

Discourse Twenty-One: Clarity, Ambiguity, and Interpretation in the Qur'an

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هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٠٤﴾

“It is He who sent down upon thee the Book wherein are clear verses that are the Mother of the Book and other verses that are ambiguous. Those in whose hearts is doubt and divergence follow the ambiguities in it seeking discord and to interpret them. However, no one knows their interpretation save Allah and those who are steadfast in gaining knowledge. They say we believe in it, all is from our Lord. Yet none remember save those possessed of minds.”²

The meaning of these words

Morphologically, the word muhkam (clear) comes from the root hakama which means an object that nothing can penetrate, take apart, and destroy. Thus, words such as ahkam, tahkam, hakm (meaning judgment), hikmah (meaning wisdom), and hikmah (meaning harnessing a horse) all have the meaning of firmness and solidity.

Mutashabih (ambiguous) means things that are similar to each other in some qualities and aspects.

Ta'wil (interpretation) means the referral and return of one thing to another.

The terms muhkam and mutashābih according to the Qur'an

In some verses the whole Qur'an is identified as muhkam³ and in others mutashābih⁴. Also, in verse seven of Surat 'Imrān some of the Qur'an is considered muhkam and the rest mutashābih. This same verse describes muhkam verses as “umm al-kitāb” (Mother of the Book).

It must be noted that the muhkam-ness or solidity of the entire Qur'an existed before the Book was revealed⁵ and the mutashābih-ness or similarity of the entire Book means that all its verses have a single style—they all possess a pleasant order and solid form, describe truths in a uniform manner, and guide people towards Truth. Thus, here muhkam and mutashābih possess meanings different from what is usual in the whole of the Qur'an.

Considering that the prime meaning of umm is the source, referent, and refuge of objects, the term umm al-kitāb means that the referent (to understand) mutashābih verses are the muhkam ones. In this verse, muhkam and mutashābih are opposites. Then, the verse speaks of people whose hearts have been afflicted with doubt and deviation from Truth and follow mutashābih verses because they seek discord and 'interpretation'.

This shows that a mutashābih verse is one the meaning and intent of which cannot be understood by just listening to it; rather, there is doubt between various meanings until muhkam verses are referred to and its meaning is made clear. Hence, a mutashābih verse becomes muhkam by muhkam verses however a muhkam verse is muhkam in and of itself.

For instance, in verse five of Surat Tā Hā (20:5) it is stated:

﴿الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى﴾

“The Rahmān (Beneficent) is established upon the Throne.”

A person who hears this verse will not understand it. However, if, for instance, they refer to verse eleven of Surat al-Shawrā' (42:11), they will realize that the meaning of establishment upon the Throne is that God is predominant over all of existence not that there is a place where He rests which would necessitate that He be material—which is impossible for God:

﴿...لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ...﴾

“There is nothing like Him...”

Another example can be found in Surat al-Qiyāmah (75:23):

﴿إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةٌ﴾

“Looking towards their Lord.”

And Sūrat al-An‘ām (6: 103):

﴿... لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ﴾

“Eyes do not perceive Him and He perceives the eyes.”

By referring the first verse to the second, we understand that the ‘looking’ indicated in the first verse is not physical.

This is also correct for abrogative [nāsikh] and abrogated [mansūkh] verses. When we refer the abrogated verse to the abrogative one we realize that the abrogated verse comprised a precept that was only applicable until the nāsikh was revealed.[6](#)

Mutashābih verses indicate a specific intent

A person who carefully studies the whole Qur’an will without doubt not even find one verse lacking signification and explanation.

There is no verse that does not indicate its signification. This signification may either be a single one that a person who is familiar with the discourse will understand or several which may be mistaken with each other. Even so, all these meanings together certainly cover a true and real meaning and intent, otherwise there would be no signification.

This true meaning is not a stranger to the obvious principles of the Qur’an such as existence of the Creator, monotheism, appointment of prophets, canonization of precepts, and so on. It is harmonious with these principles which necessitate and entail that specific meaning. Among all the possible significations, it clarifies a truth. Some verses elucidate others and some verses are the root and source of others.

An attentive person who examines the verse we are discussing (3:7) will have no doubt that muhkamāt are verses that comprise clear and certain Qur’anic principles and mutashābihāt are verses whose meanings are made clear using those principles.

Why are some verses mutashābih?

Some might say: true, subsidiaries must be applied to principles and this is not specific to the Qur’an but this does not necessitate that the Qur’an has mutashābih.

