



## Deficiencies of Sunni Commentators in Applying the Rules of Interpretation in the Verses regarding the Infallibility of the Prophets

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### **Abstract**

One of the basic foundations and requirements of Qur'anic interpretation is interpretive rules. Sunni thinkers have been at the forefront of recounting and setting the rules of interpretation. The general rules that are mediated by inference from the verses of the Qur'an are called interpretive rules, which are divided into two types of common rules between interpretation and other sciences and rules specific to the interpretation of verses. The value of interpretive rules depends on its correct application in the interpretation of verses. This study tries to answer the question by referring to Sunni interpretations with an analytic-critique method to address the question: What shortcomings have had the Sunni commentators in applying the interpretative rules in the verses regarding the infallibility of the prophets? Despite the claim of Sunni commentators to pay attention to the most important interpretive criteria in the verses in practice, they have committed several mistakes, which are: ignoring the centrality and authenticity of the Qur'an in relation to other epistemological sources, considering the general authority of companions' narrations, ignoring the semantic differences of near-meaning words, taking the Isra'iliyyat, hesitating in interpreting the verses and contradiction in terms of interpreter. Among these, the biggest shortcomings are quoting from the Isra'iliyyat and ignoring the semantic differences of near-meaning words.

**Keywords:** *Interpretive Rules; Verses of Infallibility; Prophets; Sunni Commentators; Analysis and Criticism*

### **Introduction**

Understanding the text of the Qur'an, like any other text, has rules and regulations that are the basic foundations of inference from the Qur'an. (Al-Sabt, 1421 AH: 1/33.) These rules can be the criterion for selection in cases of interpretive disagreements and reduce interpretive errors. Some scholars believe that most of the differences and errors that have occurred in interpretation so far have been due to neglect of these rules. (Babayee et al., 2000: 63-64.)

Historical background of interpretation rules can be considered at the beginning of Islam, as some writers have attributed the beginning of the interpretation rules to the Prophet (PBUH) and the pioneers of

interpretation after him. Because some rules of interpretation are taken from the Qur'an. (Al-Sabt, 1421: 1/42.)

Among the Sunni books on the rules of Tafsir, we can mention Ibn Taymiyyah's "Rules of Tafsir" and "Al-Manhaj Al-Qawīm Fi Qawā'id Tata'allāq bil Qur'an al-Karim" written by Shams al-Din Ibn Al-Sayegh Muhammad bin Abdul Rahman Al-Hanafī, the author of *Kashf al-Zunūn*. (See: Haji Khalifa, 1941: 2 / 1358-1883.) Some Sunni books, although they have the name of the rules of interpretation, but either the whole content of those books is not related to the rules of interpretation or a small part of it has dealt with the rules; such as Ibn al-Wazir's "Rules of Interpretation" which is not considered as a compilation of the rules of interpretation according to a specific term, as well as the book "Al-Taysir in the rules of the science of interpretation" by Muhammad ibn Sulaymān al-Kafiji and the book "Principles of Interpretation and Rules" which are books on Qur'anic sciences.

The book "Qawā'id al-Ḥisān li Tafsir al-Qur'an" written by Abd al-Rahman ibn Nasser al-Sa'dī, in which 71 rules are given with examples for each rule, only twenty rules are really interpretive rules. Abd al-Rahman Habbankeh al-Maydani also stated in the book "The Rules of Contemplating in the Book of God Almighty" that the reader should observe in order to contemplate the Qur'an. The book of rules and benefits of the jurisprudence of the book of God Almighty written by Abdullah bin Muhammad Al-Jū'ī has also referred to some interpretive rules (Al-Sabt, 1421: pp. 43-45).

Among the works that discuss the rules of interpretation with a special order is the book "Principles and Rules of Interpretation" by Sheikh Khalid Abdul Rahman Al-'Ak, "Rules of Interpretation collectively and in study" written by Khalid Ibn 'Uthman Al-Sabt. Among the Shiite thinkers, Seyyed Ali Kamali Dezfuli and Ali Akbar Babayee have written independent books on the rules of interpretation. (See: Rezayee Isfahani, 2016: 253-254.) Fakir Meybodi has also written the book "Rules of Tafsir for Shiite and Sunni". Dr. Ali Ghazanfari has also dedicated a part of his book "Rules, Principles and Methods of Interpretation" to the study of 16 rules of interpretation.

Although numerous scientific works have been published in the form of books and articles on the interpretive rules and infallibility of the prophets, no independent source has been found regarding the application of the rules in interpreting the verses and expressing the shortcomings of the Sunni commentators. Regarding the infallibility of the prophets, the book "Infallibility of the Prophets" by Fakhr Rāzī, "Purification of the Prophets" by Ayatollah Ma'refat and articles entitled: "A Look at the Infallibility of the Prophets in the Holy Qur'an" by Ilya Batoul, "The Infallibility of the Prophets from Sin in the Qur'an" By Mohammad Hussein Faryab and Hamid Emamifar, "Critique of Doubts about the Infallibility of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in the Qur'an" by Madad Ali Malah, "The infallibility of the prophets in the Qur'an" was written by Ja'far Anwari.

