Khatamyyat (the seal of the prophecy) according to Allameh Tabatabaee’s viewpoint based on Al-Mizan Interpretation

Abbas Asad Abadi
Qom University
Asd.329@chmail.ir

Abstract

This paper tries to clarify the Khatamyyat issue from Allameh Tabatabaee’s viewpoint based on Al-Mizan Interpretation. This outstanding interpreter has investigated this issue from two different angles: first one investigating the issue from the reasoning of the verses and the second, answering to the dubiousness trying to nullify the Khatamyyat. According to Allameh, the first verse of Forqan, the 19th verse of Al-Ana’m and the 28th verse of Saba and the 40th verse of Al-Ahzab explicitly confirm the Khatamyyat and dubiousness and suspicious about the other verses for nullifying the Khatamyyat are rejected and unacceptable.

Keywords: Allameh Tabatabaee, prophecy, Khatamyyat (the seal of the prophecy), message, dubiousness, answer.
Introduction
Al-Mizan, the seminal book, has investigated many of the theosophical and ideological issues by Quran-Quran interpretation which is utilized by Allameh and, accordingly, he discusses the stand of Quran in relation to such matters. One of the most important ideological issues which none of the religious groups has any difference is the Khatamyyat issue. In this case, there is no theosophical, and philosophical and scientific discussion with interpretative discussion and at the same time this issue is the essence of Islam. Of course there is dubiousness about it. In this paper, the writer tries first of all to cultivate Allameh’s viewpoint about Khatamyyat (the seal of the prophecy) based on the verses and narrations based on Al-Mizan. Afterwards, the dubiousness will be delved into.

The significance of the study
The purpose of this study is to discuss Allameh Tabatabaee’s Quranic and narrative reasoning in relation to the Khatamyyat issue and, in addition, to answer the dubiousness which is put forward by himself and, in the end, Mohammad is the seal of the Messenger and his Book and Sharia’ will be the seal of the Book and it should be proved that he is the seal of the Messenger and the seal of the Heart and the seal of the anything. This means that when he came, the prophecy also came to end. (Ragheb Isfahani 1404, p.142).

Literature Review
1. Khatam based on philology and idiomatic meaning in the opinion of scholars, in particular Allameh Tabatabae

In Arabic Nowin Dictionary, the word “Khatam” (something ends to it) is translated as “to seal, end, last, and final” (Tabatabae, Mostafa 1370. P. 180).

And also, “Katm (end)” means “to seal and the result and the end of the work”. Idiomatically the seal of the prophecy demands the seal of the message because message is to notify something which the Messenger is responsible for it. And when the revelation and the connection to the origin terminate there is no reason for Message (Rabbani Golpayegani. Translated by Soleymani Behabahani 190, pp. 282-283).

Furthermore, the point worth mentioning here is that (1) if Khatem is to be pronounced like Hafez it means conclusive and (2) if khatam is to be pronounced like ﷲA`lam it means the last, (3) and khatem is to be pronounced like zareb it means the One who terminate the prophecy. And the original meaning of the khatam is to seal and in Arabic language it is said that I finished the khatam. And khatam means to seal, i.e. seal or ring of the letters and writings so as to show the termination of them. And to stamp the letter indicates that the letter was finished and (seal of the Heart and the seal of the anything) means the last prophet and by appointing Him the prophecy has terminated and afterwards, no Messenger, no Book and no Sharia will come (Sobhani. Translated by Ostadi, 1387, pp. 29, 30, 33).

Besides, it is said that I finished the Quran and Mohammad is called the seal of the prophets since he terminated the prophecy; that is to say, the segment of prophecy was cut after his appointment as the Messenger (Ragheb Isfahani, 1404, p. 142).
Idiomatically, the seal (khatam) means anything which seals everything like قالب (mould) and طابع (publisher) and the seal of the Messengers means that the prophecy has been terminated by Mohammad and no prophet will appoint after him. (Tabatabaee. Translated by Mousavi Hamedani, 1381, vol.16, p. 487).

