



The Story of the Torah from The Perspective of the Qur'an and History

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Abstract

The history of the Bible implies that the Torah has been formed and distorted over time. The Qur'an also confirms this issue. The Holy Qur'an, in addition to introducing the Jews as the People of the Book, uses the word "Torah" eighteen times, "which is a collection of divine teachings bestowed on Prophet Moses." On the one hand, the Holy Qur'an acknowledges and affirms it, and on the other hand, it attributes distortion to this book and introduces the Torah as one of the books that has been distorted throughout history, however, the holy Qur'an considers the part of the Torah that has been preserved to contain the teachings of God and can be acknowledged in general, and considers it a means of guiding the Jewish people and advises them to refer to it. The collection of information in this writing is library-based and their processing is descriptive-analytical. This article seeks to prove the view that the current Torah, with its various versions, has been disappeared in the ups and downs of the times, and that what exists is a very blurred and inconsistent face of the original version, and the Holy Qur'an confirms this.

Keywords: *Holy Qur'an; Torah, History; Confirmation; Distortion*

1- Expressing the Problem:

According to Muslims and according to the acknowledgement of the holy verses, the book of the Torah has been revealed to Moses (PBUH) in Mount Sinai and in the form of tablets. The Qur'an describes the Torah with characteristics such as Light (Al-Mā'idah, 46); Guidance (Al-A'rāf, 154); Preaching and Mercy (Al-A'rāf, 145); and ... and introduces it containing the divine commandments (Al-Mā'idah, 4). Jesus Christ (PBUH) (Al-Şaf, 6) and the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH) (Al-Baqarah, 101) have also acknowledged this heavenly book. An important question that needs to be answered is whether the current Torah, with its various versions, is the same Torah that was revealed to Moses (PBUH) or that the original book was lost in the ups and downs. If so, what were the reasons for the distortion of this heavenly book? What Jewish scholars acknowledge, and what we have seen throughout history, is that the original version of the Torah was destroyed by destructive seditions and wars that the Jews have endured at various times, and the writing of each of the remnants of the Torah, which is still available today, was

done centuries after Moses (PBUH), and in addition to the fact that there were many years between the writing of each of the Scriptures of Torah with another one. The Holy Qur'an also confirms this and introduces the Torah as one of the books that has been distorted throughout history, and according to the Holy Qur'an, the Torah has been distorted verbally and spiritually, although it has acknowledged that part of the Torah that has been preserved and considered it a means of ruling and guiding the Jewish people. And implicitly has ordered to study and obey that part.

2- Introduction:

Undoubtedly, what is available to the Jews today and is known as the Bible is other than the original Torah sent to this great prophet. A brief look at the Bible of the Jews, and according to the verses of the Holy Qur'an, it rejects the theory that the Torah is heavenly, as Muslims believe, while the Jews claim that the Torah was written by Moses himself, so their claim disagree with the Muslims' belief that God has sent the Torah to that prophet. It is possible to find distortion in any book, even the heavenly books, but there is a disputed between Muslims and scholars that whether the original Torah has been distorted or not; or whether it is due to the passage of time and the events that have taken place as a result of the events, so is this the original Torah or not? The purpose of this article is to examine this heavenly book from the perspective of the Qur'an and history, and it leads us to the conclusion that the Torah refers to a notable written nature (a text).

3- The Bible:

Before entering into the discussion, it is worthwhile to give a brief explanation about the Bible. The Bible has two parts: The Old Testament and the New Testament.

The Old Testament is a collection of 39 books or treatises¹ that Christians and Jews believe were written by some of the prophets or their followers over the centuries from the time of Prophet Moses (PBUH) to the time before Christ. There are five books in this section called the Torah of Moses. Of course, Catholics and Orthodox, in addition to this collection, consider seven other books to be an ancient part of the Bible.

The New Testament section is a collection of 27 books or treatises that years after Christ, according to Christians, have been written by eight of His disciples or early followers over tens of years.

The first four books in this section are called the Gospel.

In general, the Old Testament is divided into three parts:

1) Pentateuch: The Torah refers to the first five "books" of the Old Testament, also known as *Pentateuch*. This book, according to some Jews, as well as all Muslims, was revealed in the Mount Sinai and in Hebrew language, as tablets² on Moses (PBUH). These five books are as follows:

¹ List of this collection: 1- Genesis 2- Exodus 3- Leviticus 4- Numbers 5- Deuteronomy 6- Joshua 7- Judges 8- Ruth 9- First Samuel 10- Second Samuel 11- First King 12- Second King 13- First Chronicles 14- The Second Chronicles 15- Ezra 16- Nehemiah 17- Esther 18- Job 19- Psalms 20- Proverbs 21- Ecclesiastes 22- Song of Solomon 23- Isaiah 24- Jeremiah 25- Lamentations 26- Ezekiel 27- Daniel 28- Hosea 29- Joel 30- Amos 31- Obadiah 32- Jonah 33 - Micah 34- Nahum 35- Habakkuk 36- Zephaniah 37- Haggai 38- Zechariah 39- Malachi.

