



Comparative Analysis of Narratives and Interpretations of Verse 2 of Surah Al-Fath Regarding the Infallibility of the Prophet (PBUH)**

Seyed Mohammad Mehdi Alavi, Rashid Moradi Saki

School of Medicine, Jiroft University of Medical Sciences, Jiroft, Iran.

Abstract

One of the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) in explaining the knowledge of the Holy Quran, which is obtained from narrations, is the opening of a new and time-harmonious gateway called "interpretation" through which the inner meanings and instances of the Quranic verses are extracted. Besides the apparent meanings, the Quranic verses have inner layers or interpretations, and the best way to access these interpretations is through the Infallibles (AS). This article seeks to answer the question: What is the reason for the conflict between certain verses, such as verse 2 of Surah Al-Fath, with the infallibility of the Prophet from the perspective of interpretive narrations? And what are the different interpretations of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) regarding this verse? In this context, interpretive narrations related to this verse were extracted from interpretive narrations and determined descriptively-analytically that the word "sin" mentioned in this verse has been interpreted as the sins of the Shia of Ali (AS) and his infallible descendants.

Keywords- Interpretive narrative, interpretive hadith, Surah Al-Fath, sin

Introduction

Prophets are individuals whom Almighty God has chosen to guide humans towards Him, and God communicated with prophets through revelation. Prophets, as conveyers of divine decrees and bringers of divine law, must be free from any contamination, for otherwise, they themselves would need admonition and advice. Divine leaders must possess the best attributes and perfections and be free from deficiencies and faults to guide humanity towards prosperity, and they must practice everything they preach. Thus, the concept of infallibility is one of the characteristics that prophets are endowed with. All prophets brought the truth, but as the Quran states, "Those messengers - some of them We caused to exceed others," the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the seal of the prophets, had the highest degree of infallibility. This issue has been discussed in various verses and narrations. The discussion of the infallibility of the prophets is examined in different sciences,



including theology, ethics, and Quranic sciences, but our focus in this research is on examining this issue within the scope of verses and narrations. The question now arises: What is the reason for the conflict between certain verses, such as verse 2 of Surah Al-Fath, with the infallibility of the Prophet Muhammad from the perspective of interpretive narrations? What interpretive narratives and interpretations from the Imams exist in this regard? Interpretive narrations or hadiths, which are sources for understanding the Quran, play a valuable role in interpreting and explaining divine words after the Quran itself, which is self-explanatory. The infallible Imams from the Ahl al-Bayt, who have risen from the house of revelation and are appointed by God, are the best interpreters of the Quran after the Prophet Muhammad and are the most knowledgeable about the Quranic knowledge. The juxtaposition of the Quran and the Ahl al-Bayt in the well-known and mutawatir (widely transmitted) Hadith Thaqaalayn is clear evidence of this reality. One of the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) in the method of interpretation and explanation of the Quranic meanings, obtained from narrations, is the opening of a new and time-harmonious gateway called interpretation, through which valuable points from new instances and inner meanings of the verses are obtained. In the books of interpretive narrations, interpretive narrations are not distinguished from interpretive hadiths. In this research, an attempt is made to extract, translate, and determine the type of interpretations of the Ahl al-Bayt regarding verse 2 of Surah Al-Fath from the interpretive narrations and make them available to scholars and knowledge seekers. For this purpose, interpretive works such as Tafsir Qomi, Tafsir Furat Kufi, Noor al-Thaqaalayn, Al-Burhan, and Bihar al-Anwar are used.

Conceptual Definitions

Linguistic Definition of Infallibility

Infallibility, in terms of its morphological structure, is a verbal noun derived from the root-ع-ص-م "ع-ص-م" which in Arabic means prevention and abstention (Raghib Isfahani, 1404, 336:1) and is used to refer to restraining oneself from sin (Hassan Amid, 1379, 1440:2). Ma'soom (infallible) also means being protected and pure from committing errors (faultless) (Antoun Elias, 442:1380). Ibn Faris writes regarding the meaning of infallibility: "It is divine protection from bad things that occur to servants" (Ibn Faris, 403:12). Ibn Manzur also writes that infallibility in Arabic speech means prevention, and infallibility is that God protects His servant from things that lead to his destruction and loss (Ibn Manzur, 403:12).



Terminological Definition of Infallibility

Infallibility from the perspective of Shia scholars means the protection of a certain group of God's servants from sin, error, inadvertence, and forgetfulness, and the source of this protection is a grace from God. Sheikh Mufid states: "Infallibility is a grace from God for the duty-bound, which prevents them from committing sin and abandoning obedience despite having the power to do so" (Sheikh Mufid, 37:1413). Sayyid Murtaza also defines infallibility as: "Infallibility is what prevents the duty-bound from committing ugly acts and neglecting obligations. Without it, committing such acts would be possible, even though inherently, committing both (ugly acts and neglecting obligations) is possible. Infallibility is actually something that God does for His servant, making it known that with it, the servant will not commit sin, provided that this action does not lead to compulsion and loss of free will" (Alam al-Huda, Sayyid Murtaza, 1405, 277:2).

