

ARRIQAAQ

FROM INCEPTION TO ILLUMINATION

PRINCIPLES OF TAFSEER

A SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES



DR SYED NOORUZUHA BARMAYER
NOORA JUKAKU

ARRIQAAQ

*Inception to Illumination:
Navigating the Summary of
Principles of Tafseer*

By: Dr. Syed Nooruzuha Barmaver
Noora Jukaku

Foreword: Shaykh Owais Madani

CONTENTS

Foreword (4)

Preface (6)

Defining Tafseer (9)

Categories of Tafseer (13)

Asbab An Nuzool (Reasons of revelations) (18)

Prophetic Methodology of Tafseer (23)

The Tafseer of the Sahabah and Tabieen and its status (31)

Answering arguments about conflicts in Tafseer between Salaf (36)

Correct position regarding Israiliyyat (Judeo-Christian narrations) in Tafseer (42)

Examples of Deviant and Misguided Tafseer (45)

Example 1 (Ahmadi/Qadiani Tafseer) (45)

arriqaaq.com

Example 2 (Twelver Shia Tafseer) (47)

Example 3 (Twelver Shia Tafseer) (49)

Example 4 (Modernist/Progressive Tafseer) (51)

Dangers of using one's opinion in Quranic
Interpretation (54)

Tafseer vs Tadabbur (57)

Can Scientific Tafseer be a part of reflecting upon the
Quran? (61)

Concept of Nazm al-Quran (Coherence of Quran)
(64)

Some authentic books of Tafseer (67)

Conclusion (70)

Appendix: Reality of book called (Tafseer Ibn Abbas)
Tanwîr al-Miqbâs min Tafseer Ibn Abbas! (72)

Foreword

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, the All-Sufficient, and peace upon His chosen servants. It is with great pleasure that I introduce Dr. Syed Nooruzuha Barmaver, an Islamic researcher and the first scientist from the Nawayat community residing in the USA.

He has shared with me the contents of his book, "Inception to Illumination: Navigating the Summary of Principles of Tafseer." This work fills my heart with joy, and I wholeheartedly congratulate him on this remarkable achievement. May Allah accept his efforts and grant blessings to the Ummah through his contributions. He requested me to write the preface for his book. Although my intention was to pen a comprehensive preface, my advancing age has limited me to these few lines.

The book is grounded in the foundational text, "Muqaddimah fi Usool at-Tafseer" by Ibn Taymiyyah—a masterpiece I explored around 25 years ago. In accepting his request, I offer these thoughts and pray that Allah increases him in knowledge, enriches his actions, and grants him a long life.

Wassalam,

Owais Madani

23/12/1446 (20/06/2025)

(Shaykh Owais Madani is a senior scholar and founding member of Markaz Ibn Hajr al-Asqalani in Bhatkal, India. His teachers consist of Shaykh Ibn Baaz, Shaykh Ameen al-Shanqeeti, Shaykh Hammad al-Ansari, Shaykh Taqeeuddin Hilali, Shaykh Ubaydullah Rehmani Mubarakpuri, among others).

Preface

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

It is with great humility and a sense of duty that we present this book, *"Inception to Illumination: Navigating the Summary of Principles of Tafseer"*. Designed for beginners and crafted to resonate with young, modern readers, this work aims to bridge the timeless wisdom of classical Islamic scholarship with contemporary insights and illustrative elements that capture the imagination. This book has been inspired by the work *"Muqaddimah fee Usool al-Tafseer"* by Shaykhul Islam Ibn Taymiyyah. While his work serves as a cornerstone, our aim has been to provide a modern touch, presenting these teachings in an accessible and engaging manner. Recognizing the challenges faced by the younger generation in engaging with religious texts, we have designed this book to be visually

appealing and straightforward without making it complex.

Our hope is that this format will draw readers into a deeper exploration of the Quran, inspiring reflection and understanding. Moreover, we have included critical evaluations of deviant Tafseer practices, addressing interpretations by various sects, including those emerging in the 20th century such as the Ahmadiyyah. It is imperative for the seekers of knowledge to discern authentic Tafseer from error-prone interpretations that stray from the established understanding by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, his Companions, and early Islamic scholars.

Also, we have incorporated a section on Tafseer vs Tadabbur, offering clarity on their distinct roles in Quranic study. Furthermore, we provide a critical analysis of modern approaches such as Nazm al-Quran (the coherence of the Quran) and scientific Tafseer, exploring their contributions and limitations.

As we delve into the intricate world of Quranic interpretation, it is our sincere prayer that this book serves as a tool for enlightenment and guidance, leading our readers to a more profound connection with the message of Allah and a greater appreciation of the Quran as a source of wisdom and inspiration. May Allah accept this humble endeavor and make it beneficial for all who seek the light of understanding. Ameen.

Syed Nooruzuha Barmaver

Noorah Jukaku

Nashville. USA

01/06/2025

DEFINING TAFSEER

Linguistic Meaning

The word "Tafseer" comes from the Arabic root "ف س ر" (fā-sīn-rā), which means to explain or clarify. Essentially, it denotes the act of making something clear or understandable. So, when we talk about Tafseer, we are referring to explaining or interpreting the meanings behind the words of the Quran.

Technical Meaning in Islam

In the context of Islam, Tafseer specifically refers to the scholarly interpretation and explanation of the Quran. It involves:

Explaining Meanings: Clarifying what each verse means in detail.

Context of Revelation: Understanding the circumstances and occasions when certain verses were revealed (this is known as Asbab an-Nuzool).

