

## Surah 2. Al-Baqara

Asad: The lightning well-nigh takes away their sight; whenever it gives them light, they advance therein, and whenever darkness falls around them, they stand still. And if God so willed, He could indeed take away their hearing and their sight: <sup>12</sup> for, verily, God has the power to will anything.

Malik: The lightning terrifies them as if it was going to snatch away their eyesight; whenever it flashes they walk on; when it becomes dark, they stand still. And if Allah wanted He could have totally taken away their hearing and their sight; for Allah has power over everything.

Pickthall: The lightning almost snatcheth away their sight from them. As often as it flasheth forth for them they walk therein, and when it darkeneth against them they stand still. If Allah willed, He could destroy their hearing and their sight. Lo! Allah is Able to do all things.

Yusuf Ali: The lightning all but snatches away their sight; every time the light (helps) them they walk therein and when the darkness grows on them they stand still. And if Allah willed He could take away their faculty of hearing and seeing; for Allah hath power over all things.

Transliteration: Yakādu albarqu yakhtafu absarahum kullama adaa lahum mashaw feehi waitha athlama AAalayhim qamoo walaw shaa Allahu lathahaba bisamAAihim waabsarihim inna Allaha AAala kulli shayin qadeerun

Khatab:

It is as if the lightning were about to snatch away their sight. Whenever lightning strikes, they walk in its light, but when darkness covers them, they stand still. Had Allah willed, He could have taken away their hearing and sight. Surely Allah is Most Capable of everything.

### Author Comments

12 - The obvious implication is: "but He does not will this" - that is, He does not preclude the possibility that "those who have taken error in exchange for guidance" may one day perceive the truth and mend their ways. The expression "their hearing and their sight" is obviously a metonym for man's instinctive ability to discern between good and evil and, hence, for his moral responsibility. - In the parable of the "people who kindle a fire" we have, I believe, an allusion to some people's exclusive reliance on what is termed the "scientific approach" as a means to illumine and explain all the imponderables of life and faith, and the resulting arrogant refusal to admit that anything could be beyond the reach of man's intellect. This "overweening arrogance", as the Qur'an terms it, unavoidably exposes its devotees - and the society dominated by them - to the lightning of disillusion which "well-nigh takes away their sight", i.e., still further weakens their moral perception and deepens their "terror of death".

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