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ARAŞTIRMA MAKALESİ/RESEARCH ARTICLE
ON THE PROTECTION OF THE QUR'ÂN
-in the Context of Verse 9 of Sūrat al-Ĥijr-

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Abstract

Divine messages, which are guides and directives for humanity, have been tried to be understood and interpreted from the moment they were sent, but due to human weaknesses, issues and problems, the revelations called 'books' have not been given due attention. Subsequently, the newest, the latest, the most solid and the most definitive source of revelation was sent instead of the Divine books that were distorted or corrupted. The most perfect of this chain of revelation, which has essentially the same content, assignment, mission and vision, and which confirms, validates and complements each other, is the Holy Qur'ân. This divine word, according to the Creator Himself, will be preserved by Himself. Whether this preservation is in the physical dimension or in the meaning has been a matter of academic debate among scholars. Verse 9 of Sūrat al-Ĥijr is at the center of these debates. In our study, we have endeavored to investigate this verse in question within its context with regard to the interpretations of two commentators having different approaches. According to the data we have obtained, the Divine word is free from both human negative endeavors and the interventions of superhuman beings. It will be preserved both physically and semantically by its Creator forever and it will continue to be the only, the most unique and the most accurate source for humanity.

Keywords: Tafsīr, the Qur'ân, Verse 9 of Sūrat al-Ĥijr, the Protection of the Qur'ân, al-Ṭabarī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.

ON THE PROTECTION OF THE QUR'ÂN
-in the Context of Verse 9 of Sûrat al-Ĥijr-

KUR'ÂN'IN KORUNMASI ÜZERİNE

-Hicr Sûresi'nin 9. Âyeti Bağlamında-

Öz

İnsanlık adına rehber ve yönlendirici konumunda olan ilahi mesajlar gönderildiği andan itibaren anlaşılmaya ve yorumlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Ancak beşerî zaafılar, sorunlar ve problemler nedeniyle 'kitap' adı verilen vahiylerle gereği gibi özen gösterilmemiştir. Akabinde tahrif edilen yahut bozulan ilahi kitaplar yerine en yeni, en son, en sağlam ve en kesin bir vahiy kaynağı gönderilmiştir. Temelde aynı içerik, görev, misyon ve vizyona sahip olan, birbirini onaylayan, doğrulayan ve tamamlayan bu vahiy zincirinin en mükemmeli Kur'ân-ı Kerîm'dir. Bu ilahi söz, bizzat Yaratıcı'nın ifadelerine göre Kendisi tarafından korunacaktır. Bu korunma meselesinin fiziksel boyutta mı yoksa anlama dair mi olduğu ise müfessirlerce akademik alanda tartışma konusu olmuştur. Hicr Sûresi'nin 9. âyeti ise bu tartışmaların merkezinde yer almaktadır. Çalışmamızda söz konusu âyeti, kendi bağlamı içerisinde iki farklı yaklaşıma sahip müfessirin yorumlarına göre araştırmaya gayret ettik. Ulaştığımız verilere göre, ilahi söz hem insana dair olumsuz çabalardan hem de insanüstü varlıkların müdahalelerinden uzaktır. Sonsuza dek, onu Yaratan tarafından hem fiziksel hem de anlamsal açıdan korunacak ve insanlık için tek, en eşsiz ve en doğru kaynak olma vasfını taşımaya devam edecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tefsir, Kur'ân, Hicr Sûresi 9. Âyet, Kur'ân'ın Korunması, Taberî, Fahreddin er-Râzî.

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Introduction

Throughout history, God has sent revelations to ensure that people are happy, healthy, successful and peaceful in this world, to protect people from false beliefs, and to inform them of the principles of righteous and virtuous living. These messages, which are in the nature of guides, have been tried to be read, understood, interpreted and explained from the moment they were sent, but due to human weaknesses. So, the revelations called books were not given due attention and a new book or source of revelation was sent instead of the falsified books. There is no doubt that the Holy Qur'ân is the last and the most perfect of the chain of revelations, which have essentially the same content and mission, and which confirm and complement each other.

