CHAPTER THREE

THE INTERPRETATION OF *SHAJARAT AL-KHULD* OR ETERNAL TREE AS KNOWLEDGE

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Based on the study of the views of the four thinkers i.e. Imām al-Qurṭubī, Imām Sayyid Quṭb, St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, it's clear that four main interpretations of the *shajarat* that are common to the four thinkers:

1. Knowledge
2. Sexual desire
3. Impurity
4. Tribulation

There are different views and opinions on these four interpretations. Therefore, this chapter will provide conceptual analysis on those interpretations chronologically.

Shajarat refers to knowledge. All four scholars agree to this much. Beyond that lies some difference of opinion and the question what "kind of knowledge does it refer to and why did God forbid Adam and Eve to approach it".

In order to understand the concept of *shajarat*, which refers to knowledge in the Islamic and Christian perspective, this study will focus chronologically on St. Augustine's views (354-430AD), Imām al-Qurṭubī's views (d.671H/1273), St. Thomas Aquinas's views (1225-1274AD) and Imam Sayyid Quṭb's views (1906-1966). This will be followed by their discussions on how the concept of *shajarat* refers to sexual desire, impurity and tribulation.

3.1 *SHAJARAT* AS KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is the most ordinary and yet the most mysterious human experience. We know instinctively what it is, but we cannot clearly define it. How do we acquire knowledge? The theory of knowledge is an area of philosophical speculation concerned with nature, conditions and first principles of knowledge in general and also, according to some authors, with the truth-value or reliability of knowledge in general. The expression 'theory of knowledge' is used interchangeably with the term 'epistemology by some authors, but others, particularly in Europe, mean something else by the latter term-usually a critique of modern scientific knowledge'.[1]

The theory of knowledge is among the more controversial areas in philosophy, there being serious disagreement among the different philosophical traditions over the selection and correct formulation of the problems to be considered. Disagreement exists also over the question of whether the theory of knowledge

[1] A.H Armstrong (1957), ***Introduction to Ancient Philosophy***. Westminter, p. 233; J. Burnet (1914), ***Greek Philosophy: Tales to Plato***. London, p. 22.

should precede and control, or follow and to be controlled by 'metaphysics and psychology'.[2]

Scholastic philosophers generally prefer the second alternative, both because their conception of being and knowing requires that a theory of knowledge rest on something more basic than itself, and also because there is a strong tendency, found in history, for the first alternative to lead to some kind of skepticism.

In Islamic Tradition, there are many ways of conception and classification of knowledge. Epistemology is the most important topic to discover the concept of knowledge. Therefore, the most fundamental ideas related to traditional epistemology, are those of the unity and the hierarchy of the sciences. The profound relationship between this idea and traditional epistemology may be expressed by saying that in one sense the idea is the fruit of traditional inquiry into epistemology, while in another sense it is the basis of that inquiry. The former is true because the idea results from the application of the doctrine of *Tawḥīd* to the whole domain of human intelligence and its activities of thinking and knowing. In inquiring into the problem of how a person knows-that is, the methodology of knowledge (*al-'ilm*) in its most comprehensive sense-one cannot but be confronted by the hierarchic nature and reality of the subjective and objective poles of knowledge. We are in other words, confronted with the hierarchy of the faculties and powers of knowing within the human, knowing that the subject and the world of beings that are knowable and known.[3]

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[2] A.H. Armstrong, ***Ibid***, p. 234

[3] Osman Bakar (1998), ***Classification of Knowledge in Islam***, Foreword by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, edition 2. United Kingdom: The Islamic Texts Society, Cambridge, pp. 43-44. Hereafter, this book will be known as ***Classification of Knowledge***.

3.1.1 ST. AUGUSTINE'S CONCEPTION OF KNOWLEDGE (THE THEORIES OF KNOWLEDGE THAT INFLUENCE AUGUSTINE)

In order to understand St. Augustine's views and conception of knowledge, we have to know the dominant theory or theories, which influenced his opinions. We also have to look upon his theories of knowledge, which influenced the scholars after him.

As a youth, St. Augustine was no worse and perhaps no better than his fellows, but he was richly endowed and early came under the dominance of an absorbing intellectual passion, which he called the love of truth. He was thus a dedicated student and an omnivorous reader, and this kept him from the many excesses to which his temperament made him easily liable. His reading was confined almost exclusively to Latin authors. Some Greek writers, but not many, St. Augustine knew in Latin translation. On the other hand, St Augustine was very familiar with Latin literature, Cicero, Varro, Sallust, Virgil, Lucretius, Seneca and the North African Apuleius.[4] The writings and works of Cicero, the Roman orator and statesman inspired St. Augustine. St. Augustine greatly admired him and ranked him above all other ancient writers, as was the fashion of the day. St. Augustine read Cicero's Hortensius, when he was eighteen, awakening in him an interest in philosophy. He had hitherto been engaged wholly in the study of rhetoric and literature in preparation for teaching. Soon after reading Cicero's Hortensius he joined the Manicheans. Manichaeism, though like Gnosticism, of independent

[4] Arthur Cushman McGiffert (1933), ***A History of Christian Thought (The West from Tertullian to Erasmus)***, Volume 11, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, p.73

origin, adopted many elements of the Christian faith, and in Augustine's time claimed to be a higher form of Christianity, superior to the Catholic system because of its more rational and philosophical character. Furthermore, Augustine's studies, which covered a wide range of subjects, including dialectics, ethics and physics, gradually led him to a growing dissatisfaction with the teachings of the sect. He completely lost confidence in astrology and his intellectual development reached the point where much of the "boasted wisdom" of the Manicheans seemed only folly and pretence. After a protracted period of indecision, he finally broke with them altogether and fell into scepticism abandoning his effort to reconcile science and faith and losing his earlier confidence in the power of human reason.

Augustine's scepticism however, was far from radical. It was modeled upon Cicero, to whom he owed his acquaintance with the principles of the Academy (philosophy- philosophers that called as Academics) and it went no further than his. He tells us for instance, that he never ceased to believe in God and providence, but he did have doubts as to the immortality of the soul and his general attitude was moderately agnostic in striking contrast with the dogmatic confidence of his Manichean days.

From the skepticism, which lasted two or three years and made him very unhappy, for his was one of the minds that cannot long endure anything less than complete certitude, he was rescued by Platonism or more accurately by Neoplatonism. Therefore, this study traces the historical development of theories of knowledge from early times to the present. It will examine Greek theories of knowledge,

followed by early Christian thoughts on knowledge and interpretations of the Bible, which influenced St. Augustine's conception of knowledge.

3.1.1a GREEK THEORIES OF KNOWLEDGE

Like many problems in philosophy the problem of knowledge received its earliest formulations and variety of solutions among the Greeks, the most important of whom include Parmenides, Democritus, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.

3.1.1.1a PARMENIDES

Questions concerning the nature and conditions of knowledge first assume importance in the philosophy of Parmenides (c. 485B.C). Parmenides predecessors had concerned themselves, from the very beginning of Greek philosophy (c. 585B.C), with cosmological questions concerning the basic material from which the familiar things of experience are made and concerning the process whereby such things undergo change. These thinkers took the meaning of knowledge as an obvious fact, but with further attention. The starting point of Parmenides thought seems also to have been this plurality, but he found that the more basic affirmation about reality is that it exists. Being is and nonbeing is not. Determined to discover the ultimate implications of this intuition, Parmenides said that being cannot come to be (since being 'is' and what 'is' cannot come to be) and must therefore be eternal, in the sense of "beginning less". Moreover change must be an appearance only, since change means becoming, and neither being (because it simply 'is') nor nonbeing (because it is nothingness) can

become. In a conclusion that influenced the subsequent history of Greek thought about being and knowledge, Parmenides declared that being is eternal and changeless.

This intuition controls Parmenides's theory of knowledge. It corresponds to the duality that he introduces between being (or true reality) and appearances. He also introduces a duality between knowledge, the object which "is being" and in which alone is to be found truth, and another, corrupted or limited kind of cognition called *doxai* (Greek-*doEai)* a term often translated somewhat misleadingly, as 'opinions', that rather means one's perceptions of the plural and changing appearance of being. Parmenides introduces a similar duality between reasoning, which because it achieves knowledge about true reality, is the higher way and sensation, and that which tied down to the appearances of plurality and change, leads to perplexity and poor discernment. The ordinary cognition of all men is one in which knowledge and *doxai* are mixed, and it is only in rare moments of inspiration and illumination that men – a few men - have cognition in which things are seen from the standpoint of the timelessness and changelessness of being.[5]

3.1.1.1b. ATOMIST AND SOPHIST

The theory of knowledge of the Greek Atomistic School (5th century B.C) was a continuation of Parmenides' doctrine on knowledge, in spite of the fact that, at first glance, a world conceived in terms of plurality of atoms would seem to have

[5] A.H. Armstrong, ***Ibid.***, p. 233; G. Vlastors (1946), " 'Parmenides' Theory of Knowledge", ***Transactions and Proceedings 77***. USA: American Philogical Association, p. 66-77.

little in common with the Parmenidean world. The best known representative of this school Democritus of Abdera, who distinguishing between reality (eternal and changeless atoms moving through the void) and appearances (the changing configurations of atom groups making up the familiar world), concluded that since no one perceives the atoms, knowledge of reality is possible. One has only *doxai*, which were described as private sensations resulting from atoms impinging upon the cognitive organs.[6]

While Democritus's theory of knowledge restricted cognition to *doxai*, his Parmenidean background was strong enough to move him to regard such cognition as superficial and second best; a genuine knowledge of true reality, were it possible, would be better. It was left to the Sophists to take the logical step of declaring that, if *doxai* alone constitutes the cognition possible for man, and then there is hardly any basis for depreciating and regarding as second best this kind of cognition. Among the Sophists, Protagoras (c. 490-420B.C) eliminated the Parmenidean notion of truth - i.e. stable knowledge of eternal, changesless being – because it was useless and therefore quite irrelevant in the matter of living one's life wisely and well. Truth, therefore, if it is to be found anywhere, will have to be found in one's ever-changing *doxai*, one's perceptions of the appearances. This doctrine was taken by some to mean that the way in which things happen to appear to an individual is the way they actually are, for him, and that therefore truth is relative to each individual.[7]

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[6] ***Ibid.***

[7] A.H Armstrong, ***An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy***. p.233-234; J.I Beare (1906), ***Greek Theories of The Elementary Cognition from Alcmaeon to Aristotle***. London: Oxford, p. 20. Hereafter this book calls as ***Greek Theories of Elementary.***

3.1.1.1c. SOCRATES, PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

Against this background, Socrates whose chief interest was virtue (identified for him, with knowing how to live wisely and well), saw that the Sophist's notion of truth made virtue impossible since ever-changing *doxai* provided no dependable guides for living well. Accordingly Socrates sought to discover from the changing, particular appearance of things some permanent and universally valid meanings in terms of which there could be a genuine knowledge of being and hence some basis for making wise decisions.[8]

His major disciple Plato, who agreed that doxai were not a satisfactory guide for living well carried Socrates' project further. Only genuine knowledge could be a satisfactory guide. Accepting the Parmenidean doctrine of knowledge of being and that being is eternal and changeless, Plato concluded that behind the familiar world of changing sensible things – appearances - there is an archetypal world of Forms (ideas), which, eternal and changeless, provide the stability needed for objects of knowledge. In spite of the ever-changing character of the material world about which there can be only *doxai*, genuine knowledge of permanent and universally valid meaning - and therefore basis for making wise decisions - is possible, because of the existence of the forms. These forms were said by Plato to be known by the soul prior to its imprisonment in the body and during its earthly life the soul's knowledge is simply recollection.[9]

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[8] J. Burnet, ***Greek Philosophy: Tales to Plato***. p. 34; J. Owens (1959), ***A History of Ancient Western Philosophy***. New York, p. 19; J.I Beare, ***Greek Theories of Elementary Cognition***, p. 55

[9] N. Gulley (1962), ***Plato's Theory of Knowledge***. New York, p. 11; W.D. Ross (1951), ***Plato's Theory of Ideas***. London: Oxford, pp. 3-4

Aristotle while agreeing with Parminides and Plato that stability is a necessary requisite for an object of knowledge rejected Plato's tendency to locate this stability in a separate world of forms and insisted that, since all knowledge begins with sensible things, there must be something stable in these them. This was explained in terms of the Aristotelian hylomorphic doctrine, according to which every sensible substance is a composite of a determinable principle (matter) in virtue of which the substance can change and a determining principle (form) in virtue of which the substance is what it is. Accordingly while a sensible substance can change, nevertheless to the extent that it 'is' it is stable, hence it is being and is knowable - its stability, being and knowableness resulting from its form. Aristotle explained the knower's knowledge in terms of the knower abstracting the form of the known object, so that the knower's knowledge is not something that represents the known object, it actually is the known object.[10]

3.1.1b EARLY CHRISTIAN'S THOUGHT ON KNOWLEDGE AND INTERPRETATION OF BIBLE

If we speak of "pre-Christian origins", it is implied that some kind of causal relation must be involved. We should be aware, then, that we run the risk of giving the impression that Christian spirituality as well as Christian' thought regarding knowledge was derived from its antecedents in Hellenism and Judaism. But if, on the other hand, one speaks of the "pre-Christian background", it might be thought that we are dealing with no more than a setting or backdrop with no real influence on what actually happened on the stage itself. Therefore, early Christian spirituality and knowledge cannot be reduced to its antecedents.

[10] J.I.Beare, ***Greek The Theories of Elementary***, p. 67.

In Greek philosophical tradition, there is word known as "reflective spirituality" affirmed by Hilary Armstrong, the great Plotinian scholar. "Reflective spirituality" means a spirituality that not only engages in the discovery and celebration of the divine, but also actively reflects on the nature of that process, such reflection involving both contemplation of the object of that celebration and examination of the human subject engaged in it. Armstrong also adds that reflective should not be understood in narrow terms as virtually equivalent to philosophical and this for two reasons. First, Greek spirituality and knowledge has its root in the archaic piety of Homer and Hesiod, which continued to exert its influence in various forms until the end of antiquity, and in the countryside remained a living force until it was replaced by, or perhaps better absorbed into Christianity. Secondly, throughout the centuries, but especially in the fifth century BC, the Greek poets scrutinized the impact of the gods on the lives of humankind in a manner that left an indelible mark on ancient culture.[11]

Nevertheless, an examination of the contents of the volume that Armstrong edited will reveal that in the course of time the main vehicle of this "reflective spirituality" did become Greek philosophy. After initial conflict and largely through the decisive intervention of Socrates and Plato, an alliance was struck between religion and philosophy. Greek religion had no scriptural canon, no fixed body of dogma, no group of intellectuals whose prime task was to preserve the tradition. Philosophy filled the breach but did so on its own terms. Three features stand out. Firstly, a more cosmic perspective replaces the old division into the world of the gods and the world of humans. Secondly, the divine is, partly at least,

[11] Hilary Armstrong (1977), ***World Spirituality: An Encyclopedic History of the Religious Quest***. Volume 5, New York, pp. 64-69

internalized in the nature of the human beings itself in a development, which is called "micro theism". Thirdly, God or the "divine" represents the ideal that one should strive to attain.[12]

Philosophical spirituality as orientation towards the divine, in whichever form it takes place, thus has a direct link to life. The scholar who has done more than anyone else to bring this aspect to the fore is undoubtedly Pierre Hadot. Hadot's claim is nothing if not far-reaching: "Philosophy in antiquity was a spiritual exercise. As for philosophical theories, they were either placed explicitly in the service of spiritual practice, as was the case in Stoicism and Epicureanism, or else they were taken as objects of intellectual exercises, that is, of a practice of the contemplative life, which in the last analysis, was itself nothing other than a spiritual exercise. It is impossible to understand the philosophical theories of antiquity without taking into account this concrete perspective, since this is what gives them their true meaning".[13]

As an account of ancient philosophy Hadot's survey is somewhat limited and even idiosyncratic. The Presocratics, for example, scarcely feature in it at all. Many of the more technical achievements of the ancient philosophers are set aside. Yet the point he is making is surely vital. *Logos* and *bios* are inextricably entwined in ancient philosophy. This assumption was generally accepted and there was no

[12] D.T Runia (1997), ***The Pre-Christian Origins of Early Christian Spirituality***. New York: Charles Barns, p.3.
[13] Perre Hadot, ***Exercices Spirituels et Philosophie Antique***, translated into English ***Philosophy as a Way of Life***. New York: Garden City, pp. 22-25

need to advertise it at every turn. Without this background the description of early Christianity as a *philosophia* would have made no sense.[14]

Philosophy as a, or rather, the way of life furnished the therapy for the soul's ills. The starting point was the Socratic knowledge of one's self. This meant control, or even removal, of the passions under the guidance of reason, development of the virtues in a steadfast *ethos* and orientation of one's life towards the goals of freedom and self-sufficiency. In short, philosophy was the concern of the individual for his or herself. One's teacher served as spiritual guide but the aim of the process was to render that role. The true spiritual guide was the *logos*, reason was a fine-tuned instrument dedicated to the attainment of the life of well-being, *eudaimonia*. Hadot showed how many philosophical exercises were adapted and continued in the Christian monastic tradition.[15] This, we should note was a continuation of the spiritual elitism should not be an overlooked feature of ancient philosophy.

More needs to be said, however, about the goal of the philosopher's spiritual quest. It is not just a state of spiritual freedom. It also has an intellectual content. Most philosophers in antiquity agreed that the life of contemplation was a higher goal than the mere practice of moral excellence. In his books Hadot perhaps pays too little attention to the theological underpinnings of philosophy as an ideal way of life. The spiritual ideal, which it involves can also be described as divine knowledge in the double sense pointed out by Aristotle at the beginning of his *Metaphysics*, i.e. knowledge of who God is and the attainment of the knowledge

[14] ***Ibid.***
[15] ***Ibid.***

that God himself possesses. Both are possible because, as we noted above, the divine has been sent at least partly internalized within humankind itself. On this issue there is both optimism and pessimism. Even Aristotle, who formulated the ideal of knowledge more uncompromisingly than anyone else, compared humans to bats who can only tolerate light for the briefest period. Raoul Mortley has impressively traced the long career of the Logos-ideal from the pioneering optimism of Parminides to the final despair of Damascius in his two-volumes study *From Word to Silence*. It is true to say, we believe that when the Christians first encountered Greek philosophy, optimism was still dominant, though the first intimations of a more pessimistic theology of negation were already germinally present. God as first principle of reality could be known. He could be found, though not directly and certainly not fully, within oneself. The well-known Platonist formulation of the philosophical *telos*, "becoming like unto God to the fullest extent possible", may be taken as representative of the spiritual quest of Greek philosophy as a whole at the time that the early Christians first came into contact with it.[16]

Furthermore, we would like to turn to the second of the traditions that form the point of departure for Christian spirituality and knowledge. It may be sensed that the distance between the Greek philosophical spirituality just outlined above and early Christianity was too great to allow a direct bridge to be formed between them (we recall that this was Paul's experience on the Areopagus as recorded by Luke in **Acts 16**). But there was no need to do this anyway. A bridge existed already in the form of Greek-speaking Judaism. The "new song" of the early Christians was not the *shir h'adash* of the Hebrew Bible, but the *asma kainon* of

[16]D.T. Runia, ***The Pre-Christian Origins***, p. 4.

the Septuagint. The language of Christian liturgy and thought was formulated in Greek; all sorts of connotations from general Greek culture were carried along as well. For example, *kainon* could be taken to mean not only "new and fresh", but also "novel" or even "revolutionary". The importance of Greek-speaking Judaism for the development of early Christian thought and spirituality cannot easily be overestimated. Here for the first time Greek and Jewish traditions join together. It can safely be said that, without this confluence of two hitherto wholly independent traditions, the present conference would not be taking place, or at the very least the subject of the conference would be a different one.