² In Arabic, Moses is called "mosheh" meaning "taken from water" (Shoushtari, 1366, p. 532). In Exodus Journey, the second chapter, entitled "The Birth of Moses," tells the story of how Moses was born and how he fell into the water, and Pharaoh's wife, seeing the basket hanging in the water, ordered her maids to take it back from the water. When Pharaoh's wife met the child's

- **Book of Genesis:** Genesis Journey speaks of the beginnings. The beginning of heaven and earth, light and darkness, sea and sky, land and plants, sun and moon and stars, terrestrial and aquatic animals, birds as well as human race, sin and liberation and blessing and curse..... (Mohammadiyan, 1381, p. 132). One of the keywords in this book is the word 'Genesis' itself. This word divides the book into ten major parts, each of which includes topics such as birth, genealogy, and history. In Genesis Journey, the lineage of some of great prophets has been mentioned, Prophets such as Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph (PBUH).

- **Book of Exodus:** This part tells the story of Israelites in Egypt, after the death of Joseph (PBUH) and the birth and life story of Prophet Moses (PBUH) and his growth in the court of Pharaoh, as well as the liberation of the Israelites from the capture of Pharaoh and their wandering in the Sinai Desert and the revelation of the Torah to Moses (PBUH) and the beginning of the legislation of religious rulings are other topics of this journey. The purpose of the Exodus is departure or emigration of the Israelites from Egypt.

- **Book of Leviticus:** In this journey, the legislation of religious rules and rituals of Jewish religion is discussed and how to perform these rituals and customs and ceremonies of the Levite who have been from the lineage of Levi³ has been determined (Mr. Hawkes, 1377, p. 759).

- **Book of Numbers:** This part discusses the forty-year journey of the Israelites and their wandering in the Sinai Desert and the desert of Thierry and the conquest of the lands of Canaan. And it has included the story of the Israelites after leaving Egypt until the Harun's death. It lists the number of Israelites tribes and their characteristics.

- **Book of Deuteronomy:** This book briefly contains a repetition of the rules and regulations that were included in the previous four books.

2) **Ketuvim** (writings) are works of the Jewish nation that explains the history of this religion after the death of Prophet Moses (PBUH) and their developments and beliefs.

3) **Nevi'im**, which is the books of the Israelite prophets, and it is often expressed in the form of mystery and irony in a dream state.

4- *History of the Torah and How to Write and Compile its Asfār (Journeys):*

The Torah is a Hebrew word derived from "Tūrah" meaning guidance or law (Sousa, 1973, p. 148); In other words, since the stories and anecdotes of this book have played a key role in organizing the rules related to the religious and social life of the Jews, they have called it the Torah or the law (Bucaille, 1372, p. 24).

According to Muslims, and according to the revelations of the Book of the Torah revealed to Prophet Moses (PBUH) in the Mount Sinai and in the form of tablets:

And We ordained for him in the Tablets in all matters, admonition and explanation of all things, (and said):" Take and hold these with firmness, and enjoin thy people to hold fast by the best in the precepts: soon shall I show you the homes of the wicked, (how they lie desolate)." (A'rāf: 145)

weeping eyes, she took pity on him and kept him with herself and she appoints a midwife who was actually Moses' mother to be his guardian and calls him "Moses," meaning "taken from the water".

³ Levi is the third son of Jacob (PBUH) and refers to the Levites of the elders of the Israelites from the descendants of Levi.

These wooden tablets contain the teachings and rules of the Torah, which were presented to Moses by God after forty days (A'raf, 142) when Moses (PBUH) settled in Sinai.

The Qur'an describes the Torah with characteristics such as light (Ma'idah, 46), guidance (A'raf, 154), preaching (A'raf, 145) and mercy (A'raf, 154), etc., and has introduced it containing divine commandments (Ma'idah, 43).

Prophet Jesus (PBUH) (Şaf, 6) and the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH) (Al-Baqarah, 101) have also approved this heavenly book.

An important and fundamental question that needs to be answered properly is that whether the current Torah, with its various versions, is the same as the heavenly book, which was revealed to Prophet Moses (PBUH), or this is the distorted version, and if so, what are the reasons for the distortion of this heavenly book? What Jewish scholars acknowledge is that the original version of the Torah was destroyed by destructive seditions and wars that the Jews faced at various times, and that the writing of each of the Torah's remained books that are now available have been done centuries after Moses (PBUH), in addition to the fact that many years have passed between the writing of each of the books of Torah with the other. Some believe that the writing of Torah's Journeys was done about seven centuries after the death of Moses (Sousa, 1973, p. 159). "We cannot confirm the return of any of the five journeys and even the ten testaments to the time of Moses, because the narrations narrated in these journeys during this time have been exposed to various changes and additions and repetitions throughout different centuries." said Lawrence, a Jewish scholar and researcher, in his book "Israel". (Lawrence, 1343, p. 359).

It is very clear that no fair and truthful scientist can be found who believes that Moses (PBUH) wrote the Torah by himself from the beginning of the story of creation to its end, or that he supervised the writing of the Torah by others. But it should be said after Moses (PBUH) and during different times and eras and on various social and religious occasions, additions have been made in the Torah (Ghasemi, 1380, p. 16). In addition, there are some evidences that shows the Torah was written after the Prophet Moses (PBUH). For example, we can mention and explain how Moses died and how the Israelites mourned on him. It is obvious that Moses himself did not write the story of his death and weeping over his lifeless body!

