

دور علم التفسير في فهم وتفسير النصوص الدينية

The Role of Hermeneutics in Understanding and Interpreting the Religious Texts

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الملخص

تستقي الورقة البحثية الحالية توفير إطار لتفسير وفهم النصوص الدينية. و أن الهدف من دراسة التفسير والفهم الدقيق للنصوص الدينية هو التحري في فهم تلك النصوص وتطوير نهج نظامي لتفسيرها. و توفر الأسس النظرية للتفكير بإمكانيات تحليل الطبقات المعقدة للمعنى المتعدد الأبعاد المتواجد في النصوص الدينية، وتساعد على تقليل الفجوة بين السياق التاريخي للنص وما له من صلة بالقراء المعاصرين. استخدمت بيانات هذه الدراسة من القرآن الكريم، بما في ذلك سبع سور مفسرة من قبل يوسف علي. من خلال دراسة التفسير والفهم الدقيق للنصوص الدينية، يمكننا أن نتعلم كيفية تفسير تلك النصوص بدقة ، وتطبيق تعاليمها على حياتنا اليومية. هذا يتطلب فهماً شاملاً للنص الديني واللغة والسياق الثقافي الذي تم فيه كتابته، بالإضافة إلى الوعي بالنهج التفسيري المختلف الذي يمكن استخدامه. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يمكن أن تساعد دراسة التفسير والفهم الدقيق للنصوص الدينية على تعزيز الحوار والتفاهم بين الأديان، حيث يوفر إطاراً مشتركاً لتفسير وفهم النصوص الدينية عبر التقاليد المختلفة. ويمكن أيضاً أن يساعد على تعميق فهمنا لمعتقداتنا وممارساتنا الدينية، ويوفر رؤى حول السياق التاريخي والثقافي الذي تطورت فيه

الكلمات المفتاحية : علم التفسير ، النصوص الدينية ، القرآن الكريم .

Abstract:

The current paper is an attempt to investigate and provide a framework for interpreting and understanding religious texts. The aim of studying hermeneutics in interpreting and understanding religious texts is to gain a deeper understanding of these texts and to develop a systematic approach to interpreting them. Hermeneutics provides a framework for analyzing the complex layers of meaning present in religious texts, and helps to bridge the gap between the historical context of the text and its relevance to contemporary readers. The data of the current study is taken from Holy Quran including seven surahs interpreted by Yusuf Ali. By studying hermeneutics, we can learn how to interpret religious texts accurately and meaningfully, and apply their teachings to our lives today. This requires a thorough understanding of the religious text, language, and cultural context in which the text was written, as well as an awareness of the different interpretive approaches that can be used. Furthermore, the study of hermeneutics can help to promote interfaith dialogue and understanding, as it provides a common framework for interpreting and understanding religious texts across different traditions. It can also help to deepen our understanding of our own religious beliefs and practices, and provide insights into the historical and cultural context in which they developed.

Keywords: *Hermeneutics, Religious Texts Interpretations, Holy Quran.*

Introduction

Hermeneutics is defined by Webster's dictionary as the science of interpretation and explanation; exegesis; specifically, the branch of theology that defines the rules for determining the meaning of the Scriptures. Conner and Malmin (1983, p 1) explain it as it is a science because it is concerned with principles within an ordered system. It is meant to derive and classify the principles which are necessary for the proper interpretation of scripture. It is also an art because it is concerned with the application of derived principles. The application of these principles cannot be mechanical, but must involve the skill of the interpreter."

Milton (2017, p 17) defines the hermeneutics as "the science of interpretation. The word is usually applied to the explanation of written documents and may therefore be more specifically defined as the science of interpreting an author's language". He also states that the concept of hermeneutics is regarded as both the science and arts.

Demeterio (2015, p 1) states that the hermeneutics is derived from the Greek word hermeneutic, which means to interpret, and hermeneia, which means interpretation. Moreover, he says: "in its barest sense, Hermeneutics can be understood as a theory, methodology and praxis of interpretation that is geared towards the recapturing of meaning of a text, or a text-analogue, that is temporally or cultural distant, or obscured by ideology and false consciousness".

