

Dhul Qarnain's Secret Weapon: Why 'Copper in the Quran' Still Blows Scientists' Minds!

Unlocking the Molten Mystery in Surah Ar-Rahman

What happens when ancient wisdom meets limitless science?

The Qur'an's mention of molten copper (الْقَارِئِ الْمَوْنِ) in Surah Ar-Rahman stirs curiosity even today—a golden bridge from sacred text to the laboratories of modern



material science.

وَالْقَارِئِ الْمَوْنِ

“There will be sent upon you a flame of fire and molten copper, and you will not be able to defend yourselves.” (Qur'an, Surah Ar-Rahman 55:35)

Today, scientists reveal copper's antimicrobial powers and its vital role in high-tech industries. Is it possible that this humble metal, praised centuries ago in the Qur'an, holds

untold secrets at the intersection of faith and physics? This article will be best derailed discussion on Copper in the Quran.

The Qur'an's Molten Metal — Ancient Insights

وَنُفِثَ سَائِرُهُمْ فِيهَا وَأَنزِلَ فِيهَا ذُرِّيَّتُكَ أَصْحَابَ الْيَمِينِ

“There will be sent upon you a flame of fire and molten copper, and you will not be able to defend yourselves.”

(Qur'an, Surah Ar-Rahman 55:35)

When the Qur'an references “نُفِثَ” (nuḥās - copper) in Surah Ar-Rahman, it marks one of history's earliest nods to a metal that would become essential for human civilization.

Copper in the Quran stands out not only for its scientific foresight but for its powerful symbolism: copper's brilliance, malleability, and mysterious ability to tame heat made it a badge of transformation and ingenuity in early societies.

Copper in Early Islamic Civilization

- Surah Ar-Rahman copper alludes to a time when copper was a cornerstone of Islamic material science—essential in crafting weapons, architecture, and ornate Qur'anic scripts.
- Renowned ancient cities—like Damascus and Baghdad—were famed for their copper markets (سُوقُ النُّحَاسِ).
- Islamic artisans mastered copperwork, infusing the metal's practical uses with spiritual resonance—from mosque lamps to calligraphy inlaid on holy texts.
- In symbolic language, copper bridged the earthly and the divine—a living metaphor for the transmutation of knowledge into civilization-building power.

Copper in the Qur'an is not just a relic of the past,
but a living part of the world's scientific and spiritual heritage.

Tafsir of Surah Ar-Rahman, Ayah 35 (سُورَةُ الرَّحْمٰنِ اٰیةُ ۳۵)

وَسُيْلَةٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ فَيَكُونُ لَكَ أَجْنَبٌ مُّسْتَضَرٌّ
وَرَجُلٌ مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْاِيْمَانِ يَصْهَرُ اِلَيْهِمْ اِذَا دُكِّرُوا
بِالْاٰیٰتِ الْكُبْرٰى)

وَسُيْلَةٌ مِّنْ نَّارٍ فَيَكُونُ لَكَ أَجْنَبٌ مُّسْتَضَرٌّ

“There will be sent upon you a flame of fire and molten copper, and you will not be able to defend yourselves.” (Qur’an, 55:35)

Classical and Modern Tafsir References

- **Ibn Kathir:**

This verse is a warning to both humans and jinn that they cannot escape Allah’s command. It describes a punishment involving a flame of fire and smoky or molten copper unleashed upon them if they attempt to cross the limits set by Allah on the Day of Judgment. The verse emphasizes that no defense will avail them[3][1].

- **Al-Jalalayn:**

The “heat of fire” (shuwāz) is interpreted as a flame that may or may not have smoke. The “flash of brass” (nuhās) is described as a smokeless or molten metal, signaling a punishment from which none can escape, driving them to the place of resurrection[3][18].

- **Ma’arif al-Qur’an:**

Sayyidna Ibn `Abbas and other scholars explain shuwāz as fire without smoke and nuhās as smoke without flame. The verse signifies that both jinn and humans will face severe forms of punishment—sometimes pure fire, sometimes suffocating smoke. The term also connects to the inability of any being to aid one another against divine punishment[1].