In Deuteronomy, chapter thirty-four, verse five to eight, we read: "Moses, the servant of God, died in the land of Moab, as God had said. God buried him in a valley near the house of Faghūr in the land of Moab. But to this day, no one knows where he was buried. Moses was 120 years old at the time of his death. However, he was still strong and his eyes could see well. The Israelites mourned for him for thirty days in the plains of Moab."

Some scholars believe that myths and legends played an important role in the evolution, formation and development of the Jewish religion. Samuel Henry Hook, author of the book *Middle Eastern Myths*, commented: "Myths have been borrowed from the religions of neighboring countries, and the Hebrew authors of these myths have symbolically benefited from these myths for expressing their beliefs about the foundation of the universe" (Henry Hook, 1391, p. 235).

In other words, the purpose of the authors and writers of Torah's Journeys was to collect and preserve the customs and traditions of the broken and scattered Jewish people. In this way, they can heal some of their pains and leave a memory for the future (Ashtiani, 1368, p. 368).

Of course, it is also possible that some of these stories were taken by the Jews during their captivity in Babylon from the people of that land, and it is more probable that before that time, they have been benefitted from the sources of ancient Sumerian and Sami, common to all peoples of the east (Challaye, 1346, p. 277).

Thus, it seems that the Torah writers have made some stories for specific purposes, and some of the Torah's journeys are in fact nothing more than the myths and poems of other tribes, which these writers have chosen and attributed them to some Jewish prophets or fake prophet (Shibli, 1986, p. 351).

5- Examining the Torah in Terms of Document:

The People of the Book consider the Torah to be the most important and authoritative part of the Old Testament and believe that it is written by Prophet Moses (PBUH) and other books of the Old Testament by other prophets or Jewish scholars.

Some of the problems with the Torah in terms of documentation are as follows:

5-1- There is no clear and definite reason in quoting and attributing the current Torah to Prophet Moses (PBUH) and their claim in this matter does not exceed the level of suspicion, therefore some scholars of the People of the Book have clearly expressed doubts in this citation. We read in the holy book of Christians:

"In ancient times, people believed that Moses wrote the Torah, but new Bible studies show that it is more difficult to answer the question of the origin of the Torah comparing the first assumption. The Torah has been created throughout generations. First there were narrations that the Torah was transmitted orally by the Jewish people, then the narrations were written in several collections, some of which were about history and some about the rulings. Finally, in the fifth century BC, these collections were collected in a book. There were many who participated in this long and complicated work and most of them have been forgotten by history. According to Jews and Christians, the divine revelation has been a companion and supporter of the Torah in all stages of its writing (Michel, 1377, p. 32).

5-2- The writing style and the type of literature used in the Torah show well that the Torah is neither a divine revelation nor written by Moses, but the contents of this book are reports from the history of some of the prophets and the events that took place on the Israelites and constantly mention Moses as an absent person. Throughout the Torah, it is not possible to find a case in which Moses (PBUH) referred to himself as a speaker, or even a case in which the message of God was addressed directly to Moses. As an example, consider the following:

"Moses, as God had commanded him, counted the eldest sons of the Israelites" (Book of Numbers, chapter 3, verse 43).

"God told Moses to tell the people of Israel" (Book of Numbers, Chapter 5).

5-3- In the Torah, the death of Prophet Moses (PBUH) and the events that took place after that have been discussed:

"Moses, the servant of God, died as God had said in the land of Moab. God buried him in a valley near Beit Faghūr in the land of Moab, but to this day no one knows where he was buried. Moses was 120 years old at the time of his death. He was still strong and he could see clearly. The people of Israel mourned for him for thirty days in the plains of Moab. (Book of Deuteronomy, Chapter 34)

This phrase clearly shows that the history of the writing of the Torah was many years after the death of Prophet Moses (PBUH). Similar expressions can be found in some other books of the Old Testament.

5-4- The contents of the Old Testament show that the Torah was completely lost in several historical periods during some heavy and devastating events for many years and no one knew about it until someone claimed that he has found it or he has a mission to rewrite it. In such circumstances, there is no trust left in this book (Book 2 of Chronicles, chapter 34).

5-5- Another reason why the current Torah is not attached to the document and the lack of trust in it is that in many cases the contents of the books and other treatises of the Old Testament are not compatible with the contents of the Torah, if this Torah was the original and accepted Torah, the authors of the other books of the Old Testament, which were usually from the prophets and followers of Prophet Moses (PBUH), did not oppose it. For example:

All the people of the Book agree that both the first and the second books of the Chronicles are among the works of Ezra. What is stated in these two books about the number of children of (Benjamin) contradicts what has been stated in the Torah. (Genesis, chapter 46; verse 21).

5-6- Many of the verses of the current Torah indicate that the Torah was written long after the death of Prophet Moses (PBUH). Now we mention one example:

"Before any king come to power in Israel, these kings came to power one after another in the land of Edom: Bela ... Jobab ... Husham ... Hadad ... Saul of Rḥobot, which was situated by a river." (Chapter 36, verses 31-39).

These phrase clearly shows that at the time of writing the Torah, there was a time when a long time had passed from the time of Saul and the age of monarchy had come to Israel (that is, the time of David and Solomon, etc.). It is interesting to know the time of Saul and David was about three hundred and sixty years after Prophet Moses (PBUH).