David Winston, an American Jewish scholar with expertise in Philo's thought,[17] would certainly be in general agreement with everything that has so far been said about Philo's amalgam of Greek and Jewish thought, but he would wish to place more emphasis on the role of the *logos*. Humankind is created in the seminal words of **Genesis 1:26**, according to God's image, i.e. in accordance with the divine *logos* that is to say as an image of an image. This is what gives humankind its special status, its capacity to embark on a quest for its origin. The pursuit for this request, Winston argues is best described in mystical terms. There is no evidence to prove that Philo himself was a "practicing mystic", but he certainly was a "mystical theorist". Knowledge of God is supreme bliss; separation from God is the greatest of evils. The aim must be to reach the state of "sober intoxication" that ecstatic condition of the soul in timeless union with God the source of all Being.[18]

[17] He was the great writer, great exegete and philosopher especially in Hellenistic-Jewish literature who was known as "Philo of Alexandria".

Philo's mysticism as interpreted by Winston was certainly not without influence on the Fathers. One thinks in particular of Origen and Gregory of Nyssa, but the more general influence that Philo and Hellenistic Judaism exercised on early Christian thought occurred at a somewhat less rarefied level: in the application of Greek (and particularly Platonic) terminology and conceptuality to a Biblical context, often by means of an extensive use of the allegorical method. The following is a striking example from Philo's *Exposition of the Law*:

> We the disciples and pupils of the prophet Moses shall not cease in our quest for the One-who-is, regarding as the goal of our well-being knowledge of him and also age-long life, in accordance with the Law, which states that those who hold fast to God shall all live (cf. **Deuteronomy 4:4**), laying down a necessary and philosophical doctrine. For truly the godless are dead in their souls, whereas those who have joined the ranks of the God-who-is live a life without death. (***De Specialibus Legibus 1.345***)

This is a lovely example of Philo's seamless marriage of Greek conceptuality and Jewish spirituality. God is Being with a capital letter. However, he is far from mere philosophical abstraction, for we are exhorted to "hold fast" to him, and this will gain us eternal life. The main question of interpretation here is what Philo means by "knowledge of God", which is the goal of human life and well-being. Is this religious knowledge? Since the context here is exposition of the first commandment, this form of knowledge – involving acknowledgement of God's presence, devotion and worship - must be included. But Philo surely intends more.

[18] David Winston, ***op.cit.*, p.29.**

Though Winston's mystical knowledge (if one may be allowed to use this expression) cannot be excluded, it is surely spiritual knowledge that is meant first and foremost.[19]

According to that discussion, we understand that the early Christian concept of knowledge is based on of the Greek philosophical tradition as well as that of Hellenistic-Judaism. Finally, we would like to turn our discussion to early Christian spirituality and knowledge itself, in order to see the extent to which the origins, which have already been outlined, actually make their presence felt. This might seem an impossible task, because it can only result in the descent into fairly meaningless generalities. The best way to counter this 'danger', it seems to us, is to zoom in on a particular example, in which such influence may be discerned and analyzed. The examples that we have chosen will relate to points that we have made in the earlier part of this discussion and illustrate how aspects of Greek and Judeo-Hellenic spirituality are appropriated and transformed into Biblical themes. The examples are as follows:

1. The song of the *logos* is the new song because it has come to wipe out the language of myth, which is inextricably associated with the old polytheistic religion of Hellenism. The mountains sacred to Greek myth and literature, as in the case of the story of Eunomos and the grasshopper, are to be abandoned. Instead attention is demanded for the words of **Isaiah 2:3:** "From Zion the *nomos* will come forth, and the *logos* of the Lord from Jerusalem". **Prophetic Choir 2.2:** "Let truth be taken down from heaven and brought to

[19] D.T. Runia, ***The Pre-Christian Origins***, p. 6

the holy mountain and to the prophetic choir". Text and imagery of the Bible replaces that of Hellenism. As we have noted, this does not entail an entirely new language. For example, in the passage just referred to terms *nomos*, *logos* and *aletheia* continue to retain many of the old associations they had in Greek culture. *Nomos* is not only the law with a capital letter, but also in Clement's[20] context, a melody or musical strain.

2. At the same time, however, the newness of Clement's song is only partial. It is new because the Christian message is new. But the Old Testament prophecies that it incorporates were already old, certainly no less old than the rival Greek culture itself. They might seem new to the Greek convert, but only because she or he misses the background of the history of Israel. Clement is aware of the dangers of novelty in a conservative culture. The song of *logos* is *kainos*, but at the same time as old as anything can be. In order to make this clear, the role of the *logos* has to be placed in a cosmic perspective. It is the *logos* that is the origin and cause of cosmic harmony[21]. If the truth were known, it preceded the foundation of the universe[22]. Not only is the problem of novelty resolved in this way, but it also allows the human situation to be placed in cosmic perspective. As J.C.M Van Winden has pointed out, Clement here

[20] He is the one of the writers of 'new song' in early Christianity, which takes over from the opening lines of **Psalm 96:1-4** and also **Psalm 98, 149**. He affirmed it was new not only in relation to the heritage of Israel, but also in relation to the dominant Hellenic culture that surrounded all early Christianity on all sides. He also analyzed St. Augustine's truth.
[21] ***The song of logos 5***.
[22] ***The song of logos 6.4***

in fact quotes a passage in Philo on the cosmic working of the divine *logos*[23]. Philo thus serves as mediator between Clement and Greek philosophy.

The human being is a microcosm.[24] His or her destiny has to be placed in that cosmic perspective, which the entire Greek philosophical school regarded as fundamental. What is distinctively Christian is Clement's allusion to **Ephesians 1:4:** God has chosen us in Christ, before the foundation of cosmos, to be holy and blameless before him. This means that the creation of man was the idea of humankind and not only the destiny of individual human beings before they were born.

3. The "new song of the *logos*" offers salvation to those who will listen to it.[25] It is medicine of persuasion.[26]In the Greek myth Orpheus tames wild beasts with his song. The real beasts, however, are human beings with their passions and ignorance.[27]These only the *Logos* can tame and give new life, converting them into *anthropoi theou,* humans belonging to God. The *Logos* is like a good doctor who has all manner of techniques for restoring the ailing body. Salvation brings about purification and results in excellence[28], a godly life. All the themes of "philosophy as a way

[23] ***De Plantatione 8-9***
[24] ***The song of logos 5.3***
[25] ***The new song of logos 8.1***
[26] ***The new song of logos 2.4***
[27] ***The new song of logos 3-4.***
[28] ***Arete 9.1.***

of life", as interpreted by Hadot, can be recognized here. Much too of the conceptual framework is retained (passions, ignorance, medicine, therapy, purification, excellence). As has often been pointed out, Clement seems more comfortable in this framework than in the Biblical counterpart of sin, repentance, redemption, and holiness. Strikingly, however, the term "philosophy" itself is absent. In a protreptic context it belongs to the world that must be left behind. The *Logos* and his song take its place. The *Logos* is not only the creator, who gives human beings the gift of life. He is also the excellent teacher who taught man so that man can live well and ultimately obtain the eternal life that God extends to man.[29] The experience of salvation is personalized beyond what we find in philosophical therapeutics. Early Christianity believes that the *Logos* is not just the abstract spiritual guide of reason, but is Christ, both a human being and God. He is the teacher and spiritual mentor on a superior level, a theme, which Clement will further develop in his *Paedagogus*. Wickedness too is not just a matter of succumbing to passions or making mistakes in one's reasoning. It is the work of the evil one, the creeping serpent, which has led humankind astray from the time of Eve onwards. Clement resists the move of his Alexandrian predecessor Philo, who allegorizes the snake away in terms of pleasure or malevolence.[30]There is a real deceiver out there, one whom only the *Logos* can charm.

[29] ***The new song of Logos 7.3***
[30] ***cf. Opif. 157ff.***

According to the discussions, we understand that the early Christianity of spirituality and knowledge was inherited from cognate strains in Greek philosophy and Hellenistic-Judaism. In Christianity interpretation, *Logos* with the capital letter is Christ, as announced by John the Baptist, the voice of wilderness. He is the merciful God who emptied himself and became human in order to save humankind.[31] From the historian's point of view, therefore, both Greek philosophy and Hellenistic Judaism contributed to the formation of Christian spirituality and thought (known as divine knowledge). In analytical terms, we might say that they were necessary conditions, that is to say, without them it would not have become what it became.

[31] D.T.Runia, ***The Pre-Christian Origins***, pp.8-9.

3.1.1c ST. AUGUSTINE'S INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS

As we mentioned in the Introductory Chapter, the story of Adam and Eve, that is man's estrangement from his Creator, has always been of the utmost interest to the Church. Since about 1900 Biblical exegetes have fruitfully re-examined the literary form of the account of The Fall and have come to a deeper knowledge. As a result new light has been thrown on the nature of The Fall and its consequences, as well as on the conception of knowledge among Christian scholars. Therefore, St. Augustine and St. Aquinas discuss their interpretation of Genesis, which relates to the story of the Fall of Man, who approached the Tree of Knowledge, the forbidden tree in Eden.

At the time of Augustine, the Aristotelian/Ptolemaic cosmology was dominant. The literal Biblical model had but a few defenders, such as Lactantius (b. 250AD). The work of Augustine is an attempt to approach Scripture from the perspective that the Ptolemaic picture is roughly correct.

In a work called "On the Literal Interpretation of Genesis", completed in about 415AD, Augustine attempts to read Genesis in the light of Greek cosmology. He claims that his major aim in writing the work is to demonstrate a one to one correlation between Scripture and what is actually the case in the universe.[32]

Augustine held that God created everything at the beginning of the universe in one instantaneous act of creation. The six-day structure, which we find in the Genesis

[32] St. Augustine, ***Confessions***, Book Eleven, new translated and edited by Albert C.Outler (Ph.D.). USA: Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas, 1993, pp. 151-152

narrative, is not intended to be the literal historical sequence of creation. Rather, for Augustine it is a topically ordered set of revelations to angels. It is not ordered sequentially the way that events occurred in time, but is doctrinally ordered in the way in which the events were revealed to angels. Augustine's focus on the part played by angels comes from the tradition that Moses received the book of Genesis from angels.[33]

Augustine also claims that the six-days of creation have mathematical significance. Six is claimed to be a perfect number because it is equal to the sum of all of its factors. The Hebrew tradition saw seven as the perfect number and it seems that Augustine was more in tune with Pythagorean philosophy than with Hebrew thought.

Further, the great mind of St. Augustine was drawn largely into this kind of creation, and nothing marks more clearly the vast change which had come over the world than the fact that the greatest of early Christian thinkers turned from the broader paths opened by Plato and Aristotle into that opened by Clement of Alexandria. In the mystic power of numbers to reveal the sense of Scripture Augustine found special delight. He tells Christians that there is deep meaning in the many scriptural uses of the number forty, and especially as this is the number of day required for fasting. Forty, he reminds Christians, is four times ten. Now, four, he says, is the number especially representing time, the day and the year being each divided into four parts; while ten, being made up of three and seven, represents knowledge of the Creator and creature, three referring to the three persons in the triune Creator, and seven referring to the three elements, heart, soul

[33] ***Ibid***, p. 160.

and mind, taken in connection with the four elements, fire, air, earth and water, which go to make up the creature, especially in the creation of the first man, Adam. Therefore, this number ten, representing knowledge, being multiplied by four, representing time, admonishes man to live during time according to knowledge, which is represented by the tree and Tree of Life - that is, to fast for forty days.[34]

Referring to such misty methods as these, which lead the reader to ask himself whether he is sleeping or waking, St. Augustine remarks "ignorance of numbers prevents us from understanding such things in Scripture"[35]. But perhaps the most amazing example is to be seen in his notes on the hundred and fifty and three fishes, which according to St. John's Gospel, were caught by St. Peter and the other apostles. Some points in his long development of this subject may be selected to show what the older theological method could be made to do by a great mind. He tells us that the hundred and fifty and three fishes embody a mystery; that the number ten, evidently as the number of the commandments, indicates the law, but as the law without the spirit only kills, we must add the seven gifts of the spirit, and we thus have the number seventeen, which signifies the old and new dispensations, then, if we add together every serial number, (which seventeen contains from one to seventeen inclusive), the result is a hundred and fifty and three-the number of the fishes.[36]

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[34] George T Montague, ***Understanding the Bible: A Basic Introduction to Biblical Interpretation***, Chapter XX: "The Older Interpretation: From the Divine Oracles to the Higher Criticism". New York: Paulist, Mahwah, New Jersey, 1997, pp. 127-128.Hereafter, this book will be known as ***Understanding the Bible***.

[35] St. Augustine, ***Confessions***, Book Eleven, p. 171.

[36] ***Ibid***.

Using that sort of reasoning, he finds profound meanings in the number of furlongs mentioned in the sixth chapter of St. John. Referring to the fact that the disciples had rowed about "twenty-five or thirty furlongs", he declares that "twenty-five typifies the law, because it is five times five, but the law was imperfect before the gospel came, now perfection is comprised in six, since God in six days perfected the world, hence five is multiplied by six that the law may be perfected by the gospel and six times five is thirty".[37]

But Augustine's exploits in exegesis were not all based on numerals; he is sometimes equally profound in other modes. Thus he tells Christians that the condemnation of the serpent to eat dust typifies the sin of curiosity, since in eating dust he "penetrates the obscure and shadowy", and that Noah's ark was "pitched within and without with pitch" to show the safety of the Church from the leaking in of heresy.[38]

Still another exploit, one at which the Church might well have stood aghast was his statements that the drunkenness of Noah prefigured the suffering and death of Christ. It is but just to say that he was not the original author of this interpretation; St. Cyprian had presented it long before. But this was far from Augustine's worst.[39]

Augustine placed great emphasis the interpretation of God's creation. In one act of creation, God created all substances, all of the material world and all of the forms of every kind of thing that would ever come into existence. This does not mean

[37] ***Ibid***, p. 179.
[38] ***Ibid***, pp. 181-182.

that all created things were present at that instant of creation; rather they were all there in embryo in order that they would develop at a later time. So there is a kind of blueprint for everything that will later come to be.[40]

Augustine expressed this in terms of the idea of a seed, which he thought of as a causal reason. The causal reason, or seed principle, will eventually result in the existence of particular instantiations of the forms. Augustine uses the example of an acorn and an oak tree. The oak tree is there potentially present in the seed. This picture is one of evolution, which is historical and has a purpose.

We now turn to Augustine's views regarding the interpretation of Scripture, or hermeneutics. Augustine held that scripture comes uncorrupted from God, so the aim of hermeneutics is to discover the intention of the author. Post-modern hermeneutics may be seen as being the denial of Augustine, in that Post-modern writers such as Roland Barthes reject the entire notion of the author and conclude that any interpretation of a text is as good as any other.[41]

Augustine discusses both the literal and metaphorical approaches to reading a text. He also makes a distinction between the different ways in which we can tell whether something is to read literally or metaphorically.[42] We will refer to these as the internal way and the external way. By internal, we mean internal to the text. We can discover internally the intentions of an author by staying within the confines of the text. There may also be an external reason for taking either a literal

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[39] George T. Montague, ***Understanding the Bible***, Chapter XX, p. 185.
[40] Phil Dowe, ***Augustine and the Interpretation of Genesis***. New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1999, p. 16. Hereafter, this book will be known as ***Augustine***.
[41] Phil Dowe, ***Augustine***, p. 17.

or metaphorical approach to a text. Such external reasons are outside of the text. Augustine holds that both of these reasons play an important role in the way that Christians understand Scripture.

This study will examine Augustine's actual hermeneutics of Scripture. First, Augustine maintains that the literal reading of Scripture should always be taken as being the true one, unless anyone has conclusive reasons to do otherwise. Christians are never to read Scripture as metaphorical unless they have very good reason for doing so. These good reasons might be internal or external.[43]

An internal reason might be something like the fact that it is clear from the author's style or the style of the literature that a literal interpretation is inappropriate. Also, there may be contradictions when examining different sections of the same text. This should, claims Augustine, lead Christians to a metaphorical interpretation of the text. It is important to note that, underlying this concept is the premise that there is no one, single author of the text, who cannot be wrong.[44]

There may also be external reasons for not accepting the literal interpretation of Scripture. This is where science enters the picture. These external reasons also rely on the premise that there is one God who has produced both creation and Scripture.

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[42] George T Montague, ***Understanding the Bible***, Chapter XX, p. 193.
[43] ***Ibid.***
[44] ***Ibid.***

Augustine gives an example of symbolic interpretation as opposed to literal interpretation on the interpretation of the tree. Augustine emphasized that the terminology used to describe the law of Yahweh in the second half of **Psalm 19** is reminiscent of the description of the tree in **Genesis 2.9**, **17**; **3.5-7**. It is here suggested that the author of **Psalm 19.7-14** intended by his allusions to **Genesis 23** to assert the superiority of the law to the tree as a means of "obtaining wisdom". The terms of interest are principally the *eve* two-word phrases that form the second halves of the *eve stichoi vv. 8-10a.*

For Augustine "the eating of the fruit of the tree did not however produce the wisdom hoped for, whereas the restorative food of the law brings true wisdom as the exact function of the tree is to be plain that Eve and Adam found the tree to be coveted in order to become wise".[45] Augustine also emphasized that the "Tree of Knowledge" as literally in **Genesis 31.24** means "everything and anything". Therefore, Adam and Eve know everything and anything beyond their creation.[46]

Based on that interpretation, Augustine believes that the importance of knowledge, which is to know the Creator in order to gain wisdom, is known as spiritual knowledge. This means that the tree also has an impact to Augustine's views of knowledge, which will be discussed in detail in his interpretations of the tree or *shajarat.*

St Augustine also commented on Eve, but usually emphasized Mary's greatness. Augustine sees as symbolic the account of Eve's creation from the side of Adam.

[45] St. Augustine, ***Confessions***, Book Twelfth, pp. 197-198.

She is made from man's bone to give her some of man's strength, and in the place of the removed rib, man is given flesh, which gives him some of woman's tenderness.[47]

Further, Augustine also discussed the importance of the creation of Adam and Eve, which will be discussed further in Chapter Five of this study.

On the other hand, Augustine says that Christians must take the Scripture literally, unless it is contradicted by conclusively proven facts such as scientific findings teaching about cosmology, for instance. But, Augustine also says that the Scripture is concerned with spirituality and salvation rather than cosmology or any other aspects of science. Therefore, we can conclude that underlying Augustine's entire methodology is the idea that there is "one mind" that is responsible for the whole of creation.

