

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ، أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَالْحَقِّ الْمُبِينِ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا مُحَمَّداً عَبْدَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولَهُ، رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَنِعْمَتُهُ، وَعَطِيَّتُهُ وَمِنْتُهُ، فَاللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسِلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَنَبِيَّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ، وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَاحْبِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ، وَعَلَى مَنْ تَبَعَهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.

All praises are for Allah. Who sent His Messenger with guidance and a clear Truth. And I bear witness, that there is nothing worthy of worship, except Allah. And I bear witness that our Leader and Master, our Prophet, Muhammad, is the perfect example of servanthood unto Allah. The Mercy of Allah and His Blessing, His Gift and Boon. O Allah send your salutations, peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad and upon all of his family and companions. And upon whomsoever follows them in the best of ways till the Last Day.

1. ALLAH'S DESIGN AND DECREE

وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرْقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا “*Not a leaf falls, but He knows it.*” (6:59)

If Allah knew about the leaf falling, then he also knew my movements that day. Allah must have willed and destined for our paths to cross. Before I was even born, the ice age, the time the dinosaurs roamed world, the seas formed and the earth cooled enough to harbour life, the solar system was born, the big bang, in a time before time, I and this leaf were destined to meet. *“The first thing Allah created was the Pen. He said to it: ‘Write!’ It asked: ‘What should I write, my Lord?’ He said: ‘Write what is decreed about everything till the Last Hour comes.’”* (Abu Dawud)

2. THE VASTNESS OF ALLAH'S KNOWLEDGE

- Allah had absolute knowledge of the leaf. He knew the precise moment when the leaf will fall, how it would fall, how it would interact with the wind, the branches and leaves. How many cells the leaf has, how much sunlight it absorbed in its lifetime, how much Carbon Dioxide it converted to Oxygen, how long it lived for, how many raindrops fell upon it. There is no detail that was hidden from His knowledge, The All-Knowing

“With Him are the keys of the Unseen; none knows them but He. He knows what is in the land and sea; not a leaf falls, but He knows it. Not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth, not a thing, fresh or withered, but it is in a clear book.” (6:59)

His knowledge encompasses not just this one leaf but every leaf, every living and non-living entity on land and sea, whether in the darkness of night or light of day.

3. THE REALITY OF ALLAH'S POWER - He is with everything, in every moment, in every place. The universal truth is that we are all completely and utterly in need of Allah in every moment as our very existence is dependent upon Him.

"Allah! There is no God except Him. The Ever-living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth...."

Allah is the centre of our world, the very ground of our existence... yet we have the audaciousness to question if He exists or He is a figment of our imagination!

"They esteem not Allah with true esteem that is due to Him. On the Day of Judgement the whole of the earth will be but His handful, and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand: Glory to Him! Exalted is He and high above what they associate with Him." (39: 67)

4. UNIQUE AND BEAUTIFUL WONDERS - Each leaf, like each snowflake is unique and beautiful. Like the leaf, we too are unique and beautiful. Allah created and fashioned each and every one of us with the best form. The humble leaf is a wonder of God's work but we are His greatest masterpiece. He has subjugated everything in the heavens and earth for our use and honoured us with the best of form and endowed us with potential for greatness.

"Verily we have honoured the Children of Adam." (17:70) "Do you not see that Allah has made what is in the heavens and what is in the earth subservient to you, and amply bestowed upon you His favours, [both] apparent and unapparent?" (31:20)

5. HUMBLE BUT NOT INSIGNIFICANT - The leaf is an embodiment of humility and silent service. They are common but they are not insignificant. They bring beauty and restore balance in the atmosphere. A leaf alone is but one, but collectively they change the world. These silent powerhouses of nature oxygenate the very air all leaving things breathe. Similarly we human beings have a crucial role to play just like the leaves. If Allah is aware of the leaf, He is aware of our actions, He sees and He knows what we do and He will reward accordingly.

"As for those who believe and do good deeds, they will have a reward unending." (41:8)

6. A LEAF'S JOURNEY - The autumn leaf fragile and withered, weathered through storms, torrential rain, violent winds and scorching summer. Severed from the tree it called home and journeyed towards the ground. We too are on a journey, one day we too will die and we too will be returned to the ground. Like the leaf, we go through different seasons in our lives. Allah knows about our plights and the challenges. Just as Allah took care of the leaf, He too will take care of us. **"Indeed, those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure!"** (39:10)

7. ON-GOING LEGACY - During its life it made the world a better place for everything, and in death, it will continue to be a source of benefit. It will either enrich the earth or become nutrient for other plants and trees or it will be used as fuel or fossil fuel in years to come. **"When a man dies, his deeds come to an end, except for three: An on-going charity, knowledge by which people derive benefit, pious child who prays for him."** [Muslim] An apple fell and Isaac Newton saw gravity at play. A leaf fell in and we see Allah's artistry at work. Allah is always painting a picture but do we see it?