

## Importance of Knowledge in Light of Holy Quran With Special Reference to Ibn-Kathir

Dr. Hafiz M. Ibrar Ullah \*

Dr. Hafiz M. Irshadullah \*\*

### **ABSTRACT**

Holy Quran is the book of All-Mighty Allah. It has revealed the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). By 'development of knowledge' we mean 'promotion', 'advancement' & 'spread' of knowledge. No other book of the world has focused on the spread of knowledge so much as the Holy Quran has. The spread of knowledge and knowledge is the main objective of the Quran. Holy Quran indicates the basic principles of knowledge that lead a human to an examination of the universe and environment, where he can calculate the answers to many questions by his efforts. Holy Quran highlights the importance of knowledge. On one occasion it says, "Can the learned and illiterate be the same status?" Similarly, in another situation, it says that those who do not use their capabilities and intelligence are like animals rather worse than animals and they will be sent to hell. Holy Quran, in itself, is total knowledge and lifelong learning. The very meaning of the word "Quran" that is 'recitation' or 'reading' is related to knowledge. Allah Almighty has revealed it for the main objective of knowledge. Knowledge has a very prominent position in the Quran. The very first revelation was started with the words 'Iqra' (read) and 'Qalam' (pen). The first word that is 'Iqra' is a symbol of 'reading' whereas, the second word that is 'Qalam' is a symbol of 'writing'. The use of both these terms and so many others shows the importance of knowledge in the Holy Quran.

**Keywords:**

---

\* Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies The Azad Jammu & Kashmir University  
Muzaffarabad

\*\* Post Doctorate Research Fellow, Faculty of Education, University of  
Johannesburg

## Introduction:

Knowledge is this thing based on the knowledge of an intention of certainty present at the end. The word knowledge is appropriate for this proposition which includes the object and the predicate with news independent of the news similar to those controlled in the plan. The subject and the predicate are the two terms of a combined proposition by means of the copula, which is forever a fraction of the verb "to be". Furthermore, a proposition is right or wrong and the question of its fact or falsehood is raised only when statements are made about objects. We can therefore say that every proposition cannot be called knowledge; only this proposition will be called knowledge which is solid and secure and has a valid justification regarding realism on earth, external to the proposition. According to Al-Mighty Allah,

*“In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. “And He taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He showed them to the angels and said, Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful.”<sup>(1)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Allah stated the virtue of Adam above the angels, because he taught Adam, rather than them, the names of everything. This occurred after they prostrated to him. This discussion precedes that event here, only to show the importance of his position and knowledge”. \*

*“They ask you (O Muhammad S A W) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: “In them is a great sin and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit.” And they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: “That which is beyond your needs.” Thus Allah makes clear to you His Laws in order that you may give thought”<sup>(2)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Hazrat Omar once said, o Allah give us a clear ruling regarding Al.khamr, Allah sent down the ayah of Surah Al. Baqarah”. \*

*“Allah! La ilaha illa Huwa (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists. Neither slumber, nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His Permission? He knows what happens to them (His creatures) in this world, and what will happen to them in the Hereafter. And they will never compass*

(1) Surah- Al-Baqra: 31.

(2) Surah-Al-Baqra: 219.

*anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills. His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great". [This Verse 2:255 is called Ayat-ul-Kursi.]<sup>(1)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir "imam ahmad recorded that ubayy bin kaab said that : the prophet asked him about the greatest ayatulkursi in the book of Allah , and ubayy answered , Allah and his messenger know better , when the prophet repeated his question several times , ubayy said , ayatulkursi , the prophet commented , congratulation for having knowledge , o abu al . mundhir , by he and whose hand in my soul . This ayah has a tongue and two lips with which she praises the king (allah) next to the leg of the throne".\*

*"O you who believe! Take not as (your) Bitanah (advisors, consultants, protectors, helpers, friends, etc.) those outside your religion (pagans, Jews, Christians, and hypocrites) since they will not fail to do their best to corrupt you. They desire to harm you severely. Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, but what their breasts conceal is far worse. Indeed We have made plain to you the Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses) if you understand".<sup>(2)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir "Allah forbids his believing servants from taking the hypocrites as advisors, so that the hypocrites do not have the opportunity to expose the secrets of the believers and their plans against their enemies .the hypocrites try their very best to confuse, oppose and harm the believers and way they can and by using any wicked, evil means at their disposal".\*