The Qur'ân is a divine guide that gives life, meaning and guidance to man, life and the universe.¹ Questions such as how the Qur'ân, the only holy book that has preserved its originality since its revelation, has survived to the present day, what is the reason for this, and what distinguishes it from other holy books, have generally resulted in a clear answer of "the Divine protection", and this idea has been linked to verse 9 of Sûrat al-Ĥijr, which constitutes the main theme of our study. If this answer alone is thought to be sufficient, then the various measures taken by the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) and his followers to preserve and disseminate the revelation, such as *ḥıfz*, *muqābala*, *kitābat*, would be ignored. The reason for our study is the fact that the verse in question -even with good

¹ Ahmet Nedim Serinsu, *Kur'an Nedir?* (İstanbul: Şule Yayınları, 2012), 17.

intentions- has been taken out of its context and turned into basic evidence in defense of this idea.

In our study, in order to contribute to the correct understanding of this product of revelation and its context, we consulted the commentaries of Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd el-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī al-Baghdādī and Abū ‘Abdillāh (Abū al-Faḍl) Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Ḥusayn ar-Rāzī at-Ṭabaristānī, two commentators from two different cultures, periods, times, interpretations, and conditions, who, in our opinion, tried to reach a more solid understanding than other sources of exegesis. We examined their interpretations of verse 9 of Sūrat al-Ḥijr. Then, we tried to evaluate the verse in question together with the verses that precede and follow it in order to better see the context and connection between the verses.

Regardless of the views of the commentators in our study, questions have occupied our minds such as:

“From whom and how is the Qur’ān protected?”

“If the Qur’ān can be protected as a revelation, what is the reason why other revelations are not protected?”

We have discussed the verse in question within the framework of these questions in the background.

The fact that the Qur’ānic revelation reached the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) in an unadulterated and reliable manner and has survived to the present day by preserving its originality since its revelation has showed the importance of its preservation. As is known, the Qur’ān, like other revealed books, is the only revealed book that has not been affected by the structure that has been formed around it throughout its history. In this respect, the Qur’ān is the only measure of value that can be used to evaluate both other books and religions. The validity of accepting the Qur’ān as a measure of value here lies in the fact that the Torah, the Gospel and the Qur’ān came from the same source, and that the Qur’ān remains unchanged while the first two have changed.²

In addition to the Divine will and power, there are also elements such as the angel of revelation and the Prophet in the preservation of the Qur’ān. The angel Gabriel (*Jibrīl* or *Jibrāʾīl*, the angel of revelation, had played a major role in ensuring that the revelation had come unchanged during the revelation. In response to the claims and accusations of the polytheists that the Qur’ānic revelation was sent down by the devil or jinn, Allāh Almighty has emphasized in the following verses that the revelation was sent down through the angel of revelation under divine protection:

² Mehmet Paçacı, “Kur’an-ı Kerim Işığında Vahiy Geleneğine Kitab-ı Mukaddes Bağlamında Bir Bakış”, *İslami Araştırmalar* 5/3 (Temmuz 1991), 175.

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“Say, ‘The Holy Spirit has sent it down in clear truth and unshakable righteousness, to strengthen those who believe, and as a guidance and glad tidings to those who submit to Allāh.’”³

“The devils did not bring it down because it exceeds their strength. Because the devils were absolutely prevented from listening to it.”⁴

“A trustworthy spirit Gabriel (Jibrīl or Jibrāʾīl) has sent it down into your heart that you may be of the warners.”⁵

The prophet, who is an important element in the protection of revelation, has the responsibility of communicating the revelation that has come to him, and the Qur'ānic statement about this duty is as follows: “(Prophets) are such that they convey what Allāh has sent, and they fear Allāh and fear none but Him, and Allāh is sufficient as a recompenser (for those who do not listen).”⁶

In addition to the importance of the angel of revelation and the prophet during the revelation, the contribution of human measures after the revelation has a very valuable place in the preservation and dissemination of the revelation. Measures such as *qirāʾāt*, *ḥifz*, *muqābala*, *kitābat*, which are manifestations of the interest and reverence shown to the Divine word, have ensured that the revelation has survived to the present day. The Qur'ān is the only Divine revelation that has been preserved in terms of both its letter and meaning, and the preservation measures for the Qur'ān's letter can be categorized under the following headings:

Protection based on reading-pronunciation (*qirāʾāt*)

Protection based on memory (*ḥifz*)

Protection based on writing (*kitābat*)

Protection based on transmission (*tablīgh*)

Protection based on control (protection to ensure reading, memorization, teaching the Qur'ān correctly)⁷

Thanks to the Prophetic measures, the precautions taken by the Companions and post-Companion Islāmic societies, the spiritual protection realized through the Qur'ānic sciences, as well as the efforts to preserve the wording and meaning, the Divine revelation was not subjected to distortion and alteration.

