

The Story of Plants

From the Signs of Creation to the Scenes of the Hereafter

In the Light of the Holy Quran and the Narrations of the Ahl al-Bayt
With a Reading of Science within the Limits of Its Evidence



By the Researcher and Writer
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Al-Saraf Al-Husayni**

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In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

The Story of Plants

From the Signs of Creation to the Scenes of the Hereafter

In Light of the Holy Quran and the Narrations of the Ahl al-Bayt, Peace Be upon
Them

With a Reading of Scientific Knowledge within the Limits of Its Evidence

The Second Book in a Series of Eleven Books

By the Researcher and Writer

Sayyid Hussam Zaha Murtadha Al-Saraf Al-Husayni

Writing completed: 13 Jumada al-Ula 1441 AH — 9 January 2020 CE

The anniversary of the martyrdom of Lady Fatimah al-Zahra, peace be upon her, according to the
second account

First revision completed: 25 Rajab 1444 AH — 17 February 2023 CE

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About the Book and Its Development

In *The Story of Plants — From the Signs of Creation to the Scenes of the Hereafter*, I present a journey through plant life, the names and descriptions of plants in the Holy Quran, and what has been related about them in the narrations of the Prophet, may God bless him and his family, and the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them. I trace their connections with food, work, worship and the environment, before turning to what revelation tells us about trees and fruits in the unseen and the Hereafter.

I completed this book on 13 Jumada al-Ula 1441 AH — 9 January 2020 CE, the anniversary of the martyrdom of Lady Fatimah al-Zahra, peace be upon her, according to the second account.

I completed the first revision on 25 Rajab 1444 AH — 17 February 2023 CE, and the 2026 revision on 8 Rabi' al-Akhir 1448 AH — 20 September 2026 CE. In these two revisions, I returned to what I had written to check, update and expand it, placing developments in my experience and knowledge within their proper chronological context.

I present this Arabic edition after expanding its discussions and reviewing its texts and references. I want readers to know the source of each piece of information and the limits of my findings. I therefore distinguish Quranic verses from commentary, transmitted narration and scientific research, and explain in the appendices which investigations I have completed and which still require study.

Note on the English translation. This is an English translation of the Arabic manuscript. Quranic passages are rendered in English in full at their points of citation; these renderings convey their meanings and do not replace the Arabic Quran. The writing and review dates record the history of the Arabic original. The author's first-person voice and distinctions between scripture, transmitted reports, interpretation, and science have been retained.

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Dedication

To those who seek scientific and religious truth, who are not satisfied with what is commonly repeated and do not disdain correcting an error; to those who open a book to deepen their understanding, look at a green leaf and find new questions, and make honesty a companion to everything they learn and teach.

To my dear father and mother, in gratitude for roots from which the branches of my life can never be separated, and in appreciation of your care, love and encouragement. Whatever good these pages contain, my prayers and thanks to you exceed what their words can express.

To my wife, my companion on this journey: thank you for your patience with the hours I spend reading, writing and occupied with this work, and for the support that sustains it before a reader ever sees it. You have a share of the gratitude within this book, just as you bring reassurance and support to my life.

To my children: I hope that in this story you will find an invitation to reflect, learn and be gentle. Plant goodness wherever you can, protect what has been entrusted to you, ask for evidence, and never make knowledge a reason to look down on anyone.

To my teachers of agriculture and biology, and to the teachers who brought an understanding of life within my reach. I make particular mention of Mr Kamil, my biology teacher at Al-Hamza Secondary School, in appreciation of what I learned in his lessons and of the lasting influence of teaching. And to my teachers in the Department of Community Health at the Medical Technical Institute in Diwaniyah Governorate, whose teaching formed part of my scientific and health education.

To my first teacher of the Holy Quran, Ms Umm Du'a, my Islamic education teacher at primary school: in gratitude for a beginning whose influence remains alive within me, and for a lesson whose meaning extended far beyond the classroom.

And to the first shaykh with whom I studied during my very brief period at the seminary in Najaf, the honoured Shaykh Abd al-Rasul al-Sudani al-Nasiri; and to everyone who helped me to read, understand and ask questions. I cherish your place in my learning, and ask God to reward you on my behalf.

To the memory of His Eminence Shaykh Ahmad al-Wa'ili, may God have mercy on him, in gratitude for the words that accompanied our upbringing, encouraged our love of knowledge and religion, and joined eloquence to the responsibility of serving listener and reader.

And to farmers and those who plant; to those who tend a tree without expecting to be the only ones to enjoy its shade; to my students, and to every young man or woman who finds the beginning of a new question in a garden or a book: I dedicate this story, hoping that it will be useful and will bring together love of creation and gratitude to the Creator in the reader's heart.

A Word from the Author

Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds, who placed the means of life upon the earth and made the diversity of plants an invitation to look and ask anew. May blessings and peace be upon our master Muhammad and his good and pure family.

My connection with plants did not begin with writing about them. In my life, study met a personal interest, reading met observation, and concern for health met a love of the soil and trees. I studied agriculture at intermediate school, which formed part of my first systematic introduction to this world. I then continued in the science stream at secondary school, where biology included botany and its questions about structure, growth and reproduction.

My engagement with science continued in the Department of Community Health at the Medical Technical Institute in Diwaniyah Governorate, through my technical medical studies and training in preventive medical research. This background strengthened my interest in the relationship between people, their food and their environment, and in the value of prevention and accurate information. I mention it to explain the path by which I arrived here, not to claim mastery of every branch of medicine or botany.

Agriculture also had another place in my life: a passion, a hobby and a practical pursuit that began in Iraq and accompanied me to Australia. Watching a tree grow, or a graft succeed or fail, teaches patience and respect for causes. A tree does not respond to wishes alone. It needs time, a suitable environment and care, and an unexpected result may lead us to correct our understanding before repeating the experiment.

I present myself in this book as a researcher and collector of what I have been able to discover in books. I am not a cleric, nor do I claim the authority of independent legal reasoning. I do not put myself in the place of a specialist in every subject I discuss. My task is to gather material from its sources, arrange it, explain what I can, attribute statements to their authors and acknowledge what remains unclear to me.

I wanted The Story of Plants to be a companion for the general reader, respecting the sacred text and scientific accuracy alike. In the Quran, plants open a path to reflection on divine unity, gratitude, resurrection and justice; in the laboratory and the field, they are subjects of observation and experiment. The two kinds of inquiry may meet in a single reflection, but their means of establishing a claim are not identical. Good intentions do not replace accurate transmission.

Whatever is correct in this work comes through God's guidance; responsibility for any error or shortcoming is mine. I regard a comment that improves a phrase or clarifies a source as a service to the book, and thank everyone who helps me provide it.

Sayyid Hussam Zaha Murtadha Al-Saraf Al-Husayni

General Introduction — A Story That Begins with Looking

A person may pass a tree many times without pausing beside it until they need its fruit or shade. Yet what seems familiar conceals wide-ranging questions. How did this branch emerge from a seed? How does the same soil support plants that differ in colour, taste and scent? Why is cultivation linked in many verses with water, provision and gratitude, only to return in others as an image of resurrection or the passing of worldly life?

The story begins with a scene the Quran invites us to contemplate: water descending, plants emerging, and fruits differing in colour and taste before they ripen. These meanings come together in the following verse of Surah al-An'am. It is followed by verses from Surah 'Abasa that connect human food with water, soil and cultivation, while also mentioning the benefit to livestock. The questions of this book open out from this familiar scene.

The Verses from Which the Story Begins

Surah al-An'am, verse 99.

"It is He who sends down water from the sky. With it We bring forth vegetation of every kind; from it We bring forth green growth, from which We bring forth closely packed grain. From the date palms, from their spathes, come clusters hanging low, and gardens of grapevines, olives and pomegranates, alike and unlike. Look at their fruit as it appears and ripens. In these are surely signs for people who believe." (99)

The verse begins with water, then shows the green growth, grain, date palms, grapes, olives and pomegranates that emerge through it. After listing the fruits, it invites us to observe their appearance and ripening. From this movement I begin the story, following the plant through its growth rather than stopping at its names.

Surah 'Abasa, verses 24-32.

"Let the human being look at his food." (24)

"We poured down water abundantly." (25)

"Then We split the earth open." (26)

"And caused grain to grow in it," (27)

"And grapes and green fodder," (28)

"And olives and date palms," (29)

"And gardens of dense growth," (30)

"And fruit and pasture," (31)

"As provision for you and your livestock." (32)

These verses return human food to its beginnings: descending water, opening earth, then grain, fruit and gardens with their varied benefits. They conclude with what sustains people and their livestock, extending our view of the table into the earth and the lives of the other creatures that share its resources with us.

By a 'story', I do not mean inventing a history of plants or attributing to a prophet a statement that cannot be established as his. I mean bringing scattered scenes

together into a structure that readers can follow: from seed to roots, from fruit to table, from orchard to the rights of workers and those in need, and from the earth's greenery to what revelation tells us about the Hereafter.

The book proceeds through eight parts. The first presents plant life in accessible scientific language, while the second gathers Quranic names and descriptions. The third traces plants in the stories of the prophets and the Ahl al-Bayt, and the fourth considers parables and lessons. The fifth addresses narrations concerning food, fragrance and medicine; the sixth, work, rights and worship; and the seventh, the environment and agricultural knowledge. The eighth concludes with scenes of the unseen and the Hereafter.

Each return to a plant brings a particular question. The chapter on the date palm explains its structure and fruit; the chapter on Mary examines its place in her story; and the chapters on rights consider the uses of the harvest. Cross-references connect these discussions so that knowledge can develop without repeating the same explanation.

Nor will plants be discussed separately from the people who benefit from them. Cultivation involves a worker who toils, water to be shared, fruit to be sold, and a person in need hoping for a portion. Understanding certain phenomena therefore leads to a question of conduct: what do we do with what we have learned? How do we protect a blessing and fulfil the rights attached to it?

A Word on Revision and Updating — 2023 CE

I returned to the book in 2023 out of responsibility towards its subject and its reader, and from a wish to present information in clearer language with more precise references. A passage that seems straightforward on first reading may reveal, on review, a compiler's explanatory words incorporated into a narration, a plant name used in several senses, or a statement whose source needs clarification. I therefore reviewed my wording and references and reconsidered the arrangement of the material and its relationship to the parts of the book.

My experience of agriculture broadened in the years following the original writing. My work in tree grafting was associated with a Guinness achievement in 2021. The gardening page on my website explains the distinction between the many varieties mentioned in media coverage and the species on which recognition of the achievement was based. I do not turn this personal experience into evidence for interpreting a verse or authenticating a narration; I mention it as a sign of my continuing interest in experimentation and learning.

In 2022, I shared my experience of grafting and propagation with agriculture students at Greater Shepparton Secondary College. In 2023, the school recognised my support for its horticulture programme and garden. These encounters reminded me of the value of my own early education and confirmed that knowledge becomes more useful when it is shared, tested and explained in language accessible to learners.

In this revision I brought together my scientific observations and notes on sources, improved the connections between the parts, and sought to tell my personal story in its proper place while presenting the research with its evidence and sources.

A Word on Revision and Updating — 2026 CE

In my 2026 revision I returned to the questions with which I had begun, more aware of the precision and patience they require. What we learn about plants is extensive, and material published about them does not all have the same evidential standing. I have seen how a phrase can travel from one source to dozens of pages until it appears unquestionable, although repetition adds nothing to its supporting evidence.

I therefore focused on the wording I quote, the meaning I understand from it, and the conclusion I draw. A statement may be sound in its source without being applicable in every context, and a general nutritional benefit does not justify prescribing a treatment for an individual patient. I do not regard a narration as certain simply because it agrees with what I would like to believe. I return to its source and follow whatever investigation I can undertake.

I paid particular attention to scientific terminology and to distinctions between species and varieties, grafting and hybridisation, pollination and fertilisation, and everyday language and botanical classification. In discussing the unseen, I stayed within what the text tells us. I did not treat the shared names of fruits in Paradise and fruits in this world as proof that I comprehended their reality.

I hope readers will find clearer language, more accurate references and a structure that is easier to consult in this revision. I have placed an investigation register at the end of the book to explain what I have completed and what I continue to study. For me, service to knowledge begins with an honest account of one's findings and a willingness to correct what proves mistaken.

The Book's Method and Sources

The Holy Quran as the Foundation

I begin with a verse in its context and gather related verses before drawing a conclusion. I reproduce every verse I cite in full, with the name of the surah and the verse numbers, where it is explained in the introduction, chapters and supplementary scenes. I clarify the context of each passage, whom it concerns, and the sequence of events where it tells a story, then connect it to plants and explain why it is cited. When commenting on a word or part of a verse, I keep the full verse beside the explanation, rather than merely giving its number. I do not attribute to the Quran a specific identification that it does not make.

A Narration's Presence in a Book and the Reliability of Its Attribution

I distinguish between a report's presence in a hadith collection and the reliability of its attribution to an infallible figure. Its presence alone is not enough to establish its authenticity. I consider its chain of transmission, its wording, and what supports or contradicts it, drawing on specialists' assessments and attributing those assessments to them. Where I have not completed this examination, I use expressions such as 'it is reported' or 'it is narrated', identify the source and explain the limits of what I could verify.

The bibliography and documentation records identify the books and passages I consulted, foremost among them al-Kafi and works of Quranic commentary and biography. I use compilations such as Wasa'il al-Shi'a and Bihar al-Anwar to locate the transmission routes and available earlier sources of reports. I identify every source I use, making clear what I consulted directly and what I encountered through another source.

Commentaries and Language

I draw on al-Tibyan, Majma' al-Bayan, al-Mizan and narrational commentaries, distinguishing a commentator's own interpretation from a narration that he transmits. When linguists disagree over a plant name, I present the views that affect the meaning. I may leave its modern equivalent unresolved if the evidence is unclear. I do not impose a scientific name on a text merely because a published photograph carries the same Arabic name.

Scientific Knowledge

I explain scientific phenomena in accessible language and refer to supporting sources, distinguishing a general principle from a limited study's findings and from my personal experience. In discussing a medical benefit, I consider the quality of the evidence and treat a home experiment as an observation requiring evaluation before generalisation.

A Connected Narrative and the Limits of Coverage

I aim to gather material broadly and systematically while explaining the limits of what I could find. I have therefore arranged names, verses and reports in appendices so that readers can consult them and supplement anything I may have missed. When I cannot find sufficient grounds for a conclusion, I leave the question open and continue investigating it.

Preliminary Discussion — What Do We Mean by Plants?

In everyday speech, trees, grasses and flowers all fall under the name 'plants'. The Quran uses words that make the scene familiar to its audience: crops, fruits, grain, date palms and gardens. Botany also asks questions about cells, tissues, reproduction and evolutionary relationships, so its boundaries and divisions are more specialised.

A food's everyday name does not always correspond to its scientific description. Something called a vegetable at the table may, botanically, be a fruit, while 'fruit' in everyday usage is not a separate taxonomic category. A species also differs from a cultivar: a tree may carry several cultivars of a single species, and grafts from closely related species may take on it, depending on compatibility.

Older works sometimes discussed fungi and certain algae alongside plant material, whereas modern classifications distinguish them or distribute them among different groups. I preserve the historical term when quoting it, then explain the distinction, rather than treating an older usage as mistaken simply because it does not serve the purpose of a modern term.

We begin with plants as we observe them in this world. For descriptions of trees and fruits in the Hereafter, we turn to revelation. Shared names bring the meaning closer to the listener, but do not give the listener complete knowledge of a reality not yet witnessed.

Part One — The Story of Green Life

The journey begins with what the eye can follow: a seed placed in the soil, a seedling emerging, a leaf unfolding and a fruit reaching maturity. Between these images lies work that we cannot see in its entirety, but which questions and observation gradually reveal. We will accompany the plant as it grows and examine water, soil, light and the parts that work together to sustain it, until looking at a familiar tree becomes the beginning of renewed understanding.

Chapter 1 — Plants in the Scene of Creation

Diversity within a Shared Provision

“With it He causes crops, olives, date palms, grapes and fruits of every kind to grow for you. In this there is surely a sign for people who reflect.”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-Nahl, verse 11.

The verse moves from crops to familiar trees and fruits, then opens our view to the abundance of provision with the words ‘and fruits of every kind’. The scene ends by inviting reflection, as though knowing the names of what we eat were the beginning of inquiry. Behind bread, oil and grapes lie soil, water, growth and work; behind our familiarity with these blessings lies the possibility of rediscovering wonder. The story of plants begins here: making the familiar worthy of attention again, and allowing knowledge of something's usefulness to lead to gratitude and responsible use.

The Earth That Brings Forth Life

Surah al-Nazi'at, verses 30-33.

“And after that He spread out the earth.” (30)

“He brought forth from it its water and its pasture.” (31)

“And the mountains He firmly established,” (32)

“As provision for you and your livestock.” (33)

The picture begins with the earth that God made ready for life, then its water and pasture and the mountains He established upon it. It concludes by explaining the immediate purpose of these blessings: their benefit to people and livestock. Plants belong to the earth's preparation as a home for living creatures; they are not a separate scene.

Surah Taha, verses 53-54.

“He who made the earth a resting place for you, laid out paths for you upon it, and sent down water from the sky; with it We brought forth diverse kinds of plants.” (53)

“Eat and pasture your livestock. In this there are surely signs for people of understanding.” (54)

Within the dialogue between Moses, peace be upon him, and Pharaoh, the passage recalls the Lord who made the earth accessible for travel and sent down water to bring forth diverse vegetation. It then turns to eating and grazing livestock, making

daily need an opening for reflection on creation and evidence accessible to those who use their understanding.

In these blessings together, I see an earth upon which the conditions of life are made ready: water reaching plants, plants feeding people and livestock, and paths connecting those who benefit with their resources. Reflection on these relationships raises questions of gratitude and responsibility for what we have been enabled to use.

Before Human Existence

Surah al-Waqi'ah, verses 63-67.

“Have you considered what you sow?” (63)

“Is it you who make it grow, or are We the grower?” (64)

“If We willed, We could turn it into broken stalks, leaving you to lament,” (65)

“We are indeed burdened with loss;” (66)

“Rather, we have been deprived.” (67)

The passage confronts cultivators with a question that begins with their own labour. They till and sow, but germination and growth are not guaranteed by their will. If the crop became broken stalks, their helplessness and regret would become apparent. Recognition of human work is thus joined to gratitude towards the One who grants growth.

The question begins with the farmer's hand and what it can do, then reaches towards the conditions on which plant life depends. The history of plants on earth and the stages of their emergence have their own evidence, which I consider in the following discussion.

What Science Studies

The history of plant life is investigated through fossils, spores, tissues and traces of ancient environments, compared with our knowledge of organisms living today. This evidence helps reconstruct changes in terrestrial life, but requires scientific interpretation and independent comparison. The sequence of clauses in a verse is not sufficient to construct a chronology that replaces such investigation.

The First Tree and the First Crop

When a report names the first tree or links a particular species to the beginning of creation, investigation starts with its source and transmission. We do not fill this gap with a familiar name unsupported by evidence, nor treat something whose details are unknown as necessarily nonexistent. Readers can reflect on the origin of a blessing without making appreciation of its value depend on a detailed account of its first individual example.

From Causes to Responsibility

The scene of germination can be read on three complementary levels: what happens before us, how the process occurs, and what follows from our benefiting from it. The first describes a seedling emerging; the second examines water, temperature and seed structure; and the third raises questions of gratitude, care and fairness in use.

Understanding becomes distorted when we expect an experimental description to answer every ethical question, or use an exhortation to excuse ourselves from learning the causes of success and failure.

In Surah al-Waqi'ah there is a subtle distinction between what the cultivator does and what sustains the crop's life. People till, sow and tend, but their labour operates within a world whose initial conditions they did not create. From this perspective, caring for a farm does not compete with trust in God. It is a way of using available means while recognising the limits of one's power. This remains a reflection on the passage's meaning, not an additional report about the sequence of creation or the history of the first tree.

Chapter references: Surah Taha 53-54; Surah al-Nazi'at 30-33; Surah al-Waqi'ah 63-67. I have not relied in this chapter on a report identifying the first plant.

Chapter 2 — The Soil That Shelters the Seed

Soil Is Not a Single Substance

Looking at a handful of soil, we may see a single colour, yet it contains minerals, organic remains, water, air and living organisms. Particle size affects the pores through which water and air move. Two soils are therefore not necessarily equally suitable for the same plant, and fertility cannot be reduced to the amount of fertiliser added. [S1]

Roots That Respire

Living roots need conditions that allow them to function, and waterlogged soil can suffer from poor aeration. Conversely, drought limits the availability of water and nutrients. Caring for the soil therefore does not mean watering more at all times, but understanding the plant's needs and its growing medium. Suitable practices accordingly vary with location and season.

A History Preserved in the Soil

Soil forms through the interaction of parent material, climate, organisms, topography and time. Cultivation, grazing, compaction and erosion leave their marks upon it. Fertile topsoil may seem a resource that renews itself at no cost, but in many circumstances it is lost far more quickly than it can be rebuilt. Protecting it is care for the future of cultivation as well as the present harvest. [S1]

Good Land

Surah al-A'raf, verses 57-58.

“It is He who sends the winds as heralds before His mercy. When they carry heavy clouds, We drive them to a lifeless land, send down water upon it, and with it bring forth fruits of every kind. In this way We bring forth the dead, so that you may take heed.” (57)

“The good land brings forth its vegetation by its Lord's permission, while that which is poor brings forth only scantily. Thus We present the signs in varied ways for people who give thanks.” (58)

The scene moves from winds bearing good tidings to clouds laden with water, then to lifeless land that revives and produces fruit. It brings the meaning of resurrection within reach, before the contrast between vegetation emerging from good and poor ground draws attention to differences in response and yield.

The image of good land makes response and generosity of yield familiar to the hearer. I read it for its intended lesson, distinguishing that purpose from the scientific classification of soil. The description of land in the example does not constitute a moral judgement on the inhabitants of a particular region.

Reading the Soil before Judging It

Imagine two containers planted with seeds from the same batch, but producing different growth. The difference alone does not establish a particular cause: moisture, aeration or available light may differ. Systematic observation helps us

move from an impression to a specific question: which factor changed, and which remained comparable? This is an approach to learning, not a single recipe for testing every soil.

Surah al-Ra'd, verse 4.

“On the earth are neighbouring plots, gardens of grapevines, crops, and date palms growing in clusters and singly, watered with the same water; yet We give some an advantage over others in their produce. In this there are surely signs for people who reason.” (4)

Neighbouring pieces of land do not lose their differences, and the same water does not make their fruits identical. The verse brings crops, vineyards and date palms together in a visible scene, then invites people to consider this diversity. Shared apparent causes do not eliminate differences in taste and yield.

The neighbouring plots in Surah al-Ra'd illuminate another point: spatial closeness does not erase difference. We may call a large area ‘one piece of land’ despite its many influential details. Respect for the earth therefore begins with attending to its characteristics, rather than imposing upon it what succeeded elsewhere. This also teaches intellectual humility. A good result remains open to explanation and improvement; it does not become a law simply because it matched our wishes.

Chapter references: Surah al-A'raf 57-58; Surah al-Ra'd 4; scientific reference [S1].

Chapter 3 — Water, Light and Air as Conditions of Growth

A Drop Connecting Sky and Earth

Surah al-Nahl, verses 10-11.

“It is He who sends down water from the sky. From it you have drink, and through it grows vegetation in which you pasture your livestock.” (10)

“With it He causes crops, olives, date palms, grapes and fruits of every kind to grow for you. In this there is surely a sign for people who reflect.” (11)

The enumeration of blessings moves from water that people drink to vegetation where livestock graze, then to crops and fruit-bearing trees. Water thus appears as a connection between the needs of humans, animals and plants, and the diversity of food becomes an invitation to reflect on its source.

Following water brings me closer to the relationship between a physical cause and a blessing. I study its movement through clouds, soil and plants while remembering the responsibility of those who benefit from it. Reflection thus extends from knowing how it reaches us to using it well.

Light as an Energy Resource

Green plants use light energy to build organic compounds from simpler substances. This does not mean that every plant needs the same light intensity, or that higher temperatures always increase growth. Species differ in their requirements, and enzymes and tissues function within limits affected by the environment. [S2]

What Plants Take from the Air

Carbon dioxide contributes to the formation of organic matter, and gases also take part in respiration. Plants do not live on water and minerals alone: air is among their needs. As conditions change, the rates of their processes change, and conserving water may become more important to the plant than maintaining gas exchange at its previous level.

A Blessing Has Its Conditions

Fresh water is a blessing, but excessive watering can harm a plant. Sunlight supports growth, but intense heat can stress tissues. This teaches us to consider conditions together. A successful orchard does not demonstrate unlimited human power, nor does a failed experiment invalidate agricultural knowledge.

Water's Journey through the Plant

Water does not move through a plant because a heart pumps it upwards. Differences in water potential are involved, and water loss from leaves helps draw a column of water through the xylem, aided by cohesion between water molecules and their interaction with the walls. This is connected with conditions around the roots, the atmosphere and stomatal regulation. What happens in the leaf is therefore inseparable from the water available in the soil. [S11]

Surah al-Zumar, verse 21.

“Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky and conducts it into springs within the earth, then brings forth through it crops of differing colours? Then they wither and you see them turn yellow; then He makes them broken stalks. In this there is surely a reminder for people of understanding.” (21)

Here the reader follows water from the sky to springs in the earth, then sees its effect in crops of different colours. Freshness is followed by yellowing and broken stalks. The verse joins the plant's beginning to the end of its cycle, inviting reflection on change rather than on the moment of greenness alone.

Reflection can begin with a simple question: how does a drop reach a high leaf? This opens a path into physics, anatomy and physiology, then brings the reader back to the unity of the scene in which the verses connect water, earth and fruit. We do not need to attribute every technical detail to a word in the verse to appreciate the value of study. Interpretation preserves the text's meaning, while research enlarges our knowledge of the world the text invites us to observe.

Chapter references: Surah al-Nahl 10–11; Surah al-Zumar 21; references [S1, S2].

Chapter 4 — Grain and Fruit Stones, Life Concealed

The Splitting of Seeds and the Emergence of Life

“God is indeed the One who splits the grain and the fruit stone. He brings the living out of the dead, and brings the dead out of the living. That is God; how then are you turned away?”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-An'am, verse 95.

The text brings grain and fruit stones together: small, finite things held in a human hand. It then opens the meaning towards bringing the living from the dead. Moving from the image of splitting to the closing question makes the scene an argument addressed to the observer and a responsibility concerning the direction of his attention. A viable seed, however, is alive. Its apparent stillness must not be made a scientific definition of death. The believer reads the verse within its scope, and the researcher describes germination as observation reveals it; understanding grows through distinguishing the two.

Inside the Seed Coat

A seed contains an embryo, a reserve food supply and a protective coat, although the structure varies among plant groups. It may appear motionless, but this does not make it inanimate. In many species, dormancy helps delay germination until more suitable conditions arrive. [S3]

The Beginning of Germination

Surah 'Abasa, verses 25-27.

“We poured down water abundantly.” (25)

“Then We split the earth open.” (26)

“And caused grain to grow in it,” (27)

The beginning of food is presented through successive movements: water pouring down, earth splitting open and grain growing. The verses do not recount an incident in one particular field. They call the origin of familiar sustenance to mind, so that people may see a chain of conditions sustaining life behind their food.

Many seeds absorb water and resume their vital processes; the radicle then emerges and the other parts develop. Their requirements for temperature, light and prior treatment vary. An experiment with one species therefore cannot simply be applied to all others, and a failure to germinate immediately does not mean that every seed is dead.

Food for the Beginning

At first, the young plant depends on its reserves, while its parts gradually begin to function. As leaves capable of photosynthesis form, its sources of nourishment change. This stage explains why beginnings need care: preserving a seed alone does not guarantee the seedling's continued life after emergence.

The One Who Splits Grain and Fruit Stones

Surah al-An'am, verse 95, describes God as the One who splits grain and fruit stones. The description directs attention to life emerging from what appears closed and connects this with divine power. An explanation of the seed coat, embryo and germination describes the observed process without exhausting the religious meaning evoked by the verse.

The Seed between Possibility and Fulfilment

A sound seed does not mean a successful plant will appear in every circumstance. Possibility is one thing; the coming together of the conditions that realise it is another. Learners benefit from recording the sowing date and their observations, and from distinguishing a seed that has not yet germinated from a seedling that emerged and then weakened. Distinguishing the stages prevents different outcomes being lumped together as 'the planting failed'.

In the expression about splitting grain and fruit stones, attention moves from the small, closed object to its continuing effect in the world. The lesson does not stop at wonder over an emerging stem, but extends to the continuing provision carried within grains and stones. Seed preservation can therefore be understood as preserving a future possibility, while its agricultural details remain dependent on species and environment. Not every mention of a grain names a separate plant in an index of the Quran; the term may be general without identifying a crop.

Chapter references: Surah al-An'am 95; Surah 'Abasa 25-27; reference [S3].

Chapter 5 — Roots, Stems and Branches, the Plant's Structure

What We Do Not See beneath the Ground

The root system anchors the plant and absorbs water and nutrients; it may also store food. Taproots, fibrous roots and other root systems differ in their spread, so the size of a crown alone does not reveal the form of the roots. A person may harm a large tree by assuming that the effects of digging stop at the soil surface. [S4]

A Stem Does More than Provide Support

Stems connect the parts, bear leaves and buds, transport substances and may store water or food. Modified stems also occur underground or close to it. An organ therefore cannot be identified by location alone, but by its structure, connections and pattern of growth. [S5]

Xylem and Phloem

Xylem tissues transport water and dissolved substances, while phloem carries organic products between sites of production, use and storage. Phloem is not merely the outer bark, and xylem cells are not all of one type. These tissues perform complementary functions within a living plant. [S6]

The Parts Form a Whole

A branch may weaken because of damage to the roots; the loss of leaves may affect a plant's nutrition; or a deep wound may disrupt the transport of substances. The effects of damage must therefore be understood in relation to its location and connection with other organs. Knowing these relationships helps us appreciate the consequences of digging, pruning and caring for a tree.

Transport from Sources to Sites of Need

The movement of substances throughout a tree cannot accurately be represented by one invariably upward arrow and another invariably downward one. Photosynthetic products move in the phloem from sources of supply to sites of use or storage, and an organ's role may change with its developmental stage. This movement remains distinct from the predominantly upward movement of water in the xylem. [S11]

Surah Ibrahim, verses 24-25.

“Have you not seen how God sets forth a parable: a good word is like a good tree, its root firm and its branches in the sky?” (24)

“It gives its fruit at every season by its Lord's permission. God sets forth parables for people so that they may take heed.” (25)

God compares a good word to a tree with firmly established roots, high branches and fruit renewed by His permission. The scene is botanical, while its purpose is to make clear the effect of a beneficial word grounded in a firm foundation, whose good extends beyond the moment it is spoken.

The relationship between the parts gives the parable its strength: roots support the tree, branches extend, and fruit reaches others. Someone who understands the links between roots, leaves and transport pathways can picture this structure more clearly. Identifying each organ with a particular person or event is a different reading, requiring its own interpretive evidence.

Chapter references: Surah Ibrahim 24-25 for the parable; references [S4, S5, S6] for the scientific explanation.

Chapter 6 — The Green Leaf and the Making of Food

A Surface Receiving Light

A leaf contains tissues, vessels and spaces that permit gas exchange, and many of its cells contain chloroplasts that carry out photosynthesis. Its shape, area and surface layer influence its relationship with light and water. Leaves are not all identical, and other green parts may also perform some of this function. [S7]

Photosynthesis and Respiration

Photosynthesis stores energy in organic compounds, while cellular respiration makes energy available for cells to use. Respiration does not stop because a leaf is green or because it is daytime. Rather, the net effect of photosynthesis may dominate the gas exchange we observe. [S2]

Stomata Maintain a Balance

Stomata allow gases to enter and leave, a process associated with water loss. Guard cells help regulate their opening as the plant responds to conditions. Maximising carbon dioxide intake and conserving the most water cannot always be achieved together; the importance of the balance becomes clear during severe drought. [S7]

A Leaf Falls, but Its Effects Remain

Leaf pigments may change and leaves may fall as part of a seasonal cycle or in response to stress. Every instance of yellowing must not be assigned the same cause. Once a leaf falls, it enters pathways of decomposition and nutrient recycling, making its apparent end part of continuing life around the tree.

How Can a Leaf Become an Opening for Learning?

Learners can begin by describing a leaf before interpreting it: its position, orientation, colour, edges and visible veins. They can then separate what they saw from what they inferred. Saying 'this leaf is paler than the one beside it' is a description; attributing that difference to a particular nutrient deficiency is a hypothesis requiring evidence. Separating observation from interpretation teaches greater precision in speaking about plants.

Surah al-An'am, verse 59.

"With Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him. He knows what is on land and in the sea. No leaf falls without His knowing it, nor is there a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry, that is not in a clear record." (59)

The passage moves from the keys of the unseen to details we may overlook: a falling leaf and a grain hidden in the earth's darkness. These small things are not lost to God's knowledge. Looking at plants thus acquires a sense of watchfulness and humility before the breadth of divine knowledge.

I had been considering the leaf through its role in the tree's life. Here I pause at another meaning: divine knowledge encompasses what is hidden from human beings or seems small in their eyes. Each perspective has its own question. I investigate the mechanism of leaf fall with scientific tools and reflect on its Quranic significance in a way that draws attention to the limits of my knowledge.

Chapter references: Surah al-An'am 59 on divine knowledge encompassing the fall of a leaf; references [S2, S7].

Chapter 7 — Flowers, Pollination and the Continuation of Life

The Flower as a Reproductive Organ

Many flowers have organs that produce pollen and others that contain ovules, but their distribution varies. They may occur together in one flower, or separately in different flowers or plants. Reproductive diversity cannot be reduced to one familiar image of a flower. [S3]

Pollination Is Not Fertilisation

Pollination is the transfer of pollen to the appropriate site; fertilisation is a later event involving the union of gametes. Pollen may arrive without the process succeeding. We therefore distinguish the terms when explaining fruit set or its failure, rather than treating them as one name.

Partners in the Journey

Wind carries the pollen of some plants, while insects, birds and other animals help pollinate different species. Flower colours, scents and food rewards contribute to these relationships. An orchard is therefore not a collection of trees isolated from their surroundings, but part of a network of life. [S3]

Pairing and the Limits of Inference

Surah al-Ra'd, verse 3.

“It is He who spread out the earth and placed firm mountains and rivers upon it, and made in it two of each pair of fruits. He covers the day with the night. In this there are surely signs for people who reflect.” (3)

The scene brings together the earth's expanse, mountains, rivers, fruits and the succession of night and day. Pairs appear within this observable order. The verse invites reflection on creation's diversity and connectedness without presenting a detailed classification of reproductive methods in every plant.

Surah Taha, verse 53.

“He who made the earth a resting place for you, laid out paths for you upon it, and sent down water from the sky; with it We brought forth diverse kinds of plants.” (53)

Plant diversity is mentioned after the preparation of the earth, the laying out of paths and the sending down of water. This arrangement returns the different kinds to a common scene: land receives water and brings forth diverse plants, from which people and animals benefit in daily life.

Surah al-Hijr, verse 22.

“We sent the winds bearing fertilisation, then sent down water from the sky and gave it to you to drink; you are not its keepers.” (22)

The verse presents winds, descending water and people's drinking among blessings whose stores they do not possess. Describing the winds as *lawaqih* invites attention to the term in context, while the clear message reminds people that the causes of water provision extend beyond the tools in their possession.

These passages open a discussion of words before connecting them with botanical terminology. I read 'pairs' and lawaqih in each verse's context, then consider the knowledge discussed next that may help us picture their meaning.

Three Stages That Should Not Be Given One Name

In following a flower's development, we should distinguish the presence of reproductive organs, the arrival of suitable pollen, and the successful later stages that produce a crop. Counting flowers cannot therefore predict everything that will mature into fruit, and the presence of an insect does not establish that it has successfully pollinated a flower. These distinctions make agricultural questions more precise and prevent a leap from an attractive scene to an unmeasured outcome.

Surah Ya Sin, verse 36.

"Glory be to Him who created all the pairs, of what the earth grows, of themselves, and of what they do not know." (36)

This glorification opens our view to pairs among what the earth grows, among human beings, and among things they do not know. The closing words extend beyond present knowledge. Diversity remains an incentive to investigate, and ignorance of some aspects of creation remains an incentive to humility.

I begin understanding pairing through language and context. The passage may concern kinds, pairs or a broader aspect of diversity. I then draw on botanical knowledge to make the picture clearer, while recognising that determining its meaning remains a task of interpretation requiring supporting evidence.

Chapter references: Surah al-Ra'd 3; Surah Taha 53; Surah al-Hijr 22; Surah Ya Sin 36; reference [S3].

Chapter 8 — Fruits and Seeds, Provision Renewed

From Flower to Fruit

Many fruits develop from the flower's ovary, although other tissues may contribute to their structure, and some fruits develop without complete seeds. Fruits vary between dry and fleshy forms and between those that open and those that remain closed. External appearance alone is therefore not a sufficient basis for every classification. [S3]

Ripening as Gradual Change

Colour, texture, taste and scent change during ripening through processes that differ among species. Stored substances may be transformed, and cell-wall components may change. Ripeness for eating does not always coincide with the best time for transport or storage. Knowledge of a fruit must therefore be connected to the purpose for which it is harvested.

Routes of Dispersal

Wind may carry light seeds, water may transport others, and animals may move fruits or seeds. Plant life thereby extends beyond the shade of the parent from which it arose. Humans have also become influential dispersers, and transport may bring agricultural benefits or environmental risks depending on the species and location.

Looking at Fruit

Surah al-An'am, verse 99.

“It is He who sends down water from the sky. With it We bring forth vegetation of every kind; from it We bring forth green growth, from which We bring forth closely packed grain. From the date palms, from their spathes, come clusters hanging low, and gardens of grapevines, olives and pomegranates, alike and unlike. Look at their fruit as it appears and ripens. In these are surely signs for people who believe.” (99)

The verse moves from water to green growth and grain, then to date palms, vineyards, olives and pomegranates. After enumerating the fruits, it directs attention to their formation and ripening, inviting the reader to follow the tree through time rather than being content to know its name.

Surah al-Ra'd, verse 4.

“On the earth are neighbouring plots, gardens of grapevines, crops, and date palms growing in clusters and singly, watered with the same water; yet We give some an advantage over others in their produce. In this there are surely signs for people who reason.” (4)

Attention here turns to taste and benefit: neighbouring orchards receive the same water, yet their produce differs. This scene is familiar to a gardener. It raises the question of variation within similar surroundings and makes it a subject for reasoned reflection.

A fruit may attract one reader through the beauty of its colour and prompt another to ask about its changing taste and ripeness. I find these different approaches enrich

observation, provided each remains an opening to knowledge and leaves room for what has not yet been revealed.

Fruit in the Field and at the Table

Something may be called a vegetable in the market and studied as a fruit in botany, because the language of the table groups things by use, whereas anatomical classification considers an organ's origin and formation. The difference is not necessarily an error. Error arises when a conclusion from one usage is transferred to the other without explanation. This observation also helps in reading older books about food, whose divisions need not follow the arrangement of a modern botany textbook.

