



## Analysis of Bassam al-Jamal Approach to the Causes of Revelation of Quranic Verses

Marzieh Mohases<sup>1</sup>; Reyhaneh Khodamardi<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Professor, Faculty of Theology and Religions, Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

Corresponding Email: [m\\_mohases@sbu.ac.ir](mailto:m_mohases@sbu.ac.ir)

<sup>2</sup> Graduate of Master of Quranic Sciences, Quran Miracle Research Institute of Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, Iran

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### **Abstract**

The interaction between the Qur'an and the events of the time is a subject that has been considered by scholars since the beginning of the formation of the Qur'anic sciences. The commentators of the Qur'an have always expressed and analyzed the narrations that the causes of revelation of verses and have used it to understand the verse; However, the emergence of modern thinker theories paved the way for changes in Qur'anic studies and everyone was encouraged to study the historical Qur'an as a novel method and a range of views and opinions have emerged among scholars and thinkers of Qur'anic studies in this field. Despite the denial of the need for causes of revelation of verses in the understanding of some modern thinkers, some considered knowledge of the cause of revelation necessary in understanding verses. By presenting a new reading of the knowledge of the causes of revelation, Bassam al-Jamal has gone beyond traditional views and believes that understanding a small number of verses depends on knowing the cause of revelation. In the present study, by descriptive-analytical method, the manner of dealing with the knowledge of the causes of revelation is investigated. The most important findings indicate that Bassam al-Jamal, by carefully considering the factors as well as the stages of formation of the science of revelation, emphasizes the effect of narrations causes of the revelation on the interpretation of verses in the evolution of the history of interpretation and believes in the symbolization of the reports indicating the causes of revelation.

**Keywords:** *Bassam Al-Jamal; Causes of Revelation; Culture of the Time; Religious Modernism; Mythology*

### **1. Introduction**

In view of early Quran scholars, the outcome of the trend of recording the causes of revelation, is finding the indications and meanings of Qur'anic verses. This trend in the contemporary era has provided the arena for challenging perspectives.

One of the new approaches to the subject of the causes of revelation is the positivist approach, which has been independently proposed by Andrew Ripin in his doctoral dissertation<sup>1</sup>, as well as in the book “The causes of revelation is a Science of Quranic Sciences”.

Given the importance of attention to the causes of revelation in the process of interpretation and explanation of the Qur'an, the issue of how modern thinkers, including Bassam al-Jamal, confront it, is one of the important issues. The general approach of Bassam al-Jamal indicates the rejection of the popular view that the causes of revelation were effective and that the culture, imagination and history are involved in the causes of revelation of Qur'anic verses, hence, it's worth analyzing.

### 1.1. Problem Statement

Modern thinkers such as Nasr Hamed Abu Zayd, who believe that most of the verses of the Qur'an have a cause of revelation, consider the science of the causes of revelation as a central principle that emphasizes the dialectical relationship between text and reality and states that “in addressing each text, one must deal with the culture of the time, the relationship between the text and culture is also dialectical, because it influences on the one hand and is influenced on the other” (Abu Zayd, B 68). The cause of revelation from this perspective is the social context of the verses and the text of the Qur'an is a reaction to reject or accept these external facts (Abu Zayd, A 97-115). Arkon also emphasizes the determination of the historical conditions of the revelation and the occurrence of events as a scientific method in the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an (Arkon, 51). Ibn Ashur also condemned the ancients for speaking about the causes of revelation without scrutiny and a critical attitude (Ibn Ashur, 46.1-50).

Contrary to this view, some believe that knowing external conditions such as the cause of revelation limits our understanding of the verses of the Holy Qur'an and makes it difficult to achieve the divine purpose (Rashid Reza, 321/5) or a different view that considers the cause the revelation inefficient in understanding the Qur'an (Al-Sharhur, 93). Among these, Bassam Al-Jamal believes that a few verses of the Qur'an (about 14%) have causes of revelation and the knowledge of the causes of revelation is not related to all verses of the Qur'an (Al-Jamal, 120-122).

In view of the variety of opinions about the causes of revelation of verses, in the present study, Bassam al-Jamal's view on this issue is examined and the answer to this question is considered:

- What is Bassam al-Jamal's assessment of what is known as the causes of revelation in the narrative and interpretive heritage of Muslims, and what is his approach to it?

In the process of critical analysis of Bassam al-Jamal's view, the first step is to understand the propositions of his theory directly; after receiving the themes of the prepositions, then the necessities and principles of this view will be examined based on Qur'anic scholars' opinions.

