



GHADĪR IN THE QUR'AN

From the Perspective of the Sunni Exegeses

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From the Perspective of Sunni Commentaries**

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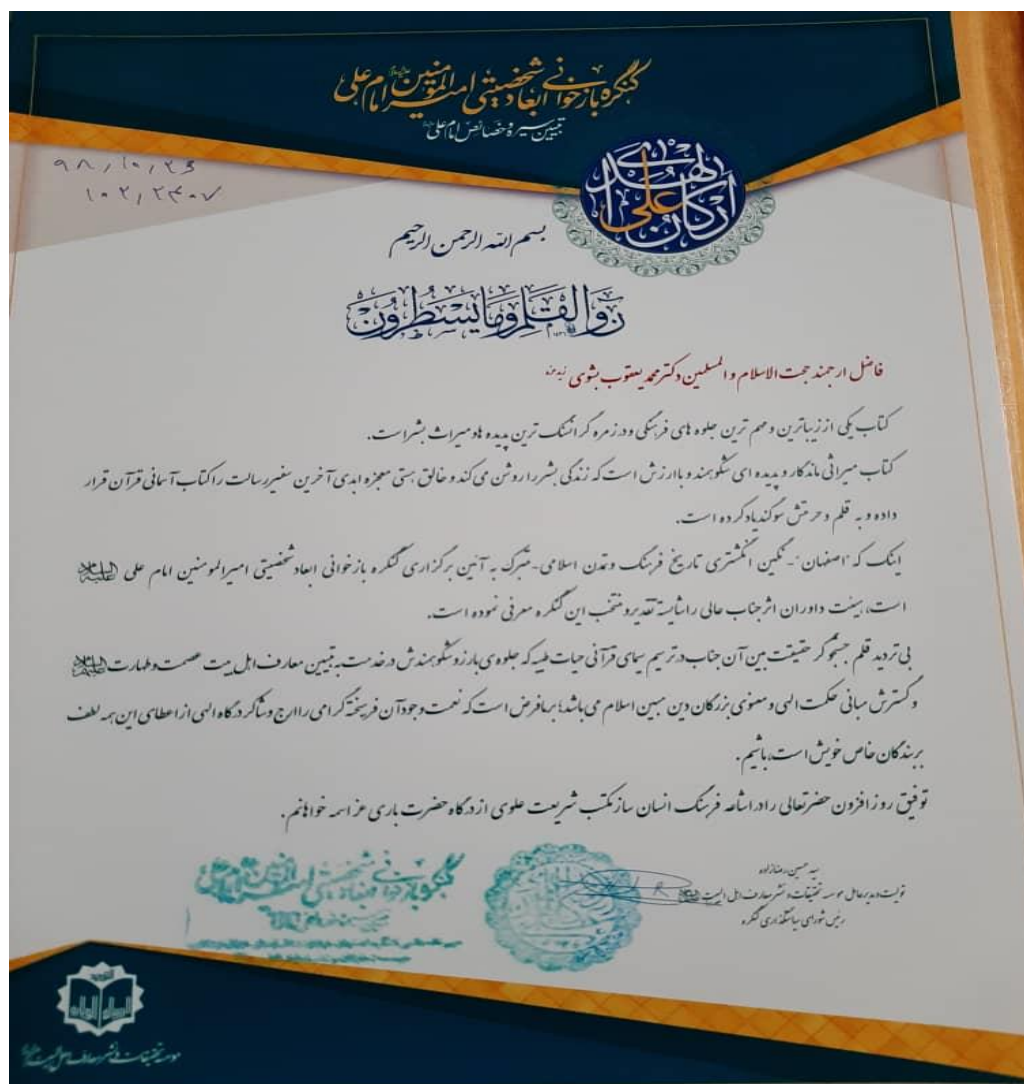
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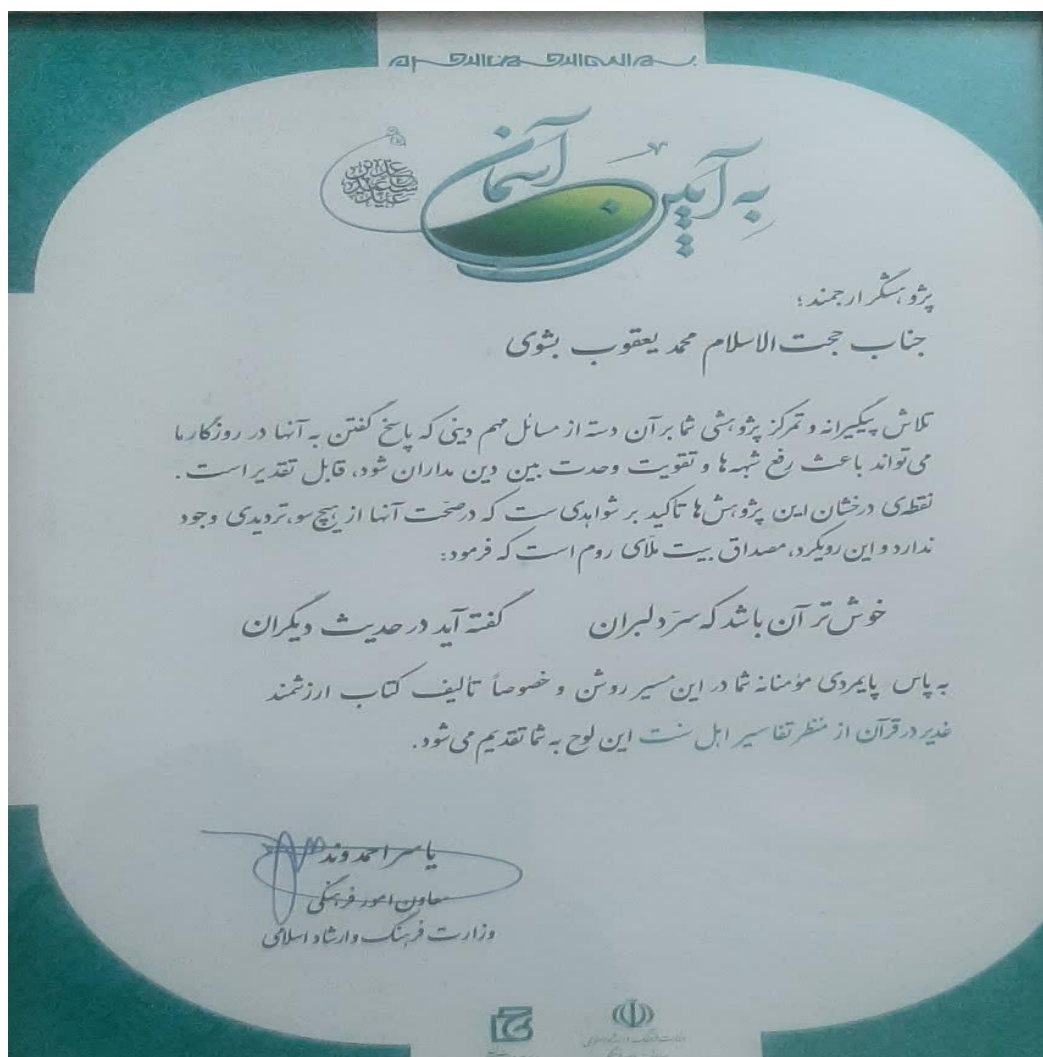
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

International Institute International Recognition:
Major Scholarly Conference – Isfahan (26 October 1998):
A high-level international conference was held in Isfahan, Iran, focusing on the legacy of Imam Ali (a.s.). Over 1,100 academic papers and multi-volume works in Persian, Arabic, English, and other languages were presented. Out of all these, only 25 works were selected for special recognition — including this book, "Ghadir in the Qur'an from the Perspective of Sunni Commentaries.



Award from Bustan-e-Ketab & Ministry of Culture: After being published by the renowned Iranian publisher Bustan-e-Ketab, the book received official recognition and an honorary certificate from the Iranian Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.



Translated into Multiple Languages: The book has been translated into numerous world languages including: Arabic, Persian, English, Russian, German, French, Azeri, Balti, Swahili, Urdu, Indonesian, Spanish, Portuguese, Tajik, Sindhi, Burushaski, and more.

Table of Contents

Publisher's Note.....	9
Translator's Foreword.....	11
About the Author	13
Introduction.....	15
The Verse of Guardianship	17
Introduction.....	17
The Literal definition of "Wilāyah"	18
The Technical definition of "Wilāyah"	19
A Study of the 'Verse of Guardianship' (Ayah of Wilāyah)	22
The Occasion of Revelation.....	24
The Consensus of Sunni Qur'anic Exegetes and Scholars on the Manifestation of Waliyy in the 'Verse of Wilāyah'	30
The Narrators of 'Hadith of Wilāyah'.....	32
The Interpretation of the Verse	33
The connection between the 'Verse of Wilāyah' and the Event of Ghadīr	41
The Guardianship of Imam Ali (PBUH) during the Prophet's Era	46
The Revealed Verses on Wilāyah Before Ghadīr Khumm.....	51
Introduction.....	51
No. 1: The 'Verse of Forsaking' [Ayah of Tārik].....	51
The Occasion of Revelation.....	52
The Interpretation of the Verse	54
No. 2: The 'Verse of Appointment' [Ayah of Naṣb]	63
The Occasion of Revelation of the Verse	64
The Viewpoints of Sunni Qur'anic Exegetes on the 'Verse of Appointment'	66
Viewpoint No. 1: To Supplicate and make a request.....	66
A Critical Review:	66
Viewpoint No. 2: Keeping Vigil at Night.....	68
A Critical Review:	68
Viewpoint No. 3: Seeking Forgiveness	68

A Critical Review:	69
Viewpoint No. 4: Putting an Effort into Worship.....	69
A Critical Review:	70
Viewpoint No. 5: Performing the Daily prayer	70
A Critical Review:	71
Viewpoint No. 6: Striving to Worship the Absolute Truth.....	72
A Critical Review:	72
Viewpoint No. 7: Appointing a Divine Leader.....	72
A Critical Review:	73
Viewpoint No. 8: Attending to the affairs of the Hereafter	78
A Critical Review:	78
Viewpoint No. 9: Supplicating for this World and the Hereafter	79
A Critical Review:	79
Viewpoint No. 10: Utilizing One's Health for Worship.....	79
A Critical Review:	79
Viewpoint No. 11: Paying attention to the Supererogatory acts.....	80
A Critical Review:	80
Viewpoint No. 12: Jihād with the Self.....	81
A Critical Review:	81
Viewpoint No. 13: Seeking intercession.....	81
A Critical Review:	82
Acceptable Viewpoint: The appointment of Ali (PBUH) as the Prophet's vicegerent ...	82
The Link between Surah Inshirāh with the prayer of Moses (PBUH).....	87
The Interpretation of the Verse	92
No. 3: The 'Verse of Proclamation' [Ayah of Iblāgh]	96
The Occasion of Revelation.....	97
The Viewpoints of Sunni Qur'anic Exegetes on the Verse	97
The Interpretation of the Verse	106
The Revealed Verses on Ghadīr Khumm After the Declaration of Wilāyah	123
Introduction.....	123
1. The 'Verse of Perfection'	123
The Occasion of Revelation.....	124
A Critical Review	127
The Context of 'Verse of Perfection'	129
The Intended Meaning of "al- Yawm " in the Verse	131
1. The day of the Prophetic mission (Bi'that).....	132
2. Before the Conquest of Mecca.....	132

3. After the Conquest of Mecca	133
4. During the Conquest of Mecca	134
5. During the Revelation of Surah Tawbah	134
6. At Mina on the days of Tashriq	135
7. A Period of time.....	135
8. An Unknown Day	136
9. During the Farewell Pilgrimage.....	137
10. On Monday at Medina	137
11. The day of Arafah	138
12. The eve of Arafah	144
13. Now.....	146
14. On the Eid of Adha	146
15. The Day of its Revelation	146
16. The day of Ghadīr	147
The Intended Meaning of ‘Perfection of Religion’	149
First Viewpoint: The Perfection of Religious Rulings	149
Second Viewpoint: The Perfection of Religion under the leadership of Ali	150
The Great Eid.....	150
The Last Revealed Verse	152
Interpretation of the Verse	154
The Verses of Surah al-Ma’ārij	158
The Occasion of Revelation of the Verse	158
The Interpretation of the Verse	160
Summary	164
References.....	168

Publisher's Note

We offer our countless thanks to Almighty Allah for granting us the honor and success to translate and disseminate the internationally acclaimed and groundbreaking work of the esteemed Qur'anic exegete, Allama Dr. Muhammad Yaqub Bashovi (may Allah protect him) — "Ghadir in the Qur'an from the Perspective of Sunni Tafsir". This noble effort involves rendering the book into multiple global languages and delivering it to both scholarly and public audiences worldwide. This book, based on a modern exegetical approach and an independent *ijtihādī* methodology, not only deepens the understanding of the Qur'an but also powerfully substantiates the *Wilāyah* (guardianship) of Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (peace be upon him) through Qur'anic verses. It represents a unique example of thematic exegesis (*tafsīr mawdū'ī*), relying solely on Sunni sources to discuss the event of Ghadir. While respecting differing views, the book maintains a purely evidence-based, academic tone—thus making it a model of scholarly integrity and methodological excellence.

This work was honored as the selected book at a prestigious international conference held in the historic city of Isfahan, Iran, and was later published by the renowned and credible Iranian publisher

Bustān-e-Ketāb. The book also received official recognition and commendation from the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Among Allama Dr. Bashovi's numerous groundbreaking scholarly contributions, this book stands out as one of his most influential. His works have been translated into more than forty languages across the globe—a testament to his far-reaching intellectual impact.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all the translators from various countries, especially Hujjat al-Islam Dr: AbdulQadir, Muhammad-Bello, who rendered the English version with remarkable precision and devotion. May Allah (swt) graciously accept their efforts and increase their success in every noble pursuit. We are also profoundly grateful to Allama Dr. Muhammad Yaqub Bashovi himself, whose scholarly vision has opened new horizons in the fields of Qur'anic understanding and the theology of Wilāyah. Through his pioneering work, a new chapter in the comprehension of divine leadership has been unveiled before the world. It is our firm resolve to continue disseminating Allama Bashovi's profound research and publications to international scholarly circles, so that the world may be further enriched by the divine knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them). Finally, we are pleased to announce to all readers and institutions around the world that any individual or organization, from any country and in any language, is hereby granted full and unconditional permission to publish and distribute this book. Wa mā tawfīqī illā billāh.

Al-Kawthar International Institute, Qom – Iran

Translator's Foreword

The present work is the English translation of the book titled *Ghadīr dar Qur'an az manẓari Tafṣīr Ahl al-Sunnah* (literally, Ghadīr in the Qur'an from the perspective of the Sunni exegeses) written in Persian by Dr. Muhammad Yaqub Bashovi and published in 2003 by Bustan Kitab (an affiliate of the Islamic Propagation Center, Qom Islamic Seminary), Qom Iran.

The book focuses on the event of Ghadīr Khumm, which is considered one of the most important historical events in Islam and is documented virtually in the Sunni and Shia reliable sources. Apart from the introduction, the book is made up of three distinct chapters. Chapter one focuses on the 'Verse of Guardianship [Ayah of Wilāyah] in which the occasion of its revelation and manifestation are discussed. In chapter two, four Qur'anic verses such as the 'Verse of Forsaking' [Ayah of Tārik]; the 'Verse of Appointment' [Ayah of Naṣb] and the 'Verse of Proclamation' [Ayah of Iblāgh], which are believed to have been revealed before the event of Ghadīr Khumm were examined based on the Sunni Qur'anic exegeses. The last chapter focuses primarily on another four Qur'anic verses such as 'Verse of Perfection' [Ayah of Ikmāl] and the first three verses of Qur'an 70 [Surah al-Ma'ārij], which were revealed after the declaration at Ghadīr Khumm. The author, using the Sunni Qur'anic exegetical sources, is able to establish the significance of guardianship [Wilāyah] in Islam and that, Ghadīr Khumm was a place where the religion is perfected, divine blessing completed and Islam is approved as a religion of salvation with the appointment of the Commander of

the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib (peace be upon him) as the guardian [Waliyy] and the leader of every believer after the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household).

Meanwhile, it is pertinent to mention that in most cases, the Arabic texts of Qur'anic verses were quoted along with the English translation to avoid any ambiguity in its understanding. Likewise, the English translation of the Qur'an by Qara'i, Ali Quli is used throughout to ensure coherence.

It is hoped that this valuable book will fill the existing vacuum between different Muslim denominations and be a source of enlightenment and guidance to every seeker of truth on the path towards achieving Islamic unity.

AbdulQadir, Muhammad-Bello
March, 2024

About the Author

Dr. Muhammad Yaqub Bashovi was born on April 15, 1972, in a village called Basho, 45 kilometres from the city of Skardu, Baltistan, Pakistan. At an early age, he started learning the Holy Qur'an from his father and completed his primary education in his birthplace and secondary education in the Kachura region. Then, he left for Lahore city to continue his modern and Islamic seminary education.

Dr. Bashovi started studying religious sciences at Jamia Al-Muntazar and for six years he was under the tutelage of respected teachers such as Ayatollah Hafiz Riyaz. After the completion of his study, he was invited to Iran in 1993 and he continued his religious study in the Holy City of Qom.

Apart from participating in the extra-curricular classes of jurisprudence [Fiqh] and jurisprudential principles [Usul Fiqh], he obtained a bachelor's degree in Islamic studies, a master's degree in Qur'anic and hadith Sciences, and a doctorate in the Comparative Qur'anic exegeses. His doctoral dissertation titled "*Social Changes from the Perspective of the Qur'an*" was recognized by the respected panel of judges as an example of scientific presentation.

Among his teachers in Qom are: Grand Ayatollah Mirza Javad Tabrizi, Grand Ayatollah Vahid Khorasani, Ayatollah Mohammad Hadi Marifat, Ayatollah Dr. Ahmad Abidi, Grand Ayatollah Mohammad Javad Fadil Lankarani, Ayatollah Seyed Mohammad Najafi, Ayatollah Andalib Hamdani and Dr. Mohammad Ali Rezaei.

The author has published about forty books and several articles on various Qur'anic and Hadith topics. His books and articles have been translated or under the process of translation into various languages such as Arabic, Urdu, English,

French, German, Turkish, Burmese, Bengali, Indonesian, Tajik, Russian, Hindi, Sindhi, Balti, Sindhi, Saraiki, Pashto, Azeri, Fulani, Swahili, Hausa, Yoruba, Thai, Chinese, Gujarati, Dandi, Chechua, Dagombe, Kashmiri, Spanish.

The author has won first place in many international festivals, and conferences. He was recognized as the best researcher and the best preacher in the international arena. He is a talented orator and an outstanding researcher in this field, he has conducted workshops on the skill of oratory and research methodology in Iran (Qom, Mashhad, Isfahan), and in various cities such as Karachi, Quetta, Islamabad, Lahore, Muzaffarabad, Gilgit, Chenyut, Skardu and Holy Najaf in Iraq.

He has engaged in missionary trips and academic meetings in numerous countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan and has academic cooperation with several universities and academic institutions. He has also collaborated with numerous establishments to organize international conferences. Teaching and counselling are among his outstanding hobbies. I wish him sound health and a prosperous long life in his endeavours towards propagating the messages of the pure Prophet's Household [Ahl al-Bayt].

Introduction

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Universe, and the pleasant outcome will be in favour of the Godway. I testify that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah, He alone has no partner. **"Look! All creation and command belong to Him. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of all the worlds¹."** I testify that Muhammad (peace be upon him and his household) is His beloved servant and Messenger, who was sent as a mercy to the Universe and it was sent down along with him a divine Book that falsehood cannot approach it, a [revelation gradually] sent down from the all-wise, all-laudable One². May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon his holy and pure household and his chosen companions. O Allah, bless Muhammad and his family and hasten their relief. Thereafter, Almighty Allah said: **"We send down in the Quran that which is a cure and mercy for the faithful, and it increases the wrongdoers only in loss."** (Qur'an 17: 82)

¹ . Qur'an 7: 54. [Translator]

² . Qur'an 41: 42. [Translator]

The purpose of the revelation of the Holy Qur'an is to create awareness and for society to advance towards perfection. The Holy Qur'an has set a firm path before society, which does not have any kind of crookedness, deviation or darkness:

"Indeed this Quran guides to what is most upright..." (Qur'an 17: 9)

Considering the noble status of the Holy Qur'an, I held onto this and decided to write about a very crucial issue of "Wilāyah" (Guardianship).

This work consists of three chapters: In the first chapter, the concept of Wilāyah (i.e., Guardianship) is discussed while the main focus is on the Verse of Wilāyah [Ayah of Wilāyah]. The second chapter is about the Verses of Ghadīr and Wilāyah before the declaration of guardianship (Wilāyah) in Ghadīr Khumm, and the verses that were revealed about it [Wilāyah] after the event of Ghadīr Khumm was the focus of discussion in the third chapter.

All the exegetical discussions of this book are based on the Sunni Qur'anic exegeses using the *Ijtihād* methodology, and its scientific discussions are written in a fluent, simple and unifying language.

It is hoped that the experts on the subject matter will point out the areas that need to be corrected or modified by the author. I would like to sincerely thank the esteemed staff of *Bustan Kitab* Institute for the preparation and publication of this work, and I beseech Almighty Allah for their continuous success. **"And my success lies only with Allah: in Him, I have put my trust, and to Him, I turn penitently¹."**

¹ . Qur'an 11: 88. [The Translator]

Muhammad Yaqub Bashovi
Islamabad Pakistan

Chapter 1

The Verse of Guardianship

Introduction

There are numerous discussions about the Verse of Guardianship (i.e. Ayah of Wilāyah) but the topics shall be presented in a concise form in this book.

Concerning the guardianship [Wilāyah], Allah says:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

“Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down.” (Qur’an 5: 55)

In the Qur’anic exegetical and hadith sources of the Sunni brethren, several verses related to the event of Ghadīr Khumm and the declaration of the guardianship of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) can be found. For societal administration, the Prophet Muhammad al-Mustafa (peace be upon him and his household) based on the divine commandment announced the leadership of Ali (peace be upon him) to the Muslims. With an emphasis by the glorious Qur'an and the descent of Gabriel, his guardianship [over the Muslims] was announced generally for all

time at Ghadīr Khumm. After the official declaration, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) took an oath of allegiance from the Muslims for the Commander of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (peace be upon him).

Several Qur'anic verses have been revealed about the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] and Ghadīr Khumm. Some of these verses focus on the fundamental issue of guardianship - but only the "Verse of Guardianship" shall be discussed in this chapter- and some verses were revealed before the declaration of guardianship [in Ghadīr Khumm] which portray the significance and the necessity of making the declaration and the negative consequences of not announcing it by the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his household).

The Literal definition of "Wilāyah"

The Arabic terms "*Wilāyah*" and "*Mawlā*" are derived from the root word "*Wa-la-ya*" while "*Wilāyah*" means placing two things next to each other, in such a way that there is no distance between them, and someone who is in this state on behalf of someone or something else is called "*Waliyy*". Therefore, lexicographers have listed various meanings for "*Waliyy*" which include: *Mālik* (a possessor), *ʿAbd* (a servant), *Mu'tiq* (a liberator), *Mu'taq* (a freed person), *Ṣāhib* (a companion), *Qarīb* (a relative such a cousin), *Jār* (a neighbour), *Ḥalīf* (an alliance), *Ibn* (a son), *ʿAmm* (an uncle), *Rabb* (a lord), *Nāṣir* (a helper), *Mun'im* (a benefactor), *Nazīl* (one who chooses a place to live), *Sharīk* (a partner), *Ibn al-Ukht* (a nephew), *Muhibb* (a lover), *Tābi'* (a follower), *Ṣahr* (son-in-law), *Awla bi-Taṣṣaruf* (one who is more entitled to take over the personal affairs of others).

Therefore, "*Wilāyah*" is also used in the meaning of administration and leadership¹.

The author of the book "*Al-Mufradāt*" writes: The Arabic terms "al-Walāu" and "al-Tawālī" mean placing two or more things next to each other in such a manner that nothing else separates them, and it is metaphorically used for the proximity of a place. "*Al-Wilāyah*" means victory, but "*al-Walāyah*" means to be in charge of an affair. It has also been said that the meaning of the two [i.e., *Wilāyah* and *Walāyah*] is the same just like the meaning of "*Dalālah*" and "*Dilālah*" and the actual meaning is "an owner of the authority"².

FirūzĀbādī also considered "*Wilāyah*" and "*Walāyah*" as the same, which means leadership and authority³. Fayyūmī also interpreted the term "Wilāyah" to mean authority and leadership⁴.

In view of this, the Arabic term "*Wilāyah*" has different meanings in its literal sense but its intended meaning in every sentence is understood based on a particular context and its understanding is impossible without this.

The Technical definition of "*Wilāyah*"

In a technical sense, the Arabic term "*Wilāyah*" means the guardianship of a perfect human being over other human beings in various dimensions such as personal and social, religious and worldly, outward and inward, intentions and the hearts of people and the legislation and development of the world of existence in order to lead them to the ultimate happiness of this world and the Hereafter.

The prerequisites for this position are: infallibility, inner purity, divine knowledge, connection with the unseen world and a broad heart. The outcomes

¹ . Muḥammad Ya'qūb, FirūzĀbādī, *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muḥīṭ*, under the entry "Waliy", vol. 4, p. 404; Muḥammad, Sa'īdī Mehr, *Kalām Islāmī*, vol. 2, p. 168.

² . Rāghib Isfahānī, Mu'jam Al-Mufradāt al-fāz Qur'an, p. 570.

³ . Muḥammad Ya'qūb, FirūzĀbādī, *Al-Qāmūs Al-Muḥīṭ*, vol. 4, p. 404.

⁴ . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Fayyūmī, *al-Miṣbāḥ al-Munīr*, p. 672.

of these are the establishment of a proof and a witness upon the outward and inward actions of every human being in this world and giving the testimony [on their actions] in the Hereafter.

From the Shia point of view, a person can become the spiritual leader [i.e., an Imam] of the Islamic community if he has an absolute divine authority or God and His chosen servant [such as the Prophet or Imam] authorize him, otherwise, he is a usurper. This is because, so far the most perfect candidate is present and available, it is not yet the turn [for the leadership] of others¹.

This definition comprises prominent features and broad concepts and it is therefore considered as the best, comprehensive and complete definition of its kind.

The Verse of *Wilāyah* specifies all the manifestations of a "Waliyy" [i.e., a guardian], but it does not explain the meaning of *Wilāyah* [Guardianship], while in order to understand the meaning of *Wilāyah*, it is necessary to understand why God, with special attention, has placed the *Wilāyah* of Ali (peace be upon him) alongside His *Wilāyah* and that of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) and with an emphatic expression "*Innamā*", when Allah says:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down."

Paying an attention to the context of the verse is necessary and it helps to understand the concept of *Wilāyah* [Guardianship]. In the context of the verse, God refers to the change in the state of the Islamic Ummah:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

¹ . <https://www.islamquest.net/fa/archive/question/fa1156>

“O you who have faith! Should any of you desert his religion, Allah will soon bring a people whom He loves and who love Him, [who will be] humble towards the faithful, stern towards the faithless, waging jihad in the way of Allah, not fearing the blame of any blamer. That is Allah’s grace, which He grants to whomever He wishes, and Allah is all-bounteous, all-knowing.” (Qur’an 5: 54)

In this verse, Allah has informed us about the apostasy and the reversion of some of the people to disbelief and the ineffectiveness of such a reversion to Islam. It has also given information about the consolidation of religious values by another group of people whose attribute is described as being loved by God. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his household) introduced the Persian people as a manifestation of this group of people: "It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his household) was asked about the interpretation of this verse, and he placed his hand on the shoulder of Salman Al-Farsi (The Persian) and said: "This man and his people". Thereafter he (PBUHH¹) added: "If the religion is hung to the chandeliers, the Persian people would have obtained it²."

In this hadith, the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) informed about the future that there would be a group of people from among the Persians who shall be very lenient [in dealing] with the believers but very strict against the infidels, and these people are a manifestation of this verse.

The apostates are also a group from among the Companions of the Prophet who renounced Islam. Abu Hurayrah reported the Prophet of Islam (peace be upon him and his household) to have said: "A group of my companions will come to me on the Day of Resurrection, and they will be taken away from the Pool of Kawthar, then I will say, ‘O my Lord, [they were] my companions, my

¹ . PBUHH: This abbreviation is used after the name of Prophet Muhammad and denotes “Peace be upon him and his Household while PBUH used after the names of pure Prophet’s progeny and denotes “Peace be upon him/her”.

² . Aḥmad Tha’alabī, Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān ‘an Tafsīr al-Qur’an, vol. 4, p. 79.

companions.' Then it will be said to me, 'You do not know what they did after you¹."

This hadith is the actual interpretation of the verse, it introduces to the Islamic Ummah a manifestation of those who reverted from the religion, and it recounts their ugly and norm-breaking deeds after the death of the Holy Prophet (the Mercy to the Worlds). In one hundred and eighty degrees, some people have hastily reverted from Islam to disbelief and ignorance!

Two different reactions of the Companions are presented in this verse. Some Companions will renounce Islam, while some others are genuine believers who have no fear of the enemy, and it is this group that accepts the guardianship of Allah, the Messenger of Allah, and the believers who give zakat while bowing. It is from this that the confederates of Allah [Hizbullah] are formed:

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ

Whoever takes for his guardians Allah, His Apostle and the faithful [should know that] the confederates of Allah are indeed the victorious. (Qur'an 5: 56)

The existence of a community that is the confederates of Allah and its dominance over everyone is the outcome of not reverting from the divine religion; being loved by God, and accepting the three guardianships, which was stated in these three verses of Surah Ma'idah (Qur'an 5: 54-56).

A Study of the 'Verse of Guardianship' (Ayah of Wilāyah)

The meaning of "*Wilāyah*" in this verse is an authority, and other meanings such as Imamate or Prophethood, etc., are specifically excluded because Imamate and others are based on divine appointment.

The term "*Waliyy*" in the Verse of *Wilāyah* means "a guardian". The 'Verse of Guardianship' indicates the bond between the guardian and the believing

¹ . Ibid, vol. 4, p. 79.

community and says that the community should not be without a guardian and be left to its own fate. This tie is firmly connected to such an extent that it will never break even in the Hereafter. This verse enjoins the believing community to follow the absolute guardianship of the Commander of the Faithful, Hazrat Ali (PBUH¹). Imam Ali, just like Almighty Allah and the Holy Prophet (PBUHH), is the guardian of the people, and this guardianship is trans-temporal and trans-spatial as it is not restricted to a specific time and place. In order to understand the concept of *Wilāyah* [guardianship] and the manifestation of a *Waliyy* [a guardian], it is necessary to interpret the verse of guardianship along with the next verse, which says:

وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ

Whoever takes for his guardians Allah, His Apostle and the faithful [should know that] the confederates of Allah are indeed the victorious. (Qur'an 5: 56)

The very crucial interior points and exterior evidence of both two verses help a lot to better understand the verse and bring the reader closer to the intention of Allah. These two verses are among the verses that absolutely indicate the guardianship of Imam Ali (PBUH) and give good news to the Islamic community that the leader of this community is the one who gave Zakat while in the bowing position. Numerous Sunni and Shia authentic narrations from dozens of the Companions and the Followers [i.e., *Tābi'ūn*] have identified the person in question as Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (peace be upon him). These two verses are the clearest evidence of the leadership and imamate of the infallible Imams (peace be upon them), especially Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him).

¹ . PBUH: This abbreviation is used after the name of any member of pure Prophet's Household and it denotes "Peace be upon him".

The Occasion of Revelation

There are numerous narrations and viewpoints in Sunni Qur'anic exegeses about the circumstances surrounding the revelation of the 'Verse of Wilāyah', some of those viewpoints are as follows:

Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (died: 310 AD) who is one of the famous Qur'anic exegetes and historians mentioned five narrations with connected chains of transmission to support this matter. For example, he quoted Mujāhid to have said: **"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down"** was revealed in honour of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib when he gave charity while in a bowing [ruku'] position¹.

Ibn Abi Ḥātim (died: 327 AH), who is a well-known and reliable Sunni Qur'anic exegete, narrated the following about the reason for the revelation of the verse with a connected chain of transmission from Salma Ibn Kahīl: Ali gave his ring as charity while bowing in the prayer; this verse was therefore revealed: **"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down"**². And he mentioned thereafter three other narrations in this regard.

Imam Fakhr Rāzī (died: 604 AH) has given three types of narrations about the 'Verse of Wilāyah' in his Tafsīr. He quoted the first narration from Ibn Abbas and wrote: "'Ata narrates from Ibn Abbas that this verse was revealed about Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib"³.

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 4, p. 289.

² . Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azīm, vol., 4, p. 1162.

³ . Fakhr Rāzī, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 12, p. 383.

The second narration was also from Abdullah ibn Salām who said: "When this verse was revealed, I said: O Messenger of Allah: I saw Ali giving out his ring in charity to the needy while bowing. Thus, we accept his guardianship!"¹¹

Abdullah ibn Salām explicitly mentioned the acceptance of Imam Ali's guardianship in this narration, with the expression "We" which indicates a group of people. That is, 'We, the Companions, accepted the guardianship of Ali and considered him as our guardian'.

Fakhr Rāzī has narrated the third narration in a little more detail from Abu Dharr Ghiffāri, in which, in addition to the confirmation of the revelation of the verse in honour of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), it also mentioned the inquiry of the Prophet as he (PBUHH) witnessed the giving out of a ring to a needy and immediately, he asked Allah about his successor and requested Allah to appoint Ali as his minister just as he appointed Hārūn as the minister and deputy for Moses. Allah also revealed the 'Verse of Wilāyah' in response to such a request from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household): It was narrated on the authority of Abu Dharr (may Allah be pleased with him) that he said: I prayed the Noon Prayer with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his household) on a day, and a needy asked for help in the mosque, but no one gave him anything. Thus, he raised his hand to the sky and said: O Allah, bear witness that I asked for help in the Prophet's mosque but no one gave me anything and Ali (peace be upon him) was on genuflection [ruku'] position, so he gestured to him with his right little finger in which there was a ring in it, so the needy approached him and took the ring in the presence of the Prophet (may peace be upon him and his household), and he (PBUHH) said: "Oh Allah! My brother, Moses asked you, saying: **"My Lord! Open my breast for me"** until **"And make him my associate in my task²."** Then You sent down a speaking Qur'an: **"We will strengthen your arm by**

¹¹ . ibid.

