

7. The Protection of the Qur'an from Alteration

Synopsis: Alterations to the meaning of the Qur'an that Muslims are in agreement about; alterations that did not occur in the Qur'an, and on which Muslims are in agreement about; alterations that occurred, and on which there is disagreement; declarations of the major Imamite figures regarding the absence of alteration, this being part of their religious beliefs; abrogation of the recitation—a well-known doctrine among Sunni scholars; utterances of the prominent Companions of the Prophet about the occurrence of alteration; the belief in the abrogation of a recitation is tantamount to the belief in alteration; five proofs against the [presence of] alteration; specious arguments of those maintaining a belief in alteration.

Before embarking upon the main topic here, it is appropriate to begin the treatment of the subject with certain matters that have relevance to the purpose of this study, and without which this discussion cannot proceed.

The Meaning of Alteration

The word *tahrif* is applied, and carries a number of meanings, by way of concurrence. Some types of alteration were made to the Qur'an and were agreed upon by the Muslims; other types of alteration did not occur, as Muslims also agreed. Still others are the subject of dispute among them. Let us now turn to the details.

First, the word *tahrif* has the sense of "transferring a word from its original sense to another, and transforming its meaning into another." Such is the meaning derived from the following verse of the Qur'an:

"Some of those who are Jews change (yuharrifuna) from their context [in the Scripture]" (Qur'an 4:46).

There is no dispute among Muslims about whether this kind of alteration occurred in the Book of God. Thus, anyone who explains the Qur'an incorrectly, ascribing to it meanings other than those it conveys, has committed an alteration. One can find many followers of the sinful deviations and corrupt doctrines,

who have changed the meaning of the Qur'an by interpreting its verses in accordance with their own opinions and their heretic tendencies.

There are prophetic statements prohibiting such alteration of the meanings, and the doer of these alterations has been condemned in a number of traditions. Among these traditions is the one reported by al-Kulayni, whose chain of transmission goes back to the Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (peace be upon him), who wrote in his letter to Sa'd al-Khayr:

Among their ways of repudiating the Book [of God] is that they stand by its wording, whereas they misconstrue its limits. Hence, they see it but do not submit to it. And the ignorant ones are pleased with their memorization of the text, while the learned are grieved by their leaving obedience to it. [1](#)

Second, the word *tahrif* has also the sense of "an omission or addition in the letters or the vocalization [of a word], while the Qur'an remains preserved [in its meanings] and without loss [of any part], even if [the altered words] were not distinct from others."

Alteration in this sense definitely occurred in the Qur'an. Earlier in this book, we demonstrated that the readings of the Qur'an have reached us through an uninterrupted transmission. This means that the revealed Qur'an accords with only one of the [ten preserved] readings, while the rest contain additions or omissions.

Third, the word *tahrif* is used in the sense of "the omission or addition of a word or two, while the revealed Qur'an remains preserved [in its meanings]."

Alteration in this sense occurred in the early days of Islam, and definitely during the period of the Companions. The evidence of this is the consensus among Muslims that 'Uthman ordered his governors to burn all the codices except the one codex that was collected under his orders. This shows that these [destroyed] texts were different from the one that was officially compiled; otherwise, there was no justification to destroy them. Some scholars have recorded the instances that had occasioned differences among these codices. One of them was 'Abd Allah b. Abi Dawud al-Sijistani, who named his work *Kitab al-Masahif* (The Book of the Codices [of the Qur'an]). Thus, there is no doubt that alterations were made either by 'Uthman or by the scribes of the destroyed codices. However, we shall explain that what was compiled under 'Uthman was the Qur'an that is now known among Muslims, which had passed to them, successively, from the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny), hand to hand. The addition and omission had occurred in those other codices that were discontinued after 'Uthman's reign. As for this existing Qur'an, there is no addition or omission in it.

In short, for those who maintain that the transmission of those other codices has stopped—which is actually the case—*tahrif* in this third sense did occur in the early days of Islam, but it certainly ended during the reign of 'Uthman, and the text was restricted to the one whose uninterrupted transmission from the Prophet was established. As for those who maintain that all the codices continued to be transmitted without interruption, they have to accept the corollary that alteration in the sense that

Muslims are not in agreement upon what would have occurred in the revealed Qur'an, and that part of it is lost. We noted the statements of al-Tabari and other scholars regarding 'Uthman's abolition of the six other *harf* in which the Qur'an was revealed, and restricting it to only one.²

Fourth, *tahrif* occurs in the sense of "addition or omission in a verse or a sura, while the revealed Qur'an remains preserved"; and it is accepted that the Prophet had recited these.

Alteration in this sense also definitely occurred in the Qur'an. For example, one of the things on which Muslims are agreed is that the Prophet recited the basmala [the verse that reads, "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Beneficent"] before each *sura* except the ninth, entitled "*al-Tawba*." Sunni scholars, however, are in a disagreement on whether this sentence is part of the Qur'an. A group of them opted for the view that it is not part of the Qur'an; in fact, the followers of the Maliki school of jurisprudence go as far as regarding it as reprehensible to recite it before the *Surat al-Fatiha* (Opening Sura) in the obligatory daily prayers, except if the worshiper determines it to be outside the dispute; on the other hand, others among the Sunnis consider the *bismalla* to be part of the Qur'an.

As for the Shiites, they have accepted the *bismalla* as part of each sura except sura nine, "*al-Tawba*". Some Sunni scholars have adopted this as the sound opinion. We shall treat the matter in detail when we begin our commentary on "*Surat al-Fatiha*." Thus, in the revealed Qur'an, there has certainly occurred *tahrif* [in the fourth sense] that is, through addition or omission in the verse or the chapter.

Fifth, *tahrif* is used in the sense of addition; this is to say that parts of the Qur'an that we now have are not a revealed Word. Alteration in this sense is not true [of the Qur'an]. This is the consensus of all Muslims and it is, indeed, known imperatively. Sixth, *tahrif* in the meaning of omission, indicates that the text that we have does not include all of the Qur'an that was revealed from heaven; rather, some of it is lost for the people.

Alteration in this sense is the one on which there is disagreement. A group has accepted it as true while others have denied it.

[The Opinion of Muslims Regarding al-Tahrif](#)

The accepted view among Muslims is that no alteration has occurred in the Qur'an, and that the text that is in our hands is the whole Qur'an that was revealed to the great Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny). A large number of prominent scholars have proclaimed this. Among them is the leading traditionist (*muhaddith*) Muhammad b. Babawayh. He has counted the belief in nonalteration of the Qur'an among the doctrines of the Imamite (Twelver) Shi'ites. The jurist-doctor of the Imamite Shi'ite community, Abu Ja'far Muhammad b. al-Hasan al-Tusi, is another major figure who holds this view. He puts forth this view at the beginning of his exegesis of the Qur'an, entitled *al-Tibyan*, and has also cited the opinion, to that effect, of his teacher, al-Sharif al-Murtada, supporting it with the most complete evidence. The famous exegete al-Tabarsi has also asserted this doctrine, in the introduction to his

commentary, *Majma' al-Bayan*. Among the leading jurists, this view is declared by Shaykh Ja'far Kashif al-Ghita' in the section of his juridical work, *Kashif al-Ghita'*, that deals with the Qur'an; in that section, he asserts that there is a consensus on the issue. The most learned jurist, al-Shahshahani, in his discussion on the Qur'an in the work entitled *al-Urwa al-Wuthqa*, maintains the same opinion and ascribes the doctrine of nonalteration to the majority of jurists. Other scholars who uphold this view include the famous traditionist, al-Mawla Muhsin al-Qasani [al Kashi],³ and the leading teacher al-Shaykh Muhammad Jawad al-Balaghi.⁴

A group of scholars has ascribed the doctrine of nonalteration to a large number of the most eminent among them. These include al-Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Shaykh al Baha'i, al-Qadi Nur Allah al-Shustari, and others as prominent. On the other hand, those who hold this view implicitly include Shi'ite scholars who have written about the necessity of the Imamate and have mentioned the shortcomings without dealing with the question of alteration. Had these scholars believed that alterations had been made in the Qur'an, this would have been more worthy of mention than the burning of [the unofficial] codices⁵ and other such accounts.

In short, the common view among Shi'ite scholars and researchers, or, rather, what is unanimously agreed upon by them, is the view that no alteration has been made to the Qur'an. However, a faction of Shi'ite traditionists and a group of Sunni scholars have held the view that alterations were made. According to al-Rafi'i, "A group of scholastic theologians (*ahl al-kalam*)—who have no preoccupation except to engage in conjecture and allegorical interpretation (*ta'wil*), and to seek procedures of disputation in every injunction and doctrine—maintain the possibility that some passages of the Qur'an may be missing. They attribute this to the way it was collected."⁶ AlTabarsi, in his *Majma' al-Bayan*, ascribes this view to the Hashwiyya group among the Sunnis.

The reader will soon see that the view about the abrogated readings is the same as that about the alteration. Therefore, the widely held view, among Sunnis, that the recital of some verses of the Qur'an has been abrogated should entail a similar acceptance of the view that the Qur'an was altered.

Abrogation and the Recital (tilawa)

The majority of Sunni scholars mention that the recital of some parts of the Qur'an was abrogated, and they support this view by citing the traditions that relate that these were part of the Qur'an during the Prophet's lifetime. It is appropriate to cite some [twelve] of these traditions in order to show that maintaining the authenticity of these traditions necessitates the belief that alteration in the Qur'an did take place.

