A Diachronic Analysis Of Ta'wīl And I'tabār In Qurānic Interpretation

Qazi Masood ul Hassan[1], Abdul Muhaimin[2], Junaid Akbar[3], Muhammad Ikramullah[4]

[1] *PhD Scholar, Department of Islamic & Religious Studies, The University of Haripur, Pakistan.*
[2] *Assistant Professor, Department of Islamic & Religious Studies, The University of Haripur, Pakistan.*
[3] *Associate Professor, Department of Islamic & Religious Studies, The University of Haripur, Pakistan.*
[4] *Associate Professor, Department of Islamic & Religious Studies, The University of Haripur, Pakistan.*

Summary

The research delves into Qur'anic interpretation (tafsir and ta'wil), emphasizing the importance of considering linguistic context and prophetic traditions. It highlights the Quran's enduring significance as a code of life while acknowledging the scholarly differences in its interpretation. Maulānā 'Ubaid Allāh Sindhī and Maulānā Ashraf 'Alī Thānvī, notable scholars of the twentieth century, offer contrasting interpretations employing their own exegetical rules, particularly regarding the principle of 'Ilm al-I'tibār. While Maulānā Thānvī focuses on individual moral enhancement, Maulānā Sindhī applies it to state affairs. This article presents a comparative analysis of their approaches, elucidating how they derive implications of Qur'anic verses for domestic issues through 'Ilm al-I'tibār.

Keywords: Qur'anic interpretation, tafsir, ta'wil, linguistic context, exegetical rules, 'Ilm al-I'tibār, moral purification

Introduction:

The Quran and Hadith contain clear, explicit, and unambiguous texts without ambiguity, interpretation, metaphor, or allegory. They do not have multiple meanings or interpretations; their purpose and meaning are also determined and clear. There is no room for interpretation or change in them.

On the other hand, some texts are unclear, concise, and contradictory and require explanation and clarification. They may be contradictory and require interpretation and consideration to determine a single meaning, resolve the apparent contradiction, or determine their meaning.

The truth is that there are many places in the Quran and Hadith where the literal meaning of the words is ignored, and metaphor, allegory, and interpretation are used. It is inevitable to admit that until this style of expression is explained in the light of metaphor, the requirements of understanding and comprehension cannot be met. This is because the people whom the Quran addressed were given as much interpretation as they needed by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

This is because the people present at the time of the revelation of the Quran were Arabs, and they understood every meaning and concept of the Quran.

The word "tafsir" is derived from the root "fassara," which means "to explain." This science explains the meaning of the Quran, called "ilm al-tafsir."

Imam al-Zarkashi defines ilm al-tafsir as follows:

"The science by which one understands the Book of Allah revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and explains its meanings, extracts its rulings and wisdom."

The people who were the audience of the Quran were Arabs. Arabic was their language; the environment and the situations, problems, objections, and questions were theirs. They were all present before them, and their beliefs and ideologies were well known.

For this reason, they did not face any difficulty in understanding even the most subtle allusions and hidden metaphors of the Quran. Wherever the verses were revealed, they effortlessly reached the meaning and purpose of the allusions and metaphors and understood the full meaning of the speech.

Then, with time, different sciences and arts came into existence, and the experts of each science and art performed the service of the sciences of the Quran and Sunnah according to their respective subjects. Similarly, some scholars also took up the subject of purification and perfection (Sufism) and explained the sciences of the Quran and Sunnah. From these scholars, some things are also narrated under the verses of the Quran, which seem to be tafsir, but they are against the literal meaning of the verse. Due to this, some uninformed people also criticize these scholars. It should be clear that the science that these scholars used in explaining the Quran is called "ilm al-tawil wa al-i'tibar". Here in this article, "ilm al-Tawil wa al-i'tibar" will be introduced, and their definition and differences will be discussed with the help of the Arabic language.

The Lexical Meaning of Ta'wil

The word ta'wil is derived from the Arabic root 'awwala, which means "to return" or "to go back to the end." In Arabic, it is used in the sense of returning to something. For example, people say, "We are the 'al of so-and-so," meaning they trace their lineage back to a great person. Thus, returning a word to its original meaning is called ta'wil.

