



Explanation of the Methodological Error of Abul-Fadl Burqe'i about the Succession Verse of Imam Mehdi (A.S.)(Istikhlaf Verse)

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Abstract

The Istikhlaf verse is the fifty-fifth verse of the Surah Nur, in which God gives the glad tidings of being successors of rulership of righteousness ones, spreading the religion and achieving peace, to those faithful who do good deeds. This verse is one of the verses which is interpreted as a proof on the uprising of hazrat Mahdi (a.s.). Abul-Fadl Burqe'i, having a background of being a Shia but moving towards a revisionist tendency, expressed some believes opposing the fundamental principles of Shiite and raised doubts in these principles. In his book "A Scientific Study on the Mahdi's Hadiths," in the chapter of "Ayyat al-Mu'wala Be-Qiyyam al-Qa'im, الأيات المؤله بقيام القائم", he attempts to reject the opinion of majority of Shiite commentators that say the reference of the Promised Government is in the "Istikhlaf verse", is Imam Mahdi and his companions. In this way, through fallacy in the words of the Imamiyah scholars such as Sheikh Tusi in Tebyan, Tabarsi in the Majma' Al-Bayan and Abul-Futtuh in Ruh al-Jinan he tried to show that they agreed him. This article seeks to evaluate his arguments in this regard by comparing the above-mentioned interpretations with those of Abul-Fadl Burqe'i.

Keywords: Istikhlaf Verse ; Imam Mahdi (PBUH); Abul-Fadl Burqe'I; Scientific Study in the Traditions About Mahdi; Successorship

Findings

Abul-Fadl Burqe'i considers the interpretation of verse 55 of Surah Nur to Imam Mahdi to be subjective (*Tafsir bi Ra'i*), and believes "كُم" in the verse "وعدالله الذين آمنوا منكم و عملوا الصالحات" refers to contemporary people of the Prophet and rejects other ideas. But his argument is not enough to refute other theories. He intertwines the various meanings of the word "خلف" and thus puts aside the main meaning of the word "استخلف" in the verse. This is while the lexicologists have inferred the meaning of successorship from this.

To prove his claim, Abul-Fadl Burqe'i reverses Sheikh Tusi's words in Tbiyan and considers Sheikh to agree with him. A search in Tebyan and other works of Sheikh Tusi regarding the above verse reveals that not only did Sheikh refuse to believe so, but also argued the opposed believers. Abul-Fadl

Burqe'i also introduces Tabarsi in Majma' Al-Bayan as well as Abul Futuh Razi in the Ruh al-Janan agree with him. This is while Tabarsi announces Shiite Imams agreed on the relation of the verse to the uprising of Imam Mahdi, and Abul Futuh Razi has elaborated the same meaning in detail.

Statement of the Problem

After the demise of the Prophet, the caliphate was transferred to the caliphs, and since then, the issue of if choosing the caliphate is rooted in the verses and traditions or not, has become one of the concerns of Sunni scholars. One of these verses is the verse of *Istikhlaf* (*Nur: 55*) which is considered by the Sunni Mutikkalims and commentators as having a special place in the subject of caliphate and is one of their main documents in proving the caliphate of the first caliph and other caliphs. Sunnitte tries to analyze the contents of the verse in a way that corresponds only to the caliphs on the one hand, and reject any kind of analysis and interpretation that may be applicable to the non-caliphs on the other. They therefore believe that the phrase "وعد الله الذين آمنوا منكم و عملوا الصالحات", in the verse of *Istikhlaf*, refers to the Companions and those present in the age of Quran's revelation. Meanwhile, Abul-Fadl Burqe'i has Sunni-like beliefs and, with similar arguments, tries to correspond the verse to the caliphs and, like Alusi¹ excludes Imam Mahdi from the examples of the verse because he was not present in the era of revelation of Quran.

In contrast, the Shi'a hadiths aligned with the appearance of the verse, regard the promised ones as Imams of Shia and the Imam Mahdi and his companions, knowing that the fulfillment of this promise in the early days of Islam is rejected, and specify it to the era of the reappearance of Imam Mahdi. This article deals with the critical analysis of Abul-Fadl Burqe'i's perspective in this regard.

1. The *Istikhlaf* verse and the reason of its revelation

The *Istikhlaf* verse is the fifty-fifth verse of surah Nur which states:

Concerning the reason of its revelation it is said that when the Prophet (PBUH) was alive and the Muslims emigrated to Medina and took custody from Ansar, disbelievers lined up against them with swords in a way that they even had to spend nights with weapons. The situation was difficult for them. Some Muslims asked how long this situation would continue, and when it would be time for us to be reassured and calm and to fear no one but God! The noble verse was revealed and it gave good news to them that such a time would come.² In fact, it is God's promise to the righteous believers who will soon provide them with their own righteous community, give them the land, prosper their religion and replace security with fear. A security in which they no longer fear the hypocrites and their plots or the infidels and their harms so they will worship God freely and do not associate anything with Him.³

Regardless of the reason of revealing the verse, according to the law of *Tatbiq* and, *Jar-i* this verse is still applicable, and in addition to the reason of its revelation, it may also refer to a nation that will come in the future. *Tatbiq* and, *Jar-i* is an issue that throughout the history of commentary, most religious

¹ Alusi, Maḥmūd ibn 'Abd Allāh, "Ar-Rūh al-Ma'ānī fī Tafsīri-l-Qur'āni-l-'Azīm wa Sab'u-l-Mathānī", vol.9, p.396.