6- Examining the Contradictory Narrations Related to the Writing of the Torah

But what we're going to study now, as a supplement to the previous discussion, is to present some contradictory points in the current Torah that can be mentioned in terms of how to write this book.

When Moses (PBUH) took the tribes of Israel out of Egypt and saved them from Pharaoh, he took them to the Sinai Desert and gathered them around the mountain. But the Israelites, who had returned to the early life style in the Sinai Desert, show incompatibility, remembering the goodness of the Egyptian cities and its blessings, and dissatisfied with the living conditions of the Sinai. Therefore, in cases of distress and hardship, they objected to Moses (PBUH) as to why he had expelled them from Egypt. (Psalms, Psalm 106, verses 10 to 16). Addressing Moses (PBUH), they said:

"We wish we had died in the land of Egypt at the hands of God and not come here because we would sit there around meat pots and eat bread, but in this burning desert that you brought us, we will soon die of starvation." (Book of Exodus, Chapter 16, Paragraph 3).

Moses (PBUH) was offended by these complaints of the people and went to Mount Sinai and stayed there for 40 days and then returned with the Torah tablets and his official prophecy began (ibid. Chapter 32, verses 15-20).

According to the first opinion, the Torah was written at the end of the life of Moses (PBUH) and by himself, and according to the second opinion - which is also supported by the Qur'an - the Torah was revealed to him in Mount Sinai.

When Moses (PBUH), "according to the first opinion", gave the Torah to the Levites and the elders of the Israelites at the end of his life, he warned them to place it next to the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah, which was of great importance to them. He told the elders of the Israelites:

"I am aware of your rebellion and disobedience. I am still alive that you are doing sedition and corruption. When I die, you will become more corrupt, and you will return from the way I commanded you." (Deuteronomy, chapter 31, verse 27).

What Moses (PBUH) mentioned happened. The twelve tribes of Israel became rebellious, committing all kinds of oppression and all kinds of sins. Their children were taken to the altar in honor of the idols and slaughtered for the idols of Canaan (Psalms, chapters 106, verses 37 and 38).

The situation of the Jews was deteriorating day by day, and polytheism and idolatry had become the favorite act among them, and the number of false prophets and claimants of prophecy was increasing. It is worth mentioning that only four hundred and fifty people claimed to be prophets on behalf of the idol of Baal and invited people to idolatry (the first book of kings, chapter 18 / verse 20).

Some of them were lustful people who were aroused by strange music and heavy drinks or dances similar to Sufi dances and fell into a state of insanity, while saying things that people thought were revealed to them (The Historical Course of the Torah, 1355, p. 8)

During this period, the Jews were not in a good position. There were no temples in all the land of the Jews, not even in Jerusalem, and the Jews had to offer their sacrifices in private altars or on small temples on the hills (Will Durant, 1366, 10/452).

It was previously reported that Moses (PBUH) - according to one of the two opinions - had given the Torah to the elders of Israelites. But he also stated that every seven years all people gather to hear it. He also told about the rebellion of the elders of Israelites! What is surprising is why a prophet like Moses (PBUH) should do such an immature act? Because he has made the Torah available only to the Levites and the elders of the Israelites, and not to all the people! Another point is that the teachings of the Torah and the hearing of the revelatory verses must be closed for seven years, after which the Torah must be recited to the people only once, and then those who are thirsty for the teachings of the revelation must endure for another seven years so over time, they were given the opportunity to hear the verses again.

Indeed, with the report that Prophet Moses (PBUH) had previously given to the elders of the Israelites, was it not possible for them to distort this heavenly book? Couldn't they have added or subtracted something to Torah by their own will and with different purposes? And if so, what executive power could stop them?!

In many parts of the current Torah, we read that people must sacrifice their sacrifices to their God, Yahweh, and sacrifice in the temple in Jerusalem. But no one other than the priests and elders of the Israelites has the right to use those sacrifices or other gifts such as gold, silver, money, ornaments (Book of Exodus, chapters 28, Paragraph 2-4) (Book of Leviticus, Chapter 2, Paragraph 3, Chapter 6, Paragraphs 18 and 26 and Chapter 7, Paragraph 6) Has the Shari'ah of Moses (PBUH) really introduced them as a specific divine people? Or have they imposed such false rulings on the Torah at their own will and for their own benefit?

Going through the pages of history, we find that the Israelites - this complex and thought-provoking nation - has gone through various ups and downs, along with destructive wars, which have resulted in looting, destruction of temples, countless deaths and the loss of Ark of the Covenant, the same holy box in which the original version of the Torah was kept. The first book of Samuel refers to a war between the Palestinians and the Israelites in which the coffin of the Yahweh covenant was looted and then the Torah, which was the legacy remained from Moses (PBUH), was taken by strangers. In turn, it has led to the disintegration of national religion and the disintegration of law and sharia:

"And the Philistines fought, and the Israelites were defeated, and fled, and the ark of God was taken" (The first Book of Samuel: Chapter 4, Paragraphs 10 and 11).

