

Reviewing Imām Al-Shāfi‘ī’s Tafsīr Āyāt Al-Ahkām for Developing Principles of Contemporary Tafsīr Literature

Md. Mokhter Ahmad*

***Abstract:** Al-Imām Al-Shāfi‘ī is one of the greatest architects of Islamic thought in general and the Qur’ānic interpretation in particular. He is the founder of one of the largest denominations based on Islamic Jurisprudence. He made a substantial contribution towards formulating an epistemological methodology for the proper understanding of the Qur’ān, especially the Qur’ānic verses related to rulings (āyāt al-ahkām), and left a permanent imprint on and legacy for the later Muslim scholars dealing with Qur’ānic tafsīr and/or tafsīr of āyāt al-ahkām. The Imām devised and developed this methodology at such a juncture of Muslim intellectual exercise when some alien philosophies and doctrines infiltrated into almost all branches of Islamic knowledge. The tafsīr literature was no exception. Besides, the emergence of some deviated intellectual outfits from among the Ummah itself virtually challenged and threatened the very fabric, purity, uniqueness and even existence of a distinct Islamic intellectual identity. For substantiating the principles of their thought, these deviant groups heavily relied on the primary normative sources of Islam (i.e., the Qur’ān and the Sunnah) and subsequently deduced policies from thereof for running their intellectual denominations. Some of these policies and principles developed thereof were also related to the interpretation of the Qur’ān itself. At this time, Al-Imām Al-Shāfi‘ī along with others came forward, developed epistemological methodologies for governing almost all branches of Islamic knowledge including the Qur’ānic interpretation, and thus set the course of Islamic thought on*

* Associate Professor, Center for University Requirement Courses (CENURC)
International Islamic University Chittagong, Dhaka Campus

right track. The same scenario is again seen everywhere around the globe where the felid of tafsīr is further intruded by some obviously alien and un-Islamic philosophical underpinnings. Scores of denominations have already emerged in the Ummah itself which offer such grotesque interpretations for the Qur'ān or some of its verses that fall squarely contradictory even to its basic spirit, the fundamental sharī'ah principles, and the vivid Prophetic guidelines. Thus the need of the hour is to reassert the methodologies of Al-Imām Al-Shāfi'ī for the tafsīr of the Qur'ān with an avowed objective of evaluating his contribution to this field and investigating into his epistemological principles so that the current deviation in the Qur'ānic tafsīr may be corrected and a worthwhile methodology for the contemporary interpretation of the Qur'ān may be developed.

1. Introduction:

1.1. Preamble:

Islam is the only surviving way of life approved by Allah and as the Qur'ān is the only uncorrupted divine scripture Islam's superstructure is inevitably rested upon the Qur'ān. This is why Allah declared the Qur'ān to be sole guidance for all human affairs, public and private, individual and collective, and religious and secular. This unparalleled position of the Qur'ān stimulated the Muslim scholars across all ages to relentlessly investing their time and energy for the study, interpretation, and exploration of the Qur'ān. Over the centuries, this phenomenon developed into a tremendous movement when Islam was spread over the then three continents (i.e., Asia, Europe and Africa) bringing a large number of reverts under its fold. The insatiable desire and religious obligation of understanding the Qur'ān caused the emergence of a group of scholars who devoted themselves to study the Qur'ānic exegesis. The development of *tafsīr* literature was the need of the hour. It is still of huge importance because: firstly, being of the highest literary standard containing the most eloquent and concise language, the Qur'ān is not equally understandable to all; secondly, the Qur'ān itself does not always mention the anecdotes behind each particular verse which are must be known in order for the verse to be fully and totally understood; and lastly, some words may have multiple meanings which obliges the Qur'ānic exegetes to explain the intents of those words. Besides, the science of *tafsīr* is the most honorable branch of science for three reasons. The first reason is with respect to

its topic. Being the Speech of Allah, it contains all kinds of wisdom and virtue; reports and pronouncements of what happened and may happen; judgments of people’s affairs etc. Its wonders never cease. The second reason refers to its goal, which is to lead mankind to the firm handhold of Allah and unending true happiness. The third reason is with respect to the great need for this science. Every religious or worldly aspect of a man, in the near or distant future, is in need of the sciences of the Sharī‘ah and knowledge of the religion which can be obtained only through the understanding of the Book of Allah.¹

The *Mufasssirūn*, the Qur’ānic scholars, followed and maintained a well-structured format for the exegesis of the Qur’ān despite some vicissitudes during the later Umayyad and early ‘Abbāsīd periods when some alien thoughts and philosophies penetrated in it. Al-Imām Al-Shāfi‘ī put the course of Qur’ānic exegesis on the right track leaving a lasting effect on the later generations of Qur’ānic exegetes. But the colonial occupation of the Muslim lands, the intellectual bankruptcy of the scholars of the Ummah, the overwhelming challenge from the orientalist and/or western-educated new generations, and the seeming superiority of the secular western education and its worldview encouraged a group of scholars to come with a new brand of Qur’ānic exegesis which deviates from traditionally held methodologies and treating the Qur’ān as an integrated whole. The exegetic methodology of al-Shāfi‘ī may offer the panacea for correcting this deviation.

1.2. Objectives of the Study:

Contemporary *tafsīr* literature suffers from either parochial outlook or lack of systematic integrated approach to suit the requirements of contemporary societies. The traditional *tafsīr* literature was intruded by internal and external penetrations, sectarian outlooks, and denominational disagreements whereas the contemporary one is narrowly shaped in all directions. Al-Shāfi‘ī put the course of traditional *tafsīr* literature back on the right track whereas the contemporary one is still at the whims and desires of some exegetes. This paper aims at studying the methodology al-Shāfi‘ī followed for forcing the traditional *tafsīr* back on track and developing principles for contemporary *tafsīr* literature in the light of al-Shāfi‘ī’s methodology so that a systematic integrated approach develops for it to suit the tastes and demands of contemporary societies.

1.3. Methodology of the Study:

This study is almost a theoretical one. The data for this study were mostly collected from the secondary sources. The books written by al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī, especially those containing the *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān²; the books written on al-Shāfi'ī, especially on his *tafsīr āyāt al-aḥkām*, the criticisms of the traditional and contemporary *tafsīr* literature, and books on the sciences of the Qur'ān (*ūlūm al-Qur'ān*) were extensively examined for framing this paper. I also consulted, chiefly, a recent compilation of the Qur'ānic verses explained by al-Shāfi'ī titled '*Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī*' by Dr. Aḥmad ibn Muṣṭafā al-Farrān and a dissertation titled '*Manhaj al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī fi Tafsīr Āyāt al-Aḥkām*' by Muḥib al-Dīn 'Abd al-Subḥān.

1.4. Literature Review:

Of many books written by al-Shāfi'ī none is known to be an absolute collection of the Qur'ānic exegesis. Some sources claimed that there was a particular compilation on al-Shāfi'ī's commentary of the legal verses of the Qur'ān but the work has not reached us. His commentaries of the Qur'ānic verses have been recorded in his books like *Al-Umm*, *Al-Risālah*, *Kitāb Jimā' al-'Ilm*, *Ikhtilāf al-Ḥadīth*, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* etc. where he primarily concentrated on extracting the legal rulings out of those verses. Excepting this, he gave us no hints of, so far we know, of the methodology he maintained for explaining the Qur'ān.

Al-Shāfi'ī's approach to the Qur'ān was first analyzed by al-Bayhaqī (384-458 AH) in his collection of the exegesis of the legal verses of the Qur'ān by al-Shāfi'ī. This work, named '*Kitāb Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*', has recently been published by Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, in 1980 CE in two volumes where 475 verses of 76 *sūrahs* of the Qur'ān explained by al-Shāfi'ī were collected. It has been arranged and chapterized as per the chapterization of Islamic Jurisprudence (*al-Fiqh*). It has not discussed much about al-Shāfi'ī's methodology for Qur'ānic hermeneutics.

Al-Shāfi'ī's approach to the Qur'ānic exegesis is further found at a work of Majdī Maṣṣūr ibn Sayyid al-Shūrā. It is, the author claims, the first attempt and fundamental work for the collection of the full *tafsīr* of al-Shāfi'ī where the compiler relied upon three books of al-Shāfi'ī (namely *Al-Umm*, *Al-Risālah*, and *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* by al-Bayhaqī). It has also been published by Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut in 1995

CE in one volume and the number *āyāt* and *sūrahs* compiled there are 274 and 37 respectively. Al-Shūrā also has not analyzed the methodology al-Shāfi'ī maintained for his exegesis.

The ground-breaking work in this regard is a thesis of Muḥib al-Dīn 'Abd al-Subḥān titled '*Manhaj al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī fī Tafsīr Āyāt al-Ahkām*' (The Methodology of al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī in the *Tafsīr Āyāt al-Ahkām*). Al-Subḥān, a student of Umm al-Qurā University of Makkah, submitted this thesis in 1407 AH/1987 CE as fulfillment of his M. A Degree and got approved in the following year. It contains 565 pages out of which 215 pages are devoted to the biography of al-Shāfi'ī, 272 pages are to explore al-Shāfi'ī's methodology for *tafsīr*, and the rest of the pages are for bibliography and references. The book has dealt only with the methodology applied by al-Shāfi'ī for explaining the *āyāt al-Ahkām*, without outlining an overall methodological structure al-Shāfi'ī followed for the Qur'ānic exegesis.

