

**RELATION IN THE QUR'AN AND HADITH:
A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ACQUIRING
KNOWLEDGE****Dr. Hifzur Rehman**

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ABSTRACT

Qur'an is the most sacred book which is the Central religious text of Islamic faith. It contains the Sayings of Allah which were revealed on His Prophet Muhammad (SAS) through the Angel Jibril (AS) in piecemeal over a period of 23 years. The pieces and fragments of the Qur'ānic revelations had been written and preserved in different ways and methods during and after the life time of the holy Prophet Muhammad (SAS), which were collected and finally compiled into the present book form during the caliphate Uthman Ibnu 'Affan (R A). On the other hand, Hadith is considered to be the Second authority in Islam after the Holy Qur'an. It contains the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAS), his deeds and actions covering the whole life.

Key words: Religious Text, Revelations, authority, Preserved.

Both Qur'an and Hadith are co-related to each other in their basic points so as to believe in the unity of Allah, in His Angels, His Prophets, His Books, the Day of Resurrection after death and the Day of Judgment etc. It is a common belief of the Muslims that Qur'an is the Constitution of the Islamic way of life. So the Hadiths are regarded as important tools for understanding the Qur'an in the matter of Islamic Jurisprudence. They are also considered as important source materials about Islamic religious practice, law and historical traditions.

It is needless to state that the Qur'an and the Hadith are the complete code of life full of guidance for spiritual as well as material requirement of man, society and state. Both of them contain the main sources of regulation for the mankind in general and for the Muslims in Particular. These regulations deal in the Religious, Social, Economic, Political, Historical, Spiritual, Philosophical, Educational, Literary, Administrative, Legal, Moral and more other aspects of their everyday life. There is a significant co-relation in the themes and subjects in the statement of these two holy books. Being the collection of commandments and guidance for every step of their life and hereafter to what they should do and what should not, both the

masterpieces have instructed about the importance of knowledge and emphasized to acquire it very repeatedly. Because, acquiring knowledge is a continual process of human civilization. It is also a fundamental objective of a man or a woman. So, the main center of attention of this discussion will be confined within the resemblance and correspondence of statements for acquiring knowledge, both in the Qur'ān and Hadīth due to the nature and scope of deliberation.

ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE

The term used for knowledge in Arabic is 'ilm, which has a much wider connotation than its synonyms in English and any other languages. The word 'Knowledge' can hardly express all the aspects of 'ilm. 'Knowledge', as per Western concept, means information about something, divine or corporeal, while 'ilm is an all-embracing term covering theory, action and education. Actually there is no concept that has been operative as a determinant of the Muslim civilization in all its aspects to the same extent as 'ilm. Islam is the way of knowledge. No other religious principle has been seen to emphasize so much as the importance of 'ilm in Islam.

It is found that the word — 'Al-ilm' occurs in the Qur'ān in 27 places. In all, the total number of verses in which 'ilm or its derivatives and associated words are used is 704. The words

‘Qalam’ (Pen) occurs in two places and ‘Al-kitab’ in 230 verses, out of which the latter stand for the Qur’ān in 81 verses and for ‘book in general’ in 149 verses. It is important to note that pen and book are very much essential for acquiring knowledge.

Being the messenger of Allah the holy Prophet (SAS) learnt that Hadrat Adam (A S), the father of Mankind was given the lesson to learn ‘the names of all things’ by the Almighty Himself as it is mentioned in the holy Qur’ān:¹ **وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا**

The holy Prophet (SAS) might have felt from the deepest corner of his heart that the first message or command he received from Allah is ‘Iqrā’, by which he was instructed to read, recite or to acquire knowledge. So it was his agreement that the knowledge of ‘reading’, ‘reciting’ and using ‘al-qalam’ (the pen) is very much important for a Muslim male or female. That is why the prophet (SAS) has given intensive importance in acquiring knowledge and it was imposed upon his nation through the following line:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ لِكُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ (و مُسْلِمَةٍ)²

“The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim (male and female).”³

The Prophet (SAS) again said: “A servant of God will remain standing on the Day of Judgment until he is questioned

about his (time on earth) and how he used it; about his knowledge and how he utilized it; about his wealth and from where he acquired it and in what (activities) he spent it; and about his body and how he used it.”⁴

LEARNED MEN ARE HONOURABLE:

Acquiring knowledge is so important that the learned men and women have been bestowed high dignity and respectable position in the eye of the Prophet (SAS). Uthman Bin Affan (R A) narrated that the Prophet (SAS) said, “The most superior among you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it.” (Bukhari 6/546). Again, Abu Said Al-Khudri (R A) narrated that Messenger of Allah (SAS) said, “A believer is never satiated with gainful knowledge; he goes acquiring it till his death and entry into Paradise.”⁵