Allamah Ibn al-Athir says: Ta'wil comes from 'al, which means "to return" or "to go back."[1]

The Arabic saying "ما تأويل هذا الكلام؟" means "What is the meaning of this speech?" In

the Quran, the word is also used in the sense of clarifying the end result, as in the verse:

"On the Day when the matter will be made clear." (Quran, 7:53)

So, ta'wil is the name for turning verses and texts to the meanings they can bear.[2]

Another saying is that ta'wil is derived from 'iyalah, which means "governance." Thus, the one interpreting a speech has set its order right and adequately placed the meaning.[3]

Technical Definition:

There are many technical definitions of ta'wil. Here are a few of the most important definitions and their differences:

1. Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti defines ta'wil as follows:

Ta'wil is the name for turning a word with multiple meanings to one of those meanings indicated by the evidence.[4]

2. Amir Badshah defines ta'wil as follows:

Ta'wil is interpreting the apparent meaning of a text in a way that is less likely to be correct.[5]

The difference between these two definitions is that the first is based on the idea of ta'yin (determining), which means choosing one meaning from among multiple possible meanings. The second definition is based on tarjih (giving preference), which means preferring one meaning over another.

According to the Hanafis, ta'wil is choosing one meaning from among multiple possible meanings for a mushtarak (a word with various meanings). They say that a mushtarak is a word that has multiple possible meanings until one of those meanings is shown to be more likely. Once one meaning is shown to be more likely, the word is no longer considered a

[1] Ibn Manzur, Muhammad ibn Mukram, Lisān al-'Arab, (Beirut: Dar-e-Sadir), vol. 11, p. 32.
[2] (Zarkashi, Badr al-Din, al-Burhān fī Ulūm al-Qur'ān, (Beirut: Dar Ihya al Kutub al Arabiyyah), vol. 2, p. 148.
[3] Suyuti, Jalal al-Din, al-Itqān fī Ulūm al-

Qur'ān, (Riyadh: Maktabah Nazar, 1394 AH), vol. 2, p. 460.
[4] Suyuti, al-Itqān fī Ulūm al-Qur'ān, vol. 4, p. 155.
[5] Amir Badshah, Muhammad Amin, Taysīr al Taḥrīr, (Dar al Fikr, 1996), vol. 1, p. 168.

mushtarak.[6]

The Shafi'is, on the other hand, do not consider choosing one meaning from among multiple possible meanings for a mushtarak to be ta'wil.[7] They generally define ta'wil as interpreting the apparent meaning of a text in a way that is less likely to be correct. However, if they are defining ta'wil in the sense of ta'wil sahih (correct interpretation), they would add the phrase "بدليل يصيره راجحا" (utilizing evidence that makes it more likely).[8]

Allamah Ibn Manzur defines ta'wil as follows:

Ta'wil refers to transferring the apparent meaning of a word from its original meaning to another meaning supported by evidence. If there were no evidence, the apparent meaning of the word would not be abandoned.[9]

Ibn Taymiyyah says that there are three meanings of ta'wil due to the diversity of terminologies:

1. Ta'wil refers to the true meaning of a speech to which it is returned, even if that meaning is by the apparent meaning. This is the meaning of ta'wil that is intended in the Quran and Sunnah.

2. Ta'wil refers to tafsir (interpretation). This is the opinion of most scholars of tafsir.

3. Ta'wil refers to turning a word away from its apparent meaning to another meaning based on an external proof. This ta'wil will be against the signified of the word. This is not the terminology of the Salaf but rather the terminology of the later scholars who were skilled in fiqh, usul al-fiqh, and ilm al-kalam.[10]

2. The Relationship Between Tafsir and Ta'wil

Tafsir and ta'wil have a relationship of general and specific. Sometimes they are both present together, and sometimes they are separate.

As mentioned earlier, the root of ta'wil is 'awwala'. Its literal meaning is to explain, to clarify the truth, and to return to its original meaning. The reference and place of return is called mu'awwal.

The word ta'wil is used in the Quran and Arabic speech as a synonym for bayan al-haqiqah (explaining the truth), tafsir (interpretation), tawdih al-ma'ani (clarifying the meanings), and tabyin (making clear). In other words, ta'wil and tafsir are used interchangeably in the Quran.

Before the fourth century AH, ta'wil and tafsir had the same meaning. The word ta'wil was used as a synonym for tafsir. Then, a slight difference began to appear between the two words. In general, scholars made the following distinction between the two concepts:

1. Ta'wil was used to explain sentences and meanings.

2. Tafsir was used to explain difficult words and vocabulary.

However, this distinction was not accepted by all scholars. Later, the technical meanings of tafsir and ta'wil were also established when the Islamic sciences were formally organized and codified. A clear distinction was made between them, and they became two separate things in technical and terminological terms.

