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Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes

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The Timeless Relevance of Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes

For centuries, Muslims around the world have turned to the **Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes** as one of the most authoritative and comprehensive commentaries on the Holy Qur'an. This monumental work, written by the revered scholar Imad al-Din Abu al-Fida' Isma'il ibn Kathir (d. 774 AH), offers a deep, verse-by-verse explanation rooted in the Qur'an itself, the authentic Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and the interpretations of the Companions and early generations. The ten-volume edition, often published by Darussalam or similar reputable publishers, makes this classical text accessible to modern English-speaking readers. In this article, we will explore the life of Ibn Kathir, the methodology behind his tafsir, the structure of the ten-volume set, and why it remains an indispensable resource for students, scholars, and every Muslim seeking a closer connection with the words of Allah.

Who Was Imam Ibn Kathir?

Born in 701 AH (1301 CE) in Busra, Syria, Ibn Kathir grew up in a scholarly environment. He studied under the greatest minds of his time, including the famous historian and exegete Ibn Taymiyyah. Ibn Kathir mastered Qur'anic sciences, Hadith, history, and jurisprudence. His works span many fields, but his *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*— commonly known as Tafsir Ibn Kathir — remains his most enduring legacy. Unlike many earlier tafsirs that relied heavily on personal opinion (ra'y) or Isra'iliyyat (narrations from Jewish and Christian sources without verification), Ibn Kathir insisted on a method that prioritized the Qur'an interpreting the Qur'an, followed by the Prophet's Sunnah, then the statements of the Companions, and finally the best opinions of the early scholars. This rigorous approach earned the tafsir universal respect across various Islamic schools of thought.

Understanding the Structure of Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes

The English translation of **Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes** typically divides the Qur'an into ten parts, each volume covering a specific range of surahs (chapters). While the exact division may vary slightly between publishers, the standard Darussalam edition follows a logical sequence that mirrors the order of the Mushaf (the written Qur'an). Below is a breakdown of the ten volumes:

Volume 1: Al-Fatihah to Al-Baqarah (1–2)

The first volume begins with Surah Al-Fatihah, the opening chapter, and continues through the longest surah, Al-Baqarah. Ibn Kathir provides extensive commentary on the foundational concepts of Tawhid, prayer, fasting, and the stories of Adam, the Children of Israel, and the Kaaba.

Volume 2: Ali 'Imran (3) to Al-Ma'idah (5)

This volume covers the family of Imran, the story of Mary and Jesus, the Battle of Uhud, and the laws regarding food, marriage, and justice in Surah Al-Ma'idah.

Volume 3: Al-An’am (6) to At-Tawbah (9)

Volume three includes Surahs about the signs of Allah in creation, the religion of Ibrahim, the spoils of war, and the principles of repentence and warfare against hypocrisy.

Volume 4: Yunus (10) to An-Nahl (16)

Prophets such as Nuh, Hud, Salih, Lut, Shu’ayb, Musa, and Yusuf feature heavily in this volume, along with detailed discussions on divine mercy and the proofs of resurrection.

Volume 5: Al-Isra’ (17) to Al-Anbiya’ (21)

From the miraculous Night Journey to the stories of several prophets, this volume emphasizes the oneness of God and the accountability of human beings.

Volume 6: Al-Hajj (22) to Luqman (31)

Volume six deals with pilgrimage, the believers’ characteristics, and the wisdom imparted by Luqman to his son, as well as the creation of the universe.

Volume 7: As-Sajdah (32) to Ya-Sin (36)

Key themes include prostrating to Allah, the Day of Judgement, and the heart-moving Surah Ya-Sin, often called the “heart of the Qur’an.”

Volume 8: As-Saffat (37) to Ad-Dukhan (44)

Here, Ibn Kathir expounds on the stories of the early prophets, the victory of truth over falsehood, and the clear revelations.

Volume 9: Al-Jathiyah (45) to Al-Munafiqun (63)

This volume contains the famous Ayat al-Kursi (the Throne Verse) in its wider context and addresses the hypocrites and the commands to stand firm in faith.

Volume 10: At-Taghabun (64) to An-Nas (114)

The final volume covers the last surahs, including protection from evil, the plea for refuge, and the ultimate victory of the believers.

Each volume typically includes the Arabic text of the Qur’an, its transliteration (in some editions), a faithful English translation, and then Ibn Kathir’s detailed commentary. Footnotes clarify historical and linguistic points, making the **Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes** suitable for both academic study and personal reflection.

