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Sometimes, it is better not to know something. The Qur'an says:

"Question not concerning things which, if they were revealed to you, would vex you."1

If those responsible for silos and storage of wheat tell the people that we only have enough wheat for so long, the people would become anxious from the moment they are told and would start to quarrel over bread supply. Those responsible should be considering a remedy of the situation and be in a position to purchase further wheat, and not in a way in which they negatively impact the society. So not every piece of information is useful. The Qur'an identifies knowledge in three different categories:

• Beneficial knowledge. Prophet Moses AS said to Khidr AS: Do you give me permission to follow you in your travels so that I may acquire the knowledge you have been given?

"Shall I follow thee so that thou teachest me, of what thou hast been taught, right judgment."2

• Knowledge that is harmful. The Qur'an describes a group of people who pursed knowledge of magic and sorcery and learnt how to cause division and a split between a couple:

وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنفَعُهُمْ

"And they learned what hurt them, and did not profit them."3

• Knowledge that is neither beneficial nor harmful. This is parallel to the desire to know if the people of the cave were three or four or more or less

"They will say they were 'Three; and 'their dog was the fourth of them.' They will say, 'Five; and their dog was the sixth of them." 4

The number of people that were in the cave is not what is important, what is important is how a small group of young people in a society full of sedition managed to protect their faith and for the sake of protecting their faith and belief, migrated away from the environment of sin and polytheism and opted to be cave dwellers than city dwellers.

- 1. Maida 5:101
- 2. Kahf 18:66
- 3. Bagarah 2:102
- 4. Kahf 18:22

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