

Principles of Exegesis and Tafseer-e-Muhammadi Titled as Moodheh-eFurqan

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The unique maiden versified Punjabi Tafseer of the Holy Quran in the history of Quranic exegesis is "Tafseer-e-Muhammadi". It has also given famous and historical name "Moodheh-e-Furqan" which indicates its beginning year by the sum of the numbers of its alphabetical letters of its name. It was the first detailed commentary of the Quran ever written in the Punjabi language in the shape of verse. It comprises seven huge volume and more than three thousands full size pages. It divided in to seven volumes according to the seven stages (Manaazil) of the Holy Quran. Every volume covers a complete stage or Manzil of the Holy Quran. This style of division during the writing of exegesis of the Holy Quran is very rare and it makes this aspect of the Tafseer distinctive too. Tafseer Muhammadi is written by Hafiz Muhammad bin Barakallh Lakhvi, a renowned scholar of sub-continent of nineteenth century. The author started writing this exegesis of Quran in the year 1285AH/1868AD. This article intends to highlight the principles of the exegesis and its applications in the Tafseer-e-Muhammadi renowned as Moodheh-e-Furqan.

Causes of Revelation:

It is necessary to know the causes of the revelation of verses besides the knowledge of exegesis to explain the meaning of Quran. To comprehend the meaning of the verses of Quran, It is necessary to know the circumstances in which the verse to intended to be explained was revealed because it leads to the comprehension the meaning of the verse.

An exegete should know the causes of the revelation of the verse because they lead to the true commentary of the holy Quran. 1

Dr Subhi Saleh says in the context of principle of Tafseer.

"As far as the religious status of the causes of the revelation is concerned we should not see the surface but into the reality. We need human beings not his appearance and countenance. We should require the true facts not its resounding. The researching scholars said that the person who does not know causes of revelation, explain the commentary of Quran is prohibited for him."2

Hafiz Muhammad sahib in its Tafseer has paid special heed to the causes of revelation for the easy comprehension of the holy Quran and he has not ignored the Quran and the Sunnah in this

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regard. He has done so contrary to the style of his compatriot exegete who pay attention to the partial incident about a verse.

In Tafseer-e-Muhammadi the descent events of the verses have been copied from “Tafseer Maaalum-ul-Tanzel” and the “Tafseer Mazhari”. In this connection, Hafiz Sahib writes in the preface of Tafseer-E-Muhammadi

“es the piche shan nazool moaalam kanoo lianday,
Jo mazhari kanoo ya hor kitaboo likhe naam tinhna day”.³

Hafiz Muhammad sahib elaborated the causes of revelation of the verses because it lead to the understand the meaning of the verse and if the cause is known, the caused is also known. ⁴

To know the causes of revelation is the most important knowledge as Hazrat Shah Wali-Ullah notes down in his well known book “Al-Fauz-UI-Kabeer”

“The second most exegesis knowledge is to know the causes of revelation. In it, there are many snags. There is difference between the terminologies of the ancient writers and the modern writers. It proves from the sayings of Sahaba and their followers that their sayings is not liked with the specific event occurred in the age of the Holy Prophet”. ⁵

In the context of the cause of the revelation, Hafiz Sahib’s view point is the same

“aam mofasar har aayat da shan nazool batawn
Har aayat de naal mowafiq qissa hik liyawan
Enha kisyaa bohat zarurat naahi hr aayaat biyanoo
Jo vich haqiqat paki nafsaa hae maqsood Quranoo
Hor akaed batil toran bhi fasid aamaalaa
Vajood napaaki nafsaa hor akaed bad afaaloo
Hae vich haqeeqat shan nazool Quran wajood inhanda
Hae door kern maqsood Qurano enhan badcheezan da” .⁶

Common exegetes describe the causes of revelation of every verse and link a tale with every verse, though there is no need of these tales. The rare cause of the revelation of the Holy Quran is to purify the hearts from false belief and evil acts. And the purpose of the revelation of the Holy Quran is to remove these evil actions and their bad affects.

