

Re-Visiting the Meaning of ‘zann’ in the Qur’ān

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Abstract

The Qur’ānic term, ‘zann,’ is usually understood and translated as conjecture. However, I argue that the Qur’ān uses ‘zann’ to mean dogmatic zeal or, in other words, being zealous to a certain belief. For conjecture, the Qur’ān uses the root ‘ḥ-s-b,’ such as, ‘ayaḥsabū.’ Although the Qur’ān may criticize some people’s conjectures, it does not criticize the act of formulating opinions with the root ‘ḥ-s-b.’ However, the Qur’ān does criticize the act of ‘zann.’ This further emphasizes the distinction between conjecture and ‘zann,’ according to the Qur’ān. The main emphasis is that when the Qur’ān requires people to shun most ‘zann,’ it is argued that it is asking to shun zealous beliefs and dogmas, and it is not asking to shun the formulation of conjectures. The method used is philological, in which the cognates are analyzed in their contexts and compared with their uses in the Qur’ān. Defining ‘zann’ as dogmatic zeal rather than conjecture has far-reaching implications in understanding Qur’ānic epistemology and the epistemic process it expects its audience to have.

Introduction

In this article, I argue that the meaning of the Qur’ānic term, ‘zann,’ as conjecture, is not the original intended meaning in the Qur’ān. ‘Aqīl ‘Akmūsh ‘Abd argues that the debates amongst the early grammarians on the origin of Arabic terms, whether a verb or gerund, caused how the majority defined the term ‘zann’ mostly as doubt rather than certainty.¹ The Qur’ānic intention behind ‘zann’ might be closely associated with its cognate in other Semitic languages, such as Hebrew and Aramaic, where the meaning of the root ‘z-n-n’ is zeal or, in other words, believing in something zealously, which is a definition also attested in medieval Arabic lexicons and traditional Qur’ānic commentaries.² In that sense, the argument propounded in this article is not new in that it is completely re-defining the term ‘zann’ in the Qur’ān that does not already exist, but what is novel is the argument in discounting its definition as conjecture as a possible intended meaning.

The purpose behind this study is to act as a step towards understanding the type of epistemology that the Qur’ān expects from its audience. If the act of performing ‘zann’ is mostly criticized in the Qur’ān and the term is understood as conjecture, then it would pose a

¹ ‘Aqīl ‘Akmūsh ‘Abd, “‘zann’ fil-Qur’ān al-karīm: Dirāsah fī mafhūm al-taḍāḍ,” *Journal of al-Qadisiya in Arts and Educational Science*, 4/3–4 (2005), pp. 65–80.

² Ibn Manzūr (d. 711/1311), *Lisān al-‘arab* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), vol. 13, pp. 272–275

contradiction in the Qurʾān. The Qurʾān has manifold passages that highly encourage thinking, contemplating, and pondering, which by definition means that one needs to resort to mental and cognitive exercises that allow for the formation of conjectures and opinions. If the act of forming conjectures is criticized, then how is one expected to think and contemplate? It, thus, causes an epistemic dilemma and inconsistency.

As such, it is argued that when the Qurʾān frequently abhors ‘*zann*’ and accuses nonbelievers of resorting to ‘*zann*,’ the Qurʾān is accusing nonbelievers of being zealous to their unwavering beliefs and dogmas while unwilling to accept any alternative, even if some evidence against their dogmas and beliefs is presented. The alternative term used by the Qurʾān to mean conjecture or a thought exercise is from the root ‘*h-s-b*.’ While the Qurʾān mostly portrays ‘*zann*’ negatively, in which it is something best avoided, it does not portray the root ‘*h-s-b*’ in a negative manner, even though it describes examples when some of the conjectures and thoughts, using the root ‘*h-s-b*,’ are incorrect. Therefore, ‘*yaẓunnūn*’ would not be synonymous with ‘*yaḥsabūn*’ in the Qurʾānic language.

Traditional and modern interpretation

Traditional Qurʾānic exegetes have given the root ‘*z-n-n*’ various meanings, from believing in something with certainty to mere conjecture.³ They prefer one meaning over the other based on context.⁴ Usually, the preference depends on ideological grounds. For this reason, the meaning of this term remains inconsistent within the Qurʾān, where sometimes it is used as a solid and zealous belief, while at other times, speculation, or some definition in between those two.⁵ This term has been known by traditional exegetes to have two opposite meanings at the same time, or an antithesis, which can only be determined through context.⁶ It is a very prominent antithetical term that Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 328/940) chose to have it as the first entry to discuss in his book, *al-Addād*.⁷ According to him, the term carries four meanings, two of which are opposites, doubt (*shakk*) and certainty (*yaqīn*), with the non-opposite meanings, lie (*kadhb*) and accusation (*tuhma*).⁸

Abū Hilāl al-ʿAskarī (d. 395/1005) also gave special attention to the term ‘*zann*’ in his *al-Wujūh wal-naẓāʾir* stating that it means two opposing definitions: certainty and doubt.⁹ Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201) defines ‘*zann*’ as being zealous towards one belief over its antithesis

³ ‘Abdulsalām I. M. Al-Majīd, “Aḥkām al-*zann* wa-alfāzuḥu wa-aqsāmuḥu fil-sharḥ al-Islāmiyyah,” *Majallah abḥāth kulliyah al-tarbiyah al-asāsiyyah*, 7/2 (2008), pp. 151–170.

⁴ Tanzīl A. ʿAbdulwahhāb, *al-Zann fil-Qurʾān: Dirāsah mawḍūʿiyyah*, Master Thesis (Khartoum: International University of Africa).

⁵ Ṭayyib Ḥ. Seyyed-Maḥmūd, “Maʿnāsh-nāsi ‘*zann*’ der Qurʾān karīm,” *Vijah ʿulūm Qurʾān va-Ḥadīth*, 1/1 (2011), pp. 41–64.

⁶ ʿAbd, “‘*zann*’ fil-Qurʾān.”

⁷ Ibn al-Anbārī (d. 328/940), *al-Addād*, ed. Muḥammad A. Ibrahīm (Beirut: al-ʿAṣriyyah, 1987), pp. 14–16.

⁸ Ibn al-Anbārī, *al-Addād*, pp. 14–16.

⁹ Abū Hilāl Al-ʿAskarī (d. 395/1005), *al-Wujūh wal-naẓāʾir*, ed. Muḥammad ʿUthmān (Cairo: al-Thaqāfah al-Dīniyyah, 2007), pp. 332–333.

in oneself, which he says is different from doubt (*shakk*).¹⁰ While this is his preferred definition, he affirms that the exegetes (*mufasssīrūn*) chose five different meanings: (1) doubt (*shakk*); (2) certainty (*yaqīn*); (3) accusation (*tuhma*), although this definition is based on Q. 81:24, which uses the term ‘*ḍanīn*,’ but some reciters pronounce it as ‘*ẓanīn*,’ (4) conjecture (*al-ḥusbān*); and (5) lie (*kadhb*).¹¹

Arabic grammarians have categorized ‘*ẓann*’ as verbs or the doings of the heart (*af‘āl al-qulūb*),¹² also known as the verbs of certainty (*af‘āl al-yaqīn*) or doubt (*af‘āl al-shakk*),¹³ that are divided into three sub-categories, certainty, doubt, and the spectrum in between both, in which Ibn al-Warrāq (d. 381/991) equates both ‘*ẓann*’ and ‘*ḥusbān*.’¹⁴

Many modern Qur’ānic translators and scholars of Qur’ānic studies take the meaning of ‘*ẓann*’ as conjecture for granted.¹⁵ In addition to how the term should be translated, understanding this term in the Qur’ān also has implications in regard to identifying Qur’ānic epistemology. In other words, does the Qur’ān encourage or discourage mental and cognitive exercises? The Qur’ān frequently asks its audience to think, ponder, contemplate, etc (e.g., 3:191, 4:82, 22:46). Mohammad Kamali has portrayed how the Qur’ān strongly encourages thought and thinking processes.¹⁶ When discussing epistemology, Mary E. Hawkesworth states,

Presupposition theorists suggest that a consideration of the various cognitive processes involved in science—argumentation, contemplation, conjecture, conceptualization, deduction, deliberation, intuition, inference, imagination, justification, representation, remembrance, reflection, speculation, validation—reveals that the dimensions of reason are diverse. And they argue that an adequate conception of reason must encompass these diverse cognitive practices.¹⁷

¹⁰ Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1201), *Nuzhah al-a‘yun al-nawāzīr fī ‘ulūm al-wujūh wal-naẓā’ir*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abdulkarīm Kāzīm al-Rāḍī (Beirut: al-Risālah, 1984), p. 424.

¹¹ Ibn al-Jawzī, *Nuzhah al-a‘yun*, pp. 424–426.