² . Qur'an 20: 25-32.

means of your brother, and invest both of you with such authority that they will not touch you¹." Oh Allah! I am Muhammad, Your Prophet and Your selected one, so expand my heart for me, ease for me my affairs and appoint Ali as a minister from among my family, with whom You will strengthen my back. Abu Dharr said: By Allah, the Messenger of Allah did not complete this expression until Gabriel descended and said: O Muhammad, recite: "**Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle...**"². Meanwhile, Nishabūrī has also mentioned the same content in his Tafsīr³.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) used the guardianship of Moses and Hārūn (peace be upon them) as a basis to establish the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali. He used the eight verses of Qur'an 20 [Surah Ṭaha] and recited them:

قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي. وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي. وَاحْلُلْ عُقْدَةً مِنْ لِسَانِي. يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي. وَاجْعَلْ لِي وَزِيرًا مِنْ أَهْلِي. هَارُونَ أَخِي. اشْدُدْ بِهِ أَزْرِي. وَأَشْرِكْهُ فِي أَمْرِي

*"My Lord! Open my breast for me. Make my task easy for me. Remove the hitch from my tongue. [So that] they may understand my speech. Appoint for me a minister from my family. Hārūn, my brother. Strengthen my back through him and make him my associate in my task"*⁴

Thereafter, he presented his request and immediately the 'Verse of Wilāyah' was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his household) by the trust-worthy Gabriel, and in this way, it is understood that these eight verses are also linked to the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah].

In these verses, some of the characteristics of guardianship are mentioned which include: the removal of great sufferings and the creation of ease under the shadow of guardianship. The "Saint of Allah" such as the Prophet took up the divine

¹ . Qur'an 28: 35.

² . Fakhr Rāzī, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 12, p. 383.

³ . Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad Qummī Nishabūrī, *Tafsīr Gharib al-Qur'an wa Raghā'ib al-Furqān*, vol. 2, 605-606.

⁴ . Qur'an 20: 25-32.

mission and provided hope and support for the religion of God. He is both an advocate of monotheism and a breaker of the tyrant.

Allah commanded Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) to challenge the tyrant [Pharaoh] of his time: "**Go to Pharaoh. He has indeed rebelled¹.**" He (peace be upon him) asked Allah to appoint Hārūn (peace be upon him) to assist him [in his mission] and then recited the above-mentioned verses. Then this mission has been assigned to the Prophet (PBUHH) and Ali, who must fight against the Pharaohs of their time and free the 'Israelites' of their time from the tyrannical system:

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

"Allah is the wali of the faithful: He brings them out of darkness into light. As for the faithless, their awliya are the fake deities, who drive them out of light into darkness. They shall be the inmates of the Fire, and they will remain in it [forever]²."

Therefore, the concept of Wilāyah is a continuous phenomenon that does not stop and it plays a vital role in all places and times.

Tha'alabī, one of the Sunni Qur'anic exegetes, has narrated the same narration but with a slight difference. He has narrated from Fakhr Rāzī who also reported 'Ibadah ibn Rabī'ī thus: One day, Abdullah ibn Abbas was sitting next to Zamzam and was narrating to the people the hadith of the Prophet, suddenly a man wearing a turban and covering his face came near and every time Ibn Abbas quoted a hadith from the Prophet (PBUHH), he also narrated another hadith from the Prophet (PBUHH) with the expression "The Messenger of Allah said." Ibn Abbas said: I beseech you by Allah, who are you? He removed the mask from his face and exclaimed: O people! One who knows me knows me [quite well], but those who do not know me, should know that I am Jundub ibn Junāda al-Badrī; Abu

¹ . Qur'an 20: 24.

² . Qur'an 2: 257.

Dharr Ghiffāri. I heard from the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) with my own ears, and if I tell a lie, let both my ears be deaf, and I saw this process with my own eyes, and if I tell a lie, let both my eyes be blind. The Prophet (PBUHH) said: "Ali is the leader of the good ones and the killer of the disbelievers. Whoever helps him will be helped and whoever abandons him will be abandoned. Then Abu Dharr added: O people! One day I was praying with the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) in the mosque and a beggar entered the mosque and asked the people for help, but no one gave him anything, he, therefore, raised his hand to the sky and said: O Allah, be a witness that I asked for help in the mosque of Your Messenger, but no one gave me anything. At that moment, Ali, who was in a genuflecting (Ruku') position, pointed with the little finger of his right hand. The beggar went near and removed the ring from his hand. The Holy Prophet (PBUHH) who was also praying saw this incident. When he finished the prayer, he raised his head to the sky and said: O Allah, my brother Moses beseech You to expand his breast and make things easy for him and untie the knot from his tongue so that people can understand his speech. In addition, Moses also requested that You appoint Hārūn, who was his brother, as his minister and helper and increase his strength through him and make him a partner in his mission. And You answered his prayer and sent down a verse of the Qur'an concerning him: **"We will strengthen your arm by means of your brother, and invest both of you with such authority that they will not touch you¹."** O Allah! I am Muḥammad, Your Prophet and chosen one, expand my chest and make things easy for me and appoint Ali from my family as my minister so that through him, my back is strengthened. Abu Dharr said: The prayer of the Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) had not yet finished when Gabriel came down and said to the Prophet (PBUHH): Recite. The Prophet said: What should I recite? Then Gabriel said,

¹ . Qur'an 28: 35.

recite: **"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down¹."**

Suyūṭī mentioned eleven different narrations with different chains of transmission from Imam Ali, Imam Bāqir (2 hadiths), Ibn Abbas (4 hadiths), Salma Ibn Kahīl, ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, Mujāhid, Sadī, ‘Utbah ibn Hakīm and Abu Rāfi’, according to which it is mentioned that the 'Verse of Wilāyah' was revealed in honour of Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

It is stated in the narration of ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir that he said: *One day, a beggar stood in front of Ali, while he was in a genuflecting position (Ruku’) in prayer. Thus, he removed his ring from his finger and gave it to the beggar. Thereafter, he [the beggar] came to the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) and narrated his story to him. It did not take much time when this verse was revealed: "Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down." The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) recited the verse to his Companions and then he said: Whoever I am his master, Ali is therefore his master. Oh Allah, love whoever loves Ali, and hate whoever hates him².*

It can be found from this narration, that the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) explained the same famous hadith of Ghadīr during the revelation of the 'Verse of Wilāyah'. The hadith was declared in Ghadīr Khumm with greater diligence and amid one hundred and twenty thousand companions who were just returning from Hajj. In the 'Verse of Wilāyah', the same guardianship which was mentioned in Ghadīr is explained. And the link between the 'Verse of Wilāyah' and 'Ghadīr Khumm' becomes more obvious in this way. In addition, the joy of the Prophet (PBUHH) and his pronouncement of *Takbīr* after the revelation of the 'Verse of Wilāyah', indicates the leadership of Imam Ali (peace be upon him), as the sentences indicate: *"The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) said Takbīr at that time he recited*

¹ . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha’alabī, al-Kashf wa al-Bayān ‘an Tafsīr al-Qur’an, vol. 4, p. 80.

² . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, Al-Durr al-Manthūr fī Tafsīr al-Ma’thūr, vol. 2, p. 294.

"Whoever takes for his guardians Allah, His Apostle and the faithful [should know that] the confederates of Allah are indeed the victorious" and this is an indication on the significance of this issue¹.

The Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) also interpreted the next verse that, 'whoever accepts the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him) is the confederates of Allah (i.e., Hizbullah)'. The pronouncement of *Takbīr* by the Prophet (PBUHH) during the revelation of the verse indicates the greatness of guardianship of Ali (PBUH), and this verse heralds the victory of Ali's party (PBUH) over all parties and movements. It was here that the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) after reciting the verse: **"Your guardian is only Allah"** said: 'Praise be to Allah, Who has completed His blessings on Ali and prepared them for him with His grace²'. This expression contains the meaning of the same 'Verse of Perfection' that all the blessings are hidden under the shadow of Wilāyah and with this, no other blessings remain and this is the grace that Allah gave to Ali (peace be upon him).

The Consensus of Sunni Qur'anic Exegetes and Scholars on the Manifestation of Waliyy in the 'Verse of Wilāyah'

The consensus of the Shia Qur'anic exegetes is that the 'Verse of Wilāyah' was revealed in honour of Ali (peace be upon him) and none of them doubted this. However, among the Sunni Qur'anic exegetes and scholars, some have considered the revelation of the 'Verse of Guardianship' in honour of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and regarded it a consensual matter among Sunni Qur'anic exegetes while some other Sunni scholars hold a contrary viewpoint.

Ibn 'Atiyyah Andalūsī (died 546 AH) writes: "And it is unanimously agreed that Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib gave charity while he was in genuflection position (Ruku)³"

¹ . ibid.

² . Jalāl al-Din Suyūṭī, *Al-Durr al-Manthūr fī Tafsīr al-Ma'thūr*, vol. 2, p. 294.

³ . Al-Muharrar al-Wajiz fī Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-'Azīz, vol. 2, p. 208.

Niẓām al-Din Nishabūrī (died 728 AH) said under the previous verse: "It is unanimously agreed that the next verse was revealed in his honour¹." He attributed the view about the revelation of the 'Verse of Wilāyah' in honour of Imam Ali to a majority of the Qur'anic exegetes. Then, he writes after a long discussion: "And the truth is that if the authenticity of the narration is established, the verse is a strong indication of the greatness of Ali, peace be upon him²."

In the Sunni most important book on beliefs, Qādī 'Aḍidu-Din Ījī Ash'ari (died 756 AH) considered the revelation of this verse -based on the consensus of the great scholars of Tafsīr- to be in honour of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) and he writes in this regard: "The great scholars of Tafsīr unanimously agreed that the intended person [in this verse] is Ali and there is a consensus of scholars on any other person³." Based on the opinion of Ījī, Imam Ali is the one who is intended as someone who gave Zakat during the genuflecting [ruku'] position. Saying that, there is a unanimous consensus among the Qur'anic exegetes on the issue, it should also be said that there is a consensus among them that no other person is intended in this verse except Ali (peace be upon him).

Mas'ūd ibn 'Umar Taftāzānī (died in 792 AH) also says: "It was revealed based on the consensus of the Qur'anic exegetes in honour of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib while he gave his ring to a beggar at genuflecting [ruku'] position in Salat⁴."

'Alāuddin Ali Ghoshchī (died 879 AH) writes: "Indeed the verse was revealed based on a unanimous consensus of the Qur'anic exegetes in honour of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, when giving his ring to a needy while in a genuflecting (Ruk'u) position⁵."

¹ . Hasan ibn Muḥammad Qummī Nishabūrī, Tafsīr Gharā'ib al-Qur'an wa Raghā'ib al-Furqān, vol. 2, p. 605.

² . ibid, p. 606.

³ . Abdul-Rahman ibn Aḥmad Ījī, Al-Mawāqif fī 'Ilm al-Kalām, p. 405.

⁴ . Sa'adudin Taftāzānī, Sharḥ al-Maqāsid, vol. 5, p. 270.

⁵ . Ali ibn Muḥammad Ghoshchī, Sharḥ Tajrīd al-'Itiqād, p. 368.

Suyūṭī (died 911 AH) brought some hadiths that prove the revelation of this verse in honour of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him), then he writes: "These are strong pieces of evidence that strengthen one another¹"

Tha'alabī (died in 876 AH) considers this to be a unanimously agreed issue and says: "And it was unanimously agreed [by the scholars] that Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib (peace be upon him) gave his ring while he was in a genuflecting (ruku') position²".

The Narrators of 'Hadith of Wilāyah'

Many Sunni Qur'anic exegetes, hadith scholars, historians and scholars have considered the Commander of the Faithful, Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) as the reason for the revelation of the 'Verse of Guardianship.' A Sunni scholar, Hākim Haskānī (471 AH) quoted the narrations related to the 'Verse of Guardianship' in 29 different ways³. The narrators of 'hadith Wilāyah' can be divided into three groups based on Sunni sources, and there are reliable individuals in each group, some of whom are:

- 1) Members of the Prophet's Household (Ahl al-Bayt): Imam Ali⁴ (peace be upon him) and Imam Bāqir⁵ (peace be upon him);
- 2) The Companions: 'Abdullah ibn Abbas; 'Abdullah ibn Salām⁶; Abu Rāf' Madani⁷; Ammār ibn Yāsir⁸; Abu Dharr Ghiffārī⁹; Anas ibn Mālīk¹⁰; Jābir ibn 'Abdullah¹¹; Miqdād ibn Al-Asūd¹².

¹ . Jalāl al-Din Suyūṭī, *Libāb al-Nuqūl Fī al-Bāb al-Nuzūl*, pp. 117-118.

² . Abdul-Rahmān ibn Ḥamd Tha'alabī, *Al-Jawāhir al-Hisān Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 1, p. 438.

³ . Hākim Haskānī, *Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl*, vol. 1, pp. 161-186.

⁴ . Hākim Haskānī, *Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl*, vol. 1, p. 175.

⁵ . *ibid*.

⁶ . Fakhr Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, vol. 12, p. 28.

⁷ . Jalāl al-Din Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, p. 106.

⁸ . *ibid*, *Libāb al-Nuqūl Fī al-Bāb al-Nuzūl*, p. 117.

⁹ . Fakhr Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, vol. 12, p. 28.

¹⁰ . Hākim Haskānī, *Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl*, p. 165.

¹¹ . *ibid*, p. 174.

¹² . *ibid*, p. 177.

3) The Followers (Tābi'ūn): Muḥammad ibn Hanafiyah¹; Salma ibn Kuhīl²; 'Utbah ibn Abi Hakīm³; Sudah⁴; Mujāhid⁵; 'Aṭā'⁶; and Abdul Malik ibn Jarī' Makki⁷.

The Interpretation of the Verse

In this verse, God Almighty, the Omnipotent has spoken about the system of guardianship, which originated from monotheism, and the main source of guardianship is the Holy Essence of the Lord. The orderliness in this world and the Hereafter is based on the centrality of guardianship and absolute guardianship.

And God has such an authority in the world of possibility, and He gave this authority to His Messenger and also gave it to a group that guarantees the survival and implementation of religion. The main duty of this group is to maintain the religion "**maintain the prayer**", which indicates such a principle, as the prayer is the manifestation and the perfection of all servitude and "**and give the zakat while bowing down**" also describes this guardian. He is the possessor of the authority of the people, who pay full attention to God, and on the other hand, he is not oblivious to God's creation but also pays full attention to their needs. Originally, this guardian (*Waliyy*) neither did he neglect God nor His creatures, rather he paid full attention to both of them. This state was his continuous and permanent one. This guardian (*Waliyy*) fulfilled the rights of God and the rights of the servants at the same time, and he had such a noble position that God, the Almighty also introduced him as the guardian of the people alongside Himself and His Messenger, and likewise, his obedience is obligatory for the people, just like the obedience to God and the divine Messenger. From this verse, the role of the

¹ . ibid, p. 167.

² . Jalāl al-Din Suyūfī, *Libāb al-Nuqūl Fī al-Bāb al-Nuzūl*, p. 117.

³ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 4, p. 288.

⁴ . ibid

⁵ . ibid, p. 289.

⁶ . Hākīm Haskānī, *Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id al-Tafḥīl*, p. 168.

⁷ . ibid.

guardianship [*Wilāyah*] in the lives of the people can be understood better. It is the role of guiding people towards monotheism and divine values and the role of the guardian is to guide society:

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْلِيَاؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

"Allah is the guardian (wali) of the faithful: He brings them out of darkness into light. As for the faithless, their guardians (awliya) are the fake deities, who drive them out of light into darkness¹"

What is the meaning of the term guardian (*Waliyy*) in this verse? There is a difference of opinion on this issue. The Shia Qur'anic exegetes have unanimously considered the meaning of "*Waliyy*" as "the one who possesses an authority". However, some scholars from among the Sunni Qur'anic exegetes interpreted it to mean "a helper" and "a beloved²". The love of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) is made obligatory in the Qur'an. In the 'Verse of Affection', his love is presented from God Almighty as a reward for the Prophetic mission and a right:

قُلْ لَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا إِلَّا الْمَوَدَّةَ فِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَمَن يَقْتَرِفْ حَسَنَةً نَّزِدْ لَهُ فِيهَا حُسْنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ شَكُورٌ

"... Say, 'I do not ask you any reward for it except the love of [my] relatives.' Whoever performs a good deed, We shall enhance its goodness for him. Indeed Allah is all-forgiving, all-appreciative³."

Many Sunni scholars consider the 'Verse of Affection' to be revealed in honor of the members of the Prophet's pure Household [Ahl al-Bayt], especially Hazrat Ali, Lady Fatima, Hasan, and Husain, and they have narrated several narrations about the love of the Ahl al-Bayt under the verse. The most famous of those narrations is the narration of Ibn Abbas, who says: *"When this verse [Say, 'I do not ask you any reward for it except the love of [my] relatives'] was revealed, They said:*

¹ . Qur'an 2: 257.

² . Fakhr al-Rāzī, Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 12, p. 384.

³ . Qur'an 42: 23.

O Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family)! Who are your relatives whose love is obligatory? He said: Ali, Fatima, and her two sons¹.

It seems necessary to pay attention to this subtle point that in this narration the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) responded by mentioning Ali and Fatima (peace be upon them) and thereafter, he made use of the expression "her sons" in order to refer to her children. The Holy Prophet (PBUHH) while introducing those whose love is obligatory did not say "*Ali, Fatima and their sons*" because in this case, the love of the other children of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) would also be obligatory, while their love is not. The intention here was to formally introduce the children of Fatima (peace be upon them) as the leaders of the religion. Therefore, the used pronoun referred only to Hazrat Fatima (peace be upon her) and this made it clear that only the children of that Holy Lady have the dignity of the leadership of the Muslim Ummah and their love as religious leaders is obligatory, and they are the possessors of the authority.

In some Sunni sources, it is stated that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) repeated the phrase "Ali, Fatima, and her children" three times² in response to the people. This repetition is considered a way to draw the full attention of the people towards the leadership of Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them).

The narrations on the obligation of the love of Ahl al-Bayt, especially Imam Ali, are reported from great narrators such as the Messenger of God (PBUHH)

¹ . Jamal al-Dīn Suyūṭī, *Al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 7, p. 348; Ibn Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr fī ‘Ilm al-Tafsīr*, vol. 7, p. 117; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Azīm*, vol. 10, p. 3276; Maḥmūd ibn ‘Umar Zamakhsharī, *Al-Kashaf*, vol. 3, p. 402; Nizām al-Dīn Nayshābūrī, *Ghara’ib al-Qur'an Wa Ragha’ib al-Furqān*, vol. 6, p. 74; Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha’alabī, *Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān*, vol. 8, p. 310; Fakhr al-Rāzī, *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, vol. 27, p. 167; Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi’ li-Aḥkam al-Qur'an*, vol. 16, p. 22; Ibn ‘Aṭīyah, *al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz fī Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-‘Azīz*, vol. 5, p. 34; Ali ibn Aḥmad Wāḥidī, *al-Wasīṭ fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Majīd*, vol. 4, p. 52; ‘Umar ibn Muḥammad Nasafī, *Madārik al-Tanzīl wa Ḥaqā’iq al-Tawīl*, vol. 2, p. 510; Abu Ḥayyān Andalusī, *al-Bahr al-Muḥīṭ fī Tafsīr*, vol. 7, p. 516; Qāḍī Muḥammad Thanā’ullah, *Tafsīr al-Mazharī*, vol. 8, p. 318; Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl li Qawā’id al-Tafdīl*, vol. 2, p. 130; Nāṣir al-Dīn Bayḍāwī, *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*, vol. 5, 28; Ismā’īl Qawanwī, *Hāshiyat al-Qawanwī*, vol. 17, p. 23.

² . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl li Qawā’id al-Tafdīl*, vol. 2, p. 132.

himself, his pure Household [Ahl al-Bayt] such as Imam Ali¹, Imam Hasan², and Imam Zain al-Abidin³ and likewise from the Companions and the Followers (Tābi'ūn) such as Ibn Abbas⁴, Jābir⁵, 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud⁶, Saeed ibn Jubayr⁷, Sudi⁸, 'Umar Ibn Shuaib⁹, etc. also narrated it. The famous hadith of Ibn Abbas was given by Ḥākim Ḥaskānī (471 AH) in eight different ways and mentioned in the book of Tafsīr titled *Shawāhid al-Tanzīl* under the explanation of the 'Verse of Affection'.

Many Sunni Qur'anic exegetes and hadith scholars have included this hadith in their books of Tafsīr and hadith sources and have accepted it. For instance, Imam Aḥmad Ibn Ḥambal¹⁰, Ibn Abi Hātim¹¹, Imam Ṭabarānī¹², Imam Wāḥidī¹³, Ḥaskānī¹⁴, Ibn Maghāzalī¹⁵, Zamakhsharī¹⁶, Ibn 'Aṭīyah Andalūsī¹⁷, Ibn Jawzī¹⁸, Fakhr al-Rāzī¹⁹, Qurṭubī²⁰, Nasafī²¹, Nizām al-Dīn Nishabūrī²², Bayḍāwī²³, Qūnawī²⁴, and Ālūsī²⁵ are among such scholars.

¹ . Maḥmūd ibn Abdullah Ālūsī, Rūh al-Ma'ānī, vol. 25, p. 29.

² . Ḥākim Nishabūrī, al-Mustadrak 'ala al-Ṣaḥīḥayn, vol. 3, p. 172; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad Sakhāwī, Istijlāf Irtiqā' al-Gharf, vol. 1, p. 331.

³ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān, vol. 13, p. 25; Maḥmūd ibn Abdullah Ālūsī, Rūh al-Ma'ānī, vol. 25, p. 29; Ibrāhīm Baqā'i, Naẓm al-Durr fī Tanāsib al-Āyāt wa Suwar, vol. 6, p. 624.

⁴ . Ibn Kathir, Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Azīm, vol. 4, p. 122; Fakhr al-Rāzī, Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 27, p. 167; Ibn 'Aṭīyah, al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz fī Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-'Azīz, vol. 5, p. 34; Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar Zamakhsharī, Al-Kashaf, vol. 3, p. 402; Jamal al-Dīn Suyūṭī, Al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 7, p. 348.

⁵ . Abu Na'im Iṣfahānī, Ḥilyat al-Awliyā' Wa Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiyā', vol.3, p. 201.

⁶ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawāhid al-Tanzīl li Qawā'id al-Tafdīl, vol. 2, p. 131.

⁷ . Muḥammad ibn 'Imādī, Tafsīr Abi al-Sa'ūd, vol. 6, p. 16; Jamal al-Dīn Suyūṭī, Al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 7, p. 348.

⁸ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawāhid al-Tanzīl li Qawā'id al-Tafdīl, vol. 2, p. 131.

⁹ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān, vol. 13, p. 25.

¹⁰ . Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal, Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥabah, vol. 2, p. 669.

¹¹ . Ibn Kathir, Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Azīm, vol. 10, p. 3276.

¹² . Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad Ṭabarānī, al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr, vol. 3, p. 47, hadith No. 2641.

¹³ . Ali ibn Aḥmad Wāḥidī, al-Wasīṭ fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Majīd, vol. 4, p. 52.

¹⁴ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawāhid al-Tanzīl li Qawā'id al-Tafdīl, vol. 2, p. 130.

¹⁵ . Manāqib, p. 309.

¹⁶ . Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar Zamakhsharī, Al-Kashaf, vol. 3, p. 402;

¹⁷ . Ibn 'Aṭīyah Andalūsī, al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz fī Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-'Azīz, vol. 5, p. 34.

¹⁸ . Ibn Jawzī, Zād al-Masīr fī 'Ilm al-Tafsīr, vol. 7, p. 117.

¹⁹ . Fakhr al-Rāzī, Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 27, p. 167.

²⁰ . Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Qurṭubī, al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkam al-Qur'an, vol. 16, p. 22

²¹ . 'Umar ibn Muḥammad Nasafī, Madārik al-Tanzīl wa Haqā'iq al-Tawīl, vol. 3, p. 253.

²² . Nizām al-Dīn Nayshābūrī, Ghara'ib al-Qur'an Wa Ragha'ib al-Furqān, vol. 6, p. 74.

²³ . Abdullah ibn 'Umar Bayḍāwī, Anwār al-Tanzīl Wa asrār al-Tawīl, vol. 5, p. 128.

²⁴ . Ismā'il Qūnawī, Hāshiyat al-Qawanwī 'ala Tafsīr al-Imam al-Bayḍāwī, vol. 17, p. 230.

²⁵ . Maḥmūd ibn Abdullah Ālūsī, Rūh al-Ma'ānī, vol. 25, p. 29.

Therefore, the 'Verse of Wilāyah' discusses the absolute leadership of three groups, and this guardianship [*Wilāyah*] does not mean love. This is because, love is an internal emotion that brings along external obedience with it, but guardianship [*Wilāyah*] is beyond love.

Some scholars have considered the term *Waliyy* to mean 'helper', and with that, a dispute will be resolved forever in this case, and that means beseeching Ali (peace be upon him) for help. And the pronunciation of the expression "O Ali! Come to my aid", in the case of accepting the term *Waliyy* to mean helper will therefore be a Qur'anic order!

In the Holy Qur'an, the term *Waliyy* is used to mean “The Overseer” and “The Possessor of Authority”. For instance, in verse 107 of Qur'an 2 [Surah al-Baqarah], Almighty Allah says:

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا لَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ

Do you not know that to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth? And besides Allah, you do not have any guardian or helper.

Likewise, Almighty Allah is referred to as “*Mawlā*” which means “The Possessor of Authority” and “The Overseer” in some verses. It is used in verse 286 of the Qur'an 2 to mean “The Possessor of Authority”:

رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا

Our Lord! Do not lay upon us what we have no strength to bear! Excuse us, forgive us, and be merciful to us! You are our Master

And it is used in verse 40 of Qur'an 8 [Surah al-Anfāl] to mean “The Possessor of Authority”:

فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَاكُمْ نِعَمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعَمَ النَّصِيرِ

Then know that Allah is your master: an excellent master and an excellent helper.

That was the reason why Ibn Mas'ūd used to recite the verse "إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ" as "إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ".¹

The available clues in the verse help a lot in specifying its actual meaning. In the 'Verse of Wilāyah', the phrase "*innamā*" is used to indicate three forms of guardianship [*Wilāyah*], and all three are mentioned in the same context, while three manifestations are mentioned for the term "*Waliyy*": Allah; the Messenger of God; and the believers who give zakat while in the bowing [*ruku'*] posture. There are three manifestations of *Wilāyah*, and the pronoun "*kum*" in the verse without any doubt refers to the Companions of the Prophet. Acceptance of Wilāyah of these three groups has an immediate effect, and that is, the formation of the Confederates of Allah [*Hizbullah*] and overpowering the Confederates of Satan. Of course, it is important to state that guardianship [*Wilāyah*] of God is intrinsic but the guardianship [*Wilāyah*] of the Messenger of God and Imam Ali is a gift from God.

Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) was reported to have said: God has treated His Prophet (PBUHH) with His love and friendship [and He mentioned his morals excellently when He said:] "**And indeed you possess a great character.**" Then he delegated [the matter of religion] to that Prophet and He said: "**Take whatever the Apostle gives you, and refrain from whatever he forbids you.**" And [in another verse] He said: "**Whoever obeys the Apostle certainly obeys Allah.**" The Messenger of God also entrusted the matter of religion to Ali (peace be upon him) and considered him a trustworthy person. So, you (Shiites) surrendered when the people denied it. By God, we would like you to speak whenever we speak, and whenever we

¹. Ibn 'Aṭīyah Andalusī, *al-Muḥarrar al-Wajīz fī Tafsīr al-Kitāb al-'Azīz*, vol. 2, p. 208.

keep silent, you should also keep silent. We are the mediators between you and God. By God, God has not done well for anyone in opposition to our command¹.

Kulaynī quoted a narration from Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) that his Eminence said concerning the interpretation of the verse "إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ" that it means the ones having more authority and more right over you, your affairs, your souls and your possessions are Allah, His Prophet and the believers, that is, Ali and the Imams from among his children until the Day of Resurrection. Then God, the Almighty describes them thus: **"Those who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down."**²

The meaning of "The believers" is Ali and his children, those who are the Imams until the Day of Resurrection. Thus, whoever from among his descendants reached the position of Imamate, shared this characteristic with him; that is, they give charity while in the bowing position.

The meaning of *Waliyy* in this narration is beyond a beloved, helper and even a community leader. Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) has interpreted the verse in this narration and used the term *Wilāyah* in a very broad and deep sense. The verse "*Innamā*" means "the one having more authority over you, who has more right over you and your affairs, lives and your property." Thus, the term *Waliyy* is the one who has more authority over you, is more entitled to your affairs than yourself, has more control over your lives than you do, and is more deserving than you to control your property and daily transactions. The term *Wilāyah* is therefore an absolute right given by God to His *Waliyy* over the people's property and their affairs, while man himself does not have such an authority.

There are numerous of evidence in Sunni narrations that show that the term *Wilāyah* means "having more authority". For instance, the hadith *Mutawātir*³ of

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Kulaynī, al-Kāfi, vol. 1, p. 265.

² . ibid, vol. 1, p. 288.

³ . Mutawātir hadith means hadith with successive chains of narrators [Translator]

Ghadīr seriously emphasizes this meaning¹. Zayd ibn Arqam narrated that the noble Prophet (PBUHH) addressed the people after the Farewell Pilgrimage at Ghadīr Khumm, thus: "O people! Indeed, I am leaving among you two things, you will never go astray as long as you follow them: The Book of Allah and my Household [Ahl al-Bayt]. Then he repeated three times: Do you know that I have more authority over the believers than they themselves? They replied: "Yes." The Messenger of God said: "Whoever I am his Master, Ali is also his Master..."²

According to this narration, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his household) repeatedly emphasized three times to the Companions: "Am I not more deserving to the lives of the believers than they are?" In continuation of this narration, it is documented that the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) said: "Do you know or do you not testify that I have more authority over every believer than himself?"³ And the same emphasis is also noted in several other narrations⁴.

Without any doubt, it is not possible to interpret the Arabic term "*Awlā*" in these narrations in a different meaning. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) intended the Imamate and the leadership of the Ummah, as well as the right to manage the affairs of the people in all these narrations, and he sought the people's testimony on this and he immediately announced the guardianship [*Wilāyah*] of Imam Ali⁵ (peace be upon him).

Thus, *Wilāyah* means authority over the peoples' affairs, that is, an authority over the lives, property, and dignity; an authority over the material and the spiritual affairs of the people; an authority over the affairs of this world and the hereafter;

¹. Muḥammad ibn Ja'far Kitānī, *Naẓm al-Mutanāthir Min al-Hadith al-Mutawātir*, p. 194.

². Ḥākim Nishabūrī, *Al-Mustadrak 'ala Ṣaḥīhayn*, vol. 3, p. 110.

³. Nūr al-Dīn Haythamī, *Majma' al-Zawā'id Wa Manba' al-Qawā'id*, vol. 9, p. 130.

⁴. Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāyah Wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 5, p. 228; Abu Abdullah, Aḥmad ibn Ḥambal, *al-Masnad*, vol. 5, p. 347; AbdulRahman Mubārakfūrī, *Tuḥfat al-Aḥwadhī bi Sharḥ Jāmi'* al-Tirmidhi, vol. 10, p. 127.

⁵. Abdullah Ibn Abī Shaybah, *al-Muṣannaf*, vol. 7, p. 495; Aḥmad ibn A'rābī, *Kitāb al-Mu'jam*, vol. 1, p. 139; Aḥmad ibn Abi Bakr Kinānī, *Zawā'id ibn Mājah 'ala al-Kutub al-Khamsah*, p. 45; Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍa, *Tafsīr al-Manār*, vol. 6, p. 383; Ali ibn Balbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ḥabān*, vol. 15, p. 376; 'Amr ibn 'Āṣim Ḍaḥḥāk, *Kitāb Abi Ba'lī*, vol. 1, p. 429; Nūr al-Dīn Haythamī, *Mawārid al-Zam'an*, p. 543; Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-Ḥifāẓ*, vol. 1, p. 10.

an authority over the apparent and hidden affairs of the people; an authority over the significant and insignificant affairs of the people. It is the *Waliyy* who has such right over the people and Allah has given this special medal to the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) and Imam Ali (PBUH).

The connection between the 'Verse of Wilāyah' and the Event of Ghadīr

The 'Verse of Wilāyah' has a close connection with the event of Ghadīr Khumm, because the guardianship [Wilāyah] mentioned in this verse is the same as the guardianship [Wilāyah] and the *Waliyy* discussed in Ghadīr Khumm. Based on the narrations of the two schools of thought [the Shia and the Sunni], Almighty Allah announced the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Himself, His Messenger and that of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib. And it was now the turn of the Messenger of God (PBUHH) to announce the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Imam Ali to the people because the interpretation and explanation of the Qur'an is the responsibility of the Holy Prophet (PBUHH):

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الذِّكْرَ لِتُبَيِّنَ لِلنَّاسِ مَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

"We have sent down the reminder to you so that you may clarify for the people that which has been sent down to them, so that they may reflect¹."

There are many narrations in the Shia sources in which the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) interpreted the 'Verse of Wilāyah; and among these are the narrations of Ghadīr Khumm, where the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) was commissioned to convey the same guardianship [Wilāyah] mentioned in the verse. Abu Ja'far Kulaynī, with a sound chain of transmission on the authority of Zurārah; Fudayl ibn Yassār, Bukayr ibn A'yan, Muḥammad Muslim, Burayd ibn Mu'awiyah and Abi Jārūd, [all of them] narrated from Imam Bāqir (PBUH) that he said that God

¹ . Qur'an 16: 44.

ordered His Prophet to convey the Wilāyah of Ali and revealed to him the following:

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ

"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down¹."

