



Validation of the Interpretative Narrations of the Alternative Tribe (verse 54 sura Ma'edah) with Emphasis on Fakhr-Razi's Perspective

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Abstract

One of the most challenging verses of the Quran is the verse 54 of Sura Ma'edah. This verse is about coming of an alternative nation of apostates. Fakhr-Razi, introducing Abu Bakr as the only example of the verse, considers this verse to be the most compelling reason to prove his righteousness and tries to consolidate his view by other narrations. This descriptive-analytic study, focusing on the Fakhr-Razi's view, first presents the five general views and arguments of each group regarding alternative tribe, then by validating documents of the traditions based on 'Ammeh (Sunni) sources, proves that their narrational reasons are not authentic. Eventually, it will be proved that the first instance of the verse is Imam Ali (as) and his true companions, and the final example of the verse is Imam Zaman (AS) – may God hasten his reappearance- and his companions.

Keywords: 54 Ma'edah; Imam Ali and Imam Mahdi (AS); Alternate tribe; Fakhr-Razi; Abu Bakr; Abu Musa

Introduction

Verse 54 of the Surah Ma'edah is one of the important interpretive verses that has been taken into consideration by the Fariqin commentators, each one has introduced a special group to be the meaning of alternative tribe.

God states in this verse:

«يَأْيُهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٌ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٌ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَ لَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ»

Due to the content of the verse and the value given to the tribe mentioned in it, the determination of an example for the tribe is a subject of controversy among commentators. Shiite and Sunni commentators have each identified a group as the example, based on their documentation. But some were

interested to infer what they wished, and commentators such as Fakhr-Razi have sought to mention Abu Bakr as its example (referent) to prove the validity of his caliphate. Therefore, this verse is regarded as one of the basics of ‘Ammeh commentators, especially Fakhr-Razi, to legitimize Abu Bakr's caliphate to and to prove his legitimacy so as to reject his opposed ones to the extent that Fakhr by referring to this verse knows the opposed ones with the first caliph the cursed ones, the oppressed and defeated people throughout history.

The basic question now is, who are the example of “tribe” with such characteristics? According to some commentators, are Abu Bakr and his companions the only example of this verse, and his opponents are apostate and defeated? And, as Fakhr claims, is this verse the most important reason to prove Abu Bakr's righteousness?

Considering the fundamental questions about the example of “tribe”, and its relation to the principles of believes and the Imamate discussion, a research on the subject of “tribe” cited in this verse is necessary in order to obtain the correct example of it. It should be noted that two essays have been written in relation to this verse, which either deals with the whole verse and analyzes apostasy or studies and analyzes various opinions regarding the examples of “tribe”; but the present research has a narrative approach and examines the document and implications of the narratives that commentators used to assert their claims. Therefore, there is a need for independent research on “فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ”, and the validation of ‘Ammeh (Sunni) interpretive narrations using their own sources and critique of their views. The present study, using a descriptive-analytic approach, focuses on the commentators' views and documents, and examines and analyzes Fakhr-Razi's claim which is Abu Bakr's authenticity due to this verse. At the end the preferred view will be explained.

Explanation of the pivotal concept

“Tribe”:

“Tribe” is a group of men, not women (Farahidi, 1410, p. 5, p. 231 / Raghīb, 1412, p. 69 / Tarihi, 1375, p. 6, p. 147).

And Ibn Faris considers two principles for “tribe”. One of them is people's congregation (Ibn Faris, 1404, vol. 5, p. 43).

Five types of Views regarding “tribe”:

Generally speaking, there are five major views about “tribe” in the interpretations of Fariqeyn. Some consider Abu Bakr and his companions the tribe mentioned in the verse. Some Abu Musā Ash’ari, some Salman and the Fars people as the example of tribe. Shiite commentators identify Ali and his true companions as the example of tribe. (al-Tusi, n.d., v.3, p. 556 / Tabarsi, 1372, v. 3, p. 321 / Abul Futuh-Razi, 1408, vol.7, p. 7 / Huveyzi, 1415, vol. 1, p. 642 / Kashani, 1423, v. 2, p. 27) Some also know the perfect example of “tribe” to be Imam Mahdi (a.s) and his true companions.

