



Dating the Surah Al-Ma'ārij

Ali Reza Tabibi*¹; Hossein Mohammadi²

¹ Associate Professor and Director of Qur'an and Hadith Sciences, Arak University, Iran

² PhD student of Qur'an and Hadith Sciences, Arak University, Iran

*E-Mail: a-tabibi@araku.ac.ir

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Abstract

Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, according to some of the asbāb al-nuzūl traditions, is regarded as Madanī; however, in the traditions of the order of descent, this sūrah is mentioned among the Makkī sūrahs, and for this reason, as well as the existence of some other asbāb al-nuzūl traditions in the interpretive sources of Sunni and some Shiite interpretations, Sūrah al-Ma'ārij has been considered as Makkī sūrahs. In order to achieve the descendant date of this sūrah, one should use Extra-Textual Evidences and Intra-Textual Evidences. Therefore, this research with a descriptive-analytic method attempts to answer this question: "what is the dating of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij based on the extra and intra-textual evidences?" The findings of the study indicated that there was a criticism about the extra-textual evidences, the order of descent traditions and the asbāb al-nuzūl traditions that confirmed this sūrah is Makkī. But, the traditions of the order of descent regarding the sūrah as Madanī, as well as the views of some commentators and intra-textual evidences, which were obtained by thinking in the concept of the verses of this sūrah, proved that Sūrah al-Ma'ārij is Madanī and, based on the sum of the evidences, this sūrah has been revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) in the last year of emigration and in the last months of his life.

Keywords: Sūrah al-Ma'ārij; Dating; Extra-textual Evidences; Intra-textual Evidences

Introduction

One of the important issues in the knowledge of the Qur'anic sciences is the discussion of dating the Qur'anic Sūrahs, which, with the help of various Makkī and Madanī Traditions, asbāb al-nuzūl, order of descent and due to the decrees that exist in the Qur'an on the events of the Age of Descent, the historical time and order of each descending unit of the Qur'an are identified and determined. It is very important to know when each descending unit of the Qur'an has been descended so that the recognition of this important point can confirm or reject many of the disputed issues and claims.

Dating the Qur'an and determining the time of each of its units, has a valuable use in correcting many of the Makkī and Madanī narratives, the order of descent, the asbāb al-nuzūl, Nasikh and Mansūkh, and the history of the Prophet (PBUH); because the claim of being Makkī or Madanī of some sūrahs and verses, has been an excuse for the opponents to pretend that this or that particular verse has not been

revealed in the dignity of Ahl al-Bayt (peace be upon them). Accordingly, some of the sūrahs, including sūrah al-Ma'ārij, which is considered Madanī according to some of the asbāb al-nuzūl traditions; has been considered Makkī in the traditions of the order of descent and some other asbāb al-nuzūl traditions that have been reported in the Sunni interpretative sources and Some Shiite commentaries, and this view has been confirmed by many commentators and this sūrah has been interpreted based on these issues.

Given this difference at the time of the descent of this sūrah, it seems necessary to date it approximately through two categories of evidences:

1. Extra-textual evidences such as Makkī and Madanī narratives, asbāb al-nuzūl narratives and the correct date, commentators' viewpoint.

2. Intra-textual evidences, which included the context (sīyāq) of the verses of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij and other verses of the Qur'an. So far, no independent and comprehensive research has been done in this regard, and this research, in a descriptive-analytical method, attempts to answer this question: "what is the dating of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij based on the extra and intra-textual evidences?"

1. Extra-Textual Evidences

Extra-textual evidences mean a set of reasons and evidences that exist outside the Qur'anic verses, including: 1. the narratives of the order of descent, 2. the narratives of asbāb al-nuzūl, 3. the viewpoint of commentators that with their critical examination and evaluation, one can be approached to the descending date of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij.

1.1. Traditions Regarding the Order of Descent

Traditions regarding the order of descent are narrations, in which the order of descent of 114 sūrahs has been reported there, according to these narratives, Sūrah al-Ma'ārij is the last Meccan sūrah, and it is after the sūrah al-Ḥāqqah, and before the sūrah an-Naba'.

1. Tradition of Ibn-Ḍurays through Aṭā from Ibn Abbās (ibn al-Ḍurays, 1408 AH: 33-34).
2. Tradition of Uthman ibn Ata from his father from Ibn Abbas (Ṭabrisī, 1372 HS: 10: 612).
3. Tradition of Naḥḥās from Ibn Abbas (Ibn Saffar, nd: 260; Suyūṭī, 1421 AH: 1:57)
4. Tradition of Yazid Nahvi by Ikrimah and Hassan Basri (Bayhaqī, 1408 AH: 7: 142-143 and Suyūṭī, 1421 AH: 1: 58).
5. Tradition of Qatādah (Suyūṭī, 1421 AH: 1: 60).
6. Tradition of Ali ibn 'Abi Ṭalḥa (Harawī, 1426 AH: 221).

