

Tafseer Al-Baqarah
From the Book, Introduction to the Tafseer of the Quran,
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[The Method Adopted in the Tafsir]

(Translated)

To proceed:

Allah (swt) has willed that I enter the field of tafsir of the Noble Qur'an, striving to the best of my ability—by the grace of Allah (swt) and His assistance—to make it understood as it was understood in the time of the Messenger of Allah (saw) and the time of his Companions (ra)—as far as I am able to do so.

To that end, I have adopted a method as follows:

First: From the perspective of language:

Indeed, Allah (swt) has explicitly stated in His Decisive Book that this Qur'an is Arabic, ﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ﴾ **“Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran”** [TMQ Surah Yusuf: 2], and He (swt) said, ﴿وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ﴾ **“And this is in a clear Arabic tongue”** [TMQ Surah An-Nahl: 103].

Thus, there is not in the Qur'an a single word that is non-Arabic.

We have explained in the introduction that Arabic speech is either:

- According to the original assignment of meaning, that is, literal usage whether shari, linguistic, or customary.
- Or a departure from the original assignment due to a contextual indicator and a relation, that is, figurative usage or metonymy.
- Or on the basis of derivation as employed by the Arabs.
- Or that the word is a name for something in the lands of non-Arabs, which the Arabs incorporated into their language using the letters of their own speech and according to their morphological patterns.

The Arabic language and its usages; thus, a word that has been Arabized on this basis becomes fully Arabic without distinction.

The Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic language in the manner we have explained, from its very first letter to its very last letter, and the Qur'an itself explicitly states this: ﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا﴾ **“Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran”** [TMQ Surah Yusuf 2]. Accordingly, it is neither possible, nor valid, for the Qur'an to be understood through any language other than the Arabic, in which it was revealed. Therefore, in tafsir, with respect to language, I have proceeded as follows:

a. Shariah meaning (haqeeqah sharaiyyah): If an explanation of a verse or of a word therein is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (saw), I adopt it in the tafsir, because the Shariah meaning takes precedence in any Shariah text over all other types of meaning (haqeeqah).

It is worth noting that a word does not have a Shariah meaning unless a specific and explicit explanation concerning it is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah (saw). If the explanation is not specific and particular to it, then it is not said to have a Shariah meaning.

An example of a Shariah meaning is the interpretation of **Salah** (Shariah prayer) or **Hajj** (Shariah pilgrimage) in the verses, ﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾ **“Establish Salah”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah 43], and ﴿الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَعْلُومَاتٌ﴾ **“Commitment to Hajj is made in appointed months”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah 197].

The Messenger (saw) clarified them and detailed them in terms of their words, actions, methodology, and evidencing. Consequently, they acquired a Shariah meaning that is relied upon in tafsir, rather than dua (supplication) or qasad (directed towards), which are their respective linguistic meanings.

b. If there is no Shariah meaning, I then resort to the customary meaning (haqeeqah urfiyyah) and linguistic meanings (haqeeqah lughawiyyah) as understood by the Arabs in whose language the Qur'an was revealed, such as the interpretation of people, beings, and cattle mentioned in the verse, ﴿وَمِنَ النَّاسِ وَالْدَّوَابِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ مُخْتَلِفٌ﴾ **“just as people, beasts, and cattle”** [TMQ Surah Fatir: 28].

Accordingly, people refer to Adam and his progeny, as a linguistic meaning, cattle refers to camels, cattle, and sheep, a linguistic meaning, and beasts refers to those that walk on four legs, as a customary meaning, rather than interpreting it as everything that creeps or moves upon the earth, as per its original linguistic assigned meaning. This is because the customary meaning used by the Arabs takes precedence over the linguistic meaning.

c. If the linguistic meaning cannot be applied, I then resort to metaphorical (majaz) and metonymy (kinayah), for this is how the Arabs commonly employed language in their speech.

For example, His (swt) saying, ﴿يَجْعَلُونَ أَصْبِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ﴾ **“They press their fingers into their ears”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 19].

Here, the contextualization (qarinah) prevents the intent of the original meaning, for the fingers cannot all enter the ears; rather, what is meant are their tips. Thus, the interpretation of “fingers” is metaphor, meaning their tips.

Likewise, His (swt) saying, ﴿فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُمْ﴾ **“So now you may touch (metaphor for having intercourse in Ramadan) them”** [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 187].

