

Interpretation Methodology of Al Shaykh ‘Abd Al-Rahman Al Sa’di In His Taysir Al-Karim Al Rahman Fi Tafsir Kalam Al-Mannan

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to examine interpretation methodology of “Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan” which was written by al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa’di, a contemporary Muslim scholar in the Arabian Peninsular. Although the book is well known in Arabic Peninsular, but it is still unfamiliar elsewhere. This article is focused on the methodology and content of this book, based on literature reviews and writer’s analysis. This article points out that there are five aspect of the methodology and content in the book.

First, this book covers a wide range of Islamic knowledge which is consistent with the author’s knowledge.

Second, the book emphasizes on the aspect of creed, manner and conclusion.

Third, the method used in the interpretation is a combination of al-ma’thur and al-ra’y.

Fourth, the approach used by the author who gives priority to the authentic narration (riwayat), has increased the erudition of the book.

Fifth, apart of interpretation, the book also discusses briefly on structural of Arabic Language.

Key words: Interpretation methodology, Tafsir, Taysir al-Karim, Abd Rahman al-Sa’di, Muslim exegesis

Introduction

Muslim scholars and Islamic intellectuals had given a serious consideration to al-Qur’an from its early era.

They focused on the process of learning and interpreting the Holy Qur’an. This endeavor remains until these days. One of the Muslim intellectuals that involves in the area of interpretation is al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al- Sa’di rahimahullah (1307-1376H/1887-1956M), a prominent scholar in the Arab Peninsular. He had been recognized as an intellectual that enthusiastically contributed to the teaching of al-Qur’an al-Karim and other areas of disciplines in Islamic knowledge.

In this article, the discussion will be focusing on al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa’di’s methodology in writing his interpretation and commentary book entitled Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan.

Though this book is considered as a brief reference, yet it still has no appropriate attention from researchers, specifically in the higher learning institutions.

Materials and Methods

The methodology of an author can be identified via two methods (Bakr 1416H:196):

1. By means of the writer's explanation in the introduction of his book.
2. By examining the contents of his writing.

According to al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di (1997: 9-10), his aim and objective of writing the commentary book of Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan is to make the meanings as the 423

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main target and not to be responsive to the explanation of the terms.

The fact that he had mentioned is in accordance to the position of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah scholars, as what had been said by al-Imam Shihabuddin 'Abd al-Rahman Isma'il (1975:193), who is known as Abu Shamah al-Maqdisi, that besides the competency in the recitation of al-Qur'an, there is something more significance which is the understanding of its meanings, implementation of its commandments, awareness about its restrictions and efforts in attaining the sense of kashyah Allah (Fearing Allah) as a consequence of the good recitation.

Al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di (1997: 10), said that generally the methodology of writing on his commentary book is to mention the meaning of each verse which comes to mind at a glance, without being satisfied with what he had explained in the previous places. This suits to al-Qur'an itself that is categorized as mathani which repeatedly mentions the information, stories, verdicts, and all the beneficial topics based on the vast wisdoms behind there.

According to the mentioned perspective of al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di, it can be concluded that the general methodology of itself in the commentary book is to emphasize on the aspect of easiness and understanding to generate the comprehensive consciousness towards al-Qur'an.

The second approach of discovering the writer's methodology is via examining the contents of his writing. By this mean, it can be identified inclusively. One of the contents of Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan that was written by al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di is the affirmation of the faith of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah.

Results and Discussions

Affirmation of The faith of Ahl Sunnah Wa Al-Jamaah:

Al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di belongs to Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, the stream of al-Salaf al-Salih. He is seen to stress the faith which he believes in his writing. In his commentary book of Taysir al-Karim al-Rahman fi Tafsir Kalam al-Mannan, he is noticed to write accurately about Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah.

According to al-Lalika'I (1995: 71), Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah has two methods in explaining the authentic faith which are as the following:

1. The affirmation of the sacred faith.
2. The rejection of ambiguous faith of the group that oppose them.

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di was very concerned about the affirmation of some of the core principles of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah. Among the core principles which are concerned by al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di is the monotheistic belief, heaven and hell, great sinner among monotheists, faith and companions.