The holy Prophet (SAS) has also declared such a position and honour to an 'Alim (learned man) that their searching for knowledge is even better than the prayer of the ignorant ones as it is found in his Hadith. Abdullah Ibn Abbas (R A) narrated that the Messenger (SAS) of Allah said, “Acquiring knowledge in company for an hour in the night is better than spending the whole night in prayer.” (Tirmidhi 256). In his another narration it is found that the Messenger of Allah (SAS) said: “A single

scholar of religion is more formidable against Satan than a thousand devout people.”⁶

The seekers of knowledge will also be granted divine respect and honour. The Prophet Muhammad (SAS) has assured: “He who travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on a road of Paradise. The angels will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, the inhabitants of the heavens and the Earth and the fish in the deep water will ask forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon, on the night when it is full, over the rest of the stars.”⁷

The Prophet has not granted inheritance in property, leadership or in any case nor has he left behind any wealth (for his successors) as he had led a simple life like an ordinary people. Despite, it is interesting to note that only the owner of knowledge may be granted to be the heir of the holy Prophet himself. It is found that Abu Dardā’ said that he heard the Prophet saying: “The Ulamā (learned men) are the heirs of the Prophets, and the Prophets do not leave an inheritance of Dirhams and Dinars but (they left) only knowledge. He who acquires knowledge acquires a vast portion.”⁸

In the narration of Abu Hurairah (R A) it is also found that the Messenger of Allah (SAS) said, "...He who treads the path in search of knowledge, Allah will make that path easy, leading to Paradise for him. And those persons who assemble in one of the houses of Allah (mosques), recite the Book of Allah and learn and teach the Qur'ān (among themselves), there will descend upon them tranquility, mercy will cover them. The angels will surround them and Allah will mention them in the presence of those near Him. He who is slow-paced in doing good deeds, his (long) descent does not make him go ahead."⁹

A knowledgeable person is respectable not only to the Prophet (SAS) only but to the Almighty Allah also. Because, Allah has given such a respectable rank and position to the 'Alims, that has not been given to an illiterate person nor to any other else. The learned men can never be compared with an illiterate one. Because, Allah ordained in the Qur'ān:

...قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ °

"...Say: 'Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition.'¹⁰

Allah will grant a suitable position to a learned man and he will be raised up to that position. It is found in the Qur'ān

regarding the position of a person with faith in Allah and proper knowledge:

...يرفع الله الذين آمنوا منكم و الذين أتوا العلمَ درجاتٍ و الله بما تعملون خبيرٌ^٥

“...Allah will raise up, to (suitable) ranks (and degrees), those of you who believe and who have been granted Knowledge. And Allah is well-acquainted with all you do.”¹¹

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE 'ALIMS':

The 'Alims or the learned men have been considered to be a respectable class in an Islamic society. This class is given always a high position, being the heirs of the Prophets. As they are granted high position and special honour, so they are equally held responsible also among the common people.

It is found that the prophet (SAS) used to supplicate as follows: “O Allah, I seek refuge in Thee from four things: knowledge which does not profit, a heart which is not submissive, a soul which has an insatiable appetite, and a supplication which is not heard.” (Sunan of Abu-Dawood hadith 1543). The Prophet supplicated: “O Allah, I ask Thee for beneficial knowledge, acceptable action, and good provision.”¹²

The imparting knowledge is an important responsibility for a learned man in Islamic principle. The Prophet ordained all his companions as well as every Muslim who possesses some

knowledge, even as little as one verse, to teach others what they know. He has emphasized on acquiring knowledge and teaching so much that he (SAS) used to stimulate his companions to seek knowledge. Ibnu Mas'ud relates that the Prophet (SAS) said: "Only two persons are worthy of being envied; a person upon whom Allah bestows riches and gives him the power to spend it in a righteous cause; and a person upon whom Allah bestows wisdom by which he judges and which he teaches."¹³

Regarding merit of imparting knowledge the Prophet (SAS) used to say: "Convey (what you learn from me) even if only one verse..." (Related by Bukhari). Similarly, it is found that the holy Prophet (SAS) said: "Learn the obligatory acts and the Qur'an and teach them to the people for I am a mortal."¹⁴