A relevant work was done by Dr. Aḥmad ibn Muṣṭafā al-Farrān titled '*Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī*' and published by Dār al-Tadmoria, KSA in 2006 CE/1427 AH. Al-Farrān submitted this as a Ph. D thesis under the faculty of Islamic Studies and Academic Research at University of Khartoum. The book is of 1529 pages where al-Farrān devoted the first 30 pages to introductory remarks (1st part), the next 148 pages for exploring al-Shāfi'ī's methodology for *tafsīr* (2nd part), the next 1303 pages for mentioning the commentaries of al-Shāfi'ī for the Qur'ān (3rd part) and the rest for list of the *āyāt* and *sūrahs* of the Qur'ān, the references and subjects which he cited in his work (4th part). The second part of his work is the real area where he explored the methodology of al-Shāfi'ī. He divided the second part into four chapters: in the first chapter he mentioned the sources al-Shāfi'ī maintained for exegesis of the Qur'ān; the second chapter devoted to the stances al-Shāfi'ī maintained regarding some specific issues of the Qur'ān; the third chapter discussed the impacts of al-Shāfi'ī in *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān and the characteristics of his Qur'ānic *tafsīr*; and the last chapter talked about the position of al-Shāfi'ī and many important principles he founded in the field of *tafsīr* literature. Dr. al-Farrān did not mention the deviations, past and present, made in the field of *tafsīr* literature and how al-Shāfi'ī's methodology may contribute to correcting those deviations. He did not also make any comparative study between the methodologies of different groups and has not suggested any measures, in the light of al-Shāfi'ī's methodology, which may be adopted to frame an outline for any contemporary

vibrant *tafsīr*. Here does stand the necessity of the present work and this work is aimed at fulfilling that gap.

2. History of the growth and development of Tafsīr al-Qur’ān:

2.1. The growth and Development of Tafsīr upto the era of al-Shāfi‘ī:

Tafsīr started in the lifetime of the Prophet (saas). He would sit among his Companions to explain the injunctions of the Qur’ān and to instruct them in the teachings of Islam. It was because the Prophet (saas) was commissioned chiefly, among others, to explain the Qur’ān to his followers, upon their appeal and/or on his own, through his statements, actions, and tacit approvals³. Though, the Prophet (saas) could give *tafsīr* of every *āyah* he did not do so. ‘Āisha (r) said, “The Prophet of Allah (saas) only gave interpretations of a few *āyāt* from the Qur’ān which were taught to him by Jibrīl.” These *āyāt* deal with matters related to *al-ghayb* (the Unseen) and some other questions that can only be understood through Revelation. The first serious necessity for a complete canonical and institutional interpretation of the Qur’ān was strongly felt when the Qur’ān was collected during the era of Abu Bakr (r) and when Islam spread like wildfire during the era of ‘Umar and ‘Uthmān pulling an unprecedented number of converts under its fold. Thus many centers of *tafsīr* evolved in Makkah, Madinah, ‘Irāq, Syria and Egypt centering the most notable Qur’ānic commentators from among the Companions including the four Righteous Caliphs, ‘Āishah bint Abī Bakr, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ūd, Ubayy ibn Ka‘b, Zayd ibn Thābit, Abu Mūsa al-Ash‘arī, ‘Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr, Anas ibn Mālik, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar, ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr ibn as-‘Āṣ, and Jābir ibn ‘Abdullah.⁴ The Companions scattering over different distant regions with the torch of Islam felt the sure necessity of a codified compendium of the Qur’ānic exegesis when confronted an issue not earlier experienced or encountered a question not previously rose⁵. Notwithstanding, many Companions did not venture into explaining any verse fearing stumble or not reaching the truth. When Abu Bakr (r) was asked about the interpretation of a certain verse he said, ‘which earth would carry me and which sky would shelter me if I talk about the Qur’ān according to my own opinion’⁶. Still many of them, especially the four Righteous Caliphs applied their personal analogical reasoning for interpreting the Qur’ān. ‘Umar’s (r) decision not to distribute the cultivable lands of Iraq to the fighters as envisaged in *sūra al-Anfāl* and his interpretation of the 7th verse of *sūra al-Ḥashr* in an unfamiliar way are just a few examples of this kind.⁷

Consequently schools of *tafsīr* proliferated and over the centuries Muslim intellectuals roamed through the Qur’ān along many different routes. Some were successful, others were not. Even concerning the Prophet’s Companions who witnessed the Revelation, had the knowledge of the anecdotes, knew the abrogating and abrogated *āyāt* as well as the factors linking the *āyāt* to real events⁸, al-Ghazālī and al-Qutūbī remarked:

It would be incorrect to assume that everything said about *tafsīr* by the Companions actually came from the Prophet (SAAS) for two reasons. One is that it is only established that the Prophet (SAAS) gave *tafsīr* of a few *āyāt*...This was also ‘Āisha’s view. The other is that they themselves differ in their *tafsīr* on various points that cannot be reconciled and cannot all have come from the Prophet of Allah (SAAS) – even though some may have done so⁹.

Tafsīr from the Prophet (saas) and his Companions did not cover all the Qur’ānic verses requiring explanation. Thus the *Tābi‘ūn*¹⁰ and their followers tried their best to fill up this gap through relying on the Qur’ān, exegetic traditions of the Prophet (saas), commentaries of the Companions, information from *at-Tawrāt* and *al-Injīl* and their own individual judgments¹¹. It was championed by the Successors who flocked to the study circles of *tafsīr* at various cities and townships. This overwhelming enthusiasm on their part saw the earliest enterprise for the compilation of *tafsīr*. The most noteworthy example is that of Mujāhid ibn Jabr (642-722 CE/40-103 AH), a student of Ibn ‘Abbās, which, however, is extinct now. The remark of Mujāhid is noteworthy: “I read the whole Qur’ān to Ibn ‘Abbās three times. During each reading, I stopped at the end of every verse and asked him about whom and why it was revealed.”¹²

Ibn ‘Abbās, the *Tarjumān al-Qur’ān*¹³ (Interpreter of the Qur’ān), produced a flock of erudite in the Qur’ānic hermeneutics who advanced the movement for a more systematic Qur’ānic exegesis and its codification. The most famous among them were Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr (d. 95 AH), Mujāhid ibn Jabr (d. 103 AH), ‘Ikrimah (d. 104 AH), Ṭāūs ibn Kīsān al-Yamānī (d. 106 AH), and ‘Aṭā ibn Abi Rabāḥ (d. 114/115AH).¹⁴ The famous study circles of *tafsīr*, especially the Syrian and Egyptian ones, were under the control of these students of Ibn ‘Abbās. Sa‘īd ibn Zubayr, the famous student of Ibn ‘Abbās, wrote a complete *tafsīr*¹⁵ and another treatise on the ‘*gharāib al-Qur’ān*’ (the oddities of the Qur’ān)¹⁶ for the mighty Umayyad Caliph ‘Abd al-

Mālik ibn Marwān and presented to him. Mujājjid, another famous student of Ibn ‘Abbās, also compiled a *tafsīr* at the behest of Ibn ‘Abbās. Al-Ṭabarī reported from Ibn Abī Malīkah, ‘I saw Mujāhid asking Ibn ‘Abbās about *tafsīr* of the Qur’ān while he had tablets with him and Ibn ‘Abbās asking him to commit those to writing until he asked him about a full *tafsīr*’¹⁷.

The most systematic attempt in this regard was initiated with an edict of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz to his Governors to collect and codify all *aḥādīth* of the Prophet which included theology, ethics and exegesis. It triggered an unprecedented fillip initiating an era of structured movement for collecting the Qur’ānic exegesis. The *ḥadīth* scholars also devoted a separate chapter, apart from other chapters putting the *aḥādīth* according to their subject-matters, for the Qur’ānic exegesis referred to the Prophet, his Companions and their Successors.¹⁸ A few books of independent *tafsīr* came into existence between the first Hijrah and the middle of the second Hijrah century¹⁹, including the books of al-Dḥaḥḥak, Qatādah, ‘Atā’, Dāūd ibn Abī Hind, ‘Abd al-Mālik ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, Muqātil ibn Sulaimān, and others. This was followed by a more measured approach making it an independent Islamic science where the *tafsīrs* of the Qur’ānic verses were compiled according to the order of the written text. The first of this kind is the *tafsīr* of Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī.

