The first human to be endowed with knowledge was Adam. Satan too had knowledge but his haughtiness and conceit made him reject God’s command to prostrate before Adam. His reasoning was that since he was made of fire and Adam out of mud, he was superior. God gave Adam the knowledge of all things that humans would encounter on earth and asked the angels if they knew all this.

The Test Begins [2:31-33] He taught Adam all the names then presented them to the angels, saying, "Give me the names of these, if you are right." They said, "Be You glorified, we have no knowledge, except that which You have taught us. You are the Omniscient, Most Wise." He said, "O Adam, tell them their names." When he told them their names, He said, "Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of the heavens and the earth? I know what you declare, and what you conceal."

Knowledge means getting to know things that one does not know. Adam did not know the names before they were instructed to him and finding those names was knowledge. Knowledge itself has no limits, no peripheries and no confines in the worldly sense. You do not have to be in some physical location to receive it. It is of various types and can be used for numerous reasons but the principal function would be to facilitate yourself and others in a most righteous manner. For example, the study of nuclear science need not be used to build atomic weapons but can be used for power generation, medicine, etc. to benefit people. We have to constantly endeavour for it, remembering at the same time that only God is Omniscient.

Thus God says: [22:5] ....We then bring you out as infants, then you reach maturity. While some of you die young, others live to the worst age, only to find out that no more knowledge can be attained beyond a certain limit....

Since the dawn of time, the human has an inherent wonder and knowledge has been crucial for our development. It manoeuvres us towards a more productive and advantageous course. The only reliable standard for actions to have a basic worth is when they are of assistance to humankind. This expectedly leads to exploration and research which in turn results in personal achievements like physical and spiritual growth.

There are those who think that knowledge promoted in the Quran means only religious and spiritual knowledge and is not advocating the achievement of any other type of information or education. All knowledge including religious knowledge can directly or indirectly advance human benefit and progress.
If a person is told not to drive without a seatbelt it has the same effect as telling him its okay to drive but put on his seatbelt first. Likewise, if you tell someone not to follow what he has no knowledge of is the same as telling him to do or follow something only when he has enough knowledge of it or first acquire the knowledge before doing or following something.

Muhammad was commanded to narrate on being informed of his Prophethood.

\[96:1-5\] Read, in the name of your Lord, who created. He created man from an embryo. Read, and your Lord, Most Exalted. Teaches by means of the pen. He teaches man what he never knew.

The words read and pen have an immense implication. They highlight the necessity to be literate so you can comprehend and put pen to paper. It is the best way of attaining and circulating knowledge. God Himself has sent us this Divine Message in the form of the Quran so we can understand, appreciate, contemplate and abide by His injunctions. He tells us how it should be done. \[2:151\] (Blessings) such as the sending of a messenger from among you to recite our revelations to you, purify you, teach you the scripture and wisdom, and to teach you what you never knew.

Not only is the need for knowledge stressed upon but also the rationale for which it has been gained. Once obtained, it should be shared in the use of others. Knowledge has to be first procured and then passed on. Gaining and conveying knowledge can bring about a just and cultured society. Satan Hypnotizes His Constituents \[7:179\] We have committed to Hell multitudes of jinns and humans. They have minds with which they do not understand, eyes with which they do not see, and ears with which they do not hear. They are like animals; no, they are far worse - they are totally unaware.

The knowledge we acquire can assist us regulate nature into our service. \[14:33\] He has committed the sun and the moon in your service, continuously. He has committed the night and the day to serve you. \[45:13\] He committed in your service everything in the heavens and the earth; all from Him. These are proofs for people who reflect. We are urged to use our senses to examine nature intelligently.

In stark difference to such people are those who reflect over God’s creation for they recognise that: Those Who Possess Intelligence \[3:190-191\] In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are signs for those who possess intelligence. When they observe, study and reflect on the grandeur of nature they are deeply moved and exclaim: They remember GOD while standing, sitting, and on their sides, and they reflect upon the creation of the heavens and the earth: "Our Lord, You did not create all this in vain. Be You glorified. Save us from the retribution of Hell.

The appreciation of nature is an uninterrupted procedure and it is packed with innumerable concepts and evidences. With God’s help, our knowledge and efforts will unfold these mysteries and ascertain what would benefit us. We do not really invent anything, we can only discover. Very often, we may think various things beyond our grasp and inexplicable at the current stage of our knowledge but we may in due course, God willing, uncover more and more.
In seeking knowledge, as submitters, we are stimulated by faith and belief. These may not necessarily follow from entirely logical debate; they emanate from visual experience of stability, synchronisation, splendour and equilibrium in nature. The Quran says these are perceptible proofs of the Creator. \[6:99\] \textit{He is the One who sends down from the sky water, whereby we produce all kinds of plants. We produce from the green material multitudes of complex grains, palm trees with hanging clusters, and gardens of grapes, olives and pomegranate; fruits that are similar, yet dissimilar. Note their fruits as they grow and ripen. These are signs for people who believe.} Knowledge is not only what plain brain power and faculties produce or to data collected with the deliberation of nature, our faith is reinforced by the Revelation.