With this explanation, God has made the guardianship [Wilāyah] of the possessor of authority obligatory but they did not know what this Wilāyah meant. Therefore, God ordered Prophet Muhammad (PBUHH) to explain the meaning of Wilāyah to them, just as he explained the ritual prayer, Zakat, fasting, and Hajj. When this command arrived, the Prophet was saddened and worried that the people would revert from their religion and deny him. With such longing, the noble Prophet (PBUHH) turned to his Lord and asked for a solution. Thus, God revealed the following verse in this regard:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people. Indeed Allah does not guide the faithless lot²."

Thereafter, the Prophet (PBUHH) based on the divine commandment, announced and declared the Wilāyah of Ali on the day of Ghadīr Khumm and he ordered those present to communicate the message to those who were absent³. Narrations with the same meaning have also been reported from Imam Ali⁴, Imam Bāqir⁵ and Imam Hādī⁶.

¹ . Qur'an 5: 55.

² . Qur'an 5: 67.

³ . Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, vol. 2, p. 398, Hadith No. 4.

⁴ . Abu al-Abbas ibn 'Uqdah, Kitāb al- Wilāyah, pp. 198-199.

⁵ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawāhid al-Tanzīl li Qawā'id al-Tafdīl, p. 191.

⁶ . Aḥmad 'Ali Ṭabarsī, al-Ihtijāj, vol. 2, p. 450.

The vital point of this discussion is that at Ghadīr Khumm, the leadership of Imam Ali (PBUH) was announced as the Saint of God [*Waliyy Allah*], and according to the interconnectivity of the position of guardianship [*Wilāyah*] between God, the Prophet (PBUH) and Imam Ali, it can be concluded that this guardianship is more important than the Prophethood, Caliphate and even the Imamate. This is because all three of these positions are nominated from one side, that is, from God, Who is the [absolute] Master but the Prophet, Caliph or Imam are not.

Therefore, it is clear from this verse that guardianship [*Wilāyah*] is different from an appointed office. For the Messenger of God (PBUHH), this guardianship is higher than Prophethood, because Prophethood is related to the guidance of the society, but absolute guardianship is the authority over the existence and lives of the people and the authority in the world of the angels and kingdoms. We can therefore consider guardianship [*Wilāyah*] to mean an "authority" and the characteristic features of this kind of authority are influence in the creation and the creatures, the possession and the kingdom, the world and the Hereafter, and even the Paradise and the Hell, and this authority is found in the world systems. There are examples of this authority in the Qur'an and the hadiths. The hadiths related to Kawthar, the scale, the path, the division of Paradise and Hell, the People of Araf etc., are an indication pointing to this *Wilāyah*. The important point is that the people accepted the Prophethood of God's Apostle but not his guardianship [*Wilāyah*] as they often disobeyed the orders of the Messenger of God (PBUHH).

In Ghadīr Khumm, the issue of the Caliphate was never raised in any other narration, rather, it was a more important issue [that is, the conveyance of the *Wilāyah*, which means the possession of more authority] that was discussed. The same concept and understanding can be found in some Sunni narrations.

A Sunni Qur’anic exegete; Maḏharī, narrated from Bara ibn ‘Āzib and Zayd ibn Arqam thus: When the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) reached Ghadīr Khumm, he took Ali by the hand and said: “Do you not know that I have more right over the believers than themselves?” They said: “Yes.” He said: “Do you not know that I have more right over every believer than himself?” They said: “Yes.” He therefore said, O Allah! Whoever I am his master; Ali is also his master. O Allah! Love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him. Thereafter, Umar met him, and he said to him, “Congratulations, O son of Abi Ṭālib! You have become the master of every believing man and woman.¹”

This is an indication that the Arabic term *Mawla* means the one having more authority. Similarly, the congratulatory message by ‘Umar indicates that the issue is more important than just love and support while the term “*Awla*” is derived from “*Waliyy*” and means the one having more rights and closer²:

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ

*"The Prophet is closer to the faithful than their own souls"*³

One of the instances when the Holy Prophet (PHUHH) established his Qur’anic guardianship in honour of Imam Ali was during the Yemen expedition when some Companions such as Burayd complained of Ali to the Prophet (PBUHH) while the latter was so much displeased to the extent that his face changed and henceforth said: “O Burayd! Am I not having more over the believers than themselves?” Burayd Said, “Yes, O Messenger of Allah.” Then he (PBUHH) said: “Whoever I am his master, this Ali is also his master.⁴”

The Messenger of God (peace be upon him) also pointed the scope of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Imam Ali to his Companions in which Imam Ali

¹ . Thanā’ Allah Pānī Patī, al-Tafsīr al- Maḏharī, vol. 3, p. 134.

² . Fakhr al-Dīn Ṭurayḥī, Majma’ al-Baḥrayn, vol. 1, p. 455.

³ . Qur’an 33:6.

⁴ . Jalāl al- Dīn Suyūtī, Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 5, p. 182.

(PBUH) just like the Holy Prophet possessed an absolute authority over the people. The Qur'an mention the Prophet's scope of guardianship thus:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِّمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

But no, by your Lord! They will not believe until they make you a judge in their disputes, then do not find within their hearts any dissent to your verdict and submit in full submission¹.

A person who has even the slightest doubt in his heart about the commands and actions of the Prophet of God (PBUHH) is not a Muslim and has not gained anything from faith. Therefore, the Qur'an conveys such news to the Messenger of God (PBUHH) with an oath. The same is true about Imam Ali (PBUH), because his authority over some matters was not understandable to some companions, and for this reason, they complained about him to the Prophet. The Messenger of God (PBUHH) in such a situation introduced the domain and authority of Ali, to which based on it, he is in charge of all the affairs of the people just like the Messenger of God (PBUHH). Sometimes a person cannot take possession of his own property or is not allowed to inflict harm on it, but any form of possession over the people's lives, property, and honor is allowed for the Messenger of God (PBUHH) and Imam Ali (PBUH). But the authority of man over himself is not absolute, rather, it is limited and restricted.

There is much evidence found in the Sunni traditions in which according to them, the term "Wilāyah" means "possession of authority" and one of the manifestations of "Waliyy" is the issue of leadership. Imam Ṭabarānī narrates from ‘Ammār ibn Yāsir, who was reported saying: After the revelation of the verse: "**Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle...**" the Messenger of God (PBUHH) recited it and

¹ . Qur'an 4: 65.

thereafter said: "Whoever I am his Master, Ali is also his Master. O Allah! Love whoever loves him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him."¹

From this, the connection between Ghadīr with the issue of Wilāyah will be understood. It is not only leadership that is explained in Wilāyah, rather leadership is one of its dimensions. The issue of governance is also one of the social affairs of the leader [*Waliyy*].

Hadith of Ghadīr points to absolute guardianship [Wilāyah] of the Commander of the Faithful (PBUH) concerning the Islamic society. Also in the Qur'an, one of the meanings of the term "*Mawla*" is "*Waliyy*" [that is, a master] such as "**Then [know that] Allah is indeed his guardian**"². The term "*Mawla*" in the Hadith "Whoever I am his Mawla..." also means a master.

Numerous Sunni scholars considered hadith of Ghadīr as a narration with a successive chain of transmission (i.e. Mutawātīr) and among whom were Muḥammad ibn Kitānī³, Ismā'il 'Ajlūnī⁴, Aḥmad Dhahabī⁵, Abdul-Ra'uf Manāwī⁶, Ali ibn Sultan Qārī⁷, Hasan Shaqāf⁸ and Tāhir al-Qādirī⁹.

The Guardianship of Imam Ali (PBUH) during the Prophet's Era

The content of the 'Verse of Wilāyah' and *Hadith Mutawatir*¹⁰ of Ghadīr is that Ali (PBUH) is also a guardian [*Waliyy*] and a proof of God over the people during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUHH) and his guardianship [Wilāyah] is not

¹ . Sulayman ibn Aḥmad Ṭabarānī, al-Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ, vol. 6, p. 218; Ibrahim ibn Muḥammad Juwaynī, Farā'id al-SSimtayn, vol. 1, p. 194; Nur al-Dīn Haythamī, Majma' al-Zawā'id, vol. 8, p. 17.

² . Qur'an 66: 4.

³ . Refer to: Muḥammad ibn Ja'far Kitānī, Nazm al-Mutanāthir Min al-Hadith al-Mutawātīr, p. 194.

⁴ . Refer to: Ismā'il ibn Muḥammad 'Ajlūnī, Kashf al-Khifā', vol. 8, p. 335.

⁵ . Refer to: Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Dhahabī, Sīr a'lāma al-nubalā, vol. 8, p. 335.

⁶ . Refer to: Muḥammad Abdul-Ra'uf Manāwī, Al-Taysīr bi-Sharḥ al-Jāmi' al-Saghīr, vol. 2, p. 442.

⁷ . Refer to: Ibn Ḥajar 'Askalānī, Mirqāt al-Mafātiḥ, vol. 5, p. 568.

⁸ . Refer to: 'Abdullah ibn Muḥammad Ghamāri Ḥassani, Arghām al-Mubtadi', p. 58.

⁹ . Refer to: Muḥammad Tāhir al-Qādirī, Al-Sayf al-Jaliyy 'ala munkir Wilāyah, p. 7.

¹⁰ . Hadith Mutawātīr is the hadith with a successive chain of transmission.

limited to a specific time, but it is also effective during the era of the Holy Prophet (PBUHH).

The verse was revealed in the presence of the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) and he informed the people that Hazrat Ali, just like God and the Prophet, is the guardian [*Waliyy*] of the people and not that he will enjoy such a right after the death of the Prophet (PBUHH). Because Ali (PBUH) has been presented to the masses from the first day of the Prophetic declaration of his Prophethood as the Prophet's executor, brother, heir, minister and caliph, and was known among the Quraysh with these titles, his obedience was therefore made obligatory from the very beginning of the Prophethood.

The famous Sunni Qur'anic exegete and historian, Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, has narrated this fateful event in his book that the Prophet (PBUHH) on the third day of his message began to address the Quraysh after they had finished their meal and he said: "O children of Abd al-Muttalib, by God, I do not know of any youth among the Arabs who came to his people with something better than what I have brought to you. Indeed, I have come to you with the goodness of this world and the Hereafter. And God, the Most High, has commanded me to invite you. Which of you will help me in this task so that he will become my brother, my will executor, and my successor among you? The people remained silent, and even though I was younger than them, and even among the young, there was no one whose eyes were waterier, his belly was bigger, and his legs were thinner than mine, and I said, O Prophet of God, I will be your supporter and he held my neck and said, "This is my brother, my will executor, and my successor among you, so listen to him and obey him." Then the people stood up laughing and said to Abu Talib, "You have been commanded to listen and your son¹."

¹ . Muḥammad Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tārikh Ṭabarī*, vol. 2, p. 63.

Bahrānī [in his version of the narration] also mentioned the phrase "My minister¹" and in some narrations, the term "My heir²" is used. Some other Sunni and Shia scholars such as Ibn Abi Ḥātim³, Ṭabarsī⁴, Baghawī⁵ and Qūmmī⁶ have narrated a narration with a slight difference to that of Ṭabarī. The narrations of this kind have implied the designation of the successor of the Prophet (PBUHH) on that day that the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) chose Imam Ali (PBUH) as his brother, heir, will executor, minister and caliph. That is, the Messenger of God (PBUHH) gave five very important posts to Hazrat Ali (PBUH) on that day. Such narrations have also been reported from Imam Ali⁷, Abu Rāfi⁸, Barā' ibn 'Āzib⁹, Ibn Abbas¹⁰, and Rabī'ah ibn Nājid¹¹. Thus, Imam Ali (PBUH) has been someone whose obedience is obligatory from the very beginning of the Prophetic mission of the Messenger of God (PBUHH).

A very interesting point in this narration is the sentence: "Listen to him and obey him", that is, the leadership of Ali was raised in the same meeting where the prophethood was declared. The Prophet (PBUHH) ordered all the people present in the assembly to listen to the speech of Ali and obey him. How could obedience to the Prophet be synonymous with the obedience to Ali? If Ali (PBUH) did not have the right to rule over the people, why was his obedience obligatory on the people? The Prophet (PBUHH) as well as other Companions were alive then, but it was only the obedience to Ali that was made obligatory from among them. The main reason for such an obligation is that he [i.e. Ali] is the leader of the community and 'someone chosen by God', and no other reason.

¹ Hāshim ibn Sulaiman Bahrānī, *Al-Burhān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 4, p. 187.

² Muḥammad Ḥussain Ṭabāṭabāī, *Al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 15, p. 336.

³ Refer to: Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azīm*, vol. 9, p. 2827.

⁴ Refer to: Faḍl ibn Ḥasan, Ṭabarsī, *Majma' Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 7, p. 356.

⁵ Refer to: Ḥussein Ibn Mas'ūd Baghawī, *Mu'alim Al-Tanzīl fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 3, p. 400.

⁶ 'Ali ibn Ibrahim Qummī, *Tafsīr Qummī*, vol. 2, p. 124.

⁷ Muḥammad Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tārikh Ṭabarī*, vol. 2, p. 63.

⁸ Faḍl ibn Ḥasan, Ṭabarsī, *Majma' Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 7, p. 323.

⁹ Aḥmad ibn Ibrahīm Tha'alabi, *Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān*, vol. 7, p. 182.

¹⁰ Ibn Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fī Tārikh*, vol. 2, p. 63.

¹¹ Ibn Jabīr, *Nahj al-Imān*, p. 236.

The 'Verse of Wilāyah' was revealed after the story of giving a ring to a needy while in bowing position [ruku'] of the prayer, an action performed only by just a single person. It seems that the giving of Zakat by Imam Ali (PBUH) in the bowing position was only a pretext for God to announce the guardianship of Imam Ali (PBUH). Thus, the verbal tenses used in the verse are in the plural form and present tense instead of the singular form and past tense. Whereas based on the Arabic syntactical rule, a singular pronoun and past tense should be used, because the action was done by one person in the past.

And if an incident happened in the past but someone reports it using the present tense format, it will be considered a lie and he has the right to legally deal with the person. This story happened in the past while its narrator is God and the information must also be given exactly how it happened, otherwise, it is false news. If the issues of the leadership of Ali and his guiding role to the people are not mentioned, without a doubt, the case would have been like this, but it is the opposite in this case. That is, the giving of Zakat happened in the past, but the verse gives the report using the future tense. The clause "*Yuqīmūna*" [i.e., maintain] conveys that the group [i.e., "The believers"] will continue to observe servitude to God, the religious values shall be preserved in the society by such a group and the society shall be revived. The clause "*Yu'tūna*" [i.e., give] connects this group with the deprived society. The term "*Rāqi'ūna*" [i.e., bowing down] indicates the submission of this group to divine commandments in all situations, that is, a total submission.

In principle, the task of this group is the leadership of the people and the management of the society based on monotheism, and this is a continuous practice. These pronouns show the unbreakable bond of this group with the Creator and the creation and the best planning in the management of physical, spiritual, religious and worldly affairs. Giving the Zakat while in the bowing position shows the extraordinary ability of this group, such that they do not forget

their role and duty in such a sensitive situation but also perform it in the best way that is more pleasing to God! Such an individual deserves the position of divine guardianship.

The 'Verse of Wilāyah' has formalized the absolute authority and the right of Imam Ali's authority over the whole existence. And as long as the Qur'an exists, Ali's authority over the existence will be mentioned, and this authority is not only limited to the right to rule but also covers the lives, property and entire affairs of the people. Imam Ali (PBUH) has more rights and authority over all the affairs of the people than the people themselves. The next verses also emphasize the essence of guardianship (Wilāyah) and recount the effects of accepting it and the consequences of its rejection. These verses encourage the Muslim community to accept the guardianship [Wilāyah], warn them of its rejection, and give some insight into the society in this regard. Because of this, the responsibility of the Muslim society becomes heavier concerning the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah]. This issue shall be discussed in detail in the next chapter, God willing.

Chapter 2

The Revealed Verses on Wilāyah Before Ghadīr Khumm

Introduction

In some sources of the two schools of thought [Sunni and Shia], we shall point to some verses that were revealed before the proclamation of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in Ghadīr Khumm. Some of the hadiths have come in a general form and greatly emphasized the issue of guardianship. In continuation, we shall examine these verses in a few discourses:

No. 1: The 'Verse of Forsaking' [Ayah of Tārik]

Some scholars of the two schools of thought considered the 'Verse of Forsaking', which was revealed before the proclamation of the guardianship [Wilāyah] in Ghadīr Khumm to have focused on the guardianship of Imam Ali (peace be upon

him). The upset of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) is discussed in the verse:

فَلَعَلَّكَ تَارِكٌ بَعْضَ مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ وَضَائِقٌ بِهِ صَدْرُكَ أَنْ يَقُولُوا لَوْلَا أُنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِ كَنْزٌ أَوْ جَاءَ مَعَهُ مَلَكٌ ۚ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ نَذِيرٌ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ

[Look out] lest you should disregard aught of what has been revealed to you, and be upset because they say, 'Why has not a treasure has been sent down to him, or [why does] not an angel accompany him?' You are only a warner, and Allah watches over all things¹.

The Occasion of Revelation

Most of the Shia traditions and some of those of the Sunni have considered the Wilāyah of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) as the reason for the revelation of this verse. In Tafsīr Nemuneh, two occasions of revelation have been mentioned for this verse and both of them have been authenticated. First of all, [it is reported that] a group of leaders of the Meccan infidels went to the Prophet (PBUHH) and said: If you are really truthful that you are an Apostle of God, then turn the mountains of Mecca into gold for us or bring angels to confirm your prophethood. Thus, the above verses were revealed in response to them. He also mentioned the narration of Ammar ibn Suwayd from Imam Ṣādiq (PBUH) as the second occasion of the revelation, in which the leadership of Ali is discussed².

Huwayzī mentioned Ammar ibn Suwayd who quoted the interpretation of the verse from Imam Ṣādiq (PBUH): "[Look out] lest you should disregard aught of what has been revealed to you, and be upset because they say, 'Why has not a treasure has been sent down to him, or [why does] not an angel accompany him?'" When the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) arrived in the land of "Qaddīd", he said to Ali: "O Ali, I asked my God to create a brotherhood between you and me, and He did so, and I asked my God to make you my successor, and He did so. Thus, two people from among the Quraysh said: By God, a measure of dates in a rotten musk is more lovely to us

¹ . Qur'an 11:6.

² . Nāṣir Makārim Shīrāzī, Tafsīr Nemuneh, vol. 9, p. 37.

than what Muhammad asked from his God. Why didn't Muhammad ask God for a property that would help him against his enemy or a treasure that would make him rich? And by God, he [Muhammad] did not pray to God for anything; right or wrong except that He answered him, and God Almighty therefore revealed this verse¹.

It seems that this is the statement of the deniers of guardianship [Wilāyah], and in response to them, God also expressed the state of mind of the Messenger of God (PBUHH) on how much he had suffered for not accepting this issue.

Jābir ibn Arqam has reported a more detailed narration about the occasion of the revelation of this verse from his brother Zayd ibn Arqam; as the Sunni Qur'anic exegete; Hākim Haskānī and a Shia Qur'anic exegete; 'Ayyāshī who narrated Zayd ibn Arqam to have said: Indeed Gabriel, the trust-worthy Spirit, descended upon the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) on the afternoon of Arafat about the guardianship of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib at Mount Arafat and he (PBUHH) was distressed with that for the fear of disbelieving him by the immoral and hypocritical people. Therefore, he (PBUHH) called a group of people, of whom I was there, and consulted them about the matter, but we did not know what to say in that regard and the Prophet (PBUHH) cried. Gabriel said to him: "O Muhammad! Are you afraid to deliver the commandment of God?" He said: No, Gabriel, but my Lord knows quite well what I have encountered from the Quraysh, as they did not acknowledge my prophethood until He ordered me to fight them and I was assisted by the Heavenly army and I had victory over them. Then how will they acknowledge the guardianship of Ali after me? Gabriel went to Heaven and thereafter revealed to him: **"It may be that you disregard what has been revealed to you, and be upset..."**²

¹. Abdul Ali ibn Jum'ah Arūsī Huwayzī, Tafsīr Nūr al-Thaqalayn, vol. 2, p. 343.

². Hākim Haskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 1, p. 356; 'Ayyāshī, Kitāb al-Tafsīr, vol. 2, p. 141.

The Interpretation of the Verse

Qur'anic verses have two dimensions, exoteric and esoteric. The interpretation [Tafsīr] of the verses is related to the exoteric meaning of the Qur'an while the allegorical interpretation [Ta'wīl] of the verses is related to its esoteric meaning. From the exoteric dimension of this verse and its interior clues, it is obvious that it is about stubborn people. The exoteric dimension of the verse quotes the sayings of the polytheists and the stubborn people whose vision has been blinded by the issue of material wealth and they have degraded the greatness of status of prophethood in such a manner that enormous wealth is considered the criterion for the truthfulness of the prophethood. Such people attached the attainment of spiritual values and perfection to some strange things, such as the descent of the angels or treasures from Heaven.

The question that is raised now is, 'Why did the Holy Prophet become so upset that he could not withstand hearing such speeches from the opponents?' This is because, the Prophet laboured for twenty-three years and after enduring many sufferings, he saw that people's awareness was not yet dynamic and that they had lowered the high position of man even to that of an angel, and the positions of prophethood and guardianship [Wilāyah] are still being measured with material things and have been relegated. This caused the biggest heartache, such that the Prophet of God (PBUHH) cried because, after twenty-three years, they still had not accepted the prophethood while some had accepted it out of fear of the sword. Thus, was it possible for them to accept the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali without any reaction? In light of this, the philosophy of the sentence **"It may be that you disregard ..."** is also clear that the phrase **"maybe"** can also be used in the form of interrogation but rhetorical questioning is more compatible with it in this regard because according to some hadiths, this verse was revealed after the weeping of the Messenger of God (PBUHH). God therefore asks His Prophet, will you not announce this matter because of the rejection by the opponents?

Thereafter, He says that you only have to convey the message, its acceptance or rejection by the people is a separate issue that has nothing to do with you: **"You are only a warner and Allah watches over all things¹."**

Such God's communication with the Prophet (PBUHH) in this manner does not mean that he did not want to deliver the divine message to the audience; rather, it indicates the importance of the issue that must be delivered.

In addition, the phrase **"maybe"** in this verse does not indicate doubt because Almighty God and the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) are above such an impression. This mode of expression is to attract the attention of the listeners and convey the message that guardianship [Wilāyah] is not a trivial matter. The fear of the Prophet on the rejection and open hostility of the hypocrites is clearly indicated in the verse **"And Allah shall protect you from the people²".** One of the purposes of such addresses is to draw people's attention to the importance of the issue, and this issue is also mentioned in other verses. For instance, the verses **"Perhaps you will kill yourself with grief because they do not believe³"** and **"Then maybe you will kill yourself with grief, sorrowing after them, if they do not believe in this announcement⁴"** convey the utmost love of the Prophet, as he has too much compassion for people, and he also has a kin interest for people to believe: **"There has certainly come to you an apostle from among yourselves. Grievous to him is your distress; he has deep concern for you, and is most kind and merciful to the faithful⁵".** This verse even uses two attributes (i.e., **Most kind, Merciful**) for the Prophet which are among the divine attributes.

¹ . Qur'an 13: 7.

² . Qur'an 5: 67.

³ . Qur'an 26: 3.

⁴ . Qur'an 18: 6.

⁵ . Qur'an 9: 128.

Some Qur'anic exegetes have considered the phrase "**maybe**" in the verse: "**It may be that you disregard...**" to be a rhetorical question¹. Rhetorical questioning is used for prohibition or negation², and it gives more emphasis when communicating a verdict. The sentence therefore means that, are you abandoning the cursing of their idols, as they have requested you? And it places more emphasis on the issue of its deliverance³."

The lexicographers have given several meanings for the phrase "**maybe**" which include:

1. **Hope and expectation:** Some have said that the phrase "**maybe**" includes the hope for the occurrence of a pleasant thing and the fear against the occurrence of an unpleasant one;
2. **Justification:** A group of lexicographers such as Akhfash and Kisā'ī have considered it to mean certainty;
3. **Interrogation:** This is the opinion of Kufan grammarians⁴.

If the phrase "**maybe**" is used in human speeches, its meaning is obvious, because humans are unaware of the future and may use it wherever they want. However, its usage in the statements of God Who knows the hidden and the manifest means what? In other words, even though God knew that His Prophet would harm himself or not because the people did not believe in him, why did He say: "**Perhaps you will kill yourself with grief because they do not believe.**"⁵ There are several responses to this question:

1. The phrase "**maybe**" is used in many cases to present justification. For example, the Qur'an says: "**Then We excused you after that so that you might give**

¹. Refer to: Wahbat ibn Muṣṭafa Zuḥaylī, al-Tafsīr al-Munīr fī al-ʿAqīdat wa al-Sharīʿat wa al-nahj, vol. 12, p. 36; Alirīḍa Mirza Khusrawī, Tafsīr Khusrawī, vol. 4, p. 262.

². Alirīḍa Mirza Khusrawī, Tafsīr Khusrawī, vol. 4, p. 262.

³. Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Qurṭūbī, Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'an, vol. 10, p. 12.

⁴. Refer to: Ali Akbar Qurashi, Qāmūs Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 193.

⁵. Qur'an 26: 3.

thanks¹" which means that "We have forgiven you so that you will be grateful". Abu al-Baqā Kūfī in his book titled "al-Kuliyyāt" said that every "**maybe**" in the Qur'an is used to offer a justification, except for the verse "*La'alakum takhludun*"² which is used as a simile. However, it is difficult to establish such a generality; for example, in the verse "**Perhaps you will kill yourself**" justification will not give proper meaning to "**maybe**".

2. The phrase "**maybe**" is sometimes used to express the hope and expectation of a speaker: "**That I may act righteously in what I have left behind**"³. Sometimes it is used to entice and imbibe hope in the audience: "**Speak to him in a soft manner; maybe he will take admonition or fear**"⁴, meaning, "Be hopeful that he may take admonition or fear." And whenever the phrase "**maybe**" is used in the statement of God, it is used to create hope in the audience.

3. The statutory hope, not of a speaker: In the verse, "**Perhaps you will kill yourself with grief because they do not believe**"⁵, the expectation and hope are not related to God, but to the status of the person in such a position. That is, "if someone in this status notices your sadness because the people did not believe in you, he will say: Maybe this person will harm himself in this manner."

This third viewpoint is considered the best and most accurate by the author. God knows best⁶.

Regarding the expression "**perhaps you**" in the verse, Fakhr Rāzī believes that the adverb "**perhaps**" means vexation and not forsaking of an action; it is rather used for emphasis⁷. Ayatollah Makārim Shīrāzī believes that the adverb "**perhaps**" is used here to indicate prohibition. Therefore, even though the adverb "perhaps" is

¹ . Qur'an 2: 52.

² . Qur'an 26: 129.

³ . Qur'an 23:100.

⁴ . Qur'an 20: 44.

⁵ . Qur'an 26: 3.

⁶ . Ali Akbar Qurashī, Qāmūs Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 193.

⁷ . Fakhr Rāzī, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 17, p. 324.

sometimes used in the sense of "maybe", but its extended meaning is the prohibition of doing something¹. Sheikh Ṭūsī believes that the adverb "**perhaps**" is used to indicate doubt, sometimes for the speaker and sometimes for the audience, and with that, the doubt of the audience is removed².

The Holy Prophet (PBUHH) knew that the people would not accept the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] and consequently, the first victim would be the Prophet and his family, and a chain of oppression such as killing, imprisonment and expulsion would follow, which will affect not only the bearer of the Wilāyah but also the associates throughout history. On the other hand, he felt sad that people do not accept the best divine system but opposed it: "**You are liable to imperil your life out of grief for their sake, if they should not believe this discourse**³." If people accepted this system, many of their problems would be solved and their questions would be answered. The verse "[Look out] lest you should disregard aught of what has been revealed to you, and be upset"⁴ is an indicator of the inner state of the Holy Prophet (PBUHH). He knew that the people would not accept the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali and consequently, endless problems of his pure Household [Ahl al-Bayt] would begin. History testifies that one of the manifestations of rejecting the guardianship [Wilāyah] happened on the last day of the Prophet on earth, and that was the refusal of the Prophet's request to bring a pen and paper [by the companions]. This incident was so resentful that Ibn Abbas was surprised to see such rudeness in the presence of the Prophet (PBUHH) and wept whenever he remembered it. Many biographers have narrated this incident, including Bukhārī in his Ṣaḥīḥ who narrated from Ibn Abbas thus: When the death of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) was near, and there was a group of people in his room, including Umar Ibn Khaṭṭab, and the Messenger of God

¹ . Makārim Shīrāzī, Nāṣir, Tafsīr Nemuneh, vol., 9, p. 148.

² . Ḥasan Ṭūsī, al-Tibyān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 148.

³ . Qur'an 18: 6.

⁴ . Qur'an 11: 12.

(peace be upon him and his family) said: Bring a pen and paper (or come near to me) so that I may write something for you that you will never go astray thereafter. Umar said: “The Prophet is overcome by pain, and the Qur’an is with you. The Book of God is sufficient for us.” There was disagreement and dispute among the people of the house. Some of the people said: Come near so that the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) could write for you something that will never make you go astray thereafter. And others supported Umar and said the same thing he said. However, when the dispute and disparity continued, the Prophet said: Get up from me and go! Ubaydullah ibn Abdullah ibn Abbas says: My father Abdullah ibn Abbas used to say: The calamity, the great calamity, was the one who put a distance between the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) and his writing and did not let him write the text he had in mind. And because of differences and raising their voice in the gathering of His Holiness, they prevented this important thing¹.

This incident brings us to the fact that two opposing movements and thoughts were formed among the Muslims even from the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household).

Another great void that arose due to the non-acceptance of the guardianship [Wilāyah] was the incident of Saqifa, which led to the demand of allegiance from Imam Ali (peace be upon him), the invasion of the house of Lady Fatimah (peace be upon her), the usurpation of Fadak farmland, the burning of the House of Revelation, the martyrdom of Mohsen, hurting the feeling of the ‘part of the Prophet’) and the martyrdom of Hazrat Fatimah (peace be upon her).

The ‘Verse of Forsaking’ is therefore, one of the verses that were revealed before the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali (peace be upon him) in

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Ismā’īl Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, vol. 5, p. 2124, Chapter 1: The saying of the sick to get up from me.

Ghadīr Khumm, and the time of its revelation was after the day of Arafah and the place of its revelation was *Guedid*; a village between Mecca and Medina¹. According to the narration of some historians, *Guedid* is a place near the city of Mecca². From this, it can be said that this verse was revealed less than a few days before Ghadīr Khumm.

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, who is one of the elders of the Sunnis, considered the verse to be about guardianship [Wilāyah] and the time of its revelation was before the revelation of the verse of Ghadīr Khumm. While explaining the hadith of *Miraj* [the Prophet's Ascension to Heaven], he quoted the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) to have said: Indeed, I have not sent a Prophet without appointing for him a minister. You are indeed a Messenger of God and Ali is your minister. Ibn Abbas said: The Messenger of God returned from Miraj but did not want to talk about this issue to the people, because they were closer to the age of ignorance, until after six days and God revealed this verse: “[**Look out**] lest you should disregard aught of what has been revealed to you”. Thus, the Messenger of God [PBUHH] endured until it was the eighteenth day, God revealed to him: “**O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord...**” Then the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) ordered Bilal to make the call to prayer (Azan) among the people - that no one should remain the next day unless he is at Ghadīr Khumm. Thus, the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) and the people left the next day. He said: O people, God has sent me to you with a message - and I am burdened by it for fear that you would accuse me and deny me - until my Lord blamed me therein with a threat that He sent down to me after a warning. Then he took Ali ibn Abi Talib by the hand and raised it until the people saw the whiteness of their armpits, then he said: O people, God is my master and I am your master - so whoever I am

¹ . Muḥammad Bistuni, Tarjumeh Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 23, p. 392.

² . Taqut ibn 'Abdullah Ḥamawi, Mu'jam al-Buldān, vol. 4, p. 313.

his master, Ali is his master. - Oh God, befriend whoever loves him, and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him, support whoever supports him, and abandon whoever abandons him. And God revealed: **“Today I have perfected for you your religion.”**¹

Narration similar to the same theme is also found in some Shiite sources². The verse: **“[Look out] lest you should disregard aught of what has been revealed to you, and be upset because they say, ‘Why has not a treasure been sent down to him, or [why does] not an angel accompany him?’ You are only a warner, and Allah watches over all things”** is apparently addressing the polytheists but it also includes the hypocrites. This kind of address is actually the miracles of the Qur'an in expression. The miracle of expression of the Qur'an is that it expresses several important issues in one verse, as Jābir Ja'fī said: I asked Abu Ja'far (peace be upon him) something about the interpretation of a verse and he answered me. Then I asked him about it a second time and he gave me another answer. Then I said, may I be your ransom! You gave me a different answer on this issue before today, and he said: O Jābir, the Qur'an has a hidden meaning and the hidden also have another hidden meaning and it has an apparent meaning and the apparent also has another apparent meaning. O Jabir, there is nothing whose understanding is far from the minds of people than the interpretation of the Qur'an. The beginning of a verse is about something and its end is about something else, and it is an uninterrupted speech with many dimensions³.

In this narration, this Qur'anic exegetical reality is clearly specified such that those who are the experts of the Qur'an may interpret a verse differently and this is an attribute of those **“grounded in knowledge”**. The Qur'an has an esoteric meaning, and for every esoteric meaning, there are several esoteric meanings.

¹ . Hākim Ḥaskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 1, p. 257-258.

² . Refer to: Hāshim Bahrānī, al-Burhān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 2, p. 397; Mirza Muḥammad Qummī Mashhadī, Tafsīr Kanz al-Daqa'iq wa baḥr al-Gharā'ib, vol. 4, p. 193.

³ . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 89, p. 91.

Thus, a verse may be about something at the beginning but explain a separate topic in its concluding part! The ‘Verse of Forsaking’ also follows such a principle and it is possible that the first verse was revealed separately, such that it is indicated in the narrations about the occasion of the revelation of the verse.