3.1.1d ST. AUGUSTINE'S SYNTHESIS OF GREEK THEORIES AND TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN

As we mentioned above, St. Augustine surmounted a crisis of skepticism in his youth with the reflection that to error is to exist and to reject an error is to proclaim truth. He urged the mind in search of true knowledge to turn from deceptive externals and to collect her forces to enter within herself, where the mind must recognize that she is under the rule of higher light, that truth is the mind's discovery not her construction and that this higher light, one for all minds,

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[46] *Ibid.*
[47] Refer to *Genesis, add litt. 9.18, 34 PL. 34: 407.*

inferior to nothing and eternally immutable is an illumination that flows from and reveals God.[48]

Although St. Paul is an indispensable guide into the mysteries of the ultimate truth, Plato can teach man to turn within and allow love, the 'weight' of the soul to bear her above the dissipation of sensual involvement. Sensation is much more a matter of the soul's attention than of corporeal passivity.[49]

St. Augustine proposes a crucial role for memory. With mind and will, a Trinitarian vestige in man, memory renders the eternal exemplars accessible to the mind.[50] Citing Virgil to show that there can be a memory of the present,[51] Augustine holds that by memory man retains the past and also sees the present in the light of the exemplars to which the apex of the soul is always present. But he is careful to disclaim a prior existence of the human soul.[52]

We understand that the Greek theories of knowledge and the early Christian thought influenced St. Augustine's views and interpretation of knowledge. Yet, it was not clear which theories exerted more influence. Therefore, we had to look at St. Augustine's views of knowledge as well as his work in the synthesis of Greek theories and Christian tradition, especially in his interpretation of Genesis, which relates to the tree, that is, his first sight toward knowledge.[53] St. Augustine had probably long known Plato's Timaeus, widely current in a Latin version, and

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[48] Arthur Cushman McFiffert, ***A History of Christian Thought***. Volume 11, pp. 76-77; J. Pieper (1960), ***Scholasticism,*** translated from Greek by R. and C. Winston. New York, p. 21

[49] Refer to St. Augustine, ***Confession 7:21 &27,***Book XIV, pp. 25-26; ***Epistles of Paul 157: 2,9; Musica 6:5-9.***

[50] ***Trinitarian 12.15:25***

[51] ***Ibid14.11.14.***

[52] ***Retraction 1.4.4***

possibly some other Platonic dialogues, but he was helped out of his skepticism not by Plato himself, by the writings of Plotinus, which had recently been put into Latin by the North African Victorinus. He found in Neoplatonism much to attract him: the concept of a realm of the spiritual being altogether different from the realm of things, the notion that all visible objects are but the types or expressions of invisible ones, the belief in the immateriality and immortality of the soul and in man's possession of a spiritual sense by which he may know God and the realities of the unseen world. Most of all he was influenced by the Neoplatonic solution of the problem of evil, the fundamental problem of the Manicheans. According to Plotinus, evil is in itself nothing, it is simply the absence of good. Augustine had heard this suggested long before, so he tells us,[54]but at that time it had no impression on him. Now it came like a new gospel and encouraged him to think that truth might not be wholly inaccessible after all and to resume feverishly the search, which he had abandoned in despair.[55]

The almost immediate extraordinary result was his conversion Catholicism. The result, however, was not as strange as it seems. The kinship between Platonism and Christianity had long been recognized by the Church Fathers both east and west, and Victorinus himself, the translator of Plotinus, had died a Christian. Once released from the radical dualism of the Manicheans which made the Catholic belief in Divine Creation impossible, and enabled by the Neoplatonic allegorical method of interpretation to explain away the difficulties of the Old Testament, which had led the Manicheans to reject it, St. Augustine swung back naturally to

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[53] George T.Montague, ***Understanding the Bible***, Chapter XX, p. 75.
[54] It is found both in Clement of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa.
[55] W. Montgomery (1914), ***St. Augustine, Aspects of His Life and Thought***. New York, p. 77. Hereafter, this book will be known as ***St. Augustine***.

the Catholic church. Platonism and Catholic Christianity, he believed were at bottom really one. Both of them laid emphasis on the contrast between the visible and invisible worlds, both interpreted man and the universe in similar ways, both emphasized on spiritual knowledge, which Augustine interpreted from the metaphoric and symbolic meaning of the tree, both recognized a divine *Logos* and both had a doctrine of the trinity.[56] Platonism, as he understood it, seemed to Augustine to be only the philosophical expression of what in Christianity appeared in popular and unphilosophical form. Plato he thought of as the Christ of the philosophers, Christ as the Plato of the masses.[57]

The new situation in which St. Augustine found himself was a counterpart of the old. What really happened was that after a brief period of skepticism, he accepted Neoplatonism with the same confidence with, which he had once accepted Manichaeism. It seemed to him to be the highest philosophy as he had formerly viewed Manichaeism. But while Manichaeism and Catholic Christianity were mutually exclusive, Neoplatonism and Catholic Christianity were not. Thus, since hence whereas he had been obliged to withdraw from the Catholic Church when he became a Manichaean, he could now return to it. And returning, he found in its authority the complete certitude he craved - certitude not for the peculiar doctrines of the Christian faith, which he was not then seeking, but for the truth common to Platonism and Christianity, particularly the truth about God and the soul.[58]

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[56] The Neoplatonic trinity, suggested already in Plato's *Timaeus*, was the supreme good or one, the reason or word and the soul of the world. St. Augustine (2000) copyright (1950), ***The City of God***, translated Marcus Dods, D.D, introduction by Thomas Merton, Chapter III. New York: The Modern Library, pp. 107.

[57] ***Ibid.***

[58] W. Montgomery, ***St. Augustine***, p. 79.

It was no great step from Platonism to Christianity as he understood them, and the step requires no labored explanation. Later, from the standpoint of a more developed orthodoxy, the step seemed to him as it has to the readers of his ***Confessions***, greater than it really was. It is commonly assumed that the dramatic account of the scene in the garden contained in the eighth book describes his conversion to Christianity. In fact, as is shown by the context, what is actually described is his decision to abandon his profession and devote himself exclusively to the pursuit of philosophy and to the knowledge of God which always seemed to him to be the chief end of philosophy. He had long believed what he had learned from Cicero's Hortensius, that the happy life (vita beata) is the contemplative life, but he had hitherto lacked the resolution to act upon his belief. The step was now made easier by pulmonary trouble, which threatened in any event to prevent him from continuing the work of teaching, and by the encouragement and support of his friends who apparently supplied the funds to enable him to live without a profession.[59]

Even so he fought against the step and did not take it without great agony of spirit. To abandon fame and all the emoluments of the brilliant career, upon which he was already well started, was no light matter. That he should have been unable to do it until fortified, as he believed, by a direct divine communication was only natural, his frame of mind being what it was. In as much as he shortly thereafter joined the Catholic Church it was not strange that later when he was a bishop and when his Neoplatonism had long been overshadowed by his Christian faith that he should identify the emotional crisis through which he passed in making up his mind to turn his back on the world and live the contemplative life of a

[59] ***Ibid.***

philosopher, with his conversion to Christianity. As already said the step from Platonism, as he understood it, to Christianity, as he then interpreted it, was so easy and natural as to need no crisis to account for it. Looking back, however, from the vantage point of his developed Catholic faith, the distance seemed immense and the step to be explained only by direct divine interposition. Augustine was thus himself responsible for the misinterpretation of the crisis in the garden, which he described with so much feeling and in such detail.[60]

For some time after his baptism Augustine remained to all intents and purposes a Neoplatonist. But gradually, he grew more orthodox and swung further and further away from Neoplatonism though he never ceased to feel its influence. It is interesting to contrast his work on "The Profit of Believing, ***Soliloquies***", written half a dozen years later, soon after he had become a priest in the church at Hippo. In this work, he makes much of the authority of the church and insists that faith must precede knowledge, contrasting the Catholic attitude to that of the Manichaeans who put knowledge before faith and emphasized free inquiry. Thus he says: "Rightly has it been ordained by the majesty of Catholic discipline that they who approach religion be first of all persuaded to have faith".[61] "True religion cannot be rightly entered upon unless we submit to authority and believe those thing, which afterwards, if we live well and worthily, we shall attain to and understand".[62]With this may be compared the words from one of his sermons: "If

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[60] ***Ibid***.
[61] St. Augustine, ***De Utilitate Credendi***, p. 29
[62] ***Ibid***, p. 21. Augustine had already shown a disposition to recognize the need of authority. See Holl, ***Augustins innere Entwicklung***. p. 9, but had made much less of it than in his ***De utilitate Credendi*** and later works.

you are not able to know, believe that you may know. Faith precedes; the intellect follows".[63]

To the end of his life, Augustine remained a devout believer in the authority of the Catholic Church and found in it the assurance he could not get along without and could not find anywhere else. His earlier confidence that truth might be attained by human effort gave way to despair of the power of reason and to an increasing dependence on revelation for whatever it was important to know. Ultimately he gave up altogether the hope of gaining full knowledge on earth and looked forward to the future for what could not be had here. Instead of being open only to the wise, he then thought of the happy life as being open only to the pious.[64]

Not only was there a marked change, after he joined the Catholic church, in his attitude toward authority, but also in his thought on many other subjects. He began to study the Bible diligently, especially the Epistles of Paul, and his Christian ideas developed rapidly. By the time he became a bishop, his theology was practically complete in its main lines. Thenceforth there was modification only in details influenced by successive controversies with the Donatists and Pelagians, which followed his initial controversy with his old co-religionists the Manichaeans.[65]

As time passed, he became more and more of an ecclesiastic and devoted a large part of his thirty-five years' episcopate to the conflicts with heretics, even invoking the arm of the law against the Donatists whom he found most

[63] St. Augustine, ***Sermo 118:1***.
[64] See ***De vera religione***, pp. 24-25

troublesome of all. His polemic as a rule was bitter and unfair, as was the custom of his day, and he rarely did justice to his opponents, often caricaturing them in scandalous fashion. But in spite of all this, in spite too of his changed attitude on the matter of authority, he never lost his interest in philosophy and was continually returning (harking back) to one or another problem that had attracted him in earlier days. Nor did he ever cease to feel the influence of Neoplatonism, though he accepted many beliefs that were diametrically opposed to it. His developed theology indeed was in considerable part a combination of Neoplatonic and traditional Christian ideas, a combination sometimes amounting to a real and vital fusion, at other times only to external juxtaposition. Because of this two-fold strain a radical inconsistency runs through his system from beginning to end.[66] In other words, St. Augustine synthesized Greek philosophical tradition and Christian tradition into one philosophy and theology.

We can see, for instance that St. Augustine's conception of God was at bottom Neoplatonic. Existence in itself is good. He was so sure of this that he maintained it is better to exist even in misery than not to exist. And he insisted that the race as a whole agreed with him, even animals and plants, all of which shun death by every means in their power. He thus recognized the will to live as a fundamental and universal instinct.[67]All being is good, "a great good if it cannot be corrupted, a small good if it can".[68] Non-being is evil; evil is merely negative, the loss of good (privatio boni).[69]"If things are deprived of all good they cease to exist. So long as

[65] Arthur Cushman McGiffert, ***A History of Christian Thought***, p. 83
[66] ***Ibid.***
[67] Cf. ***De Civitate Dei, XI***, p. 27.
[68] ***Enchiridion***, p. 12.
[69] ***Ibid***, Chapter II, p. 12

they are, they are good. Whatever is is good. The evil then whose source I sought is not a substance, for were it a substance it would be good".[70]

God is the only real being, for he is the absolutely unchangeable. God is himself reality, and the only reality. All else is temporary and changing, and hence not truly real. Augustine thus interpreted reality, as all the Neoplatonists did, in the genuine Eleatic sense. "Other things that are called essences or substances," he says, "admit of accidents, whereby a change, whether great or of any size whatever, may be made in them. But to God nothing of this kind can happen. Therefore he who is God is the only changeable substance or essence, to whom assuredly being (esse) itself, from which comes the word essence, especially and most truly belongs. For what is changed does not preserve its being; and what can be changed, even if it were not changed, is able not to be what it was. Hence that alone, which not only is not changed, but cannot be changed, may without scruple be most truly said to be".[71] This means that God is eternal in all time.

The contrast drawn by Augustine between time and eternity was not new; Plato had emphasized it already. Moreover the objectivity of time and its complete independence of man was a commonplace in Greek philosophy from Plato's day on. But in the eleventh book of Augustine's ***Confessions*** (Books/Chapters 10-30) there is an extremely interesting and characteristic discussion of the matter in which he makes an important advance upon all his predecessors, suggesting that time has a subjective reference, that it exists in the soul of man alone and can be measured only there. To be sure, this was a mere suggestion, or rather a query, on

[70] St. Augustine, ***Confessions***. Volume VII, Chapter XII, p. 18.
[71] St. Augustine, ***De Trinitate***. Volume II, p. 3.

Augustine's part; he did not abandon the objective view of time, nor did he succeed in reconciling the two conceptions. But it is significant of his philosophical interest and insight that he was the first to raise the question whether time may not be subjective rather than objective, a question that has had so large a place in modern philosophy.[72]

From Augustine's synthesis of Greek philosophical tradition and traditional Christian's ideas, he had produced another philosophy or thought, which is known as Christian Platonist.

3.1.1d.a. CHRISTIAN PLATONIST

Like Aristotle, medieval scholars inherited a noetic that derived from Plato and often enough succeeded in becoming Aristotelian without altogether ceasing to be Platonist. Knowledge for instance, was specified by its certitude. The stability of knowledge, they were tempted to think, must be founded on the object known, but the changing singular seemed a poor candidate for the role. Still, permanent structures are discerned in things. To grasp their essence, a Platonic mind has but to concentrate forces that are weakened when dispersed among the sensible. A Platonic being is intelligible of it and hardly needs modification by the intellect. What is required is rather an ethical purification of the one who knows.[73]

[72] Arthur Cushman McGiffert, ***A History of Christian Thought***, p. 86.

3.1.1e. ST. AUGUSTINE'S INTERPRETATION OF *SHAJARAT*

According to earlier discussions, we understand that St. Augustine emphasized knowledge and divinity, based on his earlier interpretations of the tree and Platonic philosophy. From these elements, St. Augustine elaborated wide discussions. Augustine believed that there is no reality in changing things and that truth therefore cannot be discovered by the senses. Real knowledge is to be had only through the reason, the organ of access to the higher world of genuine reality. "The senses of the soul," he says, "are as it were the eyes of the mind". And again: "I, Reason, am the same in the mind as the act of looking is in the eyes".[74] Of the existence of God, for instance, the wise man is as sure as of any truth in mathematics.[75] In other words, for St. Augustine, knowledge is the truth and reality. It is only to be gained through reason, the organ of access to the higher world of genuine reality, i.e. the soul, the eyes of mind. The knowledge that is attained through reason is not speculative and doubtful but rather immediate and certain. This means that St. Augustine was emphasized spiritual and physical knowledge, which had ties to the fall of Adam. Thus, St. Augustine insisted that God is not the cause of evil. He maintained that God permits evil, but always and only for the sake of a larger good.[76]

Similarly with the evil wills of men. Men too are created out of nothing and like everything else, they tend constantly to lapse again into nothingness. This

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[73] R.P. McKeon (ed.) (1929/1930), ***Selections from Medieval Philosophers***. Volume 2, New York, p.35; William of Ockham (1957), P. Boehner (ed.), ***Philosophical Writings***. New York, p.12.
[74] St. Augustine, ***Soliloquia, 11. 1: Cf. Chapter X11***, p. 24.
[75] Cf. ***De ordine***, Book 11, Chapter V11, p. 24.
[76] In ***De Civitate Dei***, Book XIV, Chapter II. Augustine says that evils are allowed to exist that it may be shown how the righteous foresight of God can make a good use even of them. See also St. Augustine, ***The City of God***, Book XII, pp. 380-81, 385.

tendency reveals itself in their choice of the lesser, instead of the greater, which is God. This is the essence of all sin. Only by the exercise of divine power, or the grace of God as Augustine calls it, can men be kept from sin, as only by His power can they be sustained in existence. God is not the author of sin and not the author of evil of any sort. He can prevent sin if he will, but he does not always choose to do so, for sin, like evil in general, may contribute to a larger good, and it is never permitted without being overruled. Thus Augustine maintained the absolute power of God, whose will is never thwarted,[77] while at the same time he denied that God is the cause of evil or that the sins of men can be traced back to him.

For Augustine, the Fall of Man, which relates to the eating of the fruit of the tree is both an attempt to gain wisdom and the desire to obtain the wisdom in order to become wise, referring to the terminology of the law of Yahweh. The creation of Adam and Eve is considered God's greatest creation and as a result, man is endowed with greater knowledge. Therefore, in explaining, the fall of Adam, Augustine was true to his general theory of evil. Adam's sin is not due to the possession of a fleshy nature; God created him and his flesh; in addition his spirit was good. But created out of nothing as he was, he tended to lapse again into nothingness, to turn from God to himself and choose the lesser instead of the greater good. His fall is due to pride, the greatest of all sins, which means the putting of one's self before God and the denial of one's absolute dependence on Him.[78] For in the first stirring of the disobedient motion, which was felt in the flesh of the disobedient soul, and which caused the first men to cover their shame,

[77] "Nothing is done unless the Omnipotent wills it to be done, either by permitting it, or himself doing it". Refer to ***Enchiridion***, 95.

one death indeed is experienced, that namely, which occurs when God forsakes the soul. But when the soul itself forsakes the body, corrupted and decayed with age, the other death was experienced, of which God had spoken in pronouncing man's sentence, "Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return".[79]

Being real and unchangeable God is eternal: "the only true and eternal substance". For the difference between eternity and time is not a matter of duration; eternity is not mere endless time. Where there is time there is change; where there is eternity there is no change. Eternity thus belongs to a higher order of existence than time, as God belongs to a higher order of existence than the world, for time was created when the world was made.[80]

As God is the only real being, he is the only real good. Apart from him, there is no reality and hence apart from him there is no good. Man's highest good is to depend upon God and cleave to him. It is the language of philosophy as well as of piety when Augustine says: "God, to turn away from whom is to fall; to turn back to whom is to rise again; to abide in whom is to stand fast. God, to depart from whom is to die; to return to whom is to come to life again; to dwell in whom is to live".[81] There is no such thing as independent goodness. The desire for independence and wisdom indeed is the root of all evil. All this of course, involves an extreme form of divine immanence. Only as men and things are in

[78] St. Augustine, ***The City of God,*** Book XIII, pp. 421-423.
[79] ***Genesis 3:19***.
[80] Cf. ***De Civitate Dei***, Volume XI, p. 6 and see also Clement of Alexandria, ***Stromateis***, Volume VI, p. 16.
[81] St. Augustine, ***Soliloquia***, Chapter I, I (3).

