



# HOW THE MAWARID LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WORKS

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**Shams Adduha Muhammad**

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### Your Courses



- Training For Ulama On How To Teach And Discuss The Foundations Of Iman
- The Learned Youth Programme Year 1 2021



**IF I USE ANY UNFAMILIAR WORDS THAT SOUND LIKE JARGON  
IN THIS PRESENTATION, PLEASE STOP ME AND ASK**

# HOW THE ISLAMIC TRADITION VERIFIES TRUTH

Reading:

- See page 26 of God, Islam and the Sceptic Mind
- كبرى اليقينيّات الكونية (The Greatest Universal Certainties p 19-30)

## 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.
4. There was no doubt that Islam was revolutionary, and morally superior to existing ways of life. Peoples lives improved under Islam in every way even if they remained non-Muslim.

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

## 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.
4. Indeed, many Muslims also question Islam's moral superiority.
5. There are constant attacks from the dominant **Western paradigm** that erode and 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. It is no longer good enough to claim Islam is superior, you have to prove it.

## CONSIDER THIS:

How do you prove to a young girl, her life under Islam is better?





## SO, WHAT NEEDS TO BE DIFFERENT?

1. Most of our parents and grandparents grew up without the truth of Islam being challenged, they had no reason not to accept whatever they learnt from their parents. Today, we see the truth of Islam challenged every day on social media. When we are ready, we need to know 'who', 'why' and 'how'.
2. We need to start from the foundations so we can see how it all works and why it is indeed true.
3. We need to see how our religion benefits us and how other ways of life harm us.
4. We must be more critical of things that go against our religion. We must ask them 'who', 'why', and 'how'.
5. Before young people are ready to understand this, they must be protected. You must protect yourselves.
6. We can't be blind about Islam; we also can't be blind about things that attack Islam.
7. We must learn how desires and conflicts of interest can get in the way of accepting truth.
8. This course is about all of that.





## KNOWLEDGE FOR RESILIENCE IN IMAN

Here's a few things we need to know to be resilient in our Iman:

- Learn about Islam in a manner that gives true confidence – that is confidence based on sound intellectual foundations, as opposed to false and assumed confidence.
- Learn the history of Islam with a focus on its intellectual, ethical and civilisational merits. Not just its stories of heroism and success in battle.
- Develop sound critical competencies so that we can see through the façade of modernity and its highly destructive influence on the world.
- Learn the meaning of objectivity and what it means to evaluate biases in a manner that emancipates us from the shackles of desires and materialism, strengthens our iman and connects us to *the* foundation of Islam: the Prophet alaihis salam.



## EPISTEMOLOGY — HOW WE KNOW WHAT WE KNOW

Epistemology is the study of the theory of knowledge.

Epistemology asks **questions** like: 'What is knowledge?', 'How is knowledge acquired?', 'What do people know?', 'What are the necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge?', 'What is its structure, and what are its limits?', 'What makes justified beliefs justified?'

# ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY

## Means of acquiring knowledge

People acquire knowledge using the following means:

1. The rational faculty
2. The five basic senses
3. Intuition or knowledge associated with the heart and spirit.

## Sources of knowledge

These are also three-fold:

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.

## 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 and ourselves as alternative forms of **scripture** which contain *ayaat* (verses and signs) in the same way that actual scripture like the Qur'an does.

إِنَّ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ  
لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۝ وَفِي خَلْقِكُمْ وَمَا يَبُذُّ مِنْ  
دَابَّةٍ آيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ ۝  
Al-Jathiyah (42:42)

وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ فَآيٍ ءَأْتَيْتَ اللَّهَ تَتَكَبَّرُونَ  
Ghafir (41:81)

**Aayaat In  
the Qur'an**

Read  
Experience

Observe  
Ponder

Iman

Study  
Observe  
Science

**Ayaat in  
Man**

**Ayaat  
In the  
Universe**

حم (1) تَنْزِيلُ الْكِتَابِ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ (2) إِنَّ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ  
 لَآيَاتٍ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (3) وَفِي خَلْقِكُمْ وَمَا يَبُثُّ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ آيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ (4)  
 وَاجْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ رِزْقٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ  
 بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَّاحِ آيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ (5) تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ تَتْلُوهَا  
 عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَبِأَيِّ حَدِيثٍ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ (6)

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

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?

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## PRINCIPLES OF KNOWING: BASIC POINTS



Knowledge is knowing the truth as it is. As such, it must be based on a method that also relies on true realisations. **Conjecture** (guessing and speculating) cannot produce truth, it can only produce conjecture.



It is often said that modern science is '**objective**', while this is often true, it is not *always* true and cannot be taken for granted. All knowledge including what comes from science needs to be tested and critiqued by examining the methodologies it adopts.



Our Islamic tradition motivates us to be objective and seek truth when we 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-Isrā' 17:36].



It is because of this that the scholars of **Islam** 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. It is why we seek truth.



## 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 men inspired by Us. If you "polytheists" do not know "this already", then ask those who have knowledge "of the Scriptures".* <sup>16:43</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

- A religion that orders its followers to use intellect, think, and reflect cannot be against reason, logic, or science. The Qur'an orders us to think with the confidence that if we do it objectively, without allowing self interest and desires to deceive us, we will reach truth.





## 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?



## 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 focus on 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.

