

«مقاله پژوهشی»

## بررسی معناشناسانه واژگان مترادف در دو آیه «بشرناه بغلام حلیم» و «بشرناه بغلام حلیم» از جنبه تربیتی

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### چکیده

این پژوهش به تحلیل معناشناختی دو تعبیر قرآنی «غلام حلیم» و «غلام حلیم» در آیات مربوط به بشارت الهی درباره فرزندان ابراهیم (ع) می‌پردازد. بیان مسئله آن است که چرا قرآن در توصیف یکی از فرزندان از واژه «حلیم» و در توصیف دیگری از واژه «غلام» استفاده کرده است و این تفاوت چه پیامدهای تربیتی دارد. اهمیت تحقیق از آن جهت است که معناشناسی واژگان مترادف در قرآن به فهم لایه‌های عمیق‌تری از تربیت انبیا کمک می‌کند. پرسش اصلی تحقیق این است: «تفاوت معنایی حلیم و غلام در بافت قرآنی چیست و چه دلالت‌های تربیتی در پرورش نسل دارد؟» روش تحقیق، تطبیقی است و با استفاده از منابع تفسیری، لغوی، و مطالعات معناشناسی قرآن، دو صفت برجسته یعنی «غلام» و «حلیم» را در دو آیه متناظر بررسی می‌کند. یافته‌ها نشان می‌دهد «غلام» به جنبه معرفتی و عقلانی انسان اشاره دارد، درحالی‌که «حلیم» به جنبه کنترلی، اخلاقی و مدیریت هیجانات مرتبط است. نتیجه این تحلیل نشان می‌دهد تربیت قرآنی بر تلفیق دانش و حلم در شکل‌گیری شخصیت مطلوب تأکید دارد.

### واژه‌های کلیدی

قرآن کریم، معناشناسی، بشارت، غلام حلیم، غلام حلیم.

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## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# A semantic Analysis of the Synonymous Words in the Two Verses "Bashsharnāhu bi Ghulāmin 'Alīm" and "Bashsharnāhu bi Ghulāmin Ḥalīm" from an Educational Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

The present study analyzes the semantic dimensions of the two Qur'anic expressions "Ghulāmin 'Alīm" (a knowledgeable boy) and "Ghulāmin Ḥalīm" (a forbearing boy) in the verses related to God's glad tidings about the children of Abraham. The research question is 'Why the Qur'an uses the word "'Alīm" (knowledgeable) to describe one of the sons and the word "Ḥalīm" (forbearing) to describe another?' 'What educational implications this difference entails?' The significance of the research lies in the fact that the semantic study of near-synonymous vocabulary in the Qur'an helps us grasp deeper layers of prophetic upbringing. The main question of the study is: 'What is the semantic difference between 'Alīm and Ḥalīm in the Qur'anic context, and what educational implications does it have for nurturing the next generation?' The research method is comparative, and by drawing on exegetical sources, lexicons, and Qur'anic semantic studies, it examines these two prominent attributes, "'Alīm" and "Ḥalīm," in the two parallel verses. The findings indicate that "'Alīm" refers to the cognitive and rational dimension of the human being, whereas "Ḥalīm" is related to the dimensions of self-control, ethics, and emotion regulation. The conclusion of this analysis shows that Qur'anic education emphasizes the integration of knowledge and forbearance in forming an ideal personality.

## KEYWORDS

The Holy Qur'an, Semantics, Glad Tidings, Ghulāmin Ḥalīm, Ghulāmin 'Alīm.



## Introduction

The Holy Qur'an, the book of guidance and education, is a discourse that stands at the highest level of eloquence and inimitability. In this heavenly discourse, the choice of every word, especially in describing central figures such as the children of the prophets, is made with a precision that goes beyond purely formal and lexical meanings and can point to the depth of the text's educational messages. This article focuses on the comparison and semantic analysis of two prominent attributes, namely "ʿAlīm" and "Ḥalīm," in two corresponding verses.

The verses under discussion are:

A) *Fa Bashsharnāhu bi Ghulāmin ʿAlīm* (al-Dhārīyāt: ٥١);

B) *Fa Bashsharnāhu bi Ghulāmin Ḥalīm* (al-Sāffāt: ١٠١).

Although both words, at first glance, refer to moral and cognitive perfections and are both applied to a "Ghulām" (son), the subtle difference in the choice of the word form and semantic root calls for a precise semantic investigation so that we may derive the educational implications of this duality.

## ١. Statement of the Problem

The verses of the Holy Qur'an always contain precise semantic subtleties, in which the choice of words is purposeful and connected to the educational message of the text. In the two verses "*Fa Bashsharnāhu bi Ghulāmin ʿAlīm*" and "*Fa Bashsharnāhu bi Ghulāmin Ḥalīm*," the difference between "ʿAlīm" and "Ḥalīm" raises a fundamental question. 'What is the relationship between the personalities of the children of Abraham, whom exegetes identify as Isaac and Ishmael, and these attributes?' 'Why does the Qur'an introduce each of them with a different description?' 'Are these

differences merely for rhetorical variety or does each referring to a specific aspect of human perfection that is needed on the path of prophethood and conveying the message?' The present study aims to answer how two related yet distinct attributes outline a complete model of upbringing.

## ٢. Significance and Necessity of the Study

The importance of this research can be explained along two main axes:

١) A more precise understanding of the semantics of near-synonymous words in the Qur'an: One of the challenges in Qur'anic studies is distinguishing among words that appear to be synonymous (such as *ʿIlm* and *Ḥilm* in this case). This distinction helps in correctly understanding the Qur'an's educational message and its rhetorical miracle, showing that no word has been placed in its position without purpose.