² Vahidi, 'Ali ibn Aḥmad, "Asbāb Nuzūl al-Qurān", p.338; Tabarsi, Faḍl ibn Ḥasan, "Majma' al-Bayan fī Tafsir al-Qurān", vol.7, p.239; Ghazī 'Inayah, Husayn, "Asbāb al-Nuzūl Al-Qurāni", p.290.

³ Tabataba'i, Muhammad Ḥusayn ('Allameh Tabataba'i, "Al-Mizan fī Tafsir al-Qurān", vol.15, p.151

scholars, Quran scientists and commentators have believed in it and referred to and acted on it in their books;⁴ but it becomes common among contemporary commentators and mainly Iranian commentators and researchers as an interpretive term and Qur'anic sciences and for the first time, it was used by 'Allameh Tabataba'ee and used it by general adaptation applied to its obvious example in its meaning⁵.

The meaning of this rule is that the Holy Qur'an is broad in terms of applying to many instances and is not limited to the cases of the revelations of the verses; Rather, it is applicable in whatever which is united with the case of revelation such as examples which are not specific to the first cases. But they can be applied to anything which is related.⁶

With this explanation, in this verse, three pieces of glad tidings are given to Muslims who have two attributes of "faith and good deeds":

1. successorship of the righteous rulers on earth
2. Establishment of Divine Religion which they satisfy
3. Changing their fear to security (so that they only worship me (God) and do not seek any partner for me.

2. The meaning of the former Ummahs

Commentators' opinions about "كما استخلف الذين من قبلهم" can be divided into three groups:

1. *The succession of the past prophets*: Some regards the meaning of Istikhlaf in the verses as the caliphate of the prophets such as Adam, Moses, David, Solomon, and they asserted their claim by the verses of the Quran, as it is about the caliphate of Adam in the verse 30 of Surah al-Baqarah: "وإذ قال ربك " يا داود إلا جعلناك خليفة في الأرض " ... للملائكة إني جاعل في الأرض خليفة...".⁷ And also addressing Prophet David: "يا داود إلا جعلناك خليفة في الأرض".⁷
- 2- *Successorship of Bani Israel*: Most commentators have agreed that *Istikhlaf* means the Successorship of Bani Israel who made rulership of righteous ones after destroying the Pharaohs.⁸
- 3- *Succession of Believers of Past Ummahs*: some others, such as Jamaluddin Qasemi and Allameh Tabataba'i, have said this succession is for the faithful of the former Ummahs. Allameh Tabataba'i said the phrase "الذين من قبلهم" is not suitable for the prophets, believing that the former caliphs are believers of the past Ummahs that God destroyed their infidels and their hypocrites and saved their pure believers such as the tribe of Noah, Saleh, Shu'ib ...⁹

⁴ Majlisi, Muhammad Baqir, "Bihar al-Anvar.", vol.2, p.345.

⁵ Tabataba'ei, Muhammad Husayn ('Allameh Tabataba'ei, "Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Quran", vol.1, pp.41-42, p.153.

⁶ Ibid, vol.3, p.67

⁷ Tabarsi, Fadl ibn Hasan, "Majma' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Quran", vol.7, p.240; Qarashi Banaji, "Tafsir Ahsan Al-Hadith", vol.7, p.247; Abul-Futuh Razi, Husayn ibn 'Ali, "Rawd al-jinan wa ruh al-jinan fi Tafsir al-Quran", vol.14, p.169.

⁸ Shgh 'Abdul 'Azim, Husayn, "Tafsir Athni 'Ashari", vol.9, p.275; Alusi, Mahmud ibn 'Abd Allāh, "Ar-Rūh al-Ma'ānī fi Tafsiri-l-Qur'ānī-l-'Azīm wa Sab'u-l-Mathānī", vol.9, p.393; Vahidi, 'Ali ibn Ahmad, "Asbab Nuzul al-Quran", vol.2, p.767,...

⁹ Tabataba'ei, Muhammad Husayn ('Allameh Tabataba'ei, "Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Quran", vol.15, p.151; Ghāsīmī, Jamaluddin, "Tafsir al-Qasimī al-Musamī Mahāsīn al-Ta'vīl (vol.7), p.403.

3. *Meaning of believers and the promised government*

Four theories by commentators concerning the word مؤمنين in "وعد الله الذين آمنوا منكم و عملوا الصالحات" has been given.

