

# Shared Religious Foundations of Education: Islam & Christianity

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This book explores the religious foundations of educational system found in Islam & Christianity and the relation between each other.

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# Dedication

*In The Name Of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful*

To my parents,  
Who taught me, the alphabet of “education” for the, first time.

# Introduction

Islam and Christianity are two important religions upon which education can be based. By “Islam” and “Christianity” we mean both Islamic texts such as the Holy Qur’an, and “traditions” (narrations) and the viewpoints of Islamic scholars, and Christian texts (i.e. the Holy Bible) and the viewpoints of Christian scholars. Since Islam and Christianity have been considered religious schools, their similarities, not differences, have been emphasized in this book.

Religious foundation of education in this book includes:

1. Ontology
2. Effect of ontology on education (ontology and education)
3. Epistemology
4. Effect of epistemology on education (epistemology and education)
5. Axiology
6. Effect of axiology on education (axiology and education).

Ontology consists of such topics like God, world, anthropology (which in itself consists of topics like, the goals of man’s creation, man’s personality, man’s freewill and determinism, and man’s responsibility). The effect of ontology on education consists of such topics like definition of education, goals of education, teacher-oriented or pupil-centered education.

Epistemology consists of such topics like status of knowledge and cognition, tools and stages of knowledge and cognition, sources of knowledge and cognitions, and obstacles of knowledge and cognition. The effect of epistemology on education consists of topics like teaching methods and instructional contents.

Axiology consists of the meanings of values, virtues and happiness, the hierarchy of values, and discussions about absolute or relative being of the values. The effect of axiology on education consists of discussion about educational values and the role of the teacher and student in teaching them.

We can consider the six above-mentioned branches for each philosophical educational school. A philosophical educational school is in fact a collection of ideas which have similarities from philosophy and education points of view.

As said, each philosophical educational school can be based on different foundations, the most important of which can be the religious foundations. In other words, we can extract some points from Islamic and Christian texts, which can be considered the basis or foundation of education, i.e. the mentioned six branches, and this will form a very important religious foundation of education.

It should be noted that it is very difficult to find some quite similar ideas in the six above mentioned branches. That's the reason why there is a great difference between the writers of different books regarding which scholar or philosopher belongs to which school (for example, see: Ozmon & Craver, 2000; Kneller, 2001; Ebrahim Zadeh, 1990; Gutek, 2001; Khalili Shavarini, 1999; Amuzegar, 2000; Sheari Nejad, 1998; Nikzad, 1992; Popkin & Stroll, 1991; Forughi, 1996; Shariatmadari, 1998; Shariatmadari, 1985).

This differentiation is sometimes so difficult that some writers have rarely tried to mention the names of several philosophers under a particular philosophical school; rather, they, in most cases, have tried to describe the viewpoints of the philosophers independently (e.g. Naqib Zadeh, 1996, 1999 has mentioned only "pragmatism").

It is probably due to this difficulty in the differentiation of various philosophers from various schools that there has been a great difference among the viewpoints of the writers (e.g. see Amuzegar, 2000; Ozmon & Craver, 2000; Gutek, 2001; Shariatmadari, 1998; Kneller, 2001; Ebrahim Zadeh, 1990; Sheari Nejad, 1995), i.e. one philosopher has been attributed to different schools in different books.

It is also probably due to the above fact that some writers believe that the educational views represented by some educational philosophers are not directly resulted from their philosophical views. Therefore, such writers have not used titles such as "effects of ontology, epistemology and axiology on education" (such writers as Gutek, 2001; Amuzegar, 2000; Nikzad, 1002; Shariatmadari, 1998; Shariatmadari, 1985; Naqib Zadeh, 1996; Naqib Zadeh, 1999; Kneller, 2001; Ozmon & Craver, 2000).

But, there are also some writers that have used the phrase "effect of ontology, epistemology and axiology on education" (e.g. Ebrahim Zadeh, 1990; Khalili Shavarini, 1999), although the educational views of educational philosophers can't be completely and accurately considered as the result of their philosophical view concerning ontology, epistemology and axiology, on the other hand we can't deny the effect of each of these on education completely, or, at least, deny the relationship between ontology, epistemology, axiology and education for every educational philosopher or religion.

That has been the reason why we have used both phrases and items: “effect of ontology on education” and “ontology and education”, etc.

# Ontology

Ontology in Greek means “on being.” Its other meaning is, “being qua being.” The word ontology was coined in the early seventeenth century to avoid some ambiguities of “metaphysic” – Leibniz was the first philosopher to adopt the word.

The terminology introduced by Christian Wolf in the early eighteenth century came to be widely adopted: ontology is the general theory of being as such, and forms the general part of metaphysics, or theoretical philosophy.

The three special parts are general cosmology, rational psychology and natural theology, i.e. the theory of the world, the soul, and God. It is on the ontological question that modern materialism, physical and naturalism differ sharply from their opponents: the question of what there is (Maunter, 2005).

In Islam, it is believed that the world outside the mind has a real being. The original fact in everything is its “being” (Tabataba’i, 1971) and the “being” is considered as the most evidential things which do not need to be proved (Ebrahim Zadeh, 1990). The world is not only summarized in the material aspect, but also immaterial facts have reality.

The reality of the being, in spite of having different forms, is unique and one (Tabatabaie, undated). Infirmity of the effect is inherent in it and dependent being will never be needless of the “cause.” In other words, the being and existence of the effect is the very belonging and dependence to the creator cause (Mesbah Yazdi, 1986).

Thus, the being of the world is the very belonging and dependence on God, that is, the entire world is as an effect, the cause of which is God. Each particle of the world owes its being to God. In other words, God is absolute and complete being who has encompassed the world, and that’s why the entire universe manifests the existence of the creator.

Therefore, God can’t be considered as an existing for example, “in the sky”, who is creating the being and the creatures.

The God which the Glorious Qur’an defines is peerless and unique, creator of all things and the worlds, and all other things are created by Him (Goreshi, 1985). The origin of the world, i.e. the creator or God, should possess the necessary conditions and merits for creating the world.

The creator of discipline and general movement should have continuous knowledge, intellect, episteme, innovation, life and management. The main origin of the world should possess originality and should be pre-existing and eternal (Dashti, 1981).

The world is a goal-centered. There is resurrection or eternal life and then a new birth as an undeniable principle in the whole of the being and existence system. The appearance of creatures is possible through cooperation and unity of diverse forces and elements of the world.

A new creature is created by combination of different elements that this birth is very principle of resurrection, and so the world is created based on this dynamic and productive principle (Dashti, 1981).

Change and transformation are from the characteristics of matter, thus each material “being” takes part in this process. According to this, absolute destruction and annihilation can only be considered as a relative interpretation that measures each stage of the change process against its previous one, because all material things are always confronting frequent changes and transformations in the route of their continuity.

In other words, the being goes through stages in a goal – centered style and flows dynamically in the way to accomplish the creation goals. For example, a seed is dropped in the earth. This very seed will grow into a corpulent and giant tree having many branches, leaves and fruits, that is, a collection possessing millions of cells each of which has thousands of particles and ingredients.

The seed in the very beginning can't be compared with the greatest computers and the most complicated programs of the world. That seed possessing such a program has a potential power to go through the highest stages of transformation. Such a program is definitely governing the universe and its events.

On the other hand, if the leaves of that tree are fallen on the earth they will fall to decay by passing of time and will turn into other particles in the soil.... This is an unlimited process and it is a transformation. It is a process in which there is no sign of destruction.

That is the reason why the Holy Qur'an has not used even for one time in its verses the word “**fout**”= (passing away, dying) for man; rather it has used the word “**vafat**” = (departure) because in the Arabic language the word “fout” indicates absolute destruction and the word “vafat” = (departure) indicates transformation and change from one stage to another.

The first and the most important belief in Islam is the doctrine of the oneness of Allah (God). This belief is called the “Tawhid.” This is made clear in the shahadah, the first pillar of Islam, which states that, “There is no God except Allah the One God & “Muhammad” is the Messenger of Allah.

A Muslim is someone who has submitted himself or herself to the will of Allah. Since Allah (God) is beyond all human understanding, so human beings cannot describe Him: “Say: He is Allah, the One and

the only; Allah, the eternal, Absolute; He beget not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him” (quoted in Keene, 2005).

The first statement of the Holy Bible describes God as the creator of the heaven and the earth whose command encompasses the entire world, “God said, let there be light and there was light... And let the dry land appear: and it was so...” (Genesis 1: 2 & 7).

God is the central subject of the Bible and always presented in relationship with the world, with that which is not God. God’s existence is assumed from the first verse of Genesis, God’s core character and most basic purposes are very constant across two testaments, and the divine speaking and acting are always in service of those purposes, whether in creation, judgment, or salvation.

God is a character in every biblical tradition (except Esther). God is presented as one who speaks, is spoken to, and is spoken about (though God’s direct speaking is rare in the NT), and one who acts and is affected by the action of others (e.g. provoked to anger).

Most commonly, God is presented as a character in a narrative, whose presence may be depicted as both intense (Sinai, Jesus Christ) and unobtrusive (the Joseph story). Narratives provide depth to God’s character without bringing closure to the depiction of God; they present God as a complexity.

The following claims are central regarding the biblical understanding of God; texts are cited from both OT and NT and are significantly represented across various genres and traditions: living and eternal, unity, unique and incomparable, present, active, relational, intentional, interactive, situational, effective, vulnerable, use of agents, mighty acts, extraordinary events (Fretheim, cited from Freedman, Myers & Beck, 2000)

Christians believe that God is omnipotent (the all – powerful creator of everything) who has a plan and purpose for all things, omniscient – the Being Who knows everything and everyone, perfect – the perfectly good and all-loving Being, eternal – outside and beyond all space and time, the Judge – the one who decides what happens to us when we die, the Father – the one who cares for us all.

Christians believe that God is one but is known or experienced through Holy Spirit. They call this belief the Trinity (Keene, 2005).

From the viewpoint of the Bible, God is not only “one” in an absolute sense, but also contains “within himself”, so to speak, a plurality of characteristics and personhood (Renn, 2005).

In the Bible, God has been variously defined as “God most high” or “most high God” (Gen. 14:13-17; Dan. 3:6; Num. 24:16; Deut. 32:8; Dan 5:13,2), “almighty” (cf. Gen. 17:11;35:11; Exod. 6:3, Num. 24:4&16; Ruth 1:20, 21; ps. 63:14; Isa. 13:6; Job 11:15) “holy one” (cf. 2Kgs. 19:22; ps. 89:12; Isa. 5:19; Hab. 3:3), “mighty God” (cf. Isa. 9:6; 10:21; Jer. 32:12), “righteous” (cf. exod. 9:27; 2 chr. 12:6; pss. 129:4; 145:17; Lam. 1:13), “King” (e.g. pss. 24:8-10; 29:10; 89:13; Isa. 6:5; 43:15; Jer. 10:10; 48:15;

Zech. 14:9, 16, 17; Mal. 1:14), and such other names and properties as: father, judge, redeemer, saviour, deliverer, shield, strength (Renn, 2005).

“God is our refuge and strength” (Psalm 46:1). “God is my salvation” (Is. 12:2). “Beside me there is no God” (Is. 44:6). “There is one God” (Mk. 12:32). “Heavens declare the Glory of God” (Psalm 19:1). “All the earth bows down to you, they sing Praise to you, they sing the Praises of your name” (Psalm 66:4). “Tremble before him, all the earth” (Psalm 96:9).

Therefore, as for man as a particle of the universe: “come, let us bow down in worship, and let us kneel before the Lord our maker” (Psalm 95:6).

Then, the duties of mankind and bondman before such God are referred to: “Ask of God, God will give it thee” (In. 11: 22). “You believe in God” (Acts 5: 29). “Fear God” (rev. 14: 7). “Follow him” (I King 13: 21). “In God I have put my trust” (Psalm 56: 4). “Give thank unto the God of Gods” (Psalm 136: 2). “Hope is in the Lord his God” (Psalm 146: 5), etc.

One of the oldest and the most important Christian statements of belief is the Nicene Creed, which goes back to the fourth century C.E. It opens with the words: “I believe in one God...Maker of heaven and earth and all things visible and invisible...” This is the point at which the Bible also begins.

The universe, the world and human beings are not divine – as God is. They are created, God is the creator. That is the real message behind the two Creation Stories in Genesis (Keene, 2005).

Jesus came into the world to share its hopes and sadness – and to show just what God was like. He left behind the teachings that would allow people who followed also to know what God is like – as they can read the Bible: “The word (Jesus) became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory of the one God and the only, which came from the father, full of grace and truth” (John 1.14) (cited from Keene, 2005).

According to the Bible, the world was created with purpose in mind, and God is closely involved in this purpose (Dewar, 2002). That’s because He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things the universe finds its purpose and meaning only in Him (Perks, 1992).

Therefore, since the universe has not been created in vain, there will surely be an eternal life after this worldly life: “**The gift of God is eternal life**” (6:23). “About the resurrection of the dead – have you not read what God said to you, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and God of Jacob’, He is not the God of the dead but of the living” (Matthew 22:31–32).

The story of the creation of the universe and all forms of life, both animal and human, is told in the opening chapter of the book of Genesis. The description there speaks of the essential goodness of God’s creation: “God looked at everything he had made and he was very pleased” (Genesis 1.31). The creation was perfect and God was totally satisfied with all that He had made (Keene, 2005).

The idea that everything strives towards the ultimate good is based on Aristotle's Four Causes. This striving towards ultimate reality is also the basis of Augustine's theodicy (Dewar 2002). Unlike the Greek idea of God being associated with the world of humans, He intervenes directly in events. In other words, the Bible shows God's involvement in the world to be dynamic (Dewar, 2002).

## Anthropology

As the study of mankind, or humankind, anthropology could encompass many studies that ordinarily fall under some other academic discipline. In theological discourse, anthropology often refers to the doctrine of man, or human beings, as created, fallen, and redeemed (Childress, 2001).

Christians have always believed that it is their soul that makes human beings different from the rest of creation. Human beings are a body and a soul. Animals are only a body. This is how the Bible describes the spiritual nature of human beings: "...The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became living beings" (Genesis 2.7).

The Apostles' Creed clearly states Christian belief in the resurrection of the body. The 1662 Book of Common Prayer (the defining book of the Church of England) states that Christians expect this body resurrection to occur followed by everlasting life.

There are also Biblical passages that support the idea: "The tombs broken open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They come out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people" (Matthew 27:52-53).

Some thinkers reject the idea that there is any continuation of individual psychological or physical identity. Other theologians have argued that only God is eternal, and any concept of eternal life should be connected to that fact.

Fundamentalists maintain a belief in a bodily resurrection, based on Biblical authority, and some Christians have rejected the idea of life after death completely, seeing it a mythological construction seeking validation of the virtuous life.

The Christian view is that the body will be resurrected after death – this is a reward for the righteous. St Paul speaks of a recreation – a resurrection with a glorified body: "so will it be with the resurrection of the death.

The body that is shown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is shown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is shown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is shown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:42-44) (cited from Dewar,

2002).

The Christian view of life after death involves separate beliefs: 1. the resurrection of the body. Christianity teaches that the body of each believer stays in the grave until the end of the world, when everyone is brought back to life. In some way, the actual body of each Christian is resurrected. 2. The immortality of the soul. This is the belief that when a person dies, their soul continues to survive because it is immortal. It is important to realize that Christians do not believe in reincarnation or rebirth.

John of the Cross (1542–1591) believed that the soul is spiritualized by divine action. The process of the purifying of the soul prepares it for union with God (Dewar, 2002).

Man as a subset of being, is not summarized only in the material aspect, it has also an immaterial aspect that is spirit. Therefore, the man's resurrection and hereafter is an acceptable fact. He is created by God, and he is a goal –centered creature.

## Goals of Man's Creation

Considering the Qur'anic verse, "***I have not created jinn and mankind except to serve me***" (51:56), we can conclude that the aim of man's creation has been "worship" or in fact "submission to or servitude of God."

Tabatabaie (1999) considers the dependencies of worship, such as blessing, forgiveness, etc. as some of the goals of the creation of jinn and man, the most important of which is the particular knowledge that one acquires regarding his Lord. Worship without knowledge will never cause man to reach submission to and servitude of God.

On the other hand, the position of servitude of God and real worship is in itself knowledge – creating. Ja'fari (1981) considers knowledge as an integral part of worship, "as soon as man is delivered from the natural process of his being, and reaches the stage of awareness about his soul – which is of divine and heavenly world – his worship has started.

Whenever man becomes aware of his pure soul and spirit and comes to know that he is a part of the whole being tune played for divine grace, he has become involved in worship." Mesbah Yazdi (1986) believes in this regard that the ultimate goal of man's creation is attaining the last ranks of perfection and God's nearness and utilizing and enjoyment of the highest and the most durable God's bounty, grace and His eternal paradise and satisfaction.

A goal of the creation has been the accomplishment of worship and obedience to God that in turn is considered as a tool for achieving the ultimate goal. The immediate goal of creation has been the preparation of material and social background, and actualization of necessary cognitions for choosing freely the straight path of the life and extending and development of Godliness and worship of God in society.

That's why in the Glorious Qur'an, after emphasis on the fact that worlds and man's creation has not been in vain and "**for sport**" (23:115) and it has a wise goal, the aim of the world's creations has been introduced as preparation of divine tests and the freely selection for man on one part, and worshipping of the exalted and sublime God on the other part.

The ultimate goal of man's creation has been introduced as placing him in the vicinity of the divine grace and utilizing and enjoyment of eternal happiness, triumph and deliverance. Nasri (1989) believes that the ultimate goal of creation has been man and his existence elevation as all the creatures have been created in order that man might be able to use them and reaches himself to divine nearness as the Qur'an says, "**It is He who created for You all that is in the earth**" (2:29).

Goth (1996) says about the real meaning of worship that worship is not a series of lifeless actions and percepts and limited and definite formal ceremonies, rather it has a very comprehensive meaning that involves all parts, thoughts and actions and feelings of the human being.

In other words, worship means turning to God in all life activities, attaining His satisfaction in all affairs and fearing of all factors that cause God's anger. Shariatmadarii (1992) states that when man's goal is nearness to God and Truth, worship, trying for earning a livelihood, effort for solving the problems of fellow creatures, choosing the job and vocation, acquiring moral virtues and sacrifice are all activities that are necessitated by movement towards God.

The most important thing for a Muslim is to live in submission to God. By doing this, each Muslim shows respect for God and finds the Key to true happiness (Keene, 2005).

"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you... Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up" (the bible, James 4: 7-8 & 10).

The word "worship" means "worthiness." Christians believe that in their worship, they are offering something that is worthy and precious to God – because He is worth it. Worship is important to Christians because God almighty Creator of the universe should be praised.

It is opportunity to say and show how much God means to loving Him in return – and also by loving their neighbors to express their love for God (Keene, 2005).

Worship in NT usually means expression of Praise or thanksgiving (Luke 17: 15-16). Sometimes it implies obeisance as an attitude for supplication (Matt. 8:2). In any case, it is the appropriate human response to the magnificence glory to God. Summons and encouragement to worship abound (Col. 4: 2; Heb. 13: 15).

The centrality of worship of Christians is evident in a book such as the Gospel of Luke, which opens and closes with scenes depicting worshippers (Luke 1: 8; 24: 52-53) and contains 21 specific references to

people glorifying, Praising, or giving thanks to God. Likewise, the book of Revelation is inundated with images of worship.

The NT takes over the concern of OT prophets that worship be integrated into the life of faith. Thus, passages that prioritize merry over sacrifice (Hos. 6: 6) or decry worship with lips but not heart (Isa. 29: 13) are quoted in new context (Matt. 9: 13; Mark 7: 6–7).

Genuine worship is not merely for show (Matt. 6: 1–18) but involves surrender of the self to God in faithful obedience (Rom. 12: 1). (Powell; quoted in Freedman, Myers & Beck, 2000). There are general commands for all to “worship” God alone in Matt. 4: 10; Mark 4: 8 (Renn, 2005). “Worship before the Lord my God” (Deut 26: 10). “Worship thou him” (Psalm 45: 11).

At the heart of worship, it is said, is a numinous sense of the presence of the holy God. The numen is experienced “outside oneself”, ‘over against’ the worshipper. Worship may serve to prepare for, allow and evoke experience of God.

It may put People in the place, psychologically and epistemologically where God can be “seen” and “heard.” That would be learning – through – experience with a vengeance (Astley; cited from Astley, Francis & Crowder, 1996).

The teaching of Christian doctrine and the formation of Christian attitudes must take place together. Neither Process can take place authentically without the other. Worship is the paradigm situation for the joint activity (Astley; cited from Astley, Francis & Crowder, 1996).

Astley (1996, p. 245) believes that, “worship is not for anything; it has no ulterior point or purpose, least of all an educational one. Religious people do not worship in order to do or become anything else, to teach or to learn. Worship is an end in itself.”