3. The Difference Between Tafsir and Ta'wil

The early scholars used tafsir and ta'wil interchangeably. However, later scholars made several distinctions between the two. These distinctions are explained in detail below:

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[6] Mullah Jewan, Ahmad, Nūr al-Anwār, (Quetta: Maktabah al Numaniyyah, 1427 AH), p. 85.

[7] Al-Āmadi, Ali ibn Muhammad, al-Ihkām fī Uṣūl al Aḥkām, (Beirut: Dār al Kitāb al 'Arabī, 1404 AH), vol. 3, p. 49.

[8] Al-Shawkānī, Muhammad bibn Ali, Irshād al Fuḥūl, (Beirut: Dār al Kitāb al 'Arabī, 1419 AH), vol. 2, p. 32.

[9] Ibn Manzur, Lisan al-Arab, vol. 11, p. 32.

[10] Ibn Taymiyyah, Ahmad ibn Abd al-Haleem, Majmū' al Fatāwā, (Dār al Wafā', 1426 AH), vol. 4, pp. 68,69.

1. The Saying of Raghib al-Isfahani

Imam Raghib al-Isfahani says:

1- "Tafsir is general, and ta'wil is specific." This means tafsir is generally used for words, while ta'wil is used for meanings.

2- "Tafsir is generally used for 'mufradat' (individual words)." This means that it is used to explain individual words. "Ta'wil is applied to 'jumal' (sentences)." This means that it is used to explain the meaning of sentences.

3- Ta'wil is often used in the divine books revealed by Allah, such as the Quran, the Torah, the Gospel, and so on. Tafsir is used in these books as well as in other books." In other words, tafsir is more general.[11]

2. The Saying of Abu Ubaydah

Allamah al-Dhahabi writes in his book "al-Tafsir wa al-Mufassirun":

"Abu Ubaydah and a group of scholars believe that the words tafsir and ta'wil are synonymous and that there is no difference or disagreement between them. The view of the early scholars of tafsir is also that these two are completely synonymous."[12]

3. The Saying of Abu Mansur al-Maturidi

Imam al-Maturidi says:

"Tafsir means to say with certainty and conviction that this word has this meaning and that Allah intended this meaning. It is fine if there is definitive and conclusive proof for this. Otherwise, it is tafsir by opinion, which is forbidden in sharia. On the other hand, if a word has several possible meanings, such as the word 'quru', which can have several meanings, then choosing one of these meanings is called ta'wil. It is not necessary to have certainty and conviction in this case."[13]

In other words, if the meaning intended by Allah is known with certainty, it is called tafsir. If one of several possible meanings is chosen, but no definitive decision is made, it is called ta'wil.

4. The Saying of Abu Talib al-Tha'labi

Imam Abu Talib al-Tha'labi says:

"The explanation of the meaning for which a word is used, literally or figuratively, is called tafsir. For example, the tafsir of 'sirat' is 'path,' and 'sab' is 'rain.' On the other hand, the clarification of a word's inner and hidden meaning is called ta'wil. The three-letter root of ta'wil is 'awwala.' Its meaning is to return to the outcome and result of something. Therefore, informing about the intended reality is called ta'wil, and expressing the proof of the intended meaning is called tafsir."[14]

In other words, explaining the word and meaning for which a word was created, whether real or symbolic, is called "tafsir." Explaining a word's hidden meaning is called "ta'wil." In short, tafsir is the name explaining the meaning of the word, and ta'wil is the name explaining the meaning of the meaning.

5. The Saying of Imam al-Baghawi and al-Qawashi

Imam al-Baghawi and al-Qawashi say:

"Ta'wil is to derive a meaning from a verse that is possible within its scope, and that is revealed from its apparent meaning and its hidden meaning, that is by the context, and that does not contradict the Quran and Sunnah."[15]

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[11] Al-Raghib al-Asphani, Husayn ibn Muhammad, Tafsīr al-Raghib al-Asphani, (Egypt: Maktabah Kulliyah al Ādāb, 1999), vol. 1, p. 11.

[12] Dhahabi, Muhammad al-Syed Husayn, Al-Tafsīr wal Mufassirūn, (Cairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 1977), vol. 1, p. 16.

