

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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Light

God's perfect design of our universe

[2:29] He is the One who created for you everything on earth, then turned to the sky and perfected seven universes therein, and He is fully aware of all things.

We know from Genesis (1:3) in the Bible the phrase: "Let there be light."

[17:12] We rendered the night and the day two signs. We made the night dark, and the day lighted, that you may seek provisions from your Lord therein. This also establishes for you a timing system, and the means of calculation. We thus explain everything in detail.

Also in Genesis (1:14) God said: "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years."

[71:16] He designed the moon therein to be a light, and placed the sun to be a lamp.

[10:5] He is the One who rendered the sun radiant, and the moon a light, and He designed its phases that you may learn to count the years and to calculate. GOD did not create all this,

except for a specific purpose. He explains the revelations for people who know.

Light is something that makes things visible or affords illumination. It can also be defined as "spiritual illumination or awareness; enlightenment."

There are many references to light in Quran. Some refer to physical light *[67:5] We adorned the lowest universe with lamps, and guarded its borders with projectiles against the devils; we prepared for them a retribution in Hell.*

Many of the references are spiritual. *[2:257] GOD is Lord of those who believe; He leads them out of darkness into the light. As for those who disbelieve, their lords are their idols; they lead them out of the light into darkness—these will be the dwellers of Hell; they abide in it forever.*

[5:46] Subsequent to them, we sent Jesus, the son of Mary, confirming the previous scripture, the Torah. We gave him the Gospel, containing guidance and light, and confirming the previous scriptures, the Torah, and augmenting

its guidance and light, and to enlighten the righteous.

[9:32] They want to put out GOD's light with their mouths, but GOD insists upon perfecting His light, in spite of the disbelievers.

[14:1] A. L. R. A scripture that we revealed to you, in order to lead the people out of darkness into the light—in accordance with the will of their Lord—to the path of the Almighty, the Praiseworthy.

[39:22] If GOD renders one's heart content with Submission, he will be following a light from his Lord. Therefore, woe to those whose hearts are hardened against GOD's message; they have gone far astray.

[64:8] Therefore, you shall believe in GOD and His messenger, and the light that we have revealed herein. GOD is fully Cognizant of everything you do.

In talking about physical light, what is light?

This is not an easy question. Light has no mass and is not really considered matter. Today scientists say light is a

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

form of energy made of photons. Light is unique in that it behaves like both a particle and a wave. Without sunlight our world would be a dead dark place. Sunlight helps us see; it keeps the Earth warm; it's a major component in photosynthesis; it's a source of energy as well as a source of vitamin D for humans.

Light moves at the fastest known speed in the universe, 186,282 miles per second! The Sun is almost 93 million miles from the Earth. It takes around 8 minutes for light to get from the Sun to the Earth.

Fire is the result of the combustion of organic material and oxygen. It gives off both light and heat. A gift from God.

[36:80] He is the One who creates for you, from the green trees, fuel which you burn for light.

Why do stars shine? From Universe Today.com

"All stars, and our own Sun is just an example, are hot balls of glowing plasma held together by their own gravity. And the gravity of a star is very intense. Stars are continuously crushing themselves inward, and the gravitational friction of this causes their interiors to heat up. This heat is measured on the Kelvin scale. 1degree F is about 256 Kelvin. 1000F is about 810. A star like the Sun is a mere 5,800 Kelvin at its surface, but at its core, it can be 15 million Kelvin – now that's hot!

"The intense pressure and temperature at the core of a star allow nuclear fusion reactions to take place. This is where atoms of hydrogen are fused into atoms of helium (through several stages). This reaction releases an enormous amount of energy in the form of gamma rays. These gamma rays are trapped inside the star, and they push outward against the gravitational contraction of the star. That's why stars hold to a certain size, and

don't continue contracting. The gamma rays jump around in the star, trying to get out. They're absorbed by one atom, and then emitted again. This can happen many times a second, and a single photon can take 100,000 years to get from the core of the star to its surface.

"When the photons have reached the surface, they've lost some of their energy, becoming visible light photons, and not the gamma rays they started out as. These photons leap off the surface of the Sun and head out in a straight line into space. They can travel forever if they don't run into anything.

"When you look at a star like Sirius, located about 8 light-years away, you're seeing photons that left the surface of the star 8 years ago and traveled through space, without running into anything. Your eyeballs are the first thing those photons have encountered.

"So why do stars shine? Because they have huge fusion reactors in their cores releasing a tremendous amount of energy."

