

Second Session – The Animal Kingdom

At dawn I presented myself to my master, and after obtaining admittance to his lodgings, I sat down at his behest.

He (as)began, "All Praise is due to Him Who is the Creator of revolution of the ages, Who brings one stage after another and one state after another of decades of time, to reward the righteous and to chastise the evil-doers, because He is just. All His Names are Exalted. His Blessings are Magnificent. He does not do the least injustice to His creatures, rather, man does injustice to himself.

Allah (s.w.t.)'s own words bear testimony to this:

Then he who has done an atoms weight of good shall see it and he who has done an atoms weight of evil shall see it – 99:7-8.

There are other verses in the Holy Book to this same effect giving detailed explanations of all matters. Falsehood cannot come in front of, nor behind It. It is a Book revealed by the Almighty Praiseworthy Allah. It is on this account that the Holy Prophet (saw) has said to the effect that your actions will be returned to you."

The Imam (as)bent down his head for a while and said, "O Mufaddhal! Mankind is perplexed and bewildered, blind, infatuated in their perverseness, following their devils and spectres. They have eyes but do not see, they have tongues but are dumb, and do not understand. They have ears but do not hear. They are happy in their contemptible degradation. They presume that they are well-guided. They are diverted from the rank of rational beings. They feed on the vegetation of' polluted dirty people. They deem themselves safe from a sudden visitation of death and the retribution of deeds. Alas! How ill fated are these people!"

This moved me to tears, and the Imam (as)solaced me by saying that I was saved, because of having accepted the faith and the gnosis, and was granted salvation.

The Animal World

He (as) continued, "I now wish to speak to you about the animal world, so that you may have as much information about it as you have got about the rest.

Just consider the physical constitution and the pattern of construction underlying their build. They are not as hard as stone, for had they been so, they could not have been able to perform actions, nor are they soft, for in that case they could not have reared up their heads or stood erect by themselves without prop.

They are composed of such pliable muscles as bend and double up. They are supported by hard bones which are gripped by the muscles and which are tied together by tendons with each other. Covering these bones and muscles is their skin which extends over the whole body.

The wooden dolls with rags wound round them tied by strings and with a varnish of gum over the whole, will illustrate the point. Let the wood stand for the bones, the rags for muscles, the strings for tendons and the varnish for the skin.

If it is possible in the case of living and moving beings to come into existence for themselves, it should be reasonably expected to happen in the case of these lifeless figures. And if it is impossible in the case of these toys, it is even more preposterous in the case of animals.

Then look minutely to their bodies, they are composed of muscles and bones like the human beings. They are endowed with eyes and ears, so as to enable men to get work from them. They would not have served his purpose if they had been blind and deaf.

They are deprived of the faculties of intellect and reason, so that they may remain subservient to men and should not disobey even when subjected to intolerably heavy labour and burden.

An objection may be raised to the effect that human slaves possessing intellect and reason, obey their masters abjectly despite hard and laborious toil.

The answer to this is that these kind of men are few in number. Most of the slaves are unwilling toilers, while the quadrupeds are obedient even under heavy burdens and when turning grind-stones etc. They cannot be affected by agitation as far as their particular duties to man are concerned.

If man had to do the work of a single camel or a mule, several men would be required, causing a deadlock in other undertakings. These simple tasks would have absorbed all manpower, without leaving any hands spare for arts and professions. Besides, men would have suffered a strain.

Just consider the constitutions of the following three kinds of living beings, and the merits with which they are endowed.

(1) Man, having been ordained to possess intellect and reason to undertake such professions as carpentry, masonry, smithy, sewing etc., has been endowed with broad palms with thick fingers to enable him to grasp all types of tools necessary for these professions.

(2) The carnivorous animals, having been ordained to live on game, have been gifted with soft palms with claws capable of being drawn in. They are suitable for hunting but unfit for professional arts.

(3) Herbivorous animals having been ordained neither for professional arts nor for hunting, have been gifted, some with slotted hoofs to save them from the hardness of the ground while grazing, while others have solid hooves to be able to squarely stand on the ground for better fitness as beasts of burden.