[13] Maturidi, Muhammad ibn Muhammad, Ta'wīlāt ahl al-Sunnah, (Beirut: Dār al Kutub al 'Ilmiyyah, 2005), vol. 1, p. 185.

[14] Suyuti, al-Itqān fī Ulūm al-Qur'ān, vol. 4, p. 193.

[15] Al-Thalabi, Zayd Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad, Al Jawāhir al Ḥisān fī Tafsīr al Qur'ān, (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al Turāth al 'Arabī, 1418 AH), vol. 1, p. 45.

Tafsir is to mention and explain the سبب نزول (reason for revelation) and the واقعة (event) related to a verse, as well as the answer to questions and its explanation.

6. The Saying of al-Suyuti

Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti writes:

"Some people say that tafsir is related to riwayat (transmission) and ta'wil is related to dirayat (understanding)." [16]

In other words, if the explanation of a word is based on riwayat, it is tafsir. If the explanation of a word is based on dirayat, it is ta'wil.

7. The Saying of al-Alusi

Al-Dhahabi, after mentioning several differences between ta'wil and tafsir in his book "al-Tafsir wa al-Mufassirun," finally quotes al-Alusi al-Baghdadi as giving the following difference:

"Some interpreters say that tafsir is the explanation of the meaning obtained from the order of the words. On the other hand, ta'wil is the name of the disclosure of the meaning that is known from the phrase by allusion." [17]

This is the famous saying among the later scholars. The famous interpreter Allamah al-Alusi al-Baghdadi endorsed it in the preface of his tafsir "Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī." [18]

8. Muhammad Sayyid Husayn al-Dhahabi

Muhammad Sayyid Husayn al-Dhahabi writes in his book "al-Tafsir wal-Mufassirun":

"There is a difference of opinion among scholars about the difference between tafsir and ta'wil. There are many opinions on this, and knowing this difference is a difficult scholarly task. Only one blessed with divine guidance can qualify for it." [19]

Summary:

After mentioning several opinions, it is concluded that the truth is that the opinion of the early scholars is correct, that there is no real difference in the use of the two words "tafsir" and "ta'wil." From the intense disagreement of those who have tried to explain the difference, it can be estimated that this has not become a fixed and agreed-upon terminology. However, it seems that some scholars have tried to make tafsir and ta'wil separate terminologies, but there was so much disagreement that no terminology could gain universal acceptance. This is why interpreters use them interchangeably without hesitation.

There are also some other opinions in this regard. However, the opinion that is closest to the truth is that tafsir is related to riwayat (transmission), while ta'wil is related to dirayat (understanding). This is because tafsir is the name of disclosure and explanation. This is only possible when it is transmitted from the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) or the Companions. On the other hand, this is not a consideration in ta'wil, but rather, one of the possible meanings in a word is preferred, and ijtihad is required for this preference. Ijtihad requires knowledge of the Arabic language and context related to dirayat.

Al-Zarkashi's decisive statement summarizes that scholars have considered the difference and distinction between tafsir and ta'wil. This is because tafsir relies on transmitted information, such as the reason for revelation, abrogation, the determination of the ambiguous, and the general explanation. On the other hand, ta'wil depends on inference. [20]

The Lexical Meaning of I'tabar:

In the Arabic language, the root of the word

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[16] Suyuti, al-Itqān fī Ulūm al-Qur'ān, vol. 4, p. 193.

[17] Al-Alusi, Mahmood ibn Abdullah, Rūḥ al Ma'ānī fī Tafsīr al Qur'ān al Aẓīm wal Saba' al Mathānī, (Beirut: Dār al Kutub al 'Ilmiyyah, 1415 AH), vol. 1, p. 6.

[18] Dhahabi, Al-Tafsīr wal Mufassirūn, vol. 1, p. 17.

[19] Dhahabi, Al-Tafsīr wal Mufassirūn, vol. 1, p. 16.

[20] Zarkashi, al-Burhān fī Ulūm al-Qur'ān, vol. 2, p. 172.

"اعتبار" is the triliteral "ع، ب، ر".