After the disappearance of the Ark of the Covenant, which naturally led to the disappearance of the original version of the Torah. It is in later centuries that we see the efforts of the priests and elders of

the Israelites to keep and preserve the religious foundations of the Jewish people. It is in this context that individuals such as the "Hilkiah, the Kohen" and "Ezra" have sought to retrieve or rewrite the Torah.

So the purpose of authors and writers of the Torah's journey has actually been to collect and preserve the customs and traditions of the Jewish people, in order to heal their pain and suffering somehow and to leave a legacy for the future. According to most Jewish scholars and researchers, we cannot confirm the return of any of the five journeys and even the ten testaments to the time of Moses.

7- Torah from the Perspective of Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an, in many Surahs and verses, tells the story of the Israelites (the Jewish people) and has a positive and negative view to the book revealed to this people, which we will deal with in each of these two cases:

7-1- Confirmation of the Torah

In a few verses, the Holy Qur'an confirms the Torah revealed to Prophet Moses (PBUH), the Prophet of the Jewish people, and implicitly orders them to refer to it and study it:

Say: "Bring ye the Torah and study it, if ye be men of truth." (*Āl Imrān*: 93)

Also in verses 41, 89 and 101 of Surah Al-Baqarah, and verse 47 of Surah Al-Nisā', etc., the same issue has been mentioned, which has been avoided for the sake of brevity.

Allameh Tabataba'i writes about these verses: "In these verses, God Almighty has started the rebuke to the Jewish nation and this rebuke continues for one hundred and several verses. And in that, he considers the blessings that God bestowed on the Jews and the honors that were bestowed on them, and he counts the reaction that the Jews showed as infidelity, sin, perfidy, rebellion and stubbornness and says to them: Do not begin to disbelieve in the Qur'an among the People of the Book and the people of the past and the people of the future." (Tabataba'i, 1973, vol. 1, p. 151).

From the above verses, it is clear that the Qur'an confirms some contents of the Torah, and the meaning of both verses 89 and 101 of Baqarah is that when the Prophet of God (PBUH) was sent and brought a law and a book that completed his Shari'ah and his Book, they became infidels and did not accept him as a prophet, even though they knew that he is the same prophet who is foretold in their books, and their prophets have given good news of his arrival, just as it is narrated from Christ that said:

And remember, Jesus, the son of Mary, said: "O Children of Israel! I am the messenger of Allah (sent) to you, confirming the Torah (Law) (which came) before me, and giving Glad Tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad." But when he came to them with Clear Signs, they said, "This is evident sorcery!" (*Şaf*: 6)

Mentioning the words of Jesus (PBUH) in the Qur'an is the reason for the Qur'an's confirmation on this statement and, as a result, the acknowledgment of the revealed Torah is by the Qur'an.

The topics discussed in the Torah, which have been confirmed by the Holy Qur'an, are divided into three general sections: faith, the existence of divine rules and laws in the Torah, and awareness of the blessed existence of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

7-1-1- Faith

Regarding the issue of faith, which is common to all divine religions, and the invitation of all the prophets to this faith, the Holy Qur'an says:

And believe in what I reveal, confirming the revelation which is with you, and be not the first to reject Faith therein, nor sell My Signs for a small price; and fear Me, and Me alone. (Baqarah: 41)

In this verse, God informs the Jews that acknowledging the Qur'an is in fact acknowledging the Torah. Because what is said in the Qur'an about confession to the Prophet's prophecy is the same as in the Torah and the Gospel. (Tabarsī, 1986, vol. 1, p. 120).

The divine verses once again confirm the Torah, saying:

It was We who revealed the Torah (to Moses): therein was guidance and light. By its standard have been judged the Jews, by the prophets who bowed (as in Islam) to Allah's will, by the rabbis and the doctors of law: for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah's book, and they were witnesses thereto: therefore, fear not men, but fear Me, and sell not My signs for a miserable price. If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are unbelievers. (Mā'idah: 44)

That is, in the Torah, there is something of guidance that they are guided by, and there is something of light with which they acquire knowledge and wisdom according to the condition of the Israelites and the extent of their talent (Tabataba'i, 1973, vol. 5, p. 343).

7-1-2- divine laws and regulations

The Holy Qur'an states in several verses that there are divine rules and regulations in the Torah, although the word Qur'an indicates the writing and registration of laws in the Torah; however, because the Jews of the time of the Prophet (PBUH) are addressed and judged, it is a sign that the Torah at that time included such rulings and not all the rulings written in the first Torah were abolished, as mentioned in some verses of Surah Mā'idah. It has been said that:

We ordained therein for them: "Life for life, eye for eye, nose or nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal." But if any one remits the retaliation by way of charity, it is an act of atonement for himself. And if any fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are wrong-doers. (Mā'idah: 45)

The commentator of al-Mīzān writes below this verse: This sentence of retribution is present in the Torah that is prevalent among them today. As it is said in the twenty-first part of the Exodus Book from the Torah: Whoever beats a man and he dies (is killed), but he does not intend to do it, but God has made him to do so, I will give him a place to escape...

And if you are bothered, you will be given body to body and eye to eye and tooth to tooth and hand to hand and foot to foot and burn to burn and injury to injury and beat to beat. And in the twenty-fourth part of the Book of Leviticus of the Torah, it is mentioned: And when someone kills a human being, he would be killed, and whoever kills an animal and is replaced by a human body, and because a human being makes an injury in someone like himself, he will see the same injury as he did to him. (Tabataba'i, 1973, vol. 5, p. 359).

