

## PART I: FOUNDATIONS OF QUR'ANIC EPISTEMOLOGY

The intellectual foundation of Qur'anic epistemology rests upon a profound ontological premise: that *all knowledge ('ilm) originates from the Divine Source* and that *human knowing* is a reflection of divine communication manifested through creation, revelation, and reason. In this first part, the study reconstructs the essential grammar of knowledge in the Qur'an, situating epistemology within a theological and moral order that transcends secular divisions between faith and intellect. The Qur'an presents knowledge not as an autonomous human enterprise, but as a sacred trust (*amanah*) that carries ethical and spiritual responsibilities (Q. 2:31; 96:1-5).

This part thus lays the groundwork for understanding how the Qur'an defines the act, process, and purpose of knowing. Knowledge (*'ilm*) is portrayed as a divine light (*mur*) illuminating both the mind and the moral self, guiding humanity toward truth (*haqq*) and justice (*'adl*). Unlike modern epistemological systems, which often isolate cognition from moral intent, the Qur'an situates knowledge within the holistic unity of being, purpose, and accountability (Q. 24:35; 17:36). The pursuit of *'ilm* becomes a form of worship (*'ibadah*), a means of recognising divine signs (*ayat*), and an ethical journey toward wisdom (*hikmah*).

### Chapter 1: Understanding Knowledge ('Ilm) in the Qur'an

The opening chapter examines the Qur'anic conception of *'ilm* as the foundational category of knowing. It investigates how the Qur'an differentiates between true knowledge (*'ilm al-haqq*) and speculative conjecture (*ẓann*), emphasising that knowledge must correspond to divine truth rather than human assumption (Q. 10:36; 17:85). This chapter further explores the ontological continuity between divine omniscience (*'ilm Allah*) and human cognition, establishing that all human understanding exists by divine permission (*bi-idhni Llah*) and within the moral horizon of divine guidance (Q. 2:255; 20:114).

### Chapter 2: Cognitive Instruments of Knowing - 'Aql, Tafakkur, Tadabbur, and Tadhakkur

The second chapter focuses on the Qur'anic instruments of cognition - reason (*'aql*), reflection (*tafakkur*), contemplation (*tadabbur*), and remembrance (*tadhakkur*). Together, these faculties constitute a multidimensional epistemic model that integrates rational, intuitive, and moral awareness. The Qur'an repeatedly calls upon the human mind to think, reflect, and remember as acts of faith (Q. 3:191; 38:29). This chapter demonstrates that these processes are not isolated intellectual functions but interdependent stages in the realisation of truth, transforming thought into understanding and understanding into ethical consciousness.

### Chapter 3: Revelation and Rationality - Integration, Not Opposition

The third chapter dismantles the false dichotomy between revelation and reason. The Qur'an does not position *wahy* (revelation) and *'aql* (reason) in opposition but unites them within a single epistemological continuum. Revelation provides ontological certainty, while reason serves as the interpretive instrument

through which that revelation is comprehended and applied (Q. 4:82; 41:53). This integration refutes both literalist fideism and secular rationalism, proposing instead a harmonised epistemology where revelation directs intellect, and intellect confirms revelation. In the Qur’anic worldview, knowing is not merely to observe or to infer but to recognise the divine pattern in the structure of reality itself.

Taken together, these three chapters establish the Qur’an as a comprehensive epistemological system that merges intellectual inquiry with moral and spiritual purpose. They form the essential groundwork for the subsequent parts of this study, where Qur’anic epistemology will be examined through its methods, ethics, and implications for the reconstruction of modern knowledge.

## Chapter 1. Understanding Knowledge ('Ilm) in the Qur'an

Knowledge ('ilm) in the Qur'an stands at the foundation of human existence, shaping the moral, intellectual, and spiritual framework of civilisation. Unlike modern epistemologies that often separate the knower from the known, the Qur'an unites knowledge with faith (*iman*), moral responsibility (*amanah*), and divine purpose. The Qur'anic conception of 'ilm is both revelatory and rational, integrating the faculties of reason ('aql), experience (*baṣar*), and reflection (*tafakkur*). It portrays knowledge not as possession but as trust—a means to recognise truth (*haqq*), attain wisdom (*hikmah*), and fulfil the divine purpose of creation. Thus, 'ilm is not simply the acquisition of information but the illumination of the soul and the harmonisation of intellect and revelation under the unity of God (*tawḥid*).