2. *The justification of Khatamyyat (the seal of prophecy)*

a. There are numerous verses in which confirm the universality message of the Islam Holy Prophet Mohammad like:

Forqan, verse 1: The Absolute Source of Blessings is the One Who sent down Forqan upon his exclusive and devoted worshipper so that he be a warning Expositor by teaching it to all mankind throughout the world.

The Khatamyyat (the seal of the prophecy) can be inferred from this verse because the expression all creatures is not limited to the specific time and place and, therefore, as long as this world exists, every Ummah could be established and it will be a part of the all creatures and the Islam Holy Prophet is the warner and the Messenger of it and no Messenger will be appointed to nullify the Islam.

The world Forqan means the difference and if Quran is called Forqan it is because it makes difference between the truth and untruth. Forqan is more appropriate than difference since Forqan is only used when we want to make distinction between the truth and untruth. Likewise, Qanaan which is only used with the male who his word suffices everyone. And this is noun not infinitive and in reverse to difference which is both noun and infinitive and it is also used in making difference between the truth and untruth. The world “all creatures” means creation and in She-hah Al-Loghah it is said that the world means creation and its plural form is worlds. And All creatures means the creation ranks and although it contains all creatures: inanimates, plants, animals and human beings, Jins and Angels, the characteristics of the verse illuminates the absence of the warning and the presence of revelation and its purpose is the groups are assigned to do the work and it means the creation and Saqaln means Jins and human. To be sure we only know two of them.

So, it becomes clear that some of the interpreters (Alousi Baghdadi, 1405, vol. 18, p. 231) contend that the verse implies the universality of the Message and that is not correct to say that he was chosen by God to guide all of the people since this interpreter neglected this notion that why the Message is construed as warning and the verse like this implies the universality:

Al-e-Imran, 42: ….Allah has chosen you and purified you and has preferred you over the women

Al-Jathiyah, 16: …We preferred them above all people of their own time.

The word “warner”, as said before, (Alousi Baghdadi, 1405, vol. 18, p. 231) means warner and Enzar to some extent is its synonym.

Then He said

The absolute Source of Blessing the One who sent down Forqan upon his exclusive and devoted worshipper… (Forqan, 1)

This verse means that there is a lot of blessing from the one who sent down on His devoted worshipper Mohammad and the absolute source of blessing related to the prophecy implies that Allah’s blessing will pour down on creatures since He has sent
down the Book which discriminates between the truth and untruth and it is the redeemer of creatures from getting lost and guides people in to the right path.

And if, according to the verse, the descent of Quran is from Allah and His Messenger is called Warner for the creatures and, furthermore, Quran is called the Discriminator and Mohammad is called the worshipper, all of these indicate that the Mohammad is the servant of Allah and he has no authority over anything.

So the above discussion can be summarized in this way that Quran is the book discriminates between the truth and untruth with its distinct evidence. Therefore, Quran is not anything but the truth itself since the untruth cannot discriminate between the right and wrong. And if it pretends itself as the right path, it comes to deceive people and the one who brings it is the devoted servant of Allah and he is going to warn the people and invites them to Allah. Thus, this devoted worshipper and servant is in the right path. And if he were in the wrong path, he would not invite the people to Allah, instead of it, he would invite them to the wrong path and to the Satan. Additionally, in Quran, Allah bear witness to the truthfulness of the Message and Allah testify that Quran was sent down by Himself.

It becomes evident that the following claim from some of the interpreter is not true and its reality is not hidden for everyone (Alousi Baghdadi, 1405, vol. 18, p. 231):

The Discriminator is taken into consideration as the Heaven Books absolutely and they were sent down to the prophets and “His Servants”, generally speaking, means all of the prophets.

b. Al-Ana’m, verse 19: Say: The Quran has been revealed to me and I am to warn you and all the people it reaches.

Although it seems that this verse addresses the unbelievers or Quraysh in general, or all the Arab people except this notion that the confrontation between من بلغ and كم indicates that the (all the people it reaches) refers to the persons who learned the Sariah and its Laws from Islam Holy Prophet whether they are contemporaneous with Mohammad or they come after him. It can be concluded that the pronoun كم in لانذركم به refers to the people whom the Holy Prophet warned them before, contemporary or after the revelation of the verse.