The above sources have either proved the infallibility of the prophets in general or have considered the analysis of the arguments of some commentators on the infallibility of the prophets. Therefore, they do not have a direct and detailed connection with the subject of this article. In this article, after defining the rules and stating the types of interpretive rules, the shortcomings of Sunni commentators in applying these rules in interpreting verses are discussed.

## **1. Defining the Interpretive Rules**

The rules of interpretation in a general division are divided into two categories: first, the general rules that are common between interpretation and other sciences that are used in any science, and second, the rules that are specific to the interpretation of the Qur'an.

### **1.1. General Rules**

The first type is the common rules between the word and the observance of syntax and I'rāb. The purpose of this rule is to use Arabic language and literature in Mufradāt and expressive styles to access

the meanings of words. Suyūṭī has described the third source of interpretation as "words" and the fourth source of the most important sources of interpretation as "Appropriate meaning of the word". (See: Suyūṭī, 1404 AH: 699-701)

There are several issues under this rule, such as discussing the main letters and redundancies, avoiding an analysis that is contrary to the appearance and contrary to the order of the word, which in some cases this rule is not observed, such as Zamakhsharī's speech below the seventh and eighth verses of Surah Al-Ḥashr that has considered "For the Poor" as a substitute for "For near Relatives" (Zamakhsharī, 1407 AH: 4/503), while considering the distance between the poor and the near relatives, knowing the exchange is contrary to appearance.

Another common rule is the rule of distinguishing between truth and trope. Many thinkers prove the existence of truth and trope in the Arabic language and literature and in the Qur'an, like Ibn Qutaybah, Suyūṭī. (Faker Maybudī, 2001: 8) The Sunnis agree with the existence of common words in the Qur'an, which are subject to the rule of commonality, but their agreement is conditional on the preference of one aspect and using it in practice; except in cases where it is not possible to prefer between one of the two meanings. (Al-'AK, 1428 AH: 397)

Regarding the rule of synonymy, there are two views among Sunni thinkers on the prohibition and proof of synonymy in the Qur'an. Al-'AK denied the existence of synonyms in the Qur'an (Al-'AK, 1428 AH: 2) and Dr. Sobhi Saleh is one of the people who acknowledged the existence of synonyms in the Qur'an and his reason is the flow of Arabic language styles in the Qur'an. (Sobhi Saleh, 1960 AD: 299) Other rules are the rule of aspects, simile and allegory, metaphor and irony, the rule of presentation and delay and guarantee (Faker Maybudī, 2001: 117-158)

Examining the common rules in Shiite and Sunni books, it is found that both groups agree on this kind of general rules and there are differences only in explaining some of the sub-rules. The Sunnis, for example, believe in the permissibility of allocating the generality of the book to a single piece of news whose narrator is not accused of lying and forgetfulness. It is also permissible to assign the generalities of the book with reason and sense. As Fakhr-e-Rāzī under the verse: "Allah is the Creator of all things" (Zumar / 62) considers the generality of the verse to include everything, even the essence and attributes of God's goodness, while we know rationally that God Almighty is not necessarily the Creator of His own attributes. (Fakhr-e-Rāzī, 1418 AH: 1/354) In explaining the verse 23 of surah Naml, he also believes that the generality of the verse is specified with sense. For there was nothing of the heavens and the throne in the hand of the Queen of Sheba. But with a little thought and care it becomes clear that these cases are specifically out of the question, because in the first verse the object is any creature, not every being. In the second verse, it should be noted that for "whole", there is a relative meaning that is meant in relation to the power and that is known for the object, such as the saying of God Almighty who said: "We revealed this Holy Book to you explaining everything." (Naḥl / 89) which means the whole in this verse is everything that man needs in his path of guidance. (Tabataba'i, 1417 AH: 12/324)

## 1.2. Specific Rules

The first specific rule is the authority of the appearances of the Qur'an, on which the Shiites and the Sunnis agree. As Ibn Ḥazm considers acting upon the appearance of the Qur'an to be sufficient to guide man. (Ibn Ḥazm, nd: 3/266)