Monotheistic Belief (Islamic Monotheism):

According to Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah, the monotheistic belief is divided into two parts (Ismail Omar 1999: 77-78):

1. Tawhid al-Ma‘rifah
2. Tawhid al-Qasd wa al-Talab

Tawhid al-Ma‘rifah is the knowledge about the essence of Allah, His attributes and His names. Tawhid al-Ma‘rifah can be classified into two types which are:

1. Tawhid al-Rububiyah is to know and confess that Allah is the Lord of all things and to sole Him is all His actions.
2. Tawhid al-Asma wa al-Sifat is to believe and admit all the names and attributes of Allah as He describes Himself in al- Qur’an and the explanations by His Prophet in authentic prophetic traditions.

Tawhid al-Qasd wa al-Talab is to sole Allah who is deserved to be worshipped or enslaved in all forms of worships and none except Him. It is also known as Tawhid al-Uluhiyah or Tawhid al-Ibadah. The division of monotheistic belief into two major categories which are Tawhid al-Ma‘rifah and Tawhid al-Qasd wa al-Talab is based on the practical obligation of a monotheist slave. The division of monotheistic belief into three types which are Tawhid al-Rububiyah, Tawhid al-Asma wa al-Sifat and Tawhid al-Uluhiyah is due to the contents of monotheistic belief itself (Muhammad Khalil Harras 1986: 11).

This division is aligned with the contents of al- Qur’an and al-Sunnah. Scholars are seen to divide the monotheistic belief into these categories for the purpose of simplifying the comprehension of the messages hold by al- Qur’an and al-Sunnah. All the types of the monotheistic belief should be existed in oneself. The lack in any types of the monotheistic belief implies the lack of the whole monotheistic belief (al-Tamimi 1996: 47).

What is the methodology of the declaration of Tawhid al-Rububiyah, Tawhid al-Asma wa al-Sifat and Tawhid al-Uluhiyah applied by al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di? In the declaration of the three categories of the monotheistic belief, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di is identified to use the following methodology:

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Tawhid Al-Rububiyah:

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di frequently explains the Lordship of Allah (Rububiyah) whenever there is a Quranic verse related to this aspect (al-Sa‘di 1997: 23). For example, when

he draws a conclusion for chapter al-Fatihah, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di enlighten this chapter encompasses all the three categories of the monotheistic belief (al-Sa‘di 1997: 23). In addition, he also clarifies the relationship between Tawhid al-Rububiyah and Tawhid al-Uluhiyah. According to him, Tawhid al-Rububiyah requires every creation to practice Tauhid al-Uluhiyah (al-Sa‘di 1997: 28).

Tawhid Al-Asma Wa Al-Sifat:

In the discussion of Tawhid al-Asma wa al-Sifat, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di emphasizes that among the principle which is agreed by the early scholars and religious leader is the belief in Allah and His attributes and the acceptance of the connotations of those attributes. For instance, they believe that Allah’s names are al-Rahman (The Most Gracious) and al-Rahim (The Most Merciful), and Allah has the attribute of Rahmat (The Mercy). All the bounties and favors are resulted from Allah’s mercy. These apply to all the attributes of Allah (al-Sa‘di 1997: 9-22).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di is seen to apply this methodology in the declaration of all the attributes of Allah. For example, in Allah’s saying which means:

“ Then grant him protection so that he may hear the word of Allah ” (the Quran) (al-Tawbah 9:6).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di elucidates that in chapter al-Tawbah, verse 6, there is apparent evidence for Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah school of thought which says that al-Quran is the sayings of Allah, and not the creation. Allah has said with it, has associated it to Himself as an association of the attribute to the possessor of the attribute (al-Sa‘di 1997: 9-290).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di’s perspective on that is aligned with the principle propagated by Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama’ah, the stream of al-Salaf al-Salih that to affirm the names and the attributes of Allah as they are asserted by Allah and His Prophet without tahrif (amendment), ta’til (abolition), takyif (question/inquiry) and tamsil (association) (al-Ashqar 1984: 225).

Tawhid Al-Uluhiyah:

In the declaration of Tawhid al-Uluhiyah, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di remind the readers about the obligation of a Muslim in realizing the precise purpose of the creation created by Allah which is to enslave himself to Allah merely. He also stresses that the main purpose of the creation of jinn and human is ma‘rifah and ‘ibadah; to know Allah via His names and attributes, to implement the responsibilities as a slave towards his Lord that is to worship Him in accordance to the Book of Allah and the traditions of the Prophet (p.b.u.h). For example, the sayings of Allah in the chapter of Ghafir, verse 61 which mean:

“ Allah, it is He Who has made the night for you that you may rest therein, and the day for you to see.

