



Concise Principles in Tafseer & Qurânic Science (Part 2): Clear and Unclear Reasons for Revelation

Description

Concise principles in Tafseer (2)

The ﴿Asbaabun Nuzool﴾ (reasons for revelation) are of two types

1. ﴿Sareehâ﴾ (clear and unequivocal)

This is when the companion states ﴿the reason for the revelation of such and such a verse isâ﴾ |â﴿ or he mentions an occurrence or a question posed to the messenger then he or she says ﴿â﴾ |â﴿ then Allah revealedâ﴾ or ﴿â﴾ ..so Allah revealed.

Concerning the statement ﴿then Allah revealedâ﴾ on rare occasions this is mentioned concerning an occurrence that is not the cause for the revelation of the mentioned verse but this is rare. Similarly the statement of a companion ﴿we used to hold that such and such a verse was revealed due to thisâ﴾ while it overwhelms our suspicions that this is the reason for its revelation, that is not always clear cut and those instances and their narrations should be correctly followed up and analysed.

2. ﴿Ghair Sareehâ﴾ (Unclear)

This is when a companion says ﴿This verse was revealed concerning such and suchâ﴾ |â﴿ this statement could relate to the reason for revelation, but it could also be a reference to the tafseer or explanation of the verse. That is to say, for example ﴿this verse was revealed concerning the expiation of a vowâ﴾ , we understand that the intent is that the subject matter of the verse is such and such.

There is a subtle difference between the first type (Sareeh) and this one. In the first the companion clearly mentions ﴿ سبب نزوله﴾ Sababun Nuzooli hadhihil Ayah.. (The reason for the revelation of the ayah is﴾) while here the companion says: ﴿ نازلة حادحة﴾ Nazalat Haadihil Ayah fee kadhaa﴾ (This verse was revealed concerning﴾ ; the word to consider here is his statement ﴿ concerning﴾ . Does he intent by this statement the reason for revelation or does he intend merely to discuss and mention its subject matter.

And the examples of these categories of ﴿ أسباب نزول﴾ in the books of tafseer (exegesis of the qurâ﴾ aan) are many.

Wallahu Aâ﴾ lam

Category

1. Science of the Qur'aan
2. Tafseer

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