Also in a narration from Ibn Abbas it has been mentioned that: this sūrah was descended after sūrah al-Ḥāqqah (ʿĀlūsī, 1415 AH: 15:62). Also in Makkī and Madanī narratives, this Sūrah has been introduced Makkī, including the narration of Hasan Basari, who has said: "except the verse 24 of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, which was revealed in Medina, all of this Sūrah is Makkī. (Ṭabrisī, 1372 HS: 10:527).

1.1.1. Review and Evaluation

There is no doubt that the traditions of the order of descent are the most important sources of narration for the dating the Sūrahs of the Qur'an (refer to Nekoonam, 2001: 128). But we cannot recognize this only through the traditions of the order of descent, and express a definitive opinion about the time of the descent of the sūrah, because most of the narratives of the order of descent cannot be cited alone since they are mursal and there are weak persons accused to falsehood in their documents, and the criterion of Makkī and Madanī are not the same among the earlier and the later scholars (Pahlavan et al., 2015: 30) and also there is a conflict among them (refer to Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1976: 184-185). In addition, some

of these narrations have been narrated by those who have not witnessed their descent (refer to Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1976: 186-187), and most importantly, many of the narratives regarding Makkī and Madanī and narratives of the order of descent, have been narrated by the great saints of the Sunni tradition that most of them are endowed or desecrated traditions which do not have the necessary authority; Allameh Ṭabāṭabāyī writes in the Tafsir al-Mizan and the Qur'an in Islam:

What we can say about these traditions (the order of descent) is that they are not reliable at all, because they have neither the value for religious narrative, nor the value for historical narrative. The only way to determine the order of Qur'anic Sūrahs and being Makkī or Madanī is to consider their themes and adapt them to the conditions before and after migration (refer to Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1417 AH: 13:235 and *ibid*, 1976: 184 -187).

In addition, the descent of the sūrah al-Ma'ārij, based on some of the traditions of the *asbāb al-nuzūl*, is determined later than the time when the traditions of the order of descent refer to them (Hasakani, 1411 AH: 2:381 and Tha'labī, 1422 AH: 10:34 and Ṭabrisī, 1372 HS: 10:529 and Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1417 AH: 20:11). Therefore, other narrations should also be considered, such as the narratives of the *asbāb al-nuzūl*, the views of the commentators, the concept and content of the sūrah and its verses, in order to give a thorough and complete opinion about them.

1.2. Traditions Regarding the Cause of Revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*)

Some benefits of the Traditions of *asbāb al-nuzūl* are: help to understand the correct concept of the verse (Zurqānī, nd: 102:1 : Hojjati, 2007: 83), eliminating the problems and preventing irrelevant perceptions of the verse (Suyūṭī, 1421 AH: 1:121, and Hojjati , 2007: 82-83 and Ramyar, 1980: 627), the interpretation of obscure names and the recognition of those, about whom one or some verses of the Qur'an have been revealed (Suyūṭī, 1421 AH: 1:122, and Zurqānī, nd: 1:106 and Hojjati, 2007: 99), and it can be used in order to know the exact time of revealing verses, and especially to recognize which part is Makkī and which one is Madanī.

In the interpretations and books of *asbāb al-nuzūl*, for two categories of the verses of this sūrah - verses 1-2 and verses 36-39 - various traditions of *asbāb al-nuzūl* have been reported in various ways that some of the traditions of the *asbāb al-nuzūl* of verses 1-2 considers this sūrah as Makkī, and some observing the sūrah as Madanī, and the narratives of the *asbāb al-nuzūl* of verses 36-39 also refer to the sūrah as Makkī, and if we examine these narratives, we will approach to the exact dating of the sūrah.