The Authoritative Methodology of Ibn Kathir

What sets Ibn Kathir’s tafsir apart from many others is its strict adherence to a hierarchy of sources. He begins each explanation by seeking to interpret the Qur’an through the Qur’an itself. For example, if an ambiguous verse appears, Ibn Kathir first looks for another verse that clarifies it. If no clear internal explanation exists, he turns to the authentic Hadith of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Only then does he cite the sayings of the Companions (Sahaba) and the Successors (Tabi‘un). He is careful to distinguish weak narrations from strong ones, especially when dealing with Isra’iliyyat — stories derived from Jewish or Christian traditions. While he includes some such narrations, he often warns the reader that they are not confirmed by Islamic sources. This critical approach makes the **Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes** a trusted reference for scholars who want a commentary that stays close to the pristine source of Revelation.

Linguistic and Historical Insights

Beyond exegesis, Ibn Kathir provides valuable linguistic analysis of Arabic roots, synonyms, and rhetorical devices. He also places each surah in its historical context, explaining the reasons for revelation (asbab al-

nuzul). For instance, when commenting on Surah Al-Ahzab, he describes the events of the Battle of the Trench and how the verses addressed the believers' fears. These details enrich the reader's understanding and bring the Qur'anic message to life.

Why the Ten-Volume Set Is Essential for Every Muslim

Purchasing the complete **Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes** is an investment in iman (faith). Here are some key reasons why this set has become a staple in Islamic libraries worldwide:

- Comprehensive coverage: Every verse of the Qur'an is given attention, from the longest surahs to the shortest.
- Authentic sources: The reliance on Qur'an, Sunnah, and the understanding of the Salaf (pious predecessors) ensures that the interpretation is sound and free from innovation.
- Practical lessons: Ibn Kathir frequently draws out legal rulings (ahkam), moral lessons, and spiritual admonitions, making it easy to apply the Qur'an to daily life.
- Educational value: The set serves as a curriculum for Islamic studies, from high school to university levels. Many online courses and seminaries structure their tafsir classes around these volumes.
- Ease of use: With clear volume divisions and indices, readers can quickly locate a surah or topic without flipping through hundreds of pages.

How to Study Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes Effectively

Reading all ten volumes cover to cover is a rewarding but lengthy undertaking. For most readers, a systematic approach works best:

1. Start with Volume 1: Begin with Surah Al-Fatihah, which Ibn Kathir describes as the essence of the Qur'an. Understanding its commentary establishes a strong foundation.
2. Use a reading schedule: Plan to read one volume per month. That gives you almost a year to finish the entire set while absorbing the material.
3. Take notes: Write down key lessons and reflect on how each verse applies to your life. The commentary often includes practical advice on patience, gratitude, and dealing with trials.
4. Cross-reference with Hadith: When Ibn Kathir mentions a hadith, look it up in a collection like Sahih al-Bukhari or Sahih Muslim to deepen your understanding.
5. Discuss with others: Join a study circle or online forum focused on the Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes. Sharing insights helps solidify knowledge.

Comparing Tafsir Ibn Kathir to Other Tafsirs

While many excellent tafsirs exist, each has a unique focus. For example, Tafsir al-Tabari is even more exhaustive in collecting narrations but is also much larger (over 30 volumes). Tafsir al-Qurtubi specializes in legal rulings, while Tafsir al-Jalalayn offers a concise summary. The **Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes** strikes a balance between comprehensiveness and readability. It is detailed enough for advanced study yet not overly cumbersome for the earnest layperson. Moreover, the English translation by scholars like Darussalam has made it widely available, complete with footnotes and indices that modern readers appreciate.

Where to Find Authentic Copies of Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes

Given the popularity of this set, many publishers have printed it. When purchasing, it is important to choose a reputable edition to ensure accurate translation and proper binding. Some trusted sources include:

- Darussalam Publishers: Their edition is one of the most widely distributed, featuring a hardcover set with clear print and comprehensive indexing.
- Alim.org and Online Islamic Stores: Websites such as IslamicBookstore.com, Noorart, and Amazon often carry the complete set. Look for reviews that mention the quality of translation and paper.

- Local Islamic Centers: Many mosques and Islamic schools have the set available for reference, and they can help you order a copy.
- Digital Versions: For those on a budget or who prefer reading on devices, apps and PDFs of the Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes are also available. However, the physical set remains preferred for deep, uninterrupted study.

Conclusion: A Lifetime Companion for Qur’anic Understanding

The **Tafsir Ibn Kathir All 10 Volumes**

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