It should be noted that it is quite right worship can be considered as an end, meanwhile, each worship can also be considered as a tool and an instrument which can lead the worshipper to other worship. For example “prayer” is a worship that can be considered as an independent goal or end i.e. the people should try to reach the position to establish prayer.

On the other hand, it can also be considered as a tool or instrument, i.e. the prayer should reach man to such positions (or ends) as he or she helps the poor, not backbite, etc. It is interesting that Astley refers to this in another part of his article when he says, “Both worship and meditations have a powerful effect in leading to a loss of self – centeredness” (p. 245).

On the other hand, Astley takes emphasis on the emotional side of worship where he expresses “such an account of worship will lead us to construe the language of worship as performing non – cognitive, rather than cognitive, functions” (p. 246).

In another part of his article, when Astley tries to describe the Christian education and the emotions, he

concludes, “Christian truth is learned both affectively and cognitively. It is when reason and emotion are divorced that religion most rapidly loses its sense and its power for people. Religion is a cognitive – affective activity” (p. 250). Thus, in addition to the cognition, God should also be loved: “I will love thee, O Lord, my strength” (Psalm 18: 1).

Loving God is a necessary part for His real worship. Therefore we should thank and appreciate Him that He has guided us to the way to love Him: “Praise is to the Lord, for he showed me the wonders of his love when I was in a city under siege.”

On the other hand, God loves those who love Him and trust Him: “The Lord’s unfailing love surrounds those who trust in him.” Then, it should again be emphasized: “Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous: sing, all you who are upright in heart!” (Psalm 32: 11), “sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous” (Psalm 33: 1), “Play skillfully, and shout for joy” (Psalm 33: 3), “The lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love” (Psalm 33: 5).

## Man’s Personality

We mean by the Personality here those characteristics which differentiates man from other creatures:

1– Man is breathed with God’s spirit: “***And (I) breathed my spirit in him***” (Qur’an, 15:29; 38:72).

Considering the Hadith of the prophet of Islam (Mohammad), “the exalted God created man on His Own Face”, one can conclude that man can become God –like and can actualize the divine and spiritual potentials which have been trusted in him.

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (the Bible, Genesis 2: 7). The second part of the Genesis creation story (chapter 2–3) involves the creation of Adam and Eve, and the “Fall” and eviction from the Garden of Eden: God is pictured in a more super – human way. Adam is created of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (Dewar, 2002).

Image of God (imago Dei): “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion ....’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (the Bible, Gen. 1: 26f; cf. 5: 1 and 9: 6).

According to Reformation theology, original sin affects the core of human nature, but there were also disputes among Reformation theologians. As Van Hervey writes, “In general, the Lutheran tradition emphasized the loss of the image of God while the Calvinist tradition regarded it as corrupted but not lost.

Although the image of God is often construed as reason and freewill, it has also been interpreted as spiritual capacities, such as self – transcendence or the capacity for and the call to relationship with God, as excellence, such as righteousness (Chiddress, 2001).

The image of God in human beings remains. According to the Bible, human being alone worship God (Keenes, 2005). Being made in God's image means that human beings share something of His nature. Christians refer to this as their 'spirit' or 'soul'. It is this that worships God. After death, the spirit or soul lives on since it is immortal (eternal) (Keene, 2005).

2- Man is prostrated by God's angels, "***And when we said to the angels, 'Bow yourselves to Adam'; so they bowed themselves***" (Qur'an, 2:34; 17:61; 20:116). Therefore, man can reach a higher position than God's angles if he keeps his humanistic properties.

3- Man is viceroy of God on the earth: "***I am sending in the earth a viceroy***" (Qur'an, 2:34; 17:30)." Therefore, it can be deduced that man has the most similarity to God, because a "viceroy" should have the most similarity to the one who has appointed him as his viceroy.

Muslims believe that God created the world and everything in it. Human beings are the most important part of creation and they have been made so that they alone can serve the God. They have been appointed to act as earth's 'guardians'.

The earth belongs to God but He has delegated responsibility for its day-to-day care to the Muslim community. (Human beings are God's 'vice-regents', appointed by Him to look after what He has made.

They must guarantee that the whole of creation is kept healthy so that food is provided for everyone. No one should ever be in want. In Islam, the more the one has, the more one should make sure that it is used properly.

This responsibility is seriously because, on the Day of Judgment, everybody will have to answer to God for how they have treated the planet. All animals and insects are a part of God's creation – no matter how big or how small! (Keene, 2005).

As God has dominion over all particles of the world, He has given some authority to man as His viceroy on the earth: "Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (the bible, Genesis 1: 28).

4- Man has covenanted friendship with God and has accepted God as his Lord: "***And when we took from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their seed, and made them testify touching themselves, 'Am I not your Lord?' They said: 'Yes, we testify'***" (Qur'an, 7:172). Thus, the man should remain truthful to his covenant with his Lord (God): "With thee will I establish my covenant" (the Bible, Genesis 6: 18).

Faith is a necessary condition of authentic knowledge of God and of the human good. This is faith as belief and believing. Faith as trust, its ties with certifiable knowledge of God and of the human good loosened, is put under heavy pressure to posit it and for itself value absolutes – ideals and/ or beings deemed worthy of unconditional loyalty. In Jesus Christ God makes Himself known; in this transaction,

and here alone, the divine moral imperatives for the faithful are ascertained (Hartt, 2002).

5– Man accepted a trust which the heavens, the earth and the mountains feared to take it: **“We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to carry it and were afraid of it; and man carried it”** (Qur’an, 33:72).

If we interpret this trust as man’s freewill in acceptance of God’s ordainments and acting according to them, then it is up to man not to leave down this trust in halfway and not to refrain from doing God’s ordainments even for a moment.

6. Man is at rest by God’s remembrance: **“In God’s remembrance are at rest the hearts”** (Qur’an, 13:28). The Holy Qur’an emphasizes that it is only possible through God’s remembrance that man’s hearts may feel rest.

On the other hand, the above verse indicates that man has a great and high status and he has similarity with God that his heart is only at rest in God’s remembrance.

Thus, God is the only and the real source of any rest and comfort: “Praise be to God... the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God” (Corinthians: 374).

7. Man possess a moral conscience that blames him when committing a sin: **“No! I swear by the reproachful soul”** (Qur’an, 75:2). This verse indicates that God considers a great importance for man’s regret and penitence after committing a sin.

It is due to this sacred and holy feeling that man repents. Thus, it is necessary for all mankind not to do those actions which might cause them to become indifferent to committing sins.

8. Man has been created in best existential conditions: **“We indeed created man in the fairest nature”** (Qur’an, 95:4). Therefore, man should not do those actions which reduce him to the lowest states: **“then we restored him the lowest of the low”** (Qur’an, 95:5).

In spite of the very high status of man between creatures, he does also suffer from some weak points: “And God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5).

According to the Qur’an, man’s weaknesses can be divided into three groups (Baqeri, 1991):

1. Those verses in which the words “create” and “man” has been used, and it has been referred to man’s creation. One can conclude from such verses that God Himself has placed these weak points in man, and these weak points can be removed by man’s endeavor and free will or be utilized positively.

The peak of elevation and luminousness of faithful man is in such a confrontation and utilization, and all

of his virtue and skillfulness is to have such an effort. Some of the verses which places in this category, are as follows:

1. ***“Man was created of haste”*** (21:37)
2. ***“Man was verily created greedy”*** (70:19).
3. ***“Man was created weakling”*** (4:23).

All of these verses have the word “man” – that refers to mankind in general – and also the word “created.” In other words, God has created man with such qualities, and so man has not himself chosen them, and since God does nothing in vain, thus man can positively utilize these properties.

For example, if human beings use their “hurry or haste” property in such a manner that instead of they reach their goals sooner, they reach later, or they don’t reach their goals at all, such haste will be considered as negative and disagreeable haste.

However, if man hurries in the route of goodness so that he might reach faster and better to the good goal of his creation, that is elevation, perfection and submission to God, he has applied a positive and agreeable haste. That’s the reason why the Muslims say several times in day and night before they begin establishing they prayers, “hurry to the prayer”, “hurry to the salvation”, “hurry to the bets action.”

Alternatively, it is said that, “hurry to the prayer before death, and hurry to the repentance before death”, or the Holy Qur’an says, ***“Vie with one another, hastening to forgiveness from your Lord”*** (3:133), or ***“so be you forward in good works”*** (5:48).

As for the verse, which refers to this fact that man has been created greedy, it can be said that such a greed and avarice may be applied in the route of the worldly abject comforts in such a manner that forces man to stinginess.

Therefore the Qur’an introduces those who keep themselves from such stinginess as the successful, ***“And whosoever is guarded against the avarice of his own soul, those – they are the prosperous”*** (59:9).

It is also possible that every person utilize positively from the “greed or avarice”, for example, he becomes greedy for knowledge, spirituality and guidance. One of the dispositions God attributes to the prophet of Islam is that he was very eager and greedy for people’s guidance (that they may be guided): ***“Now there has come to you a messenger from among yourselves; grievous to him is your suffering; anxious is he over you, gentle to the believers, compassionate”***(9:128).

As for the verses, which referred to this fact that man has been created “weak”, it can be said that from one respect man’s power is not infinite in different aspects such as physical, intellectual, etc.

From another respect it can be said that man in facing God's ordainments may remain still weak and show weakness, feebleness and disability in doing good affairs or not committing sins if he doesn't strengthen his religious beliefs and certitude.

But he, on the other hand, can reach a position in which he reduces his weakness by strengthening his faith and piety and becomes, like the disciples of the prophet of Islam who fall under this verse of the Qur'an: "...**they fainted not for what smote them in God's way, neither weakened, nor did they humble themselves**" (3:146). But in every case he should feel himself weak and unable before the powerful God: "**O men, you are the ones that have need of God**" (35:15).

The second category includes those verses in which the word "man" is used, but the word "create" is not seen in them. In other words, the weakness attributed to man in such verses has not been considered as the weak points created by God in man's nature. Thus, it can be concluded that man has a role in such weak points. The following verse is an example of such verses: "**Surly man waxes insolent, for he thinks himself self-sufficient**" (96:6).

In this verse, this character of most of men has been blamed that when they feel themselves needless of God, they will rebel and disobey. It should also be mentioned that human beings can reach to a position they only see themselves in need of God and feel an absolute freedom from whatever is against God and attains to the real position of magnanimity and loftiness of nature, and then be delivered from all worldly instabilities and agitations, and say, as Hafez, one of the Iranian most famous poets said: "Last night, at morning time, me freedom from grief, they gave" (p. 178)

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psalm 2:8). Therefore, man in such a position reaches a status in which he says: "But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory and the lifter up of mine head" (Psalm 3: 3). Because he believes that "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against me round about" (Psalm 3: 6).

"The Lord foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the Lord stand firm for ever... Blessed is nation whose God is the Lord, the people he chose for inheritance" (Psalm 33: 10-11). That is because "No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength" (Psalm 33: 16). "This is the very position that Hafez names it as "Kingdom of poverty", "O heart! If thee, the Kingdom of Poverty, they give, thy least territory will be from the moon to the fish" (p. 471). In fact, the real piety is not anything else save such a position. In other words, piety is "not wanting", not "not having."

The third category includes those Qur'anic verses referring to man's serious weak points which himself intentionally has acquired them. For example, the Qur'an says that some individuals committed a very great and indecent trick against one of the greatest God's prophets: "... **have devised a mighty device**" (71:22). The blameworthy state seen in such verses is more than the verses of the second category.

## Determinism and Free Will

We can see the idea of Islam concerning determinism and free will in its most summarized form in this valuable speech of Imam Ja'far Sadiq, one of the Muslim Imams, where he says, "There is no absolute determinism, and there is no absolute free will, but it is between these two."

Tabatabaie (2002) in interpretation of "it is between these two" says that the meaning of this statement is that the exalted God intended that His bondmen do the actions with their own free wills, as God says in the Qur'an: "**but you will not unless God wills**"(76:30). In other words, if God does not will, there will not be any man, nor will be any knowledge, power, and free will for him (Mesbah Yazdi, 1986).

According to Baqeri (1991), it can be deducted from the Qur'an that no power can take from man his free will and force him, including Satan (17:22), governmental system (4:77), social culture (43:23), penetrating and great figures of society (33:67), family system (66:10) and heredity (31:33).

This doesn't mean that society has no influence upon man, in other words although the society cannot seize free will from man, it can definitely affect man's feelings, emotions and motivation positively or negatively.

If we pay sufficient attention to different verses of the Glorious Qur'an regarding determinism and freewill, we will notice that the Qur'an considers two aspects for man, the individual aspect and the group or social aspect, that is to say some of the Qur'an verses refer to man's individual aspect, for example the prophet of Islam is addressed that; "**establish prayer**" (11:114; 17:78). On the other hand, some of the Qur'an verses refer to man's social aspect, for example: "**And do not spy, neither backbite one another**" (49:12).

According to this, the Qur'an considers two individual (17:14) and social books (45:28), two individual (19:95) and social summoning (64:9), two individual (6:164) and social punishment (16:25).

For example in man's social the Qur'an speaks of those losses that has a social aspect: "**upon the day when He shall gather you for the Day of Gathering; that shall be the Day of Mutual Fraud**" (64:9). The word "Mutual Fraud" (Taghabun) indicates in the Arabic language those losses which have a social aspect that is society sometimes causes its members to be cheat and lose, for example the society causes the religious motivation of some of its members to be decreased and they commit some sins, etc.

The question of freedom in relation a specifically Christian ethic becomes acute at two points in particular – where it impinges on the doctrines of original sin and grace. His awareness of this tension found its classic expression in the controversy between Augustinianism and Plagiarism.

The first of these views held that the human will is so disabled by sin that it cannot choose well except through the supervening of divine grace; the second, that a genuine autonomous freedom remains.

In practice, the church seems to have settled for a compromise between these extremes. Even if we allow that our fallen nature pulls us toward bad choices, we are not absolutely determined by this pull, and the very fact that there is a natural awareness of sin itself is in itself a branch in the domination of sin.

On the other hand, if we allow that the human will needs enabling grace, it cannot be supposed that such grace is irresistible or imposed in such a way that we become mere puppets. The dialectic of sin and grace is the theological counterpart of the ethical dialectic between freedoms and determinism. In both cases, the dialectic must be minted and explicated in fully personal terms (Macquarrie, 2001).

John Calvin (1509 – 1564) is most closely associated with Calvinism, the protestant theological movement that emphasizes the sovereignty of God, the goodness of creation, the authority of scripture, and the sinfulness of humanity. Calvin taught that God is all – powerful and all – knowing.

A logical of this belief is that God already knows which humans will be welcomed into heaven, and which will go to heaven, the humans have moral choice. This idea is known as Predestination, and is supported by several writers, including St Paul: “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed of the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified” (Romans 8: 28–30).

St Augustine says “will any man presume to say that God did not foreknow those to whom he would grant belief! ...This is the predestination of saints; namely, the foreknowledge and planning of God Kindness, by which there are most surely delivered.”

The belief has strong support from several Christian groups, and remains as one of the 39 Articles of Faith of the Church of England: “predestination to life is everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honor” (Article 17, Articles of Religion, Book of Common prayer, cited from Dewar, 2002).

Augustine (354 – 430) based his theory on his reading of Key Biblical passage: Genesis 3 and Romans 5: 12–20. He also based it on two assumptions: 1. Evil is not from God – God’s creation was faultless and perfect. 2. Evil came from within the world. Augustine accounts for evil by ascribing it to human agency. Evil came about because of the misuse of “free will.”

All suffering is therefore a consequence of this abuse of free will. “Natural evil” is caused by the imbalance in nature brought about by the “fall.” “Moral evil” is caused because the world has become estranged from God, and immorality has been able to thrive. However, God has not relinquished the

responsibility for the world.

If God were simply just, everyone would be suitably punished. Instead, God's grace brought about the possibility of reconciliation through Jesus Christ, whose crucifixion saved a certain number from eternal punishment (Dewar, 2002).

Aquinas believed that goodness is wrapped up in cause and purpose. An act is good as far as it achieves its potential. Aquinas's application of Aristotelian causation is the foundation of Roman Catholic morality. Every action has a purpose given it by God (Dewar, 2002).

According to these materials, we understand well why the Bible explicitly applies such words as free and freedom for humankind: "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1).

## Man's Responsibility

Since man is a free and authorized being, thus he should undertake the responsibility of his actions (Ebrahim Zadeh, 1990). Albahi (translated by Sajjadi, 1993) says that this idea of Islam that everyone is responsible of his actions is due to distinction and privilege of man as compared with other creatures because of his intellect and understanding.

Responsibility is an inner question when a person has for example ability, whether he or she has done his or her duties according to his or her ability. Human beings, because of possessing intellect, power of thinking and their other inner and natural characters, entered into an agreement with their Lord (Qur'an, 7:172), that they act according to their characteristics and potentials.

Therefore, in this a position, it is not only that ask themselves such a question, but also the others, too, have the right for asking this question, that's the reason why God addresses the men this question that: "**Where then are you going?**" (81:26).

Evidentially the wise God asks man this question when He has given man the ability of identification and distinguishing between the right way from the wrong way, and this ability has surely been given to the humans: "**Surely we guided him upon the way whether he be thankful or unthankful**" (76:3).

Therefore in the light of the very ability for identification of the right way from wrong way, it is necessary for man to see himself obliged to do good deeds and avoid from doing bad things, that is, feels responsibility since such a feeling responsibility comes from the man's nature, and religion is nothing else but the message of man's nature, thus these two are consistence with each other, and then: "**No compulsion is there in religion.**"

Particularly when the truth of the religion is comprehended and understood considering its harmony with the man and its matchless attractiveness and brightness, then there would be no force and compulsion

for human beings to accept it.

Within the word for response is hidden the Greek word for “promise”, recalling the practice of reliably performing one’s part in a common undertaking. In this sense, responsibility refers, not merely to the conditions for immutability, but to the trustworthiness and dependability of the agent in some enterprise.

This meaning has been explored by theologians rather than by philosophers. God as creator dictates a law and will judge accordingly; human beings must know God’s law and freely obey it. They are responsible, that is, accountable before God’s judgment (Jonsen, 2001).

The poem of creation speaks of humanity’s God-given responsibility for looking after the earth. The human race is to “rule over” the earth. It is told: “Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it, and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky and all the living things that creep on the earth” (the Bible, Genesis 1: 28).

Christians today believe that human beings have been called by God to be “stewards” of the world that He has created. This simply means that each generation is responsible for passing on God’s good gifts to the next generation in a good shape. The earth does not belong to us. It belongs to God: “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Psalm 24: 1–2).

## **Effect of Ontology on Education**

### **Definition of Education**

In some of the books about Islamic education, the writers usually have defined “education” in general, and not defined the Islamic education. Sanei (1996) speaks of correct education and defines it as a process, which breeds the sublime potentials, and abilities trusted in pupil’s nature and make them reach the goal for which they have been created. He considers education as a growth, Purification and refinement those individuals aptitudes are affected by it.

Faezi and Ashtiani (1996) define education as the preparation of backgrounds and factors for actualizing man’s potential aptitudes in the desired direction. Motahhari (1997) considers education as cultivation, that is, actualization and breeding the interior aptitudes that exist potentially in a creature, such an education should be a function of dependent things’ or creatures’ natures. Ahmadi (1985) has defined the concept of education in Islam as follows:

1. Breeding and making to grow
2. Guidance to the right way and straight path

3. Making the individual to reach intellectual maturity and comprehension and identification of truth from falsehood
4. Soul purification and cleansing it from contaminations and adorning it with virtues
5. Reaching all of the aspects of human personality to the peak of perfection.

All of the writers whose views on the definition of Islamic education were mentioned above are unanimous that Islamic education is the growth and actualizing of man's aptitudes in the direction of his elevation and perfection.

All of them have used the word "aptitude" in their definitions (excluding "Ahmadi" who has preferred to use the combination "personality's aspects." Baqeri's definition from Islamic education seems somewhat different.

He believes that Islamic education is the cognition of God as world's and man's one and unique Lord, and choosing Him as one's Lord, submission to His Divinity and not accepting the divinity whatever is against Him.

There is no great content difference between the aforementioned definitions. Man's personality has different aspects. Islamic education becomes applicable when this personality and its different aptitudes in the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and moral aspects are nurtured and bred and actualized according to the standards of Islam which is a position where the pupil reaches of the cognition of God and thus, chooses Him as his Lord.

Even in a more comprehensive view, it can be said that God Himself has created the above-mentioned aptitudes in man, and He has wanted man to nurture them, thus the process of this nurturing and cultivation according to standards is called religious or Islamic education.

According to Rashid Pour (1989) in the process of cultivation it is up to the educator to discover what abilities the student has, and then nurture him exactly according to his abilities and potentials.

Motahhari (1983) believes that man is perfect when he is not inclined to nurturing only one of his aptitudes and keeping inactive his other aptitudes, but he nurturers all of his aptitudes harmoniously.