*"They (hypocrites) are those of whom Allah knows what is in their hearts; so turn aside from them (do not punish them) but admonish them, and speak to them an effective word (i.e. to believe in Allah, worship Him, obey Him, and be afraid of Him) to reach their innerselves".<sup>(3)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir "They (hypocrites) are those of whom Allah knows what is in their hearts these people are hypocrites , and Allah knows what is in their hearts and will punish them accordingly , for nothing escape Allah's watch . o Muhammad ( s a w ) let Allah be sufficient for you in this regard , because he has perfect knowledge of their apparent and hidden affairs".\*

---

(1) Surah 'Al-Baqra': 255

(2) Surah 'All-Imran':118

(3) Surah 'Al-Nisaa': 63

*“Wherewith Allah guides all those who seek His Good Pleasure to ways of peace and He brings them out of darkness by His Will unto light and guides them to a Straight Way (Islamic Monotheism)”.*<sup>(1)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “indeed , there has come to you from Allah a light and a plain book . Where with Allah guides all those who seek his pleasure to ways of peace . Meaning, ways of safety and righteousness”.\*

*“And with Him are the keys of the Ghaib (all that is hidden), none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is in (or on) the earth and in the sea; not a leaf falls, but he knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but is written in a Clear Record”.*<sup>(2)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “ALLAH knows better the keys of unseen , al. Bukhari recorded that salim bin Abdullah said that his father said that the messenger of Allah said , the keys of the unseen are five and none except Allah knows them ,

Verily, Allah! With him (alone) is the knowledge of the hour, He sends down the rain, And knows that which is in the womb No person knows what he will earn tomorrow And no person knows in which land he will die,\*

Verily, Allah is all knower all aware (31:34)

Allah’s honored knowledge encompasses everything, including the creatures living in the sea and on land , and none of it , not even the weight of an atom on earth or in heaven , ever escape his knowledge” \*

*“Those who took partners (in worship) with Allah will say: "If Allah had willed, we would not have taken partners (in worship) with Him, nor would our fathers, and we would not have forbidden anything (against His Will)." Likewise belied those who were before them, (they argued falsely with Allah's Messengers), till they tasted of Our Wrath. Say: "Have you any knowledge (proof) that you can produce before us? Verily, you follow nothing but guess and you do nothing but lie”.*<sup>(3)</sup>

---

(1) Surah ‘Al-Maida’: 16  
 (2) Surah ‘Al-Anaam’: 59  
 (3) Surah ‘Al-Anaam’: 148

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Allah explaining the knowledge that , have you any knowledge that Allah is pleased with you and with your ways . Surely, Allah has full knowledge of each and every thing”. \*

*“They ask you about the Hour (Day of Resurrection):  
“When will be its appointed time?” Say: “The knowledge thereof is with my Lord (Alone). None can reveal its time but He. Heavy is its burden through the heavens and the earth. It shall not come upon you except all of a sudden.”  
They ask you as if you have a good knowledge of it. Say:  
“The knowledge thereof is with Allah (Alone) but most of mankind know not”.*<sup>(1)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Allah commanded his messenger that when asked about the appointed term of the last hour, he referred its knowledge to Allah the exalted. Only Allah knows the last hour’s appointed term and it will certainly occur, and none beside him has this knowledge. Its knowledge is heavy on the residents of the heavens and earth; they do not have knowledge in it. also, al hasan commented on this ayah, when the last hour comes, it will be heavy on the residents of the heaven and earth, ad.dahhak said that ibn abbas explained this ayah, saying, Allah creatures will suffer its heaviness on the day of resurrection, means its knowledge is hidden in the heavens and earth, and none, not even a close angel or a sent messenger has knowledge of its appointed time”. \*

*“And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war (tanks, planes, missiles, artillery, etc.) to threaten the enemy of Allah and your enemy, and others besides whom, you may not know but whom Allah does know. And whatever you shall spend in the Cause of Allah shall be repaid unto you, and you shall not be treated unjustly”.*<sup>(2)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “muqatil bin hayyan and abdurrahman bin zayed bin aslam said that this ayah refers to hypocrites , as supported by Allah’s statement , whom you may not know but whom Allah does know”. \*