The context rule is another important rule of interpretation. Although context is not defined in Sunni works, its importance has been pointed out. As Ibn Qayyim Jawzī has considered the context as one of the greatest and strongest evidences indicating the intention of the theologian, (see: Salwi, 79) Zarkashī has expressed the same interpretation a little more briefly. (See: Zarkashī, nd: 2/200) Rashid Reza also considers the best analogy for expressing the truth of the meaning of the word to be the agreement of the meaning with the previous part of speech and in proportion to the purpose for which the sentence has

been written. (See: Rashid Reza, 1990: 1 / 22-64-70) One of the cases of not paying attention to the context of words is Ālūsī's speech under verse 98 of Surah Yūnus. According to him, the divine tradition is that when a people see the divine punishment, their faith is not beneficial for them when they see the punishment, and the divine traditions do not change. While in the case of the people of Yūnus, after observing the torment, their faith was beneficial due to the "Kashafnā" and the torment was removed from them (Ālūsī, 1415 AH: 6/180), but Fakhr Rāzī writes according to the context of the word: in the verse «لَمَّا» «كُتِبْنَا عَنْهُمْ عَذَابَ الْخِزْيِ» has been mentioned and according to the narrations, the people of Yūnus believed by seeing the signs of torment and not by observing and descending torment, so there is no contradiction between this verse and the verses expressing the divine tradition. (Fakhr Rāzī, 1420 AH: 17/303)

The rule of Jary and Taṭbīq is another specific interpretation rule. Jary and Taṭbīq is the adaptation of the words and verses of the Qur'an to instances other than what the verses have been revealed about them (Faker Maybudī, 2001: 292). There are several examples of these instances in Sunni books; Like the narration of Ibn Abbas who directed the straight path to the Messenger of God (PBUH) and his two companions (Suyūṭī, 1404 AH: 1/40), "Verily Man is in loss." (Aṣr/2) is applied to Abu Jahl and "Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy." (Aṣr / 3) has been applied to Imam Ali (AS) and Salman (Suyūṭī, 1404 AH: 6/392)

Another important rule of interpretation is the prohibition of eisegesis. The interpreter of the Qur'an should seek a scholarly and impartial understanding of the Qur'an and obtain the final view of the Qur'an by summarizing verses, narrations, and rational and scientific reasons, rather than trying to prove his views, which is one of the eisegesis. In the meantime, some Sunni scholars consider the interpretation of non-prophets or non-companions as absolute eisegesis and forbid it. (Dhahabī, nd, 183/1)

Another important rule of interpretation is the prohibition of the use of Isra'iliyyat in interpretation. Al-Sabt has stated the sources of the companions in interpreting the verses of the Qur'an, the Prophetic tradition, Arabic literature, the People of the Book, their understanding and ijtihad, and taking from other Companions. The People of the Book mean the Jews and the Christians. He writes about the ruling of the Israeli narrations: These narrations are of three types: First, the narrations that we know to be correct due to the existence of evidence from the book and tradition. Secondly, the narrations that we know to be false due to the conflict with the book and tradition, and thirdly, the narrations that have no proof to be accepted or rejected and these narrations are silent. Finally, these narrations are not interpreters of the Qur'an. (Al-Sabt, 1421 AH: 166)

Although Sunni scholars have set the rules of interpretation in their scientific works, their dependence on religious beliefs has in some cases led to the neglect of the rules in the interpretation of verses.

## **2. Deficiencies of Sunni Commentators in Applying Interpretive Rules in Interpreting Verses About the Infallibility of the Prophets**

The Sunnis state two general ways of interpreting the Qur'an in the form of a rule: first, the method of fixed narration and second, the fixed opinion and they consider the interpretation other than these two ways invalid. The fixed narration of the Qur'an includes the Sunnah, the sayings of the Companions, the sayings of the followers, and the words, which should be referred to in the interpretation in the order mentioned. The first rule is the centrality of the Qur'an in the interpretation of verses.

## 2.1. Ignoring The Centrality and Originality of the Qur'an in Relation to Other Sources of Knowledge

The verses of the Qur'an are revealed as interconnected networks and collections, with the aim of guiding man, and other sources of knowledge as a tool to remove the ambiguity and explain the verses. For this purpose, the commentator must always pay attention to the originality and centrality of the verses. In some cases, Sunni commentators have not taken a comprehensive look at all the verses and have elaborated on the verses by relying on other epistemological sources. One of the criticizing examples is Marāghī's statement under the verse "Ye will; but approach not this tree, or ye run into harm and transgression." (Baqarah/35) He described Adam (PBUH) as an ordinary human being who is overcome by instincts and temptations. (See: Marāghī, 1365 AH: 1/89) While God has chosen Adam and called him prophet: "Allah did choose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of Imran above all people." (Al Imrān/33)

Fakhr al-Rāzī has also written under the verse 42 of Surah Yūsuf: The first saying is that the reference of the pronoun "he" in "Forgot him" is "Yūsuf". Explaining that it was expedient for Yūsuf (AS) not to refer to any of the humans in the events and not to offer his needs to anyone other than God and to follow his ancestor Ibrahim (AS) and if the pronoun returns to the butler, God must said: "Satan made him forget God" (Fakhr Rāzī, 1420 AH: 18 / 461-462) Zamakhsharī has also attributed forgetfulness to the butler according to the evidence in the verse. (Zamakhsharī, 1407 AH: 2/472)