Looking at ripening directs attention to transformation over time. A sequence of pictures of one fruit may teach more than an ideal photograph chosen at maturity. Benefit extends to knowing when to harvest, reducing spoilage and distributing food well. These are ethical and practical applications suggested by reflection on the scene, not linguistic meanings to which we claim the verse is confined.

Chapter references: Surah al-An'am 99; Surah al-Ra'd 4; reference [S3].

Chapter 9 — Plant Diversity and Adaptation

The Same Water and Different Fruits

“On the earth are neighbouring plots, gardens of grapevines, crops, and date palms growing in clusters and singly, watered with the same water; yet We give some an advantage over others in their produce. In this there are surely signs for people who reason.”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-Ra'd, verse 4.

The scene begins with spatial proximity — neighbouring plots — then reveals diverse crops and differing fruits despite a shared water supply. This awakens attention to differences within one scene. A reader can notice differences in taste, size and ripening in a familiar orchard, then ask scientifically about their causes. The verse presents this variation for reflection without restricting its causes to a particular agricultural factor. The mention of the same water thus invites consideration of diversity, while studying each plant still requires knowledge of its characteristics and circumstances.

Many Forms of Life

Surah Taha, verse 53.

“He who made the earth a resting place for you, laid out paths for you upon it, and sent down water from the sky; with it We brought forth diverse kinds of plants.”
(53)

Plants appear as diverse kinds in a context of earth, water and provision. The picture does not reduce plant creation to a single crop, but allows the reader to see the breadth of diversity nearby and ask how life takes many forms upon the same earth.

Describing a plant as a tree, shrub or herb helps identify its growth form, but does not replace scientific classification. Species differ in lifespan, the persistence of their parts and flowering time. A plant that completes its life cycle in a season behaves differently from a perennial retaining its resources for years.

Surviving in Different Environments

Thick surface layers, small leaves or water storage may help plants endure certain dry environments. Other characteristics appear in water or cold conditions. No trait acts entirely alone: success depends on the combination of a plant's characteristics, environmental limits and growth history. [S7]

A Response Is Not a Human Story

Growth may bend towards light, and the positions of plant parts may change in response to stimuli. Science describes testable mechanisms and outcomes; this does not require attributing human feelings or intentions to plants. Nor should the value of their lives be denied because their structure differs from that of animals.

Differences That Invite Understanding

The scene in Surah al-Ra'd combines a common water supply with differences in produce, drawing attention to variations visible within one orchard. Agricultural knowledge investigates these differences through genetics, environment and management, while the Quranic lesson extends to recognising and giving thanks for the blessing.

An Individual's Response and a Species' Adaptation

Researchers describe plant responses to stimuli, including the direction of growth under light or gravity, and investigate the signals that regulate them. But an individual's response over several days is not the same as the history of inherited traits in a population over generations. This distinction removes a common confusion when 'adaptation' is used for every change we see. [S12]

In literary writing we may describe a branch as searching for light, provided this image does not become a claim about conscious intention comparable to human intention. Respecting plants does not require giving them an imagined psychological biography. Understanding how they grow and the limits of our knowledge is enough. The story can thus combine language that makes a scene vivid with language that keeps claims precise, allowing the pleasure of reflection without confusing it with unverified information.

Chapter references: Surah al-Ra'd 4; Surah Taha 53; references [S6, S7].

Chapter 10 — From Green Growth to Broken Stalks, the Life Cycle

A Lifetime Not Measured by One Season

Tissues and organs within one plant may have different lifespans, and a perennial may lose and replace leaves without its own life ending. We therefore distinguish the death of an organ from the death of the individual, and seasonal dormancy from permanent death. This helps us read what we observe in a garden more accurately.

Disease and Stress

Plants may be affected by living agents, such as some pathogens and pests, or by non-living factors such as water shortage, heat and salinity. Symptoms may resemble one another despite different causes. A yellow leaf does not identify a particular disease simply by appearing, and an intervention that helps one tree is not necessarily suitable for another.

After the Fall

Decomposers help return the components of remains to environmental cycles. Dead wood may become a habitat for other organisms, while decomposing leaves contribute to soil organic matter. The ending of an individual life is thus connected with the movement of matter through an ecosystem, without equating this with human resurrection.

The Lesson of Transformation

Surah al-Zumar, verse 21.

“Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky and conducts it into springs within the earth, then brings forth through it crops of differing colours? Then they wither and you see them turn yellow; then He makes them broken stalks. In this there is surely a reminder for people of understanding.” (21)

In this scene the crop emerges, takes on colour and matures, then turns yellow and breaks apart. The stages are brought together within one verse to make changing conditions vivid and remind people that what appears strong and complete carries the conditions of its ending within its cycle.

Surah al-Hadid, verse 20.

“Know that worldly life is only play, distraction, adornment, mutual boasting, and rivalry in wealth and children. It is like rain whose growth delights the cultivators; then it withers and you see it turn yellow, and then it becomes broken stalks. In the Hereafter there is severe punishment, and forgiveness and approval from God. Worldly life is nothing but a deceptive enjoyment.” (20)

Attachment to worldly adornment is compared to a crop that delights observers after rain, then soon yellows and becomes broken stalks. After the image, the reader is taken to recompense, to weigh the enduring effects of deeds against passing appearance and rivalry.

This transformation brings together a reading of the plant's stages and a reading of the scene's effect upon the soul. Science explains processes of change and

decomposition; the parable returns us to the question of value: what remains of a person's work after what delighted him has passed away?

From an Apparent Symptom to the Right Question

When a plant wilts, observation begins with the distribution and timing of the wilting and the changes that preceded it, not with choosing a ready-made treatment. Is the whole plant affected or only part? Has the same pattern appeared in neighbouring plants? These questions do not replace specialist expertise, but prevent every symptom becoming a label for one cause. Improvement after an intervention does not, by itself, establish that the intervention caused it; other factors may have changed at the same time.

Surah al-A'la, verses 4-5.

“And who brought forth the pasture,” (4)

“Then made it darkened, withered debris.” (5)

Pasture that emerges green becomes remains of a different colour. Both movements appear within the glorification of the Lord who creates, determines and guides. Emergence and withering belong to the same scene; greenery alone is not its only source of instruction.

From here I return to the blessing while it remains in our hands. How do we care for it, who receives its benefit, and what effect does it have on our conduct? With this question I conclude the account of the plant's cycle and turn to the names and descriptions the Quran selects from its wide world.

Chapter references: Surah al-Zumar 21; Surah al-Hadid 20; Surah al-A'la 4-5; reference [S1] on organic matter returning to soil.

Part Two — Plants in the Holy Quran

After following plant life, we return to names familiar from the Quran: a date palm, an olive tree, an ear of grain and a fruit, and to descriptions that capture part of a scene or one of its stages. We will read each name in its setting and see its connections with provision, gratitude, parable and story. The eye that learned to observe in Part One will accompany this reading, bringing the scene closer and helping us reflect upon it.

Chapter 11 — The Date Palm, from Flowering to Fresh and Mature Dates

A Presence beyond the Fruit

Surah Qaf, verses 10-11.

“And tall date palms with closely arranged spathes,” (10)

“As provision for the servants. With it We gave life to a dead land; in this way will be the emergence.” (11)

The date palms rise high, bearing closely arranged spathes, as part of the provision God brings forth through water. The verses then connect the revival of lifeless land with people's emergence after death. The image of the palms thus conveys both sustenance and an argument for resurrection.

Surah al-Nahl, verse 11.

“With it He causes crops, olives, date palms, grapes and fruits of every kind to grow for you. In this there is surely a sign for people who reflect.” (11)

The date palm appears alongside olives, crops, grapes and other fruits. Its context does not separate it from the water that caused it to grow or the reflection to which the verse invites us. Its value is read within the diversity of provision sustaining human life.

This tree has a presence extending through food, beauty and scenes of revelation. In this chapter I will follow the details of its flowering and fruit, then pause at the fresh dates in Mary's story, peace be upon her, allowing each aspect of the palm's story to take its meaning from its setting.

Spathes and Hanging Clusters

Surah al-An'am, verse 99.

“It is He who sends down water from the sky. With it We bring forth vegetation of every kind; from it We bring forth green growth, from which We bring forth closely packed grain. From the date palms, from their spathes, come clusters hanging low, and gardens of grapevines, olives and pomegranates, alike and unlike. Look at their fruit as it appears and ripens. In these are surely signs for people who believe.” (99)

The verse brings the date palm before the reader's eyes by mentioning its spathes and the low-hanging clusters emerging from them. It then places it beside other fruits and calls attention to fruiting and ripening, connecting the palm's name to a tangible image of its growth.

Surah al-Rahman, verse 11.

“In it are fruit and date palms with enclosing sheaths.” (11)

Date palms with enclosing sheaths are mentioned in the context of the earth laid out for living creatures and the fruit it contains. The covering around the emerging inflorescence becomes part of the picture of blessing, drawing the eye towards the tree's details before its fruit reaches the human table.

The precision of the vocabulary helps us follow the palm through its stages. The tal' precedes mature dates, while qinwan refers to its fruit clusters. Those who tend the tree see the ripe fruit as the outcome of a season of growth and care, and learn to attend to the period before harvest with equal interest.

The Date Palm in Human Life**Surah al-Nahl, verse 67.**

“And from the fruits of date palms and grapevines you obtain intoxicating drink and good provision. In this there is surely a sign for people who reason.” (67)

The verse moves from fruit to what people make from it, mentioning intoxicating drink and good provision. Responsibility in use becomes apparent: the fruit is a blessing, but its transformation and consumption involve human actions and choices, whose rulings cannot be derived from this passage alone.

Surah Maryam, verses 23-26.

“The pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a date palm. She said, ‘Would that I had died before this and become something utterly forgotten.’” (23)

“Then a voice called to her from beneath her: ‘Do not grieve. Your Lord has placed a stream beneath you.’” (24)

“Shake the trunk of the date palm towards you, and it will drop fresh, ripe dates upon you.” (25)

“So eat, drink and be comforted. If you see any human being, say, ‘I have vowed a fast to the Most Merciful, so today I shall speak to no human being.’” (26)

Labour drove Mary, peace be upon her, to the palm trunk in distress and loneliness. A call came telling her not to grieve, mentioning water and instructing her to shake the trunk so that fresh dates would fall. She was then told to eat, drink, find reassurance and refrain from speaking to people. Care for the body and the calming of fear meet within the scene.

I first read this gift within the particular circumstances of Mary's story, peace be upon her, and its mercy and reassurance. Studying the nutritional and medical effects of fresh dates still depends on its own evidence and conditions. The scene does not establish a compulsory treatment for every woman or a prescription suitable for all cases.

The Memory of Date Palms

The date palm has a place in Iraq's memory and agricultural environment, and a place close to my heart in my own experience and love of plants. Whenever I contemplate it, I remember that individual experience needs knowledge broad enough to accommodate different cultivars and climates. Respect for the palm begins

with understanding its needs, protecting its environment and honouring those who care for it.

A Small Vocabulary of the Date Palm

The palm's vocabulary follows the stages in which it comes into view: emerging spathes, clusters carrying fruit, fresh dates to eat, and the trunk in Mary's story. Arranging these scenes helps us read the tree through time rather than only picturing it when its fruits are ripe.

The indices gather these terms under the date palm and allow readers to find each occurrence. Chapter 33 is devoted to Mary's scene, where the tree is connected with care within the story. Here the focus remains on the different parts and descriptions through which the date palm appears in Quranic expression.

Chapter references: Surah al-An'am 99; Surah al-Nahl 11 and 67; Surah Maryam 23-26; Surah Qaf 10-11; Surah al-Rahman 11.

Chapter 12 — The Olive, the Blessed Tree

Oil in the Quranic Scene of Food

“And a tree that grows from Mount Sinai, producing oil and a relish for those who eat.”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-Mu'minun, verse 20.

The verse connects the tree with the oil and accompaniment that reach the table. The fruit appears through its usefulness, alongside a place familiar in revelation. Following oil from tree to food reveals stages of care, harvesting, pressing and storage: details that an account of human labour adds to reflection on the blessing. The verse gives the scene its unity: a tree grows, a benefit emerges and a person eats. Gratitude is well grounded when eating is accompanied by awareness of provision's source and of the rights of those who helped bring it to us.

The Olive Tree in the Quran

Surah al-An'am, verse 99.

“It is He who sends down water from the sky. With it We bring forth vegetation of every kind; from it We bring forth green growth, from which We bring forth closely packed grain. From the date palms, from their spathes, come clusters hanging low, and gardens of grapevines, olives and pomegranates, alike and unlike. Look at their fruit as it appears and ripens. In these are surely signs for people who believe.” (99)

Olives appear with pomegranates in a scene combining similarity and difference, followed by an invitation to look at the fruit as it emerges and ripens. The olive is therefore read as a living tree with stages of development before being considered a food or a name on a list of plants.

Surah al-An'am, verse 141.

“It is He who brought into being gardens, trellised and untrellised, date palms and crops differing in their produce, and olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of their fruit when they bear fruit, and give its due on the day of harvest. Do not be wasteful; He does not love the wasteful.” (141)

After mentioning gardens, crops, olives and pomegranates, the verse commands eating, giving the due at harvest and avoiding waste. The scene does not end with abundant fruit; it moves directly to how it is handled and to other people's share of its benefit.

Surah al-Nahl, verse 11.

“With it He causes crops, olives, date palms, grapes and fruits of every kind to grow for you. In this there is surely a sign for people who reflect.” (11)

The olive is one of the forms of provision God brings forth through water, alongside crops, date palms and grapes. The enumeration calls to mind the diversity of the table and its source, moving the reader from familiarity with a blessing to reflection upon it.

Surah al-Tin, verse 1.

“In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. By the fig and the olive.” (1)

Surah al-Tin opens with an oath by the fig and olive. The two names thus appear in a position that draws attention before the discussion of the human being. Identifying anything they may indicate beyond their apparent meaning requires interpretive evidence; the name alone must not be turned into a complete historical narrative.

The olive's role changes with the context: food in an enumeration of blessings, oil and relish in the preceding verse of Surah al-Mu'minun, and an element in the parable of light. I preserve each passage's purpose so that the readings complement one another while their individual meanings remain clear.

The Meaning of Blessing

Blessing is a religious meaning that cannot be reduced to a list of nutrients. One can be grateful for the olive's many benefits without turning the word ‘blessed’ into laboratory certification that it treats particular diseases. Nor does the description of oil in the parable permit us to invent numbers or physical properties the text does not mention.

The Olive in Narration

In the Book of Foods, al-Kulayni devoted a chapter to oil and olives and included the report whose wording and two transmission routes appear later in this chapter. We read it within the etiquette of eating and applying oil, separating that discussion from an assessment of therapeutic benefit for a particular condition.

A Tree That Needs Care

A person's relationship with an olive tree tests patience: planting is work reaching beyond the present moment. A tree's reputation does not guarantee success in every soil or climate. Responsible use includes distinguishing its fruit from its oil, and attending to production and storage, rather than assigning the same judgement to every food form.

Reading the Olive within the Parable of Surah al-Nur**Surah al-Nur, verse 35.**

“God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The likeness of His light is a niche containing a lamp; the lamp is within glass, and the glass is like a radiant star, lit from a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost shine even if no fire touched it. Light upon light. God guides whom He wills to His light. God sets forth parables for people, and God knows all things.” (35)

The parable presents a niche holding a lamp within sparkling glass, supplied by exceptionally clear oil from a blessed olive tree. The passage then rises to light and guidance. Tangible details bring the meaning close to the heart without turning the parable into a material description of God's essence, exalted is He.

The parable's strength comes from the niche, lamp, glass and oil forming one image. I therefore begin with their relationship before pausing over the olive tree's

description, and weigh any proposed meaning for a detail against its connection with the whole and the evidence supporting it.

This scene invites reflection on guidance and light, whereas Surah al-Mu'minun mentions the benefit of oil to those who eat. Both share the olive's name, but its function differs. This does not diminish the fruit's benefits; it protects the reading from reducing the text to a nutritional list. A researcher can study oil composition and quality separately, drawing conclusions from appropriate research and preserving the Quranic parable's field of meaning.

The Report about Oil and Its Two Transmission Routes

Al-Kulayni narrated from Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, from the Messenger of God, may God bless him and his family, that he said:

“Eat oil and apply oil, for it comes from a blessed tree.”

The source gives a route through Sahl ibn Ziyad, Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Ash'ari and Ibn al-Qaddah, followed by another through Muhammad ibn Yahya, Ahmad ibn Muhammad, Ibn Faddal and Ibn al-Qaddah. It ends the second route with the word ‘similarly’. The printed text therefore presents two chains, with a verbal reference in the second to the preceding wording.

I consulted al-Majlisi's commentary on this passage and found his assessment of the first hadith: ‘Weak according to the well-known view, and its latter [route] is trustworthy’, in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, volume 22, page 161 [H26]. I retain his complete wording alongside the two routes. I neither describe both with a single grading nor treat a difference in their grading as a difference in the text to which the second route refers.

The report's place here concerns oil's connection with blessing and with transmitted etiquette for eating and anointing. Details of its use in a particular health condition require appropriate evidence. The narrated wording names oil: we must not replace it with a broader statement about every part of the olive tree and then attribute that expansion to the hadith.

Source: al-Kafi, volume 6, chapter on oil and olives, hadith 1, page 331; an additional comparison for reference [H2].

Chapter references: Surah al-An'am 99 and 141; Surah al-Nahl 11; Surah al-Mu'minun 20; Surah al-Nur 35; Surah al-Tin 1; al-Kafi, volume 6, Book of Foods, chapter on oil, hadith 1 [H2]; assessment of the oil report: *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, volume 22, page 161 [H26].

Chapter 13 — Grapes, Vineyards and Gardens

Fruit and Vine

Surah al-Nahl, verse 11.

“With it He causes crops, olives, date palms, grapes and fruits of every kind to grow for you. In this there is surely a sign for people who reflect.” (11)

Grapes appear among the plants God grows for people through water. The enumeration ends with reflection, extending their mention beyond the pleasure of taste to questions of irrigation, growth and the diversity of fruits that support nourishment.

Surah Ya Sin, verses 34-35.

“We placed in it gardens of date palms and grapevines, and caused springs to flow within it,” (34)

“So that they might eat of its fruit, though their hands did not make it. Will they not give thanks?” (35)

Vines, date palms and springs come together on land producing fruit for people to eat. The question of gratitude then confronts them. The orchard from which they benefit is not merely a beautiful view but a blessing supporting their continued life and calling them to acknowledge its Giver's favour.

Surah 'Abasa, verse 28.

“And grapes and green fodder,” (28)

Grapes appear with qadb among what grows after water descends and soil opens. The pairing provides a broader picture of food: fruit to eat and vegetation to cut and use, in a context encompassing the needs of people and livestock.

When grapes are named in an orchard scene, the image extends to the vine, cluster, branches and supporting ground. This breadth helps us read the verse and look at fruit on the table by returning it to the plant and labour that preceded its arrival.

Blessing and Responsibility

Surah al-Nahl, verse 67.

“And from the fruits of date palms and grapevines you obtain intoxicating drink and good provision. In this there is surely a sign for people who reason.” (67)

The passage does not stop at a cluster of grapes but follows what people make from the fruit. The distance between the original blessing and the way it is used becomes clear. Knowledge, craft and choice enter that space, requiring guidance to govern use.

Here consideration begins with the fruit's use after harvest. Rulings on drinks and fermentation belong to their jurisprudential evidence, because a fruit's suitability for eating alone does not settle the ruling on everything made from it. I preserve this distinction when moving from the plant's description to human action upon it.

The Owner of the Two Gardens

Surah al-Kahf, verses 32-44.

"Set before them the example of two men. For one We made two gardens of grapevines, surrounded them with date palms, and placed crops between them." (32)

"Both gardens yielded their produce without falling short in anything, and We caused a river to flow between them." (33)

"He had abundant produce, so he said to his companion while conversing with him, 'I have more wealth than you and a stronger following.'" (34)

"He entered his garden, wronging himself, and said, 'I do not think this will ever perish.'" (35)

"Nor do I think the Hour will come. Even if I am returned to my Lord, I shall surely find a better place to return to than this.'" (36)

"His companion said to him while conversing with him, 'Do you disbelieve in the One who created you from dust, then from a drop, then fashioned you into a man?' (37)

"But He is God, my Lord, and I associate no one with my Lord." (38)

"Why, when you entered your garden, did you not say, 'What God wills! There is no power except through God'? Although you see me as having less wealth and fewer children than you," (39)

"My Lord may give me something better than your garden, and send upon it a calamity from the sky, leaving it bare, slippery ground," (40)

"Or its water may sink away, so that you will be unable to recover it.'" (41)

"His produce was encompassed by destruction. He began wringing his hands over what he had spent on it, as it lay collapsed upon its trellises, saying, 'Would that I had associated no one with my Lord.'" (42)

"He had no company to help him apart from God, nor could he defend himself." (43)

"There, all protection belongs to God, the True. He is best in reward and best in outcome." (44)

The parable presents a man given two vineyards surrounded by date palms, with crops and a river between them. Wealth led him to boast to his companion. He then entered his garden, dismissing the possibility of its destruction and doubting the coming of the Hour. His companion reminded him of his creation, urged acknowledgement of God's will and power, and warned that the water might disappear underground or the land become unproductive.

His produce was then destroyed, and he wrung his hands in regret over his expenditure while the garden lay collapsed on its trellises. He found neither a group to rescue him nor the power to avert the loss. The ending reveals how the orchard changed in its owner's eyes from an imagined security to a place of broken pride and acknowledgement.

I pause at the change arrogance produced in the owner's view of himself: the blessing became evidence through which he imagined lasting wealth and superior

standing. In Chapter 41 I return to his conversation with his companion and to what his words reveal about this illusion before the gardens collapsed.

Grapes and Raisins

The Book of Foods in al-Kafi gives grapes one chapter and raisins another. Distinguishing fresh from dried fruit helps identify a report's subject; a statement about one should not be transferred to the other without investigation. We read these reports in context without turning every transmitted description into a therapeutic recommendation.

One Material and Many Actions

The story of grapes extends from the fruit to what people make of it and the benefits they exchange through it. At this point human action enters the inquiry: how do people produce, sell and protect the rights of those working with them? The chapters on rights and the table explore this connection between provision and responsibility.

Giving has another aspect in the following report: a much-liked cluster is brought at the breaking of a fast, then repeatedly given to people asking for help. We move from attachment to ownership in the story of the gardens to a narrated scene inviting reflection on the ability to give.

A Cluster Repeatedly Given to Someone in Need

In the chapter on grapes, Hisham ibn Salim narrates a report about Imam Ali ibn al-Husayn, peace be upon him, mentioning that he liked grapes. He was fasting, and when he broke his fast a cluster was placed before him. A person asking for help came, and he gave it to him. The cluster was then bought back and returned to the Imam. Another person came, and he gave it away again. The buying back, returning and giving away were repeated with a third person, until, according to the report, he ate it on the fourth occasion.

This summary preserves the reported sequence without adding names, a location or dialogue not transmitted in the text. Al-Kulayni's route to Hisham ibn Salim passes through Ali ibn Ibrahim, his father and Ibn Abi 'Umayr. Al-Majlisi graded the third hadith in the chapter on grapes 'hasan' in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, volume 22, page 188 [H21]. This is a reported assessment of this particular narration.

The fruit gains ethical significance because its owner liked it and it arrived when he was breaking his fast. Giving it away therefore touches an immediate desire. Readers can reflect on generosity without turning the event into a requirement for every fasting person to give up their food. The account ends with the Imam eating grapes, so enjoying a blessing remains present alongside giving.

Source: al-Kafi, volume 6, Book of Foods, chapter on grapes, hadith 3 [H3]; al-Majlisi's assessment in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, volume 22, page 188 [H21].

Chapter references: Surah al-Nahl 11 and 67; Surah al-Kahf 32-44; Surah Ya Sin 34-35; Surah 'Abasa 28; al-Kafi, volume 6, Book of Foods, chapters on grapes and raisins [H3]; *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, volume 22, page 188, assessment of the third hadith in the chapter on grapes [H21].

Chapter 14 — The Fig, Its Name, the Oath and Its Meaning

What the Wording Establishes

Surah al-Tin, verses 1-3.

“In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. By the fig and the olive.” (1)

“And by Mount Sinai,” (2)

“And by this secure city.” (3)

The oath moves from the fig and olive to Mount Sinai and then the secure city, gathering names that draw attention to blessings and to places significant in guidance. This opening prepares for the discussion of humanity; the plant names are not a purpose detached from the surah's message.

The fig is a familiar name in Arabic usage. Commentators have also transmitted interpretations connecting the objects of the oath with places or prophetic scenes. I begin with linguistic meaning and context, then present these views with attribution so that readers know where the disagreement lies.

The Interpretive Question

Majma' al-Bayan presents the interpretation of the fig and olive as the two fruits, while also transmitting other readings. The disagreement invites respect for layers of meaning, rather than the claim that the intended fruit is entirely unknown. A plant may retain its tangible presence while the commentator investigates the significance of its proximity to the places named afterwards.

Narration and the Limits of Inference

Al-Kulayni narrates a report from Imam al-Rida, peace be upon him, about figs, mentioning health benefits and concluding by comparing them to the vegetation of Paradise. In consulting its commentary in Mir'at al-'Uqul, I found al-Majlisi's wording: ‘The first hadith: hasan, and its latter [route] is weak according to the well-known view.’ The page also contains another route followed by ‘similarly’. I therefore retain al-Majlisi's full statement rather than reducing his combined assessment to a single judgement of authenticity or weakness covering everything in the passage. [H4, H18]

The meaning of the wording remains a separate question. A report's presence and an assessment of its transmission do not amount to experimental proof of therapeutic benefit. Nor should broad wording be interpreted as grounds for abandoning medicine or dispensing with diagnosis. In discussing figs, this book brings together their Quranic setting and the transmitted report, identifying the source of each and the limits of what may be inferred.

Source of the assessment: al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, volume 22, chapter on figs, page 199 [H18].

From the Oath to the Human Being

Surah al-Tin, verses 4-8.

"We certainly created the human being in the finest form." (4)

"Then We returned him to the lowest of the low," (5)

"Except those who believe and do righteous deeds; theirs is an unfailing reward." (6)

"What, then, makes you deny the Judgement after this?" (7)

"Is God not the wisest of judges?" (8)

The oath is followed by the statement that humanity was created in the finest form, then by a warning of decline, excepting those who believe and act righteously. The surah ends with a question about denying recompense and God's wisdom in judgement, clarifying the connection between the dignity of creation and responsibility for conduct.

The surah moves from the objects of the oath to human creation, form and responsibility. This transition becomes meaningful when we connect the oath with the verses on creation, action and recompense, reading the opening and conclusion as parts of one meaning.

The Surah's Opening and Conclusion

The opening connects with the conclusion in a structure concerning human creation, deeds and recompense. The fig and olive are read within that structure, while claims about their benefits are examined through their own evidence. The oath alone does not establish every circulating claim about the two fruits.

When presenting commentators' views, I distinguish a transmitted interpretation from my reason for preferring it. The existence of an interpretation connecting the fig or olive with a place does not establish that its familiar linguistic meaning is cancelled, just as the fruits' familiarity does not invalidate inquiry into the surah's connections. Readers benefit from identifying the precise disagreement: does it concern the referent of the name, the wisdom of the oath, or the relationship between the objects sworn by and what follows? Much confusion comes from treating these as one question.

Chapter references: Surah al-Tin 1-8; al-Tabrisi, *Majma' al-Bayan*, commentary on Surah al-Tin [T1]; al-Kafi, volume 6, Book of Foods, chapter on figs, hadith 1 [H4]; *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, volume 22, page 199 [H18].

Chapter 15 — The Pomegranate, Similar Appearance and Different Fruit

The Name in Its Settings

Surah al-An'am, verse 141.

"It is He who brought into being gardens, trellised and untrellised, date palms and crops differing in their produce, and olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of their fruit when they bear fruit, and give its due on the day of harvest. Do not be wasteful; He does not love the wasteful." (141)

The pomegranate appears among fruits described as similar and dissimilar, followed by commands to eat, give the harvest's due and avoid waste. Enjoying the fruit is joined to responsible possession and sharing its benefits, so the orchard's abundance does not become an excuse to forget those in need.

Surah al-Rahman, verse 68.

"In both are fruit, date palms and pomegranates." (68)

Here the pomegranate appears with fruit and date palms in the description of the other two gardens among the scenes of bliss in Surah al-Rahman. The context promises provision and joy. Familiar names bring the blessing closer to understanding, while its reality in the Hereafter remains beyond our experience.

The pomegranate's specific mention draws attention to its importance in context. Speech may name an individual member after naming its wider category. Its appearance after 'fruit' is therefore not sufficient to exclude it from every linguistic use of that word.

Observation before Conclusion

Surah al-An'am, verse 99.

"It is He who sends down water from the sky. With it We bring forth vegetation of every kind; from it We bring forth green growth, from which We bring forth closely packed grain. From the date palms, from their spathes, come clusters hanging low, and gardens of grapevines, olives and pomegranates, alike and unlike. Look at their fruit as it appears and ripens. In these are surely signs for people who believe." (99)

The passage brings olives and pomegranates together for reflection on similarity and difference, then invites contemplation of fruit as it forms and ripens. Details familiar to a cultivator — colour, shape and ripeness — become part of purposeful observation rather than passing ornaments in the wording.

Following fruit provides opportunities to observe form, colour, taste and stages of ripening. I use that experience to clarify the scene while leaving similarity and difference broader than any single characteristic an observer chooses, preserving the evidential basis of each interpretive view.

Narrations about Food

Al-Kafi gathers several reports about pomegranates in a separate chapter. Their number does not justify combining their wording into one prescription or treating their chains as equally reliable. This book identifies the reports' locations and reserves firm therapeutic conclusions for evidence capable of supporting them.

Responsible Enjoyment

The sight of a pomegranate invites me to reflect on the difference between the fruit's exterior and what appears when it is opened. This literary observation illustrates the value of patient looking; I do not attribute it to a transmitted interpretation.

How Do We Understand Similarity and Difference?

Similarity requires identifying the respect in which two things are alike: they may resemble each other in one feature and differ in another. We should not read similarity as denying every difference, or difference as denying every common feature. Fruits offer a clear opportunity to observe this, without requiring us to choose one feature and confine the Quranic meaning to it.

In a learning activity, two fruits can be described in stages: before opening, afterwards and during ripening. Learners thereby acquire the habit of identifying particular similarities and differences and separating observed characteristics from inferred judgements. This descriptive precision serves both the study of plants and the reading of texts that mention them.

The Number of Fruit Kinds in the Report's Language

In a narration from Mas'adah ibn Ziyad, Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, is reported to have said:

“Fruit comprises one hundred and twenty kinds; the chief among them is the pomegranate.”

The narration appears in the chapter on pomegranates through Ali ibn Ibrahim, Harun ibn Muslim and Mas'adah ibn Ziyad. Al-Majlisi describes the second hadith as ‘hasan or muwaththaq’ in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, volume 22, page 191 [H22]. The report uses the word *lawn*, literally ‘colour’ and here ‘kind’, in enumerating fruit. Turning the number into a scientific total of the world's plant species would require a definition of species, a scope and a counting method — none of which this text supplies.

The quotation preserves the report's wording, while the explanation preserves the distinction between its scope and modern botanical classification. The report can therefore contribute to studying the pomegranate's place in tradition and eating etiquette without becoming a complete scientific inventory or a nutritional judgement that erases differences in people's needs.

Source: al-Kafi, volume 6, Book of Foods, chapter on pomegranates, hadith 2 [H5]; al-Majlisi's assessment in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, volume 22, page 191 [H22].

Chapter references: Surah al-An'am 99 and 141; Surah al-Rahman 68; al-Kafi, volume 6, Book of Foods, chapter on pomegranates [H5]; *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, volume 22, page 191, assessment of the second hadith [H22].

Chapter 16 — Grains and Ears, Human Food

Food That Sustains Life

Surah al-Rahman, verse 12.

“And grain with its husks, and fragrant growth.” (12)

Grain with its 'asf and rayhan appear among the earth's blessings. The expression brings together sustenance, the coverings and parts accompanying the plant, and what rayhan signifies in context, drawing attention to a gift extending beyond a grain isolated from its plant.

Surah 'Abasa, verses 24-32.

“Let the human being look at his food.” (24)

“We poured down water abundantly.” (25)

“Then We split the earth open.” (26)

“And caused grain to grow in it,” (27)

“And grapes and green fodder,” (28)

“And olives and date palms,” (29)

“And gardens of dense growth,” (30)

“And fruit and pasture,” (31)

“As provision for you and your livestock.” (32)

The verses ask people to look at their food, then return them step by step to water, the opening of the earth and germination. The list expands from grain and grapes to olives, palms, gardens, fruit and abb, concluding with people and livestock. The table becomes the last visible link in a wider journey of provision.

The word habb, ‘grain’, can encompass more than one crop depending on the passage. I preserve its generality when it is general and require evidence before identifying it as wheat or barley. I will follow the ears of grain from the field that supplies food to the imagery of a parable and then to the management of an entire society.

The Grain in the Parable

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 261.

“The likeness of those who spend their wealth in God's way is that of a grain producing seven ears, in each ear a hundred grains. God multiplies for whom He wills, and God is all-embracing, all-knowing.” (261)

The parable compares spending in God's way to a grain producing seven ears, each with a hundred grains. Its purpose is to show the abundance of reward and the multiplication of good by God's permission, evoking a scene in which the farmer knows that a little can produce much.

Multiplication appears in the context of giving and its reward, made vivid through the farmer's familiar image of fertility. Actual field yields vary with water, soil and

cultivar. The number of grains in the parable does not become a production equation binding on farms.

Ears of Grain in Joseph's Story

Surah Yusuf, verse 43.

"The king said, 'I see seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean ones, and seven green ears of grain and others dry. O counsellors, explain my dream to me, if you can interpret dreams.'" (43)

The king recounts a troubling dream: seven fat cows eaten by seven lean ones, and seven green ears of grain and others dry. He asks those in his council to interpret it. The story of the ears begins with a question about an image whose meaning will later be connected with managing the people's food.

Surah Yusuf, verses 46-49.

"Joseph, O man of truth, explain to us seven fat cows eaten by seven lean ones, and seven green ears of grain and others dry, so that I may return to the people and they may know.'" (46)

"He said, 'You will sow diligently for seven years. Whatever you harvest, leave in its ear, except a little of what you eat.'" (47)

"Then seven hard years will come after that, consuming what you have stored for them, except a little that you preserve.'" (48)

"Then a year will come after that in which people will receive relief, and in which they will press.'" (49)

The question reaches Joseph, peace be upon him, in prison. He interprets the dream as successive years of cultivation, hardship and relief. He directs that grain be kept in its ears apart from what is needed for food, so the harvest of abundance will support the years of drought. Interpreting the dream thus becomes a plan to protect sustenance.

The grain's importance now extends beyond today's meal to food for years ahead, making preservation a responsibility concerning the community's life. In Chapter 28 I follow the dialogue about the dream and Joseph's plan, peace be upon him, examining the relationship it reveals between knowledge and trustworthiness.

Between Food and Trade

Grain may become a market commodity, but it remains fundamental to people's lives. Thinking about abundant harvests therefore cannot be separated from asking who receives them and who is denied access. This is a general ethical inference from the Quran's connection between provision and giving, not a detailed legal ruling about a commercial contract.

Ears of Grain between Production and Food Preservation

Grain has three times in people's lives: the time of hope before harvest, the time of abundance at gathering, and the time of reliance on stored supplies. Each stage brings a different question. Cultivation may succeed but some benefits be lost through poor storage or distribution; stocks may exist while some people in need

remain deprived. A picture of a full ear is therefore insufficient to assess an entire society's food security.

The Quran places the ear that multiplies the effect of giving alongside the ears in Joseph's dream that organise attention to the future. One is a parable of reward and generosity; the other belongs to a story about managing successive years. They share a familiar image but do not perform the same function. Part of the beauty of the plant story is that one image opens different questions according to its setting, so multiple references do not simply repeat one meaning.

Chapter references: Surah al-Baqarah 261; Surah Yusuf 43 and 46-49; Surah al-Rahman 12; Surah 'Abasa 27; al-Mizan, commentary on Surah 'Abasa 24-32 [T2].

Chapter 17 — Greens, Cucumbers, Lentils, Onions and Fum

Asking for the Earth's Food

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 61.

“And when you said, ‘Moses, we cannot endure one kind of food. Call upon your Lord for us to bring forth for us from what the earth grows: its greens, cucumbers, fum, lentils and onions.’ He said, ‘Would you exchange what is better for what is lower? Go down to a town, and you will have what you ask for.’ Humiliation and poverty were laid upon them, and they incurred God's anger. That was because they disbelieved in God's signs and killed the prophets without right; that was because they disobeyed and transgressed.” (61)

Moses' people, peace be upon him, asked to replace their food with familiar produce, including lentils and onions. The response drew attention to their poor choice in that particular situation. The verse then broadens to a history of disbelief and aggression, so its meaning must not be confined to judging the named foods.

Attention here concerns the people's attitude to a blessing and their choice within that context. The benefits of vegetables and rulings on eating them have their own evidence. The names of lentils, onions and the other requested foods do not, by themselves, establish prohibition or a lack of benefit.

Familiar Names and Disputed Names

Baql is a broad term for edible greens, while lentils and onions are familiar names. Fum has been interpreted as garlic and also as wheat; al-Mizan transmits both interpretations. I therefore preserve the disagreement, rather than placing a picture of garlic beside the verse and claiming it is the only agreed identification.

Qiththa' and Its Modern Name

Popular names for qiththa' and cucumbers may overlap across countries or differ in agricultural reference. The researcher's task is to explain a commentator's usage and the linguistic sources being cited, then identify the modern plant where the evidence permits. A similar name alone does not prove two plants are identical in every environment.

A Lesson beyond the List

The story invites reconsideration of familiarity and gratitude. A person can become so absorbed in familiar food that they overlook the provision around them. This reflection does not entitle us to judge the motives of everyone who changes their diet: each person has their own needs and circumstances.

Judging an Attitude Is Different from Judging a Food

The plant list should remain connected to the dialogue in which it appears, for the verse presents a request and a comparison between two situations. Reading the story examines the requesters' attitude; describing the plants examines their names and uses. Chapter 30 completes the dialogue's context.

The disagreement over *fum* should be stated precisely: 'some interpreted it as such-and-such' and 'another interpretation was transmitted'. Neither statement becomes 'the Quran said garlic' while the Quranic word remains *fum* and its interpretation is disputed. Keeping the original name in the index, with a separate cross-reference to its interpretations, preserves the distinction between text and explanation as information passes from one book to another.

Chapter references: Surah al-Baqarah 61; al-Tabataba'i, al-Mizan, commentary on that verse [T3].

Chapter 18 — Lote Trees, Tamarisk and Khamt

Plants in a Scene of Change

Surah Saba', verses 15-17.