³ *Kur'ān-ı Kerim Meālî*. trans. Halil Altuntaş-Muzaffer Şahin (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 2009), Sūrat al-Naḥl 16/102.

⁴ Sūrat al-Shu'arā' 26/210-212.

⁵ Sūrat al-Shu'arā' 26/221-223.

⁶ Sūrat al-Aḥzāb 33/39.

⁷ Hasan Elik, *Kur'an'ın Korunmuşluğu Üzerine* (Istanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), 162-191.

Most of the commentators have considered the fact that the Qur'ān, unlike other Divine books, has been protected since its revelation only in the context of “the Divine assurance” and have taken this statement as evidence in Sūrat al-Ḥijr, verse 9: “*Verily, We have sent down the dhikr (the Qur'ān), and verily, We are its guardian.*” The commentators who hold this view have stated that the pronoun “*lahū*” in the verse refers to the Qur'ān, and therefore the Divine protection is only for the Qur'ān. While some commentators had understood this verse with an emphasis on literal protection, Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd el-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī al-Baghdādī, one of the commentators in the main theme of our study, had interpreted this protection as being protected by Allāh because it cannot be added to or diminished in its rulings, commands and prohibitions along with literal protection.

Abū al- Qāsim Maḥmūd b. 'Umar b. Muḥammad al-Kharizmī al-Zamakhsharī had also agreed with this view and said the following about the interpretation of the verse: “*Allāh left the other holy books in the hands of religious leaders such as the rabbāniyyūn and the aḥbār, but these books were distorted because of their disputes among themselves. The Qur'ān will be preserved by Allāh in all times, unlike the other heavenly books..*”⁸

Another commentator in our study, Abū 'Abdillāh (Abū al-Faḍl) Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. Ḥusayn at-Ṭabaristānī al-Rāzī, who has said that the Qur'ān has been preserved for all times with the Divine guarantee against any attempt to corrupt it, has stated the preservation of the Qur'ān and that this preservation is not the case for other books: “*It is the greatest miracle that the Qur'ān has been preserved inspite of many enemies, both unbelievers and Jews and Christians, who wanted to falsify and distort the Qur'ān. The fact that Allāh has foretold that He will protect it from all kinds of tampering and distortion, and that this protection has continued even after six centuries has passed, is both the greatest miracle and a prophecy of the unseen.*”⁹

Contrary to the majority, a minority of commentators, such as Muqātil b. Sulaymān and al-Farrā', have said that the pronoun “*lahū*” in the verse refers to the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), not to the Qur'ān, and they have interpreted that Allāh would protect the Prophet from devils, enemies, opponents, deceit and evil. Although some verses of the Qur'ān include the protection of the Prophet, such as this idea that Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd el-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī al-Baghdādī, has expressed in the phrase “... was told”, which he has used in the opinions that he had not found reasonable and had not preferred, we are of the opinion that the verse in question cannot be evaluated within this framework considering the context of the verse in question as a result of our study.

⁸ Ferruh Kahraman, “Hicr, 15/9. Âyeti ve Kur'ân'ın Manen Korunması Üzerine”, *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 2/36 (2012), 357-386.

⁹ Ebû Abdillāh (Ebü'l-Fazl) Fahrüddîn Muhammed b. Ömer b. Hüseyin er-Râzî et-Taberistânî, *Tefsîr-i Kebîr (Mefâtihu'l Ğayb)* (Ankara: Akçağ Yayınları, 1991), 19/121.

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1. Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/9 in the work of Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd el-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī al-Baghdādī named *Jāmi'u'l-bayān fi tafsīri'l-Qur'ān*

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

(Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/9)

The translation of verse 9 of Sūrat al-Ḥijr according to Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd el-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī al-Baghdādī:

*“Verily, We have sent down the dhikr (the Qur’ān), and verily, We are its guardian.”*¹⁰

Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd el-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī al-Baghdādī (d.310/923), in his tafsīr, has preferred an interpretation after first stating the views on the interpretation of the phrase *“Verily, We have sent down the dhikr (the Qur’ān), and verily, We are its guardian.”* He has stated that the preservation in the meaning of this saying is to protect the Qur’ān from the addition of superstitious words that are not part of it, or from the omission of obligations, punishments and rulings and he has said that the pronoun in the word *“lahū”* in the verse has referred to the Qur’ān, as most commentators have stated.¹¹

Discussing the views on the verse, al-Ṭabarī has given the different narrations as follows:

Ibn Abī Najīḥ narrated from Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. Mūsā b. al-Abbās Ibn Mujāhid al-Baghdādī al-‘Aṭashī, and from him after Shibl, that he said about the saying, *“Surely we are its guardians.”* he said, *“‘indānā: ours, belonging to us, with us.”*

It was narrated to us by Sa‘īd from Qatādah that he said about the saying, *“Verily, it is We who sent down the remembrance and it is for Us to protect it.”* *“In another verse, Sūrat Fuṣṣilat 41/42: “No falsehood can come to it...” Allāh sent down this Qur’ān and protected it. Iblīs cannot mix or add anything to it from falsehood, nor can he diminish anything from its truth. Allāh has protected the Qur’ān from this.”*¹²

It was narrated from Qatādah by Ma‘mar and from him by Muḥammad b. Sawr, as for the words, *“Its protection belongs to us...”* he said: *“Allāh has protected it (the Qur’ān) from Satan (Shayṭān) adding to it what is false and diminishing its truth.”* وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ for this expression, it has been said that the pronoun *“hū”* in this statement has referred to

¹⁰ Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd el-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī al-Baghdādī, *Jāmi'u'l-bayān fi tafsīri'l-Qur'ān*, ed. Ahmad b. Muḥammad Shākir (Beirut: Muassissatu al-Risāla, 2000); et-Ṭabarī, *Taberi Tefsiri* (Istanbul: Hisar Yayınevi, 1996), 5/140.

¹¹ al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi'u'l-bayān fi tafsīri'l-Qur'ān*, 17/68.

¹² al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi'u'l-bayān fi tafsīri'l-Qur'ān*, 17/68-70; Sūrat Fuṣṣilat 41/42: *“No falsehood can come to it, neither before it nor after it. It has been sent down from Allāh, the Exalted, the All-Wise, the All-Praised.”*

the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). In this way it means: “We protected Muḥammad from his enemies who wanted evil for him.”¹³

Al-Ṭabarī has stated that Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/9 has been revealed in response to the polytheists who mocked the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) mentioned in the sixth verse of the same chapter. The verse in question reads as follows: “*The polytheists said to the Prophet: ‘O! One on whom was revealed a Book of admonition, surely you are mad.’*”¹⁴ Based on this answer, the meaning is as follows: “O! disbelievers, it is We who have sent down that admonishing Book, and it is We who will preserve it as it is. Nothing can be added to it, nor can anything be taken away from it. It cannot be changed.”

Al-Ṭabarī has explained this verse in a binary classification, i.e., protection in words and meaning, and he has emphasized that the Qur’ān, being the word of Allāh, is a *miracle* in terms of its meaning and forms of expression. In addition, he has affirmed that the Qur’ān, which does not resemble any human word, cannot be interfered with by human hands, and if it is attempted, the situation will be immediately and clearly understood.

Finally, al-Ṭabarī has said that the Holy Qur’ān has been protected and it will be protected by a spiritual power and he has also mentioned human services and measures for the Divine word. In this commentary, he has mentioned the believers and ḥāfiẓ who are the servants of the Qur’ān and he has stated that if even a single word is misread, ḥāfiẓ on the other side of the world can detect and correct this error.

2. Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/9 in the work of Abū ‘Abdillāh (Abū al-Faḍl) Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Ḥusayn al-Rāzī at-Ṭabaristānī named *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb*

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴿٩﴾

(Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/9)

The translation of verse 9 of Sūrat al-Ḥijr according to Abū ‘Abdillāh (Abū al-Faḍl) Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Ḥusayn al-Rāzī at-Ṭabaristānī:

“It is We who sent down the Qur’ān and We are its guardians.”¹⁵

In his commentary, Abū ‘Abdillāh (Abū al-Faḍl) Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Umar b. Ḥusayn al-Rāzī at-Ṭabaristānī (d.606/1210) has discussed this verse in four issues. These issues are as follows:

¹³ al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘u’l-bayān fi tafsīri’l-Qur’ān*, 17/69.

¹⁴ et-Ṭaberī, *Taberī Tefsiri*, 5/139; Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/6.

¹⁵ er-Rāzī, *Tefsīr-i Kebīr (Mefātihu’l-Ġayb)*, 14/62.