1. Prophet and Ahl al-Bayt: Most Shiite commentators have said the mentioned verse is about the reign of Imam Mahdi . For example Tabarsi by referring to traditions from Imam Sajjad and Imam Sadiq knew this verse to be about the holy Prophet and Ahlul Bayt which gives them glad tidings of their rulership and they will find security at the time of uprising of Imam Mahdi.¹⁰

2. Prophet Akram and Companions: Some believe that the verse refers to the Prophet and companions who found rulership by their victory over the enemies and became the heirs of the earth.¹¹

3. Rashidin caliphs: Many Sunni commentators believe that the meaning of the promised government was the caliphate of Rashidis because they conquered vast territories and spread religion and brought security to the Islamic community.¹²

4. Faithful ones with good deeds: Allameh Tabataba'i refused that a specific person was meant by the verse, and said it refers to some people of the Islamic Ummah and to all of them, and there is no reason to believe that the verse is only intended the Prophet or the Companions or the Ahlul Bayt; but anyone who has faith and righteous deeds can be meant by the verse.¹³ Allameh Tabataba'i, after expressing the characteristics of the desired society depicted by the verse, by referring to some traditions, believed that the formation of such a society can only be accomplished in the time of the promised Mahdi.¹⁴

5. Abul-Fadl Burqe'i and his claim on subjective commentary nature of recognizing the promised person to be Mahdi in the Istikhlaf verse

After the *Mashrute era* and as the trend towards the West peaked, activities in the area of criticizing religion began in the name of cleansing religion from superstitions from public culture.¹⁵ Shariat Sanglaji was one of those whose opinion was very close to Burqe'i's. Burqe'i was born in 1287 Sh. and died in 1370 Sh., who departed from certain and assure Shiite beliefs and denied many of traditions. He severely criticized Shiite books such as al-Kafi, Bihar al-Anwar, Mafatih al-Jinan and so on, knowing them replete with irrational against Quran traditions and in his book "Scientific Review on Traditions about Mahdi" rejected related verses to Mahdi cited in Quran and discredited them in terms of documents and sometimes in terms of text of tradition.¹⁶

After mentioning Istikhlaf verse in his book, Burqe'i knows that knowing Mahdi as a promised one in Istikhlaf verse is a kind of abusing this verse, "The above verse, which is known as Istikhlaf verse is one of the verses such as the verse 5 and 6 of surah Qesas, and the verse 32 and 33 of surah Toubah and the verse 105 of surah Anbiya is widely misused and interpreted subjectively, so it is necessary to reflect

¹⁰ Kufi, Furat ibn Ibrahim, "Tafsir Furat al-Kufi", p.288; Tabarsi, Fadl ibn Hasan, "Majma' al-Bayn fi Tafsir al-Quran", vol.7,p.240; Qabisi 'Amili, Muhammad Hasan, "Al-Bayan al-Safi al-Kalamullah al-Vafi", vol.3,p.443.

¹¹ Like: Zamakhshari, Mahmoud ibn 'Umar, "al-Kishaf 'An Haqq'iq Ghavamiz al-Tanzil va 'Uyun al-Aqavil fi vojuh al-Ta'vil", vol.3, p.251; Ibn Abi Hatam, Abdul-Rahman bin Muhammad, "Tafsir al-Quran al-'Azim", vol.8,p.2627.

¹² Like: Fakhr Razi, Muhammad ibn 'Umar, "al-Tafsir Al-Kabir", vol.24, p.413; Alusi, Mahmud ibn 'Abd Allāh, "Ar-Rūh al-Ma'āni fi Tafsīri-l-Qur'āni-l-'Azīm wa Sab'u-l-Mathānī", vol.9, p.395; Nahas, Ahmad ibn Muhammad, "I'rab al-Quran", vol.3,p.101.

¹³ Tabataba'ei, Muhammad Husayn ('Allameh Tabataba'ei, "Al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Quran", vol.15, p.154

¹⁴ Ibid, vol.15,p.155.

¹⁵ Basirat Manesh, Hamid, "Ulama va Rezhim Shah", pp.136-137

¹⁶ Burqe'i, Abul-Fazl, "Barresi 'Ilmi in Ahadith Mahdi"

on it more than other verses. He then refers readers to his other book: "refer to Burqe'i, *Arz Akhbar Usul bar Quran va 'Uqul*, no date, chapter 70, no.3"¹⁷ he has provided reasons that we mention in the following to prove his opinion, and by invoking scientific evidence, we invalidate each of them respectively.

5.1. Interweaving the different meanings of the word "Istikhlaf"

Burqe'i, in the book "*Arz Akhbar Usul bar Quran va 'Uqul*," intertwines the various meanings of the word "**Istikhlaf**" and exposes it to the reader; the verses in which the derivations of this word are used are lined up by him one after the other and then he concludes:

Every wise man simply understands that these successors are sitting in place of those who are of their own kind and with whom they are related, for example, there is no doubt that Prophet David (PBUH) was the successor of tyrants such as Jalut who was listening to his lust and mundane desire. David could have not been the successor and caliph of God. If it were meant to replace God, Quran should have a proof in the verse to distract mind from the implicit meaning of the verse revealed in the language of the Prophet, while the verses do not have any proof which distract mind from its first meaning. So he claims that the verse means what it is derived from its words¹⁸.

