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## The Interior (Batn) of the Holy Quran; Understanding it and its Levels from the Perspective of Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat

Nahed al-Shemasi<sup>1\*</sup>, Dr. Ali al-Zubaidi<sup>2</sup>

1. \* MA in Department of Quran and Hadith, Faculty of Quran and Hadith Studies, Al-Mustafa International University, Qom, Iran, (*Corresponding Author*)

2. Lecturer in Department of Islamic Mysticism, Faculty of Mysticism, University of Religions and Denominations, Qom, Iran, [alialz14@hotmail.com](mailto:alialz14@hotmail.com)

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### Abstract

**SUBJECT AND OBJECTIVES:** This article was compiled with the aim of understanding the meaning of the Quranic Interior and the extent of its knowledge from the perspective of Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat. In this identification, the differences between the two were also examined.

**METHOD AND FINDING:** According to Allameh Tabatabai, the Interior of the Quran is a fact on which the Verses of the Quran are based on preaching, and it is not one of the concepts that are shown in words and phrases for the awareness of the mind; rather, it is one of the transcendent objective concepts that God has limited to words in order to bring its understanding closer to the human mind, as defined in the Quran in the general sense of the Verses, which is called adaptation and application. On the other hand, Allameh Ma'refat believes that the Quranic Interior is the general or secondary meaning of the Verse from which the Verse and the specific aspects and the dignity of the revelation of the Verse are inferred.

**CONCLUSION:** Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat both came to the conclusion that the Quranic Interior has several levels and one of the reasons why the Quranic Interior is many times according to Allameh Tabatabai according to the different levels of its people, their levels and different moral purity of people. That they follow; while one of the reasons for the many levels of the Quranic Interior from the point of view of Allameh Ma'refat is due to the power of understanding of the audience, and it is because it propagates the comprehensive and eternal message of the Holy Quran.

**\* Corresponding Author:**

**Email:**

[nahed1010@gmail.com](mailto:nahed1010@gmail.com)

**ORCID:** 0000-0002-3033-7355

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## **Introduction**

The existence of the Quranic Interior is one of the truths stated in the words of the Holy Prophet and the Imams, and muslim scholars have followed this concept; because it is related to the immortality of the Quran and its application is valid and compatible in any society, of course, muslim scholars have had differences in defining the meaning, understanding and levels of the Quran Interior.

Among the famous scholars who sought to explain the reality of the Quranic Interior, Allameh Tabatabai was a philosopher, researcher and translator of the Holy Quran and came to the conclusion that its interpretation, implementation and application is the Interior of the Quran; Since Interior of the Quran understanding is one of the goals of the Quranic studies and interpretation, Allameh Tabatabai trained a generation of experts in the field of interpretation of the Holy Quran, one of whom was

Allameh Ma'refat, who, while participating in interpretation, each with a different point of view, explained the Interior of the Quran.

## **Explain the Problem**

In this article, the meaning of the Quranic Interior, the validity of understanding and its multiplicity of degrees will be examined according to the views of each of the two great worlds, Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat, and the approaches of both will be compared.

## **Importance of Research**

Research on the Quranic Interior is very important in order to understand the Verses of the Holy Quran. The search for the meaning of the Quranic Interior, the degree of comprehensibility and its multiplicity from the point of view of Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat helps to clarify the meaning of the Quranic Interior and makes it possible to understand it.

## **Research Goals**

The main purpose of the research is to identify the nature of the Quranic Interior from the point of view of Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat and to explain whether it is possible to reach the Quranic Interior and whether people are able to discover the meaning of the Quranic Interior; Also, assuming that the Interior of the Quran is comprehensible, is it a single-level concept or a multi-level concept?

## **Research Questions**

- What is the Interior of the Quran and how understandable is it and what is its level with Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat?
- What is the meaning of the Interior of the Quran according to Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'arifa?
- Is the Interior of the Quran understandable according

to Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat?

- According to Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat, is the Interior of the Quran unique or does it have several ranks?