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The first issue: The use of *the pattern of jami* about Allāh

The second issue: The pronoun refers to the Qur'ān

The third issue: The ways of preserving the Qur'ān

The fourth issue: A weak argument from a verse

In the first issue, al-Rāzī had said that the polytheists heard the Prophet Muḥammad's (PBUH) saying, "*Allāh had revealed to me the remembrance, the Qur'ān,*" so they had said to him, "*Oo, He to whom the remembrance (the Book) had been revealed,*" as mentioned in the seventh verse of Sūrat al-Ḥijr, and then Allāh had developed His speech with the verse in question. He had stated that although the use of *the pattern of jami* about Allāh in the verse "*We sent down the Qur'ān*" is plural, in the expression of glory, this pattern is like the words of the rulers, "*we did this, we said that*", which the rulers use when they do something or say something.¹⁶

In the second issue, al-Rāzī had evaluated what the pronoun refers to, why *the muṣḥaf* was collected despite the guarantee of protection, and whether *the bismelah* is a verse from *the sūrats* or not, and he had mentioned the different views on the issues. After mentioning the different views on the pronoun "*lahū*" in the verse, he said that the first view is the most preferable and more in line with the implication of the verse.

The different views on the pronoun mentioned in al-Rāzī's commentary of the Qur'ān are as follows:

First opinion: The pronoun "*lahū*" in the verse refers to "*dhikr*" and thus the verse means, "*We will preserve this dhikr, the Qur'ān, from falsification, excess and omission.*" Similar forms of this are the verse that mentions the Holy Qur'ān, "...so that no falsehood can come to it, neither before it nor after it." Sūrat al-Fuṣṣilat 41/42, "*If it were from anyone other than Allāh, they would surely have found in it many things that do not agree with each other.*" Sūrat al-Nisā' 4/82.

Second opinion: The pronoun in the verse refers to "the Prophet" and the meaning of the verse is as follows: "*We will surely protect Muḥammad.*" This is the view of al-Farrā' and al-Anbārī had expanded on it by saying: "*Since Allāh speaks of inzāl or revelation, and that which is revealed refers to the one to whom the revelation is revealed, it is good that this pronoun refers to him, because he has become something that is known. This is the case with the statement of Allāh Almighty, 'Surely, We revealed it on the night of Qadr' (Sūrat al-Qadr 97:1), because the pronoun*

¹⁶ al-Rāzī, Abū 'Abdillāh (Abū al-Faḍl) Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. Ḥusayn at-Ṭabaristānī. *Maḥāṭib al-Ghayb* (Beirut: Dār Ihyā at-Turāth al-'Arabi, 1420), 19/22,23,121.

“huwa” here refers to the Qur’ān, although it has not been mentioned before. Since it is known and famous, it is good to mention it with a pronoun. This is also the case here.”¹⁷

In the third issue, al-Rāzī had talked about the ways in which the Qur’ān was preserved, and he had explained the reason for raising this issue as the acceptance of the pronoun “lahū” in the verse as referring to the Qur’ān, and he had expressed different opinions on this issue. Some say that Allāh has preserved the Qur’ān by making it a miracle and a different word from the words of men, while others say that Allāh has preserved it from any human being having the power to say something similar to it. In another view, human efforts and services were emphasized, confirming that Allāh protected people from harming the Qur’ān by directing a community to learn and teach it -for preservation- and to spread it among people until the end of the time of responsibility. In another view, this preservation is meant to emphasize that the Divine word is unique, that no one in the world can change a letter or a point of the Qur’ān, and that any reading error, whether intentional or unintentional, can be recognized immediately.¹⁸ Al-Rāzī had stated that no book except the Qur’ān is completely preserved, and that error, *tashīf* (misspelling or misreading), alteration, and tampering enter other books, and he had described the Qur’ān’s preservation from all kinds of tampering -despite all the efforts of pagans, Jews, and Christians to corrupt and annul it- as a miracle and a message from the unseen.

Finally, in the fourth issue, al-Rāzī had evaluated a weak argument made by al-Qāḍī regarding the verse. Al-Qāḍī had used this verse as a proof for the falsity of the statements of Shī‘ī discussions that *“The Qur’ān has been tampered with excesses and deficiencies have entered it.”* He had said, *“If this were so, the Qur’ān would not have remained preserved.”* According to al-Rāzī, this argument is weak because it is wrong to prove something by itself. Al-Rāzī had argued that this statement of the Imamiyya perhaps meant to say, *“This verse is one of the redundancies added to the Qur’ān,”* and thus proving this purpose with this verse is like proving something by itself through a logical error, and as a result, this form of proof is wrong.¹⁹

3. Analyzing Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/9 Together with the Verses Before and After

“They said: “O Muḥammad, to whom the Qur’ān has been revealed! You are surely a madman!”²⁰

“If you were truthful, you should have brought us the angels.”²¹

“We send down the angels only with the truth. Then, they will not be given respite”²²

¹⁷ al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*, 19/122; er-Rāzī, *Tefsīr-i Kebīr (Mefātiḥu'l Ğayb)*, 14/64.