### 1.1 Introduction

The Qur'an stands as the ultimate source of divine knowledge ('ilm), defining the foundation of Islamic epistemology through its constant invocation of understanding, reflection, and inquiry. The term 'ilm, repeated over 700 times in various forms throughout the Qur'an, signifies more than the accumulation of information; it represents awareness rooted in truth, moral responsibility, and divine purpose (Nasr, 1989). The Qur'an introduces knowledge as a sacred trust (*amanah*) bestowed upon humankind to enable discernment between right and wrong (Q. 2:31-33). This intellectual capacity distinguishes humans from other creations, as demonstrated in the narrative of Adam, to whom God “*taught the names of all things,*” symbolising both linguistic and conceptual mastery.

Islamic thought views knowledge as the first principle of existence, emanating from the divine attribute *al-ʿAlim* (The All-Knowing). In this framework, all forms of knowing—empirical, rational, or revealed—find their legitimacy in God's will and wisdom (Al-Attas, 1995). The Qur'an thus provides not only an ontological basis for knowledge but also a moral orientation. It enjoins believers to seek knowledge persistently, as in “*Say: My Lord, increase me in knowledge*” (Q. 20:114). Unlike secular or materialistic conceptions that separate knowledge from ethics, the Qur'anic vision unites cognition and conscience, creating a holistic epistemic system.

Furthermore, the Qur'an extends the pursuit of knowledge beyond the spiritual to the empirical and natural worlds. The repeated command to “*observe,*” “*reflect,*” and “*travel through the earth*” (Q. 29:20; 88:17-20) signifies an early scientific attitude grounded in moral restraint and metaphysical awareness. Thus, 'ilm is both an act of worship and a form of service to humanity. Scholars such as Al-Ghazali (n.d.) and Ibn Rushd (1954) later elaborated on this duality, emphasising that knowledge harmonises intellect and revelation when pursued with sincerity.

In the modern era, revisiting Qur'anic epistemology is vital for reconstructing an integrated model of knowledge that resists the fragmentation of contemporary thought. Through its emphasis on the unity of truth (*tawḥid*), the Qur'an reaffirms that all disciplines—be they natural sciences, humanities, or theology—are interconnected paths toward divine reality. This chapter thus begins with the fundamental nature of

‘ilm, its sources, hierarchy, and ethical functions, to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive Qur’anic research methodology.

## 1.2 The Nature and Sources of ‘Ilm

The concept of *‘Ilm* (knowledge) in the Qur’an is central to the entire structure of Islamic epistemology. Unlike secular or positivist conceptions that reduce knowledge to empirical observation or rational abstraction, the Qur’anic understanding of *‘Ilm* embodies a comprehensive unity of the spiritual, moral, rational, and sensory dimensions of human experience. The Qur’an presents *‘Ilm* not merely as the accumulation of information but as illumination—a divine gift that transforms the knower’s perception of reality and aligns it with the will of God (Allah). In this sense, *‘Ilm* is both *ontological* and *teleological*: it reveals the nature of existence and directs it toward purpose (*maqṣad*).

The term *‘Ilm* and its derivatives occur over 780 times in the Qur’an, emphasising its integral role in the divine order (Nasr, 2007). These occurrences cover diverse fields—cosmology, theology, morality, natural sciences, and social order—reflecting the Qur’an’s encouragement of comprehensive inquiry. The Qur’an distinguishes between true knowledge (*‘Ilm al-Ḥaqq*) and conjecture (*ẓann*), affirming that authentic knowledge must rest upon certainty (*yaqīn*) and divine guidance: “*And do not pursue that of which you do not know (‘ilm)*” (Q. 17:36). This verse establishes a fundamental ethical and epistemic principle: the pursuit of knowledge demands accountability, evidence, and sincerity.

### 1.2.1 The Divine Origin of Knowledge

The Qur’an unequivocally identifies God as the ultimate source of all knowledge. “*He taught man what he did not know*” (*‘allama al-insana malam ya ‘lam*, Q. 96:5) encapsulates this divine-human relationship. Knowledge is, therefore, *revealed* before it is *discovered*, and every act of human knowing is a participation in the divine act of teaching (*talim*). This theological premise rejects the notion that knowledge is a purely human construct, emphasising instead that human understanding is contingent, dependent, and derivative (Al-Attas, 1995).