Carnivorous animals in their constitutional composition have sharp fangs, hard claws, and wide mouths to serve them in their nutrition through animal food as ordained for them, and they are constituted accordingly. They have been armed with such tools and implements as befit them for hunting.

On a similar analogy, you will find the beak and the claws befitting them for their particular tasks. If such claws were given to herbivorous animals, they would have been worse than useless; for they neither hunt nor catch flesh. And if the carnivorous animals were given hooves instead of claws, they would have failed to secure their necessities in the absence of suitable wherewithal.

Don't you see that both these kinds of animals are gifted with exactly the things appropriately in consonance with their need – nay, therein lies their survival.

Now look at the quadrupeds and see how they follow their mothers. They neither need to be carried nor to be nurtured as is the case with the human babies. This is so because the mothers of those young ones do not possess the tools which the mothers of human babies have. They possess kindness, love and the knowledge of the art of nurture with specialised hands and fingers to lift them. They are so constituted as to help themselves in all types of work.

You will find the same in birds, for example, the young ones of hen, partridge and grouse begin to pick up corn and move about as soon as hatched from eggs. Birds whose young ones are weak, without the strength to stand, for example those of the wild and domestic pigeons, have mothers with extra maternal instinct, so that they bring to their young one's mouths nourishment garnered by them in their crops.

Such feedings continue until chicks can fend for themselves. The pigeons don't have a large brood like the hens, to enable the females to rear them up adequately without starving them. Everyone thus receives a due share from the bounty of the Almighty Omniscient Allah.

Just see how the legs of the animals are created in pairs to enable them to move easily, which would have been difficult, had they been created in odd numbers. The moving animal lifts up one foot while resting the other one on the ground. Bipedes lift one and get supported on the other. Quadrupeds lift one pair and rest on the other, on the opposite sides.

If quadrupeds had lifted the pair of legs on the same side, grope on the other would have been difficult, just as a board cannot stand on two legs. The front leg of the right side and the hind leg of the left side are lifted together, and vice versa, for steady locomotion.

Don't you see that a donkey drives a grindstone in addition to carrying burdens, seeing that the horse is allowed comparative rest and comfort? And the camel does so much work, which cannot be accomplished by a number of men.

What would have been the case if it had declined to obey? It submits to even a child at present. How does the bullock submit to its master ploughing the fields with the yoke on its neck? The thoroughbred horses rush into sword-blades and spears like their masters during battles. A single person is able to look after a flock of sheep. If the sheep were to go astray, each one on its own way, how could anyone have been able to find them?

Similarly, the other species of animals are subservient to man, why? This is because they do not possess any intellect, nor any power to reason out matters. Had they possessed intellect, they would have shirked to implement a good deal of man's requirements.

The camel would have declined to submit, and the bullock would have mutinied against its master, the sheep would have got scattered, and so on. If the beasts of prey possessed intellect and reason, they would have contested for materials of food with men. Who then would have faced their combined advance against men?

Don't you see how they are prevented from so doing? They fear the habitats of men and flee from him, instead of man fearing them. !They do not come out during the daytime in search of food, but at night. They fear men with all their majestic awesomeness without having suffered any harm or warning from him. It' this had not been ordained so, they would have come jumping into human habitats and made their lives miserable.

The dog, among the beasts, is endowed with a special trait, loyalty to its master, his service and his safeguard. It keeps watch during dark nights, roaming about the premises safeguarding against burglars. It is prepared to lay down its life to save him and his flocks. Such is its loyalty to its master. It can put up with hunger and pain for its master's sake.

Why is the dog created on this pattern, except that it should serve to guard man, with its strong teeth, stout claws, a frightful back, why? It is to frighten the burglars and to prevent them from approaching the goods entrusted to its care.

Look as the faces of the quadrupeds and see how they are shaped. You will see that they have their eyes accommodated in the front, lest they strike a wall or fall into a pit. You will find their mouths cleft under the snout. If they were like those of men, they would not have been able to pick up anything from the ground. Don't you see that man does not pick up his food with his mouth? He does so with his

hands.

This is a peculiar merit granted to man in comparison with other feeders. Since the quadrupeds did not possess such hands to enable them to pick up grass, the under part of the snout was cleft to enable them to pick up grass and chew it. It is further helped with lengthened lips to reach out to farther as well as nearer things.