This verse also tells about the anxiety of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) which was the consequence of rejecting the announcement and declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali, which has engulfed the Islamic society for over more than 1400 years and it has not ended, and it is a kind of confirmation of the statement "**Allah shall protect you from the people.**" This anxiety was due to the deviation of the Muslim community from the path of guardianship [Wilāyah]. The Prophet knew that the Muslim Ummah would not only lose its way but would commit atrocities and crimes that the souls of thousands of pharaohs would be ashamed of! The hesitations were because the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) could see the future and was aware of future events. These hesitations were a kind of informing the Muslim community of the important future events.

God addressed the people in this way so that the importance of guardianship [Wilāyah] is revealed to everyone and everyone knows that it is not an unimportant issue. It is however obligatory for all the Muslim community until the Day of Judgment to accept the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali (peace be upon him), obey him and separate themselves from Satan’s confederates and contribute to the formation of the confederates of Allah.

It should be noted that the concept of guardianship [Wilāyah] is exclusively an Islamic issue that was not discussed before the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household), just like the concept of hypocrisy, which is an exclusively Islamic issue that no one knew about before the advent of Islam.

No. 2: The 'Verse of Appointment' [Ayah of Naşb]

Verses 7 and 8 of Qur'an 94 [Surah Inshirāh] are two other Qur'anic verses that point to the guardianship [Wilāyah] of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (peace be upon him) and his appointment in Ghadīr Khumm. Some Sunni scholars considered the verse "So when you are done, appoint, and supplicate your Lord¹" to be about the appointment of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in Ghadīr Khumm.

The Arabic term "*naşb*" has two meanings and two recitations in the Qur'an:

1. Suffering and obligation: The Holy Qur'an says:

فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتَاهُ آتِنَا غَدَاءَنَا لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِنْ سَفَرِنَا هَذَا نَصَبًا

So when they had passed on, he said to his lad, 'Bring us our meal. We have certainly encountered much fatigue on this journey of ours².'

It also says:

لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نَصَبٌ

"In it, we are untouched by toil³"

The term "*naşb*" is used in the aforementioned meaning in the two verses. Similarly, verses 45, 120 and 3 of Qur'an 15 [Surah Hījr], Qur'an 9 [Surah Tawbah] and Qur'an 88 [Surah al-Ghashiyah] respectively convey the same meaning.

2. Appointing, elevating and establishing something: The Holy Qur'an says:

وَالِى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ

"And the mountains, how they have been set?⁴"

¹ . Qur'an 94: 7-8.

² . Qur'an 18: 62.

³ . Qur'an 35: 35.

⁴ . Qur'an 88: 19.

According to the exegetic methodology of Qur'an by the Qur'an, the term "*naşb*" has two meanings in the Qur'an: suffering and appointing. The two meanings could be understood in the verse "*Fanşab*" at the same time.

The expression "*Fanşab*" in the verse is an imperative statement while compliance with the commandment is obligatory. From the tone of the verse, the obligation of such a command is also established. Based on a high probability, this verse was revealed before the 'Verse of Proclamation'.

These two verses¹ clearly point to the termination of the life of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) and the delivery of an important divine issue to the people by the Prophet (PBUHH). The expression "*Farghab*" in the verse is an imperative statement, which clearly portrays the completion of the Prophetic mission, and as if returning to God indicates the termination of suffering and pain. "*Fanşab*" is also an imperative statement, which indicates that before returning to the Lord, there is one more important duty left on the shoulders of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) that must be done. "*Fanşab*" indicates that talking is not enough, rather, an action must be taken and acting based on this comprehensive order.

The Occasion of Revelation of the Verse

This verse discusses the appointment of a divine leader (an Imam) by the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household), and this understanding has been specified in some hadiths. In the Shia hadiths, "*Fansab*" is considered to be related to the appointment of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) to the position of divine leadership and introducing the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah]. The period of the revelation of these verses was also during the period of pilgrimage (Hajj), as Imam Şādiq (PBUH) was reported to have said in the verse: "The Messenger of God (PBUHH)

¹ . Qur'an 94: 7-8.

was performing Hajj rites when it was revealed to him: When you complete your Hajj, appoint Ali as a leader [an Imam] for the people.¹"

There is another narration from Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) in which the farewell Hajj is mentioned: "O Muhammad! When you have completed the farewell pilgrimage and your prophetic mission, then appoint Ali to the position of caliphate."²

In some Sunni and Shia hadiths, the expression "*Fansab*" has been used about the event of Ghadīr Khumm, and this is a confirmation of the 'Verse of Appointment' and its meaning. The famous Sunni Qur'anic exegete, Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī quoted Abu Sa'īd Khodrī thus: When the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) appointed Ali as a divine leader (an Imam), Gabriel descended upon him with this verse: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**"³

Some other hadiths also came with the same theme. For example, "Appoint Ali to the position of guardianship"⁴; "Appoint Ali for the people"; and "So when you are done, appoint, that is, appoint Ali to the position of guardianship"⁵. It is also narrated that Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) said: "Did We not open your breast for you with Ali? And We have relieved you of your heavy burden? So, when you have completed your Prophetic mission, then introduce and appoint Ali as a successor and hurry to your Lord about this"⁶.

According to the Sunni and Shia hadiths, it is established that these two verses have also explained the necessity of declaring the issue of guardianship as a divinely desired system for the people and the entire Chapter [Surah] of the

¹ . Sayyid Hāhim Bahrānī, al-Burhān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 5, p. 689.

² . Husain Shā Abdul-'Azīmī, Tafsīr Ithnā 'Asharī, vol. 14, p. 267.

³ . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 259.

⁴ . Refer to: Hākim Ḥaskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id Tafḍīl, vol. 2, p. 451.

⁵ . Ibid.

⁶ . Mirza Muḥammad Qummi Mashhadi, Tafsīr Kanz al-Daqā'iq, vol. 14, p. 337.

Qur'an is about the issue of guardianship and the appointment of Imam Ali (PBUH) to the position of a guardian.

The Viewpoints of Sunni Qur'anic Exegetes on the 'Verse of Appointment'

Many Sunni Qur'anic exegetes, instead of giving the actual interpretation (Tafsīr) of this verse, have adopted its allegorical interpretation (Ta'wīl) and distanced themselves from the essence of the verse. This verse has declared the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] in the clearest expressions, but many Sunni and Shia Qur'anic exegetes have remained silent about it and some have even criticized it.

Some viewpoints of Sunni and Shia Qur'anic exegetes regarding these verses are presented as follows:

Viewpoint No. 1: To Supplicate and make a request

This is the view of Ibn Abbas. He and Qatādah say: "If you have completed your ritual prayer, then supplicate and ask Him (Allah) of your need¹". This viewpoint has also been attributed to Ḍaḥḥāk and Muqātil².

Based on this viewpoint, the expression "*Fansab*" in the verse is interpreted to mean 'making supplication and request' and the narration has been attributed to Ibn Abbas as well as Qatādah.

A Critical Review:

One of the characteristics of the Qur'an is its semantic flexibility. One verse may have several and different meanings and manifestations, and this is part of the miraculous aspect of the Qur'an, and the secret of its novelty lies in this point.

That is, the religious, social, political and jurisprudential issues may be extracted from one verse. For example, the verse "**Perish the hands of Abu Lahab, and perish**

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 30, p. 152; Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Qurṭubī, Jāmi' al-Aḥkām al-Qur'an, vol. 21, p. 108.

² . Ali ibn Muḥammad Māwardī, Zād al-Masīr fī 'Ilm al-Tafsīr, vol. 4, p. 462.

he!¹" is a kind of curse for Abu Lahab. However, from a social point of view, it pointed to an anti-value society that its people have reached a point where they did not only not listen to the words of the opponent; rather, they also suppressed it with absolute violence. In addition, a jurisprudential issue can also be extracted from this verse, and that is considering the same punishment for the sinner and his accomplice. The word "**hands**" is mentioned in the verse to indicate the destruction of Abu Lahab's two hands, because he used to pick up a stone with one hand and throw it at the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) with the other hand, which means that, one hand threw the stone directly but the other hand made this work easy for him. Therefore, the Qur'an gave the same judgement on both hands of Abu Lahab, that is, both the criminal and the steward are guilty. This is one of the subtleties of the Qur'an.

Concerning the verses under discussion, the following viewpoint is also mentioned: Ṭabarsī says: "**So when you are done, appoint, and supplicate your Lord**" means that: *"If you have completed with the obligatory ritual prayer, then supplicate to your Lord and beseech Him. He will [definitely] give you."* This is reported on the authority of Mujāhid, Qatādah, Ḍaḥḥāk, Muqātil and al-Kalbī from Abu Ja'far and Abu Abdullah (peace be upon them). He thereafter adds: that Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) said: *"It is supplication after prayer while you are in a sitting position²"*. This verse refers to both the fundamentals of religion (Usul al-Dīn) as well the articles of practice (Furu al-Dīn) (i.e., Imamate and ritual prayer) and likewise, the supplication.

The context of the verses rejects all such interpretations and points out the end of the Prophetic mission, the appointment of a successor, the necessity of returning to God, and the end of the Prophet's life. In addition, the narrations about the

¹ . Qur'an 111: 1.

² . Faḍl ibn Ḥasan, Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 10, p. 772.

appointment of the Commander of the Faithful also prove the context of the succession issue.

Viewpoint No. 2: Keeping Vigil at Night

This viewpoint is attributed to Ibn Mas'ūd. Ibn Mas'ūd says: "Whenever you finish your duties, you should wake up in the night¹." According to this view, the meaning of '*Fanṣab*' is waking up for the night prayer.

A Critical Review:

This statement is not true, because the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) had been worshipping a lot at night from the beginning of his Prophethood in such a way that God forbade him from excessive worship and ordered him to reduce it: "**O you wrapped up in your mantle! Stand vigil through the night, except for a little [of it], a half, or reduce a little from that²**"

This view is also in conflict with the narrations from Ahl al-Bayt and the Companions, and it is a kind of independent reasoning [*Ijtihad*] against the clear legal injunction [*naṣṣ*], which we shall also discuss later.

Viewpoint No. 3: Seeking Forgiveness

Kalbī says: "When you have finished conveying the message, then ask forgiveness for your sin and the believing men and women³." This view has considered '*Fanṣab*' in the verse to mean seeking forgiveness by the Holy Prophet himself and the believers.

¹ . Muḥammad Aḥmad Qurṭūbī, *Al-Jām' li-Ahkām al-Qur'an*, p. 109; Ali ibn Muḥammad Māwardī, *Zād al-Masīr fi 'Ilm al-Tafsīr*, vol. 4, p. 462.

² . Qur'an 73: 1-3.

³ . Muḥammad Aḥmad Qurṭūbī, *Al-Jām' li-Ahkām al-Qur'an*, p. 109; Ali ibn Muḥammad Māwardī, *Zād al-Masīr fi 'Ilm al-Tafsīr*, vol. 4, p. 462.

A Critical Review:

This viewpoint has no supporting evidence; it is rather opposed to those authentic hadiths that have explained the issue of Ali's guardianship. Kalbī did not witness the revelation of the verse and did not make any reference to the Prophet (PBUHH), the Ahl al-Bayt (PBUH) and the Companions in his statements. In addition, the term '*Anṣab*' has not been used to mean forgiveness in any language. Seeking forgiveness (*Istighfār*) has been mentioned in many verses of the Qur'an, and has been enjoined: **"And plead [to Allah] for forgiveness of your sin and the faithful, men and women. Allah knows your itinerary and your [final] abode¹."** The Qur'an in this verse, absolutely and without any time frame has enjoined the seeking of forgiveness. The ruling on seeking forgiveness has also been given even in ritual prayer. Therefore, seeking forgiveness has nothing to do with the completion of the Prophetic mission, rather, it should be done after committing any sin: **"...And plead [to Allah seeking His] forgiveness for their sins—and who forgives sins except Allah?²"**

Therefore, Kalbī's view is not correct, because he did not witness the revelation of the verse, and did not report from the Prophet, Ahl al-Bayt and the Companions.

Viewpoint No. 4: Putting an Effort into Worship

This viewpoint is attributed to Ḥasan and Qatādah. They were reported to have said: "Whenever you have finished fighting against your enemy, set up to worship your Lord³." In this viewpoint, '*Fanṣab*' [in the verse] has been interpreted to mean 'putting effort to worship'.

¹ . Qur'an 47: 19.

² . Qur'an 3: 135.

³ . *ibid*.

A Critical Review:

This statement is not true because the Messenger of God (PBUHH) had been excessively worshipping God from the very beginning of the Prophetic mission and God forbade it in the Qur'an: "**O you wrapped up in your mantle! Stand vigil through the night, except for a little [of it], a half, or reduce a little from that¹.**" How is it possible that God forbids His Prophet from excessive action but thereafter instructs him to do the same action? What is meant by worship? Is it praying? According to this verse, the Messenger of God (PBUHH) used to perform the greatest number of prayers, which God ordered him to reduce. And if the meaning of worship is in its broadest sense, then fighting against the enemy is the best action, as Ubadah ibn Sāmit says: "Verily, a man came to the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) and said: O Messenger of God, which deed is the best? He (PBUHH) said: "Faith in God, belief in Him, and Jihad in the cause of God²." This is the interpretation by two Qur'anic exegetes from among the Tābi'ūn, which is not only devoid of any scientific basis but also an independent reasoning [*Ijtihad*] against the clear legal injunction [*Naṣṣ*].

Viewpoint No. 5: Performing the **Daily** prayer

It has been reported from Mujāhid who was quoted to have said: "Thus, whenever you are done with your world, then observe your ritual prayers³." In another expression, he also says: "Thus, whenever you are done with your worldly affairs, then observe your ritual prayers⁴."

In this viewpoint, '*Faṣṣab*' [in the verse] has been interpreted to mean 'performing ritual prayer'.

¹ . Qur'an 73: 1-3.

² . Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Aẓīm, vol. 8, p. 161.

³ . *ibid*.

⁴ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 30, p. 152.

A Critical Review:

According to this point of view, if the Prophet (PBUHH) does not finish the worldly affairs, there is no need for him to observe prayer, whereas the ritual prayer should be observed five times every day and night, but this view portrays that the five daily prayers as optional. It should be noted that the Holy Qur'an while referring to the ritual prayer has always used the Arabic term 'Ṣalāt' but has never used the term '*naṣb*'.

This point of view has a strong conflict with the narrations from the rightly-guided Imams (peace be upon them) and the Companions and it is therefore invalid.

In addition, the content of this narration is confusing, because on the premise that we accept the claim that says that, 'whenever you are done with your worldly affairs, observe prayer', this can only be accepted as just a manifestation and not that there are no other manifestations for it.

Besides, this narration introduces the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) as a worldly person who is busy pursuing it to the extent that God is compelled to send the Gabriel [the angel of revelation] to warn and stop him from doing so. This is an obvious insult to such a divine personality, who does not even say his own word except based on revelation: **"Nor does he speak out of [his own] desire: it is just a revelation that is revealed [to him]¹."** Thus, how can he [Prophet Muhammad] be so busy with worldly affairs that God has to reveal this verse?!

In some Shia sources, there is a narration that uses the word "Ali" instead of "ritual prayer". This narration is narrated from Imam Bāqir and Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon them) during the explanation of the verse, when they said: "Whenever you are done with your worldly life, then appoint Ali as a guardian²."

¹ . Qur'an 53: 3-4.

² . Ibn Shahr Āshūb, Manāqib Āl Abī-Ṭālib, vol. 2, p. 249.

The expression "whenever you are done" in this narrative is an allusion to the end of the Prophet's life. Thus, this narration reminds the Prophet (PBUHH) of the need to introduce a vicegerent and the next leader after him.

Viewpoint No. 6: Striving to Worship the Absolute Truth

In his interpretation of this verse, Qurṭūbī quoted Junayd to have said: "Whenever you are done with the affairs of the people, strive to worship the Absolute Truth [Almighty God]¹." Putting an effort into worshipping the Absolute Truth is the focus of this viewpoint and this is similar to some afore-mentioned viewpoints.

A Critical Review:

This viewpoint, like some of the previous views, is just an interpretation [of the Qur'an] based on pure personal speculation [*Tafsīr bi-ra'y*]. God's intention cannot be determined by conjecture! In the interpretation of this verse, there is a clear text from the infallible, as well as many narrations from the Companions, in which the meaning '*Fanṣab*' [in the verse] has been explained so that there is no need for such interpretations anymore. These viewpoints are independent reasoning [*Ijtihad*] against the clear legal injunction [Naṣṣ] and it is considered invalid. On the other hand, these verses were revealed at the end of the life of the Prophet (PBUHH) and do not fit with such interpretations.

Viewpoint No. 7: Appointing a Divine Leader

Ibn 'Arabī in the interpretation of the verse, says: "Anyone who recites '*Fanṣab*' in the verse as '*Fanṣib*' is a heretic and they said that the meaning of the verse is: "Appoint a divine leader who is your successor." And this is invalid both in terms of its recitation and in terms of its meaning because the Prophet (PBUHH) did

¹. Muḥammad Aḥmad Qurṭūbī, *al-Jām' li-Ahkām al-Qur'an*, vol. 21, p. 109.

not appoint anyone to succeed him!¹ Al-Qurṭūbī has also narrated the same thing in his commentary².

Zamakhshari also has a view similar to Ibn 'Arabī, he said: "Among the heresies of the Shia is that they recited *'Fanṣab'* in the verse as *'Fanṣib'*, meaning that, "Appoint Ali as the Imam". If this recitation is considered correct by the Shia, then the Nasibi [the enemy of Ahl al-Bayt] would also be considered it correct to recite like this [i.e., *'Fanṣib'*] to imply a commandment to raise hatred and enmity against Ali³."

A Critical Review:

The seven modes of recitation and the inflexion of the Holy Qur'an were gradually introduced later in history, and in some traditions of the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them), reference is made to *'Fanṣib'* [with *Kasra* of letter 'ṣ']. After narrating some hadith traditions, Faiḍ Kāshānī says: What could be understood from the hadith [on the recitation of the verse] is the *Kasra* of letter 'ṣ' [*'Fanṣib'*]⁴.

Ibn 'Arabī believes that the Prophet did not appoint anyone, but we believe that the appointment took place in Ghadīr Khumm, and before that, at the very beginning of the Prophethood, at the meeting for announcing the prophethood of the Prophet (PBUH) among his close relatives was accompanied by the selection of a successor too, as many Sunni and Shia scholars have recorded that historical event. Ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī has reported the actual story of that day. He said that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) started speaking on the third day of his mission after finishing the meal and said: O son of Abd al-Muttalib, by God, none of the Arab people has brought anything better than what I have

¹ . Ibn 'Arabī, *Ahkām al-Qur'an*, vol. 4, p. 1949.

² . Muḥammad Aḥmad Qurṭūbī, *al-Jām' li-Ahkām al-Qur'an*, vol. 21, p. 109.

³ . Maḥmūd ibn 'Umar Zamakhshari, *al-Kahhāf*, vol. 4, p. 772.

⁴ . Muḥsin Faiḍ Kāshānī, *Tafsīr al-Ṣāfi*, vol. 5, p. 344.

brought to his people. I have brought you the best of this world and the Hereafter, and God Almighty has commanded me to call you to it, which of you will assist me in this task to be my brother, guardian and successor? Then he quoted Ali (PBUH) to have said: The people remained silent, and even though I was younger than them, and even among the young, there was no one whose eyes were more watery than mine, his belly was bigger, and his legs were thinner. I said: O Prophet of God, I will be your support and he grabbed my neck and said: "This is my brother, guardian and successor, listen to his saying and be obedient to him." The people laughed loudly and said to Abu Talib: He told you to obey your son¹.

Some of the Sunni and Shia Qur'anic exegetes such as Ibn Abī Ḥātim², Ṭabarī³, Baghwī⁴ and Qummī⁵ have narrated this event with a slight difference from Ṭabarī. These kinds of narrations on the selection of the successor to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) from the very first day of the beginning of the Prophetic mission indicate that the Prophet (PBUHH) chose Ali as his brother, heir, executor, minister and caliph. Such narrations have been narrated from Imam Ali⁶, Abu Rāfi⁷, Barra' ibn 'Āzib⁸, Ibn Abbas⁹, and Rabi'ah ibn Nājid¹⁰. This was the selection of the successor that reached its peak in Ghadīr Khumm. The Prophet said: "Listen to him and obey him", this statement indicates the obligation of obedience and the infallibility of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). If he was not infallible and not the leader of the Muslim community after the Prophet, how could it be reasonable that the speeches and orders of an eleven-year-old boy should be made obligatory on all the Ummah?

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Tārikh Ṭabarī, vol. 2, p. 63.

² . Refer to: Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Aẓīm, vol.9, p. 2827.

³ . Refer to: Faḍl ibn Ḥasan, Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 7, p. 356.

⁴ . Refer to: Ḥasan ibn Mas'ūd Baghwī, Mu'ālim al-Tanzīl, vol. 3, p. 400.

⁵ . Ali ibn Ibrahim Qummī, Tafsīr al-Qummī, vol. 2, p. 124.

⁶ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Tārikh Ṭabarī, vol. 2, p. 63.

⁷ . Faḍl ibn Ḥasan, Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 7, p. 323.

⁸ . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha'alabī, Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān, vol. 7, p. 182.

⁹ . Ibn Kathīr, al-Kāmil fī al-Tārikh, vol. 2, p. 63.

¹⁰ . Ibn Jubayr, Nahj al-'Imān, p. 236.

In the meeting for the proclamation of Prophethood, the Prophet from among all the Companions who were present in the crowd declared only the obedience to Ali (peace be upon him) obligatory, and this means introducing Imam Ali as the leader of the Muslim community after the Holy Prophet and that he is chosen by God.

Ibn 'Arabī believes that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) did not appoint a successor for himself! If he had studied the authentic books of Ḥadīth, he would not have said this. As it has been documented whenever the Prophet (PBUHH) left Medina, he did not leave the city without nominating a successor, rather, he introduced Ali (peace be upon him) as his successor and said: "You are to me as Hārūn was to Moses¹."

Regarding the Battle of Tabūk, Imam Bukhārī narrated from Mus'ab ibn Sa'ad who quoted his father thus: "The Messenger of God, (peace be upon him and his family), went out to Tabūk and appointed Ali as a successor, so he said, "Will you leave me with the children and women?" He said: Aren't you satisfied that you are to me as Hārūn was to Musa? Except that he is not a Prophet after me².

He also narrated a similar hadith under the "*Virtues of Ali*" from Ibrahim ibn Sa'ad who quoted from his father³. In Sunni sources, great narrators are mentioned for this hadith including the Commander of the Faithful Ali, Abdullah ibn Abbas, Jābir ibn Abdullah Anṣārī, Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd, Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas, 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭab, Abu Saeed Khudri, Barā' ibn 'Āzib, Jābir ibn Samrah, Abu Hurayrah, Mālīk ibn Ḥuwairat, Zayd ibn Arqam, Abu Rāfi', Hudhayfa ibn Asīd, Anas ibn Mālīk, Abdullah ibn Abi Awfī, Abu Ayyub Anṣārī, 'Aqīl ibn Abi Ṭālib, Hubashī ibn Junādah, Mu'āwiya ibn Abi Sufyān, Umm Salma, Asma bint Umays.

¹ . Nizāmu-Dīn Nayshābūrī, Tafsīr Gharā'ib al-Qur'an wa Raghā'b al-Furqān, vol. 3, p. 476.

² . Muḥammad ibn Ismā'il Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, vol. 4, p. 1602.

³ . ibid, vol. 3, p. 1369.

According to the explicit text of the Holy Qur'an, Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) went to Mount Tor for thirty days and did not leave the nation without a leader, and announced Prophet Hārūn (peace be upon him) as his successor: **"We made an appointment with Moses for thirty nights, and completed them with ten [more]; thus the tryst of his Lord was completed in forty nights. And Moses said to Aaron, his brother, 'Be my successor among my people, and set things right and do not follow the way of the agents of corruption¹.'"**

Now, how is it possible that the Seal of the Prophets and the pride of Moses will leave his nation wandering without a successor not only in a short time but until the Day of Judgment to the extent that so many sectarian conflicts arise? Which interest is higher than the unity of the nation? How is it possible that the Companions had a sense of responsibility after the death of the Prophet (PBUHH), gathered in Saqifa, and considered the selection of a successor to be more obligatory than the burial of the Prophet, but the Prophet neglected this very crucial matter? Is it possible to imagine such a thing? After the passage of one thousand six hundred years, the Ummah of the Prophet (PBUHH) is still struggling with this issue and its negative consequences show itself every day among the Islamic Ummah.

According to the 'Ḥadīth of Status' [*Ḥadīth of Manzila*], the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) introduced his successor just like Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) and said that Ali (peace be upon him) in my Ummah is like Hārūn (peace be upon him) in the Ummah of Moses (peace be upon him). The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family) introduced Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) as the leader of the Islamic Ummah after him dozens of times and places, the last of which was after returning from the Farewell Pilgrimage in Ghadīr Khumm, which was in the midst of a large crowd of companions where he raised the hand of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) and

¹ . Qur'an 7: 142.

asked them to confirm his superior authority over them more than themselves. Thereafter, he said, "Whoever I am his master, this is also his master¹."

Thus, despite the presence of dozens of Qur'anic texts and authentic ḥadīth with successive chains of narration about the leadership of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) in the most important Qur'anic exegetical, narrative, historical and biographical evaluation sources of the two schools of thought, how does Ibn 'Arabī claim that the Prophet (PBUHH) did not appoint a successor for himself?! This claim is questionable and not acceptable.

However, in response to Zamakhshari's statement, Faiḍ Kashānī says: "An appointment of a leader [an Imam] and a caliph after conveying the divine message or after completing worship is reasonable, it is rather obligatory so that people will not be misled after the Prophet. Therefore, it is correct that [the appointment of a leader] is related to the divine mission and completion of worship. But how is the hatred and enmity of Ali related to the propagation of the mission or worship?!"

Majlisī says in refuting Zamakhshari's statement: "First: The relationship between the completion of preaching the divine message and appointment of an Imam to safeguard the Islamic laws is apparent so that people after him will not be in confusion and misguidance, and so that the Sunnah of God Almighty may run in the first two, but there is no relationship between the completion of an obligation and a commandment of enmity towards Ali. Second: Expressing a possibility that is contrary to what all the Muslim sects have held is not equivalent to a possibility held by most pious believers. Third: What the Shia said is not purely based on lust and invention, but rather they transmitted it from their Infallible Imams, whose there is no dispute among Muslims on their excellence and loftiness. And he himself (Zamakhshari) in many cases, has reported about

¹ . Aḥmad ibn Ali Nisā'ī, Al-Sunan al-Kubra, vol. 5, p. 131.

recitations and interpretations [of Qur'anic verses] from them. All Qur'anic exegetes rely on what was reported from them. Thus, what was reported from the rightly-guided Imams is not inferior to what they narrated from Qatādah, Ka`b, Ibn Mas'ūd and others¹.”

Viewpoint No. 8: Attending to the affairs of the Hereafter

Mujāhid says: "Whenever you are done with the affairs of this world, then devote yourself to the work of the hereafter²." Based on this viewpoint, '*Fanṣab*' [in the verse] is interpreted to mean attending to the affairs of the Hereafter.

A Critical Review:

Mujāhid believes that the meaning of '*Faraghta*' in the verse is that, when he is done with worldly affairs, the meaning of '*Fanṣab*' is to pay attention to the affairs of the Hereafter. It is correct to order something to be done when the addressee is not engaged in that action. The verse was revealed at the end of the Prophet's life. How is it possible that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) was so busy with worldly affairs at the end of his life that even a verse was revealed about it? This is against the clear Qur'anic texts and is not compatible with the actions of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household). In addition to this, there is no conflict between this world and the hereafter, rather, in order to attain a better status in the hereafter, one should use the path of this world and also one should not forget the hereafter: "**Seek the abode of the Hereafter by means of what Allah has given you, while not forgetting your share of this world³.**"

¹ . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Mir'āt al-'Uqūl*, vol. 3, p. 276.

² . Ibn Jawzī, *Zād al-Masīr fī 'Ilm al-Tafsīr*, vol. 4, p. 462.

³ . Qur'an 28: 77.

Viewpoint No. 9: Supplicating for this World and the Hereafter

Zahrī and Sha'abī in the interpretation of the expression '*Fanṣab*' [in the verse], say: "Whenever you finish the Tashahhud [in the ritual prayer], then supplicate for [your needs] of this world and the hereafter¹."

Based on this point of view, the expression '*Fanṣab*' is interpreted to mean the Prophet's supplication for the needs of this world and the Hereafter.

A Critical Review:

This viewpoint is against the clear textual evidence and is not authentic. Supplication after ritual prayer is reasonable, but after *Tashahhud* of the second rak'at [unit], it is followed by standing posture [for the next unit], and in the last rak'at [unit] of the prayer, it is followed by '*Salām*'. No action was confirmed with this viewpoint in the biography of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household). Also, this point of view is not compatible with the context of the verses, because the effort to return to the Hereafter is emphasized in them.

Viewpoint No. 10: Utilizing One's Health for Worship

It has been narrated from Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥa that he said: "When you are healthy, then use your health in worship²." Utilizing health for worship by the Messenger of Allah (PBUHH) has been chosen as the meaning of '*Fanṣab*' in this view.

A Critical Review:

This viewpoint has nothing to do with the main issue. The verse in question talks about the necessity of fulfilling a great obligation—the office of prophethood. The context of the verse refers to the accomplishment of a great mission and the necessity of the Prophet's life coming to an end. In addition, this view is also

¹ . Māwardī, *Madārik al-Tanzīl wa Ḥaqā'iq al-Ta'wīl*, vol. 4, p. 462.

² . *ibid.*

against the ḥadīth of the Ahl al-Bayt and the Companions about this verse. This view is considered an independent judgement [*Ijtihād*] in opposition to clear textual evidence [*naṣṣ*], and there is no evidence to ascertain its truthfulness. In the Arabic language, the term "*Faragh*" is never used for health, but the term "*Shifa*" is used instead.

Viewpoint No. 11: Paying attention to the Supererogatory acts

"Whenever you are done with the obligatory acts, then pay attention to the supererogatory acts [*Nawāfil*]¹." In this viewpoint, after the performance of the obligatory ritual prayers, attention should be paid to the supererogatory and recommended prayers that are emphasized.

A Critical Review:

This viewpoint has been raised in some Qur'anic exegeses, but the speaker of this is unknown²! Was the Messenger of God (PBUHH) oblivious to the supererogatory acts [*Nawāfil*] such that it is necessary for God to issue a special order to do it? Whereas, other Qur'anic verses indicate the serious attention and interest of the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) in the performance of supererogatory prayer [*Nawāfil*], to the extent that God forbids him from excessive worship: "**O you wrapped up in your mantle !Stand vigil through the night, except for a little [of it], a half, or reduce a little from that!**"³

On the other hand, due to the importance and effect of supererogatory acts in human destiny, Almighty God has enjoined it separately: "**And keep vigil for a part of the night, as a supererogatory [devotion] for you. It may be that your Lord will raise you to a praiseworthy station**"⁴. Supererogatory acts (*Mustaḥabbāt*) are indeed a

¹ . Ibn Jazī, Kitāb al-Tashīl li-'Ulūm al-Tanzīl, vol. 2, p. 494.

² . Refer to: Makārim Shīrāzī and et al, Tafsīr Nemuneh, vol. 27, p. 129.

³ . Qur'an 73: 1-3.

⁴ . Qur'an 17: 79.

complement to the obligatory duties and abandoning or neglecting is not expected from a believer.

Allamah Ṭabāṭabāī has raised some existing viewpoints in this regard and then established their weakness¹.

Viewpoint No. 12: Jihād with the Self

"So, whenever you are done with jihād with the enemy, then start jihād with your own self²." Based on this viewpoint, after jihād and fighting with the external enemy, jihād against the whim is recommended.

A Critical Review:

The saying that jihād with the Self is indeed the most difficult stage of life, is true as hundreds of thousands of people are defeated at this front in every age. However, there is no time orderliness for jihād with the Self, which says that 'do such and such a thing first, then start jihād with the self'. Thus, this viewpoint is also rejected and besides, the speaker of such a claim is unknown.

Viewpoint No. 13: Seeking intercession

This point of view has been put forward by Abu Abbas ibn 'Aṭṭā. He says under the interpretation of the verse, "So whenever you are done with the propagation of the revelation, then focus on asking for intercession³."

The most important thing for the Prophet after fulfilling his Prophetic mission and preaching is seeking intercession. This viewpoint interprets "*Fanṣab*" in the verse to mean that [i.e., an intercession].

¹ . Refer to: Muḥammad Hussein Ṭabāṭabāī, *Al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 20, p. 535.

² . Fadl ibn Ḥasan Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 10, p. 773.

³ . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha'alabī, *Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān*, vol. 10, p. 237.

A Critical Review:

To interpret "*Fanṣab*" [in the verse] to mean intercession is not without an obstacle, because there is no proof to establish the correctness of such a meaning. The issue of intercession was a topic that was discussed at the beginning of the revelation, and there was no need to talk about seeking it: "**Soon your Lord will give you [that with which] you will be pleased¹.**" This verse is about intercession. Both the Shia² and Sunni³ Qur'anic exegetes have acknowledged this. In addition to this, the meaning of a '*praiseworthy station*' in the verse "**It may be that your Lord will raise you to a praiseworthy station⁴**" is the station of intercession. Ṭabarsī claims the consensus of the Qur'anic exegetes in this regard: "The Qur'anic exegetes have unanimously agreed that the '*praiseworthy station*' is the station of intercession⁵". Ṭabarī on the contrary attributed this opinion to the majority of scholars⁶. In any case, the point of view that has changed the meaning of "*Fanṣab*" in the verse to mean an intercession is incorrect.

Acceptable Viewpoint: The appointment of Ali (PBUH) as the Prophet's vicegerent

The favorable and harmonious viewpoint with the context of the verses and ḥadīth of the two schools of thought [Sunni and Shia] is the point of view that pointed to the most sensitive issue of the Islamic Ummah and considered these verses to be related to the issue of guiding the people and leading the affairs of the society after the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household). This is the viewpoint that is unanimously agreed upon by the Shia Qur'anic exegetes and some narrations of the two schools of thought have emphasized it. It is narrated

¹ . Qur'an 93: 5.

² . Fadl ibn Ḥasan Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 10, p. 765; Abdul-'Ali ibn Jum'ah 'Arūsī Ḥuwaizī, *Tafsīr Nūr al-Thaḳalayn*, vol. 5, p. 595.