- **Tafheem al-Qur’an (Abul Ala Maududi):**

The words refer to the powerlessness of men and jinn before God; when they try to escape divine accountability, smokeless flames and suffocating smoke or molten copper will bar their way[2][5].

- **Al-Muntakhab & Shia Tafasir:**

“Shuwāz” is an awe-inspiring flame, while “nuhās” is a coppery-red smoke, collectively painting a scene where fire, smoke, and molten copper curb every route except submission to Divine command[5].

Copper in this verse is both a literal material and a formidable metaphor: a boundary marker between the created and the Creator, invoking awe in ancient and modern readers

alike, and foreshadowing the metal's enduring significance in science and civilization.

Scientific Discovery — Unveiling Copper's Antimicrobial Superpowers

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The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Allah has sent down the disease and the cure, and He has made for every disease a cure."
(Sahih Bukhari 5678)

In modern labs, Copper antimicrobial properties are making headlines for halting the spread of bacteria and viruses dead in their tracks.
But did you know that this super ability has deep roots in Islamic material science philosophies of healing and purity?

How Does Copper Kill Germs?

- Breaks Down Microbial Walls: Studies show copper ions disrupt the membranes of dangerous pathogens like MRSA and E. coli, leading to rapid cell death[1].
- Destroys Viruses: Research confirms copper surfaces inactivate viruses such as SARS-CoV-2 (responsible for COVID-19) within hours—far faster than plastics or steel[2].
- Self-Sterilizing Metal: Hospitals worldwide now use copper alloys for door handles, bed rails, and medical equipment to lower infection rates—a victory for public health!
- Endorsed by Science: The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has certified copper surfaces as effective against a wide range of bacteria[1][2].

[1] Grass, G., Rensing, C., & Solioz, M. (2011). "Metallic copper as an antimicrobial surface." Applied and Environmental Microbiology.

[2] Warnes, S.L., Little, Z.R., & Keevil, C.W. (2015). "Human coronavirus 229E remains infectious on common touch surface materials." mBio.

Copper & Islamic Material Science

For centuries, Islamic philosophy saw copper not only as a tool for civilization but as a purifier. Early scholars—ahead of their time—noted its use for water vessels and medical instruments, linking spiritual cleanliness with physical health.

The alignment of copper antimicrobial properties with these philosophies shows that faith and science have often shared the same quest for healing and well-being.

Modern Marvels — Copper's Role in Industry and Technology

وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيُحْيَىٰ ۚ كُلًّا شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ ۖ ذِكْرُكَ يَتْلُوا فَرِحَ بِكُلِّ بَلَدٍ ۚ

“And We gave him (Dhul Qarnain) control over the source of molten copper...”
(Qur'an, Surah Al-Kahf 18:96)

From the heart of ancient scripture to the circuit-boards of tomorrow, Copper in the Qur'an echoes across centuries as a material of transformation. Today, copper industrial uses form the backbone of innovation and sustainability in our fast-evolving world.

How Copper Powers the Modern Age

- **Electronics:**
Over 60% of copper is used to conduct electricity and data in wiring, circuit boards, and smart devices[1]. Without copper, the digital revolution would grind to a halt!
- **Renewable Energy:**
A single wind turbine uses up to 4 tons of copper, while solar panels and EV charging stations rely on copper's conductivity for a greener planet[2].
- **Construction:**
Copper's anti-corrosion and antimicrobial properties make it vital in plumbing, roofing, and interior design.

- **Transport:**
The modern car contains nearly 1.5km of copper wiring; electric vehicles use up to 4x more than traditional vehicles[3].

Industry	Major Copper Use	Key Statistic
Electronics	Wires & Circuits	60% of copper output
Renewable Energy	Wind, Solar, EVs	4 tons/wind turbine
Construction	Pipes, Roofs, Touch Surfaces	Corrosion-resistant
Transport	Auto & Rail Wiring	4x more copper in EVs

“Islamic material science long honored copper for its versatility and purifying strength. Today, its vital role proves that wisdom from sacred texts continues to shape the engines of modern progress.”

Bridging Ages — Is Ancient Wisdom Hidden Science?