In the triliteral "العبر" means "to pass from one state to another." For this reason, "العبرة و الاعتبار" refers to the state by which one reaches unseen results through the mediation of a seen thing. Thus, in the context of this meaning, the Quran says:

"Indeed in that is a lesson (عِبْرَةٌ)." (Quran, al-Nazi'at, 26)

And:

"So take heed, you people of vision." (Quran, al-Hashr, 2)

Ibn Manzur al-Afriqi writes:

"The Quran says, 'So take heed, you people of vision,' meaning, 'Ponder and reflect on what was revealed about the Banu Qurayza and the Banu Nadir, and compare their actions to your own, and take heed from the punishment that was inflicted upon them.'"[21]

The Technical Meaning

Scholars have defined the technical meaning of 'Ilm al-I'tbār according to their preferences. Thus, Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanawi writes:

"The inner meanings that are explained are not intended to determine the meaning or interpretation of the text, but rather simply a comparison of the state of one thing to the state of another. This is called 'Ilm al-I'tabār ."[22]

Allama Kasani defines the technical meaning of 'Ilm al-I'tbār as follows:

"This is the knowledge by which one learns a lesson by comparing another person's circumstances to one's own. And if there is a similarity between two things, one can use one analogy to understand the other. And this is the meaning of gaining "عبرت" (lesson), which is to compare the state of another to oneself."[23]

Ashraf al-Jawab explains 'Ilm al-I'tbār in this way:

"Something that is not explicitly mentioned in the Quran is inferred from something that is explicitly mentioned, based on some relationship or similarity. These are in the category of subtleties, interpretations, and insights, not tafsir. And they cannot be called Quranic sciences."[24]

From these statements of the scholars, it can be concluded that:

1- The term tafsir of the Quran does not apply to any statement or explanation made through 'Ilm al-I'tabār.
2- The meaning of the verses is not 'Ilm al-I'tabār.
3- 'Ilm al-I'tbār is applied to the verse based on relationship or similarity.
4- The ultimate goal of 'Ilm al-I'tabār is religion itself.

Examples of 'Ilm al-I'tabār from the Verses of the Quran

1- An example of this in the context of statements is the following: Allah Almighty says:

"So take heed, you people of vision." (Quran, al-Hashr, 59)

The incident of Banu Naḍīr is mentioned in the context of these verses. First, the incident was mentioned, and then Allah Almighty said, "So take heed, you people of vision." Therefore, if you also do what those people did, consider that punishment for yourself. Ashraf Ali Thanawi writes:

"This is the ''Ilm al-I'tabār' that when there is a similarity between two things, one analogy is used to understand the other. And this is the meaning of gaining 'عبرت' (lesson), which is to compare the state of another to oneself, that if we do the same deeds as them, then our condition will also be the same as theirs."[25]

2- Allah Almighty says:

"Go to Pharaoh; indeed he has

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[21] Ibn Manzur, Lisān al-‘Arab, vol. 9, p. 18.
[22] Thanawi, Ashraf Ali, Sharī'at wa Tarīqat, (India: Maktabah al-Ḥaq, 2002), p. 363
[23] Kasani, Abu Bakr ibn Masud, Badāi' al-Ṣanāi', (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1986), p. 241

[24] Thanawi, Ashraf Ali, Ashraf al-Jawāb, (Lahore: Maktabh Islāmiyāt), vol. 2, p. 314
[25] Thanawi, Ashraf Ali, Bawādir al-Nawādir, (Lahore: Maktabh Islāmiyāt), vol. 2, p. 397

transgressed." (Quran, Taha, 24)

The Sufis have written about this verse:

"O soul! Go to the "نفس" and strive against it, for it has transgressed."

The Sufis' purpose here is not to interpret these verses, but rather, their meaning is this:

"O reader of the Quran! Do not read the stories of the Quran as mere stories, but rather learn from them. For the stories in the Quran are told to gain عبرت (lesson)."

Thus, Allah Almighty says:

"Indeed, in their stories is a lesson for those of understanding." (Quran, Yusuf, 111)

Allama Kasani writes:

"So when you reach the story of Musa (peace be upon him), learn from it that within you there is also one thing similar to Musa and one thing similar to Pharaoh, namely the "روح" and the "نفس." One is a caller to good, similar to Musa (peace be upon him), and the other is a caller to evil, similar to Pharaoh. So you, too, should make your "روح" over your "نفس" and refrain from disobedience. This is the 'Ilm al-I'tabār, that one learns a lesson by comparing the story of another to one's condition."[26]

3- Allah Almighty says:

"Know that Allah gives life to the earth after its death." (Quran, al-Hadid, 17)

Hazrat Ibn Abbas has said in the interpretation of this verse:

"It revives the hearts after their death. Otherwise, the revival of the earth is known by observation."

