

## Chapter 14: The Three Stages of Certainty (‘Ilm al-Yaqin, ‘Ayn al-Yaqin, Haqq al-Yaqin)

The Qur’anic epistemology presents knowledge not as static possession but as a dynamic journey toward certainty (*yaqin*). This journey unfolds through three interconnected dimensions- *‘Ilm al-Yaqin* (knowledge of certainty), *‘Ayn al-Yaqin* (vision of certainty), and *Haqq al-Yaqin* (truth or reality of certainty). Each stage reflects a deeper engagement between the human intellect (*‘aql*), revelation (*wahy*), and experiential realisation (*dhawq*), forming the architecture of faith-based knowing.

The Qur’an situates these gradations of certainty as a process of purification of consciousness: from understanding through signs (*ayat*) to witnessing the reality of divine truth in the self and cosmos. As stated, “No! If you knew with certainty (*‘ilm al-yaqin*), you would surely see the blazing fire. Then you will surely see it with the eye of certainty (*‘ayn al-yaqin*). Then you will surely be made to know it with the truth of certainty (*haqq al-yaqin*)” (Q. 102:5-7).

Thus, *yaqin* is both epistemological and moral-it transforms knowledge (*‘ilm*) into conviction and conviction into ethical action (*‘amal*). This chapter explores these three stages as a unified epistemic path rooted in Qur’anic ontology and the ethics of truth. The analysis integrates rational reflection and divine revelation, illustrating how *yaqin* culminates in the synthesis of intellect, experience, and divine reality.

### 14.1 Conceptual Foundations of *Yaqin* in the Qur’an

#### 14.1.1 Defining *Yaqin* in Qur’anic Epistemology

The term *yaqin* (يقين) occupies a central place within the Qur’anic structure of knowledge (*‘ilm*) and faith (*iman*). It encapsulates the state of unwavering conviction and inner assurance that unites intellectual understanding with spiritual realisation. In the Qur’an, *yaqin* is not merely the absence of doubt but the presence of an enlightened vision anchored in divine truth. The human intellect (*‘aql*) engages in the process of seeking and interpreting signs (*ayat*), yet *yaqin* represents the culmination of this process when reason and revelation converge to reveal ultimate reality (*haqq*).

The Qur’an treats *yaqin* as both a psychological and ontological condition. It is a state of consciousness that emerges from understanding divine signs in nature and revelation, transforming mere knowledge into experiential truth. The stages of *‘Ilm al-Yaqin*, *‘Ayn al-Yaqin*, and *Haqq al-Yaqin* (Q. 102:5-7; 56:95) together form the Qur’anic epistemic framework where knowing, seeing, and being are interwoven. Thus, *yaqin* is not an intellectual end-state but a process of spiritual becoming, a dynamic movement toward divine certainty.

#### 14.1.2 Linguistic and Semantic Roots of *Yaqin*

Etymologically, the word *yaqin* originates from the trilateral Arabic root *y-q-n*, which conveys meanings of firmness, stability, and immovability (Ibn Manzur, *Lisan al-‘Arab*). The linguistic structure implies an absence of wavering or doubt (*shakk*) and a state of settled assurance. The verb *yaqana* denotes “to be

sure,” “to be convinced,” or “to not doubt a thing.” Its verbal noun, *yaqin*, signifies the complete establishment of knowledge in the heart and mind (Al-Farahidi, *Kitab al-‘Ayn*).

In Arabic rhetoric, *yaqin* represents the highest degree of knowledge (*‘ilm al-yaqin*), a level beyond conjecture (*ẓann*) or suspicion (*shakk*). Qur’anic Arabic often juxtaposes these contrasting states: “*They have certainty (yaqin) about the Hereafter*” (Q. 2:4), versus “*They are in doubt about it*” (Q. 11:110). Hence, *yaqin* stands as the culmination of intellectual effort, emotional tranquillity, and divine illumination.

Linguistically, *yaqin* also denotes continuity and permanence. Unlike transient emotions or speculative reasoning, it implies a lasting cognitive stability. In classical Arabic thought, certainty was classified into degrees:

- *‘Ilm al-yaqin* - knowledge by inference,
- *‘Ayn al-yaqin* - knowledge by direct sight,
- *Ḥaqq al-yaqin* - knowledge by existential realisation.

These gradations are not semantic variations but sequential epistemic transformations, through which the human intellect ascends from rational understanding to spiritual union. The Qur’anic usage reinforces this hierarchy as a framework of divine pedagogy—the method by which God teaches through both reason and revelation.

### 14.1.3. Qur’anic Occurrences and Contextual Meanings of *Yaqin*

The word *yaqin* and its derivatives occur in several key passages across the Qur’an, each revealing a distinct epistemological nuance. For instance:

- “*And worship your Lord until certainty (yaqin) comes to you.*” (Q. 15:99) Here, *yaqin* is often interpreted as the moment of ultimate truth, death, or the final realisation of divine reality. It signifies the end of doubt and the arrival of absolute knowledge.
- “*Indeed, this is the truth of certainty (haqq al-yaqin).*” (Q. 56:95) In this verse, *yaqin* transcends conceptual knowledge, expressing the lived experience of truth. The Qur’an identifies itself as embodying *ḥaqq al-yaqin*, a divine revelation whose reality can be both understood and witnessed.
- “*And in the earth are signs for those who have certainty (li’l-muqinin).*” (Q. 51:20) This contextualises *yaqin* as an active state of perception. Those who attain *yaqin* do not merely believe abstractly but see divine meaning reflected in creation.
- “*We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the Truth.*” (Q. 41:53) Although the term *yaqin* does not appear explicitly here, the verse conveys its essence: certainty grows through reflective engagement with the world and the self.

Thus, the Qur’anic references to *yaqin* encompass rational certainty (*‘ilm*), empirical witnessing (*‘ayn*), and ontological realisation (*ḥaqq*). The process is cumulative and transformational, shaping the believer’s understanding of reality from intellect to inner illumination.

#### 14.1.4 *Yaqin* as the Metaphysical and Cognitive Goal of *Iman*

In the Qur'anic worldview, *iman* (faith) and *yaqin* (certainty) are mutually reinforcing. Faith initiates the journey toward certainty, while certainty perfects faith by grounding it in knowledge and experience. The Qur'an describes the believers as those “*who believe in the unseen*” (Q. 2:3), implying that *iman* begins with trust in divine revelation before full comprehension. Yet, as the believer reflects, observes, and contemplates, *iman* deepens into *yaqin*-an unshakeable conviction built upon both reason and revelation.

The metaphysical dimension of *yaqin* is tied to the ontological nature of truth (*haqq*). While *Iman* affirms the reality of divine existence, *Yaqin* actualises it within consciousness. It is the difference between believing that a fire exists and feeling its heat. The Qur'an frames this transformation through the stages of inner awareness. When *Iman* matures into *yaqin*, the human heart attains *itmi'nan* (tranquillity), as in “*O tranquil soul, return to your Lord*” (Q. 89:27-28).

