



WATER IN THE HOLY KORAN

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful
«We made from water every living thing.» (The Prophets, Sura XXI, verse 30)

How can we define water?

Water (chemical formula H₂O) is made up of two hydrogen molecules and one oxygen molecule.

Why is water so important?

Water is the most important natural element after oxygen (necessary for men's, animals' and plants' respiration). Water is also vital for the birth and survival of all living beings, as well as food, clothing, shelter, industrial, transport, energy and leisure needs, and for making the environment lovelier and eliminating urban, industrial and agricultural waste.

What place does water have in the Koran?

God (*may His Name be praised*) has given water an eminent place compared to other matter, and endowed it with unique physical, chemical and biological features. God mentions water over fifty times in the Holy Book, each time associating it with life, source of income and purity, and making it one of the signs of His omnipotence for those who know how to understand and learn from the teachings. That is why water - this extraordinary compound - illustrates the greatness of the Creator.

Water is the source of life and one of God's signs

«We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?» (The Prophets, Sura XXI, verse 30).

«And God has created every animal from water: of them there are some that creep on their bellies; some that walk on two legs; and some that walk on four. God creates what He wills; for verily God has power over all things.» (Light, Sura XXIV, verse 45).

«In the rain which God sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead». (The Heifer, Sura II, verse 164).

Water is the source of food for men and cattle and one of God's signs.

« It is God who hath created the heavens and the earth and sendeth down rain from the skies, and with it bringeth out fruits wherewith to feed you.» (Abraham, Sura XIV, verse 32).

«'He who has made for you the earth like a carpet spread out;... and has sent down water from the sky.' With it have we produced divers pairs of plants each separate from the others. Eat (for yourselves) and pasture your cattle: verily, in this are signs for men endued with understanding.» (T.H., Sura XX, verses 53 and 54).

«And do they not see that We do drive Rain to parched soil (bare of herbage) and produce therewith crops, providing food for their cattle and themselves? Have they not the vision?» (Adoration, Sura XXXII, verse 27).

«It is He Who sendeth down rain from the skies: with it We produce vegetation of all kinds: from some We produce green (crops), out of which we produce grain, heaped up (at harvest); out of the date-palm and its sheaths (or spathes) (come) clusters of dates hanging low and near: and (then there are) gardens of grapes, and olives, and pomegranates, each similar (in kind) yet different (in variety): when they begin to bear fruit, feast your eyes with the fruit and the ripeness thereof. Behold ! in these things there are Signs for people who believe.» (Cattle, Sura VI, verse 99).

« It is He Who sendeth the winds like heralds of glad tidings, going before His Mercy: when they have carried the heavy-laden clouds, We drive them to a land that is dead, make rain to descend thereon, and produce every kind of harvest therewith: thus shall We raise up the dead: perchance ye may remember.» (The Heights, Sura VII, verse 57).

«It is He Who sends down rain from the sky: from it ye drink, and out of it (grows) the vegetation on which ye feed your cattle.

With it He produces for you corn, olives, date-palms, grapes, and every kind

of fruit: verily in this is a Sign for those who give thought.» (The Bee, Sura XVI, verses 10 and 11).

Water, drink for men and animals

«We send down pure water from the sky, - that with it We may give life to a dead land, and slake the thirst of things We have created, - cattle and men in great numbers.» (The Criterion, Sura XXV, verses 48-49).

«It is He Who sends down rain from the sky: from it ye drink, and out of it (grows) the vegetation on which ye feed your cattle.» (The Bee, Sura XVI, verse 10).

« And We send the fecundating winds, then cause the rain to descend from the sky, therewith providing you with water (in abundance), though ye are not the guardians of its stores.» (the Rocky Tract, Sura XV, verse 22).

Advice not to waste water

«O children of Adam ! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: but waste not by excess, for God loveth not the wast-ers.» (The Heights, Sura VII, verses 31)

Fresh water is pleasant to drink

«Nor are the two bodies of flowing water alike, - the one palatable, sweet, and pleasant to drink, and the other, salt and bitter.» (The Originator of Creation, or, The Angels, Sura XXXV, verses 12).

«See ye the water which ye drink?»

Do ye bring it Down (in rain) from the Cloud or do We?

Were it Our Will, We could make it salt (and unpalatable): then why do ye not give thanks?» (The Inevitable Event, Sura LVI, verses 68- 70)

Water and purification

Purification means both washing and ablutions, and the cleaning of clothes, bodies, and places. All water, whether rainwater or from rivers, springs, wells or the sea, may, as long as its taste, colour or smell have not been adulterated, be used for purification. God said in the Holy Book:

«...He caused rain to descend on you from heaven, to clean you therewith, to remove from you the satan, to strengthen your hearts, and to plant your feet firmly therewith.» (Spoils of War, Sura VIII, verse 11).

«We send down pure water from the sky, - that with it we may give life to a dead land, and slake the thirst of things We have created, - cattle and men in great numbers». (The Criterion, Sura XXV, verses 48-49).

«O ye who believe ! when ye prepare for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands (and arms) to the elbows; rub your heads (with water); and

(wash) your feet to the ankles. If ye are in a state of ceremonial impurity, bathe your whole body. But if ye are in a state of ceremonial impurity, bathe your whole body. But if ye are ill, or on a journey, or one of you cometh from offices of nature, or ye have been in contact with women, and ye find no water, then take for yourselves clean sand or earth, and rub therewith your faces and hands. God doth not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean, and to complete His favour to you, that ye may be grateful.» (The Table Spread, Sura V, verse 6).

«They ask thee concerning women's courses. Say: They are a hurt and a pollution: so keep away from women in their courses, and do not approach them until they are clean. But when they have purified themselves, ye may approach them in any manner, time, or place ordained for you by God. For God loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean.» (The Heifer, Sura II, verse 222).

*«That this is indeed a Qur-an most honourable,
In a Book well- guarded, Which none shall touch but those who are clean.»
(The Inevitable Event, Sura LVI, verses 77- 79).*

Water has no equivalent or substitute

Despite the wealth of the Arabic language and the dozens of synonyms it offers to describe the lion, say, or the sword, there is no equivalent for the term «water». We can safely say that after many attempts the idea « water» can only be explained by ... « water».

In the natural world, despite the existence of numerous substitutes for things considered necessities for people's lives, there is no substitute for water. Thus this term remains unique and water will remain as God wished it - source of life and one of the signs of His omnipotence. The Qur'an thus remains an inexhaustible source of secrets and truths which discover themselves to us as the days go by. Let us preserve water, then, and not waste it. May its special qualities remain a source of teachings, for our greater obedience to God.

Realised by : National Centre for Environmental Protection

National coordinator : Dr. Abdelkader Abou Faed,
National Centre for Environmental Protection,
P.O. Box 83618, Tripoli, Libya
Tel : (218-21) 444 8452 - Fax : (218-21) 333 8098



Coordinateur Régional : Prof. Dr. Abdelhamid BELEMLIH
Société Protectrice des Animaux et de la Nature «SPANA» 41, Résidence Zohra, Harhoura
12 000 Témara - Maroc - Tél : (212-7) 74 72 09 - Fax : (212-7) 74 74 93 - E-mail : spana@mts.net.ma