On the other hand, a learned man will be held responsible if he does not acquire knowledge for a positive and useful objective. Abu Darda (RAA) narrated that Allah's Messenger (SAS) said, "The worst of men in the eyes of Allah on the Day of Resurrection will be the scholar who does not derive benefit from his knowledge."¹⁵ Ka'b Ibnu Malik (RAA) narrated that Allah's Messenger (SAS) said "He who acquires knowledge in order to fall into polemics with other scholars and prove his superiority over them, or to dispute with the ignorant or to

attract the attention of the people, Allāh will throw him in the Fire.”¹⁶

ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER BRANCHES:

There is no difference of opinion on the necessity of acquiring knowledge particularly in the religious studies. It is very much necessary to learn other sciences also in the view of the Qur’ān and Hadīth. The knowledge of a science is a preliminary requirement for attaining an Islamic goal as visualized by the tradition of the Prophet (SAS). Because, the cleanliness and physical welfare of any individual in Islamic society is necessary, so it is indirectly imperative for the Muslims to acquire knowledge of Health Science. To learn any specific science on the need of a society is also a kind of duty. It may be put for example that the knowledge of agriculture, Trade or Commerce is necessary in order to meet up the need of these subjects. Accordingly, it is commonly imperative (wajib kifāi) for Muslims to acquire knowledge especially in these fields. If the Muslims confine their interest and attention in the religious sciences only, they can never hope to survive in the present scientific world properly.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that the Holy Qur’ān attracts attention of mankind to study the system of creation, the wonders of nature and the causes and effects of all things that

exist and the conditions of living organisms. The Qur'an enjoins thought and meditation about all aspects of creation and requires human beings to apply their reason and perceptual faculties for the discovery of the secrets of nature. Allah says in the Qur'an:

أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ ° و
الْأَرْضِ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رِوَاسِيَ وَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ °

Do they not look at the sky above them? How We have made it, and adorned it, and there are no flaws in it? And the earth-We have spread it out, and set thereon firm mountains, and We produced therein every kind of beautiful growth (in pairs).¹⁷

أَفَلَا لَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ ° و إِلَى السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ رُفِعَتْ ° و إِلَى
الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ ° و إِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَيْفَ سُطِحَتْ °

Do they not look at the camel how they are created and at the sky how it is lifted up, and at the mountains how they were fixed firm, and the earth how it is spread out?¹⁸

From the above verses it is clear that the Qur'an emphasizes to acquire all branches of knowledge and science as per needs and demands of the prevailing situation of a society. The seekers of knowledge are directly or indirectly instructed to learn the planetary system and Biology and all things lying between the earth and the Heaven, as much as possible.

CONCLUSION:

From this long discussion made above it is found that the Prophetic Sunnan never differ from the Qur'ānic Commands and advices; rather these Hadiths are considered to be the supporting documents of the Qur'ān regarding importance of knowledge, its acquisition and distribution among others. It is strictly observed in Sunnan of the Prophet that knowledge should be acquired and utilized in proper way for the benefit of mankind. One must transmit his or her knowledge of whatever quantity that may be, among the lacking people. However, there is binding and responsibility for the learned men to practice anything he or she learnt, before teaching others. Because, it is a clear command of the Qur'ān that one should not say anything which he or she does not practice. In all these aspects, there is a correlation in the Qur'ān Hadiths especially for acquiring knowledge.

REFERENCES

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- ² *Al-Tirmidhi*, Hadith No. 74 and *Ibnu Majah*, Hadith No. 224.
- ³ Hadith 218: *Mishkat-ul-Masabih*, vol. I, tran. A H Siddiqui, New Delhi, 1990, p. 136.
- ⁴ *Al-Tirmidhi*, Hadith 148.
- ⁵ *Tirmidhi*: 222.
- ⁶ *Tirmidhi* 217 and *Ibn Majah*.

- ⁷ Abu-Dawood Hadith: 3634 and Ibn Majah quoted in Hadith 212: Mishkat-ul-Masabih, vol. I, Op cit. p 133.
- ⁸ Abu Daood, Hadith: 1631 and Tirmithi quoted in Hadith 212: Mishkat-ul-Masabih, vol. I, p. 133.
- ⁹ Muslim: 6518
- ¹⁰ The Holy Qur'an: 39:9
- ¹¹ The Holy Qur'an: 58:11
- ¹² Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 2487.
- ¹³ Related by Bukhari and Muslim, also in Mishkat-ul-Masabih: 201, p.126.
- ¹⁴ Tirmidhi; Mishkat-ul-Masabih: 244, vol.I, p.142.
- ¹⁵ Tirmidhi: 268.
- ¹⁶ Tirmidhi; Mishkat-ul-Masabih: 225.
- ¹⁷ The holy Qur'an: 50:6-7
- ¹⁸ The holy Qur'an: 88:18-21