First, it should be stated that hermeneutics constitutes one of the sciences that originated with the Quran's writing. Only once does the term تفسير (interpretation) appear in the Quran. تفسير is derived from the word فسر , which means explication, deconstruction of meanings, and the discovery of the rational (p. 4, Hermeneutical Thoughts of Imam Khomeini). Since hermeneutics is the foundation for mystical interpretation, it is essential to discuss the various facets of this concept. In addition, knowledge of the various approaches to hermeneutics can assist us in comprehending the fundamental assumptions of mystical hermeneutics and comparing it to other subjective and sometimes unfounded forms of interpretation. Raqeb-Esfahani (502 AH) explains that interpretation is a type of hermeneutics and is primarily concerned with the analysis of words and phrases. Nevertheless, hermeneutics focuses primarily on meanings and sentences (المفردات). (Imam Khomeini, 2009, p 4)

According to Fazil ibn-Yasar, the Quran has both connotative and denotative meanings. Imam Sadeq (PBHU) has stated in this regard that denotation refers to the literal meaning of the ayah, whereas the truth of hermeneutical knowledge refers to the connotative aspect. Some of these connotations are from the past and have yet to be realized. Quran is an eternal source of meaning and a source of illumination like the sun (Basa'er al-Darajat: 216, cited in Diyari Bidgoli 2013, pp 119-120).

1.2 The Concept of Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics' etymology can be traced back to the Greek verb hermeneuin, which means to interpret. The term relates to Hermes (Mercurius), a methodological character from Greek mythology. There is an association between Hermes and Prophet Idris among hermeneutics proponents (Baharun, 2011). Hermeneutics, sometimes known as hermeneutics, is an Indonesian word derived from the English word hermeneutics. This final word is derived from the Greek verb hermeneuo, which means to verbally convey one's thoughts. According to Hardiman (2012), the verb also denotes functioning as an interpreter and translating. Jane Dammen Mc Auliffe, who was cited by Saladin Kafrawi and Abdul Mustaqim, claimed that the word hermeneutics is etymologically related to the Greek verb hermeneuin, which means to explain, interpret, and express (Kafrawi & Mustaqim, 2009).

Sumaryono (2002) states that the word "hermeneutics" is derived from the Greek and recalls the image of the mythological character Hermes, who is tasked with conveying Jupiter's message to Humans. Hermes is pictured as having many stems and wings; in Latin, he is known as Mercurius. It was Hermes' responsibility to convert the words from the god on Mount Olympus into a tongue that was recognized as human. Therefore, Hermes' role is crucial because if the gods' message is misinterpreted, consequences will be fatal for all people. Hermes should be able to translate or repeat a message in a language that the hearer

can understand. As a result, Hermes came to represent an envoy who was tasked with carrying out a certain mission.

Subsequently, the same thing was further explained by a number of viewpoints, according to which Hermes was the god responsible for communicating divine messages to humans in Greek mythology. Hermeneutics, which originated in Greek tradition as a means of interpreting the Bible, was later extended by theologians and philosophers in the West as a general approach to interpretation in the social sciences and humanities (Baharun, 2011).

Adian Husaini claims that the term "hermeneutics" refers to a methodology used to understand Biblical (Old and New Testament) writings that originated in the Greek tradition (Husaini, 2007).