Ibn Fars has regarded three general meanings for it¹⁹:

1. **Substitution:** one comes after something else and represents it: "أن يجيء شيء بعد شيء يقوم" such as to say: He is a good substitution for his father: "هو خلف صدق من أبيه", the caliph is called caliph because he comes after the first one and becomes his successor: "إنما سميت خلافة لأن اللائي يجيء بعد الأول قائمة مقامه"

2. **coming next in order:** خلاف قدام which is famous to say that this is behind me and this in front of me: يقال: " هذا خلفي و هذا قدامي و هذا مشهور"

3. **Changing, change:** التغير as if someone's mouth smell change: "خلف فوه، اذا تغير" or someone does not live up to his promise : و يقال و عدني فاخلفته :

Fayyumi also explicitly regards the use of "استخلفه" as replacing a caliph, saying: «استخلفته جعلته» which means "I made him caliph." He then adds that the caliph means the Supreme Sultan and can have both the subjective meaning and the objective meaning. If it is a subject, it comes after the one who succeeds him. Also, if it is in the objective sense, God has made him a caliph: "أما (الخليفة) بمغني السلطان" الأعمى فيجوز أن يكون فاعلا لأنه (خلف) من قبل أي جاء بعده و يجوز أن يكون مفعولا لأن الله تعالى جعله (خليفة) أو لأنه جاء به بعد غيره كما قال تعالى «هو الذي جعلكم خلائف في الأرض»²⁰

Paying attention to Fayyumi's words, the word of Burqe'i is invalidated because Burqe'i claims that Adam and David are not "caliphs of God": "There is no doubt that Prophet David is a successor to oppressors such as" Jalut who, in his ruling over people, was influenced by his lust and not the successor of God. But Fayyumi writes in this regard, "قال بعضهم ولا يقال (خليفة الله) بالإضافة إلا لأدم و داود لورود الص بذلك و " «...قيل يجوز، و هو القياس...»؛ which means "Some say the word" Caliph of Allah can not be used for anyone except for Adam and for David as there is scripture about them. Others believe that it is permissible to use the word "caliph of Allah" for Adam and Prophet David, and this is an analogy....

¹⁷ . Burqe'i, Abul-Fazl, "Barresi 'Ilmi in Ahadith Mahdi, bab al-Ayat al-Mu'avalah bi Qiyam Al-Qaim, p.180.

¹⁸ . Burqe'i, Abul-Fazl, "Arz Akhbar Usul bar Quran va 'Uqul", no date, bab 70, p.481.

¹⁹ . Ibn Fāris, Ahmad, "Al-Mu'jam Maqa'is al-Lughat", vol.2,pp.210-211.

²⁰ Fayyumi, Ahmad ibn Muhammad, "Al-Misbah al-Munir fi Gharib al-Sharh al-Kabir", vol.2;p.178.

Burqe'i gives up the literal meaning and offers another meaning and then he accuses others of imposing their meanings on the verse and says: "Therefore it is on the claimer to put forward a reason to show the intention of the verse is something rather than what is understood from the words of the verse."

To answer this it is said, the surface of the word and "the language of the tribe" to mean "the caliph of God on earth for Prophet David and Prophet Adam is clear where He says «يا داؤد إنا جعلناك خليفة في الأرض...»²¹؛ ويا «وإذ قال ربك للملائكة إني جاعل في الأرض خليفة...»²²؟

5.2. Burqe'i shows what Tusi said in the opposite way

Burqe'i, by mentioning the name of Sheikh Tusi and writing a few sentences, pretends that the Sheikh's opinion is in line with his and writes: "Sheikh Tusi in his interpretation called "Al-Tebyan wrote in this verse God Almighty promises the believers and benefactors of the Prophet's companions to make them successors and rulers in the land of polytheists as he settled the Bani Israel in Shaam after the destruction of cruels, and this was fulfilled in the time of the Prophet when whose enemies were defeated and his invitation was revealed and his religion was perfected. I seek refuge of saying that God (the remark of Sheikh Tusi is true provided that, according to the word "منكم", the Companions of the Prophet (s), who were also addressees of the verse and reference of كُمْ, are regarded as subject to the divine promise, so Ali did regard them) have not enriched his religion so that others after him should enrich his religion."²³

He wrote in footnote that however, some of the works of religion experts like Sheikh Tusi, Abul Futuh Razi, ...pointed out that the mentioned verse is about Mahdi but it should be noticed that firstly Sheikh Tusi has mentioned the first remark before the other remarks and secondly he did not defend the second remark and confessed that the second remark is not agreed by all interpreters.²⁴

But by taking a look at some of the works of Sheikh Tusi we can infer his opinion concerning the verse 55 of Surah Nur. Opinions that are definitely different from what Burqe'i claims and attributes it to Sheikh, and even the opposite. To make examples, we mention four points:

5.2.1. Sheikh's word in Tebyan

Contrary to Burqe'i's claim, Sheikh Tusi in Tebyan said, the intention of "وعد الله الذين آمنوا منكم و عملوا الصالحات" is the caliphs of Rashidin, and rejected the consensus of commentators on this opinion and refer readers to more detailed explanation in the book al-Imamah. He did not say the interpretation of this verse to Imam Mahdi is rejected by the consensus of commentators.