Cognitively, *yaqin* marks the completion of the epistemic process. The intellect (*'aql*) examines the signs, the spirit (*ruh*) receives illumination, and the heart (*qalb*) attains steadfast conviction. This triadic integration of knowing, perceiving, and being reflects the Qur'anic balance between rational and spiritual faculties. The purpose of knowledge is not accumulation but realisation-the embodiment of truth in one's consciousness and conduct.

Moreover, *yaqin* defines the moral identity of the believer. The Qur'an repeatedly associates certainty with ethical integrity and steadfastness. For example, “*And those who are certain of meeting their Lord*” (Q. 2:46) denotes not only intellectual conviction but also moral perseverance grounded in divine awareness. Thus, *yaqin* is both an epistemological achievement and an ethical disposition-the culmination of faith that transforms knowledge into virtue.

#### 14.1.5 Relationship Between *Yaqin*, *Ilm*, and *'Aql*

The Qur'an distinguishes between several modes of knowing, each serving a particular dimension of human cognition. *Ilm* (knowledge) refers to the acquisition of information and understanding through observation, reflection, and learning. *'Aql* (reason) denotes the faculty of discernment and judgment, enabling humans to interpret signs and differentiate truth from falsehood. *Yaqin*, however, represents the synthesis and transcendence of these two when knowledge and reason reach their fullest clarity through divine illumination.

The Qur'an invites humankind repeatedly to use *'aql*: “*Will you not reason?*” (*afala ta'qilun*), and to seek *ilm*: “*Say, are those who know equal to those who do not know?*” (Q. 39:9). Yet it also warns that reason and knowledge alone are insufficient if detached from revelation and inner sincerity. The attainment of *yaqin*, therefore, requires harmony between intellectual pursuit and spiritual receptivity.

This relationship may be visualised as a triadic epistemology:

- *'Aql* (Reason) - The faculty that reflects upon divine signs and forms hypotheses about reality.
- *Ilm* (Knowledge) - The structured understanding derived from reflection and observation.

- Yaqin (Certainty) - The consummation of knowledge into unshakable conviction and spiritual insight.

The progression from *‘aql* to *‘ilm* to *yaqin* mirrors the Qur’anic methodology of discovery. Reason (*‘aql*) identifies the sign, knowledge (*‘ilm*) interprets it, and certainty (*yaqin*) internalises it as truth. This integration ensures that human inquiry remains both intellectually rigorous and spiritually grounded.

The Qur’an also positions *yaqin* as the corrective to the limitations of *‘aql* and *‘ilm*. Rational faculties can err, and knowledge can be partial or misused. Certainty emerges when these faculties are purified through divine guidance. As stated: “*It is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts that are blind within the chests*” (Q. 22:46). Here, blindness symbolises the absence of *yaqin*-the inability to see truth despite having reason and knowledge.

Therefore, *yaqin* is both an epistemic illumination and a moral awakening. It refines *‘aql* into insight and transforms *‘ilm* into wisdom (*ḥikmah*). When knowledge becomes certain, it naturally yields justice, humility, and compassion-the ethical fruits of true understanding.

#### 14.1.6 Qur’anic Epistemology as Processual: From Knowing to Becoming

The Qur’an presents knowledge as a living, dynamic process-a continuous unfolding of awareness rather than a static possession. This processual epistemology situates *yaqin* at the apex of an ever-evolving spiritual and intellectual journey.

From the Qur’anic perspective, the human being is created with faculties for hearing, sight, and reason (Q. 16:78), all intended to facilitate the search for truth. Yet this search must move beyond sensory data and abstract reasoning to inner realisation. *Yaqin* signifies the culmination of this transformation, when knowledge ceases to be merely conceptual and becomes existential-embodied in one’s being.

This dynamic understanding contrasts sharply with reductionist models of knowledge that isolate the knower from the known. In the Qur’an, knowledge is relational-it connects the human consciousness with the divine order. The process of attaining *yaqin* thus involves both intellectual inquiry and moral purification (*tazkiyah*). As the soul is refined, perception deepens, and the knower becomes aligned with truth.

The Qur’an’s epistemology may therefore be summarised as a journey through three phases:

- Tafakkur (Reflection): Rational contemplation of the signs of God in creation.
- Tadhakkur (Remembrance): Recollection of divine guidance within the self.
- Tahaqquq (Realisation): The embodiment of certainty, becoming what one knows.

This triadic movement reflects a holistic approach to human cognition, uniting the external and internal dimensions of knowledge. It is not enough to “know” the truth; one must “become” truthful. The Qur’an thus elevates epistemology to the level of ethics and ontology.

In this sense, *yaqin* is the measure of authentic knowledge. It transforms the scholar's quest into worship (*'ibadah*), the philosopher's inquiry into remembrance (*dhikr*), and the scientist's observation into divine recognition (*ma'rifah*). The Qur'an concludes this process by linking certainty with serenity: "Those who believe and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of God- verily, in the remembrance of God do hearts find rest." (Q. 13:28).

Hence, *yaqin* represents not only the end of intellectual pursuit but the beginning of inner peace-a synthesis of cognition, devotion, and ethical existence.

The Qur'anic concept of *yaqin* redefines the purpose and nature of knowledge. It is not the mere acquisition of facts but the realisation of truth through a harmony of reason, revelation, and moral consciousness. Linguistically rooted in firmness and assurance, *yaqin* signifies an epistemic stability that transcends doubt and speculation. Scripturally, it manifests as a process unfolding through *'Ilm al-Yaqin* (knowing), *'Ayn al-Yaqin* (seeing), and *Ḥaqq al-Yaqin* (being).

Within this structure, *Iman* functions as the seed, *'ilm* as the stem, and *yaqin* as the fruit of spiritual-intellectual growth. The Qur'an teaches that certainty is both the destination of knowledge and the foundation of righteous action. It bridges the human intellect and the divine truth, ensuring that cognition serves transformation.

In contemporary terms, the Qur'anic doctrine of *yaqin* invites the re-spiritualization of epistemology. Knowledge divorced from moral and ontological grounding risks becoming sterile or destructive. The Qur'an thus restores purpose to inquiry: to know is to witness, and to witness is to live truthfully.

#### **.14.2 The First Stage - 'Ilm al-Yaqin (Knowledge of Certainty)**

The Qur'anic notion of *'ilm al-yaqin*-“knowledge of certainty”-represents the foundational stage of spiritual cognition, where intellectual apprehension and faith-based conviction converge in the believer's consciousness. Derived from the triliteral root *yaqana* (يَقِنُ), meaning “to be certain, sure, or firm,” this stage constitutes the first dimension in the Qur'anic triadic framework of certainty (*'ilm al-yaqin*, *'ayn al-yaqin*, and *ḥaqq al-yaqin*). Within the structure of Islamic epistemology, *'ilm al-yaqin* signifies the transformation of conceptual knowledge into conviction grounded in divine truth. It is the moment when knowledge moves from abstraction to assurance-when belief in revelation becomes intellectually internalised and experientially validated through reasoning, reflection, and observation of divine signs (*ayat*) (Q. 45:3-5).