1.2.1. *Asbāb al-nuzūl Traditions Which Introduce It as Makkī*

As stated above, so many *Asbāb al-nuzūl Traditions* have been reported for verses 1-2 and verses 36-39 in various ways, which introduce it as Makkī and is judged separately:

1.2.1.1. *Asbāb al-nuzūl Traditions Which Introduce Verses 1-2 as Makkī*

The first group are narrations in which the pagans ask the Prophet (PBUH) for the punishment of God, which is understood from these narratives that the sūrah al-Ma'ārij is Makkī, and there are two narratives in this regard:

A) Nadr ibn al-Harith said in Mecca: "O God! If the Qur'an is a truth and sent from you, then rain a rock on us from the sky." Allah, the Almighty then revealed the verse 70:1 and Allah sent him a

torment in the battle of Badr¹. Ibn Abi Hātam narrates this narrative without mentioning the document from Sadi and Ibn Abbas (Ibn Abi Hātam: 1419 AH: 10:3373). But Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, in his interpretive book, expresses such a passage from Sadi with a proof. He also reports from Ata and Mujahid a narrative with the same concept with a document (Ṭabarī, 1415 AH: 9:307). And other commentators have reported from them (Fakhr Rāzī, 1420 AH: 30:637, Ṭabrisī, 1372 HS: 10:118, Zamakhshari, 1407 AH: 4:609, Ibn Kathīr, 1419 AH: 8:234, Tha'labī, 1422 AH: 10:34, Wāḥidī: 1411 AH: 466).

B) Some commentators have quoted about Abu Jahl, who had said to the Prophet: "If you are right, ask God to drop a piece of sky over us." This narration has been quoted by some people such as Qumī (1984: 2:385), Meybodi (1992: 10:223), Ibn al-Jawzī (1422 AH: 4:335), Baydawi (1418 AH: 5:244), Qumī Mashhadi (1989: 13:428), Shokhani (1414 AH: 5:344), Qurtubi (1985: 18:287), Huwayzi (1415 AH: 412:5) and 'Ālūsī (1415 AH: 15:62), without a document.

Some, like Wāḥidī, have expressed this narrative and the preceding narrative under the verses 32 and 33 of sūrah Anfāl by mentioning the proof (1411 AH: 240).

1.2.1.1.1. Review and evaluation of Makkī asbāb al-nuzūl traditions of verses 1-2

In this section, we first examine the narratives regarding their chain of transmitters (*sanad*) and then regarding their texts (*matn*).

1.2.1.1.1.1. Review and evaluation of Sanad

The first narrative has been quoted in four ways that the way of Ibn Abbas has been quoted without mentioning the sanad and it is not worthwhile. The way of Ismail ibn Abdulrahman Sadi, cited with the sanad of "Muhammad ibn al-Hussein, from Ahmad ibn al-Mufzal from Asbat² from al-Sadi" (Ṭabarī, 1415 AH: 307:9), is also weak because Sadi is both weak in the hadith and has been weakened by the great Sunni Scholars of hadiths such as Yahya ibn Ma'in, Abu Zara'a and Abu Hatam (Mizzī, 1413 AH: 135-137:3), and also Sadi is a Successor (m 127 AH) and has not seen the descent of the verses. Zurqānī says: "If a narrative leads to the descent of mursal, that is, the name of a companion of prophet has been removed from its sanad, and the dynasty of the document has been terminated to a successor, it is not acceptable (Zurqānī, nd: 107:1). In addition, in the sanad of Sadi's narrative, there is "Asbat ibn Nasr Hamedani", who has been weakened by descriptions such as "is not reliable." (Mizzī, 1413 AH: 359:2).

About the way of Ata ibn Abu Rabah, which is reported with the sanad of "Ahmad ibn Isaac from Abu Ahmad from Talhah ibn 'Amro from Ata" (Ṭabarī, 1415 AH: 9:307), we should say that he was also known as "Kathir al-Irsal" (Ibn Hejr, 1415 AH: 675:1) and his Mursalat is the weakest one because he narrated from anyone in the form of mursal (Ibn Hejr, 1404 AH: 182:7). This narrative has been also quoted from him as mursal and is not acceptable. Also, Talhah ibn Amro ibn Uthman Hazrami, who is in the sanad of narrative, has been severely weakened, and Ibn Habban has said about him: Asbat narrated some traditions from the authentic ones that this hadith does not belong to them (Ibn Hijr, 1404 AH: 5:21-22).

The way of Mujahid bin Jabr Maki, which is faced with a problem with the sanad of "Ibn Hamid from Hakam from Anbasa from Laith from Mujahid" (Ṭabarī, 1415 AH: 9:307), because, Mujahid in addition to being a successor and could not witness the descent of the sūrah; there is "Laith ibn Abi

¹ In Sunni and Shia interpretation it has been mentioned that the concept of this verse is about Amir al-Mōemenin, Ali peace be upon him and the day he was appointed as the successor of prophet Mohammad by God, but Nadr ibn al-Harith doubted about it and asked God to rain him stone from the sky if this is the truth. So God rained him a stone and killed him.

² children and grandchildren

Salim" In his narrative, who has been undermined by some great scholars of hadith such as Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Mo'in, Nasa'i and Ibn Hanbal (Dhahabī, nd: 420:3).