Islam pays attention to all of man's creation aspects at the same time, which is his physical, intellectual and spiritual aspects (Gotb, 1996). God's prophets did also considered man, considered all of his material and spiritual aspects, and in their humanistic program, satisfied all of his animal and humanistic trends parallel to and along with each other and thereby caused man's complete evolution, perfection and elevation (Falsafi, undated).

Christian education is education for the Christian life. Since this life is inherently a moral life, Christian moral education means the way this particular form of moral life is taught. Education may be understood

both broadly and more narrowly.

Education, broadly understood, involves all the influences of a Person's social context, which shape his or her values, beliefs, skills, and patterns of behavior, etc. In this sense, education is socialization, and is in part unplanned, unintentional, and unsystematic.

More strictly defined, education is limited to the intentional, conscious, and willed actions of persons and institutions in relation to others in order to influence them in particular ways. Christian moral education has historically involved several constant elements, however The Church has always found it important for the formation of moral life that people be intimately involved in the life of Christian community.

Here children and adults learn and assimilate the values, convictions, and patterns of perception, interpretation, and action of the faith community through participation in myriad events of worship, fellowship, service expression (Dykstra, 2001).

A Christian university functions in two different but essentially related ways for its students. It will at once and the same time be a home which provides security and peace for its inhabitants, and also a place of orientation from which students will be able to explore and take possession of the wider world around them (Thiessen, quoted in Astley et, al., 2004).

## **Goals of Education**

After definition of education, another discussion, which is necessary to be put forward here (Ontology and education), is description of the goals of education. As mentioned in "ontology" the ultimate aim of man's creation has been submission to God.

It is interesting that the ultimate aim of man's education from the viewpoint of Islam is submission to God too, that is the aim of man's education is not separate from the aim of his education, and these two aims are in harmony and consistent with each other.

In other words, each step that man takes in the direction of the aim for which he has been created, that is "submission to God" is considered as worship and thus educational. It is not inopportune that Imam Sajjad – one of the Muslim Imams in Sahifah Sajjadiyyeh, the collection of his prayers, requires God that his life to be spent doing the things he has been created for.

Considering this fact, it can be deduced that man's education is not restricted and confined to any particular place and time. It may be that formal education suffers from such a limitation but informal education does not.

If religious instruction is to work, its aims must be formed in such a way that they can be taught and learned. If aims are such that they cannot be taught or learned, they are not religious instruction aims (Lee; cited from Astley, Francis & Crowder, 1996). Some of the Islamic thinkers and scholars have

considered the goals of education as follows (Bureau of Houzeh and university Cooperation, 1998):

Viewpoint of Ibn-Sahnun: acquiring of literacy, and learning reading and writing, Learning the Qur'an, and making acquaintance with it, learning religious ceremonies and traditions and becoming committed to the religion and religious ceremonies, and guidance to the good affairs.

Viewpoint of Farabi: Instruction of right opinions and strengthening the belief in them, Instruction of necessary skills for incumbent of duties in the Utopia, encouragement of individuals for doing actions in accordance with right opinions, encouragement of individuals for doing their social duties.

Gabesi viewpoint: cognition of the religion, and acting according to Islam, beneficence, endurance, goodness (as the ultimate aim of education).

Beheshti, Abuja'fari and Faqihi (2000) state the goals of education from the viewpoints of other Islamic scholars as follows:

**Ibn-e-Moskovayh viewpoint:** Physical cultivation, Intellectual cultivation, Moral cultivation, Religious cultivation.

**Sheykh-e-Eshrag viewpoint:** Divine nearness, Submission to God, Insight, Purity of heart or inner serenity, Thought strengthening, Moderation in the morality.

**Rumi's (Moulavi's) viewpoint:** Annihilation in God, and eternity in God, Voluntary death, Insight; heart knowledge, Receiving the direct bounty of God (these four goals as the ultimate aims), Cultivation and guidance of intellect and thought, Solving the existential problems (these two goals as the intermediary goals).

Beheshti, Abuja'fari and Faqihi (2001) state the viewpoints of the other Islamic scholars regarding the goals of education as follows:

**Sadi's viewpoint:** Separation from the world and adherence to God, Spirit cultivation, Body health, Social adjustment. Sadi considers the factors causing social adjustment as follows: Justice, Humility, Self – esteem, deliverance and uprightness, Goodness and beneficence.

**Ibn Khaldun viewpoint:** knowledge, faith and monotheistic belief (as the ultimate goal). From the viewpoint of general goals of education are perfected proprieties that creates in the soul, but he considers faith, obedience and refinement as the origin of all of these perfected proprieties. From his viewpoint, the other goals of education are: Skill and mastering the knowledge, Practical – thinking skills, such as tailoring and carpentry, Moral and humanistic firm manner that makes man near to God, His angels, and the ultimate aim.

**Allameh Majlesi's viewpoint:** Knowledge, Servitude to God, Divine nearness.

**Molla Mahdi Naragi and Molla Ahmad Naragi's viewpoint:** Reaching virtue and absolute happiness, becoming good and deserving all of the individuals' manners and behaviors.

**Ghazzali's viewpoint:** Rafiee (2002) introduces the goals of education from the viewpoint of Ghazzali as follows: Knowledge and freedom (as the worldly aim), vision of the exalted God (as the other worldly aim), Creating, changing, stabilizing knowledge and manners and behavior in pupils (as middle aims), Sub goals from the viewpoint of Ghazzali are (other goals): Biological goals: cleanliness and adornment, hygiene and nourishment, exercise and play, intellect cultivation, knowledge and experience elevation, Vocational education, Spirit elevation, Soul education, Morality position and elevation.

Delshad Tehrani (1997) believes that one should achieve the general goals in order that he or she might reach the ultimate goal of education. The relationship between these two kinds of education is linear.

The general goals are correcting the relations of man with God, himself, society, nature and history. Shariatmadari (1990) mentions the following items as the educational goals in Islam: God worship, piety, instruction of wisdom, cultivation of justice – wanting spirit, man evolution, brotherhood and cooperation, friendship with other nations, cultivation of thinking power, cultivation of social spirit, and cultivation of moral character.

Ahmadi (1995) considers the goals of Islamic education as follows: nurturing man's existential and personality aspects, movement of man toward God, making man aware of his position and status in the world, nurturing the identification power in man through observation, experience, thinking and instruction, cultivation of seeking the right spirit in men, causing the spirit of brotherhood, equality, cooperation, beneficence and sacrifice, cultivation of the spirit of striving and endeavor and fighting poverty and its manifestation.

Fazel Jamali (translated by Saidi, 1981) summarizes the educational goals of the Qur'an as follows:

1. Definition of man (human being) from situation and position point of view among other creatures, and his individual responsibilities in his life in this world
2. Definition of man (human being) considering his social relations and his responsibilities in the life in this world
3. Definition of man (human being) considering his creation (naturally) and making man to understand the creator's wisdom for His innovation and creativity, and making man to use it
4. Definition of man (human being) from the position and status point of view with regard to the creator of the nature, and worshipping God

Delshad Tehrani (1997) believes that the aim of education should be consistent with the man's truth, the very purpose for which he has been created. He adds that the more man goes higher in the ranks of submission and servitude to God, the more he will achieve Divinity, and the more he passes from

himself, the more he will achieve some abilities, owes some affairs, and is endowed with Divine properties.

Hojjati (1989) mentions finding oneself, adherence to God as the goals of education. He believes that nurturing body, intellect and heart leads man to these goals. Faezi and Ashtiani (1996) consider the goals of Islamic education as follows: freedom and deliverance, faith and worship of God, justice-wanting, removing of oppression, independence.

Comprehension of this fact that the world and man are goal – centered, following the prophet of Islam, cutting the captivity chains, certitude, and Divine nearness, mans' evolution. Sanei (1996) says that the ultimate goal of education in Islam, according to the researches of the high council of education is facilitation of man's elevation trend and loftiness towards perfection state that has been determined in his creation according to Divine.

Will some of the goals that the above council has admitted are: the individuals' education in connection with the creator, himself, society and nature. Malkavi (translated by Mottagi Far and Tusi, 2001) considers "freedom" as the ultimate aim of education in Islam, and describes such a freedom as follows: freedom is here meant to be delivered from those limitations, which act as obstacles for thinking power and any movement and action that man wishes to do.

Baqeri (1991) knows the following items as the ultimate aims of Islamic education: guidance and growth, purification and clean life, piety, nearness to God, paradise and God's satisfaction, worship and submission to God.

He introduces, among these aims, submission to God as the most ultimate aim and believes that if we consider submission to God as the center of man's creation, we can consider the other aims as some of its aspects that have appeared in different words.

If we see submission to God considering its effects in man's existence, it can be called clean life and piety, if we see it considering man's reaching to the destination, it can be called guidance and growth, and if we see it considering achievement to purpose and Beloved it can be called nearness to God and His Paradise and satisfaction.

Education goals from the viewpoint of Islam can be divided into general groups: ultimate goals and intermediary goals. The ultimate goals are the most final purposes that man should reach them, and the intermediary goals are considered as the steps to the ultimate goals. The most ultimate goal is submission to God (51:56).

The other ultimate goals from the viewpoint of the Qur'an are guidance, nearness to God, Paradise and satisfaction of God and clean life (Baqeri, 1991).

Considering some of the import respects of the individuals and society, we can consider the following

items as the most important intermediary goals of education in Islam

1. Health, strength and cleanliness (physical respect) (28:25; 74:4).
2. Thinking and intellection (intellectual respect) (2:242; 22:46; 2:164; Nahj-al-Fasahah: 235; Nahj-al-Balaghah: letter 31).
3. Purification and refinement (moral respect) (62:2; Ghorar-al-Hekam: 247 and 248).
4. Adducting of just (economic respect) (57:25).
5. Cooperation (social respect) (5:2; 23:52; 21:92; 49:10; 59:9).
6. Dependence and esteem of Islamic society (political respect) (5:54; 63:8; 4:141; 3:139; Nahj-al-Balaghah: Khotbeh 207).

As mentioned before, submission to God is the truth of worship. Every worship has an appearance and interior. Contenting one with the appearances of worship does not lead humans to submission to God that is man's peak of elevation and perfection.

For example, "prayer" has been introduced in Islamic traditions as the faithful light ascension and the pillar of the religion. Can it be claimed that sufficing oneself to a standing and sitting in a prayer can cause man's effulgence and ascension or there is higher truth after apparent moves, behavior, and actions of the prayer that is obtained through paying attention to these parts? Heart courtesy, presence of hearth, man's effulgence and increasing of his ranks of servitude and surrounding to God are among the things that are created in the light of prayer, and undoubtedly, submission to God is taking steps in the route of acquisition of such manners.

This Position—that is submission to God—which is acquired because of real worship and receiving the truth of worship can be considered as the philosophy and aim of man's creation. The word "submission" mainly is reminder of the spirit of surrendering before the wise and capable God.

When the Glorious Qur'an wants to attribute the highest ranks of "servitude to God" to some of the prophets of God, it speaks of their surrender before God like Abraham: "**When his Lord said to him, 'surrender,' he said, 'I have surrendered me to the Lord of all Being'**" (2:131). There were many signs for Abraham's surrender and servitude but probably none of which are comparable with the status he accepted God's order based on sacrificing his son Ismael in God's way: He said, "**My son, I see in a dream that I shall sacrifice thee; consider, what thinkest thou?' He said, 'My father, do as thou art bidden; thou shall find me, God willing, one of the Steadfast'**" (37:102).

This is one of the highest scenes of submission to God in which a father has taken his son's hand to scarify him in the God's way and a son who gives his hand to his father to be scarified for the sake of God. It is not inopportune that God chose Abraham as His friend: "**And God took Abraham for a**

**friend**" (4:125), or Abraham was fallen in fire but God ordered the fire to become cold upon him: **"We said, "O fire, be coolness and safety for Abraham"** (21:69).

Thus, it can be concluded that acquiring popularity and being loved before God is possible by submission to God. It can also be said that those who have attained the highest states of submission to God can be chosen as God's messengers and prophets, as we say in our prayers: "I bear witness that Mohammad was God's bondman and messenger", because he was at first a real "bondman", then he was chosen as God's messenger.

Or we read in the Qur'an, that when the people had gathered around the cradle of Jesus Christ when he was born asking Maryam about that child (Jesus), that suddenly he began to talk and said: **"Lo, I am God's servant; God has given me the book, and made me a prophet"** (19:30).

Jesus said that he was first God's bondman and then he was deserving for being chosen as God's prophet. It is not only man that should surrender to God, it is also the whole universe and all of its particles that surrender to God's order, glorifying Him: **"Nothing is that does not proclaim His praise, but you do not understand their extolling"** (17:44).

A bud that opens and bestows freshness, a tree which casts a shadow, a bush that moves because of a breeze blowing, a star that lightens, all do their divine duties and tasks that God has ordained for them. It is only man that, because of the Partial free-will given to him, sometimes he turns away from surrendering to God, tries to act contrary to the universe system and commit a sin, and involves in disharmony with other Particles of the universe.

Therefore, it can be claimed that servitude to God is typically complete adjustment and harmony with the whole existence and the world, eventually it cannot be confined to a particular time and place, and rather it covers all human being's life, and is a status in which man with his purification from all unbalance, that is every error and sin, finds himself nearer to his creator that is the manifestation of all goodness and purities.

Man's nearness (p. 120), that is one of the goals of man's creation, is applied here, because God is near to us, even nearer than the jugular vein: **"We are nearer to him than the jugular vein"** (50:16). We feel ourselves far from God because of the sin we have committed, thus purifying ourselves from those sins will cause that we feel nearer to the God whom he was nearest to us.

Man, in such a position, takes more divine state and utilizes from God's properties and his behavior will be confirming such a truth. Therefore, it cannot be stated that we mean by nearness to God that we go several steps nearer towards God locally because of some worships, because such a withdrawal is considered as polytheism and indicates God's limitation that He does not exist in all places, while God manifests in the entire universe including man himself.

On the other hand, a man whose whole life scope is God's manifestation and God is present in all of his

thoughts, states and behaviors, will possess a clean or goodly life “... **We shall assuredly give him to live a goodly life**” (16:97).

Contrary to those persons who turn away from God’s remembrance and will possess a hard and unpleasant life, if we can call it ‘life’: “**Whosoever turns away from my remembrance, his shall be a life of narrowness**” (20:124).

That is why we can also consider clean and goodly life as one of the man’s goals of creation. So much is certain that those men who have attained such a position, their aptitudes, physical, intellectual, social, emotional and moral aptitudes, have completely actualized, i.e. have reached the peak of “guidance”, that is another goal of man’s creation (20:50; 29:69).

Also a man who has such a “piety”, will try to gain Divine satisfaction and Paradise that these can be considered as the other goals of man’s creation (3:135, 7:201; 59:418; 9:72). Therefore, as it was shown, these goals are not separated and independent from each other, they are a unit light, or harmonious and unit states that are complementary and can totally be gained through the position of “submission to God” which is the highest goal of man’s creation.

On the other hand, those goals can lead man to the higher ranks of submission to God. His holiness Imam Ali – the first Imam of Muslims – points in different cases and in different styles to the ultimate aim, general goals and sub – goals of instruction and education. Including these goals (cited from Al – Hayat) are:

1. Man reaches to positions in which he obeys and worships God: “It is due to knowledge that God will be obeyed and worshiped” (Amali-al-Salug).
2. reaching to the position of abstinence and piety and asceticism to the fleeting world and interest to the Hereafter: “A knowledgeable person is the one whose knowledge will lead him to abstinence and piety, and asceticism in the fleeting world and interest to the Paradise” (Ghorar-al-Hekam). According to Imam Ali, asceticism is summarized in two Qur’anic words: “**That you may not grieve for what escapes you, nor rejoice in what has come to you**” (57:23).
3. Knowledge should make the erudite to a position they are not jealous of their superiors and do not despise their inferiors: “An erudite cannot be considered as erudite until he is not jealous of his superiors, and do not despise his inferiors” (Ghorar-al-Hekam).
4. It is up to an erudite to reach a status to know his value (Behar-al-Anvar, v.7).
5. The erudite reach to a position that God, His angels and His worshippers love them: “if the erudite bear knowledge as it deserves, God, His angels, and His worshippers will definitely love them” (Behar-al-Anvar, v.2).
6. Knowledge cause the real needs of individuals and society be satisfied: “Know that there will be no

benefits and good in that knowledge which does not benefit” (Nahj–al–Balaghah, letter 31).

7. Scientific question and researches should be with the intention of reaching to a deep sighting and a real knowledge: “Ask for understanding not for confusion” (Nahj–al–Balagah, Hekmat 320).

8. Knowledge leads man to growth and perfection: “Knowledge will make you to grow” (Ghorar–al–Hekam).

9. The learner should acquire knowledge for reaching a real and right knowledge and guidance to truth: “He learns for jurisprudence and righteousness” (Al – Kafi: 172/8). Thus, learning should never be carried out for bragging and acquiring rank and fame before scientists, or flaunting before the ignorant or hypocrisy in sessions or honoring and bowing of others in the direction of seeking superintendence (Al–Ershad).

The general aim of Christian religious teaching is to co–operate with divine grace in forming Jesus Christ in the soul of the child; instructing him by word and example in the truths revealed by Christ and taught by His Church till he clearly knows them and, according to his capacity, perfectly understands them, in his daily life and conduct lives up to them and faithfully practices them, and finds pleasure and satisfaction in so doing (Cronin, 1952).

For Christians, moral education is not something separate from or added to Christian education. Christian education is education for the Christian life. Since this life is inherently a moral life, Christian moral education means the way this Particular form of moral life is taught (Dykstra, 2001).

A Christian education is one which enables the student to think God’s thoughts after Him in every discipline and area of life (Perks, 1992). The aims, objectives and methods of religious, moral, Personal and social education, for example, are far from being self – evident (Straughan, 1983), and have generated heated debate and substantial literature (Quoted in Bailey, 2005). Basic requirements for effective religious education are:

1. Respect for self
2. Respect for others
3. Respect for the environment, natural and cultural
4. Respect for beauty
5. Respect for truth

These constitute a basic concern for wholeness and seeing inter – connectedness of everything, and desire to try to sort out contradictions, not resting satisfied with fragmented and perhaps schizophrenic understanding (Watson, 1993).

The fact of the matter is that the learner acquires, for example, knowledge of the Ten Commandments (cognitive outcome), a love of the Ten Commandments (affective outcome) and obedience to the Ten Commandments (lifestyle outcome), primarily according to the on – going laws of his own human development and not Primarily to the logical structure or eternal import of the Ten Commandments themselves.

There is no empirical research evidence to suggest that a Person learns religion (or even theology) in a way fundamentally different from the basic manner in which he learns any other area of reality (Lee; cited from Astley, Francis & Crowder, 1996).

## **Is Religious Education Pupil – Oriented or Teacher – Oriented?**

In reply to this question, it should be said that most of the books written about Islamic education do not represent a clear answer, there are even, in some cases, differences of opinions among the writers.

From one respect, it can be claimed that “teacher” from the viewpoint of Islam has particular esteem, respect and authority who decides to represent on acceptable instructional content using desirable teaching methods, and apply necessary standards and regulations for management of his class.

Therefore, at the first sight, it appears that Islam is a teacher – oriented or teacher – centered school. However, it should be noted that the instructional content and the teaching methods that the teacher uses are chosen based on the cognition that he has acquired from his students, and from man, in general.

In other words, the teacher cannot decide in advance regarding instructional plan and contents, curriculum and teaching methods, rather he is really required to recognize his pupils’ concerns, motives, and aptitudes, and act in harmony with them, i.e., it is his students that determine the teacher’s instruction and his teaching from all respects.

Evidentially it should also be noted that every superficial and unoriginal interest of every student, which is not rooted in the pure nature of the students, cannot be acceptable for the teacher. Thus, in fact, the teacher must take expedient decisions concerning his teaching methods and plans.

It appears that, according to this interpretation, we can consider Islamic education as a pupil – oriented or pupil – centered education, but a middle pupil – oriented education in which the teacher possess a very high esteem and respect whose decisions based upon a perfect cognition on humanistic and natural standards of his pupils are considered respectful. Islamic education, according to this, can be considered as a combination of teacher – oriented and student – centered education.

However, a spirit of “God – oriented” state governs Islamic education. Thus, if it is here spoken of paying attention to pupil and teacher, it is in the very direction of observing Divine principles and respecting God’s rules.

In other words, considering the aptitudes and interests God has trusted in man's nature, and has ordered human beings to actualize them, is typically paying attention to God and appointing God and His Commandments as basis in education.

Imam Ali emphasizes that it is necessary to approach for action at the time when they are passionate and when they are in a mood for advancing, because if hearts are forced (to do a thing) they will be blinded (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 193).

