

HOW UNDERSTANDING/ MISUNDERSTANDING HADITHS AFFECTS THE MEANING OF THE QURANIC VERSES¹

HADİŞLERİ ANLAMA ŞEKLİMİZ KUR'ÂN ÂYETLERİNİN ANLAŞILMASINI NASIL ETKİLER?

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ÖZ

On dört asırlık İslâm ilim geleneğinde hadis ve sünnetin değerine ve bağlayıcılığına dikkat çekilirken esasen bilgi kaynağının vahiy olduğuna yapılan vurguyla hadis metinlerinin otoritesi delillendirilmektedir. Bununla birlikte vahyi tebliğ etmekle olduğu kadar açıklamakla da sorumlu kılınan Hz. Muhammed'in (s.a.s.) söz, fiil ve takrirlerinin vahyin anlaşılması ve hayata taşınması için çok önemli bir yere sahip olduğu da aşikârdır. Hatta bu ilişkiye "Sünnet Kitaba kâdîdir, Kitap ise, sünnete kâdî değildir." beyanı ile işaret edilmiş, Kur'an ile Hadis/Sünnet arasında birbirini tamamlayan bir ilişkinin var olduğu, bu iki kaynağın ruhla beden gibi bütünleşen ve İslâm dininin asli iki kaynağı olarak konumlanışı İslâm âlimlerince ifade edilmiştir. Âyetlerin anlaşılmasında hadis/sünnetin önemine işaret edilen bu noktada hadislerin anlaşılmasında karşılaşılan farklılıkların vahyi anlamaya ne ölçüde etkide bulunduğu sorusu önemli bir husus olarak çalışmada belirmektedir. Çalışmamızda bu soru esas alınacak ve Nisâ Sûresi 1. âyete odaklanılarak referans kabul edilen hadisin farklı şekillerde izah edilmesinin âyetin anlaşılmasını nasıl etkilediği tartışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hadis, Sünnet, Anlama, Nisâ Sûresi, Kadın yaratılışı.

ABSTRACT

The words, actions and approvals of Muhammad (pbuh), who is responsible for explaining the revelation as well as conveying it, have a very important place in understanding the Quranic Revelation (wahy) and bringing it to life. In fact, this relationship was pointed out with the statement "Sunnah is the judge (qadi) upon the Qur'an, but the Qur'an is not the judge (qadi) upon for the Sunnah" by Islamic scholars. At this point, where the importance of hadith/sunnah in understanding the verses is pointed out, the question of how the differences encountered in understanding the hadiths affect the understanding of the revelation appears as an important issue. In our study, this question will be taken as a basis and by focusing on the 1st verse of Surah an-Nisa, it will be discussed how the understanding way of the hadith, which is accepted as a reference, affects the understanding of the Quranic verse.

Keywords: Hadith, Sunnah, Understanding, Surah-an-Nisa, Creation of woman.

¹ This article is prepared on the basis of the paper which was presented with the title "Âyetleri Anlamada Hadis Algısının Etkisi -Nisâ Sûresi- 1. Ayet Ekseninde Bir Tahlil Denemesi" in the "Tarihîten Günüümüze Kur'an İlimleri ve Tefsir Usûlü" workshop in Istanbul.

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SUMMARY

The two main sources of Islam, the Qur'an and Hadiths, appeal to all humanity. In the face of this situation, it is of great importance that the two texts are understood correctly by their interlocutors. In fact, considering the meaning of the act of understanding, previously owned information and resources are needed to confirm or falsify the data at hand. In the correct understanding of the mentioned sources, it is of great importance that the source is handled holistically and not detached from its context. However, when it is considered in the context of the main sources of the religion of Islam, trying to understand these sources without their inter-context will break the integrity of "correct understanding", so it is necessary to try to understand the Qur'an and the Sunnah together and to apply them to life. If this practice is not achieved, it will be inevitable that there will be a conflict between what is told and what is understood.

At this point, one of the main problems of our study will be the question of how the Hadith is understood. A Hadith narration, which is considered out of context, will directly or indirectly affect the understanding of the verse, and this will certainly have serious effects on Muslims' understanding of religion. The aim of our study is to reveal the position of the hadith in understanding the revelation, and the effect of the hadiths that are evaluated incorrectly or incompletely on understanding the verses. In this context, it is not possible to understand the Qur'an excluding the Hadith/Sunnah. In order to understand the revealed revelation, it is important to know the reason for its revelation and the environment, subject, person etc. in which it was revealed. Likewise, there are some expressions in the Quran that it is essential to clarify with the explanation of hadiths.

