Knowledge of the Unseen
Imâm an-Nawawî
A translation of “Fatâwa al-Imâm an-Nawawî” pg.173

Question:

What is the meaning of the verse: ‘Say, nobody in the heavens or the earth knows of the unseen except Allâh’ and the saying of the Prophet sallAllâhu ‘alayhi wa âlîbi wa sallam: ‘Nobody knows what will happen on the morrow, except Allah’ and similar statements found in both the Qur’ân and the Hadîth even though it has occurred from the miracles of Prophets – may Allâh bless them all and give them peace – and the miracles of Saints that they imparted ‘knowledge of the morrow’ (mâ fi ghadd).

Answer:

The [correct] meaning is nobody knows absolutely (istiqlâlan). And [nobody has] such absolute knowledge that is complete and all-encompassing except Allâh ta’âlâ.

As for the miracles of Prophets and Saints, then it is by the informing of Allâh ta’âlâ, not independently by themselves. And this is – as we know – the sun rises and stays for six hours and then begins to wane; and then stays for another six and it sets; and then remains so for the next twelve hours and then rises again. Similar [prediction] can be made about the moon and other such events which are actually ‘news about the future.’

This knowledge of unseen did not come to us independently, but rather by the informing of Allâh ta’âlâ through the constancy of such things [following the laws made by Him].

1 Surah an-Naml : Ayah 65 (27:65)