¹² Al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), *al-Mufaṣṣal fī ṣan‘ah al-i‘rāb*, ed. ‘Alī Bū Milḥīm (Beirut: al-Hilāl, 1993), pp. 345–348; Ibn Hishām (d. 761/1360), *Awḍaḥ al-masālik ilā alfiyyah Ibn Mālik*, ed. Yūsuf al-Shaykh Muḥammad al-Biqā‘ī (Damascus: al-Fikr, n.d.), vol. 2, pp. 28–71; Ibn Hishām (d. 761/1360), *Sharḥ qiṭr al-nadā wa-ball al-ṣadā*, ed. Muḥammad M. ‘Abdulḥamīd (Cairo: al-Turāth, 1963), pp. 170–179.

¹³ Ibn al-Ṣā’igh (d. 722/1322), *al-Lamḥah fī sharḥ al-muliḥḥa*, ed. Ibrahīm S. al-Ṣā’idī (Medina: Islamic University of Madinah, 2004), vol. 1, pp. 333–339; Ibn ‘Aqīl (d. 769/1367), *Sharḥ alfiyyah Ibn Mālik*, ed. Muḥammad M. ‘Abdulḥamīd (Cairo: al-Turāth, 1980), vol. 2, pp. 28–63.

¹⁴ Ibn al-Warrāq (d. 381/991), *Ilal al-naḥuw*, ed. Maḥmūd J. M. al-Darwīsh (Riyadh: al-Rushd, 1999), pp. 448–449.

¹⁵ M. H. Tavaneai and Baha Aldini Farkhondeh, “A Survey of Conjecture Notion in Quran,” *Theological – Doctrinal Research*, 4/15 (2009), pp. 175–194

¹⁶ Mohammed H. Kamali, “Reading the Signs: A Qur’anic Perspective on Thinking,” *Islam and Science*, 4/2 (2006), pp. 181–205.

¹⁷ Mary E. Hawkesworth, “Epistemology and Policy Analysis,” in William N. Dunn and Rita Mae Kelly (eds.), *Advances in Policy Studies since 1950*, (New Brunswick, NY: Transaction, 1992), 295–329, p. 321.

As part of critical thinking, speculating, formulating conjectures, and hypothesizing are examples of such mental exercise and epistemic process. After all, doubt is what leads a person to critical inquiry.¹⁸ Even al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) concurs to doubt as to the starting point in the process of knowing truths.¹⁹ Sobhi Rayan defends al-Ghazālī's approach to doubt as a healthy attitude towards gaining certitude in knowledge.²⁰ Rayan concludes,

At the beginning of his research al-Ghazali defines the goal he is trying to achieve, which is certain science and knowledge. He uses the method of doubt as a tool to achieve this goal. Doubt is the tool that reveals the truth of acquired sciences from the cultural and epistemological heritage. By doubt, al-Ghazali reveals the uncertainty of the senses and the intellect. He also reaches the basis of certainty upon which he establishes other certainties.²¹

Therefore, it would seem contradictory if the Qur'an encourages people's process of thinking, while discourages formulating conjecture, unless that is not what 'zann' actually denotes (e.g., Q. 49:12). There is no consensus from within the context of how 'zann' is to be defined.²²

There are arguments that traditional exegetes have mastered Arabic philology and linguistics, and therefore, it becomes natural to accept their definitions of Qur'anic terms without criticism. If in the sixteenth century, Copernicus (d. 1543) has not questioned a geocentric model of the universe, because it was propounded by great astronomers, philosophers, mathematicians, and scientists for around two millennia, such as Aristotle (d. 322 BCE), Ptolemy (d. 170), Ibn Sīnā (d. 427/1037), and many others, then people would be in a world of ignorance only because of being uncritical of the works of great and wonderful scientists and philosophers. If people do not question, then they would resort to 'zann' (zealous belief), according to the definition argued for in this article. Moreover, recent scholarship has shown some inadequacies in the interpretation of traditional Qur'anic exegetes in the past.²³ For example, while traditional exegetes interpreted what the People of the Book know as they know their own children in Q. 2:146 and 6:20 as the Ka'bah being the true *Qiblah* or that Muḥammad is a prophet,²⁴ it has been shown that these interpretations are not even close to the most probable meaning, which is an allusion to the

¹⁸ Lisa D. Bendixen, "A Process Model of Epistemic Belief Change," in Barbara K. Hofer and Paul R. Pintrich (eds.), *Personal Epistemology: The Psychology of Beliefs about Knowledge and Knowing*, (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2002), pp. 191–208.

¹⁹ Al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), *al-Munqidh min al-ḍalāl*, ed. 'Abdulḥalīm Maḥmūd (Cairo: al-Kutub al-Ḥadīthah, n.d.), p. 111.

²⁰ Sobhi Rayan, "Al-Ghazali's Method of Doubt," *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin*, 38/2 (2004), pp. 162–173.

²¹ Rayan, "Al-Ghazali's Method," p. 173.

²² For a detailed comparison with a discussion on how translators define this term inconsistently, see Salim Y. Fathi and Luqman A. Nasser, "The Translation of the Verb 'ظن' in the Glorious Quran into English: A Linguistic and Semantic Study," *Adab al-Rafidayn*, 54 (2009), pp. 41–91.

²³ For example, Gabriel S. Reynolds, *The Qur'an and Its Biblical Subtext* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010).

²⁴ For example, al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'an* (Makkah: al-Tarbiyah wal-Turāth, n.d.), vol. 3, pp. 187–190, vol. 11, pp. 294–296.

Shema' passages in Deuteronomy, where it repeats asking the Israelites to teach and remind their children about its commandment.²⁵

Andrew Rippin has also argued how certain Qur'ānic terms may be misconstrued by philologists and translators even in contemporary times.²⁶ He analyzed several contemporary dictionaries of the Qur'ān and based on his outlook of *Analyse conceptuelle du Coran sur cartes perforées*, by Allard et al.,²⁷ Rippin states, 'Dictionaries are conveyors of ideological information as well, and compilers as well as users need to be aware of such positioning.'²⁸ In one example, Rippin compares how the root 'd-r-b' is defined by Elsaid Badawi and Muhammad Abdel Haleem's *The Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'ānic Usage*,²⁹ in which the entry is given over eleven definitions, though excluding 'chastisement,' especially in its use in Q. 4:34, which discusses wife disciplining.³⁰ However, Arne Ambros and Stephan Procházka's *A Concise Dictionary of Koranic Arabic* defines the root with four meanings,³¹ but using a grammatical analysis concludes its association with the meaning of 'parable.'³² Generally, when it comes to understanding Qur'ānic terms, Rippin states, 'While modern meanings cannot be declared to be irrelevant, the pitfalls must be acknowledged.'³³ Hence, it is not truly a new strategy to go back to the meanings of Qur'ānic terms and provide them with definitions beyond that was acknowledged by traditional exegetes. After all, what is propounded in this article is not unravelling a lost definition that is not already attested by traditional exegetes, but discounting the more popular definition of the Qur'ānic 'zann' as conjecture.

Even if we do take pre-Islamic (Jāhili) poetry as evidence for how a term is defined, but since the root 'z-n-n' is multivalent, it can perhaps mean the lack of consensus of its specific lexical semantics due to its different use across dialects. Therefore, due to the lack of such consensus, it should not be assumed necessarily that 'z-n-n' in the Qur'ānic dialect was also multivalent. I attempt to argue that 'z-n-n' in the Qur'ān can still be understood univocally as 'dogmatic zeal' regardless whether or not there were dialects that gave it a different meaning causing it to eventually have multivalence in standard Arabic.

²⁵ Abdulla Galadari, "The *Qibla*: An Allusion to the *Shema'*," *Comparative Islamic Studies*, 9/2 (2013), pp. 165–193.

²⁶ Andrew Rippin, "Studies in Qur'ānic Vocabulary: The Problem of the Dictionary," in Gabriel S. Reynolds (ed.), *New Perspectives on the Qur'ān: The Qur'ān in its Historical Context 2*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), pp. 38–46.

²⁷ Michel Allard, May Elziere, Jean-Claude Gardin, and Francis Hours, *Analyse conceptuelle du Coran sur cartes perforées* (Paris: Mouton, 1963).

²⁸ Rippin, "Studies in Qur'ānic," p. 40.

²⁹ Elsaid M. Badawi and Muhammad Abdel Haleem, *The Arabic-English Dictionary of Qur'ānic Usage* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

³⁰ Rippin, "Studies in Qur'ānic," pp. 40–41.

³¹ Arne A. Ambros and Stephan Procházka, *A Concise Dictionary of Koranic Arabic* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2004).

³² Rippin, "Studies in Qur'ānic," pp. 40–41.

³³ Rippin, "Studies in Qur'ānic," p. 43.

There have been some scholars who argued against the overuse of philology and, especially, the overuse of etymology, such as James Barr in biblical studies,³⁴ with Andrzej Zaborki³⁵ and Walid Saleh in Qur'anic studies.³⁶ Nonetheless, some recent scholarship shows that with a restrained kind of philological studies, the pitfalls caused by the over-emphasis on etymology may be avoided.³⁷ It is in that sense that this study approaches the root 'z-n-n.' Moreover, the method used anyway does not constitute an overuse of etymology that is not already attested in much traditional and medieval Arabic scholarship as a definition for this root.

