

1

---

---

---

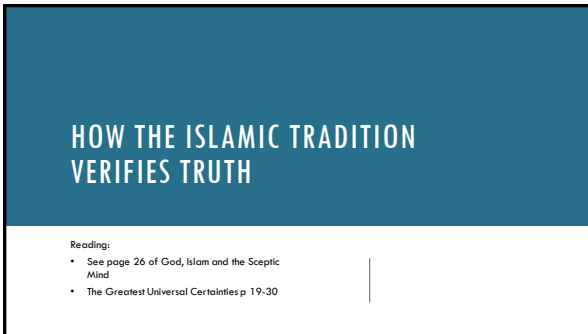
---

---

---

---

---



2

---

---

---

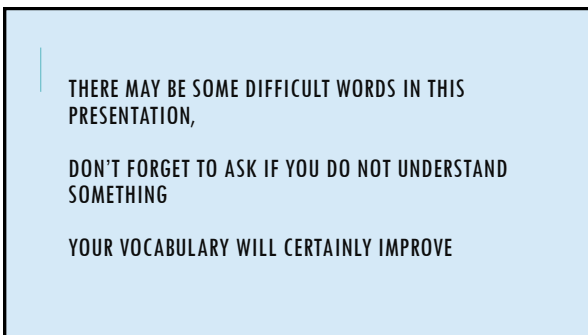
---

---

---

---

---



3

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## WHY IS THIS KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY?

There are some things that Muslims today must learn as absolute essentials that the earliest generations of Muslims took for granted.

We have to rely on knowledge and learning to bridge the gap. Three things are pertinent to us here:

1. Proximity to the Prophet (peace be upon him). There was no question of historicity.
2. Political and cultural dominance of Islam. Very few external obstacles.
3. Linguistic advantage as Arabs and as people who had access to a dominant language. The meanings of revelation were immediately known.

So early Muslims, during and after the madinan period, would have very little issues in terms of confidence and resilience in their faith.

4

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## WHY IS THIS KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY?

Now consider Muslims today for whom the situation has reversed:

1. They are no longer part of the dominant religion.
2. The dominant Western **paradigm** is directly responsible for defeating the political power of Islam.
3. Due to advancements in science and technology, and the progress of modern education, many Muslims see it as intellectually superior even if they may not see it as morally and spiritually so. Indeed many Muslims also question Islam's moral superiority.
4. There are constant attacks from the dominant **Western paradigm** that weaken the confidence of Muslims in their faith.

In this **context**, it becomes compulsory for Muslims to study their faith in a manner that takes all of this into account and gives them confidence in their faith by highlighting the **intellectual** basis of Islam but also by **critiquing** the dominant paradigm.

5

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY

First, it must be understood that human beings basically acquire knowledge using the following means:

- (1) the rational faculty or reason
- (2) the five basic senses", and
- (3) intuition or knowledge associated with the heart and spirit."

Our sources of knowledge are basically three-fold as well:

1. The universe, including the heavens, the earth and the natural world.
2. Man—including what is within ourselves, i.e. the above-mentioned faculties, as well as that taught by Prophets and other people, both present and past.
3. God's Revelation in the form of scriptures and inspiration to individuals.

In this regard, Allah (SWT) states in the Qur'an:

6

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY

Consider these verses of the Qur'an:

Say [Prophet], 'Have you ever thought, what if this revelation really is from God and you still reject it? Who could be more astray than someone who cuts himself off so far [from God]?'

"We shall show them Our signs in the horizons and in themselves, until it becomes clear to them that this is the Truth. Is it not enough that your Lord witnesses everything? Truly, they doubt that they will meet their Lord; truly He encompasses everything."

Surah Fussilat 41: 52-54

One way to look at this is to think of the universe as alternative forms of **scripture** which contain *ayaat* (verses and signs) in the same way that actual scripture like the Qur'an does.

7

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

8

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## THE QUR'AN CALLS TO ALLAH'S SIGNS

حَسْبُ (1) تَنْزِيلِ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَلِيمِ الْحَكِيمِ (2) إِنَّ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (3) وَفِي خَلْقِكُمْ وَمَا تَبَيَّنَ مِنْ دَلَالَةِ آيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْتُونَ (4) وَالْحِجَابِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ رِزْقٍ فَأَخْبَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَّاحِ آيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ (5) تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ تَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَيَاتِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ (6)

This Scripture is sent down from Allah, the Mighty, the Wise. There are signs in the heavens and the earth for those who believe: in the creation of you, in the creatures Allah scattered on earth, there are signs for people of sure faith; in the alternation of night and day, in the rain Allah provides, sending it down from the sky and reviving the dead earth with it, and in His shifting of the winds there are signs for those who use their reason.

These are Allah's signs that We recount to you [Prophet, to show] the Truth. If they deny Allah and His revelations, what message will they believe in?

9

---

---

---

---

---

---


---

---


---

---


PRINCIPLES OF KNOWING: BASIC POINTS




Science is knowing the truth as it is. As such, it must be based on a method that also relies on true realisations. **Conjecture** cannot produce truth, only conjecture.



The idea of 'objective research' is popularly attributed to modern science, but this popular attribution is not necessarily the truth. It needs to be tested and critiqued by examining the methodologies it adopts.



It is our tradition that motivates us to seek out an objective method for research and study: **"And do not concern yourself with anything that you have no knowledge of. Indeed the ears, the eyes and the hearts will all be brought to account"** [Al-Isrâ' 17:36].



It is because of this that the scholars of **aqeedah** have stipulated as a condition for a believer's faith that it be based on objective proofs of intellectual conviction and not the flawed method of following someone else.

10

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

PRINCIPLES OF KNOWING: BASIC POINTS

Here's something else from the Qu'ran to ponder:

*We did not send 'messengers' before you 'O Prophet' except mere men inspired by Us. If you polytheists 'do not know' this already, then ask those who have knowledge of the Scriptures.* <sup>16:42</sup>

*'We sent them' with clear proofs and divine Books. And We have sent down to you 'O Prophet' the Reminder, so that you may explain to people what has been revealed for them, and perhaps they will reflect.* <sup>16:44</sup>

Surah al-Nahl

11

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

PRINCIPLES OF KNOWING: BASIC POINTS

What is the status of someone who believes purely based on blind following?

Do they count as believers?

Are they sinful?

What if they are fully committed to their faith?

What does our tradition say about such people?

What about faith based on subjective proof?

Doesn't faith, by definition, imply following blindly?

12

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**PRINCIPLES OF KNOWING: BASIC POINTS**

 A topic of research will always either be a piece of information that has been transmitted or a claim that has been made (or theory proposed).

 Research into a transmitted piece of information must be restricted to verifying the link between it and its source, because the link is the object of possible corruption and doubt.

 Research into a claim must be directed towards rational proofs that are compatible with it and which by their nature will reveal the extent to which this claim is true.

13

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**THE ISLAMIC METHOD OF VERIFYING TRUTH**

It is summarised in one line:

إِنْ كُنْتَ نَاقِلًا فَاصْبِرْهُ أَوْ مُدَّعِيًا فَالِدَلِيلِ

"If you are transmitting, then authenticate, or making a claim then evidence."

14

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**THE ISLAMIC METHOD OF VERIFYING TRUTH**

This principle gives us the following categories of information/claims:

1. Transmitted claims
2. Non-transmitted tangible matters
3. Claims about the unseen
4. Non scriptural matters that are not tangible.

15

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---