The philosophical approach known as hermeneutics is named after Hermes, who in Greek mythology was the god of fertility, thieves, travellers, and lies. Hermes was tasked with bridging the gap between the two worlds to carry messages between the gods and the inhabitants of earth. His job was to explain divine mysteries that were beyond the scope of human language in terms that common mortals could comprehend. Without such a message, the two realms would remain forever apart, mysterious to one another, and incomprehensible to one another. Hermeneutics' goal is to close knowledge gaps, and for a long time, its focus was on the interpretation of sacred texts. (Ricoeur, 2004, p 28)

Hermes, the Greek deity of fertility, thieves, travellers, and lies, inspired the philosophical approach known as hermeneutics. It was Hermes' responsibility to cross the line dividing the two worlds and carry communications between the gods and the inhabitants of earth. It was his responsibility to convey divine mysteries into terms that ordinary mortals might understand. Without such a messenger, the two realms would continue to exist apart, at a distance that makes them both enigmatic and unfathomable. The basic tenet of Ricoeur's hermeneutic philosophy is that "language" is a fundamental aspect of who we are in the universe, and that the difficulty of understanding is a trait of all language, not only religious writings. Maitland draws inspiration from other theories, such as Benjamin, who is renowned for rejecting the relevance of the original text and emphasizing the storyteller's knowledge. This demonstrates the translator's growing importance. When meaning is 'concealed' rather than 'given,' symbols, like Hermes, become a hermeneutic difficulty; hidden in plain sight, they encourage mystery and ambiguity: I claimed that the symbol is constructed from a semantic angle in a way that it conveys meaning via another meaning. A primary, literal, materialistic, frequently physical, and ontological meaning that is in no manner offered outside of this indirect identification is referred to in it. Because the symbol says more than it actually says and because it never stops speaking to us, it prompts thought and demands interpretation. (ibid)

1.3 The Role of Hermeneutics in Islam

Muslims are encouraged to use a hermeneutical approach when reading the Qur'an, and the sacred scripture of Islam. Arkoun (2002, p 1)seeks to introduce a new problematization of revelation through the use of the Qur'an in his book, The Unthought-of in Contemporary Islamic Thought . For a comparative study of Revelation as a historical, linguistic, cultural,

and anthropological expression of thought shared by the three "revealed" religions, Arkoun proposed a research agenda in an earlier work published in French under the title *Lectures du Coran* (Arkoun, 1987, p. 246). He says "my purpose was then to and still is, to reverse the approach of Revelation from the dogmatic theological systems developed by competing, opposed, self-promoting ethno-cultural groups during the middle ages, to the critical, deconstructive analysis of social sciences applied to the rich topic of religious phenomena."(ibid)

1.4 Hermeneutics and Holy Quran

The hermeneutical approach, on the other hand, is the only technique that produces an authentic reading of the Qur'an and the correct conclusions (Abu Zaid, 2000, p 9). Hermeneutics, which is presently widely used to criticize the Qur'an, is one of the sciences taught at a number of western universities and one of the pillars of western science in destroying the meaning and purity of the Qur'an (Mahmood, 2006, p 323). He mentioned that the Qur'an is sometimes referred to as the greatest Arabic work. The most significant of the Qur'an's remarkable features is arguably its language. People who discuss the Quranic self-image would say that the Qur'an itself placed emphasis on this idea, as evidenced by the verses' distinctive language. However, when scholars examined the Qur'an as a miracle, its language and style took center stage in their research. Early Islamic scholars who studied the Qur'an and its interpretation viewed it as a manifestation of the supernatural and approached it from this angle. He made an effort to summarize the distinctive qualities of the Qur'an that made it a wonderful text. (ibid)

Muslims are encouraged to use a hermeneutical approach when reading the Qur'an, which is considered to be the sacred book of Islam. Indeed, this aspect of the meaning of hermeneia can be illustrated by the problem of Qur'anic hermeneutics. The Prophet (PBWH), who lived in a particular spatiotemporal universe with its own social, cultural, and historical horizon, received the Qur'an in Arabic as a revelation. The most significant component of the Qur'an's miraculous qualities is certainly its language, which is unique in many verses. However, when scholars examined the Qur'an as a miracle, its language and style took center stage in their research. Early Islamic scholars who studied and interpreted the Qur'an regarded it as a miraculous occurrence.(ibid)

