

Hair

5D's Assignment

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Introduction

Hair is an extraordinary creation, even though it has often been perceived to be just an accessory or an aesthetic feature. It shields the scalp from harmful UV rays and serves as an insulator that regulates body temperature by preventing heat loss. Besides these, hair has a great part in identity, culture, and self-expression, showing the personality, heritage, and beliefs of a person. However, beyond its importance in society, hair serves as a profound testament to Allah's creative power and precision. Complex processes of its growth, its resilience against environmental factors, and its ability for self-renewal speak loudly about the divine art of creation. Through contemplation of hair in the light of Allah's creation, one is reminded to recognize and appreciate His infinite wisdom, mercy, and generosity, as reflected in this seemingly simple yet complex feature.

Explore

Hair is a wonder of biological engineering, reflecting the perfect design of Allah, while each strand of hair consists of keratin, one of the strongest proteins providing durability with flexibility. The hair follicle, which is nestled in the scalp, is a microscopic factory manufacturing hair by drawing on nutrients from the body for its growth. Hair is composed of three layers: the medulla adds strength and resilience, the cortex contains pigment and determines color, and the cuticle is a thin, transparent outer layer. When these combine, the effect is a strand that not only performs admirably but also presents the most aesthetic aspect. Growth cycles through hair consist of events such as anagen or growth phase, catagen or transitional phase, and telogen or resting phases. This process guarantees that new hair grows even when old hair is falling out. This smooth, unconscious process is a reminder of Allah's provision and care for His creation. Allah says in the Qur'an:

وَفِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ (٢١)

“And in yourselves. Then will you not see?” (51:21)

This verse calls us to contemplate our bodies, including the minute details like hair, as signs of Allah's greatness. The difference in hair textures-straight, wavy, curly, and coily-is just another sign of His artistry. Not even two people, let alone all people, have exactly the same hair, even if their hair textures are similar, and that is a sign from Allah, Al-Musawwir (The Fashioner).

Compare

The difference is apparent when one compares natural hair with its synthetic counterpart, such as wigs or hair extensions: no human effort, however advanced, can produce the perfection of Allah's creation. While synthetic hair may mimic the appearance of real hair, it does not possess the same adaptability, self-repairing ability, and biological harmony inherent in Allah's design. Natural hair grows, heals, and responds to environmental changes, whereas synthetic substitutes

are inanimate and do not change. Even the most scientifically advanced wigs and extensions can never replace the sheen, texture, or resilience of real hair. The contrast is striking, and this shows the limitation of human ingenuity as compared to Allah's wisdom, which is endless. Artificial hair is useful for its purpose, but it serves to remind us that true perfection exists only in that which Allah creates. The Qur'an says:

وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ ۚ صُنْعَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۚ إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ (٨٨)

“And you see the mountains, thinking them motionless, while they will pass as the passing of clouds. [It is] the work of Allāh, who perfected all things. Indeed, He is Aware of that which you do.” (27:88)

By this comparison, one can appreciate the unparalleled craftsmanship of Allah and the miracles in the tiniest details in our lives.

Question

Why does hair have this incredible ability to grow, repair, and adapt, while synthetic substitutes are inanimate and static? Such sophistication and functionality cannot be the result of material causes, blind chance, or the forces of "mother nature" alone. The structure of hair in itself-the protective cuticle, pigment-filled cortex, and resilient medulla-together with the seamless processes of growth, regeneration, and adaptation, reflects purposeful design and precise engineering. These qualities point directly to Allah, the All-Knowing Creator, whose wisdom and power are evident in every detail of His creation. Random processes, or evolutionary accidents could never account for the coordination required to sustain hair's remarkable capabilities. By contemplating this, we gain a deeper understanding of Allah's greatness and our reliance on His mercy, inspiring us to offer gratitude for His countless blessings.

Connect

Hair, in its complex nature and functionality in our lives, links to a number of Allah's attributes directly: from Al-Khaliq, who created each strand of hair uniquely to serve both functional and aesthetic purposes, to Al-Razzaq, who continues to sustain hair growth through nourishment derived from food and the environment. The fragile balance to keep hair healthy is just a manifestation of His attribute Al-Latif, the Subtle One, Who knows even the minute details of our lives. Even in the case of damage or shedding, these challenges have reminded us of Allah's wisdom and the transitory nature of life. Losing hair through aging, stress, or disease is a sobering reminder that everything of this world is transient and under the discretion of Allah: The Holy Quran says:

ثُمَّ يُعِيدُكُمْ فِيهَا وَيُخْرِجُكُمْ إِخْرَاجًا (١٨)

“Then He will return you into it and extract you [another] extraction.” (71:18)

Appreciate

Let me mention three important practices to express our gratitude for hair: Dhikr, which means remembering; Fikr, which is reflecting, and Shukr, or thanking. Dhikr means we actively remember the favors of Allah while combing, brushing, or styling our hair. For example, "Alhamdulillah" when one combs or washes the hair with no pain in it or without any hindrance. Fikr means reflecting on the design and function of hair to appreciate the greatness of Allah's creation. Finally, Shukr is exercised by keeping our hair clean, avoiding practices that damage our hair, and helping others who may be experiencing hair-related difficulties. Helping those suffering from alopecia or illness-related hair loss can also be a form of gratitude and mercy. By supporting others, we not only fulfill a communal duty but also earn Allah's pleasure. The Qur'an reminds us:

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَعَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ (١٨)

“And if you should count the favors of Allāh, you could not enumerate them. Indeed, Allāh is Forgiving and Merciful.” (16:18)

Conclusion

Hair is much more than a simple feature of the human body; it is a deep example of Allah's creativity, wisdom, and mercy. It is in the exploration of its structure and growth, comparing with human-made substitutes, and reflecting on its connection to Allah's attributes that we truly begin to appreciate this remarkable creation. Hair reminds us of Allah's infinite power and the countless blessings He has bestowed upon us. By engaging in Dhikr, Fikr, and Shukr, we are discharging the duty of recognizing and appreciating these blessings and aligning our hearts and actions in accordance with Allah's guidance. Indeed, hair is a sign of divine artistry that calls us to remember and praise its Creator.

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