

IN HIS NAME & BY THE REMEMBRANCE OF HIS LAST HUJJAT (ATFS)

GHADEER LECTURE SERIES

**Lecture 8: QURANIC VERSES ON IMAMAT
VERSE OF TABLEEGH**

Part 2: Context of Revelation of the verse

Fakhrudin Raazi, the famous Sunni exegetist, in his Tafseer Kabir has listed 10 possible contexts of the revelation of this verse.

1. This verse is related to the initial era of Islam when Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) was surrounded by polytheists and enemies from whom he faced an imminent threat

This assumption is completely baseless since Surah Maidah is a Madani surah and is not connected to the initial days of Islam. Hence, we should look for some other reasons (for the revelation of this verse) that are connected to the life of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) in Madina.

2. It is related to a Mina when the polytheists were in power
3. It is related to an incident when a polytheist had dreamt of terrorising and killing Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a)

The ten occasions that Fakhre Raazi has listed about the context of the revelation of this verse, except for the tenth one, are all unrelated to Ghadeer. All others are speaking about different occasions. While the verse speaks on five topics, Fakhre Raazi has only focussed on the last part - "and Allah shall protect you from the enemies"

Based on this, none of the contexts that Fakhre Raazi has listed can be considered to be valid and relevant for this verse. Most of the matter written by him claiming to be the "context" of this verse are in fact his personal opinions and hence unrelated to facts and reality.

The verses prior to this verse criticises and condemns the 'Ahle Kitab' (Jews and Christians) and says that 'do not associate with the Ahle Kitab, as they believe in "trinity" and hence are not monotheists etc. The verses prior and after this verse are all reprimanding the Ahle Kitab

So, Fakhre Raazi says that this verse of Tableegh (Maidah, v 67) is related to Ahle Kitab. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) is responsible to convey the message of

Tauheed to the Christians and the Jews. Thus, Allah has emphasised to Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) that he should not be lax in this and if fails to do this duty, then his prophethood would remain incomplete. Thus, this verse of Tableegh is about the order to convey to Jews and Christians.

In reply we say

1. Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) had ended the problem and threat of the Ahle Kitab in the 5th year of migration after dealing with the Bani Kuraiza. Hence, after 5 AH, Islam did not face any issues or threats from the Ahle Kitab. While the Verse of Tableegh descended in the last days of the life of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) - during the Farewell Pilgrimage. Thus, this verse cannot be considered to be related to the Ahle Kitab.
2. As we mentioned earlier in the discussion of ‘Verse of Wilayah’ that the Holy Quran, which was compiled by Zaid bin Saabit and his friends, is not arranged according to the sequence of their revelation. So Fakhre Raazi cannot use this as an argument (i.e. this verse is related to Ahle Kitab since the preceding and subsequent verses speak about the Ahle Kitab). If the entire Quran had been revealed as what we have with us now, then the preceding verses can be used as a proof. Or if Fakhre Raazi can get some evidence this verse of Tableegh was revealed along with the other verses condemning the Ahle Kitab, then we can accept his opinion. Then, we can say and accept that Zaid bin Saabit has rightly placed this verse in the middle of the verses dealing with the Ahle Kitab.
Then, till the time we are not unanimous and don’t have proof, we cannot accept the view of Fakhre Raazi.
3. Many verses in the Holy Quran have condemned the Ahle Kitab. But nowhere the phrase has come “and if you don’t convey then you have not conveyed anything from your prophethood. Because, Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) had already conveyed the message of Islam to the Ahle Kitab. Hence, this verse cannot be related to the Ahle Kitab.

Actual Context of Verse of Tableegh

The real and true context of this verse is related to Farewell Pilgrimage of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a). Many traditions from the Ahle Sunnah are a witness to this fact

1. Tafseer Durre Mansoor is considered to be a very authentic and reliable exegesis of the Holy Quran among the Ahle Sunnah. It has been written by Jalaluddin Suyooti who is among their well-informed and reliable scholars. He writes in this Tafseer

• أَخْرَجَ ابْنُ مَرْدُوْيَهُ عَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ كَنَا نَقْرَأُ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلَغْتُ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رِبِّكَ أَنْ عَلَيْكَ مَوْلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِيُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ¹

This hadees has been narrated from Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduyah and Ibn Asakir who have narrated from Abu Saeed Khudri who said, ‘This verse was revealed on the day of Ghadeer about H. Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s)’
¹

• أَخْرَجَ ابْنُ مَرْدُوْيَهُ عَنْ ابْنِ مَسْعُودٍ قَالَ كَنَا نَقْرَأُ عَلَى عَهْدِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلَغْتُ مَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رِبِّكَ أَنْ عَلَيْكَ مَوْلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِيُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ¹