٢) Application of these meanings in contemporary religious education: Understanding the attributes of "*ʿIlm*" and "*Ḥilm*" plays a key role in the process of nurturing a sound generation. If education focuses solely on the acquisition of knowledge and neglects moral dimensions and self-control, the outcome will be incomplete. By differentiating between these two, this study proposes a comprehensive model of religious upbringing (Muṣṭafawī, ١٩٨٨ AD/١٣٦٠ SH: ٢, ١٧٦).

## ٣. Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are as follows:

A) To conduct a semantic analysis of the word "ʿAlīm" in the Qur'anic and lexical context;

B) To conduct a semantic analysis of the word "Ḥalīm" in the Qur'anic and lexical context;

C) To explain the descriptive relationship of these two words with the destiny and role of the children of Abraham;

D) To extract the educational implications of the difference between these two concepts for nurturing the next generation.

#### ٤. Literature Review

Numerous studies have been conducted on Qur'anic attributes, but direct focus on the semantic distinction between "ʿAlīm" and "Ḥalīm" within the dual context of the children of Abraham has received less attention:

A) The article by Ahmadi Bighash (٢٠٢٠ AD/١٣٩٩ SH), titled "A Semantic Study of the Word *Ḥilm* with Emphasis on the Views of the Exegetes of Both Sects (Sunni and Shia)," examines *Ḥilm* as one of God's attributes as well as an attribute of the divine prophets, mentioned ١٠ times in the Qur'an, and then discusses words that commonly accompany *Ḥalīm*, such as *Ghafūr*, *Ghanīyy*, *Shakūr*, and *ʿAlīm*. Thus, his work is general in nature. The difference between the present study and Ahmadi Bighash's article is, first, that it focuses specifically on the two words *Ḥalīm* and *ʿAlīm* in the two verses ٥١ of surah *al-Dhāriyāt* and ٣٧ surah *al-Ṣāffāt*, and second, that it approaches the topic from an educational perspective and examines it within the Abrahamic family.

B) Mokhtari et al. (٢٠١٦ AD/١٣٩٥ SH), in the article "A Semantic Analysis of the Word *Ḥilm* and Its Derivatives in the Qur'an and *Nahj al-Balāghah* Based on Context Theory," conclude that this word encompasses meanings such as patience, forgiveness, calmness, reason, sleep and dreams, as well as the intellectual maturity of a person in childhood; depending on the position and context of the text, one or more of these semantic aspects become

manifest. However, a comparative examination of it alongside *ʿIlm* within a shared context, and the differentiation of the educational roles of these two attributes, lay outside the main scope of their study.

C) Fallah (٢٠٢٢ AD/١٤٠١ SH), in the article "An Investigation of the Semantic Components of *ʿIlm* Based on Collocational Relations in *Nahj al-Balāghah*," examines the word *ʿIlm* in *Nahj al-Balāghah* from the perspective of syntagmatic relations and through a descriptive-analytical method. The findings of the study indicate that the collocating words reflection, reasoning, action, and *Ḥilm* have a meaningful relationship with *ʿIlm* and serve to intensify and reinforce it.

The novelty of the present study lies in its comparative examination of the two words within the shared context of the family of Abraham, together with the extraction of their educational implications. This demonstrates how these two attributes complement one another in the structure of a complete faithful personality. Accordingly, a lexical and terminological analysis of the two words *ʿAlīm* and *Ḥalīm* is undertaken, and the semantic differences and educational implications arising from this distinction constitute the central focus of the article.

#### ٥. Semantic Analysis of *ʿAlīm* and *Ḥalīm*

This section provides a precise lexical and terminological examination of the two key words, and then analyzes their differences and educational implications on the basis of Qur'anic context.

##### ٥.١. Lexical Analysis of *ʿAlīm*

The word *ʿAlīm* is derived from the trilateral root (*ʿ-l-m*), a root whose central signification in classical lexicographical texts has been

understood as "Knowledge, perception, and awareness of the reality of things." *Ibn Manẓūr* describes its fundamental meaning as the "Appearance of the effect of the known object in the mind"; that is, knowledge is realized when the effects of a thing penetrate the human soul (*Ibn Manẓūr*, ١٩٩٤ AD/١٤١٤ AH: ١١, ٤٥). *Fīrūzābādī* likewise defines *ʿilm* as a kind of firm and stable awareness arising from true perception (*Fīrūzābādī*, ١٩٨٤ AD/١٤٠٥ AH: ٣, ٨١). *Khalīl ibn Aḥmad*, in "*al-ʿAyn*," emphasizes that the essence of knowledge is the imprinting of the true meaning of a thing upon the soul, not merely knowing its word or concept (*Khalīl ibn Aḥmad*, ١٩٨٨ AD/١٤٠٩ AH: ٤, ٢١٢). *Ibn Fāris*, in "*Maqāyīs al-Lughah*," also traces the root (*ʿ-l-m*) to the meaning of "Distinction and marking out the truth," noting that true knowledge is accompanied by the clarification of the path of understanding (*Ibn Fāris*, ١٩٩٤ AD/١٤١٥ AH: ٤, ٢٠٩). *Rāghib Isfahānī* likewise defines knowledge as the "Acquisition of the form of the known object in the mind," thus viewing *ʿilm* as an existential and objective process, not merely the reception of information (*Rāghib*, ١٩٩٢ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ٣٥١).