The second narrative has been also quoted in many sources without a sanad ³, but Wāḥidī under the verses 32 and 33 of Sūrah Anfal reports this narrative with the sanad of "Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Ja'far from Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn al-Hakam from Mohammad ibn Ya'qub al-Shi'banī from Ahmad bin Al-Nazr ibn Abd al-Wahab from Obaidullah ibn Ma'az from his father and he from Shu'ba from Abdul Hamid Sahib al-Ziyadi and he from Anas ibn Malik (Wāḥidī, 1411 AH: 240), but according to a narrative from Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) Anas has been one of the three, who attributed lie to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). In addition, Abu Hanafiyah, among the saints, did not consider those such as Anas and Abu Huraira as "just" (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, nd: 4:68).

Therefore, all the ways of these two narratives have a weakness in sanad, and most of them are quoted from those, who have not seen a descent of verses and narrated them as mursal. Therefore, according to Wāḥidī, it is not acceptable to state the reasons for the descent of the verses except through the traditions and hearing from those who themselves have seen the descent and were aware of its causes and have discussed about it (Wāḥidī, 1411 AH: 10) Because the *asbāb al-nuzūl* is just the report of the narrators who have witnessed a descent, and in this case there is no place for *ijtihād* and inference (Piroozfar, 2005: 50). Ibn Kathir knows the *asbāb al-nuzūl* as an issue obtained from those witnessed the descent of revelation (1419 AH: 4:522). Ayatollah Ma'refat also considers the achievement to the *asbāb al-nuzūl* through narrative; however, if the validity of its sanad, or the extent of its narration or its frequency, will ensure the correctness of that event (2011: 1:245).

1.2.1.1.2. Review and Examination of the Text

In terms of content about the first narrative, it must be said that there are obvious contradictions in the narrative itself that indicates its falsification. Explaining that in the narrative of Sadi, the verse 32 of sūrah Anfal is considered as the word of one who has requested suffering while Sūrah Anfal is Madanī (Ṭabrisī, 1372 HS: 4:794 and Ibn Kathīr, 1419 AH: 4:3 and Darwazah, 2004: 7:7). How can Nazr ibn Harith use this verse in Mecca before the descent of the Sūrah Anfal? In addition to this, Allah speaks of a chastisement in these verses, which certainly and soon will come upon the disbelievers. Therefore, narratives regarding this sūrah in Makkī cannot lead to the descent of these verses, because if the first narrative leads to the descent, it requires that when Nazr ibn Harith asks for stone rainfall in Mecca, it would occur immediately. But it is said that he was killed in the Badr War (Amini, 2018: 1 : 230-233), and this contradicts the word of God. It is also possible that the speaker's intention, including "it is revealed in Mecca", is a place criterion, not a time criterion, since Ghadir Khumm is placed in Mecca, and such a possibility is not far from the mind.

About the second narrative, we should say: in the second year of Hijra⁴, Abu Jahl was killed by two young men named Ma'az ibn Amro and Ma'az ibn 'Afra, and his head was cut by Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (Bokhari, 1401 AH: 68:2). And this is in contradiction with the story of the narrative that knows the stone rainfall as the cause of the death of Abu Jahl.

1.2.1.2. *Asbāb al-nuzūl Traditions which introduce the verses 36-39 as Makkī*

The second group is a narrative that refers to the ridiculing the Prophet (PBUH) by the pagan people alongside the Kaaba, and we can understand from these narratives that the sūrah al-Ma'ārij is Makkī, and there is only one narrative in this regard:

³ document

⁴ migration

Commentators report: When the Prophet prayed near Kaaba and recited the Qur'an, the polytheists gathered around him and sat as a ring and listened to him and mocked him and said: If these believers, as Muhammad says enter the heaven, we will enter before them (and our interest will be more than their interest). It was this occasion that these verses were revealed. This narrative has been quoted by some commentators such as Wāhidī (1411 AH: 466), Tha'labī (1422 AH: 10:41), Rāzī (1408 AH: 19:414), Ibn Jawzī (1422 AH: 4:339), Meibudī (1992: 10:229) Qartabi (1985: 18:294) and Shokhani (1414 AH: 5:351).

1.2.1.2.1. Review and Evaluation of Makkī 'Asbāb Al-Nuzūl Traditions of the verses 36-39

In this section, we will first examine the narration regarding its sanad and then regarding its text.

1.2.1.2.1.1. Review and evaluation of Sanad

This narrative is expressed without mentioning the sanad, and Wāhidī that cites this sabab-e-nuzul indicates that it has no sanad (1411 AH: 466). Therefore, this narrative is mursal and weak. Also, Allameh Ṭabāṭabāyī, in mentioning this narrative reports it with the word "is said" (1417 AH: 20:21) which indicates the weakness and inaccuracy of the narrative.