Associated Rulings: Deriving legal or ethical rulings from the verses to guide behavior and practices in daily life.

Tafseer aims to provide a deeper insight into the message of the Quran so that believers can apply its teachings correctly in their lives.

Tafseer is like a special way to explain the Quran, the words of Allah. Imagine the Quran as a treasure chest filled with wisdom and guidance. Tafseer helps us unlock that treasure by explaining what each part means, where it came from, and how we can use it in our lives.

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was a great teacher who showed his companions how to understand the Quran. He didn't just recite the words or ask them to

arriqaaq.com

memorize but he also took the time to explain everything, so they could grasp its meaning. It's similar to when a teacher takes a lesson slow and steady, helping students understand every bit before moving on.

His companions, the Sahabah, learned the Quran piece by piece. They would study just ten verses at a time, making sure they understood everything about those verses before moving to the next set. Think of it like building blocks—you want to make sure your base is strong before adding more layers!

There's a lot of care in how Tafseer is collected and compiled. Scholars have even said that it's very important to only interpret the Quran with knowledge.

Allah says in Surah Al-Baqarah

ذَٰلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ ۚ فِيهِ ۚ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ۚ

This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allāh (Quran 2:2).

The Quran is our guide to live this life and be steadfast on the truth. And Tafseer helps us to interpret and truly understand what Allah wants us to know and follow.

Categories of Tafseer

Tafseer of Quran by Quran

أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ٦ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

Guide us along the Straight Path, The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, (Quran 1:7)

Allah explained those whom he has bestowed favor in another Ayah

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ
وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا

And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favor of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions (Quran 4:69)

Tafseer of Quran by Hadith

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

Not of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor of those who have gone astray. (Quran 1:7)

Narrated Adiyy bin Hatim: that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"The Jews are those upon whom is Allah's wrath (مَغْضُوبٌ عَلَيْهِمْ), and the Christians have strayed (وَالنَّصَارَى ضَالَّةٌ). Jami at-Tirmidhi 2954 and it is sound narration.

Tafseer of Quran by Sahabi (Companion)

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ (١) وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا (٢) فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا (٣)

When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest, And you see the people entering into the religion of Allah in multitudes, Then exalt [Him] with praise of your Lord and ask forgiveness of Him. Indeed, He is ever Accepting of repentance. (Quran 110:1-3)

Narrated Ibn Abbas: Umar used to make me sit with the elderly men who had fought in the Battle of Badr. Some of them felt it (did not like that) and said to `Umar "Why do you bring in this boy to sit with us while we have sons like him?" Umar replied, "Because of what you know of his position (i.e. his religious knowledge)." One day Umar called me and made me sit in the gathering of those people; and I think that he

called me just to show them. (my religious knowledge). Umar then asked them (in my presence). "What do you say about the interpretation of the Statement of Allah: When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest(110.1) Some of them said, "We are ordered to praise Allah and ask for His forgiveness when Allah's Help and the conquest (of Mecca) comes to us." Some others kept quiet and did not say anything. On that, `Umar asked me, "Do you say the same, O Ibn Abbas?" I replied, "No." He said, "What do you say then?" I replied, "That is the sign of the death of Allah's Messenger ﷺ which Allah informed him of. Allah said:-- '(O Muhammad) When the victory of Allah has come and the conquest, And you see the people entering into the religion of Allah in multitudes, Then exalt [Him] with praise of your Lord and ask forgiveness of Him. Indeed, He is ever Accepting of repentance. On that `Umar said, "I do not know anything about it other than what you have said." (Saheeh al-Bukhari 4970).

Tafseer of Quran by language

إِذْ قَالَ لِأَبِيهِ وَقَوْمِهِ مَا هَذِهِ التَّمَاثِيلُ الَّتِي أَنْتُمْ لَهَا عَاكِفُونَ

Remember when he questioned his father and his people, “What are these تَمَاتِيل (Tamatheel) to which you are so devoted?” (Quran 21:52)

The meaning of تَمَاتِيل according to language is الاصنام i.e., “idols or statues” (Fath al-Qadeer by al-Shawkani under 21:52).

Asbab An Nuzool (Reasons of revelations)

Asbab an Nuzool means the reasons of revelation. Knowledge of the reasons for revelation is considered one of the fundamental principles of interpretation, and a solid foundation that anyone aspiring to interpret the words of Allah must understand. The Quran was revealed over time, but not all of its verses were given because of a specific question or event. Most verses don't have a known reason for their revelation. When we look at reports about why certain verses were revealed, we find that only about 300 of these stories are considered true.

The revelation of the Qur'an falls into two categories:

The first: It is not due to a direct cause but is revealed according to need and interest.

The second: An event happens, and the Qur'an is revealed regarding it. This is what is meant by the reasons for revelation. This event includes any

statement, action, or question occurring from those who lived during the time of revelation, and the Qur'an was revealed because of them.

Allah says in Surah Al-Baqarah:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ ۖ قُلْ هُوَ أَذًى فَأَعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ ۖ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

They ask you «O Prophet» about menstruation. Say, “Beware of its harm! So keep away, and do not have intercourse with your wives during their monthly cycles until they are purified. When they purify themselves, then you may approach them in the manner specified by Allah. Surely Allah loves those who always turn to Him in repentance and those who purify themselves.” (Quran 2:222)

Thabit narrated it from Anas: Among the Jews, when a woman menstruated, they did not dine with her, nor

did they live with them in their houses; so the Companions of the Messenger ﷺ asked The Messenger ﷺ (concerning it) and Allah, the Exalted revealed: Say, “Beware of its harm! So keep away, and do not have intercourse with your wives during their monthly cycles until they are purified” to the end. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Do everything except intercourse. The Jews heard of that and said: This man does not want to leave anything we do without opposing us in it. (Saheeh Muslim 302)

It is worth noting that the arrangement of the chapters and verses of the Qur'an is not according to the order of their revelation. Rather, the verses are revealed in response to specific causes and are placed with those that are suitable to them, in consideration of the structure and flow of the Qur'an and the structure and flow is also from Allah.

