



## Investigating Quranic Documentations on Justice of all Companions

TALASHAN F.<sup>1</sup>, AZARKAMAN E.<sup>2</sup>, ARZANESH P.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>M.A. of Quran and Hadith Sciences, Shiraz University

<sup>2</sup>Ph.D. student in New Word (Philosophy of Religion)

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**Abstract.** Most Sunnis believe that companions of the prophet (pbuh) without exception are all just and none of them can be accused of debauchery and sin. The necessity of such belief about the companions is that the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) have a religious immunity, because they should not be accused of debauchery no matter whatever they do. Sunnis have reasoned based on some of the verses of the Qur'an to prove their belief (justice of all companions). In this paper, we describe some of their Quranic documentations, then we investigate and criticize them.

**Keywords:** Quranic Documentations, Reasoning, Companions, Justice, Sunnis, Shia

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Most Sunni scholars after accepting and proving of the justice of all companions, consider their words valid and believe the accuracy of their quotations without citation investigation. They believe that the companions of the prophet (pbuh) acted based on their jurisprudence on several occasions, since all of them had the discretion ability due to accompanying the Prophet, and it's not unlikely that in some cases they made mistakes at their discretion, but never knowingly and intentionally committed sin and wrongdoing. So in the opinion of Sunnis all companions in addition to justice, had jurisprudence. Necessity of Sunnis belief about the companions is that the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) have a religious immunity, because they should not be accused of debauchery no matter whatever they do and no one has the right to have any objection to them, but everyone should try to explain and interpret their work and look upon their performance with an optimistic view and if they could not justify action of the companions they should be silent and ignore giving opinions. They quote a narrative of the Prophet Mohammad pbuh in this regard: The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said: "When it comes to talk about values stop it and when it comes to speak about my companions stop talking » (Mohib Al-Din Ahmad bin Abdollah al-Tabari, 1418 AH., Vol. 1, p. 22) and out of such narratives they conclude that all the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) are just. But Shia believe that although being the companion of the Prophet (pbuh) is a pride and we can't deny their vital services and sincere efforts and their obvious role in consolidation and stability of Islam and also we cannot ignore the implication and clear verses of Qur'an about complimenting and praising them, but all companions can't be at the same level by no means, and we can't attribute the virtue of justice and jurisprudence to all of them in an absolute and comprehensive way. Also the praise and definitions of Quran cannot be an excuse for their immunity from sin, especially the permanent and lifelong immunity. It is unreasonable that only meeting the Prophet, act as an elixir, and entitle a person to justice and jurisprudence, from the standpoint of wisdom it is not accepted that the prophet put the valuable medal of justice and jurisprudence on the neck of all those who have met him and have expressed Islam. Their number is more than thousands or even tens of thousands, it's hard to rationally believe the claim that the Prophet banned all people to question about thousands of people simply because they have met him and expressed Islam. It contradicts the teachings of Islam which frequently invites human to reasoning, thinking, and selection of best views and criticizing of words of others.

\*Corresponding author. Email address: Asma13910@gmail.com

(Nikzad, 2004, No. 28) In this paper, with a descriptive – analytical method, we describe some Quranic documentations of justice of companions of the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) from the perspective of Sunnis and criticize them.

### 1.1. Investigating Quranic Documentations on Justice of all Companions

To prove their belief (Justice of all the companions) Sunnis argue on quadruplet reasons: the book, tradition, wisdom and consensus. Here we mention only a few of Quranic evidences and then comment and review them.