Pink (2014) states that early modern Quranic interpretation offered new perspectives, but it failed to provide an explicit, consistently applied hermeneutical model to achieve its goal of reading the Quran in light of the requirements of the age. This motivated Muslim thinkers beginning in the 1940s to develop a more sophisticated and consistent. This led Muslim thinkers beginning in the 1940s to develop a more sophisticated and coherent hermeneutical foundation for a modern exegesis, and in doing so, they "went beyond the revivalist dogma of going by the literal interpretation of the Quran. In light of Pink's comment, this essay will quickly go over three late modern Quranic hermeneutical theories that have been around since the middle of the twentieth century. These are the hermeneutical philosophies of Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, Muhammad Shahrur, and Fazlur Rahman. This essay will make an effort to place the historical setting of these contemporary hermeneutical approaches. It will further investigate if these ideas have what it takes to reorient the Muslim world, depending

on perceptions they garner from traditional academics and the bulk of the Muslim community.

1.5 The Modern Muslim Hermeneutical Theorists

1.5.1 Fazlur Rahman

Among contemporary Muslim hermeneutical thinkers, Fazlur Rahman (1919–88) is probably the most frequently mentioned. He actually had Pakistani ancestry, and Oxford was where he finished his undergraduate degree. He lived and studied in Chicago for the remaining twenty years of his life. Rahman believed that the traditional Islamic approach was insufficient for comprehending the Quran (Gokkir n.d.). In particular, when it came to explaining the chronology of the Quran, he considered the work of earlier traditional Quranic scholars to be unsystematic (Zainol 2018). The "double movement" approach of interpretation was developed by Rahman as a result (Rahman 1984). This process involves two steps. The first one has to do with how crucial it is to have a historical stance when studying the Quran in order to place it within the sociohistorical setting in which it was revealed. This action, in Rahman's opinion, satisfies the requirement of moral and intellectual integrity (Zainol 2018) and will aid in comprehending "the meaning of the al-Qur'an in terms of the specific tenets that constitute responses to specific situations" (Rahman 1984, p. 6). The second step is "to generalize those particular answers and proclaim them as declarations pertaining to broader moral-social objectives that can be "distilled" from specific texts in light of the socio-historical context and the frequently stated rations legis" (Rahman 1984, p. 6).

1.5.2 Muhammad Shahrur

As a qualified civil engineer, Muhammad Shahrur (1938–2019) completed his graduate work in soil mechanics and foundation engineering at the University of Dublin in 1972. He was a skilled civil engineer who studied engineering in Moscow. The way Shahrur interprets the Quran represents a clear departure from earlier Quranic interpretations. His method relies on rational analysis, which, in Shahrur's opinion (2009), is the only way to understand the meaning of the Quran. Shahrur was adamantly traditionalist in his approach to Islamic scholarship. He disapproves of the Salafi traditionalists' dogmatism and considers their claim to possess absolute knowledge of the Quran to be blasphemous (Shahrur 2009).

Here are a few main themes in Shahrur's hermeneutical theory. For instance, he claims that there is no "synonymy" in the Quran, which is defined as "two terms being neither semantically nor etymologically identical" (Christmann 2009, p. 21). Additionally, he contended that the Quranic interpretation process should adhere to the tripartite concept of existence, which is defined by the three coordinates "being," "progressing," and "becoming." The knowledge of the holy language is a continual "becoming," even though "being" is expressed in the word of God (Mudhoon 2009). Shahrur's method does not place an excessive amount of emphasis on the Quran's linguistic features. The validity of a work, in his words (2009, p. 484), "does not rest in its aesthetic or rhetorical beauty but in the substance and veracity of its content.

1.5.3 Nasar Hamid Abu Zayd

Nasar Hamid Abu Zayd was born in Egypt and lived from 1943 to 2010. Prior to continuing his education at the American University in Cairo and the University of Pennsylvania, he studied Islamic and Arabic at the University of Cairo. He taught Arabic language and literature, which perhaps explains why his hermeneutical approach tended to be inspired by literary studies principles. According to Abu Zayd, the Quran should be studied as any other work of literature, free from the influence of any particular religion (Rahman, 2001). He thought that through comprehending the historical setting in which the Quran was given, particularly seventh-century Arabia, one may understand the Quran's original meaning (Rahman 2001).