1. It was related by Ibn 'Abbas that 'Umar proclaimed from the pulpit:

Verily, God sent Muhammad (peace be upon him) with the truth, and revealed upon him the Book. Among those verses that God revealed is the verse about stoning (*al rajm*), which we read, understood,

and stipulated. Accordingly, the Messenger of God stoned [the fornicator], and we continued to do so after him. However, I am afraid that with the lapse of time, someone might say, "By God, we did not find the verse about stoning in the Book of God!" and, thus, be misguided into forsaking an obligation [ordained through] its revelation by God. Indeed, the stoning is certainly prescribed in the Book of God for anyone who commits adultery . . . Moreover, we used to read from the Book of God the following: "Do not awaken an aversion toward your fathers, because it is disbelief for you if you awaken aversion toward your fathers," or, "Indeed, it is disbelief for you if you awaken aversion toward your fathers."⁷

Al-Suyuti mentions that Ibn Ashtah reports in his book, *al-Masahif*, that al-Layth b. Sa'd said: "The first person [to order] the collection of the Qur'an was Abu Bakr, and Zayd [b. Thabit] wrote it. . . . 'Umar reported the verse about the stoning, but Zayd did not write it, because 'Umar was alone" [in maintaining that it was part of the Qur'an].⁸ The verse about the stoning [of the fornicator], which 'Umar claimed to be part of the Qur'an, and which was not accepted as such, has been transmitted in several variants [in the books on the tradition]:

If a [married] man and a woman commit adultery, then certainly stone them—a warning from God. God is Mighty and Wise.

A [married] man and a woman—certainly stone them because of what they have done to [fulfill] the lust.

If a [married] man and a woman commit adultery, then stone them without any hesitation.

Whatever the case, there is nothing in the Qur'an to deduce the injunction about stoning. Hence, if the tradition is authentic, then, undoubtedly, a verse from the Qur'an has been lost.

2. Al-Tabarani has related an authenticated tradition that goes back to 'Umar b. al Khattab, who said, "The Qur'an consists of 1,027,000 words."⁹ However, the Qur'an that is in our hands does not reach even one-third this number; hence, two-thirds of the Qur'an is missing.

3. It has been related, by Ibn 'Abbas, that 'Umar said:

Verily, God, the Exalted and Glorified, sent Muhammad with the truth, and sent with him the Book. Among those [verses] revealed to him was the verse about the stoning. Thus, the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his progeny) stoned [the fornicator] and we stoned after him.

Then he said:

We used to read [the verse in the Qur'an], "Do not awaken an aversion toward your fathers, because it is disbelief," or, "It is disbelief for you if you awaken an aversion toward your father."¹⁰

4. It has been related by Nafi' that ['Abd Allah] b. 'Umar said: "Verily, someone among you would say, 'I have acquired the complete Qur'an,' and would not know its complete extent. Much of the Qur'an has gone, and, accordingly, he should say, 'I have acquired what has appeared from it.'"¹¹

5. 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr related on the authority of 'A'isha, who said: "The 'Surat al Ahzab' that used to be recited during the lifetime of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) was two hundred verses. But when 'Uthman [ordered] the compilation of the codices, we could not count in it except what is there now." [12](#)

6. Hamida bint Abi Yunus said:

My father, who was eighty years old at that time, read to me [the following verse] from 'A'isha's codex: "Indeed God and His angels bless the Prophet. O you who believe!

Bless him and salute him with worthy salutation, *and those who pray in the front ranks.*" [13](#)

This was [how it read] before 'Uthman changed the text. [14](#)

7. Abu Harb b. Abi al-Aswad related, on the authority of his father:

Abil Musa al-Ash'ari sent for the reciters of Basra, and some three hundred personages who had studied the reading of the Qur'an came together in his presence. He said: "You are the best among the people of Basra and their reciters. Recite it therefore continuously lest time passes by and your hearts become hardened, as were the hearts of those who were before you [i.e., the people of the Book]. We used to read in the Qur'an a sura which we used to liken in length and severity of tone to 'Silrat al-Bara' a' [sura 9]. However, I have forgotten it, except that I remember the [following] verse from it: 'If the son of Adam had two valleys of wealth, he would have wished for a third one. Nothing fills the belly of the son of Adam except soil.' Moreover, we used to read a sura in the Qur'an which we used to liken to [one of the suras beginning with] *sabbib* (magnify). But I have forgotten it except the [following] verse from it: 'O you who believe, why do you say that which you do not do. This would be written as a testimony on your necks, and you would be asked to account for it on the Day of Resurrection.'" [15](#)

8. Zarr reported the following:

Ubayy b. Ka'b asked me "O Zarr! How many verses have you read in 'Surat al-Ahzab'?" I said, "Seventy-three verses." He said, "No, it was equal in length to 'Surat al-Baqara,' if not longer." [16](#)

9. Ibn Abu Dawud and Ibn al-Anbari relate that Ibn Shihab said:

We have heard that the Qur'an was revealed in many verses. But those who knew it were killed at the Battle of Yamama. They were the ones who remembered it. It was not taught, nor was it written after them." [17](#)

10. 'Amra reported from 'A'isha, who said:

Among the verses revealed in the Qur'an was, "Ten ascertained sucklings make unlawful" [a marriage between a boy and a girl who are nursed by the same woman]. Then the verse was abrogated to "five ascertained sucklings." When the Prophet died, the "five sucklings" were still being recited as part of the

Qur'an. [18](#)

11. Al-Musawwar b. Makhrama reported the following:

'Umar said to 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf, "Do you remember that which was [part of the] revealed [text as it was related] to us, 'Fight as you fought them the first time?' for we do not find it [in the codex]." He ['Abd al-Rahman] said, "It was removed along with other things that were removed [from the Qur'an]." [19](#)

12. It was related by Abu Sufyan al-Khala'i that one day Maslama b. Mukhallad al Ansari told them, "Tell me of two verses of the Qur'an that were not recorded in the codex." They could not inform him, although Abu al-Kunud Sa'd b. Malik was among them. Then Ibn Maslama recited: 'Those who believed and migrated and fought in the way of God with their wealth and their lives: Be of good cheer, you are indeed the prosperous ones. And those who sheltered them, supported them, and defended them against those with whom God is wrathful: About those, not a soul knows what is in store for them [in the hereafter] that would please their eyes, a reward for what they have performed.'[20](#)

Furthermore, it has been narrated, through several chains of transmission, that the suras entitled "al-Khal'" (Absolute Shunning) and "al-Hafd" (Absolute Obedience) were recorded in the codices of Ibn 'Abbas and Ubayy, which, in part, read:

O God, we seek Your help and ask your forgiveness; we praise and never deny You; we shun and desert those who act wickedly toward You. O God, You alone do we worship and to You we offer our prayers and prostrate ourselves. To You is our endeavor, and in You we seek refuge [or we are quick to obey you? serve you?]. We hope for Your mercy, and fear Your punishment. Indeed, Your punishment to the unbelievers is affixed.

And such other things have been related that have no significance for us to examine.[21](#) Undoubtedly, the belief in the abrogation of recitals is similar to the belief in alteration and omission. In other words, the abrogation of the recital of these [Qur'anic] verses was decided either by the Prophet himself or by those who assumed community leadership after him. If those who hold this opinion intend to convey that the abrogation was made by the Messenger of God, then such an assertion is in need of proof. However, all the scholars are in agreement that it is not permissible to abrogate the Book by means of a single narration (*khbar al-wahid*), and this has been stated clearly by a group of them in the works dealing with the principles of jurisprudence (*usul al-fiqh*), and in other such works.[22](#) Significantly, al-Shafi'i and the majority of his associates, including a large number of the Zahirites, have definitely asserted that the abrogation of [any part of] the Book is inadmissible even if supported by an uninterruptedly narrated tradition (*sunna mutawatira*). Ahmad b. Hanbal follows this view in one of the two traditions narrated on his authority. Indeed, even some of those who maintained the possibility of the abrogation of the Book by means of an uninterruptedly narrated tradition have denied that such a thing has actually happened.

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Consequently, how can one correctly attribute the abrogation to the Prophet on the basis of the traditions

reported by these narrators? This is not to mention that the attribution of the abrogation to the Prophet is incompatible with those traditions which relate that the omission took place after his death. On the other hand, if they meant that the abrogation took place under those who assumed the leadership of the community after the Prophet, then this would be exactly the same as maintaining the belief in alteration (*tahrif*). On this basis, it is possible to claim that the view that the Qur'an was altered is the doctrine of the majority of Sunni scholars, because they maintain the permissibility of abrogating the recitation of a verse regardless of whether the ordinance contained in it is abrogated or not. It is significant that the scholars of fundamental legal theory among them have hesitated to permit the ritually unclean persons to recite those verses whose recitation was abrogated, or to permit those who were not in the state of ablutions to touch them. Some of them have actually opted for the opinion denying this permission. It is true, on the other hand, that a group of Mu'tazilites have upheld the impermissibility of the abrogation of a recitation. [24](#)

It is surprising that a group of Sunni scholars has denied that the belief in the alteration of the Qur'an can be ascribed to any one of them. In fact, al-Alusi contradicts al-Tabarsi's attribution of this belief to the Hashwiyya [among the Sunnis], saying, "None of the Sunni scholars has held such a belief." Stranger still is that he maintains that al-Tabarsi's opinion regarding the absence of alteration in the Qur'an had grown out of the untenability of the Shi'ite belief in alteration, and that that was what made al-Tabarsi seek refuge in its rejection.[25](#) This is despite the fact that, as we have already mentioned, Shi'ite scholars and researchers commonly recognize, or, rather, are generally in agreement, that no alteration in the sense of omission has been made in the Qur'an. Al-Tabarsi has cited, at length, al-Sharif al-Murtada's opinion in this regard, and his most complete and convincing arguments refuting the opinion about the alteration.[26](#)

Alteration and the Book of God

In view of the preceding discussion, the truth of the matter is that alteration, in the sense that has caused disputes among Muslim scholars, did not occur in the Qur'an at all, as the following instances of proof demonstrate.

