



KHUTBAH NOTES

for

IMAMS

Water

Khutbah 3

Water: Tap or bottle?

One of Allah's greatest wonders is water.

It is He who sends down water for you from the sky. Some of it you drink, and the shrubs that you feed to your animals come from it. With it He grows for you corn, olives, palms, vines, and all kinds of fruit. There truly is a sign in this for those who reflect.

Qur'an 16:10-11

We bring down water from the sky for you to drink—you do not control its sources.

Qur'an 15:22

Although human beings play a part in storing and distributing water, ultimately it comes from Allah and He controls when and if it comes.

We sent water down from the sky in due measure and lodged it in the earth—We have the power to take it all away if We so wish—

Qur'an 23:18

Sweet, flowing water is one of the blessings of al-Jannah, - *tajri min taḥtiḥā-l-anḥār* - and 'a scalding, dark, foul fluid' (38:57) is one of the horrors of al-Jahannam.

Allah also has the power to exceed His due measure, and send floods and destruction by water as he did to destroy the people of Nuh.

We opened the gates of the sky with torrential water, burst the earth with gushing springs: the waters met for a preordained purpose.

54:11-12

Human beings have only limited power over water. Their part is

- not to waste it by over-use,
- to distribute it fairly to all.
- and to try and make sure it remains clean and pure, as Allah made it, not to pollute it

Even in these three responsibilities we humans are failing, through our carelessness, extravagance and injustice. Only 2.75% of the earth's water is fresh rather than sea water and much of this is either polluted or drying up from over-use. Unpolluted fresh water accounts for only 0.003% of total water available globally. Much of this is used extravagantly by some at the expense of others.

Average household water use for washing and drinking in the UK is about 150 litres a person daily, but we consume about 30 times as much in "virtual water", used in the production of imported food and textiles. Taking virtual water into account, each of us soaks up 4,645 litres a day;
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/aug/20/water.food1>

Most Africans residing in rural areas use, on average, only 30 to 40 litres of water per day for domestic consumption, the United Nations estimates. Much of this is still carried by women from wells and pools far away, taking many hours and a heavy toll on their health.

http://www.data360.org/dsg.aspx?Data_Set_Group_Id=757

In Bangladesh the average is more like 50 litres. In Somalia it is 98 litres <http://www.populstat.info/Africa/somaliag.htm>

“Three things cannot be denied anyone: water, pasture and fire”

(Hadith: Ibn Maajah, 2473)

“The Muslims are partners in three things: water, pasture and fire, and their price is haraam”

(Hadith: Ibn Maajah, 2472)

Water is considered to be a basic human right and many charities dig wells and work in other ways to provide water for deprived communities.

On 28 July 2010, through [Resolution 64/292](https://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml), the United Nations General Assembly explicitly recognized the human right to water and sanitation and acknowledged that clean drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realization of all human rights.

http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml

TAP WATER OR BOTTLED WATER?

Consider the water you drink – was it you who brought it down from the rain-cloud or We? If We wanted, We could make it bitter: will you not be thankful?

Q. 56:68–70

... We made every living thing from water ...

21:30

Up to 60% of the human body is water, the brain is composed of 70% water, and the lungs are nearly 90% water. Lean muscle tissue contains about 75% water by weight, as is the brain; body fat contains 10% water and bone has 22% water. About 83% of our blood is water, which helps digest our food, transport waste, and control body temperature. Each day humans must replace 2.4

litres of water, some through drinking and the rest taken by the body from the foods eaten.

<http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/propertyyou.html>

Drinking enough water is important to health. It helps to absorb the nourishment from our food and cleans out impurities from inside our bodies, but it can also be hazardous if the water carries infections or pollutants.

In some countries the standard of public tap water is unreliable, and so people resort to bottled water to try to remain healthy, thinking that it is cleaner, straight from a spring. In some places, though, even spring water carries poisons, like the natural arsenic in parts of Bangladesh.