On the other hand, Allameh Tabataba'i in his critique of referring the pronoun of "Forget Him" to Yūsuf writes: Referring the pronoun to Yūsuf is contrary to the text of the Book of God. God Almighty has stated that Yūsuf is sincere. The text of the Qur'an also indicates that Satan does not influence the sincere. In addition, God Almighty has praised Yūsuf in this surah and sincerity for God does not prevent man from resorting to other causes than God. (Tabataba'i, 1417 AH: 11/181)

Although in many cases this shortcoming exists in the method of Sunni commentators, in some cases they have preferred the Qur'anic meanings over other epistemological sources. Among them is Qurṭubī's response to a commentary according to which some commentators, citing the verse, "And thus have We, by Our Command, sent inspiration to thee: thou knewest not (before) what was Revelation, and what was Faith; but We have made the (Qur'an) a Light, wherewith We guide such of Our servants as We will; and verily thou dost guide (men) to the Straight Way." (Shūrā/52) have proved the lack of faith in previous Prophets before Bi'thah. He writes under this verse: The appearance of this verse indicates the denial of the faith of the Prophet before the revelation, but the prophets have been free from this defect since birth and their existence has originated on the basis of monotheism and faith but also on the knowledge. As is clear from the case of Moses, Jesus, John, Solomon (AS) and other prophets. The commentators have stated that the book was given to John (Yaḥyā) (AS) when he was a child. Some have said his age was between two or three years. John also acknowledged and testified that Jesus (PBUH) was the word of God at the age of three and some said that it was when he was in his mother's womb. The text of the words of Jesus (PBUH) who said: He said: "I am indeed a servant of Allah. He hath given me revelation and made me a prophet." (Maryam/30) was in the cradle. Giving judgment and knowledge to Prophet Solomon (AS) was also in his childhood. (Qurṭubī, 1985: 16/56) According to these verses, the prophets have had growth, judgment, knowledge, understanding and acknowledgment of God before being sent to the high position of prophecy.

## 2.2. Considering the General Authority of the Narrations of the Companions

Referring to the sayings of the Companions in the interpretation of the Qur'an is the most important rule for the Sunnis. As Abu Ali, by interpreting the necessity of referring to the interpretation of the Companions, argues on the authority of the Companions' words (Al-Sabt, 1421 AH: 176)

Sunni scholars do not agree on the use of the term companions:

Suyūfī has expressed the famous view in the realization of the title of Companion, seeing and associating with the Messenger of God; as Ibn Salah and Bukhari also considered someone who was with the Messenger of God (PBUH) or saw him with the Prophet as a companion. (Suyūfī, nd: 2/667; Bukhari, 1401 AH, 4/188) Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal in the definition of a companion says that whoever accompanies the Prophet (PBUH) for a year or a month or a day or an hour is considered a companion. (Ibn Ḥajar Asqalānī, 1417 AH: 1/159)

According to Ibn Ḥajar, a companion is one who has met the Prophet (PBUH) with the description of faith and has passed away as a Muslim. Now, whether his meetings with the Prophet (PBUH) are long or not. Whether he narrated a narration from the Prophet or not, whether he participated in a battle with the Prophet (PBUH) or not. (Ibid: 1/158) Although the best definition of the Companions that the Sunnis accept is the definition of Ibn Ḥajar, but Ahmad Hussein Ya'qub has criticized the definition of Ibn Ḥajar. Among other things, according to this definition, even if a child has seen the Prophet (PBUH) because observation is attributed to the Prophet (PBUH), we should consider him a companion. On the other hand, the condition of "meeting the Prophet (PBUH) with the description of faith" requires proving the truth of faith for the individual, which is something beyond human power. So Ibn Ḥajar should have said that one who believes or pretends to believe. (Ya'qub, 1994: 35-6)

Others have stated that companionship at a certain time and companionship in jihad are among the means of being companions; As Saeed Ibn Musayyib has considered accompanying the Messenger of God (PBUH) for one or two years or cooperating in one or two wars with him as a condition for applying the name of a companion. (Khaṭīb Baghdādī, nd: 50)

If we make concessions to the companions and, for example, consider them just, we should be more careful in defining it. Therefore, in the definition of the term companions, it should be said that a companion is someone who understands the Prophet (PBUH) and has both an opinion and a belief with him.

### **2.2.1. Evidences for general authority of the companions' words in the interpretation of the Qur'an**

The Sunnis agree on the general authority of the words of the Companions in the interpretation of the Qur'an and have cited verses and narrations to prove and defend their views; one of their Qur'anic arguments is the verse 100 of Surah Tawbah.

"The vanguard (of Islam) the first of those who forsook (their homes) and of those who gave them aid, and (also) those who follow them in (all) good deeds, well- pleased is Allah with them, as are they with Him: for them hath He prepared Gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever: that is the supreme triumph."

