

**PERSPECTIVES OF QUR'ÁNIC COMMENTATORS WITH SPECIFIC
REFERENCE TO MÚSÁ [P.B. U.H]**

BY

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by

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"I declare that Perspectives of Qur'anic Commentators with specific reference to Prophet Músa [P.B.U.H] is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references."

ABSTRACT

Chapter One contains a lengthy discussion of tafsír, outlining its meaning, its need to the present study and the different forms in which it exists, whilst at the same time clarifying its obscurities and commending it as an indispensable science.

Chapter Two offers a concise overview of five Qur'ánic commentators selected for this particular study. This assessment is based on the eras from which they emerged which has a definite bearing on their commentaries.

Chapter Three is a résumé of my subject's biography adopted primarily from Qur'ánic sources. As a frequently mentioned prophet in the Qur'án the story of Músá [p.b.u.h] is drawn from various chapters highlighting substantial aspects of his life.

Chapter Four concentrates on two frequently mentioned events in the life of prophet Músá [p.b.u.h], namely, his call to prophethood and the proclamation to the pharaoh and his people.

Chapter Five concludes this work by presenting an overview of the perspectives of the different commentators.

LIST OF COMMONLY USED WORDS

Músá	Sunní	Al- T abaríir
Tafsir	Baní Isrá'íl	Al-Zamakhsharí'
Mu-tazilite	H adith	Al-Rází
Ash'arite	Islám	Mu h ammad Asad

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TABLE OF TRANSCRIPTION CODES

Músá - Moses

Fir'aun - Pharaoh

Qur'án - Koran

Hárún - Aaron

Midian - Madyan

Qárún - Korah

Taurah - Torah

Jibríl - Gabriel

Muhammad - Mahomet

Makka - Mecca

ا	a
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	h
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	s
ض	ḍ

ط	t
ظ	z
ع	'a
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w
ي	y
ء	'

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Qur'án as a religious structure is par excellence a Book imbued with stories of the prophets. These stories or narratives in turn serve as teachings for mankind. The stories of the prophets are not simply to be understood in a literal sense, for the genius of Qur'ánic story telling is correlated by a systematic study of tafsír. This forms the essence of this research project around which the entire structure is constituted.

This research will focus on depicting the Qur'án not only as a book of stories, but as a monumental literary work in terms of language and grammar. This is largely evident in the influence of the Qur'án on pre-Islámic poetry.

For its sheer understanding and comprehension the story of Prophet Músá [p.b.u.h] remains one of the most intriguing in the whole of the Qur'án. The Qur'án's random description of Músá [p.b.u.h] from childhood to prophethood and beyond makes it the perfect subject of intense commentary.

The Qur'án is the quintessence of Islámic thought and life and it is the commentary of eminent commentators that is its essence.

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THIS STUDY

The research undertaken for this particular study was motivated by the following factors:

The Qur'án as a literary structure necessitates immense study and research. Coupled with this need a primary motivating factor has been to delve into the intricacies of the Qur'án as interpreted by selected commentators.

The story of Prophet Músá [p.b.u.h] is scattered along various súras and an attentive reading reveals events that are mentioned twice or even thrice. This has ignited a fervent curiosity to research the views of commentators on frequently mentioned events in the life of this honoured prophet.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The importance and influence of tafsír as an indispensable science to the study of the Qur'an.

The influence of Prophet Músá [p.b.u.h] as one of the most frequently mentioned prophets in the Qur'án.

An indepth study of the lives of selected Qur'ánic commentators and the factors influencing their approaches to the interpretation of the Qur'án.

Tafsír of repeated events in the life of Prophet Músá [p.b.u.h] which include his call to prophethood and the proclamation to the pharaoh and his people.

Analysing similarities and differences in approaches to tafsír of selected verses.

1.4 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Confine research to the views of five selected commentators, each from different eras of Islámic thought.

Selection of two particular events in the life of Prophet Músá [p.b.u.h].

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THIS DISSERTATION

This dissertation consists of six chapters. The current chapter provides an introductory review to the reader of the actual research matter.

In chapter two the reader is provided with an elaborate analysis of tafsír and its application to the present study.

The next chapter, chapter three is a biographical review of our subject, namely Prophet Músá [p.b.u.h].

A somewhat tedious chapter four follows with the introduction of the five selected commentators with added focus on their contributions to the field of Qur'ánic exegesis.

Chapter five addresses the core of this research project with a detailed exposition of the fundamental issues relevant to this study.

The dissertation concludes with an analysis of the similarities and differences of the views of the commentators as well as plans for future research.