Furthermore, due to the root 'z-n-n' in its Qur'anic context may sometimes appear to mean conjecture, it would be imperative to analyze all instances in which this root appears in the Qur'an to illustrate that the definition of 'dogmatic zeal' or 'zealous belief' remains consistent, even if one might feel 'conjecture' as an acceptable meaning. Therefore, the term may not necessarily mean itself and its antithesis, requiring the reader to try to discern what it exactly means in each context, but that regardless of the context, the semantic range of this term remains consistent with a single meaning of zealous belief in parallel with its cognate in other Semitic languages. The main purpose is to emphasize that when the Qur'an negatively portrays 'zann,' it is, in fact, negatively illustrating having zealous beliefs and dogmas and not conjecture; for if it were conjecture, it would contradict the epistemology that the Qur'an expects from its audience to think and to contemplate, which would result in hypothesis-making and formulating conjectures.

Qur'anic use of *zann*

The Qur'an uses the term '*zann*' for dogmatic zeal or unwavering belief, which means '*zann*' might sometimes be considered a delusion, if such a belief is false. The Qur'an usually uses the term '*zann*' negatively (e.g., Q. 2:78, 3:154, 4:157, 6:116, 6:148, 7:66, 7:171, 10:22, 10:24, 10:36, 10:60, 10:66, 11:27, 12:110, 17:52, 17:101, 18:35–36, 21:87, 22:15, 26:186, 28:38–39, 33:10, 34:20, 37:87, 38:27, 40:37, 41:22–23, 41:48, 41:50, 45:24, 45:32, 48:6, 48:12, 49:12, 53:23, 53:28, 59:2, 72:5, 72:7, 72:12, 84:14), with fewer instances of positive connotations observed (e.g., Q. 2:46, 2:230, 2:249, 9:118, 12:42, 17:102, 18:53, 24:12, 38:24, 69:20, 75:25, 75:28, 83:4).

The Qur'an, for example, frequently accuses nonbelievers of resorting to '*zann*,' as the reason for their unbelief:

³⁴ James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

³⁵ Andrzej Zaborki, "Etymology, Etymological Fallacy and the Pitfalls of Literal Translation of Some Arabic and Islamic Terms," in R. Arnzen and J. Thielmann (eds.), *Words, Texts and Concepts Cruising the Mediterranean Sea: Studies on the Sources, Contents and Influences of Islamic Civilization and Arabic Philosophy and Science* (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), pp. 143–148.

³⁶ Walid A. Saleh, "The Etymological Fallacy and Qur'anic Studies: Muhammad, Paradise, and Late Antiquity," in Angelika Neuwirth, Nicolai Sinai, and Michael Marx (eds.), *The Qur'an in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qur'anic Milieu*, (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 649–698.

³⁷ Abdulla Galadari, *Qur'anic Hermeneutics: Between Science, History, and the Bible* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), pp. 40–44.

Behold! Truly unto God belongs whosoever is in the heavens and whosoever is on the earth. And what is it that they follow, those who call upon partners apart from God? They follow naught but dogmatic zeal (*al-zann*),³⁸ and they do but decisively speak (*yakhrushūn*).³⁹ [Q. 10:66]⁴⁰

The term ‘*zann*’ in much of these instances is understood as conjecture and doubt by many Qur’ānic commentators,⁴¹ such as Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767),⁴² al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923),⁴³ and al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210),⁴⁴ which is why most Qur’ānic translators associate ‘*zann*’ with such semantic sense. If the sense of ‘*zann*’ is doubt, then it would mean that the nonbelievers had an attitude that included the possibility that the Qur’ān might be correct but that they were unsure.

None of the Qur’ānic passages that use ‘*zann*’ in the context of nonbelievers indicates that the nonbelievers entertain the possibility that they could be mistaken. If the nonbelievers were unsure, and they considered the possibility that they could be wrong and the Qur’ān correct, the Qur’ān would have used different tactics that would not attack the nonbelievers’ doubt but use it to convince that their doubt may only need to be further investigated. However, the Qur’ān does not manage the situation in that manner, making it clearer that the Qur’ān does not consider the nonbelievers doubting themselves, but instead are sure within themselves of their convictions and do not give the Qur’ān the benefit of the doubt.

By contrast, when the Qur’ān sometimes uses the term ‘*zann*’ in a positive sense, ‘*zann*’ is usually understood as certainty and not doubt;⁴⁵ for example, ‘I zealously believed (*zanantu*) that I would meet my reckoning’ [Q. 69:20].⁴⁶ In another case, for example, the Qur’ān expounds on people who are certain that they will meet their God: “⁴⁵ Seek help in patience and prayer, and this indeed is difficult except for the humble, ⁴⁶ who zealously believe (*yaẓunnūn*) that they shall meet their Lord and that they shall return unto Him’ [Q. 2:45–46].⁴⁷ These passages would not make complete sense if those individuals did not truly believe in what

³⁸ *TSQ* translates ‘*zann*’ as conjecture.

³⁹ *TSQ* translates ‘*yakhrushūn*’ as those who surmise. The translation of *decisively speak* is discussed in a later section of this article.

⁴⁰ All Quranic translations used are based on Nasr, Seyyed Hossein (Ed.), *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary* (San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2015), henceforth *TSQ*, except where otherwise noted, especially in the translation of ‘*zann*,’ ‘*kharṣ*,’ or other terms that help portray the argument in this article. Additionally, some archaic English is changed to modern.

⁴¹ M. K. Shaker, “A Study on the Meaning of Conjecture and Its Ethical and Epistemological Function in the Qur’ān,” *Maqalat wa Barrasiha*, 40/84 (2007), pp. 107–125.

⁴² Muqātil Ibn Sulaymān (d. 150/767), *Tafsīr*, ed. ‘Abdullah Maḥmūd Shihāteh (Beirut: Iḥyā’ al-Turāth, 2003), vol. 2, p. 243.

⁴³ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’*, vol. 15, p. 143.

⁴⁴ Al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210), *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (Beirut: Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 2000), vol. 17, pp. 279–280.

⁴⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’*, vol. 23, p. 585; al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ*, vol. 30, p. 628.

⁴⁶ *TSQ* translates ‘*zanantu*’ as ‘Truly I knew for certain.’

⁴⁷ *TSQ* translates ‘*yaẓunnūn*’ as ‘reckon.’

they were doing and were only speculating. The Qurʾān is portraying people who are certain that they will meet their God as strongly believing in what they do, and many traditional exegetes, such as Muqātil b. Sulaymān and al-Ṭabarī, concur with such definition in these instances,⁴⁸ while al-Rāzī narrates both certainty and speculation as still possible definitions.⁴⁹

Only one Qurʾānic passage clearly uses the term doubt (*shakk*) in conjunction with ‘*zann*,’ when discussing the killing of the Messiah:

and for their saying, “We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the messenger of God”—though they did not slay him; nor did they crucify him, but it appeared so unto them. Those who differ concerning him are in doubt (*shakk*) thereof. They have no knowledge of it, but follow only dogmatic zeal (*al-zann*);⁵⁰ they slew him not for certain (*yaqīnā*). [Q. 4:157]

This passage in the Qurʾān provides a possible reason to understand the term ‘*zann*,’ as conjecture, because ‘*zann*’ is being used in conjunction with the term ‘*shakk*’ (doubt). However, with a closer reading, the reader does not have to define ‘*zann*’ as conjecture in this passage. In context, the passage’s audience is some Jews, who claim that they have killed the Messiah. The Qurʾān responds to them that they have neither killed nor crucified the Messiah and claims that people that differ, concerning the Messiah, doubt about the person of the Messiah. The Qurʾān, then, claims that those people, who differ concerning the Messiah, have no knowledge, except to follow ‘*zann*.’ The question here is as follows: Is the doubt (*shakk*) in the first part of the verse equivalent to the ‘*zann*’ in the second part? When analyzing the grammar without considering the definitions of the terms, ‘*shakk*’ and ‘*zann*’ could be equivalent, but this conclusion is unnecessary. Grammatically, the ambiguity is in the use of the pronouns.⁵¹ When the verse states, ‘Those who differ concerning him/it,’ the Qurʾān is unclear as to whether those Jews are disputing concerning the Messiah or the act of killing the Messiah. When the Qurʾān later states, ‘... are in doubt of him/it,’ it is also unclear whether those Jews are doubting the personhood of the Messiah or the act of killing the Messiah, an ambiguity that al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) took notice.⁵² When the Qurʾān later states, ‘They have no knowledge of him/it,’ it is also unclear whether those Jews have no knowledge about the Messiah or the act of killing the Messiah. Therefore, when the verse later says that they, ‘follow only *zann*,’ it is ambiguous whether the Qurʾān is stating that those Jews are following ‘*zann*’ regarding the person of the Messiah or the act of killing the Messiah. In

⁴⁸ Ibn Sulaymān, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, p. 102; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ*, vol. 1, pp. 17–23; vol. 23, p. 585.

