

Scientific topics- Scientific topics from sermons- Lesson (022) : The settings of stars

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of Creations, and Peace and blessings be upon our prophet Muhammad, the faithful and the honest.

Oh, Allah, we know nothing but what You teach us. You are the All-Knower, the Wise. Oh Allah, teach us what is good for us, and benefit us from what You taught us, and increase our knowledge. Show us the righteous things as righteous and help us to do them, and show us the bad things as bad and help us to keep away from them.

O Allah our Lord, lead us out from the depths of darkness and illusion, unto the lights of erudition and knowledge, and from the muddy shallows of lusts unto the heavens of Your Vicinity.

Settings of Stars

In His Holy Quran Allah, All-Mighty, says,

“So I swear by the settings of the stars; and verily, that is indeed a great oath if you but know.”

[LVI; 75,76]

Now, the question is: What is meant by “the settings of the stars” in this Quranic Verse? In fact, there are three meanings:

First meaning:

Between the stars there are distances that are too great to be conceived by the human mind. For example, the distance between the earth and some galaxies 18,000,000,000 light-years. We have to remember that light travels 300,000 km\second. But what distance does it cover in a minute? This great number has to be multiplied 60 times. How far does it go in an hour? How far does it travel in a day, a month, a year, ...etc?!

“So I swear by the settings of the stars; and verily, that is indeed a great oath if you but know.”

Between the Earth and the Moon is a distance of 1 light-second, i.e. 360,000 km's, between the earth and the Sun 8 light-minutes, i.e. 156,000,000 km's. The length of the Solar System is 13 light-hours, and that of the Milky Way is 150,000 light-years, “So I swear by the settings of the stars; and verily, that is indeed a great oath if you but know.” This is the first meaning.

Second meaning:

The heavenly objects do not have a fixed unchangeable location, but rather different locations because they are constantly moving; and each one of them has its own course:

“They all float: each in an orbit.”

[XXXVI; 40]

The word “settings” as in the above Verse is the secret of its miraculouness. This is because the setting does not mean that the star or heavenly object exists therein. In other words, Allah, All-Mighty, does not swear

by the distances between the stars but rather by the distances between their settings, for the stars are constantly moving and are by no means standing still. Should an astronomer read this Quranic Verse, he would certainly fall prostrate to Allah, All-Mighty, Who says,

“that is indeed a great oath if you but know”.

The Earth goes round the Sun once every 365 days; but another planet in the Solar System goes round the Sun once every two or three years, some other planets need less than a year to complete their orbit round the Sun, and so on and so forth. In other words, each heavenly object has its own settings, long or short orbit, circular or oval orbit:

“So I swear by the settings of the stars.”

Moreover, each heavenly object has a different setting every moment; and the most accurate of our timers are set according to certain heavenly objects, and their makers may find that such timers are one second late or early. But on what do they rely to check the accuracy of such timers? In fact, they check them by the passage of certain heavenly objects that is 100% accurate. Therefore, such settings are organized according to a miraculously accurate system, and every second, each heavenly object has a new different setting. Even the comet Halley, which we look forward to see, covers its course in a period of 76 years. People saw it in 1910, and so did we in 1986. It was also seen in the year 2000 BC. It has never been one single moment late or early; and it is always 3,000,000 km's away from the Earth when it appears. This is the second meaning of the word “settings” in the above Verse.

Third meaning:

Between different heavenly objects are forces of gravity; and the heavenly object whose mass is greater pulls the one whose mass is smaller. There is another factor, namely the square number of the distance between the two objects. The miraculous thing is that if the settings of stars were changed, balance of the whole universe would be disrupted, stars would clash with one another, and the whole universe would become one block. Undoubtedly, such settings have been set most accurately so that they keep running in absolute balance and accuracy.

Therefore, the first meaning of the word “settings” is the fabulously great distances between the heavenly objects; the second meaning is the miraculously fast speeds of constant movements of the heavenly objects from one location to another; and the third meaning is that some of such heavenly objects are small while others are enormous, some are near while others are remote. The miraculous thing is that all such heavenly objects have been positioned in most accurate places that keep them in utmost balance and harmony so as to make the marvelous cosmic system that we see with our own eyes.

Allah, All-High, says,

“Verily! Allah does grasp the heavens and the earth lest they should move away from their places.”

[XXXV; 41]

When the earth comes near to the sun, it increases its speed so that it is not pulled by the sun. Such increase of speed gives the earth a centrifugal force that keeps it in orbit. The miraculous thing is that without such centrifugal force the earth would go away from the sun:

“So I swear by the settings of the stars; and verily, that is indeed a great oath if you but know.”

Just deliberate this Verse! Reflect! Search! Contemplate! Imagine! And get to know Allah, Who says,

“And on the earth are Signs for those who have Faith with certainty.”

[L; 20]

, and

“Say, ‘Behold all that is in the heavens and the earth.’ But neither Signs nor warnings benefit those who believe not.”

[X; 101]!!

Undoubtedly, in the heavens and the earth are endless countless Signs; and in the heavens and the earth are evidences that are not only convincing but also definitive and indisputable; and definitive evidences are far stronger than convincing ones.

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Auditing :