Ashraf Ali Thanawi writes:

"This is also 'Ilm al-I'tabār, and by "وَإِلاَّ فَقَدْ عُلِمَ إِحْياء الارْض," he does not mean to deny the famous interpretation, but rather his meaning is this: "You should not be satisfied with the apparent meaning of this verse, for it is obvious. Rather, you should move from it to the hearts, for the state of the hearts is the same as

that of the earth. These traditions are mentioned in my treatise Masail al-Suluk. These and others prove that 'Ilm al-I'tabār is not an innovation of the Sufis. Rather, its origin is found in the texts. Therefore, those who issue fatwas against the Sufis for considering 'Ilm al-I'tabār are mistaken."[27]

'Ilm al-I'tabār and its Validity:

If a claim made through 'Ilm al-I'tabār is not presented as tafsir or ta'wil but rather simply as 'Ilm al-I'tabār, then the details are as follows:

1- If the ruling proven through 'Ilm al-I'tabār is also proven by another text, then this is within the shariah limits and is valid.

2- If the ruling obtained through 'Ilm al-I'tabār is not proven by any other text, it is just a discomfort.

3- If the ruling obtained through 'Ilm al-I'tabār is contrary to another shariah ruling, it is invalid.[28]

The Sufis and 'Ilm al-I'tabār:

Muhammad 'Īesa writes:

"So the Sufis do not go beyond the limits of this ('Ilm al-I'tabār), because they neither deny that the literal meanings are signified, nor that they are intended (they believe that the literal meanings are both signified and intended). The ignorant Sufis deny that the literal meanings are signified, and the modern educated people do not deny that the literal meanings are signified, but they deny that they are intended. Rather, they only consider the symbolic meanings to be intended. Understand these differences well."[29]

The Difference Between Qiyas Fiqhi and I'tibar:

Ashraf Ali Thanawi explains the difference as follows:

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[26] Kasani, Badāi' al-Ṣanāi', p. 240.

[27] Thanawi, Ashraf Ali, Ghāyat al-Najāḥ, (Lahore: Maktabh Islāmiyāt), vol. 2, pp. 228-229

[28] Thanawi, Ashraf Ali, al-Taqsīr fī al-

Tafsīr, (India: Maktabah Qasmi, 2016), vol. 2, pp. 4-5.

[29] Ilahabadi, Muhammad Isa, Anfās-e-'Īsa, p. 317.

"Inferring something not explicitly mentioned in the Quran from something explicitly mentioned, based on some relationship or similarity, is not true qiyas. It is simply a form of qiyas. Therefore, the rulings of qiyas do not apply to it. This qiyas is not legal proof. Therefore, it is not permissible to attribute this ruling to the text based on this qiyas. The only valid shariah proof is qiyas fiqhi."[30]

The Status of Qiyas Derived from 'Ilm al-I'tabār:

The status of the inferences of 'Ilm al-I'tbār is even lower than that of fiqhi qiyas for the following reasons:

- These indications are neither specific nor intended to be interpreted.

- This knowledge itself is not something that can be acquired. Instead, only those receptive to these relationships can understand them.

- Such a person can make such arguments, even if he does not have a high level of knowledge and virtue.

- In qiyas fiqhi, the unmentioned is linked to the mentioned, and a ruling is made on it, and that too only where there is no independent proof.

- This unmentioned thing also becomes the meaning of the text through the cause, and the qiyas are merely a manifestation.

- The qiyas ('Ilm al-I'tabār) of the Sufis, if not proven by proof, are not proven by these texts.

- This I'tabār is merely a form of comparison in which the reason for contrast does not affect the ruling.

- Argumentation comes from the linguistic meaning with the methods that the scholars of meaning and principles have described, and I'tbār comes in the form of comparison and

indication.

The Difference Between Istidlal and I'tabar:

The difference between still and i'tibar is explained as follows:

- Istidlal comes from the linguistic meaning with the methods that the scholars of meaning and principles have described, and i'tabar comes in the form of comparison and indication.

- The origin of both of these sciences is proven from the Quran. However, the word "دليل" (proof) does not appear explicitly in the Quran, but rather its synonyms are used.