So, what role does understanding the hadiths have in understanding the verses? The answer to this question actually points to the problem of understanding the hadiths. As we have stated, when the mission of the hadith explaining the Qur'an is taken into consideration, first of all, the necessity of understanding the hadiths in themselves emerges. In our study, a method based on the first verse of Surah Nisa will be followed in revealing the effect of the wrong evaluation of the hadiths on the understanding of the verses. In this context, the role of the correct understanding of the hadiths in understanding the verses will become clearer. The first verse of Surah Nisa, which we examined in this

article, is about the creation of man/woman. As a result of our investigations, we see that the same verse appears in different translations due to differences in understanding in various translations.

In this context, in the explanations made in the commentaries, an approach/understanding that the woman (Eve) was created from the rib of the man (Adam) and another approach/understanding that people were created from the same essence by evaluating this verse metaphorically has occurred. In our study, we evaluate the narrations in the relevant context based on *Kutub-i Tis'a*. The narrations that are the subject of our article are included in the hadith sources with the versions “a woman is like a rib” and ontologically “the woman was created from a rib”. One of the most important factors in understanding these narrations differently from each other stems from the fact that the hadith is detached from its context and handled with a fragmentary approach and literary arts are ignored. Looking at the text as a whole, the Prophet talks about treating women well and then uses the expression that women are like a rib. While the original text is like this, it will not be possible to correctly understand a statement taken from here. As a matter of fact, establishing a healthy connection between the representative and the represented in the understanding of the narrations that contain analogy emerges as an important method in the correct understanding of the hadiths. Although this narration is trying to be understood by considering it as a simile, understanding it in its non-simile form will not be an understanding that will harm the value of woman. In the belief of Islam, since a person can only attain his value through his servitude, it does not matter from which element the man or woman was created. As a result, ignoring the real meaning reached together with other *tariqs* that reveal the integrity of the narration in understanding the hadiths may cause erroneous interpretations arising from the incomplete or wrong evaluation of the hadiths in the understanding of the verses.

HADİSLERİ ANLAMA ŞEKLİMİZ KUR'ÂN ÂYETLERİNİN ANLAŞILMASINI NASIL ETKİLER?

ÖZET

İslâm dininin asli kaynağı olan Kur'ân metninin bir hayat tarzına dönüştürülmesinde, bizzat Kur'ân-ı Kerim tarafından Müslümanlar için en güzel örnek olarak vasıflandırılan Hz. Peygamber'in söz, fiil ve takrirlerinin muhataplarınca kendi bağlamı içerisinde doğru anlaşılması çok büyük önem arz etmektedir. Esasen anlama eyleminde eldeki veriyi doğrulama ya da yanlışlama faaliyetinin izharı için önceden sahip olunan bilgilere, kaynaklara gereksinim duyulmaktadır. Söz konusu kaynakların doğru anlaşılmasında ise kaynağın bütüncül bir şekilde ele alınması ve bağlamından koparılmaması büyük önem arz etmektedir. Nitekim İslâm dininin asli kaynakları bağlamında bu durum düşünüldüğünde vahyin hayata taşınmasını sağlayan bir unsur olarak Hadis/ Sünnet ile Kur'ân metni arasında bizzat Kur'ân tarafından tesis edilen dinamik bağın ihmal edilmesi ya da görmezden gelinmesi halinde vahy-i ilâhînin muradının anlaşılmasında eksiklikler olacağı âşikardır.

İşte bu noktada çalışmamızın odak noktasında hadis/sünnetin nasıl anlaşıldığı ve bunun Kur'ân/Sünnet bütünlüğü bağlamında vahyi anlamayı nasıl etkilediği sorusu yer alacaktır. Bağlamından kopuk olarak değerlendirilen bir hadis rivayeti, âyetin anlaşılmasına direkt ya da dolaylı bir şekilde etkide bulunacak, bu da kaçınılmaz bir sonuç olarak Müslümanların din anlayışı üzerinde ciddi etkiler bırakacaktır. Bu bağlamda Kur'ân-ı Kerim'in anlaşılabilmesi için vahyin sebep-i nüzûlü ve bu minvalde nazil olduğu ortam, konu, kişi vb. unsurların neler olduğunun bilinmesi önem arz etmektedir ki bu bilgiler hadis/sünnet literatüründen elde edilmektedir. Aynı şekilde Kur'ân-ı Kerim'de geçen bazı ifadeler bulunmaktadır ki bunların, Hz. Peygamber'in tebyini ile açığa kavuşturulması elzendir. Örneğin Kur'ân'da bazı âyetler konulara kısaca temas etmekte ve detaya dair bilgi vermemektedir. Namazın nasıl kılınacağı, orucun nasıl tutulacağı ve zekatın nasıl verileceğine dair detay barındırmayarak mücmel olarak gelen bu ifadeler bizzat Nebi'nin (s.a.s.) örnekliliği ve uygulamaları ile açıklanmaktadır. Yine Nisâ Sûresi 238. âyette "*Orta namaza devam edin.*" buyurulduğu gibi müşkil, bir diğer ifade ile manası bilinmeyen kelimeler bulunmaktadır. Hz. Peygamber tarafından bu âyette yer alan "orta namaz" ifadesinin "ikinci namaz" şeklinde açıklandığını görmekteyiz. Aynı şekilde umûmîlik ifade eden bazı âyetler Resûlullah (s.a.s.) tarafından (katilin mirasçı olamayacağını beyanı gibi) tahsis edilmektedir. Mutlak olarak gelen bazı âyetler Hz. Peygamber tarafından (mirasın üçte bir ile kayıtlanması gibi) takyid edilmiştir. Hakeza Nebi (s.a.s.), hadisleri ile Kur'ân-ı Kerim'de bulunan hükümleri teyit etmiştir. "Sünnet Kitaba kâfidir, Kitap ise, sünnete kâdî değildir." ifadesi de esasen Kur'ân'ı tebyin edip daha anlaşılır hale getiren sünnetin bu önemli rolüne işaret etmektedir. Bu bağlamda karşımızda beliren