⁴⁹ Al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ*, vol. 3, p. 491–492.

⁵⁰ *TSQ* translates ‘*zann*’ as conjecture.

⁵¹ Todd Lawson, *The Crucifixion and the Qurʾan: A Study in the History of Muslim Thought* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009), p. 47.

⁵² Al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144) *al-Kashshāf ʿan ḥaqāʾiq ghawāmiḍ al-tanzīl* (Beirut: al-Kitāb, 2007), vol. 1, pp. 587–589.

other words, a plausible explanation is that those Jews doubt (*shakk*) the person of the Messiah, but are sure (*zann*) the Messiah was killed, or vice-versa, although the likely answer is the former, due to the consistency of the word definition.

Unlike al-Zamakhsharī, many traditional exegetes do not always take notice of the ambiguity in Q. 4:157, and they take ‘*zann*’ here to simply mean doubting.⁵³ Al-Rāzī, on the other hand, recognizes the ambiguity to what precisely the pronouns refer; however, he interprets that it could either refer to the Messiah or the one who took his form, as per the traditional interpretation of this passage that it was not the Messiah but someone who looked like him was killed.⁵⁴ Nonetheless, he also takes ‘*zann*’ as doubting for granted. Yet, if the Qur’ān intended for ‘*zann*’ in this verse to mean doubting, it would mean that those Jews who are claiming that they killed the Messiah are not sure if they actually did so. However, if they were doubting and unsure, they would not have made this claim. Instead, they would have claimed that they *might* have killed him. However, they appear to be sure of their claim, and therefore, it would seem less likely that ‘*zann*’ here means doubting, but that they zealously believe in their claim, in which the Qur’ān denounces it and argues that, in reality, they have not killed the Messiah.

Given the ambiguity of what ‘*zann*’ could mean in the verse concerning the Messiah’s crucifixion (i.e., Q. 4:157), the question is as follows: if in all other passages it makes more sense to understand ‘*zann*’ as dogmatic zeal or to zealously believe, should ‘*zann*’ in this verse be considered an exception to the rule, and therefore, mean doubt? However, if no clear reason is evident to apply an exception to the rule, then it is unnecessary to apply such an exception. Hence, this verse would still make sense even if doubt (*shakk*) and ‘*zann*’ are not considered equivalent. Therefore, not applying an exception is more plausible than doing so. Consequently, the term ‘*zann*’ in this verse continues to be more conceivably defined as ‘zealous belief’ or ‘dogmatic zeal,’ instead of ‘doubt.’

Difference between zealous belief (*zann*) and certainty (*yaqīn*)

Al-Farāhīdī (d. 170/786) accepted two antithetical definitions of the term ‘*zann*’: doubt (*shakk*) and certainty (*yaqīn*).⁵⁵ Ibn Manẓūr (d. 711/1311) defines ‘*zann*’ as something ‘*muḥkam*,’ that is, the person has a definite belief, but that some of this belief may either be based on doubt (*shakk*) or certainty (*yaqīn*).⁵⁶ Even if the belief was based on certainty (*yaqīn*), Ibn Manẓūr states that the type of certainty that ‘*zann*’ may have is not based on something seen, but on something deduced through logic or contemplation (*tadabbur*),

⁵³ Ibn Sulaymān, *Tafsīr*, vol. 1, pp. 420–421; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ*, vol. 9, pp. 376–377.

⁵⁴ Al-Rāzī, *Mafāṭīḥ*, vol. 11 pp. 259–262.

⁵⁵ Al-Farāhīdī (d. 170/786), *al-ʿAyn*, eds. Maḥdī al-Makhzūmī and Ibrāhīm al-Sāmarrāʾī (Beirut: al-Hilāl, 2007), vol. 8, pp. 151–152.

⁵⁶ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 13, pp. 272–275.

because if certainty was possible based on seeing, the certainty would be called knowledge and not a belief. Ibn Manẓūr seems to attempt in making sense of what, otherwise, would be considered an ambiguous use of the term. As discussed, early and medieval Muslim scholars realized that the term ‘*ẓann*’ has two opposing definitions: certainty and doubt.⁵⁷

A dogmatic conviction in something false that is maintained despite reason and logical evidence indicating its falsehood is defined as a delusion. Therefore, although not every strong and unwavering conviction (*ẓann*) is a delusion, some and perhaps most are delusions, according to the Qur’ān. The Qur’ān seems to differentiate between certainty (*yaqīn*) and zealous belief (*ẓann*). In other words, the Qur’ān appears to be making epistemic definitions regarding the matter. A zealous belief (*ẓann*) could be true or false, but regardless of whether a zealous belief is true or false, it is not defined as certainty (*yaqīn*). Certainty (*yaqīn*) is perhaps not simply a conviction, but knowledge supported by experiential evidence. For example, if the Qur’ān uses the singular pronoun ‘you’ to refer to Muḥammad in the following passage, certainty (*yaqīn*) could be understood as experiential knowledge, ‘And worship your Lord, till certainty (*al-yaqīn*) comes unto you’ [Q. 15:99].

- Assumption: This verse addresses Muḥammad.
- Muḥammad has a belief, perhaps even strongly, on the issue that such a belief can be regarded as a zealous belief (*ẓann*) to him.
- Muḥammad has evidence to prove such belief based on the Qur’ān or divine revelation.
- However, the Qur’ān does not state that Muḥammad has certainty (*yaqīn*) regarding such belief.
- Conclusion: Certainty (*yaqīn*) is neither defined as a strong conviction nor is revelatory evidence sufficient to consider it certainty (*yaqīn*). Therefore, certainty (*yaqīn*) must mean a type of knowledge beyond revelatory evidence and perhaps is experiential evidence,⁵⁸ especially when compared with Q. 102:3–7.

As such, the semantic range for the term ‘*ẓann*’ meaning to zealously believe in something is very different from knowing something with certainty (*yaqīn*). This can further be portrayed in the following Qur’ānic verse, which explicitly distinguishes between ‘*ẓann*’ and ‘*yaqīn*.’

When it was said, “Surely God’s Promise is true, and there is no doubt in the Hour,” you said, “We do not know what the Hour is. We zealously believe (*naẓun*) but dogmatic zeal (*ẓannā*), and we are not certain (*mustayqīnīn*).” [Q. 45:32]

⁵⁷ Al-Anbārī (d.328/940), *al-Adḍād*, pp. 14–16; Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad bin Aḥmad al-Hurawī (d. 370/981), *Tahdhīb al-lughah*, ed. Muḥammad Mur’ib (Beirut: Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 2001), vol. 14, pp. 260–262; Abū Bakr Muḥammad bin Aḥmad Ibn al-Ṣābūnī (d. 634/1237), *Ma’rifah al-farq bayn al-ḍād wal-ẓā’*, ed. Ḥātim Ṣ. al-Ḍāmin (Damascus: Naynawah, 2005), p. 17.

⁵⁸ For more details on the role of experiential knowledge in the Qur’an with regard to the difference between “faith” and “reason,” see Abdulla Galadari, “Qur’anic Faith and Reason: An Epistemic Comparison with the Kālāma Sutta,” *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue*, 30/1 (2020), pp. 45–67.

Linguistic analysis of zeal (*ẓann*)

When the Qurʾān describes belief, the term usually used is rooted in ‘*īmān*.’ Linguistically, the term’s root is ‘*-m-n*,’ meaning safety or security, in addition to faith.⁵⁹ The definitions of safety and security are also paralleled in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Ethiopian.⁶⁰

Due to the root’s meaning of safety and security, it has come to also mean trust or trustworthy, which the Qurʾān sometimes uses in the form of ‘*amānah*’ and ‘*amīn*,’ respectively (e.g., Q. 2:283, 12:54). The *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament (TDOT)* divulges an ambiguity regarding the etymological original meaning of the root ‘*-m-n*,’ and whether the original meaning is closer to the Arabic definition of faithful or security, or closer to the Syriac definition of enduring.⁶¹ Nonetheless, the root is more frequently used in the Hebrew Bible and the Qurʾān in the form of entrustment and faithfulness.

William F. Albright has suggested that ‘*’ōmēnīm*’ is derived from the Akkadian ‘*ummānu*,’⁶² which is used in Hammurabi’s laws to mean a craftsman, workforce, or an army.⁶³ However, the *TDOT* rejects this, since trust and safety have no connection to a craftsman.⁶⁴ Nonetheless, I do not consider this as grounds for rejection, because a craftsman could have been entrusted to perform a certain job. The same goes for the workforce and, especially, soldiers, who are entrusted to do their job in providing security.

As such, Akkadian and not Hebrew could be the earliest literary account of the root ‘*-m-n*.’ Additionally, the Akkadian root seems closer to the definition of security, especially since it also means to entrust someone with goods and a person entrusted with knowledge (a scholar).⁶⁵ Even the English word ‘faith’ is from the Latin ‘*fides*’ or ‘*fidere*,’ which means to trust. The

⁵⁹ Al-Farāhīdī, *al-ʿAyn*, vol. 8, pp. 388–389; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 13, p. 21.