\textit{David and Solomon [27:15]} We endowed David and Solomon with knowledge, and they said, "Praise GOD for blessing us more than many of His believing servants."

Scientists may acquire knowledge of nature and natural processes. However, they still have to worship and believe in God alone. \textit{God's Colorful Creations [35:27-28]} Do you not realize that GOD sends down from the sky water, whereby we produce fruits of various colors? Even the mountains have different colors; the peaks are white, or red, or some other color. And the ravens are black. Also, the people, the animals, and the livestock come in various colors. This is why the people who truly reverence GOD are those who are knowledgeable. GOD is Almighty, Forgiving.

The so-called Muslim “ulema” have since long given up the quest of real Quranic knowledge. They are fully enmeshed in rites, regulations and traditions which have no part of true Islam. They spend less time in studying God. God is the Divine Law that controls the universe and all creation. \textit{A Great Prophecy [41:53]} We will show them our proofs in the horizons, and within themselves, until they realize that this is the truth. Is your Lord not sufficient as a witness of all things?

Nature is governed by unalterable laws. [35:43] ....You will find that GOD's system is never changeable; you will find that GOD's system is immutable. Our requirement does not lie in turning away from it but by utilising it to comply with our will. Nature is not a “maya” or an “illusion”. [38:27] \textit{We did not create the heaven and the earth, and everything between them, in vain. Such is the thinking of those who disbelieve. Therefore, woe to those who disbelieve; they will suffer in Hell.} [29:44] GOD created the heavens and the earth, truthfully. \textit{This provides a sufficient proof for the believers.}

With a God directed evolutionary procedure, the earth became a suitable habitat for humans and animals to exist and multiply. The earth cooled down and had it grown hotter it would have been unimaginable for any of us to survive. In earlier times, humans tried to manipulate nature by resorting to black magic and talismans. Often, superstition (unfounded beliefs) overwhelms logical interpretation and rational analysis. By God’s leave, our knowledge protects us unlike our wealth which we have to worry after. The more we use it, the more it increases. A candle when it lights another candle does not lose any of its own luminescence. God willing, we can rely on our intellect.
We also see the so-called Sufis and mystics and who consider the world as fundamentally wicked and seek redemption with as little interaction as possible. They favour introspection in isolation. They are self-absorbed and remove themselves from society. It does not transpire to them that by utilising their God given mind they could learn to identify with nature, manage its power and make better advances in their “self-discovery and self-fulfilment”. Nature is not necessarily unreceptive and inhospitable to us. We do not have to be gloomy or cynical. God is our Best Friend, receptive to our intellect and compassionate to our activities. Since humans and nature have both been created by One and the Same God there is no inconsistency between them. In the radiance of Divine Guidance, we can use the knowledge of nature for the accomplishment of our legal and moral ends.

**Crucial Advice** [17:36] *You shall not accept any information, unless you verify it for yourself. I have given you the hearing, the eyesight, and the brain, and you are responsible for using them.* The brain has reference to intelligence and with our ears and eyes form the resources and conduits for the acquisition of knowledge. The brain gives us the ability to sense, imagine, appreciate, figure out, envision, absorb, conserve, prepare, conduct and evaluate. The verse is mainly to prevent us from performing or conforming to something evil but it also accentuates the attainment of knowledge of something one is uninformed of.

The Quran also indicates another way which one can reach knowledge. When Cain killed Abel, he did not know what to do with the body. [5:31] *GOD then sent a raven to scratch the soil, to teach him how to bury his brother's corpse. He said, "Woe to me; I failed to be as intelligent as this raven, and bury my brother's corpse." He became ridden with remorse.* By observing, he deduced that the cadaver had to be buried. However, for us, observation alone is not adequate though we may learn a lot through it. There has to be followed and completed by sound interpretation and equivalence to draw the acceptable end and make the accurate use of it in any other fitting circumstance. If we follow or do something without the necessary knowledge we may wrong or harm ourselves or others. This is why the Quran frequently accentuates pondering and reflecting over myriad topics and signs in the universe. [30:8] *Why do they not reflect on themselves? GOD did not create the heavens and the earth, and everything between them, except for a specific purpose, and for a specific life span. However, most people, with regard to meeting their Lord, are disbelievers.*

[20:114] *Most Exalted is GOD, the only true King. Do not rush into uttering the Quran before it is revealed to you, and say, "My Lord, increase my knowledge."*

*God be glorified!*