Following this verse, Abu Zuhra has considered the interpretation of «السابقون الاولون» as the leader of every person who wants to be guided. (Abu Zuhra, nd, 7/3430) Darwazah has also acknowledged the leadership of Muhājirān and Anṣār (Darwazah, 525 / 9 ;2004). Fakhr al-Rāzī has stated the reason for this promise as the strengthening of the heart of the Messenger of God (PBUH) and removing his fear. (Ālūsī, 1415 AH: 6/9) Abu Zuhra writes in the argument of the verse 100 of Surah Tawbah: In this verse, God Almighty praises those who followed the pioneers of the Muhājirān and the Anṣār. Therefore, following the guidance of the pioneers will lead to the praise of God, and quoting the sayings of the pioneers as an argument is nothing but a kind of obedience and following. (Abu Zuhra, 1377 AH, 212-213) The Sunnis have relied on other verses to prove justice, followed by the general authority of the Companions;

including verses 18 and 29 of Surah Fath, 110 of Surah Al Imrān, 143 of Surah Al-Baqarah, 64 and 74 of Surah Anfāl; the eighth verses of Surah Al-Ḥashr; verse 10 of Surah Ḥadīd and verse 95 of Surah An-Nisā'. Considering that some of these verses are addressed to the Islamic Ummah and are not reserved for the companions, and other groups are generals who only praise the actions of the individual.

Another part of the verses, considering the reason for their revelation, refers to a special group of companions who have suffered a calamity in the way of Islam. Therefore, it doesn't mean the praise of all the companions in these verses. The Sunnis have also cited narrations in order to prove the authenticity of the Companions' words, such as the narration of «مثل النجوم يهتدى بها فيأى قول اصحابي اخذتم اهتديتم» (Timi, 1425 AH: 2/726); Abu Hamed al-Ghazali, while narrating: He is not one of the companions unless a special praise is given to him. Therefore, we deserve to accept the authenticity of their words and not to be suspicious of them and to carry their actions for good and right; although it does not really mean. Now, if we find the reason for the mistake and error, the suspicion is removed, and if we do not find it, then there may be an interpretation and an excuse that we are unaware of. Al-Ghazali further argues on the authority of the words of the Companions: Grace is known only through revelation, and the Companions, upon hearing from the Prophet (PBUH), gained knowledge of virtues, and the best people to hear from the Prophet (PBUH) are those who are associated with his situation. (Ghazali Tusi, 1424 AH: 1/79)

In general, the narration of the "My Companions as Stars" has been narrated through Salam ibn Salim from Ḥārith ibn Ghassin from A'mash from Abu Sufyān from Jabir (Namri Qurṭubī, 1414 AH: 2/923; Ibn Ḥazm, nd: 6/82) although some Sunnis, based on this narration, have considered the general authority of the sayings of the Companions, but others have stated that this hadith is fake and fabricated with two reasons: First, this hadith is Marfū'ah; Secondly, Ibn Abd al-Barr stated that this document is not authentic, because Ḥārith ibn Ghassin is unknown. Ibn Ḥazm also considers the narration invalid for two reasons: one is the weakness of Abu Sufyān and the second is Salam Ibn Sulaymān, whose narration is undoubtedly fake. (Al Sheikh, 1416 AH: 1/25)

Ibn al-Qayyim, Ibn Fawzān, and Abu Ḥayyān also called the narration "My Companions as Stars" false and forged, and considered the weakness of the hadith to be related to 'Abd al-Rahman, about whom the scholars have remained silent. (Ibn Qayyim, 1411 AH: 2/171; Abu Ḥayyān, 1420 AH: 6/582; Ibn Fawzān, 1422 AH: 1/252) The weakness of this hadith has been mentioned in other works. (Najdi Ahsá'í, 1423 AH: 1/239; Ibn Qudāmah, nd: 1/143; Qaraḍāwī, 1421 AH: 1/73) This hadith is both weak in terms of the document and has many drawbacks in terms of its meaning, including:

1. Following a word or action of a companion cannot lead a person; since on the one hand, it will require the superiority of the Companions over the Messenger of God (PBUH). On the other hand, in spite of many differences in the words and deeds of the Companions, it is not possible to follow all of them, and choosing one of them to establish in practice is an unfortunate preference. (Muttaqī Hindī, 1989: 11/294)
2. The meaning of this narration is in conflict with many verses of the Holy Qur'an, which have been included in the condemnation of some of the Companions; such as verses from surah Anfāl, Barā'at and Jumu'ah, etc.
3. There is a conflict between the concept of this narration and the numerous narrations of the Messenger of God which exist in the prohibition of following the companions. Hadiths such as: "There is discord and sedition among my companions. God forgives my former companions and throws the people who follow them after me into the fire of Hell." (Ibid)
4. The meaning of this narration is in conflict with the narrations in which some of the companions have been condemned. Such as: the narration of "Dhāt al-Shimāl" which is a correct narration in which the Holy Prophet (PBUH) reports about the apostasy of some of the companions after his death. (Ibn Ḥanbal, 1421 AH: 15/4) as well as the "Narration of Apostasy", in which the news of the apostasy of some of the companions was given (Ashqadari Albani, 1422 AH: 4/170)

5. It is unreasonable to follow the sayings or behavior of the companions, some of whom were murderers or victims, some of whom were oppressors or oppressed, some of whom were cursed or accursed. For example, according to the differences between Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (AS) and some other companions and the confrontation between them in the battle of Şiffin and the battle of Jamal, if you follow Mu'āwiya and 'Amr al-Āṣ or Ṭalḥa and Zubayr, who were all companions of the Prophet, it may seem the same for him to be in any of these groups, because in any case he has followed the companions of the Prophet!