The Qur'an repeatedly employs the term *yaqin* to describe the culmination of a process of faith and understanding. As Allah commands: “And worship your Lord until certainty (*yaqin*) comes to you” (Q. 15:99). Here, *yaqin* is the ultimate goal of servitude, implying that true knowledge of God (*'ilm al-yaqin*) emerges from continuous engagement with divine revelation, culminating in unwavering assurance. This stage, therefore, is not static but dynamic-a constant unfolding of insight through the interaction of reason (*'aql*), revelation (*wahy*), and moral consciousness (*taqwa*) (Q. 2:2-3).

### 14.2.1 Linguistic and Conceptual Dimensions of ‘Ilm al-Yaqin

The term *‘ilm al-yaqin* combines two central epistemological concepts of the Qur’an: *‘ilm* (knowledge) and *yaqin* (certainty). Linguistically, *‘ilm* denotes both cognitive awareness and comprehension of truth, whereas *yaqin* signifies immovable conviction-knowledge so firm that doubt (*shakk*) or conjecture (*zann*) cannot coexist with it (Q. 10:36). The Qur’an differentiates *yaqin* from mere *‘ilm* by grounding it in the heart’s perception rather than the intellect alone (Q. 22:46). Thus, *‘ilm al-yaqin* refers to knowledge that transcends speculation; it is knowledge perceived as reality rather than theory.

In its morphology, the noun *yaqin* suggests permanence. It derives from *yaqana*, which implies “to settle, to be unmoved,” reflecting the Qur’anic metaphor of mountains (*jibal*)-symbols of stability (Q. 16:15). When *‘ilm* becomes *yaqin*, knowledge attains the solidity of a mountain, unshaken by doubt or illusion. This linguistic union indicates that *‘ilm al-yaqin* is not simply intellectual cognition but cognitive steadfastness anchored in divine truth (Q. 2:147).

### 14.2.2 Qur’anic Contexts of ‘Ilm al-Yaqin

The phrase *‘ilm al-yaqin* appears explicitly in the Qur’an in Surah al-Takathur: “*Nay! If you knew with the knowledge of certainty (‘ilm al-yaqin), you would surely see Hellfire.*” (Q. 102:5-6). This verse situates *‘ilm al-yaqin* as a threshold between unseen truth and experienced reality. The addressees are reminded that true knowledge extends beyond material accumulation toward awareness of eschatological reality. In this sense, *‘ilm al-yaqin* exposes the veil between the temporal and the eternal; it is the comprehension that life and death, reward and punishment, are not speculative metaphors but ontological certainties.

Other verses reinforce this epistemological hierarchy. For example, “*This is indeed the truth of certainty (ḥaqq al-yaqin)*” (Q. 56:95) refers to the highest level, yet it presupposes the earlier attainment of *‘ilm al-yaqin*. Similarly, Qur’an 69:51 declares: “*And indeed, it is the truth of certainty.*” These intertextual linkages show that the Qur’an builds a continuum -knowledge leading to vision, and vision leading to realisation.

In the Qur’anic worldview, therefore, *‘ilm al-yaqin* forms the rational foundation of faith. It represents the believer’s intellectual engagement with revelation through reflection upon signs in the cosmos (*ayat fi al-afaq*) and within the self (*ayat fi anfusikum*) (Q. 41:53). Such engagement transforms faith from imitation (*taqlid*) to verification (*tahqiq*), creating a synthesis between intellect and revelation.

### 14.2.3 Knowledge of Certainty as Cognitive Transformation

In Qur’anic epistemology, *‘ilm al-yaqin* is a process of cognitive purification -the movement from ignorance (*jahl*) to illumination (*mur*). The Qur’an repeatedly contrasts knowledge grounded in *yaqin* with knowledge rooted in conjecture. For instance: “*And most of them follow nothing but conjecture; surely conjecture avails nothing against the truth*” (Q. 10:36). Here, Allah delineates that authentic knowledge (*‘ilm al-yaqin*) cannot arise from assumption or imitation but only from rational comprehension aligned with divine revelation.

This transformation involves the entire human faculty: mind, heart, and soul. The intellect (*'aql*) perceives rational evidence; the heart (*qalb*) internalises meaning; and the spirit (*ruh*) affirms truth. Together, these yield *'ilm al-yaqin*, a synthesis of intellect and faith. The Qur'an affirms this integrative process in the verse: "*Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying down, and reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth, saying, 'Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly.'*" (Q. 3:191). Here, reflection (*tafakkur*) transforms intellectual observation into moral and spiritual certainty.

The Qur'an thus presents *'ilm al-yaqin* as a cognitive-spiritual bridge: the intellect verifies what the heart believes. The believer's rational inquiry does not oppose revelation but confirms it, as in "*We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth*" (Q. 41:53). This verse captures the essence of *'ilm al-yaqin*: truth is not imposed upon the mind but revealed through reflection and inner realisation.

#### 14.2.4 The Relationship Between 'Ilm, 'Aql, and Yaqin

In Qur'anic discourse, *'ilm* (knowledge), *'aql* (reason), and *yaqin* (certainty) represent a triadic hierarchy of knowing. *'Ilm* provides the data of revelation and experience; *'aql* organises and interprets that data; and *yaqin* transforms understanding into conviction. The Qur'an commands believers to use their intellect—"*Do they not reason?*" (Q. 36:68)—and simultaneously directs them to ground their reasoning in faith. This synthesis is the essence of *'ilm al-yaqin*.

Unlike modern epistemologies that separate rational inquiry from belief, the Qur'an unites them. Reason becomes a vehicle toward certainty, not a barrier to it. The believer's rational faculty (*'aql*) acts as a mirror reflecting divine truths already inscribed within creation. The Qur'an emphasises this ontological link: "*He taught Adam the names of all things*" (Q. 2:31), symbolising the primordial knowledge embedded within human nature. Thus, *'ilm al-yaqin* arises when the intellect recognises divine order within creation and aligns itself with revelation.

The Qur'an also distinguishes between two cognitive failures: ignorance due to denial (*kufir*) and ignorance due to heedlessness (*ghaflah*). The first rejects truth despite knowledge (Q. 2:88), while the second ignores knowledge despite its availability (Q. 7:179). *'Ilm al-yaqin* remedies both by awakening the intellect through reflection and aligning it with revelation.

#### 14.2.5 The Processual Journey of Certainty

*'Ilm al-yaqin* in the Qur'an is not merely a state but a gradual unveiling of truth. Certainty evolves through stages, corresponding to different modes of human knowing. The Qur'an's triadic structure—*'ilm al-yaqin*, *'ayn al-yaqin*, *haqq al-yaqin*—depicts a process from intellectual realisation to visionary witnessing to existential unity.

At the first stage, *'ilm al-yaqin*, knowledge is acquired through reflection, revelation, and contemplation. This corresponds to the believer's initial awakening—the moment when faith becomes intellectually verified. The Qur'an speaks of this progression through the story of Abraham (Ibrahim), who sought to understand how Allah gives life to the dead. Allah asked him, "*Do you not believe?*" Abraham replied,

“Yes, but only that my heart may be at peace” (Q. 2:260). Here, Abraham already possessed *‘ilm al-yaqin* but desired *‘ayn al-yaqin*, direct witnessing.