From the perspective of morphological structure, *ʿAlīm* is on the pattern *Faʿīl*; a pattern that in Arabic is used to convey intensity, continuity, and firmness of an attribute. According to *Muṣṭafawī*'s analysis, this pattern indicates that knowledge in a person's character is not only stable and deep-rooted, but has also become a kind of "Psychic Disposition" (*Muṣṭafawī*, ١٩٨١ AD/١٣٦٠ SH: ٢, ١٤٤). For this reason, there is a fundamental difference between *ʿĀlim* and *ʿAlīm*: "An *ʿĀlim* is one who knows, whereas an *ʿAlīm* is one in whom knowledge has become deeply ingrained and transformed into part of his identity and essence. This point has also been emphasized in

lexical and exegetical sources. *Ṭabāṭabāʾī* notes that the attribute *ʿAlīm* denotes knowledge that is continuous and penetrating, knowledge that is connected to practical wisdom and guidance, not mere possession of information (*Ṭabāṭabāʾī*, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ١١, ١٨١).

In comparison with other derivatives of the root (*ʿ-l-m*) and similar words, *ʿAlīm* carries a distinctive semantic weight. Unlike *Khabīr*, which denotes awareness of the hidden layers of matters, or *ʿĀrif*, which is more concerned with immediate or experiential knowledge, *ʿAlīm* is a more comprehensive attribute, encompassing theoretical understanding, analytical capacity, and the ability to apply knowledge in complex situations (*Rāghib*, ١٩٩٢ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ٣٥٢). *Ṭabrisī*, in "*Majmaʿ al-Bayān*," points out that *ʿAlīm* includes both theoretical knowledge and practical wisdom; that is, the *ʿAlīm* person is capable of correct understanding, judgment, and action (*Ṭabrisī*, ١٩٩٣ AD/١٣٧٢ SH: ٧, ٣٢٤). *Qurṭubī* also considers the signification of *ʿAlīm* to be broader than the mere concept of knowing, describing it as a kind of "Comprehensive grasp of knowledge." (*Qurṭubī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٢٢, ٧٩)

The use of the word *ʿAlīm* in the Qur'an is extensive and multilayered. In the divine sphere, *ʿAlīm* appears repeatedly and signifies absolute, all-encompassing knowledge that surrounds all things, knowledge that is neither bound by time nor confined to any particular domain. Verses such as "And Allah is knowing of what you do" (*al-Ḥashr*: ٧) and "Indeed, your Lord, He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise" (*al-Anʿām*: ١٢٨) are examples of this usage. *Ṭabāṭabāʾī* considers this divine knowledge to be *Qayyūmī* knowledge: "Knowledge subsisting in the very essence of God, which is both the creator of things and present in all the details of existence (*Ṭabāṭabāʾī*, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ١١,

٧٨). *Fakhr Rāzī* likewise notes that divine knowledge encompasses causes and outcomes, the outward and the inward, as well as the future and the past (Fakhr Rāzī, ١٩٩٩ AD/١٤٢٠ AH: ١٤, ٢٠).

However, in relation to human beings, the use of *‘Alīm* is restricted to perfected humans, prophets, and individuals endowed with a special divine capacity. The glad tidings, "So We gave him good news of a learned boy" (al-Dhāriyāt: ٢٨), show that the attribute *‘Alīm*, on the human level, signifies wisdom, analytical ability, and worthiness for guidance. In other verses as well, the knowledge of the prophets is linked with such categories as *Hukm* (sound judgment), insight, and correctness of opinion: "And We granted him judgment and knowledge" (Maryam: ١٢). Exegetes such as *Ṭabarī*, *Ālūsī*, and *Makarem Shirazi* have regarded this attribute as indicative of the capacity for intellectual leadership, social reform, and response to doctrinal crises *Ṭabarī*, ١٩٨٨ AD/١٤٠٩ AH: ٢٣, ٣٢٤; *Ālūsī*, ١٩٩٤ AD/١٤١٠ AH: ٢٣, ٦٤; *Makarem Shirazi*, ١٩٩٠ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ٢٠, ٢٠٦). *Zamakhsharī* also interprets *‘Alīm* in descriptions of the prophets as denoting knowledge accompanied by "Practical wisdom and guidance." (*Zamakhsharī*, ١٩٨٧ AD/١٤٠٧ AH: ٤, ٨١)

In terms of semantic depth, knowledge in the Qur’an has three levels: "Sensory knowledge, rational knowledge, and spiritual/intuitive knowledge." *Ibn Manzūr* defines sensory knowledge as knowledge based on perceptible experience (*Ibn Manzūr*, ١٩٩٤ AD/١٤١٤ AH: ١١, ٤٦). Rational knowledge pertains to the ability to analyze, compare, and understand universal principles (*Muṣṭafawī*, ١٩٨١ AD/١٣٦٠ SH: ٢, ١٤٦). However, the highest level of knowledge is spiritual or intuitive knowledge, which in traditions and exegetical

literature has been termed "Divinely bestowed knowledge" and is regarded as a sign of nearness to God, guidance, and inner illumination (*Ṭabāṭabā’ī*, ١٩٩٠ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ١٣, ٣٠٧; *Rāghib*, ١٩٩٢ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ٣٠٠). This is not a kind of knowledge acquired through ordinary learning; rather, it is a form of inspired and illuminative perception that manifests itself in prophets and the friends of God.