From this standpoint, revelation (*wahy*) becomes the primary source of *‘Ilm*. The Qur’an itself is described as *kitabun mubin* (a clear book) and *huda wa rahmah* (guidance and mercy), serving as the foundational epistemic authority. It provides not only content but also methodology—how to observe, reflect, analyse, and conclude with moral certainty. This divine origin does not negate human inquiry but sanctifies it: human knowledge becomes meaningful when aligned with revelation.

The prophetic model reinforces this relationship. The Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) is described as *mu‘allim al-insan*, the teacher of humanity, who embodies and transmits divine knowledge. His sayings, actions, and judgments (*sunnah*) serve as the living extension of Qur’anic epistemology. Thus, revelation and Prophetic teaching together form the two primary and infallible sources of *‘Ilm* within the Islamic worldview.

### 1.2.2 The Human Means of Acquiring Knowledge

While the divine source is ultimate, the Qur'an also recognises human faculties as instruments of knowledge acquisition. These include sensory perception (*sam'*, hearing; *baṣar*, sight), rational reflection (*'aql*), and inner awareness (*qalb*). Each faculty functions within a divinely ordained system, enabling humans to perceive, interpret, and internalise reality.

The Qur'an repeatedly calls upon these faculties in commands such as “*Do they not see?*” (Q. 88:17), “*Do they not reason?*” (Q. 2:44), and “*Do they not reflect?*” (Q. 47:24). These verses establish observation (*nazar*), reasoning (*ta'aqqul*), and contemplation (*tafakkur*) as legitimate epistemic processes. However, the Qur'an maintains that these faculties must operate under moral and spiritual discipline. When divorced from divine remembrance, they lead to arrogance and error. “*They have hearts with which they do not understand, eyes with which they do not see, and ears with which they do not hear*” (Q. 7:179).

Hence, in Qur'anic epistemology, *'Ilm* is not purely rationalistic but an *integrative* harmony between sensory, rational, and spiritual cognition. Al-Ghazali (2000) described this synthesis as the meeting of *'aql* (reason) and *qalb* (heart) under divine illumination. The heart in Qur'anic language is not an emotional centre but a metaphysical organ of perception, capable of recognising truth that transcends empirical limits.

### 1.2.3 The Hierarchy of Sources

The Qur'an establishes a divinely ordered hierarchy of knowledge sources (*maratib al-'ilm*), ensuring coherence, authenticity, and ethical accountability. This hierarchy reflects the natural flow of divine communication to human comprehension - from revelation to understanding to practice. Each level functions under divine authorisation, and none can claim independence from the divine source.

Revelation (*Wahy*) - The Supreme Source of Knowledge: The Qur'an itself is the Mother of Knowledge (*Umm al-Kitab*, Q. 13:39), containing the complete framework of guidance, moral principles, and intellectual methodology. All knowledge originates from this revealed source, which is absolute, infallible, and comprehensive. It provides not only facts but also epistemic criteria - distinguishing between truth (*haqq*) and conjecture (*ẓann*). Every human inquiry must, therefore, be measured against revelation. As the Qur'an states, “*Falsehood cannot approach it from before or behind it; [it is] a revelation from the Wise, the Praiseworthy*” (Q. 41:42).

Divine Laws in Creation (*Sunnat Allah fi al-Kawn*) - The Manifest Order of the Universe: The Qur'an consistently invites humanity to observe the laws and patterns of Allah operating in nature and history. These patterns - referred to repeatedly as *Sunnat Allah* - are expressions of divine wisdom observable through empirical inquiry: “*You will never find any change in the way of Allah (Sunnat Allah); nor will you find any deviation in it.*” (Q. 35:43) These immutable natural and moral laws constitute an objective field of study sanctioned by revelation. The Qur'an thus integrates the study of nature within its epistemological system, allowing the empirical sciences to serve as a form of *tafakkur* (contemplation) upon divine order.

Human Intellect ('*Aql*) - The Reflective Instrument: Human reason is honoured as the *interface* between divine revelation and sensory experience. The Qur'an repeatedly challenges humans to use reason: "*Do they not reason?*" (*afala ta'qilun*, Q. 2:44). The function of '*Aql* is interpretive - to derive meaning, to discern purpose, and to align understanding with divine truth. However, reason is not autonomous; it remains a tool that functions correctly only under divine guidance. When detached from revelation, it degenerates into speculation and arrogance (Q. 10:36).