The first of these is God's saying, "**Lo! We, even We, reveal the Reminder, and lo! We verily are its Guardian**" (*Qur'an 15:9*). This verse provides proof that the Qur'an is divinely protected against alteration, and that the unjust, corrupt hands shall never be able to play with it.

Those who maintain the belief in alteration interpret this verse in several ways. First, they say that *al-dhikr* (the Reminder) refers to the Prophet, for it is used in regard to him in God's saying, "Now God has sent down to you a reminder (*dhikr*):

A messenger reciting to you the revelations of God" (Qur'an 65: 10-11).

This suggestion is a clear error, for in both cases, *dhikr* refers to the Qur'an, as indicated by the use of

the verb *anzala* (to send down, reveal). Had the reference been to the Prophet, then the appropriate term would have been *arsala* (to send), or something to that effect. Moreover, even if the above suggestion holds true for the second of the two verses, it cannot be true of the first. For the protection verse [the first of the two] is preceded by God's saying, "And they say, '**O you to whom the Reminder (*al-dhikr*) is revealed; lo! you are indeed a madman!**'" (*Qur'an 15:6*).

There is no doubt that *al-dhikr* in this last verse is a reference to the Qur'an, and, hence, it proves that *al-dhikr* in the protection verse is also the Qur'an.

Second, they maintain that the protection of the Qur'an means protection from being maligned and from the invalidation of its lofty meanings and profound teachings.

This suggestion is even more manifestly erroneous. If protection against being maligned means protection against being reviled by the unbelievers and the obstinate, then there is no doubt that this is incorrect, for those people have reviled the Qur'an more often than can be counted. However, if it meant that the Qur'an is unshakable in its meanings, convincing in its reasoning, and straightforward in its approach—and, by virtue of these aspects and others like them, is far too high in status to be affected by the slandering of the malignant and the doubts of skeptics—this would be correct. However, this would not be in the sense of protection after its revelation, as stated in the protection verse, for the Qur'an, with its special characteristics, protects itself and does not need an external protector. Moreover, this is not the sense suggested by the verse, for it intends the protection of the Qur'an to occur after its revelation.

Third, they maintain that the verse points to the protection of the Qur'an in general and does not indicate that every single copy is protected. This is not necessarily the object of the verse. If what is intended is its protection in general, then it is sufficient for it to be preserved with the [twelfth] Hidden Imam (peace be upon him). This suggestion is the weakest of them all. The protection of the Qur'an must necessarily occur among those for whom it was revealed—that is, humankind in general. As for being preserved with the Imam, this is similar to being preserved in the Preserved Tablet [*al-lawh al-mahfaz*; cf. *Qur'an 85:22*], or with one of the angels. This opinion is undoubtedly weak and resembles someone saying, "I am sending you a gift, and I am protecting it in my possession or in the possession of one close to me."

It is indeed strange that the person who made this suggestion should say that the verse means the protection of the Qur'an in general and not every single copy of it. It is as if he presumes that the *dhikr* (Reminder) is intended for the written or the recited Qur'an, of which there are certainly many copies. However, it is obvious that this is not the intention here, for the written or the recited Qur'an does not have external permanence. It is for this reason that the protection verse does not refer to this written or recited Qur'an; rather, the *dhikr* refers to the actual Qur'an that was revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny), and the reference to its protection involves its immunity from being trifled with and lost, so that all people will have access to it. This resembles our saying that such and such a poem is "preserved," by which we mean that it is immune from loss in such a way that access to it is impossible.

To be sure, there is yet another argument that invalidates this verse as proof against the occurrence of alteration. This is that whoever claims that the Qur'an has been altered will have to assume that this verse may have been altered, too, because it is one of the verses of the Qur'an; hence, using it as evidence would not be valid until the absence of alteration is proved. Otherwise, if we try to prove the absence of alteration through such verses, this would result in an invalid circular argument.

This argument addresses itself to those who bar the holy Family of the Prophet from the divinely ordained caliphate and who do not follow their teachings and their actions. Such persons are unable to refute this argument. But for those who regard the Prophet's family as the incontestable proof of God for His creatures, and as intimately linked with the Book of God in the obligation to adhere [to it and to them together], this argument does not affect them. The reason for this is that the reliance of the Family on the Qur'an for their decisions, and the fact that they confirmed their followers in its use, proves the evidential nature of the existing Qur'an. And if it is maintained that an alteration has occurred, then, at the most, the evidential nature of the Book will refute the claim of alteration on the strength of their confirmation of it. The second instance of proof that alteration did not occur is God's saying: ***"For lo!, it is an unassailable Book. Falsehood cannot come at it from before it or behind it. [It is] a revelation from the Wise, the Owner of Praise" (Qur'an 41:41--42).***

This noble verse proves that falsehood in all its forms is excluded from the Book of God. This is because when exclusion is applied to the nature of a thing, it implies a general application. There is no doubt that alteration is one of the forms of falsehood, and accordingly, it should have no way to the Book of God.

Those who hold that alterations have occurred in the Qur'an respond to the above argument as follows:

The verses [Qur'an 41:41-42] in question assert that the Book is divinely protected from inconsistencies in its ordinances, and deny that there is falsehood in what it says. To support this argument, those who held it resorted to the tradition related by 'Ali

Ibrahim al-Qummi in his exegesis of the Qur'an, on the authority of the Imam al-Baqir (peace be upon him), who said [in an explanation of the protection verse], "No falsehood can come to it [the Qur'an] from the Torah, or the Gospels, or the Psalms, that preceded it, nor from that which follows it; that is, there will not be a book that will revoke it." Furthermore, they cite the tradition of the two Imams, al-Baqir and al-Sadiq, reported by al-Tabarsi in his *Majma' al-Bayan*: "There is no falsehood in [the Qur'an] in what it reports about the past, nor in what it reports about the future."

The response to this argument is as follows:

The two traditions do not restrict falsehood to [misinformation and abrogation] only; thus, they do not contradict the broad applicability of the verse. This is particularly true when we take note of the traditions which convey that Qur'anic notions are not limited to specific objectives. We have already cited some of these traditions in the section dealing with the excellence of the Qur'an in the introduction. Undoubtedly, the verse refers to the elimination of all sorts of falsehood from the Qur'an in all ages. Since alteration is

one of the most obvious forms of falsehood, the Qur'an must therefore be immune from it. The proof that alteration is a form of falsehood that the verses deny in regard to the Qur'an is that [the first of them] describes the Book as "unassailable." Unassailability implies that the thing concerned is protected from change and loss. Had the word *batil* (falsehood) been specifically intended as inconsistency and untruth, it would not have been in harmony with describing the Book as unassailable.

Alteration and the Sunna

The third instance of proof is provided by the traditions about the "two things of high estimation" (*al-thaqalayn*), which the Prophet left among those in his community, saying that they shall not part until they meet him at the Pool [of al-Kawthar]. Accordingly, he commanded the community to adhere to both of these things, and these are the Book and the Family (*al-'itra*). These traditions have been successively reported by both Sunni and Shi'ite chains of transmission. The proof deduced from these traditions regarding the absence of alteration in the Book of God is twofold:

First, the belief in alteration necessarily means that it is no longer incumbent [on the community] to adhere to the revealed Book, because it has been lost to the community due to the alteration. However, the obligation to adhere to the Book remains until the Day of Resurrection, as the traditions about the "two things of high estimation" indicate. Therefore, the belief in alteration is absolutely erroneous.

To make this clearer, [it should be noted that] the traditions point to the bond between the Family and the Book and assert that they would remain among people until the Day of Resurrection. Consequently, it is necessary that there should always be a person linked to the Book, and it is necessary that the Book should always exist so as to be linked to the Family, until they return to the Prophet by the Pool. This would be in order that the adherence to them would serve to protect the community from being led astray, as the Prophet declared in this tradition. It goes without saying that the adherence to the Family means supporting them, obeying them in what they command and prohibit, and following their guidance. This thing is not conditional upon establishing contact with the Imam and speaking to him directly, for this was not possible for every obligated person (*mukallaf*) during the period of [his] presence, let alone [the current] period of occultation. The stipulation about the possibility for some people to reach the Imam (peace be upon him) is a claim without evidence and justification. The Shi'ites, during the absence of the Imam, adhere to him, support him, and carry out his commands. One of these commands is to refer to the transmitters of the Imams' teachings in dealing with future contingencies. As for adhering to the Qur'an, it is something that is impossible without accessing it. Hence, it is necessary that it should be among the community, in order for them to adhere to it. Otherwise, they might stray from the truth. This elucidation directs us to regard the invalidity of the argument that the Qur'an is preserved and is in the possession of the Hidden Imam, because the existence of the Qur'an [whether it is in the Preserved Tablet or with the Hidden Imam] is not, by itself, sufficient for people to adhere to it.

An objection has been made to this elucidation to the effect that the traditions about the *thaqalayn*

indicate that the verses that are free of alteration are those that contain the ordinances, because these are the ones that people have been asked to adhere to. Consequently, they do not refute the occurrence of alteration in the other verses of the Qur'an.

Our response to this is that the entire Qur'an, with all its verses, has been revealed by God for the guidance of humanity, and for leading them to their full potential of perfection in all respects. As such, there is no difference between verses which contain ordinances and other types of verses. We pointed out earlier that, although the apparent sense of the Qur'an is a narrative one, its hidden purpose is exhortation. However, most of those who believe that alterations have occurred in the Qur'an claim that that happened in the verses that deal with the question of *wilaya* (authority) or in those that resemble them. It is clear that if these verses are proven to be part of the Qur'an, then adherence to them should also be incumbent on the community.