"For Sheba there was a sign in their dwelling place: two gardens, on the right and the left. 'Eat of your Lord's provision and give thanks to Him: a good land and a forgiving Lord.'" (15)

"But they turned away, so We sent upon them the flood of the dam, and replaced their two gardens with two gardens bearing bitter produce, tamarisk and a few lote trees." (16)

"Thus We repaid them for their ingratitude. Do We repay in this way any but the deeply ungrateful?" (17)

Sheba had two gardens around its dwellings, to the right and left, and provision was joined to a call for gratitude. When the people turned away, the flood came, and the gardens' fruit was replaced by bitter produce, tamarisk and a few lote trees. The loss of blessing is narrated together with its moral cause within the story.

The change becomes apparent when I compare what the gardens once yielded with what they became. A remaining tree may be useful elsewhere, but its replacing an abundant orchard here indicates a loss of livelihood. The story is understood through the transition between the two states.

Lote Trees in This World and the Hereafter

Surah al-Waqi'ah, verse 28.

"Among lote trees without thorns." (28)

The thornless lote tree appears in the description of the bliss of the companions of the right. This setting belongs to the Hereafter and concerns comfort and abundance. It differs from the few lote trees remaining in Sheba's story; context reveals the name's function in each place.

Surah al-Najm, verses 14-16.

"At the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary," (14)

"Near it is the Garden of Refuge," (15)

"When there covered the lote tree that which covered it." (16)

The Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary appears within the vision in Surah al-Najm. Near it is the Garden of Refuge, and the text mentions what covers it without detailing its reality. I therefore keep the description within Quranic limits rather than turning it into a geographical location or a description of a particular earthly species.

Each setting differs: the aftermath of loss in Sheba, a promise of bliss for the companions of the right, and a scene of God's signs at the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary. I preserve these distinctions when explaining the name and remain within the text when describing the unseen.

The Limits of Identifying Khamt

In Majma' al-Bayan, while discussing the term and its reading, al-Tabrisi quotes Abu 'Ubaydah's explanation of khamt as 'every bitter tree with thorns'. In Jami' al-Bayan, al-Tabari favours identifying it as arak and transmits this identification from several interpreters. We thus have a broader linguistic description and a specific tree name in the commentaries. This difference should not be hidden behind a single modern botanical name. [T9, T10]

The comparison clarifies the question: does the word describe a plant's taste and characteristics, or name a particular tree? The context depicts the transformation of the gardens and its effect on the people's provision. That change can be understood while leaving identification open, without declaring all uses of arak or other plants worthless.

Interpretive comparison: Majma' al-Bayan, commentary on Surah Saba' 16, discussion of readings and their arguments [T9].

Comparative source: al-Tabari, Jami' al-Bayan, commentary on Surah Saba' 16 [T10].

The Environment Is Not a List of Good and Evil

The reading distinguishes a plant's function in a story from its value in its environment. Tamarisk and lote trees belong to a scene of transformation affecting Sheba's settled life; their benefits and relationships with other organisms are studied in their own settings. A tree's name does not become an omen of misfortune merely because it appears here.

What Changed in Sheba's Landscape?

The comparison concerns the two gardens before and after their transformation. Vegetation may remain on the land while what it supplies its inhabitants in food and livelihood changes. The significance of replacement emerges by comparing the two scenes, not by isolating a single tree.

Chapter 43 therefore returns to Sheba as a story of blessing, settlement and ultimate outcome. This chapter records the plant names and disputes over identification, allowing linguistic study and narrative reading to complement one another without repeating the detailed story.

Chapter references: Surah Saba' 15-17; Surah al-Waqi'ah 28; Surah al-Najm 14-16. Appendix 6 preserves the disagreement over khamt without an unsupported preference.

Chapter 19 — The Gourd Plant in a Scene of Mercy

What the Verse Says

Surah al-Saffat, verses 145-146.

“Then We cast him onto the open shore while he was ailing,” (145)

“And caused a plant of yaqtin to grow over him.” (146)

Jonah, peace be upon him, was cast onto open ground, ill after his ordeal. God then caused a yaqtin plant to grow over him. The plant appears as care for a prophet whose body was weak. These two verses do not state in detail how he benefited from it.

I see the lesson in this care accompanying Jonah's weakness after his rescue, peace be upon him. Turning the gourd into a treatment programme or specifying a quantity to consume would require other evidence. The story shows care; it does not present a medical experiment.

The Word Shajarah

The verse's use of shajarah, often translated ‘tree’, cautions us against imposing modern botanical terminology on every older Arabic word. A word's range in linguistic usage may differ from the definition of a tree in a contemporary textbook. This discredits neither language nor science; it requires understanding each term within its field.

The Gourd and Its Identification

Yaqtin is commonly interpreted as gourd, while commentaries discuss the name's breadth. This book therefore mentions the familiar interpretation without restricting the text to a modern commercial cultivar or a particular fruit shape sold in markets. Identifying a cultivar requires more than the general name.

Mercy Close at Hand

Care may come as shade, food, water or companionship. This is a reflection inspired by the scene, not an addition of details absent from the text. What we first need from the gourd's story is the understanding that weakness does not place a person beyond care.

Care without Adding Unknown Details

This chapter preserves the name yaqtin and the limits of its identification. Chapter 32 follows the context of Jonah's story. Separating the two discussions is useful when we distinguish questions about the plant from questions about its place in the prophet's journey.

The image of care remains close to the heart through what the text establishes: illness and the plant's growth. Reports adding details must be studied through their sources and transmission routes. The reader can thus connect botanical vocabulary with narrative while knowing the source of each detail.

Chapter references: Surah al-Saffat 145-146. Jonah's story is discussed in Chapter 32.

Chapter 20 — Mustard, the Small Seed and the Precision of the Balance

The Mustard Seed in Luqman's Counsel

“My son, even if it is the weight of a mustard seed, hidden within a rock, or in the heavens, or in the earth, God will bring it forth. God is subtle, fully aware.”

The Holy Quran, Surah Luqman, verse 16.

In a father's words to his son, the seed's smallness makes the precision of accounting and the breadth of knowledge vivid. The meaning deepens through the remoteness of the places named and the concealment within a rock. The lesson is not a number assigned to a seed's weight, but that what people dismiss as small or hidden is not lost to God. This image shapes conscience: a little good matters, and concealed wrongdoing does not become permissible because its perpetrator thinks no one will see it.

Smallness That Is Not Overlooked

The mustard seed appears in two verses concerning comprehensive knowledge and justice. In Luqman's counsel, the text evokes the seed even within a rock, in the heavens or in the earth. The scene returns people to responsibility for the small as well as the great.

Justice and the Balance

Surah al-Anbiya', verse 47.

“We shall set up the scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so no soul will be wronged in anything. Even if it is the weight of a mustard seed, We shall bring it forth. Sufficient are We as reckoners.” (47)

The scene is the Day of Resurrection, when just balances are established and no soul is wronged. The mustard seed conveys the utmost precision in accounting: a deed is not disregarded because it is small, nor is bringing it forth beyond reach. A tiny seed thus becomes an image of complete justice.

The small seed becomes a way to understand a great meaning: a deed's value is preserved even when hidden from people's sight. Mustard makes this precision perceptible. Its quantity is understood here as an illustration, not a fixed laboratory unit of measurement.

No Need for Botanical Exaggeration

The parable does not require the mustard seed to be the smallest seed in the world. It uses an image understood in ordinary speech and does not depend on ranking all seeds by size. Imposing such a claim on the text makes it say what it did not say.

A Practical Effect

Agriculture contains small acts whose effects accumulate: preserving a seed, repairing a leak or avoiding the waste of a fruit. They can remind us of the value of action, provided we do not attribute these detailed examples to transmitted exegesis. They are ethical applications I propose in light of the general meaning.

Ethical Precision Does Not Require a Laboratory Number

The image of the seed connects a thing's apparent insignificance with its preservation in the balance of justice. This raises a question for conduct: which details do we neglect because their effects are not visible to us? Reflection moves from the seed's size to integrity in action.

Researchers may learn care for details from this meaning: attributing a statement to its author, not omitting a word that alters meaning, and identifying a point not yet verified. I propose these applications without confining the two verses to them. They show how a brief plant image can encourage practical habits in research and work without being made to announce a scientific discovery it does not discuss.

Chapter references: Surah al-Anbiya' 47; Surah Luqman 16.

Chapter 21 — Rayhan, Qadb, Abb and Pasture

Words Broader Than a Single Species

Surah al-Nazi'at, verses 31-33.

"He brought forth from it its water and its pasture." (31)

"And the mountains He firmly established," (32)

"As provision for you and your livestock." (33)

The verses bring together the emergence of water and pasture and the firm setting of mountains, then explain their benefit to people and their livestock. Pasture in this scene provides food and life; plants appear through the role they share in sustaining the earth.

Surah al-A'la, verses 4-5.

"And who brought forth the pasture," (4)

"Then made it darkened, withered debris." (5)

The image moves from growing pasture to darkened debris whose color and condition have changed. This transition reveals an aspect of the measured stages of plant life: what nourishes living beings at one stage does not retain its form forever.

Not every plant-related word in the Quran names a particular species. Pasture denotes a place of feeding on vegetation; abb is explained as herbage and what livestock graze; and qadb concerns vegetation that is cut. Commentaries may record more than one interpretation of some of these terms.

Rayhan

Surah al-Rahman, verse 12.

"And grain with its husks, and fragrant growth." (12)

Rayhan appears beside grain with husks in an enumeration of the earth's blessings. Reading begins with this shared context of provision and then examines the word's meaning, without assuming that every occurrence describes the same plant in the modern technical sense.

Surah al-Waqi'ah, verse 89.

"Then there will be repose, fragrant provision, and a Garden of bliss." (89)

This good news comes within the account of a person's fate at death, concerning one who belongs to those brought near to God. Rayhan is joined with repose and the Garden of bliss, relating its meaning to comfort, provision, and honor within this promise of the Hereafter.

I therefore interpret rayhan by returning to each occurrence's context and to its linguistic possibilities, presenting the interpretations recorded by commentators. The name now commonly given to a particular aromatic plant is not, by itself, enough to determine the meaning in all these passages.

Qadb and Abb

Surah 'Abasa, verses 28-32.

“And grapes and green fodder,” (28)

“And olives and date palms,” (29)

“And gardens of dense growth,” (30)

“And fruit and pasture,” (31)

“As provision for you and your livestock.” (32)

The verses move through kinds of fruit, trees, and gardens, then unite them in their benefit to people and their livestock. These words are thus more than a list of names: they provide a brief map of the diversity of food, including what people eat and what sustains animal life.

Al-Mizan explains qadb as vegetation that is cut and records differing views about its use; it explains abb as herbage and pasture. This reading helps us understand the diversity of parts that humans and animals consume from the same earth's bounty.

The Claim of What We Do Not Eat

A plant may be unsuitable for the human table yet serve as fodder, shelter, or part of a place's living community. We should therefore not measure every plant's value by how much of it we sell or eat. This ethical lesson comes from the breadth of the scene; it does not establish a prohibition on every alteration of pasture.

An Index That Respects a Word's Breadth

If an index puts “pasture” and “date palms” in one list without explanation, it may imply that the two terms occupy the same taxonomic level. It should distinguish a plant name from a part's name and from a word denoting a group, use, or form. Organized this way, the index becomes a means of understanding the text rather than a storehouse of adjacent words.

The index retains rayhan as it appears and explains its different uses; it also retains qadb and abb as words requiring linguistic explanation. Cross-references bring together passages concerning provision for people and livestock while preserving their differences. The breadth of meaning thereby becomes part of the knowledge the index offers.

Chapter references: Surah al-Rahman 12; Surah al-Waqi'ah 89; Surah al-Nazi'at 31–33; Surah 'Abasa 28–32; Surah al-A'la 4–5; al-Mizan, commentary on Surah 'Abasa [T2].

Chapter 22: Ginger and Camphor

Two Names in the Drink of Bliss

Surah al-Insan, verses 5-6.

“The righteous will drink from a cup mixed with camphor,” (5)

“a spring from which God's servants drink, causing it to flow abundantly.” (6)

The righteous drink from a cup mixed with camphor. The description then mentions a spring from which God's servants drink, made to flow for them as He wills. This is a scene of honor in the Hereafter: camphor's name occurs within promised bliss, not in a medicinal prescription for this world's inhabitants.

Surah al-Insan, verses 17-18.

“And there they will be given a cup mixed with ginger,” (17)

“from a spring there called Salsabil.” (18)

Surah al-Insan continues describing the hospitality offered to the people of bliss, mentioning a cup mixed with ginger and a spring called Salsabil. These details express aspects of pleasant living and joy, while the reality of the Hereafter's bliss cannot be confined to its earthly likenesses.

Familiar names bring the drink's pleasantness closer to the listener's understanding, while its description remains a matter of the unseen. I preserve this boundary when turning to earthly uses of camphor and ginger: neither the composition nor the nature of Paradise's drink can be deduced from an ordinary substance or a household recipe.

An Approximation, Not an Identity

People understand something of a description through familiar names, but knowing a name does not mean comprehending the reality it names in the Hereafter. This principle preserves the text's ability to bring meaning near while preserving what sensory experience alone cannot disclose about the unseen.

Camphor in Another Use

Camphor also appears in Imami rulings on preparing the deceased for burial, a legal subject distinct from the description of bliss. Sharing a name does not give both uses one ruling, nor does it permit consuming a substance intended for a nonfood use.

Ginger and Food

Ginger has familiar culinary uses, but the occurrence of its name in the surah is not independent evidence that it treats a particular disease. In this book, any transmitted report belongs in its own discussion and medical research in its own, while the verses of bliss are read according to their purpose.

The Familiar Name and the Description of the Unseen World

The descriptions of drink in Surah al-Insan are read within its account of the righteous and their reward. Attention thus moves from the isolated name to the

scene that unites pleasantness, honor, and repose. Reflection on bliss begins with the description the text provides and stops at the limits of what it tells us.

The study of an earthly substance remains a separate question: what is it, how is it used, and what evidence supports its benefit? Separating these questions helps explain camphor and ginger's place here before we proceed to food and treatment in their respective parts.

Chapter references: Surah al-Insan 5-6 and 17-18. See also Chapters 50 and 57.

Chapter 23: Gardens, Orchards, Crops, and Unnamed Plants

The Beauty of the Whole Scene

Surah al-Naml, verse 60.

“Or who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water for you from the sky, with which We caused gardens of beauty to grow? You could not have made their trees grow. Is there a god alongside God? Yet they are a people who set up equals to Him.” (60)

The address asks who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water that produced beautiful gardens, reminding people that they do not independently cause their trees to grow. It ends by asking about taking a god alongside God: the beauty witnessed here is an approach to recognizing divine unity.

Surah al-Naba', verses 14-16.

“And We sent down abundant water from the rain-laden clouds,” (14)

“to bring forth with it grain and vegetation,” (15)

“and densely intertwined gardens.” (16)

God sends down plentiful water, and the text then mentions the grain, vegetation, and dense gardens He brings forth through it. These blessings occur in the context of preparing the world for human life, before the surah turns to scenes of judgment and recompense.

Surah 'Abasa, verse 30.

“And gardens of dense growth,” (30)

The dense gardens appear within the journey of food presented in Surah 'Abasa. The image suggests trees gathered closely together, moving the reader's gaze from an individual fruit to the orchard with its interwoven growth and varied bounty.

Surah al-Ra'd, verse 4.

“On the earth are neighbouring plots, gardens of grapevines, crops, and date palms growing in clusters and singly, watered with the same water; yet We give some an advantage over others in their produce. In this there are surely signs for people who reason.” (4)

The verse places neighboring plots of land, vineyards, crops, and date palms before the reflective eye. It then highlights differences in fruit despite shared irrigation, making the orchard a place for observing distinctions rather than a uniform image that conceals the diversity growing within it.

The description of a garden or orchard is enough to bring together water, greenery, and fruit in the mind, even where each plant is not named. I leave that breadth intact, identifying crops only where the text indicates them or transmission supports the identification.

Trellised and Untrellised

Surah al-An'am, verse 141.

"It is He who brought into being gardens, trellised and untrellised, date palms and crops differing in their produce, and olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of their fruit when they bear fruit, and give its due on the day of harvest. Do not be wasteful; He does not love the wasteful." (141)

Gardens take different forms, trellised and untrellised, and their fruits vary in what they yield for eating. The address then turns to eating, giving the harvest's due, and avoiding excess, connecting the orchard's form with its owner's conduct in benefiting from its bounty.

Here the orchard's appearance meets the way its fruit is handled. I follow that connection from plant form and cultivation methods to the harvest's due and moderation in use, preserving the details commentators give concerning trellised and untrellised growth.

Plants Whose Names Are Not Given

There is a tree in Adam's story, a tree at the call to Moses, and a tree beneath which the pledge was made. In these passages the Quran gives no specific botanical name. "The text does not name its species" is therefore useful information, not a deficiency to conceal through guessing.

The Encyclopedia's Limits

This book gathers central subjects and relevant names. It does not claim that every usage derived from a linguistic root has undergone an independent automated count. The verse index enables readers to review passages used in the main text, distinguishing that task from a claim to absolute lexical exhaustiveness.

An Unnamed Tree Is Not an Empty Space

The absence of a tree's name is itself a clue to how we should read: we follow the action and description the text supplies and ask how they serve the story's purpose. If an identification appears in a commentary, I present it as a view attributed to that source.

This book therefore uses three distinct formulations: "the text names the plant," "it describes it without naming it," and "some commentators identify it." These formulations help readers recognize the source of a name beneath an image or in an index. A story can retain its full meaning while its species remains unknown to us: the lesson of obedience, covenant, or care loses nothing because we have not turned the tree into an entry in a modern herbarium.

Chapter references: Surah al-An'am 141; Surah al-Ra'd 4; Surah al-Naml 60; Surah al-Naba' 14-16; Surah 'Abasa 30.

Chapter 24: Plant Parts and Transformations in Quranic Expression

From Leaves to Sheaths

Surah al-An'am, verse 59.

"With Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him. He knows what is on land and in the sea. No leaf falls without His knowing it, nor is there a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry, that is not in a clear record." (59)

The falling leaf and hidden grain belong to the account of God's knowledge, from which nothing moist or dry is absent. The purpose is not the story of one particular leaf, but to awaken awareness that even what seems small or concealed in plant life remains within His all-encompassing knowledge.

Surah al-Rahman, verse 11.

"In it are fruit and date palms with enclosing sheaths." (11)

Fruit and date palms with sheaths are mentioned within the earth God has set out for living beings. Mentioning the sheaths directs attention to the coverings of the inflorescence and the stages of fruit formation, broadening appreciation of the blessing to include its development before it takes the familiar form eaten at the table.

Each plant part has a significance determined by its place: a leaf in an account of all-encompassing knowledge, sheaths in a description of blessing, and ears of grain in a parable or vision. Knowledge of plant parts helps us picture the scene while preserving differences between their names and their functions in the discourse.

Broken Stalks, Dry Fragments, and Debris

Surah al-Kahf, verse 45.

"Set forth for them the likeness of this worldly life: it is like water We send down from the sky, with which the earth's vegetation mingles, then becomes dry fragments scattered by the winds. God has power over all things." (45)

Worldly life is likened to water with which the earth's vegetation mingles, after which the vegetation becomes dry fragments scattered by the winds. Between fullness and dispersal, the speed of change is revealed, teaching the reader not to take present freshness as proof that possessions will endure.

Surah al-Zumar, verse 21.

"Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky and conducts it into springs within the earth, then brings forth through it crops of differing colours? Then they wither and you see them turn yellow; then He makes them broken stalks. In this there is surely a reminder for people of understanding." (21)

The verse brings together water's passage through the earth, the emergence of crops, their varied colors, and then their yellowing and reduction to broken stalks. Here the broken remnants are the end of a moving scene, reminding those of understanding that apparent strength is a stage in a cycle that can end.

Surah al-A'la, verses 4-5.

"And who brought forth the pasture," (4)

"Then made it darkened, withered debris." (5)

Pasture emerges and then becomes dark debris, compressing a cycle of growth and change into two successive statements. The context is glorification and divine measure, making the plant's dissolution a source of reflection just as its emergence is a source of wonder.

The image selects from the stages of drying and dispersal what makes its meaning accessible to its audience. I read hashim, hutam, and ghutha' in their contexts and distinguish this reading from a scientific classification of decomposition stages; each has its own way of describing transformation.

The Green Tree and Fire

Surah Ya Sin, verse 80.

"He who made fire for you from the green tree, and from it you kindle." (80)

Bringing fire from the green tree occurs within the response to those who dismiss the possibility of reviving the dead. The One who creates this means of benefit from something whose qualities seem remote from it is capable of the resurrection that people deem unlikely.

Surah al-Waqi'ah, verses 71-73.

"Have you considered the fire you kindle?" (71)

"Did you bring its tree into being, or are We its originator?" (72)

"We made it a reminder and a benefit for those in need in the wilderness." (73)

People are asked about the fire they kindle and the origin of its tree: did they bring it into being, or did God? Its benefit and its reminder are then mentioned, returning an everyday instrument to the source of its blessing and the reflection it invites.

From here I turn to the ways people benefit from plant material. I present what can be explained about its uses while leaving the identification of a particular tree or mechanism as the verse's meaning dependent on its own evidence.

A Simile, Not a Named Plant

Surah al-Rahman, verse 37.

"Then, when the sky splits apart and becomes rose-red, like oil," (37)

The scene belongs to the events of the Resurrection: the sky splits and is likened to a rose, like oil. The rose is part of the portrayal of this immense transformation, not a report about an orchard or the naming of a plant growing in the sky.

Surah al-Masad, verses 4-5.

"And his wife, the carrier of firewood," (4)

"around her neck a rope of twisted fiber." (5)

The close of Surah al-Masad mentions Abu Lahab's wife as the carrier of firewood, with a rope of twisted fiber around her neck. The wording occurs in a context of

warning: what relates to plants carries meaning within an image of recompense, rather than forming an independent subject for praising or condemning a plant.

Indexing these words requires attention to how they appear: the rose in a simile for the sky, firewood in a scene of warning, and tree names elsewhere. This distinction preserves the text's meaning and distinguishes a direct botanical name from an image that draws upon it.

The Plant Word Within Its Rhetorical Relationship

A word's function differs according to its setting: a description of something in this world, an element of a parable, one side of a simile, or a report about the unseen. That function determines the kind of inference that can be drawn. Preparing an index therefore begins with reading the sentence and context, then identifying what the word does within them.

Before assembling a list, a researcher should ask whether the text affirms the plant's presence in the scene or borrows its image to bring another scene closer to understanding. The next question concerns the word's relationship with what precedes and follows it. These two steps reduce confusion in indices and allow verses to be brought together through a clear relationship rather than merely because they share green or agricultural vocabulary.

Chapter references: Surah al-An'am 59; Surah al-Kahf 45; Surah al-Zumar 21; Surah Ya Sin 80; Surah al-Waqi'ah 71-73; Surah al-Rahman 11 and 37; Surah al-A'la 4-5; Surah al-Masad 4-5.

Part Three: Plants in the Stories of the Prophets and the Lives of the Ahl al-Bayt, Peace Be upon Them

The tree now enters the human story: a prohibition in Adam's account, planks in Noah's ark, ears of grain in the king's vision interpreted by Joseph, and a date palm in Mary's hour of hardship. The meaning of plants' presence changes with the events and those who experience them. We will follow these scenes as far as the texts tell us, then continue with the planting, labor, and generosity narrated in the lives of the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them.

Chapter 25: Adam and Eve—The Garden and the Tree

The Tree and the Limits of Choice

Surah al-Baqarah, verses 35-36.

"We said, 'Adam, dwell with your wife in the Garden, and eat freely from it wherever you wish, but do not approach this tree, lest you become wrongdoers.'" (35)

"Then Satan caused them to slip from it and brought them out of the state they had enjoyed. We said, 'Go down, some of you enemies to others. On earth you will have a dwelling and provision for a time.'" (36)

Adam and his wife were permitted to eat in the Garden while being forbidden to approach a particular tree. Satan then caused them to slip, and the story moves to their departure from their former state and their descent to earth. The tree's identity remains unnamed in this text, while the prohibition and its violation are clear.

The meaning of choice begins with wide permission and its defined boundary. From here I follow the effects of temptation, human action, and return to God, leaving the tree's name among the matters on which the text is silent. The lesson's clarity does not depend on identifying its fruit.

A Name the Quran Does Not Give

Illustrations commonly depict an apple tree, while some commentaries transmit accounts identifying wheat or other plants. None of these identifications becomes Quranic text through repetition. The Quran also names Adam and mentions his wife without giving Eve's name in these verses. We use her name here according to its established place in the tradition, while preserving this distinction.

The Leaves of the Garden

Surah al-A'raf, verses 19-22.

"'Adam, dwell with your wife in the Garden, and eat wherever you wish, but do not approach this tree, lest you become wrongdoers.'" (19)

"Then Satan whispered to them to expose what had been concealed of their nakedness. He said, 'Your Lord only forbade you this tree to prevent you from becoming angels or becoming immortal.'" (20)

"And he swore to them, 'I am indeed a sincere adviser to you.'" (21)

"Thus he brought them down through deception. When they tasted the tree, their nakedness became apparent to them, and they began fastening leaves from the Garden over themselves. Their Lord called to them, 'Did I not forbid you that tree and tell you that Satan is an open enemy to you?'" (22)

Satan whispered to Adam and his wife, claiming that the prohibition stood between them and a higher status and longer existence; he then swore that he was a sincere adviser. When they tasted the tree, their nakedness appeared, and they began fastening leaves of the Garden over themselves. Plants thus move from being the setting of a trial to a means of covering.

Plants return to the scene as a covering after having been the occasion of a trial. I preserve the image's brevity: leaves being fastened together and a need that has emerged. The text does not identify the leaves' species or give a detailed method of preparation.

From the Lapse to Repentance

Surah al-Baqarah, verses 37-39.

"Then Adam received words from his Lord, and He turned to him in mercy. Indeed, He is the Acceptor of repentance, the Merciful." (37)

"We said, 'Go down from it, all of you. When guidance comes to you from Me, those who follow My guidance will have no fear, nor will they grieve.'" (38)

"But those who disbelieve and deny Our signs are the companions of the Fire, remaining there forever.'" (39)

The story does not close its door at the lapse. Adam received words from his Lord, who accepted his repentance. Descent was then joined to the promise of guidance and an account of the outcome of following or rejecting it, beginning earthly life on the basis of the possibility of return and the acceptance of responsibility.

Surah al-A'raf, verses 23-25.

"They said, 'Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves. If You do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we will certainly be among the losers.'" (23)

"He said, 'Go down, some of you enemies to others. On earth you will have a dwelling and provision for a time.'" (24)

"He said, 'There you will live, there you will die, and from there you will be brought forth.'" (25)

Adam and his wife acknowledged that they had wronged themselves and asked for forgiveness and mercy. The account then states that they will live on earth, die there, and be brought forth from it. This conclusion places the event within the horizon of the whole human lifespan, from dwelling to resurrection.

This ending makes clear that responsibility concerns human action and choice and that the tree belongs to the setting of obligation. I reflect on how a boundary preserves the meaning of freedom amid blessings, and how repentance opens a path for someone who recognizes a lapse and returns to the Lord.

The Tree's Name in the Language of Temptation

Surah Ta Ha, verses 115-120.

"We had previously made a covenant with Adam, but he forgot, and We found no firm resolve in him." (115)

"When We said to the angels, 'Prostrate before Adam,' they prostrated, except Iblis, who refused." (116)

"We said, 'Adam, this is an enemy to you and your wife. Do not let him drive you both from the Garden, so that you suffer.'" (117)

"You will neither hunger there nor be naked,'" (118)

"nor will you thirst there or suffer the sun's heat.'" (119)

"Then Satan whispered to him, saying, 'Adam, shall I direct you to the tree of immortality and a kingdom that never decays?'" (120)

The verses recall the covenant with Adam, the angels' command to prostrate, Iblis's refusal, and then the warning against his hostility and against departure into hardship. Satan then names the tree the tree of immortality and links it with an unfading kingdom, revealing how he fashioned temptation in language touching the human desire to endure.

The way desire is embellished arrests my attention: crossing the boundary is presented as a path to preserving blessing and making it last. Here I understand the persuasive force of temptation, while separating the promise created by whispering from the tree's actual nature, which the Quran does not describe as granting immortality.

Surah Ta Ha, verses 121-123.

"Then they both ate from it, and their nakedness became apparent to them, and they began fastening leaves from the Garden over themselves. Adam disobeyed his Lord and went astray." (121)

"Then his Lord chose him, accepted his repentance, and guided him." (122)

"He said, 'Go down from it together, some of you enemies to others. When guidance comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guidance will neither go astray nor suffer.'" (123)

After the eating, the exposure of nakedness, and the attempt to cover themselves with leaves, the text recounts God's choosing Adam, accepting his repentance, and guiding him. The instruction to follow guidance then comes with the descent. The story explains the effects of the lapse alongside the way back, without reducing a person to a moment of weakness.

This reading links the plants' appearances through one thread: a tree associated with a boundary, a promise enticing people to cross it, and leaves covering what appeared afterward. Guidance then returns the story's center to human choice and responsibility for the path one follows.

Chapter references: Surah al-Baqarah 35-39; Surah al-A'raf 19-25; Surah Ta Ha 115-123.

Chapter 26: Noah—Wood and the Ark of Deliverance

From the Earth to the Ark

Surah al-Qamar, verses 13-15.

“We carried him upon a vessel of planks and fastenings,” (13)

“sailing under Our watch, as a recompense for the one who had been rejected.” (14)

“We left it as a sign. Is there, then, anyone who will take heed?” (15)

The text describes the deliverance of Noah, peace be upon him, and those with him in a vessel of planks and fastenings sailing under God's care. The image preserves the role of material labor in the means of deliverance, then makes the event a sign inviting remembrance and reflection.

Planks and fastenings invite us to consider the ark's material and construction, while the wood species and detailed dimensions remain outside what this expression specifies. I therefore separate the Quranic description from every detail requiring another source and a means of establishing its attribution.

Work Under Revelation

Surah Hud, verses 37-40.

“‘Build the Ark under Our watch and according to Our revelation, and do not address Me concerning those who have done wrong. They will be drowned.’” (37)

“He was building the Ark, and whenever leaders of his people passed him, they mocked him. He said, ‘If you mock us, we will mock you as you mock.’” (38)

“‘You will come to know upon whom a humiliating punishment will fall and upon whom an enduring punishment will descend.’” (39)

“Until, when Our command came and the oven overflowed, We said, ‘Carry aboard it a pair of every kind, and your family, except those against whom the word has already passed, and those who believe.’ But only a few believed with him.” (40)

Noah was commanded to build the Ark under God's revelation, while his people mocked him as he worked. When the command came and the oven overflowed, he was ordered to carry the pairs, his family except those against whom the word had already passed, and the few believers. The structure that had been ridiculed became a means of rescue.

Between command and deliverance lies a period of labor and steadfastness in what Noah, peace be upon him, had been instructed to do, amid his people's ridicule. This interval gives craftsmanship its value in the story: the means of deliverance is prepared before people see the need it will meet.

Plant Growth as Language for Human Origins

Surah Nuh, verses 17-18.

“God caused you to grow from the earth,” (17)

“then He will return you into it and bring you forth again.” (18)

Noah reminds his people of their origin from the earth, then of their return to it and emergence from it. The language of growth brings the relationship between human origins and the earth closer to understanding, while the argument concerns creation and resurrection, not the classification of humans as a plant species.

Here the language of growth extends to explaining human origins and the ordering of human creation and destiny. I understand it through the context of Noah's address to his people and the uses of language, distinguishing it from biological classification, which studies organisms' characteristics and relationships.

Deliverance Is a Responsibility

Surah Hud, verses 41-44.

"He said, 'Board it. In God's name are its sailing and its anchoring. My Lord is indeed Forgiving, Merciful.'" (41)

"It sailed with them through waves like mountains. Noah called to his son, who stood apart, 'My son, board with us and do not remain with the disbelievers.'" (42)

"He said, 'I will take refuge on a mountain that will protect me from the water.' Noah said, 'Today there is no protection from God's command except for those on whom He has mercy.' The waves came between them, and he was among the drowned." (43)

"It was said, 'Earth, swallow your water, and sky, withhold!' The water subsided, the matter was settled, and it came to rest on al-Judi. And it was said, 'Away with the wrongdoing people!'" (44)

The Ark began sailing through waves like mountains. Noah called to his son to board, but the son thought a mountain would protect him from the water. The waves separated them, and he was among those drowned. The earth was then ordered to swallow its water and the sky to cease, and the Ark rested on al-Judi. This completes the picture of deliverance and the limits of relying on apparent strength.

Surah al-Mu'minun, verses 27-29.

"We revealed to him, 'Build the Ark under Our watch and according to Our revelation. When Our command comes and the oven overflows, take aboard it a pair of every kind and your family, except those among them against whom the word has already passed. Do not address Me concerning those who have done wrong: they will be drowned.'" (27)

"'When you and those with you have settled aboard the Ark, say, "Praise belongs to God, who delivered us from the wrongdoing people.'" (28)

"'And say, "My Lord, let me land at a blessed landing place; You are the best of those who bring to land.'" (29)

Surah al-Mu'minun again recounts the building of the Ark and the carrying of pairs and family, then directs Noah and those with him to give praise once settled aboard and to pray for a blessed landing place. Prayer and gratitude accompany work, and deliverance remains the beginning of responsibility for life after the ordeal.

The story of the Ark gives me room to reflect on listening, working, and preserving what is entrusted to a person. Wood's value becomes clear through the skill with

which it is fashioned and the purpose it serves. A familiar material can, in the right use, become a means of preserving life.

The Plank Between Ridicule and Deliverance

In the scene of the Ark's construction, the leaders pass Noah and mock him while the commanded work continues. This sequence confronts the reader with differing views of the same act: what some see as an occasion for ridicule stands, in the prophet's knowledge, as obedience and preparation. When deliverance comes, the planks' significance changes for those following the story. They have become assembled parts performing a function no single plank can perform.

From this scene we draw the value of gradual work and the proper use of materials, while preserving the distinctive circumstances of Noah, peace be upon him, and the revelation he received. Wood makes accessible the effects of assembling parts and caring for work until it is complete: a familiar material acquires its place through the purpose it serves.

Chapter references: Surah Hud 37-44; Surah al-Mu'minun 27-29; Surah al-Qamar 13-15; Surah Nuh 17-18.

Chapter 27: Abraham, Hagar, and Ishmael—The Valley Without Crops

Describing the Place

Surah Ibrahim, verses 35-41.

“When Abraham said, ‘My Lord, make this city secure, and keep me and my children from worshipping idols.’” (35)

“‘My Lord, they have led many people astray. Whoever follows me belongs with me, and whoever disobeys me—You are indeed Forgiving, Merciful.’” (36)

“‘Our Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in a valley without crops, beside Your Sacred House, our Lord, so that they may establish prayer. Make hearts among the people incline toward them, and provide them with fruits, so that they may give thanks.’” (37)

“‘Our Lord, You know what we conceal and what we reveal. Nothing on earth or in heaven is hidden from God.’” (38)

“‘Praise belongs to God, who granted me Ishmael and Isaac in old age. My Lord indeed hears prayer.’” (39)

“‘My Lord, make me one who establishes prayer, and some of my descendants as well. Our Lord, accept my supplication.’” (40)

“‘Our Lord, forgive me, my parents, and the believers on the Day the reckoning is established.’” (41)

Abraham, peace be upon him, prays for security and avoidance of idol worship, and mentions settling some of his descendants in a valley without crops beside the Sacred House. He then asks for prayer to be established, hearts to incline toward them, and provision from fruits, closing with prayer for himself, his parents, and the believers. The needs of body and spirit meet in one petition.

Hope becomes stronger in this prayer against the scarcity of visible means of cultivation. Describing the valley as without crops concerns the place of settlement in the address; I do not extend it into a judgment that no plant could ever grow there at any time.

Prayer for Descendants

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 126.

“When Abraham said, ‘My Lord, make this a secure city and provide its people with fruits—those among them who believe in God and the Last Day.’ He said, ‘Whoever disbelieves, I will allow a little enjoyment, then compel him toward the punishment of the Fire. What an evil destination!’” (126)

Abraham asks for the city's security and provision from fruits for its believing inhabitants. The answer states that the disbeliever is allowed a little enjoyment before facing judgment, distinguishing the breadth of earthly provision from the final judgment upon a person.

Human needs stand beside one another in the prayer: sustenance, security, connection with others, and a purpose that orders life. In their gathering I see help

toward understanding provision within a complete life, where prayer carries its meaning and food preserves bodily strength.

Between the Verse and Biographical Details

In the biographical tradition, this scene is associated with Hagar and Ishmael, peace be upon them, while the verse itself does not recount every person's name or every detail of their journey. We preserve this distinction so that we do not attribute to the verse what we know from other accounts. Abraham's prayer remains the documented center of this chapter.

Fruit Arriving from Afar

Surah al-Qasas, verse 57.

“They say, ‘If we follow guidance with you, we will be snatched away from our land.’ Have We not established for them a secure sanctuary to which fruits of every kind are brought, as provision from Us? But most of them do not know.” (57)

The objection of people who feared that following guidance would lead to their removal from their land is met with a reminder of the secure sanctuary to which diverse fruits are brought. Provision arriving from outside the place thus appears as evidence of an existing blessing from which they benefited.

Fruits reach a place that may not produce them through movement and exchange among people. Seen this way, agriculture's story extends to roads, markets, security, and the relationships that make one land's bounty available to the inhabitants of another.

Sustenance and Hearts in One Prayer

The prayer reveals the place's need for its inhabitants and for those who visit and carry provision to it. The meaning of settled life thus expands to include worship, the inclination of hearts, and the exchange of benefits. The arrival of fruits makes tangible the connection between the field that produces them and the place that benefits from them.

We pause at the image of a fruit growing in a distant field and reaching the hand of someone who never planted its tree. It recalls work distributed among the grower, keeper, carrier, and seller, and this chain's need for trust and security. I draw this social reading from the scene while recognizing that the prayer's meaning is broader. A place's success is not measured only by the abundance of its local crops, nor is its spiritual need separate from its inhabitants' conditions of life.

Chapter references: Surah Ibrahim 35–41; Surah al-Baqarah 126; Surah al-Qasas 57.

Chapter 28: Joseph—Ears of Grain and Years of Drought

Planning in Joseph's Counsel

"He said, 'You will cultivate diligently for seven years. Leave what you harvest in its ears, except a little of which you eat.'"

The Holy Quran, Surah Yusuf, verse 47.

The counsel combines continuing production, preserving the crop, and estimating consumption. Harvesting does not conclude thinking about food; afterward comes a decision about what to eat and what to store. "Except a little of which you eat" draws attention to the discipline needed in times of abundance to preserve the capacity to face scarcity. Applying a particular storage method today depends on the crop, humidity, pests, and storage facilities. The story's clear enduring meaning is the connection between knowledge of a crisis and a plan covering cultivation, harvest, and daily living.

A Vision That Raises the Question of the Future

Surah Yusuf, verses 43-46.