Considering the students' interests causes their serious participation in learning and showing their suitable interaction and reflexes (Shariatmadari, 1991). Therefore, the teacher is required to consider the interests of his or her student as the starting point of his work and try to activate the students with due attention to their interests (Shariatmadari, 1985).

Education in the Bible was transition from a family – based phenomenon to something the society saw as its Primary responsibility. It was a peculiar mix of institution and individual, sage and prophet, law and aphorism, all grounded in values which could and were given humanistic rationales and, finally, attributed to God the teacher (Morgan; cited in Freedman, Myers & Beck, 2000).

It is indoctrination, not education, which seeks to inculcate, fixed views on essentially controversial issues. Any educational approach to controversial area must focus on the controversy itself. The reason for it and the arguments that can be produced on both sides; helping pupils to make their own informed judgments is always a prime educational aim, whatever the context (Straughan, cited from Bailey, 2005).

Therefore, in Christianity, students cannot be considered higher than their teachers can: “students are not above their teachers, nor servants above their masters” (Matthew 10:24). Two interesting examples of “teachers” in the Bible are the prophet Amos and Jesus.

Both were itinerant. Both used forms of wisdom literature and rhetoric to express their message to the People (Parables, rhetorical questions). While neither is usually seen primarily as a sage, both are given authority because of their teaching and its power. At the very last Amos and Jesus, reflect the existence of wisdom teaching and its influence. Both were educated and educators (Morgan; quoted in Freedman, Myers & Beck, 2000).

Brümer applies the claim even to God's love for us, arguing that Nygren's position, which asserts that God's love, creates value in its object but is indifferent to it, is incoherent. Brümer writes, “Only by needing us can God bestow value on us and upon our love for him”, others have expressed similar views.

James Mackey has even argued that a “defensible and meaningful” use of the term God could be derived from a notion of Eros as a pervasive originating impulse of the cosmos.

In teaching, too, there can be a proper and natural form of need – love. It is a need – love that must be

qualified, added to, transmuted and transcendent, but never ignored or disparaged. Real teachers need to teach; they want to teach; they are deeply fulfilled by teaching. They love it, as they love their learners' learning.

It is not too much to say that many teachers need their learners; they need the joy of watching them learn – of sharing in that disclosure situation in which the student comes to see the truth or masters a skill, or are charged in some other way. This is a desire and need that may properly be fulfilled, if it is recognized, directed and channeled aright (Astley, 2004).

Learning and teaching, but – like worship – if we never enjoy them, it would be far better to give them up. Both learning and teaching need such passion (Astley, 2004).

## Epistemology

Epistemology is taken from the Greek word *episteme*, which means knowledge and science.

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge; the branch of philosophy that inquiries into the nature and possibility of knowledge.

It deals also with the scope and limits of human knowledge, and with how it is acquired and passed. It also investigates related notions, such as perception, memory, proof, evidence, belief and certainty (Mounter, 2005).

Thus it can be said the central question includes the origin of knowledge, and the place of experience in generating knowledge, and the place of reason in doing so; the relationship between knowledge and impossibility of error; the possibility of universal skepticism, and the changing forms of knowledge that arise from conceptualizations of the world (Blackburn, 2005).

It is said in Christianity that we have been endowed with the ability to gain some reliable knowledge about reality (Peterson, 1986). It is believed in Islam that it is possible for man to know and recognize, i.e. to have knowledge and cognition.

Motahhari (1989) says in this regard that one of the reasons of possibility of man's cognition from the viewpoint of the Qur'an is this fact that it invites the humans to cognition, then it is evident that the Qur'an does not invite men to an impossible thing.

It is also believed in Islam that knowing and cognition is not a material process. Sadr (translated by Marashi Shushtari, undated) says that cognition is neither material nor as a phenomenon penetrated or reflexes into a material (like brain), because it is contrary to the material rules.

# Status of Knowledge and Cognition

The following issues are among the reasons why Islam believes that knowledge and cognition are very important:

1. Adam was prostrated by the God's angels when all of the facts of the universe were instructed to him: **"And we taught Adam the names, all of them."** (Qur'an, 2:31) It meant by the word "names" in the above verse, "the named" i.e. all that the entire name is applied to it, that is the being itself and its truth. That is the reason the word "name" has been interpreted as "the named" in this verse.

It also follows from this verse that the aptitude and potential of knowledge and cognition has been trusted in man's nature and it can be concluded that the humans can take efforts to actualize these potentials. "And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name there of" ( the Bible, Genesis 2: 19).

"And Adam gave names to all cattle and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a help meet for him" (Genesis 2: 20). The human being's potential knowledge of God is indicated in Rom. 1: 19 where it is said that what can be known about God is evident to human in general, although the ungodly deny God's existence (Renn, 2005).

2. Knowledge and cognition can be the factors of man's elevation: **"God will raise up in rank those of you who believed and have been given knowledge"** (58:11), or the Qur'an asks: **"are equal those who know and those know not"** (39:9). And this means that those who know are better than those who do not know.

The Qur'an believes that although all humans beings are equal, but there are four factors that cause a man to be higher than the others: knowledge (58: 11), piety (49:13), faith (58: 11) and jihad (holy war) for God's sake (4 95).

It should be noted that if man has really the necessary knowledge, he will surely have the other three factors of elevation, i.e. piety, faith and striving for God's sake, and definitely such properties when mixed and blended with knowledge can save the individual and the society.

The Bible considers wisdom and knowledge higher than strength: "a wise man is mightier than a strong man and man of knowledge than he who has strength" (Prov. 24: 25).

3. witness bearing of the knowledgeable has been along with the witness bearing of God, and His angels: **"God bears witness that there is no God but He – and the angels, and men possessed of knowledge – upholding justice"**(2:18).

4. It is the knowledgeable and scientist that fear God: **"even so only those of His servants fear God"**

**who have knowledge**” (35:23). It can be deduced from this Qur’anic verse that if person does not fear God as it deserves, then we can doubt his ranks of knowledge and science.

It may be that such a person possess a superficial science, but undoubtedly has not acquired a real and essential knowledge, which can affect his attitude and behavior. It is not inopportune that the Qur’an says in another verse **“he who fears shall remember”** (7:10).

Comparison of these two verses show that it is real knowledgeable and scientists that will soon notify and receive the necessary advices. “The eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love” (the Bible, Psalm 33: 18).

However, according to the Bible, as far those who do not fear God: “I have a message from God in my heart concerning the sinfulness of the wicked: there is no fear of God before their eyes” (Psalm 36: 1).

“Therefore fear God” (Ecclesiastes 5: 7). “Whoever fears God will avoid all (extremes)” (Ecclesiastes 7: 18). However “Because the wicked do not fear God, it will not go well with them, and their days not lengthen like a shadow” (Ecclesiastes 8: 13).

5. It is only the erudite that understand God’s exemplum and will ponder them: **“And those similitude’s we strike them for the people, but none understand them save those who know”** (29:93).

6. We should always want God to increase our knowledge continuously: **“And say, `O my Lord, increase me in knowledge”** (20:114). God’s prophet was ordered from God to want Him to be increased in knowledge because knowledge and thus submission to God is unlimited, so we should definitely have such a desire.

7. “Pen” has become deserving for God’s oath in the Holy Qur’an: **“by he pen, and what they inscribe”** (68:1). God swore by soul of the prophet of Islam (15:72), the sun (91:1), and moon (84:18), stars (53:1, 55:6), etc. and He has also swore by “the pen”, and this indicates the magnitude of the Pen.

It is not also surprising that, according to Islamic traditions and narrations, black ink of the religious and pious scientist has been preferred to the martyrs’ blood (Imam Ja’far Sadeg) because it due to the knowledge, statements and pens of them that the love to martyrdom is created.

8. The first verse revealed to the prophet of Islam, after **“In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful”**, was: **“Recite: In the Name of Thy Lord who created”** (96:1).

9. God admires Himself in the Qur’an with the property of “the most generous” when he taught man that which he did not know **“recite: And thy Lord is the most Generous, who taught by the pen, taught man that he knew not”** (96:4, 45).

It is interesting to be noted that when God “created” man, He admitted Himself with the property of Generous: **“O man! What decided thee as to thy Generous Lord who created thee?”** (82:6). But

when “taught” man, He admired Himself with the property of “the most Generous”, and this indicates that “teaching” to man is more important than man’s creation.

The aim of man’s creation has been knowledge and awareness: ***“It is God who created seven heavens, and of earth their like, between them the Command descending, that you may know that God is powerful over everything”*** (65: 12).

It is in the light of such knowledge that man can reach the ultimate goal, or the most ultimate goal of creation, i.e. submission to God, therefore it deserves them man appoints such goals for his life, and does always take steps towards them so that he might not be separated from all that he has been created for, that is he should always be acquiring knowledge, and increasing ranks of his submission to God.

In continuation of this discussion, it can be said that one can achieve a real faith, and have the success of establishing prayer and payment of Zakat (alms) as it deserver (4:162), and becomes certain and aware of Islam and the Qur’an truth (34:6; 22:54) and bear witness to this fact that there is no God but the One God (3: 18) in the light of knowledge.

The Glorious Qur’an introduced the deaf and the blind ones who do not contemplate as the worst world creatures (8:22). The Qur’an severely complains of those who dispute about God without any knowledge and guidance (22:8).

Thus it is not for nothing that Noah seeks refuge to God not to want God that which he is unaware of, and Moses seeks refuge to God not to be of the ignorant and unaware ones (2:67).

Considering the verses and Islamic narrations mentioned in “Al Hayat, v.2”, it can be deduced in characterization of the magnificence of the knowledge that the erudite and scientists are like the stars in the sky that guides man, intercession of the erudite will be accepted by God, the erudite are as a bright candle among the humans that give them lightness, God likes the seekers of knowledge, the most valuable men are the most knowledgeable ones, jurisprudence and thoughtfulness is the key of insight and completeness of worship and factor of man’s elevation towards high stages and ranks in the world and in the Hereafter.

Looking at the erudite face is considered as worship. Visiting the erudite is higher than seventy Kaaba’s circumambulation. There is not a faithful to sit down before knowledgeable unless the exalted Lord will tell him—you that sat before my friend, I will place you and that knowledgeable in the Paradise by my glory and honor.

To whomsoever the wisdom is given, an abundant bounty has been given to him. Knowledge and science is like a light that cause man’s deliverance and man’s exit from darkness. Imam Ali considers the value of knowledge so great that no honor is like it (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmet 113) that is the origin of every goodness (Ghorar-al-Hekam) and is the head of every bounties (Ghorar-al-Hekam), and it is

venerable estate (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmet 5), and is the highest the most beautiful treasures (interpretation of Ibn-e-Abi-al-Hadid).

No one should be considered great until his episteme and knowledge have been tested (Ghorar-al-Hekam), there is not a movement unless in which man needs knowledge (Tohaf-al-Oqul p. 152), thus the seeker of such a knowledge is like the one who does Jihad for God's sake (Rauzah-al-Vaezin), therefore those endowed with knowledge will remain as long as the world lives (Rauzal-al-Vaezin), and if there is a distinction and privilege it is for the knowledgebase'.

Thus, the man who esteems such an erudite, in fact he has esteemed his Lord (Ghorar-al-Hekam). Therefore, we see Imam Ali orders us to teach such a knowledge (Imali-al-Sadug), and say that the one who teaches him a word, he has made Ali as his slave. Taba-tabaie (translated by Gerami Qumi, 1999) says that in spite of this fact that Qur'an has invited the people to thinking, rationalization and notification in more than three hundred verses, there is not seen even one verse in the Qur'an in which God has ordered His bondman to believe in the Qur'an or anything else from His presence ignorantly or go away blindly.

Ja'fari (1981) after stating this fact that there are about 730 verses in the Qur'an regarding knowledge and its details, adds that knowledge from the viewpoint of the Qur'an is a light that separates man's rational life from irrational life.

By inspiration from verses and Islamic traditions cited in "Al Hayat, vol. 2", the following characteristics can be mentioned for the knowledgeable and scientists:

1. Fear and awe from God (33:39; 35:28; 22:54)
2. Knowledge to God (Prophet of Islam: Tohaf-al-Ogul/ 21; Imam Hossain: Tohaf-al-Ogul/ 172; Imam Sadeg: Tohaf-al-Ogul / 269; Al-Khesal / 21; Al- Behar: 2/27).
3. Seeking knowledge foe God (the prophet of Islam: Rauzat-al-Vaezin. 11)
4. Thinking and seclusion [from bad people] (prophet of Islam: Makaram-al-Akhlag / 543; Tohaf-al-oqul / 22; Imam Ja'far Sadeq: Al-Kafi 1/49; Amali-al-Mofid / 121; Al-Behar: 72/203).
5. The effect of knowledge on heart (prophet of Islam: Al-Behar 2/33; Imam Ali: Nahj-al-Balaghah /1127, 909; Tohaf-al-oqul / 160, 377; Imam Ja'far Sadeq: Al-Behar: 2/33).
6. Humility and the purification of soul (Imam Ja'far Sadeq: Al-Kafi 1/37, 2/41).
7. Piety (Imam Ja'far Sadeq: Al-Behar 2/49)
8. Abstinence (Imam Ali: Ghorar-al-Hekam : 305)
9. Usefulness (Prophet of Islam: Al-Behar 1/216; Imam Mohammad Baqer: Al-Kafi 1/33; Imam Ja'far

Sadeq: Al-Kafi 1/33; Imam Musa Kazem: Al-Kafi: 1/38).

10. Distribution of knowledge (Imam Ali: Nahj-al-Balaghah / 1304–1305; Al- Behar 2/23; Imam Musa Kazam: Rejal 455).

11. Overcoming carnal desires and preventing hypocrisy (prophet of Islam: Meshkat-al-Anvar / 245; Monyat-al-Morid-al-Hadidi 193, 195; Safinah-al-Bihar 2/532; Imam Ali: Al-Kafi: 2/300; Monyat-al-Morid / 193; Makarem-al-Akhlag / 558).

12. Loving the poor and paying attention to the weakened (prophet of Islam: Makarem-al-Akhlag / 558; Imam Ja'far Sadeq: Al-Bihar 22/327).

13. Proficiency and domination to different sciences (prophet of Islam: Rouzah-al-Vaezin / 10; Imam Ali 2/121).

14. Referring to the Qur'an (Imam Mohammad Begher: Al-Vasael 4/830). 15. Reminding God when seeing them (Imam Ja'far Sadeq: Al-Kafi 1/39).

16. Being the best people after the immaculate Imams (prophet of Islam: Al-Bihar: 2/110; Imam Hasan Askari: Al-Bihar: 2/32).

Wisdom and knowledge are so important from the viewpoint of the Bible that it says: "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings; be instructed, ye judge the earth" (Psalm 1: 10). "And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this of man to be exercised there with" (Ecclesiastes 2: 13).

"I communed with my own heart, saying, Lo! I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge" (Ecclesiastes 2: 16). "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge" (proverbs 12: 1).

"Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun. Wisdom is a shelter... wisdom preserves the life of its possessors" (Ecclesiastes 7: 11, 12). "Wisdom brightens the face and change its hard appearance" (Ecclesiastes 8: 1). "Wisdom is better than weapons of war" (Ecclesiastes 9: 18).

It should also be noted that having knowledge and wisdom can cause a particular and holy sorrow in the Person, because he knows something and some facts the laymen do not know: "For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (Ecclesiastes 2: 18).

In the OT, knowledge is experiential and relational. The "man of sorrows" in (Isa.53:3) "is acquainted with" (Heb. "knows") grief, i.e., he has experienced grief when the prophet Hosea announces that there is "no knowledge of God in the Land" (Hos. 4:1), he is equating knowledge with loyalty faithfulness.

To know God is to be in relationship to God (Hos. 6: 6) knowledge of God involves reverent obedience to him (Prov. 1:7). The same is true on the human plane: to know another is to have a relationship with that person. Knowledge can have the abstract senses of realization (Judge 13: 21), rational discourse (Job. 15:2), and insight into the nature of reality (Job 12: 3; Eccl. 1: 16).

In the NT knowledge can also be experiential and rational, as in the OT (e.g., "The Lord knows those who are his"; 2 Tim. 2: 19). In general, however, the NT uses knowledge in a more theoretical sense, consistent with its range of meaning in Greek. For instance, knowledge of Jesus is insight into a revealed truth, namely that Jesus, against appearance, is actually the eternal Word of God (John 1: 10).

Because knowledge, both in Greek philosophy and in Hellenistic religion, can have an abstract, even mystical quality, the Apostle Paul could be critical of knowledge, casting it as inferior to the supreme virtue, love (1 Cor. 8: 1-3). The Apostle Paul's words in 1 Cor. 13: 8 ("Love never ends. But ... as for knowledge, it will come to an end") would not make sense to an OT prophets for whom, in Hebrew terms, knowledge of God is equivalent to love for God (Ps. 91: 14) (Moblely, cited).

"Wisdom" can be the result of "Knowledge" and "Understanding": "For the Lord gives wisdom, from his mouth come knowledge and understanding"(Prov. 2: 6). Similarly: "The tongue of the wise dispenses knowledge" (Prov. 15: 2). These three concepts are to be with each other, so that one without another is incomplete and meaningless.

Therefore, it is the wise who can acquire knowledge and teach it to others: "The lips of the wise spread knowledge" (prov. 15: 2). Or: "The mind of him who has understanding seek knowledge" (prov. 15: 4). According to the above points: "When a wise man is instructed, he gains knowledge" (Prov.21: 11).

Thus it is up to all of us to consider the following command: "incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise" (Prov. 27: 17). "Wisdom" and "Knowledge" come from the same Spirit: "To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12: 8).

Thus, "Wisdom" has a near relationship and connection with knowledge, in fact: "Wisdom, next, is the knowledge of divine and human matters and the causes of these" (4 Mac. 1: 16). And if a man to be wise, his knowledge will increase like a flood: "The knowledge of a wise man will increase like a flood and his counsel like a flowing spring" (Sir. 21: 13).

The Bible has pointed out to knowledge of God in many cases. The majority of these verses indicate the greatness and comprehensiveness of this knowledge: "The Lord is a God of knowledge" (1 Sam. 2: 3).

"Thou hast knowledge of all things" (Ps. 119: 66). "All the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord"  
"They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountains; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Prov. 1: 7).

“The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (Prov. 1: 7). Undoubtedly, if all bondmen do know the above facts regarding the knowledge of God, and that God really knows all that we think and do, the Probability of doing evils in secret and public and doing good in all of us will definitely increase, without which "hypocrisy" will pervade the society.

God Himself has praised knowledge: “The eyes of the Lord keep watch over knowledge” (Prov. 22: 2). Evidentially knowledge has many good results and uses that God and the religious texts have taken such an emphasis on acquiring it.

It is in the light of knowledge that interpersonal relations and communications with people would be possible, as it deserves: “Give, me now wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people” (2 Chr. 1: 10).

This particular kind of knowledge may be considered as a branch of social science which causes man to preserve his personality and have a desirable moral character before the people. Ruling people is possible by knowledge: “... and have not even asked long life but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself that you may rule my people over whom I have made you king” (2Chr. 1: 11).

Kingdom has its own mysteries, secrets and techniques which are all discovered by knowledge. Enjoying a happy and pleasant life is gained by knowledge “Knowledge will be pleasant to your soul” (Prov. 2: 10).

Knowledge causes one to see the entire universe as it is, and do all good behaviors as it deserves, seeing the truth of the life, can reach man to status in which he is secure and has no worldly grief.

Knowledge, from the viewpoint of the Bible is of great importance and considerable merit. It is more valuable than the entire world. Thus, it is up to man to seek wisdom and knowledge in all his life and all over the world, and ask God to give him such a magnificent possession.

“God answered Solomon, ‘ Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked possessions, wealth, honor, or the life of those who hate you, and have not even asked long life, but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself’ ” (2Chr. 1: 11). In the light of such a knowledge and wisdom it is possible for man to acquire: “riches, possessions, and honor, such as none of the kings had” (2Chr. 1: 12).

Therefore, it is quite reasonable to be told that: “Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold” (Prov. 8: 10). And knowledge is certainly the most precious jewel: “There is gold, and abundance of costly stones, but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel” (prov. 20: 15).

That is the reason why: “By knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches” (Prov. 11:9). Receiving the necessary “Knowledge” may be synonymous with gaining “The law of life”: “He bestowed knowledge upon them, and allotted to them the law of life” (Prov. 13: 16).

Knowledge is the awareness of man in relation to the harmonies and orders of the life and the universe, so: “Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid” (Prov. 12: 1). Possessing a great knowledge causes man not to omit anything from the law of the Lord or His commandments.

On the other hand, teaching the necessary ordinances and judgments is possible by such a great knowledge (1Eser 8: 7). And knowledge is needed in everything: “In everything a prudent man acts with knowledge “but a fool flaunts his falsely” (Prov. 13: 16).

And if a man wishes to reach the goal of his creation, he should certainly have knowledge, because those who have not knowledge in this field will surely go astray: “It is not good for a man to be without knowledge, and he who makes haste with his feet misses his way” (Prov. 19: 2).