“Hadis/Sünnetin anlaşılması âyetlerin anlaşılmasında nasıl bir role sahiptir?” sorusu daha da kıymetli hale gelmektedir. Şöyle ki ifade ettiğimiz üzere hadisin Kur’ân’ı tebyin eden misyonu göz önünde bulundurulduğu zaman öncelikle hadislerin kendi içerisinde doğru anlaşılmasının gerekliliği ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bu durumu dikkate alarak çalışmamızda, Hadis/Sünnetin farklı anlamlara gelecek şekilde yorumlanmasının âyetlerin anlaşılmasına etkisinin ortaya konulmasında Nisâ Sûresi 1. âyetten hareketle bir araştırma yapmak hedeflenmektedir. Bu bağlamda makalemizde çalışmamıza esas olan Nisâ Sûresi 1. âyet, insanın yaratılışı konu edinmektedir. İlgili âyet-i kerîmenin gerek mealine gerekse tefsir kaynaklarındaki açıklamalarına baktığımızda âyetin anlaşılmasında esas alınan bir hadis rivayetinin anlaşılma üslubuna bağlı olarak tercüme ve tefsirde benimsenen anlamların değişiklik gösterdiği görülmektedir. Bu meyanda tefsirlerde yapılan açıklamalarda kadının (Hz. Havva’nın) erkeğin (Hz. Âdem’in) kaburgasından yaratıldığı şeklinde bir yaklaşım/anlamanın ya da kadın ve erkeğin aynı özden yaratıldığı şeklinde bir diğer yaklaşım/anlamanın esas olduğu görülmektedir. Çalışmamızda âyet-i kerîmenin anlaşılmasına doğrudan etki eden hadis rivayetleri Kütüb-i Tis’a esas alınarak tespit edilip değerlendirildiğinde, ilgili rivayetlerin hadis kaynaklarında teşbihli bir şekilde “*Kadın kaburga kemiği gibidir.*” ve ontolojik açıdan “*Kadın kaburga kemiğinden yaratılmıştır.*” versiyonları ile yer aldığı görülmektedir. Söz konusu rivayetlerin birbirinden farklı anlaşılmasındaki en önemli etkenlerin hadisin varid olduğu bağlamından koparılıp parçacı bir yaklaşımla ele alınması ve edebî sanatların göz ardı edilmesi olduğu görülmektedir. Bütüncül olarak metne bakıldığında Hz. Peygamber, kadınlara iyi davranılmasından bahsetmekte ve ardından kadının kaburga kemiği gibi olduğu ifadesini kullanmaktadır. Nitekim bu örnekte de görüldüğü üzere içerisinde teşbih temsil içeren rivayetlerin anlaşılmasında temsil eden ve temsil edilenin bağının sağlıklı bir şekilde kurulması hadislerin doğru anlaşılmasında önemli bir usul olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bununla birlikte ilgili rivayetin temsil/teşbih içeriği esas alınarak anlaşılmasının ötesinde teşbihsiz formu ile yaratılışı esas alarak anlaşılması esasen kadının değerine zarar verecek bir durum değildir. İslâm inancında bir insan değerini ancak kulluğu ile elde ettiğinden kadının ya da erkeğin hangi unsurdan yaratıldığına herhangi bir önemi bulunmamaktadır. Bununla birlikte hadislerin anlaşılmasında rivayetin bütünlüğünü ortaya koyan diğer tariklerle birlikte ulaşılan asıl mananın dikkate alınmamasının, âyetlerin anlaşılmasında hadislerin eksik ya da yanlış değerlendirilmesinden kaynaklanan farklı yorumlara sebebiyet verdiği net bir şekilde görülmektedir. Tam da bu nedenle vahy-i ilâhînin anlaşılmasında Kur’ân-Sünnet bütünlüğünün esas olması kadar hadis/sünnetin kendi bağlamında bir bütünlük içerisinde anlaşılması oldukça önem arz etmektedir. Bağlamından kopuk metin bilincinden mahrum bir hadis/sünnet tasavvuru sadece hadis/sünnetin yanlış anlaşılmasına değil vahy-i ilâhînin muradının da anlaşılmasına ve doğru bir İslâm tasavvurunun oluşmasına sebebiyet verecektir.