From an educational perspective, the attribute *‘Alīm* plays a foundational role in the formation of human character. A person endowed with such knowledge possesses the ability to distinguish truth from falsehood, respond to doubts and objections, and provide intellectual guidance to society. In *Ṭabrisī*’s words, sound knowledge is the infrastructure of wisdom and guidance, and it was through this very knowledge that the prophets directed societies toward the right path (*Ṭabrisī*, ١٩٩٣ AD/١٣٧٢ SH: ٧, ٣٢٤). In Qur’anic verses, *‘Alīm* often appears together with such attributes as *Hakīm* (wise), *Khabīr* (fully aware), and *Rashīd* (rightly guided), in order to show that true knowledge is valuable only when it is transformed into practical wisdom. In mystical thought as well, *‘Alīm* refers to one whose knowledge has reached the level of presence and direct witnessing, and has been transformed into the light of guidance (*Ṭabāṭabā’ī*, ١٩٩٠ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ٩, ٢٤٦).

Thus, the word *‘Alīm* in the Qur’an is not merely a sign of theoretical knowledge; rather, it is a multilayered, wisdom-oriented, and guidance-producing concept. A *‘Alīm* is one in whom knowledge has deeply penetrated the soul, enabling discernment, insight, management, and guidance, and establishing an inseparable connection with practical wisdom.

### ٥,٢. Lexical Analysis of *Ḥalīm*

The root of the word *Ḥalīm* derives from the trilateral root (*ḥ-l-m*), a root that in authoritative lexical sources is consistently associated with concepts such as forbearance, inner composure, the ability to restrain hasty reactions, and tolerance of others' faults. Lexicographers such as *Ibn Manẓūr* define the primary meaning of this root as the "Power of self-restraint at the moment of provocation" (*Ibn Manẓūr*, ١٩٩٤ AD/١٤١٤ AH: ١٢, ١٦٠). *Khalīl ibn Aḥmad*, in "*al-ʿAyn*," likewise states that the essential core of this root is "patience accompanied by the preservation of dignity"; that is, the ability of a person to respond to anger, insult, or emotional pressure without passivity, yet also without rage (*Farāhīdī*, ١٩٨٨ AD/١٤٠٩ AH: ٣, ٤٤٠). *Ibn Fāris* traces the root to the meanings of gentleness and forbearance, emphasizing that *Ḥilm* always refers to deliberate and controlled conduct, not to imposed endurance or weakness-induced restraint (*Ibn Fāris*, ١٩٩٤ AD/١٤١٥ AH: ٢, ١٣٣).

From a morphological perspective, *Ḥalīm* follows the pattern *Faʿīl*, which in Arabic functions as an intensive form, indicating firmness and deep-rootedness of an attribute. This pattern suggests that *Ḥilm* is not a transient state or short-term reaction, but rather a "Stable Disposition" within the soul, manifesting naturally even under conditions of tension and crisis (*Muṣṭafawī*, ١٩٨١ AD/١٣٦٠ SH: ١, ٢٣٢). *Rāghib Isfahānī* interprets this firmness as the "Capacity to manage emotion," explaining that a *Ḥalīm* person is not one who lacks emotion, but one who is able to restrain emotion appropriately and at the proper time (*Rāghib*, ١٩٩٢ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ١٤٣). Thus, the morphological structure indicates that *Ḥilm* arises from ethical training, intellectual maturity, and strength of character.

In comparison with related or apparently synonymous terms, *Ḥalīm* possesses a more specific intensity and quality than patience, gentleness, forbearance, or deliberation. Patience generally refers to enduring hardship; forbearance denotes behavioral softness; gentleness implies gentleness and consideration. By contrast, *Ḥilm* refers to the capacity for "Active Self-control." *Ibn Manẓūr* explicitly states that the opposite of *Ḥilm* is haste, that is, impulsiveness and uncalculated rapid reaction, which often stems from weakness of character (*Ibn Manẓūr*, ١٩٩٤ AD/١٤١٤ AH: ١٢, ١٦١). For this reason, *Ḥilm* is neither mere endurance nor passivity; rather, it is a form of mastery over the self that enables a person to act with dignity, reflection, and prudence. This quality renders *Ḥilm* more precise and profound in meaning than its other near-synonyms.

In its terminological and religious usage, *Ḥilm* is an attribute applied both to God and to perfected human beings, though its meaning in both domains arises from a single root and essential reality. *Rāghib Isfahānī*, in "*al-Mufradāt*," defines *Ḥilm* as "Control of the self at the height of anger," not before or after it (*Rāghib*, ١٩٩٢ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ١٤٣). Allamah *Ṭabāṭabāʿī* describes this concept as the "Power of establishing moral equilibrium under conditions of pressure." (*Ṭabāṭabāʿī*, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ١٨, ٥٢)

*Qurtubī* likewise emphasizes that *Ḥilm* is always conscious and accompanied by insight; that is, the person knows what has occurred, knows that a strong reaction is possible, and yet chooses self-control through a moral decision (*Qurtubī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ١٥, ٣٩٥). This element of conscious choice constitutes the distinctive feature of *Ḥilm* in Islamic ethics.

At the Qur'anic level, when the attribute *Ḥalīm* is applied to God, it denotes a wise

forbearance that arises from absolute power and knowledge. Although God is fully aware of all human errors and lapses, He does not punish immediately but grants opportunities for repentance and reform; this meaning of *Hilm* forms one of the foundations of divine mercy: "And Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing" (al-Nisā': ١٢) (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ٥, ٥٨). In the human sphere, however, *Hilm* signifies spiritual maturity, strength of will, and the capacity to bear heavy responsibilities. In the verse "So We gave him glad tidings of a forbearing boy," (al-Şāffāt: ١٠١) the Qur'an describes Ishmael with the attribute *Halīm*, because in the most critical divine test, the readiness to accept the command of sacrifice, he responded without protest, without emotional haste, and with profound inner calm (Ṭabarī, ١٩٨٨ AD/١٤٠٩ AH: ٢٣, ٣٣٣). *Zamakhsharī* also interprets Ishmael's *Hilm* as a sign of the "Steadfastness of his character and the soundness of his soul." (Zamakhsharī, ١٩٨٧ AD/١٤٠٧ AH: ٤, ٩٥)