Perception and Experience (*Sam' , Baṣar, Fu'ad*) - The Sensory Pathways of Knowing: The Qur'an identifies the sensory faculties as the instruments of empirical discovery. "*And Allah brought you out of your mothers' wombs not knowing anything, and He made for you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks*" (Q. 16:78). These faculties are divine trusts enabling observation of the world as *ayat* - signs of God. However, sensory data alone cannot produce wisdom; it requires reflection (*tadabbur*) and remembrance (*tadhakkur*) to yield insight.

Knowledge Internalised ('*Ilm al-Yaqin* → '*Ayn al-Yaqin* → *Ḥaqq al-Yaqin*) - The Ascending Certitude: The Qur'an outlines an ascending epistemic chain of certainty, beginning with conceptual knowledge ('*ilm al-yaqin*), followed by experiential realisation ('*ayn al-yaqin*), and culminating in absolute truth (*ḥaqq al-yaqin*) (see Q. 102:5-7; 56:95). This hierarchy reflects the progressive internalisation of divine truth through contemplation, verification, and moral application. True knowledge thus culminates not in speculation but in certainty grounded in divine reality.

Action ('*Amal*) - The Embodiment of Knowledge: In the Qur'anic epistemic model, knowledge attains completion only when translated into righteous action. "*Those who believe and do righteous deeds*" (*alladhina amanu wa 'amilu al-ṣalihat*) appears over fifty times in the Qur'an, establishing action as the verification of faith and knowledge. Knowledge without action is condemned as hypocrisy (Q. 61:2-3). Thus, '*Ilm* is never static; it is dynamic, ethical, and transformative.

Together, these six levels form a Qur'anic epistemic hierarchy - from *Wahy* (divine revelation) to '*Amal* (action). It reflects a continuous flow: divine truth revealed → manifested in creation → understood by intellect → verified through perception → realised in certainty → embodied in ethical conduct. This structure eliminates any need for external epistemic authorities beyond the Qur'an itself. The Qur'an is self-sufficient, internally complete, and universally applicable as the ultimate *Source, Standard, and System* of knowledge.

### 1.2.4 The Transformative Nature of '*Ilm*

In Islamic epistemology, '*Ilm* is transformative rather than merely informative. The Qur'an frequently pairs knowledge with moral consequences. For example, "*Only those who know His servants fear Allah*" (Q. 35:28). This indicates that true knowledge leads to humility, awe, and ethical behaviour. The moral dimension distinguishes Qur'anic epistemology from secular scientism, where knowledge is often divorced from virtue.

Furthermore, *Ilm* is portrayed as a means to *'ubudiyyah* (servitude to God). Knowledge, therefore, is both an act of worship and a responsibility. The value of knowledge lies not in its accumulation but in its application toward justice, compassion, and balance (*mizan*).

### 1.2.5 The Qur'an as Epistemic Framework

Unlike modern theories that compartmentalise knowledge, the Qur'an establishes a unified epistemic framework grounded in *Tawhid*. Every field of knowledge, natural or human, theoretical or applied, finds coherence in the understanding of divine unity. Thus, physics, metaphysics, and ethics are not separate domains but interconnected manifestations of divine wisdom (*hikmah*).

Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1989) argues that modernity's epistemic crisis stems from its detachment of knowledge from sacred purpose. The Qur'an, in contrast, situates all inquiry within moral teleology: to know is to serve. Hence, the Qur'anic view transforms epistemology into an act of devotion, where understanding creation is a path toward understanding the Creator.

This epistemic unity also implies a responsibility to integrate revelation and empirical study. Muslim scholars historically demonstrated this synthesis, whether in astronomy, medicine, or philosophy, guided by the conviction that truth is singular and divine. The collapse of this synthesis in modernity represents not progress but fragmentation.

The Qur'anic conception of *Ilm* encompasses divine origin, human cognition, moral accountability, and cosmic harmony. Knowledge in Islam is not a neutral possession but a sacred trust (*amanah*). Its sources—revelation, reason, and sensory perception—operate in a divinely ordered hierarchy, ensuring both authenticity and humility in the pursuit of truth. The modern challenge for Islamic epistemology is not merely to rediscover these sources but to reintegrate them into a coherent intellectual paradigm that unites faith, reason, and experience. Only through such reintegration can the ummah revive its intellectual and spiritual vitality in the modern world.

### 1.3 Hierarchy of Knowledge

The Qur'an establishes a clear hierarchy of knowledge, structured around degrees of certainty and levels of divine proximity. This hierarchy begins with *'ilm al-yaqin* (knowledge of certainty), progresses to *'ayn al-yaqin* (vision of certainty), and culminates in *haqq al-yaqin* (truth of certainty) (Q. 102:5-7). These levels represent both epistemological depth and spiritual maturity, integrating the cognitive, experiential, and revelatory dimensions of knowing.