⁶⁰ See J. Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (electronic ed.) (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997); also see F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2000), pp. 52–53, henceforth *BDB*; also see L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 63–64; also see Samuel P. Treggeles (Trans.), *Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, [orig. 1857], 2003), pp. 58–59.

⁶¹ G. J. Botterweck, H. Ringgren, and H.-J. Fabry (Eds.), J. T. Willis (Trans.), *The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Revised Edition) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), vol. 1, pp. 292–293, henceforth *TDOT*.

⁶² William Albright, “A Prince of Taanach in the Fifteenth Century B.C.,” *Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research*, 94/2 (1944), pp. 12–27.

⁶³ M. E. J. Richardson, *Hammurabi’s Laws: Text, Translation, and Glossary* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), pp. 323–324.

⁶⁴ *TDOT*, vol. 1, p. 294.

⁶⁵ A. Leo Oppenheim, Erica Reiner, and Martha T. Roth (Eds.), *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (Chicago, IL: The Oriental Institute, 1956–2011), vol. 20, pp. 102–116, esp. 20, pp. 110–115, henceforth *CAD*.

Proto-Indo-European term might have been *'bheidh'* meaning to trust,⁶⁶ which may have been the root of the Greek *'pistis.'*⁶⁷

The cognate for the root *'z-n-n'* in Aramaic is *'ṭ-n-n,'* which is not used in the Hebrew Bible. However, in Syriac Aramaic, *'ṭ-n-n'* means dogmatic zeal or envy.⁶⁸ The relationship between those two definitions: zeal and envy, is that they both require emotional arousal. In the case of envy, the arousal is caused by what someone has, and in the case of zeal, the arousal is caused by their motivation for something. Al-Farāhīdī even states that the /z/ in the Arabic *'z-n-n'* is sometimes changed to /ṭ/ to make *'ṭ-n-n,'* if it was preceded or followed with a /t/ sound.⁶⁹

There seems to be compatibility in the use of the Syriac *'ṭ-n-n'* for the Greek *'zēlos,'* because both can mean zeal or jealousy.⁷⁰ The Peshitta, for example, uses the root *'ṭ-n-n'* in Luke 6:15 and Acts 1:13 for the Greek *'zēlōtēs'* and *'zēlōtēs'* to describe Simon the Zealot. The root *'ṭ-n-n'* is also used in Acts 21:20, for 'They are all zealous (*zēlōtēs*) for the law.' Similarly, where Acts 22:3 quotes Paul saying, 'Being zealous (*zēlōtēs*) for God,' the Peshitta also uses the root *'ṭ-n-n'* for zeal. Additionally, in 1 Corinthians 12:14 and 1 Peter 3:13, the Peshitta uses the term *'ṭ-n-n'* for *'zēlōtai,'* and it is used for *'zēlon'* in 2 Corinthians 7:7 and 7:11.

Romans 10:2 states the following regarding the Israelites, 'They have a zeal (*ṭ-n-n*) for God, but not according to knowledge,' in which the Peshitta also uses the root *'ṭ-n-n.'* This passage in Romans clarifies that the term *'ṭ-n-n'* is distinct from an individual with knowledge. As such, the Syriac use of *'ṭ-n-n'* in this passage to make such a distinction corresponds to how the Qur'ān also distinguishes *'z-n-n'* from knowledge (*'ilm*) (e.g., Q. 45:24).

The root *'ṭ-n-n'* is also used by the Peshitta in John 2:17 for the Greek *'zēlos,'* when quoting Psalm 69:9, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' The Hebrew term used in Psalm 69:9 to mean zeal is *'qin'at,'* which can also mean jealousy.⁷¹ In Aramaic, Ethiopic, Amharic, Tigre, and Soqotri, the root *'q-n-n'* also means jealousy and envy.⁷² The Peshitta uses the root *'ṭ-n-n'* for jealous (*parazēlōsai*) in Romans 11:11. In 2 Corinthians 9:2, Philippians 3:6, and Hebrews 10:27, the Peshitta uses the root *'ṭ-n-n'* for *'zēlos.'*

⁶⁶ Gerhard Köbler, *Indogermanisches Wörterbuch: indogermanisch-neuhochdeutsch-neuenglisches Wörterbuch, neuhochdeutsch-indogermanisches Wörterbuch, neuenglisch-indogermanisches Wörterbuch*, (Giessen: Arbeiten zur Rechts- und Sprachwissenschaft, 2006), p. 106.

⁶⁷ Albert Doja, "Honneur, Foi et Croyance: approche linguistique anthropologique des valeurs morales et religieuses," *Anthropos* 106, 1 (2011), pp. 161–172, p. 164.

⁶⁸ K. Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum* (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1982), pp. 181–182; also see Hebrew Union College, *Targum Lexicon*.

⁶⁹ Al-Farāhīdī, *al-Ayn*, vol. 8, p. 152.

⁷⁰ Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1964), vol. 2, pp. 877–888, henceforth *TDNT*.

⁷¹ *BDB*, pp. 1109–1114.

⁷² *TDOT*, vol. 13, p. 48.

In 2 Corinthians 11:2, the Peshitta uses the root ‘*ṭ-n-n*’ for ‘*zēlō*.’ Galatians 5:20 lists works of the flesh, in which ‘*zēlos*’ is among those listed, for which the Peshitta uses the root ‘*ṭ-n-n*.’ However, as Galatians 5:21 continues with the list, the text uses ‘*phthonoi*,’ which also means envy or jealousy⁷³ that the Peshitta renders with the root ‘*ḥ-s-m*,’ which means envy in Syriac,⁷⁴ but also zeal.⁷⁵ Therefore, one might question whether ‘*phthonoi*’ is used as a synonym for ‘*zēlos*’ in Galatians 5:20 or if the author intended a different meaning. For an author to repeat the same meaning using synonyms as part of their rhetorical style is not unusual. When analyzing these terms in the Bible, John Elliott states, ‘The emotions of zeal, jealousy and envy are related but also distinct.’⁷⁶ Nonetheless, in James 4:5, the Peshitta uses the root ‘*ṭ-n-n*’ for ‘*phthonon*.’ Similarly, in many places where a word rooted in ‘*zēlos*’ is used, the Peshitta renders them with a word rooted in ‘*ḥ-s-m*,’ as well. As such, the use of synonymous words in Galatians is likely to be attributed to rhetoric, as a difference in meaning cannot be demonstrated. The Septuagint does not use the term ‘*phthonos*,’ for the Hebrew ‘*q-n-*,’ but usually uses the term ‘*zēlos*’ instead.⁷⁷

In the Peshitta, ‘*ṭ-n-n*’ has a unique use in Colossians 4:13, where it is applied for the Greek ‘*ponon polyn*’ (worked very hard). Although the Greek does not use the term ‘*zēlos*,’ an individual who works very hard may be considered zealous, which is apparently the sense in which the Peshitta understands ‘*ponon polyn*’ in this passage.

The Greek term ‘*zēlos*’ and, subsequently, the Syriac ‘*ṭ-n-n*’ is used in the New Testament both positively and negatively. Luke sometimes uses ‘*zēloō*’ and ‘*zēlōtēs*’ to portray the zeal he perceives from the Jewish people against the Christians (e.g., Acts 5:17, 13:45, 17:5). Paul, similarly, describes himself before his conversion as zealous (*zēlōtēs*), which the Peshitta translates with ‘*ṭ-n-n*’ (i.e., Galatians 1:15). Dane Ortlund argues that Paul’s understanding of zeal is to be overly confident in the flesh without true knowledge.⁷⁸ In other words, Ortlund’s explanation of Paul’s understanding seems similar to how the Qur’ān appears to frequently use the root ‘*z-n-n*,’ which is being zealously dogmatic or zealously believing in something without knowledge acquired through experiential certainty (*yaqīn*).

⁷³ Frederick W. Danker (Ed.), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 1054.

⁷⁴ George A. Kiraz, *Analytical Lexicon of the Syriac New Testament*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 2003); also see Hebrew Union College, *Targum Lexicon*.

⁷⁵ J. Payne Smith (Ed.), *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary: Founded upon the Thesaurus Syriacus of R. Payne Smith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, n.d.), pp. 151–152.

⁷⁶ John H. Elliott, “Envy, Jealousy and Zeal in the Bible: Sorting Out the Social Differences and Theological Implications – No Envy for YHWH,” in Robert Coote and Norman K. Gottwald (eds.), *To Break Every Yoke: Essays in Honor of Marvin C. Chaney*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2007), pp. 344–363, p. 345.

⁷⁷ *TDNT*, pp. 882–884.

⁷⁸ Dane C. Ortlund, *Zeal without Knowledge: The Concept of Zeal in Romans 10, Galatians 1, and Philippians 3* (London: T&T Clark, 2012).

Seemingly, in the overall view of the Syriac use of the root ‘*t-n-n*,’ an appropriate understanding is zeal. Jealousy may also be attributed to zeal. Therefore, the Arabic root ‘*z-n-n*’ may have also had the same connotation of zeal, closely resembling that in Syriac.