In English language, there is a book titled, “The Authentic Musnad of Reasons for the Descending of Revelation” by Shaykh Muqbil bin Hadi which is of great benefit in this topic. The famous book “Asbab Nuzool al-Quran By Imam Ali al-Wahidi, has also been translated to English language. However, it has some weak narrations.

Have you ever wondered?

Which Tafseer (Quran interpretation)
is considered the most trusted
globally?"

The most trusted and powerful
interpretation is the Tafseer from
Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ)."

Prophetic Methodology of Tafseer

It is important to understand that the Prophet (ﷺ) elucidated the meanings of the Quran to his companions in a manner similar to how he conveyed its exact words.

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

And We have sent down to you «O Prophet» the Dhikr, so that you may explain to people what has been revealed for them, and perhaps they will reflect.
(Quran 16:44)

In this chapter, we are going to look at the Prophet's (ﷺ) way in interpretation of the Quran and how he conveyed it to his companions. We will also notice how the Prophet Muhammed (ﷺ) does not say anything of

his own rather speaks within the guidance and words of Allah Himself.

Narration:

The Tabiee, Abu Abdurrahman al-Sulami, narrates from the Sahabah, specifically mentioning 'Uthman Ibn Affan and Abdullah Ibn Masood, about their approach to learning the Quran directly from the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

Approach to Learning:

The Sahabah would thoroughly learn ten verses at a time. They refrained from moving forward until they had grasped the complete knowledge and practical application of those verses.

Insight:

This methodology was an integrative learning process that combined memorization, understanding, and application.

The process was deliberate and reflective, which led to a slow but profound acquisition of knowledge.

Source: (Musannaf Ibn Abee Shaybah 6/117)

Here is an example of the first way in which the Prophet ﷺ taught the understanding of the Quran. The way how he clarified the meanings of the Ayahs using his words.

Allah said in the Quran, in Surah Al An'am, Ayah 82:

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ
وَهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ

"It is those who believe and confuse not their belief with Zulm, for them (only) there is security, and they are the guided."

When the companions of the Prophet heard this Ayah they became confused. They put their concern forward to the Prophet ﷺ asking him: "Who among us has not confused his belief with wrongdoing (Zulm)?" The Prophet ﷺ eased their concern saying, "This is not meant (by the Verse). Don't you listen to Luqman's statement:

إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

Verily! Joining others in worship with Allah is a great wrong indeed.” (Al-Quran 31:13) (Saheeh Al Bukhari: 6918).

As we learn the way in which the companions learnt the interpretation of the Quran, it is also important to learn the ways in which our beloved Prophet ﷺ taught the interpretation of the Quran. The methodology of the Messenger did not only focus on verbal conveyance of the meanings, but the understanding of it was also inculcated in his daily actions and dealings with the companions.

So how exactly did the Prophet ﷺ carry the teachings of the Quran?

There are mainly two ways:

Verbal Elucidation

The Prophet ﷺ provided explanations for difficult words or the meanings of specific verses within the Quran. He would clarify and provide context to his companions.

Action and Explanation

The Prophet's ﷺ own actions served as a practical demonstration of the teachings of the Quran. His actions, along with the explanations found in authentic Hadiths, offer insight into Islamic law (Shareeah) and how to apply the verses of the Quran in daily life.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ clarified meanings for his companions with his words, who, despite knowing Arabic, sought his guidance when they struggled with Ayah interpretations. He responded by using Allah's words to provide the best explanations.

There are also examples how the Prophet ﷺ taught his companions the interpretations of the Ayahs in his daily acts.

Allah said in Surah Al Baqarah, Ayah 43:

"وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ"

And establish prayer and give zakāh”

When it came to *Salah (Prayer)*, the Prophet (ﷺ) not only instructed Muslims verbally but demonstrated the way to perform prayers through his actions, saying: "Pray as you have seen me praying" (Bukhari). As for *Zakah (Almsgiving)*, He provided detailed guidelines regarding the types of wealth subject to Zakah, the threshold at which it becomes due (Nisab), and the proportion (rate) to be given. We looked at how the Prophet (ﷺ) used to explain the meanings to the Sahabah. But how will we now know which sources we can rely on to study tafseer of Prophet (ﷺ).

There are three sources from which we can learn the Prophetic Tafseer.

1. Hadith Collections Featuring Books of Tafseer such as: a) Kitab al-Tafseer from Saheeh al-Bukhari. b) Kitab al-Tafseer from Saheeh Muslim. c) Kitab al-Tafseer from Jami al-Tirmidhi and more.
2. From books of Tafseer bil Mathoor (Tafseer based on narrations) like Tafseer al-Tabari, Tafseer as-Samani, Tafseer Abdur Razzaq as-Sanani, Tafseer Ibn Mardaway (as collected in Ad Dur Al Manthur), Tafseer Ibn Mundhir etc.
3. (Collections and Encyclopedia) Tafseer an-Nabawi is recently published where author Dr. Khalid bin Abdul Aziz compiled all narrations of Prophet ﷺ on Tafseer.

