"And We Made from Water Every Living Thing": Quran 21:30 as a Scientific Miracle

Introduction

The Quranic verse in Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:30, reads:

أولم ير الذين كفروا أن السماوات والأرض كانتا رتقا ففتقناهما وجعلنا من الماء كل شيء حي أفلا يؤمنون

"**Do not those who disbelieve see that the heavens and the earth were joined together before We clove them asunder, and We made from water every living thing? Will they not then believe?**" (Quran 21:30).

This verse presents two major signs of Allah's creative power: the initial joining and subsequent separation of the heavens and the earth, and the fundamental role of water in sustaining all life. When examined through the lens of modern scientific discovery, these statements reveal remarkable alignment with contemporary understanding of cosmology and biology—knowledge that was entirely unavailable at the time of the Quran's revelation in the 7th century CE.

The Joining and Separation of the Heavens and the Earth

The first part of the verse concerns the heavens and the earth being "joined together" (*ratq*) and then "separated" (*fatq*). The source presents several interpretations, each offering profound insights.

Cosmological Origin and the Big Bang Theory

The cosmological-origin interpretation reads the verse as describing the universe's beginning from a single, undifferentiated mass that was then separated, producing the heavens, the earth, and the celestial bodies. In this reading, *ratq* ("joined together") means the heavens and the earth were initially a single, fused, or undifferentiated mass. *Fatq* ("then We clove them asunder") means that this mass was opened, split, or separated, giving rise to distinct celestial bodies such as stars and planets.

This perspective resonates with modern scientific theories about the origin of the universe, potentially referencing the Big Bang theory, which postulates an initial explosion. It also says the universe continues to expand.

Modern cosmology holds that approximately 13.8 billion years ago, the entire universe was concentrated in an extremely hot, dense state—a singularity—before expanding rapidly. This initial expansion, commonly known as the Big Bang, led to the formation of subatomic particles, then atoms, and eventually stars, galaxies, and planets. The Quranic description of the heavens and earth being "joined together" before being "cloven asunder" aligns remarkably with this scientific model of cosmic origins.

Several Quranic verses and traditions are used to support this interpretation:

Quran 41:11. The Quran describes the heaven as "smoke" at an early stage. Since the earth and the heavens above were formed from this same "smoke," they were initially one connected entity. This supports the idea of a primordial unified mass that later separated. Modern astrophysics confirms that the early universe consisted of a hot, opaque plasma—effectively a cosmic "smoke"—from which all matter eventually condensed.

Quran 79:29–30. The process of forming the earth and then raising the sky after the initial creation of primary elements. This is presented as a detailed explanation of the "joining" and "separation" at a fundamental level.

The account of Abu Ja'far. Abu Ja'far provides an elaborate account of initial creation: Allah first created water, from which He created things; from water He created the wind, which caused foam to swirl; from the foam, the "pure white land" was created. Subsequently, Allah created fire from water, leading to smoke, from which the "clear and pure sky" was formed. This sequence implies an initial state of fundamental elements—water, wind, fire/smoke—from which the earth and sky were then shaped and established as distinct entities.

> محمد عن أحمد بن محمد عن ابن محبوب عن العلاء بن رزين عن محمد بن مسلم و الحجال عن العلاء عن محمد بن مسلم قال قال لي أبو جعفر (عليه السلام) كان كل شيء ماء و كان عرشه على الماء فأمر الله عز ذكره الماء فاضطرم نارا ثم أمر النار فخمدت فارتفع من خمودها دخان فخلق الله السماوات من ذلك الدخان و خلق الأرض من الرماد ثم اختصم الماء و النار و الريح فقال الماء أنا جند الله الأكبر و قالت الريح أنا جند الله الأكبر و قالت النار أنا جند الله الأكبر فأوحى الله عز و جل إلى الريح أنت جندي الأكبر .
>
> Muhammad, from Ahmad Bin Muhammad, from Ibn Mahboub, from Al-A’ala Bin Razeyn, from Muhammad Bin Muslim and Al-Hajjaal, from Al-A’ala, from Muhammad Bin Muslim who said: Abu Ja’far (asws) said to me: ‘**Everything used to be water, and His (azwj) Throne used to be on the water. So Allah (azwj) Mighty is His (azwj) Mention Commanded the water, so a fire was**

ignited. Then He (azwj) Commanded the fire, so it was extinguished and smoke arose from its subsidence. So Allah (azwj) Created the Heavens from that smoke, and Created the earth from the ash. Then the water, and the fire, and the wind quarrelled. So the water said, 'I am the greatest army of Allah (azwj)', and the wind said, 'I am the greatest army of Allah (azwj), and the fire said, 'I am the greatest army of Allah (azwj). So Allah (azwj) Mighty and Majestic Revealed unto the wind: "You are My (azwj) greatest army'.

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 8) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 68, Hadith #1

This sequence implies an initial state of fundamental elements—water, wind, fire/smoke—from which the earth and sky were then shaped and established as distinct entities.

Creation in "six periods" and the expanding heavens. Allah created the heavens and the earth in "six periods," and that the heavens are built with might and are expanding. The expansion motif is consistent with the cosmological interpretation: after the initial separation, the universe continues to expand. This aligns with the scientific discovery of cosmic expansion, first observed by Edwin Hubble in 1929, which showed that galaxies are moving away from each other, indicating an expanding universe.

- **Concept of Heavenly Days:** The heavenly yardstick for time differs from the earthly one. A "day" in the context of creation can be equivalent to a thousand years of human reckoning, or even range between 1,000 and 50,000 years. This understanding aligns with modern scientific estimates regarding the age of the Earth and the Sun, which span millions of years.
- **Gradual Process:** The creation was a gradual process, not an instantaneous event. The universe underwent a series of changes before reaching its present state. This gradual evolution is a fundamental law applicable to all material things in the world, which naturally change and pass through different stages to become perfect phenomena.

Expanding Heavens and Cosmological Interpretation

The Quran also describes the nature of the heavens as being built with might by Allah's hand, and that He is the one who expands it. This concept of "expanding heavens" is consistent with modern cosmological interpretations.

- **Primary Nebula:** The Quranic reference to the heaven being "smoke" before its formation (Surah Fussilat Quran 41:11) is interpreted as referring to a gaseous material with particles suspended in it. This description corresponds to the scientific concept of a "Primary Nebula," which is thought to have consisted of hydrogen and helium, serving as the raw material for the universe.
- **Separation of Heavens and Earth:** The Quran also mentions that the heavens and the earth were initially joined together as one unit before being separated by Allah, further illustrating the transformative stages of creation.

  Thus, Islamic tradition and Quranic verses present a detailed account of creation, emphasizing its sequential and gradual nature, the vastness of the time involved, and the dynamic state of the universe, including the expansion of the heavens.

Substance Differentiation

Another view holds that earthly and heavenly substances were initially uniform and later diversified into various compounds, resulting in the rich variety of life forms and natural elements. In this view, *ratq* refers to the primordial uniformity of substances, and *fatq* refers to their later differentiation into the rich variety of plants, animals, and natural elements. This differentiation allowed for the appearance of a wide array of plants, animals, and other created beings, each with its own special system, effects, and properties, and that these distinct systems are powerful signs of Allah's infinite knowledge, glory, and might.

Several Quranic verses reinforce this theme of unity followed by differentiation:

- Quran 24:45 states: "**Allah has created every [living] creature from water. And of them are those that move on their bellies, and of them are those that walk on two legs, and of them are those that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent**." This presents a single origin—water—and then describes diverse forms of animal life.
- Quran 41:39 says: "**And of His signs is that you see the earth stilled, but when We send down upon it rain, it quivers and grows. Indeed, He who has given it life is the Giver of Life to the dead. Indeed, He is over all**

things competent." Water causes the earth to stir and swell and to bring forth vegetation, producing diverse kinds of vegetation and crops of varying hues.