In view of these matters, it is impossible for the Messenger of God (PBUH) to order absolute obedience from all the Companions and to consider this as a guide for the followers. In addition to the above, there are cases in Sunni books in which narrations have been narrated in which the companions are mentioned in the chain of narration. But those narrations have been expressed as strange and weak; like the narration of Anas Ibn Malik from the Messenger of God (PBUH) about the manifestation of God on the mountain. Ibn Kathīr denies it (Ibn Kathīr, 1419 AH: 3/423) and Rashid Reza also states it by denying the previous narrations from Anas. (Rashid Reza, 1990: 9/110)

### 2.3. Ignoring Semantic Differences in Near-Meaning Words

One of the most important and controversial issues regarding the words of the Qur'an is the discussion about the presence or absence of synonymous words in the Holy Qur'an. Regardless of the differences, the proponents of both views have accepted the principle that near-meaning words are not synonymous. In the meantime, this principle is more defensible in the words of the Qur'an due to its miracle of expression, wise structure and firm order. Therefore, in interpreting the Qur'an, the commentator must first lay the principle on the non-synonymy of words. Second, typically, near-meaning words in Arabic language each have a specific semantic feature that should not be overlooked in interpretation. This principle has been widely considered in the discovery of Zamakhsharī but has often been ignored by some commentators.

The words "Alqī" and "plan" are near-meaning words. The word "Alqī" in verse 150 of Surah A'rāf in the narration of the story of Moses (PBUH) is mentioned in the phrase "وَأَلْقَى الْأَتْرَاحَ". However, some lexicographers have given Alqī the meaning of plan. (Fayyūmī, 1414 AH: 2/558; Ḥumayrī, 1420 AH: 9/6088; Ṭarayḥī, 1375 AH: 1/377) But Allameh Mustafawī has defined Alqī as the abandonment. (Mustafawī, 1430 AH: 10/253) Ālūsī also used "Alqī" to mean to be placed on the ground, then mentioned the justification of those who said that Alqī was throwing tablets as follows: Judge Naser al-Din stated that throwing the tablets was due to the intensity of anger and out of zeal and religious protection. And Effendi Haydari has objected to this promise. By stating that the requirement of protection and zeal for religion is to respect the divine book and support it so that no defect is inflicted on it, not to disrespect it and cause the tablets to break. Therefore, it is correct to say: Moses (PBUH) lost the tablets unintentionally due to the intensity of his religious support and his anger for God Almighty. Ālūsī says in response: The breaking of some tablets is not an insult to the Book of God, because Moses (PBUH) was authorized to do so and did not think that by dropping the tablets, they would break, and this act of Moses (PBUH) was due to haste in placing the tablets on the ground due to his zeal for God. (Ālūsī, 1415 AH: 5/64)

"Alqī" is semantically different from "Ramy" and "Ṭarḥ". Therefore, according to the meaning of "Alqī", there is no need for the justifications given for the act of throwing, and the objections that have been raised are not correct. Another near-meaning word is the word Dhanb, Wizr and Ma'ṣiyat. Some have considered Ma'ṣiyat as opposition to the commands and prohibitions of God and Dhanb as a mistake in ijtiḥād. Explaining that the prophets sometimes made such mistakes in order to understand their need to training by God and complete them at any time. (Marāghī, 1365 AH: 12/41) Some have stated the meaning of "Wizr" is the sins of the Prophet and even polytheism. (Ṭabarī, 1412 AH: 150/30) and some people have defined "Wizr" as the mistake, (Baghawī, nd: 5/276) Mulla Ḥuwaysh Al Ghazi has referred



to forgetfulness. (Al Ghazi, 1382 AH: 1/161) Fakhr Rāzī has defined Dhanb as the heaviness of sin. (Fakhr al-Rāzī, 1420 AH: 32/207) Ibn Aṭīyyah Andulisī has given examples for the sin of the Prophet (PBUH) such as attending gatherings that God does not like or fellowship with his people and eating their sacrifices in ignorance, (Andulisī, 1422 AH: 5 / 497) Zuhaylī has expressed the forgiveness of sins before and after the prophecy and abandonment of the better act. (Zuhaylī, 1422 AH: 3/2895) The author of Al-Manār also defined Dhanb as sin and he has said that one should learn politeness from God, who has shown the utmost kindness and respect to his Messenger and has forgiven him before sin. (Rashid Reza, 1990: 10/465)

According to what Allameh Tabataba'i has written, these interpretations have been frozen in relation to the new terms in a certain custom, so as not to give up the new meaning of Dhanb, which is the same Ma'ṣiyat ... This mistake is due to the fact that they thought Dhanb means Ma'ṣiyat and disobedience, while it is not so (see: Tabataba'i, 1417 AH: 9 / 286-287), but three meanings have been stated for Dhanb: crime, consequence of something and benefit, (Ibn Fāris, 1404 AH: 2/361) And its famous meaning is consequence (Rāghib Isfahani, 1412 AH: 331).