Consider the tails of animals and the benefits ordained therein. It is a sort of covering for their excretory privatives. It also helps them keep off flies and mosquitoes that settle on the dirt on their bodies. Their tails are patterned after the fans with which to drive away flies and mosquitoes. They also get relief by constantly wagging their tails.

These animals stand on all fours, they have no occasion to move them about, they therefore, feel relieved by wagging their tails.

There are other benefits as well which human imagination is incapable of grasping and which are known only when the need arises. Among these benefits, the tail is the most handy weapon to extricate it when it gets stuck in the mud. The tail hair may also be used to advantage by men.

The trunk of such animals is made flat by lying on all four legs to facilitate riding and copulation because of the situation of their relevant parts.

The Elephant

Consider the trunk of an elephant and the great ingenuity in its pattern. It serves the purpose of taking in food and water to the stomach, like the human hand. Without it the elephant cannot lift anything from the ground, since its neck is not long enough, which it may stretch forward like the quadrupeds.

In the absence of a long neck it has been given in its place a long trunk so that it may extend it and meet its need. Who has given it an organ to compensate for the absence of a missing one? Surely, He Who is so very Compassionate on His creatures. And how can this take place without set Design, as asserted by the perverse naturalists and atheists?

To the objection as to why it has not been endowed with a neck similar to that of the other animals, the reply is that the head and the ears of the elephant being very heavy would have caused great strain, even rupture, so its head is joined directly to the body to protect it against that contingency and instead thereof the proboscis is constructed to serve all those purposes it needs, including those of feeding.

The Giraffe

Just consider the constitution of the giraffe and the distinct nature of its organs resembling certain other animals. Its head resembles that of a horse, the neck that of a camel, the cleft hoof¹ that of a cow, and its

skin that of a leopard.

Some ignorant people have supposed that this results from the union of several kinds of animals. These ignoramuses say that different species of land animals come to the watering place one species individual enters into sexual union with another species individual, resulting in such an offspring. As such it is a composite model.

To say this is to betray ignorance, and lack of the gnosis of the Almighty Allah, glory be to Him. No animal enters into sexual union with animals of other species. No union takes place between a horse and a she-Camel or a camel and a cow. Sexual union can take place only between animals of similar constitutional shape, for example a horse and a she-ass resulting in a mule, or a wolf with a badger resulting in a hybrid.

Moreover, it never happens that the offspring of such a union can borrow one organ from one of the other mate. A giraffe has one organ resembling that of a horse, another that of a camel, another hoof that of a cow. But you see that a mule has its head, ears, back, tail and hoof midway between those of a donkey and a horse, so is its cry midway between neighing and braying. This argument adequately shows that a giraffe is not the offspring of the union of desperate species, but is one wonder of the wonderful creation of the Almighty Allah, demonstrating His Omnipotence.

It should also be known that the Creator of the numberless species of animals creates the organs of which so ever He likes of them similar to one another and those of others dissimilar. He adds in the composition whatever He Wills and curtails there from whatever He Wills. This is so that His Omnipotence may be demonstrated and that nothing can hinder Him in anything He Wills.

Why is its neck long and what advantages do accrue to it there from? The advantage lies in enabling it to reach up to the leaves and fruits of the tall tress for its nourishment where it lives, dwells, and it is born and has its grazing places, the dense forests.

The Monkey

Just consider the creation of the monkey and the similarity that subsists between its organs and those of man with, the head, both shoulders, chest and the internal organs.

Moreover, it is gifted with brain and intellect because of which it understands the signals and the directions of its master. It generally apes man's activities as it sees him. It is very close to man in its qualities, traits and constitutional build up.

It should serve as an admonition to man that he should bear in mind that in his nature and material he is animal-like, resembling; them so closely and if he were not gifted with brain, intellect and speech, he would have been just like animals.

There are certain additions in the constitution of the monkey differentiating it from man e.g., the mouth, the long tail, the hair covering the whole body. These differences, however, would not have hindered it to become human, if it had been gifted with reason, intellect and speech faculties like man. The real line: of demarcation between it and man, as such, is due only the facilities of reason, intellect and speech.

