

## **A Comprehensive Review of Comparative Interpretation of Holy Quran: Approaches, Methodologies, and Criteria for Establishing Plausible Interpretations**

**Gulam Mustafa Nukhba**

Islamic Studies Department of the Shariah Faculty of Kabul University Afghanistan

\*Corresponding Author

Email: [mnukhba.nukhba@gmail.com](mailto:mnukhba.nukhba@gmail.com)

---

### **Abstract**

*The interpretation of the Quran has evolved over time, reflecting the exigencies, culture, and requirements of each era, as well as the diversity of methodologies and approaches adopted by scholars. Four main types of interpretation emerged: general interpretation, analytical interpretation, thematic interpretation, and finally, comparative interpretation. This study aims to review the concept and development of comparative interpretation, including its different approaches and methods, and the methodological criteria for determining the most plausible interpretation in this field. Additionally, the study seeks to clarify the principles and standards used in favoring and selecting the most robust and logical opinion. The study adopts a descriptive and analytical methodology, relying on reliable library sources. Several significant findings were obtained, indicating that the methodology of comparative interpretation involves identifying the subject and objectives, conducting meticulous comparisons between the opinions and approaches of interpreters, and discussing the relevant evidence based on specific methodologies. The study also emphasizes the importance of recording the comparison results and adopting the prevailing opinion based on credible evidence while avoiding reliance on uncertain views. Furthermore, the results indicate that comparative interpretation contributes to rectifying and adjusting the course of religious interpretation, eliminating weak opinions based on unsound foundations. Moreover, comparative interpretation provides opportunities to explore new perspectives and opens new horizons for ideas and minds, with the aim of developing a comprehensive approach that combines diverse interpretations.*

**Keywords:** *Interpretation, Comparative, Approaches, Trends*

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

Praise be to Allah, who made the Noble Quran the greatest book in estimation, most abundant in benefits and utility, richest in wisdom and expression, and clearest in guidance and evidence. Peace and blessings be upon the trustworthy Messenger who conveyed this magnificent book to humanity, along with his family, companions, and those who follow his path until the Day of Judgment.

The Quran was divinely revealed by Allah and presented as a sign of the truthfulness of His Messenger, peace be upon him. It challenged the eloquent and the proficient in language. The Quran is beautifully woven with precision, encapsulating profound meanings and purposes in concise and comprehensive words. This aspect is considered a crucial element of its miraculous nature.

Throughout history, Allah has appointed distinguished individuals and eminent scholars to take care of His noble book. They paid profound attention to its nuances and intricacies, and in each era, their perspectives varied, their approaches diversified, and their interpretations were influenced by their individual reasoning, harmonizing and complementing each other.

The interpretation of the Quran has evolved over time, reflecting the exigencies, culture, and requirements of each era, as well as the diversity of methodologies and approaches adopted by scholars. Four main types of interpretation emerged: general interpretation, analytical interpretation, thematic interpretation, and finally, comparative interpretation.

The importance of comparative interpretation lies in its exploration of various contributions from multiple interpreters, its rectification and alignment of the interpretation with carefully studied scientific principles, and its elimination of weak statements founded on unsound bases. Moreover, it opens doors to new perspectives, paving the way for broadening the scope of ideas, minds, and hearts, thus leading to the formulation of a comprehensive approach that amalgamates diverse interpretations.

Research in comparative interpretation can provide a broad Quranic culture, allowing the reader to understand that a single verse can have multiple directions and interpretations, necessitating awareness of what other scholars have stated to grasp the meanings and implications of the words. No single interpretation, regardless of its author's status in knowledge, can fully encompass the depth of the Quran, as it is the speech of Allah, and the words of a human interpreter, no matter how scholarly, cannot fully encompass the speech of the Creator. Therefore, researchers emphasize the importance of continuous reference to the consensus and collective opinion of scholars.

It is worth mentioning that some scholars have written about comparative interpretation, either implicitly within works exploring various methods of interpretation or explicitly in relation to applied aspects of the subject. Examples include "Comparative Interpretation between Theory and Application" by Rawdat Abdulkareem, "Ibn Atiya's Approach to Interpretation: A Comparison between Ibn Atiya, Al-Zamakhshari, Al-Baghawi, and Ibn al-Arabi" by Abdulwahab Fayad, "The School of Interpretation in Andalusia" by Mustafa Al-Mashni, which includes a comparison between two different schools of interpretation, titled "Comparison between Andalusian Interpreters and Eastern Interpreters in Themes and Methodologies," and "Interpretation of Surah Al Imran: A Comparison between Al-Zamakhshari and Ibn Hisham" by Atiya Sadiqi Al-Atrash.