## **Research Hypothesis**

According to Allameh Tabatabai, the Quranic Interior is the objective reality of the Quran that can be understood and used; but the Quranic Interior according to Allameh Ma'refat does not have the ability to express and speak; But it is understandable and has several levels.

## **Theoretical Foundations of Research**

### **1. The Lexical and Idiomatic Meaning of "Interior" (Batn)**

- *Lexical*: The Interior is opposite in appearance to everything, and the sum of it is the Interiors.
- *Idiomatic*: These meanings are not obvious in the Verses of the Quran and

extracting and knowing them requires effort.

## 2. The Lexical and Idiomatic Meaning of “Understanding”

- *Lexical*: What is known by the mind or heart and has a clear idea of something and its meaning is understood by others.
- *Idiomatic*: This perception is the meaning of what the addressee said.

## 3. The Lexical and Idiomatic Meaning of “Level”

- *Lexical*: Level indicates the average status and grade.
- *Idiomatic*: The level of understanding or the degree of depth of the audience in terms of meaning and verbal importance, which is known according to the level of understanding or moral purity of the reader.

## The Meaning of the Quranic Interior (Batn) from the Perspective of Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat

### 1. The Meaning of the Quranic Interior (Batn) in the View of Allameh Tabatabai

- The Interior is the same Esoteric Interpretation of the Quran

Allameh Tabatabai considers esoteric interpretation of the Quran as external facts on the basis of which the Holy Quran has based its knowledge and laws. For this reason, Allameh Tabatabai writes:

*Esoteric interpretation of the Quran is the external facts on which the Verses of the Quran are based on the knowledge, laws and other things that have been shown. So if one of those facts were to change, the content of the Verses would change. (Tabatabai, 1997, Vol. 3: 61)*

Allama Tabatabai defines the Interior of the Quran (Esoteric interpretation of the Quran) as follows:

*This is a fact on which the Verses of the Quran are based in terms of ruling and advice, and it exists in all Verses of the Quran. The Interior of the Quran is to get closer to the human mind and they are like proverbs that are used to get closer to the goals.*

Therefore, Allameh Tabatabai believes that the Interior of the Quran is:

This is the fact on which the Quranic Verses are based, whether it is a ruling, advice or wisdom, and it exists for all the Verses of the Quran: They are “Muhkam and Mutashabih”, and this is not one of the concepts uttered by words; Rather, it is one of the transcendent objective objects surrounded by word networks. Thus, they are like proverbs that are expressed to bring closer goals and in accordance with what is

appropriate for the listener. (*Tabatabai, 1997, Vol. 3:57*)

As God said:

*“By the Book that makes things clear. We have made it a Quran in Arabic, that ye may be able to understand (and learn wisdom); And verily, it is in the Mother of the Book, in Our Presence, high (in dignity), full of wisdom”.* (*Quran, 43: 2-4*)

- The Interior is the same Adaptation

*Adaptation in the Words:* What passes quickly and is the opposite of stillness.

*Conformity in the Term:* Passivity from the article “according to” which means harmony and agreement.

*Adaptation in the Term:* It is the same linguistic meaning that was expressed and Allameh Tabatabai took it in the idiomatic meaning and used it in his interpretation; as

used in the Holy Quran in the sense of the sun and the moon.

According to the statement of Ahl al-Bayt and quoted by Fadhil ibn Yasar:

I asked Abu Ja'far about this narration (there is no Verse in the Quran except that it has a behind and a Interior)?

He said: The meaning from behind is revelation and the meaning of the Interior is the esoteric interpretation of the Quran of what is past and does not flow from it as it does not flow from the sun and the moon.

*(Saffar, 2002: 216)*

*Conformity in the Term:* arises from understanding the meaning of the Verse with the new source, agreeing with it, not rejecting it and avoiding its comprehensiveness. *(Zubaidi, 2016: 106)*

Allameh Tabatabai defined the Quranic Interior with the general meanings of the Verse, which is called adaptation and conformity.