(Qumi, 1367, vol. 1, p. 170; Huveyzi, 1415, vol. 1, p. 641; Tabatabai, 1417, vol. 5, pp. 390 and 389) But the common point of the interpretations is that the verse is about unseen news and will be fulfilled after Prophet. (Neyshabouri, 1416, v. 2, p. 603) Of course, regarding this verse other opinions are also expressed such as Anṣar (Qurtubi, 1364, v. 6, p. 220 / Ibn ‘Atiyyah, 1422, v. 2, p. 207 / Tha’labi, 1422, v. 4, p. 79) and the Saba’ tribe (Tabari, 1412, v. 6, p. 184 / Ibn Abi Hatam, 1419, v. 4, p. 1161 / Ibn

Kathir, 1419, v. 3, p. 123) . But because of their weakness and lack of traditions proving them, they are not included in the present study.

Among the interpretations available, *Mafatih al-Ghayb* is used this verse as a strong document to prove the legitimacy of the first caliph. By arranging various arguments and rejecting the famous Shiite comments on the verse, he eventually concludes that the only example of “tribe” should be Abu Bakr and his companions. Of course, Fakhr also mentions two other opinions of commentators and, according to others, mentions Abu Musa Ashari’s and Ahl Fars’ opinions, but his main point of view on the verse is “Abu Bakr”. Therefore, considering the importance of his point of view and the consequence of his point of view, this article attempts to examine other points of view by focusing on Fakhr's point of view and analyzing his point of view. In the following, the five types of views on “tribe” and reasons for each claim are discussed and analyzed.

1- Abu Bakr and his companions:

Commentators have quoted this opinion from Hasan, Qatada, Dahhak and Ibn Jarir. This view has many supporters among the ‘Ammeh commentators and in order to comply with the word "tribe" which is a plural noun, they interpret this verse being asserted by the hadith to be Abu Bakr and his companions (Qurtubi, 1364, Vol. 6, p. 220 / Tabari, 1412, v. 6, p. 183 / Fakhr-Razi, 1420, v. 12, p. 377 / Al-Suyuti, 1404, v.2, p. 292 / Madhhari, 1412, vol.3, p.129/ Rashid-Reza, 1414, 1414, vol.6, p.436) Fakhr-Razi is a strong supporter of this view and stands against the opponents of his view. He considers this verse to be a strong reason to prove corruption of Imamiyah . He gives this reason to prove his claim: the Shiites believe that Abu Bakr's electors have been apostates for denying the the *Nas* related to Imamate. But their claim is false because God promises that whoever of you becomes an apostate, a tribe will be sent by God to destroy them, but there is no news of such a tribe coming. So this verse is the strongest reason for our righteousness because the opposite was the case and the Shiites have always been banned from expressing their false beliefs, which shows that God has subjugated the Shiites. (Fakhr-Razi, 1420,v. 12, p. 378)

1.1 Reasons of this view:

Fakhr-Razi cites the following for his view:

1. Of the interpretations mentioned regarding the verse, only Abu Bakr fought with the apostates, and no one spoke about people of Yemen, Abu Musa, people of Fars, and ‘Ali who fought with apostates and if such a fight was recorded, it was under the command of Abu Bakr.
2. The second reason is that ‘Ali fought with apostates, but Abu Bakr's fight was more important and more valuable. Because ‘Ali opposed and war against those who opposed Imamate. But Abu Bakr was the one who, after the demise of the Prophet, fought with Musaylamah and Taliheh while despair and anxiety hugged the community, and fought with the seven tribes of apostates. He fought with those who opposed Zakat giving and by his effort Islam was expanded and blossomed. But by the time ‘Ali came to Imamate, Islam had spread to the east and west. It was thus proved that Abu Bakr's war had the most influence and that the verse is to revere a tribe that sought to strengthen Islam and its triumph, and the only person fits this description was Abu Bakr.

3. He further contradicts the arguments of supporters of ‘Ali (PBUH) and regards their documents as a "hadith Rayah" and "Ahad"¹ news so dismisses it as unjust.

4. Fakhr-Razi in order to prove his claim then tries to match traits and characteristics of the "tribe" to Abu Bakr. He claims that Abu Bakr is the lover of God and the holy Prophet. He uses two hadiths to prove his claim.

"Truly, in the Resurrection Day, God will be manifested for the servants in general and for you in particular." And "God did not pour anything in my heart unless He pours it in the heart of Abu Bakr." (ibid, vol.12, p381)

Fakhr concludes: Abu Bakr loves God and the Prophet, and God and the Prophet love him. So the only reference to this verse is Abu Bakr and his companions.