A few trends developed among the people regarding *tafsīr* in between the era of the Companions and their Successors unto the era of al-Shāfi‘ī. Firstly, as the knowledge of Arabic and her idioms of the time of the Prophet (saas) was needed for the correct understanding of the Qur’ān, the scholars directed a great deal of time in collecting Arabic lexicography, phonology, grammar, great Arabic poetry, and classical usages. Secondly, the circumstances surrounding the revelations of the Qur’ān known as *asbāb al-Nuzūl* were collected, studied, and developed into a separate subject. Thirdly, the traditions referring to the understanding and interpretation of the Qur’ān by the Prophet and the Companions were studied and preserved black and white. Fourthly, philological and linguistic study of the Qur’ān started which produced some famous works including ‘*majāz al-Qur’ān*’ by Abū ‘Ubayda (d. 210 AH), ‘*ma‘ānī al-Qur’ān*’ by both al-Kisā‘ī (179 AH) and al-Farrā’ (207 AH) individually and ‘*gharīb al-Qur’ān*’ by Abū Sa‘īd al-Bāqī (d. 141 AH). Fifthly, legal study of the Qur’ān for deducing legal rulings out of selected verses. Scores of legal deductions from the Qur’ān are known from al-Imām Mālik ibn Anas (r) in this regard. Al-

Ḥāfiẓ Yaḥyā ibn Ādam ibn Sulaimān al-Qurayshī (d. 203 AH) authored ‘*mujarrad aḥkām al-Qur’ān*’ and al-Shāfi‘ī wrote ‘*aḥkām al-Qur’ān*’²⁰ for interpreting the legal verses of the Qur’ān.

Al-Shāfi‘ī (150-204 AH) was born in Gaza of Palestine and moved to Makkah at the age of two where he got his education. He got orientation of the Qur’ānic hermeneutics at the hands of the students of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbās and their students. After moving to Egypt, he availed out of the exegetic collection of Sa‘īd ibn Zubayr, the famous student of Ibn ‘Abbās who wrote a complete *tafsīr* for ‘Abd al-Mālik ibn Marwān. This is why one can see the influences and references of Sa‘īd ibn Zubayr in al-Shāfi‘ī’s Qur’ānic commentaries found in his books like *al-Umm*.²¹

The *tafsīr* of al-Shāfi‘ī predominantly focused on the legal verses of the Qur’ān. Occasionally he made some brief remarks and commentaries over some other Qur’ānic verses. Though al-Shāfi‘ī is the pioneer in terms of a systematic care and compilation for *tafsīr* of the legal verses of the Qur’ān, he was preceded by many in this field. ‘*Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*’ by Abū al-Nadḥr al-Kalbī’s (d. 146 AH) which he narrated from Ibn ‘Abbās, ‘*al-Ma’tḥūr ‘an Mālik fī Aḥkām al-Qur’ān wa Tafsīruhū*’ of Imām Mālik ibn Anas (d. 179 AH), the founder of the Mālikī school of thought, which was compiled by Makkī ibn Abī Ṭālib later on in ten volumes, and ‘*Mujarrad Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*’ of al-Ḥāfiẓ Yaḥyā ibn Ādam ibn Sulaimān are a few of this kind.²²

2.2. The growth and Development of Tafsīr beyond the era of al-Shāfi‘ī:

The trend of resting *tafsīr* preferably on the Qur’ān, Sunnah and commentary of the Prophetic Companions and their Successors while very seldom on personal reasoning controvertible sources continued till the end of the era of al-Shāfi‘ī.

Towards the end of the ninth century CE, the field of *tafsīr* evolved into an independent science. Many world famous *tafsīr* books were authored by, among others, Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310 AH), Ibn Mājah (d. 272 AH), Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 327 AH), Ibn Ḥibbān (d. 369 AH), al-Ḥākim (d. 404 AH), and Ibn Mardawayh (d. 410 AH) in this period, and those were arranged according to the order of the written text of the Qur’ān. The end of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century CE witnessed a new phenomenon in *tafsīr* literature. This time the chains of narration from the *tafsīrs* were deleted while keeping the names of the Companions or their Successors. The next generation put

more stress on the literary forms, grammatical constructions, variant readings of the Qur'ān where they mentioned many unreferenced and anonymous statements to authenticate their points. By the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE, the door of *tafsīr* according to personal opinion (*tafsīr bi al-Ra'y*) opened; Greek philosophy and science and other heretical thoughts started to exert influences in the body of *tafsīr* literature. Resultantly, a large number of theological heresies emerged among the Muslims during the Umayyad period, like the Khārijites, the Mu'tazilites, the Shi'ites, and other sects. These sects adduced sectarian exegesis of the Qur'ān. *Al-Kash-shāf* of al-Zamakhshārī (d. 538 AH), *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606 AH), the Twelver *Shi'ah tafsīrs* of Mullah Muḥsin al-Kāsh, and the *Sūfī tafsīr* of Ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 638 AH) are few such examples.²³

Side by side, another comprehensive trend surfaced regarding specialization of Qur'ānic study among the Islamic scholars triggering a multiplicity of disciplines. Al-Jassās (d. 369 AH) and al-Qurṭubī (d. 671 AH) concentrated on deducting *fiqh* from the Qur'ānic passages according to their respective *fiqh* schools. Al-Tha'labī (d. 427 AH), a specialized in tales of ancient history, authored *al-Jawāhir al-Hisān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* where he gathered all ancient narrations regardless of their authenticity. Others authored *tafsīr* books to substantiate their legal school of thoughts (*madhāhib*). This new trend and other heretical and sectarian trends for the Qur'ānic exegesis brought an admixture of truth and falsehood in the latter *tafsīr* books. But those were never left unchecked and unchallenged. A potent example is the *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ʿAdhīm* by al-Ḥāfidh ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH).

Some modern-day people developed a few new forms of tendencies for the exegesis of the Qur'ān. Some venture to explain the Qur'ān from pure scientific perspective, some from intellectual perspective, while others from rational or political perspective. These may be categorized as 'Scientific/Political/Rational/ Intellectual...Approach'. Those who are deeply influenced by the natural and social sciences follow the materialists of Europe and the pragmatists for interpreting the Qur'ān. According to them, what the religion claims to exist but the sciences reject (i.e., The Throne, The Chair, The Tablet and The Pen), those should be interpreted in a way that conforms with the science; as for those things which the science is silent about (i.e., the resurrection etc., they should be brought within the purview of the laws of matter...²⁴ Under this approach the Qur'ān is explained away to adapt to any particular theory.

A very recent phenomenon developed for the Qur’ānic exegesis is called ‘Feminist Approach’²⁵. This approach is led by Amina Wadud, Asma Barlas, Leila Ahmed, Fatima Mernissi, and others. Amina Wadud, a [retired] Professor of Islamic Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia, USA, called for a rereading and reinterpretation of the Qur’ān from a feminist perspective. To her, this is not the religion that has kept the women suppressed; it is in fact the patriarchal interpretation and implementation of the Qur’ān which is responsible for this sorry state. Wadud breaks down specific texts and key words which have been used, she argues, to marginalize and limit public and private role of any woman, and even to justify violence against her. She contends that close examination of the original meanings and contexts of those words defy such interpretations.²⁶ Barlas²⁷, another feminist Qur’ānic interpreter, argues, quoting many Qur’ānic verses, for a fresh comprehensive revisionist treatment of the Qur’ānic hermeneutics. She contends, the Qur’ān actually views women as equal and even superior to men. To her, misogyny and patriarchy have seeped into Islamic practice through "traditions", or the “Sunnah”, or the ḥadīths; and the sharī‘ah. According to her, a military-scholarly complex manipulated the Qur’ān to establish these traditions in a successful effort to preserve the position of the military rulers and clerics of early Islamic history with women's status being the victim. She says that though the Qur’ān speaks contrary, some flawed traditions coupled with the misinterpretations of the Qur’ān were exploited to instill misogynistic patriarchy in the Qur’ān’s exegesis.²⁸

2.3. Epistemological Critique of the Previously-Applied Methodologies for Tafsīr:

A deep and insightful analysis of the previously-applied methodologies, other than the ones applied by the Companions, their Successors, and the likes of al-Shāfi‘ī, for the Qur’ānic *tafsīr* demonstrates that due to the absence of any uniform, integrated, and convincingly clear-cut methodology, many un-Islamic trends developed in and crept into the *tafsīr* literature. Of those, the following drawbacks are illustrious:²⁹

1. Penetration of alien cultures, traditions, superstitions, and philosophies in the *tafsīr* literature like the Isrāīliyāt (Talmudic traditions) and Greek philosophy. Those who applied these have been seen to explain away the Qur’ān to suit their philosophical underpinnings.

2. Selective reading of the Qur'ān without dealing with it in totality and as an integrated whole like focusing on the Qur'ān from pure lexical, philological, grammatical and/or other singular perspective/s. The earlier generations almost concentrated on painstakingly establishing the miraculous quality of the Qur'ān (i.e., the inimitability of its poetic beauty, style, and literary elegance representing the highest peak unknown in Arabic style).
3. The Umayyad period witnessed the emergence of a large number of theological heresies and early sects among the Muslims while the first century of the 'Abbāsid rule observed an outburst of intellectual activities. These two periods saw the production of both heretical and sectarian *tafsīrs*; and deeply conflicting juristic and *ṣūfistic tafsīrs*. Despite various puritan attempts, an admixture of truth and falsehood in the *tafsīr* literature got deep-rooted in this period which set the latter trend of composing more narrowly approached *tafsīr* books and opened the door to 'talking on the Qur'ān on one's opinion' (*al-Tafsīr bi al-Ra'y*).
4. The modern trends of 'Scientific/ Political/ Rational/ Intellectual/ Socialist/ humanistic/ Feminist... Approach' to the Qur'ānic exegesis is of greater danger. These cripple the Qur'ān to offer any wholesome and integrated solutions to human problems; and open windows for its whimsical interpretations by many to suit their narrow personal interests.