- Quran 6:99 is cited as describing fruits and plants, including "**And it is He who sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby the growth of all things. We produce from it greenery from which We produce grains arranged in layers. And from the palm trees - of its emerging fruit are clusters hanging low. And [We produce] gardens of grapevines and olives and pomegranates, similar yet varied. Look at [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening. Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe**."
- Quran 45:3–5 and Quran 6:38 are cited to show the vast diversity of animal life. Allah spreads abroad of animals "**Indeed, within the heavens and earth are signs for the believers. And in the creation of yourselves and what He disperses of moving creatures are signs for people who are certain [in faith]. And [in] the alternation of night and day and [in] what Allah sends down from the sky of provision and gives life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and [in His] directing of the winds are signs for a people who reason**." (Quran 45:3–5), and that "**there is no animal that walks upon the earth nor a bird that flies with its two wings but they are genera like yourselves**" (Quran 6:38).
- Quran 79:29–30 is mentioned in connection with the formation of the earth and the raising of the sky, and the account of Abu Ja'far (as above).

The creation of man from *tin* (mud) is also noted. Since mud is a mixture of water and dust, this implies a combination or differentiation of substances in the creation of human beings.

The Creation of Man from Dust, Water, and Clay:

The Quranic descriptions of human creation from dust, water, and clay elucidate a multi-staged process, emphasizing both the material origins and the divine power and purpose behind human existence. These terms are not contradictory but rather complementary, describing different phases or aspects of creation.

Quranic Descriptions of Human Origin

The Quran uses several interrelated terms to describe the origin of humanity:

Dust (Turab): This term emphasizes the earthly material origin, particularly for Adam. The creation of Adam from dust highlights that humanity is intrinsically a part of the earth and originates from its basic material.

Clay or Mud (Tin, Hama, Salsal): This signifies dust that has been combined with water. Mud is formed through the combination of dust and water, indicating a material mixture in the creation of the human being. The Quran mentions the creation of man from sounding clay from mud moulded into shape and from wet earth. "**And certainly did We create man from an extract of clay**." (Quran 23:12) "**And We did certainly create man out of clay from an altered black mud**." (Quran 15:26). Narrations also describe Adam's creation from dust and water, where various kinds of earth and water were combined and kneaded to prepare a lump of clay, which was then molded into a figure.

"Salsaal" (sounding clay) is also mentioned as the material from which Allah created human beings.

Water (Ma): Water's essential role is highlighted in the creation of living beings and in the continuation of human life. The Quran states, "**And We made every living thing out of water**." (Quran 21:30). It describes the creation of man from "**water pouring forth**" (Quran 86:6) and states, " **And it is He who has created from water a human being and made him [a relative by] lineage and marriage. And ever is your Lord competent [concerning creation]**." (Quran 25:54). This emphasizes the importance of water in the creation of life and Allah's omnipotence.

رسول اللهۖ (صلي الله عليه و آله) : كل شيء خلق من ماء

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his family) said: ‘**Everything has been created from water**.’

— Kanz al-’Ummal, no. 15119

These descriptions are seen as complementary. For instance, Adam's creation began from clay, while his progeny proceeded from "**Then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging**." (Quran 23:13). This sequence signifies a movement from a basic earthly material (dust combined with water) to the biological stages of human reproduction.

Stages of Creation

The Quran outlines a detailed process of human creation, particularly regarding the development of progeny:

1. **Initial Substance:** Beginning from dust, clay, or an extract of clay. "**And certainly did We create man from an extract of clay**." (Quran 23:12), which is seen as the first mixture of creation. Narrations elaborate that Allah collected samples of dust from various types of soil and added water to form a lump of clay.

2. **Seed/Fluid:** The initial substance is then placed as a drop (of seed) in a safe lodging. "**Then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging**." (Quran 23:13). Other verses mention creation from a "small seed," a "small life-germ uniting itself," or a "gushing fluid."

3. **Developmental Stages:** This drop then progresses through several stages:
    - A clot (congealed blood).
    - A little lump of flesh.
    - Bones are formed within the lump.
    - The bones are clothed with flesh.

4. **Another Creation:** Finally, Allah "**produced it as another creation**" (Quran 23:14), signifying the fully formed human being into whom Allah breathes His spirit.

It is emphasized that Adam's creation was distinct from his descendants, as he was not born through the coupling of a man and woman. Allah fashioned him and "**breathed into him of My spirit**" (Quran 15:29).

Significance of the Creation

The Quranic descriptions of human creation from dust, water, and clay hold profound significance:

Earthly Origin and Humility: Creation from dust and clay highlights humanity's earthly material origin, reminding individuals of their "lowly origins." This underscores that Allah is the sole creator and manager of human affairs and that human existence is limited to a specific term decreed by Allah.

Divine Power and Wisdom: The transformation of simple materials like dust and water into a complex human being, culminating in "**the best stature**" (Quran 95:4), demonstrates Allah's absolute power and wisdom. It shows His ability to create from nothing and to perfect His creation. The Quran mentions that Allah created humanity in the best of forms from humble beginnings.

Spiritual Dimension: After the physical form is fashioned, Allah breathes His spirit into man. This "Divine Grace" is inherent in every human being and is considered the cause of human dignity and honor, distinguishing humanity from other creatures. This spiritual aspect enables humans to proceed on the path of perfection.

Purpose and Accountability: Humanity was created with a purpose and with an inherent recognition of Allah as the Creator. Humans are granted the blessing of freedom to choose between good and evil and are accountable to Allah.

Connection to Resurrection: The creation of humans from dust and water demonstrates Allah's power to bring forth life from non-living matter, serving as a powerful reminder of His capability to resurrect the dead. "**O People, if you should be in doubt about the Resurrection, then [consider that] indeed, We created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a clinging clot, and then from a lump of flesh, formed and unformed - that We may show you. And We settle in the wombs whom We will for a specified term, then We bring you out as a child, and then [We develop you] that you may reach your [time of] maturity. And among you is he who is taken in [early] death, and among you is he who is returned to the most decrepit [old] age so that he knows, after [once having] knowledge, nothing. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down upon it rain, it quivers and swells and grows [something] of every beautiful kind**." (Quran 22:5)

Obedience and Submission: The clay from which man is created is described as soft and adaptable, symbolizing obedience and submission to Allah's will, which is the essence of Islam and the spiritual destiny of humans.

Shared Origin and Bonds: Narrations indicate that Adam was created from water and clay, linking the ambition of his descendants to these elements. The concept of shared clay also explains bonds, such as a freed slave (mawla)

محم د بن عيل بن الحسين، اقل: قيل للصادق)عليه السالم(: لم قلتم: مولى الرجل منه؟ فقال: النه خلق من طينته، ثم .فرق بينهما، فرد ه السبي اليه، فعطف عليه ما كان فيه منه، افعتقه ؛ فلذلك هو منه

Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Al-Hussein said: It was said to Al-Sadiq (peace be upon him): Why do you say a man's mawla is from him? He said: **Because he was created from his clay, then they were separated, then captivity returned him to him, so he showed him kindness due to what was in him from him, and freed him; therefore he is from him**.

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 23, Section 1, Chapter 35, Hadith 29111

Special Creation of Prophets and Believers: Islamic tradition states that prophets are created from the most sacred clay, and believers from a "stickier kind of clay," suggesting a special connection and a relationship of roots and branches.

ـ علي بن إبراهيم عن أبيه عن ابن محبوب عن صالح بن سهل قال قلت لأبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) جعلت فداك من أي شيء خلق الله عز وجل طينة المؤمن فقال من طينة الأنبياء فلم تنجس أبدا.

Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from ibn Mahbub from Salih ibn Sahl who has said that I asked abu Abu ‘Abdillah (peace be upon him) the following: “May Allah keep my soul of service to you, from what kind of material has Allah, the Majestic, the Glorious, created the clay of the believers? He then replied, ‘**He has created them with the clay from which the prophets were made. Thus, they never become unclean**.’”

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 2) by Shaykh MuHammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 1, Hadith #3

In essence, the Quranic accounts of human creation from dust, water, and clay provide a holistic view of human origins, encompassing physical development, divine intervention, spiritual endowment, and ultimate purpose, all within the framework of Allah's omnipotence.

Origin of the First Human (Adam)

The creation of Adam is described using several terms for different forms or states of clay and earth, emphasizing a miraculous and direct act of creation distinct from subsequent human reproduction.

Primary Substances

Dust (turab) and Earth (al-ard): The initial material for human creation is often mentioned as al-ard (earth) or turab (dust). The process begins with Allah sending water upon the clay, molding it, and creating Adam from it. Islamic tradition further elaborates that four clays were brought by the angel Jibra'il from the crust of the earth and mixed with four types of water (fresh, salty, bitter, stinky).

Water (ma): Water is integral to the formation of clay. It is stated that Allah collected clay from various types of earth (hard, soft, sweet, sour), which He then mixed with water until it became pure and gluey. Imam al-Baqir (peace be upon him) stated,

الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام) : أول شيء خلقه من خلقه الشيء الذي جميع الأشياء منه ، وهو الماء

Imam Mohammad al-Baqir (peace be upon him) said, ‘**The first thing that He created from His creation was the substance that all things come from, and that is water**.’

— al-Tawhid, p. 68, no. 20

Clay (Tin): The combination of dust and water results in Tin (clay). The Quran states, "**He it is Who created you from clay**." (Quran 6:2). The significance of clay is highlighted as a soft and adaptable substance, symbolizing obedience and submission.

Stages of Clay Transformation

Dark, Foul-Smelling Clay (Hama): The initial mixture of dust and water forms Hama, described as a dark, foul-smelling clay.

Refined and Sticky Clay (Tin lazib): This Hama is then refined, strained, kneaded, and dried, becoming Tin lazib, which is sticky clay ready to be fashioned.

Resounding Clay (salsal): The final stage mentioned for Adam's creation is salsal, described as dry, raw clay that gives forth a sound when blown into or tapped, similar to pottery or ceramic. The Quran states, "**And certainly We created man of clay that gives forth sound, of black mud fashioned in shape**." (Quran 15:26). This refers to salsal min Hama masnun (raw clay, of black mud moulded).

Fashioning and the Divine Spirit

After the clay was molded into a figure and dried until it became salsal, Allah "**fashioned him (in due proportion unto him) and breathed into him of My spirit**." (Quran 15:29), (Quran 38:72) This infusion of the divine spirit (Ruh) gave Adam life and signifies humanity's unique dignity and honor.

The creation of Adam was unique in that he was not born through the coupling of a man and woman.

Origin of Human Progeny (Subsequent Generations)

The Quran describes the creation of Adam's descendants as a process of biological development, beginning with an extract of clay and evolving through specific stages within the womb.

Initial Substance (from an Extract of Clay/Water)

Extract of Clay: Humans were created from an "**extract of clay**" (Quran 23:12), also referred to as a quintessence of clay. This implies a refined essence derived from the original clay.

Water / Semen / Seed: The progeny is described as being created from an extract of water, a drop of fluid, a seed, sperm seminal fluid, or gushing fluid. It is also mentioned as a mixture of male and female sexual discharge. These phrases highlight the role of bodily fluids, ultimately derived from food and water, in human reproduction. It is stated that humanity originated from dust, and then was transformed into semen, and God created man from dust and then made his progeny from an extract of water.

Stages of Embryonic Development

Drop (nuTfah): The journey begins with a drop (of seed) placed in a receptacle secure.

Clinging Clot (alaqah): This drop is then "fashioned... a clot," referring to a clinging clot or congealed blood.

Lump of Flesh (mudghah): The clot is then fashioned into a lump of flesh or bitesize tissue, which may be formed or unformed.

Bones (iẓam): From the lump of flesh, "bones" are formed.

Clothed with Flesh (laHm): The bones are then "clothed with flesh."

Another Creation: Finally, Allah "produced it as another creation." This final stage involves the breathing of the soul, culminating in a complete human being with distinct faculties. The Quran states: "**Verily we created man from a product of wet earth; then placed him as a drop (of seed) in a safe lodging; then fashioned we the drop a clot, then fashioned we the little lump bones, then clothed the bones with flesh, and then produced it as another creation. So blessed be God. the fairest of creators**!" (23:12-14)

Reconciling Different Descriptions

The various Quranic descriptions of human origin and substances (dust, clay, mud, water, semen, clot, etc.) are not contradictory. Instead, they illustrate different stages, aspects, or origins in the comprehensive process of human creation:

Sequential Stages: The creation of human beings progresses through a series of stages, each material or state representing a particular phase.

محمد بن يحيى عن أحمد بن محمد و علي بن إبراهيم عن أبيه عن ابن محبوب عن ابن رئاب عن زرارة بن أعين قال سمعت أبا جعفر (عليه السلام) يقول إذا وقعت النطفة في الرحم استقرت

فيها أربعين يوما و تكون علقة أربعين يوما و تكون مضغة أربعين يوما ثم يبعث الله ملكين خلاقين فيقال لهما اخلقا كما يريد الله ذكرا أو أنثى صوراه و اكتبا أجله و رزقه و منيته و شقيا أو سعيدا و اكتبا لله الميثاق الذي أخذه عليه في الذر بين عينيه فإذا دنا خروجه من بطن أمه بعث الله إليه ملكا يقال له زاجر فيزجره فيفزع فزعا فينسى الميثاق و يقع إلى الأرض يبكي من زجرة الملك .

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad and Ali ibn Ibrahim has narrated from his father from ibn Mahbub from ibn Ri'ab from Zurarah ibn ' A'yan who has said the following: "I once heard abu Ja'far (peace be upon him), saying, '**When the seed falls in the womb it settles there for forty days, remains as a clot for forty days and as an embryo for another forty days. Allah then sends two creative angels with instruction to create him, as Allah wants it to be. It can be a male or a female. They shape him and write down the duration of his life, the time of his death, that he is a fortunate or unfortunate. The two must write down between his eyes the covenant of Allah, which He has taken from him in the condition of being particles. When the time for his coming out from the belly of his mother draws near; Allah sends an angel called admonisher who admonishes him that sends him into shock. He forgets the covenant and falls on the ground weeping because of the admonition of the angel**?"

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 6) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqūb al-Kulayni, Book 1, Chapter 6, Hadith #7

Initial vs. Progeny Creation: The initial creation of Adam from clay was a direct, miraculous act. The subsequent creation of his progeny involves a biological process that begins with an "extract of clay" (linking back to Adam) and develops through seminal fluid (originating from water and food) into a fully formed human.

Confirmation by Modern Science: These stages comply with modern science and are confirmed in embryology, suggesting a harmony between divine revelation and scientific observation regarding human development.

Practical Lessons

The descriptions of human origin convey profound lessons about humanity's relationship with Allah:

Humility and Purpose: Starting from humble substances like dust and clay, humans are reminded of their physical origins, fostering humility. Yet, the elaborate process and the breathing of Allah's Spirit emphasize the purposeful and dignified nature of human existence.

Allah's Omnipotence and Wisdom: The intricate and sequential stages of creation demonstrate Allah's ultimate power, design, and wisdom in bringing forth complex life from seemingly simple elements.

