

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

Fatemeh Hosseini Alaee

PhD Candidate at Payame Nour University of Tehran

***Corresponding Author email:** hoseinif114@gmail.com

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.

(Maedeh/55) إِنْ مَّا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَ يُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَ هُمْ رَاكِعُونَ «انما»

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 Imamatus. (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's (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 يَتَّبِعُونَ 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:

«يَا أَيُّهَا 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 «إليهم» 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 رَجَعْنَا إِلَى الْمَدِينَةِ لِيُخْرِجَنَا 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.

Regarding this third objection claiming that giving his ring to a poor for charity is not considered as zakat the answer is that today the term zakat refers to the obligatory zakat due to properties and one does not get the implication of charity from this term, but this does not mean that the Arabic lexical meaning of zakat does not imply this meaning, the fact is that over more than a thousand year has passed from Islam, clergymen and people have used this word for the obligatory zakat, but in the early years of Islam zakat was used in its lexical meaning, and the lexical meaning of zakat includes charity as well. In fact, if zakat is used with prayer, it means giving your property for God's sake and this implication is seen in other verses about prophets too, for example, the verse talking about Ibrahim, Ishaq and Ya'qub (Peace be Upon Them) says:

«وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ فِعْلَ الْخَيْرَاتِ وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ» (Anbia / 73)

And other verses in 'Meccan surahs', especially those revealed in the early ages after the prophetic mission, as «حم سجده» and the like. The point is that these verses were revealed long before the time when zakat became obligatory and found its current implication. Possibly, Muslims in that era got an implication from the term zakat in these verses, and in the verse of zakat which implies that the current zakat is one form of charity and it is called zakat basically because it is a type of charity, as charity is a purifier and the term zakat is taken from the word "tazkieh" meaning purification. (Tabatabaee, 1996)

After these three obstructs the mentioned interpreters have stated that this means that this verse is not about any special person and includes all believers. This is a point containing "ghasr-e-ghalb"¹ or "ghasr-e-afraad"² because hypocrites are so keen to the "velayat" of infidels and making friendship with them and persisted to all Muslims to love them. The Glorious God has prohibited believers from friendship with infidels and says: "your 'olia" are not infidels and hypocrites, but are God, his messenger and true believers." (Fakhroddin Razi, 1999).

¹"ghasr-e-ghalb" refers to when someone condemns another's view and says the contrary, for example, when one says: "Zeid is standing" he believes not only Zeid is not standing, but also is sitting, and also when one says: "Zeid is a poet" he believes that not only Zeid is not a poet but also Amro is a poet.

²"shasr-e-afraad" refers to when one believes that two or more attributes exist in one person or two or more people have the same attribute, for example, against the sentence: "zeid is only a writer" they say Zeid is a writer and a poet and also against the sentence: "there is no writer but Zeid" they believe that Zeid and Amro are both writers.

Study and Investigation

This noble verse is among verses which prohibit "velayat" of other religions and the unbelievers, so some of Sunih interpreters have tried to associate this verse to verses coming before and after it and declare that they are all uttering one of the duties of Muslims which is to restrain from helping the Jews and Christians and of course the unbelievers and only assist God and his Messenger and the believers, but only the believers who say prayer, and pay zakat while they are bowing in God's worship, and not any person entering the Islam's domain. Therefore, we should not assist the hypocrites who are disbelievers in their hearths just as we should not assist the unbelievers. In short, these interpreters want to say that "velayat" in this verse is the same as verses like:

«وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ» (Al-e-Emran / 67) and «النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ» (Ahzab / 6)

And also these verses which apply the term "velayat" to believers:

«أُولَٰئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ» (Ahzab / 6) and «وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ» (Tubeh / 71)

Just like these verses in which "velayat" means assistance, in the verse under investigation it has the same meaning, so the Shia claim that says this verse refers to Imam Ali (A.S.) and is an indicator of his "velayat" and ruling, because it is just him who gives his ring for charity while he is bowing in God's worship is null and void. These interpreters where then asked: so what is the role of the sentence «وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ» after the sentence «وَأُولَٰئِكَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ»? In the case this verse does not refer to Imam Ali (A.S.) as Shia believe, what does the sentence "while bowing in God's worship" mean?

In response to this question they say that here the real meaning of bowing in God's worship is not meant, but the implication is the figurative meaning that is humility before God's immensity which is in human's heart because of his poverty and other attributes of human being and it means that: "your "olia" and assistants are not the Jews or Christians and unbelievers, but your "olia" and assistants are God, his messenger and the believers who say prayer and pay zakat and in all these times are humiliated, or those who pay zakat while they, themselves, are poor and indigent (Abdoh, Bitah, and Fakhroddin Razi, 1999).