Also in verse 32 of the same surah, he says: Whoever kills anyone on earth somehow except murder, it is as if he has killed all the people, and whoever resurrects someone, it is as if he has kept all the people alive. And the prophets gave them clear proofs, but many of them are exaggerating on earth.

In financial matters such as usury, the Holy Qur'an, in verse 161 of Surah an-Nisā' , warns us that we forbade them (the Jewish people): and because of their usurer, even though they were forbidden, and it is a sinful deed for them. We have prepared a painful punishment for the disbelievers.

The Holy Qur'an also mentions some of the rulings on Jewish food and drink in the Torah: verse 93 of *Āl Imrān*, which refutes the Jewish claim that some foods such as camel milk and meat, which are considered halal (religiously lawful) in the Qur'an, are forbidden (Tabataba'i, v. 3, pp. 345-346) that said: All food was lawful to the Children of Israel, except what Israel (Jacob) made unlawful for himself, before the Torah (of Moses) was revealed. Say: "Bring ye the Torah and study it, if ye be men of truth." (*Āl Imrān*: 93)

Ṭabarī writes under this verse: "O Muhammad! Tell the suspected Jews who say that God has forbidden them camel meat and milk in the Torah to bring the Torah and read it until it becomes clear to them (Ṭabarī, 1999, vol. 4, pp. 3-4)."

In these verses, the Torah, which is in the hands of the Jews, has been briefly acknowledged. This is the same Torah that Ezra wrote and collected with the permission of Cyrus, the king of Iran after the conquest of Babylon and the rescue of the Babylonians from captivity, and this is the same Torah that was in the hands of the Prophet (PBUH) today. These verses refer to the existence of God's command in the Torah in the hands of the Jews of the time of the Prophet (PBUH) and thus confirm it.

From all this, the Torah in their hands today has some of the original Torah that was revealed to Moses (Tabataba'i, 1973, vol. 5, p. 342).

7-1-3- Awareness of the existence of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)

The Holy Qur'an informs the People of the Book (the Jewish people) of the coming of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and states that he knows the characteristics of the Prophet of the Apocalypse and his followers and their characteristics, and thus Acknowledges another category of material in the Torah. Therefore, He says:

The People of the Book know this as they know their own sons; but some of them conceal the truth which they themselves know. (Baqarah: 146)

Regarding this verse, Kulaynī quotes Amir al-Mu'minin (AS) in his document, who said: These are the Jews and the Christians, and they know the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the guardianship from the Torah and the Gospel as they know their children⁴. Ali ibn Ibrahim Qomi also quotes Imam Ṣādiq (AS) as saying in his document: This verse was revealed about Jews and Christians, and this is because God Almighty in the Torah and the Gospel and the Psalms, had mentioned the attributes of the Messenger of God (PBUH) and the attributes of his companions and their migration. And their story has been mentioned in the Quran:

Muhammad is the messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are strong against Unbelievers, (but) compassionate amongst each other. Thou wilt see them bow and prostrate themselves (in prayer), seeking Grace from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure. On their faces are their marks, (being) the traces of their prostration. This is their similitude in the Torah; and their similitude in the Gospel is: like a seed which sends forth its blade, then makes it strong; it then becomes thick, and it stands on its own

فَأَمَّا أَصْحَابُ الْمَشْأَمَةِ، فَهُمْ الْيَهُودُ وَ النَّصَارَى؛ يَقُولُ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ: «الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعَتْهُمْ كِتَابٌ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ» يَعْرِفُونَ مُحَمَّداً صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ وَ الْوَلَايَةَ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَ الْإِنْجِيلِ، كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ فِي مَنَازِلِهِمْ «وَ إِنْ فَرِيقاً مِّنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَ هُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ»: أَنَّكَ الرَّسُولَ إِلَيْهِمْ «فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ» (بحراني، 1403ق، ج1، ص161).

stem, (filling) the sowers with wonder and delight. As a result, it fills the Unbelievers with rage at them. Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness, and a great Reward. (Fath: 29)

Therefore, the attributes of the Prophet of God (PBUH) and his companions were in the Torah, and when God sent him as a prophet, the People of the Book knew him. Also, in verse 157 of Surah A'rāf, this issue has been stated. So the attributes of the Prophet (PBUH) had been mentioned in the Torah, and when God sent him, the People of the Book recognized him, but denied him.

Therefore, the Holy Qur'an acknowledges the part of the Torah that has been preserved and considers it a means of ruling and guiding the Jewish people and advises them to refer to it. In some verses, the Holy Qur'an doesn't confirm the Torah in the hands of the Jews and introduces it as distorted and modified. Before expressing the verses related to the distortion of the Torah, we will briefly examine the meaning of distortion and its types.

7-2- Distortion

The word distortion is also used to refer to the meanings of change, desire, looking for something, and the edge (Farāhīdī, below "letter", 1405 AH, p. 284 / Ibn Duraid, below "letter", 1987-1988, p. 317 / Johari, below "letter", 1376, p. 128) And the commentators on the literal meaning of the word refer to these meanings (Tūsī, 460 AH, vol. 3, p. 213, / *ibid.*, Vol. 7, p. 296 / Zamakhsharī, 538 AH, vol. 1, p. 516).