  Thus, Allah Almighty says:

  "Say, 'Bring forth your proof.'" (Quran, 2:111)

  And He also says:

  "Say, 'Do you have any knowledge?'" (Quran, 10:63)

  Here, 'برهان' (proof) and 'علم' (knowledge) are used in the sense of دليل (proof). Therefore, it is correct to call it argumentation, just as it is correct to say that Allah Almighty has made prayer obligatory, even though the words "Allah" and "obligatory" do not appear explicitly in " أَقِيْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ " (establish prayer). However, their equivalent is present.[31]

Fal, I'tabar, and Ta'bir:

There is a distinction between these three that separates their ranks. The distinction is as follows:

- If a religious ruling is intended from something that is not explicitly mentioned in the Quran, then the rank of this (formal) qiyas is that of 'علم اعتبار' ('Ilm al-I'tabar), and it has been the practice of the Ummah, provided that it is not raised to the level of tafsir.

- If a worldly ruling is intended from

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[30] Thanawi, Bawādir al-Nawādir, vol. 2, p. 394.

[31] Thanawi, Ashraf Ali, Ḥuqūq al-Zawjayn, (Lahore: Maktabh Islāmiyāt), p. 51.

something not explicitly mentioned in the Quran, then the rank of this qiyas is no more than that of a known fāl or poetry, even if the qiyas is correct or happens to be correct. Thus, poets also use such qiyas to argue for their fanciful claims; sometimes, they are even correct.

- The rank of this poetry or this fāl is the same as that of this qiyas under discussion.

The Difference Between 'Ilm al-I'tabar and 'Ilm Ta'bīr al-Ru'yā:

The difference between these two is explained as follows:

- Ilm al-I'tabar, attributed to the Sufis, is nobler than this (fāl and poetry) due to its connection to the righteous people.
- 'Ilm Ta'bīr al-Ru'yā (interpretation of dreams) is also based on such relationships. No one considers it to be something that can be acquired, nor do they consider it proof.
- 'Ilm al-I'tabar is higher than 'Ilm Ta'bīr al-Ru'yā.
- The reason why 'Ilm al-I'tabar is superior is that 'Ilm Ta'bīr al-Ru'yā (interpretation of dreams) is only used to argue for ontological rulings, while 'Ilm al-I'tabar is used to say for purely legal rulings.[32]

The Difference Between Metaphor and I'tabar:

The following difference is stated between these two:

- The reality of 'Ilm al-I'tabar is that one "likened" is explained by another "likened to," not proven. Rather, the "linked" is proven by another proof.
- 'Ilm al-I'tabar does not fall under the metaphor category, implied or explicit. This is because, in metaphor, there is an indication that the meaning is not

literal. Therefore, the meaning is the non-literal meaning.

- When a word is used metaphorically, its literal meaning, which is the meaning for which the phrase was coined, is not intended. Instead, the non-literal meaning is intended.
- In 'Ilm al-I'tabar, neither is the non-literal meaning intended nor is there any indication to take the non-literal meaning.

The Difference Between Metonymy and I'tibar:

The difference between these two is explained as follows:

- 'Ilm al-I'tabar does not fall under the metonymy category either because the literal meaning is not abandoned in metonymy. Rather, the literal meaning of the speech is the same as the literal meaning. However, the intended meaning is its consequence or implication. For example, the phrase "طَوِيْلُ النَّجاد" (long in lineage) does not abandon the literal meaning. The literal meaning of the speech is the same, but the intended meaning is "طَوِيْلُ الْقَامَةِ" (tall) because "طويل النجاد" necessarily implies "طويل القامة." In 'Ilm al-I'tabar, neither is that meaning intended nor is it the meaning of the speech.
- 'Ilm al-I'tabar is like a symbolic analogy and is similar to a legal analogy.
- 'Ilm al-I'tabar is not the same as qiyas fiqhi because, in qiyas fiqhi, the shared cause effectively rules the analogized. Therefore, that ruling is attributed to the analogy. This is not the case here, either.
- In 'Ilm al-I'tabar, there is only a similarity between the analogized and the analog. And the similarity does not affect the ruling. Instead, that ruling is

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[32] Thanawi, Bawādir al-Nawādir, vol. 2, p. 396.

itself proven by independent proof. This is the reality of 'Ilm al-I'tabar.

A question arises: How did the Sufis use 'Ilm al-I'tabar? Is it also used in the texts?