Thus, the Qur’an portrays certainty as experiential deepening rather than static possession. Each stage builds upon the previous, transforming belief into vision, and vision into reality. In this process, *‘ilm al-yaqin* serves as the foundation: it provides intellectual anchoring without which higher certainties cannot emerge.

#### 14.2.6 The Ethical and Existential Implications of ‘Ilm al-Yaqin

Epistemologically, *‘ilm al-yaqin* has moral consequences. Knowledge of certainty demands ethical transformation; knowing the truth entails acting upon it. The Qur’an repeatedly links knowledge with righteous conduct (*‘amal ṣalīh*), warning against the hypocrisy of knowing without doing (Q. 61:2-3). This is because *‘ilm al-yaqin* without moral embodiment remains incomplete and becomes mere data rather than illumination.

The ethical function of *‘ilm al-yaqin* is evident in verses such as: “Indeed, those who are certain of the Hereafter believe in it and guard their prayers” (Q. 6:92). Here, *yaqin* motivates obedience, transforming belief into practice. Similarly, Qur’an 39:9 asks: “Are those who know equal to those who do not know?”- implying that knowledge validated by certainty results in moral excellence.

Therefore, *‘ilm al-yaqin* integrates epistemology with ethics. It defines a mode of knowing that is simultaneously cognitive and performative: to know is to transform. Certainty is not achieved by passive contemplation but through continual spiritual refinement, remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*), and engagement with divine guidance.

#### 14.2.7 ‘Ilm al-Yaqin in the Cosmological and Eschatological Context

The Qur’an extends *‘ilm al-yaqin* beyond individual cognition to cosmic and eschatological dimensions. It reveals that the universe itself operates according to principles of certainty. Allah declares: “And on the earth are signs for those who have sure faith, and in yourselves-do you not see?” (Q. 51:20-21). The cosmos becomes a field of knowledge -every atom reflecting divine wisdom. The believer, through reflection, attains *‘ilm al-yaqin* by perceiving the unity of creation and Creator.

In eschatological terms, *‘ilm al-yaqin* prepares the soul for ultimate realisation. The knowledge of the Hereafter, repeatedly affirmed in the Qur’an, is not a speculative but revelatory truth. “The Hour is surely coming -of that there is no doubt” (Q. 40:59). This certainty anchors moral accountability, ensuring that human life is directed toward eternal realities.

*‘Ilm al-yaqin* marks the first awakening of the human intellect to divine reality. It represents the Qur’anic ideal of knowledge grounded in revelation, purified of conjecture, and integrated with ethical consciousness. Through it, faith becomes intellectually substantiated, reason becomes spiritually illuminated, and the believer’s worldview becomes unified under divine truth.

In the triadic ascent of certainty, *'ilm al-yaqin* forms the foundation -the rational and moral groundwork for *'ayn al-yaqin* (vision of certainty) and *haqq al-yaqin* (truth of certainty). It is the starting point of the soul's journey from knowing about God to knowing through God. The Qur'an thus establishes knowledge not as an accumulation of facts but as a transformation of being unfolding certainty that draws the believer nearer to the Real (*al-Haqq*).

### 14.3 The Second Stage - 'Ayn al-Yaqin (Vision of Certainty)

The Qur'anic framework of *yaqin* (certainty) describes a spiritual-epistemological ascent that progresses from *'ilm al-yaqin* (knowledge of certainty) to *'ayn al-yaqin* (vision of certainty), and ultimately to *haqq al-yaqin* (truth of certainty). If *'ilm al-yaqin* represents intellectual conviction derived through reasoning and revelation, *'ayn al-yaqin* constitutes the experiential and perceptive witnessing of that truth. It is the transition from knowing through inference to knowing through direct spiritual perception-the movement from mental affirmation to unveiled vision.

The Qur'an illustrates this transformation through its language of seeing (*ru'yah*), witnessing (*shuhud*), and perceiving (*basirah*), which signify the deepening of cognition into intuitive realisation. *'Ayn al-yaqin* is the level where truth becomes visually and existentially self-evident; the believer perceives divine reality not merely as an abstract belief but as a living certainty inscribed in creation and the self. The Qur'an captures this stage in verses such as: "You will surely see Hellfire; then you will see it with the eye of certainty (*'ayn al-yaqin*)" (Q. 102:6-7). This verse affirms that the unseen truths known by the intellect will ultimately be seen, transforming belief into direct witnessing.

This section explores the Qur'anic conception of *'ayn al-yaqin* as the vision of truth, examining its linguistic roots, epistemic structure, and metaphysical significance. It also analyses how *'ayn al-yaqin* integrates revelation and perception, connecting the Qur'anic discourse of sight with the broader theological and cognitive processes that lead to spiritual illumination.

#### 14.3.1 Linguistic and Conceptual Foundations of 'Ayn al-Yaqin

Linguistically, *'ayn al-yaqin* is composed of two key terms: *'ayn* (عين) and *yaqin* (يقين). The term *'ayn* in Arabic signifies both the physical eye and the essence or source of a thing. It denotes direct perception-seeing with one's own eyes-and also conveys the idea of immediacy, authenticity, and presence. The Qur'an employs *'ayn* in multiple semantic layers: as the organ of vision (Q. 20:39), as the source of water or life (Q. 18:60), and as the symbol of divine observation ("And you are under Our eyes," Q. 52:48).

When joined with *yaqin*, the phrase *'ayn al-yaqin* indicates a mode of knowing that is no longer dependent on reasoning or inference but grounded in direct perception. It signifies "certainty through vision"-knowledge transformed into immediate realisation. The Qur'an distinguishes between seeing with physical eyes (*'uyun al-bashar*) and perceiving with the inner eye (*basirah*). The latter is not sensory but intellectual and spiritual vision-a seeing with the heart (*qalb*), as expressed in "It is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts within the chests that are blind" (Q. 22:46).

Thus, *‘Ayn al-yaqin* is not mere optical sight; it is the illumination of the inner vision whereby the unseen (*ghayb*) becomes unveiled to the soul. The Qur’an’s repeated invitation to “look,” “see,” and “observe” (*unzuru, afala tubsirūn, afala tatafakkarūn*) demonstrates that perception itself is a mode of knowledge-one that culminates in *yaqin*.

### 14.3.2 The Qur’anic Context of ‘Ayn al-Yaqin

The term *‘ayn al-yaqin* appears explicitly in Surah al-Takathur: “*Nay! If you knew with the knowledge of certainty (‘ilm al-yaqin), you would surely see Hellfire; then you will surely see it with the eye of certainty (‘ayn al-yaqin).*” (Q. 102:5-7).

This passage defines *‘ayn al-yaqin* as the direct experiential realisation of what was previously known through intellect. It emphasises the transition from knowing to seeing, from rational conviction to undeniable vision. The first stage (*‘ilm al-yaqin*) involves comprehension of truth through signs and arguments, whereas *‘ayn al-yaqin* involves witnessing that truth as an existential reality.

