

Opinion of Commentators

Lots of commentators who have discussed about this verse explicitly confessed that Advantage (غنيمة) has mainly a vast meaning and consists of spoils of war and other than them and generally all that a person could gain without hardship. Even those who consider this verse exclusive to spoils of war confess that there is no such a limitation in its main meaning, but for another reason its meaning has been limited.

“Ghartabi”, famous Sunni commentator, writes below this verse in his interpretation:

“Literally, “advantage” (غنيمة) is the thing that a person or a group of people gain with endeavor ... and know that the consensus (of Sunni scholars) is that the meaning of advantage (غنيمة) in the verse “ وَ اَعْلَمُوا اَنْمَا غَنِمْتُمْ ” is assets which reach Muslims by fight and victory over infidels, but it should be considered that this limitation is not in its literal meaning as we said before, but this bond has been set in the common law of religion”.

“Fakhr Raazi¹” affirms in his interpretation that: “الغنم الفوز بالشىء (advantage is that a person gains something”. And then after expressing this vast literal meaning adds: “Religious meaning of advantage (غنيمة) (in opinion of Sunni scholars) is spoils of war”.

And also in “Al-Manar²” interpretation, the definition of advantage (غنيمة) has been expressed in its vast meaning and it has not been limited to spoils of war, although author believes that according to religious bond the vast meaning of this verse should be limited to spoils of war.

Also it has been mentioned in the interpretation of “Rooh Al-Ma’aani” written by Aloosi, famous Sunni commentator, that:

“Mainly, “غنم” (three word root of غنيمة in Arabic) means any kind of interest and benefit”.³

And in “Majma’ Al-Bayan” interpretation first advantage has been interpreted in the meaning of spoils of war, but during the explanation of the meaning of the verse it says:

قال اصحابنا انّ الخمس واجب في كلّ فائدة تحصل للانسان من المكاسب و ارباح التّجارات، و في الكنوز و المعادن و الغوص و غير ذلك ممّا هو مذكور في الكتب، و يمكن ان يستدلّ على ذلك بهذه الاية فانّ في عرف اللّغة يطلق على جميع ذلك اسم الغنم و الغنيمه

Shiite scholars believe that Khums is obligatory in any benefit that a person would gain, consisting of it is from business, or from treasure or mine and anything that derives from the sea by diving, and other jobs that has been mentioned in Fiqh books, and it is possible to ratiocinate with this claim about this verse because advantage (غنيمت) implies to all of these in its common meaning”.[4](#)

It is amazing that some partial persons who seems to have a special mission for poisoning the common thoughts, have tried a funny falsification in their book which have written about Khums in the expression of Majma’ Al-Bayan interpretation; they have mentioned the first part of the expression which guaranties the interpretation of advantage (غنيمت) in the meaning of spoils of war (according to the opinion of some commentators), but they have ignored the explanation about the generality of literal meaning of the word and the meaning of the verse completely and have ascribed a false matter to this great Islamic commentator, maybe they thought they are the only persons who have the book “Majma’ Al-Bayan” and nobody will read that book in order to reveal their lie to everyone and it is strange that they did not perform this betrayal only about this matter, but in other cases anything that might have benefit has been mentioned and anything that might be the opposite direction has been ignored.

Also it has been affirmed in Al-Mizan interpretation according to the words of scientists of literature that advantage (غنيمت) is any benefit that person gains from business, working or the war and although the point for descending of the verse is spoils of war but we know that never the point particularizes the generality of definition.[5](#)

It is concluded from all that has been said:

The verse of advantage (غنيمت) has a vast meaning and consists of any kind of income, interest and benefit, because literal meaning of this word has a vast meaning and there is no clear proof about particularizing it in hand.

The only thing that some of Sunni commentators refer to, is that the verses before and after this verse are about Jihad and this matter shows that the verse of advantage (غنيمت) points to spoils of war in proportion.

While we know that the reasons of descending or the direction of discussion in Suras never particularize the generality of a verse; and in more clear way, there is no problem in that the meaning of the verse to be a general and overall definition while the reason of descending the verse is one sample of that general and overall concept.

For example, we read in verse 7 of Sura Hashr:

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا

... So take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. (59:7)

This verse says a general order about the necessity of obeying Prophet (S), while the case for descending was assets which has been taken under the ownership of Muslims from enemies without war (and the term “فِيء” is used for them).

And also in verse 233 of Sura Baqara:

... لَا تُكَلِّفُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ...

no soul shall have imposed upon it a duty but to the extent of its capacity; .. (2:233)

has been mentioned as a general rule while the case for descending was about paying women who feeding babied and it has been ordered to the father of infant to pay according to his ability; but can reference of the verse to this special matter prevent the generality of this rule (not to do more than the ability)?!

Briefly, this verse has been said among the verses of Jihad but it says: Pay one fifth (Khums) of any income that you gain from any source (which one of them is spoils of war). Specially the relative word ” (any) and the word “شيء” (thing) which are two general and without any bond or condition words emphasize this matter.

[1.](#) Fakhr Raazi interpretation, vol. 15, page 164.

[2.](#) Al-Manar interpretation, vol. 10, pages 3–7.

[3.](#) Rooh Al-Ma'aani, vol. 10, page 2.

[4.](#) Majma' Al-Bayan interpretation, vol. 4, pages 543 &544.

[5.](#) Al-Mizan interpretation, vol. 9, page 89.

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