[6:97] And He is the One who made the stars to guide you during the darkness, on land and on sea. We thus clarify the revelations for people who know. [16:12] And He commits, in your service, the night and the day, as well as the sun and the moon. Also, the stars are committed by His command. These are (sufficient) proofs for people who understand. [56:75] I swear by the positions of the stars.

With regards to our universe, there is way way way more darkness than there is light. The lighted visible universe—that's all the stars, planets and galaxies that can be seen today—make up just 4 percent of the universe. The other 96 percent is made of things astronomers can't see, detect or even comprehend. This is dark matter. Astronomers acknowledge that this vast majority of the universe is unknown for now and may never be known.

[6:1] Praise be to GOD, who created the heavens and the earth, and made the darkness and the light. Yet, those who disbelieve in their Lord continue to deviate.

God has allowed us to make some amazing discoveries. The Hubble telescope has seen far into the universe to other galaxies millions of light years away. It has recorded light getting stretched by space. This is called red shift. We are able to see red shift from every distant galaxy and that means that space is stretching everywhere. And that is something truly amazing. Something that God revealed 1400 years ago. Our universe is expanding.

[51:47] We constructed the sky with our hands, and we will continue to expand it.

By studying how galaxies themselves are red shifted, scientists found something completely unexpected. The universe is not just expanding, thanks to Hubble [and God] it's expanding at an ever-increasing rate and accelerating over time. By knowing that the universe is expanding, we can look back in time, billions of years, to a time before the earth and sun, to that moment when the universe began, 13.8 billions years ago (bigthink.com). The Big Bang.

The European Space Agency's Planck Telescope is designed to look for the remains of the big bang. Planck used its 5 foot mirror and 2 detector arrays to capture light in the form of microwaves, and built a map of the furthest reaches of the universe. After 4 years of scanning, scientists are now able to glimpse a snapshot of the aftermath of the big bang in spectacular detail. Basically, we can see the light from a time when the whole universe was on fire. Not when the universe was empty space but a boiling churning plasma. Not an image of the big bang itself, but the cosmic microwave background is powerful scientific evidence that it did happen. As Submitters, we have God's words as evidence.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

*The Big Bang Theory Confirmed**
[21:30] Do the unbelievers not realize that the heaven and the earth used to be one solid mass that we exploded into existence? And from water we made all living things. Would they believe?

*21:30 The Big Bang Theory is now supported by the Creator's infallible mathematical code (Appendix 1). Thus, it is no longer a theory; it is a law, a proven fact.

One of the scientists interviewed made a statement that stuck with me. "We don't know why it started, and we don't know why it ended. When the rapid expansion of the big bang slowed down, something happened that dumped a bunch of energy into the universe and created this fireball state. "

I'm thinking this scientist needs to read the Quran.

[51:56] I did not create the jinns and the humans except to worship Me alone.

We are a speck of dust on a speck of dust. We are totally unimportant to the universe in any possible way you can think of. And yet, we can see the beginning of the universe. This is a gift from God.

[40:57] The creation of the heavens and the earth is even more awesome than the creation of the human being, but most people do not know.

[24:35] **GOD** is the light of the heavens and the earth. The allegory of His light is that of a concave mirror behind a lamp that is placed inside a glass container. The glass container is like a bright, pearl-like star. The fuel thereof is supplied from a blessed oil-producing tree, that is neither eastern, nor western. Its oil is almost self-radiating; needs no fire to ignite it. Light upon light. **GOD** guides to His light whomever He wills. **GOD** thus cites the parables for the people. **GOD** is fully aware of all things.

And God tells us that in the next life,

the real life, there will be light.

[57:12] The day will come when you see the believing men and women with their lights radiating ahead of them and to their right. Good news is yours that, on that day, you will have gardens with flowing streams. You will abide therein forever. This is the great triumph.

May God continue to guide us, shine His light upon us and help us to continue to appreciate His uncountable blessings...a major one being light.

Bob

* * * * *

Habits

I am your constant companion.

I am your greatest helper or your heaviest burden.

I will push you onward or drag you down to failure.

I am completely at your command.

Half the things you do, you might just as well turn over to me, and I will be able to do them quickly and correctly.

I am easily managed; you must merely be firm with me.

Show me exactly how you want something done, and after a few lessons I will do it automatically.

I am the servant of all great men.

And, alas, of all failures as well.

Those who are great, I have made great. Those who are failures, I have made failures.

I am not a machine, though I work with all the precision of a machine.

Plus, the intelligence of a man.

You may run me for profit, or run me for ruin; it makes no difference to me.

Take me, train me, be firm with me and I will put the world at your feet.

Be easy with me, and I will destroy you. Who am I?

I am a HABIT!