1.2.1.2.1.2. Review and Evaluation of the Text

In terms of content, it should also be noted that the asbāb-e-nuzūl that has been mentioned under the verse, if it is not continuous or definitive, it should be presented to the verse in question, and only if the content of the verse and the evidences available around the verse is compatible with it, the sabab-e-nuzul is reliable (Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1976: 176). Accordingly, if the narration is applied to the verses discussed, it will be determined that it is not compatible with the style of the verses, because according to the verses 38-39 of sūrah al-Ma'ārij, it is understood that they were not polytheists, because they have greed of heaven, but they were the hypocrites who apparently believed in the Prophet, but again returned to their disbelief in their hearts and rejected some of the verdicts (Ṭabrisī, 1372 HS: 10:538 and Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1417 AH: 20:21). As Allameh Ṭabāṭabāyī states in Tafsir Al-Mizan: "The verse concerned is about a tribe of Muslims who believed and were among the believers and surrounded the Prophet more than the true believers, from the left and the right, but they disbelieved some of the decrees, which were revealed to the Prophet, and did not pay attention to it. Allah has reproached them in these verses that they would not benefit from surrounding the Prophet and always being with him, and they should not have the greed to paradise. Because they are not the ones, who enter the heaven, they neither can overthrow the judgment of God, nor will they harass God. The next verses confirms this aspect when saying: "We are surely able, to bring a better people than them in their place; and we shall not be overtaken and defeated in our schemes" (sūrah al-Ma'ārij: 40-41) (Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1417 AH: 20:21).

In addition it should be said that the verses which have the same style and continuous themes constitute a unit of descent; then it is not accepted that some of it would have a different sabab nuzūl and unlikely to occur from its other part (Hashemi and Fasihi, 1995: 140 and Nekounam, 2001: 166-167). Rashid Reza writes in this regard: "The work of the narrators of the asbāb nuzul is a wonderful thing. They disconnect the interconnected set of divine words and divide the Qur'an into fragments and divide the verses and, for each sentence, put a separate sabab nuzul (1990: 2:11) the style of this sūrah also indicates its unified descent (Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1417 AH: 20:6 and May 2004: 5:392). Also, by examining the verses of this sūrah, we find that there is a verbal or spiritual connection between all verses which is considered as the link of verses with each other:

- A. The presence of the conjunctions of *and* or *then* in most of the verses of Sūrah Al-Ma'ārij
- B- Extraordinary particles, whose exceptions included in the preceding verse

- C- Coming of the "*jar*" and "*majroor*" belonging to the preceding verses
- D- Coming of the pronoun which refers to a word in the previous verse

Therefore, it should be said that the Sūrah Al-Ma'ārij has one unit of descent, and all its verses have been revealed once. So, for verses 36-39, it is not possible to give a special sabab nuzūl, through which it can be proved that the sūrah is Makkī.

1.2.2. *Asbāb al-Nuzūl Traditions Introducing It as Madanī*

Madanī traditions indicate implicitly to the Madanī status of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, because, since this sabab nuzul refers to the descent of the verses of this sūrah as a result of the question of Na'aman ibn Harith from the Prophet about the succession of Imam Ali (PBUH) after the incident of Ghadir Khumm. Such a sabab nuzūl needs to be descended in Medina because the event of Ghadir Khumm has been after the hijrah of the Prophet (PBUH) and at the end of his life and this narrative is as follows:

Hakim Haskani narrates from Sufyan ibn E'inah that Imam Sadiq (AS) narrates from his ancestors when the Prophet (PBUH) appointed Imam Ali (AS) on the day of Ghadir Khumm, he said: "So anyone I am his wali, Ali (AS) is his wali." This news was released to towns and Na'aman ibn Harith Fahri came to the Prophet and said: "On behalf of God, you commanded us to testify to the unity of God and your mission, and you brought Jihad, Hajj, and fasting, and prayers, and Zakat, and we accepted." Then you did not finish in these things until you had appointed this son (Imam Ali), and you said: "So anyone I am his wali, Ali (AS) is his wali." Is this something on behalf of you or something from God?! The Prophet said: "I swear to God who has no god other than Him, this is from Allah. At that time, Na'aman returned while saying: "O Allah, if this is true and on behalf of you, rain down stone on us" (Anfal: 32) So the Lord threw a stone upon him and killed him. This is where the verses 1-2 of sūrah al-Ma'ārij were revealed. This narrative has been reported by the Shia and Sunni scholars, including Haskani (1411 AH: 2:381), Ṭabrisī (1372 HS: 10:529), Tha'labī (1422 AH: 10:34), Zarandi Hanafī (1998: 1377), Qurṭubī (1985: 18:278), Hawizi (1415 AH: 5:411) 'Ālūsī (1415 AH: 15:62) and Darwazah (2004: 5:394).