و لو سلمنا أن المراد بالاستخلاف الإمامه للزم أن يكون منصوفا عليهم، و ذلك ليس بمذهب أكثر مخالفيها، و إن استدلوا بذلك على صحة إمامتهم احتاجوا أن يدلوا على ثبوت إمامتهم بغير الآية، و انهم خلفاء الرسول حتى تتناولهم الآية. فان قالوا: المفسرون ذكروا ذلك. قلنا: لم يذكر جميع المفسرين ذلك ... و قال أهل البيت إن المراد بذلك المهدي و قد استوفينا ما يتعلق بالآية في كتاب الامامة، فلا تطول بذكره. هاهنا - وقد تكلمنا على نظير هذه الآية...²⁵

²¹ Sad:26

²² Baqareh:30

²³ Burqe'i, Abul-Fazl, "Barresi 'Ilmi in Ahadith Mahdi", bab al-Ayat al-Mu'avalah bi Qiyam Al-Qaim, p.180.

²⁴ Ibid, footnote, p.180.

²⁵ Tusi, Muhammad ibn Hasan (Sheikh Tusi), "Al-Tebyan fi Tafsir al-Quran", vol.7,p.457.

5.2.2. Sheikh's word in Talkhis al-Shafi

The content of the book of Al-Shafi'i²⁶ has undoubtedly been endorsed by Sheikh al-Tusi and accordingly he has attempted to write **Talkhis al-Shafi**, a book which he acknowledges in its preface he added some parts to it²⁷.

In this book, after mentioning the verse, the discussion begins with two key words, "تمكن" and "Istikhlaf", and then he explained the different aspects of the words of opposite group who says that تمكن and Istikhlaf happened during the time of the three caliphs in early Islam and after that by strong arguments, he rejected the point that the verse has any meaning other than "Imamate". First, based on the content of the verse, this Istikhlaf and تمكن is specific for faithful who have good deeds and first their faith should be proved. Secondly, the intention of Istikhlaf is not imamate or caliphate; rather, it means that "coming after the past Ummahs". In response, he said that if it was true, this Istikhlaf had not been postponed until the reign of 'Umar and Abu Bakr, but it was in the days of the Apostle of God who, in turn, succeeded the former Ummahs on the one hand and on the other hand he became the victor and propagator of religion and so on. And we ask shelter from God from saying that God did not enrich His religion for the Prophet.

Tamkin (fulfilment, enrichment, prosperity in various aspects) does not mean plurality of conquest and conquest of the cities, which if it was so, the religion has not been enriched up to this day; because there is no plurality of Muslim conquest and there are many lands that have not been conquered by Muslims. Or for example, how many cities Bani Umayyad conquered but 'Umar and Abu Bakr had failed to conquer.

What is the other side of your argument for proving *Tamkin* refers to the three caliphs? And if it is said that we have not seen *Tamkin* except in the days of these three caliphs, we say that if it only means conquests, the conquests were also in the time of the Messenger of God. And if it is said that we did not see anybody replace the Prophet but the three caliphs, we tell them you have raised the issue of Imamate and if so, others have also succeeded the Prophet ... You claim that the commentators hold the consensus that what is meant by "الذين آمنوا منكم و عملوا الصالحات" is the caliphs of the Rashidin; while people like Mujahideen and Ibn 'Abbas refer the verse to the Ummah of prophet of God. And others have also referred to uprising of Ahul Bayt, which this point invalidates the claim of consensus."²⁸

5.2.3. The word of Sheikh in Misbah al-Muthajad and Salah al-Mut'abad

Sheikh al-Tusi, as a Raja'ali Mohaddith, quotes in this book a Ziyarah issued by Imam Sadiq on Ashura day:

روى عبد الله بن سنان قال: دخلت على سيدي أبي عبد الله جعفر بن محمد في يوم عاشوراء .. ثم ارفع يديك و اقتنت بهذا الدعاء و قل .. اللهم ... و اجعل لهم أياما مشهودة و أوقاتا محمودة مسعودة توشك فيها فرجهم و توجب فيها تمكينهم و نصرهم كما ضمننت لأوليائك في كتابك المنزل فإنك قلت و فولك الحق: "وعد الله الذين آمنوا منكم و عملوا الصالحات ليستخلفنهم في الأرض كما استخلف الذين من قبلهم و ليمكنن لهم دينهم الذي ارتضى لهم و ليبد لنهم من بعد خوفهم أمنا يعبدوننى لا يشر كون بى شيئا" اللهم فاكشف غمهم يا من لا يملك كشف الضر إلا هو يا أحد يا حي يا قيوم».²⁹

²⁶ Al-Shafi fi al-Imamah va Ibtal Hujaj al-'Ammah is a Kalami book about Imamah by Seyyid Murteza 'Alam al-Huda (355 Ah-436 AH.). he wrote it to answer doubts of Qazi 'Abdul-Jabbar Mu'tazeli about Imamah.