The Animal Skin

Just consider the Mercifulness of Almighty Allah towards these animals in giving their bodies a covering with different kinds of hair to protect them against winter hardships. And they have been gifted with hooves, cleft and uncleft, or padded feet to protect them. They have neither hands, nor palms nor fingers to spin and weave, and so their clothing is made part of their bodily build to serve them all through life without renovating and changing.

Man, however, possesses hands and skill to weave cloth and spin thread. He makes cloth and from time to time changes it with many advantages to him. Among them, he is kept busy with manufacturing his clothing and is thereby saved from harmful activities and idleness. He puts off his clothing whenever he wants to be at home.

He can make various kinds of dresses for the pleasure he gets in their change by way of ostentation and so on. He prepares socks and shoes by way of fine industry to protect his feet. The labourers, and the traders thereby get their livelihood and the livelihood of their families. These different kinds of hair serve the animals as clothing; while their hooves and padded feet by way of footwear.

Burying The Dead

Just consider the constitutional trait of animals, namely, the concealment of the dead bodies when they die just as men bury their dead. No a single dead body of the beasts and animals is seen. They are not so far as to be overlooked. In fact their population is greater than that of men.

Look at the flocks of deer, the wild oxen, the wild ass, the wild goats and the stags and also the different species of the animals and beasts like the lion, the badgers, the wolves, the leopards etc., and the varieties of insects living inside the bowels of the earth and moving on its surface, in the deserts and the mountains, and similarly the flight birds like crows, the partridge, the ducks, the cranes, the pigeons, the birds of prey.

None of their corpses do we see except the few that the hunter gets as game or those that are devoured by beasts. As a matter of fact when these animals get a feeling of approaching death, they hide themselves in some secret place and die there.

Look at the arts that man has learnt from these animals – its first exemplification. He saw two crows fighting, one killing the other and then burying its dead body, whence Cain learnt to dig and conceal his

brother Abel's corpse. That was undertaken under the guidance of Almighty Allah. These animals were given the instinct to save man from the affliction of those troubles and epidemics which would have followed.

Animal Instinct

Consider the instincts with which they have been naturally gifted by the Almighty Allah through His infinite Mercy so as not to leave any creature deprived of His compassion though this is not under the rational thinking faculties.

The Ozan (deer) swallows up a snake but it does not drink water, however intense its thirst, for fear of the poison circulating in its body because of water, which may kill it. It roams about water tanks. It cries because of the intensity of thirst but does not touch water for fear of death. You see the great restraint that these animals possess in regard to intense thirst because of the fear or harm to an extent that a rational wise man is unable to undertake.

The fox, when it does not get food in any other way, feigns death with its belly inflated to deceive birds into believing it to be dead. As soon as the birds come round it to devour the Second Session apparent dead body, it attacks them and makes a hearty meal of them.

Now, say, who has given this skill to the speechless irrational fox? Surely, He Who has taken upon Himself the responsibility of feeding it. As the fox cannot undertake those activities which other beasts can, e.g., direct attack on the victim, it has been gifted with skill and fraud as means for livelihood.

The Dolphin needs birds as victims. It catches a fish and kills it so that it may keep floating; on the water while it itself is hiding underneath it, stirring the water all the time to keep its own body hidden. As soon as a bird pounces upon the fish, it pounces on it and takes hold of the bird. By this skill it gets its victim."

The Python and the Cloud

I then requested for an account of a python and the cloud.

Imam (as)replied that the cloud is a sort of an angel to get hold of its python wherever it may find it, just as the magnet stone gets hold of iron. It does not raise its head from the earth because of the fear of the cloud except in summer when the sky is clear without a trace of cloud and then too only once.

I asked, "Why is the cloud made overlord of the python to get hold of it wherever it may find it?"

The Imam (as)replied, "To save men from its harm."

The Ant

I said, "Master! You have given an account of the animal world so fully as to serve as an eye opener for everyone. Kindly give some account of the ants and the birds."

The Imam (as)said, "Look at the jaws of this little ant. Do you find any deficiency therein affecting its benefit? Where has this propriety and measure come from? Surely the same ingenuity and design which has gone into the build of all creation, big or small.