*“Nay, they deny that; the knowledge whereof they could not compass and whereof the interpretation has not yet come unto them. Thus those before them did deny. Then see what was the end of the Zalimun (polytheists and wrong-doers, etc.)!”*<sup>(3)</sup>

---

(1) Surah ‘Al-Araaf’: 187

(2) Surah ‘Al-Anfaal’: 60

(3) Surah ‘Younus’:39

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “nay, they have belied the knowledge whereof they could not comprehend and what has not yet been fulfilled. They did not believe in the Quran and they have not yet grasped it or comprehended it”. \*

*“Thus will your Lord choose you and teach you the interpretation of dreams (and other things) and perfect His Favour on you and on the offspring of Ya'qub (Jacob), as He perfected it on your fathers, Ibrahim (Abraham) and Ishaque (Isaac) aforetime! Verily, your Lord is All-Knowing, All-Wise”.<sup>(1)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Allah says that yaqoob said to his son yusuf, just as Allah choose you to see the eleven stars, the sun and the moon prostrate before you in a vision, and teach you the interpretation of ahadith, mujahid and several other scholars said that, this part of the ayah is in reference to the interpreting of dreams, Allah knows best whom to chose for his messages”. \*

*“Alif-Lam-Ra. [These letters are one of the miracles of the Qur'an, and none but Allah (Alone) knows their meanings]. (This is) a Book which We have revealed unto you (O Muhammad S A W S A W) in order that you might lead mankind out of darkness (of disbelief and polytheism) into light (of belief in the Oneness of Allah and Islamic Monotheism) by their Lord's Leave to the Path of the All-Mighty, the Owner of all Praise”.<sup>(2)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Allah says, this is a book that we have revealed to you, O Muhammad, this book is the glorious Quran, the most honored book, that Allah sent down from heaven to the most honored messenger of Allah sent to all the people of the earth, arabs and non arabs alike, we sent you O Muhammad (saw) with this book in order that you might lead mankind away from misguidance and crookedness to guidance and the right way”. \*

*“And We sent not (as Our Messengers) before you (O Muhammad S A W) any but men, whom We inspired, (to preach and invite mankind to believe in the Oneness of Allah). So ask of those who know the Scripture [learned men of the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel)], if you know not”.<sup>(3)</sup>*

---

(1) Surah ‘Yousaf’: 06

(2) Surah ‘Ibrahim’: 01

(3) Surah ‘Al-Nahal’: 43

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Allah informs those who doubt that a messenger can be a human to ask those who have knowledge of the previous scriptures about the prophets who came before, was their prophets’ humans or angels! Then Allah mentions that he has sent them. \*

*“(Some) say they were three, the dog being the fourth among them; (others) say they were five, the dog being the sixth, guessing at the unseen; (yet others) say they were seven, the dog being the eighth. Say (O Muhammad S A W): My Lord knows best their number; none knows them but a few.” So debate not (about their number, etc.) except with the clear proof (which We have revealed to you). And consult not any of them (people of the Scripture, Jews and Christians) about (the affair of) the people of the Cave”.<sup>(1)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “the ayah mentions three views, proving that there was no fourth suggestion. Allah indicates that the first two opinions are invalid by saying (guessing at the unseen) meaning that they spoke without knowledge, like a person who aims at an unknown target. indicating that the best thing to do in matters like this is to refer knowledge to Allah , because there is no need to indulge in discussing such matters without knowledge , if we are given knowledge of a matter, then we may talk about it . qatadah said that ibn abbas said , I am one of the few mentioned in this ayah , they were seven , ibnjurayj also narrated that ata al khurasani narrated from him , I am one of those referred to in this ayah , and he would say , their number was seven”. \*

*“Then High above all be Allah, the True King. And be not in haste (O Muhammad ﷺ) with the Qur'an before its revelation is completed to you, and say: My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.”<sup>(2)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Meaning , give me more knowledge from you , ibnuyaynah said , the prophet did not cease increasing in knowledge until Allah , the mighty and sublime , took him”.\*

*“Then they turned to themselves (their first thought and said): "Indeed you [Ibrahim (Abraham)] know well that these (idols) speak not!"<sup>(3)</sup>*

