



# The Holy Koran: An Interpretive Translation from Classical Arabic into Contemporary English

*Mohamed K. Jasser*

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*From the Introduction:*

This translation of the Koran differs from other available English translations, in numerous respects. Most, if not all, available translations use old Arabic interpretations of the Koran as a source for the meaning of words and sentences. In effect, they are translations of those old interpretations rather than translations of the actual text of the Koran.

The Koran was revealed in the Arabic language, a very complicated language, as the language was used at the time the revelations occurred. The Koran text should actually speak for itself, to those who are familiar with classical Arabic. Interpretations written hundreds of years ago have nothing to recommend them as having high degrees of accuracy or correctness. Most of these old interpretations were heavily influenced by opinions or conclusions of others, and derived heavily from Hadith.

It is basic to Islamic belief that the Koran was revealed for all times and all ages. That by itself excludes fixed interpretations over all times and all ages. It is actually an indication of a certain degree of fluidity and variability of meaning. So actually the text is fixed, the interpretation is variable. In the Koran it is actually stated: "*Some of it is clear and some of it is ambiguous*" (chapter 3, verse 7).

Interpretation of the Koran belongs to anyone who feels qualified to do it. Interpretations can be right in many things and wrong in some. The guide should be the language, logic, and measuring the Koran against itself, such as noting the use of certain words in one place and comparing this with the way they are used in other places. The Koran recognizes no hierarchy for accepted interpretations. The Koran clearly states, "*No clergy in Islam*".

Those who interpret the Koran correctly shall be rewarded by God, and those who do it incorrectly shall be punished by Him, and those who are incapable of interpretation will have to depend on the work of others, and then make a judgement on their own.

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