Truly, Allah is full of Bounty to mankind; yet most of mankind is ungrateful ”. (Ghafir 40: 61).

In the commentaries in the chapter of Ghafir, verse 61, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di (1997: 687) states that there are two major purpose which are ma‘rifah (the knowledge about Allah) and ‘ibadah (the self modesty to Allah).

Heaven And Hell:

The stand of Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah in pertaining to the heaven and hell is that they were created and both are existing from time immemorial (al-Hanafi 1986, 2: 171). In the matter related to the heaven and hell, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di asserts this faith according to Allah’s sayings which mean:

The Hell ...prepared for the disbelievers (al-Baqarah 2: 24).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di emphasizes the chapter of al-Baqarah, verse 24, and the similar verses are the basis for Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah to declare that the heaven and hell were created. This point of view is contradicted to the stream of Mu‘tazilah (al-Sa‘di 1997: 28).
Great Sinner Among Monotheists:

According to Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah, the end of the great sinner among the monotheists and their final destination will be the heaven and they will not be eternally in the hell (al-Shaybani 1993, 1: 395). Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di establishes this faith according to the interpretation of Allah’s saying in the chapter of al-Baqarah: verse 24 which mean:
The Hell ...prepared for the disbelievers (al-Baqarah 2: 24).

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According to al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di (1997: 28), the chapter of al-Baqarah: verse 24 includes the indication that the monotheists will not be perpetually in the hell though they have done some of the great sin. This is due to Allah’s saying which means: “...was provided for the disbelievers (al-Baqarah 2: 24). Thus, if the monotheist sinner will be everlastingly in the hell, that means the hell does not mean for the disbelievers only.

Faith:

According to Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah, the faith encompasses the sincerity of the heart towards Allah, confession of the tongue and implementation by the limbs (Abu ‘Ubayd 1983: 9). Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di declares that this creed is according to Allah’s saying which means:

“And those who believe in (the oneness of Allah and His Messengers, they are the Siddiqun (i.e. those followers of the Prophets who were first and foremost to believe in them) and the martyrs with their Lord, they shall have their reward and their light. But those who disbelieve (in the Oneness of Allah – Islamic Monotheism) and deny our signs they shall be the dwellers of the blazing Fire”. (al-Hadid 57: 19).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di (1997: 780) says that according to Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah, the faith refers to everything which is signified in al-Quran and al-Sunnah, which comprises the word of the heart and tongue together with the accomplishment of the heart, tongue and limbs. Hence, the faith embraces all the Islamic Syariat externally and internally.

Companions:

Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah agreed upon the obligation of all Muslim to respect the companions with the declaration of the honesty, to praise and not to insult them. This is because Allah frequently praises and forgives them in the al-Quran (al-Haitami 1997, 2: 603).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di affirms this faith according to Allah’s saying which means:

“And what is the matter with you that spend not in the Cause of Allah? And to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and the earth. Not equal among are those who spent and fought before the conquering (of Makkah, with those among you who did so later). Such are higher in degree than those who spent and fought afterwards.

But to all Allah has promised the best (reward). And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do”. (al-Hadid 57: 10).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di (1997: 779) explains that the chapter of al-Hadid, verse 19 indicates the superiority of the companions. This is for the reason that Allah accepts their faith and promises to grant them the Heaven as the reward. He also mention that the words of the companion are verdict, especially the four caliphs. It is like they were very familiar with the struggle in turning back and repenting to Allah.

In another verse of the al-Quran, Allah mentions that those whose behavior is alike the companions, are deserved to be followed (al-Sa‘di 1997: 701).

Abolition of Deviated Faith:

The second methodology of Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah in the declaration of the authentic faith is to abolish the deviated faith (al-Lalika’I 1995: 71). Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di also engages in this noble efforts.