At the foundational level, *'ilm al-yaqin* corresponds to rational or discursive knowledge attained through study, reflection, and empirical verification. It provides intellectual certainty but remains limited to conceptual understanding. The second level, *'ayn al-yaqin*, is experiential knowledge attained through direct perception or spiritual witnessing, reflecting a deeper internalisation of truth. The highest level, *haqq al-yaqin*, signifies ontological realisation—when the knower becomes unified with the known in a state of complete awareness of divine reality (Chittick, 2007).

This triadic epistemology mirrors the Qur'anic progression from *iman* (faith) to *yaqin* (certainty) to *haqq* (ultimate truth). It suggests that knowledge is not static but transformative, leading the seeker from intellectual understanding to spiritual realisation. Moreover, the Qur'an's frequent pairing of "knowledge" with "action" ('ilm and 'amal) implies that knowledge gains authenticity only when translated into moral conduct. As the Qur'an warns, "*The most detested in the sight of Allah is one who says what he does not do*" (Q. 61:3).

The hierarchy of knowledge also serves as a safeguard against arrogance and false claims. It distinguishes between 'ilm al-nafi' (beneficial knowledge) and 'ilm al-la yanfa' (knowledge without benefit), emphasising the ethical dimension of epistemology. Beneficial knowledge contributes to the well-being of creation and aligns with divine justice, while unbeneficial knowledge inflates the ego and breeds corruption (Al-Attas, 1995).

In contrast to modern hierarchies that often privilege empirical data over metaphysical truth, the Qur'anic model restores balance by situating all knowledge within the domain of divine reality. Thus, revelation is not an obstacle to intellectual inquiry but its ultimate anchor. This hierarchy reflects the Qur'an's vision of an integrated epistemic cosmos, where every act of knowing, whether scientific or spiritual, constitutes a step toward *ma'rifah*, the direct knowledge of God.

#### 1.4 Knowledge and Responsibility

In the Qur'anic paradigm, knowledge ('ilm) is never value-neutral; it inherently entails responsibility and moral accountability. The acquisition of knowledge is portrayed not as a privilege but as a trust (*amanah*) that binds the knower to act justly and truthfully (2:283). The Qur'an explicitly warns against the misuse or concealment of knowledge, declaring that "*those who conceal what Allah has revealed of the Book and exchange it for a small price-they consume nothing in their bellies but fire*" (Q. 2:174). This verse illustrates that knowledge divorced from ethics leads to spiritual corruption.

The Qur'an establishes a profound link between 'ilm and 'amal (action), insisting that genuine knowledge must manifest in righteous conduct. Knowledge, when unaccompanied by ethical responsibility, becomes an instrument of arrogance and injustice. Al-Ghazali (n.d.) cautioned against scholars who pursue knowledge merely for social prestige or argumentation, calling such knowledge "*a veil thicker than ignorance.*" The Qur'an reinforces this moral framework by differentiating between those who "know" and those who "do not know" (Q. 39:9), affirming that knowledge without humility cannot lead to enlightenment.

Responsibility in knowledge also implies discernment in its use. The Qur'an prohibits speculative assumptions or claims beyond one's epistemic capacity: "*Do not pursue that of which you do not know*" (*la taqfu ma laysa laka bihi 'ilm*) (Q. 17:36). This injunction forms the ethical core of Qur'anic epistemology, emphasising intellectual honesty, caution, and verification. It anticipates the modern principle of evidence-based reasoning while grounding it in divine accountability.

Furthermore, the Qur'an assigns scholars ('ulama') a unique social responsibility: to bear witness to truth and uphold justice. "*Indeed, those who possess knowledge stand in awe of Allah*" (Q. 35:28). Knowledge

thus cultivates humility and God-consciousness (*taqwa*), shaping not only personal conduct but also social order. Therefore, in the Qur'anic context, knowledge is both enlightenment and burden, empowering humanity to act with wisdom, while obligating the knower to align their pursuits with divine justice and compassion.

### 1.5 Knowledge as a Collective Endeavour

While the Qur'an emphasises individual reflection and understanding, it equally portrays knowledge as a collective pursuit that sustains civilisation and moral progress. The verse “*And We raised some of them above others in ranks, so that some may take others in service*” (Q. 43:32) implies that human interdependence is part of divine design. Knowledge grows through cooperation, dialogue, and transmission across generations.