So when it is said that “Al-Ana’m, verse 19: Say: The Quran has been revealed to me and I am to warn you and all the people it reaches” it suggests that his Message is for eternity and His Quran sent down for all times and there is no difference between who take Quran directly from him or take Quran from the others. In other words, this verse implies that Quran is the proof of orator and it argues
for the truth and it is against the wrong from its revelation to the Resurrection day. And Quran is from Allah.

He said I want to warn you by Quran and did not say I want you to recite Quran or someone has to be translate or interpreted it. All in all, it is the proof for everyone who hears it. Yes, when the letter or book is sent to the group of people, it is not necessary to write it in their languages but the following conditions are enough:

Firstly, its contents involve them; and secondly, its proofs are shown to them.

Allameh Tabatabaee said,” The Message of Mohammad is universal and His Quran is for all the times and there is no difference in invitation whether people hear it from himself or from the other persons since Quran is the proof of the narrator and it was set down from Allah and it is in favour of the truth and against the untruth till the resurrection day.

(Allameh Tabatabaee. Translated by Mousavi Hamedani, 1381, vol. 7, pp. 52-53)

c. Saba, verse 28: We did not send you but as a guide to all mankind in order to give glad-tiding to the believers and to warn those who have gone astray; but the majority of the people are ignorant.

Allameh Tabatabaee writes, “Ragheb in Singularities said that the word كف‬ means the palm, i.e. the organ which repels or catches and kaffaftah means that “I catch him in the act” and also it means “I repels him with my hand”. It is common to use kaf when we repel anything by everything even though we do not use our palm. Then makfouf can be said about the blind. And Quran says

We did not send you but as a guide to all mankind
To be sure، کاف‬ the end of the كاف‬ is the exaggeration.

And the verse describes Mohammad with these two characteristics:
Bringer of glad-tidings and the warne. These two words are in the active form describing the guide (Zaomakhshari. 1366, vol.3, p.583). And it might be said that it is hidden in the “We did not send you but as a guide to all mankind”

This interpretation might be possible and it is futile to trouble ourselves.

But if guide deals with the universality and the active form is related to the people(so the meaning is as follows: we did not send you but for all of the people) , it will not be correct because belletrists do not accept this rule that the active form being in front the owner of it which is genitive. Although the content of the verse is about the prophecy, according to the earlier verses which are about the Monotheism, it relates to the prophecy and it is the other evidence for Monotheism- since the Message is one of the prerequisite for Masterfulness and its status is to lead people to reach to happiness and to know themselves thoroughly.

Then, the universality of the Message of the Seal of the Prophet Mohammad, who is God’s Apostle not the other’s show that His Exclusive Masterfulness. Since if they were another Lord, He would have to send the other apostle and, as a consequence, it meaningless to accept Universality Message of Mohammad. And people require another apostle from the other God. As Imam Ali put forward, “If they were another partner for your God, His Messengers will come to you to give His messages.”

The supporter for it is the following phrase:
but the majority of the people are ignorant
Because if the meaning of the verse is as the same as what Ragheb said about the word کافه guide, it was not such a complicated issue but the implication for Exclusive Message of Mohammad means the Exclusive Mastery of Allah, and this the point that the majority of people do not get it. Therefore, the content of the verse is as follows:
Unbelievers cannot bring you the partner for Allah while we do not send you to them but to deter all the people and you are the bringer of glad-tiding and warner. If there were another God for the unbeliever we could not send you to the people, thought the majority of them have served another God and Allah is the knower of all things.