³ . Ibn Abī Ḥātim, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Aẓīm*, vol. 10, p. 3443; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Aẓīm*, vol. 8, p. 412.

⁴ . Qur'an 17: 79.

⁵ . Fadl ibn Ḥasan Ṭabarsī, *Majma' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 6, p. 671.

⁶ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 15, p. 97.

from Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) that he said: "Whenever you are done with your prophetic mission, then appoint Ali and supplicate your Lord¹."

It is stated in Tafsīr Qummī thus: "So, whenever you are done, then appoint. He said: When you have completed the farewell pilgrimage, then appoint the Commander of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Talib²."

Abdul Ḥamīd ibn Abi Daylam has quoted from Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) in a long narration that he said: And he [the Holy Prophet] used to remind them of the virtues of his successor until this Surah [Qur'an 94] was revealed, and he protested against them when he learned of his death and heard the report of it. Then God (Glory be to Him), said: **"So when you are done, appoint, and supplicate your Lord."** That is, when you are done with the proclamation of your mission, then establish your knowledge, announce your successor, and inform them of his virtue openly. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) said three times: "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master. O God, befriend whoever befriends him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him³."

This narration about the revelation of Surah Inshirāh [Qur'an 94] is connected to the end of the life of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household). Imam Ja'far Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) also said: "So, whenever you have completed [the mission of] your prophethood, then appoint Ali as a guardian and supplicate to your Lord on that⁴."

Salman says: I asked Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) about the verse **"So when you are done, appoint"** He said: "Undoubtedly God has ordered him (the Messenger of God) to observe prayer, pay Zakat, fast, and perform a pilgrimage, and then

¹ . Abdul-'Ali ibn Jum'ah 'Arūsī Ḥuwaizī, Tafsīr Nūr al-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 605.

² . Ali ibn Ibrahim Al-Qummī, Tafsīr al-Qummī, vol. 2, p. 428.

³ . Muḥammad ibn Ya'qūb Kulaynī, al-Kāfī, vol. 1, p. 294.

⁴ . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 36, p. 135.

He ordered him to appoint Ali as his successor whenever he has done with those tasks¹."

Abī Jamīla quoted Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) to have said: "The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) was on Hajj when the verse was revealed. When you have completed your pilgrimage [Hajj], appoint Ali for the people (as a leader)²."

Ḥasan ibn Kharzād has quoted some people who narrated from Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) to have said: "Whenever you are done, then appoint Ali [as a leader] for the people³."

In addition, it has been reported from Mufaḍḍil ibn 'Umar, who quoted Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) to have said: "When you are done, then appoint Ali to the position of guardianship [Wilayāh]⁴." Ḥaskānī has narrated from Abu Baṣīr who quoted Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) to have said on the interpretation of the verse: "It means [appoint] Ali to the position of guardianship [Wilayāh]⁵." Ḥaskānī has mentioned ten other narrations with the same theme through the chain of Abdullah ibn Sinān and Faḍl from Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him).

Allamah Majlisī says after narrating some of these hadiths: "What is understood from these narrations is that, it was in the recitation of the Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them) to recite letter 'Ṣ' in the verse with the short vowel sound kasrah "i" [i.e., Fanṣib] which means raise or uplift⁶."

¹ . ibid

² . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 36, p. 135.

³ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 2, p. 452.

⁴ . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 36, p. 135.

⁵ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 2, p. 451.

⁶ . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 36, p. 135.

Abu Hātim Rāzī quoted Imam Bāqir (peace be upon him) to have said: "Whenever you have finished the completion of the Islamic law [Sharia], then appoint Ali as their Imam¹."

It is categorically stated in a narration mentioning the recitation of the letter 'Ṣ' in the verse with the short vowel sound kasrah "i" [i.e., *Fanṣib*] to explicitly means uplift and appoint a leader: On the authority of Ja'far ibn Muhammad Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) who quoted his father (peace be upon him) to have said concerning the statement of God [the Most High]: "So when you are done, appoint", the expression 'Fanṣib' is with the short vowel sound kasrah "i" (meaning, "Whenever you are done with the obligations, appoint Ali"). And the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) implemented this order².

The Arabic term "*Naṣb*" appears in the Holy Qur'an in two recitations and meanings:

1. When the letter 'Ṣ' [in the expression] has the short vowel sound *fatha* "a" [i.e., *Naṣab*], it means suffering and toil, "لَا يَمَسُّنَا فِيهَا نُصَبٌ" [In it, we are untouched by toil³]

2. When the letter 'Ṣ' [in the expression] has the short vowel sound kasrah "i" [i.e., *Naṣib*], it means appoint and raise "وَإِلَى الْجِبَالِ كَيْفَ نُصِبَتْ" [And the mountains, how they have been set⁴]. This meaning of "*Naṣb*" is always with continuity and stability. Therefore, this term has been used for the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] to indicate that guardianship is one of the permanent and unchanging religious issues. Of course, both meanings can be combined in the matter of

¹ . Hāshim ibn Sulaiman Buhrānī, *Al-Burhānī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, vol. 5, p. 689.

² . Ibn Hayyūn, *Sharḥ al-Akhbār*, vol. 1, p. 245, Hadith No. 270.

³ . Qur'an 35: 35.

⁴ . Qur'an 88: 19.

guardianship [Wilāyah] and are consistent with the ‘Verse of Proclamation’ and the ‘Verse of Perfection’.

Apart from the shortcomings of each of the aforementioned viewpoints that have been discussed, it seems that all the viewpoints except the last one are contradictory to the context of the verses! Likewise, the verse "**and supplicate your Lord**" indicates that God Almighty has ordered the appointment of a vicegerent because the outlook of the verse shows that the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) was near and based on this situation, he should have introduced his successor so that the order and system of the society do not break apart.

According to dozens of authentic narrations from the two schools of thought [Sunni and Shia], this task took place in Ghadīr Khumm. Even some Sunni scholars have considered the 'hadith of Ghadīr' to be a narration with successive chains of narrators [Mutawātir], including Muḥammad Katānī¹, Ismā'īl ‘Ajlūnī², Aḥmad Dhahabī³ Abdul Rauf Manāwī⁴, Ali ibn Sulṭān Qārī⁵, Ḥasan Saqqāf⁶ and Ṭāhir al-Qādirī⁷.

In Ghadīr Khumm, the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] and leadership of the Ummah was discussed and Imam Ali (peace be upon him) was introduced as the guardian [Waliyy]. The problems however started when some refused this divine covenant.

¹ . Muḥammad Ja'far Katānī, Naẓm al-Mutanāthir min al-Ḥadīth al-Mutawātir, p. 194.

² . Ismā'īl ibn Muḥammad ‘Ajlūnī al-Jarrahī, Kashf al-Khafā', vol. 8, p. 335.

³ . Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Dhahabī, Sir A'alām al-Nubalā', vol. 8, p. 335.

⁴ . Muḥammad Abdul Rauf Manāwī, al-Taysir bi-Sharḥ al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr, vol. 2, p. 442.

⁵ . Ibn Ḥajar ‘Asqalānī, Murqāt al-Mafātīh, vol. 5, p. 568.

⁶ . Abdullah ibn Muḥammad Ghamārī Ḥasanī, Arghām al-Mubtadi', p. 58.

⁷ . Muḥammad Ṭāhir al-Qādirī, Al-Sayf al-Jaliy 'ala Munkir Wilayāt Ali (r.a), p. 5.

The Link between Surah Inshirāh with the prayer of Moses (PBUH)

The Qur'anic exegetes have neglected Surah Inshirāh [Qur'an 94]. This surah started with the context of mentioning the favours done [to the Holy Prophet]. The whole Chapter is a response to the request of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) about the succession of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) and it comprises instructions such as nomination of Ali (peace be upon him) as a guardian. In this Chapter, God has given information about His response to the Prophet's request regarding Ali (peace be upon him), which many Shia scholars and some Sunnis have reported. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) repeated the same request of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) for the succession of Prophet Hārūn (peace be upon him) regarding the succession of Ali (peace be upon him). Imam Fakhruddin Rāzī, who is one of the great Sunni Qur'anic exegetes, has narrated from Hazrat Abu Dharr that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his household) prayed and asked God Almighty thus: "O Lord! My brother, Musa requested You thus: **'My Lord! Open my breast for me ... Appoint for me a minister from my family, Aaron, my brother. ... And make him my associate in my task¹**'. Then the Qur'an says: **'We will strengthen your arm by means of your brother, and invest both of you with such authority²**'. My Lord! I am Muhammad, Your Apostle and Your chosen one. Do open my breast for me and make the difficulty of my work easy, and appoint Ali, who is from my family, as my minister and support me with his strength and help! Abu Dharr said: I swear to God! The request of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his family) had not yet finished the statement when Gabriel came down and said: "O

¹ . Qur'an 20: 25-32.

² . Qur'an 28: 35.

Muhammad, recite: **"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down^{1,2}"**

Nishābūrī also mentioned the same contents in his Qur'anic exegesis [Tafsīr]³. Likewise, Tha'alabi also narrated this narration from the authority of Ubada ibn Rabī'ī⁴ but with a slight difference and Ḥaskānī also reported a similar narration from the authority of Hudhayfa ibn Asid and Asma bint Umais⁵.

The eight verses of Qur'an 20 [Surah Ṭaha] are also related to the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah]: **"My Lord! Open my breast for me. Make my task easy for me Remove the hitch from my tongue, [so that] they may understand my speech. Appoint for me a minister from my family, Aaron, my brother. Strengthen my back through him, and make him my associate in my task⁶."**

In these verses, some features of guardianship [Wilāyah] have been mentioned. With the guardianship [Wilāyah], burdens are lifted and ease is created. At first, this task might be difficult, but it will have a delightful outcome.

The Qur'an 94 [Surah Inshirāh] entirely discusses the guardianship [Wilāyah] and it is a report of the response to the Prophet's request: **"Did We not open your breast for you, and relieve you of your burden, which [almost] broke your back? Did We not exalt your name? Indeed ease accompanies hardship. Indeed ease accompanies hardship. So when you are done, appoint, and supplicate your Lord⁷."**

The Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) beseeched God for the broadness of his breast because the mission of announcing the succession was ahead; just as Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) beseeched God for the broadness of his breast because he was assigned to go to Pharaoh and carried out

¹ . Qur'an 5: 55.

² . Fakhruddin Rāzī, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 12, p. 383.

³ . Nizāmudīn Nishābūrī, Gharā'ib al-Qur'an Wa raghā'ib al-Furqān, vol. 2, p. 605-606.

⁴ . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha'alabi, al-Kashf wa al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 4, p. 80.

⁵ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 1, p. 478.

⁶ . Qur'an 20: 25-32.

⁷ . Qur'an 94: 1-8.

his duty, which was his greatest mission. It was at this moment that he beseeched God for the broadness of his breast and the succession of Hārūn (peace be upon him). The 'Verse of Forsaking' informed about the upset of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household): "[Look out] lest you should disregard aught of what has been revealed to you, and be upset¹"

The Qur'anic exegetes considered this verse to be about the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him). Therefore, the broadness of the breast is also related to the guardianship of Ali, as there are various pieces of evidence to support this claim. This is because, according to the narrations of the two schools of thought, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) requested thus: "O Lord! I am Muhammad, Your Apostle and Your chosen one. Do open my breast for me and make the difficulty of my work easy, and appoint Ali, who is from my family, as my minister and support me with his strength and help²!" The Qur'an 94 [Surah Inshirāh] is therefore the response to this request. Allah said to His Prophet thus: "The heavy burden of the mission will break your back, but with the successorship of Ali, We have removed that heavy burden from your shoulders and made him your partner."

Imam Bukhāri has reported from Muṣ'ab ibn Sa'ad through his father about the Battle of Tabūk as follows: "Indeed, the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) went to the Battle of Tabūk and appointed Ali as his successor. He [Ali] said, 'Will you leave me in charge of the children and women?' He said: Aren't you satisfied to be to me what Hārūn was to Moses? Except that there is no prophet after me³." He also reported a similar hadith under the virtues of Ali from the authority of Ibrahim ibn Sa'ad who also reported it from his father⁴.

¹ . Qur'an 11: 12.

² . Fakhruddin Rāzī, al- Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 12, p. 383.

³ . Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl Bukhāri, Ṣaḥīḥ al- Bukhāri, vol. 4, p. 1602.

⁴ . ibid, vol. 3, p. 1369.

Hazrat Hārūn (peace be upon him) had important positions that the Holy Qur'an has mentioned a few of these; including:

1. **Prophethood:** In the reports of the two schools of thought, Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) did not attain the status of Prophethood and Messengership.

2. **Leadership:** Hārūn is one of the descendants of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), and God's promise is the attainment of the leadership position by the non-oppressive descendants of Prophet Abraham (PBUH): "**When his Lord tested Abraham with certain words and he fulfilled them, He said, 'I am making you the Imam of mankind.'** Said he, '**And from among my descendants?**' He said, '**My pledge does not extend to the unjust¹.**'"

3. **An associate in the Prophetic affair:** "**And make him my associate in my task².**" This position has also been established for Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him).

4. **A minister:** "**Appoint for me a minister from my family, Aaron, my brother³.**" This status has also been established for Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him).

5. **A member of the Household:** "**a minister from my family**"; this status is also reserved for Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him).

6. **Brotherhood:** "**Aaron, my brother**"; this status has been established for Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him).

7. **A helper and supporter of Moses:** "**Strengthen my back through him⁴.**" This status has also been established for Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him).

8. **Succession:** "**We made an appointment with Moses for thirty nights, and completed them with ten [more]; thus the tryst of his Lord was completed in forty nights. And Moses**

¹ . Qur'an 2: 124.

² . Qur'an 20: 32.

³ . Qur'an 20: 29-30.

⁴ . Qur'an 20: 31.

said to Aaron, his brother, ‘Be my successor among my people, and set things right and do not follow the way of the agents of corruption¹.’”

This Chapter apart from being a response to the request of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household), also informs about the difficulty of this task and that the Prophet (peace be upon him) was commissioned to appoint: "**So when you are done, appoint**". The presence of the letter "*Fa*" in the expression "*Fanṣab*" [in the verse] indicates that the appointment is an urgent order and it is the responsibility of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) which was accompanied by difficulty and a broken heart. The Arabic term "*Naṣb*" also means uplifting. The difficulty of the task is also put into consideration in the term "*Naṣb*" because the declaration into the office of guardianship is accompanied by numerous problems. Therefore, Almighty God guarantees the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) His protection: "**Allah shall protect you from the people**²."

On the interpretation of the verse "**So when you are done, appoint**" and its connection with the ḥadīth of the position [ḥadīth al-Manzilah], Martyr Mutahhari says: "The Shia interprets [the verse] in this way, that We [Allah] have relieved this heavy burden for you through Ali (peace be upon him), We appointed Ali to help you, and the Shia has the right to say this and it is correct, that is, the reasoning dictates the same." In the hadith narrated by both Shias and Sunnis, which is with successive chains of narrators (and cannot be denied by Sunni either, because the Sunnis have narrated it even more than the Shias), he [the Holy Prophet] said to Ali (peace be upon him): "You are to me what Hārūn was to Moses except that there is no prophet after me." That is, just as God has answered the request of Musa ibn ‘Imrān and gave him an associate and helper in preaching

¹ . Qur'an 7: 142.

² . Qur'an 5: 67.

and guiding the people, O dear Ali! God has appointed you as a helper and deputy for me. The Prophet (PBUHH) told Ali: "You are my minister."

The Arabic term "*Wazīr*" literally means helper and deputy. The ministers were called by this name because they were the assistants of the kings. Basically, the term "*Wazīr*" means a helper. This is what the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) told Ali (peace be upon him): "You are my *Wazīr*", that is, you are my helper just as Hārūn is the '*Wazīr*' of Moses; that is, the helper of Moses. Look at the requests of Musa, peace be upon him: **'My Lord! Open my breast for me. Make my task easy for me Remove the hitch from my tongue, [so that] they may understand my speech. Appoint for me a minister from my family, Aaron, my brother¹.'**

It is one hundred percent consistent with what was done about the Noble Prophet in the following way: **"Did We not open your breast for you, and relieve you of your burden, which [almost] broke your back? Did We not exalt your name? Indeed ease accompanies hardship. Indeed ease accompanies hardship. So when you are done, appoint, and supplicate your Lord²."**

If the meaning of the expression "*Anṣab*" [in the verse] is not derived from the Arabic root "*Naṣiba*", it should rather be derived from the root "*Naṣaba*". That is, the intended meaning is to appoint Ali (peace be upon him) to the caliphate, and the subject is one hundred percent consistent with the verses of the Qur'an³.

The Interpretation of the Verse

The most significant expression in this verse is "*Fanṣab*". What does "*Naṣab*" mean? Perhaps the use of the term "*Naṣab*" to announce the succession of the Commander of the Faithful is because the term "*Naṣab*" is accomplished with the

¹ . Qur'an 20: 25-30.

² . Qur'an 94: 1-8.

³ . Murtaḍa Mutahharī, Majmū'ah Āthār, vol. 17, p. 419.

meaning of suffering and hardship. It means that the announcement into the office of guardianship is difficult, and its acceptance requires purification of the soul, which cannot be achieved without suffering. Therefore, in a narration of the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him), he advises those claiming to be the leader of the Ummah as follows:

مَنْ نَصَبَ نَفْسَهُ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا - [فَعَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَبْدَأَ فليبدأ بتعليم نفسه قبل تعليم غيره و ليكن تأديبه بسيرته قبل تأديبه بلسانه و معلم نفسه و مؤدبها أحق بالإجلال من معلم الناس و مؤدبهم

"Whoever places himself as a leader of the people should commence with educating his own self before educating others, and his teaching should be by his conduct before teaching by the tongue. Someone who is a teacher and disciplinarian of himself deserves more respect than a person who is a teacher and the disciplinarian of the people¹."

In addition, two verses were revealed with a strong tone, therefore, the choice of the term *"Naṣaba"* is the most appropriate term for declaring the position of guardianship. In some hadiths of the two schools of thought, the term *"Naṣaba"* is also mentioned in some hadiths concerning the event of Ghadīr Khumm.

Abu Ja'far Iskāfī narrates from Sunni prominent scholars as follows: Jabir ibn Abdullah and Abdullah ibn al-Abbas, the two Companions, said:

أمر الله محمدا أن ينصب عليا للناس ويخبرهم بولايته، فتخوف رسول الله أن يقولوا حابا ابن عمه، وأن يطعنوا في ذلك عليه، فأوحى الله إليه: يا أيها الرسول بلغ ما أنزل إليك من ربك. فقام رسول الله بولايته يوم غدیر خم²

God commanded Prophet Muhammad to appoint Ali over the people and inform them of his guardianship. The Messenger of God feared that they would say he loved his cousin, and that they would criticize him for that. So God revealed to him: O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord.

¹ . Ali Ibn Abi Talib (a.s), Nahj al-Balagha, Wisdom 73.

² . Muḥammad ibn 'Abdullāh al-Iskāfī, al-Mi'yār wa Mawāzinah fī Faḍā'il al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minīn, Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, p. 2.

*So, the Messenger of God declared his guardianship on the day of Ghadīr
Khum.*

This narration is reported by two authoritative figures in Islam: Jabir and Ibn Abbas, and the sentence "God commanded Prophet Muhammad to appoint Ali over the people and inform them of his guardianship" is very important; as it means that Ali should be appointed as the "guardian of the people" and the "leader of the community" while the same theme is also expressed in the verse. This narration concurs with the principle of judging the hadith based on the Qur'an.

Regarding the object of the expression "**When you are done**" [in the verse], there are five possibilities which all mean the same thing:

1. "When you are done with your pilgrimage...¹"; and "When you are done with your Farewell Pilgrimage...²". These two narrations indicate that the appointment of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) took place after the Hajj ceremony, in the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage.
2. "When your worldly life is to come to an end, appoint Ali as the leader, by whom the group will be guided³." This narration indicates the appointment of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) at the end of the Prophet's life.
3. "When you are done with your prophetic mission⁴" refers to the end of prophethood and the beginning of Imamate.
4. "When you are done with the observation of the obligations, then appoint Ali and he (PBUHH) did so.⁵"

¹ . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 36, p. 135.

² . Ḥussain Shā Abd al 'Azīm, *Tafsīr Ithna Asharī*, vol. 14, p. 267.

³ . *Manāqib Āl Abī Ṭālib*, vol. 2, p. 249.

⁴ . Mirza Muḥammad Qummi Mashhadi, *Tafsīr Kanz al-Daqa'iq wa Baḥr al-Gharāib*, vol. 14, p. 337.

⁵ . Ibn Hayyūn, *Sharḥ al-Akḥbār*, vol. 1, p. 245; Muḥammad Bāqir Anṣārī, *Ghadīr dar Qur'an*, vol. 1, p. 49.

5. "When you are done with the completion of the Islamic laws [Sharia]..."¹

In each of the five narrations, it is mentioned that the declaration of the authority of the guardianship [Wilāyah] is a "mission", which is explained with five different expressions. 'When he is done with the Prophetic mission' means that, after fulfilling all the responsibilities as a Prophet of God, he should declare the guardianship [Wilāyah]. By 'When he is done with the observation of the obligations', it means that guardianship [Wilāyah] is the last obligation that must be declared after all obligations. By 'the completion of the Islamic laws [Sharia]', it means that nothing is left from the religion of God except the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah], which should be presented as the presiding essence of the religion after the declaration of its completion.

Syntactically, the verb "*Naṣaba*" in Arabic means, "To appoint" and requires two objects: one is the appointee and the other is the office [the position] to which he is appointed. The first object in some narrations is "Ali" while in some others, it is "Amir al-Mu'minīn". In some cases, it is "your flag" while it is in the form of a prepositional phrase in two hadiths:

1. "So, appoint Amir al-Mu'minīn, Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib²."
2. "So, appoint Ali³."
3. "So, appoint Ali as a leader for them⁴."
4. "So, appoint Ali to the office of guardianship⁵."
5. "So, appoint Ali as the successor⁶."
6. "So, appoint Ali for the people⁷."
7. "Appoint Ali to the office of guardianship⁸."

¹. Sayyed Hāshim Baḥrānī, *Al-Burhān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 5, p. 689.

². Ali ibn Ibrahim Qummī, *Tafsīr al-Qummī*, vol. 2, p. 428.

³. Furāt Ibrahim Kūfī, *Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī*, p. 574.

⁴. Sayyid Hāshim Baḥrānī, *al-Burhān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 5, p. 689.

⁵. Hākim Ḥaskānī, *Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl*, vol. 2, p. 452; Furāt Ibrahim Kūfī, *Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī*, p. 573.

⁶. Ali IstarĀbādī, *Ta'wīl al-Āyāt al-Zāhirah*, p. 785.

⁷. Hākim Ḥaskānī, *Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl*, vol. 2, p. 451.

⁸. Ibid

8. "So, appoint your flag and declare your successor¹."

9. "So, appoint Ali to the office of caliphate²."

Each of these expressions and statements indicates a dimension and direction from the dimensions and directions of the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him). The Arabic term "Imamate" [leadership] does not encompass the whole meaning of guardianship [Wilāyah]; rather, it is just one of its meanings, which is the concept of leadership of the people. Arranging the genuine succession to the Prophet (PBUHH) removes the veil and its being "a flag" also means that Ali (peace be upon him) is the only symbol of guidance.

No. 3: The 'Verse of Proclamation' [Ayah of Iblāgh]

The issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] is extremely important in the Qur'an. After the revelation of several verses, such as, 'Verses of guardianship', 'Verse of Forsaking' and the 'Verse of Appointment' about the basis of guardianship and the need for its declaration, it is now time to declare guardianship [Wilāyah] as a religious principle that must be immediately and publicly communicated to the people; as God commands the noble Prophet (PBUHH) with great emphasis, thus:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ
O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people. Indeed Allah does not guide the faithless lot³.

The 'Verse of Proclamation' is one of the verses that the Qur'anic exegetes of the two schools of thought have said a lot about the occasion of its revelation and presented different viewpoints. Therefore, some of these viewpoints must be

¹. 'Abdul 'Ali ibn Juma'ah 'Arūsī Huwayzī, Tafsīr Nūr al-Thaqalayn, vol. 5, p. 605.

². Mawla Faṭḥ Allāh Kāshānī, Tafsīr Manhaj al-Ṣādiqīn fī Ilzām al-Mukhālifīn, vol. 10, p. 287; Ḥussain Shā Abd al 'Azīm, Tafsīr Ithna Asharī, vol. 14, p. 267.

³. Qur'an 5: 67.

subjected to scientific criticism and analysis so that, while disambiguating them, the indication of the verse on the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] and Ghadīr Khumm becomes clearer.

The Occasion of Revelation

According to the narrations of all Shia and many Sunni Qur'anic exegetes and scholars, the 'Verse of Proclamation' [Ayah Iblāgh] was revealed before the declaration of the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him) in Ghadīr Khumm, and it has spoken about the necessity of an urgent declaration of the guardianship.

Wāḥidī one of the prominent Sunni scholars narrates about this as follows: "This verse **'O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord'** was revealed on the day of Ghadīr Khumm concerning Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him)¹.

The Viewpoints of Sunni Qur'anic Exegetes on the Verse

Some prominent Sunni Qur'anic exegetes considered the 'Verse of Proclamation' to be revealed about Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him) and on the day of Ghadīr Khumm:

1. Ibn Abī Ḥātim (d. 327 A.H)

Ibn Abī Ḥātim is one of the prominent Sunni Qur'anic exegetes. He narrated from 'Aṭiya, who also narrated from Abu Saeed Khudrī in his Qur'anic exegesis (Tafsīr) that the verse **'O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord'** was revealed concerning Ali (peace be upon him) and he writes thus: Abī Thanā, Uthmān ibn Ḥarzād, Ismā'il ibn Zakariya, Thanā Ali ibn Abbas told us, on the authority of Al-A'mash ibn Al-Ḥijab, from 'Aṭiya Al-Awfi and Abu Saeed Khudrī, who said: "This verse **'O Apostle! Communicate that which has**

¹ . Ali ibn Aḥmad Wāḥidī Nīshābūrī, *Asbāb al-Nuzūl al-Qur'an*, p. 192.

been sent down to you from your Lord' was revealed about Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him)¹." Ibn Abī Ḥātim accepted that the verse was revealed about Imam Ali (peace be upon him).

2. Abu Ishāq Aḥmad Tha'labī (d. 427 or 437 A.H)

Tha'labī has narrated several hadiths on the revelation of this verse about Imam Ali (peace be upon him). He has narrated such narrations from prominent Islamic figures such as Imam Bāqir (peace be upon him), Barā' and Ibn Abbas. He writes: "Abu Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Ali [Imam Bāqir] said: Its meaning is: Communicate what has been revealed to you regarding the virtue of Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib. When the verse was revealed, he [the Prophet] held Ali's hand and said: Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master²."

He also quoted another hadith about this and then wrote: Abu al-Qāsim Ya'qūb ibn Aḥmad al-Sirri, Abu Bakr ibn Muḥammad ibn Abdullah ibn Muḥammad, Abu Muslim Ibrahim ibn Abdullah al-Ka'abī, al-Hajjāj ibn Minhāl, Ḥammād narrated from Ali ibn Zayd, from 'Adi ibn Thābit, on the authority of al-Bara', he said: When we, along with the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) reached Ghadīr Khumm during the Farewell Pilgrimage, he called for congregational prayer and the Messenger of God (PBUHH) was under two trees and held Ali's hand and said: "Am I not having authority over the believers than themselves?" They replied: Yes, O Messenger of God. He (PBUHH) said: "Am I not having authority over the believer than himself?" They said: Yes, O Messenger of God. He said: "This is the master of whom I am his master. O God, befriend whoever befriends him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him." He said: Then Umar met him and said: Congratulations to you, O son of Abī Ṭālib. You have become the master and the master of every believing man and woman³.

¹ . Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azīm, vol. 4, p. 1172.

² . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha'labī, al-Kashf wa al-Bayān, vol. 4, p. 92.

³ . ibid

Tha'labī also quoted a narration from Ibn Abbas: It was narrated by Abu Muḥammad, Abdullah ibn Muḥammad al-Qā'inī, narrated by Abu al-Ḥasan Muḥammad ibn Uthmān al-Nuṣaybi, narrated by Abu Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Sabīṭī, narrated by Ali ibn Muḥammad al-Dihān, and al-Ḥusain ibn Ibrahim al-Jaṣṣās, who said: Al-Ḥasan ibn Al-Ḥakam, Al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥusain ibn Ḥayyān narrated from Al-Kalbī, on the authority of Abu Ṣālih who quoted Ibn Abbas saying: **'O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord'** was revealed about Ali (may God be pleased with him). The Prophet, may God bless him and his household, was commanded to convey it. Therefore, he (PBUHH) took Ali's hand and said: "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master. Oh God, befriend whoever befriends him and hate whoever hates him¹."

3. Wāḥidī (d. 468 A.H)

Wāḥidī Nīshabūrī (d. 468 AH) considers the occasion of the revelation of the 'Verse of Proclamation' to be about Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) and on the day of Ghadīr Khumm. He narrated the following from Abu Saeed Khuḍrī: This verse **'O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord'** was revealed on the day of Ghadīr Khumm about Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (May God be pleased with him)².

4. Ḥaskānī (d. 490 A.H)

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī also mentioned several narrations under the [interpretation of] 'Verse of Proclamation' that are connected to the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] and Ghadīr Khumm. He also mentioned a narration reported by Abu Hurayrah claiming that the 'Verse of Proclamation' was revealed on the Prophet's Ascension into Heaven: On the authority of Abu Hurayrah who reported the Prophet (PBUHH) to have said: "When I was taken on my journey to Heaven, I

¹ . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha'labī, al-Kashf wa al-Bayān, vol. 4, p. 92.

² . Ali ibn Aḥmad Wāḥidī Nīshabūrī, Asbāb al-Nuzūl, p. 192.

heard [a call from] the Throne: "O Muḥammad! Convey that Ali is the flag of guidance and the beloved of whoever believes in me." He said: When the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) descended, he concealed that, and therefore God Almighty revealed: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord"** concerning Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib, **"and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people"**¹

Ḥaskānī mentioned the hadiths of Abu Saeed and Ibn Abbas and then narrated another hadith like this: Abdullah ibn Abī Awfa told us, he said, I heard the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) saying on the day of Ghadīr Khumm, and he recited this verse: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message."** Then he raised his hands until we could see the whiteness of his armpits, and then said: Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master. Oh God! Befriend whoever befriends him and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him. Then he said: Oh God, bear witness to this²!

Similarly, he quoted a narration from Imam Bāqir in this regard: Ziyād ibn Al-Mundhir says: I was with Abu Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Ali while he was speaking to the people when a man from the people of Basra named Uthman Al-A'sha came to him and he was narrating on the authority of Al-Ḥasan Al-Basri and said: O son of the Messenger of God, may I be your ransom. Al-Ḥasan tells us that this verse: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord"** was revealed about a man but he did not tell us who the man was. He said: If he wanted to say it, he would have said it, but he is afraid. Gabriel came to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) and said to him: God commands you to enjoin your nation to pray, so, he guided them to pray, then he descended and said: God commands you to enjoin your nation to pay zakat, so, he guided

¹ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 1, p. 249.

² . ibid, p. 252.

them to do so. Then he came down and said: God commands you to enjoin your nation to fast, so, he guided them to do so. Then he descended and said: God commands you to enjoin your nation to perform Hajj, so he did so. Thereafter, he descended and said: God commands you to guide your nation to their guardian just like you have guided them regarding their prayers, zakat, fasting, and Hajj so that the proof for them is completed in all of these. Then the Messenger of God (PBUHH) said: O Lord, my people are closer to the era of ignorance, there is competition and pride between them, and there is no man among them except that he has a grudge against Ali and I am afraid. Therefore, God Almighty revealed: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message."** That is, you did not convey it perfectly. **"And Allah shall protect you from the people."** However, when God guaranteed [him] protection and allayed his fear, he held the hand of Ali ibn Abī Tālib and said: O people, whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master. O God, befriend whoever befriends him, be hostile to whoever is hostile to him, support whoever supports him, abandon whoever abandons him, love whoever loves him and hate whoever hates him¹." Thereafter, Uthman said thus: I will not take anything more lovely to my city than this hadith.

Ḥaskānī has narrated from Jābir and Ibn Abbas that they said: God commanded Muḥammad to appoint Ali over the people and to inform them of his guardianship. The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) feared that they would say he favoured his cousin [over them] and would criticize him for that, so God revealed to him: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord"**. Then the Messenger of God (PBUHH) declared his guardianship on the day of Ghadīr Khumm².

¹ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 1, p. 255.

² . Ibid, vol. 1, p. 256.

In addition, he mentioned another narration from Ibn Abbas: On the authority of Abdullah ibn Abbas, who reported the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) [and he quoted] the hadith of the Ascension until he said: And I have not sent a Prophet except that I appoint for him a minister, and indeed, you are the Messenger of God and Ali is indeed your minister. Ibn Abbas said: The Messenger of God (PBUHH) descended, but feared to inform people of anything because they were closer to the pre-Islamic era. After six days, God Almighty revealed: "[Look out] lest you should disregard aught of what has been revealed to you." Therefore, the Messenger of God endured until it was the eighteenth day. God revealed to him: "O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord¹."

In this hadith, God informs his prophet that succession is a general issue that every Prophet has a minister for himself, and that the minister of the Holy Prophet is Hazrat Ali.

5. Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī (d. 606 A.H)

Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī proposes ten contradictory occasions of revelation for the 'Verse of Proclamation' in which the tenth one is Ghadīr Khumm and Imam Ali (peace be upon him): The verse was revealed concerning the virtue of Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib (peace be upon him). During its revelation, the Prophet held his [Ali's] hand and said: "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master. O God, befriend whoever befriends him and oppose whoever is hostile to him." Then Umar met him and said: Congratulations to you, O son of Abī Ṭālib, you have become my master and the master of every believing man and woman. This is the saying of Ibn Abbas, Al-Barā'u ibn 'Āzib, and Muḥammad ibn Ali².

¹ . Ibid, vol. 1, p. 257.

² . Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 12, p. 401.