The most famous verses which they have quoted includes:

## 2. SURAH NISA, 115

*“And whoever acts hostilely to the Messenger after that guidance has become manifest to him, and follows other than the way of the believers, We will turn him to that to which he has [himself] turned and make him enter hell; and it is an evil resort.”*

### 2.1. Sunnis Reasoning Based on Justice of Companions

- a. Zamakhshari says that this verse is a reason that the consensus, is an ultimatum and opposing it is not permitted, because God has brought those who “*follow other than the way of the believers*” together with “*whoever acts hostilely to the Messenger*” it means that the opposition to the Prophet (pbuh) and following the non-believer’s way is a condition and the punishment for this conditional sentence is “intense”. So opposition with the believers (consensus of believers) is not permitted. (Zamakhshari, 1407 AH, vol. 1, p. 565).
- b. Fakhr Razi says: Shafeie has reasoned on the validity of consensus from this verse, he states that following non-believers is forbidden, so it is necessary to follow their way. Fakhr Razi has reasoned from this verse the necessity of the infallibility of the Prophet (s), in the sense that if any sin is committed on behalf of the Prophet, then opposing him is not only permissible, but obligatory. Therefore, by virtue of the verse, his opposition is forbidden so he does not commit sin. He also suggests that its meaning is a religion other than God worshippers. (Fakhr Razi, 1420 AH, vol. 6, pp. 43 and 46).
- c. Shokani believes that “*follow other than the way of the believers*” means to behave other than their way. The way of believers is adherence to Islam and its precepts, Then the meaning of “*other than the way of the believers*” is conversion from Islam to other religions. (Shokani, 1414 AH, vol. 1, p. 594).
- d. Tabari says: anyone who opposes with Mohammad and separates himself with hostility and follow non-believers has disbelieved in God of course, after he identified the way of guidance and knew that he is the Messenger of Allah, for disbelief in Allah and his Messenger is other than the way of the believers. (Tabari, 1412 AH, vol. 5, p. 178).
- e. Abouhayan Andelosi with respect to the verse states that, the way of believers, is that righteous religion that believers are on its way. (Abouhayan, 1420 AH, vol. 4, p. 67).

### 2.2. Review

- a. Meaning of the “*سبيل*” in the verse is adherence to righteous religion, faith and obedience to the Prophet (pbuh), and the meaning of “*غير سبيل*”, is idolatry and other religions. And by believers, it refers to all Muslim nations that has nothing to the justice of the companions. And by believers in the verse it does not refer to the "companions".
- b. As Abouhayan expressed, opposing with the Prophet and following other ways than the believers, does not conflict but are associated with each other and are mentioned for emphasis and the promise for punishment is for one thing.

- c. Assuming the correctness of Sunnis reasoning, about this verse it can be said that if all the companions have done something, they can't be accused of debauchery act and count that as a deviant thing, but it can't be implied from the verse that each companion is protected of debauchery and sin.
- d. According to Sunni sources revelation of the verse is about "طعمه بن ابيرق" then the verse is not only about the justice of companions but also about the prove of the possibility of apostasy and diversion of some of the companions.
- e. Ordering to follow each and every companion, in fact is God's command to commit an oxymoron action because there were some disputes and differences between the companions, especially in Safin, Nahravan and Jamal wars, and ordering to follow the companions who were in one side of the conflict, was just opposing other companions who were present at the other side and compliance with both is impossible.
- f. Supposing that this verse orders to follow the companions, the adverb in verse implies that the purpose is any companion or a believer who is on the right track.
- g. In the early centuries the issue of justice, was not reasoned out of this verse, as a result in the following years this verse became the ideological creed of the upholders of justice of the companions. (Nikzad, 2004, No. 28).

### 2.3. Surah Tobeh, 100

*“And [as for] the foremost, the first of the Muhajirs and the Ansars, and those who followed them in goodness, Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them for ever; that is the mighty achievement.”*

### 2.4. Sunnis Reasoning Based on Justice of Companions:

A number of Sunni scholars, reasoned for the Justice of companions based on this verse and commented on the examples of this verse, including:

- a. Abdul Razzaq Sanani says “And [as for] the foremost, the first” are those who pray toward both Qiblah. (Sanani, Bitah, vol. 1, p. 161).
  - b. Ibn Abi Hatam holds: those who pray toward both Kiblah are people of Badr. He says people are in three places: the first Mohajirs, " and those who followed them in goodness ", " و الذين جاء وامن بعدهم يقولون ربنا اغفر لنا و لاخواننا ", Then he quoted that some people went to "bin Abbas" and objected to some companions "Ibn Abbas," said, “And [as for] the foremost, the first” But you do not follow them well. (Ibn Abi Hatam, 1419 AH, vol. 6, p. 1868).
  - c. Maverdi notes that there are five sayings about “And [as for] the foremost, the first”:
- (A) Those that prayed with the Prophet (PBUH) toward two Qiblahs.
  - (B) Those who have been in Bei'at Rezvan.
  - (C) People of Badr
  - (D) Those of Mohajering and Ansar who overtook each other on death and martyrdom.
  - (E) Likely it means those who came to Medina before the migration of Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and “Sabeghoun Al-Avaloon” of Ansar are those who became Muslim before migration.

On the other hand he notes that there are three aspects in " رَضِيََ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ وَ رَضُوا عَنْهُ ":

- (A) God was satisfied with them because of their faith and they were satisfied with God for his rewarding.
- (B) God was satisfied with them in their worshipping, and they were pleased with God for the reward of their worshipping.

(C) God was satisfied with them for their obedience of the Prophet (PBUH) and they got satisfied with their acceptance. (Maverdi, Bitā, vol. 2, pp. 394 and 395).

(D) Fakhr Razi: being first in migration, ensures being first in Islam, but being first in Islam, doesn't guarantee being first in migration. On the other hand, " رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ " includes all status and times, and God didn't make any exceptions for any case, so God has been satisfied with them in all the circumstances. (Fakhr Razi, former, vol. 6, pp. 172 and 175).

## 2.5. Review

- a. Allameh Tabatabaei says: Sabeghoun includes all those who preceded in having faith from the beginning of Islam till the Day of Resurrection among Muslims, therefore he brought the word "Avaloon" to dedicate it to Mohajirs and Ansar. Because God mentioned the third floor of the three kinds items in "*and those who followed them in goodness*" and didn't bound it to a certain age and didn't describe it to the first subordinates, so it includes all Muslims until the Day of Resurrection, therefore if " رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ " indicate the concept of justice, all Muslims must be just until the Day of Judgment.
- b. The issue in this verse was stated in two descriptions of Sabeghoun and Avaloon that because of Nosrat and Hijrat, this priority is credited to them and the meaning of "*and those who followed them*" is that they were followers of Sabeghoun Avaloon in good way, as a result only those are included to the verse, that are either among Sabeghoun Avaloon or have followed them in a good way, so justice of all the companions cannot be proved by the verse. (Tabatabaei, 1417 AH, Vol. 9, pp 372-373).
- c. Seyed Mohsen Amin Ameli: If these verses imply on justice of all companions, they should also reject hypocrisy and apostasy, and, if meeting the Prophet prevents from sin, it can also prevent apostasy and hypocrisy. (Amin Ameli 1403 AH, vol. 1, p. 114).
- d. Late Tabarsi says: "*and those who followed them*" implies that anyone who follow precede in good doings till doomsday will be included in this verse. (Tabarsi, the 1993, c. 5, p. 97)
- e. in some interpretations it is stated that the meaning of "*and those who followed them in goodness*" are all believers until the Day of Judgment, so if " رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ " implies on the proving justice then we must know all Muslims to be just till the Day of Resurrection, and it is not compatible with wisdom and religion.
- f. This verse, is not generalized the same as the previous verse, because the first part of the verse is only related to the forerunners of Mohajerin and Ansar, but not all of them, and the second part of the verse also brought the adverb of "*and those who followed them*" and this adverb indicates that not all of them have this feature. (Nikzad, the 2004, No. 28).

## 2.6. Surah Fath 18

*Certainly Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance to you under the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, so He sent down tranquility on them and rewarded them with a near victory.*

## 3. REASONING OF SUNNIS

Most of early interpretation books have not objected to this issue, also in contemporary interpretations, no verse is used on justice of the companions, only in some of them some phrases can be seen " انتم خير اهل الارض " which is quoted in the dignity of allegiance under the tree. The more we get away from the time of Prophet (PBUH) and the companions, the more these narratives become explicit so that it came to " لا يدخل النار احد ممن بايع تحت الشجرة " that has no conflict with the Shia belief in justice of companions, because assuming the validity of these narratives, it only includes those who swore allegiance at that time, some may also do a sin but they are forgiven by the grace of God or repenting and thereby enter into the paradise.