1.6. Methodology

1.6.1 Data collection

Data of the current study are selected verses taken from the Glorious Qur'an compared with their English translation involving the translator Abdullah Yousef Ali (1989), in translating the Qur'anic verses from Arabic into English.

1.6.2 Data analysis

The analysis of the current study is to investigate the role of hermeneutics in interpreting and understanding the Quranic verses in order to gain a deeper understanding of these texts and to develop a systematic approach to interpreting them. The analysis of this paper is based on interpretation of the Arabic grammarian Fadel Al Samarria in interpreting the Quranic verses. The verses are taken from glorious Qur'an and compared them with their English translations

Sample No.(1)

١. وَإِذِ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرِبَهُمْ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا مِنْ رِزْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْلُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ

(سورة البقرة) (60)

Interpretation

"And remember Moses prayed for water for his people; We said: "Strike the rock with thy staff." Then **gushed** forth therefrom twelve springs. Each group knew its own place for water. So eat and drink of the sustenance provided by Allah, and do no evil nor mischief on the (face of the) earth."

(Translated by Yusuf Ali) (Surah Al-Baqarah)

۲ وَقَطَعْنَا لَهُمْ اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ أَسْبَاطًا أُمَمًا ۚ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ إِذِ اسْتَسْقَاهُ قَوْمُهُ أَنْ اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ ۖ فَانْبَجَسَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا ۚ قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَشْرِبَهُمْ ۖ وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْغَمَامَ ۖ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَنَّٰنَ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ ۖ أَكَلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ ۗ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ ۖ ١٦٠

(سورة الاعراف) (160)

Interpretation

"We divided them into twelve tribes or nations. We directed Moses by inspiration, when his (thirsty) people asked him for water: "Strike the rock with thy staff": out of it there **gushed forth** twelve springs: Each group knew its own place for water. We gave them the shade of clouds, and sent down to them manna and quails, (saying): "Eat of the good things We have provided for you": (but they rebelled); to Us they did no harm, but they harmed their own souls."

(Translated by Yusuf Ali) (Surah Al-A-raf)

Analysis

It is important to note that the role of hermeneutics in translating the word "**gushed forth**" in the Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 60 by the translator Yusuf Ali is to understand the meaning of the word in its original context and to convey that meaning accurately in the target language. The interpretation of this verse "**And (remember) when Moses prayed for water for his people, We said: 'Strike the rock with thy staff.' Then gushed forth therefrom twelve springs. Each group knew its own place for water.**"

The word "**gushed forth**" in this context refers to the sudden and forceful flow of water from the rock that Moses struck with his staff. Hermeneutics can help us understand the linguistic and cultural context in which this word was used and how it should be accurately translated into another language. For example, a hermeneutic approach may involve analyzing the root of the word "**gushed**" and its related terms in the original Arabic, as well as examining the context in which it was used in the Quran and other relevant religious texts. Additionally, it may involve considering the various interpretations and commentaries of this verse by scholars and theologians over the centuries, to gain a deeper understanding of its meaning and significance. Based on this approach, Yusuf Ali chose the term "**gushed forth**" to convey the sudden and powerful flow of water that emerged from the rock when it was struck by Moses' staff. This translation of the word انفجر وانبجس does not accurately capture the meaning of the original Arabic word and conveys the intended message of the verse to English-speaking readers.

It is important to note that the words "**انفجر**" and "**انبجس**" do not have similar meanings in Arabic, and cannot be used interchangeably in some contexts. Both words do not refer to the sudden and forceful emergence of something, such as water or an explosion. However,

there are semantic differences in the nuances of meaning between these two words, which can vary depending on the context in which they are used. In the context of the Qur'anic verse in question, the word انفجر could be used to describe the sudden emergence of water from the rock greatly when Moses struck it with his staff while the word انبجس could be used to describe the sudden emergence of water from the rock smoothly. The translator Yusuf Ali chose to use the term "gushed forth" to translate both "انفجر" and "انبجس" in this verse, which is a common translation choice among English translations of the Quran. He had to take the semantic differences between these words. It is important to note that translation is a complex and nuanced process, and there is often not a direct one-to-one correspondence between words in different languages. Translators must carefully consider the nuances of meaning, context, and cultural connotations when choosing how to translate a particular word or phrase. While it is possible for translators to make mistakes or overlook certain nuances, it is important to approach translation with an understanding of the complexities involved and to strive for accuracy and clarity in conveying the meaning of the original text.