Ashraf Ali Thanawi answers this question as follows:

"An example of this is present in the texts as well, and I do not say this myself, but I prove it with the words of Shah Waliullah Dehlawi. This great scholar wrote in Al-Fawz al-Kabir about two hadiths that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) once mentioned the issue of predestination: 'There is no one among you whose place in Hell or Paradise has not been written.' The Companions asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, should we then rely on our predestination and stop doing deeds?' He (peace be upon him) said, 'No, but do deeds, for every person is made easy for those deeds for which he was created. He who is among the people of happiness will be given the success of the deeds of happiness, i.e., good deeds, and he who is wretched will be given the success of the deeds of the wretched.' Then he (peace be upon him) recited this verse: {So as for him who gives and fears Allah and believes in the best, We will make easy for him the way to ease. But as for him who is stingy and self-sufficient and denies the best, We will make the way to hardship easy for him.} (Quran, 92:5-10)[33]

Now, the question arises: where is the mention of predestination in this verse? The meaning of the verse is that giving and fearing Allah makes Paradise easy, and stinginess and self-sufficiency make Hell easy.

Shah Waliullah has answered this by saying that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used this verse as an example of 'Ilm al-I'tabar to explain the meaning of the hadith. The purpose is to give a simile that just as some deeds make Paradise easy for some and Hell easy for others, in the same way, predestination makes good deeds easy for some and sins easy for others. This simile only explains that predestination has the same effect as the ease of deeds mentioned in this verse. So, the purpose is to clarify by simile. Shah Waliullah has explained the origin of 'Ilm al-I'tabar in the Quran in the hadith commentary.[34]

The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used 'Ilm al-I'tabar in the hadiths. I am saying this with the authority of a great person. I do not say such a big thing because it is a big claim. And if someone does not accept the words of Shah Sahib (may Allah have mercy on him), then I will tell him to explain these hadiths. Surely, there is some revealed knowledge in these hadiths. No one can explain the reason for the connection except what Shah Sahib has said." [35]

Conclusion:

From the above details, we have come to the following conclusions:

- The Holy Quran is in Arabic, and the meaning of a word, phrase, or idiom is determined by the society in which that language is spoken. For this reason, the language of the time a book was written or revealed is the authority. Therefore, explaining the meaning of the Quran's words, phrases, and idioms in the context of the Arabic language of the Prophetic era and the era of ignorance is tafsir and ta'wil.

- The Holy Quran has explained every point in different words, styles, and methods. As a result, one place's ambiguous or concise statement becomes clear in another place. Moreover, most of the topics of Usul al-Fiqh, i.e., the determination of the meanings of words and their implications, are determined from the Quran itself. This is also tafsir or ta'wil.

- The tafsir and explanation of many verses of the Holy Quran have been

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[33] Bukhari, Muhammad ibn Ismail, Al Jāmi' al Ṣaḥīḥ, (Dār Ṭawq al-Najāḥ, 1422 AH), Ḥadīth # 1362.

[34] Kasani, Badāi' al-Ṣanāi', p. 243.
[35] Kasani, Badāi' al-Ṣanāi', p. 256.

done through the sayings of the Messenger and the Sunnah of the Prophet. Some interpretations and ta'wils are narrated from the Companions and through them from the Taba'īn. This is also included in tafsir and ta'wil.

- The Holy Quran has used many technical terms, such as Salah, Zakat, Sawm, Hajj, Umrah, Udhiyah, Masjid al-Haram, Safa, Marwah, Tawaf, etc. Although their meanings differ, the Quran has used many such words as technical terms. The mutawatir Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) has determined their meanings, and the Muslim Ummah has agreed on their meanings and concepts from generation to generation. Although there have been some minor اجتہادی differences in some subsidiary and incidental matters, there has been no difference of any kind in the principles and fundamentals.

- All matters related to ijtihad, knowledge and points, subtleties and wonders, hints, etc., derived from the Holy Quran. However, they are considered to be tafsir bil-ra'y, but if they are not against the tafsir of the Book of Allah, which has been done in the light of the Sunnah, then it will be considered as Ilm al-I'tibar or tafsir bil-ra'y.

- Such tafsirs in which the meanings of the Quranic terms have been taken away from the Sunnah, whether derived from any language, are tafsir bil-ra'y and are rejected.

- The conclusion from all this discussion is that there are many such tafsirs in which the commentators of each era have written tafsir concerning the problems and situations of their own time or given their academic specializations. However, they are not against the tafsir of the Book of Allah,

transmitted from the Sunnah. It is not correct to deprive the creation of God of the immense treasures of the knowledge of the Quran by considering them as tafsir bil-ra'y, given the rational arguments, fiqh, theological discussions, and the discussions of language and readings.