6. Nizām al-Dīn Nīshabūrī (d. 728 A.H)

Nizām al-Dīn Nīshabūrī explained the meaning of this verse similar to that of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī. He quoted the hadith of Abu Saeed Khudrī, and considered the verse to be revealed in honor of Ali (peace be upon him), which was revealed in Ghadīr Khumm about his guardianship (Wilāyah)¹.

7. Meybodī (6th Century)

Rashīd al-Dīn Meybodī considered the occasion of revelation of the verse to be about Ali and at Ghadīr Khumm: The verse, "**Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord**" was revealed regarding the virtue of Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

Al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib says that when this verse was revealed, we were returning from the Farewell Pilgrimage. The Messenger of God (PBUHH) and his companions came to a place called Ghadīr Khumm. They were under the shade trees when the Messenger of God said loudly: "It is time for a congregational prayer!" Thereafter, the Messenger of God (PBUHH) held Ali's hand and said: "Am I not more worthy to the believers than themselves?" They [the companions] said: Of course, O Messenger of God. He said: "Am I not more worthy to every believer than himself?" They said: Yes. He thereafter said: "This is the master of whom I am his master." Oh God, befriend whoever befriends him, and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him." He said: Then Umar met him and said: Congratulations to you, O son of Abī Ṭālib. You have become my master and the master of every believing man and woman².

8. Suyūṭī (d. 911A.H)

Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, a famous Sunni Qur'anic exegete, mentioned several narrations about the occasion of the revelation of the verse. Then he mentioned

¹ . Nizām al-Dīn Nīshabūrī, Tafsīr Gharīb al-Qur'an Wa Raghā'ib Furqān, vol. 2, p. 616.

² . Abu al-Faḍl Rashīd al-Dīn Meybodī, Kashf al-Asrār Wa 'Iddat al- Abrār, vol. 3, p. 182.

two narrations in which it is stated that the verse was revealed in Ghadīr Khumm concerning Imam Ali (peace be upon him). He quoted the first narration from Abu Saeed al-Khudrī, who said: This verse **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord"** was revealed to the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) on the day of Ghadīr Khumm concerning Imam Ali (peace be upon him)¹.

Suyūṭī quoted the second narration from Ibn Mas'ūd, who said: We used to recite this verse during the time of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) thus: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord"** that 'Ali is indeed the master [Mawla] of the believers', **"And if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people."**²

It is necessary to note that the expression "Ali is indeed the master of the believers" in this narration is not a Qur'anic verse, but an explanation of its meaning. Paying adequate attention to such narrations will prevent misunderstandings.

9. Shawkānī (d. 1250 A.H)

Shawkānī has mentioned two narrations from Ibn Mas'ūd and Abu Saeed al-Khudrī under the interpretation of the 'Verse of Proclamation', in which both of them refer to the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali and Ghadīr Khumm³.

10. Ālūsī (d. 1270 A.H)

Ālūsī mentioned some hadiths under the interpretation of the verse, but he does not accept the Shiite viewpoint that this verse was revealed regarding Imam Ali (peace be upon him)⁴.

¹ . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 298.

² . ibid.

³ . Muḥammad ibn Ali Shawkānī, Fath al-Qadīr, vol. 2, p. 69.

⁴ . Maḥmūd ibn Abdullah Ālūsī, Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 3, p. 359.

Now, while the 'Verse of Proclamation' does not point to the succession of Ali (peace be upon him), many other evidences could be used to establish his succession. On the contrary, this verse emphasizes the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him) and the significance of conveying this important message, which is an urgent commandment and a fundamental of religion. The meaning of guardianship is much wider than that of the caliphate while the caliphate is an integral part of guardianship [Wilāyah].

11. Ṣiddīq Khān Qannawjī (d. 1307 A.H)

Ṣiddīq Khān Qannawjī has presented two narrations of Abu Saeed Khuḍrī and Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd about Ghadīr Khumm and the issue of the guardianship of Imam Ali (peace be upon him)¹.

12. Rashīd Riḍā (d. 1354 A.H)

Rashīd Riḍā is an Egyptian Sunni scholar who raised various doubts about the virtues of the Prophet's Household [Ahl al-Bayt] (peace be upon them). He considered the occasion of the revelation of the 'Verse of Proclamation' to be about Ghadīr Khumm and the guardianship of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and quoted the narration of Abu Saeed Khuḍrī in this regard². Then he raised some doubts against the hadith of guardianship [Wilāyah] that apparently has nothing to do with this verse and the narration, which considered Imam Ali as the occasion of its revelation.

Meanwhile, the doubts raised by Rashīd Riḍā will be answered in the fourth chapter.

¹ . Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qannawjī, *Faṭḥ al-Bayān fī Maqāṣid al-Qur'an*, vol. 4, p. 19.

² . Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Ḥakīm*, vol. 6, p. 384.

The Interpretation of the Verse

Declaring the guardianship [Wilāyah] is related to the mission of the Prophet, and this issue is so important that the Messenger of God (PBUHH) must announce it. Without the announcement of the guardianship, he would not have perfectly accomplished his Prophetic mission. That is if the guardianship is not announced, all the twenty-three years of the Prophet's mission will be in vain. The issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] is just like the management and guidance of the society, if not announced and communicated, the guidance of the society will be halted and this is against the divine practice. It can be understood from the expression "**From Your Lord**" [in the verse] that the guardianship [Wilāyah] is related to the attribute of God's Lordship, and the guardianship [Wilāyah] is a manifestation of God's Lordship, while the development of society is possible under the shadow of guardianship.

Some Qur'anic exegetes, experts of hadith, historians, and Sunni scholars considered the revelation of the 'Verse of Proclamation' to be in honor of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him). The 'Verse of Proclamation' was revealed in Ghadīr Khumm concerning the declaration of guardianship of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). After its revelation, the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) held the hand of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) in his hands and loudly uttered the famous ḥadīth, "Whoever I am his master, Ali is his master." In this regard, they have mentioned different narrations from the Prophet's household [Ahl al-Bayt], the Companions and the Followers [Tābi'ūn] through different channels. For instance, Imam Bāqir¹ (peace be upon him) from among the Prophet's household; Ibn Abbas², Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd³, Abdullah ibn Abī

¹ . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha'labī, al-Kashf wa al-Bayān, vol. 4, p. 92.

² . Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 12, p. 28.

³ . Maḥmūd ibn Abdullah Ālūsī, Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 172.

Awfī Aslamī¹, Barā'u ibn 'Āzib², Jābir ibn Abdullah Anṣārī³, Abu Saeed Khuḍrī⁴ and Abu Hurayh⁵ from among the companions; Zayd ibn Ali⁶, Abu Hamzah Thumālī⁷, and 'Aṭīyah ibn Saeed 'Awfī⁸ from among the Followers [Tābi'ūn] have considered the 'Verse of Proclamation' to be revealed in Ghadīr Khumm concerning the guardianship of the Commander of the Faithful (peace be upon him).

Suyūṭī quoted from Ibn Mardwīyyah and Ibn 'Asākir, who also narrated from Abu Saeed Khuḍrī who said that this verse was revealed in Ghadīr Khumm about Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him). In this regard, Abu Saeed Khuḍrī says: This verse **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord"** was revealed to the Messenger of God (PBUHH) on the day of Ghadīr Khumm about Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib⁹."

After the revelation of this verse, the Messenger of God (PBUHH) held Hazrat Ali's hand and announced his guardianship [Wilāyah]. If this announcement was not made, the entire mission of the Prophet would be in danger. That is to say, this declaration is equivalent to the entire Prophetic mission. This is because the survival of the religion is the most important issue after the death of the Prophet. Therefore, this declaration was made in Ghadīr Khumm with special protocols such as making a pulpit, delivering a sermon, taking repeated confessions and the oath of allegiance from the companions for Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him).

Suyūṭī quoted another narration from Ibn Mas'ūd, in which the term *"Mawla"* is used, which means guardianship [Wilāyah]: We used to recite this verse during

¹ . Hākim Ḥaskāni, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 1, p. 190.

² . Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 12, p. 53.

³ . Hākim Ḥaskāni, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 1, p. 192.

⁴ . Ali ibn Aḥmad Wāḥidī Nīshābūrī, Asbāb al-Nuzūl al-Qur'an, p. 164.

⁵ . Hākim Ḥaskāni, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl Li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 1, p. 187.

⁶ . Aḥmad ibn Mardawīyyah, Al-Manāqib, p. 240.

⁷ . ibid.

⁸ . Abu Na'īm, quoted from Ḥasan ibn Yusuf Ḥilli, Manhāj al-Karāmah, p. 117.

⁹ . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 298.

the time of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) thus: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord"** that Ali is indeed the master [Mawla] of the believers, **"and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people¹."**

These two hadiths were also narrated by another Sunni Qur'anic exegete, al-Shawkānī².

It should be noted that the sentence *"Ali is indeed the master [Mawla] of the believers"* in this narration, is not an integral part of the Qur'anic verse, but rather, [it is used as] an explanation and interpretation of the verse, which is the characteristic of Ibn Mas'ūd's version of the Qur'an manuscript. Therefore, this narration should not be considered as proof to establish the distortion of the Qur'an, because these types of narrations are explanatory and interpretive narrations. That is to say, this verse was revealed only about the guardianship of Ali and it indicates its significance.

Ibn Mas'ūd used to say, we used to read the verse during the time of the Prophet like this: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord"** that Ali is indeed the master [Mawla] of the believers, **"and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people."** That is, O Prophet, convey to the people from your Lord that after the Messenger of God, Ali is the only one who has the authority over all the believers and has control over their affairs.

According to numerous Sunni Qur'anic exegetes, this verse was revealed on the 18th of Dhu al-Hijjah in Ghadīr Khumm. It can be established based on this verse that the leader of the society must be appointed by God because the guidance of the people is obligatory on Him: **"Indeed guidance rests with Us³."** Therefore, this

¹ . ibid.

² . Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Shawkānī, *Fatḥ al-Qadīr*, vol. 2, p. 69.

³ . Qur'an 92: 12.

guidance is done through the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) and then through his successors. And the same necessity is conveyed by the verse that people must know the guardian of the religion. The declaration of the guardianship is superior to the declaration of prayer and fasting, [because] all religious rituals are on one side while the declaration of the guardianship is on the other side. In view of this, God addressed His Prophet with the highest rank, that is, a Prophethood: "**O Apostle!**" so that no one thinks that this is a separate issue; rather, everyone should know that this is the most important part of the Prophetic mission. In this verse, some key points are used, in which more attention should be paid. These include:

1. Guardianship [Wilāyah]: A Divine System

God does not just want to introduce a manifestation of a guardian [*Waliyy*], but He wants to introduce to the Muslim Ummah until the Day of Judgment a guardianship system headed by a divine figure such as Imam Ali (peace be upon him). The guardianship of Ali is different from his Imamate. The position of Imamate is limited to the twelve Imams, but the guardianship is a system that encompasses Imamate, Prophethood and monotheism.

The Guardianship [*Wilāyah*] encompasses monotheism, Prophethood and Imamate, and even the guardianship of an orphan child, as the 'Verse of Guardianship' and dozens of other verses indicate such a claim. Guardianship [*Wilāyah*] is a comprehensive divine system, which apart from proclamation; also involves propagation, implementation or preservation of religion and nurturing the soul and the body of the society and the individual, and has spiritual control over property, life, and financial possession, and the mind and soul of the people.

Contrary to the Prophethood, whose only duty is to inform, warn and give glad tidings, the concept of guardianship [*Wilāyah*] conveys a kind of purposeful intervention and control by a divine master in human life. Guardianship is rather

considered a kind of engineered management in life. Guardianship [Wilāyah] means intervention and control, not only in the external affairs but also in the internal ones: **"The Prophet is closer to the faithful than their own souls¹"**

Guardianship [Wilāyah] is manifested both in positive and negative forms. Therefore, it is strongly emphasized in the 'Verse of Proclamation' that society should not go towards negative guardianship. The acceptance of the guardianship is directly related to the issue of awareness. It can be understood from the 'Verse of Proclamation' that guardianship is a system that has a direct connection with society. The religion of Islam has a meaning in this system. Intervention and control in the material and celestial worlds occur with guardianship. The verse, **"Allah is the wali of the faithful: He brings them out of darkness into light²"** points to this intervention and control, but God also has control over the material and celestial worlds. Guardianship [Wilāyah] means having complete authority in the two worlds. The introduction of *Wali* of Allah was so necessary for the society that God made this issue one of the duties of the Messenger of Allah: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord."** God obliged his Prophet to convey to the people the guardianship of Ali as an urgent religious order, and this proclamation was one of the most important duties of the Prophethood.

In the guardianship system, the needs of the community are taken into account and the rights of the less privileged are given priority. In this system, the right of a claimant is preferred even over the supererogatory prayers, but God mandates him to take care of the poor even while on the recommended prayers, but not everyone can do this. It must be someone who can communicate with God and

¹ . Qur'an 33: 6.

² . Qur'an 2: 257.

His creatures at the same time! The chosen servant of God knows where he is at work and based on the existing conditions, he knows his duty and will fulfill it.

2. Why the Threatening of the Prophet (PBUHH)?

There is no precedence in the entire glorious Qur'an where God commanded and threatened the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) in such a severe manner on a ruling! In the custom of the people, threatening is used when the performance of work by the other party is not guaranteed, but such an assumption is incorrect with regard to the Prophet (PBUHH). Therefore, the question here is, 'Why did God threaten the Prophet (PBUHH)?'

Was it possible for the Messenger of God (PBUHH) to have disobeyed? If such a claim is established even in one case, the whole of his prophethood would be brought under the question. Is it possible that the Prophet (PBUHH) has violated the order in other matters that now he is being threatened like this? The threat is not a trivial one; rather, everything he has done will be nullified if he refuses to do what he has requested. If this commandment is not conveyed, it is as if he has not fulfilled any of his Prophetic mission. This verse was revealed towards the end of the Prophet's life. What was the duty that was greatly emphasized so much?

This is an unquestionable principle between the two schools of thought that there is no possibility of error or weakness in the work of the Prophethood, otherwise the whole mission will be doubted and this is improper. This is because, according to the Holy Qur'an, the Prophet was not allowed to include or remove anything to the divine religion from himself: **"Nor is it the speech of a soothsayer. Little is the admonition that you take! Gradually sent down from the Lord of all the worlds. Had he faked any sayings in Our name, We would have surely seized him by the right hand and then cut off his aorta¹."**

¹ . Qur'an 69: 42-46.

The Messenger of God (PBUHH) did not speak without God's permission. This indicates the infallibility of the prophet's speech, which had a direct connection with the celestial world: **"Nor does he speak out of [his own] desire; it is just a revelation that is revealed [to him]"**¹

According to the context of the verse: **"And if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people"**, it is understood that the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him) is equivalent to the entire Prophetic mission. This verse contains unseen news, predictions of the future, the threat of the opponents and the divine support to the Prophet (PBUHH).

The threat of the opponents of the guardianship [Wilāyah] and God's defense and protection of it are continuous and permanent. The danger of the enemies is so tense that God Himself promised to defend His Prophet against the enemies and guaranteed him that He would protect him from their evils.

It should be noted that God has apparently threatened the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) in only two places in the Holy Qur'an. One is about shirk and the other is about guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him).

In the Holy Qur'an, regarding shirk, the Prophet is addressed thus: **"Certainly it has been revealed to you and to those [who have been] before you: 'If you ascribe a partner to Allah your works shall fail and you shall surely be among the losers'"**².

This verse speaks of the general principle that, whoever commits shirk, his deeds will be destroyed. Shirk is a microbe that destroys all the values and good deeds of a person, even if such a person is the Prophet of Islam! Is the possibility of committing shirk conceivable for the Messenger of Mercy? Certainly, it is unlikely to imagine such about the Messenger of God (PBUHH). Then, why did

¹ . Qur'an 53: 3-4.

² . Qur'an 39: 65.

God address him in such a manner? The reason for this is due to the danger of shirk, so that people realize that shirk is the greatest sin and an act that can be committed by anyone, but it is a strategic and unforgivable sin. The Holy Qur'an says about the danger of shirk: **"When Luqman said to his son, as he advised him: 'O my son! Do not ascribe any partners to Allah. Polytheism is indeed a great injustice.'**"¹

God has clearly said in some Qur'anic verses that the polytheists will not be forgiven: **"Indeed Allah does not forgive that partners should be ascribed to Him, but He forgives anything besides that to whomever He wishes. Whoever ascribes partners to Allah has indeed fabricated [a lie] in great sinfulness"**².

In another verse, He emphasizes the fact that the polytheists are not going to be forgiven: **"Indeed Allah does not forgive that any partner should be ascribed to Him, but He forgives anything besides that to whomever He wishes. And whoever ascribes partners to Allah has certainly strayed into far error"**³.

Therefore, attributing such an act to the Prophet (PBUHH) is due to the greatness of its ugliness, so that people realize the negative consequences of such an act; the act that can destroy all the assets of human life in less than a moment.

However, the threat due to the non-declaration of the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him) is more serious than the issue of shirk. The Holy Qur'an has spoken about the "nullification of the deed" in the issue of shirk: **"If you ascribe a partner to Allah your works shall fail"**⁴. The deed is related to just an individual, but in the issue of the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him), it is not just about the nullification of the deed, which is related to an individual, the issue is rather higher and more important than that, that is, "the confiscation of the Prophetic

¹ . Qur'an 31: 13.

² . Qur'an 4: 48.

³ . Qur'an 4: 116.

⁴ . Qur'an 39: 65.

mission", which apart from being related to an individual, it is also related to the entire Muslim nation.

Because the Messenger of God (PBUHH) is directly involved in introducing this issue to society, he must communicate the guardianship of Ali (PBUH) to the people with extraordinary diligence. However, if the declaration is not done, the Prophetic mission of the Messenger of God (PBUHH) is wasteful and shall also be confiscated by others. The Holy Qur'an also makes people understand that the guardianship [Wilāyah] is connected with the fate of the society. If a society or a nation is devoid of the chosen servant of God [*Waliyy Allah*], tyrannical and Satanic thought shall rule over such a society: **"Allah is the wali of the faithful: He brings them out of darkness into light. As for the faithless, their awliya are the fake deities, who drive them out of light into darkness. They shall be the inmates of the Fire, and they will remain in it [forever]¹."**

For the society not to be captured by the lusts of the tyrants and the satanic guardianship, it must be governed by the thought of divine guardianship. These two guardianships [i.e., divine and Satanic] are opposite to each other and cannot be combined at the same time. The fate of society changes positively under a divine guardianship and it is guided from darkness to light, and this is the only way. Therefore, the Holy Qur'an using an exclusive determiner and emphasis says: **"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down. Whoever takes for his guardians Allah, His Apostle and the faithful [should know that] the confederates of Allah are indeed the victorious²."**

A society cannot escape from the guardianship of the tyrants unless it is under the protection of divine guardianship. And it is impossible to be under a divine guardianship without accepting the guardianship of the Messenger of God (peace

¹ . Qur'an 2: 257.

² . Qur'an 5: 55-56.

be upon him and his household) and it is not possible to be under the guardianship of the Messenger of God (PBUHH) without accepting the guardianship of Ali. Therefore, Allah clearly states this condition in this next verse: **"Whoever takes for his guardians Allah, His Apostle and the faithful [should know that] the confederates of Allah are indeed the victorious."**

Without accepting the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Imam Ali, it is impossible to become the confederates of Allah [Hizbullah]. It is through believing and accepting the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him) that the confederates of Allah [Hizbullah] are formed.

Then, God has given an extraordinary glad tiding to those who have accepted the three guardianships, and that is, the invincibility and the eternal victory of the thought of the confederates of Allah [Hizbullah] over all anti-God thoughts.

The guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali (PBUH) is an entry into the two guardianships [that is, the guardianship of Allah and His Prophet (PBUHH)]. Therefore, Allah said to His Prophet (PBUHH) that, if that entry is closed and not made open to the community, your Prophetic mission would not have been fulfilled at all. First, you must open that door so that your Prophetic mission could have been perfectly accomplished.

From the context and the expression of the verse, **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord"**, it can be understood that the issue of Imam Ali's guardianship had already been revealed but only its announcement and notification remained in Ghadīr Khumm. As Umar ibn Uthina narrated on the authority of Zurāra, Fuḍail ibn Yasār, Bukair ibn A'ayin, Muḥammad ibn Muslim, Buraid ibn Mu'awiyah and Abi al-Jārūd, in which they all quoted Imam Baqir (peace be upon him) to have said: "God Almighty commanded His Messenger to appoint Ali and revealed to him: **"Your guardian is only Allah, His Apostle, and the faithful who maintain the prayer and give the zakat while bowing down"**

and He made the guardianship of those vested with authority [Ulu al-Amr] obligatory but they did not know who they are. God therefore commanded Muhammad (peace be upon him and his household) to explain the guardianship [Wilāyah] to them, as he had already explained ritual prayer, zakat, fasting, and Hajj to them. When such a commandment came to him from God, the Messenger of God was distressed over that, and he feared that they would apostatize from their religion and that they should reject it. Therefore, his heart was filled with distress, and he returned to his Lord, so God the Mighty and Majestic revealed to him: **"O Apostle! Communicate that which has been sent down to you from your Lord that Ali is indeed the master [Mawla] of the believers, and if you do not, you will not have communicated His message, and Allah shall protect you from the people."** Therefore, he declared the commandment of God, and he appointed Ali (peace be upon him) to the position of guardianship on the day of Ghadīr Khumm. He called for a congregational prayer and ordered those people present to inform those absent¹."

This narration also confirmed the context of the verse. This verse in the Qur'an 53 [Surah Najm]: **"Then he drew nearer and nearer until he was within two bows' length or even nearer, whereat He revealed to His servant whatever He revealed. The heart did not deny what it saw²"** most likely refers to **"That which has been sent down to you from your Lord."**

Abu Baṣīr asked Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) about the Prophet's Heavenly Ascension [Mi'rāj] and he replied thus: "May I be your ransom, how many times did the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) ascend to the Heaven? He said, twice. Then Gabriel stopped him and said: O Muhammad, be in your position. You stood on a point on which neither an angel nor Prophet has ever stood before. Indeed, your Lord is praying. He [the Prophet] asked: O Gabriel, but how does He pray? He replied: "He says Glory be unto Him, I am

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Ya'qub Kulayni, Al-Kāfi, vol. 1, p. 28.

² . Qur'an 53: 8-11.

the Lord of the angels and the Spirit. My mercy precedes My wrath". And he [the Prophet] said: "O God, your pardon, your pardon!" He [Imam Ṣādiq] said: He was [standing at a point] as God said: "**He was within two bows' length or even nearer.**" Thus, Abu Baṣīr asked the Imam: May I be your ransom, what does "**He was within two bows' length or even nearer**" means? He [Imam Ṣādiq] replied: "From the tip of the bow handle to its other tip" and he said, "Between them was a shimmering, flickering veil" but I do not know it except he said: It was azure, and the Prophet looked through the hole of a needle and received the rays of the glory of Truth as much as God wanted. Then God, the Most High, said, "O Muhammad." He replied: "At Your service, my Lord." He said, "Who is the leader of your nation after you?" He said, "God knows best." He [God] said, "Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib, the Commander of the Faithful, the master of the Muslims and *the* leader of the beautiful ones. Then Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon him) said to Abu Baṣīr: O Abu Muḥammad! By God, the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him) did not come from the earth, but rather it came orally from Heaven¹.

In such interpretative narratives, it is clearly stated that the guardianship of Ali (PBUH) was announced on the night of Ascension [Mi'rāj] and it was authorized on the same night.

Some scholars of the two schools of thought have considered the verse: "**The Apostle and the faithful have faith in what has been sent down to him from his Lord**"² to be revealed on the night of Ascension about the guardianship of Ali. Aḥmad Khwarizmi, one of the Sunni scholars, narrates from the authority of Abi Salmī (the Shepherd of the Prophet's camel) in the *Maqatal of Imam Husain* (PBUH) as follows: I heard the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) saying: The night I ascended to the Heaven, the Almighty God said to me: "**The Apostle has faith in what has been sent down to him from his Lord.**" Then I said: And

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Ya'qub Kulayni, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 443.

² . Qur'an 2: 285.

the believers? He said: You are right. O Muhammad! Who will succeed you among your Ummah? I said: The best of them. He said: Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib? I said: “Yes, O my Lord.” He said: O Muhammad, I look unto the earth for the first time and chose you from among the people and I coined a name for you from among My Names with which I will not be mentioned anywhere except that you will be mentioned along with Me. I am Mahmūd and you are Muhammad. Then, I looked unto the earth for the second time, I chose Ali and I coined for him a name from My own Name. I am Al-Aliyy [the Most high] and he is Aliyy. O Muhammad, I created you and Ali, Fatima, Hasan, Husain, and the Imams from his progeny from a source of My light, and I presented your guardianship to the inmates of the Heavens and the people of the earth. Therefore, whoever accepts it is among the believers before Me, and whoever denies it is among the disbelievers to Me. O Muhammad, if one of My servants worshipped Me until he was cut off or became like worn-out sand, and then returned to Me denying your guardianship, I would not forgive him until he acknowledged your guardianship. O Muhammad, would you like to see them? I said: Of course, my Lord. He said to me: Turn to the right of the Throne. I turned and saw Ali, Fatima, Hasan, Husain, Ali ibn Husain, Muhammad ibn Ali, Ja'far ibn Muhammad, Musa ibn Ja'far, Ali ibn Musa, Muhammad ibn Ali, Ali ibn Muhammad, Hasan ibn Ali, and Al-Mahdi standing in a pool of light, praying. In the middle of them, he (that is, Al-Mahdi) shines like a bright star. He [God Almighty] said: O Muhammad, these are the divine Proofs and he [Al-Mahdi] is from your family. By My glory and majesty, he is the obligatory proof for My friends and the avenger over My enemies¹.

¹ . Qāḍī Nūrullah Mar'ashi, *Iḥqāq al-Ḥaqq wa Izhāq al-Bāṭil*, vol. 5, pp. 45-46.

Shia scholars such as Furāt Kūfī¹, IstraĀbādī² and Majlisī³ have also reported the same narration. The scholars of the two schools of thought have considered many verses of the Ascension Night to be related to the issue of Imam Ali's guardianship. For instance, some of them consider the verse **"Ask those of Our apostles We have sent before you"**⁴ to be revealed about Ascension. On the night of Ascension, one of the great signs of God was to show the extent and scope of the guardianship [Wilāyah]. On this night, issues such as the position of the proximity of the Holy Prophet (PBUHH) to God, the questioning of all the Prophets and the issue of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali were raised.

Tha'alabī (died 427 or 437 AH), a Sunni Qur'anic exegete, writes from the saying of Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd who reported the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) to have said: An angel came to me and said: O Muhammad, **"Ask those of Our apostles We have sent before you"** about what they were sent for. I said: For what [purposes] were they sent? He said: About your guardianship and the guardianship of Ali ibn Abi Tālib⁵.

Nizām al-Dīn Nishābūrī also narrated from Ibn Mas'ūd in this context: The Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) said: The angel came to me and said: O Muhammad, ask the previous Prophets on what [purpose] they were sent? I said: For what [purpose] were they sent? He said: [They were sent] about your guardianship and the guardianship of Ali ibn Abi Tālib (may God be pleased with him)⁶.

¹ . Furāt ibn Ibrahim Kūfī, Tafsīr Furāt Kūfī, p. 74.

² . Ali Ḥusaini IstraĀbādī, Ta'wīl al-Āyāt al-Zāhirah fī faḍā'il al-'Itrat al-Ṭāhirah, p. 105.

³ . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 27, p. 200.

⁴ . Qur'an 43: 45.

⁵ . Aḥmad ibn Ibrahim Tha'alabi, Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān Fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 8, p. 338.

⁶ . Nizāmudīn Nishābūrī, Gharā'ib al-Qur'an Wa raghā'ib al-Furqān, vol. 6, p. 93.

Other Sunni scholars have narrated the same hadith, such as Ḥākim Nishābūrī in the book *Ma'rifah al-Hadīth*¹, Ibn 'Asākir in *Tarikh Ibn 'Asākir*², Khwarizmi in *Manāqib*³ and Ḥākim Ḥaskānī in his *Shawā'id*⁴ mentioned it.

Allamah Majlisī quoted Ibn Abbas as saying: The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) said: When I ascended to the Heaven, I reached the fourth heaven with Gabriel, and I saw a house made of red ruby. Then Gabriel said to me, "O Muhammad, this is the "Frequented House" [Bait al Ma'mūr]. God Almighty has created it fifty thousand years before the creation of the heavens and the earth." Arise, O Muhammad, and pray therein. The Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) said: God gathered all the Prophets, the Gabriel arranged them in a row behind me, and I prayed along with them. When I finished the prayer, someone from my Lord came to me and said: "O Muhammad, your Lord extends His greetings to you and says to you: "Ask the Messengers before you the purpose for which I sent them" Therefore, I said: "O the Messengers of God, for what [purpose] my Lord sent you before me?" The Messengers said: "On your guardianship and the guardianship of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib" and that is what God Almighty refers to when He said: **"Ask those of Our Apostles We have sent before you"**⁵.

The issue of the guardianship of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) and that of Ali (peace be upon him) has been raised in these kinds of narrations.

3. The Worry of the Prophet (PBUHH)

Why was the Prophet threatened? This was because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his household) was worried that the people were yet to

¹ . Ḥākim Nishābūrī, *Ma'rifah 'Ulūm al-Hadīth*, p. 153.

² . Ibn 'Asākir, *Tarikh Madinat Damashq*, vol. 42, p. 241.

³ . Khwarizmi, *Al-Manāqib*, p. 279.

⁴ . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, *Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl*, vol. 2, p. 223.

⁵ . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 26, p. 307.

accept his Prophethood, then how would they accept the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali? This form of worry is related to religion. In addition, two other reasons have been mentioned for this: Apostasy from Islam to disbelief and rejecting the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household): "And he is afraid that they will turn away from their religion and that he will be denied. Therefore, he was disturbed¹."

In another place, the noble Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) said that the reason for this worry is due to the possibility of people's accusations [against him] and their rejection [of his message]: "That you accuse me and deny me- until my Lord blamed me thereafter with a threat that He sent down to me after a warning²."

Therefore, three reasons have been mentioned about the worry or anxiety of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) regarding the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali (peace be upon him):

1. The apostasy of the people towards *Jahiliyyah* [the era of Ignorance]. Such a possibility existed, and the Qur'an also pointed to this fact: "**Muhammad is but an apostle; [other] apostles have passed before him. If he dies or is slain, will you turn back on your heels? Anyone who turns back on his heels will not harm Allah in the least, and soon Allah will reward the grateful³.**"

2. The possibility of rejecting the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household)

3. Accusation of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household)

According to the Sunni exegeses, it is clear that the 'Verse of Forsaking'; the 'Verse of Appointment' and the 'Verse of Proclamation' were all revealed before

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Ya'qub Kulayni, *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 28.

² . Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, *Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl*, vol. 1, pp. 257-258.

³ . Qur'an 3: 144.

the declaration of the guardianship in Ghadīr Khumm. And these verses directly deal with the issue of the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him) and they are concerned with the issue of Ghadīr Khumm, and in all of them, the declaration and announcement of the guardianship of Ali have been emphasized.

The greatest message of the verse ['Verse of Proclamation'] for the Islamic and human society is that, if the Prophet's mission could be in danger for a non-challant attitude towards the guardianship of Ali, then there is no excuse for anyone to continue his work without accepting Ali's guardianship. This is because without his guardianship [Wilāyah], no deed of anyone will be favourably accepted, even if such a person is the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his family) because the scale of evaluating the deeds after the declaration of guardianship [Wilāyah] in Ghadīr Khumm is Ali's guardianship. This is where this famous hadith "If the people gathered together for the love of Ali, Allah would not have created Hellfire¹" finds its meaning and understanding.

Similarly, these verses express the necessity and importance of the Islamic ruler in society and how significant and decisive is divine guardianship. There is no society without guardianship, it is either that such a guardianship belongs to Allah, the Messenger of God, and the chosen servant of God [*Waliyy Allah*], or it belongs to Satan and the tyrants. The guardianship of the chosen servant of God is basically the guardianship of the Messenger of God and that of Allah, and without accepting these [three] guardianships, no happiness and salvation can be attained.

¹ . Muḥammad Ṣādiq Tehrānī, *Al-Furqān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an*, vol. 14, p. 257.

Chapter 3

The Revealed Verses on Ghadīr Khumm After the Declaration of Wilāyah

Introduction

The Holy Qur'an has attached great importance to the issue of Ghadīr Khumm. The verses that are mentioned in Sunni sources about Ghadīr Khumm and its positive consequences will be discussed in this chapter just as in the previous chapters. In addition, the verses that were revealed about the deniers of Ghadīr Khumm and the negative consequences of their rejection shall also be discussed. These verses shall be discussed in two parts.

1. The 'Verse of Perfection'

In the primary sources of our Sunni brethren, the 'Verse of Perfection' is also connected to the issue of Ghadīr Khumm and the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him). After the declaration of the guardianship and introduction of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) to the Islamic community in Ghadīr Khumm as the divinely appointed guardian, the verse was revealed¹:

الْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

"Today the faithless have despaired of your religion. So do not fear them, but fear Me. Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam as your religion²."

¹ . Hākim Ḥaskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 1, p. 156-1160. Hākim mentioned several narrations from different narrators such as Ibn 'Abbas, Abu Saeed Khudri, Abu Hurayrah; Jalāl al-Dīn Suyuṭī, Al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 3, p. 19.

² . Qur'an 5: 3.

The Occasion of Revelation

There are two categories of contradictory narrations concerning the occasion of revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection'. Some Sunni narrations considered the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' to be on the day or night of Arafah¹, in the square of Arafah, while some believe that the verse was revealed on the day of Ghadīr² in the square of Ghadīr Khumm regarding the declaration of the guardianship of Hazrat Ali (PBUH).

I) Revelation on the day or night of Arafah

This category of narrations, which is affiliated with some companions such as ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭāb, is also divided into two sub-categories. The first category is the narrations that consider the revelation of the verse to be on Thursday, the night of Arafah, while the second category considers its revelation to be on Friday.