Second, the belief in alteration entails that the Qur'an could not be used as an evidential text, and its literal sense should, accordingly, not be adhered to. Moreover, those who hold the alteration view would be implying that the pure Imams confirmed the Book that is in our hands and approved the idea that people should resort to it even though its alteration had been established. In other words, the evidential character of the existing Book derives from its having been endorsed by the Imams as a basis for reasoning. The obvious meaning of the uninterruptedly transmitted traditions is that the Qur'an is one of the two recourses for the community and the foremost of the two sources of independent proof to which it is necessary to adhere. Rather, it is the greater of the two things of high estimation (*thaqalayn*). Accordingly, its evidential character is not derived from the evidential character of the smaller of the two esteemed things.

The reason that the Qur'an ceases to be the proof when its alteration is assumed is the possibility that the literal meanings of the Qur'an have a context [which is presumably omitted], and which points to the opposite of this apparent meaning. In this case it is not acceptable to rely on the [principle that states that the] fundamentality of the absence of the context [is applicable] because [certain words or phrases] have been omitted. The proof based on this principle is derived from the rational argument that one should follow the literal sense, and should not be concerned with the possibility of the context being inconsistent with it. We explained, in our work on the fundamentals of jurisprudence, that the established measure of rational principles, no matter how small, dictates that rational persons not be concerned about the existence of a separate context, nor about a connected context when the reason for the probability is the neglect on the part of the speaker to explain, or on the part of the listener to be informed. As for the probability of the existence of the connected context apart from these two reasons, the rational persons have suspended judgment about following the apparent sense of the passage. The following example illustrates this case. A person receives a letter from someone he must obey, in which he is ordered to buy a house. But he finds that part of the letter is destroyed, and thinks it probable that the destroyed part contained the specifications of the house he was required to purchase, as to its size, price, or location. The rational persons would not adhere to the general tone of the existing letter, relying

on the fundamentality of the absence of the connected context, and would not purchase any house as a fulfilment of the order of the person who sent the letter, nor would they regard the one who carries out such a command as having obeyed the instructions of the master.

The reader's doubts may go further than this, and he may say that this view undermines the foundation of the science of jurisprudence, and the deduction of juridical decisions. The reason for saying this is that the most important documentary evidence [for the deduction of juridical decisions] is found in the traditions transmitted from the infallible Imams (peace be upon them), and it is likely that their words and phrases have connected contexts that have not reached us. [In that case how could one trust these reports in deriving legal injunctions?] However, a little careful analysis of the situation would remove this illusion. This is because the fundamental principle in the matter of reporting, when the connected context does not exist, is the apparent narration of the reporter, for it is incumbent upon him to explain such a context if the statement of the infallible Imam had one. The probability that the reporter might have neglected to mention this context cannot be taken into consideration.

Certainly, the belief in alteration means that adherence to the literal meanings of the Qur'an is not permitted. And, in order to prove this conclusion, there is no need to assert comprehensive knowledge about the inconsistency of the apparent sense in some verses, so as to respond to this conclusion by maintaining that the occurrence of alteration in the Qur'an is not in need of such knowledge as a general principle. Moreover, this overall knowledge cannot be implemented, because some aspects of it are not part of the verses that contain injunctions, and accordingly, it is of no consequence in the matter of performing [Legally ordained duties]. However, the comprehensive knowledge can be implemented if it has practical consequences for any aspect of [performing a religious obligation].

Some of those who believe that alterations have been made in the Qur'an may claim that the guidance that the infallible Imams provide for reasoning on the basis of the apparent meanings of the Qur'an, and their confirming their followers on adherence to it, establish the evidential character of the apparent meanings of the Qur'an, even though this character had formerly been lost because of alteration.

Nonetheless, this assertion is unsound, because this guidance from the infallible Imams, and this stipulation to their followers to adhere to the apparent meanings of the Qur'an, result from the Qur'an itself being an [unaltered], independent proof, and not because they wanted to take the initiative in making it so.

Permission to Recite the Chapters in the Salat (Ritual Prayers)

The fourth [source of] proof [that alteration did not occur]: The Imams of the Prophet's Family have ordered the recitation of a complete sura of the Qur'an after the recitation of "*al-Fatiha*" (the Opening Sura) in the first two cycles of the obligatory prayer, and have decided that it is permissible to divide one sura or more [between the first two cycles] of the prayer with verses.[27](#)

It is clear that these rulings were established in the Shari'a when the prayer was ordained, and that precautionary dissimulation (*taqiyya*) is not at all involved here. Consequently, for those who maintain that the Qur'an was altered, it is necessary that they should not recite any sura that is likely to have been altered, because a definite obligation requires a definite exemption [for the performer to be released from its execution]. A person who holds the alteration view may claim that he cannot find a complete sura [free of possible alteration]. In that case, it is not obligatory for him [to recite a complete sura in the prayer], because the divine ordinances are applicable to those who are capable of performing them. Nevertheless, this claim is accurate if one maintains that alteration has occurred in all the suras of the Qur'an.

But if there is a chapter, like "Surat al-Tawhid" (sura 112), in which there is no probability of alteration, then it is necessary for him to recite nothing else. Moreover, a person maintaining the existence of alterations may not take the permission the Imams granted to the worshipers to read any chapter in the daily prayer as sufficient proof that he may select any sura [for recitation], when it was not permissible for him to regard it as sufficient before the permission [of the Imams], because of the alteration [consideration]. This is because the permission from the Imams [to do that] is, in itself, evidence that no alteration has occurred in the Qur'an; otherwise, [this permission] would have necessarily rendered the obligatory prayer [recital] discharged [by nullifying the recitation of the altered suras] without a pressing reason. For it is obvious that the required recitation of unaltered suras does not constitute an infraction of precautionary dissimulation (*taqiyya*). In fact, we see that the Imams have recommended to their followers that they recite the "al-Tawhid" and "al-Qadar" in all the daily prayers. What, then, prevented them from making these two, or any other verses in which there is no likelihood of alteration, obligatory [for recitation in the prayer]?

However, those who maintain the belief in alteration may claim that the obligatory recital of a complete sura [i.e., as it was revealed] has been abrogated by the obligation to read any complete sura as it is in the existing Qur'an. At any rate, we do not believe that they would maintain such a thing, because abrogation has definitely not occurred after the [lifetime of the] Prophet, although there has been a discussion among scholars about its possibility, or otherwise—a subject that is beyond our scope at this time.

To summarize, there is no doubt that the Imams ordered their followers to recite any sura from the Qur'an that is in our hands for the performance of the daily prayer. This injunction is well established, without any shade of doubt, nor any possibility that it was made as a precautionary dissimulation, and it must have been ordained either during the time of the Prophet or after that [under the Imams]. The latter proposition, however, is wrong because it would have amounted to an abrogation [of a practice of the Prophet], and this certainly did not take place after [the time of] the Prophet, though in itself it is possible. Thus, it is necessary to regard [the religious ordinance pertaining to the recitation of a complete sura in the prayer] as the established practice from the time of the Prophet himself. In other words, this means that no alteration has been made in the Qur'an. This form of argumentation applies to every legal

ordinance that the Imams have made incumbent in the recitation of a complete verse from the Qur'an.

Assertion about Alteration under the Caliphs

The fifth argument [that alteration did not occur involves the following]. Those who maintain the belief in alteration claim that it took place either under the first two caliphs (Abu Bakr and 'Umar), after the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny), or under 'Uthman when he assumed the affairs of the community, or under some other person when the first period of the caliphate ended. All these assertions [about when it occurred] are incorrect. As for the charge that the alteration took place under Abu Bakr and 'Umar, it is negated by the following. If they did alter the Qur'an, this was either done unintentionally—because of the fact that the complete text of the Qur'an was not available for them, having not been compiled by then—or it was done deliberately. If they had deliberately altered the Qur'an, this would have involved either the verses that adversely affected their leadership or verses that did not have such an effect. The possibilities are therefore three in number.

As for the possibility that the complete text of the Qur'an had not reached them, this is unquestionably wrong. The attention which the Prophet paid to the Qur'an memorizing it, reading it, and reciting its verses—and the attention which the Companions, likewise, lavished on the Qur'an, both during the Prophet's lifetime and after his death, lead us to the definitive conclusion that the Qur'an was preserved with them, whether in the form of a collected text or fragments; memorized in their hearts; or written on paper. If they had paid so much attention to memorizing pre-Islamic Arabic poetry and orations, it is hard to imagine that they did not pay similar attention to the preservation of the Book of the Almighty, [especially when] they had risked death by calling for and announcing its ordinances, and, for its sake, had emigrated from their country, spent their wealth, separated from their women and children, and taken the stance by means of which they had brightened the face of history. Would a sane person imagine, after all this, that they would not take good care of the Qur'an, leaving it to be dispersed among people, so that they eventually needed two testifiers in order to establish its text? Is this not merely like imagining that additions were made to the Qur'an, or even like imagining that nothing has survived from the revealed Qur'an? Nevertheless, the uninterruptedly narrated traditions about the *thaqalayn* (two things of high estimation), as cited earlier, indicate the falsity of the probability. This is because the Prophet's saying that "I leave among you the two things of high estimation, the Book of God and my Family" would not be correct if some of the Qur'an had been lost during his lifetime, for what is left after that would be a portion of the Book, not all of it. On the contrary, in the *thaqalayn* tradition, there is indisputable proof of the compilation of the Qur'an and its collection during the lifetime of the Prophet, for the term "Book" does not apply to the totality of dispersed things, nor to the text that is preserved "in the hearts" [i.e., memorized]. (We shall discuss those who collected the Qur'an during the Prophet's time.) Even if we were to concede that the Muslims did not care to collect the Qur'an during the Prophet's time, why did not the Prophet himself do that, considering his intense concern about the Qur'an? Was he unaware of the consequences of this neglect [on his part], or was he unable to collect it for lack of the means? It is obvious that all of these propositions are unfounded.

