

الحروف المقطعات

ALI 341: THE UNCONNECTED LETTERS

A REVIEW OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN INTERPRETATIONS

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ALI 341: Huruf Muqattiaat

INTRODUCTION



29 CHAPTERS

WITH A SINGLE LETTER

3

WITH TWO LETTERS

9

WITH THREE LETTERS

13

WITH FOUR LETTERS

2

WITH FIVE LETTERS

2

THE UNCONNECTED LETTERS

ا ح ر س ص ط ع ق ك ل م ن ه
ي
ج د ش ض ظ غ ف ب
خ ذ و ت
ز ث

TRADITIONAL OPINIONS

- They form part of God's challenge (*tahaddi*) to bring about the like of the Qur'an
- They were a means of catching the attention of the audience
- They refer to the Qur'an itself
- They are from the *mutashabihat*, whose meanings are only known to God

TRADITIONAL OPINIONS

- They are the names of the chapters in which they appear
- They are vocatives to the Prophet (S)
- They refer to the names and attributes of God

ORIENTALISTS' VIEWS

- Noldeke/Hirschfield: They are the initials of scribes of the Uthmanic codex
- Massey: They are the initials of the sources used by Zaid
- Palmer: Labels!
- Bellamy: They refer to the *basmalah*
- They are mystical letters similar to those in Jewish *Kabbala*

MODERN THEORIES

- They are the letters that most frequently appear in that chapter
- Irfani interpretations
- The views of 'Allamah

POSSIBILITIES

- They form part of the challenge of the Qur'an
- They are vocatives addressing the Prophet (S)
- They denote individual themes of revelation