¹⁸ al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*, 19/123.

¹⁹ al-Rāzī, *Mafātiḥ al-Ghayb*, 19/124.

²⁰ Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/6.

²¹ Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/7.

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“And certainly! We sent messengers among the nations before you.”²²

When we analyze the verses 6, 7, 8 and 10 of Sūrat al-Ḥijr, we see that these verses are related to the issue of the preservation of the Qur'ān mentioned in verse 9. In fact, these verses are dominated by the polytheists' claims that the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) was one of the magicians who had contact with beings such as *jinn*s and devils, which was common at the time, and that the Qur'ān was a word that came to him from *jinn*s and devils. In other words, there is a denial of prophethood and the divinity of the Qur'ān. This verse, then, is a response to the statements and claims that prove that the Divine word did not come from *jinn*s and devils. Abū l-A'ḷā Mawḍūdī's interpretation of the verse has also supported this point:

“We sent down this dhikr. So, it is not our messenger whom you call mad, but your mocking accusation is against Us. You should also know that it is “Our dhikr” and that We protect it. Therefore, you cannot harm it in any way. Nor can your mockery, sarcasm and enmity diminish its value. No matter what you do against it, you cannot prevent it from developing. And no one will be able to change or corrupt it.”²⁴

However, Qatādah's explanation of the verse, which emphasizes the protection of the Qur'ān from *jinn*s and devils during its revelation, is also noteworthy. In his commentary, Qatādah has declared that the Qur'ān had been revealed by Allāh alone and that He had protected it from any addition or diminution by Satan (*Shayṭān*).

After the allegation of *majnūn*, Allāh had explained the doubts of the polytheists by mentioning their statement in the seventh verse, “If you were of the truthful, you should have brought us the angels.” The meaning and the aim of the polytheists' doubts were that if Muḥammad's prophethood was true, then the angels should have been sent down to prove the prophethood and to speak the truth. Similar to this is the statement in Sūrat al-An'ām 6/8 is: “They said, ‘Should not an angel have been sent to him? If We had sent an angel, surely the work would have been finished.’”

In response to the polytheists' request about the angels, Allāh had answered them in the verse 8 that the angels will descend only in the case of truth, or that they will not be given respite if the angels descend. Al-Rāzī had commented on this issue in his tafsīr, saying that the descent of the angels is only possible in the case of truth and benefit, and that Allāh knew from the attitude of the disbelievers that even if He sent down angels to them, they would persist in disbelief, and therefore He did not send down the angels in vain.

²² Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/8.

²³ Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/10.

²⁴ Ebū'l-A'ḷā el-Mevdūdī, *Tefhimu'l Kur'an (Kur'an'ın Anlamı ve Tefsiri)* (Istanbul: İnsan Yayınları, 1986), 2/531.

Finally, as a result of the polytheists' accusations and persistence in denying the prophethood and the Qur'ān, Allāh had revealed verse 9 of Sūrat al-Ḥijr, explaining that He had sent this word and reminder, the Qur'ān, and consoled the Prophet by stating that the previous prophets had also been denied by their nations. In the verses that follow, Allāh had stated that the polytheists' denial was a continuing bad habit of theirs, so he had should not been upset about it.

Evaluation and Conclusion

This study has examined verse 15/9 of Surat al-Ḥijr on the theme of the preservation of the Qur'ān and focused on the interpretations of Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd el-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī al-Baghdādī and Abū 'Abdillāh (Abū al-Faḍl) Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Umar b. Ḥusayn al-Rāzī at-Ṭabaristānī on the subject. In the first part of the study, the narrations and interpretations of al-Ṭabarī and al-Rāzī have been discussed, and in the second part, the relationship between the verse in question and the preceding and following verses has been evaluated in order to assess its context.