Just see how the ants gather together to gather food for themselves. You will find that when several ants mean to carry a grain to their homes they resemble several men engaged in carrying home their corn. The ants in fact bring in effort and activity which men cannot do. Do you not see how they help each other in carrying the grain like men? They break the grain into pieces lest they should sprout and become useless for their purpose. In case the grains get moist, they spread them to get dry. The ants burrow their holes at elevated places, away from the danger of flooding.

All these activities, however, are without the intervention of reason, purely instinctive, with which their constitutions are endowed with, by the Kindness of the Almighty Allah.

The Spider

Just look at the insect called 'Lais' (a kind of spider), generally called the lion of the flies. How great skill and ingenuity and mildness it has been endowed with for its livelihood. You will see that when it has a feeling of the approach of a fly, it ignores him for a while as if it itself is a lifeless body.

When it feels that the fly is put off guard and is altogether unaware of its presence, it begins moving towards it in slowing step by step motion till it gets near enough to catch it, upon which it pounces and gets hold of it. Getting hold of it, it embraces it with its whole body to prevent its escape. It holds on until it feels the fly to have weakened and its limbs to have relaxed, when it turns to it and devours it. This is the way it lives on.

The ordinary spider weaves its web and uses it as a trap for the catching of flies. It sits hidden within it. As soon as it fly is trapped, it pounces upon it, cutting it into pieces. It lives on like this. So is the case with the dogs, the lion hunt, and the trap snares for hunting. Just see how this weak insect has been gifted with the instinct to catch its prey which man cannot do without using artifice and implements.

Do not find fault with anything, for everything has a lesson to teach just like the ants etc. A fine meaning is often expressed by an insignificant thing without depreciating its value just as gold is not depreciated if it is weighed against iron weights.

The Bird

Just consider the physical build of the bird as it was ordained that it would fly high in the air. It has been gifted with a light body and a comparatively compact constitution. It has only two feet instead of four, four fingers instead of five, only one orifice for excretion instead of two. It is gifted with a sharp chest to cut through the air just as a boat is built to cut through water. It has long stiff feathers on its sides and tail to help it fly high. The whole body is covered with feathers to get filled with air for high flights.

Since it was ordained for it that its nutrition will consist of grains and flesh which it will swallow without mastication, teeth have been missed from its build and a stiff beak to seek food has been given to it with which it can pick up food material. It is not injured in picking up nor broken by nibbling flesh.

Since it has no teeth, but takes in grains and raw flesh, a great deal of heat is created in its stomach which serves to cook up its food without the need for mastication. It is just an example that the seeds of grapes pass out of man's stomach as such while they are completely cooked in the bird's stomach. They have been so constituted as to lay eggs rather than give birth to young ones so that they may not have any burdens to bear in flight due to the foetus in the womb staying to be fully developed.

Everything in its build has been so created as to be fully appropriate to its situation in life. It was also ordained that the birds that had to fly in the air should sit for a week, or two weeks, or three weeks on the eggs to bring forth their chicks. They then turn to them with their entire attention. It has a crop large enough to bring up its young ones with food on which it can subsist.

Who has entrusted it with tasks of first filling up its crop with grains picked up from the field, and then replace the same into the crop of the young ones? Why does it take all that trouble although it has no faculty of reasoning nor has it any expectations which man entertains about his young ones –honour, survival of name, and inheritance, etc. This is an activity which demonstrates that it is a special boon to its chick under a special dispensation of the Almighty Allah which the bird itself cannot know, nor reason out. And what is it? It is an arrangement for the survival of the race.

The Hen

Just look at the hen and see how anxious it is to lay the eggs and to bring forth the chicks although it has neither any particular nest nor the eggs from the same stock. It clucks, it expands its feathers, it gives up its nourishment, unless it is given eggs to sit on and to bring forth the chicks, why? It is so to preserve the race. Had it not been instinctively ordained, who could have obliged it for the preservation of the race, although it has no intellectual or reasoning faculty?

Just look to the composition of the egg and the white and the yellow matters inside it. One part is for the chick to be constituted while the other is to serve it as its nourishment till such time as it leaves the egg. Just see how the ingenuity underlying it as the composition of the chick was to be carried on safely

within the shell without allowing any exterior disturbance, its nourishment was provided within it which is sufficient till it gets out. A person who is imprisoned security without any approach to him is provided with enough food to suffice him till his release.

