

The Mahdi^{AS} in the Holy Qur'an

The Brief Tafsir of the Ayah 5:54



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scholium of the verse 54 of Surah Maida.*

Specification of Verses of Quran by Mahdi^{AS} is not excluded from principles of Arabic

Further, in the Word of Allah Most High; ‘...*fa-sawfa ya’-tillaahu bi-qawminy-yu-hibbhum wa yuhib’-buunahuu...*’¹ Mahdi Al-Mau’ood^{AS} has specified the word *qawm* for his community. This is not improbable on the basis of ‘*aql-o-naql* [rationality or narration]. Hence, we will deal with it.

Imam Baghawi² has written in his book of *Tafsir, Ma’alim-at-Tanzil*, under the divine saying: ‘*O ye who believe! Look to your own selves.*’³ That:

Some of the [Quranic] Verses are such that their interpretation has occurred even before they were revealed. The interpretation of some other Verses has occurred during the period of Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. The interpretation of some other Verses has occurred sometime after the Prophet^{SLM}. And some Verses are such that their interpretation will occur in the *Aakhir Zamana* [Last Era] (Here ends the statement of the *Ma’alim-at-Tanzil*).

Now I say that the interpretation of this Verse has occurred at the time of the emergence of Mahdi^{AS}. Hence, if it is said that the *mufassirin* [commentators of Quran] have explained that the purport of the *qawm* [community] is the community of *Ansar* [helpers of Madina] or Abu Bakr^{RZ} [Siddiq] and his community, or Salman Farsi^{RZ} and his community. Its reply is that this is not so, because Allah Most High says ‘*fa-sawfa ya’-tillaahu bi-qawm*’ [Allah will bring a people whom He loveth and who love Him...]. However, the *Ansar*, Abu Bakr^{RZ} and his community and Salman Farsi^{RZ} and his community, were already present during the period of the Prophet^{SLM}. And the Arabic word ‘*sawf*’ indicates that the advent of the *qawm* [community] will be in the distant future. Then how is it possible for that *qawm* to be present during the period of the Prophet^{SLM}?

The statement of Hasan Basari supports the meaning we have expressed. He has said that Allah Most High knew that a *qawm* will renege on its commitment to Islam after the demise of the Prophet^{SLM}. Hence, He has announced that He will bring a *qawm*. That *qawm* will be friends with Allah and Allah Most High will be the friend of that *qawm*. Same is what the *Ma’alim-at-Tanzil* too has said under this Quranic Verse. This shows that the emergence of the expected *qawm* will occur after the demise of the Prophet^{SLM}. And the purport of this *qawm* is not the *Ansar*, or Abu Bakr^{RZ} and his community or Salman Farsi^{RZ} and his *qawm*, as has been mentioned earlier by some commentators.

¹ Quran, S. 5:54 SAL. Transliteration. It means; “Allah will bring a people whom He loveth and who love Him...” [Translation by MMP.]

² His full name is Husayn bin Mahmud al-Farra’ al-Baghawi.

³ Quran, S. 5:105 SAL.

This is also supported by the saying of Qazi Shihabuddin who has said in his *tafsir, Bahr-e-Mawwaj*, that:

It is narrated that after the *irtidad* [the revolt of apostates], two thousand people of the Nakh'ee Tribe and three thousand people of the Kundi Tribe, and three thousand from various [miscellaneous] other tribes came into the Religion of Islam and became sincere *muminin* [believers]. '*Fa-sawfa ya'-tillaahu bi-qawm*' [Allah will bring a people whom He loveth and who love Him...]' purports this group and this revelation has come in reference to them.

Some say that that the Prophet^{SLM} was asked who these people were. The Prophet^{SLM} said that they were the *Ansar* [Helpers]. Some others say that the Prophet^{SLM} gestured towards Salman Farsi^{RZ} and bestowed this glory to his *Qawm*. Then, he [the Prophet^{SLM}] said, 'Even if *Iman* [Faith] were hung on the *surayya* [Pleiades], some men of *Faris* [Iran, Persia] will achieve it.' Yet some others have said that this Verse is in the *shan* [glory] of Abu Bakr^{RZ}, who fought and killed *murtidin* [apostates—people who had rebelled and refused to pay *zakat*—*poor-due*] with a large army.⁴ He made such an arrangement for the killing and did not stop and was not bothered by the blame of the blamers. He did not compromise with them, and said, "By God! Even if they [people who opposed the killing] shackle me to prevent me from fighting, I will continue the killing [the rebels]." Then he hurried to fight the *jihad* [holy war] with them. And by Allah's help and will, he was successful. Some among the rebels were killed while others converted to Muslims.

