

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

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KNOWLEDGE

The first human to be endowed with knowledge was Adam. Satan too had knowledge but his haughtiness and conceit made him reject God's command to prostrate before Adam. His reasoning was that since he was made out of fire and Adam out of mud, he was superior. God gave Adam the knowledge of all things that humans would encounter on earth and asked the angels if they knew all this.

The Test Begins

[2:31-33] *He taught Adam all the names then presented them to the angels, saying, "Give me the names of these, if you are right." They said, "Be You glorified, we have no knowledge, except that which You have taught us. You are the Omniscient, Most Wise." He said, "O Adam, tell them their names." When he told them their names, He said, "Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of the heavens and the earth? I know what you declare, and what you conceal."*

Knowledge means getting to know things that one does not know. Adam did not know the names before they were instructed to him and finding those names was knowledge.

Knowledge has no limits, no peripheries and no confines in the worldly sense. It is of various types and can be used for numerous reasons but the principal function would be to facilitate yourself and others in a most righteous manner. For example, the study of nuclear science need not be used to build atomic weapons but can be used for power generation, medicine, etc. to benefit people.

Since the dawn of time, the human has an inherent wonder, and knowledge has been crucial for our development. It manoeuvres us towards a more productive and advantageous course. A reliable standard for actions to have basic benefit is when they are of assistance to humankind. This leads to exploration and research which in turn results in personal achievements like physical and spiritual growth. All knowledge, including religious knowledge, can directly or indirectly advance human progress if God permits. Knowledge has to be first procured and then passed on. The more we use knowledge, the more it increases. Like a candle—when it lights another candle it does not lose any of its own luminescence. Gaining and conveying

knowledge can bring about a just and cultured society.

Muhammad was commanded to narrate on being informed of his Prophethood.

[96:1-5] *Read, in the name of your Lord, who created. He created man from an embryo. Read, and your Lord, Most Exalted. Teaches by means of the pen. He teaches man what he never knew.*

The words *read* and *pen* have an immense implication. They highlight the necessity to be literate so you can comprehend and put pen to paper. It is the best way of attaining and circulating knowledge. God Himself has sent us this Divine Message in the form of the Quran so we can understand, appreciate, contemplate and abide by His injunctions. He tells us how it should be done.

[2:151] *(Blessings) such as the sending of a messenger from among you to recite our revelations to you, purify you, teach you the scripture and wisdom, and to teach you what you never knew.*

In seeking knowledge, as submitters, we are stimulated by faith and belief.

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These may not always come from entirely logical debate; they may emanate from visual experience of stability, synchronisation, splendour and equilibrium in nature. The Quran says these are perceptible proofs of the Creator.

[6:99] He is the One who sends down from the sky water, whereby we produce all kinds of plants. We produce from the green material multitudes of complex grains, palm trees with hanging clusters, and gardens of grapes, olives and pomegranate; fruits that are similar, yet dissimilar. Note their fruits as they grow and ripen. These are signs for people who believe.

With a God-directed evolutionary procedure, the earth became a suitable habitat for humans and animals to exist and multiply. Since humans and nature have both been created by One and the Same God, there is no inconsistency between them. In the radiance of Divine Guidance, we can use the signs within nature for the growth of our knowledge.

Crucial Advice

[17:36] You shall not accept any information, unless you verify it for yourself. I have given you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brain, and you are responsible for using them.

The brain has reference to intelligence, and with our ears and eyes, forms the resources and conduits for the acquisition of knowledge. The brain gives us the ability to sense, imagine, appreciate, figure out, envision, absorb, conserve, prepare, conduct and evaluate.

The Quran also indicates another way to attain knowledge. When Cain killed Abel, he did not know what to do with the body.

[5:31] GOD then sent a raven to scratch the soil, to teach him how to bury his brother's corpse. He said, "Woe to me; I failed to be as intelligent as this raven, and bury my brother's corpse." He became ridden

with remorse.

By observing, he deduced that the cadaver had to be buried. However, for us, observation alone is not adequate, though we may learn a lot through it. This has to be followed and completed by sound interpretation to draw the acceptable end and make accurate use of what we observe. If we follow or do something without the necessary knowledge we may wrong or harm ourselves or others. This is why the Quran frequently accentuates pondering and reflecting over myriad topics and signs in the universe.

[30:8] Why do they not reflect on themselves? GOD did not create the heavens and the earth, and everything between them, except for a specific purpose, and for a specific life span. However, most people, with regard to meeting their Lord, are disbelievers.

[20:114] Most Exalted is GOD, the only true King. Do not rush into uttering the Quran before it is revealed to you, and say, "My Lord, increase my knowledge."

Alim

* * * * *

[2:32] They said, "Be You glorified, we have no knowledge, except that which You have taught us. You are the Omniscient, Most Wise."