Sample No. (2)

1. أَنَا أَعْطَيْتَكَ الْكَوْثَرَ (١) فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرْ (٢) إِنَّ شَانِيكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ (٣)

(سورة الكوثر) (2)

Interpretation

"To thee have We granted the Fount (of Abundance). Therefore to thy Lord turn in Prayer and Sacrifice. For he who hateth thee, he will be cut off (from Future Hope)."

(Translated by Yusuf Ali) (Surah al-Kawthar)

2. وَقَدَيْنَاهُ بِذَبْحٍ عَظِيمٍ

(سورة الصافات) (107)

Interpretation

"And We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice"

(Translated by Yusuf Ali) (Surah As-Saffat.)

Analysis

It is important to note that in the context of interpreting the words "الذبح" and "النحر" in Islamic law, hermeneutics plays an important role in understanding the meanings and nuances of these terms. One of the key principles of hermeneutics is that interpretation must

take into account the historical and cultural context in which the text was written. This is particularly important in the case of Islamic law, which has evolved over many centuries and has been shaped by various cultural and historical factors. To understand the meaning of "الذبح" and "النحر" in Islamic law, it is therefore important to consider the context in which these terms are used, including the religious beliefs and practices of the time and the specific legal and cultural traditions that have shaped Islamic law. Another important principle of hermeneutics is the idea that interpretation is a dynamic and ongoing process, rather than a fixed or static one. This means that the meanings of "الذبح" and "النحر" have different meanings. The word النحر is used only for **camels** while the word الذبح is used for all types of animals. In this case the translator must take the hermeneutics into consideration in giving accurate interpreting these the words "الذبح" and "النحر". He must put them between brackets in order to be more obvious for readers, for the word الذبح :

" We ransomed him with a momentous sacrifice (**for types of animals**)"

And for the word النحر:

"Therefore to thy Lord turn in Prayer and Sacrifice (**for camels**)"

Sample No.(3)

1. وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا

(سورة الجن) (١٥)

Interpretation

"But those who **swerve**, - they are (but) fuel for Hell-fire -"

2. إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

(سورة الممتحنة) (8)

Interpretation

"Indeed, Allah loves those who **act justly**."

Analysis

Based on the translations provided, it is noted that the translator Yusuf didn't apply hermeneutics accurately in interpreting the words "القاسطون" and "المقسطون" which they are semantically different. Hermeneutics is a method of interpreting text, particularly religious and philosophical texts, by understanding their meanings within their cultural, historical, and linguistic contexts. To accurately apply hermeneutics, one would need to consider not just

the literal translation of words, but also the cultural, historical, and linguistic context in which they were used. Without this context, it is possible to misinterpret or misunderstand the meaning of words or concepts. Therefore, it would be necessary to know more about Yusuf's process of interpretation and the context in which these words were used to determine whether or not he applied hermeneutics accurately. He must give accurate interpretation for these words. He succeeded in interpreting the second one "المقسطون" as "who act justly" but he did not give accurate interpretation for the word "القاسطون". In order to be more accurate and obvious for reader, it should be interpreted as "those who act unjustly".

Sample no.(4)

١. إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا فَأُولَئِكَ مَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا

(سورة النساء) (97)

Interpretation

"Indeed, those whom the angels take [in death] while wronging themselves - [the angels] will say, "In what [condition] were you?" They will say, "We were oppressed in the land." The angels will say, "Was not the earth of Allah spacious [enough] for you to emigrate therein?" For those, their refuge is Hell - and evil it is as a destination."