In answer I must say that the reason for mutashābih in the Qur'an is twofold. There are two types of knowledge imparted in the Qur'an:

The first type consists of divine teachings that are beyond the domain of matter and the senses. However, normal intellects halt here and are in doubt as to whether the meaning is physical. For instance, in Sūrat al-Fajr (89: 14, 22) it is stated:

﴿ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَبِالْمِرْصَادِ ﴾

“Verily your Lord lies in ambush.”

﴿ ...وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ ﴾

“And your Lord came...”

These statements are fashioned for a mind that is familiar with tangibles, and the verses seem to signify physical properties. However, when we refer to related principles which repudiate matter and corporeality in such matters, the initial (physical) meaning is removed from the mind.

This pertains to all non-material and transcendent knowledge and it is not specific to the Holy Qur'an. This method is common in other divine books in teachings that have not been altered or distorted and also in theological discussions in philosophy. The Qur'an indicates this where it states:

﴿ ...أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَهُ بِقَدَرِهَا ﴾

“He sent down water from the sky that flowed in every channel to the extent of its capacity...”⁷

﴿ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ * وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدِينًا لَعَلِّي حَكِيمٌ ﴾

“Verily We have made the Qur'an an Arabic book that you may understand and it is with Us in the Mother of the Book, high in dignity and correct in foundation.”⁸

As you can see these verses make it clear that the Qur'anic wisdom is highly exalted. Even so, every individual understands it differently and to a certain extent. Thus are the mutashābih verses of the Qur'an. The fault comes from the reader not the words of God.

The second type is comprised of matters related to social norms and subsidiary precepts. This type also encompasses abrogative [nāsikh] and abrogated [mansūkh] verses. These verses are abrogated

because the reasons for their establishment were superseded. Also, the Qur'an has been revealed gradually.

These two issues, i.e. *nāsikh* and *mansūkh*, in the Qur'an and gradualness of the Qur'an's revelation lead to *tashābuh* (i.e. the property of being *mutashābih*) in the Qur'an. Nevertheless, this *tashābuh* is resolved by referring *mutashābih* verses to *muhkam* ones and *mansūkh* to *nāsikh*.

Following *mutashābih* verses

God states:

﴿...فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ...﴾

“Those in whose hearts is doubt and divergence follow the ambiguities in it...”⁹

In explanation I must say that this verse divides the people into two groups according to their attitude towards the Qur'an. The first consists of deviants who seek sedition, to corrupt the people, to (re)interpret (the Qur'an), and follow *mutashābih* verses. The other group is composed of those with firm knowledge and steadfast hearts who apply *muhkam* in order to employ *mutashābih*.

This explanation makes it clear that by 'following *mutashābih* verses' practical adherence is meant not belief. It does not mean that believing in *mutashābih* is blameworthy, rather that it is wrong to exploit them in practice, seeking sedition and reinterpretation of verses. Clearly this culpability only arises if one follows *mutashābih* verses without referring them to *muhkam* ones.

If we refer *mutashābih* to *muhkam* and understand and conform to the signification of the *mutashābih* verses, we are in truth adhering to *muhkam* not *mutashābih*.

What is *ta'wīl* (interpretation)?

Basically, the word *ta'wīl* means referral. Therefore, the *ta'wīl* of *mutashābih* is the reference of a *mutashābih* verse and the *ta'wīl* of the Qur'an is the main source of Qur'anic wisdom. In order to clarify this matter, we must first know that exegetes¹⁰ have defined many meanings for the term *ta'wīl*, the most illustrious of which is: *ta'wīl* is a meaning that is contrary to the superficial meaning of the words.

This definition has become so established among recent exegetes that, even though the term *ta'wīl* primarily means referral, it has now come to mean 'that which is contrary to the appearance'. This meaning is not acceptable for the following reasons:

First, the usage of *ta'wīl* as 'against appearance' is something that emerged after the revelation of the Qur'an and there are no grounds for defining *ta'wīl*, which has been mentioned in the Qur'an sixteen

times, as ‘against appearance’. In fact, if one seriously contemplates the Qur’anic usage of this word, it will become clear that none of the meanings that exegetes have mentioned are completely accurate although a number of them are relatively correct.

Secondly, this definition of ta’wīl necessitates that there exist a series of meanings in the Qur’an that are in opposition to the appearance of the verses and because these appearances are against the muhkamāt of the Qur’an, they bring about subversion and deviation of the people. This would mean that there are contradictions among Qur’anic verses that cannot be resolved without stripping some verses of their formal meanings and restoring them to significations not understood by the general public.