A life worthy of the Lord is necessarily along with increasing the knowledge of Him “To lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1: 10). Such a life, according to this verse, is pleasing and fruitful in every good work.

Knowledge and teaching are among those valuable things which will surely benefit all men: “Now, brethren, if I come to you speaking in tongue, how I shall benefit you unless, I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or leaching?” (Cor. 14: 6) “By knowledge the righteous are delivered” (Prov. 11: 9).

Even, all men can be saved in the light of coming to the knowledge of the truth: “Who desires all men and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1Tim. 2: 4). The characteristic of wisdom in comparison with money is that: “The advantage of knowledge is that wisdom preserves the life of him who has it” (Eccl. 7: 12).

While the money requires to be preserved. Therefore, it can be said that the Spirit of the Lord, and the fear of Him, shall rest upon the righteous and knowledgeable: “And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord” (Isa. 11: 2).

Therefore, knowledge is so valuable that: “An intelligent mind acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge” (Prov. 18: 15).

The highest part of the body, the heart, is the real position for “wisdom”: “Wisdom will come into your heart” (Prov. 2: 10). In this case, “Knowledge will be pleasant to your soul” (Prov. 2: 10).

Therefore, the standard and criteria for might and magnificence is wisdom and knowledge, and according to this: “A wise man is mightier than a strong man, and a man of knowledge than he who has strength” (Prov. 24: 5).

Not only the ability of man but the stability of the earth also is due to knowledge and the men of

understanding and knowledge: “When land transgresses it has many rulers; but with men of understanding and knowledge its stability will long continue” (Prov. 28: 2). Thus, it is up to all men to consider the following command: “Apply your mind to instruction and your ear to words of knowledge” (Prov.23: 12).

Even, knowledge, wisdom and understanding are so important that one can pray God that these characteristics be granted to him and the competent men: “And so, from the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding” (Col. 1: 9).

Because God has said that “let light shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ”(2Cor. 4: 6). It is through the knowledge of our Lord that we can escape the defilements of the world”(2pet. 2: 20). Man’s knowledge is imperfect (1Cor. 13: 9). On the other hand, man’s is filled with the Spirit of God (Exod. 31:3).

In the knowledge of God, grace and peace are multiplied to man (2Pet. 1: 2). Therefore, it is up to all of us to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord (2Pet. 3:18). And in the light of such knowledge, "insight" will be given to man: “Knowledge of the Holy One is insight” (Prov. 9: 10). Without insight, are the words of those who speak, without knowledge" (Job. 34: 35). And if one who is perfect in knowledge is with man, in this case, truly his words are not false (Job. 36: 4).

Those persons who suffer from lack of knowledge do not distinguish the facts of the creation, and so: "They are all without knowledge; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; dreaming, lying down, and loving to slumber" (Isa. 56: 10).

Then, how would it be possible for them to have even the least part in a real happy life, while they are quite unaware of acquiring the real joys and happiness? Though, they may sometimes feel a superficial and false security:” You felt secure in your wickedness, you said, “No one sees me” (Isa. 47: 10).

All the evildoers who commit the worst crimes have no real knowledge: “Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread, and do not call upon the Lord?”(Ps. 14: 4) And undoubtedly such people: “Have neither knowledge for understanding, they walk about in darkness" (Ps. 82: 5).

Therefore, it is clear from the above facts that the evildoers are among the fool whose presence must be left, for there we do not meet words of knowledge (Prov. 14: 7). And these people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: "my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hos. 4: 6). On the other hand, some people suffer from a “false and superficial knowledge and understanding” Which has led them astray: “Your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray, and you said in your heart, “I am, and there is no one besides me "(Isa. 47: 10).

Therefore, such beguiling wisdom and knowledge must not be mistaken for the real and actual

knowledge and understanding that save man from all sorts of evils and sins, not the origin of crimes and bad needs. In fact: "The knowledge of the ignorant is unexamined talk "(Sir. 21: 18). A falsely called knowledge is, if fact, ineffective or untruthful in the knowledge of our Lord (2Pet. 1:8).

Therefore, we should definitely avoid from all sorts of falsely called knowledge which can certainly lead to different contradictions: "Avoid the Godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge (1Tim. 6: 20). But these two dangers, that is lack of knowledge and a falsely called knowledge, can both be removed by acquiring a good and real knowledge and understanding.

## **Tools and Ranks of Knowledge**

It is believed in Islamic that things are first comprehended by appearing senses followed by the intellectual and reflective operations (Sajjadi, undated). Islam appoints scientific thinking as the basis for everything in the life, and the wise and the sage are those who choose the scientific method as the basis of their thinking, because it is this method that leads man towards remembrance and understanding of God and Divine piety (Mahjub, 1987).

Motahhari (1999) believes that senses, intellectual and heart can be considered as the tools or means of man's knowledge and cognition. Therefore, it can be concluded that observation" (seeing accurately along with reflection) of the being and the universe can cause man to reach to a real knowledge and episteme (29: 19–20; 50:6–11; 88: 17–20).

That is the reason why the Holy Qur'an invites humans to observe the universe phenomena (6:99). Considering different speeches of Imam Ali, one can result that he considers "sense", intellect" and "heart" as the most important tools of man's knowledge and cognition, the heart here is meant "the right soul."

"Heart" can be considered as one of the main tools for cognition and insight: "Let the words of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer" (the Bible, Psalm 19:14). Therefore, the fact that some knowledge comes through sense perception is a point which a Christian epistemology would grant (Peterson, 1986), but sense perception is not sufficient for a complete and comprehensive cognition.

As God has stated His religion – based verses in the Holy Qur'an, he has also placed His existence – related verses or tokens (the universe and its components) in the nature. As His verses in the Qur'an are sacred, His verses/tokens in the universe and nature are sacred too.

As it requires thinking and rationalization to comprehend and understand the verses of the Qur'an (4:82), it also requires thinking and rationalization to comprehend and understand and to take lesson from God's verses (tokens) in the nature, that is a person can reach, for example from seeing a tree's leaves, to God who observes and contemplates.

Sa'di, one of the most famous Muslim and Iranian poets, says that each leaf of the green trees is a scripture full of the cognition of the creator, in the sight of the wise. The Qur'an says that taking lesson from the universe requires seeing eyes (3:13), pure intellect (12:111) and enlightened heart (79:26) (Baqeri, 1991).

The Glorious Qur'an takes emphasis on this fact that there are signs in the creation of the heavens and the earth, but for men possessed of minds who remember God (3:190–191), and how many signs there is in the heavens and in the earth that some people pass by turning away from them (12:105).

Those who have the success and chance of thinking in the heavens and the earth will come to a position in which they will see the creation of the universe goal – centered and will become certain of resurrection and Hereafter and will identify the creator of the being free from all defect, and deficiencies (3:191).

The Qur'an says that it requires thinking (45:13; 16:10–11) or intellection (2:164; 30:24; 16:12) to comprehend the Divine tokens in the universe. Even, deliverance from the Hell is possible by intellection (67:10).

The Qur'an using such question as “**did you not see; do you not see; did you see? etc.**” confirms considering the senses in man, and using such statements as, “for the people who intellect, the people who reflect, the people who notifies, the people who comprehend, etc”, confirms the importance of the intellect in man (Tabatabaie, 1987).

The Qur'an does not content itself with introducing eyes and ears (senses or primary source of knowledge) as the bounties that man should give thanks to God for them, but it also names “heart” as one of the other of these bounties: “**and He appointed for you hearing, and sight, and heart, that haply so you will be thankful**” (16:78).

The Qur'an severely complains of those who only know an outward part of the world's life and they are headless of the Hereafter (30:7). These group should be of those who do not purify their hearts, and do not apply their thought and intellect and content themselves with the superficial senses.

Imam Ja'far Sadeq says that the senses cannot comprehend anything except with guidance, as it is impossible to walk in darkness (Ershad / 124; quoted in Al-Hayat: vol. 1). He also says that the senses cannot comprehend the things in themselves, and there is no way for cognition for them without heart; the heart is the guide for the senses, the heart remains after the destruction of the senses (Behar 59/61; cited from Al-Hayat, vol.1).

That's the reason the Qur'an calls the unpurified and uneducated, that is the infidel, the squanderer, the doubter, the paramour and the cruel as aberrant and deviated: “**even so God leads astray the unbelievers**”(40:74), **even so God leads astray the prodigal and doubter**”(40:34), “**and thereby He leads none astray save the ungodly**”(2:26), “**and God leads astray the evil doers**”(14:27), because they are the blind who have eyes and do not find out the truth of the affairs and do not reach insight:

***“they have eyes, but perceive not with them”*** (7: 179).

Or, according to the Bible, “Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand. In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: `you will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people’s heart has become calloused. They hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would hear them” (Matthew: 13– 15).

According to the Qur’an that’s because their bad behavior which is due to their undeveloped interior, is like a veil which has caused their darkness and their not receiving any light: ***“that they were earning has rusted upon their hearts”*** (83: 14).

These persons, according to the Prophet of Islam, the more increase their appearing and superficial science, the more they will become away from God. According to Baqeri (1991), the “heart” can be the factor of comprehension and intellection (22:46), the factor of feeling and reaction (3: 159), and the factor of action and practice (2:225).

He concludes from this that the concept “heart” is synonymous with the “soul”, because these three categories are the manifestations of the “soul.” Thus, just as the soul is defined as inciting to evil” (12:53), when it orders to badness, the heart is in a similar case called “sinful heart” (2:283), and just as the soul is defined as “at peace or at rest soul” (89:28) when it is saved from badness and finds comfort, the heart is in such case defined as “at rest heart” (13:28).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the most complete cognition is possible when individuals apply their senses to think on those things they have sensed, while have purified their hearts from all sorts of contaminations and sins. So much is certain that the purification of heart from sins or the purification of the soul will cause man to comprehend the facts of the universe as they are.

But wherever man’s heart is contaminated to sins, it will not surely reflect the truth light because of those sins or rusts. Thus, it is possible to find and discover the points and subtle things from the universe in the light of purified heart without which this was not possible at all. How often in such a state, man can hear a voice and a call from the individual trees’ leaves, sky stars and desert gravel stones and take lesson from them one of which is not found in the formal school books.

In one of the issues addressed in Nahj–al–Balaghah (Khotbeh 185), Imam Ali states that if humans thought about the great power of God and His abundant bounties, they would surely return to the way of God, and would fear the doom of the Hell. In this statement, Imam Ali brings up thinking, which is a manifestation of “intellect and reflection”, as a tool for knowledge and cognition of the right way.

Imam Ali adds that but the hearts are unable and sick and have lost the power to think about Divine power and God’s boundless powers that be guided to the straight way. Therefore, it can be deduced from the expression that “heart”, i.e. the right soul, can be considered as one of the means (tools) or

ways for knowledge and cognition.

Imam Ali continues his speech asking why humans do not observe that small things that God created. It is concluded from this sentence that Imam Ali considers man's senses as one of the tools or ways of man's knowledge.

Imam Ali in another part of Nahj-al-Balaghah (Khotbeh 133) compares a man who uses senses, intellect and heart (an insightful person) with a man who contents himself of using only his superficial senses (a blind man) saying that: "the insightful person turns away from the world, but blind person turn his face towards the world; the insightful person takes provision from the world, but the blind person takes provision for the world."

It is quite evidential that those who can be granted knowledge that have been competent and qualified for its reception, as the Bible confirms: "Whom will he teach knowledge, and to whom will he explain the message? Those who are weaned from the milk, those taken from the breast? (Isa. 28: 9).

"Whom did he consult for his enlightenment, and who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?" (Isa. 40: 14) "He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding" (Dan. 2: 21). Knowledge is granted to those who are worthy of its reception.

The believers in God's commandments can receive such a knowledge: "Teach me good judgments and knowledge, for I believe in thy commandments" (Ps. 119: 66). The above verse illustrates that good judgment and knowledge are something that should be taught by God to His righteous bondmen. That's the reason why, "Fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Prov. 1: 7).

And "Law" is so important in obtaining the necessary knowledge that it can be proclaimed that: "Through the law comes knowledge of sin" (Rom. 30: 20). Acquiring knowledge requires competence and capacity, and so: "The mind of a fool is like a broken jar; it will hold no knowledge" (Sir. 21: 14).

One of the necessary factors for acquiring knowledge, is "understanding", and thus, "knowledge is easy for a man of understanding" (Prov. 14: 6). Evidentially without possessing necessary qualifications, one cannot be granted wisdom and knowledge: "A scoffer seeks wisdom in vain" (Prov. 14: 6).

Therefore: "The simple acquire folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge" (Prov. 14: 18). "Reprove a man of understanding, and he will gain knowledge" (Prov. 19: 25). A good and precise "listening" to good persons and competent sources can cause the listener to arrive at knowledge of truth: "Who will listen to anybody and can never arrive at a knowledge of the truth" (2Tim. 3: 7).

Therefore: "If you love to listen you will gain knowledge, and if you incline your ear you will become wise" (Sir. 6: 33). "The satisfaction of God" from his bondmen may be the reason why they are granted wisdom and knowledge on behalf of God: "For to the man who pleases him God gives wisdom and

knowledge and joy” (Eccl. 2: 26).

In the above verse, “joy” is mentioned along with “wisdom” and “knowledge.” So, it appears that the real joyful life which is full of happiness is the result of a real wisdom and knowledge. Because of these two, man can possess an insight and intuition by which he can reach a position to see the universe and its different parts and relations as they are, and formulate his behaviors as he should, and evaluates the beautiful life, as it deserves, and then nothing could disturb him.

On the other hand, the sinners, those who are really away from wisdom and knowledge, because of the lack of understanding, theirs will be a disturbing and depressive life: “To the sinner he gives the work of gathering and heaping, only to give to one who pleases God. This is also vanity and a striving after wind” (Eccl. 2: 26).

Those whom God does not love: “God did not choose them, nor give them the way to knowledge” (Bar. 3: 27). So far as one doesn’t fear God he will not definitely reach a position to receive the light of the knowledge and to understand the mysteries of the creation, so: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge” (Prov. 1: 7).

Therefore, those who understand the fear of the Lord will surely find the knowledge of God” (Prov. 2: 5). And those men who did not choose the fear of the Lord, were among those who hated knowledge (Prov. 1: 29). Similarly: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov. 9: 10).

“Righteousness” can cause a man to acquire a particular understanding and knowledge by which he will be able to know the facts of the world, including the rights of the poor, etc.: “A righteous man knows the rights of the poor; a wicked man does not understand such knowledge” (Prov. 29: 7).

Therefore, those who have not yet learned wisdom, are not to be expected to have a good knowledge of the Holy One: “I have not learned wisdom, nor have I knowledge of the Holy One” (Prov. 30: 3). “Goodness”, “knowledge” and “instruction” three valuable and sacred words which can be mentioned with each other so that “Goodness” can lead to a good “knowledge” and “instruction”, and on the other hand, a real “knowledge” and “instruction” can be due to goodness, because a good knowledge can’t be acquired only in the light of goodness: “I myself am satisfied about you, my brethren, that you yourself are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to instruct one another”(Rom. 15: 14).

“Wisdom” and “knowledge” can be considered as valuable treasures which are hid in good and aware men: “In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2: 3). And it is due to the significance of accompanying “Love” and “knowledge” that it is necessary in all worships that these two complementary components exist, without them the worship would have no effect on the worshippers and the others: “And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge” (Phil. 1: 9).

Therefore, man should desire a steadfast “love” and “knowledge” of God: “I desire steadfast love not

sacrifice, the knowledge of God” (Hos. 6: 6). Such a “love” will lead to increase in “knowledge” of the God and on the other hand, such a “knowledge” will cause man’s loving relationship with God, and this is the connection between the “brain” and the “heart” or the “cognitive” and the “emotional” aspects of man’s personality.

Thus, those hearts which are knit together in love can have all the riches of assured understanding and the knowledge of “God’s mystery of Christ” (Col. 2: 2). All powers, understandings and knowledge, without “love” will be nothing: “And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but I have not Love, I am nothing” (1Cor. 13: 2).

And it is necessary for all men to make every effort to supplement their faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self – control, and self – control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with Godliness (2Pet. 1: 5 – 6). Thus, the following concepts should be considered in this field; “Purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine, Love...” (2Cor. 6: 6).

That’s because in competent men is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge” (2Esdrs).

On the other hand, it can be concluded that Islam believes in three stages for knowledge (Ebrahim Zadeh, 1990):

Knowledge by reason (102:5) that is a deductive knowledge and is acquired through rational reasoning and its accuracy is based on the accuracy of the presupposed introductions. Therefore, there is the possibility of error on it.

Knowledge by objectivity (102:7) that is a comprehension or indirect knowledge and is acquired through senses. The reasoning method in this knowledge is based on induction so it is exposed to errors, but because of being based on experience (observation or instruction) its certainty is more.

Knowledge by truth (69:5) which is direct and insight based on knowledge, here, the experience acquired from these states has more certainty. The Divine guidance in the first place, in such a way applies to the bondmen.

Tabataba’i (undated) divides the knowledge to two categories: obtaining –based knowledge and present knowledge. In obtaining – based knowledge, the presence of essence is clear for the knower, but in present knowledge, the existence is clear for the knower.

In other words, according Mesbah Yazdi (1986), in present knowledge, the man’s awareness is direct, but in obtaining – based knowledge, the man’s awareness is indirect. Ebrahim Zadeh (1990) says that the Qur’an considers the present knowledge as true knowledge (knowledge by truth) and without any error, and the obtaining – based knowledge is acquired through thinking, reflection, intellection,

observation and experiment.

He believes that obtaining – based knowledge has three stages sensory stage, imagination stage, and the intellection stage.

## **Sources of knowledge and Cognition**

It is meant by the phrase “sources of knowledge and cognition”, those things we can receive knowledge from them. According to this definition, even the tools of knowledge (sense, intellect, heart) can be considered as the resources of cognition, because we can receive knowledge from each of them.

On the other hand, each of these can be considered as tool, means or way of knowledge or cognition by which we can receive the necessary knowledge from the “sources of knowledge.” According to this interpretation, we can receive knowledge from “nature or universe, including from man himself, history and books”, using the above tools.

Thus, it is possible to consider God tokens in nature and in man’s existence, history and the books as the resources of knowledge. It is interesting that the primary and main sources of knowledge are nature, man and history, and the secondary resources for knowledge are the books, because the books reflect the parts of the main resources, while we often consider the books as the main and primary resources of knowledge and cognition.

It is believed in the Holy Qur’an that the being and existence of man (51:21), and earth (Dharyat) can be a manifestation of God’s tokens and the source for knowledge and episteme. It is also believed that traveling and trip on the earth can cause humans’ hearts to acquire wisdom and they accept the truth (22:46), thus this can be considered as a knowledge resource.

Considering different sayings of Imam Ali, it can be concluded that he also considers God’s tokens in the universe (including in man himself), history and the book (here the Qur’an and Nahj–al–Balaghah) as the most important resources of knowledge.

Imam Ali states that a man who knows himself, he has attained the peak of every knowledge and episteme (Ghora–al–Hekam). That is the reason why Imam Ali believes that whosoever knows himself, has really recognized and know his God (Ghorar–al–Hekam).

Regarding God’s tokens in the nature, Imam Ali says that each of the creatures of God in nature, including the sun, moon, plants, trees, water, rocks, etc. are all deserving for man’s observation, i.e. we can receive a suitable and deserving cognition and knowledge from them: “Therefore, you look at the sun, moon, vegetation, plants, water, stones”(Nahj–al–Balaghah; Khotbeh 185).

Imam Ali, concerning history, believes that the one, who knows history and life days, will never neglect readiness for the future (Al Kafi 8/23). Thus, history can give man cognition and can be considered as

one of the knowledge resources.

Imam Ali, regarding the glorious Qur'an, as the highest scripture and book, says; "Learn the Qur'an for it is the fairest of discourses and understand it thoroughly for it is the best blossoming of hearts.

Seek cure with its light for it is the cure for hearts"(Nahj-al-Balaghah, Khaboteh 110). This statement shows that learning the Qur'an and thinking in it cause man to reach a real knowledge by which man's heart and soul are delivered from all sorts of illness, evil thinking and evil seeing.

Imam Ali, in another part of Nahj-al-Balaghah, say: "no one will sit beside this Qur'an but that when he rises he will achieve one addition or one diminution – addition in his guidance or elimination in his (spiritual) blindness" (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Khotbeh 176).

Eventually one of the branches and subdivisions of the increasing of the guidance and decreasing the depravity is an increase in man's knowledge and episteme. Therefore, it can be claimed that the Qur'an can be considered as one of the most important of man's resources of knowledge. Motahhari (1998) says that nature is one of the sources of knowledge man's senses are a tool for acquiring knowledge from nature.