1.2 Evaluation and criticism

This claim is one of the views expressed by Sunni commentators. Therefore, the disagreement of the ‘Ammeh commentators on this view is itself a reason for violating this claim. Also, his attempt to exaggerate about this verse to prove Abu Bakr's legitimacy and suppress his opponents is a futile attempt.

Fakhr's first reason is fundamentally irrelevant because the verse does not talk about the struggle and overcoming of the alternative tribe over apostates. Rather, according to the appearance of the verse, God states, "O you who believe, if you become apostates, then God will soon bring forth a tribe who has special attributes." Only bring forth and not fight has been mentioned. So Fakhr's attempt to reject other comments, relying on their not-fighting with apostates is useless,. Therefore, the content of the verse does not exclude other ones.

His second reason is also baseless; because as mentioned above, in the verse fighting has not been mentioned but bringing of a tribe with special characteristics. His third reason is also false. Because "hadith Rayah" is abundant not only in Shiite sources but also in Sunni sources. This is discussed in the fifth type of view. By referring to two mentioned narrations, he argues that Abu Bakr is the only example of يُجِبُّهُمْ وَيُجِبُّونَهُ while by studying Sunni narrative books, the invalidity of both hadiths is revealed.

" Truly, in the Resurrection Day, God will be manifested for the servants in general and for you in particular "

1. Ibn Jawzī narrated this hadith from Anas (through three ways), Jabir (four ways), Abi Hariri and ‘Aisha. But in the end, after narrating the story in all its ways, he says:

"This hadith is not true in all its ways" (Ibn al- Jawzī, 1386 Sh, Vol. 1, p. 304).

He then pointed out to each narrator's weaknesses: for the first way (Anas) Muhammad bin ‘Abd is narrator who was known as a liar. For the second way the narrative is Bunaws who is unknown. Ibn Jawzī likewise dismissed all other narratives as incorrect. (Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 304 -308)

2. Shukānī has said:

¹ A tradition which is narrated only by one person.

“The Prophet said: O Abu Bakr! Shall I give you glad tidings? He said, "Yes, may my parents sacrifice for you. He said: Truly, in the Resurrection Day, God will be manifested for the servants in general and for you in particular. Khatib narrated this hadith from Anas in a *Marfu*² way and said: The hadith has no origin and in its chain on narrators is Muhammad bin ‘Abd al-‘Amir and there are other ways on narration for it. For example, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to Abu Bakr: May God grant you *Rizwan Akbar* (the greatest paradise).

Some asked: What is *Rizwan Akbar*? Then the Prophet said: in the Resurrection Day, God will be manifested for the servants in general and for you in particular. This hadith has been narrated by Abu Na'im from Jabir in *marfu* way and in its chain of its narrators we have Muhammad bin Khalid al-Khatli who is a liar, and Abu Na'im has said after transmitting the hadith and attaching it to the Companions: This is a proved hadith that A'lam scholars have narrated but the truth is only that only Khatli quoted from Kathir bin Hasham in *Al-Laqli*'. Hakim quoted this hadith in his *Mustadrik* with its document through Khatli followed by Dhahabi; Khatli only narrated this Hadith, and I suppose he had made this hadith." (Shukani, 1407, p. 330)

3. Dhahabi also quoted this hadith in two of his works and regarded it a lie according to the owner of al-Muzu'at. (Dhahabi, n.d., vol. 2, p. 575 / Dhahabi, 1995, vol. 6, p. 131).

4. Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, after quoting from Ibn Jawzi about falseness of this hadith, did not deny its existence. (Ibn Hajar, 1406, Vol. 5, p. 151) Elsewhere, he stated: Yunis Ibn Ahmad quoted from Abi Khalifah al-Jamhi through correct (*Sahih*) documents: "Truly God will manifests to Abu Bakr in a particular way. One of its narrators is Yunis Ibn Ahmad, who is accused of attributing this hadith to Abi Khalifah. (Ibn Hajar, 1406, vol. 6, p. 331)

5. The author of *al-Kashf al-Hathith*, according to Dhahabi, considered that narration to be fake (Al-Halabi, 1407, p. 185).

6. Al-Suyuti considered this hadith only narrated by Muhammad ibn Khalid, while he knew him a liar. (Al-Suyuti, 1417, vol. 1, p. 263).

These documents proving the falsehood of the narration of " يتجلى " is only a part of the documents concerning falseness of these narrations in ‘Ammeh sources. So the first hadith of Fakhr is confusing and untrustworthy.

b) God did not pour anything in my heart unless it was poured on Abu Bakr's heart

The second hadith that Fakhr has appealed to is another prophet's hadith which is also confused.