Allameh Tabatabai writes in his book "Quran in Islam" about adaptation and conformity in the Holy Quran:

The Holy Quran is a permanent book for all times and its rulings apply to all people, so it also applies during the time of absence; as it happens now and applies to the past and the future. The rule of the Quran is for anyone who shares the characteristics of the source of the Verse. *(Tabatabai, 1984: 66)*

## **2. The Meaning of the Quranic Interior (Batn) in the View of Allameh Ma'refat**

From the perspective of Allameh Ma'refat, the Quranic Interior is the general meaning of the Verse, which appears after extracting it from the temporal and spatial conditions and individuals. This is what is found in his mind and in extracting a general rule from the Verse. Allameh Ma'refat writes:

*Most of the revealed Verses, considering the dignity (occasion) of the revelation of the Verses, seem to refer to the source of the revelation of the Verses according to their original appearance and do not go beyond the surface, and this issue makes the understanding of the Quranic Interior to others except Prophet, be hard.*

*This has a general message for all people; Therefore, the Interior has the general meaning that it is received by exemption from certain aspects of the Verse and its dignity. Therefore, the Verse is meaningful in relation to the source of its revelation. (Ma'refat, 1997: 34-33)*

*Method of Obtaining the Interior of the Verse:* This is done by extracting the Verse and observing the temporal and spatial conditions and the dignity of revelation, which is

done through the method of logical division.

Allameh Ma'refat writes:

*We should note the comparisons and conditions of the Verse according to the revelation; Therefore, what we have kept in the core of our message and has nothing to do with the Verse, we must put aside it by using research and logical division.*

*The polytheists do not have access to this because they are polytheists, and this lack of understanding is due to their own ignorance. Likewise, there is no doubt about the issue of human prophecy; Rather, it is an issue that the pagans were unaware of.*

*Thus, referring to the Jews and questioning the People of the Book is only because they are scholars, and according to the Holy Quran, ask*



*of those who possess the Message. (Quran, 16: 43)*

If we ignore these conditions and bring them to the core of the debate, the result from which it is extracted will be this: This is the general message of the Verse to the general public, and therefore to all the Verses that seem to be revealed in a special revelation. It has a general function. (*Ma'refat, 2011, Vol. 1: 33, Al-Tafsir al-Athari al-Jami*)

### **Ability to Understand the Quran Interior (Batn) from the Perspective of Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat**

Allameh Tabatabai opinion about the interpretation of the Verse “And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say” and the knowledge of esoteric interpretation of the Quran is for non-God is that the knowledge of esoteric interpretation of the Quran is for God and “And” in the Verse “And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge

say” is this which presupposes the word of God at the beginning of the Verse: “those in whose hearts is perversity follow the part thereof that is allegorical”. (*Quran, 3: 7*)

He also writes:

*The apparent limitation is that the knowledge of esoteric interpretation of the Quran is confined to God; but the Quran says: “And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say”. (Tabatabai, 1997, Vol. 3: 32)*

*However, he believes that the knowledge of esoteric interpretation of the Quran is taught by purified people and under divine training “Which none shall touch but those who are clean”. (Quran, 56: 79)*

The most important thing that Allameh Tabatabai adhered to to prove his statement is that the esoteric interpretation of the Quran is specific to God:

There are two types of people who take this meaning from the Quran: Some of them follow something similar, and some of them, if something similar, say: "We believe in the Book; the whole of it is from our Lord"; (*Quran, 3: 7*) Rather, they differed because of differences in heart deviation and knowledge confidence.

If "And" was for turning and meant to be associated with those who specialize in the knowledge of Esoteric (Ta'wil) interpretation of the Quran, it was the Prophet of God who is the best of them and how can it be imagined that the Holy Quran was revealed to the heart of the Prophet without knowing the purpose What is it?

