

THE WORLD OF NATURE: A QURANIC VIEW

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Holy Quran is the sacred scripture of Islam, revealed to the Arabian unlettered (ummi) prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) more than fourteen hundred years ago. Being a bringer of guidance to the believers in their every walk of life, it contains a very wide-ranging list of injunctions. One of the most peculiar features of the Quranic verses is their approach towards diverse aspects ranging from the historical facts to the facts about Nature. A remarkable feature about the Quranic verses is that it grippingly contains a broad range of verses, which directly call human beings to observe, reflect and make use of the material nature on one hand and realize the powers of the Originator and Creator on the other. Hundreds of the verses of Holy Quran repeatedly speak and reveal about the various manifestations of nature. The Quranic exemplification of the material nature is unique in its approach, usefulness and essence. Although Holy Quran does not include all the verses about nature at one place, but it appears feasible to analyze thoroughly all the related verses and conceptualize the Quranic idea about the exemplification of nature.

Hypothesizing that 'nature is one of the basic themes of Holy Quran, along with concept of history, God, worship etc' an analytical attempt has been made by the researcher to understand the explorations, depictions, exemplification or citations of nature. There is no doubt the analysis has been broadly based on the primary sources i.e. relevant Quranic Verses, as the survey of literature revealed a little about related significant studies undertaken by other researchers. An explanatory report on the development of the study and findings has formed the body of the thesis on the aforementioned title. The thesis contents have been logically divided and placed in order, into six chapters.

The very first chapter entitled 'Problem Definition' is basically aimed at precise definition of the problem undertaken for study by the researcher. An attempt has been made to introduce the topic as well as the problem and the context of the study; and clarify the needs, objectives and the significance of the study etc. Moreover, it also includes a personal admission (and perhaps of other human researchers too) on the limitations and delimitations of the study, on the sacred scripture of Islam.

The second chapter entitled 'Review of Related Literature' is aimed at reporting a review on related and significant contributions, on or around the topic of the study. This primarily includes a survey of contributions by eminent scholars on the Quranic Verses, addressing nature in one or the other form. It may also be considered as a humble attempt to appreciate the significant contributions and to use the same meaningfully during the course of study for having a sound bases.

The third chapter entitled 'Nature in Holy Quran' includes an analytical description of the concept of nature in the Quranic context. This chapter contains discussion about the various attributes of the material nature in the light of Holy Quran. An attempt has been made to explore various manifestations of Nature, categorizing them as heavenly and earthly natural phenomena. It also contains the description of various aspects of Nature such as sun, moon, stars, earth etc in Holy Quran.

The fourth chapter entitled 'Aspects of Nature and Holy Quran' includes a descriptive analysis of some other aspects of Holy Quran in connection with material nature. A brief discussion on a number of scientific aspects in Holy Quran follows it, in relation with modern findings. Consequently two very important aspects of Holy Quran namely aesthetic element of the verses and parables used in Holy Quran has been brought to light, while depicting the various manifestations of Nature. Finally, beauty aspects of the various manifestations of the material nature have been highlighted, with regard to related verses of Holy Quran including nature parables of Holy Quran.

The fifth chapter namely 'Almighty God and Nature' includes a descriptive analysis on those verses of the Quran in which the description of Islamic God is portrayed. The selection of verses, to prove the existence of the Creator, may be called as 'sign' verses of Holy Quran. An attempt has been made to bring about the Islamic concept of transcendent God and to explain Nature with all of it's causes and phenomena to prove the existence of one and only God. The Quran itself repeatedly referred these verses as a proof of the existence of one God. According to Holy Quran, Nature with all its manifestations as well as the phenomena connected to it is very clear and convincing proof of the Creator. Holy Quran also subscribes clearly that the Creator is only one that's why the working of the whole cosmos is functioning smoothly and efficiently without any hindrance.

The last chapter namely 'Summary and Conclusions' primarily summarizes the developments during the course of study on the topic of research, undertaken by the researcher. Furthermore, it contains the description of the conclusive findings and observations, implications of the study and scope for future related work.

In the light of above-mentioned reporting in six chapters of the thesis, on the basis of Quranic verses and secondary sources related to it in context of nature, the researcher has reached many conclusive finding including following:

- The Quranic depiction of nature may serve as one of the most convincing proofs of 'one and only one Creator', who has powers over all things and who regulates the affairs of the cosmos.
- Almighty God controls nature with all its manifestations, and it clearly indicates a uniquely well-defined order prevailing in nature.
- There is a very sound connectedness, harmony and interrelationship among all the manifestations of Nature.
- Supreme God governs the forces that are governing the affairs of this huge cosmos and these are willingly doing their specific functions.

- The whole nature is full of beauty, bounty and perfection. This kind of perfection, beauty and bounty is due to the one of the attributes of Almighty God known as mercy.
- Nature has certain attributes like finiteness, limitness and dependency, which convey its createdness, and thus Nature nevertheless in any circumstance may serve as God or deity of Godhead.
- The scientific aspects of the natural phenomena discussed in Holy Quran are well in correlation with the scientific discoveries of the modern times.
- The recent discoveries gradually confirm the facts subscribed by Holy Quran about Nature. It also appears that with the more scientific development in future the remaining aspects, which are yet to be reaffirmed with Holy Quranic facts, will be compatible with scientific discoveries.
- The parables of Holy Quran, in which the use of manifestations of Nature has been cited, helps in the better understanding of Holy Quran.
- The depiction of Nature may help the future generations to get more clear understanding of Holy Quran to elites as well as to masses with the development of knowledge particularly in science and technology.