INTRODUCTION

The two main sources of Islam, which is the last religion with universal characteristics, are the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Just as it is not possible to think of an Islamic religion without the Qur'an, it is also impossible to think of an Islamic religion separate from the Sunnah. Islam was sent to be lived in practical life, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) showed this life comprehensively to people and became the best example in this field. Therefore, the Sunnah, which is the expansion of the Qur'an, is the practice of Islam. Undoubtedly, in order to understand the Qur'an (revelation) as a text (*Mushaf*), it is of great importance to understand the hadiths correctly. Making an effort to understand the revelation by ignoring the Hadith and Sunnah will mean blocking the way to reach the "correct meaning" that is intended by this effort from the very beginning. At this point, the question of how the Hadith is understood becomes important. A hadith narration that is considered out of context will directly or indirectly affect the understanding of the Quranic verse, and this will have serious effects on Muslims' understanding of religion. In this article, we will deal with the narrations that affect the understanding of the 1st verse of the Surah an-Nisa in terms of their effect on the translation and interpretation studies, and we will point out the vital position of the correct evaluation of the hadith narrations in understanding the Qur'an.

The Position of Hadith in Understanding Revelation

Making an effort to read and understand a written text is basically an effort to deal with a problem of latency. The effort to understand the *Mushaf* as a text is itself the process of ensuring that the revelation that speaks us linguistically is located in the center of life. The endeavour to understand the Qur'an, which is a process that will enable people to build their life centered

on the Qur'an, is undoubtedly not an effort to be realized by just looking at the text. The relationship between *siyaq-sibaq*, the relationship of the verses with different verses and of course the relationship of the verses with the Hadiths are the issues that should be emphasized in this sense. The relationship between verses and hadiths is so important in understanding the revelation that we would not be mistaken if we express this with an analogy that the two elements are connected to each other like flesh and nails. It is obvious that separating them from each other will lead anyone who is trying to understand the revelation to different channels.¹ Holy book without a Prophet is like a boat without an oarsman. No matter how hard they try in this sea of life, they can't get where they want to go. A prophet without a book is like a guide without light. In these situations, when people want to reach Allah (swt), they start to worship the guide that leads them by summoning them God.

The Hadith/Sunnah, which has a vital place in understanding the real meaning of the text, will ensure to understand the orders of the Qur'an in its own context and by seeing its background.² Of course, the *Mushaf* as a text can have more than one meaning. Because the subjective character of the activity of understanding and interpretation necessarily composes this result. May be a word does not have a single and final interpretation, but it should not be forgotten that it does not have an endless and unlimited interpretation. At this point, hadith and sunnah prevent endless/unlimited interpretation and become one of the basic parameters of understanding the revelation.

For example; when the hadith/sunnah is not taken into account as a source, the command in the verse "Cut off the hand of a man or woman when stealing",³ which is about cutting off the hand of a thief, can be interpreted as absolute.

However, when the verse is evaluated in the light of the hadiths, it will be possible to understand the elements of theft crime under conditions such as that the stolen property is under protection and in the amount of nisab, that the stolen property is not of the type that spoils quickly, that the theft does not occur in the year of famine, and also in the light of the hadith "Avoid punishments with doubts".⁴ Such a difference in meaning clearly shows us how vital the hadiths are in understanding the revelation.

¹ See: Yavuz Ünal. *Hadis Geleneğinde Metin Bilinci* (Samsun: Etüt Yayınları, 2008), 13-38.

² Fazlurrahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: 1982), 18-19.

³ al-Ma'idah 5/38.

⁴ Tirmidhī, Hudud, 2; Abū Dāwūd, Salat, 114; Ibn Mājah, Hudud, 5.

The Effect of Differences in Perception of Hadith on Understanding the Verses

At this point, where we point out the position of hadiths in understanding the Qur'an, we are faced with the problem of understanding the hadiths themselves. While reaching the correct understanding of the revelation in the light of the sunnah, the need for correct interpretation in understanding the Sunnah/Hadith makes itself felt. A religious understanding that will be built on misunderstandings, on the other hand, will inevitably shift to different non-religious interpretations that religion does not deem appropriate, since it cannot protect its own internal integrity.

