

Thunder and Lightning

“Or like a rainstorm from the sky within which is darkness, thunder and lightning...”ⁱ

Definition

Prophet Mohammad (saw) described *thunder*, by explaining that the angel responsible for the clouds uses a piece of fire to drive them wherever Allah wills. When this angel strikes the clouds with it, the sound of thunder is heard. ⁱⁱ

According to Ibn Kathir, Al Barq or *lightning* refers to the bright radiant light that originates from within clouds and Allah (swt) has full power over it.ⁱⁱⁱ

Prophet Mohammad (saw) also said, “Verily, Allah originates the clouds, and they speak in the most beautiful voice and laugh in the most beautiful manner.”^{iv} This hadith has been interpreted to mean that the cloud's *voice* is the *thunder* and its *laughter* is the *lightning*.

Hope and Fear

One of the chapters of the Quran is named as Surah Ar Radd – The Thunder. In it we find references to thunder and lightning:

“It is He who shows you lightening, (causing) fear and aspiration, and generates the heavy clouds. And the thunder exalts with praise of Him, and the angels from fear of Him and He sends thunderbolts and strikes there with whom He wills while they dispute about Allah, and He is severe in assault.”^v

The first verse talks about two distinct responses that people have when they see lightning and hear the thunder. Some people are *afraid* that they may fall victim to a thunderbolt or that devastating floods may follow. Others have *hope* that the lightning may be followed by rain that will give life to barren land and will make dry rivers flow again. Subsequently, the second verse reminds us that everything in the skies and on earth is constantly glorifying Allah (swt) since they are both thankful to and fearful of him.

“They put their fingers in their ears against the thunderclaps in dread of death.”^{vi}

Loss of Eyesight

In other places, reference is made to the power of lightning that can take away the eyesight.

“The lightning almost snatches away their sight. Every time it lights (the way) for them, they walk therein; but when darkness comes over them, they stand (still)...”^{vii}

“...The flash of its lightning almost takes away the eyesight.”^{viii}

Destruction by Thunder and Lightning

As we have seen in previous lessons, weather has been used by Allah (swt) to destroy evil nations. In the case of the People of Thamud, they were destroyed by a terrible storm of thunder and lightning.

“But if they turn away, then say, “I have warned you of a thunderbolt like the thunderbolt (that struck) Ad and Thamud.”^{ix}

“But they were insolent toward the command of their Lord, so the thunderbolt seized them while they were looking on.”^x

Duas for Thunder and Lightning

We must remain silent when thunder is heard and we should recite this dua:

Dua Upon Hearing Thunder^{xi}

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي يُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ، وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ

“How perfect He is, (The One) Whom the thunder declares His perfection with His praise, as do the angles out of fear of Him.”

Things To Do:

- Write the definition of thunder and lightning based on what you have read above.
- Have you ever experienced thunder and lightning? Do you feel fear or hope?
- Write any one verse about thunder and lightning in your Science Journal.
- Remember to recite the dua next time you hear thunder.

ⁱ Surah Al Baqarah 2:19

ⁱⁱ Sahih Tirmidhi 3117

ⁱⁱⁱ Tafsir Ibn Kathir Surah Ar Radd

^{iv} Sahih Musnad of Imam al-Waad’iee 1526

^v Surah Ar Rad 13:12,13

^{vi} Surah Al Baqarah 2:19

^{vii} Surah Al Baqarah 2:20

^{viii} Suran An Nur 24:43

^{ix} Surah Al Fussilat 41:13

^x Surah Adh Dhariyat 51:44

^{xi} <https://ahadith.co.uk/>