Ibn Marduyah narrates from Abdullah ibn Masood, the famous companion of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a), who said that “In the time of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) we used to recite this verse as “O Messenger! Convey what has been revealed by your Lord, **‘that Ali is the Master of all believers’**. And if you don’t convey then you have not conveyed anything from your prophethood. And do not fear about those who are jealous of the wilayat of Ali”²

¹ Al Durrul Mansoor fi tafseer Ma’soor, vol 2 pg 298

² Ibid

It is important to note that this does not mean, God forbid, that the present day Quran has been altered. Or some statement was present in it earlier, but has now been removed. What this hadees is trying to say that in the time of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a), this verse was **understood** in this manner that this order and “conveying” was about the wilayat of Ali ibn Talib. And it does not mean that this was originally in the text of Quran and then removed later.

We have many traditions – both in Shia and Sunni books – that say that this verse is concerning H. Ali (a.s). Hence, it is proved that this verse is neither about the Ahle Kitab nor about the polytheists.

2. Hakim Haskani, a famous scholar of the fifth century has written the book ‘Shawahedut Tanzeel’ which is a collection of all Quranic verses related to Ameerul Momineen (a.s). On page 250, after narrating many traditions on this matter, he writes as follows

• عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ عَنْ أَبْنِ عَبَّاسٍ فِي قَوْلِهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلَّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ الْآيَةَ، [قَالَ: نَزَّلْتُ فِي عَلَيِّ، أُمِرَّ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَ أَنْ يُبَلِّغَ فِيهِ، فَأَخَذَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ بِيَدِ عَلَيِّ فَقَالَ: مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلَيُّ مَوْلَاهُ اللَّهُمَّ وَالِّيْ مَنْ وَالاَهُ وَعَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ.]

The verse “O Messenger! Convey what has been.....” was revealed concerning Ali. Allah ordered His Messenger to announce about it. Then Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) caught hold of Ali’s hand and said to the people ‘Of whomsoever I am the master, this Ali too is his master. O Allah, You befriend those who befriend Ali and You detest those who detest Ali’³ Hence, it clearly and undoubtedly proves that this verse is concerning H. Ali (a.s) and it was revealed on the day of Ghadeer.

• حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ أَبِي أُوفَى قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَ يَقُولُ يَوْمَ غَدِيرِ خُمٍّ وَتَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ: يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلَّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَبَلَّغْتِ رِسَالَتَهُ ثُمَّ رَفَعَ يَدَيْهِ حَتَّى يُرَى بِيَاضِ إِبْطِيهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ: أَلَا مَنْ كُنْتُ مَوْلَاهُ فَعَلَيُّ مَوْلَاهُ، اللَّهُمَّ وَالِّيْ مَنْ وَالاَهُ وَعَادِ مَنْ عَادَاهُ. ثُمَّ قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ اشْهِدْ.

³ Shawahedut Tanzeel, pg 251, H 245

We heard Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) reciting this verse “O Messenger! Convey....” Then he raised his hands so high that the whiteness of the armpit was visible and he said, “Of whomsoever I am the master, this Ali too is his master. O Allah You befriend those who befriend Ali and you detest those who detest Ali.” Then he (s.a.w.a) said, “O Allah, You bear witness”⁴

Hence, we see that the context of this verse is against the ten contexts listed by Fakhre Raazi in order to deviate the people from the real background of the *Verse of Tableegh*. This verse is also neither about the ‘fear’ of Holy Prophet (s.a.w.a) nor about the Ahle Kitab. It has only one context which have been discussed above and it is related to the place of Ghadeer Khum. This verse implies, “O Messenger! Convey about the Wilayat of Ali Ibn Talib to the people. And if (for the sake of assumption) you don’t, then all Your other efforts of your Prophethood will be null and void” Why? Because Ali is the guardian and protector of your efforts of Prophethood (of the last 23 years). Whatever you have said about Quran, Tauheed, Qiyamat, Ahkam, Akhlaq and Shariah as well as every other topic under the sun, after you Ali will protect it and safeguard it. So if you don’t announce his Wilayat, then all your efforts of Prophethood will be wasted and nothing of religion will survive after you.

On the day of Ghadeer, Allah had such minutely and precisely arranged for the announcement of the Wilayat of H. Ali (a.s) , that all those who opposed his Wilayat – and who later gathered at Saqifah to hatch their conspiracy – could not deny his appointment on that day. Hence, Allah executed His ‘covenant’ to perfection.

At the end of the verse, Allah says about all those who oppose the Wilayat of Ali Ibn Talib, since they oppose the order of Allah, that ‘*Allah shall not guide the polytheists’*

⁴ Shawahedut Tanzeel, vol 1 pg 252, H 247