Given the aforementioned background, we have decided to explore the concept, origins, and development of comparative interpretation, its significance and distinguishing features, its various aspects, analytical comparison, comparison in methodologies and trends, the research methodology employed, evidence for preference in comparative interpretation, accompanied by illustrative examples for each, and conclude by presenting the findings and references

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The researcher conducted this study using a descriptive and analytical approach, utilizing library resources and direct sources. The study also involved examining the methodological criteria for research and reasoning in comparative interpretation. This research falls under the category of basic research in terms of its purpose and qualitative research in terms of its methodology. The analysis of data in this study is qualitative and relies on logical deduction and content analysis. The study observes and analyzes the phenomenon by presenting its elements and concepts and scientifically linking them based on established principles and results.

The purpose of this article, conducted through the aforementioned approach, is to present and elucidate the concept, origins, developmental stages, aspects, and research methodology of comparative interpretation. The overall conclusion is that comparative interpretation can provide a broad Quranic culture, allowing readers to understand that a single verse can have diverse interpretations and multiple narratives. Therefore, it is essential to explore what other scholars have said to comprehend the meanings and implications of the words in the verse.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### **The Meaning of Comparative Interpretation in Language and Terminology:**

The term "comparative interpretation" is composed of two words, "interpretation" and "comparative." Understanding the compound term relies on grasping its constituent parts. Therefore, I will first mention the meaning of "interpretation" and then proceed to explain the meaning of "comparative" to subsequently define the term "comparative interpretation" as follows:

#### **Definition of Interpretation:**

In its linguistic sense, the root of "interpretation" comes from the word "fasara," which signifies clarification, elucidation, and disclosure. In the Arabic language, "al-fasr" means "explanation" (Ibn Manzur, 1414, v.5, p.55). Ibn Faris stated that "fasara" is a single word that denotes the explanation and elucidation of something (Ibn Faris, 1979, v.4, p.504).

Exegesis (Tafsir) is a scholarly discipline that seeks to understand the divine intent of Allah to the extent possible within the limitations of human capacity. It encompasses all aspects that contribute to comprehending the meaning and elucidating the purpose behind the divine revelations. Essentially, it is the science that expounds upon the Book of Allah, which was revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), providing clarification on its meanings, extracting legal rulings, and deriving its wisdom and guidance (Shawqi, 2020: p. 109).

In its terminological sense, scholars of interpretation have presented various definitions for the term "interpretation." While it is impractical to list them all here, I will provide one of the most explicit definitions: "Interpretation is the explanation of the miraculous speech of Allah, revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)" (At-Tayyar, 1423, p.21).

#### **Definition of Comparative:**

In its linguistic sense, the root of "comparative" originates from the word "qarana" and "yaqrunu," which means to unite two things together. For instance, one may say, "qarana bayna al-qawl wal-amal" (unite between speech and action), meaning to bring them together. "Qarana bayn al-hajj wal-umrah" (combine Hajj and Umrah) signifies performing them together during the state of consecration (Ihram). In another sense, "qarana" denotes connecting or linking one thing to another. For example, "qarana arabat al-qitar ila al-qatara" (connect the train carriage to the locomotive) means to link and connect them together.

According to some scholars the term "comparison" refers to "balancing between two or more things and juxtaposing them to illustrate points of similarity, dissimilarity, variation, and correlation, and then prioritizing based on evidence." (Al-Nasirat, 2015: p. 43).

Moreover, it can also mean "balancing one thing with another." For instance, "qarana hu muqarana" (balanced it with balance) implies weighing it using a scale. "Qarana bayna al-shay'ayn aw al-ashyaa" (balance between two things) denotes weighing them against each other; thus, it is called "muqarana" (weighing) (Majma' al-Lughah al-Arabiyyah, 2004, v.2, p.730).

#### **Definition of Comparative Interpretation:**

The term "comparative" is commonly used in literary, critical, and rhetorical contexts, although it was not widely known among ancient interpreters with this meaning. Nevertheless, some contemporary researchers and interpreters have elucidated its meaning in their studies on methodologies and approaches to interpretation. They have defined "comparative interpretation" in a descriptive context as follows: Sheikh Dr. Ahmad Al-Koumi defined it as follows: "Comparative interpretation is the elucidation of Quranic verses based on the collective opinions of interpreters, juxtaposing their views and comparing the various directions they take. The aim is to reconcile different interpretations of Quranic verses and Hadiths found in different heavenly scriptures or identify their differences" (Al-Koumi, 1402, p.17).