In the UK and other developed countries, regulations for public drinking water are higher than those for bottled water.

Tap water has to conform to the strict regulations set by the EU and the UK governments. Surface water in London goes through ten different processes to clean and disinfect it, ranging from filtration to chlorine disinfection and ammoniation to prolong the effects of the disinfection process. Bottled water does not have to conform to the same regulations and has been found in some cases to contain much higher levels of bacteria - up to 100 times above the permitted limit.

A study in Canada, done by Crest Laboratories is one example:

Microbiologist Dr Sonish Azam, of Crest Laboratories in Canada, said bottled water did not live up to its claims or purity.

She said: "Heterotrophic bacteria counts in some of the bottles were found to be in revolting figures of one hundred times more than the permitted limit."

Dr Azam said tighter controls needed to be put on bottled water manufacturers. "Bottled water is not expected to be free from microorganisms but the [level] observed in this study is surprisingly very high," she said.

Dr Azam said there was no need to drink bottled water if tap water was of a good quality. "Unsurprisingly, the consumer assumes that since bottled water carries a price tag, it is purer and safer than most tap water," she added.

Dr Azam said that the bacteria in bottled water is unlikely to cause disease. "But the high levels of bacteria in bottled water could pose a risk for vulnerable populations such as pregnant women, infants, immuno-compromised patients and the elderly," she said.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/7763038/Bottled-water-contains-more-bacteria-than-tap-water.html>

In addition, public tap water is far less expensive to drink than bottled water. We all have to pay water rates, so why spend extra money on bottled water?

It is an Islamic virtue to provide drinking water fountains - *sabil* - for the public and even for animals. Many of these were protected by *awqaf* (religious endowments), with elaborate and exquisitely detailed deeds of trust, many of which have survived. Water troughs used to be provided in UK villages when there were more animals about and some can still be seen, even in old parts of London.

This tradition of providing public water sources is still in evidence. In some UK parks, and in Singapore's ultra-modern airport, there are free drinking water fountains donated by charities. By way of contrast, in London airports, machines dispense bottled water at inflated prices, especially at departure gates where there is no other source.

Not everyone knows that plastic bottles are made from crude oil / petroleum. Imagine a water bottle filled a quarter of the way up with oil. That's about how much oil was needed to produce the bottle.

Bottled Water is Wasteful

- 1.5 million barrels of oil are used per year to produce plastic water bottles. This is enough oil to fuel 100,000 cars for a full year. (EPI 2006)
- For every gallon of water that goes into plastic bottles, two gallons of water is wasted during production. This adds to the world's water shortage crisis.
- The growth in bottled water production has created water shortages for farmers worldwide as large multi-national corporations privatise public water sources. The water shortage means that farmers produce less crops, adding to the world's food crisis affecting a billion people every day.
- Bottled water costs between 240 to 10,000 times more than tap water. (EPI, 2006)
- Thames Water calculated that bottled water in London costs 1,000 times more than that from the tap. (Thames Water, 2009)

Destruction of the Environment

- Every year, 200,000,000,000 litres of bottled water are consumed globally which generates 1,500,000 tons of plastic waste. (Lighter Footstep, 2008)
- Year after year, three out of four plastic bottles go un-recycled. (WRAP 2007)
- Plastic is believed to constitute 90% of all rubbish floating in the oceans. The UN Environment Programme estimated in 2006 that every square mile of ocean contains 46,000 pieces of floating plastic.
- An island of waste in the Pacific Ocean is growing at an alarming rate and now covers an area twice the size of the continental United States. (The Independent 05/02/2008)
- Islands of plastic rubbish in the ocean have a devastating impact on wildlife, killing thousands of birds and fish which mistake the waste for food.
 - Although we know that transport is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions, the transportation alone of bottled water in Britain is estimated to produce 33,200 tons of carbon dioxide, equivalent to the annual energy use of 6,000 homes. (EPI, 2006)
 - On average 22 million tonnes of bottled water is

transported from country to country each year. (CIWEM)
<http://www.madeineurope.org.uk/campaign/i-drink-tap>

Plastic bottles can pollute the water they contain if left in hot sunshine, in cars for instance, making it dangerous to drink, not to mention disgusting to taste. Tap water in a glass bottle or thermos flask, or a stainless steel container, is safer to carry when travelling.