If we maintain such a discrepancy in the Qur’an, the following argument would be invalid:

﴿ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا ﴾

“Why do they not ponder upon the Qur’an? If it was from other than Allah surely they would find within it much discrepancy.”¹¹

In order to fully understand this it must be noted that if the discrepancy between two verses is resolved by professedly ‘ta’wīl-ing’ one verse to another and saying that it has a meaning other than what it appears to mean, something known by no one but God (and those firm in knowledge), the verse with such a meaning will be completely invalid.

In explanation, we can also ta’wīl the statements of people in a similar manner, even ones that are surely lies. We could say that the apparent meaning is not meant rather the signification is the true meaning intended by the speaker, which others cannot understand!

In short, if we want to resolve discrepancies in the Qur’an in this manner, it is in opposition with what the previous verse (4:82) has declared. This verse clearly expresses that the Qur’an can be understood by the minds of the general public and they can discuss and contemplate it and there is no verse in the entire Qur’an whose intent is something contradictory to its Arabic wording or is some kind of riddle.

Even so, with our so-called ta’wīl we have forgotten these truths. Essentially, we cannot say that words that we believe to be elevated above normal statements and contradictory views, beyond reproach, perfect in every way, are to be ‘ta’wīl-ed’ in the same manner that one could ta’wīl lies and nonsense.

Now I will first define ta’wīl in my own view and then bring various verses as proof in accordance with my exegetical style.

Ta’wīl is the real external truth upon which Qur’anic statements, including precepts, exhortations, and wisdom, are based. This truth exists in all Qur’anic verses whether muhkam or mutashābih. That verses have ta’wīl has nothing to do with them being mutashābih and their referral to muhkam.

Ta'waj is not specific to mutashabih verses. The whole Qur'an has ta'waj, muhkam has ta'waj, and mutashabih also has ta'waj. Ta'waj is something apart from textual concepts and meanings; therefore, words cannot impart it. It consists of exalted truths that words cannot contain. God has moderated these lofty truths into words so that they may become closer to something we are able to comprehend. These words are analogies used to explain things in a way we may better understand. The Qur'an states:

﴿ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُبِينِ * إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ * وَإِنَّهُ فِي أُمِّ الْكِتَابِ لَدِينًا لَعَلِّي حَكِيمٌ ﴾

“By the Book that makes things clear, verily We have made the Qur'an an Arabic book that you may understand and it is with Us in the Mother of the Book, high in dignity and correct in foundation.”¹²

Bearing in mind the purport of this verse and similar verses that implicitly or explicitly express this meaning, it becomes clear that the Qur'an possesses a lofty status in the transcendent realm where it is beyond the understanding of the people; however, in order to make it more accessible to human understanding it has been presented this way. That lofty reality that is beyond general understanding is called ta'waj and it pertains to the whole Qur'an, whether muhkam or mutashabih.

Several proofs from the Qur'an

1. Ta'waj of the deeds of Khidr ('a): In the story of Moses ('a) and Khidr ('a) the word ta'waj is used where Khidr tells Moses:

﴿ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِتَأْوِيلِ مَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ... ﴾

“I will soon inform you of the ta'waj of that for which you could not bear patience.”¹³

And at the end of the narration he says:

﴿ ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْتَطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ... ﴾

“This is the ta'waj of that for which you could not bear patience.”¹⁴

Now we will examine the account to understand the meaning of ta'waj. Khidr ('a) did three things that according to Moses ('a) did not seem right and he protested:

﴿ ... حَتَّى إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا ... ﴾

“When they embarked upon the boat, he made a hole in it...”¹⁵

﴿...حَتَّى إِذَا لَقِيَ غُلَامًا فَقَتَلَهُ ...﴾

“When they met a young man he slew him...”¹⁶

﴿...حَتَّى إِذَا أَتَى أَهْلَ قَرْيَةٍ اسْتَطْعَمَ أَهْلُهَا فَأَبَوْا أَنْ يُضَيِّفُوهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنْقَضَ فَأَقَامَهُ ...﴾

“When they came to the people of a town, they asked them for food but they refused them hospitality. They came to a wall that was close to falling down and he repaired it...”¹⁷

These were acts that Khidr (‘a) performed and Moses (‘a) protested each of them. That is to say, the semblance that Moses perceived for these deeds were as follows:

﴿أَخْرَقَتَهَا لِنُجْرَتٍ أُخْرَىٰ لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا إِمْرًا ...﴾

“Did you make a hole in the boat to drown its passengers? Thou has indeed done a dreadful thing.”¹⁸

﴿أَقْتَلْتَ نَفْسًا زَكِيَّةً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا نُكْرًا ...﴾

“Have you killed an innocent person and that not for retaliation against a person slain? Thou has indeed done a horrible thing.”¹⁹

﴿لَوْ شِئْتَ لَاتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ...﴾

“If you wanted, you could have taken payment for it.”²⁰

Clearly Moses (‘a) objects to the deeds of Khidr (‘a) because they do not have appropriate outward appearances.

