

An introduction to the Science of Tafseer

علم تفسیر کا تعارف

Introduction

➤ Definition Of Tafseer:

The literal meaning of Tafseer in the Arabic is to open or to explain, interpret or comment.

Technically, the science of Tafseer is a branch of knowledge in which the meaning of the Qur'an are explained and its injunction and wisdom are described openly and clearly.

Two types of Quranic verses

ولقد يسرنا القرآن للذکر فهل من مدکر

(سورة القبر: 22)

Indeed we have made the Qur'an easy for seeking advice. So, is there anyone to heed to the advice?

► There are two types of Verses

- 1) Related to Tawhid, Risalat, Aakhirat, Tazkeer, Stories of previous nations etc.
- 2) Related to different types of difficult orders and in depth issues, like "Hudood, ruling regarding different aspects of circumstances"

Ruling on both types of verses

- ▶ For the First type of Ayah's if someone has a strong grip on **Arabic language** and he has a wide knowledge of **Ahadees e Mubarka**, we can say it isn't necessary for him to gain knowledge through Ulama's. So he don't want to ask Ulama what happen to Firon, what happen to the nation of Sumood, what is Jannah ? What is Jahnnunum etc.
- ▶ This is what discussed in above Ayah that we made the Quran easy for “**seeking advice**” للذكر. So there isn't a single Islamic scholar who says that you need the guidance from Ulama for understanding about what happened to the Firon etc...
- ▶ While for the other type of Ayah's Quran gives the below message:

وَمَا كَانَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لِيَنْفِرُوا كَافَّةً ۖ فَلَوْلَا نَفَرَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِّنْهُمْ طَائِفَةٌ لِّيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي
الدِّينِ وَلِيُنْذِرُوا قَوْمَهُمْ إِذَا رَجَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَحْذَرُونَ ﴿٢﴾

It is not (necessary) for all the believers to go forth.’; So, why should it not be that a group from every section of them goes forth, so that **they may acquire perfect understanding** of the Faith, and so that they may warn their people when they return to them, so that they may take due care (of the rules of Sharī‘ah)

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «مَنْ قَالَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ بِرَأْيِهِ فَلْيَتَّبِعُوا مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ» رواه الترمذی

Let him who interprets the Qur’an in the light of his opinion come to his abode in hell

Conclusion

- ▶ Allah didn't send any book without Prophet, and Prophet didn't leave for us just book without scholars(his companions) Quran said:

فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنُتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا ۖ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ

So, if they believe in the same way **as you believe**, they will have certainly found the right path, and if they turn away, then the fact is that they are in antagonism.

- ▶ So from the very first day two things we found together:
Book and the Guider
- ▶ And Quran told us in the second last Ayah, that there should be some people whom have grip on **Deen** so they teach others

Another Misconception

- ▶ There is one more huge misconception that some of us thinks that:

“Like Jews and Christian scholars, what they did with their religion, Islamic scholars do the same thing with Islam”

Differences

1. Quran said that their scholars change their religion, but said about Islamic scholars “Only those of His slaves fear Allah who are knowledgeable”
2. Islam is the religion for all mankind, till the doomsday
3. **انا نحن نزلنا الذِّكْرَ وَاَنَّا لَهُ حٰفِظُوْنَ** so how can Scholars change the religion?

Note: No doubt ,that there is a number of individuals try to manipulate the message of Quran of Sunnah in every era.

15 Qualifications for “Mufasssir”

1. Knowledge of Arabic language and its vocabulary (lugat)
2. Knowledge of Arabic grammar (nahv)
3. Knowledge of Arabic morphology (sarf)
4. Knowledge of Arabic words and word structure (ishtiqaq)
5. Knowledge of Arabic rhetoric (maani)
6. Eloquence (byan)
7. Manners of oratory (Badee)
8. Knowledge of qira'at
9. Knowledge of the principles of faith (usul e deen)
10. Knowledge of fiqh
11. Knowledge of asbab an-nuzul
12. Knowledge of naskh and mansukh (abrogation)
13. Knowledge of hadith
14. Knowledge of ulum al-Qur'an
15. Divine endowment (divinely endowed talent)

The Sources of Tafseer (تفسیر کے مآخذ)

1. The Glorious Qur'an (تفسیر القرآن بالقرآن)
2. The Hadith of Prophet ﷺ (تفسیر القرآن بالحديث)
3. Interpretation by the Companion (تفسیر القرآن بآثار الصحابة)
4. Interpretation by "Tabi'i" (تفسیر القرآن باقوال التابعین)
5. From Arabic Language (تفسیر القرآن باللغة العربیہ)
6. Deliberation and contemplation تدبر / غور و فکر / عقل سلیم

