

“The manifestation of God velayat or authority in “velayat” verse”

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ABSTRACT: Our main discussion in this article is an investigation of the term "vali" in the verse of "velayat". A deep investigation of this verse shows that the term "vali" refers to the meaning of "guardian" and "manager". This verse, providing a perfect and correct aspect of the term "velayat", is one of the best examples of the manifestation of God's "velayat". A good understanding of this concept is the answer to many doubts which have been brought up in regard to the reason of the revelation of this verse and the next verse coming after it. This verse tends to explain that the only guardian and manager of your affairs is God, his messenger and those who keep up prayer, pay the welfare tax (zakat) and bow their heads (in worship). Those who claim that the intention from "vali" in this verse is assistor and friend neglect the fact that assistance and friendship applies to all Muslims and for these concepts it is not necessarily needed that one keep up prayer and pay the welfare tax while bowing in worship of God. Hence, this verse specifically refers to one person and he is Imam Ali (Peace be Upon).

Keywords: the Holy Quran, velayat, rasul, allah

INTRODUCTION

One of the discussions in the understanding of the holy Quran and related sciences which many scholars working in related fields have dealt with is the concept of synonymy and homonymy. It is possible that one word is used in several meanings in the holy Quran and one of the examples of this is the term "vali" which is repeated 234 times in the holy Quran, considering the derivations of this term, and 16 different meanings are considered for it. In this article our main objective is an investigation of one of the meanings of this term in the verse of "velayat". To this aim, first a brief explanation is presented about the lexical meanings of this term and then the meaning of the term «وليك» is explained in the verse of "velayat" and finally the views of different interpretations is investigated regarding this issue.

إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَ يُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَ هُمْ رَاكِعُونَ» (Maedeh/55)

This verse starts with the word «انما» with the lexical meaning of monopoly and says: "vali and guardian and possessor in your affairs are three groups: God, his messenger and those who believe – who keep up prayer, pay the welfare tax (zakat) and bow their heads (in worship).

There is no doubt that the word vali in this verse does not mean friend or assessor, because "velayat" meaning friendship and assistance does not hold for people who say prayer and pay zakat while they are bowing in worship of God, but is a general command which envelopes all muslims, all muslims should love and assist each other, even those who are not due to zakat and in fact do not have anything to pay zakat for, let alone paying zakat while bowing in the worship of Allah, they should also be friend and assist of each other.

Therefore, it is clear that in this verse the intention from "vali" is "velayat" meaning guardianship, possession and material and spiritual guidance, especially because of the fact that this "velayat" is compared to the "velayat" of God and his messenger and all three are uttered in one sentence. Hence, this verse is from among verses which indicate Imam Ali's (A.S.) "velayat" and Imamat. (Makarem Shirazi, 1995)

The following meanings are taken from the term "vali" in this verse:

- 1- Guardian (Tabresi, 1993 – Tostari, 1988 – Ghomi Mashadi, 1989 – Feiz Kashani, 1995 – Shubbar, 1986 and Makarem Shirazi, 1995)
- 2- Superior (Bahrani, 1995 – Feiz Kashani, 1995 and Hoveizi, 1994)
- 3- Friend (Kashefi Sabzevari, 1990 and Tabatabaee, 1996)
- 4- Assistance and guardianship (Fazlollah, 1998)

Objections posed by some obstinate interpreters to the content of this noble verse denoting to Imam Ali (A.S.) "velayat" and the rejection of those objections (taken totally from Al-Mizan Interpretation). Of course it should be noted that the mentioned interpreters have dispute about this verse and each objected to an aspect of it in order to say that this verse does not point to Imam Ali (A.S.) but refers to all believers; but we tell them with all respect that it was not just and proper to object to all these narratives (revayats) because if one is not affected with obstinacy and enmity, the narratives are so strong and binding that a just interpreter would not try to weaken them and deny them; the objections they have posed to these narratives are as below:

First – "velayat" in this verse and verses before and after it has the meaning of assistance and this narrative is not acceptable because of not being compatible with this meaning.

In response to their claim that this verse is in such a context in which "velayat" means assistance we explained before and repeat here that this verse's context does not imply such a meaning and even if the previous verses have such a context, this does not mean that this verse also imply this meaning and is in line with its previous verses.

Second- Narratives saying velayat has the meaning of possession in this verse do not comply with this phrase that says «الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ الصَّلَاةَ» that mean those who say prayer, so it cannot be said that this verse only refers to Ali (A.S.), while he is single (one person) and those refers to a group of people.