Now, let us examine the ta’wīl of Khidr (‘a), that is, the true and good aspects and designations of these deeds:

﴿أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسَاكِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْبَحْرِ فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَاءَهُمْ مَلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ غَصْبًا﴾

“As for the boat, it belonged to some poor people who worked upon the sea. I intended to mar it

because there was a king before them who seized every ship by force.”²¹

﴿ وَأَمَّا الْغُلَامُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنَيْنِ فَخَشِينَا أَنْ يُرْهِقَهُمَا طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا * فَأَرَدْنَا أَنْ يُبَدِّلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِنْهُ زَكَاءً ﴿ وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا ﴾

“As for the young man, his parents were people of faith. I feared that he would impose upon them rebellion and disbelief. Thus I intended that their Lord give to them in exchange a son better than him in purity and closer in affection.”²²

﴿ وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُ كَنْزٌ لَهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَا ﴿ ... أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنْزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِنْ رَبِّكَ ﴾

“As for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city. Beneath the wall there was a treasure cache belonging to them and their father had been a righteous man. So your Lord intended that they become full adults and unearth their treasure as a blessing from your Lord.”²³

After Khidr (‘a) gave his answers for each of his deeds, he gave another comprehensive answer for all the criticisms of Moses (‘a):

﴿ ... وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُ عَنْ أَمْرِي ... ﴾

“And I did not do these things willfully...”²⁴

As my dear readers see, the meaning of ta’w²l in these verses is for everything to be referred to its own aspect and designation and to realize its true significance. For instance the word ‘zadan’ in Farsi designates chastisement however ‘rag zadan’ signifies the aspect of medical treatment.

It is true that, lexically, the word ta’w²l means ‘referral’ and it includes all kinds of return and reference.

For instance, when we say ‘John came’ the point of reference of this sentence is that ‘John’ must have ‘come’ in the external world. However, the word ta’w²l is not idiomatically used in such cases; rather, it denotes the specific reference and return to true significance the like of which we saw in the verses regarding Moses (‘a) and Khidr (‘a).

2. Ta’w²l in the story of Joseph (‘a): In the story of Joseph the word ta’w²l is repeatedly used. For instance, it is said:

﴿ ... وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا وَقَالَ يَا أَبَتِ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُؤْيَايَ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًّا ﴾

“And he lifted his parents upon the throne and they fell down before him in prostration. And he said O father! This is the ta’w^ql of my dream from before. Verily my Lord has made it true...”²⁵

The earlier dream of Joseph (‘a) was as follows:

﴿ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ ... ﴾

“O father! Verily I saw eleven stars and the sun and the moon. I saw them bowing down before me.”²⁶

Also, it is used in the verses regarding the dream of the king where the interpreters of dreams said that we do not know the ta’w^ql of distorted dreams. Finally, Joseph’s (‘a) friend from prison went to him and heard the ta’w^ql of the king’s dream from him.²⁷ It is also used in the case of the dreams of Joseph’s two prison companions who asked him to tell them the ta’w^ql of their dreams²⁸ and also where the Qur’an speaks of ta’w^ql-i ah^qd^qth which was taught to Joseph (‘a).²⁹

In all these cases the word ta’w^ql is used regarding events that are the reference and reality of the dream.

Dreams are aspects or examples of external truths and future events which are seen by a person who is asleep. In fact, that external truth is like the meaning, and the dream is like the form which clothes the meaning. In effect, ta’w^ql is related to that which is ‘ta’w^ql-ed’ (e.g. a dream that has an interpretation) in the same way that meaning is related to form or truth is related to metaphor.

With careful consideration it is evident that in both this story and the story of Moses (‘a) and Khidr (‘a) the meaning of ta’w^ql is the same.

3. Ta’w^ql in verses regarding the Resurrection: In some verses that discuss the Day of Resurrection, the term ta’w^ql is seen. For instance, in the following verse and with reference to the next verse we know that the nature of seeing things on the Day of Resurrection is not related to the senses we use in this world; just as the occurrence of these phenomena and the system governing that Day are different from what we are used to in this world.