The Birds Crop

Just consider the bird's crop and the ingenuity underlying it. The stomach is approached by a narrow tube to allow nourishment to reach it in small quantities. Without the crop, the grain would have taken time to reach the stomach. The bird in its far-sightedness fills up its crop hastily. Its crop is constructed on the pattern of the haversack suspended in front of it, so that it may fill up hastily with whatever it gets, then slowly transfers it to the stomach.

There is another advantage in the crop. Certain birds have to transfer food material to their young ones. The crop helps them to transfer it easily.

The Birds Feather

Sonic people of this materialistic school claim that the variegated hues and the constitutions of the birds are merely due to the compounding of elements and humours in varied proportions. They are not due to any particular design.

This ornamentation which you see in the peacock or the partridge and the perfect symmetry, as if some artist with a fine brush has accomplished the art of picturesque. How can this irrational compounding bring it forth without any flaw? If these artistic models came into being without the Almighty Artist, how could this symmetry and uniformity be maintained?

Just look closely at the feathers of a bird, you will find it like cloth woven with fine strings. One hair is interwoven with another just as one piece of thread is interwoven with another. Look at its composition. If you open it, it opens up without being split to allow air to be filled in and to allow the bird to fly when it likes. Within the feather you will find a stout stick covered with hair-like material so that because of its stoutness, it holds them. The stick is hollow within so as not to be a burden to the bird and hinder its flight.

The Long Legged Birds

Have you ever seen the long-legged bird and ever thought of the advantage it has of the long legs?

It is often found at comparatively shallow water. You will find it as if it is keeping watch at the spot standing on its long legs. It keeps watching; the movements in the water. When it finds anything; edible, it slowly moves to it and catches hold of its victim. If its legs had been shorter, its belly would have touched water in its movements towards its victim and it might have swelled and failed to catch its victim.

It has therefore been gifted with two long props to fulfil its need without any obstacle.

The Provision of Food

Just consider other pieces of skill that have gone into the build of birds. You will find every long-legged bird possessed of a long neck as well to enable it to pick up its food from the ground. It sometimes happens that a long beak is made to serve the purpose of a long neck leading to the required facilities.

Do you not see that whatever creation you consider, you will find it exact and full of ingenuity?

Look at those herbs which these birds seek after during the day. It never happens that they don't find them but nor do they find it collected in one place. They obtain them by searching and moving about. This same situation prevails in the case of other creatures.

Glory be to the Almighty Allah who has apportioned sustenance and arranged in different ways to supply it.

It is not so arranged as to be out of reach by the creatures who need it nor has it been arranged to easy of access as to be obtained without any efforts, for that would have been useless if food had been obtained in inexhaustible quantities at any one place the animals would have glutted, never leaving the place, leading to indigestion and destruction.

Men too, because of plentifulness, would have succumbed to conceit and pride with consequent mischief and evil doings."

The Night Birds

The Imam (as) asked me, "Do you know about the birds like the owl and the bat, which only come out at night, and about their food material?"

I replied, "I do not know." He (as) said, "The food of these consists of those varied kinds of insects scattered in the atmosphere, e.g. the mosquitoes, the moth, the locust-shaped insects and spiders etc. They are always present in the atmosphere, no place is free from them. When you light a lamp at night on the roof or in the compound, many of such kind of insects gather around it.

Where do they come from? Surely from near about they come. If anyone says that they come from the forests and fields, he will be answered with the query as to how they reach so soon and how can they see the lamp lit inside a building surrounded by many other buildings, while as a matter of fact they take no time to come round the lamp. It is clear from this that all these are scattered everywhere in the atmosphere and the birds that come out at night catch hold of them and feed on them.

See how nourishment is arranged for the birds that come out at night by means of such insects,

scattered in the atmosphere.

Try to understand the purpose of the creation of such living creatures, lest some one may consider that they are created in vain without any advantage.

The bat is a strange creature, midway between a bird and a quadruped, in fact more akin to a quadruped, with two protruding ears, teeth and fine hair. It gives birth to its young ones, whom it feeds on its milk. It urinates and excretes. It moves on all fours. All these traits are contrary to those of birds. It comes out only at night and feeds on insects scattered in the atmosphere.