As for the possibility that the first two caliphs intentionally altered the Qur'an in the verses that did not have a bearing on their leadership and the leadership of their associates, this is intrinsically far-fetched, especially in light of its serving no purpose whatsoever for them. As such, alteration did not occur under them. Moreover, how could they introduce alterations in the Qur'an when the question of the caliphate was actually founded on politics, although in appearance it was regarded as a matter of religious importance. Did any of those who refused to pay allegiance to the caliphs argue against them [on the issue of alteration], including those who had opposed Abu Bakr's succession to the caliphate, like Sa'd b. 'Ubadah and his companions? [More important], did the Commander of the Faithful ['Ali b. Abi Talib] mention this in his famous speech of *al-Shiqshiqiyya* (the third sermon in Nahj al-Balagha) and in other statements in which he objected to those who preceded him to the caliphate? Moreover, it is not possible to claim that the Muslims had objected to them on the alteration issue, and that this has somehow remained hidden from us. Undoubtedly, this claim is clearly false.

As for the possibility that alteration was intentionally introduced by the two caliphs in those verses that were inimical to their leadership, that too should be ruled out completely. Indeed, the Commander of the Faithful ['Ali] and his wife, the veracious and pure [Fatima] (peace be upon both of them), and a group of their supporters, had opposed the accession of Abu Bakr and 'Umar to the caliphate. They contended against them on the basis of things they had heard from the Prophet, and they called on those of the Helpers (*Ansar*) and Emigrants (*Muhajirun*) who had witnessed these events to testify to their authenticity. They also contended against Abu Bakr by means of the Ghadir event [in which the Prophet had nominated 'Ali as his successor] and other such traditions. Al-Tabarsi mentions, in his book *al-Ihtijaj*, that twelve persons argued against the succession of Abu Bakr and produced textual evidence to support their argument against him. In addition, the well-known scholar al-Majlisi compiled a chapter on the subject of the Commander of the Faithful's ['Ali's] vindication of his rights in the matter of the caliphate.²⁸ Had there been something in the Qur'an inimical to their leadership, it would certainly have been more worthy of mention in these arguments, and more deserving of calling upon all Muslims to witness, especially since the issue of the caliphate according to those [who believe in the alteration of the Qur'an] became an issue much earlier than the date of the Qur'an's collection. The fact that the Companions did not mention anything [about the alteration], neither at the beginning of the caliphate nor after the caliphate had fallen to 'Ali, is the irrefutable proof that the said alteration [under the first two caliphs] did not occur.

As for the possibility that the alterations were introduced by 'Uthman, this is even more far-fetched than the earlier assertion [regarding the first two caliphs]. There are several reasons that support this conclusion.

1. By the time 'Uthman became caliph, Islam had spread to such an extent that it was impossible for him, or even for anyone more powerful than him, to remove anything from the Qur'an.
2. Had 'Uthman's alteration been in connection with the verses that neither dealt with the question of

authority, nor, in one way or the other, adversely affected the leadership of those who preceded him, then this would have meant doing something for which there was no justification. If, on the other hand, his alterations had been in connection with something to do with the question of leadership, then this definitely did not occur. The reason is that if the Qur'an had included such verses, they would have been known among the people, and the caliphate would not have passed to 'Uthman.

3. Had 'Uthman altered the Qur'an, that would have served as the clearest argument for, and major justification of, his public assassination. His opponents would not have needed to argue against him on the basis of his having diverged from the practice of the two preceding caliphs in handling the public trust of the Muslims, and other such arguments.

4. Had 'Uthman committed the act of alteration, it would have then been incumbent on 'Ali, following the death of 'Uthman, to restore the Qur'an to its original state when it was recited during the Prophet's time and the time of the first two caliphs. Such an action on his part would not have drawn any criticism; on the contrary, it would have given a great help to his cause and would have served as a strong argument against those who rebelled against him [i.e., the Umayyads] under the rubric of avenging 'Uthman's blood. More specifically, he could have used it to defend his orders to reconstitute the land grants that 'Uthman had distributed [from the public trust]. He had referred to this matter in one of his speeches [during the reign of 'Uthman], saying:

I solemnly declare that even if I were to find that it [the distributed public lands] had been used by women to get married, or in purchasing slave-girls, I would still have returned them [to the treasury]. Indeed, in doing justice, [the scope] is wide. He to whom justice is hard, injustice is even harder.[29](#)

If this is how 'Ali acquitted himself in the matter of public lands, what would he have done in the case of the Qur'an had it been altered? His endorsement of the Qur'an that existed during his reign is evidence that there was no alteration in it.

As for alterations occurring after the period of the [first four] caliphs, no such thing has been claimed by anyone we know of. However, this view has been attributed to some who believe in the occurrence of alteration. Hence, it is claimed that al-Hajjaj,[30](#) when he arose in support of the Umayyads, deleted many verses from the Qur'an that were revealed in the criticism of the Umayyads, and added to it things that were not part of it. He wrote Qur'anic codices and sent them to Egypt, Syria, Mekka, Medina, Basra, and Kufa. The Qur'an that is in existence now is in conformity with these texts. As for the other texts, he gathered them and destroyed them all, leaving not even one copy.[31](#)

These assertions resemble the senseless jabber of the feverish and the superstitions of the insane and children. This is because al-Hajjaj was one of the governors of the Umayyads. He was far too insignificant, and of too low a status, to harm the Qur'an in any way. In fact, he was too ineffectual to make changes even in the ancillary branches of Islamic knowledge. How, then, could he change the foundation of religion and the pillar of the Shari'a? Moreover, where did he acquire the authority to

[distribute his own Qur'anic codex] in all Islamic lands when the Qur'an was already in wide circulation there? And how is it that no historian has mentioned this major feat in the books of history, and that no critic has touched upon it in spite of the importance of the matter and the many good reasons to report it? More important, how is it that no Muslim narrated it in al-Hajjaj's time, and how did the Muslims overlook this deed after his time had passed and his authority ended?

Even if we were to assume that he was able to collect all the different manuscripts of the Qur'an, and not a single manuscript in all the sprawling Muslim lands escaped his power, was he capable of removing the Qur'an from the hearts of the Muslims who had memorized it, with their number at that time being known only to God? Furthermore, if some of the verses in the Qur'an had been injurious to the Umayyads, Mu'awiya would have surely removed them long before the time of al-Hajjaj, because he was more powerful and influential than al-Hajjaj. [Had this happened], the supporters of 'Ali would have taken this as a strong point against Mu'awiya, and used it as an argument, as they used other arguments that have been preserved in history and in the books of tradition and theology. From what has been said above, it is clear that anyone who asserts that alterations did take place in the Qur'an would be at variance with the most elementary reasoning. There is a proverb which says: "Tell a person about something that is impossible to have happened. If he believes it will happen, then he is certainly not rational."

The Errors of Those Who Maintain the Alteration View

Those who hold that alteration occurred in the Qur'an cling to a number of errors that need to be presented and refuted, one by one.

The First Error

First, alteration, they say, occurred in the Torah and the Gospel. According to traditions narrated through various chains of uninterrupted transmission, by Sunni as well as Shi'ite traditionists, [they cite] all that has occurred in the past communities, [and say that] something similar will certainly occur in this [Muslim] community. One of these traditions is related by Ibn Babawayh al-Sadiq in his Kamal al-Din on the authority of Ghiyath b. Ibrahim, who reported from al-Sadiq, who had reported from his forefathers. He [al-Sadiq] said:

The Messenger of God said, "All that has happened among the past nations will surely happen in this nation, exactly as a horseshoe follows another and a feather of an arrow follows another [i.e., they are identical]."[32](#)

What follows from this is that alteration will necessarily occur in the Qur'an; otherwise, the signification of these traditions will not come to pass.

The response to this is as follows.

First, the traditions in question are supported by single narrations, and, consequently, they have neither theoretical nor practical value. The claim that they have been transmitted without interruption is arbitrary, with no evidence to support it. These traditions have not been recorded in any of the four authoritative compilations of Shiite traditions. Hence, it does not follow that the incidence of alteration in the Torah will inevitably be repeated in the Qur'an.

Second, if this reasoning were sound, it would have certainly been evidence that additions have been made to the Qur'an, as they have to the Torah and the Gospel; and it is evident that this is incorrect.

Third, many incidents have occurred in past nations the like of which has not taken place in the [Muslim] community, such as the worshiping of the calf; the wandering of the Children of Israel for forty years; the drowning of Pharaoh and his companions; the dominion of Solomon over humans and jinns; the raising of Jesus to Heaven; the death of Aaron, who was the legatee of Moses, before the death of Moses himself; the receiving of nine manifest divine signs by Moses; the Immaculate Conception of Jesus without a father; the transmutation of many among the ancients into monkeys and swine; and countless other events. This is a most convincing argument that what is intended here is not the literal statement of the traditions but some semblance of it. Accordingly, for alteration to have occurred in the [Muslim] community, it is sufficient that they [Muslims] do not observe the boundaries of the Qur'an even when they maintain its outward form, as in the tradition cited at the beginning of this discussion [the letter from al-Baqir to Sa'd al-Khayr]. This is further supported by another tradition, related by Abu Waqid al-Laythi:

When the Messenger of God set out for Khaybar, he came upon a tree [sacred to the unbelievers] known as *Dhat al-Anwat* [tree of many branches]. The unbelievers used to hang their weapons on it [for a blessing]. Thus, the believers said, "O Messenger of God! Designate for us a [sacred] tree like *Dhat al-Anwat*, [the one] they have for themselves." The Prophet said: "Glory be to God! This is just as the people of Moses said, 'Designate for us a god, just as they have a goddess.' By the One in whose hands is my soul! Indeed, you will follow the path of those before you."³³

This tradition is explicit in stating that what shall occur in the community will resemble certain aspects of what happened in past nations.