Firuz-Abadi Shafi'i, after quoting several hadiths about the virtues of Abu Bakr, including this and the previous hadith (إن الله يتجلى) said that this narrative and likewise are made by liars that, by the order of sound mind, they are obviously invalid.

He added:

I did not find anyone who mentioned any document for these hadiths. Ibn Jawzi expressed them, in his book “*Mudu'at*” and considered them neither *correct* (*Sahih*) nor fake (*Mudu*). Rather, such

² A narration that one or several narrators are omitted from the chain of its narrators.

traditions have become popular among public, and Ibn al-Qa'im, al-Menar al-Manif, said, These traditions are of those that are made by the Sunnis ignorant ones. (Firouz-Abadi, n.d., p. 10).

Ibn Jawzī, in his “*Mudu'at*”, has known invalidation of such traditions obvious and has not found any benefit for them because he believed that these hadiths were issued by ordinary people. (Ibn Jawzī, 1386, Vol. 1, p. 319).

Fatani, too, considered this hadith to be fake. (Fatani, n.d, Vol. 1, p. 674) Mosul considered this hadith like the former hadith fake by the order of reason. (Mosul Al-Varani, p. 36) Heravi, too, called it false that the Sunni ignorant had forged it. (Heravi, n.d., p. 476) Shukani also considered this narrative to be fake. (Shukani, 1407, p. 335).

Content-based shortcoming:

In addition to the various shortcoming concerning documents and content and implications for this this view, the content of the verse also rejects this interpretation. Because the attributes mentioned in the verse, such as being loved by God, extreme humbleness, and perseverance, indicate the existence of complete faith in an individual and avoidance of any ideological and moral deviation. Therefore, those who have been glorified in this way by God are also free from even the slightest error, let alone the great blunders that history attests to such errors committed by Abu Bakr and his companions. Therefore, Abu Bakr and his companions cannot be the example of this verse, and in Allama's view, this view is an example of the interpreter's adaptation and imposition of his view to/on the verse and is not valid (Tabatabai, 1417, vol. 5, p. 389). Therefore the reasons of the most important holder of this view point, ie. Fakr-Razi, are rejected. Tabari mentioned a hadith about this verse from imam 'Ali that adapted a tribe to Abu Bakr that is one of the strangest cases of this view in Sunni sources. Tabari stated in his commentary:

"Ibn Hasham said: Sayf ibn 'Amr from Abi Ravaq from Dahhak, from Abi Ayyub, from 'Ali, told us: In front of apostates of religion, there is a tribe whom God loves and they love God. And they are Abu Bakr and his companions." (Tabari, 1412, vol. 6, p. 183)

Hadith evaluation:

This hadith is unreliable and fake. Because in its document, there is Sayf ibn 'Amr. The Sunni *Reja'ali scholars* have asserted his weakness and considered his hadith ineffective ('Aqili, 1404, vol. 2, p. 175 / Abu-Hatam al-Razi, 1271, vol. 8, p. 479 / Nisa'i, 1405, p. 123) as far as Isfahani and Dhahabi accused him to be a *Zandaqi* and said:

" Sayf ibn 'Amr al-Dhabi al-Kufi is accused of being a *Zandaqi* and his hadith is void of value and it is nothing (worthless)" (Isbahani, 1405, p. 91).

Makhul Beiruti said, "I heard from Ja'far ibn Aban who quoted from Ibn Namir who said that Sayf al-Dhabi is Tamimi and for all his narrations he said: a Tamimi person narrated to me, Sayf issued hadith, and is accused of being a *Zandaqi* (Dhahabi, 1995, vol. 3, p353)

Ibn Jawzī says:

" Sayf is weak in hadith narrating," said Yahya. So Fals (Black Money) is better than him and Abu Hatam Razi said: He is a *Matruk al-Hadith* (*his hadith should be left*), and also Nisa'i and Dar al-Qutani regarded him weak. Ibn Haban also said: He forges hadith. (Ibn Jawzi, 1406, vol.2, p.35)

Thus, despite all weaknesses counted for Sayf in the authentic sources of ‘Ammeh, there is no doubt that his traditions should be rejected and the above mentioned hadith had no validity. Moreover, Dahhak is not credited by all Sunni scholars and people like ‘Aqili has pointed to his weakness (‘Aqili, 1404, vol. 2, p. 218). By the rejection of the hadith from Imam Ali (as), the only remaining evidence of this view, there remains no other credible reason to accept this view and attribute the verse to Abu Bakr.