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “qatadah said , the people admitted their guilt and confusion , and said , indeed you know well that these speak not , so how can you tell us to ask them , if they cannot speak and you know that they cannot speak”. \*

---

(1) Surah ‘Al-Khaf’: 22

(2) Surah ‘Tahaa’:114

(3) Surah ‘Al-Anbeya’: 65

*Say "In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything (i.e. treasures of each and everything)? And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector, (i.e. if Allah saves anyone none can punish or harm him, and if Allah punishes or harms anyone none can save him), if you know".*<sup>(1)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “means, in whose hand is the realm of all things and he protects while none can protect against him if you should know”. \*

*“Or do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are only like cattle; nay, they are even farther astray from the Path. (i.e. even worst than cattle)”.*<sup>(2)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Meaning, they are worse than grazing cattle. Cattle only do what they were created to do, but these people were created to worship Allah alone without associating partners with him, but they worship others with him even though evidence has been established against them and messengers have been sent to them”. \*

*“He said: "This has been given to me only because of knowledge I possess. Did he not know that Allah had destroyed before him generations, men who were stronger than him in might and greater in the amount (of riches) they had collected. But the Mujrimun (criminals, disbelievers, polytheists, sinners, etc.) will not be questioned of their sins (because Allah knows them well, so they will be punished without account)”.*<sup>(3)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Meaning I have no need of your advice, Allah has only given me this wealth because he knows that I deserve it and because he loves me, in other words, he has given it to me because he knows that I am fit for this, when harm touches man, he calls upon us, then when we have changed it into a favor from us, he says only because of knowledge I obtained it”. \*

*“And of mankind is he who purchases idle talks (i.e. music, singing, etc.) to mislead (men) from the Path of Allah without knowledge, and takes it (the Path of Allah, the Verses of the Qur'an) by way of mockery. For such there will be a humiliating torment (in the Hell-fire)”.*<sup>(4)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “and of mankind is he who purchases lahw al hadith to mislead (men) from the path of Allah without

(1) Surah ‘Al-Momenoon’: 88

(2) Surah ‘Al-Furqaan’: 44

(3) Surah ‘Al-Qassas’: 78

(4) Surah ‘Luqman’: 06

knowledge, qatadah said, by Allah, he may not spend money on it, but his purchasing it means he likes it, and the more misguided he is, the more he likes it and the more he prefers falsehood to the truth and harmful things over beneficial things”. \*

*“And those who have been given knowledge see that what is revealed to you (O Muhammad S A W) from your Lord is the truth, and guides to the Path of the Exalted in Might, Owner of all praise”*.<sup>(1)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “This is another kind of wisdom following on from the one before, which is that when those who believed in what was revealed to the messengers see the onset of the hour and how he righteous and the wicked will be rewarded and punished respectively, which they knew of beforehand in this world from the books of Allah and which they are now seeing with their own eyes”. \*

*“So let not their speech, then, grieve you (O Muhammad SAW). Verily, We know what they conceal and what they reveal”*.<sup>(2)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “means , we know everything about them , and we will punish them for their false claims and deal with them accordingly on the day when none of their deeds , great or small , major or minor , will be overlooked , and every deed they did throughout their worldly lives will be laid open for examination”. \*

*“Those (angels) who bear the Throne (of Allah) and those around it glorify the praises of their Lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah) (saying): Our Lord! You comprehend all things in mercy and knowledge, so forgive those who repent and follow Your Way, and save them from the torment of the blazing Fire!”*<sup>(3)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “our lord! You comprehend all things in mercy and knowledge, meaning, your mercy encompasses their sins and your knowledge encompasses all their deeds”. \*

*“Have you seen him who takes his own lust (vain desires) as his ilah (god), and Allah knowing (him as such), left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight. Who then will guide him after Allah? Will you not then remember?”*<sup>(4)</sup>

- 
- (1) Surah ‘Sabaa’: 06  
 (2) Surah ‘Yaseen’: 76  
 (3) Surah ‘Al-Momin’: 07  
 (4) Surah ‘Al-Jasia’: 23

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “and Allah left him astray with knowledge, has two meanings. One of them is that Allah knew that this person deserve to be misguided, so he left him astray , The second meaning is that Allah led this person astray after knowledge reached him and the proof was established before him . The second meaning includes the first meaning, but not the opposite”. \*