For example, according to the hadith coming from Anas (ra.) the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) would turn his face to us before he started the prayer, without saying takbeer, and say: *“Straighten and tighten your rows because I see you behind me”*.⁵ “Seeing” is used to express that he is aware of the broken rows in the back while leading the prayer in the narration. However we witness in our sources that it is interpreted as that *he has one eye behind him and that even the dress cannot cover him, so he constantly sees his back*.⁶

Considering this type of literal approaches to the text, Mohammed al-Ghazali (d.1996) calls attention to the understanding/interpretation problem of the hadith narrations with these words:

Muslims did not suffer from fabricated hadiths as much as they suffered from misunderstood or misused hadiths. This situation has reached such a level that those who look at all hadiths with suspicion and wish Muslims to get rid of these hadith narrations have emerged.⁷

After these statements, which once again reveal the importance of correct interpretation, we would like to discuss how the concepts of (nafs) and (minha) in the 1st verse of Surat an-Nisa, which is the subject of our study, are interpreted in the light of the relevant hadith narrations.

The Reflections of the 1st Verse of Surat an-Nisa in the Translations of Qur'an

In our study, we will focus on understanding the expression “... الَّذِي لَدَيْهِ...” in the 1st verse of Surat an-Nisa. These expressions in the verse are understood in some translations as “The

⁵ Nasā'ī, al-Imamah 2, 28; Hākim al-Nīsābūrī, *al-Mustadrak Ala al-Sahihayn* (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ilmīyah, 1990), 2/671.

⁶ İbn Hajar, Ahmed b. Ali el-Askalani, *Fath al-Bari Şerh Sahih al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: n.d.), 1/514.

⁷ Mohammed al-Ghazali, *Fıkhu's Sire*, trc: Resul Tosun (Istanbul: Risale Yayınları, 1987), 43.

creation of Adam and then Eve’s creation from Adam” while in some other translations it is understood that “Adam and Eve was created from the same essence”

This verse, which is the subject of our research, has been translated as follows in some of the translations:

... who created you from a single soul and created his mate from him...⁸

... who created you from a single soul and created his mate from him...⁹

... who created you from a single person, and from him He created his mate...¹⁰

...who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)]...,¹¹

... who has created you from a single soul. From it He created your spouse...¹²

... who created you from a single cell, and from it created its mate...¹³

... who created you from a single soul. He created its mate from it...¹⁴

... who created you from a single being and out of it created its mate...¹⁵

... who created you from a single soul and from it created its spouse...¹⁶

... who created you from one soul and created from it its mate...¹⁷

... who has created you out of one living entity, and out of it created its mate...¹⁸

... who created you from a single soul and from it He created its mate...¹⁹

As can be seen above, the point where the translation of the verses differ is the diversity of opinion on how to understand the concept of “*nafs*” and accordingly, how to interpret the expression “*minha*”.

The main reason behind this variety of understandings in the translations where we see that “*nafs*” is interpreted as “single person”, “single soul” or “living entity”, “single cell”, “single being” is the opinions on the creation of a first woman which could be change according to the meaning

⁸ Muhammed Hamdi Yazır, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

⁹ Kur’an Yolu (Publications of the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey) , an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹⁰ Mubarakpuri, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹¹ Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali, Muhammad Muhsin Khan, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹² Sarwar, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹³ Ahmed Ali, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹⁴ Wahiduddin Khan, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹⁵ Maududi, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹⁶ Ahmed Raza Khan, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹⁷ Maulawi Sher ‘Ali, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹⁸ Muhammad Asad, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

¹⁹ Mustafa Khattab, an-Nisā’ 4/1.

given to the “*nafs*”. If “*nafs*” is translated as a “*single person*”, it will be perceived as Adam and it will be revealed that his wife was created “from him”/”*minha*”. If it is translated as a “*living entity*” or “*single cell*” then it will be understood that Adam and Eve were created separately from common source. The differentiation of opinion on this issue in the translations was also reflected in the tafsir studies and very different opinions emerged about the understanding of the verse.

Explanation of the Related Verse in Tafsir Sources

When we examine our classical and modern tafsir sources, we witness two different approaches in understanding the verse, as in the translation studies. Investigating the tafsir sources of al-Tabari (d.310/923),²⁰ al-Qurtubi (d.649/1252),²¹ al-Nasafi (d.537/1142),²² Fakhraddin al-Razi (d. 606/1209)²³ we see that this difference in meaning on the verses is based on the hadith narrations.

While explaining the first verse of the Surah An-Nisa(النساء) in the aforementioned exegesis studies, although there is no clear statement in the verse, the word “*nafs*” is used as “*Adam*”, and based on the narrations on the subject, the expression “*minha*” is also referred to as “*Adam's rib bone*”.