2- Abu Musa Ash'ari and Yemeni people:

This is quoted from Mujahid, and Abu Hayyan Andulusi and Tabari consider it to be true. (Tabari, 1412, vol. 6, p. 184 / Abu Hayyan, 1420, vol. 4, p. 297) After expressing this interpretation, Qurtubi also adopts this interpretation as the best. (Qurtubi, 1364, vol. 6, P. 220) Of course, some commentators, after expressing the reason of this verse to be Abu Bakr, refer to this quote as another reference of this verse. ‘Ammeh commentary books attribute a narration to the Prophet (peace be upon him) who, after the revelation of this verse, addressed Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, saying: (هم قوم هذا : They are the tribe of this person) (Ibn Abi Hatim, 1419, vol. 4, P. 1160 / Mahalli, 1416, p. 120 / Baghavi, 1420, vol. 2, p. 62 / Maraghi, n.d, vol. 6, p. 140 / ibn ‘Atiyah, 1422, vol. 2, p. 207)

2.1 Reason for this view:

The followers of this view have focused on a narration from the Prophet. This narration is quoted in Sunni narration sources:

When the verse was revealed, the Messenger of Allah said: "O Abu Musa! That tribe is your tribe. And the Prophet pointed to Abu Musa by his hand." This hadith is true document-wise. But Bukhari and Muslim have not mentioned it in their Sahih. (Hakim Neyshaburi, 1411, Vol. 2, p. 342).

In addition to Hakim, other Sunni authors have also pointed out to the above hadith, with a slight difference (Beyhaqi, 1408, vol. 5, p. 351 / Heythami, 1412, vol. 7, p. 80 / Al-Suyuti, n.d., 2, p. 37 / Busiri, 1420). , Vol. 6, p. 205) But the common aspect of these sources is that this hadith has been narrated in one way and its chain of narrators reaches Samak ibn Harb and he narrated from ‘Ayaz Ash'ari. To be succinct, in the following, only Samak and ‘Ayaz are mentioned.

2.2 Evaluating the Reason for this View:

Samak ibn Harb:

There are different opinions about Samak. Some accept his hadith and others do not accept and know them weak. Ijli, of the Sunnis' earliest scholars, said about him:

" Samak is allowed to narrate traditions as he was knowledgeable in poetry and the history and biographies and was eloquent, but in the hadith of ‘Akramah sometimes attributed narrations to Ibn ‘Abbas and sometimes quoted directly from the Prophet. Whereas Ibn ‘Abbas quoted from ‘Akramah.

According to Sufyan Thuri, he was weak and in terms of authenticity of his traditions, he is moderately credible" ('Ijli, 1405, vol. 1, p. 436)

'Ijli with this word did not assert Samak, but just called him allowed to narrate hadith. He also asserted that Sufyan had weakened him.

Ibn 'Uday Jurjani quoted Ibn Sa'id as saying that Samak was unacceptable and said that he had entered superstitions in his records. (Ibn 'Uday, 1409, vol. 3, p. 460)

Abu Hatam Razi pointed out to this disagreement and, according to Ahmad bin Hanbal, introduced him as "*Muztarib al-Hadith*" (i.e. anxious at Hadith.)

"For some, Samak was *Muztarib al-Hadith*, and for some "*Theqeh*" (i.e. authentic). Yahya ibn Mu'in has been asked about the cause of Samak's lack of authenticity. He has said that he is *Theqeh*, but the defect which is told about him is that he cited documents for his hadiths that no one else has mentioned." (Abu Hatam, 1271, vol.4, p.279)

Shu'bah and Ibn al-Mubarak considered him weak. Ibn Kharash also did not assert him and considered him a liar regarding hadith-narrating and Ahmad bin Hanbal considered him *Muztarib al-Hadith*. (Dhahabi, n.d., vol.1, p.285) Dhahabi in another place said, he is *Theqeh* but his memorization was not good. (Dhahabi, 1413, vol. 1, p. 465).