Could the plastic in water bottles pose a health risk?

Recent research suggests that there could be cause for concern, and that the issue should be studied closely. Studies have shown that chemicals called phthalates, which are known to disrupt testosterone and other hormones, can leach into bottled water over time. One study found that water that had been stored for 10 weeks in plastic and in glass bottles contained phthalates, suggesting that the chemicals could be coming from the plastic cap or liner. Although there are regulatory standards limiting phthalates in tap water, there are no legal limits for phthalates in bottled water -- the bottled water industry waged a successful campaign opposing the FDA proposal to set a legal limit for these chemicals.

<http://www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/qbw.asp#plastic>

See also <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/plastic-bottles-health-hazard.html>

Recycling plastic bottles

Plastic water bottles can be recycled into such things as polyester fleece and padded jackets, sleeping bags, pillows, duvets and poly-cotton clothing and sheets, BUT only one in six bottles is recycled. If left as litter, plastic bottles can be an unsightly hazard.

Yes, you can make a difference. Remember this: Recycling one plastic bottle can save enough energy to power a 60-watt light bulb for six hours.

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/stories/spacescience/water-bottle-pollution/>

In 2010, during and after Hajj, pilgrims left more than 100 million plastic bottles piled up in the streets of Makka, Mina and Madina. These had to be swept up and disposed of expensively by designated companies.

Before plastic bottles, each pilgrim would have carried a water flask on a strap, and some still do.



In an attempt to make the Hajj greener, Muslim environmentalists are calling for a ban on plastic bottles.

A *Green Hajj Guide* has recently been launched which you can download from the Internet. This is part of the Muslim Seven Year Action Plan on Climate Change announced in 2009 by Dr Ali Gomaa, Grand Mufti of Egypt.

http://www.arcworld.org/downloads/Green_Guide_for_Hajj.pdf

Allah made every living thing from water, including you! Water is good for you, so keep drinking it.

But think about how often you use plastic water bottles, and see if you can make a change.

Du'a

Allahumma anta khāliq as-samawāti wa-l-‘arḍ wa mā baynahuma, wa tanzilu min al mu ‘sirrati mā’an thujājan, li tukhriju bihi ḥabban wa nabātan. Allahumma ātinā fi d-dunya hasanatan wa fil-ākhirati hasanatan, wa qinā adhāb an-nār

O Allah, you are the creator of the heavens and earth and what is between them. You send water down from the clouds with which you produce plants and grain. O Allah, give us good in this world and good in the next, and protect us from the torment of the Fire.

Allahumma ja’alnā min alladhīna yuqīmū-s-ṣalāt wa ātuz-zakāh wa dhālika dīn al-qayyima; wa ja’alnā min alladhīna tawasau bil haqq wa tawasaw bir-raḥma – ulā’ika as-ḥāb al mash’ama wa ulā’ika khair al-bariya
Allah, make us people who keep up prayer, and give the poor due, for that is true religion, and make us people who urge each other to do right, and be merciful: they are the companions of the right hand, the best of human beings.

Allahumma ja’alnā min al-mutaḥḥirīn, wa la ja’alnā min al-muṣrifīn.

Allah make us clean, and do not make us wasteful.

Alhamdulillāh-illadhi at'amanā wa saqānā wa ja ‘alanā muslimīn.

Praise be to God who has fed us, given us drink, and made us submit to Him.

Water Aid www.wateraid.org.uk

Green Hajj Guide
http://www.arcworld.org/downloads/Green_Guide_for_Hajj.pdf

The Qur'an: a New Translation by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem

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