This approach also shows itself in the tafsir of one of the leading Turkish scholars of the twentieth century, Muhammed Hamdi Yazır (d.1942). That is to say, Yazır uses the following expressions while explaining the verse that is the subject of our study:

There is consensus that the purpose of this person is Adam and what is meant by his wife is Eve. Adam “Surely, Allah chose Adam and made him superior” (Ali ‘Imran, 3/33). And as it can be understood from the verses “Allah created Adam from soil.

²⁰ Tabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qurān* (Beirut: Dar al-Marife, 1972), II. edition, 4/150. “O people, fear your Lord by keeping His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. He created you from one soul, Adam. He created his wife, Eve, from one of his ribs.”

²¹ Qurtubī, Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad, *al-jāmi‘ li-ahkām al-Qur‘ān* (Cairo: Dar al-Kütüb al-Arabi, 1967), 5/2. “...here Adam and Eve is implied. Mujahid says that Eve was created from Adam’s lowest rib. It is commanded in the hadith: “Woman was created from a crooked rib.”

²² Nasafī, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Aḥmad, *Madārik al-tanzīl wa-ḥaqā’iq al-ta’wīl* (Dimashk: Dār al-Kalim at-Ṭayyib, 2005), I-III, 1/326. “Here is one soul that has produced you, multiplied and branched out from a single soul, whose characteristics are as follows: This feature is that God created him from the earth, and He created his wife Eve from one of his ribs.”

²³ Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, trz., yy., 1/453-454. “Narrated by Ibn Abbas and Ibn Mas’ud; God put him in a state of sleep and took one of his left ribs and replaced it with flesh, and from that bone he created Eve.”

Then He said to him, ‘Be’ and he became” (Ali ‘Imran, 3/59). Eve was created by separating from Adam himself. This meaning is conveyed in the hadiths as “Eve was created from one of Adam’s ribs”, which means a split. And this meaning is the basis of the relationship of accompaniment.²⁴

Also, when we look at Wahbah al-Zuhayli’s tafsir, we witness a similar approach:

According to the opinion of the majority of scholars, a single soul means Adam, the father of humanity, and Eve is meant by his wife. Eve, was created from Adam’s left rib while he was asleep. When Adam woke up and saw Eve, they liked her and felt mutual affinity for each other. The proof for this is the sound hadith in Bukhari and Muslim.²⁵

These statements show us the effectiveness of the perception of the hadith narration on the interpretation of the verse.

Commentators who do not perceive the narrations literally, on the other hand, accepted that the narrations expressing the creation from the rib bone have a figurative meaning²⁶, and accordingly, they evaluated the concept of “soul” as the “common essence from which Adam and Eve were created”.²⁷

As an example of this approach, we can cite the translation-tafsir study named *Kur’an Yolu* published by the Presidency of Religious Affairs of Turkey. In this study, the verse about the subject is explained as follows:

In the verse, first it is said, “He created you from a single soul”, and then it is commanded “who created a mate out of him”. Since each human has a father and mother, and each individual is created within the framework of the laws of reproduction, the word “creator from the nafs/soul, from it” is not used as “from a part of it” (for example, from his rib) but “from its essence, from its similar origin and root (here according to the expression, it should be understood as “creator from the nafs/soul”).²⁸

As can be seen above, we witness two different approaches to understand the verse in tafsir studies. The commentators, who interpret

²⁴ Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır, *Hak Dini Kur’an Dili* (Istanbul: Eser Neşriyat, 1979), 2/1273-1274.

²⁵ Zuhaylî, Wahbah Mustafâ, *al-Tafsîr al-munîr: fî al-‘aqîdah wa-al-shar‘ah wa-al-manhaj* (Istanbul: Bilimevi Basın Yayın, 2005), 2/469.

²⁶ For figurative meaning in hadith narrations see: Athman Hajara Amina. “The Use Of Figurative Language In The Hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh.) In The Book Paradise of the Pious By Imam An-Nawawi”, (unpublished thesis), (Nairobi: The University Of Nairobi, Department of Linguistics And Languages, July, 2015), 46-77.

²⁷ See for instance: Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur’an* (Gibraltar: Dar-al-Andalus, 1993), 100.

²⁸ Kuran Yolu Türkçe Meal ve Tefsir, Komisyon (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları) (I-V), 2007, 2/11.

“*nafs*” as a person, prove this with hadith narrations stating that Eve was created from Adam’s rib, and in the light of these narrations, they accept the reference of the word “*minha*” in the verse to Adam (rib bone). Here, we see how clearly the hadith narrations about the creation of Eve have an impact on understanding the verse. This situation leads us to examine the aforementioned narrations and to understand the purpose of the Prophet’s (pbuh.) words. In this way, we will examine how and with which variants, the narrations which are the subject of our research take place in the sources of *al-Kutub al-Tis’ah*.