1.2.2.1. *Review and Evaluation of Madanī 'Asbāb al-Nuzūl Traditions*

In this section, Asbāb al-nuzūl traditions which introduce the Sūrah as Madanī are examined, firstly their chain of transmitters (sanad) and secondly their texts (matn).

1.2.2.1.1. *Review and Evaluation of Sanad*

It should be said that regarding the sanad, the narrative document is correct due to the authenticity of all narrators, and lack of irsal. Allameh Amini, the owner of al-Ghadir, after some researches says: "Isnad of this hadith is true and all its narrators are authentic" (Amini, 2018: 1:241).

It should be noted that this narrative has been cited by the infallible Imam with a proper sanad. Unlike Sunnis, the Shia believes that if a word leads to a prophet's companion or a successor, lacks a Sharī'a authenticity, so they do not care about it (Mamaghani, 1411 AH: 1: 321, 331, 332). Shi'a scholars, in addition to the topics of the laws, have ignored the non-innocent traditions and did not trust their words as witnesses of the time of the descent of the Qur'an and those who knew it; hence, they are commonly used in Shi'a narrative interpretations, such as Tafsīr al-'Ayyāshī and al-Burhan, Less narratives can be seen quoted by non-innocent (Nafisi, 2002: 72). Allameh Ṭabāṭabāyī believes that there is no decisive reason for this and the narrations quoted from the commentators of the Companions cannot be considered as prophetic narratives, because they are likely interpreted by the Companions (Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1976, 73 -74), Ayatollah Javadi Amoli believes such narrative are non-authentic and says that these statements are the

sole basis for interpretive deductions and are not authentic unless the confidence is achieved, in contrast to the authentic Hadith that has a divine authenticity, although it is not guaranteed. If it is assured in a case, such as that of a history, it can have a divine validity (1999: 1:233). Also, some Sunni scholars believe that such traditions are not conceivable except the companion specifies he is quoting the tradition from another narrator (Novi, 1407 AH: 1: 30 , Ayni, nd: 1: 47).

1.2.2.1.2. *Review and Examination of the Text*

Regarding the text, it should also be said that the special 'Asbāb al-Nuzūl Traditions usually have two categories of interpretation: one is narrating the event, and then bringing the conjunction of "fa" (i.e. *then*) (*then*, this verse was descended) and the other in this way that the narrator says: (this verse was descended in *somewhere* and instead of *somewhere*, he mentions an event or a person or a group (Ghazi, 1411 AH: 88-84). And since the latter is often used to express what the verse generally refers to, or to account for the examples of the verse, it does not explicitly express the sabab of the verse, and it may be said that they have basically the emergence in the interpretation of the verse; therefore, such narratives cannot be accepted as the verse's sabab nuzūl (Kamani, 2012: 190). But this narrative, among all the asbāb al-nuzūl traditions mentioned for this sūrah, is the only sabab nuzūl that has used the phrase "*then* was revealed" which emphasizes the special sabab nuzūl of the sūrah. Therefore, the drawbacks in the asbāb al-nuzul that introduced the Sūrah as Makkī are not true here, and the reported narrative has no intra-textual drawback.

The concept of this narrative has been narrated by many commentators and narrators of the hadith with a brief difference. In Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī, it is said that Hussein ibn Muhammad Kharfī asked Sufiyan ibn E'ṭna about these verses, and in response, he narrates this narration from Imam Sadiq (Furāt al-Kūfī, 1410 AH: 503). Also, in this interpretation, such a narrative has come with another sanad, with the difference that the speaker has said such a word in the same day of Ghadir from among the people (ibid, 503-504). In the Tafsīr Furāt al-Kūfī, another narrative has also mentioned that says the person who asked the torture of God is not one but they are 12 infidels to be accompanied by Amro-bin Hariths (ibid, 504-505). Allameh Amini, in al-Ghadir (2018: 1 : 239-246), reminds some of the famous Sunni scholars who have narrated this narrative, which is stated in many of these books that the above verses has been revealed in the same issue. Of course, the difference is that this person is "Harith ibn Na'aman" or "Jabir ibn Nadr" or "Na'aman ibn Harith Fahri", and it is clear that this issue has no effect in the main issue itself. Though Allameh Amini believes that the person, who has asked God for a stone rainfall, is Jaber ibn Nadr ibn Harith and his name was a recorded by Abu Obeid Herawi in the third century, but Abubakr Naghash Museli Baghdadi in the 4th century, has written his name as Harith ibn Na'aman, which is also referred to by Tha'ālibī (Ibid., 2018: 1:240).