He objects the deviated faith which is against to Ahl Sunnah wa al-Jama‘ah. For example Allah’s saying which means:

“Eat not (O Believers) of that (meat) On which Allah’s name has not been pronounced (at the time of slaughtering of the animal) for sure it is Fisq (a sin and disobedience of Allah). And certainly, the Shayatin (devils) do inspire their friends (from mankind) to dispute with you, and if you obey them, then you would indeed be Mushrikun (polytheists)”. (al- An‘am, verse 121).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di (1997: 234) interprets the chapter of al-An‘am, verse 121, as he says that everything which is appeared in the heart, for example ilham (inspiration) and kashaf (intuition), mostly concerned by al-Sufiyyah (the Muslim Mystics), can be only

acknowledged when it is supported by al-Quran and al-Sunnah. If it's suitability is anonymous, then it's acceptance should be deferred. This is because ilham and kashaf can also come from satanic whisper. Thus, it should be able to distinguish between which comes from Satan and which comes from Allah.

Commentaries of The Quran With The Quran:

Al-Tafsir bi al-Ma'thur is the commentary which embraces the explanation from the Quran, Prophetic Traditions, Companions and their Students which are the commentaries of the Quran (al-Dhahabi 1:152).

This 426 Adv. in Nat. Appl. Sci., 5(5): 422-431, 2011 methodology of the commentaries is the greatest way to seek the accurate interpretations of the Quranic verses (Ibnu Taymiyyah 1995:127).

Al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di uses the Quranic verses while interpreting other Quranic verses. Due to this effort, his commentary book is considered as a commentary book which contains the characteristics of al- Tafsir bi al-Ma'thur. In the usage of the Quranic verses as the main interpretation, he has some methods, which are as follows:

1. To use the Quranic verse to strengthen the interpretation of the verse (al-Sa'di 1997: 29).
2. To use some Quranic verses to strengthen the interpretation of the verse (al-Sa'di 1997: 130).
3. To relate the Quranic verse with another verse in the same chapter (al-Sa'di 1997: 202).
4. To relate the Quranic verse with another verse in the different chapter (al-Sa'di 1997: 590).
5. To explain the specific verse and general verse (al-Sa'di 1997: 184).
6. To explain nasikhah verse (eliminator verse) and mansukhah verse (eliminated verse) (al-Sa'di 1997: 144).
7. To abolish the assumption about the existence of the contradiction within the exterior of two verses (al-Sa'di 1997: 692).
8. Sometimes, al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di also enlightens a range of manner in the recitations (qiraat) for some verses (al-Sa'di 1997: 850).

Commentaries of The Quran With The Hadith (Prophetic Traditions):

Al-Imam al-Qurtubi (1985, 1: 37-39) states that if the hadith is thabit (authenticate) from Rasulullah (p.b.u.h), it is obliged to accept it. He also clarifies that the Prophet's explanation is divided into two which as follows:

1. The explanation of mujmal (general) matters in the al-Quran such as related to five daily prayers, alms giving, pilgrimage and others.
2. The explanation of matter whose rulings are unexplainable in the al-Quran like the prohibition of marriage with women (aunty either from mother or father's side), prohibition of domestic asses, prohibition of fanged beast and others.

Al-Imam al-Qurtubi (1985, 1: 79-80) also warns the dangerous in the usage of batil (fabricated) hadith in the commentaries of al-Quran, especially in the subject of the fadhail (advantages). He suggests people to take the hadith from the books that are referred by the scholar merely and to

get rid of the unauthentic and weak sources. He emphasizes that the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) prohibits the act of fabrication in the narration of hadith.

In the application of hadith, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di (1997: 258) affirms that only authentic hadith can be accepted. Neither the fake hadith nor the hadith from unknown sources is necessitated by Islam.

He has two way in the treatment of hadith as basis which are as follows:

1. To indicate that there is evidence from hadith which are related to the discussing matter. For instance,

Allah’s saying which means:

“The free for the free, the slave for the slave, the female for the female” (al-Baqarah 2: 178).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di (1997: 67) states that mantuq in the chapter of al-Baqarah, verse 178 indicates that qisas include all types of killing, also a man that kill a woman. The exceptional element from this general principle is the mother or father who kill her or his child. They cannot be sentenced death base on the evidences from al-Sunnah. Pertaining to this matter, he is identified to signify the evidence with the gist of the hadith. This hadith is –similar to the hadith which means:

“A father who kills his child cannot be sentenced to death” (Ibnu Majah, Book 21, Chapter 22).