The Way the Narrations Take Place in the Sources of *al-Kutub al-Tis’ah*

There are two different versions of the narrations that are the subject of our study in the sources of *Kutub al-Tis’ah*.²⁹ The first of these is the version of “a woman is like a rib... (إنما المرأة كالضلع)”, which is included in the hadith sources with the following two texts:

- **A woman is like a rib.** *If you try to straighten it, you will break it. If you want to take advantage of it, you can use it even though it is curved.*³⁰
- **A woman can’t act uniformly towards you. Because it’s like a rib.** *If you try to straighten it, you will break it. If you leave it alone, you will benefit from it as it is crooked.*³¹

The second version of the narration is that “the woman was created from the rib... (فإن المرأة خُلِقَتْ مِنْ ضِلْعٍ)” and “they were created from the ribs... (فإنهن خلقن من ضلع)”. These texts are quoted in the sources of *Kutub al-Tis’ah* with the following texts:

- **Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should not harm his neighbor and advise each other about women. Because they were created from ribs.** *The most curved part of the rib bone is its tip. If you try to straighten it, you’ll break it. If you leave it alone, it will continue to curve (you will benefit from it like that) Therefore, you advise each other about women.*³²
- **The woman was created from the rib bone.** *It doesn’t justify against you in one direction. If you want to take advantage of it, you can use it*

²⁹ See: Cemal Ağırman, *İlgili Rivayetler Bağlamında Yeni Bir Yaklaşım Kadının Yarattığı* (İstanbul: Rağbet Yayınları, 2001); Hüseyin Akgün, “Kadının Kaburga Kemiginden Yarattılması Meselesi” *Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi* V.19/2, (2019), 323-338.

³⁰ Bukhārī, Nikaah, 79; Müslim, Rada, 65; Tirmidhī, Talak, 12; Darimi, Nikaah, 35; Ahmad b. Hanbal, *al- Musnad*, II/428; Ahmad b. Hanbal, *al- Musnad*, V/164; Ahmad b. Hanbal, *al- Musnad*, VI/279; Ahmad b. Hanbal, *al- Musnad*, V/150-151;

³¹ Ahmad b. Hanbal, *al- Musnad*, II/449; Ahmad b. Hanbal, *al- Musnad*, II/530;

³² Bukhārī, Nikaah, 80; Müslim, Rada, 60; Bukhārī, Enbiya, 1; Nasā’ī, 5/364 (No. 9152);

*even though it is curved. If you try to straighten it, you'll break it. His breakup is also his divorce.*³³

- **The woman was created from the rib bone.** If you try to straighten it, you will break it. Treat her well. Because there are aspects that can be used sufficiently together with curvature in it.³⁴

Evaluation of Hadith Narrations

As can be seen above, the narrations about the creation of the woman which reach us via *Kutub al-Tis'ah* in 20 varied tariqs were transmitted by 4 different companions, namely Abu Hurayra (r.a.), Abu Zar (r.a.), Samura ibn Jundab (r.a.) and Aisha (r.a.). The narrations that are the subject of our study are basically divided into two groups, when a literal classification is made among themselves, the narrations with the phrase “*Woman is like a rib bone*”, which refers to the kindness of women, and the narrations with the statement “*Woman was created from the rib bone*”, which relates the creation of women with the rib bone. At this point where we see that both versions are reported with a close number of narrations in the *Kutub al-Tis'ah* sources (11 different versions of narrations with analogy version and 9 different versions of narrations with creation versions), we first feel the need to deal with the situation of the narrations in terms of their *isnad*. In this sense, although we see that the narrations are accepted as authentic in our classical sources, it is a scientific necessity to deal with each tariq separately and to make the necessary examination about the attributions of the narrations.

Although it is clear at first glance that the expression “*Woman is like a rib*”, which is one of the two versions of the narrations, contains analogies,³⁵ the expression “*Woman was created from a rib*” has become widespread both in scientific works and among the public, as can be seen in the above-mentioned tafsir sources. However, when we examine Prophet’s (pbuh.) use of the aforementioned expression in the narration, we understood that not with the aim of giving information about the creation of woman, but when he was giving advice on inter-family relations, after talking about the right of neighbours and expressing the good treatment of them, concluded his sentence with an expression which contains “analogy” that we all use in our daily life. That is to say, the context of the narration itself clearly reveals this:

Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should not harm his neighbor. Also, give good advice to each other about women.

³³ Müslim, Rada, 59; Ahmad b. Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, II/498;

³⁴ Darimi, Nikaah, 35; Ahmad b. Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, V/8; Nasā’ī, 5/364 (No. 9140).

³⁵ For analogies in the hadith narrations see: Sa’d Abdürrahim Ahmed, *et-Teşbih fi'l-hadisî n-nebeviyyi 'ş-şerîf* (Amman: Daru Gayda' li'n-Neşr, 2011).