Dr. Musaid At-Tayyar stated in his book: "The interpreter, using this approach, presents two interpretations and compares them, ultimately favoring what they consider more convincing" (At-Tayyar, 1414, p.33).

Roueda Abdul Kareem Faroun stated, "It is an exposition of the speech of Allah Almighty, leaning towards the most plausible among the various interpretive opinions, which represents a genuine difference, considered within the same context after carefully weighing them in light of a disciplined scientific approach" (Shawki, 2020: p. 109).

Dr. Mustafa Al-Mashni mentioned in his article: "A comprehensive definition of comparative interpretation is that it involves balancing between the opinions and statements of interpreters regarding the meanings, subjects, and implications of Quranic verses. It encompasses comparing interpreters in light of their diverse cultures, artistic styles, knowledge, and varied methodologies in interpretation. This entails a scholarly and objective discussion, followed by the adoption of the most convincing opinion based on credible evidence for preference" (Al-Mashni, 2006-1427, p.148). and (Farhan, 2018: p. 48).

Upon reflecting on these three definitions, we observe that although they differ in expression, they share a common meaning. Comparative interpretation involves comparing the opinions and statements of interpreters, ultimately preferring what is considered most convincing, while providing evidence for such preference and rejecting doubtful interpretations.

### **The Emergence and Development of Comparative Interpretation:**

The inception of comparative interpretation can be traced back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Its general features were closely related to the emergence of the exposition of the Noble Quran and evolved over different periods, keeping pace with the development of interpretation throughout the ages and eras. Despite the absence of a formal terminology at that time, the varying perceptions and understandings of the companions and later scholars, along with the diverse sources and methods of interpretation, inevitably led to differences and divergences in their opinions. (Farouk, 2018: p. 262).

Consequently, presenting the various opinions and viewpoints with their supporting evidence became essential, and scholars engaged in discussions, ultimately favoring the most supported view based on evidence. During the time of the companions, they would diligently investigate matters and present their conclusions to the Prophet (peace be upon him) to discern the correct from the incorrect. Just as the Prophet (peace be upon him) weighed the opinions of his companions concerning the concept of the mosque founded on piety, as two companions differed in identifying the intended mosque. The Prophet (peace be upon him) confirmed that the mosque in question was indeed the one they were in at that moment (Ibn Abi Shaybah, 1997, v.1, p.83).

These examples persisted into the era of the companions, the first period after the Prophet's time, where instances of differing interpretations of certain Quranic verses among the companions were observed. Al-Suyuti noted: "The companions differed in understanding a particular verse, and each adhered to his own opinion according to his perspective" (Al-Suyuti, 1394 AH/1974, v.6, p.2288). They also expressed divergent views on the meanings of Quranic words. Sometimes, after one person compared his opinion to that of another and found it more fitting, he would revert to his own opinion if he believed it was correct. For example, Abdullah ibn Abbas compared his interpretation of the phrase "wa al-adiyati dabha" to that of Ali, who stated that it referred to camels used in Allah's cause. Ibn Abbas then reverted to Ali's view after Ali told him, "You are giving religious verdicts without knowledge. By Allah, the first battle that the Muslims fought was the Battle of Badr. At that time, we did not have any animals other than horses: one horse for Az-Zubair and one for Al-Miqdad. So how could you say that Al-Adiyat

referred to camels?" Ibn Abbas later relinquished his view and adopted Ali's (At-Tabari, 2000, v.24, p.559).

Similarly, following the era of the companions, their successors (Tabi'un) derived from their teachings and weighed the opinions of certain companions regarding the meaning of the Surah An-Nasr (The Divine Support). As reported by Ibn Abbas, some companions believed it referred to when people enter the religion of Allah in groups until the end of the Surah, while others did not express an opinion. Omar ibn al-Khattab balanced the views of some elderly companions and asked Ibn Abbas, "Why did you not enter with them, considering that we have sons like them?" Omar then said, "He is one of those you know." He then called them all one day, including Ibn Abbas, to inquire about their opinions regarding the Surah An-Nasr, observing that people were entering the religion of Allah in groups, and the Surah concluded. Some said, "We have been commanded to praise and seek forgiveness from Allah when He grants us victory and success." Others remained silent or did not express their views. Omar asked Ibn Abbas, "Do you say the same?" Ibn Abbas replied, "No." Omar asked, "Then what do you say?" Ibn Abbas responded, "It refers to when Allah grants victory by opening up Makkah. That is the sign of your death. So glorify and seek forgiveness from your Lord, as He is Forgiving, Merciful." Omar said, "I only brought you here to show them my opinion." Ibn Abbas replied, "May Allah guide me," indicating he did not fully comprehend the matter (Al-Bukhari, 1422 AH, v.4, p.1901).