If the meaning of his speech was: "And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say" that they know the Esoteric interpretation of the Quran and the Prophet of God is certainly one of them, the right of speech was as stated;

So it should be said:

*"but no one knows its hidden meanings except Allah; And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge". (Quran, 3: 7)*

Allameh Ma'refat view on the interpretation of the Verse "And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say" and the knowledge of esoteric interpretation of the Quran for non-God is that "And" is a turning point and not "And" appeal, and this is due to the necessity of wisdom that requires opening the doors of knowing the Book of God in all sciences, statements and it is knowledge.

Allamah Ma'refat says in his book "Esoteric Interpretation of the Quran in Different Denominations and Opinions":

*The commentators unanimously agreed on the necessity of turning and rejected the validity of the endowment, standing by the classical literature of the language in such terms. This*

*necessity of wisdom requires opening the doors of knowledge of the Book of God in all its evidences and utterances; Because this book was revealed as a guide for the worlds and is a inspiration that illuminates the path of good and evil. (Ma'refat, 1997: 20)*

Allameh Ma'refat also states that believing in the existence of Verses whose doors are closed to the public and which are incomprehensible even to the pure Imams is degrading the book of the Quran and is also contrary to the wisdom of God.

Accordingly, the Quran will be a puppet in the hands of swindlers to mislead people and create corruption on earth; Therefore, Allameh Ma'refat writes:

*But there are some “Mutashabih” Verses that not everyone can understand. The Holy Quran is a book in which there are similarities that it is not possible for the general public to understand*

*and need to be interpreted, and its interpretation is done by the Ahl al-Bayt so that other people do not misuse it do not mislead people. (Ma'refat, 1997: 21)*

- Aspects of the Science of Esoteric Interpretation of the Quran for Non-God

Allameh Ma'refat knows that the esoteric interpretation of the Quran of the Verses of the Holy Quran is not specific to God for various reasons:

1. Knowledge of the esoteric interpretation of the Quran of the Holy Quran for non-Gods is based on the rule of grace.
2. Lack of knowledge of esoteric interpretation of the Quran renders the Quran useless in most of its Verses.
3. The consensus of the Companions of the Prophet and their followers in esoteric interpretation of the Quran the Verses of the Holy Quran is based on this agreement. (Ma'refat, 2011, Vol. 3: 43)

### **Allameh Ma'refat Response to Allameh Tabatabai's Point of View in the Interpretation of the Verse (Al-Raskhoon)**

Allameh Tabatabai believes: The apparent limitation is that the knowledge of esoteric interpretation of the Quran is devoted to God, and the apparent meaning of the words is that “And” in the Verse “Al-Raskhoon” is an appeal; because it is part of the repetition that happens at the beginning of the Verse.

The greatest “Al-Raskhoon” is the Prophet who reached this position, as the Holy Quran says:

*“The Messenger believeth in what hath been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith”*; (*Quran, 2: 285*) and *“But Allah did pour His calm on the Messenger and on the Believers”*. (*Quran, 9: 26*)

The answer of Allama Ma'refat is that the Holy Quran contains many Verses that are understood by all and does not mention the Prophet individually; Such as this Verse: “There is no god but He: That is the witness of Allah, His angels, and those endued with knowledge, standing firm on justice”. (*Quran, 3: 18*) and other Verses. (*Ma'refat, 2011, Vol. 3: 38*)

### **Multiple Levels of the Quranic Interior (Batn) from the Perspective of Allameh Tabatabai and Allameh Ma'refat**

#### **1. Multiple Levels of the Quranic Interior (Batn) According to the Theory of Allameh Tabatabai**

- The Interior of the Quran is numerous and has ranks according to the talent and understanding of the people: the perception of the people and their ability to acquire heavenly knowledge are different, there are

those who do not give originality to this world except to matter and there are those who have the effect of the purity of their nature who do not see happiness by relying on material pleasures; Rather, they look at the eternal world with their pure hearts and then the doors of knowledge and understanding of truth open for them. *(Tabatabai, 1999: 83)*

- The relationship between multiple levels of the Quranic Interior and moral purity: Since spiritual purity has several levels, those who believe in it are also different in reaching that level; therefore, what is obtained from the interpretation must be different and have a degree in terms of moral purity. *(Tabatabai, 1999: 85)*