He introduces rational or logical reasoning, i.e. deduction or reason, as the second tool for knowledge, and he believes that this tool is valid when we considered intellect as resource of knowledge. He introduces heart as the third knowledge resource, and considers the purification of the soul as a tool of knowledge for this resource.

## **Obstacles of Knowledge and Cognition**

The Holy Qur'an introduces the following issues as the most important obstacles of knowledge and cognition:

- Soul turbidities (2:282; 62:2; 57:28)
- Concupiscence (28:50; 45:23; 47:4)
- Blind friendship (41:17; 29:38)
- Self – conceit and snobbery (40:50; 45:31; 7:46; 27:14)
- Truth denial (27:14; 46:26)
- Inclination to worldly desires (57:14)
- Thought sediments (40:83; 5:104; 2:170; 28:36)
- Imitation from family and environment (5:77; 26:69–74; 43:22–24)

Imam Ali introduces the following issues as the most important obstacles of knowledge and cognition:

- Not purification of the soul (Ghorar-al-Hekam)
- Cardinal desires (Njah-al-Balaghah, Khotbeh 1 and Hekmat 211)
- Loving blindness and ignorance (Ghorar-al-Hekam: Nahj-al-Balaghah, Khotbeh 109)
- Self – admiration and haughtiness (Ghorar-al-Hekam; Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 113)
- Covetousness (Al Vasaal, vol. 1, cited from Al-Hayat, vol. 1)
- Anger (Ghorar-al-Hekam)
- Denial and stubbornness (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 179)
- Long worldly desires (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 275)
- Force and compulsion (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 193)
- Being despotic in opinion (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 116)

The glorious Qur'an introduced the prophet of Islam as a messenger of good news and a warned for all humankind (34:28), and explains the philosophy of his mission as the guidance of human being to the straight path and sending them out from different kinds of darks (5: 15– 16; 65:10–11), as the Qur'an which is a revealed collection from God to the prophet causes guidance and compassion (45:20), but to receive such a guidance, one should prepare in himself the necessary conditions and background, for instance, he or she should be of men certitude (45:20; 51:20) and piety (2:2) and faith (7:203; 30:52–53).

Such a person will definitely be guided to the best words and to the way of the exalted God (22:24). The truth of the knowledge from God will be given to those who have Divine piety (2:282), because both guidance (29:69) and giving knowledge (2:32) is from His presence.

But, as mentioned, one should acquire the necessary merit and should make enough effort (29:69), but those contaminated hearts that have stretched the veil of sin upon themselves, will surely be deprived of the receiving truth and guidance (39:22; 22:46; 18:57).

Thus, in this field adherence of knowledge and faith (4: 162; 34:6; 22:54; 3: 18; 45:20; 7:52; 30:52–53; 43:40; 10:42–43) and adherence of knowledge and practice (2:44; 15:99) is of great importance.

In the Bible, the phenomenon of “knowing” is predicted of both human beings and God. In some cases, “knowing” involves state of “moral awareness”, for example, Gen. 3:5, 22; Isa. 7:15 speaks of “knowing good and evil.” Knowing sin in one's life, in the sense of being made aware of its existence, is indicated in Lev. 4:28; Sam. 12:17; ps. 51:3; Jer. 14:20; Ezek. 20:4.

In positive contexts, Exodus. 18:20; ps. 119: 152 refer to knowing the law of the covenant and its obligations similarly, prov. 1:2; Eccl. 1:17 speak of knowing wisdom; and ps. 25:4 refers to knowing the ways of God. Great importance is placed in the OT on knowing God. Jer. 31:34; Hos. 2:20 express the desire to know God intimately (Renn, 2005).

If enough teaches otherwise and does not agree to the Godly teaching, they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicious and constant friction between people of corrupt mind” (1 Timothy 6:2–5).

“Keep reminding God’s people of this thing. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen” (2 Timothy 2:14). “The Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful” (Timothy 2:24).

## **Effect of Epistemology on Education**

### **Status of Teacher**

As stated in the discussion of “epistemology”, the real “knowledge” prospers very high esteem, thus in the discussion of “effect of epistemology on education”, it can be said that due to the status of knowledge, the “teacher” has enjoyed a very high esteem and status in the Islamic foundation of education and Islamic education, because it is he or she who teaches and instruct that valuable “knowledge.”

In such a viewpoint, being a teacher is not considered as a job and vacation, but it is accounted as a manner, even the most distinguished manner, that is applied to those who deals with such instruction and teaching. It is interesting that, from this perspective, the student or pupils have very high esteem, as the prophet of Islam says that if one likes to observe the faces of those who have been surely saved from the Hell’s fire, then he should look at the students’ faces.

In the Bible, the people are identified as the target of divine instruction (1 Kgs. 8:36; 2 Chr. 6:27; Job. 36:22; Isa. 2:3; Mic. 4:2), as are sinners (Ps. 25:8) and Godly people (Ps. 25:12; 32:8). In other places, various individuals and classes of people are cast in the role of teachers for the people of God – for example, Moses (Exodus. 24:12); Samuel (1Sam. 12:23), and judges and priests (Deut. 17:11; 24:8 ; 33:10 ; 2 kgs. 12:2; 17:27; Ezek. 44:23).

The father’s pivotal role in the nurture and instruction of children is laid down in prov. 4:4. In significant metaphorical context, the role of wisdom (personified) as a teacher is described in prov. 4:11. The idol

deity is indicated as a “teacher of lies” in Hab. 2:18.

Human beings, plead with God to teach them in Job 6:24; pss. 27:11; 86:11; 119:33) (Renn , 2005). The spirit of acknowledgement and encouragement can be considered as a very effective and important factor of the teacher – students’ relation and in increasing their motivations: “Whoever publicly acknowledges me I will also acknowledge before my father in the heaven.

But whoever publicly disowns me I will disown before my Father in the heaven” (Matthew 10:32–33). “Acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in highest regard in love because of their work” (Thessalonians 5:12–13).

General references to the activity of teaching are found in several different contents of the Bible. The psalmist pleads with God to teach him his ways and laws (cf. pss. 25:4 ff; 119:64ff; 108:124, 143:10). The need for knowledge of Yahweh to be taught by a third party is set to disappear in the promise of Jer. 31:34.

Such knowledge will be given to all in the edge of the new covenant when spirit of God will indwell each believer. This does not mean that the need for teachers will disappear altogether, only that individual believer will not be entirely dependent on others for their awareness of God.

David promises to teach sinners the way of the Lord in Ps. 51:13. Other contexts speak about teaching from a negative perspective. For example, Jer. 9:5 refers to people being taught to lie; and Jer. 9:14 describe the corrupt teaching of Godless parents who led their children into Baal worship (Renn, 2005).

Foundation of education is the inquiry into the ideas that dominate educational theory and Policy. The current questions are what it is worthwhile or necessary to teach, and what the best ways of doing it are. Different views about human nature will influence answers to both questions (Blackburn, 2005).

## **Teaching Methods**

As mentioned in “epistemology”, we can consider “senses, intellect and heart” of men as the tools (or means and ways) of knowledge and cognition. Therefore we can say in the discussion “effect of epistemology on education” that it is the duty and task of the teachers to nurture senses, intellect and heart of their students (whether teacher or student, should do such an action and other educational actions about themselves as their own informal teachers and educators).

That’s because we have made contradictory statements if we introduce the above issues as the knowledge sources, but do nothing for their nurturing and cultivation in education. For example, worship and lab –related affairs and using observational methods can be considered as effective activities for nurturing the pupils’ senses.

Now, if the teachers ask their students to think when using these methods and achieve desired and new

results by innovation and creativity, they have both increased and improved the spirit of innovation in their students and will cause nurturing and breeding of the intellect, reflection and thinking through their teaching methods in such a manner, cause strengthening the reflection, thinking and intellection in the students by that applying techniques.

Some of the teaching methods can be more effective in this field, such as question and answer, discussion and group discussion, and the methods based on problem solving. The students will definitely value those things their teacher's value. If the teachers goals are to cultivate innovation and thinking in the students, and if the evaluation carried out by the teachers are based upon the assessment of the students' innovation and thinking, and the necessary possibilities and facilities are prepared for these, then the students will see themselves obliged to observing these standards of their teachers.

If the teachers use a combination of different teaching methods, and choose each of them considering the related goals and the subject matter, then their students will be more successful. It is sometimes necessary for the teacher to use lecture teaching method to create a spiritual effect in his class, and use the needed techniques to make it more effective wherever necessary.

If we identified the "heart" as one of the man's tools of knowledge in epistemology, then it is up to us to do the necessary planning, and take needed measures, because "many lessons if we stay forty years in university and Houzeh, we will not learn them, but if we purify our heart from sins, then the God will flow the wisdom streams from our hearts to our tongues", in such a position if a person establishes his prayer as it deserves then God will open the sky doors unto him, that is a symbol of divine knowledge upon the purified prayer-establisher, and if such a person in such position recites and contemplate in the Qur'an, the truth of the Qur'anic verses will be made clear for him (56:79).

Such a student, if studies literature, history, arts, and other branches of the science, he will surely be able to better understanding of the real concepts of every science and receive nicer and more subtle points.

Thus, all of the teachers' speeches and behaviors of different subject matters should be such that cause higher ranks of growth and purification in their students, proving in the practice that they know their pupils "hearts" as one of resource and some cases the highest resource of knowledge.

Imam Ali considers the basis of instruction and teaching methods as thinking and nurturing of thought. He advocates of those methods, which awaken the spirit of reflection which, and intellection in the individual such as a thinking and reflection which can create insight, perspicacity and wisdom in the persons (Ghorar-al-Hekam) that is a deep and comprehensive knowledge, which cause humans to see the being as it is, and do the works, as it deserves.

Therefore, Imam Ali even says that a religion which there is no deep-insight and thinking in it, will be of no virtue and utilization (Al Behar, vol.70). The recommendation of Imam Ali to his son – Imam Hasan– is that: "understand my advice and do not turn away from it" (Nahj-al-Balaghah, letter 31), because he

believes that thinking and understanding are much more important than superficial repetitions (Ghorar-al-Hekam).

Such a reflection and thinking if is mixed with man's sight will change into observation", i.e. an accurate and deep seeing, that according to Imam Ja'far Sadeq, frequent observation of knowledge will actualize the intellect, an intellect and wisdom that does not deceive whomsoever it counsels (Nahj-al-Balaghah: Hekmat 201), and is the "sender of the Truth" and "the most powerful foundation" and "corrector of every work" (Ghorar-al-Hekam), and even religion and courtesy are the result of such an intellect (Ghorar-al-Hekam), there is no one whom God has given intellect, unless he will be saved someday (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 407).

Thus, it is deduced that Imam Ali takes emphasis on educational climate which stimulates thinking (Nahj-al-Balaghah, letter 53) and he recommends man to try to achieve the truth with deep – insight and thinking comprehensively: "your search should first be by way of understanding and learning and not by falling into doubts or getting entangled in quarrels" (Nahj-al-Balaghah, letter 53), and in this direction emphasizes using different information resources for acquiring knowledge: "it is necessary for you to recall how matters went with those who preceded you..."(Nahj-al-Balaghah, letter 53).

In spite of this, he recommended hesitation and consideration in issuing ordinances in decisions: "Avoid haste in matters before their time, slowness at their proper time" (Nahj-al-Balaghah, letter 53). From the viewpoint of Imam Ali, the teacher or the educator should pay sufficient attention to the students' concerns and interests in instruction and teaching, failing this they turn away from learning: "Hearts are imbued with passion and the power of advancing and retreating.

Therefore, approach them for action at the time when they are passionate and when they are in a mood for advancing, because if hearts are forced to do things they will be blinded (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 193).

It is necessary to consider the pupils' aptitudes, growth and thinking ability (Bahar). Negotiation and discussion cause continuation of knowledge: "Visit and negotiate with each other about the hadith (tradition), failing this it will be effaced" (Al Mostadrak).

Therefore, one should have frequent companionship and society with the knowledgeable and the erudite and the wise: "Keep on increasing you conversations with scholars and discussions with the wise" (Nahj-al-Balagheh, letter 53). Instruction, is the best thing for the intellect growth (Ghorar-al-Hekam), and "knowledge multiples by spending" (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 147).

Therefore, if a person who hides his knowledge, it is as if he did not know it (Behar, vol.2). Thus, Imam Ali emphasizes the people to learn the knowledge of those who know, and to teach from their knowledge to those who do not know (Ghorar-al-Hekam).

He considers learning knowledge and science as virtual and request humans turn to acquiring

knowledge (Behar, vol. 1), and introduces interest and enthusiasm to knowledge and science as one of the Properties and characteristics of a pious: “He has strength in religion, determination along with leniency, faith with conviction, eagerness in (seeking) knowledge in forbearance” (Nahj–al–Balaghah, Kabotheh 193).

Therefore, Imam Ali recommends the development and generalization of the knowledge (Behar, vol. 1, 2). The one who does not continue instruction and investigation, will not gain any real knowledge and any deep–insight (Ghorar–al–Hekam), so we should always seek knowledge to increase our knowledge (Ibid), and a real knowledgeable is the one who doesn’t satisfy from knowledge (Ibid), and does not get tired of knowledge instruction (Ibid), and everyone who claims that possess the peak and ultimate of the knowledge, he has really shown the peak of his ignorance (Ibid).

It is possible in some cases to understand something better, by comparing it with its opposite, for instance, we can better understand “growth” by understanding ignorance and guidance.” The purification of the soul from sins and vices and loving the world cause man reach the real knowledge, in the light of which man can achieve the truth of the things, for example, one can recognize the truth of the world by piety: “Abstain from the world so that God may show you its real evils and do not be neglectful because (in any case) you will not be neglected” (Nahj–al–Balaghah, Hekmat 391), the one who does not purify his soul, he will not benefit from wisdom and intellect (Ghorar–al–Hekam), “many a slavish mind is subservient to overpowering longings” (Nahj–al–Balaghah, Hekmat 211).

The learner must think about that which he learns or is instructed so that his knowledge becomes firm and understands that which he has not yet understood (Ghorar–al–Hekam). The teacher should not be ashamed of saying “I do not know.”

When he or she does not know something: “No one should feel ashamed of saying “I do not know” when he is asked a matter which he does not know” (Nahj–al–Balaghah, Hekmat 82), failing this, not only his scientific weakness will become evident for his students, but also his moral and personality weakness will be uncovered for his students too.

On this basis, one should never say that which he does not know: “Do not talk about what you do not know even though what you know be very little (Nahj–al–Balaghah: letter 31).

On the other hand, according to Prang it would be contrary to the aim of education to teach so as to close the mind, to curb or atrophy the individual’s growing autonomy, or to teach as certain what was essentially controversial.

And it is equally claimed that it would be wrong to promote a particular form of life as though, despite the plurality of views, one particular way of life was the correct one. That would be to indoctrinate – the very antithesis of education. Hence, indoctrination would seem to apply when the *doctrines* or the *content* of what one is teaching are controversial – when there is no public agreement over what is true or false, valid or invalid.

Thus, religious truths, in this respect, are rather like political or moral or aesthetic truths. The same arguments against nurturing religious beliefs and attitudes would be similar to those which would be levelled against teaching a particular moral code or attitude, or teaching people how to appreciate literature, or what sort of political stance one should adopt, or a particular interpretation in history of past events.

But that indeed would be drastic. Not to nurture beliefs which are in any way controversial would leave the schools bereft of almost anything but mathematics and science. Therefore, those who make accusations of introduction retreat from an emphasis upon the *content* of teaching to the *method* of teaching – of teaching so as to demonstrate the truth of what is taught, not tolerating deviation from the accepted view. Criticism would be discouraged, contrary evidence not revealed, alternative opinions muted (Gardner, Carins & Lawton, 2005).

There is this belief in Christianity that there can be a relationship between this religion and educational thinking (Peterson, 1986). In Christianity, according to the situation, teachers can use various and quite different teaching methods (Peterson, 1986; McMahan, 1928). Professional teachers in churches, Para church organizations, and schools do not usually adopt any one-method completely.

They usually pick and choose elements from different approaches that fit their teaching style and use them in combination. Teachers may also adopt one method for one set of objectives or subject matter and an entirely different approach for another (Pearl, cited in Ratcliff, 1992).

The list of strategies in both the religious and secular domain include role playing, moral dilemma discussions, dramatizations, the use of filmstrips, movies, and other audio-visuals, values clarification exercises, cross-age teaching and counseling, interviewing, and diary keeping.

Religious and secular educators have the list of strategies in common. The difference lies in the use made of all the strategies (Barber, 1984). Taking up this multidimensional analysis of religion, we may argue that formative religious education must also ensure that it is developing the whole range of learning outcomes appropriate to being religious.

Thus, Christian religious education cannot just be a matter of teaching Christian beliefs or knowledge claims, for this would be to develop only what some have called “belief – commitments.” Such a concentration on the cognitive (“thinking”) element of Christianity will lead to the neglect of the affective (“feeling”), attitudinal and conative, volitional lifestyle elements.

Christianity is best learned both affectively and cognitively. It is when reason and emotion are divorced that religion most rapidly loses its sense and its power for people. Religion is intrinsically a cognitive – affective activity.

On the other hand, the teaching represented in the book of proverbs (in the Bible) relies upon careful observation and analysis of experience, drawing some logical and theological conclusions (Morgan;

quoted in Freedman, Myers & Beck, 2000). One of the significant aspects of the usage of 'ginosko' in the Bible lies in the meaning "understand."

It refers to understanding the law of God (Rom. 7:1); the mind of God (1 Cor. 2:16); the mysteries of heaven (Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10); and the spiritual aspects of God's revealed truth (John 7:17; 14:20; 8:28, 32:2; Tim. 3:1; 2 pet. 1:20). From a negative viewpoint, Jesus points out Nicodemus' failure to understand spiritual truth in John 3:10.

General lack of spiritual understanding is indicated in John 8:27; 10:6; 1 Cor. 2:14 (Renn: 2005).

Therefore, teaching wisdom and truth along with understanding them should be the basis of the learning, which will lead the student to the straight path. That's why the Bible emphasizes: "Listen to me; be silent, and I will teach you wisdom" (Job 33:33).

"That, which I see not teach thou me" (Job 34:32). "Teach me the paths" (psalm 25:4). "Lead me in the truth, and teach me" (Psalm 25:5). "Teach me the way, O Lord and lead me"(psalm 27: 11). "Teach me good judgment and knowledge" (Psalm 119:66). "Teach me to do the will" (Psalm 143:10).

Intuitive discernments or experiences of God would then have to be spelled out in terms of propositional truths ("beliefs – that") in order for us to speak of "religious knowledge." The same point may be made of the accounts of no propositional revelation that are often espoused by religious believers (Astley, 1994).

Experience and knowledge of the subject yield dividends in the classroom. Especially in secondary schools, considerable sophistication is called for in order to sustain the interest of older and often religiously alienated pupils. In both primary and secondary schools there is a need for as highly qualified teachers as possible to act as coordinators, helping and encouraging those whose main expertise lies elsewhere (Watson, 1993).

The most fundamental factor in effective religious education, as in the effective teaching of any other subject, is the teacher. Guidelines, syllabuses, books, aids of various kinds, all depend upon the teacher who actually applies them within the classroom situation. The teacher is in control of the way that the intended learning is handled.

The same topic, with the same age and ability range of pupils, and the same general style and method of teaching, can yield different results, depending upon the teacher. One lesson can really take off, and another be dead (Watson, 1993).

A social – science– based theory of religious instruction shows how and why the four major variables present in every teaching act (teacher, learner, subject matter and environment) dynamically and continuously interact in such a fashion as to yield desired religious outcomes (Lee; cited from Astley, Francis & Crowder, 1996).

Much of the Christian learning occurs, explicit, deliberate, systematic and sustained activities, which lead to the development of knowledge and understanding of Christian belief. As such, it may be described as “Christian education.” But the context and complement of all these activities is the implicit catechesis that takes place within the worship of Church.

Latter this process, deriving as does from ritual (words) an ceremonial (acts) of worship, is hardly an international activity and certainly not a systematic one. However, it does result in a change in a person because of conscious experience. We may say, therefore, that it produced “learning”, even if it is not itself education.”

What is thus learned in Christian worship is range of emotions, experience and attitudes that lie at the heart of Christian spirituality (Astley, cited from Astley; Francis & Crowder, 1996).

## **Instructional Contents**

We introduced, in epistemology”, man’s being and existence, nature (the universe), history, and the books as the “resources of knowledge”, we can now, in the discussion “the effect of epistemology on education”, identify and determine the “instructional contents” with due attention to those resources.

