Ghadir in Sunni interpretations viewpoint

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Abstract

Undoubtedly Ghadir is one of the most brilliant incidents of mysterious history of Islam that Holy Prophet proclaimed to Muslims as Divine Order. The message that Ghadir tries to convey can be considered the same as the mission of all divine prophets throughout mankind history where the God emphasized that if Prophet Muhammad doesn't proclaim Ghadir, his mission will not be performed that is the mystery surrounding Ghadir.

Researchers and commentators of Quran do not have same opinion about this event in interpreting propagation (Tabligh) and perfection verses of Sunnis although most of them have mentioned Ghadir incident but some fanatics tried to bring dust of forgetfulness and neglect on this great event. This research is tried to express and analyze Sunnis interpreters' viewpoint in interpreting above verses through respecting historical documents and in this way prove the quotation legitimacy of those who follow the truth through deep analyzing of interpreted authentic narrations and argued the weakness of fanatics claim.

Keywords: Quran, Ghadir event, Interpretations, Sunnis, narrations.
Introduction:
Ghadir event has a particular brilliance in Islam history in terms of various aspects and different directions and few events can be fine in Islam history that has the strength as Ghadirincident in terms of authenticity, plurality of narrators, scholars, interpreters and witness. So it is clear that Ghadir event is the most important eventful incident of Islam which has virtue among Muslims. Because the Almighty's will in the world of creation lay down on this goal that Ghadir story to be survive in history and the purpose of creation, mankind and the philosophy of sending messengers is to be ended to Wilayat; some revealed verses refer clearly to this important event "O Messenger (Muhammad)! Proclaim (the Message) which has been sent down to you from your Lord. And if you do not, then you have not conveyed His Message. Allah will protect you from mankind. Verily, Allah guides not the people who disbelieve" (1) indicates something happened that day which is so important that is considered as perfection of religion and completion of God's favor for human; Islam is Islam with it, it's the religion that God wants and Islam is not Islam without it. Regarding that Ghadir is one of the Islamic facts and the most authentic Sunni interpretation and narrative books related to it, this research is trying to assess and analyze Ghadir in Sunni documents.

1. Propagation verse (Tabligh Verse) by Sunni commentators' viewpoint
Although, unfortunately prejudgment and religious bigotries prevented the facts about this verse to be clearly available for all Muslims, but a lot of narrations can be seen in different Sunni scholars' books, such as Tafsir, Hadith, and history, which obviously admitted that the above verse was revealed about Imam Ali (A.S.).

Many companions such as "Zayd ibn Arqam", "Abu Sa'id al-Khudri", "Ibn Abbas", "Jabir ibn Abd Allah", "Abu Hurairah", "Al-Bara' ibn Azib", "Hudhayfah", "Amer ibn Lailaiibn Zomrah", "Ibn Masud" have quoted a lot of narrations about this verse and said that above verse revealed about Imam Ali and the story of Ghadir day. Some of these Hadiths were quoted in one way such as Hadith of Ziyadibn Arqam, some were quoted in eleven ways such as Abu Sa'id al-Khudriand, Ibn Abbas and some other like Al-Bara' ibn Azib was quoted in three ways. As some Sunnis thought that succinct about this verse is not sufficient and in order to identify the purpose of verse revelation, they expressed some probabilities which included: the verse doesn't have a particular revelation purpose, about religion rules (3, 4, 5), the Prophet protection (6, 7, 8), about fear of Jews and polytheists or Jews trick (9, 10), rajm (stoning), and Qisas (11).

Among Sunni scholars, some tried to justify that this verse was not related to Ghadir but many Sunni scholars and their narrators mentioned the cause of revelation of this verse about Ghadir Khumm (the event of Ghadir), Imam Ali's (a) succession in their exegetes and Hadith books such as: Abu Ishaq Neishabouri (12), Shihab ad-Din Al-Alusi Shafee Al-Baghdadi (5), Jalal Al-Din Al-Suyuti (8), Hakem Haskani (13), Meibodi (10), Shoukani Judge (4), IbnAbi Hatim (14) pointed to Ghadir event and Imam Ali's(a) dignity; Neishabouri in commentaries of "Gharib Al-Quran" (15) wrote as the first probability quoted from Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri; this verse was revealed on Ali ibn Abitaleb's (a) dignity and in Ghadir Khumm then Prophet Muhammad took Ali's hand and said: " Of whomsoever I had been Supporter and Master (Mawla), Ali here is to be his Supporter and Master". Then Umar met Imam Ali (A.S.) and said: "Congratulations to you, Ali Ibn Abitaleb. Today you have become the master of me and all believing men and women."