The Special Status of Humanity: The divine act of breathing the Spirit into Adam and the detailed, careful development of human beings underscore humanity's unique status and responsibility among creation. Allah is described as the "**Best of creators**" due to the special care given to human creation.

Hadith Narrations on Human Creation

Narration from Al-Kafi on the Prohibition of Eating Clay

عدة من أصحابنا عن أحمد بن محمد عن الحسن بن علي عن هشام بن سالم عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) قال إن الله عز و جل خلق آدم من الطين فحرم أكل الطين على ذريته .

A number of our people have narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad from al-Hassan ibn Ali from Hisham ibn Salim who has said the following: “Abu ‘Abd Allah (peace be upon him), has said that **Allah, most Majestic, most Glorious, created Adam from clay and has made it unlawful for his offspring to eat clay**.’”

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 6) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 5, Chapter 18, Hadith #4

Narration from Al-Kafi on the Creation of Adam and Eve

أبان عن الواسطي عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) قال إن الله خلق آدم (عليه السلام) من الماء والطين فهمة ابن آدم في الماء والطين وخلق حواء من آدم فهمة النساء في الرجال فحصنوهن في البيوت.

Aban has narrated from al-Wasitiy who has said the following: “Abu ‘Abd Allah (peace be upon him), has said, ‘**Allah created Adam from water and clay so the ambition of the sons of Adam is in water and clay. He created Eve from Adam so the ambition of women is for men and their fortress is in the houses**.’”

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 5) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqūb al-Kulayni, Book 3, Chapter 19, Hadith #4

Narration from Man La YaHduruh al-Faqih on the Mawla

و قيل للصادق عليه السلام لم قلتم مولى الرجل منه قال لأنه خلق من طينه ثم فرق بينهما فرده السبي إليه فعطف عليه ما كان فيه منه فأعتقه فلذلك هو منه.

It was said to Imam Jafar ibn Muhammad Al-Sadiq (peace be upon him): Why do you say that a man's mawla (freed slave) is considered to be from him?

Imam (peace be upon him) said: **Because he was created from his clay, then they were separated, and captivity brought him back to him. So, he showed**

compassion for what was in him (the shared origin) and freed him. Therefore, he is considered to be from him.

— Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih (Vol. 3) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 49, Hadith #2

The Quranic accounts of human creation from dust, water, and clay provide a comprehensive view of human origins, encompassing physical development, divine intervention, spiritual endowment, and ultimate purpose, all within the framework of Allah's omnipotence. These descriptions are not contradictory but rather complementary, illustrating different stages and aspects of the creative process. They emphasize humanity's earthly origins, the divine power and wisdom behind creation, the spiritual dimension bestowed upon humanity, and the purpose and accountability inherent in human existence.

Heaven, Earth, Rain, and Sustenance

عن الحسين بن علوان، عن جعفر، عن أبيه اقل: اقل رسول هللا)صل هللا عليه وآله(: إن الرزق لينزل من السماء إلى األرض .عل عدد قطر المطر إلى كل نفس بما قدر لها، ولكن هلل فضول افسألوا هللا من فضله

From Al-Hussein bin Alwan, from Ja'far, from his father who said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: **Indeed, provision descends from the sky to the earth equal to the number of raindrops, to each soul according to what is decreed for it, but Allah has excess, so ask Allah from His bounty. Shaykh Hurr Amili: What indicates this has preceded in persistence and other matters, and what indicates it will come, and the transmitted supplications for seeking provision are very numerous**.

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 7, Section 2, Chapter 48, Hadith 8904

حدثنا محمد بن القاسم الأسترآبادي، قال: حدثنا يوسف بن محمد بن زياد وعلي بن محمد بن سيار عن أبويهما، عن الحسن بن علي، عن أبيه، علي بن محمد، عن أبيه محمد بن علي، عن أبيه علي بن موسى الرضا، عن أبيه موسى بن جعفر عن أبيه جعفر بن محمد، عن أبيه محمد بن علي، عن أبيه علي بن الحسين عليهم السلام في قول الله عز وجل: (الذي جعل لكم الأرض فراشا) قال: جعلها ملائمة لطبائعكم موافقة لأجسادكم، لم يجعلها شديدة الحمى والحرارة فتحرقكم، ولا شديدة البرد فتجمدكم، ولا شديدة طيب الريح فتصدع هاماتكم، ولا شديدة النتن فتعطبكم، ولا شديدة اللين كالماء فتغرقكم، ولا شديدة الصلابة فتمتنع عليكم في دوركم و أبنيتكم وقبور

موتاكم، ولكنه عز وجل جعل فيها من المتانة ما تنتفعون به و تتماسكون وتتماسك عليها أبدانكم وبنيانكم، وجعل فيها ما تنقاد به لدوركم و قبوركم وكثير من منافعكم فلذلك جعل الأرض فراشا لكم، ثم قال عز وجل (والسماء بناء) أي سقفا من فوقكم محفوظا، يدير فيها شمسها وقمرها ونجومها لمنافعكم، ثم قال عز وجل: (وأنزل من السماء ماء) يعني المطر نزله من العلي ليبلغ قلل جبالكم وتلالكم وهضابكم وأوهادكم، ثم فرقة رذاذا ووابلا وهطلا وطلا لتنشفه أرضوكم، ولم يجعل ذلك المطر نازلا عليكم قطعة واحدة فيفسد أرضيكم وأشجاركم وزروعكم وثماركم، ثم قال عز وجل: (فأخرج به من الثمرات رزقا لكم فلا تجعلوا لله أندادا) أي أشباها وأمثالا من الأصنام التي لا تعقل ولا تسمع ولا تبصر ولا تقدر على شئ (وأنتم تعلمون) أنها لا تقدر على شئ من هذه النعم الجليلة التي أنعمها عليكم ربكم تبارك وتعالى.

Muhammad ibn al-Qasim al-Astarabadi said: Yusuf ibn Muhammad ibn Ziyad and `ali ibn Muhammad ibn Sayyar both said, on the authority of their father, on the authority of al-Hasan ibn `Ali, on the authority of his father `Ali ibn Muhammad, on the authority of his father Muhammad ibn `Ali, on the authority of his father, `Ali ibn Musa al-Rida, on the authority of his father Musa ibn Ja`far, on the authority of his father Ja`far ibn Muhammad, on the authority of his father Muhammad ibn `Ali that His father, `Ali ibn al-Husayn, was asked to interpret the Word of Allah, the Mighty and High: **Who made the Earth a resting place for you**. He said **He made it suitable for your nature and in harmony with your bodies. He did not make it severely hot and warm so it may burn you, nor severely cold so it may freeze you. Neither did He make it severely perfumed to give you headaches, nor did He make it terribly foul-smelling so it may sicken you. He neither made it severely soft like water so it may drown you, nor did He make it severely hard so it may obstruct you from making houses, buildings, and graves for your deceased. However, Allah, the Mighty and High, made it with firmness so that you could benefit form it, enabling your bodies to walk upon it and your houses to hold together. He placed in it soft soil so that you could build your homes upon it, dig graves, and so that you could find other benefits. This is why He made the earth a resting place for you. Then the Mighty and high said: Heaven a canopy, i.e. a protecting roof over you, where its sun, moon and stars rotate for your benefit. The Mighty and High then said: And (Who sends down water from heaven, i.e. the rain which He sends down form a height so that I may reach the highest points of the mountains, the hills, the elevations, and the**

low-lying land. Then He separated the rain into drizzle, shower, heavy downpour, and sprinkles so that he earth could better absorb it. He did not sent the rain down in one shot, as that would have destroyed our lands, trees, field and fruits. Then the Mighty and High said: Then brings forth with it subsistence for you of the fruits; therefore, do not set up rivals to Allah, i.e. Images or idols, which cannot think, hear, see, and do not have power over anything. While you know, that they do not have power over the magnificent bounties which your Lord, the Blessed and Exalted, ha blessed you with.

