

# 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.



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- 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.





## THE ISLAMIC METHOD OF VERIFYING TRUTH

It is summarised in one line:

إِنْ كُنْتَ نَاقِلًا فَالْصِّحَّةُ أَوْ مُدَّعِيًا فَالدَّلِيلُ

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

## THE ISLAMIC METHOD OF VERIFYING TRUTH

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

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