A habit is a behavior that is repeated regularly and becomes automatic, requiring little to no thought. Habits can be good or bad, and they can affect a person positively or negatively.

Here are some examples of habits: Brushing your teeth, eating a healthy snack, biting your nails, smoking. Habits are developed through repetition and reinforcement, and are learned rather than innate. They can be part of any activity, such as eating, sleeping, thinking, and reacting.

In the military, you develop habits that you do every day: Wake up early, take a run, make your bed. These habits stayed with me for years after I left the military. They were ingrained in me. And these were good habits. If you have a bad habit, you have to condition yourself to break it or change it. Some say that it's easier to break a bad habit by substituting a healthier alternative than quitting cold turkey.

It's easy to get into bad habits. But to get out we need to train ourselves, condition ourselves to something different, something healthier. For example, cooking at home, instead of eating out. If I tried a delicious recipe for home-made spaghetti sauce that is great. Then I can work on doing that again!

For me, a problem is getting to sleep. I've tried many things, including the worst one—watching TV. So, I'm trying now to use that time listening to Quran. With our technology, we have Quran beautifully recited on our phones, and we can listen to it any time, including to help us fall asleep.

Being a Submitter, we're looking for the best habits for our soul, following God's commandments. Most important, we need to figure out "who is your god?" Appendix 27 of the Authorized English Version of Quran goes into detail. Excerpts and my thoughts follow. Most people who claim to be believers are destined for Hell (12:106).

(Continued on page 4)

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(Continued from page 3)

Your god is whatever occupies your mind most of the time.

We really need to consider this question: "Who is your god?" Idols can be our children or spouse, our business, money, our ego. We have to get in the habit of doing the things that will make certain that God is our god all the time.

[33:41] O you who believe, you shall remember GOD frequently. [33:42] You shall glorify Him day and night.

To put this commandment into practice, we must establish certain habits whereby we guarantee that God occupies our minds more than anything else. The Quran helps us establish soul-saving habits:

1. The Contact Prayers (Salat): those who observe the 5 daily prayers come a long way towards commemorating God a significant proportion of their waking hours. Salat helps us remember God not only during the few minutes of prayer, but also throughout the times of anticipation. It's not just the actual prayer but time leading up to the prayer, thoughts of God. We get up for the dawn prayer, even if we're tired. We do all 5 of our prayers, not 3, not bunching them all together at the end of the day. The habit we develop is because of what God tells us in:

[29:45] You shall recite what is revealed to you of the scripture, and observe the Contact Prayers (Salat), for the Contact

Prayers prohibit evil and vice. But the remembrance of GOD (through Salat) is the most important objective. GOD knows everything you do.

2. Commemorate God before eating: Verse 6:121 enjoins us to mention God's name before we eat:

[6:121] Do not eat from that upon which the name of GOD has not been mentioned, for it is an abomination. The devils inspire their allies to argue with you; if you obey them, you will be idol worshippers.

Often I take a bite or two, forgetting to mention God's name, and then I remember. I'm trying to do better, but I got in the habit in the military of wolfing down my chow. They gave you 5 minutes to eat, so you better hurry up or they take it away. I need to do better, get rid of that bad habit and replace it with appreciation. God is the Provider.

3. God Willing (IN SHAA ALLAH): "You shall not say, 'I will do this or that tomorrow,' without saying, 'God willing'. If you forget to do this, then apologize and say, 'May my Lord guide me to do better next time.' " (18:24). This is a direct commandment that we must carry out, no matter who we are talking with.

We must develop this good habit.

5. Glorify God day and night: When we eat anything, we shouldn't be like animals.

I was thinking of my dog, who slopped his water and food all over the floor. He

paid no attention to what he was eating. I love to consider the small oranges and their bite-size pieces, all wrapped in a beautiful peel. We need to be appreciative of this gift from God—how it's created and packaged. I used to just go out and watch the sunset and it made me so appreciative. When we see the beautiful things that God has created in our world—a flower, a sunset, an animal—we need to glorify God. Take every opportunity to remember and appreciate God's gifts. This habit helps make God our God.

6. First Utterance: Make it a habit to say: "In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. There is no other god besides God," the moment you wake up every morning. If you establish this good habit, this is what you will utter when you are resurrected.

We all have bad habits that we need to overcome; that we need to replace with good habits. These steps can help us slow down and think more and more often of God, be more appreciative. I implore God to help me in all areas—especially reverence during our Contact Prayer, to keep Satan's thoughts out of my head. To help me when I can't sleep, to meditate, read or listen to Quran. To help me not be distracted by this lowly world. To commemorate God day and night. It's a commandment. I need to do this.

May God help us all to practice these good habits that God wants us to do.

Frank