However, an accurate attention to this verse and the surrounding verses and also the whole Surah shows us that these interpreters' claim is just null and void and the first witness to their mistake considering "velayat" to mean assistance in this verse is their own reasoning saying that these verses are all in the same context and so "velayat" in all of them is talking about whom we should assist and whom we should not assist, because despite the fact that this surah was revealed in the last parts of the Prophet Mohammad's (P.B.U.H) life in

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:

«يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضُهُمْ...» (Maedeh / 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:

«وَعَزَّزُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ» (Eraf / 157)، «وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ» (Hashr / 8) and «وَالَّذِينَ آوَوْا وَنَصَرُوا» (Enfal / 72)

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

«وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ» (Haj / 40)، «إِنَّا لَنَنْصُرُ رُسُلَنَا وَالَّذِينَ 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:

«الَّذِينَ آوَوْا بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ» (Ahzab / 6) and «إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا...» (Maedeh / 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» (Maedeh / 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 وَرُسُلِي» (Mojadeleh / 21) and «وَلَقَدْ سَبَقَتْ كَلِمَتُنَا لِعِبَادِنَا الْمُرْسَلِينَ. إِنَّهُمْ لَهُمُ الْمَنْصُورُونَ وَإِنَّ جُنَدَنَا 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 وَ رَسُولُهُ وَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَال: وَلَايَةُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى الْاِخْتِيَارَ لِمَنْ اسْتَوْلَاهُ، ثُمَّ أَعْلَمَ الرَّسُولُ أَنَّهُ وَلِيَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، فَيَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يُوَالِيَ مَنْ وَالَى اللَّهَ تَعَالَى وَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا، ثُمَّ قَالَ: وَ مَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَ رَسُولَهُ وَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمْ الْغَالِبُونَ يَعْنِي غَالِبُونَ هُوَ نَفْسُهُمْ» (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.

REFERENCES

- Abdoh M. 1994. Al-menar, 12 vol. Dar al-Marefah, Beirut.
 Al- Qoran Al-Karim
 Aruzi Hoveizi A. 1994. Nor al-saqalein, 4th edn, vol 11. Ismailian, Qom.
 Bahrani H. 1995. Al-borhan fi tafsir al-Quran, 1st edn, Vol 7 . Bonyad Besat, Tehran.
 Fakhr al-Din Razi M. 1999. Mafatih al-qeib, 3rd edn, vol 6. Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi, Beirut.
 Fazl allah M. 1998. Tafsir men vahi al-Quran, 2nd edn, vol 15. Dar al-Melak Lettabae va al-Nashr, Beirut.
 Feiz Kashani M. 2010. Tafsir al-safi. Zav al-Qorba, Tehran.
 Kashani M. 1957. Tafsir menhaj al-sadeqin fi alzam al-mokhalefin (10th Volume). Alami: Tehran.
 Kashefi Sabzevari H. 1990. Mavaheb alaih (9th Volume). Eqbal Publication: Tehran.
 Makarem Shirazi N. 1995. Tafsir-e nemuneh, 1st edn (15th Volume). Dar al-kotob al-eslamieh: Tehran.
 Mostafa H. 1980. Altahighigh fi kalamat alghoran alkarim (3rd ed.). Tehran: boniga-e tarjome va nashr-e kitab.
 Mostafavi H. 1981. Al-tahqiq fi kalamat al-Qoran al-karim (15th Volume). Books Translation and Publication Institution: Tehran.
 Mostamli EM. 1969. Sharhe Tasarof. Tehran: Bonyad-e Farhang-e Iran
 Qomi Meshadi M. 1989. Tafsir kanz al-daqaq va bahr al-qaraib, 1st edn, vol 12.
 Shubbar A. 1986. Al-Jawhar al-thamin fi tafsir al-Kitab al-mubin, 1st edn, 13 vol. Maktabat al-Alfin: Kuwait.
 Tabatabaee M H. 1996 , criteria of Qoran, Islamic publication of seminary clergymen –Qom
 Tabresi FH. 1993. MajmaolAl-Bayan in Quran interpretation, Naser Khosro publication, Tehran
 Tostari M. 1988. Behaj al-sabaqe. Nahj al-Balaaq Publishing.