"The king said, 'I see seven fat cows being eaten by seven lean ones, and seven green ears of grain and others dry. O counsellors, explain my dream to me, if you can interpret dreams.'" (43)

"They said, 'Confused dreams! We have no knowledge of the interpretation of dreams.'" (44)

"The one of the two who had been saved, remembering after a long time, said, 'I will tell you its interpretation, so send me.'" (45)

"'Joseph, O man of truth, explain to us seven fat cows eaten by seven lean ones, and seven green ears of grain and others dry, so that I may return to the people and they may know.'" (46)

The vision of cows and ears of grain troubled the king, whose council could offer no interpretation. After a time, the survivor of the two prison companions remembered Joseph, peace be upon him, and asked to be sent to him. He questioned him about the vision so that he could return with an answer to the people. The question of government thus reaches the knowledge of a man in prison.

The question of the ears of grain concerns a community's future and its need for food. Joseph's interpretation gains its practical force here: a reading translated into preparation and knowledge expected to preserve people when the season's conditions change.

Cultivation and Storage

Surah Yusuf, verses 48-49.

"Then seven hard years will come after that, consuming what you have stored for them, except a little that you preserve." (48)

"Then a year will come after that in which people will receive relief, and in which they will press.'" (49)

After years of work and storage come seven severe years that consume what was prepared for them, except a little kept in reserve. Then comes a year in which people receive relief and press their produce. These stages are read in connection with Joseph's earlier instruction to moderate consumption and preserve the crop, revealing the purpose of planning across time.

The decision to store is made in a time of abundance, while its value appears during hardship. Here I follow this decision's effect on communal life, while observing the conditions for applying grain-preservation methods discussed at the chapter's opening.

Economy in Times of Abundance

Preparation for drought does not begin after food is exhausted. This is a deeply human core of the story: abundance may be an opportunity to prepare for the future, not an invitation to consume everything at hand. Yet storage that preserves people's food differs ethically from hoarding that exploits their need.

Knowledge in the Service of Society

Surah Yusuf, verses 54-56.

"The king said, 'Bring him to me; I will reserve him for my own service.' When he spoke with him, he said, 'Today you hold a position of trust and standing with us.'" (54)

"He said, 'Place me in charge of the storehouses of the land. I am indeed a knowledgeable guardian.'" (55)

"Thus We established Joseph in the land, to settle in it wherever he wished. We bestow Our mercy on whom We will, and We do not let the reward of those who do good be lost." (56)

The king summoned Joseph and brought him close. After speaking with him, he declared his standing and trust. Joseph asked to take charge of the land's storehouses because of his safeguarding ability and knowledge, and the Quran then recounts his establishment in the land. Knowledge moves from interpreting a vision to the trust of managing a resource people need.

Knowledge meets trustworthiness when entrusted with a resource from which people live. This meaning offers me an approach to agricultural education: learning growth, preservation, and planning; respecting food producers; and preparing for needs society may face.

Turning Interpretation into a Program of Action

Joseph's answer transforms the vision into practical responsibility: preparing during fertile years and preserving what the difficult years will require. Knowledge thus becomes a basis for organizing behavior, and controlling consumption becomes part of protecting the resource on which people will depend.

The sequence of verses ends in a year of relief when people press their produce, keeping the story's horizon open to life's renewal. This ending joins preparation for hardship with hope of overcoming it and gives planning its purpose: preserving people until the conditions of abundance return.

Chapter references: Surah Yusuf 43-49 and 54-56.

Chapter 29: Moses—The Tree and the Staff

The Call at the Tree

Surah Ta Ha, verses 9-16.

“Has the account of Moses reached you?” (9)

“When he saw a fire, he said to his family, ‘Stay here. I have perceived a fire. Perhaps I can bring you a burning brand from it or find guidance at the fire.’” (10)

“When he came to it, he was called, ‘Moses!’” (11)

“‘I am your Lord, so remove your sandals. You are in the sacred valley of Tuwa.’” (12)

“‘I have chosen you, so listen to what is revealed.’” (13)

“‘Indeed, I am God; there is no god but Me. Worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance.’” (14)

“‘The Hour is coming—I keep it almost wholly hidden—so that every soul may be recompensed for what it strives to do.’” (15)

“‘Do not let one who disbelieves in it and follows his own desire turn you away from it, lest you perish.’” (16)

Moses, peace be upon him, saw a fire during his journey and asked his family to wait, hoping to bring them a flame or find guidance for the road. When he reached it, he was called by name, made to know his Lord, commanded to worship and pray, and reminded of the Hour. Seeking the road became the beginning of his commission as a messenger.

Surah al-Qasas, verses 29-32.

“When Moses had completed the term and was traveling with his family, he perceived a fire on the side of the Mount. He said to his family, ‘Stay here. I have perceived a fire. Perhaps I can bring you news from it or a burning ember, so that you may warm yourselves.’” (29)

“When he came to it, he was called from the right side of the valley, in the blessed place, from the tree: ‘Moses, I am God, Lord of all worlds.’” (30)

“‘Throw down your staff.’ When he saw it moving like a swift snake, he turned and fled without looking back. ‘Moses, come forward and do not fear. You are among those who are safe.’” (31)

“‘Put your hand into the opening of your garment; it will come out white, without harm. Draw your arm close to yourself against fear. These are two proofs from your Lord to Pharaoh and his leaders. They are indeed a defiantly disobedient people.’” (32)

Surah al-Qasas recounts that Moses traveled with his family after completing his term and then saw fire beside the Mount. The call came from the valley's side, in the blessed place, from the tree, followed by the commands concerning the staff and hand as two signs to Pharaoh and his leaders. Place and plant appear within the scene of calling and commission.

I read the call in the context of divine address and election, alongside the principles that God transcends indwelling in matter or being confined by it. I preserve the tree's place in the scene without identifying a species the text does not name.

The Staff Before the Sign

Surah Ta Ha, verses 17-18.

“What is that in your right hand, Moses?” (17)

“He said, ‘It is my staff. I lean on it and beat down leaves with it for my sheep, and I have other uses for it.’” (18)

Asked what was in his right hand, Moses described his staff through its everyday uses: leaning on it, beating down leaves for sheep, and other benefits. This answer precedes the sign's appearance, introducing the familiar tool before the reader witnesses its transformation at God's command.

Knowledge of the staff's uses matters because of what follows: it is a tool Moses carries and knows in daily life, then sees transformed at God's command. This introduction makes its familiar condition clear before the sign appears.

Transformation by God's Permission

Surah Ta Ha, verses 19-23.

“He said, ‘Throw it down, Moses.’” (19)

“He threw it down, and there it was—a moving serpent.” (20)

“He said, ‘Take it and do not fear. We will restore it to its former state.’” (21)

“Press your hand to your side; it will emerge white, without harm, as another sign,” (22)

“so that We may show you some of Our greatest signs.” (23)

Moses was commanded to cast down the staff, which became a moving serpent. He was then reassured that he could take it and that it would return to its former state. He was shown the sign of the hand, white without harm. The scene prepares him to witness God's power and carry clear proofs in his mission.

Surah al-A'raf, verses 107-117.

“He threw down his staff, and there it was—a manifest serpent.” (107)

“He drew out his hand, and it was white to those watching.” (108)

“The leaders of Pharaoh's people said, ‘This is indeed a learned magician.’” (109)

“He wants to drive you out of your land. What, then, do you advise?” (110)

“They said, ‘Put him and his brother off, and send gatherers into the cities,’” (111)

“to bring you every learned magician.” (112)

“The magicians came to Pharaoh and said, ‘We will surely have a reward if we are the victors?’” (113)

“He said, ‘Yes, and you will be among those brought near.’” (114)

“They said, ‘Moses, will you cast, or shall we be the ones to cast?’” (115)

“He said, ‘Cast.’ When they cast, they bewitched people's eyes and terrified them, producing great magic.” (116)

“We revealed to Moses, ‘Throw down your staff,’ and it swallowed what they had fabricated.” (117)

Moses displayed the staff and hand before Pharaoh. The leaders accused him of magic and called for the magicians to be assembled. The magicians cast what they had and frightened the people; Moses's staff was then cast and swallowed their fabrication. The scene thus develops from objection to confrontation and the sign's manifestation.

I present the staff's transformation as an extraordinary sign and examine its account and significance through the text. Wood's properties that can be tested and whose effects can be repeated belong to another subject. The story therefore does not establish an agricultural procedure capable of producing this transformation.

Simple Tools and Great Meanings

In this story I reflect on the value of a useful tool: a hand that carries it, a need it meets, and a circumstance that changes its significance. I offer this as a literary reflection, distinguishing it from the story's events, for which I return to their Quranic passages.

The Staff as Its Owner Knew It

The question and answer bring the staff close to Moses's daily life before the transformation. Prior familiarity with the tool is part of the scene's construction and gives the reader a clearer awareness of the greatness of what God commanded Moses to witness in it.

The reader should pause over this narrative construction: introducing the tool, explaining its use, then giving the command through which the sign appears. The sequence contributes to the scene's force. The wood's origin or the age of the branch from which the staff was made is not necessary to understand it. A shepherd's tool reminds us that people's livelihoods and occupations are not outside religious narrative: the simplest of their tools may enter a moment of greatness while retaining its everyday history in its owner's hand.

Chapter references: Surah Ta Ha 9-23; Surah al-Qasas 29-32; Surah al-A'raf 107-117.

Chapter 30: The Children of Israel—The Earth's Food and the Trial of Blessing

Food in a Communal Context

Surah al-Baqarah, verses 57-60.

"We shaded you with clouds and sent down manna and quails for you. 'Eat of the good things We have provided you.' They did not wrong Us; they were wronging themselves." (57)

"When We said, 'Enter this town and eat freely from it wherever you wish. Enter the gate bowing humbly and say, "Relieve us of our sins." We will forgive your transgressions and grant more to those who do good.'" (58)

"But the wrongdoers substituted words other than those they had been told. We sent down a punishment from heaven upon those who had done wrong because of their defiance." (59)

"When Moses sought water for his people, We said, 'Strike the rock with your staff.' Twelve springs burst forth from it, and each group knew its drinking place. 'Eat and drink of God's provision, and do not act wickedly on earth, spreading corruption.'" (60)

The verses remind the Children of Israel of the shading clouds, manna and quails, the command to enter the town and speak and act as instructed, and Moses's request for water, his striking the rock, and the emergence of twelve springs. Images of food and water stand beside the explanation that blessing calls for gratitude and uprightness.

Surah al-A'raf, verse 160.

"We divided them into twelve tribes, as communities. When his people asked Moses for water, We revealed to him, 'Strike the rock with your staff.' Twelve springs flowed from it, and each group knew its drinking place. We shaded them with clouds and sent down manna and quails for them. 'Eat of the good things We have provided you.' They did not wrong Us; they were wronging themselves." (160)

The verse recounts the division of the Children of Israel into twelve groups, each knowing its drinking place when the springs flowed, together with shade and food. The ordering of communal resources appears alongside their provision, joined to the reminder that their wrongdoing fell upon themselves.

The arrangement of these blessings recalls the community's history of sustenance and places its later choice before what it had been given. I therefore follow the dialogue with Moses, peace be upon him, in its full meaning, returning food names to the circumstances in which they occur.

No Condemnation of Lentils and Onions

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 61.

"And when you said, 'Moses, we cannot endure one kind of food. Call upon your Lord for us to bring forth for us from what the earth grows: its greens, cucumbers, fum, lentils and onions.' He said, 'Would you exchange what is better for what is lower? Go down to a town, and you will have what you ask for.' Humiliation and poverty were laid upon them, and they incurred God's anger. That was because they

disbelieved in God's signs and killed the prophets without right; that was because they disobeyed and transgressed." (61)

The people told Moses they would not endure one food and asked for varieties of what the earth grows. They were rebuked for the exchange they sought in their circumstances, after which the verse mentions aspects of disobedience. The story concerns their attitude toward provision and obligation, not a prohibition of lentils or onions.

The comparison in the dialogue concerns the recipients' choice and what they sought to exchange for what they had been given. Food rulings and benefits remain subject to their independent evidence. The rebuke in this event does not create a prohibition of lentils or onions.

Names and Agricultural Memory

The list of greens, cucumbers, fūm, lentils, and onions evokes a life connected with cultivating the earth. It reminds us that food is the memory of a home and a community, not merely abstract nutrients. This social reading, however, does not allow certainty about every psychological motive of those in the story.

Blessing Requires Awareness

A person may overlook a blessing because it is available and exaggerate the value of something absent because of longing for it. One fruit of the story is learning attentiveness to what exists while recognizing the legitimacy of seeking life's needs. Gratitude does not prevent improving food, nor must improvement be accompanied by ingratitude.

When Food Becomes the Language of Memory

Mention of the earth's food invites reflection on the table's connection with place, work, and habit. I offer this social reading while distinguishing it from the dialogue and attitude expressly stated in the verse.

The reader returns from this reflection to the story's ethical question: how does one balance seeking a need with gratitude for what has been given? This question preserves the rebuke within its context and directs attention to conduct toward blessing. The plant names and disagreement concerning fūm were explained in Chapter 17.

Chapter references: Surah al-Baqarah 57–61; Surah al-A'raf 160. See Chapter 17 on differing interpretations of fūm.

Chapter 31: David and Solomon—The Field and Justice

A Field Enters the Court of Judgment

Surah al-Anbiya', verses 78-79.

"And David and Solomon, when they judged concerning the field in which the people's sheep had strayed by night; We witnessed their judgment." (78)

"We gave Solomon understanding of it, and to each We gave judgment and knowledge. We subjected the mountains and the birds to glorify with David, and We were the doer of this." (79)

A case concerning a field entered and damaged at night by people's sheep was brought before David and Solomon, peace be upon them. They judged it, and God singled out Solomon for understanding the case while affirming wisdom and knowledge for both. The two verses do not detail the compensation. The text therefore remains the basis for discussing justice and understanding, while details narrated in commentary are distinguished from it.

The field appears here as a resource subject to a right that has suffered harm, and judicial work appears in resolving a dispute among people. Agriculture thereby enters questions of ownership, responsibility, and redress, making justice part of preserving the means of life.

What the Text Establishes

The Quran mentions the incident, Solomon's being given understanding, and both prophets' being granted judgment and knowledge, but it does not set out all the judgment's details in the verses themselves. We therefore do not confuse the concise text with elaborations in commentaries and transmitted accounts, nor issue a contemporary ruling on compensation merely by summarizing the story.

The Crop Owner's Right

Behind plants lie time, labor, and anticipated sustenance. Their destruction is therefore no trivial event simply because an animal caused it or because the damage occurred within a few hours. Among the scene's implications is the need for justice that restores rights and orders relationships between livestock owners and field owners.

Knowledge and Humility

The verses preserve the standing of both prophets while distinguishing Solomon through understanding in this incident. Responsible reading adheres to this statement and makes knowledge and justice the focus of reflection on the judgment, without adding details the text does not give.

Damage Done in a Night

The effect of damage becomes apparent when we consider the work preceding it and the crop expected afterward. A field holds past effort and awaited sustenance; protecting it includes its owners' right to the fruit of that effort. This makes cultivation a matter of justice within society.

Details of compensation offered in explanations still require presentation of their sources and evidence. The verses themselves establish the event, judgment, knowledge, and understanding, placing before the reader a clear relationship between caring for crops and safeguarding rights.

Chapter references: Surah al-Anbiya' 78-79.

Chapter 32: Jonah—The Gourd and Care

Growth at the Close of the Scene of Deliverance

“We caused a gourd plant to grow over him.”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-Saffat, verse 146.

The short sentence follows the scene of Jonah, peace be upon him, emerging onto the open shore while ill. Growth is mentioned as an act of care, bringing a plant into the story at a time of weakness and need. What is expressly stated is enough to enrich the narrative: deliverance followed by kindness, and land where a plant becomes part of a scene of mercy. The precise species and details of food, shade, and benefit are investigated through language, commentary, and the sources of reports; they are not added to the verse's words as though part of them.

A Body Weakened by Trial

Surah al-Saffat, verses 139-145.

“Jonah was indeed one of the messengers,” (139)

“when he fled to the laden ship,” (140)

“and drew lots, becoming one of those who lost.” (141)

“Then the great fish swallowed him while he was blameworthy.” (142)

“Had he not been among those who glorify God,” (143)

“he would have remained in its belly until the Day they are raised.” (144)

“Then We cast him onto the open shore while he was ailing,” (145)

Jonah, peace be upon him, went to the laden ship, lost the drawing of lots, and was swallowed by the great fish while blameworthy. The text mentions his glorification as a reason he was delivered from remaining in its belly, then recounts his being cast onto the open shore while ill. This explains the gourd plant's place in the stage after deliverance.

The gourd's growth lies between deliverance and the resumption of the mission. Its position preserves its connection with Jonah's condition, making clear the care shown to him when he was cast out ill, before continuing to what happened with his people.

What We Know and What We Do Not Know

We know that God caused a gourd plant to grow over him. The Quran does not explain all its functions for his body and surroundings. If a commentator mentions shade, food, or another property, we must attribute the detail to its speaker and examine its evidence. We do not turn a possibility into a medical assertion.

Mercy After the Ordeal

Surah al-Anbiya', verses 87-88.

"And the man of the fish, when he went away in anger, thinking We would not constrain him. He called out in the darkness: 'There is no god but You. Glory be to You! I have indeed been among the wrongdoers.'" (87)

"We answered him and delivered him from distress. Thus do We deliver the believers." (88)

The man of the fish—Jonah, peace be upon him—calls to his Lord in the darkness, affirming divine unity and transcendence and acknowledging that he has wronged himself. The answer and deliverance from distress follow, opening from the incident a general meaning for believers: return to God is present at the heart of hardship, not only after it ends.

I draw from the sequence the thought that someone who survives danger may still need care to recover strength. The end of the immediate cause of harm opens another stage of gentleness toward the exhausted and attentiveness to their needs.

From the Gourd to the People

Surah al-Saffat, verses 147-148.

"We sent him to a hundred thousand or more," (147)

"and they believed, so We granted them enjoyment for a time." (148)

The conclusion recounts his being sent to a hundred thousand or more, their belief, and their enjoyment for a time. Jonah's story therefore does not end with his bodily rescue but extends to the mission's effect upon a community. The plant takes its place within a broader course of mercy and guidance.

Mercy's fruit extends to a person's return to a role among others. I therefore preserve the gourd's place as a gift along the path of responsibility, reading God's care for Jonah, peace be upon him, within the story of mission, calling, and response.

What Comes After Deliverance Is Part of the Story

Mention of illness after deliverance draws attention to a person's condition upon emerging from an ordeal. From this sequence we draw the importance of noticing the exhausted after immediate danger passes and treating them gently as they regain their capacity.

Reflection extends to resuming one's role among others: care helps a person continue bearing responsibility. This is an ethical insight drawn from the story's sequence. Chapter 19 discussed the word *yaqtin* and the limits of its identification; the plant's medical function remains a question requiring its own evidence.

Chapter references: Surah al-Saffat 139-148; Surah al-Anbiya' 87-88. See Chapter 19 on the plant's name.

Chapter 33: Mary and Jesus—The Date Palm and Fresh Dates

Fresh Dates Between Gift and Movement

“Shake the trunk of the date palm toward you; it will drop ripe, fresh dates upon you.”

The Holy Quran, Surah Maryam, verse 25.

The scene combines a command to move with a gift of fruit. The word “ripe” brings the dates close to the hand and the meal after the pain and solitude surrounding Mary, peace be upon her. We recall the story's particular circumstances and the honored standing of the one addressed, then reflect on reassurance appearing as something to eat and an action to perform. The command in this event establishes no general medical rule about women's exertion during childbirth: medical care depends on their circumstances, while the verse remains a scene of reassurance and mercy within the story.

At the Palm Trunk

Surah Maryam, verses 22-24.

“She conceived him and withdrew with him to a distant place.” (22)

“The pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a date palm. She said, ‘Would that I had died before this and become something utterly forgotten.’” (23)

“Then a voice called to her from beneath her: ‘Do not grieve. Your Lord has placed a stream beneath you.’” (24)

Mary, peace be upon her, conceived and withdrew to a distant place. Labor then drove her to the palm trunk, until she wished she had been forgotten. The call came telling her not to grieve and informing her of what God had placed below her. The severity of the situation appears first, followed by its movement toward reassurance.

The moment's depth is revealed by pain and solitude together, followed by reassurance. I remain with these elements stated by the text: they are enough to grasp Mary's need for mercy without imagining the weather, the palm's age, or its fruit's color.

Fresh Dates and Water

Surah Maryam, verse 26.

“So eat, drink and be comforted. If you see any human being, say, ‘I have vowed a fast to the Most Merciful, so today I shall speak to no human being.’” (26)

After mentioning the fresh dates, the text commands eating, drinking, and taking comfort, then instructs her to announce a vow of abstaining from speech if she sees anyone. Care for her immediate need is joined to preparation for meeting people; food is not a detail separate from the rest of the ordeal.

Care for the body appears here connected with strengthening the heart: what sustains strength accompanies what quiets fear. I read this conjunction within Mary's particular story, then reflect on the mercy it awakens toward someone passing through an hour of hardship.

The Hand's Movement

Shaking the trunk appears alongside the divine gift. We may reflect on taking practical means together with trust in God, but the verse does not tell us the amount of force exerted or the details of her physical condition in a way suitable for clinical comparison. The lesson requires no invented measurements.

Human Dignity in Weakness

Surah Al 'Imran, verse 42.

“When the angels said, ‘Mary, God has chosen you, purified you, and chosen you above the women of all worlds.’” (42)

The angels tell Mary that God has chosen and purified her and chosen her above the women of all worlds. This news illuminates her standing in the story. Her need for food and reassurance during labor does not diminish her dignity; it reveals mercy's presence in her human experience.

Mary's dignity remains evident while she needs what sustains her body and reassures her heart. From this meaning I see service to the needy as preserving their dignity, and I trace the plant's presence within this care that brings together nourishment and tranquility.

Nourishment for the Body and Reassurance for the Heart

The address to Mary brings together eating, drinking, and taking comfort, then offers guidance concerning how she will face people. Care in the scene encompasses the body and its surrounding fear, loneliness, and social confrontation. The palm cannot be separated from these elements, nor should the dates be read as though they fell into a vacuum outside the story.

From this conjunction we learn that need does not diminish dignity, and that someone undergoing an ordeal needs reassurance as well as bodily sustenance. Mary's movement toward the trunk remains an act within its own context, contemplated alongside the other elements of the story and the standing of the person addressed.

Chapter references: Surah Maryam 22-26; Surah Al 'Imran 42 on divine election.

Chapter 34: Prophet Muhammad—Trees in Scenes of the Mission

The Pledge Beneath the Tree

Surah al-Fath, verse 18.

“God was pleased with the believers when they pledged allegiance to you beneath the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent tranquility upon them and rewarded them with a victory near at hand.” (18)

God tells of His pleasure with the believers who pledged allegiance to the Prophet, may God bless him and his family, beneath the tree, His knowledge of their hearts, His sending tranquility upon them, and His rewarding them with a nearby victory. The tree is mentioned as a marker of the pledge's place, while the verse's significance concerns sincerity of heart and steadfastness.

The verse's attention is directed toward the pledge's sincerity, what lay in the hearts, and the tranquility that descended. I preserve the tree's place as a witness to the event, leaving its species among what the text does not name.

Date Palms in Surah al-Hashr

Surah al-Hashr, verse 5.

“Whatever palm trees you cut down or left standing upon their roots was by God's permission, and so that He might disgrace the defiantly disobedient.” (5)

The verse mentions the palms cut down and those left standing upon their roots in the confrontation presented by Surah al-Hashr, connecting the matter with God's permission. The action must therefore be read in its specific circumstances, without turning it into unrestricted permission to destroy crops or attack people's resources.

I preserve the qualification of permission and the event's context when reading about cutting and retaining the palms. I return to their significance in Chapter 59, where I discuss conduct toward trees and its connection with responsibility for preserving life's resources.

The Orchard and Work

Al-Kafi transmits an account about managing water on the Prophet's land, may God bless him and his family, as report 7 in the chapter on emulating the Imams in seeking livelihood [H6]. Al-Majlisi classified it as “unknown” in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, p. 18 [H28]. I therefore present it as a transmitted report and distinguish it from the Quranic testimony in this chapter. In the orchard accounts that follow, the word *ha'it* means an orchard, illustrating the biographical reader's need to understand older agricultural language.

No Separation Between the Mission and Livelihood

Trees, fields, and fruits appear in the livelihood of the society addressed by revelation. Their presence is connected with ordering rights, feeding people, and honoring covenants. These scenes bring the mission's connection with everyday life closer to understanding.

The Tree as a Landmark

Memory may preserve a great event by recalling where it occurred: beneath a tree, beside water, or in an orchard. This relationship with place appears in the Pledge of Divine Pleasure, while the verse focuses on the believers' condition, covenant, and tranquility. The tree makes the scene imaginable, but the event's meaning cannot be separated from the people and what was established among them.

In this sense, the tree preserves the event's location in memory, while the covenant made beneath it remains central to its significance. The researcher supplements information about the place through biographical sources and information identifying the plant through its evidence, if any exists. Where no identification is available, the scene remains understandable through what the Quran states.

Chapter references: Surah al-Fath 18; Surah al-Hashr 5; al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on the duty to emulate the Imams in seeking livelihood, report 7, p. 75 in the displayed edition [H6]; its assessment: Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 19, p. 18 [H28].

Chapter 35: Reports of the Prophet's Signs Concerning Trees

The Tree Account in al-Qasi'ah

Nahj al-Balaghah recounts in the sermon al-Qasi'ah that some people of Quraysh asked the Prophet, may God bless him and his family, to summon a tree to come to him, and that it responded by God's permission. I present the report with its source attribution, distinguishing its presence in the book from investigation of its transmission routes in other sources.

The Palm Trunk's Yearning

In al-I'tiqad, al-Bayhaqi transmits accounts of the palm trunk's yearning when the Prophet adopted the pulpit, recording different transmission routes and texts. The story also appears in other collections. Citing a source outside the Imami corpus here serves comparison and documentation; it does not change the book's method or automatically equate reports' levels of reliability.

Blessing in Fruit

Books of biography and proofs of prophethood circulate accounts of blessing in food and fruit. Here I limit myself to the two examples of the tree and the trunk whose sources I have identified, preserving each report's boundaries. Additions whose sources I have not verified remain for further research.

How Is a Miracle Read?

A miracle is studied through the establishment and meaning of its report, not measured against an ordinary agricultural process. Belief in the possibility of the extraordinary does not require believing every story, just as asking for a source does not mean denying divine power. Between these positions lies room for disciplined inquiry and reverence.

From the Report's Text to Its Transmission History

When an incident concerning the tree or the trunk's yearning is narrated, the first documentary task is to preserve the selected report's boundaries: who speaks, what is the occasion, and where does the account begin and end? Versions are then compared without assembling a new version from multiple sources and presenting it as one wording. Reports may agree on an event's core while differing on a detail that changes how it is presented.

The documentation records at the end of the book indicate what could be compared and what still needs study. Consulting them enables readers to distinguish establishing a report's presence in its source from assessing its reliability, while the narrative maintains continuity without repeating the method at every point.

Chapter references: Nahj al-Balaghah, sermon al-Qasi'ah, the tree account [H7]; al-Bayhaqi, al-I'tiqad wa-l-Hidayah ila Sabil al-Rashad, accounts of the palm trunk's yearning [H8].

Chapter 36: The Commander of the Faithful—Planting, Endowment, and Work

Date Stones as a Future

In the planter's eyes a date stone has two times: a small present held in the hand and a hoped-for future as a useful tree. The report of carrying date stones, whose wording and location appear in this chapter, presents this transition from hope to work. The account of Yanbu' adds another dimension: how a resource created through effort becomes an enduring benefit to people.

From Water to Charity

In the Book of Wills, al-Kulayni transmits the account of the spring at Yanbu' from Ayyub ibn 'Atiyyah al-Hadhdha', from Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him. It relates that the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him, dug a spring on land he had acquired and, when the bearer of good news reached him, dedicated its benefit to pilgrims and travelers. I consulted the passage directly in al-Kafi, vol. 7, pp. 54-55, report 9 in the chapter on the charities and wills of the Prophet, Fatimah, and the Imams, peace be upon them [H9].

The report states the charitable purpose in these words:

"It is an absolute and irrevocable charity for the pilgrims to God's House and travelers in God's path; it shall not be sold, gifted, or inherited."

This excerpt identifies the beneficiaries and restricts disposal of the asset. Reflecting on it, I understand that lasting good requires preserving both the resource and its purpose. The legal details of endowment conditions and rulings have their own field of study. I do not claim that this textual comparison exhausts all transmission routes or critically examines the report's manuscript originals.

Direct source: al-Kafi, vol. 7, Book of Wills, report 9, p. 54 [H9].

Continuation of the report and wording of the charity: al-Kafi, vol. 7, p. 55 [H9].

Wealth That Works After Its Owner

Endowment invites thought about another lifespan for planting: its benefit may continue after the initiator has departed. Yet establishing a valid endowment and defining its administration and conditions requires legal and jurisprudential knowledge. Beautiful sentiment alone cannot protect beneficiaries' rights.

A Lesson in Dignity

These reports place productive labor alongside the Imam's standing, so that serving the earth is no opposite of distinction. Fidelity to this meaning includes respecting workers and farmers and refusing to turn stories of effort into sermons repeated by those who underpay the people who exert it.

Planting That Outlives the Planter

Work begins with date stones, water, and soil; its meaning expands when the benefit is assigned to others. Thought moves from owning a resource to arranging for it to

remain useful. The endowment's value in the story emerges through continuity: a resource whose benefit does not end at the first act of giving, but requires protection, administration, and maintenance.

Reflection on this meaning raises practical questions before any charitable project: who will care for the planting afterward, how will the conditions of use be preserved, and what will prevent the asset's loss? These questions do not replace endowment law; they remind us that lasting good needs organization as well as intention. Fidelity to the example of work lies in serving people well, not merely decorating a modern project with an inherited name while neglecting its purpose.

“Date Palms, God Willing”: Naming the Planting by Its Future

Al-Kulayni transmits from 'Abd Allah ibn Sinan, from Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, an account of the Commander of the Faithful going out with loads of date stones. When people ask what he carries, he says:

“Date palms, God willing.”

The report then mentions his planting the stones. The answer offers a graceful picture of work: the questioner sees a load of seeds, while the planter sees what he hopes they will become. The expression does not dispense with effort; the story joins the answer to planting. Hope thus meets the working hand, while making the future subject to God's will remains part of the answer's wording.

The source records this as report 9 of the chapter, through a group of al-Kulayni's companions, from Sahl ibn Ziyad, from Ibn Mahbub, from 'Abd Allah ibn Sinan. Al-Majlisi described it as “weak according to the well-known view” in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, p. 19 [H28]. I preserve that assessment alongside the report's wording and do not attach numbers found in other accounts of planting or emancipation; each report has its own transmission route and words.

Source: al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on the duty to emulate the Imams, peace be upon them, in seeking livelihood, report 9, p. 75 [H6].

Chapter references: al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on emulating the Imams in seeking livelihood, report 9, p. 75 [H6]; al-Kafi, vol. 7, Book of Wills, chapter on the charities and wills of the Prophet, Fatimah, and the Imams, peace be upon them, report 9, pp. 54–55 [H9]; assessment of the date-stone report: *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, p. 19 [H28].

Chapter 37: Plants in the Lives of the Other Members of the Ahl al-Bayt

Work in the Orchard

Reports in al-Kafi bring orchard work before the reader's eyes: a carried tool, directed water, and expended effort. This chapter presents, with wording and reference, the scene of Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, using a spade and opening a watercourse.

Imam al-Kazim and Seeking Livelihood

In report 10 of the chapter, al-Kafi transmits from 'Ali ibn Abi Hamzah that he saw Abu al-Hasan, peace be upon him, working on his land, with a reply connecting such work to the conduct of the Prophet and the Imams [H6]. The honorific here is understood through the report's route and context, not merely the similarity of honorifics among the Imams. Al-Majlisi classified this report as “weak” in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, p. 19 [H28]. I present his assessment alongside the scene's attribution to its narration.

Al-Rida and Reports About Food

Among plant and food reports attributed to Imam al-Rida, peace be upon him, is the fig report, whose text and transmitted assessment were presented in Chapter 14. This cross-reference connects these biographical scenes to the food chapters while preserving each report in its proper place.

Biography Is Broader Than a Famous Story

Plants may appear in accounts of the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, through food, charity, endowment, or ethical teaching. I gather what could be located and documented and leave unverified reports recorded for research, without creating a story for every Imam merely to complete a list of names.

The Details of Work Preserve the Scene's Humanity

Orchard reports mention a tool, sweat, water, and a moving hand, allowing readers to see work as it happens in daily life. In report 13 of the chapter, Abu 'Amr al-Shaybani recounts Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, working with a spade in an orchard of his. Al-Majlisi classified this report as “unknown” in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, p. 20 [H28]. I read these details within the dignity of earning, diligence, and respect for producers, observing differences in people's circumstances and abilities and preserving each report's individual assessment.

Arranging reports by subject helps bring together scenes of labor, food, and endowment, then return each scene to its subject and source. The documentation records retain the transmission route and name as given and indicate what needs further investigation, particularly where honorifics are shared.

The Spade and Opening the Watercourse in Isma'il's Report

Isma'il ibn Jabir says in the report recorded by al-Kulayni:

“I came to Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him, and found him in an orchard of his, holding a spade with which he was opening the watercourse. He wore a shirt resembling coarse cotton cloth, so tight that it seemed sewn around him.”

The narrator witnesses a specific scene of work: an orchard, a spade, and water being given a channel. Ha'it in this account means an orchard, not simply a wall. These details keep attention close to the realities of agricultural care: available water does not always reach where it is needed by itself, and tending its passage is part of the landholder's work.

The report's chain passes through Muhammad ibn Yahya, Ahmad ibn Muhammad, and Ibn Sinan to Isma'il ibn Jabir. I retain “Ibn Sinan” as it appears here. Al-Majlisi described report 11 as “weak according to the well-known view” in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, p. 19 [H28]. This is his transmitted assessment of this particular report. The scene of caring for the land invites reflection on work's value but does not require reproducing the garment's form or the working conditions in every age.

Source: al-Kafi, vol. 5, the same chapter, report 11, p. 76 [H6].

Chapter references: al-Kafi, vol. 5, the chapter mentioned above, reports 10, 11, and 13, pp. 75–76 [H6]; al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on figs [H4]; assessments of labor reports: *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, pp. 19–20 [H28].

Additional Scenes in the Stories of the Prophets

Job and the Bundle

I begin these additional scenes with Job, peace be upon him, whose story includes the dighth, a bundle in its general linguistic explanation. I read the command within this event's particular circumstances of patience and turning to God, without treating it as a general license to strike people.

Surah Sad, verses 41–44.

“Remember Our servant Job, when he called to his Lord, ‘Satan has afflicted me with hardship and suffering.’” (41)

“Strike with your foot: here is cool water for washing and drinking.” (42)

“We granted him his family and as many again with them, as mercy from Us and a reminder to those of understanding.” (43)

“Take a bundle in your hand and strike with it, and do not break your oath.’ We found him patient. What an excellent servant! He was ever turning to God.” (44)

Job, peace be upon him, called to his Lord amid severe affliction. He was commanded to strike the earth with his foot and told of cool water for washing and drinking. The Quran then recounts the restoration of his family and as many again as mercy, and the command to take a bundle to fulfill his oath without breaking it, praising his patience and return to God. That is the passage's sequence. Identifying the person concerned by the oath and explaining its cause belong to commentary; the text does not recount those details here.

Salih and the Palms with Tender Clusters

Mention of palms with tender clusters next leads me to Salih's address to Thamud, peace be upon him. I preserve the description as given without using it to identify a

particular date variety, and follow its connection with gardens, springs, and settled life in the following verses.

Surah al-Shu'ara', verses 146-152.

- “Will you be left secure in what is here,” (146)
- “among gardens and springs,” (147)
- “and crops and date palms with tender clusters?” (148)
- “You skillfully carve houses out of the mountains.” (149)
- “So be mindful of God and obey me.” (150)
- “Do not obey the command of the extravagant,” (151)
- “who spread corruption on earth and do not set things right.” (152)

Salih, peace be upon him, asks whether his people expect to remain secure among gardens, springs, crops, and palms, with houses carved into mountains. He then calls them to mindfulness of God, obedience to him, and refusal to follow the extravagant corrupters. Agricultural prosperity appears at the opening of the admonition, revealing that abundant livelihood does not remove responsibility for one's deeds.

Shu'ayb and the People of the Thicket

The name “People of the Thicket” carries another connection with plants, for aykah is linguistically associated with intertwined trees. From this name I turn to Shu'ayb's call, peace be upon him, where fairness in measuring and weighing and people's rights form the story's center.

Surah al-Shu'ara', verses 176-191.

- “The People of the Thicket rejected the messengers,” (176)
- “when Shu'ayb said to them, ‘Will you not be mindful?’” (177)
- “I am a trustworthy messenger to you.” (178)
- “So be mindful of God and obey me.” (179)
- “I ask you for no payment for it. My reward rests only with the Lord of all worlds.” (180)
- “Give full measure and do not be among those who cause loss.” (181)
- “Weigh with a just balance.” (182)
- “Do not deprive people of what is theirs, and do not act wickedly on earth, spreading corruption.” (183)
- “Be mindful of the One who created you and the former generations.” (184)
- “They said, ‘You are only one of those bewitched.’” (185)
- “You are only a human like us, and we certainly consider you a liar.” (186)
- “Then cause fragments of the sky to fall upon us, if you are truthful.” (187)
- “He said, ‘My Lord knows best what you do.’” (188)
- “They rejected him, so the punishment of the Day of the Shadow seized them. It was indeed the punishment of a tremendous day.” (189)

“In that there is a sign, yet most of them were not believers.” (190)

“Your Lord is indeed the Mighty, the Merciful.” (191)

Shu'ayb, peace be upon him, called the People of the Thicket to mindfulness of God, explained his trustworthiness and that he sought no payment, then commanded full measure and weight and an end to depriving people and spreading corruption. They accused him of being bewitched and of lying, demanding that he cause pieces of the sky to fall upon them. He referred the matter to his Lord's knowledge. The text then recounts their rejection and the punishment of the Day of the Shadow, ending with the lesson and God's might and mercy. The scene's connection with justice in dealings thus emerges, extending beyond the trees' name alone.

Part Four: Plants in Quranic Parables and Symbols

We have seen plants present in the events of the mission and people's livelihoods. Here we see them as images that bring closer the meanings of speech, giving, conceit, and the fate of deeds. A verse may begin with a small grain, then carry our gaze toward an effect that cannot be measured by its smallness; it may present a flourishing orchard to reveal its owner's hidden attitude. We will read these parables through the sequence of their images and listen to the question each scene returns to our lives.

Chapter 38: The Good Tree and the Corrupt Tree

A Firm Root and a Rising Branch

“Have you not seen how God sets forth a parable: a good word is like a good tree, its root firm and its branch in the sky?”

The Holy Quran, Surah Ibrahim, verse 24.

“Have you not seen” opens the door to observation, then moves to an image memory can retain: root and branch, firmness and extension. The word thereby acquires meaning beyond the moment it is spoken: it has something upon which it rests and an effect that appears and reaches others. The Quranic context completes the image with fruit in the next verse. Explanation should preserve the relationship between these parts so that root or branch does not become a detached symbol upon which we impose every meaning that occurs to us.