This trend continued, and later scholars followed in the footsteps of their predecessors. Towards the end of the third century AH, Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, known for presenting the statements of the early interpreters, companions, successors, and others, and for weighing and discussing their evidence, began to emerge. He established a foundation for the process of comparing and evaluating interpretations, thus setting the stage for the evolution of comparative interpretation in the future. Each scholar today examines the statements of earlier interpreters, weighs and evaluates them based on sound scientific and methodological principles, thereby contributing to the ongoing development of comparative interpretation.

#### **Advantages of Comparative interpretation:**

In the realm of Quranic interpretation, comparative interpretation emerges as a vital tool, serving several key purposes that contribute to a more profound understanding of the scripture. Through a systematic application of well-established scientific principles, this method serves to correct and align interpretations, discarding weak opinions and Israeli narrations that lack credible evidence.

Another fundamental function of comparative interpretation lies in its ability to consolidate scattered interpretative opinions and their supporting evidence, offering a centralized resource for scholars and enthusiasts of the science of interpretation. By bringing together these diverse perspectives, it facilitates a comprehensive examination and analysis of various viewpoints.

Central to the practice of comparative interpretation is the presentation of the most probable opinion, accompanied by a thorough presentation of the evidence that supports its preference. This approach enables researchers to weigh the merits of each interpretation and make informed conclusions.

Moreover, comparative interpretation plays a crucial role in grounding Quranic lessons, providing a scientific and structured framework for researchers. By identifying and rectifying extraneous ideas or interpretations that lack relevance to the Quran, whether they stem from external sources or personal reasoning, this method ensures a focused and accurate understanding of the sacred text.

In essence, comparative interpretation represents an indispensable foundation for advancing Quranic scholarship, allowing for a more coherent and comprehensive exploration of its profound teachings. Through rigorous analysis and adherence to scientific principles, this

approach fosters a deeper connection with the Quran, illuminating its timeless wisdom and guidance.

### **Types of Comparative Interpretation:**

Comparative interpretation can be divided into two categories:

1. Analytical comparison.
2. Comparison of methodologies and approaches.

Analytical Comparison: This category includes:

1. Comparing the opinions of one or more interpreters regarding a specific verse or verses gathered in one place.
2. Comparing the opinions of one or more interpreters regarding a group of verses under a single theme or in a specific location.

In this type of comparison, the researcher collects the opinions of various interpreters about a single verse or group of verses, covering various aspects such as the meaning, narration, understanding, recitations, reasons for revelation, language, syntax, and more. Then, the researcher compares these opinions and weighs one opinion against the others, providing evidence for the preferred interpretation. Alternatively, the researcher may balance the opinions of interpreters across different verses on a particular subject. This type of analysis involves exploring the meanings of the texts and utilizing various linguistic and grammatical tools to elucidate their contents.

For example, a comparative analysis could be conducted between the interpretations of Al-Zamakhshari (d. 538 AH) and Ibn Atiyya (d. 546 AH) concerning the interpretation of the word "Al-Sirat" in the verse: {Guide us to the Straight Path}. Ibn Atiyya suggests that "Al-Sirat" means "the clear path," and he supports this interpretation with Arabic poetry and linguistic reasoning. On the other hand, Al-Zamakhshari discusses the various recitations of the word "Al-Sirat" and its different meanings in different contexts, ultimately concluding that it refers to "the true path," which is the path of Islam.

It is evident from the comparison between the two interpretations that Ibn Atiyya focuses on language and linguistic evidence to support his interpretation, while Al-Zamakhshari also considers the recitations and the opinions of other linguistic scholars. Additionally, Ibn Atiyya relies on the statements of the Companions and the Tabi'un (successors of the Companions) to strengthen his interpretation, whereas Al-Zamakhshari does not emphasize the narrations as much.

It is essential to note that Ibn Atiyya demonstrates greater attention to narrations and their authenticity, whether they are from the Prophet's companions or the succeeding generations. This illustrates a significant difference in their methodologies and approaches.