Allameh Mustafawī has stated a principle for "Wizr" which means "a burden that is imposed on something" (Mustafawī, 1430 AH: 13/102). It refers to the heavy burden it places on the sinner, which causes shame and despair in the world and torment on the Day of Judgment. (Ibn Sayyidah, 1421 AH: 9/103; Motarzi, 1399 AH: 2/351; Ibn Duraid, 1987: 2/712; Ibn Manzūr, 1414 AH: 5/282; Ibn Fāris, 1404 AH: 6/108; Farāhīdī, 1409 AH: 7 / 381) The word Wizr is used in other verses to mean heaviness; such as:

"But we were made to carry the weight of the ornaments of the (whole) people" (Ṭā Hā/87) or "And no one shall Bear the burden of another person's Sin" (An'am/164)

The result is that inaccuracy in the difference in the meaning of near-meaning words has a significant effect on the deviation of understanding from the verses and as a result choosing the incorrect belief. Such as inaccuracy in the difference between the meaning of "Dhanb, Ithm, Wizr and Iṣyān"; "Ḍilālat and Ghawā" is the reason for the mistake of many Sunni commentators in ruling on the non-infallibility of the prophets.

#### 2.4. Using Isra'iliyyat

Another reason for not applying the rules is to use Isra'iliyyat. The word Isra'iliyyat in the word is the plural of Israiliyah. The origin of the word Israel is Hebrew and means to overcome God. (See: Hawks, 2015: 142) The term "Isra'iliyyat" refers to articles that have been taken from the books of the Testament and other books of Jews, Christians, as well as their narrated sciences, which have reached them heart to heart. So, this term refers to everything that has entered the field of Islam from the books of the past (Ghazanfari, 1400: 280). Rejecting the use of Isra'iliyyat, Ālūsī writes: Although the commentators, due to their adherence to the decisive text, narrate some narrations which are all taken from the People of the Book and pass on the faults and shortcomings to the narrators, it is better that the elders, to narrate a reliable hadith and not to narrate the hadiths in their books. He has continued: In the ruling evidence of some of these narrations which have cited abominable relations to one of the prophets, but the ruling evidence is condemned due to the invalidity of these narrations by the creditors. (Ālūsī, 1415 AH: 6/407)

In his commentary, referring to the narration of Sadī and Kalbī and their opponents, Baghawī has spoken about the request of Prophet David (PBUH) from God to test him like the previous prophets, so that after knowing the time and place of the disease, in the sanctuary, he prayed and recited psalms. While worshipping, a golden dove came upon him, which surprised David. David (PBUH) abandoned the worship and followed the dove to the place where David (PBUH) saw a woman who was bathing in a garden, and the same story written in the Torah has been stated for the Prophet David (PBUH). And he

pointed out that the result of David's marriage with Orija's wife was Solomon the Prophet (PBUH). In the footnote of his commentary, Baghawī states that this narration is from the Isra'iliyyat. (Baghawī, nd: 4/59) In his commentary, Qurṭubī states that "Nuhās" has quoted such narrations in his book "I'rāb al-Qur'an wa Ma'ānī al-Qur'an", and has told the story of David (AS) and Orija; while most of them are incorrect and their documents are not attached. But again, the most correct narration about David (AS) is narrated by the stolen narration of Abdullah Mas'ud, who says that what David (AS) did was nothing more than telling Orija to deprive yourself of your wife and leave it to me. And because David had ninety-nine wives, God rebuked him. Ibn Arabī also considered the sending of Orija to war to kill him as invalid. (Qurṭubī, 1364 AH: 15 / 175-176)

Ibn Aṭīyyah Andulisī under verse 22 of surah Sād, considers the story of David (AS) with Orija's wife to be in accordance with the Isra'iliyyat, while what he himself has defined is of the Isra'iliyyat. He has also expressed two other opinions: one is that he was reprimanded for the intention he did not do and the second is that the mistake of David (AS) was that in killing of Orija he didn't mourn as in the killing of his other soldiers. He did not mourn because his heart was in the hands of his wife (Andulusī, 1422 AH: 4/498), which also somehow confirms it as an Isra'iliyyat.

