



IMAM SADIQ peace be upon him
ONLINE SEMINARY

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Summary of Quranic Sciences

Lesson 45: The Methods of Tafsir

In the concluding session on Quranic sciences, the focus is on the methods of Tafsir and the different generations of Quranic commentators. There are two primary methods of interpreting the Quran. The first is the sequential method, where the Mufasssir interprets the verses one by one, from Al-Fatiha to An-Nas. This traditional approach has been followed by many early commentators, and numerous commentary books have been written using this method. Some scholars completed the entire Quran, while others focused on specific Surahs.

The second method is topical Tafsir, which addresses modern developments in sciences and human knowledge by focusing on specific questions. This method collects relevant verses from the Quran to understand its perspective on particular topics. The topical method is newer and integrates human experiences with Quranic guidance.

The depth and comprehensiveness of Tafsir depend on the knowledge of the Mufasssir. The more knowledgeable the commentator, the more reliable the Tafsir. Both sequential and topical methods require expertise for accurate interpretation.

Next, we examine the generations of Mufasssirun. The first Mufasssir is the Quran itself, which interprets certain parts internally. Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) is regarded as the primary human interpreter. For



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example, the Prophet clarified the ayah (33:33) by pointing to Imam Ali, Fatimah, Hasan, and Husayn as the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.).

There is a debate among scholars whether the Prophet interpreted the entire Quran or only specific ayat. Some argue he explained everything, while others suggest he only interpreted what was necessary.

The Sahabah, such as Imam Ali (عليه السلام), followed the Prophet in interpreting the Quran. Subsequent generations, including the Tabi'un, continued this tradition. In modern times, significant works like "Tafsir al-Mizan" by Allama Tabataba'i and "Tafsir al-Amthal" led by Nasir Makarim Shirazi are considered essential resources in both Shia and Sunni scholarship.