### **Comparison in Methodologies:**

This involves comparing the approaches of interpreters, either between one or more interpreters in general, through a comprehensive and meticulous study. For instance, Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 AH) balanced between the exegesis methodologies of Al-Zamakhshari (d. 538 AH) in his work "Al-Kashaf" and Ibn 'Atiyyah (d. 542 AH) in his work "Al-Muharrar Al-Wajiz fi Tafsir Al-Kitab Al-'Aziz." Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned that Ibn 'Atiyyah's interpretation is more accurate, excellent, beautiful, and better than Al-Zamakhshari's. It is also closer to the authentic narrations and further from innovations. According to Ibn Taymiyyah, the interpretation of Ibn 'Atiyyah and similar interpretations adhere more to the Sunnah and consensus and are free from innovations compared to Al-Zamakhshari's exegesis, even if Al-Zamakhshari quoted the statements of the early scholars found in the transmitted interpretations, it would still not match the superiority and beauty of Ibn Jarir al-Tabari's exegesis, which is among the best and most significant transmitted exegeses (Al-'Uthaymeen, 1415 AH-1995: p. 121).

### **Comparison in Approaches:**

This refers to the emphasis given by interpreters to certain aspects or perspectives in their interpretation, which distinguishes them from others. Approaches in interpretation can be categorized as follows:

- Consideration of the theological school of thought: For example, the Salafi approach is evident in the exegeses of Ibn Jarir and Ibn Kathir and Al-Shanqiti's works. The Isolationist approach is apparent in Al-Zamakhshari's "Al-Kashaf."
- Consideration of the dominant knowledge in the interpretation: This is exemplified by the works of Al-Farra' in "Ma'ani Al-Quran" and Abu 'Ubaidah in "Majaz Al-Quran." The linguistic approach is evident in Al-Nahhas's "I'rab Al-Quran" (Al-Rumi, 1419 AH: p. 57).
- Ibn Taymiyyah's approach to answering a question about the most authentic and closest interpretation to the methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah while distancing from the innovations of the Mu'tazilah and the Batiniyyah. He stated that the most authentic interpretations in people's hands are the exegesis of Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, as it cites statements of the early scholars with established chains of transmission, and it does not contain innovations or narrations from the accused. As for the three exegeses for which someone is responsible, the safest one from innovations and weak hadiths is Al-Baghawi's. As for Al-Zamakhshari, his interpretation is filled with innovations and follows the Mu'tazilite approach, such as denying divine attributes, vision, and claiming that the Quran is created. He also denied that Allah has intentions for His creations and is the Creator of the actions of the servants, among other Mu'tazilite principles (Al-'Uthaymeen, 1415 AH-1995: pp. 325-326).

### **Important New Books in Comparative Exegesis:**

In the realm of comparative exegesis, numerous books and research papers have delved into this intriguing subject, shedding light on various perspectives and approaches. Here, we present a selection of notable works that have contributed to the field:

One of the significant works in this domain is "Comparative Exegesis between Theory and Practice" authored by Rawda Abdul Karim. This comprehensive piece of scholarship represents her doctoral dissertation, which was published by Dar Al-Nafa'is in Jordan. It serves as an important reference for those interested in exploring the intersections between theoretical concepts and practical applications in the realm of exegesis.

Abdul Wahab Fayyad's work titled "Ibn 'Atiyyah's Approach in Exegesis" presents a thought-provoking comparison between the interpretations of Ibn 'Atiyyah, Al-Zamakhshari, Al-Baghawi, and Ibn Al-'Arabi. This study provides valuable insights into the distinct approaches and perspectives of these renowned interpreters, making it a significant contribution to the field of comparative exegesis.

Another notable work in this field is "The School of Exegesis in Al-Andalus" by Mustafa Al-Mashni. This book specifically focuses on the comparison between two distinct schools of exegesis: Andalusian interpreters and those from the East. Al-Mashni meticulously analyzes their interpretations, themes, and methodologies, providing readers with a comprehensive understanding of the different approaches adopted by these two schools.

Atiya Siddiqi Al-Atrash's work, "Comparing Al-Zamakhshari and Abu Hayyan's Exegesis of Surah Al-Imran," offers a deep and insightful exploration of the interpretations of Surah Al-Imran by Al-Zamakhshari and Abu Hayyan. This doctoral manuscript from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt, brings to light the nuances and divergent perspectives of these two esteemed interpreters, adding to the richness of comparative exegesis literature.

Lastly, we have "Comparative Exegesis: A Theoretical and Applied Study" authored by Mahmoud Aqeel Maroof Al-Ani. As part of the requirements for his specialization in exegesis, Al-Ani submitted this doctoral thesis to the Council of the College of Islamic Sciences at the

University of Baghdad. The work not only delves into theoretical aspects but also offers practical applications, making it a well-rounded and valuable contribution to the field of comparative exegesis.