²⁷ Tusi, Muhammad ibn Hasan (Sheikh Tusi); "Talkhis al-Shafi", p.61.

²⁸ .. «و استدلوا أيضا على ذلك بقوله تعالى: «وعد الله الذين آمنوا منكم و... فلم نجد هذا التمکن و الاستخلاف في الأرض .. ثم المراد بالاستخلاف هاهنا ليس هو الأمام»؛ Tusi, Muhammad ibn Hasan (Sheikh Tusi); «و الخلافة على ما ظنوه - بل المعين فيه بقاؤهم في اثر من مضى من القرون و جعلهم عوضا منهم و خلفا ...»؛ "Talkhis al-Shafi", vol.3, pp.112-115.

²⁹ Tusi, Muhammad ibn Hasan (Sheikh Tusi), "Misbah al-Mutihajid va Silah al-Mute'abbid", vol.2, pp.782-785.

The explanation is the Sheikh confirming this prayer as it declares that this verse is about Imam Mahdi.

5.2.4. The word of the Sheikh in al-Ghibah

Sheikh Tusi in the part “rejecting Waqfiyyah” gives a long narration of Imam Sadiq, in which his holiness first talked about the reason of the prolongation of the absence of Imam Mahdi. The absence that differentiate pure right and pure faith from others and anyone of Shiites who are impure, as well as those who may change into hypocrisy when they see successorship, enrichment and security of the time of Mahdi, will go out of religion. Then Mufazil asked him about the remark of the *Navasib* that believe this verse is related to the caliphs of Rashidin. His holiness answered, "God does not guide the hearts of the *Navasib*, when did the religion which God and His messenger were pleased with was firm and enriched, and security spread among nation and the fear left their hearts and doubts were cleaned from their hearts? "Did it happen in the era of those three caliphs or in the Ali's era when Muslims became apostates and there were seditions and wars between Muslims and happened what happened?"³⁰

In short, Sheikh al-Tusi in his various written works, contrary to the claim of Burqe'i, considers Imam Mahdi and his companions as the promised ones of this verse and has argued in this regard in various positions. (ibid)

5.3. Fallacy of Burqe'i in presenting Tabarsi opinion

Burqe'i pretends Tabarsi agreed him and writes in the footnote: "... Sheikh Tabarsi has also mentioned his remark before others ...?"³¹ he said, "Sheikh Tabarsi has also mentioned his remark before others" and in this way tried to tell the reader that the final opinion of the late Tabarsi is in line with his opinion. This is while it is not the constant and stable method of commentators to mention their own opinion in the first place. As in the commentary on the mentioned verse, Tabarsi in his commentary, after quoting all the remarks about this noble verse, quotes the saying of infallible imams that clarified that the interpretation of this verse is rulership of Imam Mahdi (AS) and he declares: "All the Imams have this consensus and their consensus is valid (Hujah), as the Prophet of God said, "I leave two precious assets among you: the Book of God and my Itrah. These two do not break apart unless they come to me in the pond", and another point is Muslims and believers have not yet gained full power on earth. So we have to wait for a day that God fulfills His promise because God does not break His promise"³².

5.4. Fallacy of Burqe'i in presenting the Abul-Futuh's opinion

Burqe'i by saying “**Abul-Futuh** Razi has also knew his opinion the best” attributes something to this interpreter while **Abul-Futuh** against Burqe'i's opinion, after dividing the different views on this verse into three parts, strongly argued this verse is about reappearance of Imam Mahdi.³³

Contrary to the claim of Burqe'i, **Abul-Futuh** says: There are three opinions about who these people are who find prosperity on the earth without fear.³⁴

³⁰ Sheikh Tusi after narrating the hadith says, "... و الاخبار ف هذا المعنى اكثر من ان تحصى ذكرنا طرفا منها لئلا يطول به الكتاب ...". Muhammad ibn Hasan (Sheikh Tusi, "al-Ghaybah", pp.170-171.

³¹ Burqe'i, Abul-Fazl, "Barresi 'Ilmi in Ahadith Mahdi", footnote p.180.

³² Tabarsi, Fadl ibn Hasan, "Majma' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Quran", vol.7, p.240.

³³ Burqe'i, Abul-Fazl, "Barresi 'Ilmi in Ahadith Mahdi" Abul-Futuh Razi, Husayn ibn 'Ali, "Rawd al-jinan wa ruh al-jinan fi Tafsir al-Quran", footnote: p.180

1. Those who believe they are the whole nation of the Prophet whom Allah has made them the caliph of the past nations. Just as God cleansed the earth from Jinn and gave it to Adam, He cleansed the earth of the disbelievers and the nations of the past and gave it to the nation of Muhammad.
2. And some have said: They are the companions who had caliphate after the Apostle of God, who are: Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and 'Ali, since in Abu Bakr time some Arab provinces were conquered, and in 'Umar time some provinces of non-Arab.
3. Another claim what comes in the commentary of Ahl al-Bayt: The Caliph is Saheb al-Zaman that the Prophet of God announced his uprising at the end of time and called him al-Mahdi.³⁵ The one all Muslims have a consensus on him, and the only difference is in the determination of the example مصداق عيني.