Ibn Haban introduced his hadith as unknown, saying that Samak had erred in quoting the hadith and his hadith per. se. is not authentic. (Ibn Haban, n.d., vol. 1, p. 256). In other place, he agreed on his too much mistakes. (Ibn Haban, 1395, Vol. 4, p. 339)

Of course, the author of "*al-Jadawil al-Sughrah*" said, "The Sunnis except Bukhari rely on his Hadith." (Qasemi, n.d., vol.1, p.484)

Despite various opinions about Samak, it can be seen that he was not fully trusted and due to his weakness, the trust in those who confirmed him is rejected. Therefore, the great scholars of Sunni did not assert him, his hadith is rejected and has no effect. On the other hand, Abu Musa's hadith has one way only, which is doubtful. So the third view on this verse is rejected.

'Ayaz Ash'ari:

'Ayaz Ash'ari is the same 'Ayaz Ibn 'Amr Kufi that Shu'bi and Samak have narrated from him. (Ibn 'Abd al-Bir, n.d., vol. 1, p. 382).

There is disagreement about him being a Companion; some have doubted it (Khatib Baghdadi, n.d., vol. 1, p. 207) and some have rejected it and only a few accepted it. 'Abdul Rahman bin Abi Hatam quoted his father as saying that 'Ayaz was not a companion and Ibn Hajar had rejected his companionship (Mazi, 1400, vol. 22, p. 571). Most of Sunni Rijali scholars knew him a *Tabe'ee*. (Abi Hatam, n.d., p.25/ Al-Nuvi, n.d., p. 553) Although, Dhahabi has introduced him among the Companions. (Dhahabi, 2, 1413, p. 384) A poor saying is he was present at the time of the Prophet for a while, but Ibn Haban did not accept this. (Ibn Haban, 1395, Vol. 5, p. 264)

It is noteworthy that the number of hadith narrated by 'Ayaz was a few, and the Rijali scholars did not provide any specific confirmation for him. But contemplating on traditions narrated by him does not lead to a positive view towards him and his being credible. Because in a narration, he has said the Prophet played Daf (a musical instrument). (Ibn Athir, n.d., p. 886)

The important drawback is how does a person who seems to be Tabe'ee according to the most of the Sunnis narrate from the Prophet without any intermediary. The Sunnis themselves have, of course, acknowledged that his hadith is *Mursal*, and this had weakened his hadiths.

Therefore, with the lack of a clear confirmation for his hadith, and his inappropriate word about the Prophet, his hadith is not acceptable and the only support for this view is lost.

Therefore, given the content of the verse and the particular characteristics of the tribe, as well as the lack of valid reason for it, this view goes under question. In addition, Fakhr disregards this view and considers it to be derived from hadith *Marfu'*. (Fakhr, 1420, vol. 12, p. 378).

3- *Salman and Fars people:*

This claim has been put forward by a number of commentators, as "فيل" and quoted it in continuation of their preferred interpretation (Fakhr-Razi, 1420, p. 12, p. 378 / Beydhavi, 1418, vol. 4, p. 132/ Tha'labi, 1422, vol.4, p.79)

Evaluation:

This view is also weak one and there is no reason for it. According to the content of the verse, this interpretation is also problematic. Because the Persians at that time did not have the attributes mentioned in the verse. Unless it is intended that God will later bring out some people from them who possess such attributes (Tabatabai, 1417, vol. 5, p. 388). In addition, this view has not been confirmed by authentic narrations.

4.Imam Ali (peace be upon him) and his Companions:

This verse was revealed in its supreme dignity for the Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali who fought the people of Basra, and this narration is also narrated by 'Ammar ibn Y_{aser}, Hazifah Yaman_i and Ibn 'Abbas (Kashani, 1336, vol. 3, p. 258 / Shabar, 1407, vol. 2, p.188). The followers of this view endorsed it by the story of the conquest of Khaybar and the "hadith Rayah" (Rayah means flag) in which the Prophet praised Ali (pbuh) by the same description mentioned in the verse (al-Tusi, n.d., vol. 3, p. 556 / Tabarsi, 1372, vol. 3, p. 321 / Abul-Futuh Razi, 1408, vol. 7, p. 7 / 'Arusi Huveyzi, 1415, vol. 1, p. 642)

As stated in the first view, Fakhr, after quoting this view from the Shiites, considers it " *Khabar Vahid*" and does not regard it suitable to revoke to it." (Fakhr Razi, 1420, vol.12, p.380) Alusi also after narrating this from Imamiyah said, " there is no document for them regarding this narration except for their fake Akhbar." (Alusi, 1415, vol. 3, p. 330)

3.1 Reasons of this view:

According to Tha'labi, Mulla Fathullah Kashani considers the verse to be sent down for the dignity of 'Ali. He states that his claim is confirmed by the attributes mentioned in the verse which are not suitable to be applied to any one except him and Ahlul Bayt. And what the companions of hadith have mentioned in the authentic narrations confirms this such as "Hadith Rayah " in the Khyber war mentioned in Sihah. (Kashani, 1336, Vol. 3, p. 258).

