

## “How Does Our Tradition Respond to Climate Change With Reference to Our Scriptures?”

This world is getting warmer, and humans are partly responsible in depleting the ozone layer, which God had so lovingly created as the umbrella of main filter of sun rays affecting the earth. Greenhouse gases are rising more rapidly than ever imagined. They are emitted from industrial pollutions and changing lifestyles, with full pace of rapidly advancing modern technology. United Nations formed UNEP Agency, which then took the initiative globally to involve all UN members Governments to sign up, to different Protocols to reduce atmospheric emissions, which will reduce the damages to the protective ozone layer. Different types of gases have different heat-trapping capabilities.

Ozone was discovered by Christian Friedrich Schönbein in 1840, who named it after the Greek word for smell (*ozein*), from the peculiar odor in lightning storms. The odor from a lightning strike is from electrons freed during the rapid chemical changes, not the ozone itself. We must understand the basics of ozone depletion. **Ozone** (O<sub>3</sub>) is an allotrope of oxygen, the molecule consisting of three oxygen atoms, a triatomic molecule, instead of the more stable diatomic O<sub>2</sub>. Ozone is a pale blue gas at standard temperature and pressure. It forms a dark blue liquid below -112 °C and a dark blue solid below -193 °C. Ozone is a powerful oxidizing agent. It is also unstable, decaying to ordinary oxygen through the reaction: 2 O<sub>3</sub> → 3 O<sub>2</sub>. This reaction proceeds more rapidly with increasing temperature and decreasing pressure. It is present in low concentrations throughout the Earth's atmosphere. Ground level ozone is an air pollutant with harmful effects on lung function and in the upper atmosphere it prevents damaging ultraviolet light from reaching the Earth's surface. It is also formed from O<sub>2</sub> by electrical discharges such as lightning, and by action of high energy electromagnetic radiation. The highest levels of ozone in the atmosphere are in the stratosphere, in a region also known as the ozone layer, (only 3 mm thick). Here it filters out the shorter wavelengths of ultraviolet light from the Sun that would be harmful to most forms of life in large doses. These same wavelengths are also responsible for the production of vitamin D, which is essential for human health. In order to absorb damaging carbon dioxide gas, God created forests: *Qur'an 10:24* “The likeness of this world's life is only as water which We send down from the clouds, then the herbage of the earth, of which men and cattle eat, grows luxuriantly thereby; until when the earth puts on its golden raiment and it becomes adorned, and its people think that they are masters of it, Our command comes to it, by night or by day, so We render it as reaped seed-produce, as though it had not flourished yesterday. Thus do We make clear the messages for a people who reflect.” For thousands of years, mankind has been directly involved in deforestation with no programs for reforestation, which means that damaging carbon dioxide gases and other damaging gases have been rising and continuously destroying the ozone layer.

Examples of ozone destroying gases are methane, methyl bromide, chlorofluorocarbons, Hydrochlorofluorocarbons, etc. The world will experience 4-5-deg Celsius temperature rise within the next few years. This will directly cause millions of tons of ice melting in North Polar and South Polar Regions, which will accelerate rapid sea level rises, flooding, and stormy weather in certain parts of the world and droughts in other parts of the world. God Almighty created the earth and rest of the universe in six periods of His time from nothingness. His word is His power and He only says “Be” and it is – just as He required: *Qur'an 2:117* “Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth! And when He decrees an affair, He says to it only, Be, and it is.” God as the Creator, as the Best Designer and as the Best Fashioner and as the Beneficent, made all things in pairs of masculine and feminine as matching for continuous procreations: *Qur'an 51:49* “And of everything We have created pairs that you may be mindful.”

God in His infinite wisdom made His laws (of nature) for continuous reproductions: *Qur'an 57:4* “He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods, and He is established on the Throne of Power. He knows that which goes down

*into the earth and that which comes forth out of it, and that which comes down from heaven and that which goes up to it. And He is with you wherever you are. And Allah is Seer of what you do.”* We as mankind do not ask God, on daily basis, for all the basic needs of survival. God gave us mankind the various planetary movements in the universe; He gave us the perfect matching hours of daylight and darkness in proportioned compensation: *Qur’an “21:33 And He it is Who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon. All float in orbits.”* God also gave us the balanced atmosphere of essential gases without our asking: *Qur’an 7:10 “And certainly We established you in the earth and made therein means of livelihood for you; little it is that you give thanks!”*

God gave us the vegetation and forests on land and God also gave us the pristine freshness of marine life and source of seafood for our survival: *Qur’an “16:14 And He it is Who has made the sea subservient that you may eat fresh flesh from it and bring forth from it ornaments which you wear. And thou seest the ships cleaving through it, so that you seek of His bounty and that you may give thanks.”* God follows each and every form of life of all animals and all other creatures and most important of all God takes care of a child from conception to birth: *Qur’an 40:67 “He it is Who created you from dust, then from a small life-germ, then from a clot, then He brings you forth as a child, then that you may attain your maturity, then that you may be old; and of you are some who die before and that you may reach an appointed term, and that you may understand.* Another quote: *Qur’an 76:2 “Surely We have created man from sperm mixed (with ovum), to try him, so We have made him hearing, seeing.”*

Mankind has been mostly both selfish and careless. Most people are not thankful to what God has given us purely out of His love for mankind. We mankind are the pride of His creation. On the contrary, mankind has been ruthlessly and without appreciation destroying so much of everything that God has most lovingly given to mankind for mankind’s gainful benefits. We must preserve the basic gifts of God that God has so lovingly given to us for our benefits. Preservation is a worldwide long-haul peoples’ program forever into the future.

All different communities of people must fully recognise and understand the simple origins of human beings, especially with original references to Adam and Eve: *Qur’an 15:26 “And surely We created man of sounding clay, of black mud fashioned into shape.”* For on-going procreations, the Holy Qur’an makes clear definition: *Qur’an 22:5 “O people, if you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then surely We created you from dust, then from a small life-germ, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh, complete in make and incomplete, that We may make clear to you. And We cause what We please to remain in the wombs till an appointed time, then We bring you forth as babies, then that you may attain your maturity. And of you is he who is caused to die, and of you is he who is brought back to the worst part of life, so that after knowledge he knows nothing. And thou seest the earth barren, but when We send down thereon water, it stirs and swells and brings forth a beautiful (growth) of every kind.”*

The continuous destructiveness by mankind of all gifts of nature causes imbalance in the environmental occurrences. God knows that once mankind uses something correctly, then there is in place a process, which will bring about its natural replacement: *Qur’an 35:27 “Seest thou not that Allah sends down water from the clouds, then We bring forth therewith fruits of various hues? And in the mountains are streaks, white and red, of various hues and (others) intensely black.”* Mankind in his fragile wisdom continues to destroy the very support measures, which God has so lovingly provided to mankind. God in His most marvellous Wisdom made landmasses all over the world and placed strong mountains as reinforcements to make the landmass firm and stable; and yet with massive excavations of mountains and landfills, mankind are destroying the land structures: *Qur’an 78:7 “And the mountains as pegs?”* This has been described in the Qur’an at 99:1 as: *“When the earth is shaken with her shaking, 99:2 And the earth brings forth her burdens, 99:3 And man says: What has befallen her?”* Mankind will continue to abuse and destroy the wonderful things that God has so beneficently provided for mankind, until a time will come when: “enough is enough” and the perishing of this planet (earth) begins with loss of ozone layer, excessive heat, loss of forests to absorb carbon emissions, desertification, excessive sea level elevation, sun-exposure sicknesses to humans and animals, etc – all because people failed warnings given in their scriptures.

**Fiji**