Fourth, even if it is admitted that these traditions were transmitted without interruption, and that they are accurate in what they indicate, they still do not prove that alteration did occur in the past. On the contrary, it might happen in the future, whether in the form of addition or omission. What appears from the tradition of al-Bukhari is that it (i.e., what has happened in the past nations would also happen in this community) could extend to the Day of Judgment. As such, how can one argue that alteration occurred in the early days of Islam or during the first period of the caliphate?

The Second Error

According to this error, 'Ali (peace be upon him) possessed a written text [of the Qur'an] other than the one existing now. He presented it to the community, but they refused to accept it from him. Moreover, his text included parts that are not present in the Qur'an that we have in our hands. From this it follows that the existing Qur'an is deficient when compared with the text of the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali. This is the type of alteration that has been the subject of so much controversy. The traditions which indicate it are numerous.

Among them is the one narrating the argument of 'Ali against a group of Emigrants (*muhajirun*) and Helpers (*ansar*), in which he is reported to have said:

O Talha! Every verse that was revealed by God, the Exalted, to Muammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) is in my possession, dictated by the Messenger of God and written by my hand. [Moreover], the interpretation of every verse that was revealed by God, the Exalted, to Muhammad—of all things that are lawful or unlawful, subject to legal punishment or ordinances, or anything needed by the community until the Day of Resurrection— is in my possession, dictated by the Messenger of God and written by my hand, to the extent of [rules regarding] the blood money for the scratchmark. [34](#)

Another tradition reports Ali's argument against a heretic (*zindiq*), in which 'Ali said that he had "brought the complete Book [of God], comprising the interpretation and the revelation, the precise and the ambiguous verses, the abrogating and the abrogated verses; nothing was missing from it, [not even] a letter *alif*, nor *lam*. But they did not accept it from him." [35](#)

Another tradition is related by al-Kulayni in his al-Kafi, with a chain of transmission going back to Jabir, who reported from the Imam al-Baqir (peace be upon him), who had said, "No one can claim that he possesses all of the Qur'an, its exoteric form and its esoteric dimension, except the legatees (*awsiyat*) [of the Prophet]." [36](#)

He also reports that Jabir said:

I heard Abu Ja'far [al-Baqir] say that no one has ever claimed that he collected the Qur'an in its entirety as it was revealed, except a liar; and no one collected it and memorized it as it was revealed by God, the Exalted, except 'Ali b. Abi Talib and the Imams (peace be upon them) who came after him. [37](#)

The response to this is as follows.

That there existed a text of the Qur'an, in the possession of Amir al-Mu'minin ['Ali] (peace be upon him), differing in arrangement of the chapters from the existing Qur'an, is something that should not be doubted. The fact that prominent scholars are unanimous in affirming its existence spares us the trouble of proving it. However, even if it is true that his Qur'an incorporated additions that are not part of the existing Qur'an, this does not mean that these additions comprised parts of the Qur'an and have been

dropped from it due to alteration. Rather, the correct position in this regard is that these additions were the exegesis in the form of interpretations, and that which goes back to the explanation of the Divine Speech, or were in the form of revelations from God, explaining the intention [of the verses].

Furthermore, this error has stemmed from defining the terms *ta'wil* and *tanzil* according to the convention, among later scholars, of applying *tanzil* to what was revealed as a Qur'an, and *ta'wil* to the explanation of the intent of the words, considering that to be a sense other than their literal one. However, the two meanings of these technical terms are modern conventions. There is no indication in the [classical] lexicons to support this specific meaning of them. Hence, they must not be understood in this sense when they occur in the traditions transmitted on the authority of the Imams from ahl al-bayt.

At any rate, *ta'wil* is a verbal noun derived from AWL, meaning "to return," as in the sentence "He returned (*awwala*) the judgment to the people it concerned." The word *ta'wil* may also be used to mean the consequences and the eventual results of a matter. It is in this sense that the word occurs in the Qur'an:

And will teach you the interpretation (*ta'wil*) of events (Qur'an 12:6). Announce to us its interpretation (*ta'wilih*) (Qur'an 12:36). This is the interpretation of my dream (Qur'an 12:100). Such is the interpretation of that wherewith you could not bear (Qur'an 18:82).

These are some of the examples of the usage of the word *ta'wil* in the Qur'an. Accordingly, the meaning of the word *ta'wil* in the Qur'an is "that to which the speech refers," that is, its "eventual sense" regardless of whether it is apparent through the literal sense and can be understood by whoever knows Arabic, or whether it is an inner sense known to none save "those firmly established in knowledge" [cf. Qur'an 3:7]. *Tanzil* is also a verbal noun, derived from the root NZL. It may be used to refer to that which "comes down, descends." This is the sense in which it is used in many verses of the Qur'an. Thus, God, the Exalted, says:

This is indeed a noble Qur'an. In a well-kept Book. Which none touches save the purified. A revelation (tanzil) from the Lord of the Worlds (Qur'an 56:78-80).

As mentioned earlier, not all that has been sent down from God [has to be in the form of a] revelation for it to be necessarily part of the Qur'an. Consequently, that which can be construed from the traditions regarding this point is that the codex of 'Ali (peace be upon him) included additions consisting of *tanzil* or *ta'wil*, as explained above. There is no evidence in any of these traditions to substantiate that these additions were part of the Qur'an. It is in this light that we must view what has been reported about the listing of the names of hypocrites in the text of Amir al-Mu'minin ['Ali]. There, names were essentially listed as part of the exegesis [and not of the actual revealed text of the Qur'an].

This is corroborated by the irrefutable evidence provided earlier in connection with the absence of any omission from the Qur'an. In addition, the conduct of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) toward the hypocrites does not support such a thing [i.e., the view that the list of hypocrites was part of

the Qur'an]. On the contrary, he behaved toward them with forbearance, to win their hearts, and concealed what he knew about their fraudulence. This is clear to anyone with the slightest knowledge of the Prophet's life and his virtuous conduct. How could it be possible that he would mention the names of the hypocrites in the Qur'an and ask them to curse themselves, and command all other Muslims to do the same, and urge them on that day and night? Is this at all possible so as to justify that one should investigate its soundness or falsehood, or insist on demonstrating it by what some traditions say about the existence of the names of a number of hypocrites in the text of 'Ali (peace be upon him)? Can this [mention of names of the hypocrites] be analogous to the mention of Abu Lahab [by name in the Qur'an], [his] having been cursed because of his associationism (*shirk*) and his hostility toward the Prophet, in spite of the Prophet's knowledge that he would die in disbelief? Well, it is not far-fetched to maintain that the Prophet did mention the names of the hypocrites to some of his close associates, like the Amir al-Mu'minin ['Ali] and others in his special gatherings.

To summarize, even if it is correct that there were additions in the text of 'Ali (peace be upon him), they were not part of the Qur'an, and not part of what the Messenger of God was commanded to convey to the community. To maintain, on the basis of such additions, that his text contained additional revelations is merely an opinion without evidence, and definitely it is false. All the previously discussed evidence in relation to the absence of alteration (*tahrif*) provides irrefutable proof in this connection, too.

The Third Error

According to this [error], there are uninterruptedly narrated traditions, on the authority of the Imams from ahl al-bayt, that corroborate the view that alteration of the Qur'an definitely took place and that, therefore, one must accept this view.

The response [to this is as follows]. Surely, these traditions do not indicate that alterations have occurred in the sense of the word on which Muslims do not agree. To make this clearer, [it should be noted that] most of the traditions are appended with weak chains of transmission, having been narrated from the book of Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Sayyan, who, according to the consensus of the scholars of biographical dictionaries (*'ulama' al-rijal*) held corrupt beliefs and maintained a belief in metempsychosis. Others have been narrated by 'Ali b. Ahmad al-Kufi, who, as reported by the scholars of biographical dictionaries, was a liar, and held false beliefs. Nevertheless, the sheer number of these traditions forces us to accept that some of them are authentic accounts related on the authority of the infallible Imams, and must, at least, be regarded with confidence. In addition, some of them have been related through credible chains of transmission. Consequently, there is no need to dwell upon the source of each tradition in particular; [instead, we shall concentrate on the contents of each tradition].

Examination of the Traditions on Tahrif

It is necessary to discuss the meanings of these traditions, and to clarify that they are not all united in

purport, and that they can be divided into groups. We should therefore undertake to explain the differences of purport and speak about each group of traditions in that light.

The First Group of Traditions

These are the traditions which mention *tarif* explicitly. This group consists of some twenty traditions, of which we shall mention some examples and leave out the ones which have the same content. They are as follows.

1. A tradition [was] reported on the authority of 'All b. Ibrahim al-Qummi, whose chain of transmission goes back to Abu Dharr, who said:

When the verse "On that day some faces will brighten and some others will darken" was revealed, the Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his progeny) said: "My community will return to me on the Day of Resurrection under five banners." Then he [Abu Dharr] added that the Messenger of God will ask the groups about the way they treated the *thaqalayn* (the two objects of high estimation). The first group will say: "As for the greater one, we altered it and tossed it away behind our backs; as for the smaller one, we became its enemies, hated it, and wronged it." The second group will say: "As for the greater one, we burned it, tore it into pieces, and opposed it; as for the smaller one, we became its enemies and fought it. . . ."

2. A tradition was reported on the authority of Ibn Tawus and al-Sayyid al-Muhaddith al-Jaza'ri, their chain of transmission going back to al-Hasan b. al-Hasan al-Samarra'i, who related, in a long tradition, that one of the things that the Prophet told Hudhayfa, about the person who violates the Sacred House, is that he will "lead the people astray from the Path of God, make alterations in His Book, and change my sunna (precedent)."