The Tafseer of the Sahabah and Tabieen and its status

The companions (Sahabah) were firsthand witnesses to the revelation process and were directly taught the interpretation (Tafseer) of the Quran by Prophet ﷺ.

They took the interpretations and what they learnt from the Prophet ﷺ, memorized it, inculcated the tafseer in their day to day life and acted upon it. They also taught this to their students and the generation that came after them (Tabieen).

In this chapter, we will deal with the status and importance of the tafseer of the Sahabah (companions).

Even though all the companions of the Prophet learnt the tafseer from him, there are some notable figures from the companions that were experts of Tafseer. From them are:

- **Four Caliphs:** Renowned for their leadership and knowledge.
- **Abdullah ibn Masood:** Known for his profound understanding of the Quran's context and revelation details.
- **Abdullah ibn Abbas:** Often referred to as "Turjuman al-Quran" (Interpreter of the Quran) due to his exceptional insight.
- **Ubay ibn Kaab & Muadh ibn Jabal:** Recognized for their expertise in Quranic exegesis.

From amongst the experts of the tafseer, the companions Abdullah ibn Masood and Abdullah ibn Abbas have an emphasized status.

Abdullah Ibn Masood radiAllahu anhu said: By Him besides Whom there is no god, not a single verse of the book of Allah has been revealed without my knowing where and when it was revealed and upon

whom it was revealed. By Allah, if I know there was anyone who knew more of the Book of Allah, I would travel to be with him." (Saheeh Muslim 2463). Muhammad Ahmad Isawi has collected narrations of Ibn Masood on Tafseer and named it "Tafseer Ibn Masood".

Ibn Abbas radiAllahu anhu narrated that once the Prophet Muhammed ﷺ embraced him and said: "O Allah! Bestow on him the knowledge of the Book (Qur'an)." (Saheeh al-Bukhari 75)

Abdullah Ibn Masood radiAllahu anhu also recognized the status of Ibn Abbas by giving him the title of "The Interpreter of the Quran" (Tafseer Tabari 1/81, Saheeh).

Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah al-Humaydi has collected narrations of Ibn Abbas on Tafseer and titled it as "Tafseer Ibn Abbas".

Here we looked at the tafseer of the Sahabah. Now who are the Tabieen and what is their status in relation to Quranic interpretation?

Tabieen were the generation that followed the Sahabah, studying Tafseer directly from the companions of the Prophet ﷺ.

A distinguished scholar of tafseer from the Tabieen, Mujahid bin Jabbar said: “I read entire Quran to Ibn Abbas stopping him at every ayah and asking him concerning it and Ibn Abbas dictated it to him.” (Tafseer al-Tabari 1/85, Saheeh).

Another notable expert of tafseer Sufyan al-Thawri used to say: “If you read Tafseer of Mujahid, its sufficient for you.”. For this reason, great Imams like al-Shafi, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Bukhari relied heavily on Tafseer of Mujahid. (Muqaddimah fee Usool Tafseer 32).

Other Distinguished Tabieen Scholars in Tafseer like Said ibn Jubayr, Ikrimah (freed slave of Ibn Abbas), Ataa, Hasan al-Basari were renowned for their profound knowledge and interpretative contributions. Tabieen like Masrooq, Said bin Musayyib, Qatadah, ad-Dahhak, Rabi ibn Anas, each left an indelible mark on the field of Tafseer with their unique insights and scholarly works.

Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Khudayri has collected Tafseer of Tabieen and titled it as “Tafseer al-Tabieen”.

Do you think there were contradictions or conflicts in the tafseer between the generations?”

There is something called Sahih (authentic), Da’if (weak) and Mawdoo (fabricated) narrations and scholars were diligent in differentiating between them.

Answering arguments about conflicts in Tafseer between Salaf

There are argument suggesting that the Tafseer of the Sahabah and Tabieen cannot be relied upon due to apparent confusion and disagreements among their interpretations. However, scholars remained very careful and diligent while narrating, collecting and compiling Quranic interpretation.

Scholarly have put in tremendous efforts to differentiate between authentic, weak, and fabricated narrations. Hafidh Ibn Hajr wrote a beneficial introduction on authentic chain of narrations in Tafseer of Sahabah in his book al-Ujaab fee Bayanil Asbaab. Also, even if disparities were found among the Tafseer of the Sahabah and Tabieen they mostly represent variations in perspective, and not contradictions.

The Quran is the word of Allah and the companions learnt the interpretation directly from the Prophet Muhammed ﷺ. They then transmitted the interpretation and taught their students from the Tabieen. The scholars and experts of Tafseer were well known and students only learnt from them. This knowledge was then passed on authentically and carefully so as not to make any mistakes. However, if we do find some differences in perspectives, these differences can be reconciled with the following examples.

Allah said in the first chapter of the Quran in Ayah 6:

أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the straight path.”

The words الصِّرَاطُ الْمُسْتَقِيمُ (Straight path) has different variations of interpretation in the different generations.

Some predecessors saw the "straight path" as the Quran itself, a guiding light and criterion (Furqan) separating truth from falsehood. Others interpreted it as Islam, the complete and comprehensive way of life and submission to the will of Allah. The two interpretations might seem different, yet both interpretations lead to one meaning: Choosing the path and way of life which Allah prescribed for us whether through his book or religion. The interpretations highlight different aspects of the same truth; hence, no contradiction exists.