d. Al-Ahzab, Verse 40: Mohammad is not the father of any of your man; he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the group of Messengers.
Regarding its interpretation, Allameh Tabatabaee acknowledges that: the word the last is the tool is used to stamp something like publisherقابط and mould قالب. And the purpose of “the last group of the Messengers” is Mohammad and the prophecy terminated with his prophecy and there will be no other prophecy after him.
What are the meanings of the Message and the apostle? As said in previous paragraphs, apostle is the one who brings the Message from Allah to the creatures and the prophet is the one who brings the news from the unseen world and the unseen world is the religion and its truths. This premise requires that there should be no prophecy after our Holy Prophet Mohammad and, to be sure, there will be no prophecy because the Message is one of the news of the unseen world. When it comes to cut the unseen world from the prophets there must be no prophecy and, surely, there will be no Message. It becomes clear that when Mohammad is the last of the prophets he will be the seal of the apostles.
Allameh Tabatabaee continued, “In Majma Al-Bayan, concerning the “he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the group of Messengers”
There is the valid and reliable narration from Jaber ben Abdollah who narrated from the Islam Holy Prophet as follows: My example among the prophets is like the people who build the house and completed and decorated it but they empty one brick so as to surprise those who enter the house and he says, all parts of this house are perfect but alas! This empty place made it ugly. And till I was not appointed by Goad as the Messenger, this empty part in the house of prophecy is me and as I was appointed as the Messenger, the house of prophecy was completed.
This narration is retold in Bokhari and Muslim in their reliable and valid books. (Tabarsi, 1406, vol. 8, p. 362 & Tabatabaee, translated by Mousavi Hamedani, 1381, vol. 16, p. 487).

Investigating the dubiety of Khatamyyat (the seal of the prophecy)
Regarding the Khatamyyat (the seal of the prophecy), there is some dubiousness. The following dubiousness in relation to and Khatamyyat is concerned with the verses indicate it. Here, only some of the most important ones will be discussed which are based on Quran reasoning about Khatamyyat (the seal of the prophecy).

http://www.ijhcs.com/index.php/ijhcs/index
1. The first dubiousness

How is it justifiable to accept Muslim’s claim that their Prophet is the seal of the Messengers and no one will be appointed by God after him? Although Quran explicitly says that the prophecy has terminated and after him the other Messengers will come. As Quran says, “O. Children of Adam! When there come to you Messengers [chosen] from among you, reciting to you My Words of Revelation, then those who [follow them] and are righteous and make amends, no fear shall be upon them, neither they shall grieve” (Al-A’raf 35).

“When there come to” is in the future tense and shows something will happen in the future and, therefore, the other Messengers will come after Mohammad and he is not the last prophet.

(Sobhani. Translated by Ostadi, 1387, p. 138 & Mesbah Yazdi, 1393. P. 571).

Answer

The origin of this groundless criticism is that the previous verses have been neglected and overlooked and only this part of Surah was studied. If the previous verses had been read such unfounded debates would never have been happened. The following phrase “When there come to you Messengers [chosen] from among you” does not address the Muslims and ummah to say that no Messenger will be appointed after Mohammad but whole verse addresses the children of Adam and it relates to the beginning of the creation. And in response, it should be said that The word "لَمِن" in the verse is compound and according to the rule of “if-clause (condition) and its prefix, and if condition and response are two indispensable elements and “then those who [follow them] and are righteous and make amends” is its response sentence. And this phrase is accompanied in conditional sentence and there is no reason to consider it as the future action. And it is not related to the tense at all. The purpose of this verse is to say that Allah’s Way runs only for those who follow the Messengers (Sobhani . Translated by Ostadi, pp. 139, 144, 148).

The word لَمِن consists of ان و ما اما, that is to say, ان is the condition and ما is the prefix and in its conditional verb “to give you the emphatic N is used to show that the action is inevitable and قص means to explain and give in detail since in this word it means certainty and declaring. This verse addresses all of the persons which is extracted from the Adam and Paradise. This last verse talks about the divine knowledge concerning the following the Messengers and paying attention to revelation and tells that God’s guidance is done through revelation and Message. (Tabatabaee. Translated by Mousavi Hamedani, 1381, vol. 8, p. 107)

2. The second dubiousness

Al-Ahzab, Verse 40: Mohammad is not the father of any of your man; he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the group of Messengers. And Allah is the Knower of all things.