In non-interpretive books, such as Aghayed, Rejal and hadithi of Sunnis the desired verse is only cited and is not reasoned. For example:

- a. Khatib Baghdadi as an argument about the Justice of companions said that the companions have characteristics that their justice cannot be put into question and they are free of it and they are absolutely just and through the divine book, traditions and consensus a significant part of the Islamic nation are adjusted. According to the verse " *You are the best of the nations raised up for [the benefit of] men*" (Al Imran, 110), " *Certainly Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance to you under the tree*" (Fath, 18) and ... says that all nations have agreed on the adjustment of all companions. (Khatib Baghdadi, 1409 AH, p. 264) in books like Asadalghabeh and Alasabh, it is argued with this style.
- b. Fakhr Razi says that God in this verse, has made obedience to God and the Prophet (PBUH) as a sign of entry to heaven and the verse implies that people of Bei'at Rezvan obeyed Allah and the Messenger, and on the other hand satisfaction is accompanied with entry to heaven. Also the knowledge of God is before satisfaction as a result satisfaction is not only obtained at the time of swearing, but is obtained through the allegiance that God's knowledge confirms it. (Fakhr Razi, former Vol. 28, part 14, p. 95).  
Many commentators have not addressed the issue, or if someone has addressed it he has made no reasoning. Now we quote a number of commentators whose interpretation is valid.
- c. Wehbe Zoheyli: the verse implies the satisfaction of God ... God is continually dominant, the most complete and skilful and manages the works of people according to the wisdom and strength and for the people of Bei'at Rezvan has realized glory, victory and elation in the world and Hereafter. (Alzoheyli, 1418 AH, Vol. 11, p 24)
- d. Ahmad Mostafa Almaraghi : God has promised to people of Bei'at Rezvan assistance in this world and heaven in the Hereafter. (Maraghi, Bitā, vol 11, p. 11) Shanghiti, Rouhol Bayan, Shokani in Fathol-Qadir Jamal al-Din Qasemi in Mahasenol Tavail didn't object to this issue.

### 3.1. Review

#### 3.2.1 Allameh Tabatabaei says

Satisfaction, is a condition that occurs to the human soul in facing any gentle thing, and accepts it and doesn't get it away from himself. In contrast to the satisfaction, there is the word dissatisfaction, and when the two words are attributed to Allah (who has no soul nor heart) then it can mean his reward and punishment, then the satisfaction of God means good rewarding, not the commission that created and developed on the soul, because it is impossible for God to be exposed to the events, on the other hand satisfaction and dissatisfaction are attributes of God, not of his essence.

The word Reza, both in itself becomes transitive and gets an object, and if it doesn't become transitive with the word "عن" then its object might be concrete or abstract and if it become transitive with the word "عن" then its object would only be concrete as God said: " رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَ رَضُوا عَنْهُ. "if it become transitive with the word "باء" its object would only be abstract and since the satisfaction of God is the character of his action and with the meaning of reward and punishment, so the punishment is always against action, not against concreteness.

Consequently, where the satisfaction of God is attributed to an essence, if it become transitive with the word "عن", as it is used in the verse " لَقَدْ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ " a kind of attention makes the word of satisfaction to be transitive with the word "عن" and that attention is swearing allegiance that belongs to satisfaction, and there is no alternative left except that the satisfaction be their own. Then sentence " *Certainly Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore*

*allegiance to you under the tree*” talks about reward and that the almighty God has given them reward in return for their allegiance under the tree, and the meaning of " *what was in their hearts*" is the good will and truthfulness in their allegiance. Because a deed which is true and pure in terms of intention will satisfy God, not only deed with a beautiful appearance. Then the meaning of the discussed verse is that God is aware from their true intention and purity in their allegiance with you. (Tabatabaei, 1995 No. V 18, S424-426)