In an eschatological context, the verse refers to the moment of resurrection when all veils of perception are lifted, and the unseen becomes seen. However, within the Qur’anic framework, this unveiling also occurs in spiritual experience within life when the believer attains inner sight of divine reality. As the Qur’an states: “*Thus We show Abraham the kingdom of the heavens and the earth so that he may be among those who have certainty*” (Q. 6:75). Here, *‘ayn al-yaqin* is realised through divine disclosure (*kashf*)-Allah enables Abraham to *see* beyond appearances into the metaphysical order of existence.

This Qur’anic articulation suggests that *‘ayn al-yaqin* is both an eschatological and ontological event vision that occurs in the Hereafter in its fullest sense but begins in this life as spiritual unveiling through reflection, purification, and divine grace.

### 14.3.3 The Epistemological Transition from Knowing to Seeing

The distinction between *‘ilm al-yaqin* and *‘ayn al-yaqin* marks a profound epistemological shift. *‘Ilm al-yaqin* is discursive and relies on reflection, reasoning, and interpretation. *‘Ayn al-yaqin*, however, is intuitive and direct- it is *knowledge by presence (‘ilm ḥuḍuri)*, where the knower and the known coincide in perception.

The Qur’an repeatedly bridges these two modalities. In Qur’an 3:191, believers are praised for reflecting on creation (*tafakkur*) and arriving at certainty through observation: “*Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying down, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth.*” Here, reflection transitions into vision; what begins as mental contemplation culminates in spiritual seeing.

Similarly, Qur’an 6:75 shows that Abraham’s certainty arose not merely from reasoning but from divine demonstration-he was *shown* the realities of creation. Thus, *‘ayn al-yaqin* transcends abstract deduction. It is an unveiling (*tajalli*) of truth within consciousness, where the intellect gives way to illumination.

This process mirrors the Qur'anic pedagogy of signs (*ayat*). The Qur'an calls creation itself a visible text sign of divine meaning. *'Ayn al-yaqin* arises when the believer no longer perceives phenomena as isolated objects but as transparent symbols of divine presence. The world becomes a mirror of truth, and the perceiver becomes its illuminated witness.

#### 14.3.4 The Metaphysics of Vision in the Qur'an

Vision in the Qur'an is not limited to the physical faculty of sight; it is an ontological condition. To "see" in the Qur'anic sense is to become aware of divine reality through spiritual awakening. The Qur'an describes this transformation as the removal of veils: "*So your sight today is sharp*" (Q. 50:22). The verse addresses the human soul on the Day of Resurrection, yet its principle applies to every moment of awakening when perception transcends illusion.

The Qur'an also depicts the false vision of those blinded by arrogance and heedlessness: "*They have hearts with which they do not understand, eyes with which they do not see*" (Q. 7:179). True vision, therefore, is moral and spiritual before it is sensory. The seeing heart perceives what the physical eyes cannot: the divine order underlying existence.

At the level of *'ayn al-yaqin*, the believer's perception becomes unified, and external and internal realities reveal the same truth. The world ceases to be opaque and becomes luminous with divine meaning. Every event, object, and phenomenon is recognised as a sign pointing to Allah. This is not pantheistic identification but the Qur'anic *tawhīd al-shuhūd* -the unity of witnessing, where multiplicity is seen as a reflection of the One.

#### 14.3.5 The Ethical and Spiritual Function of 'Ayn al-Yaqin

While *'ilm al-yaqin* emphasises intellectual certainty, *'ayn al-yaqin* emphasises a transformative vision that reshapes moral consciousness. The one who "sees with certainty" acts differently than one who merely "knows." The Qur'an repeatedly ties true vision to moral awareness. "*Indeed, in that is a reminder for whoever has a heart or gives ear while he is witness*" (Q. 50:37). The act of witnessing (*shuhūd*) here implies spiritual attentiveness-the capacity to see the truth of one's actions and their consequences.

At this stage, ethical action arises not from command alone but from direct perception of reality. When the believer perceives the Hereafter as vividly as the present, moral discipline becomes natural, not imposed. The Qur'an describes such insight: "*They see it (the Day) as distant, but We see it as near*" (Q. 70:6-7). The believer endowed with *'ayn al-yaqin* lives in awareness of divine nearness and accountability.

Thus, *'ayn al-yaqin* transforms epistemology into ethics. It is no longer sufficient to believe or to know; one must *see* the moral and metaphysical order. Such vision results in humility, detachment from illusion (*ghurūr*), and sincere devotion (*ikhlaṣ*). As the Qur'an declares: "*This is an insight for people and guidance and mercy for a people who have certainty*" (Q. 45:20).

#### 14.3.6 'Ayn al-Yaqin and the Unveiling of the Unseen (al-Ghayb)

The Qur'an defines faith (*iman*) as belief in the unseen (*al-ghayb*) (Q. 2:3). Yet *'ayn al-yaqin* brings the unseen into the horizon of spiritual visibility. It does not abolish the mystery of the unseen but renders it

inwardly accessible through divine light (*mur*). Allah declares: “*Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth*” (Q. 24:35). The parable that follows describes the illumination of the believer’s heart as a niche containing a lamp lit from a blessed source—a symbol of perception through divine illumination.

At this level, the unseen is no longer merely believed in but perceived within the heart’s inner sight. The Qur’an frequently uses light imagery to express this epistemic unveiling: “*And whoever Allah has not granted light-for him there is no light*” (Q. 24:40). The believer’s certainty thus becomes luminous, while the disbeliever remains in layers of darkness.

Through *'ayn al-yaqin*, the Qur’an transforms epistemology into theophany: truth is not an object of thought but an experienced presence. When the divine light dawns within the human consciousness, what was unseen becomes manifest, and the believer’s vision expands beyond empirical limitation.

### 14.3.7 Cosmological Vision: Seeing Divine Signs in Creation

The Qur’an presents creation itself as a theatre of divine signs (*ayat*). To attain *'ayn al-yaqin* is to see these signs as transparent revelations of divine wisdom. The Qur’an repeatedly commands: “*Do they not look at the camels, how they were created?*” (Q. 88:17) and “*Look again: do you see any flaw?*” (Q. 67:3). These verses invite human beings to transform ordinary sight into contemplative vision.

At the level of *'ilm al-yaqin*, one infers God’s existence through reasoning about the order of creation. At *'ayn al-yaqin*, one directly perceives that order as a manifestation of divine will. Nature becomes scripture, and observation becomes worship. The Qur’an declares: “*We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth*” (Q. 41:53). This statement encapsulates the movement toward *'ayn al-yaqin*: a gradual unveiling of divine reality through observation and reflection.

Thus, the cosmos is not merely an environment but a revelatory phenomenon, an *ayah* that can awaken vision. The believer perceives not only what is visible but also what it signifies, realising that “*He who created all things has made them in due proportion and measure*” (Q. 25:2). Seeing creation in this way constitutes *'ayn al-yaqin*—the recognition of divine presence in the order of existence.

### 14.3.8 The Eschatological Fulfilment of Vision

The Qur’an indicates that the fullness of *'ayn al-yaqin* will be realised in the Hereafter when veils are completely lifted: “*You were heedless of this, so We have removed from you your covering, and your sight today is sharp*” (Q. 50:22). At that moment, perception becomes absolute—truth stands unveiled before every soul. The believer’s faith, once grounded in knowledge and partial vision, becomes total comprehension.