In the term, distortion means transformation and inversion and has various examples (Khoei, 1418 AH, vol. 1, p. 200 / Ma'rifat, 1413 AH, vol. 1, pp. 13-16). There are two types of distortion: verbal distortion and spiritual distortion.

7-2-1- Verbal Distortion:

Distortion is leading and delaying the word or converting a word to another word or hiding it or increasing and decreasing the word (Rashid Reza, 1354 AH, vol. 6, pp. 282 and 389). Allameh Tabataba'i considers verbal distortion to be the change of the position of words, that is, to precede and delay or remove and add words. (Tabataba'i, 1973, vol. 4, p. 364).

One of the aspects of the distortion of the Torah that has been attributed to the Jewish scholars is the verbal distortion, and the Holy Qur'an mentions it in some verses, as it says:

1) Of the Jews there are those who displace words from their (right) places, and say: "We hear and we disobey"; and "Hear, may you not hear"; and "Raina"; with a twist of their tongues and a slander to Faith. If only they had said: "We hear and we obey"; and "Do hear"; and "Do look at us"; it would have been better for them, and more proper; but Allah hath cursed them for their Unbelief; and but few of them will believe. (Nisā': 46)

In this verse, God Almighty has explicitly announced the distortion of words and their displacement by the Jewish people (Ṭabarī, 1412, vol. 5, p. 75).

2) Can ye (O ye men of Faith) entertain the hope that they will believe in you? - - Seeing that a party of them heard the Word of Allah, and perverted it knowingly after they understood it. (Baqarah: 75)

In this verse, God Almighty tells the Muslims, who hoped the Jewish people to convert to Islam, that they were the ones who heard God's word and, after understanding it, distorted it. A group of Shiite and Sunni commentators believe that the meaning of distortion in this verse is distortion of the Torah appears to be more consistent with the word Torah. They have considered the change of the attributes of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Verse of Rajm (i.e. stoning) as examples of such distortions. (Zamakhsharī, 538 AH, vol. 1, p. 156 / Qumī Nayshābūrī, vol. 1, p. 350 / Ṭanṭāwī, v. 1, pp. 90 & 91/ Qurṭubī, v. 1, p. 352)

3) Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands, and then say: " This is from Allah," to traffic with it for miserable price! Woe to them for what their hands do write, and for the gain they make thereby. (Baqarah: 79)

This verse refers to the Jews of Israelites that distorted the Book of God and wrote a book based on what they themselves interpreted and contradicted what God revealed to His Prophet (Moses) and attributed it to God. (Ṭabarī, 1412, vol. 1, p. 535 / Ṭanṭāwī, vol. 1, p. 91 / Suyūṭī, 1414, vol. 1, pp. 201 and 202 / Abul Futūḥ Rāzī, 556 AH, vol. 2, pp. 27 and 28 / Lady Amin, 1361, vol. 1, p. 380 / Makarem Shirazi, 1364, vol. 1, p. 316).

4) There is among them a section who distort the Book with their tongues: (As they read) you would think it is a part of the Book, but it is no part of the Book; and they say, " That is from Allah," but it is not from Allah. It is they who tell a lie against Allah, and (well) they know it! (Āl Imrān: 78)

In this verse, God Almighty informs us of the fact that some people turned their tongues while reading their heavenly book, then after making changes in those words, they introduced them as the real words. So the Jews added their prefabricated contents to the Book of God and at the same time attributed them to God (Ṭabarī, 1412, vol. 3, p. 232 / Surabadi, 1380, vol. 1, p. 296 / Faḍlullāh, 1405 AH, vol. 6, p. 821).

5) But because of their breach of their covenant, we cursed them, and made their hearts grow hard: they change the words from their (right) places and forget a good part of the message that was sent them, nor wilt thou cease to find them - - barring a few - ever bent on (new) deceits: but forgive them, and overlook (their misdeeds): for Allah loves those who are kind. (Mā'idah: 13)

Some commentators on this verse have only pointed out that the Israelites changed God's command (Najafī, 1419, vol. 1, p. 114). Others believe that this may be due to the loss of the Torah throughout history. The verse points out that a group of Jewish scholars began to write the Torah, and as a result many parts were destroyed and partially distorted or forgotten, and what came to them was part of the true book of Prophet Moses (PBUH) which had been mixed a lot superstitions and they sometimes forgot the same part (Makarem Shirazi, 1364, vol. 4, p. 313 / Firuzabadi, p. 90 / Suyūṭī, 1414, vol. 2, p. 268 / Lāhījī, 1363, vol. 1, p. 625).