It is worth mentioning that in general, many studies have been done in the field of revelation, but specifically about Bassam al-Jamal's view until now, only the Farsi translation of his book entitled “A New Research on the Causes of Revelation of Qur'an” by Seyyed Hossein Seyyedi is published and the Doctoral thesis of Mohammad Jamal al-Din Khoshkhazeh, entitled “Analysis of the Discourse of Verses, a Way to Evaluate the Text of Narrations of Causes of Revelation (Case Study of Surah Al-Insan)” from Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, has, when needed, alluded to his views, hence a centered research on the comments of Bassam Al-Jamal is necessary.

### 1.2. Scientific Personality Bassam Al-Jamal

Bassam al-Jamal, a contemporary Tunisian scholar, holds a PhD in Arabic Literature and Language from the University of Manuba, is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Literature and

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Rippin, The Quranic asbāb al-nuzūl material: an analysis of its use and development in exegesis.

Humanities in Sifaqis, Tunisia. He is also a teacher of Arabic and Islamic civilization at Tunisia University, expert in ancient civilization and interested in studying imagination, symbolic anthropology and study of the Qur'an. Among his works are: The book "Causes of Revelation, a Science among the Sciences of the Qur'an" published by the Arab Cultural Center with the participation of the Foundation of the Believers Without Borders, second edition in (2013). The book "Al-Islam Al-Sunni" published by "Dar Al-Tali'a wa Al-Rabetato Al-Aqlaniin Al-Arab" Beirut (2006), and "Al-Islam Al-Sunni" (the series of Islam, one and several) (2006), "Lailatol Al-ghadr fi al-Motakhaiaal al-Eslmai" (2007), "Jadalo Al-Tarihk wa Al-Motokhaiaal; Sirato Fatema" (2016), "Me Al-Ramz ela Al-Ramz Al-Dini: Bahth fi Al-Mana wa Al-wazaef wa Al-Mogharebat" (2011). Bassam Al-Jamal is the head of the Religious Heritage Office at the Foundation for the Study and Research of Believers without Borders. He is the head of many research projects such as "Aalm Tajdid Al-Fekr al-Dini; Mogharebato Naghdiato" (2016) and "Mohawelat Tajdid Al-Fekr Al-Eslami; Mogharebato Naghdiato" (2016).

### 1.3. Introduction of the Book of the Causes of Revelation

Bassam al-Jamal's book "The causes of revelation, a Science among the Sciences of the Qur'an" is in fact his doctoral dissertation, which was defended in the Department of Literature of the University of Manouba (Tunisia). With a new look at "Quranic sciences", he tries to re-read its definitions and functions in contemporary religious studies. He has tried to complete the scientific project of Abdolmajid Al-Sharafi in the field of the Qur'an by going beyond the traditional definitions of "the cause of revelation" as a science among the Qur'anic sciences (for becoming further familiar with the Quranic opinions of Al-Sharafi refer to the article: *Fi Gheraate Al-torath Al-Dini "Al-Etghan Fi Olum Al-Quran Enmuzejan"* in the book "Labanat", which is a collection of some of his articles). A project that can be interpreted as "an attempt to prove the ability to have a new reading of the religion through religious texts."

He finds that Arabic scholars have had two main approaches to the literature of the causes of revelation: first, an approach that has praised. Second, a critical approach that, in addition to others, is linked to the works of Mohammad Arkoun, Hassan Hanafi, Nasr Hamed Abu Zayd, and Abdul Majid Al-Sharafi. On the other hand; Western literature has also transferred two views to the Arab world: the first is what the author calls the educational and positivist approach; An approach for which an excellent example can be found in the works of Goldziher and William Moore, and the second view is what Bassam al-Jamal calls the "Philological Method" or lexical jurisprudence (a lexical approach or what can be translated as equal historical-critical approach).

## 2. Explaining the Cause of Revelation from the Point of View of Bassam Al-Jamal

### 2.1. The Literal Meaning of the Causes of Revelation

Bassam al-Jamal first presents a report on the use of words (cause) and (revelation) in the Meccan and Medinan Surahs based on the views of classical commentators, and points out that these applications emphasizes the gradual revelation of the Qur'an according to the needs of events and occurrences of the era of revelation and writes: "When (the cause) is the means of research and the fulfillment of needs, knowledge (the cause of revelation) is also among the sciences from which the interpreter uses to determine the historical data of the time of revelation of the verses." (Al-Jamal, 78-83).