According to the report of Suyūṭī, many hadith scholars have reported the narration that considered the revelation of the verse to be on the night of Arafah: Al-Ḥumaidi, Aḥmad, Abd ibn Ḥamid, Al-Bukhari, Muslim, Al-Tirmidhi, Al-Nasā’i, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Al-Mundhir, Ibn Ḥibban, and Al-Bayhaqi narrated in his Sunan on the authority of Ṭāriq Ibn Shihāb, who said: The Jews said to ‘Umar: Verily, you do recite a verse in your Book that if it were to be revealed to us [the Jews], we would have taken the day of its revelation a day of festival [Eid]. He [‘Umar] said, “Which verse?” He said: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you."** ‘Umar said: “By God, indeed I know the day on which it was revealed to the Messenger of God (PBUHH) and the hour in which it was revealed to the Messenger of God (PBUHH) was on the eve of Arafat, on a Friday³.

¹ .The day of Arafah is the 9th day of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah [Translator]

² . The day of Ghadīr is the 18th day of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah [Translator]

³ . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

God willing, we shall later examine this viewpoint in detail under the discussion about “the intended meaning of ‘**Today**’ [in the verse], which day was it?”

II) Revelation on the day of Ghadīr Khumm

Some prominent Sunni Qur’anic exegetes have considered the revelation of the ‘Verse of Perfection’ to be about Imam Ali (peace be upon him) on the day of Ghadīr Khumm, and several hadiths have been narrated about it, which include:

1. Khaṭīb Baghdadi (died 463 A.H)

Khaṭīb Baghdadi reported from Abu Hurayrah thus: "Whoever fasts on the eighteenth of Dhu al-Hijjah, he would be credited with fasting for sixty months. It was the day of Ghadīr Khumm when the Prophet (PBUHH) held the hand of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib and said: Am I not the guardian [Waliyy] of the believers? They said: Of course, O the Messenger of God. He said: Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master. ‘Umar Ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb said: “Congratulations to you, O son of Abi Ṭālib. You have become my master and the master of every Muslim.” Therefore, God revealed: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**¹."

2. Ibn Maghāzili (died 483 AH)

Ibn Maghāzili narrates from Abu Hurayrah the virtue of fasting on the eighteenth of Dhu al-Hijjah: "On the authority of Abu Hurayrah, he said: Whoever fasts on the eighteenth day of Dhu al-Hijjah, it will be recorded for him as if he has fasted for sixty months. It was the day of Ghadīr Khumm when the Prophet (PBUHH) held the hand of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib and said: "Am I not more worthy to the believers than their own selves?" They said: Of course, O the Messenger of God. He (PBUHH) said: "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master." Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb said: Congratulation, O Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib. You have become my

¹ . Khaṭīb Baghdadi, Tārikh Baghdadi, vol. 3, p. 498.

master and the master of every believer. Therefore, God Almighty revealed: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you¹."**

3. Ibn 'Asākir (died 571 AH)

Ibn 'Asākir has also narrated the same narration from Abu Hurayrah and writes: "Whoever fasts on the eighteenth of Dhu al-Hijjah, it will be recorded for him as if he has fasted for sixty months. It was the day of Ghadīr Khumm when the Prophet (PBUHH) held the hand of Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib and said, "Am I not the guardian [*Waliyy*] of the believers?" They said: "Of course, O the Messenger of God." He (PBUHH) said: "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master." Then 'Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb said: "O son of Abi Ṭālib, you have become my master and the master of every Muslim." Therefore, God Almighty revealed: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you²."**

4. Suyūṭī (died 911 AH)

Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī reported this narration from Abu Saeed Khudri: Ibn Mardawiyah and Ibn 'Asākir narrated with a weak chain of transmission on the authority of Abu Saeed Khudri who said: When the Messenger of God (PBUHH) appointed Ali to the position of guardianship [*Wilāyah*] on the day of Ghadīr Khumm, Gabriel descended upon him with this verse: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you³".**

Suyūṭī reported another narration from Abu Hurayrah: Ibn Mardawiyah, Al-Khaṭīb, and Ibn 'Asākir narrated with a weak chain of transmission on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, who said: "When it was the day of Ghadīr Khumm, which was the eighteenth of Dhu al-Hijjah, the Prophet (PBUHH) said: "Whoever

¹ . Ibn Maghāzili, *Manāqib Amir al-Mu'minīn Ali ibn Abi Ṭālib*, p. 46.

² . Ibn 'Asākir, *Tārikh Madinah Damashq*, vol. 42, p. 233.

³ . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr*, vol. 2, p. 259.

I am his master, then Ali is his master.” Therefore, God revealed [this verse]:
“Today I have perfected your religion for you¹.”

A Critical Review

On thorough examination of the traditions about the occasion and the occasion of the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection', we conclude that the narrations claiming that the revelation of the verse was in Arafah are attributed to the second caliph, and the majority of Sunni Qur'anic exegetes have also preferred this category of narrations. These narrations have no affiliation with the Prophet of God (peace be upon him and his household) and do not say anything about the occasion of the revelation of the verse. On the contrary, the narrations that considered the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' to be on the day of Ghadīr Khumm and in honor of Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) were attributed to the Prophet of God (peace be upon him and his household). Therefore, when choosing between two categories of narrations, one should be on the side of the narration of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household). The latter category of the narrations, apart from stating the occasion of revelation, has also stated the reason for the revelation of the verse, and unlike the first category of the narrations, this reason is in complete agreement with the context of the verse.

The Shia narrations are also in perfect harmony with the second category of the narrations and it confirms this interpretation.

There are two types of narrations reported from the second caliph, one of which says that the 'Verse of Perfection' was revealed on Thursday, the night of Arafah, and the other narration says that the verse was revealed on Friday. The noteworthy point in these narrations is that the second Caliph considered the day of Arafah a day of festivity (Eid), while according to the consensus of Muslims and dozens of narrations, Eid is on the tenth day of Dhu al-Hijjah. Therefore, the caliph's

¹ . ibid.

opinion contradicts the narrations. The day of Arafah comes every year, so why should the 'Verse of Perfection' be revealed on that day?

Ibn 'Umar considered the place of revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' to be Mina. Of course, according to the narration of the second caliph, the term "**Today**" [in the verse] refers to a specific day, while other opinions about this are unacceptable. The second caliph took a stand against the Jews and Christians who declared the day of the revelation of the verse as a day of festivity [Eid] claiming that the Muslims also considered it a day of festivity [Eid] and it was the day of Arafah. However, this statement is not convincing enough, because, if that day is a day of festivity [Eid], why was no one among the companions except the second caliph aware of it? Of course, the second caliph accepted the importance and auspiciousness of that day.

If the day of the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' was on Friday at the plain of Arafat, then why did the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) never perform the Friday prayer in the plain of Arafat? On the contrary, the Prophet (PBUHH) based on sound narrations in reliable Sunni sources, prayed the noon [Zuhr] and the afternoon [Asr] prayers together on the day of Arafat at the plain of Arafat: It is documented that the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) combined the noon [Zuhr] and the afternoon [Asr] prayers on the day of Arafat, with a sermon like the Friday sermon, and he combined the sunset (Maghrib) and the evening (Isha) prayers at Muzdalifah, with one Adhan and two Iqamah, as was documented in the Sahih¹.

Sufyān Thawrī, one of the great Sunni scholars of Hadith and Theology did not accept that Friday was the day of Arafah. Sufyān narrated on the authority of Qays ibn Muslim, from Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb, who said: The Jews said to 'Umar: You are reciting a verse that if it had been revealed about us, we would have taken it

¹. Wahbah ibn Mustāfa Zuḥayli, *Al-Tafsīr al-Munīr fī al-‘Aqīdah wa al-Sharī‘at wa al-Manhaj*, vol. 2, p. 222.

as a holiday [Eid]. ‘Umar said: Indeed I know when and where it was revealed, and where the Messenger of God (PBUHH) was when it was revealed. It was revealed on the day of Arafat while the Messenger of God (PBUHH) was standing on the plain of Arafah. Sufyān said: I doubted whether the day was Friday or not: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam as your religion¹."**

The first narration says that the Prophet (PBUHH) prayed the noon and afternoon prayers together in the plain of Arafah and also delivered a Friday sermon. The second narration is not sure that it was Friday. Therefore, by considering the sound narrations, the day of Arafah was not on Friday; otherwise, instead of noon and afternoon prayers, he would have offered Friday prayers and delivered its sermons.

The Context of 'Verse of Perfection'

According to these two categories of narrations that have been mentioned in Sunni sources about the occasion of revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection', some have insisted on the context of the verse and denied the event of Ghadīr Khumm. However, it is very important to pay attention to the fact that the 'Verse of Perfection' has explained two different things: One is related to the prohibition of forbidden meats and the other issue is related to the completion of religion and the despair of the infidels [over the religion], which based on several pieces of evidence, was revealed completely independent of the context of the verse:

1. The narrations, which explain the occasion of revelation [of the verse] of the two schools of thought are all focusing on the revelation of the expression **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"**, but not the sentences before and after it, which are about the rulings on carrion. This is the greatest evidence to establish

¹ . Muḥammad Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 54.

that this expression has nothing to do with the context of the verse, but was revealed independently.

2. According to all the Shia and some Sunni narrations, this part of the verse **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"** was revealed after Ali ibn Abi Talib was appointed as the leader and guardian of the Muslim Ummah in Ghadīr Khumm.

3. On this day: **"Today"**, some important events happened, such as the despair of every faithless from Islam, the perfection of the religion, the completion of the divine blessings and God's satisfaction with Islam as an eternal norm and divine religion. And all these features have nothing to do with the prohibition of meat, but it is directly related to divine leadership and the Islamic system.

4. In the context of the verse, the prohibition of carrion, pork, blood and other things is discussed: **"You are prohibited carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, and what has been offered to other than Allah, and the animal strangled or beaten to death, and that which dies by falling or is gored to death, and that which is mangled by a beast of prey—barring that which you may purify—and what is sacrificed on stone altars [to idols], and that you should divide by raffling with arrows. All that is transgression¹."**

However, the same prohibitions have been discussed in some other Qur'anic Chapters before the revelation of this verse. For instance, it is stated in Qur'an 2 [Surah Al-Baqarah] thus:

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخَنِزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

He has forbidden you only carrion, blood, the flesh of the swine, and that which has been offered to other than Allah. But should someone be compelled, without being rebellious or transgressive, there shall be no sin upon him. Indeed Allah is all-forgiving, all-merciful².

¹ . Qur'an 5: 3.

² . Qur'an 2: 173.

Likewise, the prohibition of these items is explained in the Qur'an 6 [Surah al-An'ām] thus:

قُلْ لَا أَجِدُ فِي مَا أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ مُحَرَّمًا عَلَى طَاعِمٍ يَطْعَمُهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مَيْتَةً أَوْ دَمًا مَسْفُوحًا أَوْ لَحْمَ خَنْزِيرٍ فَإِنَّهُ رِجْسٌ أَوْ فِسْقًا أُهْلًا لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ

Say, 'I do not find in what has been revealed to me that anyone be forbidden to eat anything except carrion or spilt blood, or the flesh of swine—for that is indeed unclean—or an impiety offered to other than Allah.' (Qur'an 6: 145)

Also in Qur'an 16 [Surah al-Nahl]:

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخَنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ فَمَنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

He has forbidden you only carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been offered to other than Allah. But if someone is compelled [to eat any of that], without being rebellious or aggressive, indeed Allah is all-forgiving, all-merciful¹.

Therefore, the context of these verses does not point to the 'Verse of Perfection', as this verse was revealed independently.

The Intended Meaning of "al-Yawm" in the Verse

In the Qur'anic exegetical sources of the two schools of thought, some possibilities have been raised about the meaning of the term "al-Yawm" in the 'Verse of Perfection'. This particular day has four prominent features: It is the day when the infidels despair of the religion of Islam, the day when the religion is perfected, the day when the blessings are completed, and the day of God's satisfaction with the religion of Islam. It is based on these features and the exegetical perspectives of the Qur'anic exegetes and scholars [of the two schools of thought] that we shall study this issue. Which day is this important and fateful day that is superior to other days? Various opinions have been raised in this regard:

¹ . Qur'an 16: 115.

1. The day of the Prophetic mission (Bi'that)

Some Qur'anic exegetes have considered the meaning of "**al-Yawm**" [in the verse] to be the day of the declaration of the Prophetic mission. These Qur'anic exegetes do not accept the meaning of "this day" for "**al-Yawm**¹". It should be noted that the day of the declaration of the Prophetic mission [Bi'that] was the beginning of the blessing, not its completion. The context of the verses also negates this possibility.

On the day of the declaration of the Prophetic mission, the infidels had not despaired, but the attacks and pressures of the opponents just started. In addition to this, how is it possible that Islam has been perfected at its advent when the obligatory injunctions have not yet been revealed to the people? This view is not in any way acceptable and it is incompatible with reason and textual evidence.

2. Before the Conquest of Mecca

Fakhr al-Din Rāzī, one of the famous Sunni Qur'anic exegetes, writes: We mentioned that the most correct opinion is that the Chapter [Surah Mā'idah] was revealed before the conquest of Mecca.

No narration affirms this viewpoint of Rāzī. In addition, the context of the verses shows that the day of the conquest of Mecca was not the day of the completion of blessings and the perfection of the religion. On the contrary, the Qur'an 5 [Surah Mā'idah], which has numerous jurisprudential rulings, was revealed after the conquest of Mecca.

Ustadh Muḥsin Qira'ati writes in this regard: "The Almighty God, in the matter of changing the Qibla, says thus: The changing of the Qibla is made so that I will complete My blessings upon you in the future. That is, your independence and facing the Ka'aba are the basis for the completion of blessings in the future: "So

¹. Murteza Mutahhari, *Imāmat wa Rahbari*, p. 123.

that I may complete My blessing on you¹". This incident took place in Medina in the second year of Hijrah. In the eighth year of the Hijrah, God also said during the conquest of Mecca thus: **"And He complete His blessing upon you²"**, that is, this triumph [over the idolaters] is an avenue for God to complete His blessing on you in the future. As we can see in both verses, "the completion of blessing" is expressed using the present tense, which is an indication that it will happen in the future. However, verse 3 of Qur'an 5 [Surah Al-Mā'idah], which was revealed during the return from the Farewell Pilgrimage in the tenth year of Hijrah and after the introduction of an infallible leader in Ghadīr Khumm, says thus: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam as your religion."** That is, I have completed my blessing upon you today.

It is noteworthy and accurate to say that, God considered the turning of the people to the Qibla as the first step towards the completion of blessings, conquering of Mecca as another step, while the appointment and introduction of a divine leader is the last step towards the completion of the blessings. It is necessary to remember that during the determination of the Qibla and likewise, the determination of a divine leader, He [God] stated: **"So do not fear them, but fear Me"** because there is a possibility of resistance, confrontation, making excuses, and spreading rumours in both cases³.

3. After the Conquest of Mecca

Fakhr al-Din Rāzī has also mentioned the opinion of the revelation of the verse after the conquest of Mecca and considered this opinion to be more appropriate. He writes from the statements of Mawardi thus: This verse was revealed after the conquest of Mecca. After its revelation, the Prophet did not live for more than 60

¹ . Qur'an 2: 150.

² . Qur'an 12: 6

³ . Muḥsin Qira'ati, Tafsīr Nūr, vol. 1, p. 231.

days on earth, and he was constantly engaged in the glorification of God and the seeking of forgiveness¹.

This viewpoint is also incorrect because its peculiar day is not mentioned, even though the verse mentions a specific day. According to this viewpoint, the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) lived only for sixty days on earth after the revelation of this verse. However, based on the Shia narrations, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his household) lived for almost 70 days on earth after the revelation of the verse.

4. During the Conquest of Mecca

Some Sunni Qur'anic exegetes believe that the 'Verse of Perfection' was revealed on the day of the conquest of Mecca: "Mujāhid reported that this verse was indeed revealed on the day of the conquest of Mecca²".

According to the context of the 'Verse of Perfection', this viewpoint also loses its credibility, because for the conquest of Mecca, the expression: "**And He complete His blessing upon you³**" was used which means that, God will complete His blessing in the future. However, the 'Verse of Perfection' discusses the completion of the blessing and these two views are not compatible.

5. During the Revelation of Surah Tawbah

It has been narrated from Ibn Abbas that, the day of the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' was the same day of the revelation of the Qur'an 9 [Surah Tawbah]: "The polytheists and Muslims used to perform Hajj rites together. However, when Qur'an 9 [Surah Tawbah] was revealed, the polytheists were exiled from the Sacred House, and the Muslims performed Hajj rites, without the presence of any of the polytheists in the Sacred House. That was therefore the completion of the

¹ . Fakhr al-Din Rāzī, Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 32, p. 347.

² . Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Qurṭubī, Al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 61.

³ . Qur'an 12: 6.

blessing in His saying: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you"**¹

The day of the revelation of the Qur'an 9 [Surah Tawbah] was important, but its recitation unto the polytheists took place several days later. In addition, many rulings were revealed after the revelation of the Chapter. Therefore, this viewpoint is also unacceptable.

6. At Mina on the days of Tashriq²

Some Sunni Qur'anic exegetes have considered the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' to be during the Farewell Pilgrimage in the 10th year of Hijrah at Mina. Ṣāwī writes: "On the authority of Ibn 'Umar who said: This Chapter³ was revealed in Mina during the Farewell Pilgrimage. Thereafter, this verse: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you and I have completed My blessing upon you"** was revealed. The Prophet, may God bless him, lived for eighty days on earth thereafter. The 'Verse of Kalalah'⁴ was revealed, and he lived on earth thereafter for fifty days. Then the verse: **"And beware of a day in which you will be brought back to Allah"** was revealed and he lived on earth thereafter for twenty-one days⁵.

This viewpoint is apparently attributed only to Ibn 'Umar and no one else has a similar view. In addition, this viewpoint does not mention any specific day, it rather says that the verse was revealed in the days of *Tashriq* at Minna, whereas, the verse discusses a special day and not several days.

7. A Period of time

Fakhr Rāzī also mentioned this viewpoint: It does not mean an exact day, so it can be said that they [the infidels] did not despair a day or two before it. It is

¹ . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūfī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

² . The days of Tashriq are the 11th, 12th and 13th of Dhu al-Hijjah [Translator]

³ . That is, Surah al-Naṣr [Qur'an 110].

⁴ . Qur'an 4: 12; 176 [Translator]

⁵ . Muḥammad ibn 'Alī Ṣāwī, Ḥāshiyat al-Ṣāwī 'ala Tafsīr al-Jalālayn, vol. 4, p. 443.

rather an expression that is uttered outside the customs of the speakers of the language. It means that there is no need for you now to flatter these infidels because you have now become powerful and none of your enemies will aspire to weaken your religion. This is similar to the Arabs' saying: "Yesterday, I was young but I have become old today." The term 'Yesterday' does not mean the day before that day and 'Today' does not mean the present day you are in now¹.

Contrary to what is opined by Fakhr Rāzī that, a period is not intended in this verse, just like the saying: "Yesterday, I was young but I have become old today" a specific day is rather intended by the verse. In addition, according to the linguistics, "*Alif and Lam*" is used [in this verse] to indicate a present situation. The term "**al-Yawm**" [**Today**] is repeated twice in this verse while it refers to a particular day in each of the two cases, not two different days. The Qur'an describes this special day thus: "**The faithless have despaired of your religion**"; "**I have perfected your religion for you**"; "**I have completed My blessing upon you**"; "**I have approved Islam as your religion.**"

Since all these attributes are related to a certain day, they must be connected; in such a way that the perfection of religion and the completion of blessings cause the disbelievers to despair and the God's satisfaction with the sovereignty of Islam over the society. Therefore, this day with these unique features should be considered a sensitive day and a turning point in the history of Islam in which a special event happened on that day.

8. An Unknown Day

In some Qur'anic exegeses, it has been stated that the meaning of "**al-Yawm**" in this verse is an unknown day that only God knows: "This is not a day known to the people²." It has also been reported by Ibn Abbas that the intended meaning of

¹ . Fakhr al-Din Rāzī, Tafsīr al-Kabīr, vol. 11, p. 287.

² . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 54.

"**Today I have perfected your religion for you**" is an unknown day, which no one knows. "It is not a day that people are aware of it¹." On the contrary, a specific day [which is known] has been mentioned in this verse.

9. During the Farewell Pilgrimage

Some Sunni Qur'anic exegetes believe that Qur'an 5 [Surah al-Mā'idah] was revealed during the Farewell Pilgrimage. They quoted the view of Rabī' ibn Anas in this regard, who said: "The Qur'an 5 [Surah al-Mā'idah] was revealed to the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) on his way during the Farewell Pilgrimage²."

They have also quoted Asma, the daughter of 'Umayy who said: "I performed Hajj with the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) during that Hajj [i.e., the Farewell Pilgrimage], and on the way, Gabriel appeared to him [the Prophet] while on the mount. The mount could not bear the weight of the Qur'an [being revealed] to him, and it therefore knelt down. Thus, I came to him and draped over him with a robe that was on me³."

Likewise, in this case, it is not yet clear which peculiar day is meant by the term "**al-Yawm**" [in the verse]. This viewpoint covers a period ranging from after leaving Medina until returning to it. This is contrary to the verse in which "**Today**" was a specific day.

10. On Monday at Medina

Some Sunni sources mentioned that the whole of the Qur'an 5 [Surah al-Mā'idah], including the 'Verse of Perfection', was revealed in Medina. Qurṭubī, one of the Sunni Qur'anic exegetes, quoted this saying and then considered it weak⁴. Ibn Abbas says: "Your Prophet (peace be upon him and his household)

¹ . Ibid.

² . Ibid.

³ . Ibid, p. 51.

⁴ . Ibn 'Arabī, Aḥkām al-Qur'an, vol. 2, p. 551.

was born on Monday, left Mecca on Monday, entered Medina on Monday, and the Qur'an 5 [Surah Al-Mā'idah] was revealed on a Monday "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**" and his name was exalted on Monday¹.

In this narration, Monday has a special significance because of the Prophet's birth, his departure from Mecca, his arrival in Medina, the revelation of the Qur'an 5 [Surah Al-Mā'idah] and the 'Verse of Perfection', the Prophet's death, and the exaltation of his remembrance took place on this day.

Some other Qur'anic exegetes have said that the Qur'an 5 [Surah Al-Mā'idah] was revealed in Medina, but they excluded the 'Verse of Perfection' and said that it was revealed in Mecca. Baghawi said: Surah Al-Mā'idah is entirely Medinan Chapter except for the expression: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you.**" Indeed it was revealed at Arafat, and it is one hundred and twenty verses.²"

11. The day of Arafah

Most of the Sunni Qur'anic exegetes considered "**al-Yawm**" [in the verse] to refer to the day of Arafah, and in this regard, they have relied on the sayings of the second caliph. They have reported fourteen narrations from 'Umar ibn Khaṭṭab, one narration from Mu'awiyah ibn Abu Sufyān, one narration from Samrah, four narrations from Ibn Abbas, and one narration from 'Ali about this.

Narrations of 'Umar Ibn Khaṭṭab

Fourteen narrations have been reported from the second Caliph about the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' on the day or night of Arafah. All these narrations have been reported through these four narrators: Abu 'Umays Utbah, Idris ibn Yazīd, Sufyān and Mas'ar in the Sunnis Ṣiḥāh [authentic books of Hadith]. And each of them reported their narrations from Qays, who also quoted

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 54.

² . Ḥusain Ibn Mas'ūd Baghawi, Mu'ālim al-Tanzīl fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 2, p. 5.

Ṭāriq, and he reported from ‘Umar ibn Khaṭṭab¹. All these narrations are the Caliph's response to a question about the time and place of revelation of the verse.

For instance, Ka'b said: If this verse had been revealed to any other nation, they would have considered the day on which it was revealed a holiday on which they would gather. ‘Umar said: "Which verse, O Ka'b?" He replied: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you.**" ‘Umar said: Indeed, I know the day and the place it was revealed. It was revealed on Friday and the day of Arafah, and both of them, to God be glory are a holiday [Eid] for us².

The narrations reported from the second Caliph about the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' on the day of Arafah have serious scientific controversies, which include:

1. The contradiction in terms of the time of the revelation of the verse: Some of these narrations have declared the revelation of the verse to be on the eve of Friday while others considered it to be on the daytime of Friday.
2. The contradiction in terms of the place of revelation of the verse: Some of these narrations consider the place of revelation of the verse to be Arafat Square and others consider it to be on Mount Arafah. He said: ‘Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭab said that it was revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household), while he was standing on a mountain on the day of Arafat³. Of course, there is no mountain in Arafah Square other than the Mount of Rahmah.
3. The narrations transmitted by ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭab, which the majority of Sunnis accepted because its narrator was the second caliph, also have a problem in terms of its narrator. In these narrations, Abu ‘Āliyah, an unknown person from

¹ . cf. Luqmān Ḥakīmī, ṬuruqShanāsī Riwayāt ‘Arafah, Hamraha bā naqd wa barresī (Nigāi riwāyi bi sha’n wa makān nuzūl āyat Ikmāl), Ṭulū’ Journal, No. 32, 1389, p. 147.

² . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

³ . Ibid.

among the People of the Book, said: They were with ‘Umar when this verse was mentioned, and a man from among the People of the Book said: If we had known the day this verse was revealed, we would have taken it as a holiday [Eid]. ‘Umar said, Praise be to God, Who has made it a holiday for us. The second day it was revealed was on the day of Arafah. The second day was the Day of Sacrifice. Thus, religion was perfected for us and we knew that religion thereafter would be on the decline¹.

According to another narration, the questioner was Ka'b. He said, "If this verse had been revealed to other nations, they would have considered the day on which it was revealed to them as a holiday [Eid] in which they would gather. ‘Umar said: What verse, O Ka'b? He replied: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you.**" ‘Umar therefore said, "I know the day and the place it was revealed. It was revealed on a Friday and a day of Arafah and both of them, to God be the glory, are a holiday [Eid] for us². "

In another narration, Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb, a Jew was the questioner who asked ‘Umar. Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb said: A group of Jews said to ‘Umar, You recite a verse in your Book, which if it had been revealed to us, the Jews, we would have taken that day of its revelation as a holiday. He [‘Umar] said: Which verse? He replied: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you and completed My blessing upon you.**" ‘Umar said: By God, I really know the day on which it was revealed to the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) and the time. It was revealed to the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) on the eve of Arafah, on a Friday³.

4. The most important point in these narrations is the neglect of the reason for the revelation of the verse. The inquiry of those Jews and Christians and their surprise

¹ . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

² . Ibid.

³ . Ibid, p. 258.

was because of this fact that the 'Verse of Perfection' gave the greatest glad tidings to the Islamic Ummah and by repeating the term "**al-Yawm**", it pointed out to the greatness of that day. It has drawn everyone's attention to it and announced the perfection of the religion, the completion of God's blessings and His satisfaction with the religion of Islam, but Muslims are unaware of such a day!

5. Such narrations conflict with the narrations that recount the time, place and reason of the revelation of the verse to be about Ghadīr. There is no difference of opinion in the verses and narrations of Ghadīr, as everyone considers the revelation of the verse to be after the proclamation of the guardianship [Wilāyah] in Ghadīr Khumm Square while the reason for its revelation was to declare the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali.

6. The theme of the narrations of Ghadīr is consistent with the theme of the 'Verse of Perfection'. The verse says that the infidels have despaired with the Muslim religion because a person who was similar to the Prophet (PBUHH) in terms of piety and management has been chosen as the Prophet's successor. Therefore, the religion was perfected and the outward and inward blessings were completed on the Muslims and God is satisfied with the religion of Islam until the Day of Resurrection and the religion got its rightful guardian.

If the narrations of [the revelation of the verse at] Arafah are accepted, then, no justification can be found for the content of the verse, and no connection can be seen between the content of the verse and the narrations.

The Narration of Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyān

There is also a narration related to this from Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyān: 'Amr ibn Qays Al-Sakūnī said that he heard Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyān on the pulpit

reciting this verse: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"** until he completed it and said: "It was revealed on the day of Arafat, on a Friday¹."

The Mu'awiyah's narration conflicts with the narrations of Ghadīr and consequently loses its validity. Mu'awiyah himself claimed the caliphate and was the one who initiated and promoted the innovation of cursing Imam Ali (PBUH) among the people. Therefore, was it expected of him to report the narration of Ghadīr?! Because of this, Mu'awiyah's narration has no value before the Shia.

The Narration of Samra

Samra is quoted to have said: This verse, **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"** was revealed to the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and [and his household] while he was at Arafah².

Haythami has rejected and considered the narration of Samrah weak because of the presence of 'Umar Ibn Musa ibn Wajīh in the chains of its narrators³. Samra was one of the staunch enemies of Imam Ali. He had a special skill in altering the occasion of revelation of the verses and distorting them. After receiving an exorbitant amount of money, he distorted the narration and changed the occasion of revelation of the verse **"And among the people is he who sells his soul seeking the pleasure of Allah"**⁴ from Imam Ali to Ibn Muljam!⁵

Because of this, the narration of Samrah is invalid, as it cannot withstand the narrations that considered the reason for the revelation of the verse to be Ghadīr Khumm.

¹ . Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūfī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

² . Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūfī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

³ . cf. Luqmān Ḥakīmī, ṬuruqShanāsī Riwayāt 'Arafah, Hamraha bā naqd wa barresī (Nigāi riwāyi bi sha'n wa makān nuzūl āyat Ikmal), Ṭulū' Journal, No. 32, 1389, p. 159.

⁴ . Qur'an 2: 207 [Translator].

⁵ . Ibn Abi al-Ḥadīd, Sharḥ Nahj al-Balagha, vol. 1, p. 361.

The Narration of Ibn Abbas

Many contradictory narrations have been reported from Ibn Abbas, he says in a narration: When the Prophet (PBUHH) was standing at the Arafah, Gabriel descended upon him with the verse, "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**" while he was raising his hand, and the Muslims were supplicating to God and said: "These are the lawful and unlawful things for you" and no injunction concerning "the lawful and unlawful" did not reveal after this. "**I have completed My blessing upon you**", so no polytheist will be allowed to perform Hajj rites with you, and "**I was satisfied**", that is, "I have chosen Islam as your religion." The Messenger of God, (peace be upon him [and his household]) was alive for eighty-one days after the revelation of this verse, then God took him to Himself¹.

In this narration, it has rejected the revelation of any injunction concerning lawful and unlawful things after the revelation of the verse. The Prophet (PBUHH) did not live on earth more than 80 nights, 81 days or 82 days after the revelation of the verse.

Another narration has been reported from Ibn Abbas thus: He recited this verse: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**" and a Jew said, "If this verse had been revealed to us, we would have taken that day as a holiday." Ibn Abbas said, "It was revealed on two Eid days, on Friday, the day of Arafah²."

In another narration of Ibn Abbas, the day of the revelation of the verse is introduced to on Monday instead of Friday, he says: Your Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) was born on a Monday, left Mecca on a Monday, and entered Medina on a Monday, and Surah Al-Mā'idah was revealed to him on a

¹ . Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 257.

² . Ibid, vol. 2, p. 257.

Monday: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"**, and his remembrance was exalted on a Monday¹.

Other narrations have been reported from Ibn Abbas, in which he considered the day of the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' as the day of the revelation of the Qur'an 9 [Surah Tawbah]: The polytheists and Muslims used to perform Hajj rites together, but when the Qur'an 9 [Surah Tawbah] was revealed, the polytheists were exiled from the Sacred House, and the Muslims performed Hajj, without the presence of any of the polytheists. Thus, that was the completion of the blessing in His saying, **"Today I have perfected your religion for you and completed My blessing upon you"**².

Another report has been attributed to Ibn Abbas, which says that the meaning of **"al-Yawm"** in the verse **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"** is an unknown day, which no one knows: "It is not a known day that people know about it"³.

Now that the verse has spoken about a specific day. Four contradictory narrations have been reported only from Ibn Abbas about the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection', which cannot be summed up in any way as they are in sharp contradiction with each other.

12. The eve of Arafah

According to the report of Suyūṭī, he said that many hadith scholars have quoted the narrations that considered the revelation of the verse to be on the eve of Arafah.

Al-Ḥumaydi, Aḥmad, Abd ibn Ḥamīd, Al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Al-Tirmidhi, Al-Nasā'ī, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Al-Mundhir, Ibn Hibban, and Al-Bayhaqi narrated in his

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 54.

² . Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

³ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 54.

Sunan on the authority of Ṭāriq Ibn Shihāb, who said: A Jew said to ‘Umar: You recite a verse in your Book [Holy Qur’an] that if it were to be revealed to us, the Jews, we would have taken the day [of its revelation] as a holiday [Eid]. He [‘Umar] said: Which verse? He replied: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you and completed My blessing upon you.**" ‘Umar said; “By God, I know the day on which it was revealed to the Messenger of God, and the time in which it was revealed to him. It was the eve of Arafah on a Friday¹.

Ṭabarī reported from Ṭāriq Ibn Shihāb thus: “A Jew said to ‘Umar: If we, the Jews had known when this verse: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam as your religion**" was revealed, we would have taken that day as a holiday [Eid]. ‘Umar said: Indeed, I know the day and time on which it was revealed, and where the Messenger of God (PBUHH) was when it was revealed. It was revealed on the eve of Friday while we were with the Messenger of God in Arafah².

In some Sunni sources, a narration attributed to Imam Ali (peace be upon him) is also quoted, as Suyūṭī writes: "Ibn Jarīr and Ibn Mardawiyah narrated on the authority of Ali, who was reported to have said: This verse "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**" was revealed to the Messenger of God, while he was standing on the eve of Arafah³."

This report is invalid because it is stated in some narrations that Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) argued for his caliphate using the 'Verse of Perfection'.

¹ . Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

² . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi’ al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’an, vol. 6, p. 54.

³ . Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

13. Now

Some Sunni Qur'anic exegetes have taken the "**al-Yawm**" [in the verse] as the equivalent of "now". Qurtubī writes: The second opinion is that it means the present time because the Arabs use the term "Today" in the meaning of the present time "now"¹.

