

True Meaning of the Traditions

It is abundantly clear from the last report quoted above that the word *Tahrif* (displacing the words of Allah from their rightful places) denotes the variations brought about by the *qaris* who most of the time based their mode of recitations on their own opinions. We have made it plain from the very outset that such a tampering has definitely occurred, where a particular *Qari* has read a particular word differently though without effecting any change in the original text or its essence. Whether we subscribe to the so called, seven modes of recitations or not, there is no doubt that such a tampering took place. In fact, there are many renderings, each based on the reader's guess and conjecture, which have changed the pronunciations and the recitations. In any case, this report does not support the view of *Tahrif* as the alteration, addition, omission or interpolation in the Qur'an.

The remaining traditions clearly point out that the word *Tahrif* used in them mean the misinterpretation of the verses. One of the results was that the excellence of *Ahl ul-Bayt* ('a) was denied, and hostility towards them encouraged. This is further supported by the sermon of Imam Husayn ('a) quoted above when those who were gathered to kill him are described as perpetrators of *Tahrif*.

In the tradition reported from *al-Kafi*, Imam Muhammad al Baqir ('a) says:

"And one of the examples of their repudiation of the Book is that while they upheld the words they distorted its injunctions".

Well, we have repeatedly said that *Tahrif* in this fashion has indisputably occurred in relation to the Qur'an. Had it not been so, the rights of *Ahl ul-Bayt* ('a) would have remained protected, and the reverence for them by the Prophet ('s) would have been honoured. The events would not have taken the tragic turn the way they did, resulting in the usurpation of their rights and in the Prophet's inconsolable grief.

The second type of traditions are those which state that the names of aimma (Imams) had originally appeared in certain verses of the Qur'an. These are quite a few. Among them is a report in *al-Kafi* by its own chain of narrators from Muhammad b. Fudhail that Abul Hasan (Imam Ali b. Musa Ridha ('a))said:

"The wilayah of Ali b. Abi Talib found mention in every book of the Prophets. No Prophet was sent without a covenant of Muhammad's ('s) prophethood and his rightful successor's wilayah, peace be upon them and their progeny"

And there is a report by al-Ayyashi with his chain of reporters from as-Sadiq ('a);

"If the Qur'an were to be read the way it was revealed, we would be found therein by our names".

Further reports of this nature are in *al-Kafi*, tafsir of Al-Ayyashi, reporting from Abu Ja'far ('a) and again in *Kanzul Fawaid* with its several chains of reporters from Ibn Abbas, and also in tafsir of Furat b. Ibrahim al Kafi with its own chain of narrators. It reports from Asbagh b. Nubatah having heard from Amirul Mu'mineen (Ali b. Abi Talib ('a))

"The Qur'an was revealed in four quarters: a quarter about us, a quarter about our adversaries, a quarter about traditions and parables, a quarter about the obligations and the laws. Ours was the most vital part of the Qur'an".

And *al-Kafi* has also reported with its own chain of reporters from Abu Ja'far (Imam Muhammad al-Baqir ('a))

"Jibra'ill came with this *ayah* to Muhammad in this way:

وان كنتم في ريب مما نزلنا على عبدنا - في علي - فأتوا بسورة من مثله

In reply to all these, we have clarified earlier that some parts of the revelations to the Prophet did not constitute the Qur'an; they were elucidatory. The reports which say that certain verses contained the names of Aimma ('a) could be such elucidatory additions. But if this interpretation does not seem plausible or probable, then the reports must be totally rejected as false and fabricated, because they would be deemed to be against the Qur'an, the traditions, and the aforementioned evidence which disprove *Tahrif*. There are acknowledged and continuous authentic reports which direct us to discard and reject all those reports which contradict the Qur'an.

One of the most convincing proofs that the name of Amir al Mu'minin ('a) was never openly mentioned in the Qur'an is the tradition of al-Ghadir. On that occasion, the Prophet ('s), as commanded by Allah appointed Ali after a revelation which placed great emphasis on it, and promised the Prophet ('s) that he would be guarded from evil men. If Ali's name had been openly there in the Qur'an, there would have been no need to declare an appointment, nor would it be necessary to make an elaborate arrangement for Muslims to assemble, or for Allah to assuage his fear that the declaration could cause him any harm.

The authenticity of *Ghadir is* enough to prove that these reports about the names of Aimma ('a) in the Qur'an are untrue; especially so because the event of *Ghadir* occurred in the farewell Hajj of the Prophet

(‘s) during his last days. By that time, most of the Qur'an had been revealed and had gained currency among the Muslim populace.

Moreover, the last report from *al-Kafi* seems to be highly improbable by its very contents. The abrupt mention of Ali where Allah wishes to prove the truth about Muhammad (‘s) by presenting the challenge of Qur'as an inimitable Book, seems quite irrelevant.