The relationship between *Hilm* and *Ilm* in the Qur'anic educational framework is highly fundamental. The Qur'an shows that knowledge without forbearance can lead to arrogance, contempt for others, and moral downfall, as seen in the stories of *Bal'am Bā'ūrā* or the *Sāmirī*. Conversely, forbearance without knowledge also lacks full value; a forbearing person who lacks insight may be led toward compromise, passivity, or retreat from the truth (Majlisī, n.d.: ٦٨, ٤٢٣). *Ṭabrisī* likewise emphasizes that the highest degree of *Hilm* is the control of anger in the face of others' ignorance, and this is possible only when a person possesses not only forbearance but also a level of religious and moral knowledge (Ṭabrisī, ١٩٩٣ AD/١٣٧٢ SH: ٧, ٣٤٢). Thus, *Hilm* and *Ilm* are two complementary forces:

knowledge shows the path, while forbearance provides the strength to walk it.

From a psychological and social perspective, *Hilm* is one of the most effective factors in maintaining stability of character and reducing collective tensions.

*Fakhr Rāzī* notes that a society in which forbearance and patience are present enjoys greater psychological and social security, because when individuals face disagreement or crisis, they respond with measured and calm behavior rather than harsh reactions (Fakhr Rāzī, ١٩٩٩ AD/١٤٢٠ AH: ١٨, ٢٣٥).

The Qur'an also considers *Hilm* one of the keys to reforming human relationships, because many conflicts arise not from intellectual disagreement but from uncontrolled emotional reactions. *Hilm* provides the capacity to manage precisely these decisive moments.

### ٥,٣. Semantic Differences between *'Alīm* and *Halīm* within the Framework of the Philosophy of Education

The distinction between the two attributes *'Alīm* and *Halīm* is among the most fundamental semantic issues in the Qur'an. The Qur'an's use of these two terms is not limited to describing the psychological or moral traits of two historical figures; rather, through them it articulates two "Types" of education and two "Foundational dimensions of human perfection." The attribute *'Alīm* represents the cognitive and epistemological dimension of the human being, a dimension connected with perceiving truth, understanding wisdom, and explicating divine law. In contrast, the attribute *Halīm* refers to the moral and volitional dimension of the human being, relating to the capacity for self-control, regulation of emotions, perseverance in fulfilling duty, and the delay of impulsive reactions. By employing

these two attributes in the verses concerning the births of Isaac and Ishmael, the Qur'an in fact introduces two kinds of "Mission" and two kinds of "Existential Preparedness" for two generations (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ١٣, ٣٠٧; Rāghib Iṣfahānī, ١٩٩٢ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ١٤٣).

The first difference between these two words lies in their ontological domain. *ʿAlīm* pertains to the realm of perception and discovery of reality. This attribute, derived from the root (*-l-m*) in the intensive pattern *Faʿīl*, signifies the firmness and intensity of knowledge, that is, knowledge that is not superficial, transient, or merely empirical, but stable, profound, and penetrating into the layers of existence. In the Qur'an, such knowledge generally concerns the understanding of divine wisdom, the universal laws of creation, and truths related to guidance. In this sense, knowledge is not methodological expertise or scattered information; rather, it is "Divinely oriented cognition" and a "Correct understanding of humanity's place within the order of existence." This kind of knowledge forms the foundation for the emergence of a scripture-centered and law-oriented community, one that must be connected to a prophet characterized by knowledge, such as Isaac. By contrast, *Ḥalīm* operates in the domain of self-control and the management of reactions. *Ḥilm* refers to the ability to restrain anger, delay response at moments of provocation, maintain calm during crises, and respond with wise restraint. The word derives from the root (*ḥ-l-m*) and in lexicography denotes "A spiritual strength that enables one to swallow anger and keep behavior within the bounds of reason." (Rāghib, ١٩٩٢ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ١٤٣) Thus, if *ʿAlīm* concerns "Knowledge of the world," *Ḥalīm* concerns "Knowledge of the self" and mastery over inner impulses and emotions. One

shapes the intellect; the other shapes the character.

The second difference lies in the educational foundation of these two attributes. In its discussions of education, the Qur'an shows that the cultivation of a balanced human being rests on two pillars: "Perception" and "Restraint." The attribute *ʿAlīm* establishes the foundation for perceiving truth. A person who is *ʿAlīm* possesses the capacity for analysis, reasoning, value discernment, and understanding wisdom, and is able to distinguish clearly between good and evil (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ١٣, ٣٠٧). The attribute *Ḥalīm*, however, forms the foundation of behavioral and emotional regulation. *Ḥilm* is rooted in willpower, active patience, forgiveness, tolerance of others' faults, and the ability to withstand tension. This quality serves not only personal ethics but also forms the basis of order, tranquility, and stability within the family and society (Ibn Manẓūr, ١٩٩٤ AD/١٤١٤ AH: ١٢, ١٦٢). Therefore, if knowledge represents the stage of "Understanding," *Ḥilm* represents the stage of "Being Able," that is, the capacity to enact what one has understood. Complete education emerges only when knowledge shows the path and forbearance provides the strength to walk it.