Linguistic and Terminological Definition of Forgiveness

Forgiveness comes from the root "غ-ف-ر" and in lexicon means covering something that protects one from ugliness. In Quranic terminology, it means that God covers the flaws and sins of repentant servants, protecting them from punishment and erasing the effects of sin (Raghib Isfahani, 609:1412). "Ghaffar" and "Ghafur" are emphatic forms from the root , غ-ف-ر meaning frequent and constant forgiveness of the faults and sins of servants (Ibn Manzur, 1414, 2:5). Ibn Faris writes that "Istighfar" (seeking forgiveness) is derived from the root "غ-ف-ر". The original meaning of this root is "covering" and "concealing", but it is sometimes used in a broader sense that is close to this meaning. Thus, istighfar means seeking coverage. He also writes that "غفر" mostly means covering. For example, when it is said "غفر الله ذنبه", it means "God covered his sins", "غفران", "غفر", and "مغفرة" are all verbal nouns (Ibn Faris, 385:4). Allameh Tabatabaei also writes regarding this word: "Maghfirah, derived from the root , غ-ف-ر means that you cover someone's body with a garment that protects them from contamination. Similarly, when one says "اغفر ثوبك في الوعاء", it means to immerse your garment in a dye to make it less likely to show dirt. Maghfirah and forgiveness from God mean that He protects His servant from punishment reaching him" (Tabatabaei, Mohammad Hossein, 1374, 516:19).

In verse 2 of Surah Al-Fath, God Almighty says:

"لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا") That Allah may forgive you your former and later sins and complete His favor upon you and guide you to a straight path.("



Allameh Tabatabaei comments on this verse: "The apparent meaning of 'Liam' in 'Liyaghfir' is that it indicates the purpose, and its appearance suggests that the purpose of this 'clear victory' is 'forgiveness of your past and future sins'. However, we know that there is no direct relationship between this victory and the forgiveness of sins, and no reasonable meaning for this relationship comes to mind. So what should we do, and how should we interpret this verse? According to Allameh, the word 'sin' in its commonly understood meaning, i.e., violation of divine commandments, is not intended here. Also, 'forgiveness' does not mean the removal of punishment for violating divine commandments. 'Sin' in its linguistic meaning refers to an act with negative consequences, and 'forgiveness' means covering something. The Prophet's (PBUH) struggle and movement against disbelief began before the Hijra and continued after it. The wars he waged after the Hijra

Here is the English translation of the provided text:

In the sources of Hadith, there are four traditions that discuss the interpretation of this verse. These traditions mention:

One narration from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) is reported by Omar ibn Yazid Bey'a Sabari, who says: "I asked Abu Abdullah (peace be upon him) about the meaning of Allah's words in His Book: 'So that Allah may forgive you what has preceded of your sin and what will follow.' He replied: He had no sin nor any concern for sin, but Allah placed the sins of His followers upon him and then forgave them." (Qumi, Ali ibn Ibrahim, 1404 AH, p. 314)

In another narration from Imam Ali (peace be upon him), it is reported: "When the verse 'So that Allah may forgive you what has preceded of your sin and what will follow' was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), he said: 'O Gabriel, what is the past sin and the remaining sin?' Gabriel replied: 'You have no sin for which Allah would need to forgive you.'" (Kufi, Farat ibn Ibrahim, 1410 AH, p. 419)

Additionally, in Bihar al-Anwar regarding the above verse, it is stated: "Abu al-Hasan al-Thalith (peace be upon him) was asked about Allah's words: 'So that Allah may forgive you what has preceded of your sin and what will follow.' He replied: 'What sin did the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) have, past or future? Rather, Allah placed the sins of Ali's followers upon him, those who had passed away and those who remained, and then forgave them for him.'" (Majlisi, Muhammad Baqir, 1386 AH, vol. 24, p. 273)



In another Hadith in Bihar al-Anwar reported from Mufaddal by Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him), it is said: "Mufaddal said: 'O my Master, what sin did the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) have?' The Sadiq (peace be upon him) replied: 'O Mufaddal, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: 'O Allah, place the sins of my followers, the followers of my brother and my descendants who are the successors, from the past and the future until the Day of Judgment upon me, and do not expose me among the prophets and messengers because of the actions of my followers.' So Allah placed these upon him and forgave all of them." Mufaddal said: "At that moment, I cried a lot and said: 'O my Master, this is a grace from Allah upon us through your blessing.' The Imam replied: 'O Mufaddal, those followers whose sins the Prophet took upon himself are like you and those like you. But, Mufaddal, do not share this Hadith with some of our followers who are lax in religious matters, because they might rely on this grace and neglect their religious duties, which will not benefit them from Allah. As Allah has said about us, they do not intercede except for those whom He is pleased with, and they are fearful of Him.'" (Majlisi, Muhammad Baqir, 1386 AH, vol. 53, p. 33)

The phrase "So that Allah may forgive you what has preceded of your sin and what will follow" in the above narrations has been interpreted as referring to the sins of the followers of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and his infallible descendants. Therefore, the interpretation in these narrations is considered a description of the inner meaning of the verse.