God or he in them have they any existence. But this is only one side of Augustine's thought.[82]

Based on that explanation, St. Augustine's view on *shajarat* was related to the spiritual knowledge, which placed emphasized on the good soul to gain the truth and reality, i.e. God as the spiritual knowledge. For God, the author of natures, not of vices, created man upright; but man, being of his own will corrupted, and justly condemned, begat corrupted and condemned children.[83] Because of that incident, man is no longer a good creatures, (living forever eternally), those only being excepted who are freed by the grace of God through the salvation of Christ.

For Augustine, spiritual knowledge is the eternity of God and only God is the real being unchangeable. Man, as God's creature, is not. Man only can gain spiritual knowledge through true faith in God. Man cannot gain that knowledge by himself or attain treasure level of spiritual knowledge as God.

3.1.2 IMĀM AL-QURṬUBĪ'S CONCEPTION OF KNOWLEDGE (THEORIES OF KNOWLEDGE THAT INFLUENCED IMĀM AL-QURṬUBĪ)

In order to understand Imām al-Qurṭubī's conception of knowledge, this study will look at the theories of knowledge which influenced him in his writing of *tafsīr* and his views of knowledge.

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[82] To know further about Augustine's thought of God and other examples of his views of his synthesis of Greek philosophy tradition and tradition Christian's ideas, please refer to St. Augustine, ***The City of God***, Books 1-XXII, pp. 3-867.
[83] St. Augustine, ***The City of God***, Book XIII, p.422.

There are several major theories or sources, which influenced Imam al-Qurtubi, i.e. the holy Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth* (*naqli*) and the reports from companions (*ṣaḥābah*), successors (*tābi'īn*), Arabic language, writings of previous and eminent *mufassirūn* and Islamic scholars before his time (*'aqli*).

3.1.2a THE HOLY QUR'ĀN AND *ḤADĪTH* AS THE MAJOR SOURCES

3.1.2.1a THE GLORIOUS QUR'ĀN AND *AL-ḤADĪTH*

As we mentioned earlier, the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* were the main sources which influenced Imām al-Qurṭubī's writings and interpretations of revelations. Al-Qur'ān is the speech of Allah sent down to the last Prophet Muhammad (ṣ.'a.w), through the Angel Gabriel, in its precise wording transmitted to us by numerous persons (*tawātur*), both verbally and in writing. Inimitable and unique, God protected it from corruption.

Whereas *ḥadīth* refers to the sayings and doings of Prophet Muhammad (ṣ.'a.w) and actions done with his approval.

Imām al-Qurṭubī and Muslim scholars overwhelmingly accept the Holy Qur'ān, as well as *ḥadīth*, as the unique reference in all its aspects.

Imām al-Qurṭubī examined and discussed the whole text of the Qur'ān beginning with *sūrah al-Fātihah* and ending with *sūrah al-Nās*, in his ***al-Jāmi'***. He then uses the *ḥadīth* in order to support his views in discussions of revelations as well

makes use of several opinions of *ṣaḥābah*, *tābi'ĭn* and Muslim scholars in his deliberations.

3.1.2.1b THE REPORTS FROM COMPANIONS (*ṢAḤĀBAH*)

The noble *ṣaḥābah* (r.'a) received their education directly from the Prophet (ṣ. 'a.w). In addition, they were personally present on the scene when *waḥy* came and they had themselves witnessed all the circumstances and background of the revelations of the Qur'ān. Therefore, naturally, the recorded statements of these blessed souls are far more authentic and trustworthy in explaining the noble Qur'ān; than later people who were not there at the time. Hence, in the case of verses the explanation of which is not found in the Qur'ān or *al-Ḥadĭth*, statements recorded from the noble Companions (r. 'a.) are given the highest priority. Consequently, if there is consensus of Companions on the explanation of certain verses, Imām al-Qurṭubĭ follows just that; and explaining it in any way, other than that is not permissible. If the statement of the Companions differs from the interpretation in *tafsĭr* of a certain verse, then Imām al-Qurṭubĭ examines them in light of arguments and determines to which interpretation or explanation can be given prefence. In order to handle this situation, there is an important corpus of rules and regulations already codified under the science of *Uṣūl al-Ḥadĭth* and *Uṣūl al-Tafsĭr*.

3.1.2.1c. THE REPORTS FROM THE *TĀBI 'ĪN* OR SUCCESSORS

The later are those who have learned the *tafsĭr* of the Qur'ān from the Companions. Therefore, their statements have great importance in the science of

tafsīr although there exists difference among scholars as to whether or not the statements of the *tābi'īn* are decisive in *tafsīr*. But their importance is something which cannot be denied.

3.1.2.1d. THE ARABIC LANGUAGE

The noble Qur'ān was revealed in the Arabic language. Therefore, in order to explain the Qur'ān, a complete mastery of the language is necessary. To this end, Imām al-Qurṭubī studied the language and became proficient or fluent.

3.1.2.1e. DELIBERATION AND DEDUCTION

The subtleties and mysteries of the noble Qur'ān are an ocean with no shore, no end. As Imām al-Qurṭubī, deliberates in it he discovers ever-new mysteries and subtleties. As a result of this, he presents the outcomes of his respective deliberations, but the mysteries and subtleties so described are found acceptable only when he does not disagree with the major sources i.e. the Qur'ān, *al-Ḥadīth*, *syarī'ah* and the reports from *ṣaḥābah* and *tābi'īn*.

3.1.2b. MUSLIM SCHOLAR'S OPINIONS AND IMĀM AL-QURṬUBĪ'S INTERPRETATION OF *SHAJARAT*

For Imām al-Qurṭubī, the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, the reports from *ṣaḥābah*, *tābi'īn*, the Arabic language and his own deliberation were the main sources in his writings. He also refers to previous Muslim scholar's opinions, but we cannot specify who

were the most popular. In Imām al-Qurṭubī's *tafsīr*, ***al-Jāmi'***, he refers to, for instance, Ibn 'Abbās, Imām al-Ghazzālī, Imam Rabi' al-Anas, Ibn 'Arabī and Imām Fakhr al-Rāzī. This means that he used the opinions of other Muslim scholars to strengthen his opinions and his interpretations of revelations. Further, because Imām al-Qurṭubī was a great researcher, he needed to analyze the other Muslim scholars' opinions. Based on their various opinions, Imām al-Qurṭubī reached his own regarding the interpretations of revelations, for instance in explaining the concept of *shajarat*, which was discussed in Chapter Three.

Based on the above explanation, we understand that there are several major sources influenced Imām al-Qurṭubī's writings. Therefore, in order to understand his theories and concepts of knowledge, we cannot view his specific writings as al-Fārabī or Imām al-Ghazzālī did. We have to view all the volumes of Imām al-Qurṭubī's *tafsīr* and from that we can reach conclusions about his opinions on knowledge. This is because his concepts of knowledge were not specifically mentioned in particular chapters in his writings of *tafsīr*. Imām al-Qurṭubī discussed knowledge relating to the interpretations of any *sūrah* or texts of the Qur'ān which dealt with on knowledge, and then discussed the topic generally in his own writings.

In general, Imām al-Qurṭubī discussed knowledge in his interpretations of the whole text of the Qur'ān, however, he only relates any text of the Qur'ān to knowledge whenever it explains that topic. For instance, in explaining the verse 31 in *sūrah al-Baqarah* (2), he explains the concept and relation of faith, knowledge and *akhlāq*. Allah says in *sūrah al-Baqarah* (2) verse 31, which means

2. Man had feelings and emotions compared to others creatures such as animals.[87] This is man's nature because man had willing (*nafs*) and intellect (*'aql*). Therefore, man must know how to manage and balance these two elements for the good.
3. Man understands the qualities and values of things. This is because man has feelings and is intellectual. History showed us the tragedy of Qabil and Habil who knew the qualities and values of their partner. As a result, man must be able to reach a balance between his desire and intellect.
4. Man had potential to conceal his future thoughts.[88]
5. Man had potential to know and understand the meaning of "the tragedy".[89]

That discussion shows that man as vicegerent, caliph and loyal servant is the only honored creature who can develop and prosper on the earth, according to the Qur'ān and *al-Ḥadīth*. This is because man was given all the potential and knowledge to lead this universe.

Adam proved that he was the right vicegerent and shows his invaluable *akhlāq* and good qualities as the caliph. Therefore, his descendants have continuously had

[87] This is based on loneliness of Adam in Eden without friends to talk to. Allah Knows man's feeling. Therefore Allah creates Eve as a partner to Adam. Please refer to Chapter Two, pp. and Imām al-Qurtubī, ***al-Jāmi'***. Volume 1, pp. 147-149

[88] Adam and Eve proved their responsibility to develop and prosper on the earth for the sake of Allah.

[89] After the tragedy in Eden, Adam and Eve know who Satan was. Satan is man's worst enemy. Please refer to Chapter Three.

responsibilities as caliph, vicegerent and servants in developing this universe. According to the above discussion, we understand that God placed Adam as caliph or vicegerent and educated him with knowledge and *akhlāq*.

Furthermore, Adam has been equipped with physical strength and intellectual abilities and given guidance from God. Indeed, Adam has faith in his Creator as well as in the abilities given to him, to compare and choose between the good and the bad. He also has a good physical instrument, feeling and mind that can be used in thinking and comparing between the good and bad qualities. Man is always being tested by his feelings instead of his mind.[90] But, man's faith, belief in God precisely, transforms into certainty bringing man closer to his Creator. This certainty is expressed in the Qur'ān in terms of the three types of knowledge of God which were discussed by philosophers, mystics, theologians and jurists during the
Islamic Middle Period (the 9th through 15th centuries C.E.).[91]Imām al-Qurṭubī also referred to them in explaining the certainty of knowledge in his writings.

Imām al-Qurṭubī's writings mention that Adam is leading toward knowledge of the true nature of things. His invaluable intellect was inherited by his descendants who were given guidance from God through His Prophets and Messengers. Therefore, the religion of God spread continuously throughout the world.[92]

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[90] Muḥammad Mutawallā al-Sha'rawī, ***al-Syaiṭān wa al-Insān***. Qāherah: Maktabah al-Sha'rawī al-Islamiah, 1999, pp. 48-49.
[91] Vincent J. Cornell, "Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge The Relationship Between faith and Practice in Islam" in John L. Esposito, (ed.), ***The Oxford History of Islam,*** New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 63.
[92] Imām al-Qurṭubī, ***al-Jāmi'***. Volume VII, pp. 122-123.

Basically, knowledge is truth. All truth is in itself certain. But as received by men and understood with reference men's psychology, certainty may have certain degrees. There is probability or certainty resulting from the application of man's power of judgment and his appraisal of evidence. This is *'ilm al-yaqĭn*, certainty by reasoning or inference. Then there is certainty of seeing something with our own eyes. "Seeing is believing".[93]This is *'ain al yaqĭn*, certainty by personal inspection. Then, there is the absolute truth, with no possibility of error of judgment or error of the eye, (which stands for any instrument of sense perception and any ancillary aids, such as microscopes, etc.). This absolute truth is the *haqq al-yaqĭn*. All of these types of knowledge will be discussed here according to present Muslim scholars, whose opinions were based on those of previous Muslim scholars.[94]

The most basic and fundamental of the types of knowledge is the 'knowledge of certainty' or *'ilm al-yaqĭn*. Allah says in *sūrah al-Kauthar* (102): 5:[95]

كلا لوتعلمون علم اليقين

This type of certainty, which is analogous to Aristotle's concept of intellectual knowledge, refers to the knowledge that results from the human capacity, for

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[93] It is not just a simple gloss on the axiom "seeing is believing". It will be discussed on the topic "the eye of certainty" in this Chapter.

[94] Please refer to Imām al-Qurṭubi, ***al-Jāmi'***. Volume VII, pp. 135-136; also refer to Abū Bakr Sirāj al-Din, ***Book of Certainty,*** Cambridge: Islamic Text Society, 1992, pp. 10-23, 24-33 and 34-44; Muḥammad Abū al-Quasem, ***The Ethics of al-Ghazali: A Composite Ethics in Islam,*** Delmar, New York: Caravan Books, 1978, pp. 13-21.

[95] The first is certainty of minds or inference mentioned here: we hear from someone, or we infer from something we know: this refers to our own state of mind. If we instruct our mind in this way, we should value the deeper things of life in, and not with waste all our time on ephemeral things. But if we do not use our reasoning faculties now, we shall yet see our own eyes the penalty for our sins. It will be certainty of sight. We shall see hell. Please see the next verse. But the absolute certainty of assured truth is described in this fleeting world few things are what they seem. The absolute truth cannot fail. It must prevail. Therefore be not lured by false appearances in this life; it is revelation that points to the sure and certain reality. That is not liable to any human error or psychological defect. Please refer to A. Yūsuf 'Alĭ, ***The Holy Qur'ān,*** pp. 1595, 1603 & 1780.

example, logical reasoning and the appraisal of what the Qur'ān calls the clear evidences or *bayyināt* of God's presence in the world. It is also the knowledge that comes from the study of Islam through the Qur'ān, the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (ṣ.'a.w) i.e. *al-Ḥadīth*, and books of the theology and exegesis.[96] By nature, the "knowledge of certainty" is rational and discursive, a point that the Qur'ān acknowledges when it admonishes human beings to 'travel throughout the earth and consider how Allah initiated the creation'.[97]The same type of knowledge is involved when the Qur'ān presents rhetorical arguments for the existence of God: "It is Allah who brings things to life and causes them to die, and Allah is the alteration of the night and the day. Will yea not then understand?"[98]

The second type of knowledge is the 'eye of certainty' which Qur'ān calls '*ayn al-yaqīn*.[99] It is developed over time and under the influence of contemplation and spiritual practice, so that the 'knowledge of certainty' may be transformed into a higher form of knowledge of God. This term, which broadly corresponds to Plato's concept of the "vision" of the intellect, refers to the knowledge that is acquired by the spiritual intelligence, which Islam locates metaphorically in the

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[96] Imām al-Qurṭubī, ***al-Jāmi'***. Volume VII, p. 137; Abū Bakr Sirāj al-Dīn, ***Book of Certainty***, Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1992, pp. 5-23; Vincent J. Cornell, ***Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge***, pp. 64-65.

[97] Al-Qur'ān ***sūrah al-'Ankabūt*** (29) verse 20. Travel through the earth: again, literally as well as symbolically. If we actually go through this wide earth, we shall see the wonderful things in His Creation- the Grand Canyon and the Niagara Falls in America, beautiful harbors like that at Sydney in Australia, mountains like Fujiya, the Himalayas, and Elburz in Asia, the Nile with its wonderful cataracts in Africa, the Fiords of Norway, the Geysers of Iceland, the city of the midnight sun in Tromsoe, and innumerable wonders everywhere. But wonders upon wonders are disclosed in the constitution of matter itself, the atom and the forces of energy, as also in the instincts of animals, and the minds and capacities of man. And there is no limit to these things. Worlds upon worlds are created and transformed every moment, within and presumably beyond man's vision. From what we know we can judge of the unknown.

[98] ***Sūrah al-Mu'minūn*** (23): 80. The alteration of the night and day stands here as a symbol for all the beneficent processes of nature provided by God for the comfort and growth of man's outer and inner life. Please refer to A. Yūsuf 'Alī, ***The Holy Qur'ān***, p.888. Imām al-Qurṭubī was also emphasized the '*hikmah*' of all creatures, which created by God was benefited to man.

[99] ***Sūrah al-Kauthar*** (102): 7. Please refer to ***al-Jāmi'***. Volume X, pp. 88-90

heart.[100] Before attaining this type of knowledge, the heart of the believer must be 'opened to Islam'.[101] Once opened, the heart receives knowledge as a type of divine 'light' or illumination, which leads the believer toward remembrance of the Creator. Just as with the 'knowledge of certainty', with 'the eye of certainty' the believer apprehends God's existence through God's presence in the world. In this latter case, however, what leads the believer to the knowledge of God are not arguments to be understood by the rational intellect, but rather theophanic 'appearances', also called *bayyināt*, that strip away the veil of worldly phenomena to reveal the divine reality beneath.[102]

Just as there is spiritual progress for those who seek God, so there is more and more spiritual retrogression for those who close their hearts to God. Their hearts get hardened, and they allow less and less of God's grace to penetrate within. But it is obvious that they flounder on the way, and cannot walk with the firm steps of those who are assured of faith.

Therefore, the metaphor of the 'eye of certainty' is thus more than just a simple gloss on the axiom 'seeing is believing'. From a spiritual perspective the one who holds knowledge of God, who perceives reality in this way, is the true 'intellectual'. Unlike the scholar, who develops his or her skills through years of formal study, the spiritual intellectual does not need book learning to apprehend the divine light.[103]

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[100] Abū Bakr Sirāj al-Dīn, ***Book of Certainty,*** pp. 23-33; Vincent J. Cornell, ***Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge,*** p. 65.
[101] ***Sūrah al-Zumar*** (39); 22. Please refer to ***al-Jāmi'***. Volume VIII, p.101.
[102] Imām al-Qurṭubī, ***al-Jāmi'***. Volume III, p. 95; Vincent J. Cornell, ***Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge,*** p. 65.
[103] Imām al-Qurṭubī, ***Ibid.***

The third and the most advanced type of knowledge (compared with the two types of knowledge, previously discussed) builds on the transcendent nature of knowledge itself. This highest level of consciousness is called the 'truth of certainty' or *haqq al-yaqīn*.[104] It is also known as 'the knowledge by presence' or *'ilm al-ladunnī*.[105] This form of knowledge partakes directly of the divine reality and leaps across the synapses of the human mind to transcend both cognitive reasoning and intellectual vision at the same time. The 'truth of the certainty' refers to that state of consciousness in which a person knows the 'real' through direct participation in it, without resorting to logical proofs and without objectifying either subject or object. Viewed in terms of Islamic sacred history, this type of knowledge characterizes God's prophets and messengers, whose consciousness of the truth is both immediate and participatory, because the knowledge on which it is based comes from direct inspiration.[106]

The possibility that divine inspiration could remain accessible to believers is seen, for example in the figure of al-Khidr or Green One.[107] He first appeared in the

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[104] Refer to ***sūrah al-Ḥāqqah*** (69): 51

[105] Refer ***sūrah al-Kahfi*** (18): 65.

[106] Muḥammad Abū al-Quasem, ***The Ethics of al-Ghazali: A Composite Ethics in Islam,*** pp. 23-28; Abū Bakr Sirāj al-Dīn, ***Book of Certainty,*** pp.34-44; Vincent J. Cornell, ***Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge,*** p. 66.