A Word with a Root and Fruit

Surah Ibrahim, verse 25.

“It gives its fruit at every season by its Lord's permission. God sets forth parables for people so that they may take heed.” (25)

The parable of the good word continues with fruit renewed by God's permission: enduring benefit answers the firm root and rising branch. The parable does not recount a particular historical tree but makes a tree's growth an accessible image of the effect of a sound word that takes root and bears fruit.

From firmness, extension, and fruit together, I draw a question about the word I utter: what is its root, whom does its benefit reach, and what effect remains? The image's beauty thus becomes a test concerning speech's truthfulness and its work in people's lives.

Firmness and Growth

Firmness in the image does not mean immobility: the tree is firmly rooted while its branches grow and it bears fruit. A person may draw from this steadfastness of principle alongside renewed action, provided this is understood as ethical reflection, not an exclusive interpretation of every part of the parable.

The Opposite Image

Surah Ibrahim, verse 26.

“The likeness of a corrupt word is that of a corrupt tree, uprooted from the surface of the earth, having no stability.” (26)

The opposite image shows a corrupt tree uprooted from the earth with no stability. The corrupt word's weakness is understood through its lack of a firm root. Apparent extension is not enough when what sustains endurance and benefit has been severed.

The word's weakness appears in the loss of what establishes it and makes its effect beneficial. I read corruption here within the representation of speech, without transferring it into an ethical judgment upon a plant species in a garden.

Commentary and Transmission

The tradition contains applications of the tree to persons or meanings connected with faith. Proper investigation presents each application with its source and the basis of its significance, without canceling the parable's general apparent meaning or treating every modern reflection as a report from an infallible Imam. What is established here is the Quranic structure of the contrast.

The Effect That Distinguishes a Good Word

Surah Ibrahim, verse 27.

“God makes those who believe steadfast through the firm word in worldly life and in the Hereafter. God lets the wrongdoers stray, and God does what He wills.” (27)

The believers' being made steadfast through the firm word follows the two tree parables, revealing the plant image's purpose. The desired steadfastness concerns faith and guidance in this world and the Hereafter, set against the wrongdoers' straying. The parable thereby returns to human destiny and deeds.

The parable's ending leads to steadfastness through guidance and connects the preceding tree image with the speaker's responsibility. I present what I draw about truthful speech and renewed benefit as reflection on this structure, preserving the broader interpretations commentators give.

The opposite image reveals that lack of stability is a problem in the foundation, not merely a defect in decoration. Readers may use this meaning to examine eloquent speech without truth or a frequently repeated promise unsupported by action. Applying the trees to particular people remains a separate matter requiring transmission and interpretive grounds: personal admiration does not make an application of the parable a transmitted interpretation.

Chapter references: Surah Ibrahim 24–27.

Chapter 39: The Grain, the Ears, and the Garden on a Hill—Parables of Giving

The Grain of Giving and the Breadth of Multiplication

“The likeness of those who spend their wealth in God's way is that of a grain growing seven ears, in each ear a hundred grains. God multiplies for whom He wills, and God is All-Encompassing, All-Knowing.”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-Baqarah, verse 261.

Imagination follows the grain to the ears, and the ears to abundant grain, seeing giving's effect continue after it leaves the giver's hand. The verse's ending broadens the meaning through multiplication and knowledge. The parable concerns spending in God's way; it cannot be separated from its ethical context or turned into a promise of a fixed agricultural yield from every seed. It teaches readers to see giving through the good that may arise from it, with sincere intention and protection of recipients' dignity.

Beyond the Grain's Size

Surah al-Baqarah, verses 262-263.

“Those who spend their wealth in God's way and do not follow their giving with reminders of generosity or harm will have their reward with their Lord. They will have no fear, nor will they grieve.” (262)

“Kind speech and forgiveness are better than charity followed by harm. God is Self-Sufficient, Forbearing.” (263)

The image of multiplied grain is followed by counsel to protect giving from reminders of generosity and harm. The verses place kind speech and forgiveness above charity that wounds the person in need. Giving's quality lies not only in its quantity but in intention, manner, and effect upon the recipient.

This counsel protects the effect of a gift after it leaves the hand by preserving the recipient's dignity. The multiplication with which the parable began belongs to God's reward; I do not read it as a promise of a specified earthly financial return for every giver.

The Smooth Rock and the Soil

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 264.

“You who believe, do not nullify your charities through reminders of generosity and harm, like one who spends his wealth to be seen by people and does not believe in God and the Last Day. His likeness is that of a smooth rock with soil upon it: a downpour strikes it and leaves it bare. They can gain nothing from what they earned. God does not guide the disbelieving people.” (264)

Giving spoiled by display and reminders of generosity is likened to a smooth rock covered with soil that a heavy rain exposes bare. The image reveals an action that suggests growth but proves to have no foundation preserving the fruit of giving.

Rain in this image tests what was hidden beneath the soil. I reflect on this exposure in relation to motives: what sustains a deed when its public appearance disappears, and does anything remain to preserve its benefit under trial?

A Garden on a Hill

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 265.

“The likeness of those who spend their wealth seeking God's pleasure and with firm conviction in themselves is that of a garden on a hill: a downpour strikes it, and it yields its produce twofold. If no downpour strikes it, then a light rain suffices. God sees what you do.” (265)

Opposite the previous image stands an elevated garden, likened to one who gives seeking God's pleasure and with inner conviction. Heavy rain doubles its fruit, and if heavy rain does not come, a light rain suffices. The parable thus makes accessible the effect of a sound foundation on continuing benefit.

The garden's location, rain, and fruit come together to convey enduring effects when the motive for giving is sound. I preserve the image's purpose; selecting a farm's location and studying its slope require knowledge of the land's own conditions.

A Fire at the Time of Need

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 266.

“Would any of you wish to have a garden of date palms and vines, with rivers flowing beneath it and every kind of fruit in it, then be overtaken by old age while having weak offspring, and have a whirlwind containing fire strike it and burn it? Thus God makes the signs clear to you, so that you may reflect.” (266)

The question portrays an elderly man with weak children and a plentiful garden that holds his need and hope, then a fiery whirlwind burns it. The image's severity lies in loss at the moment of greatest need, awakening fear of wasting the fruit of work before the time of benefiting from it.

The damage's impact is tied to the sufferer's condition: old age, children needing care, and a resource difficult to replace. From this connection I reflect on protecting the fruit of work and a person's responsibility toward dependents.

Four Scenes for One Question

The parables of giving move among a multiplying grain, an exposed surface, a fruitful orchard, and a garden burning when its people need it most. The common question concerns more than the amount of money: it includes what underlies the deed, what follows it, and what remains of its effect. The sequence of images lets readers see reminders of generosity, harm, and display through tangible consequences rather than as abstract ethical words.

Old age and weak children make the garden's loss more severe because the resource vanishes when the need for it is greatest. We therefore learn that harm's effect is connected with the sufferer's condition and ability to replace the loss, as well as with the amount lost.

Chapter references: Surah al-Baqarah 261–266.

Chapter 40: Vegetation Becomes Dry Fragments—An Image of Worldly Life

From the Earth's Greenness to Scattered Fragments

“Set forth for them the likeness of this worldly life: it is like water We send down from the sky, with which the earth's vegetation mingles, then becomes dry fragments scattered by the winds. God has power over all things.”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-Kahf, verse 45.

The verse compresses an extended time into a swift movement from water and vegetation to fragments scattered by the winds. This compression affects the reader by bringing beginning and ending into one scene. Anyone who has lived through a season in a garden knows how the eye clings to greenery, then learns that change is part of its reality. The parable calls for reconsidering attachment to worldly life, while work, cultivation, and kindness retain their value. Knowledge of transience refines our conduct toward what we possess and calls us to use the time of benefit well.

The Scene Everyone Knows

Surah al-Zumar, verse 21.

“Have you not seen that God sends down water from the sky and conducts it into springs within the earth, then brings forth through it crops of differing colours? Then they wither and you see them turn yellow; then He makes them broken stalks. In this there is surely a reminder for people of understanding.” (21)

Crops emerge through water in differing colors, then wither, turn yellow, and become broken stalks. The verse does not present only the final fate; it preserves the beauty of the beginning as well. Bringing both together teaches people to see and thank for a blessing without assuming it remains in one condition.

This parable's nearness gives it force within the soul. A person may witness the earth's changes where they live, without travel or rare instruments. Returning to the scene through the seasons is enough to renew the question of what absorbs the heart and what remains of deeds.

When Adornment Reaches Its Fullness

Surah Yunus, verse 24.

“The likeness of worldly life is only that of water We send down from the sky, with which the earth's vegetation mingles, providing food for people and livestock. When the earth takes on its adornment and is beautified, and its people think they have power over it, Our command comes by night or day, and We make it a harvested field, as though it had not flourished yesterday. Thus We explain the signs for people who reflect.” (24)

The earth's adornment becomes complete and its people think they have power over it; then God's command comes by night or day, leaving it as though it had not flourished yesterday. The parable names no particular people. It exposes the illusion of complete control when material means reach their height.

I pause at the assumption of power when adornment is complete. Tending crops and rejoicing in harvest remain ways of benefiting from them. The lesson concerns the conceit that forgets the limits of what one can guarantee.

Knowing Life Passes Does Not Mean Neglecting It

Surah al-Hadid, verse 20.

“Know that worldly life is only play, distraction, adornment, mutual boasting, and rivalry in wealth and children. It is like rain whose growth delights the cultivators; then it withers and you see it turn yellow, and then it becomes broken stalks. In the Hereafter there is severe punishment, and forgiveness and approval from God. Worldly life is nothing but a deceptive enjoyment.” (20)

The verse lists forms of worldly absorption—play, adornment, boasting, and rivalry for more—then makes their passing accessible through a crop that delights observers and becomes broken stalks. The Hereafter's outcome follows, returning life's valuation to what a person does within it.

Recognizing the season's brevity may lead to greater care and justice. Someone who knows that possessions pass away better appreciates their effect on people. The question of the legacy left behind becomes a motive for improvement and resource preservation.

The Grower's Memory

A grower knows that the garden's appearance is in motion. Reflection teaches that today's delight calls for gratitude and tomorrow's loss does not exhaust life's meaning. This is a personal reflection connected with the parable, not an unseen explanation for why every farm suffers loss.

What Passes Away, and What Remains a Matter of Choice?

A person's work during a season differs from the power to stop time. One can plant, preserve, and improve, but cannot prevent every change or make the field's appearance permanent. The parable places this truth before the eye as it moves from adornment to dry fragments, returning temporary ownership to its limits.

Delight in greenery may be gratitude accompanied by recognition of blessing, or become conceit when accompanied by imagined self-sufficiency and certainty. The difference appears in conduct: how does a person care for what is held and fulfill the rights of dependents? From this question the story moves to the owner of the two gardens.

Chapter references: Surah Yunus 24; Surah al-Kahf 45; Surah al-Zumar 21; Surah al-Hadid 20.

Chapter 41: The Owner of the Two Gardens

A Flourishing Orchard and a Disordered Heart

Surah al-Kahf, verses 32-36.

“Set before them the example of two men. For one We made two gardens of grapevines, surrounded them with date palms, and placed crops between them.” (32)

“Both gardens yielded their produce without falling short in anything, and We caused a river to flow between them.” (33)

“He had abundant produce, so he said to his companion while conversing with him, ‘I have more wealth than you and a stronger following.’” (34)

“He entered his garden, wronging himself, and said, ‘I do not think this will ever perish.’” (35)

“Nor do I think the Hour will come. Even if I am returned to my Lord, I shall surely find a better place to return to than this.” (36)

One of the two men was given two vineyards surrounded by date palms, with crops and a river between them; both bore plentiful fruit. He boasted to his companion of wealth and supporters, then dismissed the possibility of his garden perishing and the Hour arriving, expecting something better if returned to his Lord. The disorder began in his understanding of the blessing and what it meant.

The orchard's means of abundance were visible, and its owner's confusion began with the meaning he gave their possession. I therefore trace his speech about wealth, status, and destiny, where the disorder appears before the gardens' appearance changes.

Dialogue at the Gate of Blessing

Surah al-Kahf, verses 37-41.

“His companion said to him while conversing with him, ‘Do you disbelieve in the One who created you from dust, then from a drop, then fashioned you into a man?’” (37)

“But He is God, my Lord, and I associate no one with my Lord.” (38)

“Why, when you entered your garden, did you not say, ‘What God wills! There is no power except through God’? Although you see me as having less wealth and fewer children than you,” (39)

“My Lord may give me something better than your garden, and send upon it a calamity from the sky, leaving it bare, slippery ground,” (40)

“Or its water may sink away, so that you will be unable to recover it.” (41)

His companion reminded him that the One who created him from dust, then a drop, and fashioned him as a man was his Lord. He guided him to attribute blessing to God's will and power, then warned that the garden could be ruined or its water sink away. The counsel answered conceit and called for gratitude.

Friendship in this dialogue creates room for counsel and for returning someone to the origin of creation and the source of blessing. The correction concerns the words spoken by the orchard's owner as he surveyed his wealth and the arrogance and heedlessness they revealed.

The Scene Reversed

Surah al-Kahf, verses 42-44.

"His produce was encompassed by destruction. He began wringing his hands over what he had spent on it, as it lay collapsed upon its trellises, saying, 'Would that I had associated no one with my Lord.'" (42)

"He had no company to help him apart from God, nor could he defend himself." (43)

"There, all protection belongs to God, the True. He is best in reward and best in outcome." (44)

Destruction overtook the fruit. Its owner wrung his hands in regret over his expenditure, while the garden lay collapsed upon its trellises. He wished he had not associated anyone with his Lord and found no supporter to repel what had happened. At the ending, the limits of wealth and followers before God's sovereignty become clear.

Regret exposes the fragility of security founded on wealth alone. I preserve this meaning within the event's context: the Quran explains this man's attitude; it does not make every agricultural loss evidence of its owner's arrogance.

What Do We Take with Us?

A garden owner can rejoice in planting and take pride in work while acknowledging in heart and speech that success was not achieved alone. Behind it stand land, water, knowledge, workers, and circumstances not all under one's control. This awareness makes pride in work less harsh and more grateful.

The Language of Ownership When It Becomes Arrogance

The story shows the effect of the language people use about wealth. The man does more than describe an orchard: he compares himself with another and infers status and future security from abundance. The crop changes from beneficial provision into an argument for superiority. His companion returns him to his created origin and recognition of his Lord, correcting his way of seeing before discussing how much fruit he has.

The lesson begins before the loss, when the disorder appears in the owner's speech amid his fruit. The dialogue should therefore be read first to understand what changes afterward, and this event's meaning remains connected with its context. Losing a resource does not, by itself, reveal its owner's inner character.

Chapter references: Surah al-Kahf 32-44.

Chapter 42: The Owners of the Garden

A Harvest Appointment Without the Poor

Surah al-Qalam, verses 17-18.

"We have tested them as We tested the owners of the garden, when they swore to harvest it in the morning," (17)

"without making any exception." (18)

The garden's owners swore to gather its fruit in the morning, making no exception in their oath. The story begins with this decision: an orchard awaiting harvest and owners planning what they will take, before later events reveal what they intended toward the poor.

The story begins with a collective decision about harvest time, before the verses disclose their intention to exclude the poor. From this opening I follow fruit's transformation into a test of conscience: what does a person do when the earth's bounty and others' need for it meet in their hand?

A Visitation Changes the Plan

Surah al-Qalam, verses 19-27.

"A visitation from your Lord passed over it while they slept," (19)

"and by morning it was like a stripped field." (20)

"They called to one another at daybreak," (21)

"Go early to your field if you intend to harvest." (22)

"They set off, whispering to one another," (23)

"No poor person must enter it upon you today." (24)

"They went early, resolved to withhold, believing themselves able." (25)

"When they saw it, they said, 'We have surely lost our way.'" (26)

"Rather, we have been deprived." (27)

A visitation from God passed over the garden as they slept, leaving it like a stripped field. In the morning its owners went out, whispering that no poor person should enter, confident in their ability. When they saw it, they first thought they had taken the wrong road, then realized they had been deprived of its fruit. Loss preceded their plan's execution.

A gap appears between the owners' confidence in what they would gather and what they found on arrival. This contrast reveals the narrowness of human knowledge and returns the question of fruit to their intention of withholding the needy person's due.

The Voice of Admission

Surah al-Qalam, verses 28-33.

"The most balanced among them said, 'Did I not tell you, "Why do you not glorify God?"'" (28)

“They said, ‘Glory be to our Lord! We have indeed been wrongdoers.’” (29)

“Then they turned upon one another in mutual blame.” (30)

“They said, ‘Woe to us! We have indeed transgressed.’” (31)

“‘Perhaps our Lord will replace it with something better. To our Lord we turn in hope.’” (32)

“Such is the punishment, and the punishment of the Hereafter is greater, if only they knew.” (33)

The most balanced among them reminded them of what he had urged. They acknowledged their wrongdoing, blamed one another, confessed their transgression, and hoped their Lord would replace the garden with something better. The text ends by warning of the Hereafter's punishment. It does not recount the granting of their request for replacement, so I do not add that to the events.

The group's speech changes when it faces the result of its conduct: admission after confidence, blame after agreement, and hope after deprivation. This change invites reflection on selfishness exposed and the beginning of return.

Harvest as a Shared Trial

We can read this story while distributing a home garden's surplus, organizing a food business, or planning help for someone in need. This does not mean imposing all the rules of zakat and charity on one incident; it means that people should not forget one another in a season of blessing.

The Collective Plan and Individual Responsibility

The garden's owners exchange resolve and instructions, revealing selfishness as a decision on which a group cooperates. Agreement may lead members to imagine that an act is acceptable simply because they share it. The most balanced voice then emerges during reconsideration, showing that a reminder may arise from within the group itself.

The story depicts a transition in speech from planning and exclusion to admission, blame, and hope. It presents both the garden's destruction and the owners' changed awareness; the verses do not specify the mechanism of destruction. Reflection on their shared decision raises a question for readers: do they reconsider what they see as wrong, or find reassurance in not having acted alone? This is an ethical question drawn from the scene.

Chapter references: Surah al-Qalam 17-33.

Chapter 43: Sheba and Its Two Gardens

A Civilization Sustained by Blessing

Surah Saba', verse 15.

"For Sheba there was a sign in their dwelling place: two gardens, on the right and the left. 'Eat of your Lord's provision and give thanks to Him: a good land and a forgiving Lord.'" (15)

Sheba's dwellings were surrounded by two gardens, to the right and left, and its people enjoyed provision and a good land. This bounty was described alongside a call to eat and give thanks to a forgiving Lord. The story thus begins with an evident blessing and responsibility toward its Giver.

The two gardens' goodness extends into settlement, livelihoods, and the relationships formed around a regular resource. I therefore read Sheba's blessing within a whole community's life and trace the effect of gratitude or turning away through the story.

Turning Away and Transformation

Surah Saba', verses 16-17.

"But they turned away, so We sent upon them the flood of the dam, and replaced their two gardens with two gardens bearing bitter produce, tamarisk and a few lote trees." (16)

"Thus We repaid them for their ingratitude. Do We repay in this way any but the deeply ungrateful?" (17)

The people turned away; the flood of al-'Arim came, and the two gardens were replaced by bitter-fruited growth, tamarisk, and a little lote. The verses connect this transformation with their ingratitude, making the altered agricultural scene a sign of the community's changed condition after abundance and stability.

The text explains the reversal from abundance to its loss. Identifying the engineering and historical details of structures associated with Sheba is another investigation with its archaeological evidence. Here I remain with what the Quran narrates and its context indicates.

Reading the Plants in Their Place

Khamt, athl, and a little sidr appear in the description of the replacement. The sense of deficiency arises from the comparison as a whole. The plants themselves do not become cursed or useless everywhere; Chapter 18 explained this distinction.

Gratitude as the Work of Sustaining Society

Gratitude can appear in maintaining water resources, honoring people's rights, and avoiding waste. These are contemporary ethical applications of a general meaning; we do not claim them as transmitted interpretations of every word. Sheba's story opens an enduring question: how do we preserve blessing without becoming conceited about it?

A Civilization Needing a Memory of Gratitude

Surah Saba', verses 18-19.

"We placed between them and the towns We had blessed other visible towns and measured the stages of travel between them: "Travel through them by night and day in safety.'" (18)

"But they said, 'Our Lord, lengthen the distances of our journeys,' and wronged themselves. We made them tales and scattered them completely. In that are signs for everyone steadfast and grateful." (19)

The story expands from orchards to routes among visible towns, with measured stages of travel and security. Yet the people asked for their journeys to be made more distant and wronged themselves; they became tales and were dispersed. The story thus joins the loss of livelihood with the loss of social cohesion and security.

This ending reveals settled life's dependence upon crops, roads, and security together. When a familiar resource is disrupted, people's work, relationships, and places of living are affected. Loss extends beyond the fruit that disappeared.

One meaning of gratitude I draw is that abundant resources should not cause us to forget their maintenance or beneficiaries' rights. This reflection does not authorize interpreting every contemporary flood as punishment upon a community. The text describes a particular event; disasters we witness require investigation of causes and assistance to those affected. Admonition accompanied by inquiry and mercy is more beneficial than admonition used to accuse the afflicted.

Chapter references: Surah Saba' 15-19.

Chapter 44: The Crop That Grew Strong and Stood Upright

Gradual Growth

Surah al-Fath, verse 29.

“Muhammad is God's messenger. Those with him are firm against the disbelievers and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating, seeking bounty from God and His pleasure. Their mark is on their faces from the effect of prostration. That is their likeness in the Torah. Their likeness in the Gospel is a crop that sends out its shoots, strengthens them, grows stout, and stands upright upon its stalks, delighting the growers, so that through them He may anger the disbelievers. God has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great reward.” (29)

The verse describes Muhammad, God's messenger, may God bless him and his family, and those with him through worship, mutual mercy, and steadfastness. It then likens them to a crop whose shoots strengthen it until it grows stout, stands upright on its stalks, and delights growers. Plant growth makes mutual support and strengthening accessible, and the ending promises forgiveness and reward to those who believe and act righteously.

The verbs of growth follow one another, allowing the reader to see support becoming strength and uprightness. This gradual sequence conveys the effect of continuous building over time through the grower's knowledge of the difference between a seedling's emergence and its full strength.

The Growers' Delight

The text mentions the growers' delight, making their expertise part of the image's power. Those accustomed to tending plants understand what it means to see growth standing firm and cohesive. This glimpse gives agricultural work a presence in the parable's language, beyond its existence in life's background.

The Community and the Image of Support

The parable describes the Messenger and those with him within specific qualities and purposes. It can illuminate cooperation's value, but every contemporary group cannot be attached to this Quranic praise merely because its numbers increase or its organization is cohesive.

Strength with a Purpose

Increasing size is not an independent ethical goal: a project may grow while oppressing, and wealth may expand while corrupting. The context guides us to read growth alongside the qualities preceding the image, keeping strength connected with worship, mercy, and truthfulness.

The Eloquence of Successive Verbs

The successive verbs make time visible in the parable: each stage prepares for the next until the crop stands firmly together. This movement lets readers see support during growth and then observe its effect in the resulting form.

The growers' delight represents the appreciation of those who know the stages of growth and the value of the outcome. From this we draw the benefit of viewing results together with how they were built, in education and shared work. I offer this application while preserving the Quranic praise for those in whose context it occurs and with their stated qualities.

Chapter references: Surah al-Fath 29.

Chapter 45: The Prostration of Trees and the Glorification of Creation

Trees in the Verse of Prostration

“The low-growing plants and the trees prostrate.”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-Rahman, verse 6.

The verse places trees within the discourse of submission to God, broadening the believer's view beyond immediate utility. Responsible reading affirms the prostration reported by the text and limits descriptions of its manner to what revelation indicates. This chapter presents that meaning while distinguishing it from responses studied by botany.

A World Broader Than Silence

Surah al-Isra', verse 44.

“The seven heavens, the earth, and all within them glorify Him. There is nothing that does not glorify Him with praise, but you do not understand their glorification. He is indeed Forbearing, Forgiving.” (44)

The verse reports the glorification of the heavens, earth, and their inhabitants, and that everything glorifies God with praise while human understanding falls short of comprehending it. Plants enter this broad horizon, and readers are called to recognize that their understanding of beings does not encompass every aspect of them.

This account directs me to the limits of my perception of the surrounding world. The inability of hearing and understanding to grasp beings' glorification does not negate what God has reported. Reflection on trees is therefore accompanied by humility before aspects of their existence I do not encompass.

A Prostration with Its Own Manner

Surah al-Hajj, verse 18.

“Have you not seen that to God prostrate all who are in the heavens and on earth, the sun, moon, stars, mountains, trees, animals, and many people? Yet upon many the punishment has become due. Whoever God humbles has no one to honor him. God does what He wills.” (18)

The scene gathers the prostration of what is in the heavens and earth, then names the sun, moon, stars, mountains, trees, animals, and many people. The tree appears within creation's submission to God, while the human condition remains connected with attitude and responsibility, as the verse's ending explains.

In discussing trees' prostration, I present the commentaries' treatment of submission, being subjected, signification, and other interpretations, preserving attribution of each view. Its manner remains within what the text indicates, without measuring it against the posture of human prostration.

Science Does Not Measure Every Meaning

Science may study plant responses to stimuli, but establishing a response is not the same as establishing glorification in a laboratory, just as not measuring glorification

does not negate the religious account. In both cases, the error is transferring a question from its domain to another and then announcing it solved.

The Courtesy of Observation

A believer can regard a tree respectfully as part of God's creation while remaining able to prune and use it rightfully. Reverence does not eliminate use; it distances contempt and pointless interference and reminds people of their limited understanding.

Between the Language of the Laboratory and the Language of Worship

A researcher studying plant response identifies a stimulus and an observable result; the believer receives the account of glorification from the religious text.

Understanding both domains requires identifying each source of knowledge and the limits of what it establishes.

This reading yields a sense of responsibility in benefiting from created things: the power to act upon them is accompanied by awareness of knowledge's limits and care to avoid pointless harm. This is an ethical effect I draw from reflection; the manner of glorification and prostration remains read within the text's limits.

Chapter references: Surah al-Rahman 6; Surah al-Isra' 44; Surah al-Hajj 18.

Chapter 46: The Cursed Tree and Symbols in Interpretation

A Passage Requiring Precision

Surah al-Isra', verse 60.

"When We told you, 'Your Lord encompasses the people,' We made the vision We showed you only a trial for people, and likewise the cursed tree in the Quran. We warn them, but it only increases them in great transgression." (60)

The verse mentions God's encompassing people, the vision shown to His Prophet, and the cursed tree in the Quran in a context of testing and warning. The tree is not named in this passage. Its identification is therefore studied through other texts and commentators' views, distinguishing interpretation from the verse's wording.

Commentators differ in identifying the tree: some connect it with Zaqqum, while others read it as a symbol of a corrupting human lineage or succession. I present each as an interpretation with its basis, keeping the verse's phrase distinct from the names assigned in explanation.

The Reading of al-Mizan

Al-Tabataba'i discusses the botanical interpretation and favors understanding the tree as a succession of hypocrites, connecting the discussion with reports he transmits concerning the Umayyads. This summarizes his view in the passage; it does not claim commentators' agreement or independently authenticate every narration he cites.

Comparing Commentaries

Surah al-Saffat, verses 62-65.

"Is that a better welcome, or the tree of Zaqqum?" (62)

"We have made it a trial for the wrongdoers." (63)

"It is a tree that emerges from the depths of Hell," (64)

"its fruit clusters as though they were devils' heads." (65)

The tree of Zaqqum is presented in contrast with the bliss of Paradise's people, described as emerging from Hell's depths and as a trial for wrongdoers. Its fruit clusters receive a frightening image. The description concerns warning and permits an interpretive connection with the tree in Surah al-Isra', without removing the need to explain that connection's basis.

Al-Qurtubi presents the Zaqqum interpretation alongside others and discusses some historical interpretations. Comparison helps identify agreement and disagreement among readings while making their attribution and evidence clear—a care I preserve as I write from the school of the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them.

Symbolism Does Not Permit Generalization

If a particular interpretation applies the tree to a historical group, its judgment does not automatically extend to everyone with a similar lineage or name in another era.

Ethical responsibility must remain connected with individuals' actions and their evidence, and reading the tradition must not become accusation without proof.

Levels of Assertion When Presenting Disagreement

An assertion's strength changes with its formulation. "So-and-so interpreted the tree as this" attributes a view to its holder. "The commentators agreed" is a broader claim requiring a survey. "The Quran names the group" is incorrect if its name does not appear in the verse. Confusion may arise when attribution is omitted in summaries, turning an interpretive conclusion into wording that seems to be revelation itself.

Attributing views to their holders preserves the inquiry's clarity and the point of disagreement. Readers can then review each interpretation and its evidence without confusing a commentator's opinion with the verse's words. Applying a judgment to a particular person likewise continues to require evidence, as explained above.

Chapter references: Surah al-Isra' 60; Surah al-Saffat 62-65; al-Mizan, commentary on Surah al-Isra' 60 [T4]; al-Qurtubi, al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Quran, commentary on the same verse [T5].

Part Five: Plants in Reports About Food, Fragrance, and Treatment

Fruit reaches the table and fragrant herbs reach the hand, bringing plants' story into daily detail. Transmitted accounts contain scenes of eating, giving, gifts, and fragrance, and statements of benefit that need understanding and documentation. We will read them in their wording and context, aided by established specialist assessments, so that their presence remains close to people's lives and their source clear to readers.

Chapter 47: Fruits and Grains in Reports About Food

A Map of the Chapters

Al-Kafi's Book of Foods includes chapters on bread, rice, lentils, dates, grapes, pomegranates, apples, quinces, figs, and more. These headings reveal plants' broad presence at the table discussed by the reports. Yet a chapter bearing a food's name does not mean every collected report has an authentic chain or universally applicable meaning.

The Fruit in the Text

Reports differ: some describe an action, some offer etiquette, and others attribute a health benefit or virtue. Reading begins by identifying what a report actually says. Seeing an Imam eat a fruit is not equivalent to ordering everyone to eat it, and mentioning a benefit is not necessarily an unconditional promise for every circumstance.

The Example of Lentils

The chapter on lentils contains a report about tenderness of heart and another rejecting a circulating statement linking their sanctification to a large number of prophets. Their proximity reminds us that the tradition itself preserves material for verification and criticism; gathering virtues indiscriminately may conceal disagreement present in the source.

A Varied Table

Reading these chapters shows food as part of people's livelihoods and relationships, not only a list of remedies. Readers can love fruits and grains and be grateful for them while retaining freedom of taste and attending to health conditions. The aim is to prevent the table becoming an arena for therapeutic promises unsupported by evidence.

A Narrated Action and a General Command

I begin the reading record with the report's form, its addressee, and what its context establishes, then connect this with its location and the assessment of its transmission route. These steps organize diverse material, allowing food etiquette and attributed benefits to be read according to their support.

Chapter references: al-Kafi, vol. 6, contents of the Book of Foods; chapter on lentils, reports 1-4 [H11]; chapters on oil, grapes, pomegranates, and figs [H2-H5].

Chapter 48: Vegetables, Greens, and Edible Plants

Greens at the Table

In its chapter on greens, al-Kafi transmits mealtime scenes containing green vegetables, including Hanan's report with Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him. This gives everyday plants a place in narration, but it does not remove the need to assess the report's transmission route and understand any figurative language it may contain.

The Meaning of Buqul

In older usage, buqul may mean vegetables or greens and does not always correspond to legumes in modern nutritional terminology. We therefore do not apply a statement about baql exclusively to chickpeas and lentils or read a traditional heading through a later technical meaning without explanation.

Names Requiring Precision

The corpus includes chapters on chicory, leeks, celery, coriander, purslane, lettuce, chard, cucumbers, eggplant, onions, and garlic. Benefiting from them requires establishing the name, part used, and preparation method. A report may concern edible leaves while a reader thinks of a seed or a different extract.

Diversity Attentive to the Person

Modern dietary guidance emphasizes variety, balance, nutritional adequacy, and food safety. These principles do not mean every plant suits everyone, or that a garden becomes a safe food source merely because it is domestic. Interest in growing is completed by knowing what we eat and how we prepare it.

The Name, the Part, and the Method of Use

Someone may say a report concerns a certain plant, then show a part that was not the report's subject. The error arises from relying on the general name while overlooking the leaf, fruit, seed, or preparation. The reading record should therefore begin by identifying what actually appears and following the source's language before matching it to a contemporary product.

This matters still more when names differ between countries. One common name may refer to several plants, or one plant may have multiple names. A single image or automatic translation cannot resolve the ambiguity; suitable linguistic and botanical sources are needed. Within this book's limits, I rely on a clear description of the Arabic term, state disagreements, and refrain from inserting a precise scientific equivalent where identification evidence is incomplete.

Hanan at the Table: Greens Have a Context

Hanan recounts being at the table with Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him. The Imam reached for greens while Hanan abstained “because of an ailment I had.” He then narrates his question about greens at the Commander of the Faithful's table, with this reply in the report:

“Because the hearts of believers are green, and they yearn for what resembles them.”

Mention of the ailment preserves the difference between the narrator's condition and that of his fellow diner, preventing the context from being lost when the expression circulates. The correspondence between green hearts and green vegetables is an image in the language of admonition, not an anatomical description. It offers room to reflect on goodness and beauty's connection with what comforts the soul.

The report is transmitted through 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, from his father, from Hanan. Al-Majlisi described it in *Mir'at al-'Uqul* as “hasan or muwaththaq,” while calling the first report in the chapter on greens “weak” [H23]. The text names neither Hanan's illness nor the particular greens. The scene remains an account of a table and its etiquette; determining dietary suitability for a particular person still requires knowing their condition.

Source: al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, chapter on greens, report 2 [H10]; *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 22, p. 204 [H23].

Chapter references: al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, chapter on greens, reports 1 and 2, and contents of the vegetable chapters [H10]; *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 22, p. 204 [H23]; World Health Organization, Healthy Diet, 2026 update [M3].

Chapter 49: Flowers, Fragrant Herbs, and Aromatic Plants

Pleasure Beyond Eating

A plant's benefit may be a delightful color or comforting scent rather than edible fruit. This broadens the meaning of giving: people need beauty as well as sustenance. A garden combining food value with visual beauty trains the eye to see beyond calculations of yield.

Fragrant Herbs in al-Kafi

Al-Kafi devotes a chapter to fragrant herbs, including reports about accepting and smelling them and a scene of a bowl of fragrant herbs in Imam al-Sadiq's hand, whose wording follows. The reports' transmission routes and assessments differ; the whole chapter cannot receive one judgment simply because its accounts share a heading [H13, H19].

The Rose and Remembrance

The chapter's fifth report contains Abu Hashim al-Ja'fari's account with Abu al-Hasan, the Imam of al-'Askar, concerning a rose a boy handed him and the remembrance of the Prophet and his family associated with it. The route contains "from some of his companions," and al-Majlisi classified this report as "mursal." We therefore attribute the detailed reward to the transmitted account and do not treat the story's fame alone as proof of every detail's authenticity [H13, H19].

Fragrance, Garden, and Memory

Scents can summon memories of homes and loved ones in everyday human experience. Here I speak of my attachment to greenery and the comfort it brings me, recognizing that personal memory is not sufficient medical evidence. A scent that pleases one person may not suit another, so good taste includes consideration for those sharing the space.

A Garden That Trains Attention to Beauty

A flower offers benefits without waiting for harvest: color, shape, scent, and changes noticed by whoever pauses beside it. The grower may share in this beauty before a tree bears fruit or an awaited graft succeeds. Plant care thus expands into daily companionship teaching patience and attentiveness, beyond the amount of food produced.

This comfort appears in some accounts of gifts and remembrance. From them I turn to the brief scene Yunus ibn Ya'qub narrates concerning a bowl of fragrant herbs, preserving the details he mentions.

A Bowl of Fragrant Herbs in the Imam's Hand

Yunus ibn Ya'qub narrates a brief scene:

"I entered upon Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him, and in his hand was a bowl containing fragrant herbs."

Mikhdabah means a vessel, and knowing the word clarifies the scene's form. The narrator mentions only the herbs' presence, without identifying a plant by a modern name, describing flower numbers or colors, or quoting the Imam's speech at that moment. This brevity itself preserves the account's closeness to everyday life.

The transmission passes through Ahmad ibn Abi 'Abd Allah and al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Yaqtin to Yunus ibn Ya'qub. Al-Majlisi classified the fourth report in *Mir'at al-'Uqul* as "muwaththaq." He described the first, second, and third respectively as "marfu'," "sahih," and "marfu'," and the fifth as "mursal." I transmit these descriptions with each report identified, separating assessment of the route from understanding its meaning. The bowl scene in the fourth report does not by itself carry a therapeutic claim or a specified reward.

Source: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on fragrant herbs, report 4, p. 525 in the digital display corresponding to the reference [H13].

Source for assessments of the chapter's reports: *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 22, chapter on fragrant herbs, p. 435 [H19].

Chapter references: al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Dress, Adornment, and Courtesy, chapter on fragrant herbs, especially reports 4 and 5 [H13]; *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 22, p. 435 [H19].

Chapter 50: Herbs and Treatment—Between Transmission and Evidence

Three Different Questions

The researcher asks: is the report established, what does it mean, and has the medical benefit been established by an appropriate method? These questions cooperate but are not identical. A text's attribution may be established while its meaning requires qualification; medical research may show a benefit without thereby validating every old report with a similar meaning.

A Plant Is Not a Single Preparation

A plant's name does not sufficiently identify what a patient consumed. The part used, concentration, and preparation method all define the substance. An eaten fruit is therefore not equivalent to its concentrated extract. The US National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health cautions that the description “natural” does not guarantee safety or superiority.

Interactions with Medicines

Some herbal preparations may interact with medicines, but evidence strength varies between cases. The official review explains that some concerns rest on limited data while other interactions are documented. We therefore generalize neither reassurance nor fear, but return to evidence concerning the product and circumstances.

The Preventive Researcher's Responsibility

My study of community health makes me particularly concerned that knowledge reaches people without exaggeration. This book does not direct anyone to abandon prescribed treatment or try an unknown mixture. When a reader needs treatment, consulting a doctor or pharmacist and disclosing supplements used is a practical step toward understanding the situation.

What Does a Study of a Particular Preparation Establish?

If research tests a specific preparation, its result does not automatically extend to every package bearing the plant's name. A marketed product may differ from the one studied in its ingredients or method of use. The official health source highlights this difference between market products and preparations used in studies. [M4]

Before announcing benefit, the researcher therefore asks: what substance was tested, in whom, in what form, and what outcome was measured? Improvement in a limited marker does not establish a cure for an entire disease, nor does one person's favorable experience justify generalization to everyone. A fair comparison states the result's limits alongside the result. This discipline serves prevention and protects readers' trust by accepting established findings in proportion to their evidence and leaving unestablished matters open to research.

Chapter references: National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, “Natural Doesn't Necessarily Mean Safer, or Better” [M1]; “Herb-Drug Interactions,” December 2024 issue [M2].

Chapter 51: Harmful Plants, Poisons, and Active Substances

Beauty Is Not Enough to Judge By

A fruit's color or a leaf's shape may attract us, but admiration cannot determine whether it is edible. Knowledge begins with reliable plant identification, not resemblance to a passing image. This chapter offers neither a guide to gathering wild plants nor recipes for experimenting with unknown ones.