It is important to note:

The infallibles possess a type of acquired virtue through their own actions and an intrinsic and divine grace from God so that they can serve as models and examples for the people. In other words, the infallibles, due to divine support and their pure actions, do not commit sins despite having the power and free will to do so, just as no wise person would put a piece of fire in their mouth, even though there is no compulsion or coercion. This state arises from the inner awareness and natural dispositions of a person without any compulsion. According to the verse of purification, the term "regret" refers to something impure, whether impure from the perspective of human nature, reason, or religious law, or all of these. Some interpretations of "regret" as "sin," "polytheism," "envy," or "false belief" are specific instances of this term, but the term itself is general and encompasses all types of impurity. Similarly, the term "purification" in the verse of purification means cleaning and emphasizes the removal of impurities, and its mention as "absolute object" further underscores this meaning. (Makarem Shirazi, Nasser, 1371 AH, vol. 17, p. 294) Furthermore, Allameh Tabatabai explains regarding the verse of purification: "Considering that the term 'regret' in the verse has the definite article, it implies that Allah wants to remove all kinds



of impurities, evil forms, and vices from you (the Ahl al-Bayt), which would otherwise prevent true belief and righteous actions. Such purification aligns with divine infallibility, which is a state of knowledge in the soul that preserves a person from all falsehoods, whether in beliefs or actions. Thus, this verse is one of the proofs of the infallibility of the Ahl al-Bayt. The meaning of the verse is that Allah continuously and constantly intends to bestow upon you (the Ahl al-Bayt) the gift of infallibility by removing false beliefs and the effects of wicked actions from you, leaving no trace of such false beliefs or wicked actions in your hearts." (Tabatabai, Muhammad Hussain, 1374 AH, vol. 16, p. 465)

Summary and Conclusion:

Through studying and investigating Surah Al-Fath (48:2), it is understood that the phrase "So that Allah may forgive you what has preceded of your sin and what will follow" in this verse has been interpreted as referring to the sins that the polytheists attributed to the Messenger of Allah. However, in the narrations, it has been interpreted as referring to the sins of the followers of Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and his infallible descendants. Therefore, the interpretation in these narrations is considered an explanation of the inner meaning of the verse.

References:

- [1]Quran
- [2]Ibn Faris, Abu al-Husayn Ahmad ibn Faris, 1404 AH, *Mu'jam Maqayis al-Lughah*. 1st edition. Qom, Maktab al-Ilm al-Islami Publications
- [3]Ibn Manzur, Muhammad ibn Mukarim, 1414 AH, *Lisan al-Arab*. 3rd edition. Beirut, Dar Sader Publications
- [4]Hosseini Estarabadi, Seyyed Sharif al-Din Ali, 1409 AH, *Tafsir al-Ayat al-Zahira*, 1st edition. Qom, Islamic Publishing Office of the Society of Seminary Teachers of Qom
- [5]Raghib Isfahani, Abu al-Qasim Husayn ibn Muhammad, 1412 AH, *Mufradat Alfaz al-Quran*. 1st edition. Beirut, Dar al-Qalam Publications
- [6]Tabatabai, Muhammad Hussain, 1417 AH, *Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Quran*. 5th edition. Qom, Islamic Publishing Office of the Society of Seminary Teachers of Qom
- [7]Tabarsi, Abu Ali Fadl ibn Hasan, 1372 SH, *Majma' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Quran*. Tehran, Nasser Khusro Publications



- [8]Sadouq, Muhammad ibn Ali, 1413 AH, *Man La Yahduru al-Faqih*. Qom, 2nd edition. The Society of Seminary Teachers of Qom Publications
- [9]Tabari, Muhammad ibn Jarir, 1412 AH, *Jami' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Quran (Tafsir al-Tabari)*. 1st edition. Beirut, Dar al-Ma'arifa Publications
- [10]Tusi, Muhammad ibn Hasan, 1409 AH, *Al-Tibyan fi Tafsir al-Quran*. Beirut, 1st edition. Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-Arabi Publications
- [11]Alam al-Huda, Seyyed Morteza, 1364 SH, *Resail al-Sharif al-Murtadha*. Qom, Dar al-Quran al-Karim: Ayatollah Golpaygani School Publications
- [12]Omid, Hassan, 1379 SH, *Farhang-e Farsi Omid*. Tehran, 22nd edition. Amir Kabir Publications
- [13]Qomi, Ali ibn Ibrahim, 1363 SH, *Tafsir al-Qomi*. Qom, Dar al-Kitab Publications
- [14]Kufi, Abu al-Qasim Farat ibn Ibrahim, 1410 AH, *Tafsir Farat Kufi*. Tehran, Ministry of Culture and Guidance Publications
- [15]Majlisi, Muhammad Baqir ibn Muhammad Taqi, 1403 AH, *Bihar al-Anwar*. Beirut, 2nd edition. Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiyya Publications
- [16] Mufid, Muhammad ibn Muhammad, 1413 AH, *Al-Nukt al-I'tiqadiyya*.