"Quran" and "Islam" are intrinsically linked — the Quran is the word of Allah guiding to Islam, and Islam is the path dictated by the Quran.

Similarly, we can see another example in Surah Al Fatir.

Allah said in Surah Fatir, Ayah 32:

مِنْهُمْ ظَالِمٌ لِّنَفْسِهِ�ۗ وَمِنْهُمْ مُّقْتَصِدٌ وَمِنْهُمْ سَابِقٌ بِالْخَيْرَاتِ

Then We granted the Book to those We have chosen from Our servants. Some of them wrong themselves, some follow a middle course, and some are foremost in good deeds by Allah's Will. That is truly the greatest bounty.

The scholars has different interpretations of the degrees of righteousness mentioned in the Ayah. The Ayah describes three types of believers who inherit the scripture: those who wrong themselves, those who follow a middle course, and those who are foremost in good deeds.

First Interpretation

Wrong themselves: Those who neglect obligatory acts and engage in sinful behaviors.

Middle course: Those who fulfill obligations and avoid prohibitions.

Foremost in good deeds: Those who perform extra voluntary deeds in addition to obligatory acts.

Second Interpretation

Wrong themselves: Those who delay prayers or miss them.

Middle course: Those who perform prayers on time without delay.

Foremost in good deeds: Those who pray at the earliest time and in congregation (for men).

Correlation between Interpretation

- While explanations may vary, they all categorize believers according to their piety and adherence to religious duties.
- Overall, the message is same and no contradiction.

(Muqaddimah fee Usool Tafseer 10)

Correct Position regarding Israiliyyat (Judeo-Christian narrations) in Tafseer

Narrated Abu Huraira: The people of the Book used to read the Torah in Hebrew and then explain it in Arabic to the Muslims. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said (to the Muslims). "Do not believe the people of the Book, nor disbelieve them, but say, 'We believe in Allah and whatever is revealed to us, and whatever is revealed to you.'" (Saheeh al-Bukhari 7362)

Shaykh Ahmad Shakir outlined a framework for dealing with Isra'iliyyat, the Judeo-Christian narrations found in Tafseer.

He categorized these narrations into three types:

Affirmed Truth: These are narrations confirmed by Islamic sources, like the Qur'an and Sunnah, and are considered truthful.

Rejected Falsehood: These narrations are contradicted by Islamic teachings and are therefore deemed false.

Neutral: These narrations do not fall into either the truthful or false categories. We neither believe nor reject them, but we can cite them when necessary.

He emphasized that most of these narrations do not offer any substantial benefit to religious matters. This lack of utility often leads to disagreements among scholars of the People of the Book, resulting in varying interpretations among Muslim scholars as well.

(Introduction to Umdah at-Tafseer 1/14-17)

Do you know that there are Tafseer that are deviant and wrong interpretations of the Quran?

There are some interpretations of the Quran that are deviant and misguided. These cannot be relied on as they are misrepresentation of the Quranic Ayahs.

Examples of deviant and misguided Tafseer

Example 1: (Ahmadi/Qadiani Tafseer)

وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَبْنِي إِسْرَءِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ
مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي
أَسْمُهُ أَحْمَدٌ ۖ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ ٦

And “remember” when Jesus, son of Mary, said, “O children of Israel! I am truly Allah’s messenger to you, confirming the Torah which came before me, and giving good news of a messenger after me whose name will be Ahmad.” Yet when the Prophet came to them with clear proofs, they said, “This is pure magic.” (Quran 61:6)

Erroneous Claim:

The deviant interpretation by the Ahmadiyyah community, which misattributes this prophesy to false claimant of Prophethood Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

Refutation through Sahih Hadith:

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) himself said: I am Muhammad and Ahmad. (Saheeh Bukhari 3532).

Clarification of Names:

False claimant in Indian subcontinent, His name was “Ghulam Ahmad” not “Ahmad”

Example 2: (Twelver Shia Tafseer)

قُلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَّنَ

Say (O Muhammad(ﷺ)) But the things that my Lord has indeed forbidden are Al-Fawahish (great evil sins and every kind of unlawful sexual intercourse) whether committed openly or secretly. (Quran 7:33)

Erroneous Claim:

The deviant interpretation by the Twelver Shia community about Ayah is that: “All the things which are forbidden by Allah in Quran are apparent (Dhahir) but the inner meaning (Baatin) is that they are oppressive Imams, likewise, all the things which are permitted by Allah are apparent but the inner meaning of this Halal is the Imams upon truth.” (Usool al-Kafi (1/374), Tafsir al-Ayyashi (2/16))

Answer: Shaykhul Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: “The one who claims to know (Baatin) inner meanings of Quran which is against what is apparent is mistaken, Zindeeq (heretic) or a misguided ignorant.”(Majmoo al-Fatawa (13/236)).

Example 3: (Twelver Shia Tafseer)

وَقَالَ الشَّيْطَانُ لَمَّا قُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَعَدَكُمْ وَعْدَ الْحَقِّ وَوَعَدْتُكُمْ
فَأَخْلَفْتُكُمْ

And Shaytaan will say when the matter has been concluded, "Indeed, Allah had promised you the promise of truth. And I promised you, but I betrayed you. (Quran 14:22).