The Meaning of Harm

Safety cannot be reduced to a simple division between natural and synthetic. Plants contain compounds whose effects may vary with amount, form, and use. The official health source gives natural toxins as an example showing that a substance's origin does not determine its safety.

The Substance and the Product

Exposure to a substance may change when it is concentrated, incorporated into a preparation, or used in a way unfamiliar from food. Limited culinary use cannot justify another use without study, nor can a general traditional name identify the contents of a modern package.

Preserving Mind and Life

Substances affecting cognition raise health, ethical, and jurisprudential questions concerning harm and the nature of use. This book does not determine rulings on specific products or treatments from a plant's name alone. Its aim is to join use with awareness so that love of nature does not become a reason to overlook human harm.

Reliable Identification Before Trying the Unknown

Verification begins by identifying the specimen itself, then determining the part and form to be used. These steps connect the plant's description with the question of safety and explain why a common name or visual resemblance is insufficient for judging a particular substance.

Official guidance notes that some supplements may interact with medicines or pose risks to people with particular health conditions. [M4] Precisely describing what someone uses is therefore helpful when discussing the situation with a specialist. This chapter complements the preceding treatment discussion, connecting love of plants with knowledge of their identity and the limits of their use.

Chapter references: health sources [M1, M2] within the limits of general safety. No dosages or preparation methods for toxic or psychoactive substances are included.

Chapter 52: Wondrous Accounts and Attributed Benefits

When the Story Expands

A story may begin with a brief text, then acquire numbers, promises, and explanations until its origin is difficult to recognize. The researcher's task is to return it to the earliest location that could be verified and distinguish the source's words from additions by transmitters or preachers.

The Example of Paradise's Fruits

Al-Kafi's fruit chapters contain two reports differing in number and wording. To prevent confusion, the comparison below gives each report's text, location, and al-Majlisi's assessment. Neither report yields a scientific history of crop origins or movement, nor should old cultivar names be reduced to unverified modern agricultural equivalents [H12, H20].

Numbers and Generalization

If a plant is credited with curing many diseases or earning an enormous numerical reward, the attribution and meaning require examination rather than automatic republication. We have already seen, within the lentil chapter itself, a report challenging a circulating number of prophets—a practical reminder that an expression's fame does not settle its authenticity.

An Open Record for Investigation

Appendix Seven preserves examples still requiring study instead of silently omitting them or affirming them with manufactured certainty. Readers can thus know this edition's limits, and later researchers can continue from a clear point.

How Does an Expression Grow During Circulation?

A qualified report may appear in a source, then lose its qualification in a summary, acquire a benefit from another report, and circulate as a composite under an exciting title. Repetition makes it difficult to distinguish the original from what circulation has produced. Finding the same wording on many websites is not enough: they may all have copied one error.

Critical investigation separates the layers again: the source's wording, the compiler's explanation, the editor's comment, and the modern transmitter's inference. It then asks about transmission and meaning without substituting emotional force for evidence. This method does not impoverish the story; it protects it from unverified additions attributed to religious authority. Faithful wording, even when less exciting, is better suited to building knowledge readers can examine.

Five in One Report and Four in Another

The first report, from Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him, states:

“Five of the fruits of Paradise are in this world: the amlisi pomegranate, the shisqan apple, the quince, the raziqi grape, and the mushan fresh date.”

The second report, from Abu Ja'far, peace be upon him, states:

“Four descended from Paradise: the raziqi grape, the mushan fresh date, the amlisi pomegranate, and the shisqan apple.”

Only the first text mentions the quince, and the expressions differ between “fruits of Paradise in this world” and “descended from Paradise.” We therefore do not create a third statement saying five kinds descended and attribute it to either report. I give the names according to the consulted al-Kafi edition; variations in their vocalization across editions and usage remain a separate subject.

The first report's route includes “from someone who narrated to him,” an unnamed intermediary. Consulting Mir'at al-'Uqul, I found al-Majlisi's assessments: “unknown, mursal” for the first and “weak” for the second. We thus have a specific text and a judgment attributed to a particular commentator. Transmitting his judgment does not imply an exhaustive survey of routes or agreement among researchers.

First text and beginning of the second: al-Kafi, vol. 6, fruit chapters, p. 349 [H12].

Continuation of the second text: al-Kafi, vol. 6, p. 350 [H12].

Transmitted assessment: Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, fruit chapters, p. 187 [H20].

The Lentil Report and Correction of a Circulating Number

In the lentil chapter, al-Kulayni records Muhammad ibn al-Fayd's account of eating lentil broth with Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, then mentioning a statement circulated by some people that eighty prophets had sanctified lentils. The reply in the report is:

“They have lied. No, by God, not even twenty prophets.”

This exchange makes the common statement itself a subject of questioning and review. Wide circulation is not enough to establish a number attributed to prophets. Al-Majlisi described the fourth report as “unknown, and its ending is mursal” in Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 178 [H24]. The methodological lesson drawn from the dialogue is read alongside this explicit assessment: the report does not become certainly attributable merely because it supports caution against exaggeration.

After the dialogue, the source contains a statement beginning “It was narrated,” concerning tenderness of heart and readiness to weep. This is another transmission formula on the page; we do not attach it to the dialogue as though Muhammad ibn al-Fayd narrated it within the same speech. The value of separation marks and transmission expressions in preserving textual boundaries appears even before assessing chains.

Source: al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, chapter on lentils, report 4 and the transmission formula following it [H11]; Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 178 [H24].

Chapter references: al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, fruit chapters, reports 1 and 2, pp. 349–350 [H12]; chapter on lentils, report 4 [H11]; Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, pp. 187 and 178 [H20, H24].

Part Six: Agriculture in Human Life, Worship, and Ethics

Behind every table lies a story of work: prepared land, arriving water, planting tended by a hand, and a harvest awaited by a family. With this work arise rights, relationships, and questions of justice and proper use. In this part we move from planting to harvest, from ownership of resources to the rights of workers, neighbors, and the needy, then to plants' presence in worship and the home, to see knowledge's effect on daily conduct.

Chapter 53: Agriculture—Work and Livelihood

A Hand Unashamed of Soil

People may become so distant from their food's source that they forget the effort spent on it. Accounts of agricultural labor return them to a simple truth: working hands stand behind the table. From this perspective, studying plants also means studying the dignity of the working person.

Cultivate and Plant

In response to a question about agriculture being disliked, al-Kafi records encouragement to cultivate and plant, describing the work as lawful and wholesome. This chapter gives the report's wording, route, and al-Majlisi's transmitted assessment so that the reference points to a definite, located text.

Livelihood and Responsibility

Seeking livelihood through agriculture does not exempt anyone from honest selling, fulfilling workers' rights, or preserving rights to water and land. A profession's honorable name does not make every practice within it sound. Neglecting these rights may have a greater impact than losing a season.

A Profession and a Hobby

A person may cultivate for livelihood or grow in a small space from love of greenery. In my experience, agriculture is a passion that has accompanied study and work, opening a path to learning from the earth and farmers' experience. Each time I follow a planting as it strengthens and grows, I appreciate more deeply the patience and effort it requires.

The Dignity of Work and Its Surrounding Rights

Seeing harvest in an orderly market may conceal the chain of effort preceding it: preparing land, tending water, awaiting the season, and enduring fluctuations beyond the grower's control. Restoring this chain to awareness changes how we regard the farmer: a partner in life's continuity, not a distant name behind a commodity.

Appreciation of the worker is completed by just treatment, honoring agreements, and respecting time and working conditions. Reading biography thus meets the farm's reality: what reaches the table bears the effect of care that should be answered with recognition and fulfillment of rights.

The Report Encouraging Planting and al-Majlisi's Assessment

In response to someone asking about people's claim that agriculture is disliked, al-Kulayni narrates from Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him:

“Cultivate and plant. By God, people have done no work more lawful or wholesome than it. By God, crops will be cultivated and date palms planted after the emergence of the Dajjal.”

This is the encouragement upon which the discussion relies; its ending continues to mention cultivation and planting in a future scene. The route passes through Muhammad ibn Yahya, Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Isa, Muhammad ibn Khalid, and Sayabah. Al-Majlisi classified report 3 of the chapter on agriculture's merit as “unknown” in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*. I attribute this assessment to him and to the particular report, without claiming consensus or an independent judgment of my own.

Presenting wording and assessment together supports faithful reading: readers know the cited expression and its location and know that finding its general meaning sound does not replace examining its chain. The chapter's reflections on respecting workers and preserving rights are identified as ethical readings, with detailed rulings returned to their evidence.

Text source: al-Kafi, vol. 5, Book of Livelihood, chapter on the merit of agriculture, report 3 [H1].

Assessment source: al-Majlisi, *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, p. 331, commentary on report 3 of the chapter on the merit of agriculture [H17].

Chapter references: al-Kafi, vol. 5, Book of Livelihood, chapter on the merit of agriculture, report 3 [H1]; chapter on emulating the Imams in seeking livelihood [H6].

Chapter 54: Planting and Reviving Land

A Small Beginning

Improvement may begin by removing an obstruction from a water source, preparing suitable ground, or tending a seedling. Not every improvement is a vast project. What matters is understanding the place's needs and continuing care after planting day and the celebratory photograph.

Revival as a Jurisprudential Term

Reviving uncultivated land has a specific meaning and rulings in jurisprudence; it is not simply planting any apparently empty land. Minhaj al-Salihin distinguishes land conditions and prior rights, states that dense forests are not dead land, and mentions restrictions connected with others' rights and the public interest.

Knowledge Before Possession

Anyone wishing to use land should know its status, rights, and applicable regulations, without making encouragement to plant a pretext for seizure. An act that gives life to a plant may violate a person's right if undertaken without a lawful basis.

Lasting Benefit

The measure is not only the number of seedlings on planting day but their ability to survive and what they contribute to the place. Good planting includes selecting what suits the site, providing care, and reviewing effects on the surroundings. These are general practical principles, not a cultivation plan for a particular climate.

After Planting Day

A record of observation and care helps identify what survived, what needed adjustment, and what proved unsuitable for the site. Through this follow-up, the planter learns how to improve the next season's work.

In the ethical meaning of revival, land without a commercial crop should not be seen as devoid of all life or rights. It may have a use or function invisible to a passing observer. Knowledge of the place therefore precedes changing it, and verification of rights precedes claiming ownership. Encouragement to plant thus becomes a motive for considered improvement rather than haste that changes the land's appearance and leaves consequences to others.

Chapter references: al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on reviving dead land [H15]; Sayyid al-Sistani, Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 2, Book of Reviving Dead Land [F7].

Chapter 55: Land, Water, and Harvest—Rights and Contracts

More Than One Party

Land may belong to one person, seeds to another, labor to a third, and water to a group. Without clear boundaries, disputes arise even if everyone began with good intentions. Agriculture is therefore inseparable from the language of contracts and rights.

Muzara'ah and Musaqat

Jurisprudence presents muzara'ah as a relationship concerning cultivation and division of yield according to its conditions, and discusses musaqat in relation to work on established trees and their produce. These legal chapters define shares, duration, tasks, and responsibilities. This is an introduction to the subject, not a contract template adequate for signing without review.

Water as a Shared Resource

The reports include a chapter on selling water and withholding its surplus, while jurisprudential works detail rights relating to rivers, springs, and their facilities. This reminds us that water reaching one farm does not erase downstream needs; its management requires understanding both rights and the resource's actual condition.

Clarity Preserves Good Relations

It is useful to record agreements in language the parties understand and specify who bears expenses and how losses are handled. The validity of conditions and their compatibility with local law and the relevant jurisprudential authority require specialist attention. This book opens the question and explains its importance; it does not replace professional documentation.

A Clear Agreement Before Awaiting the Harvest

An agricultural relationship may begin with a broad oral understanding, then reveal unanswered questions at the first loss: what work was intended, who decides, how are expenses established, and what was actually agreed? Such questions do not necessarily indicate bad faith; each party may have understood a general phrase differently.

Clarity thus preserves understanding when conditions change. Each party can return to what was agreed instead of reinterpreting a general phrase during a dispute. Every contract's rulings remain connected with its conditions and governing framework.

Chapter references: Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 2, Book of Muzara'ah [F4] and Book of Musaqat [F5]; al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on selling water and withholding its surplus [H14].

Chapter 56: The Day of Harvest

Three Actions at Fruiting and Harvest

“He is the One who brought into being gardens, trellised and untrellised, date palms and crops of varied produce, olives and pomegranates, alike and unlike. Eat of their fruit when they bear, give its due on the day of harvest, and do not be excessive. He does not love those who are excessive.”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-An'am, verse 141.

After the variety of gardens and crops, the commands turn to human action: eating, giving the due, and avoiding excess. Fruiting time thus combines benefit, responsibility, and disciplined conduct. Harvest is not confined to how much enters the owner's storehouse; it raises the question of what must be given and how blessing is used. The obligatory due's details, conditions, and amounts belong to jurisprudential discussion, referred to in its place. This scene gives the chapter its ethical unity: joy in provision accompanied by fulfillment and moderation.

Joy That Notices Others

Harvest day concludes effort and begins distribution. The verse in Surah al-An'am combines eating fruit, giving its due on harvest day, and avoiding excess. Joy is preserved but finds its boundaries in rights and moderation.

A Right Not Reduced to a Passing Gesture

Surah al-Qalam, verses 17-33.

“We have tested them as We tested the owners of the garden, when they swore to harvest it in the morning,” (17)

“without making any exception.” (18)

“A visitation from your Lord passed over it while they slept,” (19)

“and by morning it was like a stripped field.” (20)

“They called to one another at daybreak,” (21)

“Go early to your field if you intend to harvest.” (22)

“They set off, whispering to one another,” (23)

“No poor person must enter it upon you today.” (24)

“They went early, resolved to withhold, believing themselves able.” (25)

“When they saw it, they said, ‘We have surely lost our way.’” (26)

“Rather, we have been deprived.” (27)

“The most balanced among them said, ‘Did I not tell you, “Why do you not glorify God?”’” (28)

“They said, ‘Glory be to our Lord! We have indeed been wrongdoers.’” (29)

“Then they turned upon one another in mutual blame.” (30)

“They said, ‘Woe to us! We have indeed transgressed.’” (31)

“Perhaps our Lord will replace it with something better. To our Lord we turn in hope.” (32)

“Such is the punishment, and the punishment of the Hereafter is greater, if only they knew.” (33)

The garden's owners intended to harvest in the morning and secretly agreed to exclude the poor. Yet a visitation struck the garden at night before they left. Seeing what had happened, they moved from thinking they had lost the road to acknowledging deprivation and wrongdoing, then blamed one another and hoped for their Lord's mercy.

I recall the story here because abundant yield did not prevent corrupt intentions in its distribution. The trial appeared in whom they allowed access to the bounty. The amounts of financial dues and the conditions making them obligatory require jurisprudential evidence; their details cannot be extracted from the story alone.

Obligatory zakat, its conditions, and amounts remain distinct from voluntary charity and mutual support, with details referred to jurisprudential works. Knowing a specified right precedes judging that a symbolic gift has fulfilled it, just as it precedes extending one crop's ruling to every garden fruit.

What Comes Before Distribution

Before food reaches its rightful recipient come gathering, sorting, preservation, and transport. Poor management of these stages can waste the effort. Ethical awareness includes more than the intention to give: suitable food should arrive while its recipient can benefit from it.

The Effect of Sharing

When people give fruit from their own planting, they share something of their time and care. The fruit's price alone does not measure this value. A small gift from the garden may become a doorway to affection among neighbors of different languages and origins.

The Fruit Between the Producer's Hand and the Needy Person's Hand

The intention to give may be present, yet food may arrive too late to help or in a way that fails to preserve dignity. Distributing fruit therefore requires knowledge of need and delivery, not simply disposal of surplus. Good giving includes seeing oneself as sharing a blessing, not as a benefactor entitled to follow a gift with harm.

Harvest day joins two joys: that of someone seeing the result of work and that of someone receiving a share of goodness. With protected rights and good distribution, the farm's effect extends to its surroundings. Through this meaning we read the following report, which connects cultivation with tending and giving the due.

A Crop Its Owner Tends and Gives Its Due

In a report Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, narrates about the Prophet, may God bless him and his family, being asked about the best wealth, the reply includes this excerpt:

“A crop that its owner plants and tends, giving its due on the day of harvest.”

The expression places the grower's actions in sequence: planting, tending, and giving. Proper care and fulfillment of rights enter the report's picture of wealth. Connecting these actions helps us understand harvest as the end of one stage of responsibility and the beginning of another: after care and toil comes the test of conduct toward the fruit.

The excerpt appears in report 6 of the chapter on agriculture's merit, within a longer answer discussing other forms of wealth, through 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, from his father, from al-Nawfali, from al-Sakuni. I present it explicitly as an excerpt. Identifying the right and its amount in a particular case requires assembling the relevant jurisprudential evidence and conditions.

In *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, p. 332, al-Majlisi described report 6 as “weak according to the well-known view, and its ending is mursal” [H27]. A further narration introduced by “It was narrated” appears on p. 334 after the long answer ends. I preserve this detail, without equating the transmission formulas of its different sections or using the excerpt alone to judge the whole report.

Source: al-Kafi, vol. 5, Book of Livelihood, chapter on the merit of agriculture, report 6 [H1].

Chapter references: Surah al-An'am 141; Surah al-Qalam 17–33; Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 1, rulings on zakat of crops [F6].

Chapter 57: Plants in Worship, Purification, and Funeral Preparation

A Material That Enters a Ruling

Plants appear in worship in several forms, from the surface of prostration to preparation of the deceased. This does not mean every plant use is worship; certain materials are the subjects of particular rulings with their own conditions.

Prostration

Sayyid al-Sistani explains that the forehead's resting place should be earth or what grows from it that is neither eaten nor worn, with details and exceptions given in their place. Wood and inedible leaves are among the examples. Application therefore depends on the material's description and the ruling, not merely its color or commercial name.

Sidr, Camphor, and the Two Fresh Twigs

The chapter on washing the deceased mentions sidr and camphor within the sequence of washes. The rulings on the two fresh twigs recommend placing them with the deceased, with details of types and method. This chapter presents only the connection with plants; actual practice should follow the complete rulings and those competent in funeral preparation.

The Tooth-Cleaning Stick, Henna, and Fragrance

Plants' relationship with cleanliness and adornment extends to tooth-cleaning sticks, henna, and fragrances. We do not assign every custom a religious ruling merely because it is old, nor equate every modern product with the material mentioned in a report. Understanding a ruling begins by identifying its subject and then verifying its evidence.

Identifying the Material Before Applying the Ruling

Botanical knowledge meets jurisprudence when a ruling requires knowing the material concerned. The question may involve an edible plant, fiber used in clothing, wood, or a composite whose commercial name does not reveal its nature.

Memorizing a legal statement therefore does not replace verifying its subject in the case to which it is applied.

When manufacturing changes a product or mixes it with other materials, inquiry begins by describing its components and then learning its ruling according to the chosen religious authority. Keeping these steps in order connects botanical information with the legal question; practical details remain tied to the ruling's full text.

Chapter references: al-Fatawa al-Muyassarrah, prostration [F1]; al-Masa'il al-Muntakhabah, washing the deceased [F2]; Minhaj al-Salihin, the two fresh twigs [F3]. These references follow the named sources and do not claim uniformity in all authorities' detailed rulings.

Chapter 58: Plants in Housing, Clothing, and Industry

Beyond the Table

Plant materials enter human life through uses other than eating: wood, fibers, paper, oils, and fragrances. Reading plants' story through this doorway, we see their effect inhabiting the home, touching the hand, and accompanying writing and work.

Fibers That Clothe People

Cotton and flax are familiar examples of plant materials used in clothing. Jurisprudential books mention them when explaining plant-derived clothing materials. Their industrial history and each textile's properties form an independent subject, not conclusions drawn from the legal reference alone.

Fire and Fuel

Surah Ya Sin, verse 80.

"He who made fire for you from the green tree, and from it you kindle." (80)

People are reminded that the fire they kindle has been brought forth for them from the green tree. Within the context of the power to give life, this example returns attention from a familiar tool to its created origin, and from using a blessing to acknowledging its Giver.

Surah al-Waqi'ah, verses 71-73.

"Have you considered the fire you kindle?" (71)

"Did you bring its tree into being, or are We its originator?" (72)

"We made it a reminder and a benefit for those in need in the wilderness." (73)

The address asks about the fire people kindle and its tree, then explains that it is a reminder and a benefit. Plants appear as a source of energy and use, accompanied by meaning that awakens gratitude and does not leave everyday use detached from reflection.

Plant fuel's benefits extend to cooking, heating, and industry. Its use is accompanied by questions of preserving the resource and its effects on others' lives. Knowledge of the material thus connects with how we consume it.

An Object's Cycle

We may look at a table or sheet of paper and forget its plant origin, then discard it as though it had no history. Renewed attention to that origin may improve our use and maintenance of things. This calls for responsible consumption, not a judgment that every plant material is sustainable under all production conditions.

The Memory of Material Within the Home

Plant material may last for years in uses such as a door, book, or textile. During that time, maintenance and good use become part of our relationship with the resource from which it arose. Everyday objects thus enter plants' story after leaving the field.

A product's environmental effects are studied across obtaining its material, manufacturing, use, and what happens afterward. This view directs attention to the whole journey and connects caring for what we hold with caring for its source.

Chapter references: Surah Ya Sin 80; Surah al-Waqi'ah 71-73; jurisprudential source [F1] for the examples of cotton and flax.

Chapter 59: Cutting Trees and Destroying Crops

Cutting Is Not One Single Case

Cutting may meet a lawful need, occur wantonly or aggressively, or concern a tree posing danger in its location. One ethical judgment cannot properly cover every case without considering rights, harm, and alternatives.

The Verse and Its Context

Surah al-Hashr, verse 5.

“Whatever palm trees you cut down or left standing upon their roots was by God's permission, and so that He might disgrace the defiantly disobedient.” (5)

Surah al-Hashr mentions some palms being cut and others left standing by God's permission in a specific confrontation. It places the action within context. Resemblance in outward form is therefore insufficient to judge every act of cutting as belonging to the same category.

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 205.

“When he turns away, he strives through the land to spread corruption and destroy crops and offspring. God does not love corruption.” (205)

The verse portrays someone striving to corrupt the earth and destroy crops and offspring, then denies God's love of corruption. Ruining cultivation and attacking the conditions of life's continuity appear as signs of blameworthy conduct, distinct from an action defined by its context and permission.

Reading the two passages together prevents neglect of an action's context and qualification: an event with its specific permission, and corruption condemned for destroying crops and offspring. I preserve this distinction when discussing responsibility for cutting trees and acting upon land.

The Neighbor's Right

Branches may cross property boundaries, or excavation may affect a shared resource. Jurisprudential books discuss these cases in detail, and local regulations govern them. Sound management addresses the problem through dialogue and expertise before it becomes a dispute or lasting harm.

An Effect Beyond the Owner

Trees may be privately owned while their presence affects shade, scenery, and the surrounding environment. This does not cancel ownership rights but calls for responsible exercise of them. A limited adjustment sometimes preserves great benefit and avoids removal that cannot quickly be compensated.

A Decision Difficult to Reverse

The question before removing a large tree differs from pruning a small branch. Effects may outlast the work, and replacement may take a long time. Practical wisdom first identifies the problem: a documented danger, damage in a particular

place, or simply annoyance at fallen leaves? Appropriate alternatives are then studied with those holding knowledge and rights.

This does not mean every tree must remain whatever its condition; the decision should be proportionate to its cause. Nor may someone wishing to cut decide alone about a shared resource or neighbors' rights. Responsible consideration brings together people's safety, preserving benefit, and verification of ownership and local rules. These are principles for organizing inquiry, not a ruling or general removal permission for an unexamined case.

Chapter references: Surah al-Baqarah 205; Surah al-Hashr 5; Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 2, Book of Reviving Dead Land, questions of protected adjacent space and branches [F7].

Chapter 60: The Plant-Based Table—Gratitude and Moderation

Food with a Journey

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 168.

“People, eat what is lawful and wholesome on earth, and do not follow Satan's footsteps. He is an open enemy to you.” (168)

The address calls people to eat what is lawful and wholesome on earth and warns against Satan's footsteps and hostility. The table is linked with permission, wholesomeness, and right following, making food choice part of conscious human conduct.

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 172.

“You who believe, eat of the good things We have provided you and give thanks to God, if it is Him you worship.” (172)

Believers are addressed to eat of the good things God has provided and to thank Him if they worship Him. Food is not separated from acknowledgment of blessing, nor is gratitude made into a word distant from how provision is received and used.

By the time greens reach the table, they have passed through land, water, labor, and transport. Recalling this journey brings gratitude closer: a mouthful did not suddenly appear on a plate but is the fruit of wide cooperation whose participants we do not all see.

Moderation

Surah al-A'raf, verse 31.

“Children of Adam, take your adornment at every place of worship, and eat and drink, but do not be excessive. He does not love those who are excessive.” (31)

The verse joins taking adornment at every place of worship with eating, drinking, and avoiding excess. Moderation appears within permission to benefit. What is required is appreciation of blessing and the limits of need, without wasting it or making it a display of excess.

Enjoying wholesome things goes together with moderation in amount and use. Suitable food is assessed according to personal need and condition, allowing gratitude to appear in proper use of what is permitted and its protection from waste.

Variety, Not a Slogan

The World Health Organization includes variety and balance among healthy eating principles and emphasizes food safety. Describing food as plant-based does not mean it automatically meets them: ingredients, preparation, and the overall diet affect evaluation.

Preserving Surplus

Reducing waste can begin with buying what we need, storing food appropriately, and sharing usable surplus. These daily practices make ethical meaning visible. Spoiled

food does not become a generous gift because giving it away prevents the owner's sense of loss.

Gratitude Visible in Daily Habit

Surah al-An'am, verse 141.

“It is He who brought into being gardens, trellised and untrellised, date palms and crops differing in their produce, and olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of their fruit when they bear fruit, and give its due on the day of harvest. Do not be wasteful; He does not love the wasteful.” (141)

After presenting diverse gardens and fruits, the command comes to eat, give the harvest's due, and avoid excess. These successive commands connect consumption, others' rights, and preservation of blessing, giving gratitude a practical form in gathering and sharing crops.

Gratitude may be spoken and then contradicted by purchases unrelated to need, careless storage that spoils food, or a table whose surplus is discarded without thought. Moderation does not require every meal to become an exhausting calculation. People can learn through repeated experience what they need and waste, correcting habits as they are able.

Sharing gives fruit another meaning. A small garden gift may start a conversation and affection between neighbors. Involving a child in tending a plant and then eating its fruit may teach a connection that buying food alone does not offer. I propose these educational examples without claiming to have measured their outcomes experimentally. They return the table to its human context: provision arriving through nature, work, and relationships, deserving awareness and gentleness in response.

Chapter references: Surah al-Baqarah 168 and 172; Surah al-A'raf 31; Surah al-An'am 141; World Health Organization [M3].

Part Seven: Plants, Environment, and Knowledge

If we stand beside a tree and widen our gaze a little, its connections with soil, water, and other beings appear. At these connections the story resumes its questions: how do we preserve what grows, understand the effect of our intervention, and connect farmers' experience with researchers' learning? We approach environment, diversity, and documentation, seeing how love of plants becomes care that learns from its results.

Chapter 61: Plants and Ecological Balance

A Network, Not an Isolated Ornament

A tree belongs to relationships with water, soil, air, and other organisms. Removing plant cover may therefore change more than a visual scene. The Food and Agriculture Organization highlights forests' roles in water regulation and quality while noting that forests themselves consume water.

Not Every Increase Is an Improvement

Wanting greenery does not make planting any species anywhere appropriate. Site, climate, water resources, and the ecosystem's nature all matter. Protecting existing cover or restoring native plants may be more suitable than imposing an imported appearance on a place.

Soil as a Store of Life

The organization explains that soils contribute to nutrient, water, and carbon cycles and house organisms performing vital functions. Care for the green surface alone is insufficient if what lies beneath is neglected. A place may look tidy while its invisible processes weaken.

From Knowledge to Conduct

Surah al-A'raf, verse 56.

“Do not spread corruption on earth after it has been set right. Call upon Him with fear and hope. God's mercy is near to those who do good.” (56)

The verse prohibits corruption on earth after its restoration, calls for prayer with fear and hope, and mentions the nearness of God's mercy to those who do good. From this ethical foundation we understand responsibility to avoid harm, then use knowledge to identify its effects on land, water, and plants.

The value of stewardship gives a motive to preserve the environment, and scientific knowledge helps explain actions' effects upon it. I bring them together in thought and practice while distinguishing the meaning indicated by the text from terminology arising in ecological research.

A Green View and an Ecological Function

A green surface may please the observer while water, soil, and diversity remain outside the picture. Color alone is insufficient to judge a place. We should ask what

functions existing cover performs, how changing it affects its surroundings, and what resources sustain it. In some places, improvement may mean preserving what exists rather than replacing it with a scene that looks tidier to us.

What happens in soil reminds us that a place's life exceeds its appearance. Care begins by observing these relationships, identifying what needs preservation or change, and reviewing the work's effects afterward. The desire for greenery thus connects with knowledge of what makes it beneficial and stable.

Chapter references: Food and Agriculture Organization, Forests and Water [E2], and Soils Overview [E3]; Surah al-A'raf 56 for the general prohibition of corruption.

Chapter 62: Plants and Other Organisms

Food and Shelter

Surah 'Abasa, verses 24-32.

"Let the human being look at his food." (24)

"We poured down water abundantly." (25)

"Then We split the earth open." (26)

"And caused grain to grow in it," (27)

"And grapes and green fodder," (28)

"And olives and date palms," (29)

"And gardens of dense growth," (30)

"And fruit and pasture," (31)

"As provision for you and your livestock." (32)

Food's journey begins with water and growth from the earth, then proceeds through varieties of sustenance, trees, fruit, and pasture, ending with benefit to people and livestock. The ending highlights living beings' sharing of plant resources. The scene is broader than the human plate alone.

Plants' benefit extends through life's network: food for one being, shelter for another, and a place of reproduction for others. Observing these relationships, I see shared resources and understand my need for plants within a life exceeding what I take directly from them.

Pollinators

Surah al-Nahl, verses 68-69.

"Your Lord inspired the bees: 'Make homes in the mountains, in the trees, and in what people build.'" (68)

"Then eat from all the fruits and follow your Lord's paths made easy.' From their bellies comes a drink of varying colors, in which there is healing for people. In that is a sign for people who reflect." (69)

The verses describe bees' inspiration to make homes in mountains, trees, and what people build, then to eat from fruits, follow the paths made easy, and produce a drink of varied colors containing healing for people. Plants connect here with shelter, food, and production, and the image ends by inviting reflection.

Various animals contribute to plant pollination, and this interaction plays roles in production and species continuity. This does not mean every plant needs an insect or that all insects benefit a crop in every circumstance. The relationship depends on species and context.

Beneath Our Feet

Soil organisms participate in breaking down remains and cycling nutrients. Garden owners may overlook them because they are absent from the fruit's image. Yet

caring for plants calls for attention to their living medium, not pursuing every small organism with the aim of eliminating it.

Care as Knowledge of Balance

Farmers see pests' effects upon crops, and their need to protect them remains legitimate. Good management begins by identifying the problem and drawing upon knowledge, rather than treating every movement in the garden as an enemy. This book offers no pest-control program; it calls for understanding relationships before intervening.

Changing the View of the Garden

A farm owner sees awaited fruit; an insect may see a feeding place; a bird sees a branch suitable for resting. These are not contradictory descriptions but reveal the many relationships gathered in one place. Recognizing them helps us move beyond the idea that whatever does not serve our immediate need has no function.

Understanding these relationships is completed by careful observation: what organism is present, what damage appeared, and what connects them? An organism's presence near a damaged leaf does not alone prove it caused the damage. These questions help growers protect crops while understanding the life sharing their space.

What Reaches Birds and Animals from the Field

Report 5 of the chapter on agriculture's merit begins by favoring cultivation and mentions the righteous and the wicked benefiting from it, then states:

“Animals and birds eat from it.”

This portion of the report takes the field's image beyond its owner alone: work's fruit enters other beings' food. Readers may draw upon this meaning to develop awareness of cultivation's broad effects, while detailed descriptions of ecological relationships remain a scientific field. The narration is not a table of organism numbers or quantities eaten.

The route includes “from some of our companions,” an intermediary unnamed here, followed by transmission from Abu Ja'far, peace be upon him, saying, “My father used to say.” Al-Majlisi classified report 5 as “mursal” in *Mir'at al-'Uqul*, vol. 19, p. 332 [H27]. I record this with the excerpt. Assessing pest damage and prevention remains a practical investigation: shared benefit does not cancel growers' right to protect their livelihood through appropriate means.

Source: al-Kafi, vol. 5, Book of Livelihood, chapter on the merit of agriculture, report 5 [H1].

Chapter references: Surah 'Abasa 24-32; Surah al-Nahl 68-69; Food and Agriculture Organization, Biodiversity Overview [E1]; Soils [E3].

Chapter 63: Plant Diversity and Its Conservation

Diversity Within One Name

One crop may include varieties differing in taste, season, and adaptability. Preserving diversity therefore means more than preventing major species names from disappearing; it also concerns the varieties and agricultural knowledge people hold.

Within and Beyond the Habitat

Plants can be protected in their environment, while propagation material can be conserved in specialist institutions. Kew's Millennium Seed Bank project exemplifies partnerships that conserve seeds and make them available for research and habitat restoration. This complements protecting nature; it is no reason to neglect it.

Knowledge Accompanying the Seed

A specimen gains value when its origin, history, name, and condition are known. Likewise, hobbyists benefit from a record of a seedling's information rather than reliance on fallible memory. Conservation is not merely putting seeds in a container; it preserves a story that can be verified.

Responsible Sharing

People may enjoy exchanging seeds and cuttings with friends, but movement between countries and regions is subject to local agricultural and health rules that should be understood. This chapter does not set out one country's regulations; it emphasizes that love of diversity accompanies care for the environment receiving a plant.

Preserving Diversity and Agricultural Memory

The record connects the first keeper with later users and gives comparison a known starting point. Where did the specimen come from, what was observed, and what changed after storage? Later users thus benefit from what earlier ones recorded.

This also applies to farmers' shared knowledge about varieties. Faithful recording preserves what they said and observed while distinguishing local experience from a generalizable rule. Collecting names in a book does not complete conservation: it concerns living material, habitats, and accompanying knowledge. Specialist institutions such as seed banks serve part of this work, while connecting conservation with life in nature remains an indispensable goal.

Chapter references: Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Millennium Seed Bank Partnership [E4]; Food and Agriculture Organization, Biodiversity [E1].

Chapter 64: From the Farmer's Experience to Botany

Observation That Learns from Error

Garden owners know details visitors may miss: a bud's opening time, differences between two seedlings' responses, and the effect of a small care adjustment. Such observation becomes more useful when recorded, compared, and made available for others to review.

Vegetative Propagation

Plants can be propagated without gamete fusion, through methods such as cuttings and layering. This differs from sexual reproduction involving pollination and fertilization. Each method has conditions and limits; seeing one plant's cutting succeed does not establish the method's suitability for every species.

Grafting and Hybridization

Grafting joins a scion to a compatible rootstock so that they continue growing together. Sexual hybridization concerns genetic material coming together through reproduction. A tree bearing multiple varieties therefore does not mean every fruit has become a genetic mixture of the other branches. This distinction protects agricultural achievement from misleading description.

My Experience of Affection and Learning

My passion for agriculture extends from Iraq to Australia, with grafting experiments and teaching students forming part of the journey. I believe the finest gift of a hobby is not one successful experiment but the continuing desire to ask questions. Teachers, farmers, researchers, and hobbyists can exchange knowledge while remaining clear about the limits of each person's experience.

The Agricultural Experiment Notebook

A hobbyist's experiment can become clearer knowledge by recording what was done and what happened, including unsuccessful attempts. The record begins with the plant's name and source, procedure date, and observed conditions, then describes the outcome rather than merely saying "succeeded." In grafting, for example, it distinguishes early scion survival from continued later growth: each statement describes a different extent of observation.

When comparing two methods, it is best not to change many factors and then attribute the difference to one selected factor. A photograph of a successful trial alone is not a faithful record of all attempts. These principles bring a hobby closer to the spirit of research without claiming that every home experiment is a published study. I see them as an extension of what I learned from agriculture, biology, and community health: a clear question, observation, and readiness to correct understanding.

Chapter references: biology reference, asexual reproduction [S8]; Chapter 7 on sexual reproduction; my agriculture page [A2]. These paragraphs do not provide a practical protocol for grafting a particular species.

Part Eight: Plants in Scenes of the Unseen and the Hereafter

The grain has accompanied us from the earth to the tree and table; plants have appeared in story, parable, and work. We now reach what revelation tells of the unseen and the Hereafter: the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary, the earth's blessings, revival and resurrection, the fruits of bliss, and scenes of warning. The texts lead this part, accompanied by explanation within the limits of their meaning, keeping the story connected with faith, action, and a good return.

Chapter 65: The Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary

The Name in Surah al-Najm

Surah al-Najm, verses 13-18.

"He indeed saw him on another descent," (13)

"At the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary," (14)

"Near it is the Garden of Refuge," (15)

"When there covered the lote tree that which covered it." (16)

"The sight neither swerved nor exceeded its bounds." (17)

"He certainly saw some of his Lord's greatest signs." (18)

Surah al-Najm describes another vision at the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary, mentions the Garden of Refuge and what covered the tree, then affirms the steadiness of sight and the witnessing of great signs of the Lord. The lote tree thus appears within a momentous scene of God's signs, while details the text leaves unstated remain outside its direct description.

I stand before this scene with the reverence for God's signs it inspires, preserving the text's brevity where it leaves matters general. I then distinguish details in commentary and narration from the Quranic description itself so that readers know the source of every addition.

The Limit of Sensory Knowledge

We know *sidr* as a name in our world. Sharing a name does not mean we comprehend the reality, dimensions, or nature of the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary. An account of the unseen is understood through its words and established explanations, not by directly measuring it against a garden tree.

Witnessing and Reverence

Readers may reflect on the lote tree's association with great signs and gain a deeper sense of knowledge's limits. This reflection leads to humility, not claims to draw an exact place one has never seen or construct an astronomical map unsupported by the text.

What Is Left Without Addition

This book's educational illustrations are confined to observable botanical subjects that can be explained and checked. The Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary is presented through its Quranic text and what could be documented in its explanation, preserving the distinction between revelation's description and artistic imagination.

The Eloquence of What the Text Leaves Undetailed

The text says that what covered the lote tree covered it, leaving breadth in the expression that readers should not fill from imagination and then attribute to revelation. The moment's power may lie in this very boundary: knowing the greatness of what occurred without encompassing every aspect of how it occurred. I therefore remain with what the text reports and create no details it does not mention.

A symbolic drawing remains a human expression of spiritual meaning, however deeply it affects the soul; it is not a visual record of the unseen scene. This distinction lets viewers understand an image's function and limits and keep knowledge of the lote tree connected with what the text reports.

Chapter references: Surah al-Najm 13-18.