٢. الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنفُسِهِمْ فَأَلْقُوا السَّلْمَ مَا كُنَّا نَعْمَلُ مِنْ سُوءٍ بَلَىٰ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ النحل

(سورة النحل) (28)

Interpretation

"The ones whom the angels take in death [while] wronging themselves, and [who] then offer submission, [saying], "We were not doing any evil." But, yes! Indeed, Allah is Knowing of what you used to do."

Analysis

It can be noted that the phrase "تتوفاهم الملائكة" and "توفاهم الملائكة" are both mentioned in the Qur'an (Surah An-Nahl, verse 97 and Surah An-Nisa 28). The translation of these phrases can vary depending on the context and the interpreter's understanding of the words and their linguistic, cultural, and historical context. These phrases are semantically different. In the verse, the word "توفاهم" is often translated as "to take" or "to cause to die". However, the precise meaning of the phrase "تتوفاهم الملائكة" and "توفاهم الملائكة" is a matter of interpretation and may require hermeneutic analysis to fully understand the intended meaning. Hermeneutics can help interpreters to understand the meaning of the words by analyzing the linguistic, cultural, and historical context in which they were used. This analysis can include examining the grammar and syntax of the words, exploring the meanings of the words in their original language, and considering the social and historical

context in which they were used. Therefore, hermeneutics plays a crucial role in interpreting the words of "تتوفاهم الملائكة" and "توفاهم الملائكة" by Yusuf Ali. By using a hermeneutic approach, interpreters can provide a more accurate and nuanced understanding of the meaning of the words, which is essential in translating religious texts. The translator should give more accurate interpretation for the above mentioned phrases because these phrases are semantically different, first "تتوفاهم الملائكة" is used for those who were oppressed and wronged themselves. They became few in number, and then it was said, "تتوفاهم".

While "تتوفاهم الملائكة" is used for those who were only wronging themselves and were not oppressed. When their number increased, it was said as "تتوفاهم".

Results:

As a result, the role of hermeneutics in understanding and interpreting the religious Qur'anic words is crucial for accurate comprehension of Islamic teachings and beliefs. Even if there are not enough accurate interpretations by Yusuf Ali or any other translator, proper application of hermeneutics can lead to the following results:

1. Clarity of meaning: Hermeneutics can help clarify the meaning of difficult or ambiguous words and phrases in the Quran. This can lead to a better understanding of Islamic teachings and beliefs.
2. Contextual understanding: Hermeneutics can help place the Qur'anic text in its historical and cultural context. This can provide a deeper understanding of the text and the context in which it was revealed.
3. Consensus building: Hermeneutics can help build a consensus among scholars and readers on the interpretation of difficult or controversial Qur'anic passages. This can help promote unity and a shared understanding of Islamic teachings and beliefs.
4. Critical engagement: Hermeneutics can encourage critical engagement with the Qur'anic text, leading to a deeper understanding of the text and its relevance to contemporary issues and challenges.
5. Respect for the text: Hermeneutics can promote respect for the Qur'anic text by encouraging careful analysis and interpretation of the text. This can help prevent misunderstandings and misinterpretations of Islamic teachings and beliefs.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the role of hermeneutics is essential for understanding and interpreting the religious Qur'anic words accurately. While Yusuf Ali's interpretations may not always be accurate or sufficient, proper application of hermeneutics can lead to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the text. Therefore, it is crucial for scholars and

translators to approach the Qur'anic text with a sound hermeneutic methodology. This can include taking into account the historical and cultural context, analyzing the linguistic and literary features of the text, and engaging with contemporary issues and challenges. Furthermore, it is important for readers of the Quran to approach the text with an open and critical mind, seeking to understand its teachings and beliefs within the broader context of Islamic tradition and thought.

In summary, the application of hermeneutics is vital for accurate and comprehensive interpretation of the Quranic text, especially in the absence of accurate interpretations by individual translators.

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