In the above verse, the “seal of the prophets” has been used not the “seal of the apostles”: there is the difference between the “prophet’ and the “apostle” . It cannot be inferred that no one can be appointed as a Messenger (Mesbah Yazdi, 1393, p. 571 & Motahhari 1374, vol. 3, p. 170).

Answer

Besides the arguing between the meaning of the “apostle” versus “prophet”, it should be mentioned that although these two concepts are distinct from each other but in practice there is a general and particular relationship between them. That is to say, every apostle is the prophet but
it does not mean that all prophets are apostles. Accordingly, this premise that no prophet will come after the Islam Holy prophet also includes the apostle, as the general negation requires the particular negation. Therefore, this is the necessities of the seal of the prophecy (Khatamyyat).

he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the group of Messenger the word “khatam” means everything that is used to seal like publisher and mould). And the purpose of “the seal of the prophets” is that the prophecy will be terminated after him and no prophet will come later. As said earlier, apostle is the person who is the bearer of Allah’s Message for the people and the prophet is the person who is the bearer the message from the unseen world and this unseen world consists of the religion and its truths and this claim requires that there must be no Message and prophecy after Mohammad since the Message is the essential factor for the unseen world. When it establishes to cut from the unseen world and no prophet / apostle comes later, consequently, there must be no Message. Accordingly, it can be concluded that when the Islam Holy prophet is the seal of the prophets, the seal of the apostles is the inevitable result. (Tabatabaee, translated by Mousavi Hamedani 1387, vol.16, p. 487).

3. The third dubiousness

and it was not expected from any Messenger that he should bring a Miracle except by Allah’s Leave. For every period of time there is a Law decreed. (Al-Ra’d 38)

Some say that it is possible to reason that for every time and every place there are laws and regulations, so it is true to conclude that the Islamic laws are for the particular time and place not for the eternity. (Sobhani, translated by Ostadi, 1387, p. 187).

Answer

This verse is not related to the limitation of religions and, in fact, this verse is used to reject the ideas of Jewish denying the abolition and for all things from evolution to legislation they believed in only one destiny. And the Moses’ era began with His appointment and finished by the advent of Christ and the appointed time of the Christ’s Ummah began by His appointment and terminated by the advent of the last prophet. But the appointed time of the Islam’s Ummah begins by the advent of Mohammad and lasts till the Resurrection. All of the laws and regulation were compatible for that era and they were also usable during the mission of Mohammad and they will be finished by the Resurrection and all of them are in Quran. Therefore, the eternity of the Sharia is guaranteed till the Resurrection and no one can suspect this fact (Sobhani, translated by Ostadi, 1387, pp. 188-190).

When Our Holy Prophet Mohammad dissuaded his Ummah from following the other religions such Christianity and Jewish, he said that the Allah’s way is accordance to this fact that the prophets were selected among the average people and, basically, sending the apostles is done through the customary and usual way and it does not mean that the prophets are the owner of the unseen world and they have authority over its particular characteristic like having the unseen power to do whatever thing they wish. If His wisdom allows, He send the verse or miracle and it is not necessarily to believe that the wisdom and expediency are equal and the only thing that the prophets believe that whatever thing they do is done only by Allah’s permission. Therefore, Allah send whatever thing He prefer and to He allow to do whatever thing He want. Then when Allah say

and it was not expected from any Messenger that he should bring a Miracle except by Allah’s Leave. For every period of time there is a Law decreed.
All people should be obedient to these laws and regulations.