3. Analysis and Findings:

3.1. Al-Shāfi'ī's Contribution to Tafsīr Literature:

Al-Shāfi'ī's contribution to the Qur'ānic exegesis is tremendous. His passion for al-Qur'ān became evident from his very childhood. He memorized the Qur'ān at seven; taught people the Qur'ān in the *masjid al-harām* when thirteen³⁰; would finish its recitation outside *ṣalāt* everyday twice- once at night and once at day³¹. He also knew all the meanings of the Qur'ān and the implications of all its words but two, as is reported from him³². Sufyān ibn 'Uyainah said about him, 'I do not know anyone more knowledgeable in the *tafsīr* than him (al-Shāfi'ī)'³³.

Al-Shāfi'ī talked about 95 *sūra* of the Qur'ān and interpreted its 745 verses only which comprise 11.26% of the total Qur'ān if the counting of Ibn 'Abbās (r) for the Qur'ānic verses as 6616 is considered. His Qur'ānic exegesis and interpretation is mostly related to the *āyāt al-Ahkām* as those are pertinent with *fiqh* and *ijtihād*.³⁴

To ‘Allāmah al-Zarakshī, Imām al-Shāfi‘ī was the first who singled out the *āyāt al-Ahkām* for collection and interpretation³⁵. This opinion is supported by al-Suyūti³⁶ and al-Dāūdī³⁷. Though this is not a unanimous and uncontested opinion, still it does indicate of his pioneering position and epoch-making contribution to the development of this distinct branch of Qur’ānic exegesis.

The depth of his knowledge of *tafsīr al-Qurān* is duly acknowledged by many including his own teachers. Whenever anyone approached Ibn ‘Uyainah, a front-ranking teacher of al-Shāfi‘ī, about *tafsīr* and *fatwā*, he would refer the matter to al-Shāfi‘ī saying, 'ask this man'.³⁸ The same is attested by no less a person than Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal: 'I have not seen anyone more knowledgeable for the book of Allah that this young Quraishite'.³⁹

3.2. Methodology of al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī in Qur’ānic Exegesis:

Al-Shāfi‘ī followed a distinct and well-structured source of reference for interpreting the Qur’ān. Abu Jahrah says, ‘al-Shāfi‘ī followed a sound methodology. For inferring from the Qur’ān, he would take help of the Sunnah. If there was no relevant Sunnah, he took help of the statements of the Prophetic Companions, in agreements or disagreements. If no statement of any Companion is found, he took help of the Arabic style, reasoning and analogy (*qiyās*)’⁴⁰. Based on this, Al-Farrān concluded that al-Shāfi‘ī relied on the following seven sources for his exegesis:⁴¹

- 1) The Qur’ānic exegesis in the light of Qur’ān
- 2) The Qur’ānic exegesis in the light of *mutawātir* Sunnah and authentic *aḥād aḥadīth*.
- 3) The Qur’ānic exegesis in the light of consensus and was preferred over analogy.
- 4) The Qur’ānic exegesis in the light of analogy on the basis of what preceded.
- 5) The Qur’ānic exegesis in the light of the statements of the Companions
- 6) The Qur’ānic exegesis in the light of the statements of the Successors to the Companions and other scholars
- 7) The Qur’ānic exegesis in the light of Arabic language and employing the language (Arabic) and its different styles.

Al-Shāfi'ī maintained and remained stick to its sequential order. For, to al-Shāfi'ī, knowledge is of five sequential stages⁴²: the Qur'ān and authentic Sunnah; the consensus of the specialized scholars (in case of non-availability of the Qur'ān and Sunnah); the statements of the Prophetic Companions; the disagreements of the Companions concerning any issue and one opinion was preferred which was found closer to the spirit of the Qur'ān and Sunnah and supported by analogy; and analogy in light of a matter whose ruling was known in the previous four stages.

Though of 95⁴³ *sūras*, al-Shāfi'ī commented well over 745 verses and those mostly related to the verses of ruling (*āyāt al-Ahkām*)⁴⁴, he commented on some verses relating to *i'tiqād* (Islamic belief-system). His stance on verses relating to abrogation (*naskh*) and verses ostensibly referring to 'choosing the best' (*istihsān*) is also obvious in his Qur'ānic exegetical methodology.

3.2.1. Exegesis in the light of the Qur'ān: Al-Shāfi'ī is found to explain the Qur'ānic verses in the light of other relevant and similar verses, sometimes citing those merely to stress the points made by any verse at hand while other times mentioning those to press any intended meaning home.⁴⁵ For example, Al-Shāfi'ī adduced verse 4 of *sūra al-Baiyinah* while explaining verse 105 of *sūrah Āl-i-Imrān* with the objective of stressing Allah's (SWT) condemning the disagreement of the people of the Book in the presence of a clear-cut evidence. Similarly, he took support of verse 2 of *sūra al-Talāq* for explaining verse 282 of *sūra al-Baqarah* to press his intended meaning home. It was because to al-Shāfi'ī, *'adālah* (probity) of the witness is a fundamental requirement for his/her testimony to be granted. As verse 282 of *sūra al-Baqarah* does not stipulate any such condition, he adduced verse 2 of *sūra al-Talāq* to press his opinion home.

Al-Shāfi'ī uses the Qur'ān for explaining the Qur'ān in four methods: explaining the ambiguous (*muǧmal*) in the light of more self-explained (*mufassar*); explaining any verse by the implications of the previous verse/s; specifying the meaning of any verse by virtue of another verse; and explaining the absolute (*muṭlaq*) by the qualified (*muqayyad*).⁴⁶

3.2.2. Exegesis in the light and with the help of *al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah*: Al-Shāfi'ī employed the Sunnah when the Qur'ān required further explanation, for the Qur'ān usually provides general

guidelines on matters of law and religion to be specified or elaborated by the Sunnah.⁴⁷

To al-Shāfi‘ī, the relationship between the Qur’ān and the Sunnah is either of three capacities: (a) merely confirming and reiterating the Qur’ān (like *aḥādīth* pertaining to the five pillars of the faith and rights of the parents, respect for others’ property, homicide, theft and false testimony, etc.); (b) explaining or clarifying the Qur’ān, clarifying the ambivalent (*mujmal*), qualifying the absolute, or specifying the general terms of the Qur’ān (like the *aḥādīth* explaining the Qur’ānic expressions like *ṣalāh*, *zakāh*, *ḥajj* and *ribā*, etc.); and (c) introducing independent rulings on issues where the Qur’ān is silent (like the prohibition regarding simultaneous marriage to the maternal and paternal aunt of one’s wife, the right to pre-emption (*shuf‘a*), grandmother’s share in inheritance, the punishment of *rajm*).⁴⁸

For explaining verse 103 of *sūra al-Nisā’* pertaining to *ṣalāh*, verse 43,83,110 of *sūra al-Baqarah* pertaining to *zakāh*, verse 97 of *sūra Āl-i-‘Imrān* pertaining to *ḥajj* for example, al-Shāfi‘ī adduced many *aḥādīth* as to the timing of *ṣalāh*, number of obligatory prayers, their units, status, and other relevant rulings. As for *zakāt* he cited *aḥādīth* to elaborate on the zakatable and non-zakatable items, their conditions, rates, who to give and whom to give and other relevant issues. For *ḥajj*, al-Shāfi‘ī mentioned many *aḥādīth* to discuss the meaning of *sabīl* (path) and explained the prophetic performances of *ḥajj*.