These selected works not only expand the scholarly discourse on comparative exegesis but also provide a glimpse into the diverse approaches and interpretations adopted by prominent scholars in this fascinating field of study. As researchers and readers delve into these works, they will undoubtedly gain a deeper appreciation for the complexities and nuances involved in the analysis and comparison of various exegetical perspectives.

### **Methodology of Research in Comparative Exegesis:**

The methodology employed in the field of comparative exegesis involves a series of essential steps that guide the researchers in their analysis and comparison of various interpretations. These steps ensure a systematic and rigorous approach to the study. Let's delve into the key elements of this methodology:

Firstly, the researchers begin by defining the subject of their study, clearly articulating its objectives and purposes. This initial step helps to establish a solid foundation for the entire comparative exegesis process.

Next, they proceed to develop a well-structured plan that outlines the path of their investigation. The plan is designed to adopt a clear, organized, and sequential approach to address the demands or topics under consideration. This systematic approach ensures that all relevant aspects are covered comprehensively and in a logical manner, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the study.

A crucial aspect of the methodology involves accurately and objectively translating the various interpretations being analyzed. This requires careful documentation of scholarly material and the provision of proper references, ensuring transparency and credibility in the research process.

The heart of the comparative exegesis lies in the meticulous comparison of statements, opinions, methods, and approaches taken by different interpreters. This critical analysis involves a thorough examination of the evidence presented by each interpreter. To maintain a high level of rigor, researchers rely on a specific and well-established methodology directly related to the subject of comparison.

As the researchers proceed with their study, they carefully record the results of their comparative analysis. These findings guide the formulation of conclusions, which are based on the preponderant opinion derived from the evidence presented. Moreover, the researchers consider and incorporate reliable and respected criteria commonly used by scholars in the field.

To ensure the reliability of the study's outcomes, it is strongly recommended to avoid relying on inconclusive opinions or unsubstantiated claims. Instead, the researchers prioritize robust evidence and scholarly consensus, enhancing the validity and credibility of the comparative exegesis.

By following this comprehensive methodology, scholars and researchers in the field of comparative exegesis can contribute to a deeper understanding of various interpretations, shed light on diverse perspectives, and enrich the overall discourse surrounding the subject of study. The systematic and methodical approach employed in this process fosters a solid academic foundation and promotes a more comprehensive appreciation of the complexities within the realm of exegesis. (Al-Mashni, 2006 CE - 1427 AH: pp. 180-185).

### **Evidence of Preference in Comparative Interpretation:**

The evidence of preference in the books of interpretation (Tafsir) is based on four main sources: the Quran, authentic Sunnah, language, and reason. These comprehensive pieces of evidence may include branches such as language derivation, grammatical rules, and the

preference of the literal meaning over figurative interpretation. They also encompass rational proofs like the consensus of interpreters (ijma'), analogy (qiyas), and other similar methods. Furthermore, within the realm of preference, there are other foundational rational proofs, especially in jurisprudential interpretation (Tafsir al-Fiqhi), such as approval (istih-san), customary practices (urf), public interests (masalih mursala), blocking the means to evil (sadd al-dhara'i), and previous legislation by previous religious communities.

According to Ibn al-Jawzi, there are twelve aspects of preference: the Quran, Sunnah, the majority view, the opinion of most interpreters and companions, linguistic and grammatical evidence, contextual indication of the meaning, the readily apparent meaning, favoring the literal over the metaphorical, generalization over specification, preference of the unrestricted over the qualified, preference of independence over inclusion, and interpreting a statement according to its sequence.

Firstly, the preference based on the Quran: In the verse "{and they seek forgiveness for those on earth}," Ibn Jawzi explains that the general statement refers to specific individuals, i.e., the angels seek forgiveness for the believers on earth, just as in the verse "{and they seek forgiveness for those who have believed}" (Ghafir: 7). Thus, Ibn Jawzi concludes that this verse narrows down the previous verse, and the aspect of preference related to this is the prioritization of the specific over the general, rather than the generalization based on other evidence.