1.3. *Exegetes' Views*

Another extra-textual evidence for dating of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij is the viewpoints of earlier and later exegetes.

1.3.1. *The Exegetes Who Believe in Being Makkī*

Most exegetes have accepted the opinion of considering this Sūrah as Makkī. Some of them has believed the descent of the sūrah is integrated and consider the entire sūrah as Makkī- including Sayyid Qutb in Fi Zilal al-Quran (1412 AH: 6: 3691-3703) and Muhammad Ezzat Darwazah in the Tafsir al-Hadith (2004: 5:392). Tha'labī also refers to the words of Hassan Basri and Qatada, and considers this sūrah to be Makkī (1422 AH: 10:34). Sam'ani also has considered this sūrah as Makkī (1418 AH: 6:489).

1.3.2. *The Exegetes Who Believe in Being Makkī and Make an Exception of Some Verses*

Some exegetes have excepted some of the verses of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, including Sheikh Ṭabrisī in Majma' al-Bayān and 'Ālūsī in Rūh al-Ma'ānī, referring to Hasan Basri's narrative, believe the verse 24 of this sūrah is Madanī (Ṭabrisī, 1372 HS: 10:527 and 'Ālūsī, 1415 AH: 15:62).

1.3.3. *The Exegetes Who Believe in Being Madanī*

Among the exegetes, Allamah Ṭabāṭabāyī believes that verse 24 of the Sūrah al-Ma'ārij and its belongings, which are before and after this verse, are Madanī. He also considers verses 1 and 2 of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, with regard to its asbāb al-nuzūl, as Madanī and brings some reasons for it (1417 AH: 21:5). By thinking in the word of Allameh, we can know that he has considered the whole Sūrah as Madanī.

1.3.4. *Review and Evaluation*

Those who believe that this sūrah is Makkī is due to the asbāb al-nuzūl that consider the Sūrah as Makkī, while, as we argued in the preceding discussion, the asbāb al-nuzūl of this sūrah is confronted with some drawbacks in sanad and text. And those, who have made an exception of some verses, is for considering the contents and concepts of this sūrah, because of these differences, it is necessary to study this Sūrah more.

2. *Intra-Textual Evidences*

In Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, there are certain criteria and attributes that place it in Madanī sūrahs:

A) Any sūrah that speaks of boundaries and obligations is Madanī (Zarkashī, 1410 AH: 1:275, and Zurqānī, nd: 191:1, and Hossein Ahmad, 1420 AH: 1:168-169 and Ma'rifat, 1415: 1:132) Thus, due to the verse 24 of this sūrah that speaks about Zakat, it will be Madanī (Ṭabarī, 1415 AH: 29:51 and Ṭabrisī, 1372 HS:10:52; Fakhr Rāzī, 1420 AH: 30 : 645 and Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1417 AH: 20:5).

B) Every sūrah which speaks of the hypocrites is Madanī (Zurqānī, Nd: 191:1, and Hossein Ahmad, 1420 AH: 1:168-169 and Ma'rifat, 1415 AH: 1:133). Therefore, according to verses 36-39, which states the history of the hypocrites (Ṭabrisī, 1372 HS: 10:538 and Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1417 AH: 20 : 5-6) - as it will come - is Madanī. Therefore, with regard to these points, one can emphasize the Sūrah is Madanī, as Allameh Ṭabāṭabāyī says this is not true to consider the Sūrah as Makkī and he says about the style of the Sūrah: "there are some evidences in this surah that shows it is Madanī, for example, in the verses 19-23, it talks about the characteristics of the prayers, and the term "Permanent Praying" is related to Medina, although the principle of prayer is in Mecca. The jurisprudential decree of zakat has been also revealed in Medina like the decrees of fasting and pilgrimage, while in Makkī Surahs, zakat means mustahabbi zakat (i.e. recommended zakat) and tazkīya (i.e. the purification of the soul.)

He also considers the final verses of the sūrah, due to its content, appropriate with the hypocrites who had surrounded the Prophet from the left and the right, and says that it is appropriate for those who refuse some of God's commandments. Especially the verse 38 and 41 of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij is more about the hypocrites than the unbelievers of Mecca. He then says the reason why the hypocrites have been referred to as "those who disbelieve": There is such an interpretation in Sūrah At-Tawbah and some other sūrahs, because the reality of the hypocrites is disbelief (Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1417 AH: 20 :5-6).