Regarding this issue about the word «الذين», it should be noted that there is a difference between when a plural word is used to refer to a single person or make a general rule and refer to a group of people. With an investigation we can see that the first form is so common in the holy Quran that cannot be questionable. These interpreters are referred to this verse:

«بِأَيِّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ» (Momtaheneh/1)

Until where it says:

«تُسِيرُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ» (Momtaheneh/10)

There are binding reasons and accepted narratives that the source of the pronoun «اليهم» despite being plural is only one person and he is Hateb Ibn Abi Baltae who had concealed correspondences with Ghoreish and enemies of Isam. Also in this verse:

«يَقُولُونَ لَنْ نَرَجِعَ إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ لِنُخْرِجَنَّ الْأَعَزُّ مِنْهَا الْأَذَلَّ» (Monafeghun/8)

There are binding and correct narratives that this verse refers to just one person who is Abdollah Ibn Abi Bisalul, head of the hypocrites (Monafeghin).

Likewise, in this verse:

«يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُقْفُونَ» (Baghareh / 215)

The subject of the plural verb «يسألون» is only one person and also in the verse:

«الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُم بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً» (Baghareh / 274)

There are true and binding narratives that this verse refers only to one person who is Ali Ibn Abitaleb (A.S.) or based on their own view, Sunni interpreters, it refers to Ababakr!!

There are many other verses in which there are plural verbs referring to one specified person. In the case these interpreters have any answer based on all mentioned examples we are open to hear it. The strangest case is this verse:

«يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَى أَنْ تُصِيبَنَا دَائِرَةٌ» (Maedeh / 52)

"They say, we dread lest a turn of fortune strike us!" based on their own confession and interpretation this verse is referred to one person who is the head of the hypocrites (Monafeghin), Abdollah Ibn Abi Bisalul, and the strange point is that this verse follows the same rule, how can they forget their words so easily and have such a poor memory?!

One may say that in mentioned verses which a plural verb is used for a single person, in fact the idea is not related only to a single person, but there were people who accepted and were consented to his deeds, even though the doer of the action was only an individual, God uses a plural verb in his reproach so that those who did not do it but are in line with the doer, are reproached too.

The response is that we agree in that there might be a point which necessitates using plural in place of a singular and in this verse the same condition applies, that is in the use of plural form is a point, that if The Legislator bestows all kinds of religious munificences from which one is "velayat" to a single person, Ali (A.S.), it is not in vain and exorbitant, but is because of supremacy and priority he has in act and sincerity over others. Moreover, most or even all those who have quoted this narratives are prophets companions (Sahabeh) or people who lived in the same era with sahabeh and they were pure Arabs, and it can be said that Arabic language was much more intact in that era. Therefore, if this use of plural verb was not acceptable in Arabic language, it could have been more reasonable that Arabs in that era would object it and this is while from thousand companions of the prophet and other people in that era no one objected this use of language, since if there was such an objection it would have reached us. (Tabatabaee, 1996)

Third- The requisite of these narratives is that by zakat the intention is charity, but it is not seen call charity by the term zakat.

Hujjat-al-Veda (last and farewell argument), but it was not the whole surah which was revealed then and there is no doubt that parts of the verses were revealed before that time and it is clear in their contents and also narratives uttered about them.

Therefore, just the fact that these verses are now adjacent and are arranged in this order does not imply that they have the same context, and also the existence of some relations between them does not show that the verses of this surah are all revealed in their current order. The second witness to this claim's invalidity is the content difference between the previous and the next verses of this verse, because in the verse:

«بِأَيِّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ...» (Maedah / 51)

This not only prohibits the believers from the unbelievers' "velayat", but also it reproaches the hypocrites who are disbelievers in their hearths, because of the wicked act of hurrying to help the unbelievers and taking their side and it is all uttered in such a way that does not address the unbelievers at all. Unlike this verse, in the next verses after the inhibition from the unbelievers' "velayat" God orders his messenger to give this message to the unbelievers and remind them their wickedly deeds that are derision and requisition and their internal flaws that is discord and hypocrisy. Therefore, the previous verses have a different motive and purpose than the next versus. Now, how can we find a unique context among these two groups of verses?!

"Vali" in this noble verse does not mean assistor but is "velayat" meaning love and friendship. Moreover, it is nonsense that prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H) be people's "vali" with the implication of believers' assistor because either they are his assistor or he and the believers are assistors of religion, or God is his messenger and believers assistor. All these implications are correct but it is not sound to say he is the assistor of believers.