Erroneous Claim:

The deviant interpretation by the Twelver Shia community about Ayah is that: “ Shaytaan here refers to “second one” (Tafsir al-Ayyashi (2/223), Tafseer al-Safi 3/84), Bihaar al-Anwaar (3/378), Tafseer al-Burhaan (2/309))

It is reported from Abu Abdillah in Usool al-Kafi that “So and so is Shaytaan”, Mulla Muhammad Bakhir Majlisi writes in its Sharh that “So and so here refers

to Umar” (Mirat al-Uqool Sharh Usool Al-Kafi 4/416)

Answer: The Quran was revealed in plain, clear Arabic so that people could understand it directly (Quran 12:2). The assertion of knowing the "baatin" or inner meaning of something is subjective rather than absolute.

Anyone can claim, "I believe the inner meaning is 'this'," but since these interpretations are arbitrary, you cannot dismiss someone else's inner meaning as incorrect.

Example 4: (Modernist/Progressive Tafseer)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّبِيَّانَ مَنْ ءَامَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا
هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

Indeed, the believers, Jews, Christians, and Sabians—whoever truly believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good will have their reward with their Lord. And there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve. (Quran 2:62).

Erroneous Claim:

The deviant interpretation by the Modernists about Ayah is that: “Even Jews and Christians of this generation can go to Jannah without believing in Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).”

Response: Allah says in the Quran (3:85)

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ
الْخَاسِرِينَ

And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers”.

Imam Muslim (d.261 A.H) named a chapter in his *Saheeh Muslim* entitled,

بابُ وُجُوبِ الْإِيمَانِ بِرِسَالَةِ نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى
”جَمِيعِ النَّاسِ وَنَسْخِ الْمِلَلِ بِمِلَّةِ

“Chapter: Obligation of believing that the message of our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is for all people, and the abrogation of all other religions.” In this chapter he brought authentic Hadith

from Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) that he said: “By Him in Whose hand is the life of Muhammad, he who
arriqaaq.com

amongst the community of Jews or Christians hears about me, but does not affirm his belief in that with which I have been sent and dies in this state (of disbelief), he shall be but one of the denizens of Hell-Fire.” (Saheeh Muslim, Hadith number 153).

The Spanish scholar Ibn Hazm (d. 456 A.H) said in his book *Maratib al-Ijmaa* p 119:

"واتفقوا على تسمية اليهود والنصارى كفاراً"

“They (the scholars) have agreed in calling the Jews and the Christians disbelievers”.

Dangers of using one's opinion in Quranic Interpretation

Abu Bakr al-Sideeq said: “What sky would shield me and what earth would carry me if I said about the Book of Allah without knowledge”.

Tafseer Ibn Katheer (1/16), Shaykh Muqbil bin Hadee said in his checking of Tafseer Ibn Katheer that chain of this narration is disconnected. However, it is an authentic statement without the words “Book of Allah” (Kitaab Is‘aaf al-Akhyar p 249).

Imam At-Tirmidhi said: This is how it has been reported from some of the people of knowledge among the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), and others. They were very stern about this - about explaining the Qur'an without knowledge. As for what has been related from Mujāhid, Qatadah and others, among the people of knowledge, that they would interpret the Qur'an, then it should not be thought

arriqaaq.com

about them that they would say something about the Qur'an, or interpret it without knowledge, or according to their own intellect. Rather that which proves what we have said has been reported from them, that they would not say something from themselves without knowledge. (Jami al-Tirmidhi under 2952).

Do you think you are allowed to ask questions about the Quran or does that lead to deviancy?

The deviant tafseer misguides people and gives them a wrong view of the Quran. But does that mean we are not allowed to use our mind or ask questions when trying to understand the Ayahs?

Tafseer vs Tadabbur

Tafseer: Scholarly interpretation of the Quran, explaining the meanings of words and verses, contexts of revelation, and associated rulings.

Tadabbur: Personal reflection and deep contemplation on the Quran's verses, asking oneself about the application and implications of the teachings.

While we learned about Tafseer and Quranic interpretations and the way to interpret Quran in the previous chapters, we also need to understand what Tadabbur means.

Tadabbur is a form of personal reflection of the Quranic Ayahs. It is to use the Tafseer to ponder on the Ayahs and ask yourself, “What more does this Ayah entail? How can I use this Ayah in my life? What else could this Ayah do to help me in my personal life?”

How does this Ayah relate to real life? How can I apply this Ayah?” and so forth.

While Tafseer helps us to theoretically understand the Ayah, Tadabbur assigns true essence to the Ayah in real life context.

We can look at an example to fully understand the concept better.

Allah says in the Quran:

وَمَنْ يُطِيعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ فَازَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا

And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) he has indeed achieved a great achievement.” (Quran 33:71)

The Tafseer of this Ayahs helps us understand that those who show obedience to Allah and the Messenger receive success in this life and the hereafter. It also helps us understand the importance of obeying Allah

and His Messenger in the life of a Muslim. It tells us that those who disobey Allah and the Messenger do not achieve success.

However, Tadabbur encourages us to deeply reflect, and delve introspectively into one's adherence to the commandments, assessing personal faith and conduct in light of the verse.

So what would the questions of Tadabbur look like?

- Where do I stand in relation to this Ayah?
- Am I truly obedient to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ)?
- Do I genuinely feel the achievement described?
- How well do I integrate this verse into my daily life?
- How rigorously do I follow divine commandments?
- Do I conscientiously avoid prohibitions?

NOTICE:

Some authors have composed extensive works titled "Tadabbur e Quran," yet they neglect the authentic Ahadith of the Prophet and the Tafseer of the Sahabah.

Critical Insight: They rely on pre-Islamic arabic poetry and personal reasoning, potentially endangering accurate Quran interpretation.