### 2.2. The Quantity of Narrations about the Causes of Revelation

Regardless of the differences in the existing reports on the number of narrations on the causes of revelation in different sources and religions for reasons such as religious differences and differences of authors in the development and narrowing of the definition of the causes of revelation, there is also difference in the report of counting these narrations. For example, in a count of the number of narrations of the causes of revelation in the Tabari interpretations of *Majma Al-Bayan Fakh Razi*, 262, 259, 166 narrations were reported (Hosseini, 243), respectively. However, the number that Bassam Al-Jamal has

provided in these interpretations is that the number of the causes of revelation of the verses has been reported as 564, 434, and 450, respectively (Al-Jamal, 121).

Other reports indicate that “the narrations of the causes of revelation through the Sunnis are very much and reach several thousand, but they are few through the Shiites and may not be more than a few hundred narrations” (Tabatabai, a 172-173). Maarefat also counts different figures from the interpretive narrations of the Imams (AS), of which the cause of revelation is also a part, and considers the causes of revelation of the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) to be few (Maarefat, 261/1 B) and in another work he explains the scarcity, weakness and discontinued of interpretive narrations and the cause of revelations (Maaref, 180/1). From the view of another Qur'anic scholar, the total number of narrations of the causes the revelation reaches to about 900 narrations, which are quoted below about 600 verses; In other words, the number of verses for which the cause of revelation has been narrated does not reach more than 15% of the total verses of the Qur'an (Nekounam, 148).

Bassam Al-Jamal also looks at the number of narrations of the causes of revelation in line with the well-known view and believes that the narrations cause of the revelation are weak compared to all the verses of the Qur'an and therefore do not consider the knowledge of the causes of revelation to be related to all verses of the Qur'an; Rather, he relates only a limited number of verses to it, which ultimately do not exceed 14% (Al-Jamal, 120).

It is noteworthy that the limited number of narrations on the causes of revelation on the one hand and its important effect on better understanding the verses of the Qur'an on the other hand, has led to two approaches among Qur'anic scholars in this regard; In the first approach, the only way to reach the causes of revelation is to hear and narrate from those who witnessed the revelation and were aware of the causes of revelation (Vahedi, 5). Jabari, who adheres to the same principle, when faced with the small number of narrations on the causes of revelation, inevitably in a general rule, removes most of the verses of the Qur'an for which no cause of revelation is narrated from the scope of specific verses and calls them general verses (Siouti, 61; Zarqani, 83/1).

### **2.3. Factors in the Formation of the Science of Revelation**

According to Bassam al-Jamal, three main factors are effective in the formation of knowledge of the causes of revelation. The first factor is a cultural factor, which arises from the role of storytellers in considering the causes of revelation of some verses related to the prophetic behaviors and wars (Al-Jamal, 124). The storytellers were interested in all the strange things, because they wanted to attract the attention of people who were far from the prophetic experience; Of course, they deliberately removed some historical facts that they felt did not reflect the expectations of the masses, and interfered in the narrations, and various forms of this interference, is evident in the magnified version of some events or forging some other incidents. The reason for such events in the field of transmission of reports related to the causes of revelation has been its reliance on an oral cultural framework (Al-Jamal, 52-66).

In an assessment, it can be said that according to the principles of the science of quoters of Imamiyah, only the narrations whose documents is connected to the authentic companions of the Messenger of God (PBUH) that have the conditions of authenticity are valid; But the sayings of the Companions and their followers are, at best, their personal ijtiḥad and have no validity (Balaghi, 45-47). Therefore, Imamiyah only accepts those narrations on the causes of revelation narrated from an infallible and that have a correct and valid document and considers the historical sayings from other than the infallible as only a basis for interpretive readings and does not give any authority to them; To the extent that contemporaries, in the face of documents of narrations of the causes of revelation, have often used them by using terms such as “by neglecting the document”, “assuming the integrity of the document”, “assuming the authenticity of the document”, and examining a document is not a complete criterion so that one cannot recognize a narrations to be invalid by observing the weakness and discontinuity of its document (Javadi Amoli, 232/1-233). They also believe that if one of the companions was truthful and

trustworthy in narrating the reports and avoided guessing and estimating, his words can be trusted and the definite knowledge of the narrator on the causes of revelation would suffice in this regard (Maaref, A, 105-106).

Other factors mentioned by Bassam al-Jamal are the epistemological factor or the atmosphere and conditions simultaneously with the revelation, which is very effective in receiving the divine meaning, as well as the ideological factor that considers the formation of the causes of revelations to be arisen from disputes of different groups on interpretations of the verses based on the causes of revelations (Al-Jamal, 124). From this view, the occurrence of internal disputes after the death of the Prophet (PBUH) led to the emergence of several sects and the dispute between the followers of sects prevailed in justifying the meanings of the text of the Qur'an and strengthens the correctness of the view of each sect. These justifications required knowledge that provided reports or items outside the text; In other words, the use of reports on the causes of revelation in a particular way achieved the intentions of the followers of the sects (Al-Jamal, 60).