The third difference is one that the Qur'an frames in the form of two fundamental questions of human life. The attribute *ʿAlīm* answers the question: 'What do you know?' 'What have you truly understood?' that is, a question concerning knowledge, perspective, analysis, and recognition of realities. The attribute *Ḥalīm*, however, answers the question: 'When you know and suffer, how do you act?' a question that measures human conduct under conditions of crisis and pressure. Knowledge relates to "Correct Understanding," while forbearance relates to "Correct Action." The Qur'an directly conveys that understanding

without action has no value, and action without understanding is blind and dangerous. Knowledge, if not accompanied by forbearance, leads to arrogance, fanaticism, and misuse. Forbearance, if not accompanied by knowledge, results in passivity and inability to discern situations properly. Thus, each of these two attributes is incomplete, and at times even harmful, without the other.

The fourth difference lies in their educational outcomes. A person who is *'Alīm* possesses the capacity to provide intellectual guidance to society. Such a person can comprehend value systems, distinguish truth from falsehood, and analyze intellectual and moral errors. This role is foundational in both family and society, because the intellectual pillars of any educational system are individuals who possess the power of sound discernment (Ṭabarī, ١٩٨٨ AD/١٤٠٩ AH: ٢٣, ٢٢٤). A person who is *Ḥalīm*, however, serves as a pillar of moral guidance within society. He extinguishes violence, calms crises, deepens human relationships, and creates an environment conducive to moral growth. If the *'Alīm* provides the "Light of thought," the *Ḥalīm* generates the "Light of conduct." Together, these two roles establish educational balance, and the absence of either produces serious weakness in personal character.

The fifth difference concerns the relationship of these attributes to action. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes that knowledge alone is not salvific. The examples of the *Sāmirī*, *Bal'am Bā'ūrā'*, and even *Iblīs* demonstrate that knowledge without self-restraint can lead to downfall. All three possessed knowledge, yet because they lacked *Ḥilm* and self-control, their knowledge turned into arrogance, self-exaltation, and futile disputation, leading them to destruction (Fakhr Rāzī, ١٩٩٩ AD/١٤٢٠ AH:

١٨, ٢٣٥). Conversely, forbearance without knowledge is also insufficient, as it may lead a person toward compromise, retreat from truth, or inability to analyze complex matters (Qurtubī, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ١٥, ٣٩٥). Therefore, in Qur'anic education, *'Alīm* is the necessary condition for sound decision-making, and *Ḥalīm* is the sufficient condition for the proper execution of that decision. The absence of either results in imbalance of character.

In semantic conclusion, it may be said that *'Alīm* and *Ḥalīm* are two essential pillars of Qur'anic education, and in giving the glad tidings of Isaac and Ishmael, the Qur'an symbolically portrays these two roles for two generations. The line of Isaac was a generation centered on knowledge, wisdom, and expertise in exposition and analysis. The line of Ishmael was a generation marked by forbearance, morality, resilience, and breadth of spirit. The educational message of this model for today is that education without knowledge is rootless, and education without forbearance is fruitless. A society without knowledge goes astray, and a society without forbearance becomes harsh. A family without knowledge is disordered, and a family without forbearance is devoid of affection. The harmony between these two attributes is what Islamic philosophy describes as the "Comprehensiveness of personality," what mysticism calls the "Union of opposites," and what psychology terms the "Integration of personality," a harmony that the Qur'an presents as a condition for human perfection.

#### ٦. The Use of the Two Expressions "*Ghulāmin 'Alīm*" and "*Ghulāmin Ḥalīm*" in the Narrative of Abraham's Life

The use of the two expressions "*Ghulāmin 'Alīm*" and "*Ghulāmin Ḥalīm*" in the narrative of Abraham's life is among the cases that

Muslim exegetes regard as evidence of the Qur'an's precision in harmonizing word choice with the historical reality and prophetic mission of each character. In the first line of analysis, both early and later exegetes have emphasized that the glad tidings of a *Ghulāmin 'Alīm* in *Surah al-Dhāriyāt* refer to Isaac, because the role he was to play in the future was tied to the domain of knowledge, wisdom, and the exposition of prophethood. After Abraham, Isaac became the bearer of a mission whose axis was *Sharī'ah* and religious knowledge, and the Children of Israel were established upon the foundation of this tradition. For this reason, God highlights in describing him the attribute of "Knowledge," that is, the very quality most directly suited to his future task (Ṭabarī, ١٩٨٨ AD/١٤٠٩ AH: ٢٣, ٣٢٤).

By contrast, the expression "*Ghulāmin Ḥalīm*" in *Surah al-Ṣāffāt* is, in the most widely accepted interpretations, attributed to Ishmael, because the event that occurred in his life, the trial of being sacrificed, is one of the clearest arenas for the manifestation of forbearance, patience, and steadfastness. He not only did not object to the divine command, but rather said to his father with calmness, acceptance, and confidence: "O my father, do what you have been commanded"; a statement that exegetes regard as the height of forbearance, dignity, and emotional self-control (Ṭabāṭabā'ī, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ١٧, ١٢٩). Thus, *Ḥilm* in Ishmael is not an incidental quality, but a mission-oriented one; a trait showing that his character was destined to bear the most difficult obligation and was constitutionally prepared for this responsibility.

From the perspective of Qur'anic semantics, this lexical choice is based on the contrast between two fundamental semantic fields: the field of "Knowledge," which is connected to understanding the world, grasping wisdom, and

explicating the law; and the field of "Forbearance," which is linked to self-control, delaying reaction, patience in hardship, and bearing difficult responsibilities (Muṣṭafawī, ١٩٨١ AD/١٣٦٠ SH: ٢, ١٨٣). By employing these two attributes, the Qur'an expresses a kind of divine distribution of roles among Abraham's sons, a distribution based not on difference in value, but on intrinsic suitability for the future path of each line. In the words of some exegetes, Isaac was being prepared for the "Intellectual leadership of the community," while Ishmael was being prepared for its "Moral and behavioral leadership"; and these two roles are complementary, both being necessary for the survival and growth of the line of monotheism.