— Al-Tawhid by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 2, Chapter 62, Hadith #11

Meteorological and Botanical Function

A more observable interpretation is that "joining" meant the absence of rain from the heavens and the inability of the earth to produce vegetation. Allah then caused the heavens to "separate" by sending down rain and the earth to "separate" by bringing forth plants.

Traditions from the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon him) support this meaning, connecting it to direct observation of how rain facilitates growth. When the heavens and the earth were "opened," it allowed for rain to fall from the sky and for grain to grow from the earth, providing sustenance. Imam Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) clarified that "closed up" meant the sky was not sending down rain, and the earth was not growing any vegetation. When Allah "opened them," it signified that He opened up the sky by sending down rain and the earth by allowing seeds to grow.

This interpretation is directly observable and aligns with the verse's rhetorical challenge "**Do not those who disbelieve see**..." as it refers to processes visible to the naked eye—how rain falls and how lands cleave asunder to bring forth life.

Eschatological Interpretation

A less common but distinct interpretation applies the concept of joining and separation to the end of the world. Some commentators explain the "splitting open" of the heavens as their separating after having been joined as a temporary measure in this world. This union ensured that the universe operated in a way conducive to human existence. However, when the Day of Resurrection sets in, this temporary state of being joined is no longer considered necessary for the well-being of the universe.

The Command to "See": Observation and Intellectual Knowledge

The verse prompts believers to "see," which can imply both literal observation and intellectual knowledge, encompassing scientific discoveries that reveal the universe's origins and intricate design. It is also noted for providing evidence, such as the roundness of the earth, a concept not empirically proven until many years later, thereby highlighting the Quran's scientific understanding. The creation of the heavens and the earth is not random but with truth and for an appointed term, serving as signs for those who reflect and possess intellect.

A tradition in *Al-TawHid* by Shaykh MuHammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 2, Chapter 62, Hadith #11, explains the earth as a resting place: He made it suitable for human nature and in harmony with bodies. He did not make it severely hot or cold, nor severely perfumed or foul-smelling, nor severely soft like water so it may drown, nor severely hard so it may obstruct building houses, buildings, and graves. Allah made it with firmness so that bodies could walk upon it and houses hold together. He placed in it soft soil so that homes could be built, graves dug, and other benefits found. The heaven is a canopy, a protecting roof, where sun, moon, and stars rotate for benefit. Rain is sent from a height to reach mountains, hills, elevations, and low-lying land. Then He separated the rain into drizzle, shower, heavy downpour, and sprinkles so that the earth could better absorb it. He did not send the rain down in one shot, as that would have destroyed lands, trees, fields, and fruits. Then He brings forth with it subsistence of fruits, so do not set up rivals to Allah—images or idols which cannot think, hear, see, and do not have power over anything.

Water as the Foundation of Life

The second part of Quran 21:30 emphatically states: "**And We have made of water everything living**." This highlights the indispensable role of water in sustaining all forms of life presents two primary explanations.

Biological Dependence

The life of all living beings, including plants and animals, is fundamentally dependent on water, especially the water brought by rain. Water is the source of life for every living thing, and the growth and existence of vegetation and animals are directly tied to it.

Modern scientific understanding, confirms that all life forms require water for their cellular functions, and many theories suggest that life itself originated in aquatic

environments. Furthermore, a significant portion—approximately seventy percent—of the human body and many animals consists of water.

Quran 24:45: "**Allah has created every [living] creature from water. And of them are those that move on their bellies, and of them are those that walk on two legs, and of them are those that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent**." This verse is understood to mean that animals originate from water and that Allah's creative power produces diverse life forms from that origin.

In light of these Quranic statements, several points of alignment with modern scientific understanding:

- **Water as the basic factor supporting life.** Water is the basic factor supporting life and that the fundamental matter of life exists in a liquid or semi-liquid state. It also identifies water as essential to the functioning and survival of living organisms and as a major component of the living cell.
- **Aquatic origin of life.** Modern scientific data indicate that life is of aquatic origin. It notes that scientists today believe the first "gemma" (gem or bud) of life has been found in the depths of the seas, suggesting that life began by means of water.
- **Composition of living beings.** A significant portion—approximately seventy percent—of the human body and many animals consists of water. The Quran's mention of man's creation from *tin* (mud) implies a mixture of water and dust. Elsewhere it notes that protoplasm, the basic substance of living matter, is largely aqueous, and that the concept "all life began in the water" aligns with biological science.
- **Knowledge not available at the time of revelation.** Emphasizes that humanity did not possess this detailed scientific knowledge at the time of the Quran's revelation. The verse's command to "see" is understood to imply not only literal observation but also intellectual knowledge.

These are signs that point to Allah's power, wisdom, and mercy.

أحمد بن محمد الكوفي عن علي بن الحسن الميثمي عن علي بن أسباط عن عبد الصمد بن بندار عن الحسين بن علوان قال سأل رجل أبا عبد الله (عليه السلام) عن طعم الماء فقال سل تفقها و لا تسأل تعنتا طعم الماء طعم الحياة .

Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Kufiy has narrated from Ali ibn al-Hassan al-Mithamiy from Ali ibn Asbat from ‘Abd al-Samad ibn Bandar from al-Husayn ibn ‘Ulwan who has said the following: “Once, a man asked abu ‘Abd Allah (peace be upon him), about the taste of water. He (the Imam) said, ‘**Ask to understand not to harass. The taste of water is the taste of life**.’”

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 6) by Shaykh MuHammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 6, Chapter 1, Hadith #7

الإمام الصادق (عليه السلام) : طعم الماء الحياة

Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, ‘**The flavour of water is life**.’

— Tuhaf al-’Uqul, no. 370

محمد بن يحيى عن محمد بن أحمد عن يعقوب بن يزيد عن ابن فضال عمن أخبره عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) أنه قال من تلذذ بالماء في الدنيا لذذه الله عز و جل من أشربة الجنة .

Muhammad ibn Yahya has narrated from Ahmad ibn Muhammad from Ya‘qub ibn Yazid from ibn Faddal from those who narrated to him who has said the following: “Abu ‘Abd Allah (peace be upon him), has said, ‘**If one enjoys and appreciates the taste of water in this world Allah, most Majestic, most Glorious, will give him water in paradise**.’”

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 6) by Shaykh MuHammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 6, Chapter 1, Hadith #6

Allah, Be He Glorified, has said: ‘**And We made from water every living thing’**.

Reproductive Fluid

The Arabic word for water, *ma*, can also refer to the reproductive fluid from which living creatures are typically produced. This meaning is further elaborated in Quran

24:45, which states that Allah created every animal from water, describing creatures that move on their bellies, on two legs, or on four legs, affirming Allah's power to create as He wills.

In this reading, the verse's declaration—"**And We made from water every living thing**"—includes the idea that living beings are brought into existence from a water-like reproductive fluid. This meaning is further elaborated in Quran 24:45, which states: "**Allah has created every [living] creature from water. And of them are those that move on their bellies, and of them are those that walk on two legs, and of them are those that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent**." (Quran 24:45). This verse is understood to mean that animals originate from water, and it then describes the diversity of their forms—creatures that move on their bellies.

This verse is understood to mean that animals originate from water, and it then describes the diversity of their forms—creatures that move on their bellies, on two legs, or on four legs. So the reproductive-fluid reading does not narrow Quran 21:30; it extends its meaning to include the very genesis of individual creatures, not only their continued dependence on water for survival.