It should be noted that one of the vulnerable areas of historical studies with a phenomenological approach in the field of narrations is that it does not necessarily lead to a proper understanding of the subject. The correct understanding of any phenomenon depends on the fact that in addition to external studies, it can also be understood from within. Therefore, if there is no clear understanding of the concept of Imamate and its belongings such as Imam's science, infallibility or some principles of political behavior such as taqiya, it is natural that a comprehensive understanding of events related to the history of hadith will not be formed.

#### **2.4. Stages of Formation of the Science of the Revelation**

In general, the formation of the first knowledge of the causes of revelation based on oral culture raises doubts, because the first generation of Muslims who witnessed the revelation themselves did not need to record the cause of revelation, so knowledge of the causes of revelation began with a functional concern. It turned out that some historical data related to a number of verses had been learned from the tongue of the Companions (Al-Jamal, 61). He proves his claim for several reasons: 1. Occupying the main narrative by increasing or decreasing it; 2. Presenting and delaying some linguistic components; 3. Consciously or unconsciously, the narration, under the influence of peripheral pressures, increasingly interferes with the facts. In this period, in addition to falsification and distortion by some currents due to the oral narration of the causes of revelation, contradictions arose in them, so that sometimes in the case of a verse, several causes of revelation have been narrated.

The next stage, the integration of the knowledge of the causes of revelation in the interpretation of the Qur'an and the growth of its idiomatic meaning, which began with an important cultural event, which was the official compilation of Islamic teachings. The purpose of this compilation is to organize oral narrations according to methodological criteria and epistemological and ideological strategies. Because the compiler was influenced by the surrounding facts and interpreted them, the interpreter considered the oral narrations according to his own presuppositions (Al-Jamal, 61-73). In another stage, the science of the causes of revelation was introduced as an independent science, and Vehedi Neyshabouri presented the narrations on the causes of revelation that had been quoted in various books up to that time in an independent book entitled "The causes of revelation of the Qur'an". His work is associated with a kind of evaluation of existing narrations and selection of correct narrations, and it can be said that in this period, the first sparks of evaluation of narrations on the causes of revelation were made, of course, in its simplest form (Al-Jamal, 83).

It is noteworthy that in contrast to the view of Bassam al-Jamal, scholars believe that the Prophet himself (PBUH) and his Companions paid special attention to the causes of revelation. One of the evidences of this group is that the Prophet (PBUH) referred to the revelation of verses at different times. Sometimes the answer to some issues and problems is considered dependent on the revelation of that

verse, and even when there was ambiguity about some of the causes of revelation, the Prophet (PBUH) himself explained about it, the Companions also in the events and everyday problems await the revelation, and at various times recalled verses that were revealed or had little to do with their confirmation. However, any event that has the least connection with the Qur'an as the most important pillar of Islam has been of special importance (Mohsen Haidar, 14-21).

On the other hand, even Qur'anic scholars who view the narrations with skepticism and most of them consider it as subject to *ijtihad* and adaptation of the narrator and the commentator's interpretive interpretations of the Companions and their followers, believe that this *ijtihad* does not harm the validity of the narrations. For example, Allameh Tabatabai does not consider all these narrations as the cause of revelation, and some of them have considered it as comprehensiveness and adaptation to the story and the like. Allameh Tabatabai has based the principle on understanding the true meaning of the Qur'an from the text of the Qur'an, and of course, in the meantime, they have not completely abandoned these narrations, and in cases where they think it is in accordance with the context of the verse and other cases mentioned, he has used these narrations (Tabatabai, A 173-174).

Although the arguments of Bassam al-Jamal in historical factors and stages of the causes of revelation and the way of these stages, questions the historical value of the narrations, but it can be acknowledged that the issue of tension between hadith schools and strife among scholars in different periods, is among the conflicts that modern thinkers have focused on. Examining these topics from a scientific view is definitely necessary; however, when along with many important hadith issues, some of them are merely selectively paid attention to, and other topics are neglected, it becomes a shortcoming and damage in studies.