This information leads us to conclude that the Qur’ānic use of dogmatic zeal or zealous belief (*zann*) is mostly (but not always) negative, and its use of ‘*’-m-n*’ to imply safety or security is mostly (but not always) positive. The Qur’ān asks people to shun most zeal:

O you who believe! Shun much zeal (*zann*). Indeed, some zeal (*zann*) is a sin. And do not spy upon one another, nor backbite one another. Would any of you desire to eat the dead flesh of his brother? You would abhor it. And reverence God. Truly God is Relenting, Merciful [Q. 49:12].⁷⁹

Regarding matters of truth or defining truth or reality, the Qur’ān states that only God can guide to the truth. Accordingly, if an individual is zealous regarding certain dogmas, the Qur’ān states that such zeal avails nothing against the truth:

³⁵ Say, “Is there any among your partners who guides unto Truth?” Say, “God guides unto Truth. Is one who guides unto Truth worthier to be followed, or one who cannot guide unless he be guided? What ails you? How do you judge?”³⁶ And most of them follow naught but dogmatic zeal (*zann*). Truly dogmatic zeal (*zann*) does not avail against the truth in the least. Truly God knows what they do. [Q. 10:35–36]⁸⁰

Therefore, dogmatic zeal (*zann*) is mostly considered negative in the Qur’ān, and whatever zeal an individual has, it would not change the facts, the reality, or the truth. In the following section, I assess the term ‘*yakhruṣūn*’ (decisively speak), which the Qur’ān sometimes uses to describe individuals considered zealous (*yaẓunnūn*), to improve the understanding of the definition of the term ‘*zann*’ in the Qur’ān as zealous belief.

A comparison between Q. 3:154 and 48:26 provides even further insight into the meaning of ‘*zann*.’ Q. 3:154 describes some people having ‘*zann*’ as having ‘*zann al-jāhiliyyah*’ (*zann* of the ignorance). Q. 48:26 states that nonbelievers have ‘*ḥamiyyah*,’ which is a ‘*ḥamiyyah al-jāhiliyyah*’ (*ḥamiyyah* of the ignorance). Although it is not absolutely necessary to conclude that ‘*zann*’ and ‘*ḥamiyyah*’ need to be synonymous simply due to the parallelism, it is noteworthy that ‘*ḥamiyyah*’ in this passage can mean zeal,⁸¹ and is described as such by traditional exegetes, such as al-Ṭabarī⁸² and al-Rāzī,⁸³ and it is also attested in its cognates in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Ethiopic.⁸⁴ The relationship between zeal or jealousy with ‘*ḥēmā*’ is also seen in Proverbs 27:4. If the Qur’ānic phrases ‘*zann al-jāhiliyyah*’ and ‘*ḥamiyyah*

⁷⁹ *TSQ* uses conjecture for ‘*zann*.’

⁸⁰ *TSQ* uses conjecture for ‘*zann*.’

⁸¹ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-‘arab*, vol. 14, p. 199.

⁸² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi*’, vol. 22, p. 251–253.

⁸³ Al-Rāzī, *Mafāṭih*, vol. 28 pp. 84–85.

⁸⁴ *TDOT*, vol. 4, pp. 462–465.

al-jāhiliyyah’ are considered parallels, equating both ‘*ẓann*’ with ‘*ḥamiyyah*,’ then ‘zeal’ becomes the common definition between both.

The zealous who decisively speak (*yakhruṣūn*)

In several passages of the Qurʾān (e.g., 6:116, 148; 10:66), individuals with dogmatic zeal or zealous belief (*ẓann*) about things that are considered false are described as ‘*yakhruṣūn*.’ The root of ‘*yakhruṣūn*’ is ‘*kh-r-ṣ*,’ which is usually defined and understood as liars.⁸⁵ However, ‘*khirāṣ*’ or ‘*khurṣ*’ means the tip of the arrow;⁸⁶ and also hunger with coldness.⁸⁷ By contrast, the Arabic root ‘*ḥ-r-ṣ*’ means zeal⁸⁸ and also to cut or to sharpen,⁸⁹ which might be why a ‘*khirāṣ*’ is the tip of an arrow. In Hebrew and Aramaic, the root term also means to cut, sharpen, or decide.⁹⁰ Perhaps the Arabic root ‘*ḥ-r-th*,’ meaning to plough, which is also attested in Akkadian,⁹¹ is from the meaning of cutting in ‘*ḥ-r-ṣ*’ and ‘*kh-r-t*,’⁹² as is also demonstrated by al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144).⁹³ Al-Qāḍī ‘Ayyād (d. 544/1149) also corroborates the relationship between ‘*kh-r-ṣ*’ and ‘*ḥ-r-ṣ*.’⁹⁴

When ‘*ḥ-r-ṣ*’ is used for decision in Hebrew and Aramaic, the typical meaning is to make a strict, diligent, and determined decision (e.g., 1 Kings. 20:40; Isaiah 10:23, 28:22; Daniel 9:25–27, 11:36; Proverbs 21:5; Joel 3:14).⁹⁵ This sense of meaning seems to be close to the definition of zeal. In other words, it describes individuals with a strong decision regarding their faith. This meaning is similar to making a cutting decision (*amr qāṭi*) in Arabic, or as in English, a sharp decision. Having a sharp tongue or sharp words, as a metaphor, is not foreign to Semitic-speaking people.⁹⁶ In Akkadian, their cognates have the same meanings as in Hebrew and Aramaic,⁹⁷ including to set and to determine.⁹⁸ The Akkadian adverb, ‘*ḥarīṣ*,’ means ‘exactly,’⁹⁹ which can be associated with speaking decisively (exactly). The Akkadian ‘*ḥarištu*’ means an exact report,¹⁰⁰ which again is under-

⁸⁵ Al-Farāhīdī, *al-ʿAyn*, vol. 4, p. 183; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 7, p. 21.

⁸⁶ Al-Farāhīdī, *al-ʿAyn*, vol. 4, p. 184; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 7, p. 21.

⁸⁷ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 7, p. 22.

⁸⁸ Al-Farāhīdī, *al-ʿAyn*, vol. 3, p. 116; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 7, p. 11.

⁸⁹ Al-Farāhīdī, *al-ʿAyn*, vol. 3, p. 116; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 7, p. 11.

⁹⁰ *BDB*, pp. 358–359.

⁹¹ *BDB*, vol. 6, pp. 95–96.

⁹² *TDOT*, vol. 5, pp. 216–220.

⁹³ Al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), *Asās al-balāghah*, ed. Muḥammad B. ʿUyūn al-Sūd (Beirut: al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1998), vol. 1, pp. 239–240.

⁹⁴ Al-Qāḍī ‘Ayyād (d. 544/1149), *Mashāriq al-anwār ʿala ṣiḥāḥ al-āthār* (Cairo: al-Turāth, n.d.), vol. 1, p. 233.

⁹⁵ Al-Qāḍī ‘Ayyād, *Mashāriq al-anwār*, vol. 1, p. 233.

⁹⁶ Al-Qāḍī ‘Ayyād, *Mashāriq al-anwār*, vol. 1, p. 233.

⁹⁷ Al-Qāḍī ‘Ayyād, *Mashāriq al-anwār*, vol. 5, p. 216.

⁹⁸ *CAD*, vol. 6, pp. 92–95.

⁹⁹ *CAD*, vol. 6, pp. 102–103.

¹⁰⁰ *CAD*, vol. 6, pp. 102–103.

stood as a precise and unwavering statement, whether a statement of faith or otherwise. Due to the meaning of exactness, Akkadian *‘ḥirṣu’* is also sometimes used to mean an exact copy.¹⁰¹ The Qurʾān frequently accuses nonbelievers of simply believing their own traditions handed down by their forefathers (e.g., Q. 2:170, 5:104, 7:70, 10:78 11:62, 11:87, 14:10, 21:53, 26:74, 31:21, 43:22–23). As such, when the Qurʾān accuses nonbelievers of dogmatic zeal or zealous belief (*ẓann*) and suggests that they are only decisively speaking (*yakhruṣūn*), the meaning could also be that they are only exactly copying that which their forefathers have said and done.

Therefore, the Qurʾānic use of *‘kh-r-ṣ’* is understood as individuals adamantly decisive in their sharp words and convictions, and that describes zeal (*ẓ-n-n*). This provides further evidence that the Qurʾānic semantic use of *‘ẓ-n-n’* is zeal or zealous belief.