In this section, it is important to note that there are some features in this sūrah that have led the commentators to consider this sūrah as Makkī, including:

A) From the beginning, the style of this sūrah is about punishment and describes the resurrection, and it narrates the question of someone asking about the divine punishment of unbelievers.

B) Every sūrah which has used the word “kala” (i.e. that is not the case) is Makkī.

C) Makkī Sūrahs, due to brevity, are small Sūrahs with short verses that have been revealed with a rhyme (refer to; Zurqānī, nd: 191-196, and Hussain Ahmad, 1420 AH: 1:168 and Ma'rifat, 1415 AH: 1:132).

In the critique of such criteria, it should be said that there is no reason that, if a Sūrah has some contents about the description of resurrection, that Sūrah would be considered as Makkī. Such general themes are not dedicated to a particular period, and can be revealed both in Mecca and in Medina. In addition to that, the word "question" means both request and prayer, and thus it has been transitive by the word "ba", such as the verse 55 of Sūrah ad-Dukhān. According to this style, the following verses, especially the verse 5 of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, "question" does not mean asking for something. Therefore, the holy verse narrates requesting the punishment by some of the unbelievers, and not asking about some news. (Ṭabāṭabāyī, 1417 AH: 20 : 6-7).

In the case of the coming of "Kala" in Makkī Sūrahs, it should also be said that in the Sūrah At-Takāthur, this word has been repeated three times, and there is disagreement whether this sūrah is Makkī or Madanī, "given the entry of many narratives about the descent of this sūrah about Jews or two groups of Ansar, it's more likely Madanī (Mustafid: 2005; 99), so the generality of this rule is also violated.

Finally, there are also short Sūrahs with short verses in Medina, which do not belong to Mecca, such as the sūrahs of An-Naṣr, Al-Bayyinah, Al-Zalzalah, al-Insān, ar-Raḥmān, At-Talaq and sūrah Muḥammad, who have come in the style of the Makkī Sūrahs, and On the contrary, in Mecca, long Sūrahs with verses close to prose have been seen, such as Sūrah Al-An'ām, Ṭā-Hā, Al-Mu'minūn and Al-Anbiyā'.

3. Dating and Estimating the Descending Time of Sūrah Al-Ma'ārij

According to the above arguments, it is possible to approach the time range of Sūrah al-Ma'ārij.

Based on the reasons mentioned about the distortion of the asbāb al-nuzūl traditions that introduce the Sūrah al-Ma'ārij as Makkī and also because of the asbāb al-nuzūl traditions with a true sanad and text below the first verses of the Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, which was quoted from Imam Ṣādiq and introduced this Sūrah as Madanī, and also according to the style of the sūrah and its contents, it can be said that the traditions of the order of descending of this sūrah, which considered this Sūrah as Makkī, is invalid and not acceptable, therefore, this is proven that the Sūrah al-Ma'ārij is Madanī.

It has also been proven that verses 19-25 - about the attributes of the prayers- and verses 36-39 - about the hypocrites- are Madanī, and the first two verses of Sūrah that have been revealed are Madanī; therefore given that the sūrah al-Ma'ārij had an integrated descent, then all the sūrah will be Madanī.

However, in what year it has exactly been descended, the answer is quite clear, since in the sabab nuzul tradition it has been accepted that after the event of Ghadir, when the news of the Wilāya⁵ of Amir al-Mu'minin (PBUH) was declared in all cities, and Harith came to the Prophet in Medina and these verses were revealed after his apostasy. Accordingly, it can be said that this sūrah was sent to Prophet in the last year of emigration and the last months of the Prophet's life.

⁵ Wilāya means administration and authority. Wilāya is sometimes an act by God, which is the same as monotheism and counts as a Divine Attribute.

Conclusion

Due to the above argument, it became clear that in order to date the Sūrah al-Ma'ārij, two categories of extra and intra- evidences were used, mostly are extra-evidences including: 1- traditions of the order of descend, 2- 'Asbāb al-Nuzūl traditions, 3- Exegetes' Views. Among these evidences, the traditions of the order of descent were not acceptable, and the 'Asbāb al-Nuzūl traditions introducing it as Makkī were not also acceptable due to documentary and textual problems.

Some exegetes also considered a number of sūrah verses as Madanī. On the other hand, according to the correct narration of the descendant sabab introducing the sūrah as Madanī and also due to the intra-textual evidences, which was obtained with an emphasis on the meaning of the verses of the sūrah al-Ma'ārij and the forms and attributes of its verses, it was proved that the sūrah al-Ma'ārij is from the Madanī Sūrahs of the holy Qur'ān and its descent has been estimated in the last year of emigration and in the final months of the Prophet's life.

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