

The Perfect System That Perceives Scent



When you take a deep breath, you simultaneously perceive various smells, for example, from the coffee you are drinking, the food cooking in the kitchen, the flowers in the vase, and the smoke outside. And yet you perceive them all individually, because your nose can analyze each smell it detects in thirty seconds and thus can distinguish among 3,000 scents.

Messages arriving from billions of scents are transmitted within a matter of minutes to tens of thousands of cells. The speed involved here is extraordinary. Several million pieces of data move from one cell to another in as little as one-thousandth of a second, *never making a mistake*. These processes allow you to identify a smell very quickly. In addition, the identification and organization of the

transmitted data further increases scent sensitivity. The distinguishing and recognition of smells further increases scent sensitivity in the nose. (*Tim Jacob, "Olfaction," 2002, www.cf.ac.uk.biosi/staff/jacob/teaching/sensory/olfact1.html.*)

We can explain the extraordinary nature of the flawless transmission as follows: Let's assume that a specific piece of data is carried along a million telephone lines and that the number of these lines is suddenly reduced to a thousand. In that event, it is very likely that no matter how advanced the technology being used is, a loss or error in the original data will take place. Yet scent cells carry out the same task without error for as long as we live. The fact that we come into contact with a large number of scents at the same time does not prevent us from telling them apart; no matter how numerous they may be, we can distinguish one from another quite easily.

The fact that each person has such an amazing system may never have seemed surprising to us. A person finds nothing odd in recognizing the scent of a rose or of coffee and may never have wondered about the different stages involved in recognizing a particular fruit's smell. Yet the complex systems in the nose's olfactory area, which exists only because Allah wills it to and controls its flawless operation, make this possible throughout one's life:

... that is the Knower of the Unseen and the Visible, the Almighty, the Most Merciful, He Who has created all things in the best possible way. He commenced the creation of humanity from clay. (Surat al-Sajdah, 6-7)

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