Conjecture in the Qurʾān (*ḥ-s-b*)

Now that I have argued that the root *‘ẓ-n-n’* in the Qurʾān should not be understood as conjecture, I must discuss another term the Qurʾān uses that more accurately reflects a conjecture or an opinion. The Qurʾān uses the root *‘ḥ-s-b’* to mean conjecture (e.g., Q. 2:214, 3:169, 18:102, 27:44, 29:4, 47:29, 75:3). Al-Farāhīdī and Ibn Manẓūr define the root *‘ḥ-s-b’* as accounting and calculation,¹⁰² which the Qurʾān also uses in such a definition (e.g., Q. 17:12). Ibn Manẓūr considers *‘ḥ-s-b’* to mean conjecture or opinion because it is a calculated thought.¹⁰³

Identifying the root *‘ḥ-s-b’* as conjecture in the Qurʾān can also be attested in its use in some other Semitic languages. For example, the Hebrew Bible frequently uses the root *‘ḥ-ṣ-b’* to mean opinion or thought (e.g., Psalm 94:11, Isaiah 55:7–9). In an Aramaic example, the Peshitta uses *‘ḥ-ṣ-b’* to translate the Greek *‘dialogismoi’* in Luke 24:38 to mean conjecture or doubt. The term is also attested in some other Semitic languages, such as Ethiopic, Ugaritic, and Phoenician.¹⁰⁴

The Qurʾān never uses the root *‘ḥ-s-b’* as an act, in a negative manner, unlike *‘ẓ-n-n’*. Although the Qurʾān criticizes nonbelievers for some of their thoughts (*ḥ-s-b*), the act of thinking (*ḥ-s-b*) itself is never criticized. This is different from how the Qurʾān reacts to *‘ẓann’*, which as an act, is mostly criticized, as discussed earlier. From an epistemic perspective, the Qurʾān, actually, frequently encourages people to think, to ponder, and to contemplate (e.g., Q. 4:82, 6:65, 7:184, 57:17). When people think, they create thoughts and formulate opinions, hypotheses, and conjectures. The Qurʾān appears to not object to independent thought and actually encourages it. This realization further emphasizes that the term *‘ẓann’* cannot mean to formulate an opinion or a conjecture, if *‘ẓann’* is usually derided by the Qurʾān. However, the Qurʾān appears to scorn individuals’ zeal regarding dogmas or beliefs that they may hold.

¹⁰¹ CAD, vol. 6, p. 199.

¹⁰² Al-Farāhīdī, *al-ʿAyn*, vol. 3, p. 148–149; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 1, pp. 310–317.

¹⁰³ Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, vol. 1, p. 315.

¹⁰⁴ TDOT, vol. 5, pp. 228–232.

List of Qur’anic verses using ‘z-n-n’

A list of Qur’anic uses of the root ‘z-n-n’ is displayed here to show that it is possible to remain consistent in the definition of this root in the Qur’an as ‘zealous belief’ without necessarily resorting to any kind of antithesis.

	Verse	Translation
1	Q. 2:46	who zealously believe (<i>yaẓunnūn</i>) that they shall meet their Lord and that they shall return unto Him.
2	Q. 2:78	And some of them are unlettered not knowing the Book except recitations (<i>amānyy</i>) ¹⁰⁵ and they only have dogmatic zeal (<i>yaẓunnūn</i>).
3	Q. 2:230	Should he then divorce her, she is no longer lawful for him until she marries a husband other than him. And should he divorce her there is no blame upon the two to return to each other, if they zealously believe (<i>ẓannā</i>) that they shall uphold the limits set by God. These are the limits set by God, which He makes clear to a people who know.
4	Q. 2:249	And when Saul set out with the hosts he said, “Truly God will try you with a stream. Whosoever drinks from it is not of me, and whosoever tastes not of it is of me—save one who scoops out a handful.” But they drank from it, save a few among them. So when he crossed it, he and those who believed with him, they said, “We have no power today against Goliath and his hosts.” Those who zealously believe (<i>yaẓunnūn</i>) that they would meet their Lord said, “How many a small company have overcome a large company by God’s Leave! And God is with the patient.”
5	Q. 3:154	Then He sent down upon you—after sorrow—security, a sleepiness enveloping a company among you, while a company were anxious over themselves, zealously believing (<i>yaẓunnūn</i>) about God what is not true—the zealous dogma (<i>ẓann</i>) of the Age of Ignorance—saying, “Do we have any decision [in this]?” Say, “The decision belongs entirely to God.” They hide in their souls what they do not disclose to you, saying, “Had we any decision [in this], we would not have been slain here.” Say, “Had you stayed in your houses, those who were destined to be slain would have gone out to their places of rest.” And [this is] so that God may test what is in your breasts and so that He may assay what is in your hearts. And God knows what lies within breasts.
6	Q. 4:157	and for their saying, “We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the messenger of God”—though they did not slay him; nor did they crucify him, but it appeared so unto them. Those who differ concerning him are in doubt thereof. They have no knowledge of it, but follow only dogmatic zeal (<i>al-ẓann</i>); they slew him not for certain.
7	Q. 6:116	Were you to obey most of those on earth, they would lead you astray from the way of God; they follow naught but dogmatic zeal (<i>al-ẓann</i>), and they do but decisively speak (<i>yakhrusūn</i>).
8	Q. 6:148	Those who ascribe partners unto God will say, “Had God willed, we would not have ascribed partners unto God, nor our fathers, nor would we have forbidden anything.” Those who were before them had similarly denied, till they tasted Our Might. Say, “Do you have any knowledge that you can produce for us? You follow naught but dogmatic zeal (<i>al-ẓann</i>), and you but decisively speak (<i>takhrusūn</i>).”
9	Q. 7:66	The notables among his people who disbelieved said, “Truly we think that you are foolish, and we zealously believe that you (<i>la-naẓunnuk</i>) are among the liars.”

¹⁰⁵ The term “*amānyy*” does not necessarily mean “hopes” but “recitations” as the term is also used in Q. 22:52. This definition would more adequately put this verse in context about unlettered people not knowing [reading] the Book except [from] recitations; it is also one of several possible definitions found in many classical commentaries concerning this verse, including al-Rāzī (al-Rāzī, *Mafāṭih*, vol. 5, p. 564).

	Verse	Translation
10	Q. 7:171	And when We lifted the mountain above them, as if it were a canopy, and they zealously believed (<i>zannū</i>) it would fall upon them, "Take hold of that which We have given you with strength, and remember what is therein, that haply you may be reverent."
11	Q. 9:118	and unto the three who were left behind until the earth, despite its breadth, closed in upon them, and their own souls closed in upon them, and they zealously believed (<i>wa-zannū</i>) there to be no refuge from God, save with Him. Then He relented unto them, that they might repent. Truly God is Relenting, Merciful.
12	Q. 10:22	He it is Who carries you over land and sea, even when you are sailing in ships, till, when they sail with them upon a favorable wind, and rejoice therein, there comes upon them a violent gale, and the waves come at them from every side, and they zealously believed (<i>wa-zannū</i>) they shall be encompassed by them. They call upon God, devoting religion entirely to Him: "If You save us from this, we shall surely be among the thankful!"
13	Q. 10:24	The parable of the life of this world is that of water which We send down from the sky: the earth's vegetation, from which people and cattle eat, mingles with it till, when the earth takes on its luster and is adorned, and its inhabitants zealously believed (<i>wa-zannā</i>) they have gained mastery over it, Our Command comes upon it by night or by day, whereupon We make it a mown field, as if it had not flourished the day before! Thus do We expound the signs for a people who reflect.
14	Q. 10:36	And most of them follow naught but dogmatic zeal (<i>zannā</i>). Truly dogmatic zeal (<i>al-zann</i>) does not avail against the truth in the least. Truly God knows what they do.
15	Q. 10:60	And what zealous belief (<i>zann</i>) will those who fabricate lies against God on the Day of Resurrection have? Truly God is Possessed of Bounty for humankind, but most of them do not give thanks.
16	Q. 10:66	Behold! Truly unto God belongs whosoever is in the heavens and whosoever is on the earth. And what is it that they follow, those who call upon partners apart from God? They follow naught but dogmatic zeal (<i>al-zann</i>), and they do but decisively speak (<i>yakhrusūn</i>).
17	Q. 11:27	But the notables among his people who disbelieved said, "We see you as naught but a human being like us, and we see none who follow you, save the lowliest among us, as is clear to see. Nor do we see that you have any merit over us; nay, we zealously believe that you are (<i>nazunnukum</i>) liars."
18	Q. 12:42	And he said to the one of them whom he zealously believed (<i>zann</i>) he would be saved, "Mention me to your lord." But Satan caused him to forget to make mention to his lord. So he remained in prison for several years.
19	Q. 12:110	Till, when the messengers despaired and zealously believed (<i>wa-zannū</i>) that they were deemed liars, Our Help came unto them, and whomsoever We willed was saved. And Our Might shall not be turned back from the guilty people.
20	Q. 17:52	The Day when He calls you, you will respond by praising Him, and you zealously believe (<i>wa-tazunnūn</i>) that you tarried but a short while.
21	Q. 17:101	And We indeed gave unto Moses nine clear signs. So ask the Children of Israel. When he came unto them, Pharaoh said, "And I zealously believe (<i>la-azunnuk</i>) that you, O Moses, are bewitched!"
22	Q. 17:102	He said, "You certainly know that no one has sent these down as clear portents, save the Lord of the heavens and the earth. And I zealously believe (<i>la-azunnuk</i>) that you, O Pharaoh, are doomed."
23	Q. 18:35	And he entered his garden, wronging himself, and said, "I zealously not believe (<i>azunn</i>) that this will ever perish."
24	Q. 18:36	And I zealously not believe (<i>azunn</i>) that the Hour is imminent. And if I am brought back, I shall surely find something better than this in the Hereafter.
25	Q. 18:53	And the guilty saw the Fire, and zealously believed (<i>fa-zannū</i>) that they shall fall into it, but they will find no means of escape therefrom.
26	Q. 21:87	And [remember] Dhu'l-Nūn, when he went away in anger, and zealously believed (<i>fa-zann</i>) We had no power over him. Then he cried out in the darkness, "There is no god but You! Glory be to You! Truly I have been among the wrongdoers."