Muhkamat-o-Mutashbihaat:

The Quranic verses are of two kinds: Muhkam and Mutashabeh. As the Quran says

“Allah Almighty who revealed the book to you that includes vivid verses which are the roots of the book and the other verses are mutashbeh”.⁷

This verse shows that Muhkam and Mutshabeh are antonyms. In the same way the veterans in knowledge are the opposed to those who have perverted hearts. This contrast between Muhkam and Mutashbeh has impelled the scholars to define them. So, in this regard they have expressed different and manifold theories. But the gist of all the theories is that: Muhkam is that which is clear in its meanings and there is no misgivings in it. It includes the inner and the outer. Mutashabeh is that is not clear its meanings but it has many connotations. ⁸

In the commentary above mentioned verse Hafiz Muhammad sahib says that Muhkam is which has only one meaning such as the commands of Halal and Haram, and the Mutashabehaat which have more than one meanings such as “Harooof-e-Muqat-e-Eaat”.

“Mohkam ooh jis maana hikko mane hor naa koee
Jiveen hil haraam ahkaam amloon nasakh na jinha hoee
Mutashabe harooof tahajee walay alfoo laam te meemoon
Kaaf te ha yaa aaieen te sawadoon tuaa seenoon haa
meemoon”.⁹

Nasikh-O-Mansokh: Repealer and the Repealed:

“To know about Nasikh and Mansokh is such a difficult problem as include many debates and differences and the most important is the mutual difference of the terminologies Mutataqade-Meeen (the Ancient) and Mutakh-e- Reen”.¹⁰

The main cause of difference among the scholars about the definition of the terminological meaning of the Nasakh and its literal meaning is used in many connotations. ¹¹

This difference of the word Nasikh has created a great difference about the Repealer and the Repealed verses among the exegetes. And they have counted Repealer and the Repealed verses in different numbers. The difference about the meaning of Nasikh forced the exegetes to exceed the number of repealed verses upto 500. Imam Sayuti decreased this number to 19 only. Shah Wali Ullah restricted this number to 5 verses only. ¹²

The writers of tafseer-e-Muhammadi has argued about the repealer and the repealed verses in his Tafseer and stood in line with Shah Wali Ullah.

“kehya ebn jreer ne muraad naskh then nqal ayat da hae. Jes trah halal noo haram ya haraam noo halal mubah noo mekhtoor, mekhtoor noo mubah ker dena. aaye nqal atay tabdel wech aamar atay nahi dy hoonda hai. aaty wech aakhbaar dy nahi honda. Saaray ahel islam selffan Khalffan ooper aaes baat dy mtafiq hain jo neskh sabat otty jayzz hai. Kesy hek shakhes ne bhi inkar nahi keeta. Baz ullma ne kehya jo punj surtan mnsukh hain aaper nazdeek muhaqeeqeen dy punjaan aytan thin zyda mnsokh nahi hain. ehoo qool Shah Wali Allah Sahib da hae. Wech foz alkabeer dy. 13

However, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan does not accept the theory of Nasikh and Mansokh verses.

“The debate about Nasikh and Mansokh is baseless. It needs no debate. He is of the opinion that the Muslim jurists have created different ideas about the repealed verses after their own hearts avoid due to wrong thinking and unjustified arguments. He says that the theory of Nasikh and Mansokh is against the dignity of Quran and Almighty Allah. 14

Ejazul Quran: (Miracles of Quran):

The Quran is a miracle. Miracle means that makes some body powerless and answerless. The Quran is the most important miracle of God granted to the Holy Prophet. The Quran has many such miracles as reveal that the Quran is from God and it is the most distinguished among the other religious and literary books.

The Quran has many qualities that makes the unbelievers dash to the ground. And these qualities are named as Ejazul Quranin exegetic art. And the exegetes have noted down Ejazul Quran in their books at large.