What is intended by *baashiroo* (باشروا) here is not the linguistic sense of touching (مباشرة mubaasharah) — namely, that a man merely touches his wife — but rather sexual intercourse (jamaa'). This is because what had been prohibited during the nights of Ramadan was intercourse, and then Allah (swt) lifted this prohibition. The qareenah here does not prevent the intent of the original meaning, which is the literal touching, so the word ﴿بَاشِرُوهُمْ﴾ **“touch them”** in this ayah is a kinayah (metonym) about the intercourse in Ramadan.

d. Then, if the Arabs used a particular root and employed multiple derivatives from it, but did not use one specific derivative, then if this new derivative appears, its meaning is connected to the original root of derivation according to the morphological patterns of the language.

For example, the Arabs used “rahim, yarhamu, and from it al-rahmah, al-rahim etc.,” but they did not use al-Rahman as a description of Allah (swt). Since this word is derived from rahim on the pattern fa'lan, which is an intensive form indicating abundance—meaning one who possesses abundant mercy—whenever it occurs in the Qur'an it means abundantly Merciful, and it is one of the Most Beautiful Names of Allah (Ar-Rahman), even if the Arabs had not used it in this specific meaning, so long as it is derived from a root that they did use (rahim).

For this reason, Allah rebuked the Arabs for their obstinacy, argumentation, and the collapse of their proof, as stated in the noble verse, ﴿وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ اسْجُدُوا لِلرَّحْمَنِ قَالُوا وَمَا الرَّحْمَنُ أَنَسْجُدُ لِمَا تَأْمُرُنَا وَزَادَهُمْ نُفُورًا﴾ **“When it is said to them, “Prostrate to the Most Compassionate,” they ask in disgust, “What is ‘the Most Compassionate’? Will we prostrate to whatever you order us to?” And it only drives them farther away”** [TMQ Surah Al-Furqan: 60].

They knew what al-Rahman meant, and that here it refers to Allah (swt) because they used derivatives of the root (rahim) in their language and understood its meaning; yet it was sheer obstinacy and stubborn denial.

And Allah (swt) says in another verse, ﴿قُلِ ادْعُوا اللَّهَ أَوْ ادْعُوا الرَّحْمَنَ أَيًّا مَا تَدْعُوا فَلَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى﴾ **“Say, O Prophet, “Call upon Allah or call upon the Most Compassionate—whichever you call, He has the Most Beautiful Names”** [TMQ Surah Al-Isra: 110].

Accordingly, the use of any linguistic derivative (مشتقة) whose root of linguistic derivation (اشتقاق isthiqaaq) the Arabs employed renders it Arabic, with the same meaning derived from that root, in accordance with the form of linguistic derivation as morphological expressions (تفعيلات taf'eelaat) of the Arabic language.

e. Any name for an object that existed among non-Arabs which the Arabs transferred into their language — after modifying its letters and patterns and adapting it to the letters and morphological forms of their own language — becomes Arabic after Arabization (تعريب ta'reeb), just as if they had originally coined it themselves.

Such an Arabized name thus becomes Arabic, and its meaning remains the same referent for which the Arabs transferred that name.

Accordingly, whenever a name that the Arabs transferred from the languages of non-Arabs appears in the Noble Quran on the morphological forms of their own linguistic derivation, it is Arabic and is interpreted with the same meaning for which the Arabs transferred it. Thus, in His saying, the Exalted, ﴿عَالِيَهُمْ ثِيَابٌ سُنْدُسٍ خُضْرٌ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٌ﴾ “**The virtuous will be dressed in garments of fine green silk and rich brocade**” [TMQ Surah Al-Insan: 21], the words, ﴿سُنْدُسٍ﴾ “**fine silk**” and ﴿إِسْتَبْرَقٌ﴾ “**rich brocade**” are Arabized terms that became Arabic, used by the Arabs and then used by the Noble Quran because it was revealed in the language of the Arabs. Their interpretation follows the meaning that the Arabs transferred from non-Arabs: “**sundus**” for fine silk and “**istabraq**” for thick silk (brocade).

These words are fully Arabic without distinction, as stated explicitly by the Qur’an, for everything revealed in it is Arabic, ﴿وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ﴾ “**And this is in a clear Arabic tongue**” [TMQ Surah An-Nahl: 103].

In summary, with respect to language alone, I have not interpreted any word in the Noble Quran except in accordance with what the Arabic language used by the Arabs necessitates.

Thus, I take the meaning as either:

- from the Shariah meaning (haqeeqah sharaiyyah), the customary meaning (haqeeqah urfiyyah), and linguistic meaning (haqeeqah lughawiyyah), according to the original assignment and transferred usage.