Because they were created from ribs. The most curved part of the rib bone is its tip. If you try to straighten it, you'll break it. If you leave it on its own, you will benefit from it like that. Therefore, you give good advise each other about women.³⁶

In the narration, we see that the expression about creation takes place as a description of women's sensitivity and delicacy among the advices for believers. In such a situation, it leads to the conclusion that the Prophet (pbuh) did not intend to give an information about the creation of women here.

Of course, Allah the Almighty is able to create every being according to different rules. How the creation of Adam from mud and earth³⁷ doesn't make him dirty, bad etc. with reference to mud and earth, the creation of a woman from anything will not bring her a lowness. In the end, what will determine the value of a person is whether he acts with the consciousness of servitude (*al-ubudiyah*) to Allah (swt.) or not.³⁸

But we regret to see that this narration, which is literally in the minds, leads people to a very serious mental void. When we examine how the narration is understood literally, we witness that the woman is accepted as a creature of a lower degree than man. Namely; during our research when we asked ourselves questions such as: Was this narration used as a reference elsewhere in classical sources of Islam? If so, how was it perceived? etc. We encountered very different explanations based on the literal perception of the narration.

To put it with an example, during the explanation of the narration that a boy's urine and a girl's urine are different in terms of cleanliness, that it is enough to sprinkle one with water, while the other should be washed -which is in *Sunan Ibn Majah*-. what Imam Shafī says as the reason for this is so conspicuous:

Because a boy child's urine is made of water and mud but the girl child's urine is flesh and blood! When Allah created Adam, Eve was created from his short rib. For this reason, the boy's urine was formed from water and mud. The urine of the girl is made of flesh and blood.³⁹

These statements shows what kind of interpretations can be reached by the literal perception of the hadith narration openly.

Moreover, Haydar Hatipoğlu, who translated and commented on *Sunan Ibn Majah* (d.273/886), explained the same chapter, while following the statements of *Imam Shafii*, he completes his explanation on chapter by

³⁶ Bukhārī, Nikaah, 80.

³⁷ as-Sajdah 32/7; ar-Rahmān 55/14; Hūd 11/61; Tā' Hā' 20/55; ar-Rūm 30/20.

³⁸ al-Ḥujurāt 49/13.

³⁹ Ibn Mājah, Tahāra, 77-525.

quoting the phrase “Human nature does not detest a boy, but hates a girl”⁴⁰ by citing *Khattab es-Subki*’s (d.1352/1933) book titled “*al-Manhal*”. At this point, where we see that the perception of the hadith narration forms the minds and causes people to make very different interpretations, in determining the real meaning of the narration, we have once again feel how important is the understanding of the text with its context.

Ultimately, at this point, we have witnessed that the narrations that are the subject of our study do not have any problems in terms of authenticity and we come to the conclusion that the narrations containing the expression of creation also have the meaning of analogy in their own context. For this reason, it turns out that interpreting the 1st verse of Surat an-Nisa by referring to the hadiths as that Eve was created from Adam’s rib would not be a sound interpretation. Whereas, it is more obvious that it is not possible to reach interpretations that degrade the position of woman based on these narrations. It is also a fact that from what and how a woman or man is created is not important in terms of servitude and responsibility.

Conclusion

As the religion of Islam began to spread to large geographies, the need to understand the revelation, which is the basic source of religion, brought with it the need for the interpretation/tafsir of the Qur’an. Since understanding the revelation cannot be thought independently from understanding the Hadith narrations, transmitted from the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), -who is a living commentator of Qur’an- have been the main source of *tafsir* sources. In particular, the narrations regarding the reasons for the revelation (asbâb-i nuzûl) or the explanations of the Prophet about the revelation have been a source for the commentators in understanding and explaining the verses.

The hadiths, which have a vital place in understanding the revelation, will ensure that the orders of the Qur’an are fully understood in their own context and by seeing its background will prevent the risk of encountering unlimited interpretations of the verses and ensure that the revelation is understood within its own meaning.

At this point, the hadiths, with their explanatory functions, accompany the acceptance that there is no single and final interpretation of a word, but that it cannot have an endless and unlimited interpretation.

However, as we see in our study that the words and actions of the Messenger of Allah (pbuh), serve as a reference in understanding the verses and even directly affect it. Therefore understanding, comprehension and interpretation of the hadith narrations directly affect the meaning and tafsir of the Quranic verses. For this reason Muslims must give more attention

⁴⁰ Haydar Hatiboğlu, *Sünen-i Ibn Mace Tercemesi ve Şerhi* (İstanbul: Kahraman Yayınları, 1982), 2/172.

to the understanding/misunderstanding or interpretation/misinterpretation problem of hadith texts. Otherwise, Shari's purpose can not be understood and furthermore some interpretations/understandings of revelation can be far from this purpose.

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