- a. Some commentators believe that the meaning of satisfaction is heaven (Fakhr Razi, former C-14, part 28, p. 95) Some know it as the will of God (Andelosi, 1413 AH, vol. 5, p. 133) some know it as reward of God (Tabatabaei, the former, p. 424) some know it as God's blessings (Alousi, Bitā-Vol. 14, part 26, p 163), and most Shia interpretations know it as the characters of essence and action.
- b. This verse is about a certain group that swear allegiance with the Prophet under the tree in Hadibieh, but not all of companions. Did all the companions accompanied the Prophet in the sixth year of Hejrat to perform Omrah? So that they could swear allegiance with the Prophet in Shajareh allegiance?
- c. This verse expresses the satisfaction of God with that particular work. It means that allegiance with the Prophet is for loyalty and resistance and not for all their deeds. Interpretation of the verse is that God is satisfied from those believers who swear allegiance with you.
- d. This satisfaction and promise that God has given to them, is subject to the fact that they don't break their allegiance and promise , certainly those who violate the vow allegiance are not subject to this verse. Witness to this interpretation is another verse in this surah that says:

*Surely those who swear allegiance to you do but swear allegiance to Allah; the hand of Allah is above their hands. Therefore whoever breaks [his faith], he breaks it only to the injury of his own soul, and whoever fulfills what he has covenanted with Allah, He will grant him a mighty reward.*

This verse shows well that promises given in verse 29 of this surah has been conditional and it has not been guaranteed.

3-2-6- Fakhr Razi statements shows that the factor of God satisfaction is their truth and action and as far as they are truthful in their deeds God will be more satisfied of them and if they violate these rules then God will be dissatisfied. But it is not compatible with the Sunnis beliefs, because they believe that God's characteristics are old.

#### **4. SURA FATH, 29**

*Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those with him are firm of heart against the unbelievers, compassionate among themselves; you will see them bowing down, prostrating themselves, seeking grace from Allah and pleasure; their marks are in their faces because of the effect of prostration; that is their description in the Taurat and their description in the Injeel; like as seed-produce that puts forth its sprout, then strengthens it, so it becomes stout and stands firmly on its stem, delighting the sowers that He may enrage the unbelievers on account of them; Allah has promised those among them who believe and do good, forgiveness and a great reward.*

#### 4.1. Sunnis argument:

This verse is among the verses that Sunnis use to prove the justice of companions:

- a. Tabari says that the pronoun "منهم" refers to the meaning of "شطاء" and not to its word, hence it is in its plural form (منهم) and not "منه" but it made the word "شطاء" as plural to include all who enter in the religion of the Prophet to the day of Resurrection. (Tabari, former Vol. 26, p. 72).
- b. Abdol Ghani Badri said in the article of companions Justice: Most of Sunnis believe that the phrase "و الذين معه" includes all the companion groups. (Badri, 2001 S, p. 9)
- c. Samarghandi: The first interpretation that discussed the justice of companions in interpretation of this verse is Samarghandi who said: "يعجب الزراع" » a farmer would be surprised when looks at his cultivation after its enlargement the same was true about Prophet (PBUH), the Prophet became happy when the companions became Muslim one by one. (Samarghandi, 1416 AH, vol. 3, p. 321).
- d. Ibn Kathir says: Imam Malik from this verse interprets the excommunication of the heretic who have the spite of companions, then he uses some narrations and says that don't mention the bad behavior of the companions and don't curse them. (Ibn Kathir, 1419 AH, vol. 7, p. 338)
- e. Fakhr Razi in this verse not only reasons on the justice of companions but takes a reactive position and says that in "منهم مغفرة", "من" is for gender and not spite. (Fakhr Razi, former, Vol. 14, p. 110)