Abul-Futuh then reviews the claims in this regard which include the following notes:

1. If it was not the surface of the verse - and the word " وعد " was in the verse – his remark would have had the closest to meaning the verse as the " وعد : promise" refers to something which has not yet happened, and if it was meant the ummah of the Prophet , who were present, promise would have no meaning. (rejection of the first remark)
- 2- In this verse, God has attributed *Istikhlaf* to Himself, just as He attributed *Istikhlaf* of the former Ummah to Himself. (rejection of the second remark)
3. Prosperity for that admired religion and turning fear into safety is not as much as God has promised in this verse. (rejection of the second remark)
4. Some believe that the caliphate in text (without the freewill of the servants involved) is possible (believers in the Imamate of Ali and his children) and some believe that the caliphate is done by the free will of servants (believers in the Imamate of the Companions).
5. Among them (a few companions) also believe that the caliphate happens by divine *Istikhlaf* and there is a text about the Imamate of the companions. That is a rare remark. If there was such a text, there was no longer any need for the Ummah's consensus to elect Abu Bakr – according to the believers in this remark- as well as Abu Bakr's will for the Imamate of 'Umar, as well as the formation of a six-member council to elect the third caliph by the order of 'Umar.
- 6- In the Quran, God introduces Adam, David, and Aaron as caliphs. If there was such a text نص about the Companions, they would no longer need free will and the consensus of Ummah and their allegiance.
- 7-The prosperity of religion that is meant by this verse is that which is going to: ...»... ليظهره على الدين كله ...»³⁶ that is, "to make it victorious over all religions ..." this kind of prosperity did not happen that day; Rather, it will happen on the day when: " يملأ الأرض قسطا و عدلا كما ملئت ظلما و جورا".
8. It is clear that changing fear for safety is sometimes not possible by all.
9. According to the saying: "...»... يعبدونني لا يشركون بي شيئا..", it is no unknown to anyone that Muslims are a few compared to infidels, and the meaning of the verse cannot be correct, except by the caliphate or the

³⁴ Abul-Futuh Razi, Husayn ibn 'Ali, "Rawd al-jinan wa ruh al-jinan fi Tafsir al-Quran", vol.14, pp.169-174.

³⁵ Refer to: why the word "Be'that" is used for the uprising of Hazrat Mahdi in Fariqin Traditions, Mahdi-Nejad, Samira- Zoreh Akhavan Muqaddam, fall and winter 1394, pp.199 to 228.

³⁶ Holy Quran, Taubah: 33

Imamate of Mahdi, which majority of Ummah has a consensus on the existence of such a person but they disagree on its example.

10. Then he narrates some of the Prophet's traditions about the promise of God about Mahdi especially Jabir's hadith - in detail - and finally says, "And the news about this are a lot."

In this detail, it is clear that Abul Futuḥ considered the verse of Khalaf to be about Imam Mahdi and his companions and modeled his speech in this regard.

Therefore, it is obvious that Abul Futuḥ regards the verse of *Istikhlaf* is about Mahdi and his companions and made reasons to endorse his claim.

5.5. Burqe'i 's error in determining the *subject of comparison* in "كما استخلف الذين من قبلهم"

Burqe'i, in another part, to find *subject of comparison* writes: "Sheikh Tusi's words are true and the verse is addressed the present ones of the time of the Messenger of God because of the "منكم" of you, which is mentioned in the verse and that when it says "كما استخلف الذين من قبلهم" it means as the faithful people ruled in a part of this earth or all the earth, they too will be caliph in this land and all over the earth, and this promise has been fulfilled and the Muslims of the time of the Messenger of God who had real faith and did righteous deeds according to the order of God, the land of infidels and polytheists conquered by them, and succeeded them, and were able to perform religious ceremonies without fear.³⁷

The answer is that in eloquence the analogy has levels , ranging from weak to strong:

1. All elements of simile (subject of comparison, the vehicle, the event, a comparator) are mentioned such as: "زيد كالأسد في الشجاعة" This kind of simile is the weakest kind of simile.
2. Leaving subject of comparison, the vehicle, the event, a comparator. Such as: "زيد اسد في الشجاعة". In this simile, there is some rhetoric and exaggeration that is stronger than the first order.
3. Omission of *subject of comparison*, such as "زيد كالأسد", which has an exaggerated form of power that is stronger than the second one because omission of *subject of comparison* is more clear in appearance.
4. Quitting *subject of comparison and comparators*; like: "زيد اسد." This is one of the strongest types of similes, because it has the benefits of the second and third types.