Secondly, the preference based on Hadith (authentic Sunnah): For instance, the verse "{Indeed, We have granted you Al-Kawthar}," some interpreters have offered seven different interpretations: (1) the Prophet's (peace be upon him) pond (2) the abundant goodness that Allah has given him in this world and the Hereafter, (3) the Quran, (4) the abundance of his followers and companions, (5) the concept of monotheism (Tawhid), (6) intercession, and (7) the light that Allah has placed in his heart. Ibn Jawzi argues that while all these aspects may have been bestowed upon the Prophet (peace be upon him), the authentic Hadith clarifies that the intended meaning of Al-Kawthar is the pond, as described in the authentic narration where the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Do you know what Al-Kawthar is? It is a river in Paradise that my Lord has promised me."

Thirdly, the preference based on language: For instance, in the verse "{And they ask you about what they should spend}," scholars have presented six different interpretations: (1) what is left over after the needs of one's family have been met, (2) what the soul permits, (3) what has been abrogated by the verse of giving Zakat, (4) charity from the wealthy, (5) obligatory charity, and (6) moderate spending without extravagance or stinginess. Ibn al-Arabi clarifies that the various interpretations should be carefully examined in light of linguistic evidence, and he considers the most robust interpretation to be the one supported by the Arabic language and, particularly, the apparent meaning. (Ibn al-Arabi, 1424 H - 2003: Vol. 1: p. 214)

Preference based on rational evidence: Ibn al-Arabi (d. 543 H) stated that Allah, the Almighty, mentioned in the context of inheriting sisters: "{If there are two sisters, they shall have two-thirds of what he left}" (Quran, An-Nisa: 176). Scholars deduced that two daughters should share two-thirds of the inheritance, while sisters should also share two-thirds. This meticulous and profound consideration takes into account the principle of analogy (qiyas) in legal rulings.

### **Essential considerations for comparative analysis:**

Ensuring the accuracy and integrity of a comparative analysis in the realm of exegesis involves several crucial points that demand careful consideration and emphasis. Let's explore these key aspects:

Firstly, the comparison should be conducted between interpreters or multiple scholars, providing valuable insights into their differences and agreements. This allows researchers to discern variations in the presentation of issues, discussion methods, the strength of arguments,

and persuasive abilities. By exploring these diverse perspectives, a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter can be achieved.

The individual carrying out the comparative interpretation must be a knowledgeable scholar with expertise in exegesis. They should possess a deep familiarity with the various issues, sources, stages, and historical developments within this field of study. Furthermore, a thorough understanding of the exegetes, their methodologies, and orientations is essential for conducting an effective comparative analysis. Such expertise enables the researcher to navigate the complexities of the subject matter and perform a meticulous examination of the evidence.

The researcher's ability to compare and balance different interpretations is paramount. Employing critical and precise analysis, they must skillfully present and discuss the various perspectives while maintaining a sound selection of relevant evidence. This not only enhances the credibility of the study but also fosters a comprehensive evaluation of the subject matter.

To uphold academic integrity, accurate referencing of sources is of utmost importance. Researchers must diligently cite the relevant scholarly material to give proper credit to the original authors and sources. Distorting texts or misrepresenting the words of interpreters must be strictly avoided, as it can compromise the credibility and authenticity of the comparative analysis.

Impartiality and objectivity in judgment are fundamental requirements in the process. Researchers must approach their work free from biases or tendencies towards particular inclinations. By maintaining a neutral standpoint, the comparative analysis can offer a fair and unbiased examination of the interpretations, fostering a more balanced and objective understanding of the subject matter.

In conclusion, conducting a precise and reliable comparative analysis in the domain of exegesis demands a thorough understanding of the subject matter, meticulous examination of evidence, and a commitment to academic integrity and objectivity. Emphasizing these crucial points ensures the credibility and effectiveness of the study, contributing to the broader scholarly discourse within the field of exegesis. (Al-Mishani, 2006 - 1427 H: pp. 180-185)

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the concept of "al-Muqarin" or comparative interpretation in Quranic studies. The researcher found that comparative interpretation involves associating or balancing multiple matters to understand the convergence and divergence points in Quranic verses and other heavenly scriptures. This approach emerged during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but evolved over ages and generations, becoming more prominent in later exegetical works.

The methodology of research in comparative interpretation was also explored, and it was found to consist of several key points. Defining the topic, establishing a well-structured plan, organizing material, documenting scientific content, conducting meticulous comparisons of interpretations, recording the results, and adopting prevailing opinions based on reliable evidence are all essential aspects of this methodology.

The study further highlights the importance of diverse contributions from multiple interpreters in comparative interpretation. It seeks to correct and regulate the course of exegesis with scientifically sound principles, while discarding weak opinions. This approach encourages the exploration of new perspectives and the development of a comprehensive methodology that synthesizes various interpretations.