4. The fourth dubiousness
Quran says, “Allah, the Owner of the Divine Throne of Arsh and the One Who bestows ranks and degrees on men, sends by His command a spirit on any of His obedient worshippers (Ghafir 15”).
The clear and distinct purport of this verse is that God will appoint whoever He want as the Messenger. Since this verse has been inspired divinely during the life of Mohammad, it can be understood that the other Messengers will be appointed. (Mesbah Yazdi, 1393, p. 573).
Therefore, the tenor of the verse is as follows: Allah knows best on whom to place His Mission (Al-An’am 124).
None of these verses shows that God is going to appoint another Messenger in the future because the verbs of the future tenses like send and put have not meant the future action. As a consequence, the mentioned verses do not reject the seal of the prophecy at all.
This verse points to the Message- one of the prerequisite for warner- and, therefore, the “spirit” here in which God will inspire to whoever He wants by Angels is “revelation” and the purpose of “any of His obedient worshippers” is the Messengers whom God appointed. And there is some controversy over the spirit inspired to the Messengers which is unimportant and the above verse does not nullify Khatamyyat (the seal of the prophecy) at all.

Answer
Likewise, this verse is not going to see in the future but it only tries to show this fact that the selection of the Messengers is based on God’s will and it does not follow the materialistic criteria which the disbelievers consider them as the fact. God will inspire revelation to whom He deem it advisable and select him for His message.

Conclusion
Taking into consideration of various viewpoints of philologist, particularly Arabic Nowin Dictionary, the meaning of khatam is “to seal, and end, last and final”. Idiomatically, according to the different viewpoints, especially Al-Mizan, Mohammad is the last messenger of Allah and the prophecy has been finished by him and no other Messenger will come after him. There is some reason for substantiating Khatamyyat (the seal of prophecy) and in Forqan (verse 1) and in Al-Ana’m (verse 19) and in Saba (Verse 28) and Al-Ahzab (verse 40), according to Al-Mizan, it can be understood that unless the messenger had not been appointed, this would have been empty. But when the Messenger was appointed, the prophecy was also completed and, therefore, and the dubiousness about Khatamyyat (the seal of prophecy) came to the scene on the ground that the prophecy has not been finalized. To answer to this dubiousness, it can be concluded from Al-Mizan Interpretation the seal of the Messenger was Apostle of Allah and the prophecy ended with him and there will be no Messenger after him.

Endnotes
The issue of Khatamyyat is needed the comprehensive and independent discussion and for this end, the remaining part of the paper will be given to the verses and narrations.

1. Mutaffefin, verse 25: They will be given the pure drink which the jar of it is sealed.
2. Yasin, verse 65: That day We shall put a seal on the mouths of the rejecters of Faith and will have their hands to speak with us.

3. Al-Jathiyah, verse 23: Have you observed the one who takes his dominating carnal-self as his god and follows its orders? So Allah has left such person in his error and has sealed his ears and his heart and has put a cover on his sight.

4. Forqan, verse 1: The Absolute Source of Blessings is the One Who sent down Forqan upon his exclusive and devoted worshipper so that he be a warning Expositor by teaching it to all mankind throughout the world.

5. Al-Ana’m, verse 19: Say: The Quran has been revealed to me and I am to warn you and all the people it reaches. Do you bear witness that beside Allah there is another god? Say: I do not bear such witness.

6. Saba, verse 28: We did not send you but as a guide to all mankind in order to give glad-tiding to the believers and to warn those who have gone astray; but the majority of the people are ignorant.

7. Al-Ahzab, Verse 40: Mohammad is not the father of any of your man; he is the Messenger of Allah and the last of the group of Messengers. And Allah is the Knower of all things.

8. Ghafir, verse 15: Allah, the Owner of the Divine Throne of Arsh and the One Who bestows ranks and degrees on men, sends by His command a spirit on any of His obedient worshippers.

9. Nahj Al-Balagha (the first sermon): God chose Mohammad as His last Messenger so as to terminate the prophecy and to fulfill His promise and the prophecy ended with Mohammad and it is blessed and fortunate.

10. Nahj Al-Balagha (the 69th sermon): God! Bestow the dearest peace upon Mohammad Your Slave and Your Messenger who is the seal of the predecessors and conqueror of the closed doors and the indicator of right by justice.

11. Nahj Al-Balagha (the 83th sermon): O people, take it from the Seal of the Messenger that one who dies from us, in fact he has not died….

12. Nahj Al-Balagha (the 168th sermon): “Trustworthy in His revelation and the seal of the prophecy and bringer of glad tiding and warner of His bounty
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