The Glorious Qur'an (تفسير القرآن بالقرآن)

- The first source of the knowledge of *tafsir* is the Quran itself. Accordingly, it happens very often that a certain point which is brief and requires explanation is invariably clarified by some other verse of the Quran. For instance, in the following verse of Surat al-Fatihah, “Guide us on the straight path, the path of those on whom You have blessed...”, it is not clear here as to who are those whom Allah Almighty has blessed. But, in another verse, they have been identified very clearly where it is said:
“So, these are the people whom Allah Almighty has blessed, being the Prophets, the Siddiqeen, the martyrs (in the way of Allah) and the righteous”. (4:69)
- Therefore, when commentators explain a Quranic verse, they first check to see if a *tafsir* of the verse is already existent elsewhere in the Quran itself. If such an explanatory verse exists, they elect to adhere to it as their first choice.

The Hadith of Prophet ﷺ (تفسير القرآن بالحديث)

The words and the deeds of the Holy Prophet (upon him blessings and peace) are called hadith, and as it has been stated earlier, Allah Almighty sent him with the Quran solely for the purpose of explaining, openly and explicitly, the correct meanings of the Quran to people.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ (انعام ٨٢)

Those who have believed and have not mixed their faith with injustice are the ones who deserve peace, and it is they who are on the right path.

- Hadees e Mubarka tells that the meaning of ظلم here is Shirk

Narrations of Companions: (تفسير القرآن بأثر الصحابة)

- The noble Sahabah, or Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all), had received their education directly from the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).
- In addition, they were personally present on the scene when verses were revealed, and they had themselves witnessed the circumstances and backgrounds of the Quranic revelation.
- Therefore, naturally, the recorded statements of these blessed souls are more authentic and trustworthy in explanation of the Noble Quran.

Famous Tafaseer of Companions:

- ▶ Tafseer-e Ibn-e-Abbas (R.A) تفسیر ابن عباس
- ▶ Tafseer-e Ibn-e-Masood (R.A.) تفسیر ابن مسعود
- ▶ Tafseer-e Ubai bin Ka'ab (R.A.) تفسیر ابی بن کعب

Narrations of the Successors: تفسير القرآن بأقوال التابعين

- After the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) come the Successors (Tabi'in). 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. (*al-Itqan*, 2:179)

Famous Successors :

- Hasan Basari (حضرت حسن بصری رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ)
- Ikramah (حضرت عکرمہ رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ)
- Mujahid (حضرت مجاہد رحمہ اللہ تعالیٰ)

The Arabic Language: (تفسير القرآن باللغة العربية)

- ▶ Since the Quran was revealed in the Arabic language, in order to accurately explain the Quran it is necessary to have a complete grip over it.
- ▶ There are many Qur'anic verses for which there was no circumstance of revelation or any legal or scholastic question related to them. Therefore, in their explanation, neither the hadiths of the Holy Prophet nor the sayings of the companions or followers were transmitted. Hence, the only means by which such verses can be interpreted is the Arabic language.
- ▶ In addition, if there is some difference in the interpretation of a particular verse, linguistics is also used to test the validity between different opinions.

Deliberation and Contemplation تدبر / غور و فکر / عقل سلیم

- Another source of interpretation is deliberation. The mysteries and secrets of the Qur'an are an ocean without a shore. Therefore, the more deliberately a person blessed by God Almighty is in Islamic sciences, the more he will discover new mysteries and subtleties.
- As a result, commentators do present the outcomes of their respective deliberations as well, **but the mysteries and subtleties so described are found acceptable only when they do not contradict the five sources mentioned above.**

Israelite Narrations

(اسرائیلی روایات)

Rules Relating to Israelite Narrations

Israelite Narrations:

- Isra'iliyyat, 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 accounts were Jewish, which necessitates knowing about what they really are..

Rules Relating to Israelite Narrations

1. Narrations the truth of which is proved by evidences in the Quran and Sunnah.

For example,

The drowning of Pharaoh and the ascent of Sayyiduna Musa (upon him be peace) onto Mount Tur (Sinai)..

Rules Pertaining to Israelite Narrations

2. Narrations the falsity of which is proved from evidences in the Quran and Sunnah.
 - For example, it appears in Judaic/Israelite narrations that Sayyiduna Sulayman (upon him be peace) 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.” (2:102)

Rules Relating to Israelite Narrations

3. Narrations regarding which the Quran, the Sunnah, and the Shar'iah 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. (Muqaddamah Tafsir Ibn Kathir)