2. To state the hadith statement that is related to the interpretation of the verse. For example:

a. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s hadith which means:

“The characteristics of a hypocrite are three: whenever he speaks, he tells a lie, whenever he makes a covenant, he proves treacherous, whenever he is entrusted, he betrays, and also whenever he quarrels, he behaves in a very imprudent, evil and insulting manner”. (al-Bukhari Book 2: Chapter 23; See al-Sa‘di 1997: 25).

b. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s hadith which means:

“Successful indeed is Suhaib in transactions”. (Ibnu Hibban; See al-Sa‘di 1997: 76).

c. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s hadith which means:

“How the people that injure their Prophet’s face and fracture His teeth will be succeed”.(Muslim Book 32: Chapter 37; See al-Sa‘di 1997: 114).

The method of takhrij hadith used by al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di indicates that he seriously strives for the rank of authentic hadith in the commentaries of the al-Quran. However, as a human, he is not free from doing mistakes like the five following hadith:

a. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s hadith which means:

“Perish Tha‘labah” (al-Tabrani; See al-Sa‘di 1997: 304).
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b. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s hadith which means:

“One’s faith is imperfect until his lust follows whatever I brought to you”. (al-Nawawi; See al-Sa‘di 1997: 301).

c. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s hadith which means:

“The lawful thing that Allah abhors the most is talak (divorce)”. (Abu Daud Book 7: Chapter 3; See al-Sa‘di 1997: 84).

d. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s hadith which means:

“He had given the grandmother one sixth”. (al-Tirmidhi Book 30: Chapter 9; See al-Sa‘di 1997: 132).

e. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.)’s hadith which means:

“O my Lord, this is my division for the things that belongs to me. Do not be angry with me for the things that do not belong to me”. (Abu Daud Book 60: Chapter 39; See al-Sa‘di 1997: 616). Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di is apparently had done a mistake by mentioning the five unauthentic hadith. This mistake is due to two factor which are:

1. He relies on the view of some scholars who upgrade the hadith to authentic while it is considered as weak to others. This situation occurs since the scholars of al-jarh wa al-ta‘dil are categorized into three:

- a. Mutashaddidin
- b. Mu‘tadilin
- c. Mutasahilin

2. He relies on several of commentary books as the source of reference in writing his ommentary book. When most of the commentators mention the same hadith, thus appears the assumption that hadith is authentic and can be accepted.

Treatment of Scholars View:

Islam grant a special and great position to the scholars. In Islam, the scholars seem to be the intermediations that are responsible for conveying the laws of Allah to the mankind. The status which is given to the scholars is religious based and according to two main methodologies (al-Luwaihiq 1994: 43):

1. The obedience to the scholars is directly reflected on the obedience to Allah and the Prophet (p.b.u.h.).

Therefore, the implementation of their commandments is an obligation.

2. The obedience to the scholars is the conditioned obedience, which means the obedience is under the obedience to Allah and the Prophet (p.b.u.h.). In other words, the scholars should not be obeyed if they are not in favor of the commandments of Allah and the Prophet (p.b.u.h.).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di is witnessed to use the opinion of the scholars to fortify the statement towards the Quranic verses. He used the view of the scholars from the diverse fields as the science of commentaries, requires assorted kinds of knowledge to comprehend each interpretation of al-Quran. He applies the following methodologies in exposing the scholar’s views:

1. To mention the opinion of the companions (al-Sa‘di 1997: 181).
2. To take the opinion of the scholars from their respective books (al-Sa‘di 1997: 740).
3. To mention the opinion of the scholars without tarjih (al-Sa‘di 1997: 596).
4. To mention the opinion of the commentators with tarjih (al-Sa‘di 1997: 311).
5. To mention the rajih opinion only (al-Sa‘di 1997: 69).
6. To mention the weaknesses of the marjuh opinion (al-Sa‘di 1997: 92).
7. To mention the opinion of the scholars with respective names (al-Sa‘di 1997: 596).

Discussion of Fiqh:

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di has some methods in the explanation of each decision, which are follows:

1. To expose the rajih opinions only (al-Sa‘di 1997: 615).
2. To expose some of the opinions without tarjih (al-Sa‘di 1997: 183).
3. To expose some of the opinions with tarjih (al-Sa‘di 1997: 87).
4. To expose some of the decisions based on mafhum of the verse (al-Sa‘di 1997: 73).
5. To accumulate the decisions (al-Sa‘di 1997: 132-136).

