

7. The Plant Environment

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً ۖ لَكُمْ مِنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ

يُنْبِتُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

“It is He Who sends down rain from the sky: From it ye drink, and out of it (grows) the vegetation on which ye feed your cattle. With it He produces for you corn, olives, date-palms, grapes, and every kind of fruit: Verily in this is a sign for those who give thought.” (16: 10–11)

In our previous discussion, we have offered the opinions and outlooks of some experts and researchers in the field of plants and forests, and the plant’s relationship with the environmental balance and well-being. Likewise, we have shown the role played by plants in man’s and animal’s lives, not in the realm of clothes, medicine or food, rather in organizing the natural environment and its balance.

The importance of arranging the ratio of oxygen and carbon dioxide, as well as, fighting and stopping floods and rectifying the atmosphere and renewing the fertility of the soil, have, also been pointed out.

Plants are the third living creature in this world and the first producing creature, therefore, plants are man’s and animal’s companions. In this regard, the Holy Qur’an in different places talks about plants, crops, trees and arable land, as well as, plant’s environment and the relationship between man and plants.

The Islamic message encourages the act of farming and planting trees and prohibits the cutting and removing of trees during war, as some aggressive rulers practiced in their time, due to their aggressive behavior. So, Islam calls for protecting the plant’s environment and encourages the planting of trees and farming, so as to preserve the environmental sanity of the society.

Rather, Islam regards the act of planting trees and preserving the earth as an act of worship and a charity for the doer as an act that conforms with the companionship of man and animals with the plants.

Allah has made it clear, saying:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ إِلَّا النَّارُ ۗ وَحَبِطَ مَا صَنَعُوا فِيهَا وَبَاطِلٌ مَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

“He brought you into being from the earth, and made you dwell in it.” (11:16)

Also, in the Prophetic Hadith, it is narrated from the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) that, “No Muslim will grow a plant or sow a crop, that birds, animals or man eat from it, unless he has a reward for it.”¹ “No man will grow a plant unless Allah writes a reward for him, as much as the fruit that grows from it.”²

Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) further emphasizes on farming or planting when he says, “If one of you has a palm seedling and can sow it before he rises up on the Day of Judgement, then, he should do so.” And, it was reported from Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) that, “A Muslim will not grow a plant and man or animal or bird eat of it, unless he has a reward for that.”³

Ibn Umar says; “We were in the presence of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) when a date pit was brought, then, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) said, ‘Indeed, among the trees, there is a tree which is like a Muslim’, and I wanted to say it is a palm tree, but when I looked around I found that I was the youngest among the people there. Then, the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) said, ‘It is a date palm tree.’”⁴

So, this is how the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.w.) made farming and concern for the protection of the farming environment for the benefit of man and animals as an act of worship, as well as, a charity (Sadaqah), and on the other hand, compares a date palm tree to a Muslim who serves a great benefit to the community.

While discussing the issue of crime and aggression against life, the Holy Qur’an condemns the destroyers of the animal’s, plant’s and man’s environment, and rather, terms the aggression an act against humanity, because, aggression against the sources of man’s life is an aggression against that person. Concerning this the Holy Qur’an says,

وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفَاسِدَ

“When he turns his back, his aim everywhere is to spread mischief through the earth and destroy crops and cattle...”(2:205)

In this verse, the Holy Qur’an compares the destruction of plants and animals with corruption in the earth, and regards it as an aggression against the system of life, as well as an evil which must be wiped out. So, from here, we can see how the principles of Islamic law and its ideologies correspond with the natural laws and life’s balanced system. These two points will show Allah’s wisdom and will in His legislation and creation.

- [1.](#) Sahih Al-Bukhari, vol. 3, Bab Fadhl Al-Zari' Wa Al-Gharis, Chapter on the merit of cultivation and planting, pg. 135.
 - [2.](#) Ahmad Bin Hanbal, vol. 5, pg. 440.
 - [3.](#) Ibid., pg. 192.
 - [4.](#) Ibid., vol. 2 pg. 12.
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