3. A tradition was reported on the authority of Sa'd b. 'Abd Allah al-Qummi, whose chain of transmission goes back to Jabir al-Ju'fi, and, through him, to the Imam al-Baqir (peace be upon). Jabir said:

The Messenger of God (peace be upon him and his progeny) prayed in Mina. Then he said: "O people, I leave among you *al-thaqalayn*. If you hold on to them, you shall never be misguided. [These are] the Book of God and my family, and the Ka'ba is the Sacred House [which you should respect all the time]!" Then Abil Ja'far [al-Baqir] added: "As for the Book of God, they have altered it; the Ka'ba, they have destroyed; and the family, they have slain. All these trusts of God they have abandoned and from them they have rid themselves."

4. A tradition was reported by Ibn Babawayh al-Saduq in his *Kitab al-Khisal*, with his chain of transmission going back to Jabir, who related it on the authority of the Prophet, who said:

Three on the Day of Resurrection will come complaining: The Book, the mosque, and the Family. The Book will say, "O Lord, they have altered me and rented me." The mosque will say, "O Lord, they

abandoned and wasted me." The Family will say, "O Lord, they killed, rejected, and dispersed us."

5. A tradition was related by al-Kulayni and Ibn Babawayh al-Saduq, with their chain of transmission going back to 'Ali b. Suwayd, who said: "I wrote a letter to Abu al Hasan Musa [al-Kazim] when he was in prison." Then he went on until he described the Imam's response, in which he said, "They altered it and changed it."

6. A tradition was reported by Ibn Shahr Ashub, going back to 'Abd Allah, who narrated the oration of al-Husayn b. 'Ali on the day of 'Ashura', in which the Imam said, "Undoubtedly, you are the tyrants among the community, the deviates among the [Mekkan] Confederates,³⁸ the repudiators of the Book, the expectorations of the Devil, the association of the crimes, and the corruptors (*muharraf*) of the Book."

7. A tradition was reported in *Kamil al-Ziyarat* on the authority of al-Hasan b. 'Atiyya, who related it from the Imam al-Sadiq, who said, "When you enter the sacred area around the grave [of al-Husayn b. 'Ali at Karbala'], say, "O God, curse those who falsified Your Prophet, and those who destroyed Your Ka'ba, and those who corrupted Your Book."

8. A tradition was reported by al-Hijal on the authority of Qutba b. Maymun, who received it from 'Abd al-A'la:

He [al-Hijal] said: Abu 'Abd Allah [al-Sadiq] (peace be upon him) said, 'The speakers of Arabic altered the Speech of God from its original form.'"

Actual Signification of the Traditions

The response to the deductions on the basis of this group of traditions is that it is apparent from the last tradition cited that alteration here is intended [in the sense of the phonetic corruption] according to the differences among the readers, and the application of their personal judgment in the readings. This, in turn, resulted from the differences in the manner of reading while preserving the essence of the Qur'an and its original sense. We have already explained that alteration in this sense undoubtedly occurred as a result of the fact that the seven readings were not based on uninterrupted transmission. In fact, this form of *tahrif* would definitely have occurred even if the seven readings were based on uninterrupted transmission. This is because the readings were numerous, and they were based on the conjectural judgments [of the readers], which could have required them to make changes in the readings. Accordingly, this tradition has no connection with the intention of those who maintain that alteration occurred.

As for the remaining traditions, their apparent meaning points to *tahrif* in the sense of explaining the verses at variance with their actual meanings, which, in turn, goes hand in hand with denying the excellence of the Family of the Prophet (ahl al-bayt) (peace be upon them) and with displaying animosity toward them and fighting them. This explanation is explicitly supported by the attribution of

tahrif to the killers of al-Husayn b. 'Ali, in the oration quoted earlier.

As for the tradition noted by al-Kulayni in his *al-Kafi*, which was cited earlier in this chapter, the Imam al-Baqir says there: "Among their ways of repudiating the Book [of God] is that they stand by its wording, whereas they misconstrue its limits."

We have mentioned that *tahrif* in this sense has definitely occurred, and as such, it is not part of the dispute. Had such alteration not occurred, the rights of the Family would have remained unviolated and the sanctity of the Prophet in their regard would have been complied with. Nor would matters have reached the point of depriving them of their rights and hurting the Prophet through them.

Second Group of Traditions

These are the numerous traditions that convey the fact that in some revealed verses of the Qur'an, the names of the Imams (peace be upon them) were mentioned. An example of them is the tradition reported by al-Kulayni, whose chain of transmission goes back to Muhammad b. al-Fudayl, who related on the authority of Abu alHasan (peace be upon him). He [al-Kulayni] said:

The authority (*wilaya*) of 'Ali b. Ab Talib is prescribed in all the [revealed] texts of the prophets. God never sent a prophet except with the [acknowledgment] of the prophethood of Muhammad and the wilaya of his legatee—God bless them both and their progeny.

Another tradition has been narrated by al-'Ayyashi, whose chain of transmission goes back to the Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him). He said, "If the Qur'an were read as it was revealed, our names would be found there."

Still another tradition is related by al-Kulayni in his *al-Kafi* and by al-'Ayyashi in his *Tafsir*, on the authority of the Imam al-Baqir; and in *Kanz al-Fawa'id* through several chains of transmission, on the authority of Ibn 'Abbas; and by Furat b. Ibrahim al-Kufi in his *Tafsir*, through several chains of transmission, on the authority of al-Abagh b. Nubata. According to this tradition, Amir al-Mu'minin ['Ali] said:

The Qur'an was revealed in four equal parts: One-fourth is about us [the ahl al-bayt], one-fourth about our enemies, one-fourth consists of customs (sunan) and parables, and one-fourth about obligations and ordinances; and to us belongs the noblest part of the Qur'an.

In another tradition, al-Kulayni reports that the Imam al-Baqir said:

Gabriel revealed the following verse on the Prophet, in this manner: **"And if you are in doubt about what We have revealed to our servant—regarding 'All—then bring forth the like of a chapter of it."** [Cf. *Qur'an 2:23*.]

The response to making deductions on the basis of this group of traditions [is as follows]. We have noted earlier that some revelations were in the form of an exegesis of the Qur'an, and not part of it. Consequently, these traditions that speak about the names of the Imams being part of the revelation should be regarded in the same light. If not so regarded, then these traditions should be rejected for contradicting the Book, the Sunna (Prophetic Tradition), and other sources of proof that were presented to invalidate the view about [the occurrence of] *tahrif*. Many uninterruptedly transmitted traditions indicate the obligation of submitting the traditions to the Book and the Sunna, and those that contradict the Book should be rejected and discarded. In addition, what proves that Amir al-Mu'minin's name was not mentioned explicitly in the Qur'an is the tradition on the subject of al-Ghadir. In this report, it is evident that the Prophet had appointed 'Ali [as his successor] on God's command, and after having received assurances in this regard, and having been promised, by God, protection from the people. Had the name of 'Ali been mentioned in the Qur'an, there would have been neither the need for this appointment nor the preparation of that well-attended gathering of Muslims. Nor would the Prophet have feared to publicize the appointment to the point that he needed divine assurance in this matter.

In short, the fact that the Ghadir tradition is sound requires us to regard as false those traditions that state that the names of the Imams are mentioned in the Qur'an. More important, the Ghadir tradition took place during the Farewell Pilgrimage, which occurred toward the end of the Prophet's life, and after the revelation of most of the Qur'an and its dissemination among Muslims. Moreover, the content of the last tradition cited above, related in *al-Kafi* [by al-Kulayni, on the authority of the Imam al-Baqir] cannot be true in itself. This is because mentioning the name of 'Ali (peace be upon him) is out of place in the context of proving the prophethood and challenging [the people] to bring forth the like of the Qur'an. Furthermore, the authentic tradition reported by al-Kulayni on the authority of Abu Basir, contradicts all the traditions in the second group. Abu Basir says:

I asked Abu 'Abd Allah [al-Sadiq] about the [interpretation of] what God, the Exalted, says, which is, **"Obey God, and obey the Messenger and those among you who wield authority" (Qur'an 4:59)**. He [al-Sadiq] said: "The verse was revealed concerning 'Ali b. Abi Talib, al-Hasan, and al-Husayn." So I said, "People are saying, 'How come 'Ali and his family are not [specifically] named in the Book of God?'" He said, "In that case, tell them that the *salat* (prayer) was revealed to the Prophet, and in it there was no [specific] mention of three or four [units] until the Prophet was the one who explained that to them."³⁹

Accordingly, this sound tradition overrules all those [second-group] traditions and explains their purport—namely, that the mention of Amir al-Mu'minin's ['Ali's] name in those traditions is in the form of an exegesis or in the form of a revelation which came down [to the Prophet] without the command of conveyance, [thus not being part of the Qur'an]. In addition, those who had refused to pay allegiance to Abu Bakr did not resort to the argument that 'Ali's name was mentioned in the Qur'an. Had his name been in the Qur'an, this would have provided them with the strongest argument, especially since the collection of the Qur'an, according to those who maintain this belief, was done a considerable time after the matter of the caliphate had been decided. Indeed, this is among the clear sources of proof

establishing the absence of [specific] mention of ['Ali's] name in the verses [of the Qur'an].

Third Group of Traditions

These are the traditions which assert that alterations in the sense of addition and omission occurred in the Qur'an, and that the community after the time of the Prophet changed some words and substituted others in their place.

Among these traditions is the one reported by 'Ali b. Ibrahim al-Qummi, whose chain of transmission goes back to Hurayz, who related it on the authority of the Imam al-Sadiq. He said, "[The sixth verse of 'al-Fatiha' was read as follows:] *Siri'ta man an' amta 'alayhim ghayri al-maghdubi 'alayhim wa ghayri al-dallin.*[40](#)

Another tradition is reported by al-'Ayyashi from Hisham b. Salim. He said:

I asked the Imam al-Sadiq about what God, the Exalted, says in the Qur'an, which is, "**Lo! God preferred Adam and Noah and the Family of Abraham and the Family of 'Imran above [all His] creatures**" (*Qur'an 3:33*). The Imam said, "The verse [as it was revealed] is 'The Family of Abraham and the Family of Muhammad above [all His] creatures.' Thus, they replaced one name with another; that is, they made a change and substituted 'the Family of 'Imran' for 'the Family of Muhammad.'"