[107] His name is not mentioned in the Qur'ān. He was appearing by called in the Qur'ān "One of our servant." But tradition gives it as Khidr. Round him have gathered a number of picturesque folk tales, with which we are not here concerned. Khidr means Green: his knowledge is fresh and green, and drawn out of the living sources of life for it is drawn from God's own presence. He is a mysterious being, who has to be sought out. He has the secret of the paradoxes of life, which ordinary people do not understand, or understand in a wrong sense, as mentioned in the Qur'ān. Please refer to ***sūrah al-Kahfi*** (18): 65-82. The nearest equivalent figure in the literature of the People of the Book is Melchizedek or Melchisedek (the Greek form in the New Testament). In **Genesis 16: 18-20**, he appears as king of Salem, priest of the Highest God: he blesses Abraham, and Abraham gives him tithes. St. Paul allegorizes him in his Epistle to the **Hebrews (V: 6-10; VII. 1-10)**: "he was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life". That is to say, he appeared mysteriously: neither his parentage nor his pedigree is known, and he seems to live for all time. These qualities are also attributed to Khidr in Muslim tradition. In the Qur'ān it is mentioned that Khidr had two special gifts from God: 1) Mercy from His own Presence, and 2) Knowledge from His own Presence. The first freed him

Qur'ān as an unnamed servant of God and companion of the Prophet of Mūsā or Moses, al-Khidr is endowed with knowledge of the unseen that the Prophet Mūsā himself lacks.[108]

Based on those discussions, we know that the most important of the knowledge of God is *tawhīd* i.e. belief and trust in One God. This is the teaching of Islam, which was given to the prophets from Adam ('a.s) to Muhammad (ṣ.'a.w).

These discussions show that in Imām al-Qurṭubī's explanations, there is a relation between knowledge and faith, and that thus transformed into certainty and then to Oneness of God. Therefore, the knowledge and the truth of the nature of things, given by God to the first man, Adam, is the most basic of His teachings namely *tawhīd*, the Oneness of God. The teachings of *tawhīd*, which were given to Adam is known as Islam. Islam is the religion of the universe, but the *syari'at* is slightly different, from each prophet and from different times. Prophet Muhammad, the last prophets, brought up the supreme and the great teachings of Islam. The teachings of Adam can be concluded as follows:

1. "There is no God but Allah," affirms the acceptance of the divine reality by the human intellect. As a formal proclamation of divine singularity or tawhid, it is the creed equivalent to the 'knowledge of certainty' discussed earlier.

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from the ordinary incidents of daily human life; and the second entitled him to interpret the inner meaning and mystery of events, as mentioned in the ***sūrah al-Kahfi*** (18): 65-82.

[108] Please refer to the ***sūrah al-Kahfi*** (18): 65-82

2. "Adam is the messenger of Allah," affirms one's submission to God, which is the meaning of word Islam itself. Here, the human being (Eve and her sons and daughter and then the rest of human beings) respond to the Divine will by acknowledging the prophet Adam as both the vehicle of the words of Allah and the paradigmatic submitter to God. By stressing the sources of both theoretical and the practical knowledge of religion i.e. Allah and Adam as the prophet, the two, witnessing thus, reaffirm the complementarily of faith and practice in the God's religion i.e. Islam.

3. "God's words or Allah's revealed words" affirms and reminds Adam and his fellows to think about the truths that lie behind the familiar or mundane things of the world, such as the signs of God in nature, the practical value of virtue, and the cross-cultural validity of the fundamental principles of morals and ethics.

4. "The truth of the Last Day" affirms the Divine power of the "universal" and that which is "beyond comparison" that creates and sustains both the material universe and the world of human experience and the power of His determination toward universal.

5. "The Determination of affairs, whether good or bad" an affirmation of the concepts of divine foreknowledge i.e. *qaḍā'* and fate i.e., *qadar* discussed earlier.

With these teachings, Adam and Eve, the most honored creatures, equipped themselves to perform the tasks and responsibilities assigned to them, so that they would develop and prosper on the earth. Allah said in *sūrah al-Ahzāb* (33) verse 72:

"إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا"

"We offered the trust of the heaven, the earth and the mountains (to the jinn and angels), but they refused to undertake it, being afraid (of the responsibility thereof); but the human being undertook it; however, he was unjust and foolish".

Therefore, man had to perform his duties on this earth with guidance from the revelation, because he also was to be rewarded in the hereafter for what he had done in this life. The wrongful doings that occurr at different times and different places, always committed by mankind against mankind are derived from ignorance and selfishness. Therefore, man as the honored creature must exhibit great qualities such as doing "the *al-khayr* or the good" and "*al-haqq* or the truth". The idea of this practice intersects with the concepts of God consciousness (*taqwā*) and ethics. In the Qur'ān, ethics is more a matter of practice than of philosophy. Therefore, one of the best terms to describe the practice of good in the Qur'ān is *ma'rūf*. In the *sūrah Āli 'Imrān* (3) verse 104 explains: "Let there be among you a community that calls to the good (*al-khayr*), a commanding virtue

(*ya'murūna bi al-ma'rūf*) and forbidding vice (*yanhauna 'an al-munkar*); these are the ones who have attained felicity".

In Arabic *ma'rūf* is derived from the root *'arafa* which means to know; and literally means "that which is known". As an ethical term, it signifies known or virtuous acts that are performed in the full light of day and thus do not need to be hidden away from a neighbour's sight. Therefore, the meaning of *ma'rūf* is essentially social in nature.[109]

The antithesis of *ma'rūf*, the semantic domain of secrecy and hypocrisy, is expressed by the Qur'anic term *munkar* or vice, which literally means "that which is hated or despised". *Munkar* connotes those behaviors that would ruin a person's reputation if they were performed in the open.[110]

Another important "ethic or moral" in Islam is *ṣalah* or social virtue. Although the word itself is not mentioned in Qur'ān, there are numerous references to this concept as in the verse that depicts morally upright Muslim as residing in the company of those whom Allah has favored: "the prophets, the truthful (*ṣiddiqīn*), the martyrs, and the virtuous (*ṣālihīn*)".[111]

In that verse, the practitioner of *ṣulāh* is referred to in the Qur'ān as *ṣālih* or muṣlih and *ṣāliha* and *muṣliha* for female, a morally upstanding individual who works for the betterment (*iṣlāh*) of himself and his fellow Muslims. By upholding the Sunna, he or she stands in opposition to the *fasid* or the ruiner or selfish

[109] Ibn Manzūr, ***Lisān al-'Arab***. Volume VI, under the word *'arafa*.
[110] ***Ibid***. Volume III, under the word *nakara*

individualist, who jeopardizes the moral integrity of the Muslims community by undermining the standards of virtue that the *ṣālih* seeks to establish.

Therefore, Imām al-Qurṭubī's view of the concept of knowledge is that it is the true happiness, which can be found in the proper balance between knowledge, faith, *akhlāq* and practice or *'amal*. All of these are included in *tawḥīd*. This means that the concept of *shajarat al-khuld* in Imām al-Qurṭubī's view was the "unbalancing" of the *tawḥīd*, which happened because man was forgetful and unwilling to obey God's command.

3.1.3 ST. THOMAS AQUINAS' CONCEPTION OF KNOWLEDGE (THE THEORIES OF KNOWLEDGE THAT INFLUENCED AQUINAS)

From their origins in Greek philosophy, theories of knowledge were extensively developed by the early medieval and the schoolmen (scholars). Under the sway of Platonism, writers such as St. Augustine, Boethius, St. Anselm and Abelard set the stage for later scholastic theories. Aristotle's influence, transmitted by Arab thinkers such as Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and Averroes (Ibn. Rushd) added a further dimension to medieval thought. These ideas fused in the *hochscholastik* period and brought forth various solutions to the problem of knowledge as proposed principally by St. Thomas Aquinas. However, before him, there were St. Bonaventure, John Duns Scotus and William of Ockham as well as The Arabian Aristotle: Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and Averroes (Ibn Rushd).

[111] ***Sūrah al-Nisā'*** (4): 69.

Aquinas' view of knowledge was influenced especially Aristotle, Augustine and Islamic or the Arabian Aristotle, i.e. Avicenna and Averroes. Therefore, to understand Aquinas' conception of knowledge, this study will present the Christian Platonist and Arabian Aristotle's views of knowledge, which contributed to Aquinas' view of philosophy.

3.1.3.1 CHRISTIAN PLATONIST

We mentioned earlier that medieval scholars inherited a noetic that derived from Plato and frequently succeeded in becoming Aristotelian without altogether ceasing to be Platonist. Aquinas looked upon the Platonist philosophy, as well as Augustine's, in his understanding of philosophy and knowledge. However, Aquinas emphasized the Christian Platonist such as Augustine, Erigena, St. Anselm and Peter Abelard views of knowledge in developing and compiling his philosophy and teachings of knowledge.

3.1.3.1a ERIGENA

One of the most daring applications of dialectic to the Christian faith is that of John Scotus Erigena, who stated that since to know God is salvation, ignorance must be the same as damnation. Because nature is "everything that is and everything that is not"[112] the knowledge of nature is radically theological. "Nature creating, but not created" is God, the divine ideas are "nature, not creating, but created"; and the goal of the great return, when God will be all in all, is God

[112] *De. Div. Nat. 1*

qualified as "nature neither creating nor created". Thus all knowledge with all being is treated under the title "on the Division of Nature".[113]

3.1.3.1b ST ANSELM

Anselm of Canterbury posed a sign of contradiction for all succeeding speculation by his use of the old truth that God is "that than which a greater cannot be conceived" to establish that God necessarily exists. For those who accept his world, the *Pros logion* argument is irrefutable but for those who live in another world, the reasoning remains unconvincing. This means less than that Anselm had a strange theory of truth and knowledge, than that his consciousness of reasoning in the presence of truth and its participation rendered all theories superfluous. Unparticipated truth is being itself and Anselm's world is no more a world of beings than a world of truths.[114]

3.1.3.1c PETER ABELARD

Abelard came to the problem of knowledge impressed by the radical singularity of each individual and by man's ability to recognize in a general concept the individuals of which, nonetheless can be predicted. Man knows things, in three ways: by sensation when a thing is present, by imagination when its totality, a thing, is the object of the soul's attention, and by intellection when the soul attends to some detailed aspect of that thing. Like an artist, the knower holds his or her material with one hand and shapes it with the other. He or she worked over

[113] ***Ibid.***
[114] ***Ontological Argument.***

what is grasped by sense or imagination to discern the form that exists together, but which can be thought apart. Sensation requires corporeal instruments but is primarily the work of the soul.[115]

3.1.3.2 THE ARABIAN ARISTOTLE

With access to Aristotle there was a shift in the problematic. No longer deplored as an obstacle to knowledge, sensation was accredited as its sole starting point. At once receptive to what sense can deliver and active in dematerializing that content to fit it for intellectual assimilation, intellect implies two powers. As capable of adoption to the forms of other things, intellect is passive. As capable of rendering the potentially intelligible material singular actually intelligible, intellect is 'agent'. This much is surely in Aristotle but where did the Stagirite intend to locate these powers?

Arabian commentators took firm positions where the text of Aristotle left some latitude. The intelligence responsible for providing the human knower with suitably immaterial forms is an astronomical deity, styled by Avicenna the 'Giver of Forms' or the 'Intellect in effect' and by Averroes, the 'Agent Intellect'. Both hold it is one for all men.[116]

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[115] ***Logica 'ingred, Gloss. In Perih.***

[116] To know further, see Oliver Leaman (1985), ***An Introduction to Medieval Islamic Philosophy***. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-21; R.P. McKeon (ed.), ***Selections from Medieval Philosophers***, pp. 66-68.

3.1.3.2a IBN SINA (AVICENNA)

The soul may be, as Avicenna would have it, the very essence of man[117] but for all Aristotelians, soul is the form of the body and here Avicenna betrays some uneasiness with Aristotle. For to be a form of matter, Avicenna remarked, defines a function of the soul rather than its nature.[118] As in potency to receive such forms, the intellect of man is 'material', by which he meant 'passive' not 'corporeal'. As possessed of forms, but not adverting to them, intellect is 'habitual' as actually knowing that is knows, intellect is 'in effect', or in terms that remind one that intelligible forms come to man from above, it is 'borrowed' (*accommodatus*) and 'acquired' (*adeptus*).[119]

'The Giver of Forms totally and always 'in effect', is to our minds what the sun is to our sight'. Not only the source of intelligible forms for human intellects, the Giver of Forms has a second right to his title. This intelligence provides matter under the sphere of the moon with the constituent forms it is prepared to receive and thus brings new beings into existence.[120]

3.1.3.2b IBN RUSHD (AVERROES)

Averroes (1126-1198) agreed with Avicenna that there is a 'passive' intellect by which a man is capable of receiving intelligible forms from above, but this he described as corporeal imagination, destined to perish at the death of the

[117] ***De anim, 1.1.***
[118] ***Ibid.***
[119] R.P. McKeon (ed.), ***Selections from Medieval Philosophers,*** p. 70
[120] ***Ibid,*** p. 72-73

individual who possesses it. The union of the separate Agent Intellect with the passive one engenders a third intellect that Averroes termed 'material' since it too is passive. This third intellect is as little the possession of the individual as light reflected from a body is part of that body. Hence there is no ground in the incorruptibility of intellect for the immortality of the human individual. All that is individual is corruptible and all that is incorruptible is both radically separate from matter and one for all men. As the 'Agent Intellect' is one for all men, so to the material intellect is one for the entire race. The highest cognitive faculty that pertains to the individual is the corporeally rooted and therefore perishable, 'passive intellect' or 'imagination'.[121]

If this is a last word of philosophy then it is wisdom incompatible with Christian faith in personal immortality. The 'prophetic intellect', source of the illumination that has resulted in that 'miraculous' work, the Qur'ān reinforces the decision of modern scholarship that the *Three Impostors*: Moses (pbuh), Jesus (pbuh) and Muhammad (ṣ.'a.w) attributed to Averroes is a forgery but it was not enough to defend him from persecution by the Islamic theologians of his own day.[122]

3.1.3.2c ARISTOTLE AND CHRISTIANS

The danger implicit in the Arabian development of Aristotelian thought was quickly recognized by the schoolmen (scholars) of the 13th century. Correctives were soon forthcoming with various repudiations of Aristotle and with a pronounced revival in some quarters of the doctrines of St. Augustine.

[121] ***Ibid***, p. 73-74
[122] ***In de anima 3.4.5.***

3.1.3.2d ST. BONAVENTURE

St. Bonaventure was little inclined to abandon the pathways of his Christian masters for those of Aristotle. Therefore, his intimate knowledge of Aristotle's text is not withstanding. The content of knowledge as governed through sensation and the intellect can be described in Aristotelian terms but certitude specifies genuine knowledge and this as St. Augustine knew and Aristotle did not know is the fruit of a Divine illumination. Neither the created mind that knows, nor the created object known, can be the source of the universality, necessity and immutability of "certitudinal" knowledge. The divine attributes these terms "evoke care" the ultimate ground of knowledge.[123]

Faced with the two-edged risk of ascribing too much to creatures or too much to God, Bonaventure never hesitated to follow the distates of his piety and to choose the explanation that gives most to God. But not everyone not even every

Franciscan in the 13th century, was content with this solution. Is the Divine illumination the same as the general concurrence of God with creatures, or is it a special help? Does Divine illumination pertain to the order of nature or to the oriter of grace? The Franciscans found it increasingly difficult to agree with Aristotle and to be certain with Augustine and the temptation was not always resisted to transfer the problem from philosophy to theology.[124]

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[123] ***In 2 sent, 7.2-21***

[124] William of Ockham, ***Philosophical Writings***, p. 37.

3.1.3.3 ST. THOMAS'S INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE/GENESIS

In the 13th century, (St. Thomas Aquinas), wrestled with the implications for Christian theology of the most advanced science of the day-namely, the works of Aristotle and his Muslim commentators, which had recently been translated into Latin. Following in the tradition of Muslim and Jewish thinkers, Aquinas developed an analysis of the doctrine of the creation *ex-nihilo* that remains one of the enduring accomplishments of Western culture. His analysis provides refreshing clarity in the confused contemporary discussion of the relationship between science and religion.

It seemed to many of Aquinas' contemporaries that there was a fundamental incompatibility between the claim of ancient physics that something cannot come from nothing and the affirmation of the Christian faith that God produced everything from nothing. This was especially problematic in the creation of first man, Adam and his partner Eve who reproduced the next generations of man, and the creation of other creatures, sky, birds, sea, fish in order to benefit man's life. Furthermore, for the Greeks, since something must come from something, there must always be something-the universe must be eternal.[125]

Recent speculation that the universe began as "quantum tunneling from nothing" reaffirms the ancient Greek principle that anybody cannot get something from nothing. For the "vacuum" of modern particle physics, whose "fluctuation" some

[125] William E. Carroll (Prof.), "Aquinas and the Big Bang (Singularity: State of Infinite Density; Creation)", ***First Things: Journal of Religion and Public Life***. Iowa: Cornell College, Mt. Vernon, November 1999, p. 19. Hereafter, this book will be known as ***First Things***.

see as bringing this universe into existence, is not absolutely nothing.[126] It is not anything like this present universe, but it still is something. Or else, how could it fluctuate?

An eternal universe seemed incompatible with a universe created *ex-nihilo* and so some medieval Christians thought that Greek science, especially in the person of Aristotle, ought to be banned, since he contradicted the truths of revelation. Aquinas believing that the truths of science and the truth of faith could not contradict one another - God being the author of all truth - went to work to reconcile Aristotelian science and Christian revelation.[127]

The key to Aquinas' analysis is the distinction he draws between "creation" and "change." The natural sciences, whether Aristotelian or those of present day, have as their subject the world of changing things: from sub-atomic particles to acorns to galaxies. Whenever there is a change there must be something that changes. The Greeks are right: from nothing, nothing comes; that is, if the verb "to come" means a change. All change requires an underlying material reality.[128]

Creation, in the other hand is the radical causing of the whole existence of whatever exists. To cause completely something to exist is not to produce a change in something, is not to work on or with some already existing material. If, in producing something new, an agent were to use something already existing, the

[126] In the past two decades, some cosmologists have come to offer theories that account for the Big Bang (singularity that is an ultimate boundary or edge, a state of infinite density where space-time has ceased) itself as a fluctuation of a primal vacuum. Just as sub-atomic particles appear to emerge spontaneously in vacuums in laboratories, as the result of what is called "quantum tunneling from nothing", so the whole universe may be the result of a similar process. Refer to William E.Carroll, ***ibid***, p. 18.
[127] ***Ibid***, p. 20.

agent would not by itself be the "complete" cause of the new thing. But such a complete causing is precisely what creation is. To create is to give existence, and all things are totally dependent upon God for the very fact that they are. God does not take nothing and make something out of "it". Rather, anything left entirely to itself, separated from the cause of its existence, would be absolutely nothing. Creation is not some distant event; it is the continuing, complete causing of the existence of everything that is. Creation, thus, is a subject for metaphysics and theology, not for the natural sciences.[129]

Aquinas saw no contradiction in the notion of an eternal created universe. For, even if the universe had no temporal beginning, it still would depend upon God for its very being. There is no conflict between the doctrine of creation and any physical theory. Theories in the natural sciences account for change. Whether the changes described are biological or cosmological, unending or finite, they remain processes. Creation accounts for the existence of things, not for changes in things.[130]

Aquinas did not think that the opening of Genesis presented any difficulties for the natural science, for the Bible is not a textbook in the sciences. What is essential to Christian faith, according to Aquinas, is the "fact of creation", not the manner or mode of the formation of the world. Aquinas' firm adherence to the truth of Scripture without falling into the trap of literalistic readings of the text offers valuable correction for exegesis of the Bible, which concludes that one must choose between the literal meaning of the Bible and what God, its author,

[128] George T. Montague, ***Understanding the Bible***, Chapter XXI, p. 52.
[129] ***Ibid***, pp. 54-55.

intends the words to mean. The literal sense of the text includes metaphors, similes, and other figures of speech useful to accommodate the truth of the Bible to the understanding of its readers. For example, when one reads in the Bible that God stretches out His hand, one ought not think that God has a hand. The literal meaning of such passages concerns God's power, not His anatomy. Nor ought one think that the six days at the beginning of Genesis literally refer to God's acting in time, for God's creative act is instantaneous.[131]

Further, in his discussion of creation Aquinas sees that the basic Biblical assertion about man is that God created him.[132]Man is a creature. He is not God. He is not divine. He does not have a "spark of the divine in him". He is a created being and as such is under the sovereignty and dominion of God by creation. But even though man is a creation of God he is different from the rest of creation. **Genesis 1.26-27** tells that God created man in His own image. This makes man different from the other creations of God.