Consequently, it can be said that al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di has concern the understanding’s aspect and the rules in the al-Quran. His not mention too much about disagreement which exists among jurists.

By means of the using methodology, it is able to retain his book as a concise and distinct.

Narration of Israiliyat:

In the treatment of the narration of Israiliyyat, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di (1997: 37-38) asserts that the narration of Israiliyyat can’t be applied as the interpretation for the Book of Allah, if it does not certainly comes from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.). His opinion is based on the hadith which means: 428 Adv. in Nat. Appl. Sci., 5(5): 422-431, 2011

“Neither trusts the people of the Scriptures/Reveled Books nor be lie them”. (al-Bukhari Book 68: Chapter 13).

After comparing the list of the narrative or the Israiliyyat interpretation by al-Shaykh Muhammad bin Muhammad Abu Shuhbah with the interpretation by al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di, it is observed that this commentary book is free from the narrative or the Israiliyyat interpretation. Somehow, the sayings of Allah which mean:

“And We did try Solomon: We placed on his throne a body but he did return (to Us in true devotion)”. (Sad, 38:34).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di interprets the word “body” as Satan. Al-Shaykh Abu Shuhbah conveys a narration from al-Qadi ‘Iyad and Ibnu Kathir that the interpretation of “body” as Satan in accordance to the Israiliyyat interpretation (Abu Shuhbah 1408H: 272-274).

By some means, there is a possibility that this interpretation does not come from the Israiliyyat interpretation but supported by hadith. This is based on the statement made by Imam al-Bukhari who interprets “body” as Satan (al-Bukhari Book 64: Chapter 41).

Explanation of Asbab Al-Nuzul:

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di, as the most of the commentators, brings the reason of transmission/revelation for some interpreting verses. The using methodology as the following:

1. To explain the conclusion of the event with the respective names of those who experienced it. (al-Sa‘di 1997: 92).
2. To explain the conclusion briefly without the respective names of those who experienced it. (al-Sa‘di 1997: 783).
3. To state the events briefly and comprehensively (al-Sa‘di 1997: 281).

Treatment of Usul:

In the area of usul or the principles of Islam, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di clarifies the treatment of usul which is commonly used by the scholars to ease the readers in understanding the meanings of the Quranic verse, and its interior meanings. For instance, usul which he exposes is in Allah’s saying which means:

“And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war to threaten the enemy of Allah and your enemy”. (al-Anfal 8: 60).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di (1997: 286) interprets the chapter of al-Anfal, verse 60 as signifies the following method which means:

“Something; which an obligation will be incomplete without it, thus, its ruling is also obligatory”. (al-Amidi 1404H, 2: 204).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di moreover cites a number of usul and the required general principle for the commentators in the opening of his book. This indicates that he lays a great emphasis on the understanding in usul to simplify the comprehension’s process of al-Quran.

Treatment of Arabic Language:

‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbas says that one of the form of interpretation is well-known by Arabian who comprehends the Arabic language. According to him, the commentary is divided into four forms; The understandable commentary by everyone, understandable commentary by Arab merely via their language, distinguished commentary by outstanding intellectuals in their respective knowledge and anonymous commentary except by Allah (Ibnu Kathir 1999, 1: 479).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa‘di emphasizes on the understanding of the genuine Arabic language which may facilitate a Muslim to comprehend the meanings and lessons revealed by Allah in al-Quran. He applies a simple approach in delivering the meanings of the desirable words to be explained, so that could be digested by the readers from different background field of knowledge. Among the methods for explaining the Arabic language are:

1. The enlightenment of the al-Asma al-Husna's meaning in the opening of his book.
2. The explanation of the meaning for something easily (al-Sa'di 1997: 705).
3. The explanation of mufrad (singularity) for something (al-Sa'di 1997: 606).
4. The explanation of the meaning for something by explaining its examples (al-Sa'di 1997: 614).
5. The explanation of the pre-requisites for some matters (al-Sa'di 1997: 645).
6. The division of a word into some circumstances (al-Sa'di 1997: 633).
7. The division of a word into some categories (al-Sa'di 1997: 579).
8. The enlightenment of the difference word in two sentences (al-Sa'di 1997: 668).
9. The abolishment of wrong meaning in a word (al-Sa'di 1997: 34).
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10. The enlightenment of the meaning in a letter which accompanies the word to justify the meaning (al-Sa'di 1997: 655).
11. The treatment of Arabic proverbs to support the word's meaning (al-Sa'di 1997: 116).