Many commentators and Sunni narrators do not have same opinion about propagation verse and lots of them expressed different aspects about the cause of verse revelation but most of them admitted the truth of Ghadir event and verse revelation in "Hajj of farewell" (Hajj of farewell) about dignity of Imam Ali (a). Regardless of whether they believed or not, they mentioned such event that happened and a verse which has been sent down from Almighty at that day and time conveyed an important order. Some of them like Nezam Al-Din Neishabouri quoted it as first probability and some others such as Fakhr Razi mentioned Ghadir as its tenth aspect among ten about revelation cause of this verse.
2. Perfection Verse (Ikmal verse) from Sunni commentators perspective

Perfection verse is one of the verses that refers to Imamat and Wilayat of Imam Ali (a) in Ghadir Khumm and can be a strong support for Ghadir Hadith to convey the concept of Wilayat and Imamat.

Through proclaiming the divine message of Ghadir and introducing Imam Ali (A.S.) as Imam, Gabriel was sent from God to introduce completion of Islam. The verse was sent after Imam Ali’s (a) succession and expressed that the religion would be completed by Imamat and the flavor of guidance would be ended and only the Islam satisfies the God that combined with Wilayat.

"This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen Islam as your religion (16)". Revelation of this verse in Ghadir day proved according to many narrations of Shia and Sunni. The number of these narrations quoted by Shiias and Sunnis is to the extent that does not leave any doubt or ambiguity. Some narrations contained such opinion are observed in some Sunni resources as quoted by famous narrators.

Every researcher who refers to Hadith, Fiqh and tafsir resources concluded that Surah Al-Ma'idah is the last Surah of Quran that was revealed to Prophet Muhammad and the perfection verse was sent upon completion of all obligations. Some companions tried to introduce different Surah as the last Surah of Quran and to replace other verses instead of religion completion. Sunni has a lot of disagreement about the last verse revealed to Prophet and seventeen opinions are mentioned in "Al Etghan", a book by Suyuti, about the last revealed verse (17).

In term of this verse' cause of revelation (16), some Sunni scholars have emphasized it for Imam Ali (A.S.) although most Sunni resources have tried to consider document series of its narrators as poor interpretation and in contrary another exegete was quoted for this verse by Sunni that did not have enough cohesion; in other word there is no any acceptable definitive interpretation for it; they have tried to offer another justification about perfection verse to ignore the relationship between this verse and Wilayat of Imam Ali (A.S.).

In some narrations, in addition to quotation of perfection verse revelation, the narrator defined religion perfection and favor completion on his opinion as following: some scholars know the religion completion related to descent of rules, laws and religious obligations (3, 9, 10) some of them interpret the day of performing the rituals of Hajj and expelling polytheists from God's house as the day of religion perfection (2 and 3). Some scholars believed that "Al Youm" refers to the period of glory of Islam (2 and 3) some of the interpreters defined "Al Youm" as conquest of Mecca (18). Some of them introduced it related to Arafahday in "Hajj Al-Wida" (2 and 6). Some of the scholars considered it as an unspecified day that only the God knows (6). Many of commentators know its descent in Ghadir day and about Imam Ali (A.S.) (8 and 20).