Thus, the highest level of simile in rhetoric is to omit *subject of comparison and comparators* such as: «... و أزواجه أمهاتهم... ها و³⁸ ... و سراجا منيرا⁴⁰»³⁹

In the discussing verse, there is a *subject of comparison* in the "نفس استخلاف" and not in "the land" or part of it, for example in the verse "إنا أرسلنا إليكم رشوة شاهدة عليكم كما أرسلنا إلى فرعون رسولا" "We sent a prophet to you who bears witness to your deeds, just as we have sent to Pharaoh." God says, "We have sent the Messenger of God to you, the people of the time of revelation, as we did to Pharaoh. Does " كما " mean the resemblance of the people of the time of revelation of Quran to the pharaoh, or does it merely mean the sending of the apostle?

³⁷ Burqe'i, Abul-Fazl, "Barresi 'Ilmi in Ahadith Mahdi", no date, bab al-Ayat al-Mu'avalah bi Qiyam Al-Qaim, p.181.

³⁸ Holy Quran, Ahzab: 6

³⁹ Holy Quran, Ahzab:46

⁴⁰ 'Abdul Qadir, Husayn, "Al-Quran va al-Surah al-Bay'aniyah", p.8; Zarkashi, Badruddin, "al-Burhan fi 'Ulum al-Quran", vol.3, pp. 418, 424.

⁴¹ Holy Quran, Muzzammi: 15

5.6. Claiming fulfilment of "prosperity without fear"

Burqe'i in this article claims that the caliphs succeeding the apostle, who had real belief and did good deeds according to the commandments of God, conquered the land of infidels and polytheists, replaced them, and found ability to perform religion ceremonies without fear.⁴²

Despite the Burqe'i claim, what is understood from the caliphs' history is that security and the lack of fear were not on that day. By the evidence of history, Abu Bakr in the early period of his caliphate - in the 11th and 12th year of lunar years – faced with a few crisis. Appearance of Mutenabbiyan (claimers of prophethood) like Taliheh Asadi and Musileh, disobedience of some tribes from giving Zakat with different motivations and struggling groups who thought Ahl al-Bayt of Prophet should replace them and zakat should be given to them.

The Caliph considered all of these groups apostates – Ahl Radeh - and started war with them. These wars swept across parts of Islamic land from Medina to Yemen, Bahrain, and Jamaica⁴³.

The era of the caliphs after him was not all safe and comfortable either. Imam Sadiq, in a speech to Mufazzal puts it this way: "... Mufazzal says: "I said O the son of God's Apostle! These Navasib think this verse (i.e. the verse 55 of Surat al-Nur) was revealed in the dignity of Abu Bakr, 'Umar,' Uthman, and 'Ali (peace be upon him). Imam said, "God does not guide the hearts of Navasib, because when was the time when a religion that Allah and His Messenger were satisfied with it were stable and prosperous and security was spread among ummah and there was no fear in hearts of people and doubt was removed from the hearts? Was it in the time of those three caliphs? Or in the era of Ali when Muslims became apostates and there were seditions and wars between Muslims and infidels...?"⁴⁴

Results

1. Burqe'i considers the interpretation Ta'vil (interpretation) of verse 55 of the Surah Nur to Imam Mahdi as a subjective commentary, and knows the pronoun "كم" in the phrase "وعد الله الذين آمنوا منكم و عملوا الصالحات" refers to those present at the time of the Prophet, peace be upon him and rejects other opinions except this. This is while his argument is not enough to refute other theories.
2. Burqe'i intertwines the various meanings of the word "خلف" *Khalaf* and thus removes the meaning of the word "Istikhlaf" in the verse from its original position. However, the lexicologists have understood the meaning of appointing caliph.
3. To prove his point, Burqe'i shows sheikh al-Tusi's words in the opposite way and considers him to be in line with himself; by looking at Tebyan and other works of the Sheikh al-Tusi in relation to the above verse, it turns out that not only does the Sheikh himself not mean so, but also he opposes those interpret it someone except Mahdi.

⁴² Burqe'i, Abul-Fazl, "Barresi 'Ilmi in Ahadith Mahdi", p.181.

⁴³ Maqdisi, Muṭāhhir ibn Tahir, "Al-Bada' val Tarikh", vol.5, p.152.

⁴⁴ «... قال المفضل فقلت يا ابن رسول الله فإن هذه النواصب تزعم أن هذه الآية نزلت في أبي بكر و عمر و عثمان و علي؛ فقال: لا يهدي الله قلوب الناصبية! متى كان الدين الذي ارتضاه الله و رسوله متمكنا بانتشار الأمن في الأمة و ذهاب الخوف من قلوبها و ارتفاع الشك من صدورها في عهد واحد من هؤلاء و في عهد علي عليه السلام مع ارتداد المسلمين و الفتن التي تنور في أيامهم في الحروب التي كانت تنتشب بين العقار و بينهم...» Saduq, Muhammad ibn 'Ali (Sheikh Saduq, "Kamāl al-Din va Tamām al-Ni'mah", vol.2, pp.356-357.

4. Burqē'i also introduces Tabarsi in *Majma' Al-Bayan* and Abu al-Futuh Razi in *Ruh al-Janan* agree with him. This is while Tabarsi announces the Shi'a scholars agree that this verse is related to the uprising of Mahdi, Abu al-Futuh has elaborated on the same meaning.

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