The Qur'an uses the plural imperative in many injunctions related to thought-*afala ta'qilun, afala tatafakkarun*-indicating a communal process of reflection. This linguistic choice signifies that the search for truth thrives within shared human experience and mutual correction. Ibn Khaldun (1967) later developed this concept in his *Muqaddimah*, arguing that knowledge progresses within societies that value cooperation, education, and institutional support.

Historically, the Islamic Golden Age exemplified this collective epistemic spirit. Scholars worked collaboratively in institutions such as Bayt al-Hikmah in Baghdad and Al-Qarawiyyin in Fez, integrating theology, philosophy, mathematics, and medicine. This synthesis reflected the Qur'anic ideal of *tawhid al-ma'rifah*-the unity of all knowledge under divine purpose (Nasr, 1989). Through such networks, knowledge was preserved, translated, and transmitted across cultures, bridging civilisations from Greece to India and later Europe.

The Qur'an also establishes the principle of consultation (*shura*) as a methodological and ethical foundation for communal knowledge production (Q. 42:38). In an epistemological sense, *shura* encourages peer review, dialogue, and collective reasoning, ensuring that decisions and interpretations emerge through consensus and deliberation rather than arbitrary authority.

Moreover, knowledge as a collective endeavour implies inclusivity. The Qur'an calls upon all believers, men and women alike, to seek knowledge (Q. 33:35). Early Muslim women such as 'A'ishah bint Abi Bakr and Fatimah al-Fihri embodied this principle, contributing to jurisprudence and education. This inclusiveness affirms that knowledge, in its Qur'anic conception, transcends social hierarchies and is a shared inheritance of humanity.

In the modern context, this collective vision offers a corrective to the fragmentation of specialised disciplines and the isolation of individual expertise. The Qur'an invites scholars to reestablish intellectual unity through cross-disciplinary engagement grounded in ethics and spirituality. Knowledge, when pursued collectively in service of truth and justice, becomes a means of realising *khilafah*-the stewardship of humanity over creation.

## 1.6 The Sacred Function of 'Ilm

The Qur'an sanctifies knowledge as a divine light that guides human existence toward truth, justice, and spiritual fulfilment. Knowledge in Islam is not merely a tool for survival or progress but a means of recognising divine reality. As the Qur'an declares: "*Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth*" (Q. 24:35). In this sense, knowledge is an illumination of the intellect and the soul, reflecting divine light within human consciousness.

The sacred function of *'ilm* lies in its capacity to connect the finite mind with infinite wisdom. Through knowledge, humanity participates in the divine act of creation by discerning order in the universe. Ibn Sina (Avicenna) described knowledge as *a mode of being* reflection of the intelligible forms existing in the divine intellect (Fakhry, 1983). Thus, to know truthfully is to mirror the harmony and intentionality of creation.

Knowledge also possesses a redemptive and transformative power. It liberates human beings from ignorance (*jahl*), superstition, and moral decay. The Qur'an repeatedly contrasts the state of ignorance with that of enlightenment: "*Say, are those who know equal to those who do not know?*" (Q. 39:9). In this dichotomy, ignorance is not merely a lack of information but blindness to divine order, while knowledge is the recognition of meaning and purpose in existence.

Finally, the sacred function of *'ilm* is to maintain balance (*mizan*) in the world. The Qur'an states that God "*raised the heaven and established the balance, that you may not transgress in the balance*" (Q. 55:7-8). Knowledge enables humanity to preserve this cosmic equilibrium through just actions and ethical decisions. When knowledge is desacralized, it becomes destructive, leading to environmental, moral, and social disorder. Hence, the Qur'an insists that true knowledge must always reflect divine harmony and serve universal welfare.

In essence, *'ilm* is sacred because it is a bridge between knowing and being a manifestation of divine wisdom within human experience. To preserve its sanctity, knowledge must remain oriented toward truth, compassion, and service to creation.

The Qur'anic conception of *'ilm* transcends the boundaries of philosophy, science, and theology-it is simultaneously rational, spiritual, and ethical. It begins with revelation, operates through reason, and culminates in wisdom. In contrast to the fragmentation of modern epistemology, the Qur'an offers a unified vision where knowing is inseparable from being and doing. Knowledge is both the path and the purpose of existence, leading humanity from ignorance to illumination, from multiplicity to unity. Hence, the pursuit of *'ilm* is not an end in itself but a sacred journey toward divine realisation.