The animal kingdom is conceived from sperm, which is a substance composed of water and is a cause of creation. This suggests water's role not just in sustaining existing life, but in initiating it. The same theme appears in the Quranic statement: "**And it is He who has created from water a human being and made him [a relative by] lineage and marriage. And ever is your Lord competent [concerning creation]**." (Quran 25:54).

Primarily addresses the visible, tangible living creatures known to human beings, particularly plants and animals. The verse therefore describes the physical basis of ordinary terrestrial life, while not necessarily applying in the same material sense to beings such as angels and jinn. This is relevant to the reproductive-fluid interpretation, because it indicates that the verse's "water" refers to the physical generative fluid of creatures that are observable and tangible.

In light of these Quranic verses, the reproductive-fluid interpretation reinforces the verse's concluding challenge: "Will they not then believe?" The fact that living creatures are generated from a water-like fluid, and that Allah creates from it diverse forms of life, is presented as a sign of His power to create as He wills. It complements the biological-dependence interpretation: water sustains life, and water also initiates life. Both meanings point to the same theological conclusion—that Allah is the sole Creator and Sustainer, and that these signs call humanity to faith.

Other Quranic Verses on Water

Several other Quranic verses underscore the pivotal role of water in creation and sustenance:

- "**Allah has created every [living] creature from water. And of them are those that move on their bellies, and of them are those that walk on two legs, and of them are those that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent**." (Quran 24:45).
- "**Know that Allah gives life to the earth after its lifelessness. We have made clear to you the signs; perhaps you will understand**." (57:17) and "**And of His signs is that you see the earth stilled, but when We send down upon it rain, it quivers and grows. Indeed, He who has given it life is the Giver of Life to the dead. Indeed, He is over all things competent**." (Quran 41:39).
- "**It is He who sends down rain from the sky; from it is drink and from it is foliage in which you pasture [animals]**." (Quran 16:10)
- "**How We poured down water in torrents**." (Quran 80:25)

Water, Purity, Purification and Prayers

قال الشيخ السعيد الفقيه أبو جعفر محمد بن علي بن الحسين بن موسى بن بابويه القمي مصنف هذا الكتاب رحمة الله عليه: إن الله تبارك وتعالى يقول: ۞ وأنزلنا من ٱلسماء ماء طهورا ۞.

ويقول عز وجل: ۞ وأنزلنا من ٱلسماء ماء بقدر فأسكنه فى ٱلأرض وإنا على ذهاب به لقدرون ۞.

ويقول عز وجل: ۞ وينزل عليكم من ٱلسماء ماء ليطهركم به ۞.

فأصل الماء كله من السماء وهو طهور كله، وماء البحر طهور، وماء البئر طهور.

The virtuous scholar, jurist Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Hussain ibn Musa ibn Babawayh al-Qummi, the author of this book, may God have mercy on him, said: **Indeed, Allah (swt), Blessed and Exalted, says:**

'And We sent down from the sky pure water' (Surah Al Furqan Quran 25:48).

And He, Mighty and Majestic, says:

'And We sent down from the sky water in due measure, and We settled it in the earth, and indeed We are able to take it away' (Surah Al Mu'minun Quran 23:18).

'And He sent down upon you water from the sky to purify you with it' (Surah Al-Anfal Quran 8:11).

Therefore, all water originates from the sky, and all of it is purifying. Sea water is pure, and well water is pure.

— Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih (Vol. 1) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 2, Hadith #0

عن أبي عبد هللا)عليه السالم(اقل: اقل عل)عليه السالم(: الماء يطهر وال يطهر.

From Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **Ali (peace be upon him) said: Water purifies and is not purified**. Translator: Forms I and II of the verb "tahara" are used here with different meanings.

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 3, Chapter 1, Hadith 328

و روى حفص بن البختري عنه عليه السلام أنه قال: «إن الله تبارك وتعالى إذا أراد أن ينفع بالمطر أمر السحاب فأخذ الماء من تحت العرش و إذا لم يرد النبات أمر السحاب فأخذ الماء من البحر» قيل إن ماء البحر مالح قال «إن السحاب يعذبه.

Hafs ibn al-Bakhtari narrated from Him (peace be upon him) that He said: **When Allah (swt), Blessed and Exalted, wishes to bring benefit through rain, He commands the clouds to take water from beneath the Throne. But when He does not intend for vegetation to grow, He commands the clouds to take water from the sea**.

It was said: But sea water is salty.

Imam (peace be upon him) said: **The clouds purify it**.

— Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih (Vol. 1) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 80, Hadith #1491

Water is an essential means of purification in Islam, used for ablution (*Wudu*) and ritual baths (*Ghusl*) before prayers. The Quran describes Allah sending down "**And it is He who sends the winds as good tidings before His mercy, and We send down from the sky pure water**" (Quran 25:48) and "**[Remember] when He overwhelmed you with drowsiness [giving] security from Him and sent down upon you from the sky, rain by which to purify you and remove from you the evil [suggestions] of Satan and to make steadfast your hearts and plant firmly thereby your feet.**" (Quran 8:11). All water originating from the sky is considered purifying, including sea and well water. Imam Ali (peace be upon him) taught that Allah created water to be a purifier, and nothing can make it impure except that which changes its color, taste, or smell.

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): خلق الله الماء طهورا لا ينجسه شيء، إلا ما غير لونه أو طعمه أو ريحه

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**Allah has created water to be a purifier where nothing can make it impure, except for that water whose colour, taste or smell has changed**.'

— Wasa'il al-Shi'ah, v. 1, p. 101, no. 9

Water also carries symbolic significance. In Islamic tradition, water is often likened to knowledge. Just as water is necessary for the life of the body, knowledge is essential for the life of the soul. The flowing rivers in Paradise are interpreted as symbols of divine knowledge and cognition that flow through the souls of believers.

عن مسعدة بن صدقة: عن أبي عبد هللا)عليه السالم(اقل: كان عيل)عليه السالم(يقوم في المطر أول ما يمطر حتى يبتل رأسه ولحيته وثيابه، فقيل له: اي أمير المؤمنين الكن الكن، فيقول: إن هذا ماء قريب العهد ابلعرش ثم أنشأ يحدث فقال: إن تحت العرش بحرا فيه ماء ينبت

أرزاق الحيواانت، إفذا أراد هللا أن ينبت به ما يشاء رحمة منه لهم أوحى هللا إليه قمطر ما شاء من سماء إلى سماء حتى يصير إلى سماء الدنيا)فيما أظن(فيلقيه إلى السحاب.

From Mas'ada bin Sadaqa: From Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: Ali (peace be upon him) used to stand in the rain when it first started falling until his head, beard, and clothes would get wet. It was said to him: O Commander of the Faithful, take shelter, take shelter. He would say: **This water is close to the Throne**. Then he began to narrate and said: **Beneath the Throne is a sea containing water that grows the sustenance of living creatures. When Allah wants to grow what He wills as a mercy for them, Allah reveals to it to rain as He wills from heaven to heaven until it reaches the lowest heaven (as I think), then it casts it to the clouds**.

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 8, Section 1, Chapter 8, Hadith 10009

ـ الحسين بن محمد عن معلى بن محمد عن الوشاء عن أبان عن الحارث بن المغيرة عن أبي عبد الله (عليه السلام) قال إذا كانت لك حاجة فتوضأ وصل ركعتين ثم احمد الله وأثن عليه واذكر من الآية ثم ادع تجب.

Al-Husayn ibn Muhammad has narrated from Mu’alla’ ibn Muhammad from al-Washsha’ from Aban from al-Harith ibn al-Mughirah who has said the following: “Abu ‘Abd Allah (peace be upon him), has said, ‘**If you need something, take Wudu’, perform two Rak’at Salah (prayer) and then praise Allah, speak of His greatness and read of verses (of Quran), then ask for your needs, your prayer will be answered**.’”