#### 4.2. Review

- a. Tabari, interprets "شطاء" only to the companions and translates the pronoun "منهم" so that all Muslims are included, this is an apparent contradiction and nothing would be wrong if "و الذين معه" be only those who believed in him, because even those who believed in the Prophet but had not seen him were considered among companions and their faith angered infidels and empowered Islam. Then this verse is about all believers. In other words this includes all believers, or if it is for a certain group, then it should include only a part of companions as well.
- b. Fakhr Razi believes that the main principle is the justice of companions and sais, if the word "من" is discrimination then the pronoun must return to the infidels, to the believers. He took the justice of companions from elsewhere and imposed on the verse but this verse doesn't imply it.
- c. "من" in "منهم" refers to others so the believers who are stable in their faith and do good deeds, were promised forgiveness and a great reward.
- d. "و الذين معه" doesn't mean being with him in the time, place and a relative frame but it is in terms of mission and faith, so it includes all believers who have faith and good deeds until the Day of Resurrection.
- e. Purpose of the believers in the verse, is the audience in the peace of Hadibieh, the verse is absolute, but to the symmetry of "منهم" it is to encourage and benefit of those who were present in the peace of Hadibieh
- f. many of the companions in the verse had the characteristics mentioned in the verse and are the true believers, but some of them did not remain faithful and didn't do good deeds, so because of "منهم" they are not included in the verse.
- g. Allameh Tabatabaei says:
- h. Pronoun "و الذين معه" refers to "منهم" and the word "من" shows this discrimination. This statement is used to show that great reward and forgiveness is conditioned to both faith and good deeds. So if people surrounding Prophet (PBUH) be apparently believer but infidel inside, then they would be deprived from the great reward. On the other hand those who were at the beginning of faith and were with the prophet (PBUH) and then inclined to idolatry and blasphemy will not have a great reward. (Tabatabaei, 1995 No. Vol. 18, pp. 448-449).

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- i. This verse is not used to prove that all the companions had justice, because this verse was trying to explain the characteristics of the Prophet and has accompanying believers. If there is a description about some group then it means that this group due to the way in which they have chosen (faith and accompanying the prophet) deserve that description, but not necessarily each and every person in the group. An obvious witness on this interpretation is the following verse which says that: "*O you who believe! If you are careful of [your duty to] Allah, He will grant you a distinction and do away with your evils and forgive you; and Allah is the Lord of mighty grace.*" Fath, 29).
- j. I.e. God gives promises of forgiveness and great reward to those who believe and do righteous deeds. This verse clearly explains that all the companions of the Prophet didn't have these features.
- k. Assume that the mentioned verse imply the existence of these characteristics in Prophet's companions, it does not imply in any way that these characteristics are guaranteed in them for a life time. And no one under any conditions will have such characteristics. This verse doesn't intend to express such guarantees.

### 4.3. Surah Anfal, 74-75

74. *And [as for] those who believed and fled and struggled hard in Allah's way, and those who gave shelter and helped, these are the believers truly; they shall have forgiveness and honorable provision.*

75. *And [as for] those who believed afterwards and fled and struggled hard along with you, they are of you; and the possessors of relationships are nearer to each other in the ordinance of Allah; surely Allah knows all things.*

## 5. SUNNIS ARGUMENT

Companions of the Prophet (PBUH), without exception were the examples of true "و الذين آمنوا" and God has given them good news of salvation, heaven and huge victory. (Badri, 2001, p. 11).

### 5.1. Review

- a. Praise of the companions in this verse is due to the operations that is just expressed in this verse (Such as faith, migration, Jihad and accommodating the Muslim immigrants) it's not seeking to praise the performance of all of them.
- b. It can be said that this verse is to praise the Mohajirs and Ansar groups, praise of a particular group and doesn't imply praising all of them.
- c. Assuming that this verse intends to compliment all of them in general form, it wouldn't be implying its guarantee for a lifetime, and if it does, then it would be just apparently (Nikzad 2004 Sb., No. 28).

Sunnis used verses such as: (Al-Imran 110, Baghareh 143, Tahrim 8, Tobeh 88-89, Anbia 101) to prove their belief that is weaker than the previous verses.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Cited verses by some Sunnis in this area doesn't signify the justice of all the companions of the Prophet (PBUH), their argues are just a personal opinion that is not reasonable. And there are verses in Qur'an that introduces some of the companions to be sinners, hypocrites, liars etc.



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