Moralities:

The message brought by the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) stresses the aspect of fine moralities. This matter had been explained by the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) in a hadith which means:

“Indeed I was sent to complete the sacredness of the moralities”. (al-Bayhaqi Book 82: Chapter 40).

In the discussion of moralities and manners, al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa’di concerns the need of the society and readers. Hence, he frequently emphasizes on the aspect of moralities and manners. For example in Allah’s saying which means:

“But the Bounty of your Lord –Rehearse and proclaim ‘. (al-Duha 93: 11).

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa’di (1997: 858) had identified and interpret the chapter of al-Duha, verse 11 by mentioning that teachers should observe the good ethics with the students.

Abruptly, it could be said that whenever he has a chance to stress the aspect of the holiness of moralities, he would definitely renders the appropriate commitment. This method makes his commentary book prosperous with the basic explanations and the good ethics recommended by al-Quran.

Treatment of Istinbat:

Jalal al-din al-Sayuti (1992: 348) states that al-Quran is a rich treasure of knowledge. All types of knowledge exist in al-Quran. However, one’s information about all branches of knowledge depends on one’s ability to wrap up them. It is a gift from Allah to some of His slaves.

Al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sa’di are known as a moderator on conclude the benefit of the Quranic verse, to ease reader’s understanding and the practice of the contents of the Quranic verse. The using methods in istinbat (conclusion) as the following:

1. To mention the istinbat of the Quranic verse. For example in Allah's saying which means: "But if they incline to peace, you also incline to it". (al-Anfal 8:61).
Pertaining to the chapter of al-Anfal, verse 61, al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di concludes that there are three advantages of reconciliation between the Believers and the disbelievers which are as follows:
 - a. To seek the tranquility as an obligation.
 - b. Reconciliation gives opportunity to fortify the strength of the Muslim army.
 - c. Reconciliation generates the peacefulness and renders chance for people to know Islam.
2. To mention the istinbat for a number of the Quranic verse. For example, the chapter of Hud, verse 84-94.
Al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di (1997: 344) identified and conclude 14 benefits and lessons from the story of Prophet Shu'aib.
3. To mention the istinbat of a chapter. For example, Al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di (1997: 23) is seen to conclude the end of Chapter al-Fatihah by mentioning the gist and significant principles of the teachings in Islam.

Modernity And Knowledge:

Islam is a religion which renders a great emphasis on two aspects; the worldly and spirituality. By the existence of the balance between the distinguished two aspects as here and hereafter, Muslims will pursue the victory and higher position than other nation in the here and hereafter (al-Qaradawi 1999:173).

Al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di (1997: 150) in his commentary methodology also discusses the aspects related to modernity and worldly science. He is witnessed not to reject the transformation of the world to modernity and sophisticated knowledge. He says that the aspect of modernity and worldly science are not contradicted to the obligation of worship. This is in accordance to Allah's saying which means:

"O u who believe! Take your precautions, and either go forth (on an expedition) in parties, or go forth together". (al-Nisa' 4: 71).

Al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di (1997: 150) states that Allah's commandment in the Chapter of al- Nisa', verse 71 encompasses the learning in all types of skills by which is competent to preserve the unity of Muslims.

Conclusion:

This study has generated some significance. Among them:

1. It is brief but encompasses various significant discussions like the creed, jurisprudence and moralities. 430 Adv. in Nat. Appl. Sci., 5(5): 422-431, 2011

2. It renders a simple and uncomplicated presentation in commentary discussions. Various aspects of Islamic knowledge are touched reasonably.
3. It merges the method of al-ma'thur and method of al-ra'y in his commentary book.
4. It treasures with istinbat in accordance to the discussion of the Quranic verses in diverse fields.
5. It concerns the treatment in valid sources and abolishment of the unrecognized sources by the scholars. However, the weak hadith remains existed.
6. It is free from the narration of al-Israiliyyat, as the stand of al-Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sa'di who rejects the narration of al-Israiliyyat in the area of commentaries utterly. In addition, this book contains the objection of the position and i'tiqad of the deviant group against Ahli al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah.

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