14. On the Eid of Adha²

According to a report from 'Antarah, the 'Verse of Perfection' was revealed on the day of the greatest Hajj [i.e. Eid al-Adha]. When the verse "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**" was revealed, that was the day of the greatest Hajj, 'Umar cried, and the Prophet, peace be upon him, said to him: "What makes you cry?" He replied: "What made me cry is how we are advancing in our religion until when it will be completed, for nothing will ever be completed without a decrease, so the Prophet said: "You have spoken the truth."

15. The Day of its Revelation

Ibn Abbas and Sadī say: "**al-Yawm**" [in the verse] was the day this verse "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**" was revealed. That is the duties, the Sunnahs, the limits, the jurisprudential rulings, the lawful and the unlawful things have been perfected. And after this verse, no injunction on the lawful and the unlawful things and any of the obligatory duties has been revealed³.

This narration does not mention any specific day, and conclusively, it considers the day of the revelation of the verse as the day of perfection of the religion and specifies that no injunction about the lawful and the unlawful things was revealed thereafter and nothing else was revealed about the obligatory duties.

¹ . Ibn 'Arabī, Aḥkām al-Qur'an, vol. 2, p. 551.

² . The tenth of Dhu al-Hijjah [The Translator]

³ . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha'labī, Al-Kashf wa al-Bayān 'an Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 4, p. 16.

16. The day of Ghadīr

According to the Shia narrations and some of the Sunnis, the meaning of "**al-Yawm**" in the 'Verse of Perfection' is the day of Ghadīr Khumm. In the Sunni sources, the second viewpoint about the occasion of revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' is its revelation on the 18th day of Dhu al-Hijjah, that is, the day of Ghadīr Khumm, when the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) said the famous hadith "Whoever I am his master, Ali is also his master" in Ghadīr Square. At the same time, Gabriel came with the 'Verse of Perfection'.

In some Sunni sources, Abu Hurayrah has reported it through seven different channels, Abu Saeed Khudri through eight ways, and Zayd ibn Arqam through one way¹. Suyūṭī reported from Abu Saeed Khudri to have said: When the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his household, appointed Ali on the day of Ghadīr Khumm to a position of guardianship [Wilāyah], Gabriel descended upon him with this verse: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**"²

Suyūṭī also narrated from Abu Hurayrah this narration, in which he was reported to have said: When it was the day of Ghadīr Khumm, which was the eighteenth day of Dhu al-Hijjah, the Prophet, peace be upon him and his household, said, "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master," so God revealed, "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**"³.

In another narration, it is said that Ḍamara narrated with his chain of transmission on the authority of Abu Hurayrah, who said: When the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) held the hand of Ali (may God honour his face), he said: "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master." God Almighty

¹ . cf. Luqmān Ḥakīmī, ṬuruqShanāsī Riwayāt 'Arafah, Hamraha bā naqd wa barresī (Nigāi riwāyi bi sha'n wa makān nuzūl āyat Ikmal), Ṭulū' Journal, No. 32, 1389, p. 34.

² . Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, al-Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 259.

³ . Ibid.

therefore revealed: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you."** Then Abu Hurayrah said: It was the day of Ghadīr Khumm, and whoever fasts on the eighteenth of Dhu al-Hijjah, God Almighty will record for him [the rewards of] the fast of sixty months. This is a very objectionable narration, and it is considered fabricated hadith in the book *"Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah"*¹.

There is another narration from Abu Hurayrah where he said: Whoever fasts on the eighteenth of Dhu al-Hijjah, God will record for him the fast of sixty months, and it is the day of Ghadīr Khumm, when the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, took Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib by the hand and said: "Am I not the master of the believers?" They said: Yes, O Messenger of God. Thereafter, he took Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib by the hand and said: "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master." Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭab said to him: Congratulations, Congratulations O son of Ibn Abi Ṭalib, you have become my master and the master of every Muslim! Then God, the Most High, revealed: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"**².

It is also reported from Abu Saeed Khudri in another narration that he said: "When this verse was revealed to the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household), he said: Allah is great for the perfection of the religion, completion of the blessing, and the Lord's satisfaction with my message and the guardianship of Ali Ibn Abi Ṭalib after me. Then he said: "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master. O God, befriend whoever befriends him, be hostile to whoever is hostile to him, support whoever supports him and abandon whoever abandons him"³.

Ḥaskānī, a Sunni Qur'anic exegete, has also reported a narration from Ibn Abbas, in which the 'Verse of Perfection' was considered to be revealed in honour of

¹. Saeed Hawī, *Al-Asās fī al-Tafsīr*, vol. 3, p. 1473.

². Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, *Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl*, vol. 1, p. 200.

³. *ibid*.

Hazrat Ali: 'Aṭā' reported on the authority of Saeed, and from Ibn Abbas, who was reported to have said: While the Prophet, peace be upon him and his household, was in Mecca during the Hajj season, he turned to Ali and said: Congratulations to you, O father of Hasan. God has indeed revealed to me a clear, unambiguous verse in which my name and yours are mentioned equally, and that verse is: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you¹."**

This category of narrations, which considers the proclamation of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Hazrat Ali on the day of Ghadīr Khumm as the reason for the revelation of the verse is in perfect agreement with the context of the 'Verse of Perfection', and the Shia Qur'anic exegetes are also unanimously agreed on the correctness of this reason of revelation.

The Intended Meaning of 'Perfection of Religion'

There are two main viewpoints among the Qur'anic exegetes of the two schools of thought on the intended meaning of "perfection of religion" in the verse:

First Viewpoint: The Perfection of Religious Rulings

This viewpoint is accepted by most Sunni Qur'anic exegetes. They believe that this verse was revealed on the day of Arafah and according to the context of the verses, it prohibits the consumption of unlawful meats. According to the majority of the Sunni Qur'anic exegetes, several Qur'anic verses were revealed after the revelation of this verse. Furthermore, the rulings on usury, a deceased without neither parents nor offspring [*Kalālah*] and other jurisprudential rulings were also believed to be revealed after the revelation of this verse².

Thus, this viewpoint is incorrect, because many of the religious rulings have not yet been revealed and the religion has not yet been perfected for it to address such

¹ . *ibid*, p. 208.

² . Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Qurtubī, *Al-Jāmi' li-Ahkām al-Qur'an*, vol. 6, p. 62.

an issue. In addition, this issue has been addressed under the discussion about the context of the verse.

Second Viewpoint: The Perfection of Religion under the leadership of Ali

The Shias unanimously agree with this viewpoint, and some Sunni narrations have also affirmed this viewpoint and presented their arguments that the perfection of the religion refers to the day of declaration of the leadership of Imam Ali in Ghadīr Khumm.

The Great Eid

The viewpoint of the Sunnis and the Shias on the festivity [Eid] of the day of the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' is the same, and the narrations of both schools of thought have mentioned this day as a day of festivity [Eid].

Many Shia narrations have mentioned this day as "the greatest Eid" [i.e., Eid Allah Al-Akbar]. In the Sunni narrations, the day of the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection' is also referred to as a day of festivity [Eid]. This perfection of religion had a great impact on the audiences. According to some Sunni narrations, even the Jews and the Christians sometimes expressed surprise at the indifference of Muslims towards this day and the reason why they do not celebrate such a great day and they claimed that, if this verse was revealed among them, they would have indeed celebrated that day.

Ṭāriq ibn Shihāb said: A Jew said to ‘Umar, You recite a verse in your Book: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you and completed My blessing upon you."** If it had been revealed to us, the Jews, we would have taken that day as a holiday [Eid]. ‘Umar said: Indeed, I know the day and the place at which it was revealed and where the Messenger of God (PBUHH) was when it was revealed. It was revealed on the day of Arafah while the Messenger of God (peace be upon him

and his household) was on the Mount of Arafah. Sufyān said: I doubted whether the day was Friday or not¹.

In his other narration, instead of Jews, a Jew is mentioned that he said: A Jew said to ‘Umar: If we, the Jews, had known when this verse: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam as your religion"** was revealed, we would have taken that day as a holiday. ‘Umar said: Indeed, I know the day and the time on which it was revealed, and where the Messenger of God was when it was revealed. It was revealed on the eve of Friday while we were with the Messenger of God (PBUHH) at Arafat².

Ka'b said: If this verse had been revealed to other nations, they would have considered the day on which it was revealed to them as a holiday on which they would gather [to celebrate it]. ‘Umar said: Which verse, O Ka'b? He replied: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you."** ‘Umar said: Indeed, I know the day the place at which it was revealed. It was revealed on Friday, the day of Arafah, and both of them [the two days], glory be to God, are a holiday [Eid] for us³.

In this narration, the second Caliph, in response to Ka'b, informed that the Muslims celebrated these two days. However, at the moment, we have Eid al-Adha, but we do not have Eid of Arafah, and there is no evidence in Muslim history to buttress that Muslims celebrated the day of Arafah [as Eid].

Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī reported another narration from ‘Isa Ibn Ḥāritha Al-Anṣārī who said: We were sitting in the courtyard while a Christian said to us: O you Muslim! A verse has been revealed to you that if it had been revealed to us, we would have taken that day and that time as a day of festivity [Eid] for as long as

¹ . Muḥammad ibn Jarīr Ṭabarī, Jāmi’ al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur’an, vol. 6, p. 54.

² . Ibid.

³ . Ibid.

two people remain: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**", but none of us responded to him¹.

The point worth noting in this narration is a Christian's question to a group of companions about the significance of this day and that, as long as their population is even two persons, they would continue to celebrate this day, but, surprisingly, none of the Muslims responded to the Christian. From this, it can be seen that, apart from the second Caliph, no one has the information on the day this verse was revealed, and that was the reason why even the Jews expressed surprise at the indifference of the Muslims towards this great day and said: "How did the Arabs not preserve this day on which God perfected their religion for them?"²

From this kind of narration, the political dimension of Ghadīr becomes more obvious, as some people were hiding the event of Ghadīr and the leadership of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) from the very beginning.

The Last Revealed Verse

Regarding the last verse that was revealed to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household), there is a difference of opinion among the Qur'anic exegetes and the scholars of the Qur'anic sciences of the two schools of thought. Baḥrānī writes:

Al-Sadī and Ibn Abbas said: Thereafter, the verse "**There has certainly come to you an apostle from among yourselves**"³ was revealed, and the Holy Prophet lived thereafter for six months, and when he travelled for the Farewell Pilgrimage, it was revealed to him on the road: "**They ask you for a ruling. Say, 'Allah gives you a ruling concerning the kalalah'**"⁴. Therefore, it was referred to as the summer verse.

¹ . Muḥammad Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 54.

² . Ibid.

³ . Qur'an 9: 128 [The Translator].

⁴ . Qur'an 4: 176 [The Translator].

Then it was revealed to him **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"** while he was standing at the Mount of Arafah. He lived thereafter for eighty-one days, and then the verses of usury were revealed to him. Thereafter, **"And beware of a day in which you will be brought back to Allah¹"** which was the last verse that was revealed from God, and he lived thereafter for twenty-one days².

Some scholars of the two schools of thought consider the last verse to be the 'Verse of Perfection'. Yaqūbī writes in his history concerning the Medinan verses thus: The last verse that was revealed to the Messenger of God was **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"** and it was revealed on the day that the Messenger of God announced the guardianship [Wilāyah] and leadership of Ali ibn Abi Talib to the ears of everyone in Ghadīr Khumm³. However, the narrations in the exegetical sources do not accept this viewpoint, because it is one of the Shia's fundamental beliefs.

Some Sunni scholars believe that the verse **"An asker asked for a punishment sure to befall⁴"** was revealed after the declaration of Ghadīr due to its rejection. However, none of the Qur'anic exegetes of the two schools of thought even mention that the last verse is **"An asker asked for a punishment sure to befall, which none can avert from the faithless"** even though, based on some Sunni narrations, the verses **"An asker asked for a punishment sure to befall, which none can avert from the faithless"** were revealed after the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali in Ghadīr Khumm and its rejection by Ḥārith ibn Nu'man Fahri⁵.

¹ . Qur'an 2: 281 [The Translator].

² . Ḥāshim Bahrānī, al-Burhān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 1, p. 561.

³ . Aḥmad Ibn Abi Yaqūbī, Tārikh Yaqūbī, vol. 3, p. 43.

⁴ . Qur'an 70: 1 [The Translator].

⁵ . Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad Qurṭūbī, al-Jāmi' Ahkām al-Qur'an, vol. 18, p. 728 & 729; Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍa, Tafsīr al-Manār, vol. 6, p. 386; Muḥammad 'Imādī, Tafsīr Abī al-Sa'ūd, vol. 6, p. 394; Ibn al-Ṣibāq Mālikī, al-Fuṣūl al-Muhimah, p. 41; Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Tha'labī, al-Kashf wa al-Bayān, vol. 10, p. 35 (with a slight difference); Ḥākim Ḥaskānī, Shawā'id al-Tanzīl li-Qawā'id al-Tafḍīl, vol. 2, p. 286.

Some consider the 'Verse of Kalalah'¹ to be the last revealed verse, as it has been reported from Barā' ibn 'Āzib: The last revealed verse of the Qur'an was "**They ask you for a ruling. Say, 'Allah gives you a ruling concerning the kalalah'**"².

Of course, some narrations of the two schools of thought emphasize that after the revelation of the 'Verse of Perfection', no other verse concerning the lawful [Halal] or the unlawful [Haram] things was revealed. There is no problem in accepting such narrations; since the verse, "**An asker asked for a punishment sure to befall**" is about the rejection and punishment and there is no mention of the lawful and the unlawful things.

Interpretation of the Verse

The infidels thought that after the death of the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household), Islam would vanish and no trace of it would remain, but when the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali was announced in Ghadīr Khumm, all the enemies of Islam were disappointed and their plans about the future of Islam came to naught. This verse at its beginning also talks about the despair of the unbelievers: "**Today the faithless have despaired of your religion**"³. God also raised the issue of fear over the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] and made the Prophet understand that this issue has many stubborn enemies and will cause fear and panic: "**So do not fear them, but fear Me.**" From this reference to the desperation of the enemy, it is clear that the issue of guardianship is the most important pillar and the guarantor of the survival of the religion, which made the infidels desperate to stop the goals of the Prophetic mission. On this task, despite the machinations of the enemies, you should not fear them, but God is the only one you should fear.

The enemies also realized the significance and value of this day. Therefore, it has been reported from the Jewish scholars in many narrations that, if this verse were

¹ . Qur'an 4: 176.

² . Muḥammad Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an, vol. 6, p. 52.

³ . Qur'an 5: 3.

to be revealed about them, they would have considered this day great and would have made it a day of festivity [Eid]. On the authority of Ibn Abbas, he recited this verse: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you"** and a Jew said: If this verse had been revealed to us, we would have taken that day as a holiday. Ibn Abbas said: It was revealed on the day of two Eids, on Friday and the day of Arafah¹.

In another narration, Dawūd says I told 'Āmir Sha'bi: The Jews say: How come the Arabs did not preserve this day on which God perfected their religion for them? 'Āmir said: Why did they not preserve it? I said to him: What day was it? He replied: On the day of Arafah. God revealed it on the Day of Arafah².

Suyūṭī said: Al-Ḥumaidi, Aḥmad, Abd ibn Ḥamīd, Al-Bukhāri, Muslim, Al-Tirmidhi, Al-Nasā'i, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Al-Mundhir, Ibn Ḥabbān, and Al-Bayhaqi narrated in his Sunan on the authority of Ṭāriq Ibn Shihāb, who said: The Jews said to 'Umar: You recite a verse in your Book that if it were revealed to us, the Jews, we would have taken that day a day of festivity [Eid]. He said: Which verse? He replied: **"Today I have perfected your religion for you and completed My blessings upon you."** 'Umar said: By God, I know the day and the time in which it was revealed to the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his household. It was revealed to him on the eve of Arafah on a Friday³.

He also reported another narration in this regard: Ishāq ibn Rāhawiyah narrated in his Musnad and Abd ibn Ḥamīd on the authority of Abu Al-'Āliyah, who said: They were with 'Umar and this verse was recited. A man from the People of the Book said: If we had known on which day this verse was revealed, we would have taken it as a day of festivity [Eid]. 'Umar said: Praise be to God Who has made it a day of festivity [Eid] for us. The second day it was revealed was the

¹ . Maḥmūd ibn Abd Allah Ālūsī, Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Azīm, vol. 3, p. 361.

² . Jalāl al-Dīn Suyūṭī, Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 258.

³ . ibid.

Day of Arafah, the second day was the Day of Sacrifice, and the religion was perfected for us. We know that the religion will thereafter be in decline¹.

On the interpretation of the term "**al-Yawm**" [in the verse] according to the Sunni Qur'anic exegeses, eleven contradictory viewpoints were quoted, but none of them has a scientific basis, and only the viewpoint that considered this day as the day of Ghadīr Khumm seems to be correct.

Suyūṭī narrated from Abu Saeed Khudrī that he said: When the Messenger of God, peace be upon him and his household, declared the guardianship of Ali on the day of Ghadīr Khumm, Gabriel descended upon him with this verse: "**Today I have perfected for you your religion**"²."

Suyūṭī has also reported the second narration from Abu Hurayrah, who said: "When it was the day of Ghadīr Khumm, which was the eighteenth day of Dhu al-Hijjah, the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) said: "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master." God therefore revealed: "**Today I have perfected your religion for you**"³."

Four important things happened on the day of Ghadīr Khumm:

1. The infidels and hypocrites despaired about the future of Islam, because Ali was declared as the Waliyy of God, religious leader and the successor of the Prophet, and a great blow was therefore inflicted on the infidels, who were waiting for an opportunity to destroy Islam after the death of the Prophet. A system without a leader is defenceless and has nothing to fear about, and enemies are always hopeful to destroy it. Leadership is a system that, if it is put in place, closes the path of being influenced and causes the perfect movement of society towards the goal of creation.

¹ . ibid.

² . ibid, p. 259.

³ . Jalāl al-Din Suyūṭī, Durr al-Manthūr, vol. 2, p. 259.

2. Religion without a leader is incomplete and imperfect, and it is not efficient for societal management. It was because of this that a lot of emphasis was placed on the declaration of the leadership on the day of Ghadīr Khumm so that the religion would be freed from being imperfect. It is understood from this, that religion and any system without a divine leader does not have the power to confront and resist the tyrants. The leadership is the system that speaks authoritatively in this resistance. If today, we separate the leadership from this system, the religion will move towards decline instead of perfection. If someone wants the supremacy of Islam, he must follow and obey the divine leadership absolutely; otherwise, the desired result will not be achieved. The cultural, political, social and economic aspects of the religious system revolve around the leadership and the fate of the society changes with the rotation of the leadership and this is where the Ghadīr displays its significance.
3. After the guardianship [Wilāyah], there is no other great blessing of this magnitude. In order to develop and be perfect, the Islamic society must start to live under the shadow of guardianship [Wilāyah], otherwise, it will be a manifestation of an ingratitude to a blessing, which must expect the downfall. If there is guardianship, the blessing is complete; otherwise, the society will never enjoy the blessing of divine sovereignty.
4. God is not satisfied with just any system, He is rather satisfied with a system where the guardianship [Wilāyah] is the axis and center of it and all its various dimensions are under the shadow of the guardianship [Wilāyah]. A guardianship [Wilāyah] system is the desired divine system since it has divine leadership, and such a system can move society toward perfection. Islam existed before the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] in Ghadīr, but it was thereafter that God announced His complete satisfaction with the religion of Islam. Without the appointment of a divine leader [an Imam] and the institution of Imamate, the

prophethood would not continue and the sending of the Prophets would be useless. Therefore, the institution of Imamate is not separated from religion; it is rather the basis of religion, which brings its commandments from the rhetoric status to that of the action. Islam is presented as the most acceptable system to God, because it has a righteous and divine leadership, and this, by itself is a great social victory for the Islamic Ummah. Without the Imamate, the religion is incomplete and undesirable, such a religion does not have the strength to progress, and the adherents of such a religion could not be victorious and defeat the tyrants on the battlefield.

The Verses of Surah al-Ma'ārij

Among the Qur'anic verses that are directly related to Ghadīr Khumm and the issue of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of the Commander of the Faithful, Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) are verses 1, 2 and 3 of the Qur'an 70 [Surah al-Ma'ārij]: **"An asker asked for a punishment sure to befall, -which none can avert from the faithless- from Allah, Lord of the lofty stations."**

Some Sunni Qur'anic exegetes and scholars have narrated the story of Ghadīr Khumm and the guardianship of Ali under [the explanation of] these verses and they have expressed many opinions about it.

The Occasion of Revelation of the Verse

Some Sunni Qur'anic exegetes have considered the first three verses of the Qur'an 70 [Surah al-Ma'ārij] to be revealed about Ghadīr Khumm. These verses were revealed after the declaration [of guardianship] at Ghadīr Khumm, and the reason for its revelation was the denial and refutation of Ghadīr and the guardianship of Ali by Ḥārith ibn Nu'mān Fahri. As the famous Sunni Qur'anic exegete, Qurṭubī writes in his Tafsīr thus: The questioner here [in this verse] is Al-Ḥārith ibn Al-Nu'mān Al-Fahri. This is because, when he heard what the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) said about Ali (may God be

pleased with him): "Whoever I am his master, then Ali is his master." He rode his camel and came until he put his camel to rest, then he said: O Muhammad, you enjoined us on behalf of God to bear witness that, there is no god but Allah and that you are the Messenger of God, so we accepted it from you. And to pray five times daily, and we accepted that from you; to pay zakat on our wealth and we accepted that from you; to fast every year in the month of Ramadan and we accepted that from you, and to perform Hajj and we accepted that from you. Then you were not satisfied with [all] these until you appointed your cousin over us. Is this act from you or God?! Then the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) said: "By God, Whom there is no god but Him. It is from none except from God." Then Al-Ḥārith turned and said: Oh God, if what Muhammad said is true, then rain stones from Heaven on us or bring upon us a painful punishment. By God, he [Al- Ḥārith] had not reached his camel until God rained stones upon him, which killed him. The verse was therefore revealed: **"An asker asked for a punishment sure to befall."**

In the Sunni Qur'anic exegetical and narrative sources, nine Qur'anic verses (that is, verses 3, 55, 56 and 67 of the Qur'an 5 [Surah Mā'idah], verses 1, 2 and 3 of the Qur'an 70 [Surah al-Ma'ārij] and verses 7 and 8 of the Qur'an 94 [Surah Inshirah]) are believed to focus specifically on Ghadīr and the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Hazrat Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib. Sunni scholars have brought these verses with many narrations and in various ways. These sound hadiths have been narrated from Ahl al-Bayt, the Companions and the Followers [Ṭābi'un]. All these narrations indicate the guardianship of Hazrat Ali and establish with great emphasis the occasion of the revelation of the 'Verses of Guardianship' regarding him.

The Interpretation of the Verse

The issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] is the most fateful issue of religion, which God has perfectly and completely dealt with. In these three verses¹, He has revealed the fate of the deniers of guardianship, which even with the presence of the Prophet of Mercy (PBUHH), a punishment has come down and destroyed him. This happened even though God has informed in the Qur'an that the punishment will not be sent down [upon the Prophet's Ummah] due to the presence of the Prophet in their midst and due to seeking of forgiveness by the believers: **"But Allah will not punish them while you are in their midst, nor will Allah punish them while they plead for forgiveness²."**

The Noble Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) said: "My life is to your advantage and likewise my death. They said: As for your life, O Messenger of God, we understood that, but what about your death?" He said: As for my life, God says: **"But Allah will not punish them while you are in their midst, nor will Allah punish them while they plead for forgiveness"**. As for my death, your deeds will be presented before me, so I seek forgiveness for you³."

Our good and bad deeds are continuously presented before the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) and he always asks for forgiveness for us. In this narration, the important point is that, after seeing our deeds, the Messenger of God asks for our forgiveness in the *Barzakh* world, and from this, the life of *Barzakh* and its operations become clearer. Many doubts of the opponents can be answered with this narration.

In another narration, it is stated thus: My life is to your advantage and likewise, my death. As for my life, you talk to me and I will talk to you. But as for my death, your deeds will be presented to me on the eve of every Monday and

¹ . Qur'an 70: 1-3 [The Translator].

² . Qur'an 8: 33

³ . Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 23, p. 349.

Thursday. For whatever good deeds you did, I thanked God for them, but I beseech God for your forgiveness for whatever bad deeds you did¹.

Rejection of guardianship [Wilāyah] is a very great sin that is punishable by death in this world, so it becomes a source of lesson for everyone and other people do not dare to reject it. These verses say that a questioner asked about a punishment that will befall the disbelievers at any cost, that no one can avert it because it is from God. In this verse, God has used the term "faithless" for the denier of the guardianship. This is an indication of a war between God and the denier of the guardianship [Wilāyah]. The denier of guardianship [Wilāyah] is actually at war with God by rejecting the guardianship [Wilāyah].

Ḥārith ibn Nu'mān has counted it as a favour upon the Prophet that he testified to the Unity of God and prophethood, and performed the acts of worship such as the ritual prayer, fasting, Hajj and zakat for the sake of the Prophet. He considered the Holy Prophet (May God forbid) an ordinary person, whom the more he is obeyed, the more he is indebted to him. This indicates that some companions did not comprehend the status of Prophethood, those who believed that the religious instructions were fabricated and presented by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his household). Such a notion is clearly observed in the narration related to Ḥārith. He, with utter disrespect in the sacred presence of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and household) and with extreme doubt, said that the appointment of the Commander of the Faithful to such a divine position on the day of Ghadīr Khumm was exclusively the act and desire of the Prophet himself. In this narration, his enmity with the Commander of the Faithful is also obvious, because he could no longer tolerate the leadership of Imam Ali, and he could say that, if it is from God, he demands divine punishment over himself. In addition, the Prophet's oath does not convince him either. Therefore, throughout history

¹ . ibid, vol. 17, p. 149.

and after the Companions of the Elephant, Ḥārith ibn Nu'mān was the second person on whom such a punishment has been sent down from Heaven.

It is obvious that the divine punishment was sent down on the deniers of Ali's guardianship, and this guardianship [Wilāyah] is the same as absolute caliphate and leadership. Otherwise, if the guardianship [Wilāyah] meant love, the punishment would not have been sent down on its deniers. In addition, God has considered the deniers of the guardianship [Wilāyah] in this verse to be faithless, while no one is considered faithless for denying a friendship. On the contrary, it is only by rejecting the guardianship [Wilāyah] that means "the one having more authority" and which is actually a divine office, that one will be caught in such a torment.

Ḥākim Ḥaskānī has brought these kinds of narrations through different channels such as Imam Ali, Imam Ali ibn Husain, Huzayfa ibn Yamāni, Abu Hurayrah, Ibn Abbas and Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas. In addition, Imam Bāqir and Imam Ṣādiq (peace be upon them) are also seen in the chain of the narration.

Despite all these narrations and the emphasis of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household), some people have forged another meaning for the Arabic term "*Mawla*". Among these people is the famous Sunni scholar, Abdul Karīm Khaṭīb, who says under the [explanation of] the 'Verse of Guardianship' [Wilāyah], after quoting the hadith of Ghadīr: "The term 'Mawla' here, means love and affection, not caliphate¹". The term 'Mawla' in the hadith of "Whoever I am his Mawla, Ali is his Mawla" is taken to mean love and affection. Whereas, the love of Hazrat Ali according to the Sunni and Shia narrations, is made obligatory in the 'Verse of Affection'².

¹ . Abdul Karīm Khaṭīb, Tafsīr al-Qur'an li al-Qur'an, vol. 3, p. 1125.

² . Qur'an 42: 23.

The Caliphate is a dimension of guardianship [Wilāyah], and the meaning of guardianship is wider than that of the Caliphate as it encompasses all social and other affairs. The verses of the Qur'an 70 [Surah Ma'ārij] focus on people's behaviour towards the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] and show that guardianship is not a trivial issue; but is rather one of the most significant issue of divine religion, which without its acceptance, salvation is impossible for anyone.

The deniers of guardianship [Wilāyah] will be punished in this world, so that it can serve as a source of lesson to others and the people could realize that, the acceptance of their good and righteous deeds also requires the acceptance of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of a divine Leader, but without recognizing, surrendering and accepting this, all their efforts will be in vain. Without accepting the authority of the divine leader, a person will be included among the deniers, and God Almighty will not accept seemingly good actions from such a person. These verses indicate how important the existence of a religious leader is in the fate of people in society. The people of every society are in dire need of spiritual and divine support, and that support is the leader of the society, who guides the fate of people from misery to prosperity, and with wisdom and insight, causes the evolution of the society and also causes positive changes in the society. It leads society towards ideals and great divine goals.

Summary

By studying the Sunni Qur'anic exegeses, it is found that there are hundreds of Qur'anic verses that refer to the leadership of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib and specify the various attributes of His Eminence, and their citation and analysis, therefore, require several volumes of books, which shows the high value of the issue of Imamate. Without the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] and imamate, society cannot progress.

Many things have been said about Ghadīr and the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Imam Ali (peace be upon him). Nine Qur'anic verses are found in Sunni Qur'anic exegeses about Ghadīr Khumm. Based on the Sunni Qur'anic exegeses, it is found that, before the declaration of guardianship [Wilāyah] in Ghadīr Khumm, the 'Verse of Forsaking'¹ [Ayah of Tārik]; the 'Verse of Appointment'² [Ayah of Naṣb] and the 'Verse of Proclamation'³ [Ayah of Iblāgh] were revealed, and all these verses are directly related to the issue of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali and Ghadīr Khumm, and the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali has been emphasized in all these verses.

In the 'Verse of Forsaking' [Ayah of Tārik], the Prophet's fear in declaring the guardianship [Wilāyah] is discussed and that was due to the hypocrisy, denial and accusation of the opponents. This fear was not personal, but a fear for society lest the society and the people deviate from the divine leadership system. It is the insight of the divine leader that shows those who have a vision of the future threats to the system.

¹ . Qur'an 11: 12.

² . Qur'an 94: 7-8.

³ . Qur'an 5: 67.

The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his household) did not forsake the revelation at all, but he wanted to remove the veil from the faces so that everyone would know what calamities would be inflicted upon Islam following the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] and the incessant war that will begin until the emergence of Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance). According to some Sunni narrations, the 'Verse of Forsaking' [Ayah of Tārik] was revealed in Arafah Square a week before Ghadīr and it is related to the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali.

In addition, the 'Verse of Appointment' [Ayah of Naṣb] is a divine order to declare guardianship [Wilāyah] after performing Hajj rituals in a suitable place. In this verse, the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) and the need to introduce a successor by His Eminence are discussed. At the same time, by using the expression "*Fanṣab*" [in the verse], the difficulty of the task has clearly been indicated. This verse, just as the reason for the revelation of the 'Verse of Proclamation' was to emphasize the declaration of Ali's guardianship in Ghadīr Square.

The greatest message of the 'Verse of Proclamation' [Ayah of Iblāgh] for the Islamic and human society is that when the Prophet's mission is endangered due to the non-declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali, then, there is no excuse left for anyone to continue his work without accepting the guardianship of Ali (peace be upon him). Without the guardianship of Ali, no deed of anyone is favourably accepted, even if that person is a Prophet of God. This is because, the scale for the evaluation of deeds after the declaration at Ghadīr is the guardianship [Wilāyah] of the Commander of the Faithful, Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib and it is on this basis that the famous hadith "If people are united on the love of Ali, God would not have created Hell¹" finds its meaning.

¹ . Muḥammad Ṣādiq Tehrani, *Al-Furqān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'an bi al-Qur'an wa al-Sunnah*, vol. 14, p. 257.

According to the authentic narrations of the two schools of thought, the 'Verse of Perfection' was revealed after the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali at Ghadīr Khumm Square. Any opposite viewpoint, such as its revelation on the eve or the day of Arafah, conflicts with one another in terms of the time, place of revelation and its indication, and they are therefore unreliable. In the 'Verse of Perfection', the most important impacts of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali have been clarified, as how crucial this issue is, and with what effort it has been communicated to the Muslim Ummah.

Three verses of the Qur'an 70 [Surah al-Ma'ārij] give a special focus to the people's reaction to the issue of guardianship. These verses show that guardianship is not a trivial matter, but it is rather one of the most important issues of the divine religion, which without its acceptance, salvation is impossible for anyone. The denier of the guardianship [Wilāyah] will be tormented not only in the hereafter but also in this world, so that it can serve as a lesson to others and make the people realize that, the acceptance of their good and righteous deeds also requires the acceptance of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of a divine leader. And without recognizing, submitting and accepting the guardianship [Wilāyah], all their efforts will be in vain.

Without accepting the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali, man shall be categorized among the deniers, and God will not accept his good deeds. These verses clearly express the necessity and significance of the existence of a religious leader for a society and likewise, the vital and decisive role a religious leader plays in the fate of an individual, society and the nation as a whole. The people need spiritual and divine support at every time and every place, and that support is the divine leader of the society, the one who guides the fate of people from misery to prosperity.

These verses reveal the significance of the issue of the guardianship [Wilāyah] to everyone and with great emphasis; request the people to go along with the plans

of this divine system because the people's salvation lies in accepting this system and acting according to its life-giving plans.

All the emphasis of the Holy Qur'an and the narrations is to keep Ghadīr and the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] alive. This is because, as long as [message of] Ghadīr is not alive, there will be no news of the pristine Islam. The spiritual existence of Islam is attached to Ghadīr. Islam exists with Ghadīr, it is therefore obligatory for everyone to understand the message of Ghadīr and the guardianship [Wilāyah]. It was because of this that the Prophet (peace be upon him and his household) after the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali, obliged those present to convey the message of Ghadīr to those who were absent, and likewise, the fathers are obliged to transfer the spiritual legacy of Ghadīr to their offspring until the Day of Judgment. The heritage of Ghadīr must be passed on to the offspring and always kept alive in the hearts.

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Back Cover page

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Based on the findings and arguments of this research in the Sunni Qur'anic exegeses, we find out that before the declaration of the guardianship [Wilāyah] in Ghadīr, the 'Verse of Forsaking' [Ayah of Tārik]; the 'Verse of Appointment' [Ayah of Naṣb] and the 'Verse of Proclamation' [Ayah of Iblāgh] were revealed, and all these verses directly refer to the issue of the guardianship [Wilāyah] of Ali (peace be upon him) and Ghadīr Khumm. These verses reveal the significance of the issue of guardianship [Wilāyah] to everyone so that they can follow these divine commands.