## REFERENCES

- Al-Andalusi, A. M. (1413 H - 1993). *Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz fi Tafsir al-Kitab al-Aziz* - Tahqiq Abdul-Salam Abdul-Shafi Muhammad. Beirut, Lebanon: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah.
- Al-Ani, M. A. (2013). *Al-Tafsir al-Muqarin: Dirasah Ta'siliyah Tatbiqiyah*. Baghdad: Kulliyat al-'Ulum al-Islamiyah.
- Al-Bukhari, M. B. (1422 H). *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Dar Tuq al-Najah.
- Ali, Abdul Amir Ja'far, Mahdi, (2019). "Al-Tafsir al-Muqaran: Dirasah wa Tahleel". *Majallah al-Jami'ah al-Iraqiyah*, al-Adad (54-1).
- Al-Mushani, M. I. (2006 - 1427 H). *Litafsir al-Muqarin: Dirasah Ta'siliyah*. Majallat al-Shari'ah wa al-Qanun, 148.
- Al-Rumi, F. (1419 H). *Bahuth fi Usul al-Tafsir wa Manahijih*. Maktabat al-Tawbah.
- Al-Suyuti, A. B. (1394 H - 1974). *Al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Quran*. Cairo: Al-Hay'ah al-Misriyyah al-'Amah lil-Kitab.
- Al-Tabari, M. J. (1420 H - 2000). *Jami' al-Bayan fi Tawil al-Quran*. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risalah.
- Al-Tayyar, M. B. (1423 H). *Fusuul fi Usul al-Tafsir*. Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah: Dar Ibn al-Jawzi.
- Al-Tayyar, M. B. (1431 H). *Sharh Muqaddimah al-Tasheel li 'Ulum al-Tanzil li Ibn Juzayy*. Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah: Dar Ibn Jawzi.
- Al-Uthaymin, M. B. (1415 H - 1995). *Sharh Muqaddimah al-Tafsir li Ibn Taymiyyah*. Riyadh: Dar al-Watan.
- Al-Zamakhshari, A. A. (1407 H). *Tafsir al-Kashshaf 'an Haqa'iq Ghawamid al-Tanzil*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Arabi.
- Ammar Hikmat Farhan, & Lena Jassim Mohammed. (2018). Muwatin al-Ittifaq wal-Ikhtilaf bayn Ibn Atiyya wal-Razi min khilal tafsiri-huma li-Surat Luqman. *Journal of Islamic Science College*, (55).
- Hisham Shawki (2020). Manhajiyat al-Bahth fi al-Tafsir al-Muqaran: "Dirasah Nazariyyah Tatbiqiyyah 'ala Lafzah "Asqas". *Majallah al-Me'yar*, Majallad: 24, Adad: 49.
- Ibn Abi Shaybah, A. B. (1997). *Musnad Ibn Abi Shaybah*. Riyadh: Dar al-Watan.
- Ibn al-Arabi, M. B. (1424 H - 2003). *Ahkam al-Quran by Ibn al-Arabi*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah.
- Ibn Faris, A. A. (1979). *Muqayyis al-Lughah*. Beirut: Dar al-Fikr.

Ibn Juzayy, A. A. (1416 H). *Tafsir al-Tasheel li 'Ulum al-Tanzil* by Ibn Juzayy. Beirut: Sharikat Dar al-Arqam bin Abi al-Arqam.

Jihad Mohammed al-Nasirat (2015) “Al-Tafsir al-Muqaran: "Ishkaliyyat al-Mafhum". *Mu'tah lil-Buhuth wal-Dirasat, Silsilat al-'Ulum al-Insaniyyah wal-Ijtima'iyah, al-Majallad, al-Thalathun*, al-Adad al-Awal.

Majma al-Lughah al-Arabiyyah, M. A. (2004). *Al-Mu'jam al-Wasit*. Cairo: Dar al-Da'wah.

Manthur, M. B. (1414 H). *Lisan al-'Arab*. Beirut: Dar al-'Ilm.

Muhammad Ahmad Yousuf, Ahmad al-Sayyid al-Kumi. (1402 H). *Al-Tafsir al-Mawdhu'i lil-Quran al-Karim*. Cairo: Maktabat al-Nur.

Samin Ahmed, Muhammad Umar Farooq, (2018) “Al-Tafsir al-Muqaran 'Inda al-Mufasssir: Dirasah Tahleeliyyah”. *Majallah Tahdhib al-Afkar*: al-Majallad 5, al-Adad 2.