The explanation is that these interpreters who say "vali" in this verse means assistor, most possibly mean assistance in religion and God has taken this meaning too and has used it in many verses. In addition, since we can say religion is for God and for his messenger and for believers, so it is valid to say assisting religion is assisting God, because God is the legislator of religion. This is repeated several times in the holy Quran which we refer to some examples below:

«قَالَ الْخَوَارِثِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ» (Saf / 14), «إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ» (Mohammad / 7), «وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ» (Ahzab / 7)

And it is even said that:

«لَتُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ وَتَنْصُرَنَّهُ» (Ale Emran / 81)

Therefore, it is correct to say that: religion is for God and for his messenger, because God is religion's legislator and his messenger is a guide to it and summons towards it and for this summons people to assist religion or admires them for helping God and his messenger, the holy Quran says:

«وَ عَزَّوَجُودٌ وَ نَصْرُوهُ» (Eraf / 157), «وَ يَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُ» (Hashr / 8) and «وَ الَّذِينَ أَوْوَا وَ نَصَرُوا» (Enfal / 72)

It equals assisting religion to assisting the prophet and believers and says: God is his messenger and believers assistor. Quran also says:

«وَ لَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ» (Haj / 40), «إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَ يَوْمَ يَقُومُ الْأَشْهَادُ» (Ghafer / 51) and «كَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ» (Rom / 47)

However, we can no way consider Islam just for the believers and not for God's messenger, then it says God's messenger is the believers' assistor because there is no religious greatness and excellence unless its real and best appearance is in him and he has a great share of this excellence, so never in the holy Quran God's messenger is called assistor of the believers.

Yea, Devine's words are so pure that will never fail to reserve due respect to the Great prophet of Islam and this is the most binding proof that wherever in Quran "velayat" is referred to God's messenger, it implies "velayat" and right in possession and love, Like the below verses:

«النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ» (Ahzab / 6) and «إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ وَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا...» (Maedah / 55)

In these two verses the believers are addressed and it is nonsense that God's messenger be their assistor due to our discussions. Therefore, it was shown that this verse does not have the same context with its adjacent verses, even if we suppose that "velayat" here means assistance, we should not be misled by the last sentence:

«فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ» (Maedah / 56)

and believe that this sentence only comply with the word "velayat" implying assistance, because this sentence also complies with other meanings of the term "velayat" as possession and love, because the religion's dominance and spread in the whole world which is the unique objective of religious people requires that they are linked to God and his messenger in any possible way, and this can be a linkage to God and his messenger's assistance or acceptance of their possession or their love, so this last sentence is compatible with all the three meanings and God has promised explicitly several times and has reminded all people that Islam dominance is soon achieved over all other religions and said:

«كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَأَغْلِبَنَّ أَنَا وَ رَسُولِي» (Mojadeleh / 21) and «وَ لَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا الْمُرْسَلِينَ. إِنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْمَنْصُورُونَ وَ إِنْ جُنَدْنَا لَهُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ» (Saffat / 171-173)

Besides, all aspects dealt with, there are many narratives both from the Shia Imams and also from Sunih group, all denoting to the fact that this verse refers to Ali Ibn Abitaleb (A.S.) when gave his ring for charity while he was saying prayer, so this verse refers to a special command and does not involve a group of people.

In the case we are to neglect all these narratives talking about this verse's reference to Imam Ali (A.S.) and do not accept all these proofs, so we should fully renounce from interpreting Quran, because if we cannot rely on all these narratives, how shall we rely on one or two narratives about each and all verses of Quran, hence, with all aspects discussed, there is no place to claim the content of this verse implies to all believers and denotes to "velayat" of some of them to others (Tabatabaee, 1996).

Conclusions

From what was discussed above we can conclude that the term "vali" in this verse can be attributed to the meanings as guardian and friendship and it cannot be summarized just in friendship and both these meanings are somewhat implied in the meaning of proximity; but the fact that some have taken the meaning of demand "Talab" from this term is not correct, because this meaning is never attributed to this term, and this verse is from among verses which talk about the transfer of "velayat" from God to others which we will deal with in extension later.

«إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالَ: وَلَايَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى الْإِخْتِيَارَ لِمَنْ اسْتَوْلَاهُ، ثُمَّ أَعْلَمَ الرَّسُولُ أَنَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، فَيَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يُوَالِيَ مَنْ وَالِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا، ثُمَّ قَالَ: وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ يَعْنِي غَالِبُونَ هُوَ نَفْسِهِمْ» (Tostari, 1988)

RESULT

From what we discussed we can claim that

1- Considering the term «إنما» which is a sign of limitation, the guardian of human beings is God, his messenger and a special group of people who keep up prayer and pay the welfare tax while bowing in worship of God.

2- In this verse, bowing is used in its special meaning that is bowing in prayer while other meanings as humility are subsidiary and peripheral.

3- Considering of the reason for the revelation of this verse and interpretive narrations about it which are accepted by both shia and sunni, this verse confirms and notices the "valayat" of Imam Ali (Peace be Upon).

4- In this verse "vali" means guardian and manager of affairs.

5- Whoever accepts this guardianship is among God's party and God's party is the conquering and victorious.

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