All these reports are rendered useless and invalid by one authentic tradition from Abu Abdillah, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (‘a) reported by *al-Kafi* from Abu Basir. He says: "I asked Abu Abdillah (‘a) about the *ayah*:

واطيعوا الله واطيعوا الرسول وأولي الأمر منكم

He said the verse was revealed for Ali b. Abi Talib, Hasan and Husayn (peace be upon them)".

I said: "People ask why the names of Ali and his family are not mentioned in the Book of Allah". He answered:

"Tell them that the Prophet (‘s) received the revelation for Salat, but Allah never specified the number of raka'ats as three or four. It was the Prophet (‘s) who made its meaning manifest for them"

This authentic tradition decides the merit of all those reports and clarifies their possible meaning: the name of Amir al Muminin (‘a) in those revelations could be just an elucidation, not to be imparted as a part of the Qur'an. Besides, those who refused to swear oath of allegiance for Abu Bakr never substantiated their argument by saying that Ali had been mentioned in the Qur'an. No doubt, had it been so, this would have been their strongest stand. And let us not forget that the collection of the Qur'an, as believed by those who argue against us, saw its completion soon after the question of khilafah was decided. All these are pointers to the fact that the names were never included in the verses.

The third type of reports are those which mention that there have been some additions or omissions in the Qur'an, and that, after the Prophet's death, people replaced some words in the Qur'an with the others.

Ali b. Ibrahim al-Qummi has reported with his chain of narrators from Hurayz who says: "Abu Abdillah (‘a) read this *ayah* as:

صراط من أنعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم وغير الضالين

Al-Ayyashi reports from Hisham b. Salim:

"I asked Abu Abdillah (‘a) about this *ayah*:

ان الله اصطفى آدم ونوحا وآل ابراهيم وآل عمران على العالمين

He said: "It is آل عمران . They have changed one name for the other. They have substituted آل محمد for آل ابراهيم.

Besides the weakness and unreliability of the reporters, these reports are all unacceptable and false because they are against the Qur'an, the *Sunnah* and the consensus of Muslims who hold that there has not been an addition of even one letter in the Qur'an. Even those who advocate *Tahrif* do **not** believe that there has been any addition. A group of *Ulama'* have claimed a consensus on the fact that there has been no addition to the Qur'an and that which exists between the two covers is nothing but the Qur'an. Among them are Sheikh Mufid, Sheikh Tusi, Sheikh Bahai and other great *Ulama'*, may He bless them. And we have quoted earlier from *al-Ihtijaj* which also reiterates that there has been no addition.

The fourth type of reports claim that there has occurred *Tahrif* in the Qur'an by way of omission only. To them we say that they have to interpret such reports the same way as those concerning the elucidatory additions in the codex prepared by Amir al Mominin('a). And if that sounds improbable, then the reports must be rejected as false because they are against the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Most of the reports in this vein are weak, while falsehood of some of them is evident from their content. The *Ulama'* have therefore guided us to either subject them to interpretations or reject them altogether.

Muhaqqiq Al-Kalbasi has said: "All those reports which speak of *Tahrif* are against the consensus of Ummah and therefore unreliable – except for those who do not rely upon the consensus". And then he proceeds to say: "The belief in any omission having occurred in the Qur'an is baseless. Had it been true, it would have become popular and acknowledged, because such an important occurrence could not pass unnoticed".

The commentator of *al-Wafiyah*, Muhaqqiq al-Baghdadi, has further clarified this by quoting from Muhaqqiq al-Karaki who had written a complete tract on the subject. He says:

"The reports which speak of omissions must either be interpreted or rejected. Any tradition which is contradictory to the Qur'an, the acknowledged sunnah and the consensus, must be discarded if it has no room for interpretation or other justifications.

I say: Muhaqqiq al-Karaki has pointed towards what we have said earlier, about the clear directive from authentic traditions regarding the rejection of all those reports which are in disagreement with the Qur'an."

Among those traditions is the one reported by Sheikh as Saduq Muhammad b. Ali b. Husayn with his reliable chain of narrators from as-Sadiq ('a):

"To exercise restraint when in doubt is better than rushing into a jeopardy. Upon every truth there is divine light. Accept that which conforms with the Book of Allah, and leave aside that which goes against

it "[1](#)

And Sheikh Saeed b. Hibatullah, al Qutb ar-Rawandi, has reported with his authentic chain of narrators from as-Sadiq ('a),

"when you come across two opposing reports, expose them before the Book of Allah. Accept that which conforms with the Book of Allah and reject that which goes against it." [2](#)

The Fourth Doubt

This emanates from the way the collection of the Qur'an is described, making it possible for one to assume that *Tahrif* was inevitable. We now proceed to another chapter on this, so that this doubt is also allayed.

[1.](#) Al- Wasail Vol 3.

[2.](#) Al- Wasail Vol 3.

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