



Assignment # 2

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SUBJECT: Islamic Studies

Submitted to: M. Anwar

Q1: Write in detail about Tafsir, Sources of Tafsir, Kinds of Israelite, famous books of Tafsir & their authors.

Definition:

In Arabic language word **Tafsir** is defined to open or to explain, interpret or comment. Tafsir refers to Quranic exegesis. Tafsir claims to "clarify" the divine word, which serves to make the text "speak" to current social, moral, legal, doctrinal, and political conditions. Through their interpretive strategies, exegetes have struggled to make the Quran more accessible to believers, and more applicable to changing environments. Technically, the science of tafsir is a branch of knowledge in which the meanings of the Quran are explained and its injunctions and wisdoms are described openly and clearly (al-Burhan).

Addressing the Holy Prophet, the Glorious Quran says:

“We revealed the Quran to you so that you explain to the people what has been sent down to them that they might give thought.” (16:44)

Sources of tafsir:

➤ Quran:

The first source of Tafsir is the Quran by the Quran. If someone asks about the best methods of Tafsir, we reply that the best method is to explain the Quran with the Quran itself. What is mentioned in general terms in one place in the Quran, is usually explained in another place. When one does not find this easily, he should look to the Sunnah because its purpose is to explain the Quran and elaborate upon its meanings. Allah Said

“Surely, We have sent down to you (O Muhammad SAW) the Book (this Quran) in truth that you might judge between men by that which Allah has shown you, so be not a pleader for the treacherous.”

And Said

“And We have also sent down unto you (O Muhammad SAW) the reminder and the advice (the Quran), that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought.”

The Prophet (P.B.U.H) himself said to his wife ‘Aisha radhiallaahu ‘anha,

“if you see some people following the unclear (verses) then they are the ones that Allah named; so be warned from them.”

➤ Hadith

Islam has two primary sources. First is the Quran which is the direct word of God inspired to the Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him. The second source is the Prophet’s teachings. These teachings include his words, actions, and things he approved of. The Prophet’s teachings are called Sunnah. The Sunnah is found in texts called hadith.

This is why the Messenger of Allah said,

“The Sunnah was a revelation from Allah just as the Quran, although it is not recited as the Quran is recited.”

The Quran is clearly explained by the Prophetic tradition (hadith):

“Those who have done righteousness, for them will be the best reward (paradise) and something more.”

The Quran is explained by the Messenger (P.B.U.H) because he was responsible for conveying the message. He is the most knowledgeable person of what Allah intends with His speech. Allah Said:

“And We revealed to you the message that you may make clear to the people what was sent down to them and that they might give thought”

➤ **Reports of the Sahaba:**

So, one seeks the Tafsir of the Quran with the Quran itself and with the Sunnah. If one cannot find the Tafsir in the Quran or Sunnah, he should refer to the statements of the Companions, who were the most knowledgeable of Tafsir, for they witnessed the situations and incidents that we did not witness. They also had the deepest comprehension, the most correct knowledge, and the most righteous works. The third source of Tafsir is the consensus of the companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H). Especially those who were known for their knowledge and understanding of Tafsir because the Quran was revealed in their language and in the time where the companions were prevalent. Imam AbuJafar bin Jarir At-Tabari narrated that Abdullah bin Masud said:

"By He other than Whom there is no God, no Ayah in the Book of Allah was revealed but I have knowledge about whom and where it was revealed. Verily, if I know of a person who has more knowledge than me in the Book of Allah that the animals can reach (by travelling on them), I will travel to meet him."

➤ **Narrations of the Successors:**

After the Companions come the Successors. The reports of those who learned from the companions. These people grew up in an environment with people who had known Muhammad (P.B.U.H) so their insight is the next in line of the sources of tafsir. The latter learnt the tafsir of Quran directly from the former. Therefore, their statements too have great importance in the science of tafsir, although a difference of opinion among scholars exists on whether the statements of the Successors are considered decisive in tafsir. Their importance, nonetheless, cannot be denied.