“Hadith Rayah”³ in addition to its frequency in the Shi'a sources, is also abundantly found in Sunni books. Vaqidi, one of the earliest Sunni historians wrote following a long tradition:

"The Messenger of God said tomorrow I am going to give the flag to someone whom God and his messenger love him, and God will conquer (Kheybar) by his hand; the one who will not flee. Good news to you, Muhammad ibn Moslamah, tomorrow, God willing, the killer of your brother and the Jew will be killed. When it was morning, he sent someone to take Ali Ibn Talib. Ali had pain in his eyes, he said, "I couldn't see anything." The Prophet said: Open your eyes and rub his eyes with the saliva of his mouth. 'Ali (PBUH) said, "I have never had pain in my eyes since then." (Vaqidi, 1409, vol. 2, p. 653)

Other Sunni scholars have also quoted this tradition with a little different in their interpretation books. (Ibn Hisham, 1411, vol. 4, p. 305 / Ibn Sa'ad, 1968, vol. 2, p. 110 / Tabarani, 1404, vol.7 , p. 13 / Abul-Futuh, 1414, vol.2, p.174/ Ibn Kathir, 1395, vol. 3, p. 352 / Suyuti, n.d., vol. 1, pp. 417 and 418)

It is also quoted from Imam 'Ali (as) who said on the day of the Basra battle:

"I swear to God no one has ever fought with the referent of this verse and then he recited the verse." 'Arusi Huveysi, 1415, vol.1, p.641/ Safi, 1415, vol.2, p.43/ Kashani, 1336, vol.3, p.258)

Carefully paying attention to the word of Imam 'Ali, all previous views are violated. Because he says, the people of this verse have not been fought with until his time. While Abu Bakr and his companions, *Ahl Radeh*⁴, Yemenis and Qadisiyyah people all long lived before the time of the Imamate of him. So none of the above mentioned wars is not meant by the verse.

This narration has been narrated and accepted by Shia commentators and many Sunnis commentators. Of course, some commentators have disregarded this narration and considered it not to be authentic on the pretext of mismatching the plural to singular (the tribe is a plural noun and 'Ali is singular).

It is clear that there are hints to 'Ali and his companions in the traditions of their authentic books; just as they and their companions, fit Abu Bakr and his companions, or Abu Musa and his tribe, or Salman and his tribe the meaning of tribe in the verse. There is no narration saying that the verse was revealed only and specifically for 'Ali, so no one could raise the above problem.

After all, Tha'labi also mentioned in his commentary that this verse was revealed in the dignity of 'Ali. In addition, many traditions have come through the most tradition narrators that believe that the next verse (إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ) is revealed in the dignity of 'Ali, although in the verse we have (الذِينَ) which is plural. (Tabatabai, 1417, vol. 5, pp. 389 and 390) In a narration, besides Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali, the faithful companions of the Prophet (Salman, Abu Dhar and Meqdad) are also mentioned as the referent of the verse. (Huveysi, 1415, vol. 1, p. 643) These traditions can be regarded as referents and the verse is not limited to them.

³ Rayah means flag.

⁴ The returned people. This word is selected according to the *من يرتد* in the verse. In addition heretics are also called *Ahl Radeh*.

3.2 Evaluation of Reasoning:

The fifth commentary in addition to being endorsed by the commentaries, is also endorsed by the narrations. It is clear that Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali is the clearest example of the attributes mentioned in the verse. But the question is whether this verse applies to all of companions of him- who were present in the battle of Jamal and Siffin - or to some of them? Because many of them have changed their ways and therefore were not qualified. Of course, not all his companions in wars are meant. Because on the one hand, not all of them remained righteous and history is a witness to the crime of many of them; on the other hand, the verse is unallocated and generally praised all people of the mentioned tribe. Therefore, not all his companions can be considered as the examples of the verse.