Another example is reliance on the Isra'iliyyat in telling the story of Ibrahim (PBUH). In his commentary on the verse 63 of surah Anbiyā', he writes: Ibrahim (PBUH) said that the big idol became angry because small idols were worshiped with him and broke them and Ibrahim's intention (AS) was to bring a reason against the polytheists, so he said, "Ask the great idol if he has the power of speech to let you know who did this." While considering this statement to be more correct, Baghawī stated the reason for it is the narration of Abu Hurairah from the Messenger of God (PBUH) which states that he issued a lie in three cases of Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH): Two cases to prove God ) and one case about Sarah who introduced her as his sister. He has stated the interpretations in denying the lie of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) but according to the hadith, he does not accept them and writes: God Almighty has allowed Ibrahim (AS) to lie for the purpose of correction, reprimand and protest against them. As he allowed Yūsuf to command a preacher and say to his brothers: "O, you people of the caravan! Surely, you are thieves!" (Yūsuf/70) while they did not steal. (Baghawī, nd: 3/293) Ibn Kathīr has also quoted this hadith in more detail by quoting Ṣaḥīḥayn from Hishām Ibn Ḥisān from Muhammad Ibn Sīrīn. (Ibn Kathīr, 1419 AH: 5/307) His commentary has been taken from the Torah and from the Isra'iliyyat (See. Genesis: 15-19: 12; 1: 10-20)

Ṭabarī does not accept the interpretations of the denial of a lie from Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) because he does not agree with the appearance of the narration of the Messenger of God (PBUH) and writes: It is not possible that God Almighty permit his Prophet to lie in order to punish his people and show them their error and wrong view. As Joseph said to his brethren, "O, you people of the caravan! Surely, you are thieves!" (Ṭabarī, 1412 AH: 17/31)

Some have considered it permissible to claim lie of the Prophets (PBUH) in spite of expediency. Ālūsī writes in this regard: "Such a claim seeks to undermine the trust and confidence in the Shari'a, because the possibility of falsehood spreads for the sake of expediency in all laws. Therefore, the truth is that there is no way of lying in the divine laws, and everything that is in conflict with the divine laws has no escape from being a lie. (Ālūsī, 1415 AH: 9/64)

It should be noted that, first, these stories are taken from the Torah, which depicts an inverted prophet. Secondly, such claims harm the infallibility of the prophets; while the Prophets (PBUH) are infallible and it is not possible for them to be in the sins attributed to them in some of these narrations. Rather, if we allow such sins to be permissible for the Prophets (PBUH), the laws will be invalidated and there will be no confidence in what is reminded to us through divine revelation. Also, many of the rulings that regulate human life are met with the exception of the prophets and lose their authority. Like the ruling of retribution, which, despite such sins of the prophets, requires the renunciation of retribution due to the position of Nubuwwah.

## 2.5. Volatility in Interpreting Verses and Contradiction Between the Interpreter's Phrases

Rules, principles, sciences and resources that the interpreter needs to be aware of and apply carefully are many varied matters that mere knowledge of them is not enough to achieve the high knowledge of the Qur'an. But it is one of the basic foundations in interpretation, empowerment, mastery and presence of the mind over the preconceptions of interpretation, regardless of divine help, it will be very easy for the interpreter only through practice.

The difference between the commentators in having this ability is obvious, and the effect that the intensity and weakness of having these talents have on a more accurate and complete understanding of the Qur'an is undeniable. In this regard, what is considered as one of the shortcomings of interpretation is the volatility in the interpretation of verses with a single subject and the contradiction between the expressions of the interpreter.

This drawback is also present in the statements of Sunni commentators in interpreting the verses regarding the infallibility of the prophets. On the one hand, Zamakhsharī has introduced Prophet Ayyūb (AS) as obedient to the temptations of Satan. On the other hand, he considered the temptation of Satan as an act of God, which Prophet Ayyūb (AS), although he knew was an act of God, attributed it to Satan because it was an abominable act. (Zamakhsharī, 1407 AH: 4/97)

Qurṭubī in one position has rejected the hadith of return of sun and in another position he accepts it. (Qurṭubī, 1985: 15 / 196-198) Ālūsī, following verse 41 of Surah Al Imrān, considered the suspicion of the matter on Hadrat Zakariyā (AS) unlikely and quoted a narration from Qatādah as a "witness" to the truth of his statement. While in a few lines later, he does not consider Qatādah religion safe from weakness. (Ālūsī, 1415 AH: 2 / 144-145)

### Conclusion

Considering the drawbacks of the Sunni commentators in applying the rules of interpretation in interpreting the verses regarding the infallibility of the Prophets (PBUH), it can be acknowledged as follows: Although the Sunnis have been pioneers in expressing the rules of interpretation, but they have neglected in many cases in applying this rules and adherence to them.

The origins of the shortcomings in Sunni interpretations are religious prejudices and the insistence on proving the theological opinion of the commentator and the promise of complete authority for the Companions, which leads to the disregard of the rules on which everyone agrees. The greatest shortcoming is using Isra'iliyyat and the disregard for the semantic differences of near-meaning words, and the greatest shortcoming belongs to the commentators of the sixth and seventh centuries.

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