## **2.5. The Effect of Narrations on the Causes of Revelation on the Interpretation of the Verses**

Identifying the cause of revelation has a great impact on understanding Quranic verses and familiarity with the secrets of its interpretations. According to Bassam al-Jamal, the reports of the causes of revelation is considered as the direction of the commentator's work in determining the intention of God. In this regard, sometimes the commentator relies on the causes of revelation as a linguistic tool to express a specific meaning of the verse (Al-Jamal, 328). Regarding the relationship between the stories on the causes of revelation and the interpretation of verses, Bassam al-Jamal argues that the use of the stories of the causes of revelation relied heavily on the way in which the text was read. He points to the challenges of the commentators with some of the causes of revelations due to their incompatibility with the intended meanings of the verses, and believes that the commentators dare not to violate successive narrations on the causes of revelation or invalidate the consensus on historical facts. Of course, he cites examples in which liberation from the causes of revelation in selecting the interpretation consistent with the God's intention of the revelation has become possible for a number of commentators, because in such a case they have merely presented the cause of revelation merely as a reminder. Deviation from the causes of the revelation seems to these commentators to be justified; Because more than anything else, it considers the contexts of addresses in verses that accept more than one interpretation (Al-Jamal, 352).

Bassam al-Jamal believes that the verses of the rulings and reports may have been revealed for a specific cause, but its ruling is a general ruling and he writes: The ruling of the Qur'an that was revealed about a specific person during a specific historical event, and the causes of revelation informs about that, is not limited to that occasion and the ruling is for the general word. This is because the historical events that led to the revelation are necessarily limited in time, place, and factors, and end with ending the revelation, while the Qur'anic teachings have no expiration date. Thus, the generalization of a specific case to the general proves one of the characteristics of Qur'anic expressions which is the capacity of being beyond time and going beyond the conditions of the causes of revelation (Al-Jamal, 358).

In his view, with a transformation from specific to general, commentators have entered the starting point of interaction with the text. The verses of the rulings often do not refer to historical events

or real persons due to which the revelation was revealed; But the commentators and Qur'anic scholars were challenged by the general allusions and the generalizing logic that prevails over revelation, and were in search of specific and definite causes of revelations, to interpret on that basis, and whenever they were unable to find it, they made a cause of revelation related to it. Therefore, it goes without saying that following the generality of a word without considering the specific cause is a suitable solution for the phenomenon of the multiplicity of the causes of revelation and the conformity of such a method with the entry criteria is approved by the past (Al-Jamal, 358). In the first verse of Surah Al-Mujadallah, Bassam Al-Jamal emphasizes that what is meant is the generality of the word and what is stated in this verse is an allegory and it is in such a way that does not necessarily require the existence of a historical cause of revelation (Al-Jamal, 356). In his view, the commentators who have taken the reports on the causes of revelation as a means of expressing merely the cause or generalization of the Qur'anic teachings, there is no doubt that with these justifications for the indications of the religious text, they will towards deviation from the truth of Muhammad's mission and its atmosphere (Al-Jamal, 367-368).

Bassam al-Jamal's view on the effect of the cause of revelation on the interpretation of verses is consistent with the well-known view of later Qur'anic scholars. Identification and evaluation of narrations on the causes of revelation is performed in two areas of document and text, and special rules have been provided in this regard; Rules such as: knowledge of the reason of legislation, understanding the meaning and purpose of the verse and validity of the generality, all of which return to documentary and textual evaluations (Piruzfar, 76). The Qur'an scholars and commentators, in addition to the causes of revelation of verses related to the rulings, deal with the issue of generality and specification and emphasize it. One of the criteria for them is to pay attention to the generality of the word; for approving the issue, the commentators point out to some verses including the verse of Zihar in Sura Mojadela, the verse of Li'an (Curse) in Sura Noor and the verse Efk; Because the linguistic reference and context in the verses indicates the generality of the ruling on others (see: Rashid Reza, 115/10; Tabatabai, B 42/1).

Allameh Tabatabai also mentions the issue of adaptation in this regard and believes that the general adaptation on an instance has been the method of the Imams (AS) and the adaptation of a verse from the Qur'an to any case that is applicable to any case is rationally permissible; Because the Qur'an was revealed to guide all human beings in all periods and is not specific to the age of revelation and the people of that age (Tabatabai, B 42/1). Ayatollah Maarefat also recognizes the principle of generality of words to be valid for all verses; Because he believes rulings are not only for the treatment of the events of the age of revelation and should be considered by revoking the characteristics of the exclusiveness of the ruling (Maaref, P 261/1). From this view, the rule of "Al-Ebrah Beomum al-Lafz la Bekhosus al-Mawrid" states that a wise and capable jurist should put aside the characteristics of the case and use the general aspects of the word of the Qur'an. Of course, private aspects are useful for understanding the meaning of the word, but they do not convey exclusiveness; Because the divine commandments have always been universal and are current at all times (Maaref, S 66; Javadi Amoli, 233/1-234).