Therefore, in light of the frequently-narrated traditions in the sources of Shi'a and the abundance of "Hadith Rayah" in the Sunni sources, the saying of Alusi regarding this point that there is no reason for this view and the existence of false narrations, as well as the words of Fakhri and his claim which says this hadith is *ahad* are doubtful and the first and foremost example of the verse is Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali and his companions. In addition, similar phrases of the saying "يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ", available in Shiite and Sunni narrative sources, have been used only for 'Ali. The supporters of the first view also did not find a hadith that specifically stated this attribute for Abu Bakr.

4- Imam Zaman (PBUH) and his companions:

This view has been put forward in the interpretation of Qumi and Nur al-Thaqalayn. (Qumi, 1367, vol. 1, p. 170 / 'Arusi Huveysi, 1415, vol. 1, p. 641) 'Allameh Tabatabai has also endorsed it and proved it for the verse.

Evaluation:

This view is reinforced in two ways, first, the word "فَسَوْفَ" signifies this tribe will come in future. Therefore, it doesn't match Abu Bakr and his friends. Second, the attributes mentioned in the verse apply only to the righteous groups and do not include transgressors and tyrants.

Therefore, this tribe is different from the community existing in the time of revelation, and apart from the warriors with the apostles after the demise of the Prophet of God. Because they were the same Muslims present on the day of the revelation of the verse. Because the war with the apostles was not far from the demise of the Prophet of God and all were addressed by this verse. So it is not sensible that they themselves be the referent of this phrase (.. فَسَوْفَ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا) (Tabatabai, 1417, Vol. 5, p. 388).

Also, these beloved believers in God must be free from any oppression and evil. For God does not love the oppressors and the oppressors of the faithful. Now, with these difficult conditions, can anyone be considered as the referent of the verse?! And any believer deserves such a description?! Do the people mentioned by Sunni commentators fit this verse? So, according to the verse and its implication, we must inevitably accept the righteous tribe as the tribe mentioned in the verse which is free from error, not the companions of the Prophet or the people of the time of revelation.

Another point is that, in the verse, we have tribe. From this word and the plural pronouns, we can see that the promised tribe are people who come together in groups, not individually or in pairs, and that neither does mean that God, at any time or century, sends a person whom loves God and God loves him to help the religion nor a person who is humble in front of the believers and mighty and invincible in front

of unbelievers, people who fights in the cause of God and fears of no blaming! Rather, in the verse we have a righteous and pious group. (Tabatabai, 1417, vol. 5, p. 390 and 389)

The Preferred View:

Considering the five views and evaluating all of them and rejecting the first three views, the last two remain. Undoubtedly, the first referent of the verse is 'Ali (PBUH) and his pure companions and its perfect referent is Imam Mahdi (peace be upon him). The verse, unlike the next verse (the verse of the Villayah), has the capacity of having several referents.

Therefore, apart from the flaws in the documents and content and implications on Fakh'r's proofs, since Abu Bakr did not possess the attributes mentioned in the verse, he would not be its referent. For the speaker of this word and the ruler of this commandment is Wise and has not mentioned the attributes in the verse in vain. Allameh Tabataba'i, with his deep thoughtfulness, examines every single vocabulary and its exceptions and limitations, and by considering the fact that the verse is sent down by a Perfect Wisdom concludes that these valuable attributes can not be applied to every person. Due to the content and characteristics of divine Words and the lack of heedlessness in His speech on the one hand and the lack of such faith and affection in the mentioned referents in Sunni commentaries on the other hand, he rejects their views. (Tabatabai, 1417, vol. 5, p. 382)

Result:

According to what we have mentioned, the following can be offered as a conclusion:

1. There are five major points of view in the interpretation of «فسوف يأتي الله بقوم». Abu Bakr and his companions, Abu Muṣā and his tribe, Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali and his companions and companions of the Imam Mahdi (a.s), have been introduced as referents of "tribe".
2. Fakh'r-Razi's argument claiming Abu Bakr is the only referent of the verse can be violated. In spite of the problems and flaws in of documents and content and implications of his documentation, there is no tradition which introduces Abu Bakr, the referent of «يحبهم و يحبونه» in the narrative sources. While the Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali is described like this in a narration from the Prophet.
3. The second and third views are also subject of doubt and do not have strong narrative support.
2. According to the refutation of various arguments and with regard to the content of the verse and the attributes of the privileged tribe and the testimony of history, none of the instances in the Sunni sources is correct and the referent is Amir al-Mu'minin 'Ali and his righteous companions as it is confirmed by narrations.
3. The perfect referent of the verse will be Imam Mahdi and his true companions, and the inherent referent of the verse will appear at the time of his reappearance.

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