Al-Shāfi‘ī’s employing of Sunnah for the Qur’ānic *tafsīr* is of five basic categories: merely mentioning to stress the intended meaning of the Qur’ān; to clarify the ambiguity of the Qur’ān; specifying the meaning of the Qur’ān by virtue of the Sunnah; preferring one of different possible meanings in the light of Sunnah; and augmenting his policy regarding ‘abrogation’.⁴⁹

3.2.3. Exegesis based on *al-ijmā’*: *Al-ijmā’* (general consensus) ensures the correct interpretation of the Qur’ān, the faithful understanding and transmission of the Sunnah, and the legitimate use of *ijtihād*. The question as to whether the law, as contained in the divine sources, has been properly interpreted is always open to a measure of uncertainty and doubt, especially in regard to the deduction of new rules by way of analogy and *ijtihād*. Only *ijmā’* can put an end to doubt. When it throws its weight behind a ruling, it becomes decisive and infallible.⁵⁰

To al-Shāfi'ī, *al-ijmā'* is a fundamental source of Islamic *sharī'ah*. He took into consideration the *ijmā'* of the Prophet's Companions and that of all scholars of the towns at a given time. The *ijmā'* of the people of a particular town which is opposed by people of other town/s and a silent *ijmā'* (an *ijmā'* which has not been reported to be opposed by anyone) are not accepted to al-Shāfi'ī. He used *al-ijmā'* for interpreting the Qur'ān, especially the *ahkām* verses, but his use of *al-ijmā'* was rather a bit implicit. Sometimes he gave preference to the opinion of the majority while at other times he just reported others' opinions without any judgment. For example, he would say, 'I heard from the people of knowledge', or 'I heard the people of *tafsīr*', or 'the general scholars opined', or 'a group of scholars are of the opinion', etc.⁵¹

3.2.4. Exegesis based on *al-qiyās*: To al-Shāfi'ī, *al-qiyās* (analogical deduction) is another fundamental source of Islamic *sharī'ah*. He used *qiyās* when the Qur'ān and Sunnah were unavailable. For the Qur'ānic exegesis, he classified *qiyās* into three types:⁵²

Firstly, the new case (*far'*) is better in terms of ruling (*hukm*) than that of the original case (*aṣl*) because of the effective cause ('illah) which is in common to both. For example, while interpreting verse 23 of *sūra al-Isrā'* he said beating the parents is prohibited because when saying 'Fie' (Arabic *uff*) is prohibited then prohibiting 'striking them' is a better ruling. He interpreted verses 7-8 of *sūra al-zilzalah* in the same way.⁵³ Secondly, the new case (*far'*) is similar to the original case (*aṣl*) in terms of ruling (*hukm*): On the basis of verse 25 of *sūra al-Nisā'* he deduced that a male slave (like a female slave), if accused of illegal sexuality would be punished with 50 stripes.⁵⁴ Thirdly, the new case (*far'*) is weaker than the original case (*aṣl*) in terms of effective cause ('illah) of ruling (*hukm*): al-Shāfi'ī deduced from verse 233 of *sūra al-Baqarah* that the earning children should spend for their ageing fathers. The 'illah (effective cause) is that the fathers spend for them when they are unable to earn, so the earning children should spend for them when they are be unable to earn.⁵⁵

3.2.5. Exegesis based on statements of the Companions of the Prophet: Al-Shāfi'ī weighed the Prophetic Companions for understanding the Qur'ān as they were brought up upon its directives, witnessed its revelation and lived its first-hand philosophy. He resorted to the opinions of the Companions when he found nothing in the first three sources. Al-Shāfi'ī's policy for applying the statements of the Companions in explaining the Qur'ān stands at: his accepting their

opinions in totality on any issue when are found agreed; or preferring one of the opinions when they are disagreed and the preference is based on the basis of the relevant indications of the Qur’ān, Sunnah, Consensus, and Rational Analogy; and accepting the opinion of even one Companion when he is not found opposed by any other Companion/s.⁵⁶

An instance of his applying this principle is his choosing the meaning of the word '*al-quru*' (monthly course for women) in 2:228. The Companions differed on the meaning of this terminology; a group explained it to mean three 'menstrual period' (*hayḍ*) while others opined three 'period of cleanliness' (*tuhr*). Al-Shāfi‘ī preferred the first one as is suggested by ‘Āisha, Ibn ‘Umar, Zayd ibn Thābit. The Prophet (saas) reportedly said to ‘Umar, 'Ask him (meaning Ibn ‘Umar) to divorce her in the period of cleanliness (*tuhr*) in which he touched her not, as that is the period in which Allah commanded to divorce the women'.⁵⁷

3.2.6. Exegesis based on statements of the Successors to the Companions and their contemporary scholars: Al-Shāfi‘ī would also consult the opinions of the Successors to the Companions and his contemporary scholars for interpreting any Qur’ān. In case of not finding anything from the Companions of the Prophet (saas), he mentioned the opinions of the Successors accompanied but invariably with his comments and evaluation of those statements.⁵⁸ Sometimes he would cite the opinions of ‘Atā and Mujāid in their names and mentioned his own position regarding those opinions. Though there is a bit of controversy as to whether al-Shāfi‘ī did that imitating (*taqlīd*) the Successors and whether he considered their imitation permissible, it is obvious that he was always on the lookout to augment his interpretation with a similar interpretation by any Successor and/or his contemporary.⁵⁹

3.2.7. Exegesis based on linguistic study of Arabic: Al-Shāfi‘ī was a pioneering one who focused on the linguistic study of the Qur’ānic words and applied rules of language for determining their proper implications. He classified the Qur’ānic words into ‘*ām* (general) and *khās* (specific); *mutlaq* (absolute) and *muqayyad* (the qualified) and classified those further into different classifications. Thus it is seen that sometimes he interpreted the apparent general into specific and vice-versa. For example: while he interpreted the words *shai* (thing) and *dābbah* (living creature) respectively in 39:62 and 11:06 in their general and absolute meanings, but he interpreted the word *ahl*

(people) of *ahlahā* in 18:77 to indicate of qualified general, not absolute general (meaning a section of the people of that town).

Al-Shāfi'ī also extensively drew upon the Arabic language for extracting the exact meaning of any given Qur'ānic word. Abu Hassān al-Junādī says, 'I never saw anyone better to extract the meanings of the Qur'ān and cite from the language in favor of that meaning than al-Shāfi'ī'⁶⁰. He interpreted the word *shaṭra* in 2:150 to mean 'towards' and cited the poems of four renowned Arabic poets in support of his opinion: Khifāf ibn Nadbah, Sā'idah ibn Juaiyyah, Laqīt al-Ayādī, and Qays ibn Khuwaylid al-Hudālī respectively.

Similarly, while determining the original meanings of the words '*wajh*' (face) and '*ka'b*' (ankle) in 05:06, and the word *mass* (touch) in 56:79, he cited different poems to vindicate his philological analysis. In the light of the related poetry verses, he interpreted the term '*wajh*' (face) in the verse of ablution as a space between chinks, two ear-rings and the place in forehead where hair grows; and the word '*ka'b*' (ankle) in the same verse for area exposed joint of leg and foot.

3.2.8. Use of the Occasions of Revelations: Al-Shāfi'ī heavily relied on the 'Occasions of Revelations' (*Shān al-Nuzūl*) for interpreting the Qur'ān. It was because the Qur'ān was revealed to the Prophet (saas) piecemeal over a vast span of twenty three years, fulfilling the needs of the ongoing Islamic Movement and facilitating the circumstances encountered by the Prophet and the Muslim Ummah. Thus the Qur'ānic viewpoints are to be understood on the basis of the backgrounds behind the revelation of a particular verse. Otherwise, one is bound to commit mistake. Al-Shāfi'ī's policy for taking support of *Shān al-Nuzūl* is that he would mention the source and reference in most of the cases and would lump together all the relevant narrations and then make preference. He would define the timing of the revelations of those verses and on this basis would decide whether anything of those was abrogated. Examples of this are abundant in his books.⁶¹

3.3. Characteristics of the *Tafsīr al-Shāfi'ī*:

Al-Shāfi'ī is the pioneer in terms of systematic approach to the exegesis of the Qur'ān. He is the first to deal independently with the *āyāt al-aḥkām*. His Qur'ānic hermeneutics is unique in many senses. His is the earliest *tafsīr* closer to the period of the Successors to the Companions and their Successors. This is why he has a lasting impression on the

latter Qur’ānic exegetes including al-Tabarī, al-Rāzī, Ibn Kathīr, al-Suyūṭī and others to the extent that it is nearly impossible to find any book of *tafsīr* which does not contain the opinions of al-Shāfi‘ī, especially with relation to *tafsīr āyāt al-ahkām*. His hermeneutics is in clear contrast to the hermeneutics of those who based their exegesis on personal opinion. He introduced a new trend and established a new school of thought for *tafsīr* with the formulation of new principles and setting new rules for personal reasoning (*ijtihād*). His *tafsīr* is free from biblical narratives while remaining committed to the school of thought of *ahl Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘at*. He is the first to lay down rules for ascertaining abrogation in the Qur’ān. His hermeneutics is the first to apply ‘Rules of Interpretation’ (‘*Āmm, Khāṣ, Mutlaq, Muqayyad* etc.) for the Qur’ānic exegesis. His one is an invaluable and comprehensive wealth and reference at a stretch for *tafsīr, fiqh, uṣūl, ḥadīth, lughah*, and other areas of scholastic knowledge.⁶²

The *tafsīr* of al-Shāfi‘ī is characterized by clarity and understandability of language, simplicity yet brevity of sentences, inference of new judicial issues from *āyāt al-ahkām*, framing his school of thought and its fundamental principles in light of the Qur’ānic verses, relying on the school of thought of the pious predecessors (*salf ṣālihīn*) for ‘*aqāid*’ issues, following the basic sources for Qur’ānic exegesis in perfect sequential order (as stated above), direct or indirect quotation from the opinions of others, lumping together the opinions of others under certain verse, evaluating their opinions and giving preference to one of those by either explicit implication of the Qur’ānic text or by the Sunnah or by the implication of Arabic language, and sometimes offering and substantiating his own opinion refuting all other opinions. Al-Shāfi‘ī always preferred the right opinion without prejudice and mostly referred the perfection of knowledge to Allah.⁶³

He would also lump together all relevant verses of a particular topic and weave a central and consolidated theme out of all those verses while supporting that central theme through the relatable Sunnah. For example, in chapter ‘*ilm*’ (knowledge) of his book *al-Risālah*, for answering a particular question al-Shāfi‘ī put together all Qur’ānic verses⁶⁴ related to Jihād and weaved his point out of those that Jihād is *fardh* (obligatory) but it is *fardh al-Kifāyah*.