It can be said that the validity of generality of word, in addition to the jurisprudential function and the way of inferring the rulings, is a guarantee for the universality and immortality of the Holy Qur'an, as Javadi Amoli and Tabatabai believe that the verses of the Qur'an are never limited to their revelation, otherwise, the divine book will not be universal and eternal (Qatan, 75; Hakim, 37; Enayah, 14). Therefore, most of the Qur'anic verses have been revealed without any specific revelation and they are revealed with the aim of educating and guiding human beings on the path to perfection.

### ***3. The Symbolism of the Narrations the Causes of Revelation from the View of Bassam Al-Jamal***

Studying the angles of Bassam al-Jamal's book shows that he tries to prove carefully and meticulously that the addresses in the reports related to the Qur'an in narrative sources and even behavior and wars, require lexical analysis and comprehensive readings. And it is not correct to limit studies to lexical reviews, and it is necessary that the addressing and contexts in the reports be consistent with the words stated in the verses and it must go beyond the level of lexical reviews. This causes many political,

social, cultural and other fields to be revealed in the Holy Quran and Quranic sciences. In this regard, he has emphasized on the affectability of the narrations on the causes of revelation among the factors that are mentioned.

### 3.1. The Affectability of the Narrations on the Causes the Revelation of Myths

Bassam al-Jamal states that the causes of revelations mainly reflect the worldview and beliefs of the first society of the revelation. Referring to anthropological research on the development of myths, he considers them as actors who play special roles in Arab collective thought. This approach is reminiscent of Abu Zayd's thought that if we consider the Arab culture before the advent of Islam empty of such beliefs and ideas, the phenomenon of revelation cannot be understood culturally, if such beliefs were not rooted in the Arab attitude and thought of that day, how could the Arabs accept the revelation of an angel from heaven on their own kind (Abu Zayd, A 80).

This view of Bassam al-Jamal and modern thinkers considers the issue of revelation and knows it a historical and cultural category (see: Abu Zayd, B 33). "Every culture has a special imaginative aspect" says Bassam al-Jamal. So, this concept has a strong relationship with the practice of collective memory of any society and emphasizes it; The relationship between imagination and the historical reality in it is a continuous one. In addition, the aspect of imagination has an important relationship with myth from the perspective of anthropologists (Al-Jamal, 378).

Some scholars emphasize that myth is a symbolic and cryptic system. The "cryptic" aspect of the word is the common denominator between imagination and myth, which needs to be determined from an anthropological view. In general, the symbolic anthropology of religion, whatever it is, is a system of symbols. The most important feature that the code uses is the principle of semantic sharing. In this case, it can be said that the code has two properties that seem contradictory: 1- being specific 2- being general or historical and the ability to go beyond history (Al-Jamal, 379-380).

Here one can see the confusion of a discussion about the language of the Qur'an and the text of the narrations on the causes of revelation as an external source in the narration of Bassam al-Jamal. He considers the language of the Qur'an as a mythical and cryptic language in his own interpretation; Because he mentions stories, historical stories, and even Qur'anic sermons as myths, just like the Algerian modernist Mohammed Arkon, who mentions the word "myth" abundantly in his writings, and easily recognizes the text of the Qur'an to be myth. Like Al-Jamal, Arkon believes: "The stories of the Torah as well as the Qur'anic sermons are two remarkable examples of interpretations of myths" (Arkon, 21). Or he writes in another place: "The Qur'anic addressing is based on myth" (Ibid., 10). From Arkon's view, myth plays a decisive role not only in the sacred texts, but also in human life, and shapes our individual and collective historical existence (Arkon, 327/84). As can be seen in these readings, myths are transmitted to all intellectual and religious dimensions of human beings. From this view, "myth is a virtual and symbolic expression that accepts the generality and multiplicity of meanings" (cf. Rezaei Isfahani, A 96).

But in the critique of the mythology of the Qur'an among these modern thinkers, it should be said that in a situation where the Qur'an itself has taken a firm stand against the claim of mythology of the Qur'an, attributing the myth to the Qur'an and its belongings seems unlikely. In 9 verses of the Holy Quran, the phrase (Asatir al-Awwalin) has been quoted and criticized by the polytheists and opponents (An'am/25; Anfal/31; Nahl/24; Mu'minun/83, etc.); Therefore, for one who believes in the Qur'an, this intra-religious answer is sufficient.