The selection of these two words is also tied to the historical and social context of each community. The Children of Israel, who arose from the line of Isaac, were a scripture-centered people and continually lived around teaching, prophethood, religious law, and legal rulings; therefore, they needed an exemplar that embodied *'Alīm*. On the other hand, the descendants of Ishmael were raised in the land of Mecca, in a dry and harsh environment, an environment in which survival depended on patience, endurance, forbearance, and the management of emotions. In such a setting, the attribute *Ḥalīm* was not a secondary virtue, but rather the very "Foundation of life." For this reason, the quality God chose in introducing Ishmael is entirely in harmony with his environment, historical mission, and civilizational role.

As a result, the conclusion of the exegetes is that "*Ghulāmin 'Alīm*" and "*Ghulāmin Ḥalīm*" are not merely moral descriptions; rather, they constitute a "Divine blueprint" for the future of two lineages. With utmost precision, the Qur'an attributes to each the quality that accords both

with the truth of his being and with his historical mission. This harmony between description and mission reveals an aspect of Qur'anic wisdom, in which words are chosen not ornamentally, but as meaning-bearing elements. For this reason, exegetes from the earliest times to the present have regarded these two descriptions as the starting point for understanding the educational and civilizational role of each of Abraham's sons.

#### V. Educational Implications of Integrating Knowledge (*ʿIlm*) and Forbearance (*Ḥilm*)

Qur'anic education finds its meaning only when there is harmony between its two main pillars: "Knowledge" (*ʿIlm*) and "Forbearance" (*Ḥilm*). Interpretative sources explicitly show that the Qur'an introduces knowledge as the tool for discerning the truth and forbearance as the tool for managing emotions and controlling behavior; neither of these two attributes alone can lead a human being to perfection. *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* emphasizes that knowledge without forbearance leads to intellectual arrogance and moral downfall, because knowledge, if not combined with self-restraint, leads to conceit and pride (*Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٠ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ١١, ١٨١). *Rāghib Iṣfahānī*, in his moral analysis, defines *Ḥilm* as the power to "Restrain the self" in moments of agitation, and warns that forbearance without knowledge leads a person to passivity and naivety (*Rāghib*, ١٩٩٢ AD/١٤١٢ AH: ١٤٣). Historical examples in the Qur'an, such as the story of *Qārūn*, confirm that knowledge without forbearance lacks the capacity to prevent tyranny and rebellion (*Ṭabarī*, ١٩٨٨ AD/١٤٠٩ AH: ٢٠, ١٠٥). Conversely, the Children of Israel, despite having a spirit of endurance at times, fell into confusion due to a lack of sufficient knowledge (*Qurṭubī*, ١٩٩٦ AD/١٤١٧ AH: ٢, ٢٤٤).

Therefore, both attributes must be integrated to create a balanced personality.

In the view of exegetes, combining knowledge and forbearance in a single personality creates the ideal structure of Qur'anic education. *Fakhr Rāzī* emphasizes that knowledge is the lamp of guidance and insight, while forbearance is the lamp of behavior and self-restraint; a human who is only *ʿAlīm* lacks the practical control to manage his own behavior, and a human who is only *Ḥalīm* loses the ability to analyze complex situations (*Fakhr Rāzī*, ١٩٩٩ AD/١٤٢٠ AH: ٢٣, ٢٨٥). *Ṭabrisī* also stresses that the divine prophets, through the combination of these two forces, were able to be both teachers of guidance and educators of ethics and action (*Ṭabrisī*, ١٩٩٣ AD/١٣٧٢ SH: ٧, ٢٢٤). *Ālūsī* states in his commentary that the attributes *ʿAlīm* and *Ḥalīm* are the two pillars of a wise person; a human who has reached the stage of wisdom has attained this rank only when his knowledge has manifested itself in wise and patient behavior (*Ālūsī*, ١٩٩٤ AD/١٤١٥ AH: ٢٣, ٦٤). All these analyses demonstrate that Qur'anic education is formed by the synthesis of cognition and self-restraint, and the possession of one without the other leads to stunted growth.

The family also plays a fundamental role in creating this integration, and the Qur'an presents the exemplary model of this reality in the Abrahamic family. The upbringing of Isaac took shape in an environment centered on knowledge and wisdom. Exegetical sources, citing the verse "So We gave him glad tidings of a knowing son," state that God prepared Isaac to continue the prophetic mission and to explicate the divine law, an assignment that required deep and enduring knowledge (*Zamakhsharī*, ١٩٨٧ AD/١٤٠٧ AH: ٤, ٨١). By contrast, the upbringing of Ishmael developed

in the context of patience, migration, and severe trials. Referring to the description "A forbearing son, exegetes emphasize that Ishmael's mission was grounded in submission, forbearance, and endurance of hardship (Makarem Shirazi, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ٢٠, ٢٥٦). These two paths demonstrate that the Qur'an expects the family to be both an environment for learning and analysis and a school for practicing endurance, emotional regulation, and stability of character. *Ṭabāṭabā'ī's* analysis further testifies that Abrahamic education constitutes a comprehensive model in which knowledge and forbearance were cultivated in his two sons in proportion to their historical roles (*Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ١٤, ٣٩٢).