For Aquinas, there are two aspects to man being created in the image of God. The first may be found in the words "let them have dominion over the fish of the sea...over all the earth..."[133] God has given man dominion, sovereignty and lordship over (the) creation.[134] As God has sovereignty and dominion over all He has created, so God has given man sovereignty and dominion over all the earth; man in his limited sovereignty over creation like God in His unlimited sovereignty. In this sense, man is like God. Man's lordship over creation is the

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[130] ***Ibid***; William E.Carroll, ***First Things***, p. 20.
[131] William E. Carroll, ***ibid***.
[132] ***Genesis 1. 26-27***
[133] ***Genesis 1.26***

first aspect of man being created in the image of God. This passage in Genesis justifies the task and existence of all the sciences and especially biology. But it is not only the study and knowledge of creation that is involved here. Man has a God-given right to use this creation for the good of mankind and for the glory of God.

There is a second aspect to man being created in the image of God, seen in these verses of Genesis, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him: male and female He created them".[135] This does not mean that God is male and female, but that He is more than one person existing in a unique personal relationship or fellowship. As God as created man, he cannot live alone. In **Genesis 2.18** "The Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him". Of all the creatures God had created "there was not found a helper fit for him".[136] So God created, out of man, woman. Man, in the very way in which he was created had a social need - a need for fellowship, which could only be satisfied through an equal fellow creature. None of the animals could satisfy this need for fellowship, so God made an equal being, a woman. Man as a social being is able to enjoy a reciprocal personal relationship or fellowship with an equal being. In this respect man is also like God, as in God there is equality and fellowship between the three persons of the Godhead.

Further, Aquinas writes of the creation of Eve that the manner of production of the woman from the side of man signifies the social union of man and woman, "for

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[134] ***Psalm 8.4-8***
[135] ***Genesis 1.26***
[136] ***Genesis 2.20***

the woman should neither exercise authority over the man[137] and so she was not made from his head; nor is it right for her to be subject to man's contempt as his slave and so she was not made from his feet". He also sees a Christian sacramental symbol there, "for from the side of Christ sleeping on the cross the sacraments flowed, namely blood and water, by which the church was established".[138] Scholastic generally follows patristic studies on Eve, seeing her either as a contrasting type of Mary or of the Church.

Man's dominion over creation and his fellowship with an equal being - woman - are two aspects of man being created in the image of God. Both of these presuppose freedom - freedom of choice and freedom of action. This freedom of choice and not his reason, neither self-consciousness, nor self-transcendence, is that which makes possible man's dominion over creation and his choice to love and fellowship with an equal being. Man is a personal being in a created physical world and as such is a union of spirit (person or self) and body (psycho-physical organism).[139]

But man did not stay in this original state, in the way God created him in His image. He fell away from the image of God because of the temptation by Satan who seduced Eve.[140]The serpent's temptation contained two lies. The first lie attacks God's goodness indirectly by implying that God makes unreasonable

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[137] ***cf. Timothy 2.12***.
[138] St. Thomas Aquinas, ***Summa Theologiae***, Book 1, pp. 92-93.
[139] William Barret, ***Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy: Augustine, Aquinas and Other Academics***. New York: Doubleday &Co., 1958, p. 72. Hereafter, this book will be known as ***Irrational Man***.
[140] Refer to ***Genesis 3.1***

demands.[141] The second lie attacks God's goodness directly by implying that He is untruthful.[142]

These lies are attacks on God's goodness and love. This is the first element of this satanic temptation: Satan begins with an attack on God's character. God's goodness is attacked indirectly and then directly. The second element of this satanic temptation is the offering of a substitute for the true God – a false god, an idol.[143] Having undermined her faith and confidence in the goodness of God, the serpent offers Eve the knowledge of good and evil as a substitute for God. The third element in this temptation is the presenting of a method to obtain the substitute god. Satan implied that this knowledge of good and evil could be obtained through the process of eating. This was part of Satan's strategy; he had to obscure the basic fact that knowledge, moral as well as scientific, is obtained by decision, a choice, an acceptance or rejection. Adam and Eve could have known good and evil by their acceptance of the good (obeying God's command) and their rejection of the evil (Satan's temptation to disobey God's command). Evil may be equally known in its rejection as in its acceptance. Rejection is a far better way to know evil, for one does not have to receive painful consequences from the choice of evil. The knowledge of good and evil was not something God was trying to keep from them, contrary to Satan's lie. God was trying to give to them in the only way possible, by decision, by a choice between good and evil. Of course it was necessary for Satan to obscure this fact that knowledge comes by decision.

[141] Refer to ***Genesis 3.3***
[142] Refer to ***Genesis 3.5***
[143] Compare with ***Matthew 4.8-10***

Otherwise there would be no necessity for eating of the fruit of the tree and thus disobeying God.[144]

Further, adhering to the traditional reading of Genesis and the doctrinal proclamation of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), Aquinas believed that the universe had a temporal beginning. Aristotle, he thought, was wrong to think otherwise. But Aquinas argued that, on the basis of reason alone, one could not know whether the universe is eternal. Furthermore, if there was an eternal universe it still would be a created universe. To affirm, on the basis of faith, that the universe has a temporal beginning involves no contradiction with what the natural sciences can proclaim, since on their own they leave this question unresolved.

However, Aquinas would have no difficulty accepting the "singularity of the traditional Big Bang" cosmology, even with its recent variations, while also affirming the doctrine of creation out of nothing. He would, of course, distinguish between advances in cosmology and the philosophical and theological reflections on these advances. [145]

3.1.3.4 ST. THOMAS AQUINAS' SOURCES OF INFLUENCE

St. Aquinas's views of philosophy and knowledge were influenced by the Christian Platonist, the Arabian Aristotle's, the Christians and the Islamic theories of philosophy and knowledge. These influenced his interpretation of the Bible as

[144] William Barret, ***Irrational Man***, pp.72-73.
[145] ***Ibid***, 21.

well as his conception of knowledge, on which he based his interpretation of the tree of knowledge.[146]

St. Aquinas sometimes called the Angelic Doctor and the Prince of Scholastics, was an Italian philosopher and a leading Roman Catholic theologian. His works made him the most important figure in Scholastic philosophy. Aquinas studied under the German Scholastic philosopher Albertus Magnus, and followed him to Cologne in 1248. He returned to Paris in 1268, and Aquinas immediately became involved in a controversy with the French philosopher Siger de Brabant (d.1281) and other followers of the Islamic philosophers.[147]

To understand the crucial importance of this controversy for Western thought, it is necessary to consider the context in which it occurred. Before the time of Aquinas, Western thought had been dominated by the philosophy of St. Augustine, the Western Church's great Father and Doctor of the 4th and 5th centuries, who taught that the search for truth people must depend upon the experience of their senses. Early in the 13th century the major works of Aristotle were made available in Latin translation, accompanied by the commentaries of Averroes and other Islamic scholars. The vigor, clarity and authority of Aristotle's teaching restored confidence in empirical knowledge and gave rise to a school of philosophers known as Averroists. Under the leadership of Siger de Brabant, the Averroists asserted that philosophy was independent of revelation.[148]

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[146] ***Ibid***, p. 35.
[147] Arthur Cushman McGiffert, ***A History of Christian Thought***, p. 259.
[148] St. Thomas Aquinas, ***Summa Theologiae A Concise Translation***. Timothy McDermott (ed.). Texas USA: Christian Classic, 1989, pp.xviii-xix.

Averroism threatened the integrity and supremacy of Roman Catholic doctrine and filled orthodox thinkers with alarm. To ignore Aristotle, as interpreted by the Averroists, was impossible, to condemn his teachings was ineffectual; he had to be reckoned with. Albertus Magnus and other scholars had attempted to deal with Averroism, but with little success. Aquinas succeeded brilliantly.

Reconciling the Augustinian emphasis upon the human spiritual principle with the Averroist claim of autonomy for knowledge derived from the senses. Aquinas insisted that the truth of faith and that of "sense experience", as presented by Aristotle, are fully compatible and complementary. Some truths, such as that of the mystery of the incarnation, can be known only through revelations, and others such as that of the composition of material things, only through experience, still others, such as that of the existence of God, are known through both equally. All knowledge, Aquinas held, originates in sensation, but sense data can be made intelligible only by the action of the intellect, which elevates thought toward the apprehension of such immaterial realities as the human soul, the angels, and God. To reach understanding of the highest truths, those with which religion is concerned, the aid of revelation is needed. Aquinas' moderate realism placed the universals firmly in the mind, in opposition to extreme realism, which posited their independence of human thought. He admitted a foundation for universals in existing things, however, in opposition to nominalism and conceptualism.[149]

[149] ***Ibid.***, pp.xxix-xxxi

3.1.3.5 ST. THOMAS AQUINAS' SYNTHESIS (SCHOLASTIC PHILOSOPHY)

More successfully than any other theologian or philosopher, Aquinas organized the knowledge of his time in the service of his faith. In his effort to reconcile faith with intellect, he created a philosophical synthesis of the works and teachings of Aristotle and other classic sages; of Augustine and other church fathers; of Averroes the great Spanish-Arabian philosopher and physician, who Aquinas referred to "The Commentator" of Avicenna and other Islamic scholars; of Jewish thinkers such as Maimonides (d.1204) and Solomon ben Yehuda ibn Gabirol; and also of his predecessors in the Scholastic tradition. He brought this synthesis into line with the Bible and Roman Catholic doctrine.[150]

Aquinas' synthesis built up the Scholastic philosophy, which means an organized system of truths which are distinct from the dogmas of faith but not opposed to them. This separation and coordination of reason and faith is not found in all Scholastic philosophy, but only during the period of its greatest splendor achieved under Thomas Aquinas.

The period of Christian thought extending from the beginning of the ninth century to the end of the fifteenth has come to be known as Scholasticism, a name taken from the school of philosophy of the University of Paris.

Patristic philosophy reached its climax in the system of Augustine; it was the last great product of classical-Christian civilization. When the Roman Empire fell, the

only institution that was capable of standing for law and order was the church. The Goths sacked Rome but respected the church and offered it protection. The literature and culture of Greece and Rome became almost extinct; the barbarous tribes initiated the Dark Ages. The only philosophy that survived was that which filtered through the writings of the church fathers. From Augustine to the ninth century learning consisted of an ecclesiastical dogmatism, which was spiritually lifeless and it did little better than preserve the traditions of past; Plato and Aristotle were only partially known.

Scholastic philosophy, then, may be divided into:

1. The formative period, extending from the beginning of the ninth century to the middle of the thirteenth

2. The period of maturity, extending a little more than half a century and covering Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus

3. The period of decadence, extending from the death of Scotus to the end of the fifteenth century.

Aquinas's synthesis, which expanded upon the Scholastic philosophy, had been well examined and accepted by other philosophers. Aquinas' accomplishment was immense; his work marks one of the few great culminations in the history of philosophy. After Aquinas, Western philosophers could choose only between humbly following him or striking off in some altogether different direction. In the

[150] *Ibid.*, pp. xxi-xxv.

centuries immediately following his death, the dominant tendency, even among Roman Catholic thinkers, was to adopt the second alternative. Interest in Thomist philosophy began to revive, however, toward the end of the nineteenth century. In the encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (Of the Eternal Father, 1879), Pope Leo XIII recommended that St. Thomas Aquinas' philosophy be made the basis of instruction in all Roman Catholic schools. Pope Pius XII, in the encyclical *Humani Generis* (Of the Human Race, 1950), affirmed that the Thomist philosophy is the surest guide to Roman Catholic doctrine and discouraged all departures from it. Thomism remains a leading school of contemporary thought. Among the thinkers, Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic alike, who have operated within the Thomist framework have been the French philosophers Jacques Maritain and Etienne Gilson.[151]

3.1.3.6 ST. THOMAS AQUINAS' INTERPRETATION OF *SHAJARAT*

The most important of those who declined to accept a piety that exalts the Creator by positive intrinsic deficiencies in creation was St. Thomas Aquinas. With the balance that is one of his chief glories, however he admitted that whether with Plato and Augustine, one says that the intelligibles are participated from God, or with Aristotle and himself that what is participated is the very light that renders things intelligible, "does not matter much".[152]

The light of reason implanted in manly God, the natural power of the human mind that Aristotle had called the "agent intellect", is "as it were, a certain similitude of

[151] Arthur Cushman McGiffert, ***A History of Christian Thought***, pp. 293-294.
[152] ***De Spir. Creat 10 ad 8.***

Uncreated Truth".[153] As Augustine had immersed himself in Plato, Aquinas found the Aristotelian panoply of knowledge within the created structure of man. Intellect, with its passive and active powers, belongs within the human soul. As truly the form of body for Aquinas as for Aristotle, the soul is the single form of man's being and man is profoundly one, for all his wealth of powers. The human soul is by nature incorruptible and a being (*hoc aliquid*) in its own right, destined to inform a body but capable of surviving the dissolution of death because by nature incapable of dissolution.[154]

On the other hand, Aquinas had many reservations about how much man can know. His acceptance of the Aristotelian cosmos, for instance is provisional, and although this is a good account of how things seem (*apparentia salvarentur*), men may find another that will do as well. For all his "demonstrations", Aristotle was handling as truths what are but hypotheses.[155] In philosophy where in principle the human intellect "penetrates to the essence", [156] the essential principles, substantial forms - indeed the essence of even a fly -all remain in fact unknown to man.[157]The theologian, too, must resign himself to a modest accomplishment: the most profound moment in his knowledge of God is the realization that men are ignorant of Him.[158] Within these limitations, content with knowledge, consonant with men of limited being, Aquinas developed both philosophical and theological knowledge.[159] His successors were less patient. Removing from knowledge whatever failed to meet the highest standard of certitude, and working under the

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[153] ***De ver. 11.1***
[154] William of Ockham, ***Philosophical Writings***, p. 44-45
[155] ***In 2 cael. 17***
[156] ***ST 1a2ae, 31.5.***
[157] ***In 1 anim. 1.15; De spir. Creat. 11 ad 3; Symb. 1***
[158] ***De pot. 7.5 ad 14.***
[159] William of Ockham, ***Philosophical Writings***, p. 53

shadow of the Parisian condemnations of 1270 and 1277, they relinquished one proposition after another and assigned to belief what they had thought could be known. To preserve what knowledge might be salvaged, they set out on a road that could end only by restricting knowledge to immediate experience.

Furthermore, to explain the process of knowledge, Thomas Aquinas had resource neither to the innate ideas of Platonism nor the illumination of Augustine. Instead he postulated a cognitive faculty naturally capable of acquiring knowledge of the object, in proportion to that faculty.

He agreed with Aristotle, and admitted that knowledge is obtained through two stages of operation, sensitive and intellective, which are intimately related to one another. The proper object of the sensitive faculty is the particular thing, the individual; the proper object of the intellect is the universal, the idea, and the intelligible.[160]

But the intellect does not attain any idea unless the material for that idea is presented to it by the senses: "*Nihil est in intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu*".[161] The two cognitive faculties, sense and intellect, are naturally capable of acquiring knowledge of their proper object, since both are in potency-the sense, toward the individual form; and the intellect, toward the form of the universal.

The obtaining of the universal presupposes that the sensible knowledge of the object, which lies outside us, comes through the impression of the form of the

[160] St. Thomas Aquinas, ***Summa Theologiae***. Part 1, Chapter 1, pp. 13-14.
[161] ***Ibid***, p. 16.

object upon the sensitive faculty. This is likened to the impression of the seal upon wax.

Upon this material impression the soul reacts according to its nature, that is, psychically, producing knowledge of that particular object whose form had been impressed upon the senses. Thus the faculty, which was in potency is actuated with relation to that object, and knows and expresses within itself knowledge of that particular object.[162]

But how is the passage made from sensitive cognition to that which is intellective, or, rather, how is the individual form, which is now offered by sensible cognition condensed into and idea and thus made the proportionate object of the intellect?

To understand the solution to the problem, it is necessary to recall the theory of Aristotle, which Aquinas makes his own; that is, that the individual form is universal in *potentia*. It is the matter, which makes the form individual. Hence if the form can be liberated from the individualizing matter, or dematerialized, it assumes the character of universality.[163]

According to Thomas Aquinas, this is just what happens through the action of a special power of the intellect, i.e., the power by which the phantasm (sense image) is illuminated. Under the influence of this illumination, the form loses its materiality; that is, it becomes the essence or intelligible species (*species intelligibilis*). Thomas calls this faculty the *intellectus agens* (agent intellect), and

[162] To know further, please refer to ***Ibid***, pp. 12-23
[163] ***Ibid***, p. 25.

it is to be noted that for Thomas the "*intellectus agens*" is not, as the Averroists held, a separate intellect, which is common to all men.[164]

For Aquinas, the agent intellect is a special activity of the cognitive soul, and it is individual and immanent in every intellective soul. The "*species intelligibilis*" is then received by the intellect, which is called passive since it receives its proper object, and become intelligible in act.

Note that according to Aquinas the form, both intelligible and individual, is not that which the mind grasps or understands (this would reduce knowledge to mere phenomenalism), but is the means through which the mind understands the object (individual form) and the essence of the object ("*forma intelligibilis*").[165]

Furthermore, since the cognitive faculty is in potency, when it becomes actuated, it becomes one with the form, which actuates. Thus it may be said, in a certain sense, that the intellect is identified with the determined form, which it knows. For Aquinas all data of sense knowledge and all intelligible things are essentially true. Truth consists in the equality of the intellect with its object, and such concordance is always found, both in sensitive cognition and in the idea. Error may exist in the judgment, since it can happen that a predicate may be attributed to a subject to which it does not really belong.[166]

Besides, the faculty of judgment, Aquinas also admits the faculty of discursive reasoning, which consists in the derivation of the knowledge of particulars from

[164] ***Ibid.***
[165] ***Ibid***, pp. 27-29.

the universal. Deductive, syllogistic demonstration must be carried out according to the logical relationships which exist between two judgments. In this process consists the science, which the human intellect can construct by itself, without recourse either to innate ideas or to any particular illumination.

Based on the above discussion of Aquinas conception of knowledge, we understand that in Aquinas' view, knowledge is obtained through two stages of operations, sensitive and intellective, which are intimately related to one another. The object of sensitive knowledge is the particular thing, while the object of the intellect is the "intelligible", which is arrived at from the particular by abstraction. The intellect has three operations: abstraction, judgment and reasoning.