[6:82] Those who believe, and do not pollute their belief with idol worship, have deserved the perfect security, and they are truly guided.

Marvels of GOD

Part 1: Which of your Lord's marvels can you deny?

[2:2] This scripture is infallible; a beacon for the righteous.

This verse itself explains the objective of Quran. And if I don't study Quran and just recite it in Arabic then how can it become a beacon for me? I wish to highlight a few important points mentioned in Quran, which would prove that Quran is revealed from God without any doubt. In sura 55 God has questioned us 31 times "Which of your Lord's Marvels can you deny?" Apart from the marvels mentioned in sura 55, there are many more which we can use to convince people in the light of modern education and science. Let us analyze a few of them.

Astronomy: The creation of the universe is explained by the astrophysicist in a widely accepted phenomenon, popularly known as the "Big Bang." According to their findings and research for decades, they concluded that the whole universe was one big mass. Then there was a 'Big Bang' which resulted in the formation of Galaxies, stars, planets, the sun, the moon etc. This theory was revealed a few hundreds of years ago. Whereas we find it in the Holy Quran 1400 years ago.

[21:30] Do the unbelievers not realize that the heaven and the earth used to be one solid mass that we exploded into existence? And from water we made all living things. Would they believe?

Further in early times it was believed that the earth was flat. Though the earliest evidence of a spherical Earth comes from ancient Greek sources, there is no account of how the spherical shape of the Earth was discovered. The first direct demonstration of Earth's spherical shape came in the form of the first circumnavigation in history, an expedition captained by Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magel-

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lan in 1519. Whereas we find it in the Quran 1400 years ago.

*The Shape of the Earth**

[39:5] He created the heavens and the earth truthfully. He rolls the night over the day, and rolls the day over the night. He committed the sun and the moon, each running for a finite period. Absolutely, He is the Almighty, the Forgiving.*

**39:5 This verse clearly informs us that the earth is round. The Arabic for "He rolls" (Yukawwir) is derived from the Arabic word for "ball" (Kurah). Since the Earth is not exactly round, a specific reference to its shape is given in 79:30. The Quran is replete with scientific information that became known to us centuries after the revelation of the Quran. See Appendix 20.*

Hence it proves that the rolling of the day and night cannot take place unless the shape of the earth is spherical.

[79:30] He made the earth egg-shaped.

The Arabic word "dahhaahaa" mentioned in this verse means the shape of an egg. The earth is not exactly round like a ball, but it is flattened at the poles resembling the shape of an egg.

[21:33] And He is the One who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon; each floating in its own orbit.

I remember having studied during my school days that the sun was stationary and did not rotate about its axis like earth. And now school text books have incorpo-

rated the fact that the sun rotates about its own axis. And it rotates around its own axis in approximately 25 days. This means that this became common knowledge very recently. Whereas God has mentioned it in the Quran 1400 years back.

Geography: In earlier times people did not know the source of underground water. They thought the water of the oceans, under the effect of winds, was thrust towards the interior of the continents. In 1580 C.E, Bernard Palissy was the first man to describe the present day concept of 'water cycle.' But his theories were scientifically tested and authenticated in 1674 by Pierre Perrault. He described how water evaporates from the oceans and cools to form clouds. The clouds move inland where they rise, condense and fall as rain. This water gathers as lakes and streams and flows back to the ocean in a continuous cycle.

[23:18] We send down from the sky water, in exact measure, then we store it in the ground. Certainly, we can let it escape.

[39:21] Do you not see that GOD sends down from the sky water, then places it into underground wells, then produces with it plants of various colors, then they grow until they turn yellow, then He turns them into hay? This should be a reminder for those who possess intelligence.

No other text dating back 1400 years ago gives such an accurate description of the

water cycle.

Literature: *[2:23] If you have any doubt regarding what we revealed to our servant, then produce one sura like these, and call upon your own witnesses against GOD, if you are truthful.*

Here apart from mathematical challenge God has challenged the human being to produce at least one sura which could satisfy the beauty, eloquence, depth and meaning in literal terms of the modern literature. If you read the Arabic text of the Quran you will find that the whole Quran is revealed in the poetic form, yet it fulfills the objective of conveying the message and is guidance to mankind.

[56:77-9] This is an honorable Quran. In a protected book. None can grasp it except the sincere.

Quran: Our Means to Salvation

[17:9] This Quran guides to the best path, and brings good news to the believers who lead a righteous life, that they have deserved a great recompense.

[41:44] If we made it a non-Arabic Quran they would have said, "Why did it come down in that language?" Whether it is Arabic or non-Arabic, say, "For those who believe, it is a guide and healing. As for those who disbelieve, they will be deaf and blind to it, as if they are being addressed from faraway."

Abdul Ghani