However, the above-mentioned Quranic Verse, wherein the promise to bring a *qawm* [community] is stated to happen in the future, is difficult to relate to Abu Bakr^{RZ}, the *Ansar* [Helpers] or Salman Farsi^{RZ}, who were present at the time of the revelation of

⁴ The Muslims residing in the outskirts of the city of Madina refused to pay *zakat* [poor-due] and *ushr* [tithe] after hearing the news of the demise of Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM}. They also revolted against most of the commands of *Shari'at*. Hazrat Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had, while on his death bed, sent a contingent of the army under the leadership of Osama bin Zaid to the frontiers of Syria. The contingent had gone about ten leagues from Madina and had stopped there because the health of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} was deteriorating. When the death of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} occurred, the people of the villages around Madina had refused to pay the poor-due. Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ}, the first Caliph of Islam, ordered that the rebels be attacked. Hazrat Umar^{RZ} and all the Companions^{RZ} of Hazrat Prophet^{SLM} opposed the orders of Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ}. Their argument was that the rebels were Muslims and had only refused to pay the poor-due and how could they be killed for not paying the poor-due? Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ} said, "If you do not cooperate with me [in fighting the rebels], I will fight alone against them till my last breath. Even if you tie my hands and feet, I will not stop [fighting them]." Hazrat Umar^{RZ} asked, "What is your argument in continuing to fight against them [those who had refused to pay the poor-due], despite the saying of the Prophet^{SLM} that I have been commanded to fight the people until they accept that God is one and that I am His Messenger. If one did this, he would save his life and property from me, except by a right." Hence, Hazrat Abu Bakr^{RZ} said, "By God! I will fight with that person who differentiates between *namaz* [ritual daily prayers] and *zakat* [poor-due], because *zakat* is the right of the *maal* [property]. And the Prophet^{SLM} has said that by suppressing [or misappropriating] somebody's right, their *maal* [property] and *khlood* [blood] would not be safe." Hazrat Umar^{RZ} says, "By God! I had seen that Allah Most High had guided [Hazrat] Abu Bakr^{RZ} to fight. And this matter is certainly *haq* [Truth]." Up to the end.—[Excerpted from the book, *Mojez-Numa Mutavassit Quran-e-Sharif*, printed at Latifi Press, Delhi.]

the Verse. However, by the Verse: '*Fa-sawfa ya'-tillaahu bi-qawm'* [Allah will bring a people whom He loveth and who love Him...]' purports to bring the new community in the future. If the purport is not to bring or create the community in the future, it will create ambiguity, difficulty and complications. [Here ends the statement of the book, *Bahr-e-Mawwaj*].

Mahdi^{AS} and his community are mentioned in the Quran

In the book, *Tafsir-e-Naishapuri*, it has been [clearly] stated that:

"Probably the purport is the community of Mahdi^{AS}."

Then, know, O Wise man! The correct meaning of this Quranic Verse is the one that has been stated by Mahdi^{AS}. And Allah Most High has given the news of the community of Mahdi^{AS} at many places in His Book [Quran]. Among the many Quranic Verses [that have given the news] is the following one:

"As well as (to confer all these benefits upon) others of them, who have not already joined them..."⁵

In this Verse, the purport of the word '*Aakhariina*' [others of them] is the community of Mahdi^{AS}.

Along with this is the command of Allah Most High:

"A number of them will be from among the earliest believers, And a smaller numbers will be from among the later believers..."⁶

This command also supports the same meaning. The saying of Imam Baghawi in his book, *Ma'alim-at-Tanzil*, under this Quranic Verse, which is as follows:

"One group of ulama, that is, Abu'l Aa'liah Mujahid 'Ata' bin Abi Riyah and Zahhak, are of the opinion that both the groups mentioned in this Quranic Verse are from the ummat [community] [of Prophet^{SLM}] and 'Sullatum-minal-'awwaliin' [a number of them...] are the early people of this ummat [community], and the purport of 'qaliilum-minal-'aa-khiriin' [a small number...] are those people who will be born in the aakhri zamana [Last Era]. (They are the group of Mahdi^{AS}).

In the *tafsir* [exegesis] of the Quranic Verse, '*A number of them will be from the earliest believers, And a smaller number will be from among the later believers*', it is narrated by Ibn 'Abbas that Prophet Muhammad^{SLM} had said, '*Both these groups are from my ummat.*' Hence, the group that has been promised to be brought is the group of Mahdi^{AS}.

⁵ Quran, S. 62:3 AYA.

⁶ Quran, S. 56:13-14 SAL.