﴿ ... هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا تَأْوِيلَهُ يَوْمَ يَأْتِي تَأْوِيلَهُ ﴾

“Do they look to anything save its ta’w^ql? The Day its ta’w^ql comes...”³⁰

﴿ لَقَدْ كُنْتَ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكَ غِطَاءَكَ فَبَصَرُكَ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ ﴾

“Verily you were in ignorance of these (truths) but We took away the veil from before you so today your eyes are sharp.”³¹

Of course this must be discussed in detail; however, here we merely intend to say that the notifications of the Qur’an and the statements of the prophets refer to significations that manifest on the Day of Judgment. However, this reference is not the same as the reference of prophecies of future events to that which will occur in the future.

To sum up the discussion, by preserving the lexical meaning of ta’wīl, i.e. referral, and careful consideration of verses containing this word, and also taking into account the truth that the Qur’an possesses a status above and beyond mere words and lexis before God, the Almighty, we clearly understand that ta’wīl of Qur’an is that lofty truth and hidden reality that is far from the grasp of general understanding. It is like a soul in regard to its body or the symbolized in relation to the symbol.

It is what God terms “Kitāb-i Hakīm” (Solid Book), meaning something that is the basis and reference of the wisdom and concepts in the Qur’an that has been revealed and made available to us. It is that which is neither from the class of words nor meanings; rather, it is something objective, real and external.³²

1. This is a translation of a Farsi translation of an original Arabic text by ‘Allamah Tabataba’i. The Farsi translation and original glosses were done by Mr. Hujjat Kirmānī.

2. Sūrat ‘Imrān 3:7.

3. Sūrat Hūd 11:1.

﴿ كِتَابٌ أَحْكَمَتْ آيَاتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ ... ﴾

“This is a Book whose verses have been established (for a specific intention) then when they are broken down they become detailed verses. It is a Book from the Wise and Aware.”

4. Sūrat al-Zumar 39:23.

﴿ كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانِيَ تَقْشَعِرُّ مِنْهُ جُلُودُ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ ثُمَّ تَلِينُ جُلُودُهُمْ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكِ اللَّهُ يَهْدِي بِهٖ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَمَنْ يُضَلِّلِ اللَّهُ فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ هَادٍ ﴾

“... a book whose verses are similar to each other and are repeated. By these verses the skin of those who fear their Lord trembles, then their skin and heart (their whole being) softens to the remembrance (and praise) of Allah. That is the guidance of Allah with which He guides who He will and whoever Allah leaves to stray will have no guidance.”

5. This is understood from verse one of Sūrat Hūd. Thus, its ‘solidity’ was elaborated and revealed gradually.

6. Tabataba’i explained the meaning of muhkam and mutashābih in detail in his “Tafsīr al-Mizān”. Refer to “Tafsīr al-Mizān” for more information.

7. Sūrat al-Ra’d 13:17.

8. Sūrat al-Zukhruf 43:3-4.

9. Sūrat ‘Imrān 3:7.

10. It must be noted that in the original Arabic text ‘Allamah Tabataba’i wrote the various meanings of ta’wīl and its difference with tafsīr (exegesis). However, for the sake of brevity, I (the original Arabic-Farsi translator) only included the most common definition and the ‘Allamah’s discussion regarding it. I also altered the style to make it more understandable for the respected readership.

11. Sūrat al-Nisā’ 4:82.

12. Sūrat al-Zukhruf 43:2-4.

13. Sūrat al-Kahf 18:78.

14. Sūrat al-Kahf 18:82.

- [15.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:71.
- [16.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:74.
- [17.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:77.
- [18.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:71.
- [19.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:74.
- [20.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:77.
- [21.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:79.
- [22.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:80–81.
- [23.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:82.
- [24.](#) Sūrat al-Kahf 18:82.
- [25.](#) Sūrat Yūsuf 12:100.
- [26.](#) Sūrat Yūsuf 12:4.
- [27.](#) Refer to verses 43–49 of Sūrat Yūsuf.
- [28.](#) Refer to verse 36 of Sūrat Yūsuf.
- [29.](#) Refer to verses 21 and 101 of Sūrat Yūsuf.
- [30.](#) Sūrat al-A‘raf 7:53.
- [31.](#) Sūrat Qaf 50:22.
- [32.](#) Extracted from the annual, “Ma‘ārif-e Ja‘farī”.

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