- Or from the metaphorical (majaz) and metonymy (kinayah) in the language of the Arabs, in accordance with their usages.

- Or from the meaning of the root (usal) of derivation (ishtiqaq), according to the morphological forms (ta’eealat) of the Arabic language.

- Or from the Arabization (ta’reeb) of names that the Arabs transferred from non-Arabs after adapting them to the morphological forms (ta’eealat) of their own language.

And I have not assigned any meaning to any word in the Noble Quran outside the usages of the Arabs in their language, to the full extent of my ability.

Second: With Respect to Reasoning (Aql)

The human understanding or cognition of things, or the formation of thought about them, does not occur except when there is a tangible reality that is conveyed to the brain through the senses, along with prior knowledge that interprets this reality, and by using the faculty of connection (linking) that Allah (swt) has distinguished humans with in the interaction of the four elements mentioned:

- A reality, senses, a sound brain, and previous information that interprets this reality.
- Thereafter, thought is produced about it, and the human either comprehends or perceives it.

We have fully demonstrated this in the tafsir of the noble verse: ﴿وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا﴾ “**He (swt) taught Adam the names of all things**” [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah 31].

- Anything that has no tangible reality perceptible to humans, nor any perceptible effect, cannot be subjected to human reasoning, for the mind cannot produce thought about it. Therefore, we reason about created things because they are tangible realities, and through deliberation over them we conclude that they have a Creator—Allah, Glorified and Exalted.

However, we cannot subject the unseen matters (al-mughayyabat) to rational inquiry, because we neither perceive them nor sense their effects. Instead, we rely on what is conveyed in the Shariah texts and transmit it from there. This applies to all unseen matters, for reason cannot investigate them rationally since they are neither tangible nor perceptible in effect. The role of reason regarding them is limited to what is conveyed by the text according to the requirements of the language.

This is the approach I have adopted in the tafsir of the unseen mentioned in the Noble Quran. I do not subject the unseen (mughayyab) to rational investigation. Instead, I transmit what has been reported about the unseen in the Book of Allah (swt) and the Sunnah of His Messenger (saw).

For example, His saying, the Exalted, **﴿وَإِنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ اسْتَجَارَكَ فَأَجِرْهُ حَتَّىٰ يَسْمَعَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ أَبْلِغْهُ مَأْمَنَهُ﴾** **“And if anyone from the polytheists asks for your protection O Prophet, grant it to them so they may hear the Word of Allah, then escort them to a place of safety”** [TMQ Surah At-Tawbah: 6].

Allah (swt) has stated about this Qur’an that it is His Speech. I do not add anything beyond that, nor do I investigate how Allah’s speech occurs. This is unseen (mughayyab), and reason cannot delve into it. The basis for understanding its meaning is what is conveyed (naql) from the Book of Allah (swt) and the Sunnah of His Messenger (saw).

Similarly, when studying the Attributes (sifaat) of Allah (swt), I do not go beyond what the language dictates, nor do I engage in rational speculation regarding how these attributes are. The essence (dhaat) and Attributes of Allah (swt) are unseen to us, and our understanding relies on what is conveyed from the Book of Allah (swt) and the Sunnah of His Messenger (saw), interpreted according to the requirements of language, without addition or omission.

Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing, All-Wise, All-Knowing... as He has described Himself. We stop there, without rational inquiry into how these attributes are, because they are unseen to us, and human reason, as Allah (swt) created it, only functions regarding realities that have tangible, perceived elements, as we explained earlier.

For this reason, I have ensured that the understanding of the Attributes of Allah (swt) remains as it was in the time of the Messenger of Allah (saw) and his Companions (ra) with them—staying strictly with what is mentioned in the Book of Allah (swt), authentically reported from the Messenger (saw), and agreed upon by his Companions (ra), without addition or omission, and without engaging in rational speculation, unlike later sects after the era of the Messenger (saw) and his Companions (ra) who ventured into that improperly.

Third: With Respect to the Clear (Muhkam) and the Ambiguous (Mutashabih)

As I explained earlier, I have treated the clear (muhkam) as the decisive factor over the ambiguous (mutashabih). That is, if there are two texts on a single matter, or if there are two mutawatir recitations of one verse, and the meaning of one of them is definite (muhkam) while the meaning of the other is ambiguous (mutashabih) — having more than one possible meaning — then the muhkam governs the mutashabih, and it is relied upon in tafsir, not the ambiguous one.

