

Light of the world

The Covid pandemic has profoundly shaken the world. “Is this a wake-up call?” Many people in the west who've lost jobs because of lockdown are receiving government handouts as emergency relief. Meanwhile countless numbers of people suffer loneliness, anxiety and depression. In fact, suicide is increasing. It is no secret: Covid 19 elicits a deep-seated fear of death. In his book, *Struggle to Dawn*, Ugo Betty stated a profound, if obvious truth, “Every tiny part of us cries out against the idea of dying and hopes to live forever.”

Thousands of years earlier the Bible held out a beacon of hope for those living in the shadow of death. Prophets foretold that the Messiah would usher in a bright new day, “the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings.” (Malachi 4:2) Solomon also glimpsed this hope with his wise sayings, “The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter till the full light of day. ... In the way of righteousness there is life; along that path is immortality.” (Proverbs 4:18; 12:28, NIV) A thousand years later Zechariah announced, “the Dawn from on high will visit us to shine on those who live in darkness and the shadow of death.” (Luke 1:78-79, HCSB) Interestingly, on two occasions the Bible says Christ's face shone like the sun in all its brilliance. (Matthew 17:2; Revelation 1:16-18) The latter passage goes on to explain that Jesus rose victorious from the grave and is alive forever. Indeed, he holds the keys to death and the grave! How wonderful to know with absolute certainty, “Jesus Christ broke the power of death and **illuminated** the way to life and **immortality** through the Good News.”! (2 Timothy 1:10)

Sunlight ultraviolet radiation and Covid-19

A recent article in *The Jerusalem Post* observes that “Ultraviolet radiation is a common method of killing bacteria and viruses.” The article continues, “Now, researchers from Tel Aviv University have proven that the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, can be killed efficiently, quickly and cheaply using ultraviolet (UV) light-emitting diodes (UV-LEDs) at specific frequencies.”

“We discovered that it is quite simple to kill the coronavirus using LED bulbs that radiate ultraviolet light,” said Prof. Hadas Mamane, head of the Environmental Engineering Program at Tel Aviv University's School of Mechanical Engineering, who led the study with Prof. Yoram Gerchman and Dr. Michal Mandelboim. She said that the UV-LED bulbs require less than half a minute to destroy more than 99.9% of the coronaviruses. The study is the first of its kind in the world. An article about it was published earlier this month in the [*Journal of Photochemistry and Photobiology*](#).”

Is it a coincidence that ultraviolet light (including sunlight) has such amazing health benefits? It seems wise to see the benefits of sunlight as reflecting the workmanship of a master designer. As Scripture says, “The heavens proclaim the glory of God. The skies display his craftsmanship.” (Psalm 19:1) Let me explain.

Followers of the two largest religions on earth – Christians and Muslims – believe God is light. Throughout history humans have been intrigued seeing the way light emanates from the sun, moon and stars. Nevertheless, God strictly warns us, “don't be seduced into worshiping them. The Lord your God gave them to all the peoples of the earth.” (Deuteronomy 4:10)

Sunlight is, indeed, a gift of God. It sustains life and has healing power. On the other hand, the sun is essentially fire. Therefore, if one doesn't show due respect to the sun it can scorch or cause blindness. Likewise with God: he is the ultimate source of life and every true blessing, yet we dare not forget that God is unapproachable light, a consuming fire that burns and can even destroy us mortal humans.

These twin paradoxical truths are evident throughout Scripture as quoted below.

Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. ...

He lives in light so brilliant that no human can approach him. No human eye has ever seen him, nor ever will. All honor and power to him forever! ...

You have not come to a physical mountain, to a place of flaming fire, darkness, gloom, and whirlwind, as the Israelites did at Mount Sinai. ... They staggered back under God's command: "If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned to death." Moses himself was so frightened at the sight that he said, "I am terrified and trembling." ... Since we are receiving a Kingdom that is unshakable, let us be thankful and please God by worshiping him with holy fear and awe. For our God is a devouring fire." (James 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:16; Hebrews 12:20-29)

The dual symbolism implicit in sunlight is well described in *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (p. 827); "Merely as a physical phenomenon, the sun is an ambiguous image. It is the ultimate source of life and as such is a fitting metaphor of life for God himself (Psalm 84:11). Yet the Psalms evoke vivid pictures of the terror of sunstroke and heat exhaustion, perhaps captured most vividly in the image of the sun as a malevolent foe that strikes by day (Psalm 121:6; cf. Ps. 91:6) ... the book of Revelation [describes] the scorching heat of the sun that scorches sinners who respond by cursing God instead of repenting." (Revelation 16:8-9)

The two paradoxical metaphors relating to the sun correspond with two 'opposing' images of stars in Scripture. We read on the one hand, positive star-imagery pointing to the long awaited Messianic Savior/King (Numbers 24:17ff, Matthew 2:1-10; cf. Bright Morning Star in 2 Peter 1:19) Yet, on the other hand, the Bible predicts various disasters befalling the earth in the last days – judgments involving the heavens being shaken and stars falling. (Revelation 8:8-11; Mark 13:24-26) See [Doomsday Asteroid, Devil's Rock and Bright Morning Star: www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/warning_signs.html](http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/warning_signs.html)

Conclusion

The Bible warns that great disaster is definitely coming but offers everyone deliverance from that terrifying end. Today is the day of salvation! Jesus said, "I am the light of the world ... Walk in the light while you can, so the darkness will not overtake you. ... Put your trust in the light while there is still time; then you will become children of the light. ... I have come as a light to shine in this dark world, so that all who put their trust in me will no longer remain in the dark. " (John 8:12; 12:35-36, 46)

"So what makes us think we can escape if we ignore this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself?" (Hebrews 2:3)

Here is a list of other articles about light that you may wish to read.

Lighting up the darkness: https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/lighting_darkness.html

Following the star: http://www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/following_star.html

The path of righteousness: https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/path_of_righteousness.html

Meditation on light: https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/meditation_light.html

Userguide for the sunrise pamphlet: https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/userguide_sunrise.html

Wake-up call: www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/wakeup_call.html

Look on the bright side: https://www.answering-islam.org/authors/clarke/bright_side.html

All Bible quotations are taken from the New Living Translation unless otherwise noted.

Endnote: God's glory reflected in the heavenly lights

Earlier we quoted research by three professors of mechanical engineering that shines a ray of hope in the midst of a gloomy global pandemic. Another scientist, Dr. Guliuzza, who is a registered Professional Engineer and served as Chief of Aerospace Medicine, believes that momentous scientific discoveries like the UV-light-emitting diodes cited earlier, reflect a Master Designer. Guliuzza explains in an article how such breakthroughs display God's glory as the Scripture says in Psalm 19:1; "The workmanship reflects such superb levels of intelligence, wisdom, power, and skill that it stimulates acknowledging and attributing immense glory to God—not merely signifying His existence." Guliuzza's article is available online, titled, [Engineered Adaptability: Engineering Principles Point to God's Workmanship](#).