Second series of narrations are those that refer to the verse revelation in Ghadir day or shortly after that. These narrations are quoted in Shia sources with correct document and in different ways and by Sunni companions who were presented there as witnesses of verse revelation such as Zayd Ibn Arqam, Umar Ibn Al-Khattab and Abu Hurairah in many interpreted and narrated resources: "Prophet (peace be upon him) invited the people to obey Ali Ibn AbiTaleb (A.S.) and hold his arms and raised them. They were not separated till the verse was revealed and Messenger of God (peace be upon him) said." Allahu Akbar (God is the greatest) on perfection of religion and completion of favor and God's satisfaction to my mission and Ali's Wilayat", then he said: "Of whomsoever I had been Master (Mawla), Ali here is to be his Master" (8, 13, and 20).
Suyuti offered two documents in "Dur al-Manthur" about revelation of perfection verse in Ghadir day: at the first he mentioned the cause of revelation and secondary to the day when the verse was revealed. A: he quoted from Ibn Asakir and Ibn Marduyah and both of them from Abu Sa’ id al-Khudri that when the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) appointed Imam Ali (A.S.) in Ghadir Day and cried his Wilayat (leadership), Gabriel (A.S.) brought down the perfection verse (8). Suyuti quoted in addition to this verse commentary:" when Ghadir Khumm arrived on 18\textsuperscript{th}, Dhu al-Hijjah, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:" Of whomsoever I had been Master (Mawla), Ali here is to be his Master" and the God revealed perfection verse accordingly (8). Also he expressed in "Al Atqan" about the number of verses that revealed during the trip which included: in a correct Hadith quoted by Umar, it is narrated that mentioned verse was revealed at night of Arafah (day of Friday) of "Hijjat Al-wida" in many ways. Therefore, Ibn Marduyah, through assessing the ways of Abu Sa’id Al-Khudri narrated that mentioned verse was revealed in Ghadir Khumm day (17).

Although many Sunni commentators intended another justification for perfection verse interpretation to ignore its cause of revelation about Imamat and Wilayat of Imam Ali (A.S.) and to know its revelation day instead of Ghadir day, some other group of famous, prominent, and trusted interpreters and narrators have confirmed the cause of this verse revelation about Wilayat of Imam Ali (A.S.) in Ghadir Khumm on Friday evening of 18\textsuperscript{th},Dhu al-Hijjah. The number of narrators is too frequent and undeniable. In term of investigating the document, authentic books of Sunni are reliable.

Among Sunni narrators and interpreters some of them such as Abu Na'im Isfahani, who has a special place and is one of the greatest and zealous scholars of Sunni, brought Ghadir Hadith in book of « what was revealed in Quran is on dignity of Imam Ali». Katib Baghdadi is another Sunni prominent scholar who quoted this hadith in his famous book named as "History of Bagdad". Amongthese narrators, he clearly expressed Ghadir day as the perfection verse revelation day.

A question should be asked of IbnTaymiyyah and other opponents of perfection verse revelation that "is Shi'a alone in this claim that the verse is on dignity of Imamat and Wilayat of Imam Ali (A.S.) and Ghadir is its revelation day?" Do they accuse their scholars and narrators of lying and libel? Although some Sunnis scholars said that the perfection verse was revealed in Arafah but most of their elders and scholars said that this verse was probably revealed twice; once in the evening of Arafah and once in Ghadir day.

Conclusion

Many Sunni commentators and speakers do not have same opinion about perfection verse and most of them mentioned different aspects about the cause of verse revelation but the majority of them have noted the truthfulness of Ghadir event and revelation of verse in Hijjat Al-wida on dignity of Imam Ali (A.S.). Regardless of whether or not they accept that, they have noted the occurrence of such incident and the revelation of a verse by Almighty on an important subject at that day and time.

Lots of Sunni interpreter do not have the same opinion about the cause of perfection verse revelation and the majority of them expressed different aspects about it. The difference is because of their understanding and interpretation of "Al-Youm" word, religion perfection and favor completion. Lots of elders and guardians of Sunni Hadith believe that this verse was revealed in Ghadir Khumm and according to many narrations of Shi’a and Sunni it is confirmed that the number of narrations quoted by both groups is to the extent that it leaves no doubt.

At the end, the aspects defined in terms of revelation cause of propagation and religion perfection verses in interpretation that interpreted them differently from Ghadir incident and Imam Ali’s (a)dignity, are very weak and unreliable and do not have any certainty in compare with reasons related to revelation of the verse on dignity of Imam Ali (A.S.).

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