*“Indeed, Allah was pleased with the believers when they gave their Bai'a (pledge) to you (O Muhammad S A W) under the tree, He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down As-Sakinah (calmness and tranquillity) upon them, and He rewarded them with a near victory”.*<sup>(1)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Allah knew what was in their hearts, meaning, of truthfulness, trustworthiness, obedience and adherence”. \*

*“Is with him the knowledge of the unseen so that he sees?”*<sup>(2)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “means , does this person , who stopped giving for fear of poverty and ended his acts of charity have knowledge of the unseen and thus knows that if he does not stop giving, his wealth will go away ? No. such a person has stopped giving in charity for righteous causes and did not keep relations with kith and kin because of his miserliness, being stingy and of fear of poverty”. \*

*“O you who believe! When you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room. Allah will give you (ample) room (from His Mercy). And when you are told to rise up [for prayers, Jihad (holy fighting in Allah's Cause), or for any other good deed], rise up. Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do”.*<sup>(3)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir “Means, do not think that if one of you makes room for his brother, or rises up when he is commanded to do so, that this will diminish his right or honor. Rather, this will increase his virtue and status with Allah and Allah the exalted will never make his good deed be lost. To the contrary, he will reward him for it in this life and the hereafter. Surely, he who humbles himself by and before the commands of his lord, then Allah will elevate his status and make him known by his good behavior. Imam ahmed recorded that abu at tufail , amir bin wathilah

---

(1) Surah ‘Al-Fatah’: 18  
 (2) Surah ‘Al-Najam’: 35  
 (3) Surah ‘Al-Mujadila’: 11

said , nafi bin abdul .harith met umer bin al khattab in the area of usfan . hazratumar appointed abu at tufail to be the governor of makkah . umar asked him , whom did you appoint as your deputy for the valley people (that is makkah ) Amir said , I appointed ibnabza , one of our freed slaves , as may deputy , umar said , you made a freed slave their governor in your absence , he said , O leader of the faithful! He has memorized allah's book and has knowledge of regulations of inheritance, along with being a proficient judge. umar said , surely , your prophet has said , verily , Allah elevates some people and degrades others , an account of this book". \*

*"And whether you keep your talk secret or disclose it, verily, He is the All-Knower of what is in the breasts (of men)".* <sup>(1)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir "and conceal your speech or publicize it, he is knowing of that within the breasts. Meaning, that which occurs in the hearts, ideas, thoughts, etc".

*"But verily,over you (are appointed angels in charge of mankind) to watch you, Kiraman (honourable) Katibin writing down (your deeds), They know all that you do".* <sup>(2)</sup>

**Explanation:** According to Ibn-Khathir "About the angels, they know whatever you do, but verily, over you to watch you (are) kiramankatibeen, they know all that you do. Meaning, indeed there are noble guardian angels over you, so do not meet them with evil deeds, because they write down all that you do". <sup>(3)</sup>

### Conclusion

The Holy Qur'an emphasizes understanding, knowing that the Quran is a perfect body of conduct for all. No other religion or association places as much importance on knowledge as it does on the religion of Islam. Religion has led to the pursuit of enlightenment on all Muslims and felt that doing so was not a sin. The prophet, who may have been praised by God, says in a (hadith) story: "The quest for knowledge is a responsibility for any Muslim." (Al-Tirmidhi). This limitation is not limited to a certain gender or class but to a limited extent to women as it is to men, young and old, the poor and the rich. God has elevated the positions and positions of those who have knowledge and employed them in many places of Scripture. One of the defining features of Islam is its emphasis on understanding. The French and Islamic culture (sunnah) requires Muslims to seek and gain knowledge and to hold people to a higher standard. In the

(1) Surah 'Al-Mulk': 13

(2) Surah 'Al-Infetar': 10-12

(3) \*Ibn Kathir, Ismacil. "Tafsir Ibn Kathir." Riyadh: Dar-us-Salam (2000).

Qur'an, the word al-Ilm, light and symbolic, has been used more than seven hundred and eighty times. These are the first verses shown to our Prophet (SAW) that highlight the importance of reading, pens, and learning for individuals: "Read: In the name of your Lord created. stick in. Read with your Lord the kindest man who ever taught with a pen? ".