3.4. Al-Shāfi‘ī’s Stance on Some Specific Issues:

3.4.1. Al-Shāfi‘ī on the ‘Aqā’id Issues: Al-Shāfi‘ī picked up the debated issues of Islamic ‘*aqīdah*’ when interpreting the Qur’ān and put his stance thereof which was pure, obvious, and necessarily based on the Qur’ānic perspective. For example, while interpreting 5:98 and 2:143 he vindicated his position that *Īmān* is the combination of confession and application (*qawl wa ‘amal*) and while interpreting 9: 124-125, 18: 13 and other related verses he deduced that *Īmān* actually increases and decreases. His stance on Allah’s Attributes was made clear when he interpreted 2:143. He dismissed the argument of the ultra-rationalist *mu‘tazilite* about the creation of the Qur’ān in light of the 4: 162 and 9:6. He also made clear his position on other important but contested issues like the ‘Will of Allah’ and the difference between His Will (*mashyat Allah*) and the will of the human beings under 76:30, the issue of ‘Pre-destination (*al-qaḍa wa al-qadr*) and the creation of activities (*khalq al-af‘āl*)’, the issue of the ‘Sight of Allah’ (*ruiyat Allah*) in light of 83: 15 and others, and the status of the Prophetic Companions, especially the four Righteous Caliphs and the civil wars between ‘Alī and Mu‘āwiyah.⁶⁵

3.4.2. Al-Shāfi‘ī and the *Āyāt al-Āḥkām*: Al-Shāfi‘ī’s Qur’ānic exegesis is basically based on his interpretation of *āyāt al-aḥkām*. Al-Bayhaqī was the first to compile those from different books of al-Shāfi‘ī like ‘*Al-Risālah, Al-Umm, Ikhtilāf al-Ḥadīth, Jimā‘ al-‘ilm, Al-Sunnah al-Ma‘thūrah, Al-Musnad, Al-Manāqib, and Tawālī al-Ta’sīs*’ etc. Al-Shāfi‘ī based his exegesis of *āyāt al-aḥkām* on some policies: (i) he deduced some fundamental principles, basic juridical rulings and some secondary rulings out of the verses; (ii) he inferred variegated rulings from a particular verse; (iii) he augmented his juridical deductions of any verse by the Sunnah, if found, otherwise, he used his personal reasoning (*ijtihād*) for new cases.

3.4.3. Al-Shāfi‘ī and Abrogation: Al-Shāfi‘ī’s stance on *al-Naskh* (Abrogation) is rather unique. To him, the Qur’ān may be abrogated by the Qur’ān only, not vice versa as the Sunnah follows the Qur’ān in conformity to its revealed text and explains what is ambiguous there.⁶⁶ He established his opinion through the lanes of 10:15, 13:39, 2:106, and 16:101. In the light of 2:106 al-Shāfi‘ī said, ‘Allah informed us that abrogating the Qur’ān and deferring its revelation is not except through a similar verse of the Qur’ān’. Similarly, the Sunnah may be abrogated by the Sunnah only, not by any lesser source.

Al-Shāfi‘ī’s opinion on Sunnah for abrogating the Qur’ān may well be classified into three.⁶⁷ Firstly, for any abrogation occurring in the Qur’ān the issue is substantiated partially by the Qur’ān and the rest is established by the Sunnah. To al-Shāfi‘ī, 17:79 gives the impression that night-vigil prayer (*ṣalāt al-Tahajjud*) was obligatory which is subsequently clarified by 73:20 and ultimately resolved by the Sunnah as it puts straight that the number of obligatory prayers is five-times-a-day. Secondly, both the Qur’ān and the Sunnah indicate of any abrogation occurring in the Qur’ān. He proved this formula through 2:142-144 where the *qiblah* was shifted to *al-Ka‘bah* by the Qur’ān and also the Sunnah since the Prophet (saas) immediately announced and applied that. Thirdly, the abrogation in the Qur’ān is sometimes done by the Sunnah and *ijmā‘* (scholarly consensus) when no such indication is found in the Qur’ān. To al-Shāfi‘ī, 2:180 of the Qur’ān is suggestive of the obligation of making a bequest for the parents and the near relatives which is subsequently abrogated by the Sunnah as the Prophet has reportedly prohibited it during the Liberation of Makkah⁶⁸ and the scholars have been found unanimous on this prohibition.

3.4.4. Al-Shāfi‘ī and *Al-Istiḥsān*: Whether al-Shāfi‘ī employed ‘*al-istiḥsān*’ for interpreting the Qur’ānic texts is a debated issue. Despite this, his use of ‘*al-istiḥsān*’ is but extremely rare in some jurisprudential branch issues and he referred those to the analogical reasoning. Studying the books of al-Shāfi‘ī, one observes that al-Shāfi‘ī has raised serious objections against *istiḥsān*, which he considers to be a form of pleasure-seeking (*taladhhdhudh wa-hawā*) and 'arbitrary law-making in religion'... ‘Anyone who rules or gives a fatwa on the basis of a *naṣṣ* or on the basis of *ijtihād* which relies on an analogy to the *naṣṣ* has fulfilled his duty and has complied with the command of the Lawgiver. But anyone who prefers that which neither God nor His Messenger has commanded/approved, his preference will not be acceptable to God and His Prophet’. *Istiḥsān* involves, according to al-Shāfi‘ī, personal opinion, discretion and the inclination of the individual jurist, an exercise which is not harmonious with the Qur’ānic *ayāh*: 'Does man think that he will be left without guidance? (75:36)’.

Al-Ghazālī has criticized *istiḥsān* and observed that the jurists of the Shāfi‘ī School have recognized the validity of *istiḥsān* based on an indication (*dalīl*) from the Qur’ān or Sunnah. When a *dalīl* exists, then the case at hand would be governed not by *istiḥsān* but by the provision of the Qur’ān or Sunnah itself.⁶⁹ *Al-Istiḥsān* is, in fact, of two categories to al-Shāfi‘ī; one is permissible and praiseworthy and

the other is prohibited and blameworthy. The permissible one is which is based on the analogical reasoning on a past precedent. Otherwise it is blameworthy and prohibited as *al-Istihsān* is the departure of a *mujtahid* from an identical ruling in an issue which have a precedent to a different ruling for evidence more powerful than the previous one.⁷⁰ An example of his use of '*al-istihsān*' in *tafsīr* is his opinion regarding not cutting off the right hand of a thief if and when the thief advanced his left hand and that was cut off⁷¹.

3.4.5. Al-Shāfi'ī and Tolerance to Others: Al-Shāfi'ī followed a very tolerant and moderate policy to deal with opposing opinions of others in *tafsīr* as most of those were based on his personal juridical reasoning. He never offensively criticized those oppositions; even he often avoided their names. Rather, he would present his own position and make a comparative study between his and his opponents' opinion.

4. Principles of Contemporary *Tafsīr* Literature: Some Recommendations

4.1. Recommendations on the Basis of al-Shāfi'ī's Methodology:

Al-Shāfi'ī is the pioneer in introducing and establishing some distinct policies for the Qur'ānic exegesis. Al-Rāzī (Razes) said, "Al-Shāfi'ī's relation with the science of 'Principles'..... The Principles which Al-Shāfi'ī followed across his works are essentially taken from the Qur'ān and Sunnah, the basic sources of Islam. He said, 'I wrote these books, I have not talked there on my whims. Still mistakes are bound to be found, as Allah said: [If it was from anyone rather than Allah then they would have surely gotten there many disagreements (04:82).] If and when you find in my books anything contradicting the Qur'ān and Sunnah, then know that I retreated from that.'"

The principles al-Shāfi'ī maintained for his Qur'ānic exegesis are summarized below. On that basis I suggest the following principles for the contemporary commentators of the Qur'ān:

1. The Book of Allah should be given priority for interpreting the Qur'ān, because it contains guidance for all happenings.
2. The Sunnah of the Prophet (saas) should be given second priority, next to the Qur'ān, because the Qur'ān was revealed in the language of the Arabs and the Prophet (saas) was the best knowledgeable in Arabic as well as the first recipient of the

Qur’ān. Thus none can understand the Qur’ān more than the Prophet (saas).