Key Foundations Ignored: Authentic Ahadith: Essential for understanding the Quran in its true context. Tafseer of the Sahabah: Offers historical and contextual insights imperative for interpretation.

Takeaway: To maintain Quranic integrity, integrating authentic sources is crucial for balanced reflection and interpretation.

Can Scientific Tafseer be a part of reflecting upon the Quran?

When we look at reflecting upon the Quran, we can come across a concept called Scientific Tafseer. It can be defined as a way of explaining the Quran by using scientific knowledge and analysis. It aims to provide clearer explanations of the Quranic text by exploring scientific connections and insights.

Many modern-day Islamic speakers and preachers sometimes go to extremes in trying to match Quranic verses with modern scientific discoveries. While their goal is to highlight the miraculous nature of the Quran—which is indeed true—they often end up misinterpreting the verses. This happens when they ignore authentic sources, such as the sayings of the Prophet and the explanations of his companions, and take the verses out of their proper context.

Therefore, it is crucial to adhere to some aspects and conditions in scientific Tafseer.

Conditions of validity of Scientific Tafseer

- Consistency with authentic narrations: It must align with narrations from the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions without conflict.
- Contextual harmony: It should agree with the verse's context, including preceding and following verses.
- Linguistic alignment: It must adhere to the clear Arabic language used in the Qur'an.
- Harmony with Shari'ah Principles: It should align with Islamic law's foundational principles, even if other conditions are met.

- Avoidance of supporting misguided people of desires: It must not aid or promote the views of those with blameworthy intentions.

(Muhammad bin Umar Bazmul in commentary on the Muqaddimah Usool al-Tafsir of Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (p. 13)).

Concept of Nazm al-Quran (Coherence of Quran)

The concept of "Nazm al-Quran" refers to the coherence and structural unity within the Quranic text. It asserts that the Quran is not a random collection of verses but has a deliberate and meaningful organization.

Hamiduddin Farahi in the Indian subcontinent is often credited with pioneering a systematic approach to Quranic coherence. He proposed that each surah has a central theme with interconnected verses. Farahi's student, Amin Ahsan Islahi, further developed this concept in his exegesis, "Tadabbur-e-Quran," providing a thematic and coherent structural analysis of the Quran. Modern scholars continue to explore Nazm al-Quran using various methodologies, including linguistic, literary, and thematic analyses, to highlight the interconnectedness within the Quran.

We do not claim that the Quran lacks coherence.

Efforts in this regard can be appreciated. However, the primary issue with scholars Farahi and Islahi lies in their approach to authentic Hadith, which they often dismiss or reject in support of their theory of Quranic coherence (Nazm).

For a detailed examination of their stance on Hadith, see the book "Status and Preservation of Hadith: Answering the Contentions of Orientalists, Christian Missionaries, and Modernists on Hadith."

Moreover, their methodology is based on personal Ijtihad, which they claim that their interpretations are definitive and beyond opposition. This approach is unfounded and contrary to the consensus among scholars of the past. Additionally, Islahi himself contradicted Farahi at various points regarding coherence, undermining the notion that their theory is an indisputable proof.

Furthermore, when comparing Farahi or Islahi's analysis of Surah Baqarah with that of Muhammad Abdullah Draz, an Egyptian Quran scholar notable differences arise. Draz's work, "The Qur'an - An Eternal Challenge: Al-Naba' Al-Azeem," presents conflicting interpretations on Surah Baqarah. These differences highlight that if the theory were truly definitive, such opposition between scholars would not exist. I would like to give credit to Shaykh Muhammad Uzair Shams rahimahullah for the above information.

Some authentic books of Tafseer

There are some authentic books of Quranic interpretation that beginners can read . These books can help us understand the Quran better and provide deeper pondering and reflection of the Ayahs.

1. Interpretation of The Meanings of the Noble Qur'an (9 volumes) by Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan.

This nine-volume set offers a clear and accurate interpretation of the Noble Qur'an, with detailed explanations from well-known bookslike Tafseer At-Tabari, Tafseer Al-Qurtubi, and Tafseer Ibn Kathir, as well as ahadith from Sahih Al-Bukhari and Saheeh Muslim.

2. Tafseer Ibn Kathir (10 Volumes; Abridged) by Imam Ibn Kathir: It is considered the most popular explanation among Muslims, offering a thorough

commentary supported by Hadith and historical context. It has been translated and abridged into English under the supervision of Sheikh Safiur-Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri, making it accessible to a wider audience.

3. Tafseer As-Sadi (10 Volumes) by Abdur Rahman bin Nasir As-Sadi : Tafseer as-Sadi, also known as "Tayseer al-Kareem ar-Rahmaan fi Tafseer Kalaam al-Mannaan," is a contemporary commentary on the Quran that is popular in the Arab world. It emphasizes clear and concise explanations of verses, making it accessible for both scholars and ordinary readers.

4. Tafseer al-Muyassar (partly translated to English): It was written by a group of scholars under the supervision of Shaykh Saalih Aal al-Shaykh and it aims to provide a brief explanation according to the

understanding of the Sahabah and Tabieen in accordance with Usool al-Tafseer and correct Aqeedah. The authors usually limited themselves to providing the direct meaning an ayah so long as there was no need for further explanation.