There are many causes of Ejazul Quran

1. The new style:

The Arabs were very singular in the field of etymology of words and did their best to excel their contemporaries. They were very advanced in the fields of hymn, sermons, idioms and phrases. The Arabs knew nothing except these four styles. That is why the Holy Prophet who was unlettered but had a very

specific and distinguished style and to verily this was a miracle.

2. To describe the detail of the former Ummam and historians that verified the divine books.
3. The predictions and events emanating from perditions will be a fresh miracle.
4. The state of eloquence which is above human power. We people who are born in the latter ages cannot reach the facts of eloquence of the former people. But we know that the sweet words subtlety, simplicity and frankness which are fond in Quran excel the odes of the former and the latter writers. Ecstasy which can be known only by the expert poets. 15

IIm-e-Tazkeer and Mokhasma give the Suras a specific style of meaning and a wonderful newness which is out of the search of human mind. Hafiz Sahib has pointed out Ejazul Quran in his Tafseer and did not describe them separately following Shah Wali Ullah. But he has described them off and on. During his Tafseer in the 23 verse of Surah Bakra Hafiz Sahib has declared the Holy Quran as a miracle lasting till the Day of Judgment.

He says that nobody can coin a Surah like the Holy Quran's as the learned persons of Mecca failed to do so.

“mujza ey Quran aajeha teek qiyamat jari
Ajj lag kisay naa ban sakay hika surat saari
Hazrat kujh na perrya lekhyia janan makkey waly
Likhen parhan walay sab ustheen aajiz hoey niraalay
Ooh saaray arab mukhalif dushman sab yahood nasaaray
Per surat hik na bani kisay thien kar kar thakkay charay. 16
Hazrat Shah Wal Ullah has included five sciences in Ejazul Quran. He writes in his book “Foz-ul-Kabeer”

“Another miracle of Quran is that it can be comprehended by those persons only who meditate in the secrets of Shariah. And these five sciences are ample proof that the Quran had been revealed by Allah”. 17

Hafiz Muhammad sahib has also in the preface of his Tafseer written that these five sciences have been described in the Holy Quran.

Hafiz sahib writs

“biyan enhan ulloomman da wich Quran Khuda farmaya
Arab awal dy toor ootey rab chaya jevain btaya.” 18

Attitude about Israailaaiat:

The exegetic knowledge whose sole source of acquisition is the verses derived (taken out) from the former divine book is called Israailaaiat. But the thing about which no true addition exists, its only sources are the former divine books and their followers as the traditions of Kaab-e-Ahbaar, Wahb and Muhammad bin Ishaq. Neither the verification nor the refutation of these traditions is lawful. 19

Gulam Muhammad Hariri explains it so.

“Apparently the world of Israailaaiat hints at the Jews civilization and culture that affects the exegesis of the Quran. But their meanings are vaster and mean that Jews or Christian culture that affected the Tafseer of Quran. They were named as Israailaaiat and the Jewish got more fame and Jews tradition spread in the Muslims in the larger numbers”. 20

Shah Wali Ulla’s view point in this regard is that these verification and refutation must be avoided. He says Israailaaiat traditions are a monster that had stepped into our religion. As a rule true verification should be avoided. This rule reveals two facts.

1. As long as the explanation of the God’s Kalaam is available from the Hadith, we should not get help from Bani-Israeel.
2. The second fact that we should restrict ourselves to our utmost need only. 21

Hafiz Muhammad sahib has derived exegetics traditions from Tafseer Maaal-mul-Tanzeel and Tafseer Mazhari. Both of these two are purified from Israailaaiat. So, Tafseer-e-Muhammadi is all on the same pattern. In his Tafseer he sifted only that stuff from the Israailaaiat which is according to the spirit of Islam and in line with logic and tradition. If he finds any Israeli tradition, he uses it as a testimony because according to the scholars refers them for testimony is lawful.

The Israeli traditions comprise three kinds.

1. Those whose authenticity has been provided by the Islamic knowledge.
2. That falsehood is provided by our divine knowledge.
3. Those about which our divine knowledge is mute neither confirms nor refutes. We do not believe in them not refute them. This kind of tradition can be used only for testimony. 22

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