As we mentioned earlier, in Aquinas' interpretation of Bible, he believes that the tree is the choice between good knowledge and evil knowledge, i. e., the choice of wisdom and knowledge that is reason. As important and good as reason is in its proper place, it is not supreme or ultimate; it is not God.

According to the Greek thinkers, reason is the divine or God. But since the concepts of God and man are correlatives, the Greek concept of man reflects the image of this god. Since reason is god, man viewed in the light of this god, is a rational animal. Reason is the divine part of man. Aristotle says: "It would seem, too, this (reason) is the true self of every man, since it is the supreme and better part. It will be strange, then, if he should choose not his own life, but some other's... What is naturally proper to every creature is the highest and pleasantest

[166] ***Ibid***, pp. 32-33.

for him. And so, to man, this will be the life of Reason, since Reason is in the highest sense, a man's self".[167]

This is not the Biblical view of man or God. God is not reason. God is a person (or more accurately, three persons) whose existence is not in His reason but in His unlimited sovereign free decision and will; man is also a person (or more accurately, a unity of spirit (person) and body) [168]whose existence is also to be found not in his reason but in his limited free decision and will. And since decision involves a reference to an ultimate criterion beyond the self, God, the Biblical view of man is that he is a religious animal, a being who must have a god. Reason is not the divine part in man but is a function of the will of the person. To be is to choose, not to think or to know.

Knowledge and reason depend upon a prior decision as to what is real. "Whatever evidence one accepts, whether that of experience or that of logic, will depend upon neither logic nor experience alone, but upon a decision by the individual concerned in favor of the one or the other".[169]

It is upon decision that any knowledge finally depends. Reason is not the ultimate criterion but the sovereign will of the Creator who made all things and has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ. This basic incompatibility between the Greek and Biblical views of God and man explains the conflict between Greek philosophy and the Christian faith, and the synthesis points of view by Augustine

[167] Aristotle, ***Nicomachean Ethics10.7, 1178a2-7***, which we quoted in William Barret, ***Irrational Man***, p. 78.
[168] See ***Genesis 2.7***

and Aquinas. All attempts to synthesize the classical Greek view of God and man with the Biblical view had been made up by them as we mentioned earlier. In this case, for Aquinas' synthesis of the Greek philosophy and Christian faith, *shajarat* is the unbalanced performance of Adam and Eve toward the three operations of intellect i.e., abstraction, judgment and reasoning. Adam and Eve act are more followed their free wills and the outcome in Eden found counterpart in the wisdom of man, when he acts without the justification of these three operations of intellect.

3.1.4 IMĀM SAYYID QUṬB'S CONCEPTION OF KNOWLEDGE

Imām Sayyid Quṭb was a famous activist and *mufassirūn*. Several of his books such as *Ma'ālim fī Ṭarīq*, *The Four Lights* and *Fī Ẓilāl* may be regarded as semi-autobiographical. Muslim scholars and historians centuries after him have written his traditional biographies.

Furthermore, his conception of knowledge is also unwritten in a specific book, not as well as his interpretations of the Qur'ān in *Fī Ẓilāl*. Although, he wrote the book to teach adults and children, it emphasized Islam as the way of life and educating man into *tawḥīd*. However, we can understand his theories of knowledge from his writings. But, to understand his concept and theories in detail, we must examine the concept of knowledge, as relates to *shajarat*, in the whole *Fī Zilal* and his other books. In his writings of *tafsīr*, Imām Sayyid Quṭb was influenced by the traditional sources i.e., the Qur'ān and *al-Ḥadīth*, the reports

[169] Cherbonnier, "Biblical Metaphysics", ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins (1952), ***Great Books of the Western World***. Volume 8, Chicago, p. 372.

from *ṣaḥābah*, the reports from *tābi'ĭn*, mastery in Arabic language and the contemporary sources especially the ideas of Imām Ḥassan al-Bannā and Muslim Brotherhood's (*Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*).

3.1.4a THE TRADITIONAL SOURCES (THE HOLY QUR'ĀN AND *AL-ḤADĬTH*)

Two sources influenced the writings of Imām Sayyid Quṭb; the Holy Qur'ān and *al-ḥadĭth*. He used verbal description as a method of interpretation of revelations. Imam Sayyid Quṭb states that the Qur'ān is the main law, in all aspects of life, for all Muslims. Muslim scholars overwhelmingly accept the Holy Qur'ān, which contains the words of Allah as well as *al-ḥadĭth*, which contains the saying and doings, actions done with Prophet's approval, as the unique reference in all its aspects.

Imām Sayyid Quṭb examined and discussed the whole text of the Qur'ān beginning with *sūrah al-Fātihah* and ending with *sūrah al-Nās*, in his *Fĭ Ẓilāl*. He then, used the *al-ḥadĭth* as well as several opinions of other Muslim scholars, including those of the *Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*, (of which he was a member), to support his own discussion of revelations. He also referred to reports from *ṣaḥābah* and *tābi'ĭn*, used the Arabic language itself, and did deliberation and deduction in his *tafsĭr*.

3.1.4b IMĀM ḤASSAN AL-BANNĀ AND THE *IKHWĀN: CONTEMPORARY* SOURCES

Al-Imām Ḥassan al-Bannā was born in October 1906 in Maḥmūdiyyah, near Alexandria, Egypt and was assassinated on February 12, 1249. Notwithstanding his relatively short life, Ḥassan al-Bannā is the one of the most influential leaders in the fourteenth Hijri century (twentieth century), playing a central role in Egyptian religious, social and political affairs.[170]

Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Bannā, the father of Ḥassan al-Bannā, worked as a watch-repairer in the southern Egyptian town of al-Maḥmūdiyyah. He was an Islamic scholar, graduated from al-Azhar University. Imām Ḥassan al-Bannā was his oldest son.

His family was very well educated and and followed a very strict Islamic lifestyle. The Imam memorized the Qur'ān at a very young age and eventually joined the Teachers Training Center where after a three year course he placed first in his final examinations. Despite being only sixteen years of age he was admitted to Cairo University because of his intelligence and breadth of knowledge. He graduated from the Faculty of Darul 'Ulum in Cairo and worked in of education in several towns, calling people to follow the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. He was able to guide thousands of people of all classes of his society to the path of Allah.[171]

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[170] Yasser Khalīl (2000), ***Ḥassan al-Bannā: A Great Muslim and Teacher of Da 'wa***. New York: Islamic Center of North America, pp. 5-6.
[171] ***Ibid***, p. 6.

In 1927, at age 21, he took a job as teacher in a state school. In Ismailiah, Egypt for in March 1928, the Imām, his brother and five others gathered in his house and swore to live and die for Islam, paying the foundation for the *Ikhwān*. He started making da'wah in public through lectures and publications and visits to villages and towns. His activity was not only confined to men, as he also established "The Muslims' Mothers Institute" for educating girls according to Islamic teachings in Ismailiah.

The collapse of the Islamic *khilāfa* in 1924AD was a blow for Muslims everywhere. Soon after, Ḥassan al-Bannā established *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn* or the Muslim Brothers/Brotherhood and he became *al-Jamā'ah al-Mursyid al-'Ām* or the groups first General Guide. The group's main objective was and remains the rejuvenation of Islam. Ḥassan al-Bannā's greatest achievement was his ability to create a sophisticated, organizational structure aiming to translate his vision into his real life. However, what distinguishes the *Ikhwān* from other groups, which were established in the twenties and afterwards is the holistic approach of the former. The *Ikhwān* is not merely a social political or religious association or group. [172]

When he was transferred to Cairo, he transferred the headquarters there also. Cairo became the center of Da 'wah and in short time the number of *Ikhwān* reached about a half million. This enormous progress started to concern the British and their followers, the Egyptian politicians. They tried to dissuade Imām al-Bannā from politics but he insisted in remaining in his position. He established a daily newspaper in Cairo by the name *al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*, which enabled

him to address a much larger sector of the public than was possible with with lectures alone.

At the time, *al-Ikhwān* began to spread the principal Islamic idea that Islam is "the comprehensive way of life". This principle albeit considered common sense today, was uncommon at that time even among many Muslim "scholars" who believed that Islam was restricted within the walls of mosque. By the advent World War II, the Muslim Brothers had grown enormously and had become a potent element on the Egyptian scene, attracting significant numbers of members from every way of life.

When the tragedy of Palestine took place, the *Ikhwān* troops were among the most active forces, were able to reach to the gate of Tel Aviv woud have conquered it if it had not been for treason by the Arab rulers at that time. King Farouq of Egypt imprisoned a large number of *Ikhwān*. A plot was made by the British and implemented by their servants to assassinate Imām al-Bannā. He was shot in front of the "Muslim Youth Association" building in March 1949. He was carried to the hospital, where he was left on the floor bleeding - no one tried to save him. Two hours later he was shot, he passed away, at only forty-three years of age.[173]

Ḥassan al-Bannā preferred "educating men" over "writing books" and concentrated his efforts on building and strengthening his *jamā'ah* so that it would keep going unaffected by his absence. This is exactly what happened after his

[172] ***Ibid***, p. 7.
[173] ***Ibid***, pp.9-10.

Istish-hād in 1949. The *jamā'ah* continues its role to the present. This also explains why there are not many books written by al-Imām Ḥassan al-Bannā.

Al-Imām Ḥassan al-Bannā wrote his autobiography in a book that was published in Arabic and English under the name ***Mudhakkirāt al-Da 'wa wa al-Dā 'iyah***[174] or ***The Memoirs of al-Da 'wah and al-Da 'eyah.***[175] He also wrote several books which emphasized on the teachings of Islam such as *Jihād*, Peace in Islam, *al-'Aqā'id* and others.

3.1.4c *IKHWĀN AL-MUSLIMŪN*'S OPINIONS AND THOUGHT

For Imām Sayyid Quṭb, referring to other Muslim thinkers was important to strengthen the ideas of the interpretations of the revelations. However, in order to make strong interpretations, he criticized the ideas and the other Muslim interpretations. After that, he made up his own opinions. In his *tafsīr*, *Fī Ẓilāl*, Imām Sayyid Quṭb had expressed *Ikhwān* opinions directly. Although Imām Sayyid Quṭb interpreted the text of the Qur'ān using his own opinions, his thought had been influenced by Imām Ḥassan al-Bannā, the man who established *Ikhwān* school of thought.

Ikhwān was established in Egypt in 1928, soon after the calamatous collapse of the *khilāfa* in 1924. As a result of that declaration of war against all shapes of Islam in Muslim Countries, the Islamic "revival" entered into the movement phase

[174] This book was published by Dār al-Nashr wa al-Tawzee' wa al-Islamiyyah, Cairo, Egypt.
[175] This book was published by Markazi Maktabah Islami, New Delhi, India.

in the Middle East[176] as branches were established outside of Egypt.[177] *Al-Ikhwān* began to spread the principle Islamic idea: That Islam is "creed and state, book and sword and a way of life"[178]. These principles were uncommon at that time even among many Muslim scholars who believed that Islam was restricted within the walls of the mosque. After a few years, the *Ikhwān* were banned and tortured in most Muslim Countries, but the "mother movement' continued to flourish.

Al-Ikhwān has branches in over seventy countries all over the world. The movement is flexible enough to allow working under the *Ikhwān* name or under other names, adapting to the circumstances of each country. However, all *Ikhwān* groups, in all countries are characterized by the following with respect to their method[179]:

1. Following the *Salaf*: rejecting any action or principle, which contradicts the Qur'ān or Sunna, and inviting people to nothing but them both.
2. Establishing the Sunna: working - as much as possible - to spread the Sunna in every aspect of life
3. Increasing the Iman: by concentrating on the purity of hearts, loving other Muslims for the sake of Allah, and being in remembrance (plus avoiding any Sufi mistakes).

[176] Ḥassan al-Bannā, ***Mudhakkirāt al-Da'wah wa al-Dā'iyah***, Egypt:Dar al-Nashr wa al-Tawzee wa al-Islamiyyah, 1960, pp. 3-5.
[177] Mahmoud 'Abdul Halem, ***al-Ikhwan al-Muslimoon: Events That Made History***, Cairo: Muslim Brotherhood Publishers, 1960, pp. 2-3.
[178] Ḥassan al-Bannā, ***The Message of Imam- u-Shaheed***, Egypt: Muslim Brotherhood Publishers, 1960, p.4.
[179] ***Ibid***, pp. 5-10.

4. Political Activism: by iniating political programs for "Islamising" governments in different countries (after realistic studies) and establishing this program through the convenient ways, which do not conflict with Islam.

5. Stressing Physical Health: by forming sports club and committing members to regular exercise.

6. Enriching Scientific Study: by enhancing the knowledge of members and others about Islam. Members with "syari'ah" major have special study programs.

7. Establishing a Sound Economic Infrastructure: by supporting and or sponsoring any Islamic project and facing its "fiqh" problems. By the way, the only accepted source of money to the *Ikhwan* is its members' own money.

8. Fostering Social ties: by maintaining brotherhood links among the members of the Islamic society.

Furthermore, a huge tree of "sub-goals" branches from these main objectives, which are derived from the Qur'ān and the tradition of the prophet (ṣ.'a. w)[180] are as follows:

[180] ***Ibid***. pp. 10-15 and refer also to Sa'iid Ḥawwā (1962), ***An Introduction to the Da 'wa of al-Ikhwan al-Muslimoon***. Cairo, pp. 22-27.

1. Building the Muslim individual: brother or sister with a strong body, high manners, cultured thought, ability to earn, strong faith, correct worship, conscious of time, of benefit to others, organized and self struggling character.

2. Building the Muslim family: choosing a good wife (husband), educating children Islamically and inviting other families.

3. Building the Muslim society (by building individuals and families) and addressing the problems of the society realistically

4. Building the Muslim state.

5. Building the *Khilāfa* (basically a "shape of unity" between the Islamic states)

6. Mastering the world with Islam.

According to *al-Ikhwān*, objectives number one to four are parallel, interlinked and continuous even after reaching objectives number four, five and six are reached.

Furthermore, *al-Ikhwān* is also emphasized in education. For this movement, the main (not the only) way of "building" is the Islamic education or *tarbiyah*. Their methods are briefly as follows[181]:

1. *Ḥalaqa* (a weekly unit study and practice meeting)
2. *Katibah* (a monthly several-units-meeting)
3. Trip
4. Camp
5. Course
6. Workshop
7. Conference

These educational events are open to both members and non-members, with different established goals, schedules and leaders. The *al-Ikhwān* was open to the public because of the belief that all Muslims are brothers and are to be educated, as well as to ensure that the objectives of the members are achieved.

Al-Ikhwān also believes that a ruling government comes after preparing (most of) society for accepting Islamic laws. Otherwise, ruling a totally corrupt society by way of a militant government-overthrow is a great risk[182]. Preparing society is achieved by: spreading the Islamic culture, education, use of media, mosques and da'wa works in public organizations such as syndicates, parliaments, student unions and other organizations[183]. Parallel to that, as another step preparation,

[181] 'Ali Abdel Haleem (1962), ***Means of Education of Ikhwan al-Muslimoon***. Egypt: Muslim Brotherhood Publishers, pp. 19-22.
[182] ***Ibid***, p. 24.
[183] Muḥamed Aḥmed ar-Rashīd (1969), ***The Path***. Cairo, pp. 23-25.

Muslims are trained to administer political, economical, education, social and student organization efficiently (and Islamically) as another preparation step. Moreover, the *Ikhwān* are not intent upon being "the rulers" themselves. Any leader who wants to establish a true Islamic government is welcomed and will be supported and assited by the *Ikhwān*.

Throughout their history, *al-Ikhwān* preferring work and action over words and propaganda have had many accomplishments. *Al-Ikhwān* has played and continues to play a major role in the struggle to liberate Muslim's land. Ten thousand *Ikhwān* volunteers from Egypt, Syria and other countries participated in the 1948 Palestine War for liberation. They have served to raised the consciousness of Muslim all over Islamic World and restore to them the spirit of struggle and dignity; the *Ikhwān* have played a role in liberating Muslims land from colonialists' powers. The *Ikhwān* were active in Central Asian Muslim republics since the 1970's, in such places as Tajikistan and most recently in the struggle for Afghanistan and Kashmir.

Moreover, the school of *Ikhwān* counts among its graduates many of the thinkers, scholars and the activists of this century. These are a few: Ḥassan al-Bannā, Sayyid Quṭb, Abdul Qāder 'Audah, Muṣṭapha al-Siba'yi, Ḥassan al-Hudaybi, 'Umar al-Tilmisani, Yūsuf al-Qaraḍawi, Sa'iid Ḥawwā, 'Abdullah 'Azam, Muḥammad Ḥamed Abul-Nasr, Rached al-Ghannoushi, Mahfouz al-Nahnah, Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Rashid, Fatḥi Yakan, Shaikh Abdul Fattah Abū Ghuddah, Shaikh Aḥmad Yaseen, Muṣṭapha Mashhour, Muneer al-Ghadban, Shaikh Abdul

Majeed al-Zindanee, Shaikh Syed Sabiq, Shaikh Muḥammad al-Ghazzālī and many others.

The contributions of these thinkers, scholars and activists to Muslim thought in the twentieth century are well known. Stemming from the notion that Islam is comprehensive for all areas of life, the thinkers and activists who have gone through the training of the *Ikhwān* have branched out to address as many areas of Muslim life as possible. Theories have been developed in the areas of *fiqh*, finance, economics, political system, education and such.

From the late 1950's and early 1960's to the present, the *Ikhwān* contributed to establishing a firm basis for Islamic communities in Europe and North America. This was done mainly through fostering the establishment of local community organizations, Islamic Schools, National Associations and special interest organizations such as Medical, Scientific and Cultural organizations.

The *Ikhwān* were the main motivators behind setting up experiments in Islamic financing on a nationaly and internationaly viable scale. The theory and practical requirements needed to set up an Islamic banking system came from among the ranks of the *Ikhwān*. From the earliest years, establishing an Islamic economic system was a priority for the *Ikhwān*. Ḥassan al-Bannā, Sayyid Quṭb, Yūsuf al-Qaraḍawi and numerous other scholars laid down some of the groundwork for practical theories of Islamic finance. Further specialized writers provided the practical basis for Islamic Financial Institutions, a number of which were developed in Muslim countries.