Chapter 66: The Earth's Blessings in the Age of Imam al-Mahdi

Hope Connected with Justice

Reports of the appearance speak of justice, security, and abundant goodness. Within this horizon the earth's blessings are mentioned. Plants appear within a society's transformed condition, not as a detail detached from restoring rights and lifting oppression.

A Report in al-Irshad

In al-Irshad, Shaykh al-Mufid transmits from 'Ali ibn 'Uqbah, from his father, a report joining the rise of al-Qa'im, peace be upon him, with justice, safe roads, and the earth bringing forth its blessings. I record the reference as it appears in the source without claiming to have completed all its transmission routes or issued a final authenticity judgment.

No Date Can Be Set from Crops

These reports do not allow the year of the appearance to be determined from a rainy season or abundant crop, nor attached to a climatic event merely through resemblance. Dating requires evidence this inference does not possess and may expose people to repeated illusion.

An Expectation That Works

Hope for coming justice does not excuse neglecting the earth and people now. One who awaits can earn honestly, preserve a neighbor's rights, and repair what is within reach. This is a contemporary ethical fruit of expectation, not an addition to the report's details.

Justice and Blessing in an Interconnected Image

The transmitted report joins justice, safe roads, and the earth's blessings, allowing readers to see goodness within communal life rather than in a crop detached from people's conditions. Ethically, abundant food has fuller meaning when its benefits arrive in security and justice instead of alongside fear or deprivation. This is a reflection on the meanings' conjunction, not a detailed explanation of how the report's blessing operates.

Hope connects with present responsibility: preserving a right, repairing harm, and dealing honestly. In this way it becomes a motive for performing possible good while remaining within evidence concerning the future's details and timing.

The Blessings Excerpt Within the Restoration of Rights

In al-Irshad, Shaykh al-Mufid records from 'Ali ibn 'Uqbah, from his father, a report beginning:

“When al-Qa'im, peace be upon him, rises, he will judge with justice. Oppression will disappear in his days, the roads will become safe through him, the earth will bring forth its blessings, and every right will be restored to its rightful holder.”

The excerpt's elements form an image of life pervaded by justice, with rights restored to their holders. The earth's blessings are read alongside these elements, broadening bounty's significance beyond crop quantity alone. Details of the unseen remain dependent on what their evidence establishes.

The attribution here is precise in its limits: the consulted passage in al-Irshad says “from 'Ali ibn 'Uqbah, from his father,” without naming an Imam from whom the father narrates at this point. I therefore added no name to the chain and did not describe the excerpt as the complete report. Comparing its routes in other sources remains an independent task for specialist investigation.

Source: al-Mufid, al-Irshad, vol. 2, p. 384, section on al-Qa'im's conduct when he rises, peace be upon him [H16].

Chapter references: Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Irshad, vol. 2, p. 384, section on al-Qa'im's conduct when he rises [H16]; al-Kafi, chapter on agriculture's merit, report 3 [H1], on continued planting.

Chapter 67: Reviving the Earth and Resurrection

An Earth That Appears Lifeless

Surah al-Hajj, verses 5-7.

“People, if you are in doubt about resurrection, We created you from dust, then from a drop, then from a clinging form, then from a lump, formed and unformed, to make things clear to you. We settle in wombs what We will until an appointed term, then bring you forth as infants, then let you reach maturity. Some of you die, and some are returned to the frailest age, knowing nothing after having known. You see the earth lifeless; when We send water upon it, it stirs, swells, and grows every delightful kind.” (5)

“That is because God is the Truth, because He gives life to the dead, and because He has power over all things,” (6)

“and because the Hour is coming, without doubt, and God will raise those in the graves.” (7)

The verses address those doubtful about resurrection, recalling stages of human creation and life, then turning to lifeless earth that stirs, swells, and grows with water. After these two scenes they affirm God's power to revive the dead and the coming Hour. Human experience of self and earth support one another in the argument.

This reasoning brings revival close through experiences people see in themselves and the surrounding earth. I follow the address's movement from the observable scene to acknowledgment of the Creator's power to resurrect; this is how the images come together in context.

An Indication of Power

Surah al-A'raf, verse 57.

“It is He who sends the winds as heralds before His mercy. When they carry heavy clouds, We drive them to a lifeless land, send down water upon it, and with it bring forth fruits of every kind. In this way We bring forth the dead, so that you may take heed.” (57)

Winds precede heavy clouds, and rain is driven to a lifeless land, bringing forth fruits. The text then makes bringing forth the dead accessible through this scene: the action people see points to the Creator's power over what lies beyond their observation.

Surah Fussilat, verse 39.

“Among His signs is that you see the earth still and humbled; when We send water upon it, it stirs and swells. The One who revived it will surely revive the dead. He has power over all things.” (39)

The earth appears humbled and still; when water descends, it stirs and swells. The verse explicitly states that its Reviver can revive the dead. The connection is not a reader's conjecture: the reasoning is stated within the wording itself.

The address uses what is witnessed to indicate the Creator's power over what escapes the senses. I read the plant cycle within this argument while preserving its difference from human resurrection. Similarity in the reasoning does not require identical details, nor does one germination experiment independently prove every matter of the Hereafter.

From Despair to Hope

Surah al-Rum, verse 50.

“Look at the effects of God's mercy: how He revives the earth after its death. He will surely revive the dead, and He has power over all things.” (50)

The address calls us to observe God's mercy in reviving the earth after its death, then connects that mercy with His power to revive the dead. Greenness brings together present blessing and hope beyond witnessed life.

This scene may awaken hope after despair. I present that as an effect of reflection, stopping short of predicting individuals' fates or asserting when a particular loss will be compensated. Hope opens the heart to work and patience.

The Responsibility of the One Who Sees

If the earth's transformation becomes a doorway to remembering destiny, the way of living may change: arrogance diminishes, concern for rights grows, and action connects with responsibility. The plant scene thus returns from the field to conscience.

What Is Witnessed as a Doorway to Thought

Surah Fatir, verse 9.

“God is the One who sends the winds to stir up clouds. We drive them to a lifeless land and thereby revive the earth after its death. Such is the resurrection.” (9)

The scene begins with winds sent to stir clouds, then their passage to a lifeless land and the earth's revival through them. The verse ends by comparing this with resurrection, making water and vegetation's movement an accessible example awakening belief in the power to restore life.

Surah Qaf, verses 9-11.

“We sent blessed water down from the sky and caused gardens and grain for harvest to grow through it,” (9)

“And tall date palms with closely arranged spathes,” (10)

“As provision for the servants. With it We gave life to a dead land; in this way will be the emergence.” (11)

Blessed water descends, bringing forth gardens, grains, and towering palms. Provision and the revival of a dead land are mentioned, then used to bring emergence after death closer to understanding. Readers see in field and orchard both daily benefit and a recurring witness to revival.

The observer reconsiders judgments of possibility and impossibility while seeing land once thought still transform before the eyes. This image brings the power to revive

closer to understanding, while knowledge of organisms' kinds and characteristics remains within its own investigation.

The scene retains its effect for those watching the season: changing earth, a new leaf on a branch, and life whose causes had been hidden. The question returns to the Creator's power and the limits of human sight. This reflection complements the text's account of resurrection without claiming that its details match the plant cycle.

Chapter references: Surah al-A'raf 57; Surah al-Hajj 5-7; Surah al-Rum 50; Surah Fatir 9; Surah Fussilat 39; Surah Qaf 9-11.

Chapter 68: Paradise's Trees and Fruits

Bliss in Familiar Language

Surah al-Baqarah, verse 25.

“Give good news to those who believe and do righteous deeds: they will have gardens beneath which rivers flow. Whenever they receive fruit from them as provision, they will say, ‘This is what we were provided before,’ and it will be given to them in resemblance. There they will have purified spouses, and there they will remain forever.” (25)

The verse gives believers who act righteously good news of gardens with rivers beneath them, fruits received in resemblance, purified spouses, and permanence. Bliss is presented as provision, reassurance, and stability, and from its beginning the promise is connected with faith and action.

Surah al-Rahman, verses 46-53.

“For whoever fears standing before his Lord there are two gardens.” (46)

“Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?” (47)

“Both with spreading branches.” (48)

“Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?” (49)

“In them are two flowing springs.” (50)

“Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?” (51)

“In them are two kinds of every fruit.” (52)

“Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?” (53)

Those who fear standing before their Lord have two gardens with spreading branches, two flowing springs, and two kinds of every fruit. The question about denying blessings recurs through the description, joining the beauty of the gift with remembrance of the One deserving gratitude and reverent fear.

Familiar names bring bliss closer to listeners through known pleasures of fruit, shade, and water. The promised reality remains broader than their experience; I preserve this boundary while reading the descriptions and reflecting on the hope they inspire.

Sidr and Talh

Surah al-Waqi'ah, verses 27-34.

“And the companions of the right—what are the companions of the right?” (27)

“Among lote trees without thorns.” (28)

“And clustered talh,” (29)

“and extended shade,” (30)

“and flowing water,” (31)

“and plentiful fruit,” (32)

“neither interrupted nor withheld,” (33)

“and raised couches.” (34)

The companions of the right are portrayed through thornless lote trees, clustered talh, extended shade, water, abundant fruit, and raised couches. These images bring closer a life freed from deprivation and interruption, while some words still require explanation in their place.

Commentators transmit several views about talh, including banana and a tree known in earthly usage for shade or thorns. I retain the Quranic term when presenting this disagreement, explaining the views' bases without imposing a final scientific identity upon what is described in the Hereafter.

Unceasing Fruit

Surah al-Ra'd, verse 35.

“The likeness of the Garden promised to the mindful: rivers flow beneath it; its produce and shade are everlasting. That is the outcome for those who are mindful, while the disbelievers' outcome is the Fire.” (35)

The promised Garden is described through flowing rivers, enduring produce, and shade, then its people's outcome is contrasted with that of disbelievers. The permanence of blessing stands prominently in the image, differing from worldly fruit bounded by seasons and subject to disappearance.

Surah al-Rahman, verses 62-69.

“And besides those two are two other gardens.” (62)

“Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?” (63)

“Both deep green.” (64)

“Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?” (65)

“In them are two gushing springs.” (66)

“Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?” (67)

“In both are fruit, date palms and pomegranates.” (68)

“Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?” (69)

Surah al-Rahman mentions two further gardens, deeply green, with two gushing springs, fruit, date palms, and pomegranates. Remembrance of blessings recurs between descriptions, placing plant names within abundance connected with water, comfort, and gratitude.

These names allow aspects of abundance to be imagined, while the promise exceeds confinement to a list of earthly plants. I follow the descriptions' conjunction of plentiful provision, permanence, and ease of access.

Bliss Is Not Made Through Oppression

The promise is linked with faith, righteous action, and mindfulness of God. Hope for the Hereafter's gardens is therefore inseparable from created beings' rights in this world. Those who love the promised orchards should be especially careful not to destroy people's orchards, sustenance, or water.

Ease and Permanence in the Description of Fruit

Surah al-Rahman, verses 54-61.

"Reclining on couches lined with brocade, with the fruit of the two gardens close at hand." (54)

"Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?" (55)

"In them are companions of restrained gaze, untouched before them by human or jinn." (56)

"Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?" (57)

"As though they were rubies and coral." (58)

"Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?" (59)

"Is the reward of goodness anything but goodness?" (60)

"Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?" (61)

The people of bliss are portrayed reclining on couches with the gardens' fruit nearby. Pure, protected companionship follows, and the passage ends by answering goodness with goodness. Bliss thus extends beyond food to companionship and honor, with fruit remaining part of this comprehensive picture.

Surah al-Insan, verse 14.

"Its shades will be close above them, and its fruit clusters brought within easy reach." (14)

Shadows draw near and fruit clusters are made accessible to the people of bliss, so difficulty of access does not stand between them and fruit. Nearness conveys comfort and ease, contrasting with the effort of waiting and gathering known in earthly orchards.

Fruit gains meaning in the life of the blessed through beauty, accessibility, and permanence. Nearness removes the effort of reaching; permanence lifts fear of interruption. Together these meanings clarify the comfort carried by the promise.

Surah al-Rahman, verses 70-76.

"In them are good and beautiful companions." (70)

"Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?" (71)

"Fair companions, sheltered in pavilions." (72)

"Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?" (73)

"Untouched before them by human or jinn." (74)

"Which of your Lord's blessings will you both deny?" (75)

"Reclining on green cushions and beautiful carpets." (76)

The two gardens' description continues with good and beautiful companions sheltered in pavilions, then reclining on beautiful furnishings and cushions. The context portrays comfort, dignity, and companionship, preventing fruit and trees from being isolated from the human scene in which they appear.

I connect this hope with the question of action: how do I love good for myself and care for it in others' sustenance and dignity? Reflection on bliss remains a motive for kindness while acknowledging that my knowledge does not encompass the reality of God's promise.

Chapter references: Surah al-Baqarah 25; Surah al-Ra'd 35; Surah al-Rahman 46–76; Surah al-Waqi'ah 27–34; Surah al-Insan 14; al-Qurtubi, commentary on Surah al-Waqi'ah 29 [T7].

Chapter 69: Tuba

Tuba in Its Quranic Setting

“Those who believe and do righteous deeds—blessedness is theirs, and a beautiful return.”

The Holy Quran, Surah al-Ra'd, verse 29.

The word tuba is joined in the verse with faith, righteous deeds, and a beautiful return. The chapter begins with this good news, then moves to linguistic explanation and accounts of the tree, referring every description to its source.

The Quranic Word

Surah al-Ra'd, verses 27-28.

“Those who disbelieve say, ‘Why has no sign been sent down to him from his Lord?’ Say, ‘God lets whom He wills stray and guides to Himself whoever turns back to Him,’” (27)

“‘those who believe and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of God. Surely, in God's remembrance hearts find rest.’” (28)

The disbelievers demand a sign. The answer explains that guidance to God is for those who turn back, then describes believers whose hearts find rest in His remembrance. This context prepares for the good news of tuba, understood in connection with faith, return, and the heart's repose.

Al-Mizan explains tuba linguistically and contextually in relation to a good life and livelihood. I begin with this meaning in its place, then move to accounts of the tree and their sources: the verse's wording does not explicitly call Tuba a tree.

The Tree in Narration

Transmitted reports describe Tuba as a tree in Paradise. I consulted Abu 'Ubaydah's report from Imam al-Sadiq, peace be upon him, in the digital text of Tafsir al-Qummi at Surah al-Ra'd 29, and directly consulted the glad-tidings report in al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih, also using al-Mizan's discussion of narrations. I present each account with its location and the limits of what I verified [T6, T8, H25].

The Connection with the Ahl al-Bayt

Some Tuba reports connect it with the Prophet, the Commander of the Faithful, and Fatimah, peace be upon them. This chapter presents Abu 'Ubaydah's account and the glad-tidings account separately, without combining them with reports of the Night Journey or details of distances into a composite narration. Al-Tabataba'i's discussion of this material at the level of inner meaning and application is read within its context in al-Mizan [T6].

The Name's Spaciousness

Tuba's place in the heart gathers hope, goodness, and nearness to God. This meaning can move readers toward good action without needing to measure the tree's

branches or convert its descriptions into astronomical units. The purpose is to know the report's location and draw its lesson within the limits of its establishment.

Between the Word's Meaning and the Tree's Account

Surah al-Ra'd, verses 30-35.

"Thus We have sent you among a community before which other communities have passed, to recite to them what We revealed to you, while they disbelieve in the All-Merciful. Say, 'He is my Lord; there is no god but Him. In Him I place my trust, and to Him is my return.'" (30)

"If there were a recitation by which mountains were moved, the earth split, or the dead made to speak—rather, the whole matter belongs to God. Have the believers not understood that, had God willed, He would have guided all people? Calamity will continue striking the disbelievers because of what they have done, or descend near their homes, until God's promise comes. God does not fail His promise." (31)

"Messengers before you were indeed mocked. I gave the disbelievers respite, then seized them. How was My punishment!" (32)

"Is the One who watches over every soul and what it earns like any other? Yet they assign partners to God. Say, 'Name them. Are you informing Him of something on earth He does not know, or merely speaking empty words?' Rather, the disbelievers' plotting has been made attractive to them, and they have been barred from the path. Whoever God lets stray has no guide." (33)

"They have punishment in worldly life, and the punishment of the Hereafter is harder still. They have no protector against God." (34)

"The likeness of the Garden promised to the mindful: rivers flow beneath it; its produce and shade are everlasting. That is the outcome for those who are mindful, while the disbelievers' outcome is the Fire." (35)

The context expands to the Prophet's mission and recitation of revelation, the deniers' objections and demands for wonders, and the affirmation that the whole matter belongs to God. It then mentions reckoning, the outcome of mindfulness, and the enduring Garden. Tuba's good news therefore lies within guidance and a good destination before we consider reports explaining it or expanding its description.

This context clarifies the good news's place and makes the move to tree accounts a transition with an identified source. I read each account through its wording and route, presenting related interpretation or application with attribution to its holder.

Abu 'Ubaydah's report exemplifies this reading: I first record its text, then explain its location and the limits of comparison. Love of the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, remains present in receiving the tradition, while care for it appears through preserving wording and attribution.

Abu 'Ubaydah's Report in Tafsir al-Qummi

At verse 29 of Surah al-Ra'd, Tafsir al-Qummi records, through his father, from al-Hasan ibn Mahbub, from 'Ali ibn Riyab, from Abu 'Ubaydah, from Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him:

“Tuba is a tree in Paradise in the dwelling of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him. Every one of his followers has in his dwelling a branch of its branches, and beneath one of its leaves a whole community takes shade.”

I transmit this wording as it appears in the consulted passage, retaining the spelling “Riyab” according to the displayed source. This review establishes the text's location and printed route; it does not independently judge every transmitter or every item in the book attributed to al-Qummi. In literary reflection, branches and shade connect nearness, mercy, and gathering, without turning a description of the unseen into a measurement of earthly plants.

Direct source of the text: Tafsir al-Qummi, commentary on Surah al-Ra'd 28-29 [T8].

The Glad-Tidings Report in al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih

Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi narrates an account concerning the marriage of the Commander of the Faithful and Lady Fatimah, peace be upon them. It includes the Prophet's glad tidings, may God bless him and his family, Ridwan's being commanded to shake Tuba, and slips connected with love of the Ahl al-Bayt and deliverance from the Fire. I consulted report 11 directly in al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih, vol. 2, p. 536 [H25].

The passage begins “Among them: that the Prophet,” without supplying a connected chain before this report. The editor's note mentions corroborating passages in other books; these are references for later research whose routes I have not fully studied here. Some wording differs from al-Mizan, including istaqarrat in al-Khara'ij and istawat in al-Mizan. I therefore attribute each transmission to its source, keeping assessment of routes independent of locating the report.

Direct source: al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih, vol. 2, p. 536, report 11 [H25].

Chapter references: Surah al-Ra'd 28-29; Tafsir al-Qummi, Surah al-Ra'd 29 [T8]; al-Mizan, commentary on Surah al-Ra'd 27-35, exposition and discussion of narrations [T6]; al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih, vol. 2, p. 536, report 11 [H25].

Chapter 70: Zaqqum and Dari'

An Image Opposite to Bliss

Surah al-Saffat, verses 62-68.

"Is that a better welcome, or the tree of Zaqqum?" (62)

"We have made it a trial for the wrongdoers." (63)

"It is a tree that emerges from the depths of Hell," (64)

"its fruit clusters as though they were devils' heads." (65)

"They will surely eat from it and fill their bellies with it." (66)

"Then, on top of it, they will have a mixture of boiling water." (67)

"Then their return will surely be to Hell." (68)

The hospitality offered to the blessed is contrasted with Zaqqum, which emerges from Hell's depths and whose fruit clusters receive a terrifying description. Those punished eat until their bellies are full, followed by boiling drink and return to Hell. The dread of food, drink, and destination meets in one scene.

This image belongs to warning, invoking familiar knowledge of food to reveal the severity of deprivation and torment. I read Zaqqum's descriptions within the account of the Hereafter, distinguishing them from descriptions of plants observed in this world.

Food That Brings No Relief

Surah al-Ghashiyah, verses 6-7.

"They will have no food except dari'," (6)

"which neither nourishes nor relieves hunger." (7)

The food of those punished is described as dari', offering neither nourishment nor relief from hunger. The image's severity lies in reversing what people expect from food: they consume something but find neither nutritional benefit nor the comfort of satisfaction.

Deprivation appears through the absence of the effect a hungry person seeks from food. This is enough to understand dari's place in the scene, while identifying its reality in the Hereafter remains within what the text reports.

The Earthly Name and the Unseen

Some communities may name a plant with a word corresponding to one in texts about the Hereafter, but a shared word does not establish identity. We therefore do not present wild-plant photographs as images of the Hereafter's Zaqqum or dari', nor derive recipes or experiments from them.

The End of the Path

The story began with a grain in the earth and ends with images of reward and punishment. Along the way plants have proved no marginal subject in human life:

they are provision, work, parable, and an occasion for reflection. The lesson remains that people should carry knowledge into conduct worthy of blessing and their responsibility for it.

The Story's Ending and the Question of Use

Surah al-Dukhan, verses 43-46.

"The tree of Zaqqum" (43)

"is the sinner's food," (44)

"like molten metal, boiling in bellies," (45)

"like the boiling of scalding water." (46)

Zaqqum is called the sinner's food, and what occurs in the bellies is likened to boiling molten metal and scalding water. The purpose is to portray severe punishment; these descriptions of the Hereafter should not be applied to an earthly botanical experiment or familiar food properties.

Surah al-Waqi'ah, verses 51-55.

"Then you, the straying deniers," (51)

"will certainly eat from trees of Zaqqum," (52)

"filling your bellies with it," (53)

"then drinking boiling water on top of it," (54)

"drinking as thirst-stricken camels drink." (55)

The straying deniers are addressed: they will eat from Zaqqum until their bellies are full, then drink boiling water like thirst-stricken camels. The needs for food and water follow without bringing relief, completing the warning through reversal of the means of satisfaction and quenching thirst.

The journey's close gathers plants' many Quranic presences: sustenance and blessing, a parable awakening the heart, a witness within a story, and an image of promise and warning. Each receives its significance from its setting, broadening attention from the name to its meaning in human life and destiny.

Returning from this ending to the first grain, the book's questions come together: how did people regard blessing, work with it, and preserve the rights of those sharing its benefits? The conclusion grows from these questions, connecting what we learned on the pages with what we carry into the garden, the table, and people's lives.

Chapter references: Surah al-Saffat 62-68; Surah al-Dukhan 43-46; Surah al-Waqi'ah 51-55; Surah al-Ghashiyah 6-7.

Conclusion: What Has the Story of Plants Taught Me?

Whenever I return to plants, I find them close to human beings in ways I did not see at first. I looked at fruit, then learned to see the tree; I looked at the tree, then noticed soil, water, and the hand that tends it. Reading the Quran and transmitted accounts widened the scene: plants became a doorway to thanking the Creator, understanding aspects of the soul, and thinking about justice among people.

My relationship with this world did not begin with a claim to expertise in all its sciences. It began with affection, nourished by studying agriculture at intermediate school, biology and botany in the secondary science stream, and community health at the Medical Technical Institute in Diwaniyah Governorate. This journey taught me that a good question may be more useful than a hasty answer and that prevention needs truthful knowledge reaching people in language they understand.

I recall here the contribution of my biology teachers, particularly Mr Kamil, biology teacher at Al-Hamza Secondary School, and everyone who brought science close to eye and hand. A small lesson may leave a planting in the soul that continues growing for many years. A teacher may never know that a spoken word became, for a pupil, a doorway to a book, experiment, or useful work.

From Iraq to Australia, agriculture has remained a language of companionship and learning. Yet the garden also taught me will's limits: loving a plant is not enough for it to thrive, and succeeding once does not mean understanding everything. Perhaps this is among the finest things joining science and good conduct: remaining eager for knowledge and ready to correct what once seemed settled.

In this book I have tried to give every kind of knowledge its own name: a verse is a verse; a narration is a narration; commentary is a view attributed to its holder; scientific information can be examined; and I am responsible for the personal reflections I offer. What still needs investigation is recorded in its place, because love of the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them, does not replace truthful transmission from them, and respect for science does not permit exaggerating its results.

If readers leave these pages more attentive to food's blessing, gentler toward the earth, more respectful of workers, and better able to distinguish evidence from assertion, part of the book's purpose will have been fulfilled. I hope plants' story continues in the hands of those who plant, the minds of those who learn, and the hearts of those who give thanks.

O God, make our knowledge beneficial and our deeds righteous. Grant us truthful speech, good use of Your blessings, and fidelity to Your servants' rights. Praise belongs to God, Lord of all worlds, and blessings and peace upon Muhammad and his pure family.

Sayyid Hussam Zaha Murtadha Al-Saraf Al-Husayni

The Story of Plants—2026 Revision.

Appendices

I gathered these appendices to make the main text easier to read and review. Their numbers refer to chapters, and their codes to the sources that follow. They guide readers to the material I have discussed; I hope they help in returning to it and continuing research.

Appendix One: Glossary of Plants and Plant Materials

Abb: a word explained as herbage and pasture, not the scientific name of one species. Chapter 21.

Athl: a name occurring in Sheba's story; its context does not establish that it lacks benefit in all environments. Chapters 18 and 43.

Arak: a name included among transmitted interpretations of khamt, with differing identifications explained. Chapter 18.

Rice: one of al-Kafi's food chapter headings; the main text does not assess its reports in detail. Chapter 47.

Onion: mentioned in Surah al-Baqarah and the subject of a chapter in food reports. Chapters 17, 30, and 48.

Baql: a general name for vegetables in several older contexts, differing from the modern term for legumes. Chapters 17 and 48.

Apple: appears among food chapter headings and reports of Paradise's fruits; it is not attributed to the forbidden tree in the Quran. Chapters 25, 47, and 52.

Fig: mentioned at the beginning of Surah al-Tin, with an al-Kafi report presented alongside its assessment. Chapters 12, 14, 37, and 47.

Garlic: one of two interpretations of fum, also present in food chapters. Chapters 17 and 48.

Grain: a general term for a grain crop according to context; it need not mean wheat in every occurrence. Chapters 4 and 16.

Hintah and qamh: two Arabic names for wheat. Wheat appears as an example in the grain discussion, one interpretation of fum, and a transmitted identification of the forbidden tree without certainty. Chapters 16, 17, and 25.

Henna: a substance mentioned in the discussion of cleanliness, adornment, and plants. Chapter 57.

Mustard: its seed is used to convey comprehensiveness and precision in reckoning. Chapter 20.

Khamt: a name whose identification is disputed, occurring in Sheba's account. Chapters 18 and 43.

Pomegranate: mentioned in descriptions of earthly provision, the Hereafter's bliss, and food reports. The wording of a Paradise-fruit report includes the "amlisi pomegranate." Chapters 15, 47, 52, and 68.

Rayhan: may denote fragrant vegetation or a broader meaning according to context; it is not automatically confined to one species common today. Chapters 16, 21, and 49.

Ginger: appears in the righteous ones' drink; its earthly culinary use does not necessarily correspond to what is described in the Hereafter. Chapter 22.

Olive: tree, fruit, and oil; its name appears in the verse in Surah al-Nur. Chapter 12.

Zaqqum: a tree named in descriptions of punishment; identity with an earthly plant bearing a similar name is not established. Chapters 46 and 70.

Sidr: appears in Surah Saba' and descriptions of bliss; its name connects with the Lote Tree of the Utmost Boundary. Chapters 18, 57, 65, and 68.

Tooth-cleaning stick: appears in the discussion of cleanliness and adornment, distinguishing custom from evidence for an attributed ruling. Chapter 57.

Quince: one of the food chapter headings and a fruit in the first of the two Paradise-fruit reports compared in Chapter 52. Its assessment is given there. Chapters 47 and 52.

Barley: an example used to explain the general meaning of grain. Chapter 16.

Dari': mentioned as the food of those punished. Chapter 70.

Talh: described as clustered in the account of bliss, with disagreement among commentators over identification. Chapter 68.

Tuba: appears in Quranic glad tidings, and reports describe it as a tree in Paradise. Its meaning, narrations, and sources are presented in Chapter 69.

Lentil: mentioned in Surah al-Baqarah, with reports gathered in a dedicated chapter of al-Kafi. Chapters 17, 30, 47, and 52.

Grape: the fruit and vine according to context, appearing in provision and parables. Chapters 13 and 41.

Fum: interpreted as garlic or wheat in the cited commentary. Explanation in Chapter 17; context of the Children of Israel's story in Chapter 30.

Qiththa': among the earth's foods named in Surah al-Baqarah; establishing its modern name requires attention to language and local usage. Chapters 17, 30, and 48.

Gourd: among the familiar explanations of yaqtin, without specifying a particular modern cultivar. Chapters 19 and 32.

Qadb: vegetation cut or harvested, according to the interpretations; a general term that does not identify one plant species. Chapter 21.

Cotton and flax: two plant materials presented as examples in the discussion of clothing and use, with reference to their relevant jurisprudential source. Chapter 58.

Camphor: a name in the description of blissful drink and a material in funeral-preparation rulings; the two contexts are not combined into one use. Chapters 22 and 57.

Linah: the verse's term concerning cutting some palms and retaining others. Chapters 34 and 59.

Banana: one transmitted interpretation of talh, with disagreement in identification preserved. Chapter 68.

Date palm: associated with terms for inflorescence, clusters, fresh dates, and trunk, referring to different parts or conditions. Principal discussions include Chapters 11, 33, 34, and 36.

Rose: appears in reports about fragrant herbs; “rose-red, like oil” is a simile for the sky, not an addition to a list of flowers. Chapters 24 and 49.

Yaqtin: appears in Jonah's story and is commonly interpreted as gourd, without restriction to one modern market variety. Chapters 19 and 32.

Other names in the overview of food chapters: eggplant, purslane, lettuce, chard, celery, leek, coriander, and chicory. Chapter 48. This glossary attributes no therapeutic benefits to them.

Appendix Two: Plant Parts and Descriptions

Seed: a reproductive unit in seed plants containing an embryo and surrounding coverings, sometimes with nutritive tissues. Chapter 4.

Root: an organ whose functions include anchorage and absorption, with varied forms and roles. Chapter 5.

Stem and branch: bear plant organs and participate in transport and support; a branch is a subdivision of the overall structure. Chapter 5.

Leaf: an organ commonly involved in photosynthesis and gas exchange, with differences among plants. Chapter 6.

Flower: a reproductive structure in flowering plants, absent from some other plant groups. Chapter 7.

Fruit: usually develops from the ovary in flowering plants, sometimes with other tissues. Its scientific meaning does not encompass everything called fruit at the table. Chapter 8.

Tal', qinwan, akmam, and sanabil: terms for inflorescence, clusters, sheaths, and ears, retained in their contexts rather than replaced with modern labels without explanation. Chapters 11, 16, and 24.

'Asf, hashim, hutam, and ghutha': descriptions related to different parts, conditions, and images; each verse's context determines their meaning. Chapters 10, 16, 21, 24, and 40.

Terminological note: fruit is not seed; pollination is not fertilization; and the Arabic tu'm for a graft's scion is not ta'am, food. Read these distinctions with their dedicated chapters.

Appendix Three: Guide to Explicit Plant Names in the Verses Used

Fig and olive: Surah al-Tin 1; olive also occurs in Surah al-An'am 99 and 141, Surah al-Nahl 11, Surah al-Nur 35, and Surah 'Abasa 29.

Date palm: Surah al-An'am 99 and 141; Surah al-Nahl 11 and 67; Surah Maryam 23–25; Surah Qaf 10; Surah al-Rahman 11 and 68; Surah 'Abasa 29.

Grape: Surah al-An'am 99; Surah al-Nahl 11 and 67; Surah al-Kahf 32; Surah Ya Sin 34; Surah 'Abasa 28.

Pomegranate: Surah al-An'am 99 and 141; Surah al-Rahman 68.

Greens, qiththa', fum, lentils, and onions: Surah al-Baqarah 61.

Sidr, athl, and khamt: Surah Saba' 16; sidr also in Surah al-Waqi'ah 28; the lote tree in Surah al-Najm 14 and 16.

Yaqtin: Surah al-Saffat 146. Mustard: Surah al-Anbiya' 47; Surah Luqman 16.

Rayhan: Surah al-Rahman 12; Surah al-Waqi'ah 89. Qadb: Surah 'Abasa 28. Abb: Surah 'Abasa 31.

Camphor and ginger: Surah al-Insan 5 and 17.

Talh: Surah al-Waqi'ah 29. Zaqqum: Surah al-Saffat 62; Surah al-Dukhan 43; Surah al-Waqi'ah 52. Dari': Surah al-Ghashiyah 6.

Linah: Surah al-Hashr 5; connected in commentary with palms, while the verse's own term is preserved in documentation.

Qualification of the list: a name's occurrence does not always settle its modern botanical species. The verse's wording does not explicitly identify Tuba as a tree; the tree appears in narrations. The Quran also does not name the species of the forbidden tree, the tree of the call, or the tree of the pledge.

Appendix Four: Guide to General Terms and Plant Scenes

Crops and cultivated fields: food, work, a subject of rights, or an example. See Chapters 1, 16, 28, 31, and 53–56.

Jannah and hadiqah: may mean earthly gardens in context, while jannah may also occur in the promise of the Hereafter. See Chapters 23, 41–43, and 68.

Grain and ears: provision, an image of multiplication, and elements in the vision interpreted by Joseph. See Chapters 4, 16, 28, and 39.

The unnamed tree: in Adam's story, the call to Moses, and the Prophet's pledge. See Chapters 25, 29, and 34.

Leaves, inflorescences, and sheaths: parts and descriptions in different passages. See Chapters 11, 24, and 25.

Pasture and herbage: benefit beings other than humans as well. See Chapters 21 and 62.

Wood, planks, and firewood: materials or parts in use and narrative. See Chapters 24, 26, and 58.

The tree in parable and symbol: not automatically treated as an entry in botanical taxonomy. See Chapters 38, 46, and 69.

Appendix Five: Record of the Narrations Used

This record explains each account's location and the review I completed. When I say I verified its location, I mean I consulted its text or a quotation whose source I have identified. Judgment of its chain is a separate inquiry.

Encouragement to cultivate and plant: al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on agriculture's merit, report 3 [H1]. I reviewed its location and al-Majlisi's judgment in Mir'at al-'Uqul [H17]; see the documentation record below.

Choosing cultivation for the prophets: the same chapter, reports 1 and 2. One route has an unnamed intermediary, and the other contains a raised, disconnected attribution. I present the routes to show what requires investigation, without building a history of all prophets upon them.

Oil and the blessed tree: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on oil and olives, report 1 [H2]. I reviewed the text and its two routes on p. 331 and transmitted al-Majlisi's assessment in Mir'at al-'Uqul [H26], keeping health inquiry in its own domain.

Reports of grapes, pomegranates, and figs: their chapters in the Book of Foods [H3–H5]. I transmitted al-Majlisi's assessments of the grape-cluster account, the pomegranate chapter's fruit-varieties account, and the fig account [H18, H21, H22]. Documentation concerns these specific reports, not all narrations in those chapters.

The Commander of the Faithful's planting and reports of work on the land: al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on emulating the Imams in seeking livelihood, reports 7, 9, 10, 11, and 13 [H6]. I reviewed al-Majlisi's assessments in Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 19, pp. 18–20 [H28], connecting each to its report in Chapters 34, 36, and 37.

The tree in al-Qasi'ah: Nahj al-Balaghah [H7]. I consulted the account's location in the text without exhaustively examining external transmission routes.

The palm trunk's yearning: al-Bayhaqi, al-I'tiqad wa-l-Hidayah ila Sabil al-Rashad [H8]. A comparative reference to a traditional text outside the Imami corpus.

The Yanbu' endowment: al-Kafi, vol. 7, Book of Wills, report 9, pp. 54–55 [H9]. I consulted al-Kafi directly, reviewing the account's beginning, continuation, and charitable condition.

Greens at the table: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on greens, report 2 [H10]. I reviewed al-Majlisi's assessment in Mir'at al-'Uqul, distinguishing it from report 1 [H23]. See Chapter 48.

Lentils and rejection of a circulating number of prophets: chapter on lentils, report 4 [H11]. I transmitted al-Majlisi's assessment, “unknown, and its ending is mursal” [H24], separating the dialogue from the subsequent transmission formula. See Chapter 52.

Paradise's fruits in this world: fruit chapters, reports 1 and 2, pp. 349–350 [H12]. I separated the texts and numbers and transmitted al-Majlisi's assessments from Mir'at al-'Uqul [H20]. See Chapter 52.

Fragrant herbs: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on fragrant herbs [H13]. I reviewed al-Majlisi's judgments on its five reports and separated report 4's bowl scene from report 5's reward [H19].

Water and revival of dead land: al-Kafi, vol. 5, the two relevant chapters [H14, H15]. These are references to two subjects in narration, not rulings extracted from isolated reports.

The earth's blessings in al-Qa'im's time: al-Mufid, al-Irshad, vol. 2, p. 384 [H16]. I reviewed the passage without deriving a date or agricultural prediction.

Tuba and its connection with the Ahl al-Bayt: I directly reviewed Abu 'Ubaydah's account in Tafsir al-Qummi at Surah al-Ra'd 29 [T8] and the glad-tidings account in al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih, vol. 2, p. 536 [H25], using al-Mizan [T6] for interpretive comparison.

Documentation Record: Encouragement to Cultivate and Plant

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on agriculture's merit, report 3 [H1]; explanation in Chapter 53. The route passes through Sayabah from Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him. I reviewed al-Majlisi's assessment in Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 19, p. 331, finding "unknown" [H17]. This transmits his judgment on the report; it is neither independent authentication nor a statement of agreement among all researchers.

Documentation Record: Tending Crops and the Harvest's Due

Location: chapter on agriculture's merit, report 6 [H1]; explanation in Chapter 56. Route: 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, from his father, from al-Nawfali, from al-Sakuni, from Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him. Al-Majlisi's assessment: "weak according to the well-known view, and its ending is mursal," Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 19, p. 332 [H27]. I reviewed the continuation on p. 334 and explained the other transmission formula at its end. I quoted the portion concerning crops without deriving a legal amount for the obligatory due.

Documentation Record: Benefit to Birds and Animals

Location: chapter on agriculture's merit, report 5 [H1]; explanation in Chapter 62. The route includes "from some of our companions," followed by Abu Ja'far, peace be upon him, saying, "My father used to say." Al-Majlisi classified it as "mursal" in Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 19, p. 332 [H27]. I presented the excerpt about animals and birds eating, with its location and the transmitted assessment of its route.

Documentation Record: Oil and the Blessed Tree

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on oil and olives, report 1, p. 331 [H2]; explanation in Chapter 12. The source gives two routes ending with Ibn al-Qaddah from Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him; the second ends with "the same." Al-Majlisi's assessment is "weak according to the well-known view, and its ending is muwaththaq," Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 161 [H26]. I retained the complete assessment and distinguished study of the routes from reading the text's significance.

Documentation Record: Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn's Grape Cluster

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on grapes, report 3 [H3]; explanation in Chapter 13. Route: 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, from his father, from Ibn Abi 'Umayr, from Hisham ibn Salim. I summarized the text while preserving the three repeated acts of giving and eating on the fourth occasion. Al-Majlisi classified it as "hasan" in Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 188 [H21].