3. The exegesis should be based on the apparent and manifest reading of its verses until or unless it is qualified by other verses of the Qur’ān, Sunnah, or textual implication of Arabic language.
4. The Qur’ān and Sunnah should not be left conflicting between each other, rather both should be conciliated and reconciled.
5. The Qur’ān should not be abrogated except by the Qur’ān, not by the Sunnah because the Sunnah is the clarification, explanation and qualification of the Qur’ān.
6. There should be no Biblical narratives for the explanation of the Qur’ān, as al-Shāfi‘ī has not mentioned anything from the biblical narratives in his Qur’ānic exegesis.
7. One will have to take extensively from the Arabic literature for the sake of authenticating the meanings and implications he extracts for any word or verse of the Qur’ān. In this case one should maintain the sequential order among the *sharī‘ah* sources (the Qur’ān, the Sunnah, the Consensus, the Analogy, etc.). It was Al-Shāfi‘ī’s invariable policy.⁷²
8. The *tafsīr* should be treated as ‘integrated whole’. It should comprise of all issues related to interpretation, jurisprudence, principles, stories, prophetic statements, language etc.
9. One should lump together all relevant documents for any particular issue of the Qur’ān and Sunnah and discuss that with open-mindedness, tolerant attitude and deep impartial investigation.

4.2. Some Additional Recommendations: Alongside the above, the following policies may also be adopted by an exegete while making any enterprise for the interpretation of the Qur’ān. These policies are also implicitly found in the methodologies of al-Shāfi‘ī:

- a. The verses of the Qur’ān should be arranged by order of subjects/topics for the proper and complete understanding of any particular topic. Because, many of the questions which may arise out of a certain passage of the Qur’ān may have their explanation in other parts of the very same book, and often there may not any need to any sources other than the Qur’ān.

- b. The objectives of the Sharī'ah (*Maqāsid al-Sharī'ah*) should be taken into consideration for the interpretation of the Qur'ān. These *maqāsid* are in fact to be found out in and taken from the Qur'ān.
- c. The meanings of any particular *sūrah* or *āyah* should be related to the stories/ examples mentioned in the Qur'ān which will resultantly give a live account of the usage of a law or how to act in a specific situation. Allah says:
- d. 'Verily, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'ān in order that you may understand. We relate to you the best of stories through Our revelations to you, of this Qur'ān. And before this, you were among those who were unaware' (12:3).
- e. The Qur'ānic *tafsīr* should be related to the modern contexts, taking into consideration the time-space factors, so that the intricate problems of the modern world, methodological and otherwise, may be solved through the Qur'ān.
- f. The constant and unchangeable components of the Qur'ān should be separated from the variable and changeable components. The laws of Allah (*sunan Allah*) and the laws of civilization should be kept in mind before going to explain the Qur'ān. Because the universe as well the vicissitudes of civilizations are governed by certain laws of Allah, some of which are fix while others are general.
- g. The theory of *naskh* (abrogation) should be reviewed afresh so that the whole perspective of the Qur'ān may be applied in space-time consideration.
- h. Experts from all branches of knowledge should be mobilized to undertake a collective effort for formulating comprehensive and universal *tafsīr* so that all branches of human knowledge are reconstructed in light of directives and guidelines contained in the text.⁷³
- i. There should be the combined and integrated reading of the Qur'ān and the universe. These two readings are interconnected and must occur simultaneously. It will help us use the Qur'ān for rectifying the prevailing methodologies of knowledge on one hand, and then the rectified methodologies of knowledge themselves will provide a means of delving deeper into and engendering a better understanding of the universe of the Qur'ān⁷⁴. This will help us overcome such impasses found in the classical

books centering tension and conflict between reason and revelation⁷⁵.

4.3. Conclusion:

All honest attempts at *tafsīr* must begin with the *tafsīr* of the Qur’ān by Quran itself. What remain unexplained must then be sought in the Sunnah. If the *tafsīr* still cannot be found, the explanation of the *Ṣaḥābah* and their students must then be turned to. The rest can be found in the language of the Qur’ān. Such an approach to *tafsīr* takes into account Allah’s role as the revealer and explainer of His revelation, the Prophet’s role as the practical interpreter of Allah’s revelation, the *Ṣaḥābah* and their students’ roles as the conveyers of Allah’s revelation, and the Prophet’s interpretation and application of it, and the role of classical Arabic as the vehicle in which the revelation and its explanation were transmitted.⁷⁶ Besides, more innovative methods, in compliance with the mandates of the Qur’ān and Sunnah, may also be applied, like al-Shāfi‘ī’s innovation of concentrating on the legal verses of the Qur’ān or lumping together the relevant verses to forge an integrated Qur’ānic perspective on a particular issue rather than a myopic, parochial, and partial understanding of the Qur’ānic concepts. This will ensure the role’s of the Qur’ān as an ever-green solutions to all problems, past, present and future. Any other approach negates one or more of the aforementioned vital roles and implies either a claim of direct revelation from God or an understanding superior to that of the Prophet (saas) and his Companions. A brief glance at the *tafsīr* of those ignoring these steps will expose their claims to divine revelation cloaked in terms like “*ilhām*” (inspiration) and “*kashf*” (illumination).⁷⁷

References:

- ¹ Al-Suyūṭī, ‘Abdur Raḥmān, *Al-Itqān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*, Al-Halabi Press, Cairo, 4th ed., 1978, p. 224; Zarabozo, Jamaal al-Din M., *How to Approach and Understand the Quran*, Al-Basheer Publications, Denver, 1999, p. 12
- ² For example: *Aḥkām al-Qur’ān*, *Al-Umm*, *Al-Risālah*, *Kitāb Jimā‘ al-‘Ilm*, *Ikhtilāf al-Ḥadīth* and others.
- ³ Al-Qur’an: 16:44
- ⁴ Al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Itqān*, p. 239; Philips, Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal, *Usool at-Tafseer: The Methodology of Qur’anic Interpretation*, International Islamic Publishing House, Riyadh, 2005, p. 22
- ⁵ See for details: Al-Dhahabi, Muhammad Ḥusayn, *Al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, Maktabah Wahbah, Cairo, 6th ed., 1975; Al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Itqān*; Bilal Philips, *Usool at-Tafseer* pp. 19-34; Amin, Dr. Ruhul, *Tafsir: Its Growth and Development in Muslim Spain*, University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, Dhaka, October 2006, pp. 1-33
- ⁶ (أَيَّ أَرْضٍ تَقْلَنِي وَأَيَّ سَمَاءٍ تَظْلَنِي إِذَا قَلْتَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ مَا لَا أَعْلَمُ بِرَأْيِي) This statement is found at the beginning of any tafsīr book.
- ⁷ Al-Farrān, Dr. Ahmad Ibn Mustafa, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*, Dār al-Tadmoria, KSA, 2006, p. 10-11
- ⁸ See Al-Alwānī, Tāhā Jābir & Imād al-Dīn Khalīd, *The Qur’an and the Sunnah: The Time-Space Factor*, International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1991, P. 13
- ⁹ Ben ‘Ashūr, Shaikh Muhammad al-Tāhar, *Tafsīr al-Tahrīr wa al Tanwīr, al Dār al Tūnisīyah*, Tunis, 1984, p. 28-29, See Al-Alwānī, Tāhā Jābir & Imād al-Dīn Khalīd, *The Qur’an and the Sunnah: The Time-Space Factor*, International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1991, P. 13
- ¹⁰ *Tābi‘ūn*: the Successors of the Companions of the Prophet (saas)
- ¹¹ Al-Dhahabī, *at-tafsīr wa’l mufasssīrūn*, 2nd ed., Cairo: Dāru’l Kutubi’l Ḥadītha, 1396 A. H. Vol. 01, p. 100
- ¹² Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, Mu’assasah al-Risālah, Beirut, 3rd ed., 1985, vol. 04, p. 450
- ¹³ This title is given to ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Abbās by the Prophet (saas), or by ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ūd (r) according to another opinion, because of his expertise for the Qur’anic hermeneutics. See: Husayn, *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 03, p. 347