However, the Qur’an also implies that those who cultivate inner sight in this life will already experience a form of that eschatological vision. For them, the unseen world is not distant but continually manifest through divine remembrance (*dhikr*) and reflection. Their spiritual insight anticipates the ultimate unveiling of the Hereafter.

This duality-present vision and future revelation demonstrates that *'ayn al-yaqin* bridges temporal and eternal dimensions. It is both an epistemic and an ontological state, uniting the knower, the act of knowing, and the known under divine light.

### 14.3.9 Conclusion

*'Ayn al-yaqin* represents the Qur'anic stage where knowledge transforms into vision. It is the unveiling of the heart's perception, where divine truth becomes experientially self-evident. If *'ilm al-yaqin* is the foundation of conviction, *'ayn al-yaqin* is its flowering moment when faith sees.

Through this stage, the Qur'an presents a holistic epistemology where perception, reason, and revelation are integrated into a unified act of knowing. Vision is not merely optical but spiritual: the soul sees through divine light, and existence is revealed as a sign of the Real (*al-Ḥaqq*).

Ultimately, *'ayn al-yaqin* bridges the finite and the infinite. It transforms human understanding into witnessing, leading the believer toward *ḥaqq al-yaqin* -the final realisation of truth itself. Thus, the Qur'an establishes certainty not as an abstract ideal but as a lived and illuminated consciousness-a vision that sees through the eyes of faith.

## 14.4 The Third Stage - Ḥaqq al-Yaqin (Truth of Certainty)

The Qur'anic conception of *ḥaqq al-yaqin* (حق اليقين)-translated as "the Truth of Certainty"-represents the apex of epistemic and spiritual realisation. It is not simply knowledge *about* truth or a vision *of* truth, but a state of *being in* truth. This stage marks the complete unification between knowing, seeing, and becoming, where knowledge (*'ilm*), perception (*'ayn*), and essence (*ḥaqq*) converge in a singular experience of reality. It is the culmination of the Qur'anic epistemological journey that begins with inquiry (*'ilm*), matures through perception (*'ayn*), and fulfils itself in realisation (*ḥaqq*).

### 14.4.1 Linguistic and Theological Meaning of Ḥaqq al-Yaqin

The term *ḥaqq* (حق) signifies truth, reality, and that which is established without doubt. In the Qur'an, *al-Ḥaqq* is one of the Divine Names of Allah (Q. 22:6), indicating the ultimate source of all reality. When paired with *yaqin* (certainty), it forms an expression that transcends intellectual understanding to denote a total ontological alignment with divine truth. The phrase *ḥaqq al-yaqin* appears explicitly in *Sirat al-Waqi'ah* (Q. 56:95) and *Sirat al-Ḥaqqah* (Q. 69:51), where the Qur'an asserts: "Indeed, it is the truth of certainty (*innahū la-ḥaqq al-yaqin*)" (Q. 69:51).

This declaration occurs in the context of affirming the reality of divine revelation and the Hereafter. The Qur'an thus presents itself as the embodiment of *ḥaqq al-yaqin*, a direct expression of divine reality rather than a mediated human construction (Al-Attas, 1995).

### 14.4.2 The Ontological Shift: From Knowing to Being

While *'ilm al-yaqin* concerns the acquisition of certain knowledge and *'ayn al-yaqin* relates to perceiving that truth, *ḥaqq al-yaqin* involves existential transformation. The knower becomes inseparable from the known; truth is not observed from a distance but lived and internalised. This transformation echoes the

Qur’anic statement: “Allah will raise those who believe among you and those who have been given knowledge, by degrees” (Q. 58:11).

The ascent “by degrees” (*darajat*) suggests a progressive deepening of certainty, culminating in the unity of truth and self. At this highest stage, knowledge ceases to be representational-it becomes participatory. The believer embodies divine guidance, and his consciousness becomes a mirror reflecting the attributes of truth, justice, and mercy (Nasr, 2007).

### 14.4.3 Ḥaqq al-Yaqin and the Qur’an as Living Truth

The Qur’an itself is presented as *ḥaqq al-yaqin*, not merely containing truths but *being* truth in form, content, and effect. It declares: “And indeed, it is a Book of exalted power” (Q. 41:41-42), “Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or behind it; it is a revelation from the Wise, the Praiseworthy.”

Here, the Qur’an defines its own authority not as a text to be verified externally, but as self-authenticating the truth of certainty manifest in language. The act of reciting, understanding, and embodying the Qur’an thus becomes the human avenue toward *ḥaqq al-yaqin*.

### 14.4.4 The Transformative Dimension of Ḥaqq al-Yaqin

The Qur’an describes believers who attain this state as those whose hearts and actions are fully surrendered to divine command: “Those who believe and do righteous deeds, their Lord will guide them because of their faith” (Q. 10:9).

At *ḥaqq al-yaqin*, the moral, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of the self are perfectly harmonised. Knowledge is no longer external information but a living state of awareness; every act becomes a reflection of divine consciousness (*taqwa*). This integration dissolves the dichotomy between knower and known, affirming the Qur’anic axiom: “We shall show them Our signs on the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the Truth” (Q. 41:53).

This verse demonstrates that *ḥaqq al-yaqin* is attained when external observation (*afaq*) and inner realisation (*anfus*) converge, leading to total conviction.

### 14.4.5 Ḥaqq al-Yaqin and Eschatological Awareness

An essential dimension of *ḥaqq al-yaqin* is eschatological consciousness, realisation of ultimate accountability and divine justice. The Qur’an presents the Hereafter as the domain in which truth becomes fully unveiled, stripping away illusion and doubt: “You were heedless of this; now We have removed your covering, so your sight today is sharp” (Q. 50:22).

Here, the clarity of vision symbolises the attainment of *ḥaqq al-yaqin* in the ultimate sense-truth revealed without mediation. Thus, *ḥaqq al-yaqin* is both an epistemic state achieved in life through faith and knowledge, and an eschatological reality experienced after resurrection (Rahman, 1980).

#### 14.4.6 The Ethical Imperative of Truth-Realisation

To reach *ḥaqq al-yaqin* entails moral purification (*tazkiyah*) and steadfastness in truth (*sidq*). The Qur'an asserts that only those who embody truth in their lives can be guided to this ultimate certainty: “*That Allah may reward the truthful for their truth*” (Q. 33:24).

Truth in action-ethical integrity, justice, and sincerity-becomes both the condition and the consequence of attaining *ḥaqq al-yaqin*. This stage, therefore, integrates epistemology with ethics; knowing the truth implies living truthfully.

#### 14.4.7 The Dynamic Continuum: From ‘Ilm to Ḥaqq

The Qur'an's tripartite model of certainty-*‘ilm al-yaqin*, *‘ayn al-yaqin*, and *ḥaqq al-yaqin*-is not a static hierarchy but a continuum. Each stage deepens and transforms the previous one, leading from intellectual understanding to visionary perception, and finally to existential realisation. The Qur'an's layered epistemology thus presents knowledge as a dynamic process of becoming, grounded in faith (*iman*) and culminating in spiritual truth (*ḥaqq*).