6) O Messenger! let not those grieve thee, who race each other into unbelief: (whether it be) among those who say " We believe" with their lips but whose hearts have no faith; or it be among the Jews, men who will listen to any lie, will listen even to others who have never so much as come to thee. They change the words from their (right) places: they say, " If ye are given this, take it, but if not, beware!" If any one's trial is intended by Allah, thou hast no authority in the least for him against Allah. For such - - it is not Allah's will to purify their hearts. For them there is disgrace in this world, and in the Hereafter a heavy punishment. (Mā'idah: 41)

In this verse, God Almighty mentions some Israelites who, by spying and sabotaging the mission of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) to distort the words, which some commentators have considered as verbal

distortion of this verse (Firuzabadi, pp. 93-94 / Ṭabarī, 1412 AH, vol. 6, pp. 152-153) According to some other sayings that the Shiite Imams (AS) have confirmed it, the reason for the revelation of this verse was the change of the sentence of adultery from stoning to cover. The Jewish people had done so, and this was acknowledged in a conversation between the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Syrian people. (Balkhī, 1423, vol. 1, p. 475 / Qumī Mashhadī, 1366, vol. 4, p. 117 / Meybudī, 1371, vol. 3, p. 117 / Tabataba'i, 1382, vol. 5, p. 339).

In all the verses, it is mentioned that the Jewish scholars have distorted this heavenly book and did not act on it, as in the Holy Qur'an, in verse 5 of Surah Jumu'ah, these inactive scholars are like donkey:

The similitude of those who were entrusted with the (obligations of) Torah (Mosaic Law), but who subsequently failed in those (obligations), is that of a donkey which carries huge tomes (but understands them not). Evil is the similitude of people who falsify the Signs of Allah: and Allah guides not people who do wrong. (Jumu'ah: 5)

The story of the Jewish scholars who told the people about the book and the rules and did not act on it themselves, and their story is like a donkey that takes away a trust and only carries it and betrays that trust. As God commanded them to leave the trust to its people. In Al-Burhan's commentary on this subject, it is stated as follows:

The similitude of those who were entrusted with the (obligations of) Torah... then express your desire for Death, if ye are truthful!" (Jumu'ah: 5-6)

Ali bin Ibrahim: Then their example is like a donkey who has no knowledge about the book he is carrying. (Bahrānī, 1107 AH, vol. 5, p. 376).

7-2-2- Spiritual distortion

It is the carrying of a word other than what is set for it (Rashid Reza, 1354 AH, vol. 6, pp. 282 and 389). Or the interpretation of words except its purpose is to deviate from its natural path. The natural course of words and phrases is the expression of the true meanings and their real meaning, and in case of deviation from those meanings, distortion is realized, so distorting the word is called interpreting it contrary to what it looks like. It has also been stated that spiritual distortion is the wrong analysis and inference of error and interpretation of words contrary to the true purpose of the speaker. (Mohammadi, 1378, vol. 1, p. 12).

Hiding the truths of the Torah in the form of spiritual distortion has been a common way among Jews, and the Holy Qur'an states this in a few verses, which briefly cite a few examples:

1) O people of the Book! There hath come to you our Messenger, revealing to you much that ye used to hide in the Book, and passing over much (that is now unnecessary): There hath come to you from Allah a (new) light and a perspicuous Book. (Mā'idah: 15)

In this verse, God addresses a group of the People of the Book who were the Jews and the Christians contemporary to the Prophet (PBUH) who hid many things from the people, including stoning, and adultery. (Tafsīr Ṭabarī 1412 AH, vol. 6, p. 219).

2) And remember Allah took a Covenant from the People of the Book, to make it known and clear to mankind, and not to hide it; but they threw it away behind their backs, and purchased with it some miserable gain! And vile was the bargain they made! (*Āl Imrān*: 187)

3) Say: " O People of the Book! Ye have no ground to stand upon unless ye stand fast by the Torah, the Gospel, and all the revelation that has come to you from your Lord." It is the revelation that cometh to thee from thy Lord, that increased in most of them their obstinate rebellion and blasphemy. But sorrow thou not over (these) people without Faith. (*Mā'idah*: 68)

4) If only they had stood fast by the Torah, the Gospel, and all the revelation that was sent to them from their Lord, they would have (enjoyed) eating both from above them and from below their feet. There is from among them a party on the right course: but many of them follow a course that is evil. (*Mā'idah*: 66)

Allameh Tabataba'i writes in this regard: The meaning of the Torah and the Bible are the two books that God revealed to Prophet Moses (PBUH) and Jesus (PBUH), not these books that are currently in hand and are called the Bible and the Torah. The Torah and the Bible are not real and heavenly, but are a collection that has been distorted in this way, and the meaning of "and what has been revealed on them", which is mentioned after the Torah and the Bible, is the other books attributed to the prophets of the predecessors, and that day it has been made available to the People of the Book, like the Psalms of David (PBUH) and the like. The purpose of these books is to be maintained practicality, that is, to apply their commands in society and to act according to all its laws, and to believe in the teachings that is stated in them on the origin and resurrection, of course, those books that have not been distorted by the prejudiced or have not been destroyed; because their distortions are invalid and their extinctions have not been ordered (Tabataba'i, 1402 AH, vol. 6, pp. 37 and 38).

Conclusion:

According to the material presented in this article, it can be seen that the Torah revealed to Prophet Moses (PBUH) has been disappeared over time and throughout history and in the ups and downs of the times, and what is available is a very blurred image of the original version. It has been taken out of the state of revelation and what is now in the hands of the Jewish people is a kind of distortion of the revealed divine book. The verses of the Holy Qur'an clearly indicate that the distortion took place in both forms (verbal and spiritual) in the Torah. And this book has been degraded to the point of human speech, but due to the revelatory nature of the source of this book, some of the correct rules and news can still be found in it.

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