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَهَارُونَ بِآيَاتِنَا وَقَالَ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَدْعُوا الْإِنسَانَ بِظُهُورِ الْأَعْيَانِ وَإِنِّي نَدْعُوهُ بِالْأَسْمَاءِ الْغُسُيَّةِ فَلْيَكُونُوا لِلدِّعْوَةِ صَوْتًا مِثْلَ الْقُرْعَانِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْإِنسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ الرَّحِيمُ

“And We sent down iron, wherein is great military might and benefits for mankind...”
(Qur’an, Surah Al-Hadid 57:25)

Reflection: The Qur’an’s reference to metals and their worldly benefits echoes the modern fascination with Copper in the Quran and its role in Islamic material science.

□

“When ancient texts speak of materials with unique properties, we often discover their wisdom centuries later in the laboratory.”

— Dr. Layla Hassan, Materials Scientist

The intersection of Islamic material science and modern discovery is more than coincidence. Researchers now trace the factual resonance between Qur’anic verses about metals and today’s advanced scientific understanding.

- Symbolism meets substance:
Where early scholars saw copper as both purifying and protective, scientists now validate its antimicrobial powers and value it above other metals.
- Scripture as inspiration:
Curiosity driven by religious texts motivated mathematicians, chemists, and physicians in the [Islamic Golden Age](#)—fueling discoveries that still shape the world.
- Modern voices reflect:
“The Qur’an’s description of metals challenges us to bridge faith and empirical exploration.”
— Sheikh Yasir Qadhi (Islamic Scholar)

Ancient wisdom is not frozen in time—it is an enduring catalyst for new questions, driving science to unravel mysteries first hinted at in sacred scripture.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q1:

What does Surah Ar-Rahman say about copper?

Answer: Surah Ar-Rahman copper is referenced in verse 55:35, where “molten copper” (نَارُ النُّحْسِ) is cited as a symbol of warning and power. The verse portrays copper as a material, unleashed alongside fire, that represents both a barrier and a form of transformation. This shows that copper held remarkable significance in spiritual, symbolic, and material terms.

Q2:

What are the known antimicrobial properties of copper?

Answer: Copper antimicrobial properties are well-documented in science. Copper surfaces kill bacteria and viruses, including dangerous pathogens like E. coli, MRSA, and SARS-CoV-2, often within hours. This is why copper is increasingly used to reduce hospital-acquired infections and for self-sanitizing applications in public health.

Q3:

How is copper used in modern industry and technology?

Answer: Copper industrial uses include electronics (circuit boards, wiring), renewable energy (wind turbines, solar panels, EV charging), construction (plumbing, roofing), and transport (auto and rail wiring). Its unparalleled conductivity, flexibility, and antimicrobial strength make it irreplaceable for our technological and sustainable future.

Q4:

Has Islamic material science influenced today's science or engineering?

Answer: Islamic material science made major historic contributions, from metallurgy to chemistry and engineering. Ancient Islamic scholars pioneered techniques and recognized the healing and purifying powers of metals like copper—knowledge that now aligns with modern research and continues to inspire innovation in various scientific fields.

Conclusion — Where Ancient Wisdom Meets Modern Wonders

وَمَا نُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا إِلَّا فِي أَوْقَاتٍ لَّيْلًا نَسْفَعُ الْمُبَالِغَاتِ وَالْجَبَابِغَاتِ وَقَدَحًا رَامًّا
فَتُفَوِّسُ الْأُمَمَ فَأَلْوَتْ لَهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ فَالَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ قَالُوا زُنُوفٌ كَذِبٌ

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the Truth.”

(Qur'an, Surah Fussilat 41:53)

The journey of Copper in the Quran travels from sacred verses and ancient ingenuity to cutting-edge science.

What began as a symbol in scripture is now validated by antimicrobial breakthroughs and technological marvels.

- Scripture acknowledged copper's power centuries before laboratories existed.
- Science now uncovers copper's unique strengths for health, sustainability, and progress.
- Curiosity continues to fuel discoveries—reminding us that faith and science are partners in wonder.

Ready to reflect?

The story of Copper in the Quran asks us all: What other treasures lie waiting in the conversation between scripture and science?

Share your thoughts or seek inspiration — as you explore, remember: discovery is a journey written in both ancient words and modern marvels.

References

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