## **2. Multiple Levels of the Quranic Interior (Batn) According to the Theory of Allameh Ma'refat**

- The multiplicity of levels of the Quranic Interior is due to the power of comprehension of the audience: Allameh Ma'refat knows that the multiplicity of levels of the Quranic Interior is due to the level of comprehension of the listener and each class of people will have their share of Quranic expressions.
- The multiplicity of levels of the Quranic Interior is one of the characteristics of the Holy Quran: The Holy Quran had its behind and Interior from the beginning of its revelation, and according to the obvious meaning of revelation, it also had a hidden and esoteric meaning. *(Ma'refat, 2011, Vol. 1: 57, Al-Tafsir al-Athari al-Jami)*
- The multiplicity of levels of the Quranic

Interior is due to the fact that the Holy Quran has a comprehensive and endless message: Allameh Ma'refat knows that the Interior of the Quran is obtained by inferring Verses, which makes it a universal, comprehensive and timeless message. *(Ma'refat, 1997: 34)*

### **Necessary Qualifications to Reach the Interior (Batn) of the Quran**

Allameh Ma'refat believes that just as interpretation requires special documents and degrees, esoteric interpretation of the Quran also requires the acquisition of special sciences; including some essential sciences related to interpretation and of course, getting rid of the mental whims and personal desires of the interpreter in the first place.

Secondly, the process of attaining the Interior of the Quran does not just require the Quranic interpreter who is aware only of the sciences of

the Quran; Rather, to achieve a correct understanding of the Quran, one needs a mental trend and movement. Reading the text of the Quran is fruitful if it reaches the Interior of the Quran through it; otherwise, reading the Quran is superficial. *(Ma'refat, 1997: 52)*

### **Conclusion**

- The Quranic Interior according to Allameh Tabatabai: It is a fact and the Quranic Verses about ruling and advice are based on it and exist for all Verses of the Quran, because the Verses of the Quran are "Muhkam and Mutashabih".
- It is also one of the concepts indicated by words; while the meaning of the Quranic Interior according to Allameh Ma'refat is a general concept that is understood from the content of the Verse by understanding the dignity of the revelation of a

- particular Verse and its conditions, and connects the Verse to the source of its revelation.
- Allameh Tabatabai believes that the knowledge of esoteric interpretation of the Quran in the Verse is specific to God “And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say” and that “And” in the Verse is “And” appeal; but from the Verse “Which none shall touch but those who are clean” he believes that those whom God removed the impurity from them and purified them with complete purification know the interpretation of the Quran.
  - On the other hand, Allameh Ma'refat believes that the knowledge of esoteric interpretation of the Quran is known only to God and by the rule of grace, and “And” in the Verse “Al-Raskhoon” is for turning and not for appealing.
  - Allameh Tabatabai believes that one of the reasons for the multiplicity of Quranic Interior is the correspondence with the various attributes of the people and the extent of their knowledge, which depending on the level of spiritual purity of the people, is for those who follow the Holy Quran; while one of the reasons for the various levels of the Quranic Interior according to Allameh Ma'refat is the multiplicity of the power of understanding of the audience, and this is one of the characteristics of the Holy Quran, because it has a comprehensive and wide and endless message.

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### **AUTHOR BIOSKETCHES**

**al-Shemasi, Nahed.** MA in Department of Quran and Hadith, Faculty of Quran and Hadith Studies, Al-Mustafa International University, Qom, Iran.

✓ Email: [nahed1010@gmail.com](mailto:nahed1010@gmail.com)

✓ ORCID: [0000-0002-3033-7355](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3033-7355)

**al-Zubaidi, Ali.** Lecturer in Department of Islamic Mysticism, Faculty of Mysticism, University of Religions and Denominations, Qom, Iran.

✓ Email: [alialz14@hotmail.com](mailto:alialz14@hotmail.com)

✓ ORCID: [0000-0002-8456-5185](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8456-5185)

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