CONCLUSION

As we wrap up our journey through "Inception to Illumination: Navigating the Summary of Principles of Tafseer," we hope you found the exploration rewarding. Our goal was to make the world of Tafseer understandable and relatable, especially for beginners. Throughout the book, we've focused on how the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ explained the Quran to his companions, helping them understand and reflect deeply on its meanings. His teachings remain the gold standard, guiding how we should engage with the Quran today. We've discussed the differences between Tafseer, which is scholarly and interpretative, and Tadabbur, which invites personal reflection on the Quran's teachings. Both are essential in cultivating a heartfelt connection with the Quran.

As modern challenges arise, discerning authentic interpretations from those that may stray off course

becomes more crucial. We've tried to highlight the importance of aligning our understanding with authentic ahadith and statements of companions.

We hope this humble endeavor opens the door for further reflection and connection with the Quran. This book is just a starting point, and we encourage you to continue exploring its depths. May Allah bless this effort and make it beneficial for everyone seeking guidance and understanding from His Word. Ameen.

**APPENDIX: REALITY OF BOOK CALLED
(TAFSEER IBN ABBAS) TANWÎR AL-MIQBÂS
MIN TAFSEER IBN ABBAS !**

Tanwîr al-Miqbâs min Tafseer Ibn Abbas-Attributed variously to the Companion Abdullah Ibn Abbas and to Muhammad bin Ya‘qub al- Fairuzabadi.

This Tafseer is incorrectly attributed to Abdullah bin Abbas (Radhiallahuanhu), and he should not be associated with it.

Upon examining the initial pages of the Tafseer, you will find the Isnaad (chain of transmission) that includes three primary narrators: Muhammad bin Marwaan Siddi, Muhammad bin Saa'ib Kalbi, and Abu Saleh.

**1) Muhammad bin Marwaan Siddi Al-Koofi.
He is popularly known as Siddi as-Sagheer**

- Imam Dhahabi said about him: Muhadditheen have abandoned him and he is accused of lying by some and he is a student of Kalbi. (Meezan-al-I'tidaal 4/32).
- Imam Bukhari said: He is Matrook (Taarikh Al-Kabeer 1/232, Narrations can never be written from him (Ad-Dua'fa as-Sagheer p-350)
- Imam Nasa'ee said: He is abandoned in hadith (Ad- Dua'fa wal Matrookeen 538)
- Imam Bayhaqi said: He is matrook (Kitaab Asma-wa- Sifaat p-94)
- Imam Yahya bin Maeen said: He is not thiqah (Al- Jarh wa tadeel 8/86)
- Imam Abu Haatim ar-Razee said: Matrook (Al- Jarh wa tadeel 8/86)
- Imam Ibn Hibban said: He used to narrate fabricated narrations from Thiqah narrators. Its not permissible to write from him (Al-Majrooheen 2/286)

- Imam Ibn Numayr said: Kadhab (liar) (Ad-Dua'fa al- Kabeer of Uqaili 4/136)
- Hafidh Ibn Hajr said: Accused of lying (Taqreeb attahzeeb 6284)
- Hafidh Haythami said: He is weak by Ijmaa. (Majoo az-Zawaa'id 1/214)

2) **Muhammad bin Saa'ib Kalbi**

- Imam Abu Haatim Ar-Razee said: There is an Ijmaa of people that his ahadith are Matrook. (Al-Jarh wa tadeel 7/271)
- Imam Sulaymaan At-Taymee said: There were two Kadhaab (liars) in Kufaa and one among them was Kalbi. (Al-Jarh wa tadeel 7/270)
- Imam Jawzjani said: Kadhab (liar) (Ahwaal-ar-Rijaal 37)
- Hafidh Ibn Hajr said: Accused of Kadhb and Rafd (Taqreeb at-Tahzeeb 5901)

3) Bazaam Abu Saleh

- Imam Nasa'ee said: Da'eef Koofi. (Ad-Duaafa wal- Matrookeen 72)
- Imam Bukhari mentioned him in (Kitaab at-Dua'afa : 21)
- Imam Dhahabi said: Da'eeful-hadith (Deewan addua'fa 544)
- Hafidh Ibn Hajr said: Da'eef (Taqreeb at-Tahzeeb 634)
- Hadith scholar Shaykh al-Albani was asked about its attribution to Ibn Abbas and he replied: It is not correct to attribute this book to Ibn Abbas, radiallaahu'ahu. I have spoken about Mi'raaj Ibn 'Abbaas in my refutation of Doctor Al-Bootee, which is circulated under the title:"Defending the Prophetic Hadeeth and Biography." Fatawaa al-Albani [Issue No. 17]

- The chain of narrators of this book is called as Silsalah-Al-Kadhb i.e., Muhammad bin Marwaan as- Siddi a'n Kalbi a'n Abu Saleh (Tadhkirat-ul-Mawdooat p-83,Al-Itqaan fee Uloom-il-Quraan 2/416)

قال شيخ الإسلام ابن تيمية -رحمه الله: «ربما طالعت على الآية الواحدة نحو مائة تفسير، ثم أسأل الله الفهم؛ وأقول: يا معلم آدم وإبراهيم علمني، وكنت أذهب إلى المساجد المهجورة ونحوها، وأمرغ وجهي في التراب، وأسأل الله تعالى؛ وأقول: يا معلم إبراهيم
«فهمني».

العقود الدرية، ص42

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah - may Allah have mercy on him - said: "I might have studied around one hundred interpretations for a single Ayah (verse), then I would ask Allah for understanding; and say: O Teacher of Adam and Ibrahim, teach me. I used to go to abandoned mosques and similar places, rub my face in the dirt, and ask Allah Almighty; and say: O Teacher of Ibrahim, grant me understanding."

(From "Al-'Uqood al-Durriyyah," page 42)