On the other hand, with a little reflection on the verses of the Qur'an itself, it can be seen that the language of the Qur'an is far removed from the texts of myths. The anecdotes of the Qur'an, which have been the main target of this accusation, have been dealt with in such a way that the audience can subconsciously feel their objectivity and real occurrence (Al-Imran/44, Yusuf/102). The reference to the absence of the Prophet (PBUH) in these scenes is a clear proof of the occurrence of these stories in the



real world and has nothing to do with the mythic nature of these stories of the Qur'an. Also, being a myth contradicts the main purpose of the Qur'an, which is to guide. Audiences take advice from the Qur'an only when they believe in the reality of its propositions (Rezaei Isfahani, B 268).

### 3.2. The Affectability of Narrations on the Causes of Revelation from Imaginations

Bassam al-Jamal's intention of imaginary aspect of the narrations on the causes of revelation is its affectability from the imagination of man about transcendental issues in the field of religion, including revelation, angels, jinn and Satan. Bassam al-Jamal does not believe in these creatures and considers many of the beliefs of Muslims to be derived from false narrations.

According to Bassam al-Jamal, in the narrations related to Gabriel, there are roles that present imaginative images of Gabriel (Al-Jamal, 386). In these imaginative notions, not only the main role of Gabriel as the transmitter of God's word to the Prophet, but also other functions outside the essential requirements of the mission have been attributed to him, so much that in some narrations, Gabriel also refers to some of the Companions (Al-Jamal, 386). As a result, the narrations of the causes of revelation have tried to present imaginative images that have no roots in the text of the Qur'an.

In this way, the Islamic generations changed their imagination about Gabriel as an invisible being and mentioned descriptions based on the reality of life and social relations for it. In addition, the stories of the causes of revelation included supernatural events such as the splitting of the moon and the constant shedding of rain in response to the prayer of the Prophet (PBUH). These events had a historical reality in the minds of the Muslim community of that day. From this view, in a desert society, gods or wizards have no power under the laws of nature, and tribes who are unaware of the laws of science, it is natural that the splitting of the moon and the stopping of the sun in the imagination of the mass of people and praisers and writers is a great works, and it is a tool of imagination of persuasion (Al-Jamal, 396).

Recording the most important functions in which the imaginative imagination plays an important role in the creation of the causes of revelation by referring to the events and happenings in which the law of causality is eliminated. Including the narrations of Zahak on the causes of revelation of verse 27 of Surah Al-Furqan, which says: when Aghabeh Ibn Abi Moit spit on the Prophet's face, the saliva returned to his own face and was split in two parts, and fire scorched his cheek, the effect of which was there until death" The return of saliva to the face of Aqaba is due to the violation of the laws of nature; But the imaginative imagination finds this strange and extraordinary not only possible, but practical. Therefore, none of the dead objected to it, nor were they surprised. It is obvious that the return of saliva and the change in its substance show the interest of Muslims in taking revenge on the one who insulted the Prophet (PBUH) (Al-Jamal, 403).

Regarding this approach, it is necessary to mention some points: Muslims believe that miracles do not violate natural laws and divine traditions, and if man reaches the position of the divine caliphate, the whole world and man will prostrate on it. As Allameh Tabatabai writes in his definition of a miracle: "A miracle is something out of the ordinary which indicates that the supernatural has taken over nature and material things, and this does not mean that a miracle invalidates a rational and necessary thing" (Tabatabai, B 72/1).

In the occurrence of a miracle, neither the principle of causality nor the principle of naturalness nor the law of nature is violated; Rather, the issue is the type of restriction of one law by another (Rezvani, 56). The circle of normality should not be limited to human perception; Rather, the normality of the world is far beyond human perception, so the meaning of the normality must be measured from the perspective of the Qur'an.

Regarding abnormal phenomena such as "Shaq al-Qamar", the splitting of the moon in verse (Qamar/1), most commentators and Quranic scholars consider Shaq al-Qamar to be an extraordinary event and it is a sign of the prophethood of the Prophet (PBUH) and is counted as one of the miracles and

have referred to two reasons of the apparent content of the verse and the consensus of Muslims (Sheikh Tusi, 443/9).

### 3.3. Affectability of Narrations on the Causes of Revelation from History

In addition to the place of knowledge of the causes of revelation, Bassam al-Jamal deals with the influence of historical frameworks in the imaginations of the writers of behaviors and wars and historians. Bassam al-Jamal's analysis of the relationship between the cause of revelation and history is that part of the reports of the causes of revelation contains themes that occurred exactly on the date of invitation. In his view it can be said that the narrators were not historians in the strict sense of the word; Therefore, in the narrations of the causes of revelation, they did not critically examine the reports; Rather, their role is to narrate an almost important part of the events contemporary to the revelation of the Qur'an, which was evident historically and civilizationally.