From the viewpoint of Holy Qur’an, the humans should have knowledge concerning the following issues:

Man’s soul (or the man himself) (41:53; 51:20 –21)

The world (13: 2–4; 19–22)

The exalted God (14:52; 47:19; 27:60–61 and 64)

The intellect (2:242; 13: 4 and 19; 39: 9)

The Qur’an (12:2; 43:3; 4:10)

The prophets (57:25; 4:163 – 165; 41:14; 11:120)

The prophet of Islam (9:33 and 128; 8:24; 33:21 and 40)

The immaculate Imams (5:33, 55, 67)

The people (49:13; 30: 20– 22)

The enemy (2: 98, 193 and 194; 8: 114; 4:101; 60:1; 64:14; 36:60)

Calamities and hardships (18:68; 14:12)

Time, history, days, events and transformations (3:140; 10:102; 14:5)

Historical rules and laws (30:9; 7: 101; 3: 137; 27: 69)

Consequence and aftermaths of the affairs (13:22; 7: 128; 28:83; 20: 132)

Imam Ali takes much emphasis on the utility of the instructed and taught materials. He considers one of the characteristics of the faithful that they listen to the useful sciences: “They put their ears to that knowledge which is beneficial to them” (Nahj–al–Balaghah, Khotbeh 193). He also emphatically orders the parents to teach their children the useful subjects (Al Khesal / 614).

Imam Ali believes that the most preferable and deserving affairs that the children and teenagers can teach are those ones, which they need when they grow. Thus, we should set the educational goals and contents considering the needs of the individuals and society for the present time and for the future.

If the students and the teachers be sure that the goals and the contents have such characteristic, their motivation in learning and teaching will surely be increased. Imam Ali says that the science is larger than a person can comprehend and surround all of it, thus it is necessary that the best part of each science to be learned (Ghorar–al–Hekam).

Although learning some materials may be better than not learning them, but man’s span of life is limited and scope of science is unlimited, then it is evident that different scientific contents should be divided according to their priorities and then those which be chosen that play an essential role in leading man to the aims of creation and the original and desirable goals of the life.

It is necessary to pay attention to the principles put forward regarding the educational contents, because Islam which forbids inopportune throwing away a piece of bread and consider it as a sin and squander, then how it may be that, does not consider as squander wasting the life of millions of youngsters learning un–useful materials, that’s while Imam Ali emphasizes: “opportunity passes away like the cloud. Therefore, make use of good opportunities” (Nahj–al–Balaghah, Hakmat 21).

One of the most important principles in educational content is about using different ideas in these contents. Imam Ali, in his field, states: “He who has several opinions understands the pitfall” (Nahj–al–Balaghah, Hekmat 173).

Therefore, his holiness Imam Ali recommends the people to place different ideas in front of each other in order that the right idea may be created from them (Ghorar–al–Hekam), and in this field, the accurate analysis and the critique and criticism of the content should be judged, not the speaker or teller, on the other words: “see what is told and do not see who tells” (Ghorar–al–Hakam).

That’s the reason why Jesus Christ says: “take the truth from the wrongdoer, but do not take the vain from right doer, be the critique of the speech (Behar, v. 1.2).

Some of the most important educational contents recommended by Imam Ali are as follows:

– Contents about “cognition of the soul”: Imam Ali introduces self-cognition as the most useful knowledge (Ghorar-al-Hekam), a man who has achieved self-cognition, he has actually achieved the extreme of the science and knowledge (Ghorar-al-Hekam).

– Contents about “cognition of the universe”: Imam Ali believes: “God sent His Messengers and series of His prophets towards them...to show them the signs of His Omnipotence namely the sky which is raised over them, the earth that is placed beneath them” (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Khotbeh 1).

That’s because Imam Ali are sure: “Had they pondered over the greatness of His Power and the vastness of His bounty they would have returned to the right path and feared the punishment of the Fire; but hearts are sick and eyes are impure.

Do they not see the small things He has created, how He strengthened their system?”(Nahj-al-Balaghah, Khotbah 185). But his holiness say: “How many are the objects of lessons, but how few the taking of lessons” (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Hekmat 297).

– Contents about “cognition of the exalted God”: Imam Ali believes, “the foremost in religion is the acknowledgement of Him, the perfection of acknowledging Him is to testify Him, the perfection of testifying Him is to believe in His one-ness” (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Khotbeh 1).

The glorious Qur’an also says that all of the messengers of God came so that the people might become aware of this fact that God is one: “This is a message to be delivered to mankind that may be warned by it, and that they may know that He is one God” (14:52).

– Contents about “cognition of the people”: Imam Ali considers the cognition of the people of one’s time as a necessary fact (Amali-al-Tusi 1/146).

– Contents about “cognition of the enemy”: Imam Ali says to – one of his governor generals – Malek Ashtar: “Often the enemy offers peace to benefit by your negligence.

Therefore, be cautious and do not act be wish-fulness in this matter” (Nahj-al-Balaghah, letter 53). He also recommends that we do not consider the enemy as insignificant, ever if it is weak (Ghorar-al-Hekam)

– Contents about “cognition of calamities and their role in man’s evolution”: Imam Ali asserts that none endures in the route of God and for God and truth, unless he has recognized the bounty of such a Patience” (Ghorar-al-Hekam).

This statement of Imam Ali reminds us of the Qur’an verse: “How shouldst thou bear patiently that thou hast never encompassed in thy knowledge” (18:68).

– Contents about “cognition of time, history and their events and transformations”: Imam Ali believes that the one who recognizes the history and life day, he will never be neglectful of readiness for the future (Al

Kafi 8/23).

Imam Ali introduces the one who is not surprised at time circumstances and events as the most informed man (Ghorar-al-Hekam). He also asserts: “if you take lesson from the past you can be safe in the future” (Nahj-al-Balaghah, letter 49).

Therefore, he explicitly emphasizes: “Place before your heart the events of Past People, recall it what befell those who were before you and walk among cities and ruins, then see what they did and from what they have gone away and where they have gone and stayed” (Nahj-al-Balaghah, letter 31).

He also recommends: you should also fear what calamities befell peoples before you on account of their evil deeds and detestable actions. Remember, during good or bad circumstances, what happened to them, and be cautious that you do not become like them” (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Khotbeh 192).

Throughout the Bible the language of education (learning, teaching, studying), its effects (writing, knowledge, appropriate behavior), and the desire for education are very much evident. Moreover, we know the general settings where education occurred (Court, cult, family, schools) and approximately, what the content of much of the teaching would have been.

From the earliest time it is clear that the family was the central institution in which learning occurred and continued to be so throughout the biblical period. The “content” of family education varied widely. We assume children were taught not only the skills and way of life of their parents, but also some of the basic values of the society and an orientation to the identity of ancient Israel (who we were, where we are, how we relate to the world around us and why).

The setting presumed for this all – important education is home. We know very little about either the content of the curriculum or the goals of the schools. We assume the study of Torah to be a very important part of the curriculum, but more than this is unclear (Morgan; quoted in Freeman, Myers & Beck, 2000).

Concerns about content specification are closely related to issues of epistemology. A failure to specify content may be one of the main reasons why implementation has lacked coherence, and in age when there is clear need for students to be aware of and to be able to deal with controversial issues, such reluctance is problematic.

In the UK, the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA), now the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), has attempted to provide partial resolution to this problem by the setting up of a National Forum for Values in Education and the Community in order to develop a statement of values. This has resulted in the description of four possible areas of value concern and principle:

The self: we value ourselves as unique human beings capable of spiritual, moral, intellectual, and physical growth and development.

Relationships: we value others for themselves, for not only what they have or what they can do for us. We value relationships as fundamental to the development and fulfillment of others, and ourselves and to the good of the community.

Society: we value truth, justice, human rights, the rule of law and collective effort for the common good. In particular, we value families as sources of love and support for all their members, and as the basis of society in which people care for others.

The environment: we value the environment, both natural and shaped by humanity, as the basis of life and source of wonder and enthusiasm (Buttery; quoted in Bailey, 2005).

God has ordered all particles of the universe to be useful: “and God blessed them, saying, be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.”

Thus, it can be deduced that all educational contents should also be fruitful and useful for all of the individuals of the society. That’s the reason why God said to mankind: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis: 22).

## Axiology

Axiology, is taken from the Greek word “Axia”, which means “value”, “worthiness”, it is a theory of value. It seems that the term was first used by Lotze, and then by Brentano, Husserl, Scheler, Nicolai, Hartmann and others, chiefly for general format theory of value. Scheler contrasted it with praxeology, a general theory of action, but it has for the most part been contrasted with deontology, a theory of morally right action (Maunter, 2005).

Axiology denotes a value theory that typically indicates the nature, kinds, criteria, and status of values and value judgments and attempts to resolve such disputes as whether values are subjective or objective. Although moral value is important such as religious and aesthetic one, “Axiological ethics” determines right and wrong actions by reference to their ends, consequences, often identical to theological ethics (Findlay, 1970; cited by Childress, 2000).

Agathology is another word, which can be used in this field. Agathology is taken from the Greek “agathos” (good) and “logos” (discourse), agathology is the science or theory of the good (Macquarrie and Childress, 2001).

Yaqar is an adjective occurring about forty times in the Bible with the primary meaning “precious” or “valuable.” The love of God is described as “precious” (Ps. 36:7), as are the people of God (Lam. 4:2). And lady wisdom in prov. 3:15 is declared to be “more valuable than jewels (Renn, 2005).

In some cases, the word “goodness” has been applied in the Bible in the sense of “perfection” or “completeness” in Gen. 1:4ff, as God’s assessment of his creative endeavors. Other examples of his sense are found in pass. 136:1; 145:9, which point to the goodness of God given at Sinai.

“God” in the sense of high quality is indicated, for example, in reference to gold in the land of Eden (Gen. 2:12); cattle (Gen. 18:7), trees (2 Kgs. 3:25); figs (Jer. 24:2); the intelligence of Abigail (1 Sam. 25:3). The fertility of Canaan is also described this way (e.g., Exod. 3:8; Num. 14:7; Josh. 23:13ff; 1 Kgs. 14:13).

The sense of “goodness” as a moral or spiritual virtue is found in Gen. 2:17; 3:5 in reference to the “tree of knowledge of good and evil.” Material blessing from God is also described as that which is “good” (cf. Gen. 50:20; 1 Sam. 24:19; Ps. 107:9).

Also, that which is “good” include the blessing of God in a general sense (e.g. pass. 23:6; 118; Jer. 21:10; Amos 7:4); kindness (cf. 2 Sam. 3:13); God’s protection (cf. Ezra 7:9; 8:18; Neh. 2:8); that which is pleasing to the Lord (cf. 1 Kgs. 14:13); and that which brings comfort (cf. 2 Kgs. 20:19), (Renn, 2005).

“Doing well”, that is, acting in accordance with God’s character, is mentioned in Gen. 4:7 in relation to the warning God gives to Cain after the murder of his brother Abel. “Doing good” in a general sense is referred to in Lev. 5:4; Ps. 36:3; Jer. 10:5.

The nominal meaning “good” in the sense of “that which is morally upright”, including people, is indicated in Matt. 5:45; 12:35; John 5:29; Rom. 2:10; 7:13, 18; 9:11; Eph. 6:8. Elsewhere, “good” denotes “ultimate spiritual benefit” in Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 5:10; Heb. 9:11; 10:1 (Renn, 2005).

In relation to ethical standards, data in the Bible refers to the knowledge of right living, wisdom, and understanding in Gen. 2:19, 17; prov. 1:29; 2:6; 6:9ff; 12:1; 13:16; 23:12, prov. 1:7 defines the beginning of knowledge as the fear of God (Renn, 2005). Moral principles are meaningful and unchanging, because they reflect absolute moral realities (Peterson, 1986).

Islam has introduced absolute and unchangeable values. The reason of their unchanged ability is that they are based on man’s unchangeable nature, and since man’s nature does not change, “there is no changing God’s creation” (30:30), therefore, those values do not change as well, that is all men in all times and in all places consider them inherently and naturally valuable.

Islam itself is a collection of these very values, and the reason of eternity and exchangeability of Islam is summarized in the above point: “set thy face to the religion, a man of pure faith – God’s original upon which He originated mankind” (30:30).

Since man’s nature does not change, thus Islam and Islamic values that are quite consistent with man’s nature does not change too. Therefore, it can be deducted that the Divine religion is not an unfamiliar set and, collection for human being, rather it is the very familiar story that all humans has naturally an inherent acquaintance with it, and it was in the light of this very interior union that all men in “the world of

Zar” when God prepared and made present all of them and asked them whether I am not your Lord, they all answered yes, we bear witness that Thou art our Lord: **“And when thy Lord took from the Children of Adam, from their loins, their seed, and made them testify touching themselves, ‘Am I not your Lord?’ They said, ‘yes, we testify’** (the Qur’an, 7: 172). “With thee will I establish my covenant” (the Bible, Genesis 6: 18).

We cannot confine “the world of Zar” only as word before this nature and this world in which all men were present and inherently answered the question of God, rather when man purifies his soul from all sorts of sins, or has not contaminated his nature by different sins, if he at any moment is asked this question from God that: **“Am I not your Lord?”, he verily will answer that “yes, we testify.”** Thus, it is not for nothing that one of the names of the prophet of Islam is “the reminder”: **“then remind them! Thou art only a reminder”** (88:21).

We use the word “reminding”, when we remembered something and then we forgot it, and we remembered God’s message, and forgot it, thus it is the God’s prophet, which reminds us of it. Imam Ali considers natural and inherent rapprochement with men as the main duty and task of the God’s prophets (to get them fulfill the pledges of His creation) (Nahj–al–Balaghah, Khotheh 1).

The Bible refers to an intimate relationship between God and humankind, sovereignty initiated, maintained and fulfilled by God alone; and involving a commitment to life and death from both God and humankind. The solemn bonding between God and his people lies at the heart of the covenant phenomenon.

This bond testifies to God’s mercy and compassion in nurturing and redeeming his people, guaranteeing them an intimate relationship with himself as well as the prospect of blissful life in the land he had given them. All of this, however, was conditional on the people’s response of gratitude, obedience, and exclusive loyalty (Renn, 2005).

“Take hold of eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses” (1 Timothy 6: 12). That is because: “when you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it.

Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the (temple) messenger, ‘My vow was a mistake’. Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands” (Ecclesiastes 5:4–6). “Obey the King’s commands, I say, because you took an oath before God. Do not be in a hurry to leave the King’s presence. Do not stand up for a bad cause” (Ecclesiastes 8:2–3).

This very natural man’s agreement with God, i.e. with Divine values, indicates that these values are in harmony with the man’s nature, and then indicates their being absolute and eternity. Therefore, it can be said that as man does not force himself to enjoy the beauty of a beautiful flower or a beautiful handwriting and painting in the same way, he will not force himself to enjoy and love beautiful morality,

behavior and thought (religion in itself is nothing else save these very beauties), unless that man is not normal.

If a man involves in the nature deforming (metamorphosis), that is his Divine nature has deformed, has become lightless or insensible and unfeeling, then it may be that he feels contrary to his nature, i.e. enjoys indecency and obscenity. "Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law" (the Bible, Romans 7:21-22).

This superficial and seeming pleasures of the worldly men are nothing save repelling the pains, such as hunger or thirst which are pains and afflictions that food and water remove them, now if that food or water is eaten or drunk more, they in turn change into a pain, while the real pleasures (happiness) are those ones the more the seeker of which reaches them, not only he does not get tired and weary, rather he will become more lovesick, because spiritual pleasures such as the nearness to God have a state that the more the wayfarer of this route is closer to God, and the more feels the pleasure of comprehension of acquaintance with God, and the more he utilizes from immense ocean of Divine love, his thirst will be increased.

It is not inopportune that Imam Sajjad refers to this fact that: "My God, who can have tasted the sweetness of Thy Love, then wanted another in Place of Thee" (Sahifah-al-Sajjadiah, the whispered prayer of the lovers).

Therefore, it can be claimed that one's soul thirst for God (Psalm 42:2). And according to Jesus Christ: "Love the Lord Your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it: 'love your neighbors as yourself'. All the law of the Prophets hang on these commandments" (Matthew 22:37-40). Thus, "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in Zeal, but keep your spiritual favor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer.

Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not think you are superior.

Do not repay everyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as, it depends on you, live peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath...Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12: 9-21).

This is happiness if God lightens a minute of man's life with it, its value should surely be known and should not be easily lost because it is alchemy and the world sizes it easily from men. That is the reason

why the prophet of Islam emphasizes that for all the people there is breathes for their Lord in the days of their lives breathes, thus it is up to all people to expose themselves to these spiritual breathes and not to turn away from them.

It reminds us of the Hafez's poem: "In the morning from Laila's dwelling, lighting flashed; Alas! With the harvest of Majnun, heart – rent what it did" (p. 134). As if these were parts of the heaven and paradise that God has placed in the earth.

According to the Bible, God will surely bestow joy and happiness to those who are deserving for it: "You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy" (Psalm 30: 11). The result of such a holy joy will be praising of God: that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent. Lord my God, I will praise you forever" (Psalm 30:12).

Although, on the other hand, it can be said that reaching God and praising Him as it deserves will cause such a joy and happiness: "I will be glad and rejoice in your love, for you saw my affliction and knew the anguish of my soul"(Psalm 31:7).

Those who hope in God achieve a position in which their hearts rest in Him: "Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord" (Psalm 31:24). That is because "The Lord preserves those who are true to him, but the proud he pays back in full" (Psalm 31:23).

"In Him our hearts rejoice, for we in his holy name, may your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you"(Psalm 33: 21–22). "Take delight in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4).

The real faithful do not do the values –related affairs habitually, rather they have reached a position that they have identified and experienced them valuable and have identified the bad affaires as indecent and they have really achieved a state that have become sure and convinced themselves of this fact that goodness causes happiness and man's deliverance from every grief, affliction and sorrow, and that badness causes all sorrows, and since they have identified God's ordainment as all wisdom and knowledge, thus they have embraced it most heartily and have acted according to it.

According to the Bible, "This is what I have observed to be good: that it is appropriate for people to eat, to drink and find satisfaction in their toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given them – for this is their lot.

Moreover, when God gives people wealth and possessions, and ability to enjoy them, to accept their lot and be happy in their toil – this is gift of God. They seldom reflect on the days their lives, because God keeps them occupied with gladness of heart" (Ecclesiastes 5: 18–20). "There is nothing better for people under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad.

Then joy will accompany them to their toil all the days of the life God has given them under the sun"

(Ecclesiastes 8: 15). But contrary to these: “I have seen another evil under the sun, and it weighs heavily on the human race: God gives some people wealth, possessions and honor, so that they lack nothing their hearts desire, but God does not grant the ability to enjoy them, and strangers enjoy them instead” (Ecclesiastes 6: 1–2).

“Those who love money never have enough: those who love wealth are never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless. As good increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owners except to feast their eyes on them?” (Ecclesiastes 5: 10–11).

These are the real causes of wars and quarrels: “What causes fights and quarrel among you? Do not they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire, but do not have, so you kill” (James 4: 1–2).

Therefore, we should understand this valuable fact, that: “Whoever wants to save their life will lose it but whoever loses their life will find it. What good will it be for you to gain the whole world, yet forfeit your soul? Or what can you give in exchange for your soul?” (Matthew 16:25–26).

“Hypocrisy” will be increased in a society which an interior transformation has not occurred in its individuals. In such a state, which is frequently occurred in the society, the peoples’ value standards are false and truth less.

Therefore, their standards for pleasure and pain are mistaken, then they enjoy in their minds those things which are not really deserving for pleasure, and they suffer from those things that there is no place for grief and sorrow thus wherever they should enjoy, they do not, and wherever they should regret, they do not.

Imam Ali, in this field says: “What is your condition? You feel satisfied with what little you secured from this world while much of the next world of which you have been deprived does not grieve you. The little of this world which you lose pains you so much so that it becomes apparent in your faces, and in the lack of your endurance over whatever is taken away from you; as thou this world is your permanent abode, and as though its wealth would stay with you for abode” (Nahj–al–Balaghah, Khotbeh 113).

Imam Ja’far Sadeq believes that the brief and summation of all of the beautiful religion of God is “friendship and affection”, and according to the Bible: “God is love “(1Jn. 4: 10). It should also be noted that man can achieve a position in which not only loves all humans but also he loves all particles of the universe.

God as a creator of the world is at the peak of beauty and He loves the beauty. How is it possible that God is the manifestation of all beauties, and the universe and the world which is the place of manifestation of His being and existence is not at the peak of perfection and beauty: “Who created all things well (the best or the fairest)” (32:7).

As, along with this existence and originating book, His law book (scripture, i.e. the Qur'an) is the best and the most beautiful: "Learn the Qur'an for it is the fairest of discourses" (Nahj-al-Balaghah, Khotbah: 110), that is because: "God has sent down the fairest discourse as Book" (39:23).

The Bible describes the universe as collection of "good" things: "And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good"(Genesis :12). And such a "good" system and process rules over other things of the world, such as day and night (Genesis: 18), every living creature... (Genesis 1:21).

The idea of creation implies that the whole created world is good (Peterson, 1986). Thomas Aquinas believed that everything in the world that exists is more or less good. There are varying degrees of excellence. There cannot be infinite scale of good. Therefore, there must be something, which is perfection. This is what everyone understands to be God (Dewar, 2002).