- 14 Al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Itqān*; vol. 02, p. 242, See: Bilal Philips, *Usool at-Tafseer* p. 23
- 15 Al-Rāzī (Razes), Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta’dīl*, V. 6, pp. 332; Ibn Ḥajr, Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon, vol. 7, p. 879
- 16 Al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Ḍurr al-Manthūr*, vol. 01, p. 607
- 17 Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr, *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān fī ta’wīl al-Qur’ān*, Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1st ed. 1992, vol. 01, p. 31
- 18 Al-Qattān, Mannā, *Mabāḥith fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*, Maktabah al-Ma‘ārif, Riyadh, 8th ed., 1981, pp. 340-41; See: Bilal Philips, *Usool at-Tafseer*, pp. 25-27; Ruhul Amin, *Tafsīr: Its Growth and Development in Muslim Spain*, pp. 11-13. Examples of this type are the collections of Yazīd ibn Hārūn al-Salāmi (d. 118 AH/737 CE), Shu‘bah ibn al-Ḥajjāj (d. 160 AH/777 CE), Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah (d. 198 AH/814 CE), and ‘Abd al-Razzāq ibn al-Hammām (d. 211 Ah/864 CE).
- 19 See for details: Al-Fihrist, Ibn al-Nadīm, Dār al-Ma‘rifah Beirut, p. 51
- 20 ‘Abd al-Subḥān, Muḥī Uddīn, *Manhaj al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī fī āyāt al-Ahkām* (A thesis submitted to the Umm al-Qurā University to fulfill the requirement of M. A. degree), Ruhul Amin, *Tafsīr: Its Growth...*, pp. 14-15.
- 21 *Majallah al-Sharī‘ah wa al-Dirāsah al-Islāmiyyah*, number: 27, Sha‘ban 1416 AH, Year: 10th, pp. 42-85
- 22 See for details: Al-Fihrist, Ibn al-Nadīm, pp. 56-57
- 23 See: Bilal Philips, *Usool at-Tafseer*, pp. 26-28; Ruhul Amin, *Tafsīr: Its Growth and Development*, pp. 15-17.
- 24 Al-Tabataba‘ī, Muhammad Husayn, *Tafsīr al-Mīzan*, See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tafsir#cite_note-3
- 25 McAuliffe, Jane (ed.), *“Women’s and Feminist Readings of the Qur’an”*, Cambridge Companion to the Qur’an, Cambridge University Press, 2006
- 26 See for details: Wadud, Amina, *Qur’an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman’s Perspective*, Oxford University Press, USA, 1999
- 27 Associate professor and Director of the Center for the Study of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity of the department of politics at Ithaca College, New York
- 28 Barlas, Asma, *Believing Women" in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur’an*, University of Texas Press; 1st ed., 2002

- ²⁹ See for details: BJIT (Bangladesh Journal of Islamic Thought), Muhammad Mokhter Ahmad, *The Exegesis of the Qur'an: In Search of a new Epistemological Methodology*, vol. 5, no. 6, Jan-June 2009
- ³⁰ Ibn al- Jawzī, *Ṣifat al-Ṣafwah*, Vol. 02, P. 141, Al-Baihaqī, *Manāqib al-Shāfi'ī*, Vol. 01, P. 279
- ³¹ Al-Baihaqī, *Manāqib al-Shāfi'ī*, Vol. 01, P. 279
- ³² Ibid, Al-Baihaqī, Vol. 01, P. 190-91. It is reported that he said: (وحفظت) القرآن، فما علمت انه مر بي حرف الا وقد علمت المعني فيه و المراد ما خلا حرفين): قال الراوي- حفظت احدهما و نسيت الاخر، احدهما (دساها)
'I memorized the Qur'an. I knew not if any of its words passed me but I did not know its meaning and its intended implication except two words'. The reporter said: I remembered one and forgot the other. The one I remembered: (دساها)
- ³³ Al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-Huffāz*, Vol. 01, P. 263
- ³⁴ Al-Farrān, Dr. Ahmad Ibn Mustafa, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī*, Dār al-Tadmoria, KSA, p. 12
- ³⁵ al-Zarakshī, *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, Edited: Muḥammad Abū Fadl Ibrāhīm, Dār al-Fikr, Beirut, 2nd Ed., 1413 AH, vol. 02, p. 03
- ³⁶ al-Suyūfī, *al-Wasā'il fī ma'rifat al-Awā'il*, Dār Nāfi' Publishing House, P. 114
- ³⁷ al-Dāūdī, *Shamsuddin Muhammad ibn 'Alī ibn Aḥmad*, Vol. 02, P. 103
- ³⁸ Ibn Ḥajr, *Tawālī al-Ta'sīs li-Ma'ānī Muḥammad ibn Idrīs*, Edited by: 'Abdullah al-Qādhī, Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1st Ed., 1986, p. 76
- ³⁹ Al-Rāzī (Razes), *Al-Jarḥ wa al-Ta'dīl*, v. 7, pp. 203-204
- ⁴⁰ Abu Juhrah, Al- *Shāfi'ī*, *Ḥayāthū wa 'aṣṣuhū*, Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, Cairo, 2nd ed., 1948, p. 185
- ⁴¹ Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī*, P. 40
- ⁴² Abu Juhrah, Al- *Shāfi'ī*, pp. 162-63 (with adjustment); Al-Shāfi'ī, *Al-Umm*, v. 7, p. 279
- ⁴³ The *Sūra* which have not been explained by Al- *Shāfi'ī* are 19 in number and these are: *Saba'*, *Al-Dukhān*, *Al-Raḥman*, *Al-Ḥadīd*, *Al-Ḥāqqah*, *Al-Naba'*, *Al-Infīṭar*, *Al-Fajr*, *Al-Ḍuhā*, *Al-Tīn*, *Al-'Ādiyāt*, *Al-Qāriyah*, *Al-Takāthur*, *Al-Humazah*, *Al-Fīl*, *Al-Kawthar*, *Al-Naṣr*, and Al-Masad.
- ⁴⁴ Out of 745 verses of 95 *Sūra* of the Qur'an explained by Al- *Shāfi'ī* 452 are related to *Āyāt al-Aḥkām* and these verses are spread across 16 *Sūra* (*Al-Baqarah*, *Al-Nisā'*, *Al-Tawbah*, *Al-Mā'idah*, *Al-An'ām*, *Āl-e-'Imrān*,

Al-Nūr, Al-Aḥzāb, Al-A‘rāf, Al-Naḥl, Al-Isrā’, Al-Shu‘arā’, Hūd, Al-Anfāl, Al-Anbiyā’, Al-Ḥajj).

- 45 See: *Kitāb Jimā‘ al-‘ilm*, p. 69-70, no.: 434-437, 441-443,
- 46 See for details along with examples: *Manhaj al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī fī āyāt al-Ahkām*, Muḥi Uddin, pp. 226-252
- 47 Abu Juhrah, *Al- Shāfi‘ī*, p. 184-85
- 48 See for details: Al-Shāfi‘ī, Muhammad ibn Idrīs, *Al-Risālah*, Paragraph: 97-103, pp.: 32-33, Kamālī, Muhammad Hashim, *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*, Revised Edition, ‘Ilmiyah Publishers, Malaysia, pp.: 62-63
- 49 See for details along with examples: *Manhaj al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī fī āyāt al-Ahkām*, Muḥi Uddin, pp. 256-319
- 50 See: Kamālī, Dr. Muhammad Hāshim, *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*, p. 158
- 51 See the *tafsīr* of the following verses in Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*: 5:5, 4:129, 56:79, 22:33 etc.
- 52 See: Abu Juhrah, *Al- Shāfi‘ī*, his life and period, pp. 242-43
- 53 Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*, pp. 73-74
- 54 Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*, p. 74
- 55 Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*, pp. 74-75
- 56 See for details along with examples: *Manhaj al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī fī āyāt al-Ahkām*, Muḥi Uddin, pp. 326-355
- 57 See the *tafsīr* of 2: 228 by al-Shāfi‘ī in Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*
- 58 Al-Rāzī, *Ādāb al- Shāfi‘ī wa Manāqibuhū*, p. 202
- 59 See for further details with examples: *Manhaj al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī fī āyāt al-Ahkām*, Muḥi Uddin, pp. 356-368
- 60 Ibn Ḥajr, *Tawāli al-Ta’sīs*, p. 89
- 61 See for more details with examples: *Manhaj al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī fī āyāt al-Ahkām*, Muḥi Uddin, pp. 375-393
- 62 See for details: Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*, pp. 162-165
- 63 See for details: Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*, pp. 152-156
- 64 The verses are: 9: 111, 36, 5, 29, 38-39, 41, 122, and 4: 95, 86
- 65 See all relevant places in Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*

- ⁶⁶ See for details: Al-Shāfi‘ī, *Al-Risālah*, Paragraph: 314, p.: 106
- ⁶⁷ See for details: Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*, pp. 122-128
- ⁶⁸ This is according to a *Mursal* ḥadīth where the Prophet declared, 'no bequest for relatives and no Muslim is should be killed for a non-Muslim'.
- ⁶⁹ See: Kamālī, Dr. Muhammad Hāshim, *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*, p. 229
- ⁷⁰ Al-Jundī, ‘Abdul Ḥalīm, *Al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī: Nāṣir al-Sunnah*, Dār-Al-Ma‘ārif, 2nd edi, Cairo 1982, p. 243-44
- ⁷¹ Madkūr, Dr. Muḥammad Salām, *Majallah al-Fayṣal, Al-Shāfi‘ī: Nāṣir al-Sunnah*, Issue: 23, p. 54, Year: 1979
- ⁷² See for details about this order in *sharī‘ah* sources by al-Shāfi‘ī: Al-Farrān, *Tafsīr al-Imām al-Shāfi‘ī*, p. 40
- ⁷³ Al-‘Alwānī, *Missing Dimensions in Contemporary Islamic Movements*, IIIT, Herndon, VA, USA, 1996, pp. 20-21
- ⁷⁴ Ibid, *Missing Dimensions*, Al-‘Alwānī, pp. 16-19
- ⁷⁵ Ibid, *Missing Dimensions*, Al-‘Alwānī, pp. 17
- ⁷⁶ Bilal Philips, *Usool at-Tafseer*, p. 52
- ⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 52