➤ **The Arabic Language:**

Because the Quran was revealed in Arabic, it is necessary to fully understand it in order to explain it accurately. There are several verses of the Quran for which there is no accompanying circumstance of revelation and no legal or scholastic issue related. Therefore, neither the sayings of the Holy Prophets a nor

the sayings of the Sahabah or Tabin were transmitted in his statement. Therefore, the only medium through which such verses can be explained is the Arabic language, and it is only on the basis of language that they are explained. Even if there is a difference in the tafsir of a particular verse, then the science of linguistics is also used to conduct a truth test between different opinions.

➤ **Deliberation and Deduction:**

The Last Source of Tafsir is Deliberation and Deduction. The intricacies and mysteries of the Quran are an ocean without shore. Therefore, the more a person thinks about it who has been blessed by Allah Almighty with the understanding of Islamic sciences, the more and more new mysteries and subtleties are discovered. As a result, the commentators also present the results of their respective deliberations, but the mysteries and subtleties so described are only considered acceptable if they do not contradict the five sources cited above. Thus, if a person, while explaining the Quran, makes a subtle point or an independent judgment that contradicts the Quran and Sunnah, consensus language or statements of the Companions and Followers, or is in conflict with any other Sharia principle, then it will have no credibility. Some mystics in the past sought to describe such mysteries and subtleties in tafsir but investigative scholars of the Ummah did not consider them trustworthy because the personal opinion of any person that contravenes the basic principles of the Quran, Sunnah and Shariah have obviously no weight.

Kinds of Israelite

Judaica, or Israelite are narratives that have reached us through Jewish and Christian tradition. It should be noted that early commentators used to preserve all sorts of narrations which reached them from identifiable sources. Many of these narrations were Judaica, which therefore necessitates knowledge of what they truly are. Some Companions and their Successors first belonged to the religions of the People of the Book. Later, when they became Muslims and learnt the Quran, they came across several events relating to past communities in the Quran and which they had also read in the books of their previous religion. Therefore, while referring to the events mentioned in the Quran, they would describe other details to Muslims which they had seen in the books of their old religion.

There are three kinds of Israelite:

1. Narrations the truth of which is proved from evidences in the Quran and Sunnah. For example, the drowning of Pharaoh and the ascent of Sayyiduna Musa onto Mount Tur.
2. Narrations the falsity of which is proved from evidences in the Quran and Sunnah. For example, it appears in Judaic narrations that Sayyiduna Sulayman had become (God forbid) an apostate in his later years. Its refutation is clearly given in the Quran, where it is said, "It was not Sulayman who became an infidel, but the devils did become infidels." In Judaic narrations, Sulayman (A.S) is blamed to have killed his general "Uriah" and then got married with his wife....It is entirely false.
3. Narrations regarding which the Quran and the Sunnah are silent. In regards to such narrations, the prophetic teaching is to observe silence and neither confirm nor falsify. There is, however, a difference of opinion among scholars whether or not reporting such narrations is permissible. Hafiz Ibn Kathir has given a decisive ruling that reporting them is permissible but doing so is useless because they cannot be taken to be authentic.

Famous Tafsir's of the Quran:

Countless commentaries of the Glorious Quran have been written since the blessed period of the prophethood. In fact, no other book of the world has received as much attention of the scholars as the Quran. Introducing all these commentaries is not possible even in a detailed book, much less in a brief introduction such as this. However, we still wish to very briefly introduce the major commentaries that served as primary reference sources for Quranic exegesis today.

Following are some major Commentaries of the Quran:

| Sr. No | Book Name | Author | About |
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| 1. | Bayan Ul Quran | Ashraf Ali Thanwi & Dr.Israr Ahmed was a Pakistani Islamic theologian, philosopher, and Islamic scholar who was followed particularly in South Asia as well as by South Asian Muslims in the Middle East, Western Europe, and North America. | Originally written in Urdu, it is the most prominent work of its author. The tafsir is said to be specifically for scholars. |
| 2. | al-Bahr al-Muhit | Allamah Abu Hayyan al-Gharnati al-Andalusi (died 754 AH), A master of syntax and rhetoric in addition to many other Islamic fields of learning. | This tafsir is replete with discussions on syntax and rhetoric. It places special stress on investigating the words of every verse, the difference in structures, and rhetorical devices. |
| 3. | Al-Tafsir al-Mazhari | Qadi Thana ullah Panipatti (died 1225 AH). He memorized the Quran and then completed the studies of hadith under Shah Waliullah. He became a "murid" of Muhammad Abid Sinani, and became a disciple of Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Janaan after Sinani's death. | He named his book al-Tafsir al-Mazhari after the name of his spiritual master, Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Janan al-Dihlawi. This tafsir is very simple and clear and extremely useful for locating brief explanations of Quranic verses. |
| 4. | al-Durr al-Manthur | Allamah Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (died 910 AH) was an Arab Egyptian polymath, Islamic scholar, historian, Sufi, and jurist. From a family of Persian origin, he was described as one of the most prolific writers of the Middle Ages. | Its full name is al-Durr al-Manthur fil Tafsir bil Mathur. Here Allamah Suyuti has tried to collect all narrations about the tafsir of Quran that he was able to find. He included the complete chain of narrators for each tradition, he found it sufficient to simply name the particular author who has |

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| | | | presented that narration under his authority. |
| 5. | Tafseer -e-Usmani | Shaykh Shabbir Ahmad Usmani. (11 October 1887 – 13 December 1949) was an Islamic scholar who supported the Pakistan Movement in the 1940s. He was a religious scholar, writer, orator, politician, and expert in Tafsir and Hadith. | An Urdu translation of the tafsir of the Quran written by Mahmud ul Hasan. |
| 6. | Tafsir Ibn Jarir | Allamah Abu Jafar Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari (died 310 AH) was a Muslim historian and scholar from Amol, Tabaristan. Among the most prominent figures of the Islamic Golden Age, al-Tabari is known for his historical works and his expertise in Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir), but he has also been described as "an impressively prolific polymath". | The real name of this tafsir is Jami 'al-Bayan. In thirty volumes, his tafsir enjoys the status of having served as a primary source for later commentaries. In his explanation of the verses, he quotes different scholars and then goes on to prove the position which, according to him, is weightier in light of proofs. It must, however, be admitted that narrations of all sorts, sound and weak, found a place in his commentary. |
| 7. | Tafsir Ibn Kathir | Ismail ibn Kathir al-Dimashqi al-Shafi (died 774 AH) was a highly influential Arab historian, exegete and scholar during the Mamluk era in Syria. An expert on and fiqh , he wrote several books, including a fourteen-volume universal history titled Al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya. | In this commentary, emphasis has been laid on explanatory hadiths. A special feature is his criticism as a hadith expert on different narrations, and from this point of view his book holds a distinct place among all books of tafsir. |
| 8. | Tafsir al-Qurtubi | Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad Abi Bakr ibn Farah al-Qurtubi (died 671 AH) was an Andalusian jurist, Islamic scholar and muhaddith. He was taught by prominent scholars of Cordoba, Spain and he is well known for his | Its full name is al-Jamil Ahkam al-Quran. The basic objective of this book was to deduce juristic injunctions and rulings from the Quran. This book is in twelve |

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| | | commentary of the Quran named Tafsir al-Qurtubi. | volumes and has been published numerous times. |
| 9. | Al-Tafsir al-Kabir | Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (died 606 AH) was an influential Muslim polymath and one of the pioneers of inductive logic. He wrote various works in the fields of medicine, cosmology, literature, theology, and jurisprudence. He was one of the earliest proponents and skeptics that came up with the concept of multiverse, and compared it with the astronomical teachings of Quran. | Its real name is Mafatih al-Ghayb. Imam Razi is considered an imam of Islamic theology. Therefore, great emphasis has been laid in his tafsir on rational and scholastic debates and on the refutation of false sects. The truth is that his tafsir is a unique key to the Quran. |
| 10. | Ahkam al-Quran | Imam Abu Bakr al-Jassas al-Razi (died 370 AH). A scholar who occupies a distinguished place among Hanafi jurists. was a Hanafite scholar mostly known as the commentator of Al-Ḥaṣṣaf's work on jurisprudence. | Instead of explaining verses in serial continuity, he has taken up the juristic details as called for by verses which consist of juristic injunctions. |