Some say it does not eat anything; but lives only on cool air as nourishment.

This is incorrect for two reasons, for it urinates and excretes, which presupposes solid food. Then it possesses teeth, if it did not have to eat, the teeth would be useless, whereas there is nothing; in creation which is useless.

This creature has well-known merits. Its excreta is mixed with other things. Its strange constitution is in itself a wonder. It flits about as it will for its own benefit – a sign of the Great Omnipotence of the Almighty Allah.

The weaver bird builds its nest on the trees sometimes. If it sees a big snake aiming at its nest, it gets worried. It looks about for means of safety. As soon as it comes across a thorny seed, it picks it up and throws from above into the open mouth of the snake, The snake begins to writhe and convulses into death.

If I had not spoken to you of this, could you have imagined that a thorny seed could have such benefits, or could any one think that a bird, big or small, could hit upon such a plan?

Learn a lesson from this. There are many other things with unknown benefits, *which require* the description of new events or news to be known.

The Bee

Just consider the bee and the concerted efforts to produce honey and the hexagonal hive, and the subtleties of instinct that subsists therein. You will find it extremely wonderful and subtle, when you consider its workings. You will find their manufacture to be magnificent and of fine use for men.

And when you look at the artisan, you will find it devoid of intelligence, incapable of knowing itself, what to say of others.

There is thus a clear argument in this that the exactitude in skill and ingenuity is not due to the bee but due to the Omnipotence of Him, Who has created it on such pattern and appointed it to the service of men.

The Locusts

Just look at the locust – how weak, yet how strong. No one would be able to protect himself against a swarm of locusts, if they invade a town.

Don't you know that if any of the monarchs of the whole earth comes out with his armies and depends on to fight the locusts, he would not succeed?

Is not this an argument demonstrative of the Omnipotence of the Almighty Allah, that the strongest of His creation would be unable to withstand the attack of the weakest of His creatures? Look at how they cover the entire earth like a flood, spreading over the mountain, the desert, the plain and the town, all in one, so that its swarm intercepts even the slight of the sun.

Now calculate how many years would have been required to manufacture such a swarm with the hand.

The Almighty Allah has given hereby another proof of His Omnipotence, which nothing can minimise and to which nothing can be redundant.

The Fish

Just consider the fish and the proprieties that subsist under the circumstances it is ordained to continue to lead its life. It has no legs, since its residence is in water and it does not need to walk. It has no lungs, as it cannot breathe. It is kept under the surface of water.

Instead of legs, it is endowed with stout fins with which it pierces the water on both sides; just as a boatman cuts ~~~~~ on both sides of the boat with his oars. It has a covering of thick scales, interlocked with each other like the links of a coat of mail to protect itself against the accidents. It has a penetrating faculty of smell, as compensation for a weak eyesight blurred by water. It smells its material from a distance and makes for it. How else could it have learnt the whereabouts and nature of the food material? And, know too, that it has orifices all along the mouth to the ears, through which water passes and gives it the same recreative exuberation as is derived by other animals by breathing in fresh cool morning breeze.

Now, consider its reproductive characteristics. The number of eggs inside the fish is beyond computation. The reason is to increase the food potentials of other living beings, for most others live on fish at the edges of water pools, amidst the bushes. As soon as a fish passes by, they pounce upon it. Since the beasts prey on fish, the birds, the men and even other fish, matters have been so planned as to keep up the numbers of fish.

Just consider the variegated kinds of animals, the shells, aquatic life and different species of fish, to get an idea of the vast ingenuity of the Almighty Allah on the one hand and the puny nature of the knowledge thereof possessed by the creatures. They are limitless in number, nor can their merits be

known, except that man may come by them one after the other through opportunities that may arise.

As an example the Cochineal, the colour of it was learnt by men through, it is stated, a bitch roaming on the sea-shore, having found and eaten Halzoon (an insect possessing colour). Its mouth got coloured. The colour fascinated the people who began using the cochineal insect as a dye. There are several other things of which the characteristics become known from time to time to the people."

It was afternoon. My Master rose for prayers, telling me to come to him early next morning. I came back doubly pleased with the gift of instruction in knowledge I had received from him.

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