The more is man's wisdom and knowledge and his comprehension from the nature and its beauties, his goodness and beneficence will be increased, on the other hand, the more is goodness and beneficence in man, a particular kind of knowledge and wisdom will be increased in him and he will better comprehend the values and beauties of the world.

It is not for nothing that the prophet of Islam do not consider as a Muslim a man who does not try for the Muslim's affairs, because, as said, "How it is possible for such a man to understand the beautiful facts of the God's religion and act according to them?" Thus, a real Muslim and religious person, in first place, confirms by his behavior that religiosity and faith is good and beautiful.

It is not desirable that he says only with his tongue that values are valuable while his actions do not confirm this. According to the Bible, "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

The rain came down, the steams rose, and the winds blew, and beat against house, and it fell with a great crash" (Matthew 7:24-27). If man does not possess a good personality, and he only establishes prayer apparently, then he will make other people pessimistic to the prayer.

On the contrary, if a man with a lovely personality and sufficient popularity establishes prayer, prayer will become respected and lovely for the other people.

The first criteria for the judgment about a society with a special religion are the behaviors of the individuals of that society. If those behaviors are not confirmable, then the others may dislike such religion.

While it is seen nowadays that there has been created a long distance between the behaviors and cultures of some societies as compared with their religions.

Some people have imagined the religion as an awful and horrible in their mind, escaping from it in a confused state, while religion and its cognition is the most beautiful, the most scientific, the most artistic and the most subtle categories and topics of the world. Thus, it is the artist knowledgeable that can the truth of the beautiful religion of God as it is and transfer it to the others as it deserves.

As a religion, Islam is much more than just a system of beliefs. It is a way of life, though, word and deed. To the Muslim believer faith without action is meaningless. Faith must lead to action and action brings faith into the outside world where it can grow and deepen (Keene, 2005).

The word “ethics” is related to the Greek ethos habit, custom. It is used in a number of related senses. The Latin moral is was first used by Cicero, which explains why in many contexts moral ethical morality ethics, moral philosophy ethics are pairs of synonyms (Maunter, 2005).

Ethics is the study of the concepts involved in practical reasoning: good, right, duty, Obligation, virtue, freedom, rationality, choice. Also the second-order study of the objectivity, subjectivity, relativism, or skepticism that may attend claims made in these term (BlackBurn, 2005).

From the Qur’an we learn that God has endowed human beings with values. They are innate in the human Spirit. The Spiritual entity in a human being cannot therefore be considered as a social product but an innate reality (Ashraf; quoted in Ashraf & Hirst, 1994).

Virtues are general dispositions to do the right thing at the right time. Any list of virtues, therefore, embodies the values which prevail in social or cultural traditions. One might have a list of virtues which would constitute our views of the thoroughly virtuous person.

It is quite possible for a person to accept the reasons for behaving in a particular way but not be disposed so to act – not to have the relevant virtue. Indeed, such capacity to reason may be put at the disposal of the very feelings which are not virtues (Pring, 2000).

Moral and religious behaviors are based on values: “Jesus replied; you shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, honor your father and mother, and love your neighbors as yourself .... Sell your possessions and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven” (Matthew 19: 18–19 & 21).

We should really ask God to make us committed to values, according to the Bible: “In you, Lord, I have taken refuge; Let me in your righteousness” (Psalm 31:1). (Trust in the LORD and do well) (Psalm 30:3). But as for the evildoers: “The words of their mouths are wicked and deceitful; they have caused to be wise and to do well; even on their beds they plot evil; they commit themselves to a sinful course and not reject what is wrong.”

“How great is your goodness, which you bestow in the sight of all on those who take refuge in you. In

the shelter of your presence, you hide them from all human intrigues. You keep them safe in your dwelling from accusing tongues” (Psalm 31: 19–20). Therefore: “Turn from evil and do good; then you will dwell in the land forever” (psalm 37: 27).

We refer here to the parable of the sheep and goats, a story that Jesus told (Matthew 25: 31–46) to teach his followers that they would, one day, have to account for their actions on earth. These are the questions they will be asked for God according to the parable: have they fed the hungry? Have they given water into the thirsty? Have they invited the stranger into their house? Have they visited the prisoner in his prison cell? Have they looked after the sick? Have they clothed the naked? (Keene, 2005).

The Qur’an also teaches Muslims how they should prepare themselves to appear before God on the Day of Judgment. To help them in this preparation, Muslims are given guidance about matters such as (avoiding) drinking alcohol and gambling; marriage and divorce; the treatment of widows and orphans and the lending of money with interest (avoiding usury) (Keene, 2005).

There are many examples in the Hadith of how the prophet of Islam avoided waste, was kind to animals and respected the earth. All Muslims must follow his example.

What often lies at the heart of religious behavior, and indeed conviction, is not morality but duty. It is the person’s responsibility to respond in certain ways; to do their duty, to God, to another person, to society, to their community.

Morality, in religious terms, is less connected with conventional actions and more with a developing sense of responsibility and commitment. Religion may of course embody ethical principles which are not unhelpful to moral understanding (Elan and Brown; cited from Best, 2000).

Astley (1994) lists the (overlapping) categories of Christian attributes as follows:

Christian beliefs – that, understanding and knowledge: including beliefs about God, Jesus, the Church, human nature and the world; Christian beliefs –in: including faith and trust in God, or in salvation, baptism etc.; Christian attitudes and values: covering Christian spirituality and moral virtues; the valuing of Jesus, Mercy etc.; Christian emotions and feelings: including awe, thankfulness, pity, joy, etc. (this category may be entitled “subjective religious experiences”).

Christian experiences, in the sense of “objective religious experiences” of God, Christ, the Spirit etc. and their activity; Christian moral actions: e.g. active love, forgiveness, trust, obedience; Christian religious actions: e.g. prayer, profession of faith, evangelism, worship, church membership/ involvement; Christian or theological reflection and criticism: including those interpretative and evaluative cognitive skills and processes – with their related attitudes, unless these are placed in category (3) – that lead to active “Christian reflection” and/ or “doing theology.”

Astley (1994) concludes that Christianity is many – sided. Robert H. Thouless listed a range of factors in the development of a “religious attitude” – viz intellectual, social, the experiential in various forms, and personal. Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark designated five core dimensions of religiousness: belief, ritual and devotional religious practice, religious experience, intellectual knowledge, and consequential effects on general conduct.

The empirically – based factor analytic studies of Morton B. King and Richard A. Hunt found various religious dimensions including creedal assent, personal devotion, church attendance, attitudes towards the church, religious belief, subjective religious disposition (measuring the importance of religion in one’s life etc.), spiritual experience and (respect for) moral beliefs.

The psychologist of religion, Laurence Brown, lists knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, experiences, belonging and practice as individual factors of religiousness; together with trust, doctrines, consequence and rituals under the heading of “social contexts.”

Such research has encouraged students of religion to move away from thinking of religion “as a coherent ‘thing’ with rather sharp boundaries.” “Bundle” has the wrong connotations, perhaps, but this cognition of the multiplicity of religious dimensions is surely to be welcomed.

To be religious is to have certain religious attitudes and to engage in certain patterns of behavior that are expressive of such attitudes, the attitude predisposing person to behave in that way. Clearly religious people have such attitudes at least partly because they have learned them.

They have developed them as a result of certain experiences, including their experiences of other people. Very often these experiences have been placed in their way by Christian religious education (Astley, 1994).

Christianity introduces people to, and “imposes” on them, certain spiritual values. Those who learn Christianity adopt some elements of Christian spirituality that lead to their (this worldly and/ or other worldly) “release” and “hearing.”

It is some such form of Christian spirituality, experienced as salvific, that constitutes the hearth of the Christian religion. The word “spirituality” is used here in a very broad sense to describe “those attitudes, beliefs, and practices which animate people’s lives and help them to reach out towards super – sensible realities” (Astley, 1994).

Human beings are expected to be committed to values because the knowledge of identification of “good and evil” has been given to man: “And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil” (Genesis 3: 22).

According to Aquinas, reason is the God – given tool for discerning what is good (Dewar, 2002). Martin Luther and the Reformist insisted that human reason played no part in seeing right and wrong. God’s

revelation (in the Bible) was sufficient, and the Bible acts as the source of all Christian morality.

In contrast, the scholastic (such as Aquinas) argued that God – given reason was the tool by which distinction between right and wrong could be seen (Dewar, 2002). Therefore: “I have set the Lord always, before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved” (Psalm 16:8).

The result of the above will be: “Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh rest in hope” (Psalm 16: 9). Because God, only God, is the real source of happiness: “Thou wilt shew the path of lie in thy presence is fullness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore (Psalm 16:11).

“I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness” (Psalm 16: 15). That man who has tried to be committed to values and virtues is defined in the Bible as: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth the mediate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brighten forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” (Psalm 1:1–3).

But the man who is not committed to these values is described as: “The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall Perish” (Psalm 1: 4–6).

Theology has sometimes argued truly to love God or our neighbor requires us to renounce Eros entirely, and with it our desire for the beatitude of God’s presence and our natural reactions to our neighbor’ charms.

In “believing in God”, Gareth Moore wrestled with the problem of rewards, while framing a powerful account of Christian spirituality. He argues there that the talk of reward that we so frequently encounter in the new Testament is often not what it seemed, but is being used by Jesus only “in order to encourage people to forget all about rewards.”

The depth grammar of Jesus’ language is that ‘to seek a reward from God is not to seek a reward at all’, for the Christian life is presented as an end in itself and not as a means to something further. The point is that the reward is not the point; and, in any case, seeking the reward for its own sake is as counter – productive spirituality as seeking happiness for its own sake is psychologically. We must seek first the kingdom of God (Mtt. 5: 33; cited in Astley, 2004).

# Effect of Axiology on Education

The values introduced by Islam are natural. In other words, these values are not a predetermined set entitled religion which were to be imposed upon men, rather the wise God with complete encompass on the cognition of man's nature and the values that man's nature requires, has confirmed those values in the frame of religion.

Since the absolute and constant values that Islam has introduced to men are consistent with man's unchangeable Divine nature, therefore the more man can try in the purification of his soul and remain his Divine nature pure and immaculate, the more and the better he will understand the value of the Divine and Spiritual values, i.e. the nature values.

Therefore, one of the most important tasks of the teacher and educator is the arrangement and contrivance for the purification of the students' souls. Love and reverence for the teacher are generated within the heart if the teacher is 'good' both in thought and feelings. It is a common sense reality that whenever and wherever a person sees the 'good' in the form of selfless love, charity, righteousness, truthfulness, sincerity, justice, mercy and care for all creation, balanced and impractical judgment, humility, then his or her heart is immediately attracted towards that manifestation, and love and reverence are generated within the heart for the person whose behavior reflects those qualities.

To be moral is to be a whole human being who lives and acts in the world and in whom the head and the heart work in coordination and love for the good is manifest through good deeds. The Islamic ethic is thus intimately related to a practical manifestation (Ashraf; cited from Ashraf & Hirst, 1994).

Islamic education is the process through which human beings are trained and prepared in a concerted way to do their Creator's bidding in this life, to be rewarded in the life after death (Sarwar; quoted in Muslim education Trust, 1996).

Beauty is an objective truth, and is not a mere function of the individuals' minds and preferences (Motahhari, 1996). Thus the minds and thoughts of the persons should be nurtured in such a manner that they see the beautiful affairs as beautiful and the ugly affairs as ugly.

The education can achieve man to a position in which man truly loves virtue and goodness, enjoy the rational beauty, lives in real happiness, and become delivered from every undue grief.

The hardships and misfortunes that God ordains for His bondmen according to His knowledge and wisdom, will be nothing else save beauty, therefore the interpretation of His real bondmen will be nothing else save happiness. Such bondmen will become happy from hardships and misfortunes as much as the bounties, because these two are the same.

The humans, in such a position, have a very high knowledge regarding the values, acquire a very good attitudes concerning those values, and their actions confirm their knowledge and attitudes. Therefore, the teacher and educator's duty is to give his students a very high knowledge about the values which will lead them to a very deep and comprehensive awareness and will cause a very firm and confirm attitudes in them so that they may really become interested in those values and believe in them.

Such attitude will lead them to act according to those values and finally they become a manifestation the accepted values. As it is seen, the teachers avoid, imposing their values upon their students, rather they formulated his behavior and teaching methods in such a manner that their students will have a very good knowledge and attitudes about the values and good actions based on their values.

The text and its study not only make children aware of moral and religious truth, they also have an instrumental dimension, namely, that they could lead to moral/ religious practice (Ashraf; quoted in Ashraf & Hirst, 1994).

There are five areas where religious and in juxtaposition, and both groups of educations are in agreement: Values education is intentional; Values education is on open – ended system; Teachers are facilitators in value education; Teachers are arrangers of the learning environments; “Theory” is important (Barber, 1984).

The list of values which are thought in the religious domain in moral education includes justice, fairness, cooperation, responsibility, good decision making, and other instrumental values, faith, hope and love to God, one's neighbor, and one's self. Loving God by implication involves terminal values.

Loving one's self involves personal and competency values. It is not possible to teach faith, hope, and love without teaching values. One can teach “about” religion without teaching values. But religious educators hope to teach religion as a living faith.

They must teach values (Barber, 1984). Religious truth must be so taught that it will express itself in action. Children must be told not only what prayer is: they must be taught to pray. They must be told not only what Sin is, and what the Commandments of God are: they must be taught to avoid Sin and to keep the Commandments.

And the aim of all this teaching is to produce not so much the well introduced Christian as the fervent practicing Christian – the man or woman whose daily conduct is ruled and regulated by the principle of faith: the man or woman of character (Cronin, 1952). To be religious is to have certain patterns of behavior.

Religious people probably have such attitudes because they have learned them. They have developed them as a result of certain experiences, including their experiences of other people (Astley; cited from Astley, Francis & Crowder, 1996).

Thus, the students should follow their teachers as a good example: “It is enough for students to be like their teacher, and servants like their master” (Matthew 10: 25).

It is also necessary for the listeners and students to act according to the good things they say and they hear: “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what is say” (James 1: 22).

“I will show you my faith by what I do” (James 2: 19). It is up to all of the religious preachers and teachers to pay attention to this fact that: “I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize” (Corinthians 9:27).

“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace – loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere” (James 3:13 & 17). Then it is possible to reach this position teaching others what to do:

“I will help both of you speak and will teach what to do” (Exodus 4: 15). Christian theism takes a moral agent, at the very least to be a person who makes moral judgments and performs morally significant actions (Peterson, 1986).

It is also necessary that teacher not only pay attention to the good students to be better, but also to the bad students to become better; “Jesus said, ‘It is not healthy who need a doctor, but those who are ill. But go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners” (Matthew 9: 12–13).

Therefore, it can be said that the main task of the teacher is guidance and leading students to the right way: “I will teach you the way that is good and right” (1Samuel 12:23). “That thou teach them the good way” (1Kings 6: 36).

Such an instruction is divine and spiritual and its aim is pleasing God, i.e. one of the goals of man’s creations: “We instructed you how to live in order to please God” (1Thessalonians 4:1).

And if the teachers act contrary to this, they will not be considered as real teachers, but false teachers: “There were false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you” (2Peter 2: 1).

Christian teachers will be concerned not with delivering the truth from within the learner but with encouraging students to see the interconnectedness of things, to relish the interwoven complexity and irrepressible richness of the universe and thus to contribute, not to an individualistic divisiveness and competition within the academy, but to a renewed, collaborative discovery and appreciation of the universe in all its divinely bestowed unity and coherence.

The teacher is thus called upon to become a witness, to become one whose own existence testifies both to the involvement of God in our learning, and to the transformative nature of education (Rae, 2004).

In such an education, learning can be viewed as a religious activity. Learning about the world, and much learning about human society, may be understood in tradition terms as thinking God's thoughts after him, in the sense of uncovering the created laws of physical, biological and social instruction.

Learning in the humanities is located at only one remove from this: it is thinking the thoughts of God's rational creatures, and/ or using my God – given wit to think my own thoughts. But beyond this, learning, scholarship and research should themselves be embraced by the Christians as vocations of high value – of true virtue – and thus as proper expressions of Christianity and another from of love.

The learner, too, is a servant, here subservient to the truth, and must therefore exhibit a proper submissiveness. "Christianity at its best teaches people that they stand not at the center of reality, but on the periphery along with everyone else" (Marsden, 1997, p.100), there true scholar should be concerned with the truth alone, and hang the glory (Astley, 2004).

In his heavily autobiographical book, *Spirituality, Ethics, Religion and Teaching*, Robert Nash has written on the importance of passionate teaching and passionate learning in higher education (Nash, 2002, pp.9–10, 198).

He characterizes this as 'something akin to a lustful enthusiasm' which is fuelled by Eros: the 'unapologetic love' of truth, beauty and relationship, 'the primordial human energy that attracts us to each other and binds us together in affection and generosity'. The other – regarding giving of one's self, the unconditioned love that seeks no reward.

This, of course, is the agape of the new Testament Psychologically we function better when we enjoy it, and, in any case, striving to purge myself of self – satisfying feelings can itself be a form of spiritual Pride. To 'forget myself' adequately I need to concentrate on others, not on my self – forgetting.

We will not enjoy, we need to structure and direct our actions to their proper end, which is the good of others and the pursuit of truth, rather than our own good and our own pursuits. Teaching, learning and loving are all activities that can greatly fulfill us, but fulfillment cannot be their objective (Astley, 2004).

The friendship 'that binds subject and teacher' is one that the teacher wants to share with his or her students, for the true teacher is not possessive about such friendships. This is not just 'a person for the subject'; it is also a passion for others to know the subject (Astley, 2004). The teacher, who knows the subject well, must introduce it to a student in the way one would introduce a friend.

The students must know why the teacher values the subject, how the subject has transformed the teacher's life. By the same token, the teacher must value the students as potential friends, be vulnerable to the ways students may the teacher's relationship with the subject as well as be transformed. If I am invited into a valued friendship between two people, I will not enter in unless I feel that I am valued as well (Palmer, 1993, p. 104; cited in Bailey, 2005).

Therefore, the idea of the secular university has come damaging and misguided. The time has come to replace the dull uniformity of the business hotel with attractive, well organized centers of study where the spiritual is celebrated and God can be truly recognized. There are four features of the 'Christian university'.

First, it is ideologically honest: it challenges the myth that institutions can be value – free and recognizes the 'tradition – constituted' nature of us all. Second, the mission of a Christian university recognizes that there is an attempt to inculcate certain 'faith – based' values. True education must include training in the virtues.

The third feature of a Christian university will be the location and significance of metaphysics in the curriculum. Every student in every subject should reflect on the metaphysical underpinning of his or her discipline. The fourth and final feature of a Christian University is the celebration of 'rationality' and 'conversation' in the quest for the truth (Markham, 2004).

## Conclusion

In religious education, the universe consists of material and immaterial things. God has created the world. The universe is a goal – centered collection. Human being is much respected and has a very high esteem; he has been created for perfection, elevation, nearness, and servitude and surrendering to God.

Man has some authority and freewill and so he is responsible. In religious education, all the potentials of the man's nature are actualized harmoniously for reaching divine goals. The ultimate aim of education is the same as man's creation, i.e. man's perfection, elevation, etc. Paying attention to the personality and views of the student and the teacher is very important.

Man's cognition is not considered as a material process. Sense, intellect and heart are considered as the tools of cognition, and self, nature, history and books can carry human beings to knowledge and cognition thus they are knowledge resources.

Informal education plays a very important role in one's education; the students and teachers should not confine themselves only to one resource of knowledge, i.e. books; rather they should pay attention to all knowledge and cognition resources. The teacher should use all teaching methods according to the situation and subject matter he teaches.

Different educational contents, which are useful for students and society, to be taught. Knowledge is considered as a very significant matter, but those persons can reach the truth of the knowledge and cognition that have purified themselves from all sorts of knowledge and cognition obstacles, i.e. sins and

evils.

This is why morality, spirituality, values, and virtues are very crucial facts in the religious foundation philosophy. The individuals and students should have a good knowledge and a good attitude towards the values so that these values may be observed in their behaviors.

Therefore, we can design a comprehensive model for religious foundation philosophy, and use it as a basis and foundation in our educational activities. The future researches can compare the religious foundations of philosophy with scholastic and other educational philosophies to illustrate its strengths and precedence as compared with them.

It can also be concluded from this book that Islam and Christianity, when considered as a religious educational – philosophical school, have many similarities regarding foundation of education, and these similarities can overshadow their differences and therefore can unify and bring the Muslim and Christian societies close together.

According to this result of the research it is suggested that Muslim and Christian scholars, and the Muslims and the Christians in general, despite logical and rational expression of the differences, do try not to exacerbate these differences, rather they should try to discover and interpret the similarities so that these two societies may come to the highest understanding and unity forming a God – centered school with the intention of the real and true propagation of religiosity, spirituality, morality, values, virtues and education.

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