When the views of the commentators discussed in our study on the verse in question and the opinions of other scholars who provide supporting and evidential statements are analyzed within the framework of the context of the verse, the following conclusions and evaluations have been reached:

al-Ṭabarī has stated that Sūrat al-Ḥijr 15/9 was revealed in response to the polytheists who mocked the Prophet mentioned in the sixth verse of the same chapter. al-Ṭabarī has

said that the pronoun "lahū" in the word "lahū" in the verse has referred to the Qur'ān, as most commentators have stated by stating that the preservation in the meaning of this verse is to protect the Qur'ān from the addition of superstitious words that are not part of it or from the omission of obligations, punishments, and rulings. At the same time, he has considered the aforementioned verse in a dual classification, i.e. protection in terms of words and protection in terms of meaning and he has stated that the Qur'ān is a miracle by considering its meaning and forms of expression because it is the word of Allāh. He has also emphasized that the Qur'ān, which is in no way similar to any human word, cannot be interfered with by human hands, and if it is attempted to be interfered with, this situation will be understood immediately and clearly. The author has mentioned human services and measures for the Divine word in addition to the Divine protection by stating that the Holy Qur'ān is protected by a spiritual power.

Al-Rāzī, on the other hand, has discussed this verse in his commentary in four issues. These are the use of *the pattern of jami* about Allāh, the pronoun refers to the Qur'ān, the ways of preserving the Qur'ān, a weak argument from a verse. Regarding the use of *the pattern of jami* about Allāh, al-Rāzī said that although the "We" in the verse "We have sent down the Qur'ān" is plural, in the case of expressing greatness, this statement is like the

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words of rulers, the expressions used by rulers when they do something or say something. Regarding what the pronoun refers to, al-Rāzī has evaluated why *the muṣḥaf* was collected despite the guarantee of protection, and whether *the bismelah* is a verse from the chapters, and after mentioning the different views on the issues, he has emphasized that the first view is more in accordance with *zāhir* of the verse and that this is his preference. Regarding the preservation of the Qur'ān, al-Rāzī has mentioned different views such as the Qur'ān being sent as a miracle, its uniqueness, its being different from the words of people, the incapacity of people to say a word similar to it, the preservation of the Divine word by reading, spreading and teaching it through human services, and finally, he has stated that no book other than the Qur'ān is fully preserved and that errors, corrections, changes and distortions have entered other books. In another issue, the commentator has evaluated a weak argument made by al-Qāḍī. He has stated that he has found his argument wrong because he has proved something with itself.

When the context of verse 9 of Surat al-Ḥijr with other verses is evaluated, it is observed that the verse is directly related to the preceding and following verses.

The result we have reached has also provided an answer to the question “From whom and how is the Qur'ān protected?” which occupied our minds before we started our study.

The verses analyzed in the context are dominated by the claims of the polytheists that the Prophet was one of the well-known and widespread magicians who had contact with beings such as *jinns* and devils, and that the Qur'ān was therefore a word that came to him from *jinns* and devils.

As a result of the statements that seem to deny prophethood and the divinity of the Qur'ān, it is obvious that this verse had been sent as a statement to prove that the Divine word had not come from *jinns* and demons.

The fact that the Qur'ān is never the word of devils or *jinns*, which is mentioned in different places in the Qur'ān -Sūrat Fuṣṣilat 41/42, Sūrat al-Shu'arā' 26/210-212- has been understood to mean that the “protection” we have examined in our study is not the protection of the Qur'ān after its revelation and against the human beings, but the protection during its revelation. Contrary to what is known -that the Qur'ān is only divinely guaranteed for all times- the protection here has nothing to do with universal and eternal protection.

When the verses related to the preservation of the Divine word have been examined, it has become more clear that the preservation is either related to the Prophet, preservation from forgetfulness, confusion, etc., or preservation during the process in which the angel brings the revelation. The following verses are important for illustration on this point:

“We will make you read the Qur’ān and you will not forget it.”²⁵

“Tell those who are enemies of Gabriel (Jibrīl or Jibrā’īl): Jibrīl has sent down the Qur’ān into your heart by the permission of Allāh.”²⁶

“Allāh is witness to what He has sent down to you. For he (Jibrīl) sent it down with the knowledge of Allāh, and the angels are witnesses to it too. Allāh is sufficient as a witness.”²⁷

Another question before the beginning of our study, “If the Qur’ān can be protected as a revelation, what is the reason why other revelations are not protected?”, is that although it is a generally accepted view that the Qur’ān is under divine guarantee and protected, the issue of why this does not apply to other heavenly books has not been fully and in detail explained by the commentators we have examined. Al-Rāzī’s superficial mention of the Qur’ān’s glorification, its miracle, uniqueness, and inviolability in the statements evaluated in our study has given a small idea of the subject, but it has not been sufficient for the exegesis of this verse.