Documentation Record: Varieties of Fruit and Pomegranates

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on pomegranates, report 2 [H5]; explanation in Chapter 15. Route: 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, from Harun ibn Muslim, from Mas'adah ibn Ziyad, from Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him. Al-Majlisi's assessment: "hasan or

muwaththaq,” Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 191 [H22]. I preserved the number and the word lawn in transmission without converting them into a scientific count of plant species.

Documentation Record: Carrying and Planting Date Stones

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on emulating the Imams in seeking livelihood, report 9, p. 75 [H6]; explanation in Chapter 36. The route passes through Sahl ibn Ziyad, Ibn Mahbub, and 'Abd Allah ibn Sinan. Al-Majlisi classified it as “weak according to the well-known view,” Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 19, p. 19 [H28]. I quoted “Date palms, God willing” in context without adding numbers from other reports.

Documentation Record: The Spade and Opening the Watercourse

Location: the same chapter, report 11, p. 76 [H6]; explanation in Chapter 37. Route: Muhammad ibn Yahya, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad, from Ibn Sinan, from Isma'il ibn Jabir. Al-Majlisi's assessment: “weak according to the well-known view,” Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 19, p. 19 [H28]. I retained “Ibn Sinan” as in the source and distinguished this from Abu 'Amr al-Shaybani's report 13, classified as “unknown” on p. 20.

Documentation Record: Greens and the Narrator's Ailment

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on greens, report 2 [H10]; explanation in Chapter 48. Route: 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, from his father, from Hanan. Al-Majlisi's assessment: “hasan or muwaththaq,” Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 204 [H23]. I retained the narrator's ailment without naming a disease the account does not identify, reading green hearts within its admonitory imagery.

Documentation Record: Lentils and the Circulating Statement

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on lentils, report 4 [H11]; explanation in Chapter 52. The dialogue is narrated by Muhammad ibn al-Fayd, followed by a formula beginning “It was narrated.” I separated them and transmitted al-Majlisi's judgment: “unknown, and its ending is mursal,” Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 178 [H24].

Documentation Record: The Bowl and Fragrant Herbs

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on fragrant herbs, report 4, p. 525 [H13]; explanation in Chapter 49. The route passes through Ahmad ibn Abi 'Abd Allah, al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Yaqtin, and Yunus ibn Ya'qub. Al-Majlisi classified it as “muwaththaq” in Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 435 [H19]. I preserved mikhdabah's meaning as a vessel and attributed neither a modern species nor a therapeutic effect to the scene.

Documentation Record: The Earth's Blessings in al-Irshad

Location: al-Irshad, vol. 2, p. 384 [H16]; explanation in Chapter 66. The transmission formula is 'Ali ibn 'Uqbah, from his father, without naming an Imam from whom the father narrates. I added no name to the route. The quotation is the opening of a longer account, not its full text or a final assessment of its chain.

Documentation Record: The Fig and the Report's Assessment

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 6, chapter on figs, report 1 [H4]; Chapter 14. I reviewed al-Majlisi's explanation in Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 199 [H18], retaining his composite assessment as written. Further work: detailed study of routes and meaning. This hadith work does not replace medical verification of a therapeutic claim.

Documentation Record: The Charity of the Yanbu' Spring

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 7, Book of Wills, report 9, pp. 54-55 [H9]; Chapter 36. I reviewed the beginning and continuation and quoted the charitable condition directly from the source. I did not exhaust all routes or edition differences.

Documentation Record: The Two Numbers in the Fruit Reports

Location: al-Kafi, vol. 6, pp. 349-350 [H12]; Chapter 52. The first mentions five kinds, the second four; quince appears only in the first. I transmitted al-Majlisi's assessments from Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, p. 187 [H20]. Further work: verifying cultivar names and variant readings and comparing other routes.

Documentation Record: Tuba in Tafsir al-Qummi

Location: Tafsir al-Qummi, Surah al-Ra'd 29, Abu 'Ubaydah's account [T8]; Chapter 69. I directly reviewed the text and route in the digital edition, citing surah and verse without assigning a page to an edition I did not consult. This verification does not cover every Tuba report or assess all the book's chains.

Documentation Record: The Glad Tidings in al-Khara'ij

Location: al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih, vol. 2, p. 536, report 11 [H25]; Chapter 69. I directly reviewed the digital text and compared it with al-Mizan's quotation [T6]. The passage supplies no chain for this account; investigating routes and corroborating reports cited in its note remains separate work.

Appendix Six: Disagreements in Identification and Meaning

Fum: garlic or wheat in the transmitted commentary; I made no final preference between them.

Qiththa': connecting the old name with a modern crop requires attention to language and local usage.

Khamt: Majma' al-Bayan transmits from Abu 'Ubaydah a general description of bitter, thorny trees [T9], while al-Tabari selects arak [T10]. Chapter 18 presents the difference without asserting a match to modern botanical classification.

Qadb: explained as cut vegetation, with disagreement over its use.

Abb: explained as herbage and pasture, not necessarily a single species.

Rayhan: its breadth varies with context; it is not automatically equated with one aromatic plant.

Yaqtin: commonly explained as gourd, while the name's general scope remains under discussion and no modern cultivar is specified.

Talh: commentators transmit banana and other interpretations; the disagreement appears in the chapter on Paradise's bliss.

Fig and olive in the oath: the apparent meanings are the familiar plants; views connecting them with places are also transmitted and attributed to commentary.

The cursed tree: disagreement between an interpretation connected with Zaqqum and a historical symbolic interpretation. Al-Mizan's view and comparison appear in Chapter 46.

Tuba: a linguistic meaning within glad tidings and accounts of a tree in Paradise. Chapter 69 distinguishes Quranic meaning from narration.

The forbidden tree: the Quran gives no species name. The popularity of apples in illustrations is not Quranic evidence.

Rose-red, like oil: a simile describing the sky, not recorded as establishing a flower species.

Appendix Seven: Reports Requiring Broader Investigation

Health-benefit reports concerning figs, pomegranates, and others: I reviewed al-Majlisi's assessments of the fig account and the fruit-varieties and pomegranate account in Chapters 14 and 15 [H18, H22]. Study of other routes, meanings, and benefit reports remains incomplete; I adopted no treatment on the basis of these narrations.

Accounts of fruit varieties attributed to Paradise: I separated al-Kafi's first two texts and transmitted al-Majlisi's assessments in Chapter 52 [H20]. Cultivar names, edition variants, and other routes still need investigation. I did not use the reports as a basis for crop history.

The detailed-reward report concerning roses and fragrant herbs: I identified it as report 5 of the chapter and transmitted al-Majlisi's classification as "mursal" [H19]. Its routes and corroborating accounts still require a survey, distinct from report 4, which he classified as "muwaththaq."

Tuba reports: I directly reviewed Abu 'Ubaydah's account in Tafsir al-Qummi [T8] and the glad-tidings account in al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih [H25]. I continue investigating the glad-tidings report's routes and corroboration referenced in the al-Khara'ij note and other accounts with differing details.

Different identifications of the forbidden tree and the tree of the call: a species is not established merely by transmitting a commentator's view; its identification remains outside the main text's categorical claims.

Circulating numbers in palm planting or food virtues: wording, route, and the number's intended meaning need to be established before drawing a historical conclusion.

Listing a report here does not judge it fabricated or false. Incomplete investigation differs from proven falsehood, just as sound general meaning differs from established attribution.

Appendix Eight: Prophets, Figures, and Scenes

Adam and his wife: the Garden, tree, leaves, and repentance. Chapter 25.

Noah: the Ark and planks, and the use of growth to describe human origins. Chapter 26.

Abraham, Hagar, and Ishmael: the valley without crops and provision from fruits. Chapter 27.

Joseph: ears of grain and planning for hardship years. Brief discussion in Chapter 16; the story followed in Chapter 28.

Moses: the tree and staff, and the Children of Israel's request for the earth's food. Chapters 29 and 30.

David and Solomon: the field damaged by sheep and justice in judgment. Chapter 31.

Jonah: the gourd after the ordeal. Chapters 19 and 32.

Mary and Jesus: the palm and fresh dates in the birth scene. Chapters 11 and 33.

Muhammad, may God bless him and his family: the pledge beneath the tree and accounts of signs and work. Chapters 34 and 35.

The Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him: planting, work, and endowment. Chapter 36. His presence in the greens report: Chapter 48; in Tuba reports: Chapter 69.

The Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them: reports of work, food, fragrant herbs, and Tuba. Chapters 37, 47-49, and 69.

Job, Salih, and Shu'ayb: the bundle, palms, and People of the Thicket. Additional scenes after Chapter 37.

Luqman: the mustard seed in counsel. Chapter 20. The owner of two gardens, the garden's owners, and Sheba: Chapters 41-43.

Appendix Nine: Plant Parables and Their Purposes

The good and corrupt trees: steadfastness and effect contrasted with lack of stability. Surah Ibrahim 24-27; Chapter 38.

Grain and ears: multiplying the effect of giving. Surah al-Baqarah 261; Chapter 39.

Smooth rock and soil: exposure of an action that does not withstand trial. Surah al-Baqarah 264; Chapter 39.

The garden on a hill: giving's effect with a sound motive. Surah al-Baqarah 265; Chapter 39.

The garden struck by a whirlwind: loss at a time of need. Surah al-Baqarah 266; Chapter 39.

Vegetation becoming dry fragments or broken stalks: worldly adornment's passing. Surah Yunus 24, Surah al-Kahf 45, and Surah al-Hadid 20; Chapter 40.

The owner of two gardens: conceit in wealth and reconsidering blessing's meaning. Surah al-Kahf 32-44; Chapter 41.

The garden's owners: excluding the needy and exposing selfishness. Surah al-Qalam 17-33; Chapter 42.

The crop standing upright on its stalks: growth and support within their Quranic context. Surah al-Fath 29; Chapter 44.

Reviving earth after its death: reasoning toward the power to resurrect. Surah al-Hajj 5-7 and Surah Fussilat 39; Chapter 67.

Appendix Ten: Accessible Scientific Terms

Germination: the resumption of growth of the seed's embryo under suitable conditions; not a synonym for every increase in plant size.

Photosynthesis: conversion of light energy into chemical energy in the formation of organic compounds. Chapters 3 and 6 explain its general outline and relationship with food and growth.

Cellular respiration: processes through which a cell obtains energy from compounds; photosynthesis does not eliminate these processes in plants.

Pollination: transfer of pollen to its appropriate receptive location in the plant; it ordinarily precedes fertilization.

Fertilization: fusion of gametes, distinct from the mere arrival of a pollen grain.

Sexual reproduction: reproduction involving gamete fusion and offspring carrying genetic material from the parents.

Vegetative propagation: producing plants from vegetative parts, including through cuttings and layering.

Rootstock and scion: the two components of a graft; the rootstock supports the scion after a suitable union forms.

Grafting: joining compatible plant parts; it is not sexual hybridization.

Species and cultivar: not synonyms; a species may contain several cultivated varieties. Different fruit colors do not alone establish different species.

Habitat: the environment in which an organism naturally lives. Conserving it within its habitat differs from preserving specimens elsewhere.

Biodiversity: encompasses organisms' diversity, variation, and relationships within living systems; it is not reducible to the number of trees planted.

Water potential: a measure of water's energy state; differences help explain its direction of movement between media and plant parts. [S11]

Transpiration: plants' loss of water as vapor, much of it through leaf stomata. [S11]

Sources and sinks: parts exporting organic products and parts receiving them for growth or storage; an organ's role may change with its stage. [S11]

Tropism: a directional growth response associated with a stimulus such as light or gravity; distinguished from figurative descriptions of plant intention. [S12]

Definition references: [S2, S3, S6, S8, E1, E4]. These simplified definitions serve this book and are not a comprehensive specialist dictionary.

Appendix Eleven: Educational Illustrations

The following illustrations explain basic ideas from the main text. They are original simplified diagrams, not anatomical images of a particular species or representations of unseen trees.

Figure 1: Parts of a flowering plant, connecting root, stem, leaf, flower, and fruit with their general locations.

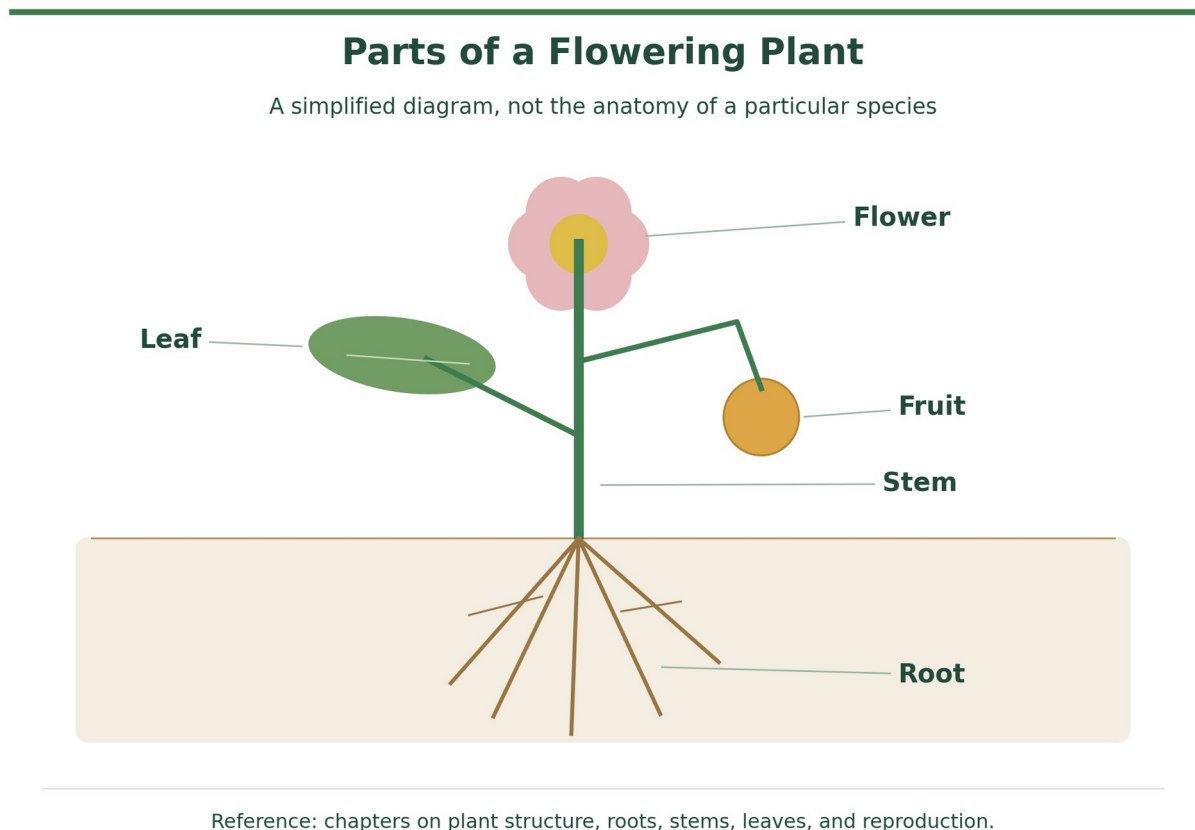


Figure 2: Life cycle of a flowering plant reproducing by seed, showing a common pathway without generalizing to all plants or reproductive methods.

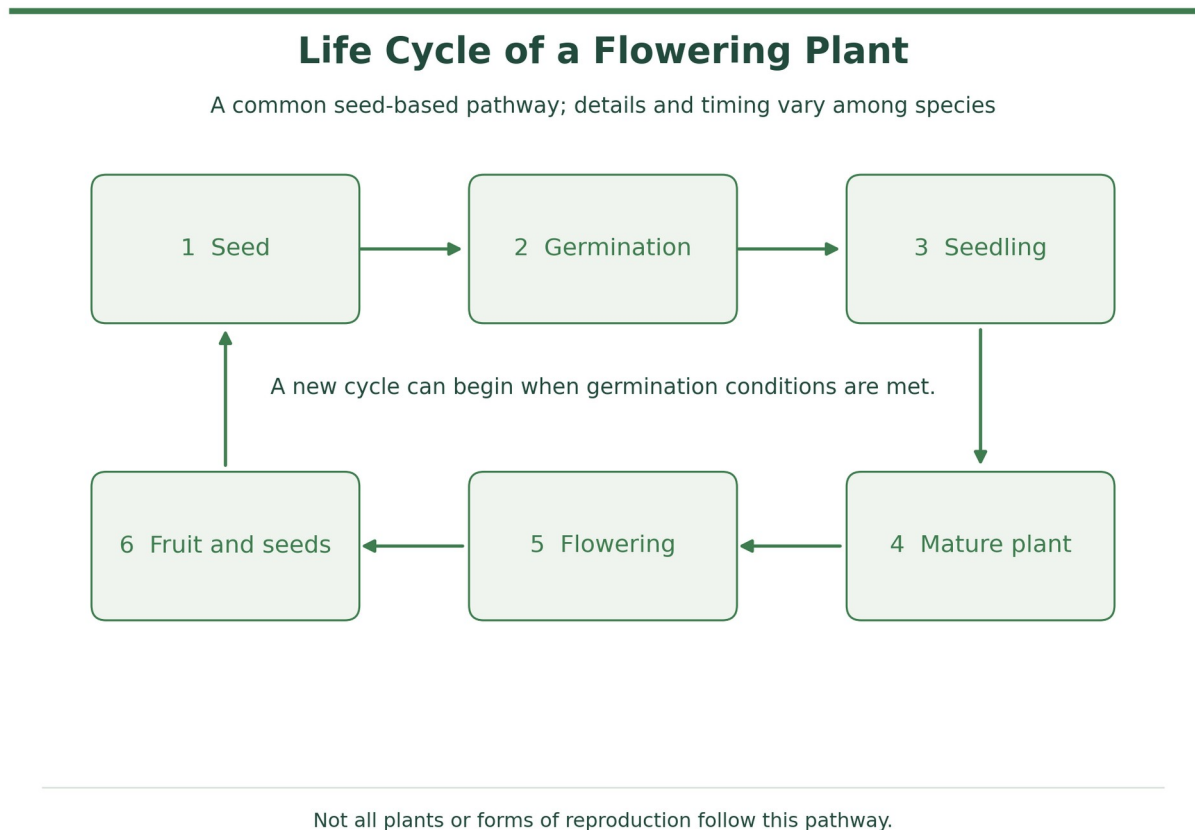
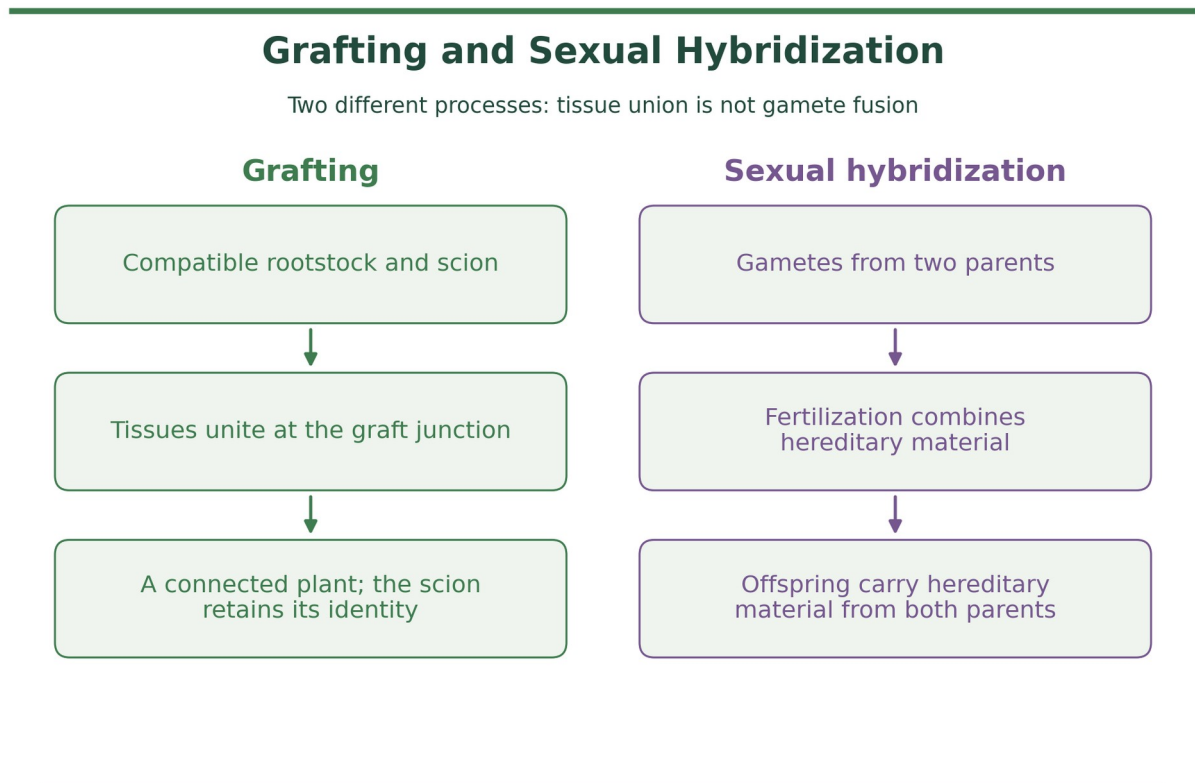


Figure 3: The difference between grafting and sexual hybridization, distinguishing tissue union from gamete fusion.



Reference: chapters on reproduction, heredity, and grafting; not every graft forms a new variety.

Appendix Twelve: Between Older Classification and Modern Terminology

Classification by form: trees, shrubs, and herbs describe growth appearance but do not alone determine taxonomic relationships.

Classification by use: grains, vegetables, fruit, fodder, and fragrances are grouped by human need; members of one group may belong to different botanical groups.

Classification by lifespan: annual, biennial, and perennial concern completion of the life cycle and persistence of the plant, not classification by stem form.

Classification by reproduction: describing a plant as seed-bearing or flowering differs from a farmer's description of a fruit tree. Not all plants produce flowers or fruits in the scientific sense.

Species and cultivar: each identifies a different descriptive level; counting cultivars does not necessarily equal counting species.

Fungi and truffles: may appear beside plants in food and natural-material books, but adjacency does not make them plants in modern taxonomy. Algae is a broad name for groups not all reducible to one simple category.

Scientific names in the Arabic edition: I chose to present the book in Arabic and used Arabic terms in explanation. I did not insert speculative Latin equivalents for disputed words. If I add a precise scientific identification in a later revision, I will explain its evidence and source.

Practical rule: retain the old term in quotation, explain it in context, then investigate its possible connection with a modern term. I preserve this order before assigning a modern identity to a name in the text.

Appendix Thirteen: Reading a Report with Medical Content

First question: where does the report appear? Record book, chapter, report number, or page according to the edition used.

Second question: how did it reach us? Distinguish direct transmission from quotation through another book and note an unnamed intermediary or raised, disconnected attribution without claiming a complete evaluation of transmitters.

Third question: what substance is intended? Establish the plant's name, part, and form used; do not substitute a concentrated extract for food.

Fourth question: what kind of statement is it? An action narrated, dietary etiquette, guidance for a particular condition, or a general therapeutic claim?

Fifth question: what are the medical evidence's limits? Distinguish laboratory research or individual observation from a clinical result appropriate to the question. Do not generalize a finding to a different substance or condition.

Sixth question: what about safety? Consider possible interactions and ingredients and discuss the case with a specialist when needed. Familiarity or natural origin is insufficient by itself for judgment.

Brief application: the fig account in [H4] provides material for inquiry but does not permit labeling a commercial product as replacing all medicines. A claim's formulation should be narrower than its evidence, not broader.

This record is a tool for editing and reflection, not for diagnosing disease or determining treatment.

Appendix Fourteen: Authorship, Revision, and the Edition's Limits

Authorship—2020 CE: I completed *The Story of Plants* on 13 Jumada al-Ula 1441 AH — 9 January 2020 CE, the anniversary of Lady Fatimah al-Zahra's martyrdom, peace be upon her, according to the second narration.

First revision—2023 CE: I completed it on 25 Rajab 1444 AH—17 February 2023 CE, returning to the text and sources and adding what my experience and knowledge had gained since authorship.

2026 revision: I completed it on 8 Rabi' al-Akhir 1448 AH—20 September 2026 CE, expanding the research, reviewing texts and references, and organizing appendices and indices.

Book structure: I arranged the material into seventy chapters in eight parts, preceded by the dedication, my opening statement, the introduction, and two revision statements, and followed by additional scenes, a conclusion, fourteen appendices, educational illustrations, sources, and indices.

Expanded discussions: in the 2026 revision I added expanded readings to every chapter concerning precise scientific observation, verse context, narrative sequence, levels of reasoning from reports, and rights in benefiting from plants. I added scientific and health references and reviewed the glossary and the connection between headings and their contents entries.

Care for textual evidence: I expanded Quranic and transmitted readings and provided documentation records in Appendix Five. I reviewed selected wording in al-Kafi and al-Irshad, transmitted al-Majlisi's assessments of particular reports from their locations in Mir'at al-'Uqul, and updated references and indices accordingly.

The Quranic text: I quoted the cited verses in full with their numbers and checked them against the Tanzil project's digital text [Q1]. I placed each passage where it is explained in the introduction, chapters, and additional scenes, following it with its context and sequence of events for stories, or its imagery's meaning for parables and signs of creation. I distinguished Quranic text from commentary and narration and kept the contents as a guide to chapters and discussions.

Comparison of narrations and commentaries: I consulted al-Kafi directly for the Yanbu' endowment, reviewed the Tuba account in Tafsir al-Qummi, and transmitted al-Majlisi's assessments of fig, fruit, and fragrant-herb reports with their locations. I separated the two fruit reports differing in number and wording, expanded comparison of khamt's meaning, and completed related documentation and references.

Language and narrative: I reviewed the book from its opening matter to Chapter 70 and the conclusion, refining repeated expressions and connecting discussions with clearer transitions and cross-references. I preserved the approach of *The Story of*

Guidance and The Story of the Universe: continuous narrative, attention to sources, and clarity about personal reflection. I also reviewed terminology, chapter and subsection titles, and their consistency with the contents.

Assessing reports: I reviewed al-Majlisi's judgments on the grape cluster, fruit varieties and pomegranate, Hanan at the table, and lentils. I then completed comparison of his assessments of the oil report's two routes, the harvest-right and animal-and-bird benefit reports, and five reports concerning work, water management, and planting date stones [H26-H28]. I directly consulted the glad-tidings account in al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih and gave it a documentation record. I attribute these judgments to their authors and state their locations and the limits of my investigation of transmission routes.

What I continue to investigate: comparing hadiths against authoritative editions, completing study of their routes, and broadening interpretive comparison at points of disagreement. I have identified these in the investigation record so readers know what I reached and what remains open.

My work's limits: I do not claim to have surveyed every narration in every book or authenticated every report I transmit, nor do I present plant benefits as medical treatment. I welcome what helps establish and understand the text and regard correction as part of my responsibility for this book.

Correction and review: I record substantive changes with their reasons and sources and update indices when material moves or discussion expands. My aim is to make the book more precise and useful and retract a statement whenever its error becomes clear to me.

Sources and References

I linked the following codes to references in the main text and added links to electronic source titles so they can be opened from the digital edition. I give location and edition details that I verified and include only sources I consulted and used in the research.

Source-code key: Q denotes the digital Quranic text; T, commentary; H, hadith, biography, and report documentation; F, jurisprudence; S, botany and biology; E, environment; M, health and food; and A, my biography and experience. The number identifies the source's position within its group: [S1] is the first scientific reference, not a verse or chapter number.

1. The Holy Quran

The Holy Quran; references in the main text give surah and verse number. I used an electronic Quran display to review selected passages, while the Quranic text remains the foundation of the argument.

I checked fourteen Quranic passages against King Saud University's electronic Quran display, then compared the chapters' Quranic quotations with the Tanzil project's digital text [Q1]. I gave verses in full at their points of citation with surah names and verse numbers.

[Q1] Tanzil Project, digital Quranic text, version 1.1, in fully vocalized simple script. I used the text version with surah and verse numbers to reproduce quotations in full without altering their wording.

Copyright for preparation of the Tanzil digital text is reserved, 2007–2021. License: Creative Commons Attribution 3.0. The text was carefully prepared and verified and is continually reviewed by the project's specialists. Verbatim copying and distribution are permitted; alteration is not permitted. Its source must be identified and linked to Tanzil for updates, and the copyright notice retained on copies and files containing a substantial portion. I include these details here with the source link and license notice.

2. Quranic Commentaries

[T1] Al-Tabrisi, *Majma' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Quran*, commentary on Surah al-Tin. Used to explain interpretations of fig and olive.

[T2] Al-Tabataba'i, *al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Quran*, Surah 'Abasa 17–42, especially food vocabulary in verses 24–32.

[T3] Al-Tabataba'i, *al-Mizan*, commentary on Surah al-Baqarah 61, concerning qiththa', fum, and the request for the earth's food.

[T4] Al-Tabataba'i, *al-Mizan*, commentary on Surah al-Isra' 60, concerning the cursed tree and its readings.

[T5] Al-Qurtubi, *al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Quran*, commentary on Surah al-Isra' 60. A source for comparing views on the cursed tree.

[T6] Al-Tabataba'i, al-Mizan, commentary on Surah al-Ra'd 27-35 and its discussion of Tuba narrations. I compared its reference to al-Khara'ij with the direct passage [H25] and consulted Abu 'Ubaydah's account in Tafsir al-Qummi directly [T8].

[T7] Al-Qurtubi, al-Jami' li-Ahkam al-Quran, commentary on Surah al-Waqi'ah 29, concerning interpretations of clustered talh.

[T8] Tafsir al-Qummi, attributed to 'Ali ibn Ibrahim, commentary on Surah al-Ra'd 28-29, Abu 'Ubaydah's account from Abu 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him, concerning Tuba. Cited by surah and verse in the consulted digital text.

[T9] Al-Tabrisi, Majma' al-Bayan, commentary on Surah Saba' 16, discussion of readings and their grounds, concerning khamt and the view transmitted from Abu 'Ubaydah.

[T10] Al-Tabari, Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ay al-Quran, commentary on Surah Saba' 16, interpreting khamt as arak. A source for comparing views.

3. Hadith and Narrative Collections

[H1] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 5, Book of Livelihood, chapter on agriculture's merit, especially reports 1-3 and 5-6. Electronic chapter numbers are not printed-edition page numbers.

[H2] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, chapter on oil and olives, report 1, p. 331 in the consulted digital edition; includes the second route referred to by "the same."

[H3] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, chapter on grapes. Chapter 13 also refers to the subsequent chapter on raisins.

[H4] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, chapter on figs, report 1.

[H5] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, chapter on pomegranates.

[H9] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 7, Book of Wills, chapter on the charities and wills of the Prophet, may God bless him and his family, Fatimah, and the Imams, peace be upon them, report 9, pp. 54-55: the Yanbu' spring account. I consulted the text directly.

Continuation of [H9]: al-Kafi, vol. 7, p. 55, the charitable declaration and conditions governing its disposal.

[H10] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, chapter on greens, reports 1 and 2. I also used the book's contents to map vegetable names.

[H11] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, chapter on lentils, reports 1-4.

[H12] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Foods, fruit chapters, reports 1 and 2, pp. 349-350. I compared their numbers, wording, and fruit lists.

Continuation of [H12]: al-Kafi, vol. 6, p. 350, continuation of the second report concerning four kinds.

[H13] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 6, Book of Dress, Adornment, and Courtesy, chapter on fragrant herbs, including reports 4 and 5. I reviewed the bowl-and-herbs scene on p. 525 of the digital display.

[H14] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 5, Book of Livelihood, chapter on selling water and withholding its surplus.

- [H15] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 5, Book of Livelihood, chapter on reviving dead land.
- [H17] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul fi Sharh Akhbar Al al-Rasul, vol. 19, p. 331, chapter on agriculture's merit. Consulted for the assessment of the particular third report, checking chapter title and report number.
- [H18] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul fi Sharh Akhbar Al al-Rasul, vol. 22, chapter on figs, p. 199: assessment of report 1 and the other route in the passage.
- [H19] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, chapter on fragrant herbs, p. 435: assessments of reports 1–5 and explanation of mikhdabah.
- [H20] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, fruit chapters, p. 187: assessments of reports 1 and 2 and notes on some names' edition variants.
- [H21] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, chapter on grapes, p. 188: assessment of report 3.
- [H22] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, chapter on pomegranates, p. 191: assessment of report 2.
- [H23] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, chapter on greens, p. 204: assessments of reports 1 and 2.
- [H24] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, chapter on lentils, p. 178: assessment of report 4 and its ending's transmission formula.
- [H26] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 22, chapter on oil and olives, p. 161: assessment of report 1 with its two routes.
- [H27] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 19, chapter on agriculture's merit, p. 332: assessments of reports 5 and 6. I also reviewed report 6's continuation and its ending's transmission formula on p. 334.
- [H28] Al-Majlisi, Mir'at al-'Uqul, vol. 19, chapter on the duty to emulate the Imams, peace be upon them, in seeking livelihood: p. 18, report 7; p. 19, reports 9–11; p. 20, report 13. Each assessment is quoted at the corresponding account.

4. Biography and Accounts of the Ahl al-Bayt

- [H6] Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, vol. 5, chapter on the duty to emulate the Imams, peace be upon them, in seeking livelihood, pp. 75–76 in the displayed digital edition; reports 7, 9–11, and 13.
- Continuation of [H6]: p. 76, containing the continuation of land-work accounts and reports of the spade and water management.
- [H16] Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Irshad fi Ma'rifat Hujaj Allah 'ala al-'Ibad, vol. 2, p. 384, section on al-Qa'im's conduct when he rises, peace be upon him: 'Ali ibn 'Uqbah's report from his father.

5. Eloquence and Proofs of Prophethood

- [H25] Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi, al-Khara'ij wa-l-Jara'ih, edited by the Imam al-Mahdi Institution under Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Muwahhid al-Abtahi's supervision, vol. 2, p. 536, report 11. I consulted the glad-tidings passage directly.

[H7] Nahj al-Balaghah, compiled by al-Sharif al-Radi, sermon al-Qasi'ah, the tree account with the Prophet, may God bless him and his family. The sermon is cited by name for ease of reference despite differing edition numbering.

[H8] Al-Bayhaqi, al-I'tiqad wa-l-Hidayah ila Sabil al-Rashad: the palm trunk's yearning among proofs of prophethood. A traditional comparative source; citation does not imply adoption of all its judgments or contents.

6. Jurisprudential Sources

[F1] Sayyid 'Ali al-Husayni al-Sistani, al-Fatawa al-Muyassarah, discussion of prostration; version on the official website.

[F2] Sayyid al-Sistani, al-Masa'il al-Muntakhabah, washing the deceased; revised version on the official website.

[F3] Sayyid al-Sistani, Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 1, fifth section of funeral preparation: the two fresh twigs; corrected edition, 1445 AH.

[F4] Sayyid al-Sistani, Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 2, Book of Muzara'ah; corrected edition, 1445 AH.

[F5] Sayyid al-Sistani, Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 2, Book of Musaqat; corrected edition, 1445 AH.

[F6] Sayyid al-Sistani, Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 1, rulings on crop zakat; corrected edition, 1445 AH.

[F7] Sayyid al-Sistani, Minhaj al-Salihin, vol. 2, Book of Reviving Dead Land, especially land definitions and rulings on adjacent protected space and branches.

7. Botany and Biology

The principal educational source for the following scientific codes is Mary Ann Clark, Matthew Douglas, and Jung Choi, Biology, second edition, OpenStax, 2018; electronic version available during preparation of the 2026 revision. The Arabic book's wording is independent and concise, and the educational illustrations are original.

[S1] The preceding reference, section 31.2: The Soil.

[S2] The preceding reference, section 8.1: Overview of Photosynthesis.

[S3] The preceding reference, section 32.1: Reproductive Development and Structure; and the following section on pollination and fertilization.

Continuation of [S3]: section 32.2, Pollination and Fertilization.

[S4] The preceding reference, section 30.3: Roots.

[S5] The preceding reference, section 30.2: Stems.

[S6] The preceding reference, section 30.1: The Plant Body.

[S7] The preceding reference, section 30.4: Leaves.

[S8] The preceding reference, section 32.3: Asexual Reproduction and Propagation Methods.

[S9] The preceding reference, section 24.1: Characteristics of Fungi; supporting the distinction between adjacency in food books and modern taxonomy.

[S10] The preceding reference, section 26.1: Evolution of Seed Plants; supporting precision in distinguishing general names from plant groups.

[S11] Biology reference, section 30.5: Transport of Water and Solutes in Plants; explaining water potential and xylem and phloem transport pathways.

[S12] Biology reference, section 30.6: Plant Sensory Systems and Responses; distinguishing stimulus responses from literary descriptions.

8. Environment and Diversity Conservation

[E1] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Biodiversity Overview; official website.

[E2] The same organization, Forests and Water module, Sustainable Forest Management Toolbox.

[E3] The same organization, Soils Overview, Land, Soils, and Water program.

[E4] Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Millennium Seed Bank Partnership; used to explain conservation outside habitats and its purposes without quoting changing statistics.

9. Health and Food

[M1] National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, US National Institutes of Health, "Natural Doesn't Necessarily Mean Safer, or Better"; the Arabic source list uses a descriptive translation of the title.

[M2] The same center, professional digest on herb-drug interactions, December 2024. Used to explain differing evidence and the need to consider interactions.

[M3] World Health Organization, Healthy Diet, 26 January 2026; official Arabic version.

[M4] National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, dietary and herbal supplements; an official reference on limits of generalizing study results to marketed products and on possible interactions. The Arabic edition uses a descriptive title for the original material.

10. My Biography and Experience

[A1] The biographical page on my personal website. In the introduction I recount my intermediate, secondary, and community-health studies at the Medical Technical Institute in Diwaniyah, mentioning my teachers and connection with preventive medical research.

[A2] The agriculture page on my personal website. I present my gardening, grafting, and educational work, with dated events from 2021–2023. I cite it when discussing my experience, distinguishing it from hadith and medical research sources.

Indices

The following indices use chapter numbers and section titles so that they remain useful in an editable document whose pages may change. They are thematic indices of material treated in this edition. The general contents provide access to all main and subsidiary headings.

Index One: Quranic Verses

- Surah al-Baqarah: 25, 35-39, 57-61, 126, 168, 172, 205, 261-266. Discussion: 16, 17, 25, 27, 30, 39, 59, 60, 68.**
- Surah Al 'Imran: 42. Discussion: 33.**
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Ms Umm Du'a, my first teacher of the Holy Quran: dedication. The honored Shaykh 'Abd al-Rasul al-Sudani al-Nasiri, the first shaykh with whom I studied at Najaf's seminary: dedication. Shaykh Ahmad al-Wa'ili: dedication.

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The Story of Plants

From the Signs of Creation to the Scenes of the Hereafter



In this book I tell the story of plants, from seeds and roots to flowers and fruits, tracing their presence in the Holy Quran, the stories of the prophets, and the narrations of the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them.

I connect this journey with food, health, agriculture, and the environment, before turning to accounts of trees and fruits in the unseen and the Hereafter, with attention to sources and the limits of their evidence.



Seventy Chapters in Eight Parts

By the Researcher and Writer

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