For example, His (swt) saying, **﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ ۗ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا﴾** **“O believers! When you rise up for Salah (Shariah prayer), wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, wipe your heads, and wash your feet to the ankles. And if you are in a state of full impurity, then take a full ritual bath of purification”** [TMQ Surah Al-Maidah: 6].

Here, there is a mutawatir recitation in the accusative (nasb), **﴿وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ﴾** **“and your feet”** [TMQ Surah Al-Maidah: 6]. This is muhkam, meaning it is connected to washing the face and the hands up to the elbows, and therefore the ruling requires washing the feet during wudu (ablution).

There is also a mutawatir recitation in the genitive (jaar), **﴿وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ﴾** **“and your feet”** [TMQ Surah Al-Maidah: 6]. This one is mutashabih, because it has two possible meanings:

a. In the first recitation, the word is in the genitive due to proximity but treated as accusative in context, meaning it is conjoined to the washing of the hands and the face; thus, the ruling is washing of the feet.

b. In the second recitation, the word is in the genitive due to conjunction with the heads, meaning the ruling is wiping (mash) of the feet by conjoining it with the heads.

Since both recitations are mutawatir, their meaning is essentially one. The first recitation is muhkam in establishing washing, while the second is mutashabih with regard to wiping or washing.

The muhkam governs the mutashabih, so the ruling is to wash the feet up to the ankles.

Similarly, whenever two texts exist on a single matter - one muhkam and the other mutashabih - the ambiguous one is interpreted according to the clear one, because the muhkam is the foundation of the Book, the fundamental reference, and thus decisive over the mutashabih.

For this reason, I have adopted this understanding wherever muhkam and mutashabih appear in a single verse with two mutawatir recitations, or in two verses on a single topic.

Fourth: The Relationship of a Verse to the Preceding Verse in the Same Surah

Allah has named the collection of ayaat (verses) a Surah (chapter), ﴿سُورَةٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهَا﴾ “**This is a surah which We have revealed**” [TMQ Surah An-Nur: 1], and ﴿فَاتُوا بِسُورَةٍ﴾ “**then produce a surah**” [TMQ Surah Al-Baqarah: 23].

The verses in each surah were arranged by divine guidance to His Messenger (saw). When a verse was revealed, the Messenger (saw) would instruct the Muslims and the scribes, «ضَعُوا هَذِهِ فِي مَكَانِ كَذَا» “**Place this verse in such-and-such position**” (At-Tirmidhi: 3011, and he said: “This is a hadith hasan sahih.” Ahmad: 376, 468).

Thus, the arrangement of the verses in the surah is tawqifi (by divine instruction).

All of this indicates that there is a relationship between a verse and the one preceding it, within the same surah. Accordingly, I have exerted my utmost effort to clarify the connection between each subsequent verse and its predecessor, and, by the Permission of Allah (swt), I hope I have succeeded; and this is a favor from Allah (swt).

Fifth: With Respect to Multiple Narrations or Meanings

I have been careful to outweigh preponderantly one narration or meaning in the tafsir of a verse or verses, and to ensure that this preponderance is justified. Therefore, I have not left the meaning of a verse uncertain among several possibilities. Instead, I have clarified one specific, preponderant meaning, so that hearts may be assured and chests may be uplifted, by the permission of Allah (swt).

This is the method I have adopted in this tafsir, which I have entitled: “**At-Taysir fi Usul at-Tafsir**” (Facilitation in the Principles of Tafsir).

As its name indicates, it is not a facilitation in tafsir itself, but in the usool of tafsir—that is, the rules upon which tafsir must be based in order to be as it was, or similar to what it was, in the time of the Messenger of Allah (saw) and the era of his Companions (ra) — as far as I was able.

I have exerted my utmost effort to make it worthy of its name in the interpretation of the verses of the Book, and I have hoped from Allah (swt) that it will truly be a facilitation for anyone who possesses some knowledge in this field.

If I have succeeded in that, and it is as I hoped, then that is a favor from Allah (swt). And if not, it suffices me that I have exerted sincere effort in reaching a correct understanding of the Exalted and Mighty Book of Allah (swt).

I ask Allah (swt) that whoever reads it may benefit from it, and whoever reflects upon it may be rewarded.

I also make Dua to Him to accept it from me with good acceptance, and to make it a source of companionship for me on the Day when neither wealth nor children will avail, except whoever comes to Allah (swt) with a sound heart.

Indeed, He (swt) is the One whose help is sought, upon Him reliance is placed, and He (swt) is the Guide to the straight path.

(Swaqah) – Jordan

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