3.1.4.2 IMĀM SAYYID QUṬB'S INTERPRETATION OF *SHAJARAT*

The *Ikhwān*, especially Sayyid Quṭb and his friends, played an important role in developing the Islamic system in all aspects of life. Imām Sayyid Quṭb emphasized the importance of knowledge among the Muslim and Muslimah, based on the creation of Adam and Eve as honored creatures who had been taught *al-Asma'*. Imām Sayyid Quṭb also emphasized the importance of the concept of *shajarat* as mentioned in the Qur'ān, in defining the concept of the true knowledge.[184]

Based on God's command to Adam and Eve to avoid *shajarat*, Sayyid Quṭb implied that there is importance in balancing faith with *'ilm* (knowledge) and *'amal* (practices), in balancing between the spiritual and the physical. Therefore, he emphasized integration between the traditional (Islamic) sciences and the modern (Western) sciences. For Sayyid Quṭb and *al-Ikhwān*, all sciences in this entire world referred to the *tawḥīd*. Therefore, Muslim scholars play an important role in explaining the importance of all sciences and their relation to *tawḥīd*. In this case, it does not matter if the subject is purely science or history, but the objective of that subject must relate to *tawḥīd* as well as the subject of *fiqh*, *tafsīr* and other traditional subjects. The point is that Islam is not only a message, Islam is also the method. The message of Islam carried out by the methods of pacifist Christian missionaries is unlikely to yield the desired results. Such an approach may help to turn Islam into a ritualized religion, but it cannot achieve the goals of Islam. The complete message of Islam includes the method of Islam. This is why there is so much emphasis in Islam on the Qur'ān, the Sunnah and the Seerah of

the Prophet Muhammad (ṣ.'a.w.) And this is why the procedures and the historical processes required to establish the Islamic state are inseparable parts of Islam.

Further, *al-Ikhwān* emphasized the theme of their movement as follows: "Allah is our objective. The messenger is our leader. Qur'ān is our law, Jihad is our way and Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope".

Based on the two major sources, the Qur'ān, *al-Ḥadīth*, and also on te ideas of Imām Ḥassan al-Bannā and *Ikhwān*, Imām Sayyid Quṭb emphasized that Islam is the way of life in all aspects of life, and that the main knowledge is the balancing of faith in *tawḥīd*, practice, *and iḥsān*.

In Arabic, *Islām* is a verbal noun that is derived from the root *aslama,* which means gave up, surrender or submitted. In purely etymological terms, Islam thus signifies the idea of surrender or submission.[185] Therefore, according to this logic, the religion of Islam can be characterized as the religion of self surrender, which means that Islam is the conscious and rational submission of the contingent and limited human will to the absolute and omnipotent will of God. The type of surrender Islam requires is a deliberate, conscious, and rational act made by the person who knows with both intellectual certainty and spiritual vision that Allah, who is the Qur'anic discourse, is reality Himself. The person who knows God, he will be called Muslim and she will be called Muslimah, which means one who submits to the divine truth, and whose relationship with God is governed by *taqwā*, the consciousness of humankind's responsibility toward his or her creator.

[184] Imām Sayyid Quṭb, ***Fī Ẓilāl***, vol. III, pp. 125-126
[185] Ibn Manẓūr, ***Lisān al-'Arab***. Volume 6, refer to the word *aslama*

But the consciousness of God alone is not sufficient to make a person Muslim. Neither is it enough to be merely born a Muslim or to be raised in an Islamic cultural context. The concept of *taqwā* implies that the believer has the added responsibility of acting in a way that is in accordance with the three types of knowledge previously discussed. The sincere believer must endeavor at all times to maintain himself or herself in the constant state of submission to God. By doing so, he or she attains the honored title of 'the slave of God or *'abd Allah*, for he or she recognizes that all power and all agency belong to God alone.[186] 'Allah has willed it. There is no power but Allah",[187] prove this.

Trusting in the mercy of his or her divine master, yet fearing God's wrath, the slave of God or *'abd Allah* will walk the road of life with careful steps, making his or her actions deliberate so that he or she will not stray from the path that God has laid out for him or her.[188]

Therefore, the most important theological point is that there is one God, Allah the God Most High, full of Grace and Mercy, universal and beyond comparison, who creates and sustains both the material universe and the world of human experience. "Allah has created the heavens and the earth in Truth; exalted is He above the partners they ascribe to Him" proves this. All other forms of so called truth, are either false in their initial premises or contingently or continently true

[186] Ahmad al-Kadi (2001), "Fi Dilal al-Qur'an: Sayyid Qutb the Great Muslim in 20th Century", ***The Message***. No. 5, New York: Islamic Center of North America, pp. 21-22; refer also to Toshihiko Izutsu (1966), ***Ethico-Religious Concept in Islam***. Montreal: Mc.Gill University Press, (I can't find the exact page of this book. The book is also out of print. I only found it in the collection of manuscript in the Library of Congress, United States of America). Please refer to Toshihiko Izutsu (1980), ***God and Man in the Koran: Semantic of the Koranic Weltanschauung***. New York: Arno Press, pp. 11-17.

[187] Refer to ***sūrah al-Kahfi*** (18): 39.

[188] Refer to ***sūrah al-Fātiḥah*** (1): 5-7.

only in limited situations. The recognition of this fact produces an alchemical effect on the human soul that forever transforms the outlook of the believer.[189] This is eloquently described in the following passage from *Fi Ẓilāl* a commentary by Sayyid Quṭb:

"When a conception that sees nothing in the world but the reality of Allah establishes itself in the human mind and heart, it is accompanied by the vision of this genuine, permanent reality in every other being that has sprung from it. This is the stage at which the heart feels the hand of Allah in everything and beyond which its feels nothing but Allah in the whole universe. There would be no other reality to be felt.

It is also accompanied by the attribution of every event and every movement in this life and in this universe to the first and only cause, that is Allah, who brings other causes about and influences their effectiveness. The Qur'ān takes great care to establish this truth in the Muslims' concept of faith. It has always put aside apparent causes and has associated events directly with the will of Allah.[190] Allah says, "When you threw (a handful[191] of dust) it was not your act, but Allah's".[192] Allah says, "There is no triumph except that given by Allah".[193] Again Allah says, "You have no will except as Allah wills".[194]

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[189] Vincent J. Cornell, ***Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge***, p. 70

[190] Sayyid Qutb, ***Fi Ẓilāl***. Volume I, pp. 110-112; Volume II, pp. 5-6.

[191] When the battle began, the Holy Apostle prayed, and threw a handful of dust or sand at the enemy, symbolical of their rushing blindly to their fate. This had a great psychological effect. Every act in the battle is ascribed to God, as it was in His cause, and it was not undertaken except by His command. A. Yūsuf 'Alī, ***The Holy Qur'ān***, p. 419.

[192] Refer to ***sūrah al-Anfāl*** (8): 17.

[193] Refer to ***sūrah Āli 'Imrān*** (30): 126 and ***sūrah al-Anfāl*** (8): 10. All help comes ultimately from God. In special cases it may take special forms to put heart into us, and to fit in with our feelings and our psychology. Therefore whatever happens, whether there is a miracle or not, all help proceeds from God. Man should not to be so arrogant as to suppose that his own resources will

That passage shows that the faith such as Islam, based on certain knowledge, is both liberation and a limitation. It is liberation in the sense that certainty of the divine reality allows the human spirit to expand both upward and outward, so that the consciousness becomes three-dimensional. But it is also limitation, because with the knowledge of God comes a concomitant awareness of the limits and responsibilities imposed on the person as a created being. Therefore, the true Muslim who submits to God cannot delude himself or herself by claiming that he or she is the sole author of his or her destiny. He or she knows that such a statement is absurd, for a person's fate is routinely influenced by factors beyond his or her control.[195]

Besides, the middle position between the limits and possibilities of human agency can be found in doctrine of choice or *ikhtiyār*. According to this doctrine, the foreknowledge or *qadā'* of an all-powerful and all just God governs human being as well all creatures. But, however, this does not mean that the believer just throws up his hands in resignation and does nothing on his own behalf. Quite the opposite. According to this perspective, God's determination of affairs is immutable only on the universal level and the level of the whole. On the level of the part, the necessity of meaningful choice between good and evil demands that

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change the current of the world plan. God helps those who show constancy, courage and discipline, and use all the human means at their disposal, not those who fold their hands and have no faith. But God's help is determined on considerations exalted far above our petty human motive, and by perfect wisdom, of which we can have only faint glimpses. A. Yūsuf 'Alī, ***The Holy Qur'ān***, p. 155.

[194] Refer to ***sūrah al-Insān*** (76): 30. Man in himself is weak; he must seek God's Grace; without it he can do nothing; with it he can do all. For God knows all things, and His wisdom comprehends the good of all.

[195] Sayyid Qutb, ***Fī Ẓilāl***. Volume II, pp.7-8; Toshihiko Izutsu, ***God and Man in the Koran: Semantic of the Koranic Weltanschauung,*** pp. 18-26; and to know the comparison between the knowledge, *taqlīd* and *ikhtiyār*, please refer to Richard M. Frank's (1998), "Knowledge and *Taqlīd*: The Foundations of Religious Belief in Classical Asharism", ***Journal of the American Oriental Society,*** January-March, pp. 37-62.

absolute predestination be replaced by the possibility of human agency which allows the human being to choose between ethical alternatives.[196]

On the other hand, at the personal level, an individual's fate or *qadar* is to a large extent dependent on the choices that he or she makes during his or her life. These may be ethical or moral choices such as political choice to determine who will be the next caliph after saidina Abū Bakr (r. 'a.) or eschatological choices such as believing that the Imam Mahdi will return at the end time. In other words, each person's fate is the result of an ongoing and continuous interaction, on many levels and over many years, between the human will and will of God. That is, each individual makes his or her choices freely, but the option to choose is divinely determined and thus beyond the individual's ability to control.[197]

Therefore, for the Muslim, belief in God's determination of affairs is not fatalism but common sense. A believer feels liberated in knowing his or her limits, because the acceptance of what can never be changed removes the worry and frustration of striving in vain and opens the door to constructive engagement with the possible. Just as knowledge of the truth compels the person to accept God as Creator and Sustainer of the universe on the level of the macrocosm, the same knowledge requires him or her to accept the givens of material life on the level of the microcosm.[198]

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[196] Sayyid Qutb (1944), ***The Four Lights***. Cairo, pp. 27-30; Charles Le Gai Eaton (1994), ***Islam and Destiny of Man***. Cambridge: Islamic Text Society, p. 97; Toshihiko Isutzu, ***Ethico-Religious Concept in the Qur'an,*** (cannot find the actual pages).
[197] Sayyid Qutb, ***Fī Ẓilāl***. Volume IX, pp. 117-119; Charles Le Gai Eaton, ***Islam and Destiny of Man***, pp. 98-110.
[198] Vincent J. Cornell, ***Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge***, p. 71.

On the other hand, either a person puts his or her mind at ease by practicing what some Christians refer to as 'letting go and letting God', or he or she suffers the endless frustration of the 'secular doctrinaire' who vainly believes that humankind can overcome all obstacles, only to find that no strategy can save him from death.[199]

The Qur'ān admonishes such people in this following verse: " Do not be like those who forgot God, so that God made them forget their own souls".[200]

Accordingly, Frithjof Schuan, defines Islam in his book *Understanding Islam* "as the juncture between God as such and man as such". He adds that when the Muslim conceives of God, it is not in the sense that God can manifest Himself in a certain way and in a certain time, but independently from history that God is what He is, and also that He creates and is revealed by His nature. Conversely, when the Muslim is conceived as the rational agent, it is not in the sense that he is lost and is need of a saving miracle, but in the sense that he is created after the image of God, is given an intelligence capable of conceiving of the Absolute, and a will capable of choosing that which will guide it.[201] Therefore, if humankind is to be saved through faith, and the essence of faith is knowledge, then it is incumbent upon God as the source of all knowledge to provide humanity with the knowledge that will enable it to apprehend the truth and thus save itself. In this sense the

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[199] Frithjof Schuon (1994), ***Understanding Islam***. The English translation of France -***Comprendre L'Islam***. Indiana: World Wisdom Books, pp.22-25. He was the noted writer on comparative religion.

[200] Refer to ***sūrah al-Hasyr*** (59): 19. To forget God is to forget the only Reality. As we are only reflected realities, how can we understand or do justice to or remember ourselves, when we forget the very source of our being.

[201] Please refer to Chapter Two, which discussed the Concept of Man in Islam and Bible. The image of God and man according to Bible is widely discussed in that chapter. There is different between the God's image in Islam and Christianity.

message of Islam echoes that of the Gospel: "Yea shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free".[202]

Sayyid Quṭb agreed to the above explanation although he received criticism from certain Muslim scholars who categorized him as a "dangerous thinker".[203] They claimed that he denied the importance of *madhab* (sect) but only emphasized that Islam was the only and the best result in all aspects of life (without *taqlīd* to any *madhab*). Further, they claimed that he was also influenced by Christian thought, which in this case was unproven. Actually, Imām Sayyid Quṭb had emphasized that *taqlīd* to only one *madhhab* or to any *madhhab* without knowledge will make Muslims faith weak. But the other Muslim thinkers had misunderstood his views.

For Imām Sayyid Quṭb, there was another important ethical concept known as *ihsān*. This term was mentioned in the *Ḥadīth* of Gabriel or *al-Ḥadīth* Jibrīl, which has long been regarded by Muslims as one of the most important statements on Islamic faith and practice. In that *ḥadīth*, the prophet tells to Jibril about Islam, Iman or faith and *ihsan*. In that *ḥadīth*, the prophet mentioned that *ihsān* means, "It is to worship Allah as if you see Him; for if you do not see Him; surely He sees you".

In addition, in the Qur'ān, the concept of active virtue or *ihsān* is especially linked to the concept of justice or *'adl*.[204] This connection between virtuous and just

[202] Frithjof Schuan, ***Understanding Islam,*** pp. 27-28.
[203] To know further, please refer to
[204] Sayyid Quṭb (1948), ***Social Justice in Islam***. Cairo: Muslim Brotherhood Publishers, pp. 33-36. One Sufi social critic was so impressed by the complementarily of truth and justice that he choose to conceptualize nearly all of Islam around it. This was Abu -l Abbas al Sabti (d. 1204), the patron saint of Marrakesh and the North African equivalent of Mother Theresa or St. Francis of Assisi in Christianity. In a hagiographic work that was written by one of his disciples, al-Sabti

forms of action is clearly expressed in one of the most famous ethical verses of the Qur'ān: "Verily Allah commands justice (*'adl*, the doing of good (*iḥsān*), and giving to one's near relatives; He forbids acts of wickedness, vice (*munkar*), and lust (*bagha*)".[205]

In a later verse of the Qur'ān, the concept of justice was expanded to include the notion of epistemological truth. This occurs in a discussion of the ends for which God created the universe: "Not but for just ends (*ill bi al-ḥaqq*) did Allah create the heavens and the earth and all that is between them."[206] In this verse, *al-ḥaqq* not only expresses the idea of truth in an abstract sense, but it also implies the notion of collective and individual rights (*ḥuqūq*), as in human rights (*ḥuqūq al-insān*) or even divine rights (*ḥuqūq Allah*). Therefore, that *ḥadīth* defines active virtue as worshipping God; it is clear that this involved much more than mere perfection of the ritual observances of Islam.

According to this statement, the epistemological and behavioral complementarily of faith and practice coincides with the moral complementarily of truth and justice. Therefore, this is one of the main reasons why Sūfis and politically active Islamic reformists have taken the term *ihsān* to connote the highest degree of Islamic practices.[207]

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discusses the social meaning of *ihsān* and its important to the spiritual life of Muslims: To know further about it, please refer to Vincent J. Cornell (1998), ***Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism***. Austin, Texas: University Texas Press, pp. 33-66; Vincent J. Cornell, ***Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge***, pp. 98-105.

[205] ***Sūrah al-Naḥl*** (16): 90.

[206] ***Sūrah al-Rūm*** (30): 8.

[207] Sayyid Quṭb, ***Social Justice in Islam***, pp. 44-45; Vincent J. Cornell, ***Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge***, p. 98.

Furthermore, the concept of Oneness of God (*tawḥīd*) is the essential prerequisite for *iḥsān*. *Tawḥīd* as an ethical concept involves more than anything else the relinquishing of all sense of personal ownership or possession. This is because the affirmation of divine reality that is expressed in the declaration of God's oneness implies the negation of all forms of contingent existence. If the goods of the material world become the goals of a person's life, they are functionally equivalent to idols. The material world thus becomes an object of worship whose mastery of the human being increases in direct proportion to the importance it is given. "Everything that masters a person is his god,"says al-Sabti. For this reason to be a true *muwaḥḥid* or affirmer of God's oneness, the human being must divest himself of everything but Allah-the One God, Absolute and Unique.[208]

From that passage, we know that man is the honored creature to whom was given the task as the vicegerent on the earth to spread the concept of Oneness of God. Adam proved himself as the vicegerent. These same tasks – those of caliph and vicegerent were then given to all the prophets – in order to spread the concept of Oneness of God. Thus, the teaching of Oneness of God was spread worldwide. Although the human being was created as the vicegerent of God on this earth, more often than not he fails to live up to the responsibilities of vicegerency because of heedleeness or vice: " And when your Lord said to the angels, 'Verily I shall place on the earth a vicegerent', they said, "Will You place upon it one who will make mischief therein and shed blood while we praise You and glorify You?"[209].

[208] Sayyid Qutb, ***Ibid*** ; Vincent J. Cornell, ***Realm of the Saint***, p.22
[209] ***Sūrah al-Baqarah*** (2): 30. This verses also discussed earlier in Chapter One. Please refer to pp.

In this sense, Sayyid Quṭb as well as al-Sabti reminded all Muslims and said, "by ignoring the ethical dimension of Islamic practice, the salvation of both society and the individual may be lost and its antithesis, social discord or perdition, may be found". In addition, through his selfless devotion to the poor, he shamed those who neglected their responsibility to their fellow Muslims and reminded them through his acts of charity that the greatest losers by their works[210] are "those whose effort is wasted on the life of the world, although they believe that they are doing good and well".[211] For those who did not heed his warning, al-Sabti reiterated the Qur'ān's stern admonition: "Those who desire the life of the world and its glitter will pay the price of their deeds in (this world) without any alleviation".[212]

Based on the above explanations, we can understand why Imām Sayyid Quṭb was considered to be a "dangerous thinker" by certain other Muslim scholars.

For Imām Sayyid Quṭb, the Qur'ān is the only and the basis of law and Islam is the only way of life. All aspects of life are based on only the pure teachings of Islam. Further, *taqlīd* to only one *madhhab* or to any *madhhab* without understanding its concepts and without knowledge will make Muslims weak. Therefore, knowledge is essential in this life. The balancing of sciences is an important part of life; no matter what the subject is, it must be linked to *tawhīd*.

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[210] Sayyid Quṭb, ***Social Justice in Islam***, pp. 55-56; Vincent J. Cornell, ***Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge***, pp. 104.
[211] ***Sūrah al-Kahfi*** (28): 104.
[212] ***Sūrah Hūd*** (11): 15.

Further, for Imām Sayyid Quṭb, the concept of the true "*ilm* of *shajarat*" is the true meaning of happiness that can be found in the proper balance between knowledge or *'ilm* and practice or *'amal*. This applies equally to acts that are purely religious in nature and to those that are essentially social. Faith, like speech, is both social and individual. Acts of faith always involve a dialogue- either between the worshiper and the object of his or her worship (i.e. Allah), or between the actor and his fellows in a religious community. It is means that faith which is not expressed in the context of structured social relationships is not faith at all. Good faith is based on proper of knowledge or *'ilm* and the best of practical or *'amal* which is associated with the ethical dimension of Islamic practices and social relationships.