The response to making deductions on the basis of this group of traditions is that, besides their dubious chains of transmission, they are in contradiction of the Book, the Sunna, and the consensus of the Muslims, including those who hold the view of *tahrif*. That not a single word was added to the Qur'an. A large number of religious scholars have maintained that there is a consensus that no additions have been made to the Qur'an, and that everything that is between its two covers is part of the revealed Qur'an. Among those who have asserted the existence of a consensus are al-Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Shaykh al-Baha'i, and other prominent scholars of Imami Shi'ism. Moreover, we already noted the traditions which cite the arguments [of 'Ali b. Abi Talib] and which indicate that no additions were made to the Qur'an.

Fourth Group of Traditions

These are the traditions which indicate that *ta'rif* of the Qur'an consisted of omissions only.

The response to the arguments based on this group is that the evidence that was produced to negate any addition in the text of Amir al-Mu'minin ['Ali] is admissible in this case, too; and if that is not admissible in the cases of some of them, they must be rejected because they contradict the Book and the Sunna. In one of our teaching sessions, we discussed another response to this claim, which may be the nearest possibility to the truth of the matter, and which we have omitted here for fear of unnecessarily prolonging the discussion. We shall, however, return to this subject in another context of

our discussion.

Moreover, most of these traditions, or, rather, the majority of them, are of weak transmission, and some of them are not even plausible in their content. It is for this reason that many renowned scholars have declared that these traditions should necessarily be either interpreted allegorically or rejected.

Among those who expressed this opinion was al-Muhaqqiq al-Kalbasi, when, as reported by others, he said:

The traditions that speak about *tahrif* are against the consensus of all the community except for those of them whose opinion has no value. . . . Moreover, the claim that there have been omissions in the Book has no basis of truth; otherwise, it would have attained fame and uninterrupted transmission, as usually happens in the case of major events. . . . And this is one of them, or, rather, the most important.

This opinion was also expressed by al-Muhaqqiq al-Baghdadi , a commentator of *al-Wafiya*, who wrote a separate treatise on this subject. In the latter work, he says, "Those traditions that indicate the occurrence of omission [in the Qur'an] should necessarily be allegorically interpreted or rejected. Certainly, if a tradition contradicts the proof provided by the Book, the uninterruptedly narrated Sunna, and the consensus, and if, further, it is not possible to interpret it allegorically, or to explain it in one way or another, then it must be rejected."

In this, al-Muhaqqiq al-Karaki is in agreement with what we mentioned earlier in this work, to the effect that the uninterruptedly transmitted traditions demonstrate that if a tradition is in contradiction of the Qur'an, it should be abandoned. Among such traditions is the one related by Ibn Babawayh al Sadiq, with a sound chain of transmission going back to the Imam al-Sadiq (peace be upon him). He said:

When one encounters obscurity, it is better to pause than to plunge into perdition, because above every truth there is a greater verity [that supports it], and above every correctness there is a light [that leads to it]. Thus, whatever agrees with the Book of God, adopt it, and whatever contradicts the Book of God, discard it.[41](#)

Another such tradition has been related by Sa'id b. Hibat Allah al-Qutb al-Rawandi, whose authentic chain of transmission also goes back to the Imam al-SadiQur'an He said:

When two contradictory traditions come to you, then compare [their contents] with the Book of God. Whatever agrees with the Book of God, accept it, and whatever disagrees with the Book of God, reject it.[42](#)

The Fourth Error

This error deals with the way the Qur'an was collected, and the manner in which alterations occurred during this process. Since we are going to discuss the collection of the Qur'an in the next chapter we

shall clarify this error there.

- [1.](#) Kulayni, al-Kafi, as cited by Muhammad b. Murtaqa Fayd al-Kashi [Kashani], Kitab al-Wafi, 15 vols. (Tehran: Kitabfurushl Islamiyyha, al-Maktabat al-Islamiyya, n.d.), vol. 5 (Toward the End of Kitab al-Salat), p. 274.
- [2.](#) See chapter 6 for the statements of these scholars
- [3.](#) Kashi, al-Wafi, vol. 5, p. 274; Kashi, 'Ilm al-Yaqin, 2 vols. (n.p., n.d.) vol. 2, p. 545
- [4.](#) Al-Balaghi discusses this question in the introduction to his exegesis Ala'al Rahman. See Rafi'l, I'jaz al-Qur'an, p42.. See Rafi'i, I'jaz al-Qur'an, p. 42
- [5.](#) This refers to the burning of the noncanonical codices, which was ordered by Caliph 'Uthman when his official codex was prepared.– Trans
- [6.](#) Rafi'i, I'jaz al-Qur'an, p. 42.
- [7.](#) Bukhari, Sahih, vol. 8, p. 26; Muslim, Sahih, vol. 5, p. 116, without any addition following inna
- [8.](#) Suyuti, al-Itqan, vol. 1, sec. 18, pp. 167–68
- [9.](#) Ibid., sec. 19, p. 198
- [10.](#) Ahmad b. Hanbal, Musnad al-Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal wa bi-Hamishihi Muntakhab Kanz al- 'Ummal fi Sinan al-Aqwal wa al-Afal, 6 vols. (Beirut: Dar Sadir, n.d.) vol. 1, p. 47
- [11.](#) Suyuti, al-Itqan, vol. 2, pp. 40–41.
- [12.](#) Ibid
- [13.](#) Qur'an 33:56, but the italicized phrase is not in the present text.–Trans
- [14.](#) Ibid
- [15.](#) Muslim, Sahih, vol. 3, p. 100
- [16.](#) Ibn 'Abd al-Muttaqi, Muntakhab Kanz al- 'Ummal, vol. 2, p. 43
- [17.](#) Ibn 'Abd al-Muttaqi, Muntakhab Kanz al- 'Ummal, vol. 2, p. 50
- [18.](#) Muslim, Sahih, vol. 4, p. 167. This verse does not occur, in either reading, in the present text of the Qur'an.–Trans
- [19.](#) . Suyuti, al-Itqan, vol. 2, p. 42
- [20.](#) Ibid
- [21.](#) Ibid, vol. 1, pp. 112–13
- [22.](#) Ibrahim b. Musa al-Shatibi, al-Muwafaqat fi Usull al-Sharia, 2d ed., ed. Muhammad 'Abd Allah Darraz, 4 vols (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, 1975), vol. 3, p. 106
- [23.](#) 'Ali b. Abi 'Ali al-Amidi, al-Ihkam fi Usul al-Ahkam, 3 vols. (Cairo: Maktaba wa Matba'at Muhammad 'Ali Sabih, 1968), vol. 3, p. 272.
- [24.](#) Ibid., p. 263.
- [25.](#) Mahmud b. 'Abd Allah al-Alusi, Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al- Azim wa al Sab 'Mathani,ed. Muhammad Zuhri al-Najjar, 30 vols. in 15 (Beirut: Ihya' al-Turath al-'Arabi, 197), vol. 1, p. 32
- [26.](#) Al-Fadl b. al-Hasan al-Tabarsi, Majma 'al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an, 5 vols. (Qumm: Maktabat Ayat Allah al-'Uzma al-Mar'ashi al-Najafi), vol. 1, p. 15
- [27.](#) .Normally, according to Shi'ite law, the "Fatiha" and a complete short sura are recited in the first two cycles of the prayer. It is permissible, however, to use part of one or two suras after the "Fatiha." In such a case, only certain verses are used; hence the expression Salat al ayat [prayer with verses].– Trans
- [28.](#) . Majlisi, Bihar, vol. 37, p. 290
- [29.](#) See Al-Sharif al-Radi Muhammad b. al-Husayn, comp., Nahj al-Balagha, ed. Muhammad Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim, 2 vols. (Cairo: Dar Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, 1963) vol.I, pp. 51–52, concerning the taking back of the land grants that were given by 'Uthman to the Muslims
- [30.](#) Al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf al-Thaqafi was one of the most important generals in the restoration of Umayyad rule in 691–92, and, later, governor of Iraq for the Umayyad caliphs 'Abd al-Malik and al-Walid.–Trans.
- [31.](#) Zurqani, Manahil al-'Irfan, p. 257
- [32.](#) . Majlisi, Bihar, vol. 8, p. 4. Sunni sources have been cited above
- [33.](#) . Tirmidhi, Sahih, vol. 3, pp. 321–22

- [34.](#) Introduction to Tafsir al-Burhan, p. 27. In this tradition, it is explicitly maintained that whatever is in the present text of the Qur'an is all of the Qur'an
- [35.](#) Muhammad b. Murtada al-Fayd al-Kashani, Tafsir al-Safi, ed. Husayn al-A'jami, 5 vols. (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'jami, 1979-82) vol. 1, p. 42
- [36.](#) Kashi, al-Wafi, vol. 2, sec. 76, p. 130
- [37.](#) Ibid
- [38.](#) The people intended here are probably the Mekkan Confederates (ahzab), who are mentioned in Qur'an 33:20-22. – Trans.
- [39.](#) Kashi, al-Wafi, sec. 30, p. 63
- [40.](#) Qur'an 1:7—"The path of those whom You have favored, not of those who earn Your anger, nor of those who go astray." The alteration consists of two minor changes in pronouns. Trans.
- [41.](#) Hurr al-'Amili, al-Wasa'il, vol. 18, p. 84
- [42.](#) Ibid.

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