Except for the commentators who constitute the main theme of our study, commentators such as al-Zamakhsharī and al-Alūsī have stated that Allāh had not personally undertaken the task of protecting the other heavenly books, but He had given this responsibility to various clergymen (*Aḥbār, Ruhbān, Rabbāniyyūn*) and this had caused corruption, but since He Himself had undertaken the protection of the Qur’ān, there will be no corruption in it forever.

In our opinion, this view is not correct in terms of the acceptance of the Divine revelation. We do not find such a claim correct both because of the data we have reached as a result of our study on the preservation of the Qur’ān -the fact that the Qur’ān was protected by Allāh at the time of its revelation (not protected from people forever), and the duty of the society to undertake this task in the following periods- and the theory of the integrity of the Divine revelation. The fact that all the heavenly books share a common message, which complements and confirms rather than contradicts each other, and that there is only one heavenly book, the original of which has not been corrupted, makes this view too harsh.

Furthermore, the idea of discriminating against the messages, commands and words had been sent by Allāh, as if it were a duty to do so, is a fiction that cannot be placed in any position in the Islāmic religious consciousness. Such views, which supposedly emphasize the inviolability and uniqueness of the Qur’ān, intentionally or unintentionally deny the truthfulness and validity of previous books, even for that period.

²⁵ Sūrat al-A‘lā 87/6.

²⁶ Sūrat al-Baqara 2/97.

²⁷ Sūrat al-Nisā’4/166.

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The general impression formed in our opinion on this issue, which is linked to the answer to our other question and the result of our study, is as follows:

“The previous heavenly books, which were addressed to a specific time, place and society, are, like the Qur’ān, the product of the Divine revelation, the words of God Himself, and are divine texts that the Qur’ān approves of them. Indeed, the Qur’ān’s tone when referring to the other heavenly books is not exclusionary or denialist. Contrary to popular belief, the reason for the corruption of these texts is not God Himself, the lack of the Divine guarantee or the superior duty given to the clergy, but the lack of interest and effort given to the Divine text by society. That is, it is of a purely human nature, as is the role and importance of human services and measures, which is equivalent to the result in the preservation of the Qur’ān. In our opinion, this approach, which is completely far from the truth, such as ignoring the fact that the Qur’ān is protected from *jinn*s and demons -based on the false perception that it is always protected from the human beings- has no reality and validity.”

In conclusion, the reason for the corruption of other heavenly books is that the addressee society had not attached the necessary value to the texts of revelation and had not engaged in serious activities for their preservation. As a matter of fact, the interest and service of the Islāmic society in the Qur’ān has been invaluable in its preservation until today.

From the preservation of the Qur’ān by Allāh during its revelation, the Prophet’s measures such as *ḥifẓ*, *muqābala*, *kitābat*, the organization of the Qur’ān during the reign of Abū Bakr, the actions of the Companions who went to various lands to teach the Qur’ān as a result of the expansion of the borders of the Islāmic State during the reign of ‘Umar, the reproduction of the Qur’ān during the reign of ‘Uthmān and the formation of the science of *qirā’āt* as a result of the efforts to protect the recitation, and the efforts that followed. The formation of the science of *qiraat* as a result of the efforts to reproduce the Qur’ān and to protect the recitation during the reign of ‘Uthmān and the efforts that followed have showed the sensitivity of the Islāmic society regarding the Qur’ān and the fulfillment of the responsibility taken from the Prophet.

In brief, we agree with Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Jarīr b. Yazīd el-Āmulī al-Ṭabarī al-Baghdādī, who emphasizes that the Qur’ān will be protected by God’s power and human services and measures forever. As Muhsin Demirci points out: “*Thanks to the close connection of revelation with life, the generation that witnessed the revelation of the Qur’ān had given it due importance and made their best efforts both in recitation and exegesis. Since this lively activity had kept the Qur’ān constantly actual, there was never any concern among the Muslims during the Prophet’s lifetime that some passages of the Qur’ān would be forgotten, changed or mixed with words that were not the product of revelation. Since this interest has continued in the same manner after the Prophet, there has never been any suspicion of tampering with the Qur’ān in terms of wording and meaning in the minds of the Muslims in any period of history. In short, since*

its revelation, every believer has regarded the Qur'ān as a newly revealed the Divine book from Allāh and has taken it to heart and tried to organize his life according to its universal principles."²⁸

Etik Beyan: Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur. / It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.

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²⁸ Muhsin Demirci, *Tefsir Tarihi* (İstanbul: Marmara Üniversitesi Vakfı Yayınları, 2015), 20.

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-in the Context of Verse 9 of Sûrat al-Ĥijr-

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