— Al-Kafi (Vol. 3) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Yaqub al-Kulayni, Book 4, Chapter 95, Hadith #9

رسول هللا صل هللا عليه وآله؟ أفخذ بكفه اليمنى كفا عن أبي جعفر عليه السالم اقل: أال أحك لكم وضوء ،من ماء، فغسل به وجهه، ثم أخذ بيده اليسرى كفا، فغسل به يده اليمنى ثم أخذ بيده اليمنى كفا من ماء .رأسه ورجليه فغسل به يده اليسرى، ثم مسح بفضل يديه

From Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) who said: **Shall I not tell you about the ablution (wudu) of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family)?**

He took a handful of water with his right palm and washed his face with it, then he took a handful with his left hand and washed his right hand with it, then he took a handful of water with his right hand and washed his left hand with it, then he wiped his head and feet with the remaining moisture from his hands.

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 8, Chapter 15, Hadith 1023

عن ابن القداح عن أبي عبد هللا)عليه السالم(اقل اقل رسول هللا صل هللا عليه وآله افتتاح الصالة الوضوء .وتحريمها التكبير وتحليلها التسليم

From Ibn al-Qaddah from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) said: The commencement of prayer is ablution, its sanctification is the takbir, and its completion is the tasleem**. Its Obligation, How To Perform It, And What Suffices For A Mute Person

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 6, Section 2, Chapter 1, Hadith 7214

Spiritual Significance and Ablution

Beyond its scientific and biological meanings, Quran 21:30 carries profound spiritual significance. Just as Allah grants physical life through water, He bestows spiritual life upon the heart, inspires acts of obedience, and fosters reflection through His divine mercy. Water, therefore, is not merely a material means of existence but also a potent symbol of divine mercy and purification.

The supplication of the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him) during ablution (*wudu*) beautifully illustrates this spiritual dimension:

و كان أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام إذا توضأ قال - « بسم الله و بالله و خير الأسماء لله و أكبر الأسماء لله و قاهر لمن في السماء و قاهر لمن في الأرض الحمد لله الذي جعل من الماء كل شيء حي و أحيا قلبي بالإيمان اللهم تب علي و طهرني ' و اقض لي بالحسنى و أرني كل الذي أحب و افتح لي بالخيرات من عندك يا سميع الدعاء.

It is narrated that Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him), when performing wudu, would say:

Bismillahi wa billahi wa khayru al-asma’i lillah, wa akbaru al-asma’i lillah, wa qahirun liman fi as-sama’, wa qahirun liman fi al-ard. Alhamdulillahi alladhi ja‘ala mina al-ma’i kulla shay’in hayyin wa ahya qalbi bil-iman. Allahumma tub ‘alayya wa tahhirni, wa iqdi li bil-husna, wa arini kulla alladhi uhibbu wa iftah li bil-khayrati min ‘indika ya Sami‘ ad-du‘a’ In the name of Allah (swt) and by Allah (swt), and the best names for Allah (swt) and the greatest names for Allah (swt), who is the Dominant over those in the heavens and the Dominant over those on the earth. All praise is due to Allah (swt), who has made from water every living thing and has revived my heart with faith. O’ Allah (swt), accept my repentance and purify me. Grant me goodness and show me all I love, and open for me the avenues of good from You, O’ Hearer of Supplication.

— Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih (Vol. 1) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 10, Hadith #87

Ablution is far more than a physical preparation; it is a profound spiritual discipline. It is considered a noble creation and a practice loved by Allah. Proceeding to water for purification and *wudu* is likened to proceeding to the Mercy of Allah. It is viewed as a key to drawing closer to Allah and extending in His service. Water used for performing *wudu* is considered blessed and acquires a different reality. It transforms into “drops of light” that are applied to the relevant parts of the body during ablution. This spiritual light, “light upon light” when *wudu* is performed repeatedly, signifies its profound inner effect.

The spiritual benefits of *wudu* include the falling away of sins.

رسول هللا صىل هللا عليه وآله: إن العبد إذا توضأ فغسل وجهه تناثرت ذنوب وجهه، وإذا غسل يديه واقل رجليه، أو رأسه، وإذا مسح إلى المرفقين تناثرت عنه ذنوب يديه، وإذا مسح برأسه تناثرت عنه ذنوب ،رجليه غسلهما للتقية تناثرت عنه ذنوب وإن اقل في أول وضوئه: بسم هللا الرحمن الرحيم، طهرت أعضاؤه كلها من الذنوب، وإن اقل في آخر وضوئه أو ادحم م أنده، وأشيك إلوب وأتكرفغت، أست إال أنله ال إ أنده، أشكدمح وبمه اللكانحبغسله من الجنابة: س ، تحاتت عنه ذنوبهياؤهصأو وفاؤكل خهياءل أوأن، وكيب ندع بكتيفلخ وكيلا ويل ع أندهأش، وكولسر وكعبد ،كما تتحات أوراق الشجر ويصيل ،ويكبره ،ويهلله ،ويقدسه ،وخلق هللا بعدد كل قطرة من قطرات وضوئه أو غسله ملكا يسبح هللا عىل محمد وآله الطيبين، وثواب ذلك لهذا

المتوضي، ثم أيمر هللا بوضوئه وغسله فيختم عليه بخاتم من .رب العزة، الحديث وهو طويل يشتمل عىل ثواب عظيم جدا خواتيم

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his family, said: **When a servant performs ablution and washes his face, the sins of his face fall away. When he washes his hands up to the elbows, the sins of his hands fall away. When he wipes his head, the sins of his head fall away. And when he wipes his feet, or washes them out of taqiyya (precautionary dissimulation), the sins of his feet fall away. And if he says at the beginning of his ablution 'Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim (In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful)', all his limbs are purified from sins. And if he says at the end of his ablution or his bath from major impurity (ghusl janaba): 'Subhanaka Allahumma wa bihamdika, ash-hadu an la ilaha illa ant, astaghfiruka wa atubu ilayk, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan abduka wa rasuluk, wa ash-hadu anna Alian waliyuka wa khalifatuka ba'da nabiyyika, wa anna awliya'ahu khulafa'uka wa awsiya'uhu' (*), his sins fall away as leaves fall from a tree, Method Of Ablution And A Collection Of Its Rulings And Allah creates for every drop of his ablution or ritual washing an angel that glorifies Allah, sanctifies Him, proclaims His oneness, exalts Him, and sends blessings upon Muhammad and his pure family. The reward for this is for the one performing ablution. Then Allah commands that his ablution and ritual washing be sealed with a seal from the seals of the Lord of Might. [This is part of] a long hadith that includes immense rewards. Translator: * "Glory be to You, O Allah, and all praise is Yours. I bear witness that there is no deity but You. I seek Your forgiveness and turn to You in repentance. And I bear witness that Muhammad is Your servant and Your messenger. And I bear witness that Ali is Your wali (guardian) and Your successor after Your prophet, and that his awliya (guardians) are Your successors and Your appointed ones**."

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 8, Chapter 15, Hadith 1040

اقل: وروي أن من توضأ فذكر اسم هللا طهر جميع جسده، وكان الوضوء إلى الوضوء كفارة لما بينهما من .الذنوب، ومن لم يسم لم يطهر من جسده إال ما أصابه الماء

It was narrated that **whoever performs ablution and mentions Allah's name, their entire body becomes purified, and ablution after ablution becomes an expiation for sins committed between them. Whoever does not mention His name, only the parts touched by water become pure**.

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 1, Section 8, Chapter 26, Hadith 1111

و روي: «أن من توضأ فذكر اسم الله طهر جميع جسده و كان الوضوء إلى الوضوء كفارة لما بينهما من الذنوب و من لم يسم لم يطهر من جسده إلا ما أصابه الماء.

