord.

Quran 28: 83 – We grant the Home in the Hereafter to those who do not seek superiority on earth or spread corruption: the happy ending is awarded to those who are mindful of God.

Quran 16:97 – To whoever, male or female, does good deeds and has faith, We shall give a good life and reward them according to the best of their actions.

On wealth management:

The story of Qarun (lived during Prophet Moses' period) in Chapter 28 verses 76-78 contain an important lesson for "wealth management":

Qarun was one of Moses' people, but he oppressed them. We had given him such treasures that even their keys would have weighed down a whole company of strong men. His people said to him, 'Do not gloat, for God does not like people who gloat. Seek the life to come by means of what God has granted you, but do not neglect your rightful share in this world. Do good to others as God has done to you. Do not seek to spread corruption in the land, for God does not love those who do this,' but he answered, 'This wealth was given to me on account of the knowledge I possess.' Did he not know that God has destroyed many generations before him, who had greater power than him and built up greater wealth?

Traditions of Prophet Muhammad inspire Muslims to "reduce, reuse and recycle"

"Whenever a Muslim plants trees or cultivates land and birds or a human or a beast eats out of them, it is a charity on his/her behalf." (**Muslim 010:3769**)

The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Even when the world is coming to an end, if any one has a palm-shoot in hand, he should plant it." (Ahmad 5:440 and 3:184)

"One of the rights of a she camel is that it should be milked at a place of water." (Bukhari 40:565)

God's Messenger(s) forbade inciting animals to fight each other. (Bukhari, Muslim, and others)

"The Prophet has forbidden the shooting of tied or confined animals." (Bukhari 67:421; 422)

The Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) said: **"Do not waste water even if performing ablution on the bank of a fast-flowing river."** Al-Tirmidhi 427

The Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) **"used to perform ablution with one mudd of water [equal to 2/3 litre] and used to take a bath with one sa' up to five mudds [equal to 2–3 1/2 litres]."** Al-Bukhari 1:200.

Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas: Once Allah's Apostle passed by a dead sheep and said to the people, "Wouldn't you benefit by its **skin**?" The people replied that it was dead. The Prophet said, "But its eating only is illegal." (Al-Bukhari, 34:424)