This process exemplifies the holistic Qur'anic view of knowledge as light (*mur*), guidance (*huda*), and mercy (*rahmah*). The believer's journey through these stages transforms both consciousness and conduct, aligning the human intellect with divine wisdom.

#### 14.4.8 Conclusion: The Realisation of Truth in the Human Self

*Ḥaqq al-yaqin* is the Qur'an's highest epistemological horizon, where truth is not merely believed, seen, or known, but *realised*. It marks the completion of the human journey toward divine proximity, as expressed in: “*O tranquil soul, return to your Lord, pleased and pleasing. Enter among My servants and enter My Garden*” (Q. 89:27-30).

In this verse, the state of the tranquil soul (*al-nafs al-muṭma'innah*) corresponds to *ḥaqq al-yaqin*, where the self achieves total harmony with divine truth. Thus, Qur'anic epistemology is not only a science of knowledge but a path of transformation from faith (*iman*) to knowledge (*‘ilm*) to truth (*ḥaqq*).

### 14.5 The Progression of Yaqin: From Knowing to Being

The Qur'anic conception of *yaqin* (certainty) presents a dynamic and integrative framework of knowledge that transcends mere cognition. It portrays human knowing as a progressive journey-an ascent from *‘ilm al-yaqin* (knowledge of certainty), through *‘ayn al-yaqin* (vision of certainty), culminating in *ḥaqq al-yaqin* (truth of certainty). These stages represent not discrete compartments of understanding but successive unveilings of the same truth at different ontological depths. The process moves from reflection to realisation to the embodiment stage, bringing the believer closer to the Divine Reality (*al-Ḥaqq*).

#### 14.5.1 The Threefold Structure of Certainty: Knowing, Seeing, and Being

The Qur'an's triadic structure of *yaqin* is one of its most profound epistemological contributions. Each level-*‘ilm*, *‘ayn*, and *ḥaqq*-marks a distinct degree of nearness to truth, yet all are interconnected aspects of the same continuum.

Ilm al-Yaqin - Knowing through Reflection: At the first level, *‘ilm al-yaqin* denotes certainty attained through rational inquiry and reflection (*tafakkur*). The Qur’an continually invites believers to think, ponder, and analyse signs in creation: “*Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for people of understanding*” (Q. 3:190).

This reflective knowing is discursive and inferential; it relies on observation, analogy, and reasoning (*‘aql*). It forms the intellectual foundation of faith (*iman*), allowing human consciousness to rise from ignorance to knowledge (Izutsu, 2002). Yet this knowledge, while necessary, remains indirect-it provides conviction through inference rather than experience.

‘Ayn al-Yaqin - Seeing through Realisation: The second degree, *‘ayn al-yaqin*, transcends conceptual knowing to become experiential seeing. It occurs when the truths previously known abstractly are witnessed directly in the soul or in the phenomena of the world. The Qur’an refers to this transformation of awareness when it states: “*You will surely see it with the eye of certainty (‘ayn al-yaqin)*” (Q. 102:7).

Here, perception is not limited to physical sight but signifies a spiritual unveiling (*kashf*)-an inward realisation where the signs of Allah become manifest as self-evident realities. The heart (*qalb*) becomes the locus of seeing, and knowledge matures into vision (Nasr, 2007).

Ḥaqq al-Yaqin - Being through Truth: At the highest degree, *ḥaqq al-yaqin* signifies the fusion of knower and known, where knowledge becomes being. It is no longer about perceiving truth but embodying it. The Qur’an describes its own revelation as *ḥaqq al-yaqin* (Q. 69:51), indicating that divine truth is not an object external to the human subject but a reality that can transform and inhabit the knower. At this stage, knowing becomes existence itself, and consciousness becomes anchored in divine reality.

Together, these three degrees trace a movement from epistemology to ontology: from conceptual reflection, to direct realisation, to existential embodiment. The human intellect thus passes through successive unveilings until it mirrors the divine light (*mur al-‘ilm*).

### 14.5.2 Integration with the Qur’anic Triad: Iman-‘Ilm-‘Amal

The Qur’anic paradigm integrates *yaqin* within the moral and practical triad of *iman* (faith), *‘ilm* (knowledge), and *‘amal* (action). This triad establishes that true knowledge must emerge from faith and culminate in righteous action, forming a circular process of ethical and spiritual transformation. “*Those who believe and do righteous deeds, their Lord will guide them because of their faith*” (Q. 10:9).

Faith provides the existential orientation-an openness of the heart to divine truth. Knowledge articulates and clarifies this faith through reason and contemplation. Action then manifests the truth of that knowledge in the world. The believer thus becomes a vessel through which divine wisdom is actualised.

In the context of *yaqin*, *iman* corresponds to the disposition that initiates the journey (*‘ilm al-yaqin*), *‘ilm* embodies the reflective and perceptive process that deepens understanding (*‘ayn al-yaqin*), and *‘amal* represents the embodied realisation of truth in ethical conduct (*ḥaqq al-yaqin*). The triad thus reflects a complete epistemic cycle where knowing, believing, and doing converge (Al-Attas, 1995).

### 14.5.3 *Yaqin* as an Epistemic Light (*Mur al-‘Ilm*)

In Qur'anic symbolism, knowledge is frequently described as light (*mur*)-an illumination that dispels ignorance and reveals the reality of things. The verse, “*Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth*” (Q. 24:35), establishes the metaphysical foundation for all knowing: divine illumination is the source of all epistemic clarity. *Yaqin* represents the intensification of this light within the human consciousness. As the seeker advances from *‘ilm* to *‘ayn* to *ḥaqq*, the luminosity of understanding grows purer and more direct.

At the first level, the light shines through reflection and reason. The second, it penetrates the heart through unveiled realisation. At the third, the light consumes the self in truth-it becomes a state of pure awareness beyond duality. This luminous epistemology aligns with the Qur'an's description of guidance: “*Is one whose heart Allah has opened to Islam so that he walks in light from his Lord [like one who is in darkness]?*” (Q. 39:22).

Thus, *mur al-‘ilm* is not an abstract metaphor but the very experience of truth as illumination. It transforms knowledge from data into wisdom, from perception into vision, and from awareness into being.

### 14.5.4 Ethical Implications: Responsibility and Sincerity in Certainty

Each progression of *yaqin* heightens moral accountability (*amanah*) and sincerity (*ikhlas*). As knowledge becomes more certain, the ethical burden of embodying it increases. The Qur'an warns against those who know but do not act upon their knowledge (Q. 62:5), equating knowledge without practice to burden without purpose.

At *‘ilm al-yaqin*, responsibility entails honest inquiry and intellectual humility. At *‘ayn al-yaqin*, it requires inner purification so that the heart's perception is not clouded by ego or desire. At *ḥaqq al-yaqin*, responsibility becomes the knower must live as truth, reflecting divine justice and mercy in every action.

Thus, *yaqin* is not only an epistemic achievement but a moral transformation. Certainty demands that knowledge be used ethically, for to know with certainty and act unjustly is to betray the very light one has received. The Qur'an states: “*Do not pursue that of which you do not know. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart-all of those will be questioned*” (Q. 17:36).