It is narrated: '**Whoever performs ablution and mentions the name of Allah (swt), all of his body becomes pure, and the ablution performed between two ablutions serves as atonement for the sins committed between them. And whoever does not mention [the name of Allah (swt)] will not purify his body except for what the water touches**.'

— Man La Yahduruh al-Faqih (Vol. 1) by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 1, Chapter 11, Hadith #102

The Verse as an Invitation to Faith

The concluding question of the verse, "**Will they not then believe**?", transforms these observed and understood signs of creation into a direct argument for reflection and belief in Allah. By presenting the majestic origin and ordering of the cosmos, alongside the undeniable dependence of all life on water, the Quran invites humanity to observe the world around them and recognize the clear manifestations of divine power, wisdom, and benevolence. The intricate design of the heavens and the earth, their initial joining and subsequent separation, serve as compelling evidence of Allah's creative might. The cyclical provision of rain from the heavens, leading to lush vegetation from the earth, visibly demonstrates the connection between divine provision and earthly life. And the universal truth that water is fundamental to the existence and continuation of all living things unequivocally points to a singular, all-powerful Creator. These are not merely natural phenomena but signs of Allah in the system of the world of existence and its regular order, emphasizing the reasons for Monotheism. The verse calls upon observers to move

from mere contemplation of creation to a profound faith in Allah, the ultimate source of all existence. It is meant to take man out of his negligence, obliterate his pride, and invite him towards worship and submissiveness to the Creator.

The Quran consistently invites contemplation of the natural world.

More than 750 verses encourage mankind to contemplate and investigate natural phenomena as divine signs within the context of the order of existence.

Surah Al-Jathiyah (Quran 45:3-5): "**Most surely in the heavens and the earth there are signs for the believers. And in your (own) creation and in what He spreads abroad of animals there are signs for a people that are sure, and (in) the variation of the night and the day, and (in) what Allah sends down of sustenance from the cloud, then gives life thereby to the earth after its death, and (in) the changing of the winds, there are signs for a people who understand.**"

Surah Ar-Rum (Quran 30:8): "**Do they not contemplate within themselves? Allah has not created the heavens and the earth and what is between them except in truth and for a specified term. And indeed, many of the people, in [the matter of] the meeting with their Lord, are disbelievers**."

Surah Fussilat (Quran 41:53): "**We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?**"

Surah Muhammad (Quran 47:24): "**Do they not then reflect on the Quran? Nay, on the hearts there are locks.**"

الإمام علي (عليه السلام): عجبت لمن شك في الله◌ وهو يرى خلق الله!

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: '**How I wonder at the one who entertains doubts about Allah whilst beholding the very creation of Allah**.'

— Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 126

" ألا لا خير فى علم ليس فيه تفهم، ألا لا خير فى قرائة ليس فيها تدبر، ألا لا خير فى عبادة ليس فيها تفكر"

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said:

Be aware! Knowledge without thinking has no profit!

Be aware! Recitation of the Quran without reflection is of little use!

Be aware! Worship lacking reflection has no effect!

— 1. Al-Kafi, Volume One, Page 36 and Tuhaful Uqul, Maani Al-Akhbar, page 226; Bihar Al-Anwar Volume 2, page 48-49, Aalamu Addeen, page 100, Mishkat Al-Anwar 137-138, Muniat Almureed 162.

عن طلحة بن زيد عن أبي عبد هللا)عليه السالم(اقل: إن هذا القرآن فيه منار الهدى ومصابيح الدبج فليجل .جال بصره ويفتح للضياء نظره افن التفكر حياة قلب البصير كما يمشي المستنير في الظلمات ابلنور

From Talhah bin Zaid from Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) who said: **Indeed this Quran contains beacons of guidance and lamps for darkness, so let one who seeks polish his vision and open his sight to the light, for contemplation/reflection is life to the heart of the insightful one, just as one seeking light walks in darkness with illumination**.

— Wasa'il al-Shia Vol. 6, Section 4, Chapter 3, Hadith 7655

تفكروا واعملوا لما خلقتم له فإن الله لم يخلقكم عبثا. (تحف العقول 274)

Imam Zain-ul-Abideen (peace be upon him): **(Oh people) contemplate, meditate, and practice for the (place, thing) that you have been created for, Allah did not at all create you in vain and useless**

— Tuhaf al-Uqul, P 274

وبهذا الإسناد، عن الحسن بن محبوب، عن العلاء بن رزين، عن محمد بن مسلم عن أبي جعفر عليه السلام في قول الله عز وجل: (ومن كان في هذه أعمى فهو في الآخرة أعمى وأضل سبيلا)

قال: من لم يدله خلق السماوات والأرض واختلاف الليل والنهار ودوران الفلك والشمس والقمر والآيات العجيبات على أن وراء ذلك أمرا أعظم منه فهو في الآخرة أعمى وأضل سبيلا، قال: فهو عما لم يعاين أعمى وأضل.

And with the same chain of transmission, on the authority of al-Hasan ibn Mahbub, on the authority of al-`Ala' ibn Razin, on the authority of Muhammad ibn Muslim, that Abu Ja`far al-Baqir (peace be upon him) was asked about the Word of Allah, the Mighty and High: And whoever is blind in this, he shall (also) be blind in the hereafter; and more erring from the way. He (peace be upon him) said: **He who is guided by the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alteration of the night and the day, and the sailing of the ships, and the sun and the moon, and all the other amazing signs of Allah, should know that there is something Greater behind them all. He shall be blind in the Hereafter, and the fartheset from the straight path. He (peace be upon him) added, "In other words, he is blind and led astray, form what he does not see**."

— Al-Tawhid by Shaykh Muhammad b. Ali al-Saduq, Book 2, Chapter 67, Hadith #6

الإمام الباقر (عليه السلام) ـ في قوله تعالى : «ومن كان في هذه أعمى فهو في الآخرة أعمى» ـ : فمن لم يدله خلق السماوات والأرض واختلاف الليل والنهار ، ودوران الفلك بالشمس والقمر ، والآيات العجيبات على أن وراء ذلك أمرا هو أعظم منه ، «فهو في الآخرة أعمى» . قال : فهو عما لم يعاين أعمى وأضل سبيلا

Imam Mohammad al-Baqir (peace be upon him) said with regards to the following verse of Allah – most High– "**But whoever has been blind in this [world], will be blind in the Hereafter**", (Quran 17:72) said, '**Whoever does not see that there is a great creator behind the creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternating night and day, the orbits of the sun and the moon and all the other wondrous signs "will be blind in the Hereafter**."' He (peace be upon him) then said, '**This means he is blind to what he did not witness and (even) more astray from the (right) way**.'

— Bihar al-Anwar, v. 3, p. 28, no. 2

In essence, Quran 21:30 is a comprehensive statement that combines scientific foresight with spiritual wisdom, presenting the creation of the universe and the fundamental role of water as irrefutable proofs of Allah’s omnipotence and a direct call for humanity to embrace faith.

Conclusion

Quran 21:30 presents two profound scientific truths that were entirely unknown at the time of revelation: the cosmic origin of the universe from a unified state followed by separation and expansion, and the fundamental role of water as the basis of all life. The verse's alignment with modern cosmology's Big Bang theory and biology's understanding of water's indispensable role in life constitutes a remarkable scientific miracle. Yet beyond these scientific dimensions, the verse serves as a powerful invitation to faith, calling humanity to recognize the Creator through contemplation of His signs in creation. The command to "see" encompasses both physical observation and intellectual understanding, encouraging scientific inquiry as a pathway to recognizing divine truth. Faith is not blind acceptance but the reasonable conclusion drawn from careful observation and reflection upon the signs in creation.

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