	Verse	Translation
27	Q. 22:15	Whosoever zealously believes (<i>yazunn</i>) that God will not help him in this world and the Hereafter, let him stretch out a rope to Heaven. Then let him sever it and see if his scheming removes that which enrages.
28	Q. 24:12	Why, when you heard it, did not the believing men and women zealously believe (<i>zann</i>) well of their own, and say, "This is a manifest lie"?
29	Q. 26:186	You are naught but a human being like us, and we zealously believe (<i>nazunnuk</i>) you to be among the liars,
30	Q. 28:38	Pharaoh said, "O notables! I know of no god for you other than myself. So kindle for me a fire, O Hāmān, for clay, and make me a tower, that haply I may behold the God of Moses, though I zealously believe (<i>la-azunnuhu</i>) he is among the liars."
31	Q. 28:39	And he and his hosts waxed arrogant upon the earth, without right, and zealously believed (<i>wa-zannū</i>) they would not be returned unto Us.
32	Q. 33:10	when they came upon you from above you and below you, and when eyes swerved and hearts reached into throats, and you zealously believed (<i>wa-tazunnūn</i>) regarding God zealous beliefs (<i>al-zunnūn</i>).
33	Q. 34:20	And Iblīs did indeed prove his zealous belief (<i>zannuhu</i>) of them to be true; and they followed him, save for a group among the believers.
34	Q. 37:87	What, then, you zealously believe (<i>zannukum</i>) of the Lord of the worlds?
35	Q. 38:24	He said, "He has indeed wronged you in asking that your ewe be added to his ewes. Truly many associates transgress against one another, save those who believe and perform righteous deeds. Yet how few are they!" And David zealously believed (<i>zann</i>) that We had tried him; so he sought forgiveness from his Lord, fell down kneeling, and repented.
36	Q. 38:27	And We did not create Heaven and earth and whatsoever is between them in vain; that is the dogmatic zeal (<i>zann</i>) of those who disbelieve. So woe before the Fire unto those who disbelieve!
37	Q. 40:37	the means to reach the heavens—that I may look upon the God of Moses. I zealously believe him (<i>la-azunnuhu</i>) to be a liar." Thus was the evil of his conduct made to seem fair unto Pharaoh, and he was turned from the way. Pharaoh's scheming led to naught but ruin.
38	Q. 41:22	You did not seek to conceal, lest your ears, your eyes, and your skins bear witness against you. But you zealously believed (<i>zanantum</i>) that God knew not much of that which you did.
39	Q. 41:23	That zeal (<i>zannukum</i>) which you zealously believed (<i>zanantum</i>) about your Lord has destroyed you, such that you have come to be among the losers.
40	Q. 41:48	That which they used to call upon before will forsake them, and they zealously believed (<i>wa-zannū</i>) that they have no refuge.
41	Q. 41:50	And if We make him taste some mercy from Us after hardship has befallen him, surely he will say, "This is mine; I zealously not believe (<i>azunn</i>) that the Hour will come. If I am returned unto my Lord, surely with Him shall I have that which is most beautiful." So We shall inform those who disbelieved of that which they have done, and We shall cause them to taste of a grave punishment. And if We make him taste some mercy from Us after hardship has befallen him, surely he will say, "This is mine; I think not that the Hour will come. If I am returned unto my Lord, surely with Him shall I have that which is most beautiful." So We shall inform those who disbelieved of that which they have done, and We shall cause them to taste of a grave punishment.
42	Q. 45:24	They say, "There is naught but our life in this world. We die and we live, and none destroys us save time." But they have no knowledge thereof. They do naught but zealously believe (<i>yazunnūn</i>).
43	Q. 45:32	When it was said, "Surely God's Promise is true, and there is no doubt in the Hour," you said, "We do not know what the Hour is. We zealously believe (<i>nazun</i>) but dogmatic zeal (<i>zannā</i>), and we are not certain (<i>mustayqinūn</i>)."
44	Q. 48:6	and that He may punish the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women, and the idolatrous men and the idolatrous women, who zealously believe (<i>al-zānnūn</i>) an evil zeal (<i>zann</i>) concerning God. Upon them is an evil turn. God is wroth with them, curses them, and prepares Hell for them—what an evil journey's end!

	Verse	Translation
45	Q. 48:12	Nay, but you zealously believed (<i>zanantum</i>) the Messenger and the believers would never return to their families, and that was made to seem fair in your hearts. And you zealously believed (<i>wa-zanantum</i>) an evil zeal (<i>zann</i>) and were a people ruined.
46	Q. 49:12	O you who believe! Shun much zeal (<i>al-zann</i>). Indeed, some zeal (<i>al-zann</i>) is a sin. And do not spy upon one another, nor backbite one another. Would any of you desire to eat the dead flesh of his brother? You would abhor it. And reverence God. Truly God is Relenting, Merciful.
47	Q. 53:23	They are naught but names that you have named—you and your fathers—for which God has sent down no authority. They follow naught but dogmatic zeal (<i>al-zann</i>) and that which their souls desire, though guidance has surely come to them from their Lord.
48	Q. 53:28	Yet they have no knowledge thereof. They follow naught but zeal (<i>al-zann</i>); and surely zeal (<i>al-zann</i>) avails naught against the Truth.
49	Q. 59:2	He it is Who expelled those who disbelieve among the People of the Book from their homes at the first gathering. You did not zealously believe (<i>zanantum</i>) they would go forth, and they zealously believed (<i>zannū</i>) their fortresses would protect them from God. Then God came upon them whence they reckoned not, and cast terror into their hearts, as they razed their houses with their own hands and with the hands of the believers. So take heed, O you who are possessed of sight.
50	Q. 69:20	I zealously believed (<i>zanantu</i>) that I would meet my reckoning.
51	Q. 72:5	though we zealously believed (<i>zanannā</i>) that humankind and <i>jinn</i> would not utter lies regarding God.
52	Q. 72:7	They zealously believed (<i>zannū</i>), as you zealously believed (<i>zanantum</i>), that God would resurrect no one.
53	Q. 72:12	We zealously believed (<i>zanannā</i>) that we could never thwart God on earth; nor could we ever thwart Him by fleeing.
54	Q. 75:25	Zealously believing (<i>taẓammu</i>) that a spine-crushing calamity will befall them.
55	Q. 75:28	And he zealously believed (<i>wa-zann</i>) that it is the parting;
56	Q. 83:4	Do they not zealously believe (<i>yazunn</i>) that they will be resurrected
57	Q. 84:14	He zealously believed (<i>zann</i>) that he would never return.

Conclusion

I posit that the Qurʾān does not necessitate the definition of ‘*z-n-n*’ as doubt or conjecture, as it is sometimes understood in traditional Qurʾānic exegetical works. This term could perfectly be understood as dogmatic zeal or zealously believing in something, which is how the term is attested in some other Semitic languages, as well. In addition, the root ‘*kh-r-ṣ*,’ which is sometimes associated with ‘*zann*’ in the Qurʾān, can also mean zeal, along with the Qurʾānic parallelism between ‘*zann al-jāhiliyyah*’ and ‘*ḥamiyyah al-jāhiliyyah*.’

The Qurʾān’s epistemic process appears to encourage people to think and, therefore, formulate opinions and conjectures. Although the Qurʾān criticizes some opinions (using the root ‘*h-s-b*’), it does not criticize formulating them. However, that is not the case when the Qurʾān uses the term ‘*zann*,’ further suggesting that ‘*zann*’ and ‘*ḥasab*’ are not considered equivalent by the Qurʾān.

Therefore, the root ‘*z-n-n*’ in the Qurʾān is best understood as ‘dogmatic zeal’ or, generally, zealously believing in something, and its translation should more accurately reflect that definition, instead of doubt or conjecture. While traditional exegetes and lexicographers do entertain an antithetical approach for how this term is used in dual meanings in the Qurʾān, it does create a contradictory dilemma on Qurʾānic epistemology. The main emphasis behind

this study is to show that the Qur'ān mostly negatively portrays zealous beliefs or perhaps, in other words, closed-mindedness and not the epistemic process of speculation and conjecture, which it actually fervently encourages. This further has implications of the type of epistemology that the Qur'ān expects from its audience, which requires a future study.