This verse situates epistemology within accountability: the faculties of knowing are moral trusts. The deeper one's *yaqin*, the greater one's duty to uphold truth with justice (*‘adl*) and sincerity (*ṣidq*).

### 14.5.5 Revelation (*Wahy*) as the Final Arbiter of Certainty

While human intellect and experience are essential to the process of knowing, the Qur'an asserts that true certainty (*yaqin*) cannot be achieved without divine revelation (*wahy*). The intellect can perceive the signs of creation, and reason about their meaning, but only revelation unveils the metaphysical source of those signs. As the Qur'an declares: “*And thus We have revealed to you a spirit of Our command. You did not know what the Book or faith was, but We made it a light by which We guide whom We will*” (Q. 42:52).

Here, revelation (*wahy*) is identified as both *ruh* (spirit) and *mur* (light)-the principle that animates and illumines all authentic knowledge. It functions as the divine compass, ensuring that human certainty remains centred on truth, not ego. Without revelation, intellectual certainty risks becoming self-referential and idolatrous.

In the Qur’anic view, revelation validates and completes reason. The intellect (‘*aql*) is a faculty of reflection, but revelation provides the framework of ultimate meanings. Together, they form a balanced epistemology: reason discovers, revelation confirms; reason questions, revelation answers; reason seeks, revelation fulfils.

Thus, *wahy* preserves the theocentric orientation of *yaqin*-it anchors certainty in divine truth rather than human subjectivity. As Al-Attas (1995) notes, revelation is “the final criterion that distinguishes between knowledge that guides and knowledge that misleads.” In this sense, revelation is both the source and safeguard of epistemic certainty.

#### 14.5.6 From Knowing to Being: The Qur’anic Path of Integration

The progression from ‘*ilm* to ‘*ayn* to *ḥaqq* parallels the Qur’anic journey from *iman* to ‘*ilm* to ‘*amal*, culminating in *taqwa*-God-consciousness. This journey signifies not merely the acquisition of information but the transformation of existence. The believer’s intellect, heart, and will are harmonised through the continuous remembrance of God (*dhikr Allah*), which purifies knowledge from pride and directs it toward service.

Ultimately, the Qur’an envisions knowledge as an act of worship. To know is to acknowledge the divine reality; to see is to glorify it; to be in truth is to surrender to it. This total integration reflects the Qur’anic ethos: “*Say: My prayer, my sacrifice, my life, and my death are for Allah, the Lord of all worlds*” (Q. 6:162).

At *ḥaqq al-yaqin*, every dimension of existence becomes a testimony of truth. The self is no longer a seeker but a witness (*shahid*) of divine reality, fulfilling the purpose of knowledge as illumination and submission.

#### 14.5.7 Yaqin as the Heart of Qur’anic Epistemology

The Qur’an’s doctrine of *yaqin* offers a holistic paradigm of knowing that integrates intellect, intuition, and being. It portrays certainty not as the negation of doubt but as its transcendence through divine awareness. From reflective knowing (‘*ilm al-yaqin*), to visionary realisation (‘*ayn al-yaqin*), to existential truth (*ḥaqq al-yaqin*), the human soul journeys through layers of perception until it becomes light itself.

This journey situates epistemology within spirituality, ethics, and revelation. It defines knowledge as a sacred trust (*amanah*)-an act of divine participation requiring humility, sincerity, and justice. Through *yaqin*, the Qur’an transforms knowing from a cognitive event into an ontological awakening, affirming that the highest form of knowledge is to *be* in truth. “*And say: The truth has come, and falsehood has vanished; indeed, falsehood is ever bound to vanish*” (Q. 17:81).

## 14.6 Conclusion

The Qur'anic conception of *yaqin* (certainty) represents a transformative epistemic journey that transcends conventional divisions between rationality and spirituality. Within the Qur'an, *yaqin* is not a static state of mind but a *progressive unfolding of consciousness*-a movement from intellectual understanding (*'ilm al-yaqin*), to direct realisation (*'ayn al-yaqin*), and ultimately to existential truth (*ḥaqq al-yaqin*). This tripartite hierarchy demonstrates that human knowledge is not confined to sensory or discursive cognition; rather, it aims toward a divine anchoring in which truth is both *known* and *embodied*.

The Qur'an situates this epistemic ascent within the very fabric of faith (*iman*). Rational knowledge (*'ilm*) forms the initial base, inviting reflection upon creation and the divine signs within the self and the cosmos (Q. 51:20-21). Yet reflection alone does not suffice-it must evolve into *'ayn al-yaqin*, the stage of realisation in which knowledge becomes experiential, transforming the knower's perception. Finally, *ḥaqq al-yaqin* represents the synthesis of knowing and being, when certainty is no longer an intellectual proposition but an existential state harmonised with divine reality (Q. 69:51). Thus, *yaqin* operates as the epistemic bridge between the intellect (*'aql*) and revelation (*wahy*), binding cognition to worship and inquiry to submission (Nasr, 2012).

In this Qur'anic hierarchy, rational knowledge and spiritual insight are not oppositional forces but complementary dimensions of the same truth-seeking process. The Qur'an consistently challenges the believer to use reason as a means to approach divine awareness, not as an end in itself (Q. 3:190-191). The rational faculty (*'aql*) is a sacred trust through which human beings discern divine order, while the heart (*qalb*) functions as the locus of spiritual perception that refines cognition into certainty (Q. 22:46). Hence, *yaqin* reconciles intellect and intuition: the former grasps the structure of the world; the latter perceives its divine meaning. Together, they cultivate an *ethical being*, where knowledge becomes inseparable from moral consciousness and accountability.

Furthermore, *yaqin* serves as the bridge between knowledge (*'ilm*) and worship (*'ibadah*). The Qur'an indicates that true knowledge naturally leads to humility and submission before the Creator: "Only those who know fear Allah" (Q. 35:28). This statement encapsulates the essence of epistemic piety-the idea that knowing reality culminates in reverence, not arrogance. In this sense, *yaqin* purifies epistemology of self-centred claims to mastery and redirects it toward divine-centred understanding, ensuring that the pursuit of truth remains a form of worship rather than domination (Al-Attas, 1995).

In contemporary epistemological discourse, the Qur'anic notion of *yaqin* offers an integrative paradigm that redefines the pursuit of truth. Modern science and philosophy, often fragmented by empiricism and scepticism, can rediscover a holistic epistemic framework where cognition, intuition, and ethics converge. *Yaqin*, as the Qur'an presents it, transforms knowledge from mere accumulation of information into a luminous process of self-illumination *al-'ilm*-where certainty is not imposed but unveiled through divine guidance. Thus, the Qur'anic hierarchy of *yaqin* refines both the scientific and the spiritual search for truth, harmonising the intellect's quest for understanding with the soul's yearning for divine proximity.

Ultimately, yaqin is not only the culmination of knowledge but the very path that leads from knowing to being, from reflection to realisation, and from understanding to surrender. In this way, the Qur'an situates human epistemology within a sacred cosmology where every act of knowing is a step toward witnessing the Truth itself.