If it is asked wherefrom is this matter understood that the promised *qawm*, which is mentioned in the two Quranic Verses⁷ is the community of the Mahdi^{AS}? It is probable that there could be any other community from the *Ummah* of the Prophet^{AS} whose emergence is awaited. What is the reason for specifying this community to be that of Mahdi^{AS}?

The reply to this question is this: Allah Most High may grant you *barkat* [blessings in abundance]. Do justice! Do not resort to crookedness! When we have proved that a *qawm* would emerge after the Prophet^{SLM}, then it should be seen that besides the *qawm* of Mahdi^{AS}, is there any other *qawm* whose coming is mentioned in the Quran, when the Mahdi^{AS} and his group possess certain specific qualities which are not found in others? And it is these specific qualities which increase the preference for choosing them. Then, what reason do we have to reject this *qawm*, that performs *karamaat* [wonderworks], and look for others?

If it is said that it is possible that the said *qawm* could be purported community of Esa^{AS} [Jesus Christ], then what is the reason to reject the *qawm* of Esa^{AS} and to prefer the *qawm* of Imam Mahdi^{AS}? The reply to this question is that your argument could of course be correct with respect to *aql* [rationality]. But the *naql* [narratives or traditions] rejects it. This is so, because the Prophet^{SLM} has informed [us] that the *qawm* of Mahdi^{AS} would come before that of Esa^{AS}. He has said that Masih [Messiah—Jesus Christ] would meet the various *aqwam* [communities] of the [Muslim] *ummat* that could be like you or better than you in strengthening the religion. This has been mentioned by Ibn Jarjan^{RA} in his book, *Irshad*, with relevant authorities, as narrated by Ali Sayeed ibn Marzooq Kindi upto RasoolAllah^{SLM}. Similarly, Imam Qurtubi has narrated it in *Tazkirah*. Further, it is narrated in *Hadis* in *Sihah*.⁸ Anas bin Sam'an narrates in the story of Dajjal [Antichrist], 'Then a community whom Allah will protect from the *fitnah* [mischief] of Dajjal will come to Esa^{AS}. He will wipe his hand over their faces and will talk to them in accordance with their ranks and grades. (Up to the end of the Tradition).

Hence, if it is asked, how is it understood that the *qawm*, which will come to Esa^{AS}, whom he would caress their faces with his hands and would talk to them in accordance with their ranks and grades and that Esa^{AS} will find them to be emulating the Companions^{RZ} of the Prophet^{SLM}, is the *qawm* of Mahdi^{AS}. Rather, it is possible that it could be some other *qawm* too.

⁷ Quran, S. 5:54 and S. 56: 13 and 14. “*Fa-sawfa ya'-tillaahu bi-qawminy-yu-hi-bbuhum wa yuhib-buunahuu...*” and “*Sallatum-minal-'awwaliin, Wa qaliilum-minal-'akhiriin.*” Meaning “*Nay! God will raise up others, loved of God and loving Him...*” and “*A number of them will be from among the earliest believers, And a smaller number will be from among the later believers...*” —English transliteration and translation from *Al-Qur'an* rendered into English by Syed Abdul Latif.

⁸ *Sihah* are the six famous Sunni collections of Holy Prophet's Traditions made by Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmizi, Abu Daud, Nasai and Ibn Majah.

The answer to this question is that, the matter is not how the questioner has assumed, because the Prophet^{SLM} has said:

'How can the ummat [community] be destroyed, when I am at its initial part, and Esa^{AS} is in its final [or last] part, and Mahdi^{AS} from my descendants is in the middle part?'

And Razin^{RA} has added the following words in the *Hadis* [Tradition]: 'And there would be a long period between Mahdi^{AS} and Esa^{AS} and during this intervening period there would be a crooked group.⁹ Neither this group is from me nor am I from it.'

Hence, the *Hadis* with its connotation proves that the advent of the Mahdi^{AS} would be before that of Esa^{AS}. Now the situation presents two alternatives with respect to the people who will be protected from the mischief of the Dajjal. They will either be from the people who have performed the *tasdiq* [affirmation] of Mahdi^{AS} or they would be from the ones who have rejected the Mahdi^{AS}. The second alternative is *batil* [void]. Hence, the first alternative will prevail.

If it is said that [in the Quran] at one place, the word *qawm* [community] has been used, while in another place, the word *aqwam* [communities] has been used. How can there be any conformity and consonance between the two? The reply to this is: In reality, the *qawm* is one single unit. However, since there are many places and many tribes, the word *aqwam* is used due to their number.

⁹ Terha ثِيْرَهَا crooked.