

## Chapter – 18

## Knowledge

(علم)

❖ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ الرَّسُولَ -

*We had appointed the former direction of prayers (Qiblah) towards which you used to turn your face, merely to test who would follow the Messenger? (02:143)*

❖ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا -

*And Allah has not yet made evident those of you who fight in His cause (03:142)*

❖ فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ -

*So (o people!) if you do not know, (then) ask those who have knowledge. (16:43)*

❖ وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا -

*And say, My Lord! Bestow me more knowledge. (20:114)*

In the above two Verses of Surat-al-Baqarah and Surat-al-Imran, there is **إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ** and **وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ**. These segments demand a complete explanation as regards to the knowledge of God.

Look! The knowledge of God is of three types:

1. **علم ذاتي** (Personal Knowledge): The self-knowing of God in fact knows to all, and this is His ‘Personal Knowledge’. Because He has the design and he is the reason of all. God knows all about both himself and His knowledge.

إِنَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطٌ

{Surely, He is, of all things, encompassing (41:54)}

Not a single particle is out of His reach and His knowledge. All elucidate the Persona of God.

Just look at it that there is a person whose name is ‘Abdullah’. How many things he has in him? He has head and body. --- How many things are in his head? Two eyes, above it two eyebrows, two ears, one nose and a mouth. In mouth there are lips, teeth and tongue as well. --- In the body, there are hands, neck, belly, back and legs. Even a single hair is not out of his body. Apparently he is one individual, but just look at him; you will get thousands of parts in him. You keep on naming his body parts you may get exhausted but Abdullah will not be totally clarified.

Since this type of knowledge is related to the desires of the Persona of God therefore it is called ‘Personal Knowledge’. --- At this juncture, God in Persona is **عالم** (knowledgeable), he Himself is **علم** (knowledge) and he is **معلوم** (known) as well.

2. **علم فعلى** (Practical Awareness): Before any creation, the knowledge that God earlier had is ‘اعيان ثابتة’, and distinctly knowing to this previous knowledge is ‘Personal Knowledge’. Simultaneously, no one should doubt that these two are eternal. Since God creates all the things knowing earlier, therefore the status of this Knowledge is higher than the Nature. God knew all before creation is technically termed as ‘اعيان ثابتة’ (Unchangeable Design). In fact, things occur when God orders for them with ‘**كُنْ**’ (Be--!), to materialize. That is why this stage is called **علم فعلى** (Practical Awareness). And with this we come to know about the next stage.

3. **علم انفعالى** (Knowing after Creation): When the old knowledge of God is related after Creation, it is called **علم انفعالى**, means knowing after creation. This type of knowledge has two sides. One side is God and the other is God’s Creations. As the Creations of God appear newly (حادث), ----- therefore this new

appearance gives some confusion that the Knowledge of God is also new. But, as mentioned above, God knew all before creation, therefore God creates exactly the same as it was known to him and that creation remains unchanged. God knows one thing and He created another thing, this is not possible. When God's knowledge as known (معلوم الی) is ordered through *كُنْ* (Be--!) and the Glories (تجلیات) of Allah's Names effect on them then all things appear and come into existence. The knowledge at this stage is called علم افعالی (Knowing after Creation). This stage comes after the step of Be--!

Some people say that God describes the first two types of knowledge (means Personal Knowledge and Practical Awareness), with 'past' and the third one (means Knowing after Creation), with 'future'. For example, we say, "God has created this thing". In this, the creation relates on two sides. One relates to 'God' and the other to 'the created thing'. When the knowledge is related to God then the desire is old. And if it is related to 'the created thing' then it appears as new emergence (حادث).

Few people consider that 'Knowledge' is old-in-old and new-in-new. Some say that God has defined "the knowledge of Prophets" as His own, and consider the meanings of *لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ* as *لِيَعْلَمَ الرَّسُولُ*. For instance:

*يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ*

{The hand of Allah is over their hands. (48:10)}

And some people think that *لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ* means *لِيَعْلَمَ النَّاسُ*. --- God is out of the Time Scale, and for him 'early or late' does not apply. ---- On the other hand, this Time Scale is with respect to persons. For example; in the printing press, paper is pasted on a stone and all prints come out. Look! According to the stone any line or any page is not 'early or late', but if it is seen with respect to its reading there is 'before and after'.

Thus, *لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ* means *لِيَعْلَمَ النَّاسُ*. In short, the knowledge of God is old and eternal and there is no place for new appearance, and there is no question for nonexistence.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ أَوْلَىٰ وَأَخْرَأَ وَبَاطِنًا وَظَاهِرًا

(And all praise to God who is the First and the Last,  
and the Noticeable and the Out of Sight)

وَإِنْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ

{There is not a thing except it elevates by His praise. (17:44)}

It means all things have some knowledge. Everyone knows that human beings and animals are knowledgeable. Now research is also going on about knowledge in plants.

When human beings meet together they get “Human Soul” and it dictates. When animals meet together they get “Animal Soul” and this dictates. Similarly plants get “Soul” and this also dictates. In Hereafter, when the rule of Human Soul will be removed from human beings, then their hands legs and other body parts will speak as witness.

O people! Ignorance is a big calamity. Ignorant, although he looks moving, but in fact he is like a dead man. A man is distinct only with his knowledge. If he has no knowledge or any skill then he does not deserve to be called as Human. The persons, who have knowledge and skill, they rule on you, as animals are ruled by humanoid. Thus, you must struggle and endeavour. Make efforts. Work hard. Ask from well-informed persons. Learn from them. Be called as ‘scholar’. Then start teaching others. But remember; don’t become “half-doctor -&-danger to the patient”. Look! First you have to work for some time under an experienced doctor then you are allowed to work independently.

Now consider Verse 114 of Surah Taha, quoted in the beginning. Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, whose greatness has been described by Quran,

وَعَلَّمَكُمَا مَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُونَ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ عَظِيمًا

{And taught you all what you did not know,  
and upon you is great kindness. (04:113)}

and whose speciality is "أَوْثَيْتُ الْعِلْمَ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ", yet God had ordered him:

وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

{And say, My Lord! Bestow me more knowledge. (20:114)}

Therefore, you also remember and clearly understand that life is the name of growth in knowledge. If the door is closed for knowledge then it is death or it is low-degree-stroke on brain.

Now! One question arise that when the Prophet has been bestowed with *عِلْمَ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ* (knowledge from the first to the last) then what is this ‘further progress’ in his knowledge ---?

The answer of this is that despite overall information a detailed knowledge is required. Look! For instance, I am looking at you, means to your overall personality. But I still need to know more about you. --- Similarly, the matter of world comes. For this, to know each details of this world you have to go for extensive research. You keep on exploring, till last day of the world you will not be able to complete your research. Because, as stated above, if your knowledge stops, it means it is your death.

O People! Knowledge has a close resemblance with water. Water quenches thirst. Knowledge satisfies urge. Water is very much essential for life. Knowledge is also vital for existence. ---- To teach an ignorant person is equal to giving a life to him. Anyhow, knowledge is wealth. It is goodness. One more thing that has to be remembered, that a person will be at loss if his today equals tomorrow. His toady is useless. ---- With respect to time, your knowledge must grow. With every breath there should be a new awareness.

رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا - وَ الْحَقِّنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ -

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