Undoubtedly, the methods of presenting them from historical events and hiding or highlighting some events in relation to others show their intellectual connections with those events. For this reason, it has remained in the minds of the past that all the contents of the causes of revelation have occurred in the historical reality (Al-Jamal, 406-407).

With this view, it seems that Bassam al-Jamal questions the discussion of the authenticity of historical documents and declares their revelation expired in two ways: 1. Many of the situation of revelations are written according to the cultural context of that era. 2. Writing the causes of revelation and the situation of revelation are forgotten due to bias of the writers in that time, the way factors and formation stages are forgotten. However, even if we accept that the causes of revelations is written in the same cultural and epistemological context, this will help today's audience to better understand the divine meaning; Because if the meaning is understood at that time, a better awareness of the divine intention will be obtained.

The use of historical reports by commentators in evaluating the text of narrations on the causes of revelation, is typically negative and to the extent of expressing incompatibility with the time of revelation of the verse. However, a positive and macro approach to this criterion can reduce some of the problems in this area. Seyyed Morteza Askari's historical evaluations of some narrations on the causes of revelation, despite their accuracy and comprehensiveness, have a negative approach and seek to clean Islamic texts from fabricated hadiths and reports (see: Askari, 22-25). Seyyed Jafar Ameli in a similar approach seeks to remove history and behavior from fake reports (Ameli, 9-14). During the description of the Prophet's biography, while quoting and criticizing the narrations in detail, he tries to correctly place the verses revealed in different events. For example, by examining in detail the historical reports about the betrayal of Abu Lababeh in the war of Bani Qurayzah and the acceptance of his repentance by God, he evaluates the cause of revelation in this field and determines the verses appropriate to this event (Ameli, 115-130). Meanwhile, Javad Ali, using a wide range of historical reports with a cultural and anthropological approach, seeks to reconstruct the historical context of the text and then understand the verses based on it. However, his main problem was not the complete investigation of the narrations on causes of revelation and text evaluation; But throughout his work, in an active and macro approach, using historical reports and cultural and anthropological information, he tries to draw a coherent atmosphere from different aspects of ignorant culture and inserts verses and narrations that cause the appropriate revelation into it. Of course, due to lack of historical information and the clarification of the existing propositions in the Qur'an, he uses the verses themselves as a reliable source for this reconstruction in a two-way movement.

The existence of such works that have been written in the field of revelation and history shows that the narrations on the causes of revelation can be used, whether they have removed the narrations that are biased and with personal or political intent and inconsistent with the verses, or that they have found the exact time and place of the verses by tools of the knowledge of hadith, the jurisprudence of hadith and the knowledge of the rijals. In both cases, these narrations can be used with historical evaluation.

Therefore, considering that the narrations on the causes the revelation are somehow history and have a historical nature, but the narrations on the causes of revelation are quasi-historical reports that affect the understanding of verses and what is relevant in this regard is the content of the verse. Therefore, the rules governing the evaluation criteria in the principles of jurisprudence and the difference of hadith cannot meet the needs of the field of the causes of revelation (Khoshkhezeh and Tabatabai, 61).

In other words; it is possible that the examples are quasi-historical and not documented, in which case the essence of the verse itself is the content of the verse, and one cannot merely use the causes of revelation, because narrations on the causes of revelation in cases where there is a conflict, would not be responsive and enough.

#### **4. Conclusion**

One of the tools for interpreting the Holy Quran and understanding the purpose of the divine verses is to pay attention to the historical evidence of the time of revelation of the Holy Quran and the situation and conditions of the time of revelation. Bassam al-Jamal believes that the Qur'anic sciences provide conditions for study that the text of the Holy Qur'an will not; Because the reports in the Quranic sciences shows the "history of revelation". It is not possible to extract the history of revelation through the order of verses and Suras. In his view, a careful study of the narrations on the causes of revelation leads the audience to affectability of the reports on the causes of revelation from history, myths and also imaginations. What Bassam al-Jamal seeks is to go beyond the level of the text and create an attitude of readability of the Qur'an through the functions of the Qur'anic sciences. Emphasizing the limitations of the narrations on the causes of revelation and also the generality of the expression and guiding purpose of the Quranic verses, he has adopted a positivist approach and knows the involvement of personal ijtihads to be an obvious and inevitable fact due to various reasons such as concealing the truth, spreading rumors, militancy and imagination and mythology in the narrations on the causes of revelation.

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