From the perspective of the philosophy of education, the integration of knowledge and forbearance is nothing other than the realization of Wisdom. In narrations and Qur'anic analyses, wisdom is defined as "Placing everything in its proper position," and this is possible only when a person possesses both correct understanding and measured conduct. *Muṣṭafawī* defines knowledge as "Accurate perception of reality" and forbearance as the "Capacity to restrain reaction," concluding that wisdom is the result of the synthesis of these two forces (*Muṣṭafawī*, ١٩٨١ AD/١٣٦٠ SH: ٢, ١٤٤). *Ṭabāṭabā'ī* likewise states in his commentary that wisdom is a characteristic of prophets and reformers, because they displayed in their conduct the complete combination of theoretical knowledge and practical forbearance (*Ṭabāṭabā'ī*, ١٩٩٥ AD/١٣٧٤ SH: ٩, ٢٤٦). From this perspective, knowledge is the tool for analyzing situations, and forbearance is the tool for managing them; therefore, neither alone perfects the human being.

At the social level as well, the integration of knowledge and forbearance establishes a stable

and effective educational system. Durkheim, in his theory of social education, emphasizes that society becomes stable only when both rational instruction and moral education are presented in balanced form (Durkheim, ١٩٥٦: ٧٨). *Ghazālī*, in "*Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*," similarly warns that knowledge without purification of the self turns a person into a corrupt scholar, and forbearance without knowledge produces a rootless morality (*Ghazālī*, ١٩٨٥ AD/١٤٠٥ AH: ٣, ١٢٧).

Motahhari also emphasizes in his educational writings that a person who possesses knowledge but lacks forbearance will fall into arrogance instead of attaining wisdom, and a society that relies solely on morality without knowledge will become backward (*Motahhari*, ١٩٩١ AD/١٣٧٠ SH: ١٦١). The Qur'an likewise, by presenting examples from the personalities of the history of revelation, invites society to construct a balanced human model, one in which knowledge and self-restraint work together to produce a responsible, profound, and balanced individual.

## Conclusion

This study, entitled "A Semantic Analysis of Synonymous Words in the Two Verses "We gave him glad tidings of a knowing son (*Ghulāmin 'Alīm*)" and "We gave him glad tidings of a forbearing son (*Ghulāmin Ḥalīm*)" from an Educational Perspective," was based on the central hypothesis that there exists a meaningful relationship between Qur'anic attributes and educational roles. Accordingly, it examined in detail the semantic scope and educational function of these two key terms.

At the first level, semantic analysis revealed that the words *'Alīm* and *Ḥalīm* are not merely lexical equivalents, but carriers of profound and distinct educational messages. Their use in the narratives of Isaac and Ishmael reflects the precision and purposeful eloquence of the

Qur'anic expression. The term *'Alīm*, derived from the root (*'l-m*), reflects cognitive capacity, analytical power, and deep wisdom within the human personality, pointing to the rational and epistemic foundation of religious upbringing. Similarly, the term *Ḥalīm*, derived from the root (*ḥ-l-m*) and meaning forbearance, self-restraint, and practical tolerance, expresses the ethical dimension of personality, emotional regulation, and perseverance in the face of hardship. The distinction between these two attributes is clearly manifested in the missions and existential roles of Isaac and Ishmael: Isaac required a theoretical foundation, precise understanding of the divine law, and transmission of the heritage of revelation, while Ishmael was entrusted with the trial of patience and complete servitude during crisis.

The examination of the Qur'anic verses and the analyses of leading exegetes demonstrated that education in the Qur'an avoids one-dimensionality. Rather, the ideal divine education requires a balanced synthesis of profound knowledge and practical forbearance. A person who merely acquires knowledge but lacks the capacity for self-restraint and endurance of hardship becomes afflicted with intellectual arrogance and pride. Conversely, a person who relies solely on forbearance without acquiring the necessary intellectual foundation will fail in complex decision-making and in distinguishing truth from falsehood. Within the framework of the philosophy of religious education, these two attributes complement one another, and only personalities formed through the integration of knowledge and forbearance are capable of playing a balanced and effective role at critical historical moments. The Abrahamic family provides an excellent model of this equilibrium, an environment in which both the conditions for learning knowledge

were present and the practical training of obedience and patience was realized.

Psychological and sociological evidence examined in this study also demonstrated that knowledge and forbearance play a fundamental role in individual and social development. A knowledgeable person (*'Alīm*) without forbearance risks impulsive decision-making and personality disorders, while a forbearing person (*Ḥalīm*) without knowledge lacks the ability to solve new problems and analyze complex situations. According to the Qur'anic educational model, education must cultivate both intellect and morality. In addition to the comparative study of the personalities of Isaac and Ishmael, this article showed that the Qur'anic model of education is dynamic and adaptive; the spiritual and intellectual traits of each personality were selected in proportion to his future mission and historical role, so that the indicators of complete growth could be experienced in real circumstances.

The synthesis of the data and sources used in this research demonstrated that the integration of knowledge and forbearance is not only an individual function but also, at the social and civilizational levels, a guarantor of moral health and security. A society that nurtures knowledge and forbearance in harmony will be more adaptable, secure, and successful. Ultimately, the Qur'an's precise selection of words in the story of Isaac and Ishmael bears witness to the order and purposiveness of revelation: no attribute is mentioned without regard to the field of action and the historical need of the character, and each description is situated within the wisdom of a future mission. In sum, this study clearly showed that Qur'anic education is a multidimensional and intelligent process grounded in the profound integration of knowledge and forbearance. Balanced

education is essential for forming a personality that possesses both the power of analysis and understanding, and the capacity to remain patient in the face of hardship, anger, and divine trials—without deviating from the path of servitude and human wisdom.

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