

Comparative Study of Interpreters' Views on "Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk Qāla Lan Tarānī" (Q.7:143), Based on the Relationship of Verses

بررسی تطبیقی آراء مفسران در تفسیر «قَالَ رَبِّ ارْنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ لَنْ نَرَاكَ»

با تکیه بر ارتباط آیات

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Abstract

There is a difference of opinion among Quranic interpreters. In interpreting verse "Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk Qāla Lan Tarānī" (Q.7:143) regarding the belief of Prophet Moses (PBUH) concerning the possibility or impossibility of seeing God at the time of saying this and they are divided into two categories. The first group believes that this verse shows that Prophet Moses (PBUH) in his words, considered it possible to see God, which is divided into five sets, each of them with their own reason. The second group of commentators, believe that Prophet Moses (PBUH) considered it impossible to see God and is divided into four sets according to their reasons. This study, by examining the opinions and reasons of the commentators and relying on the relationship between the verses and the words of this verse, will show that the request to see God from Prophet Moses (PBUH) knowing its impossibility, and only out of enthusiasm of hearing the word of God, was just for more love.

Keywords: Verse 143 of Surat al-A'rāf, the vision of God, Prophet Moses (PBUH), the relationship between the verses.

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چکیده

مفسران در تفسیر آیه «قَالَ رَبِّ ارْنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ لَنْ نَرَاكَ» (اعراف/۱۴۳) درباره اعتقاد حضرت موسی (ع) در لحظه بیان این کلام، به امکان یا عدم امکان رؤیت خداوند اختلاف کرده و به دو دسته تقسیم می‌شوند. دسته اول معتقدند این آیه نشان می‌دهد حضرت موسی (ع) در این کلام خود، رؤیت خداوند را ممکن می‌دانسته و علت درخواست را این موارد می‌دانند: برای یقین قلبی، شک در اثر وسوسه شیطان، منافات نداشتن با مقام نبوت به دلیل توبه، درخواست امکان رؤیت از خدا و نهایتاً نداشتن درجه و مقام رؤیت. دسته دوم از مفسران با اعتقاد به اینکه حضرت موسی (ع) رؤیت خدا را غیر ممکن می‌دانسته است دلایل درخواست رؤیت را اینگونه مطرح می‌کنند: طلب رؤیت از اشتیاق زیاد، این درخواست برای قوم بنی‌اسرائیل بوده است، مربوط بودن درخواست به دیدن آیات الهی و نه رؤیت خداوند، مقصود در این آیه دیدار قلبی و علم ضروری بوده است و بالاخره اینکه حضرت از خداوند خواسته که با آیات قیامت خود را نشان دهد. این پژوهش با بررسی آراء و دلایل مفسران و با تکیه بر ارتباط میان آیات و واژگان این آیه نشان خواهد داد درخواست رؤیت خداوند از طرف حضرت موسی (ع) با علم به عدم امکان آن، و تنها از سر شوق حاصل از شنیدن کلام پروردگار و برای انس بیشتر مطرح شده است.

کلمات کلیدی: آیه ۱۴۳ سوره اعراف، رؤیت خدا، حضرت موسی (ع)، ارتباط آیات سوره.

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Introduction

The commentators are divided into two general categories in the interpretation of the phrase "Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk Qāla Lan Tarānī" (Q.7:143) from Surat al-A'rāf. The first group are the commentators whose opinions show that they believe that Prophet Moses (PBUH) considered it possible to see God in expressing these words, and the reasons for requesting this visit are as follows:

In order to reach the certainty of the heart, like Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH), who asked God for the resurrection of the dead, he sought the sight of his God (Ṭūsī, nd: 4/533; Kāshānī, 1300: 4/102; Khaṭīb, 1424: 5/477); at the moment of hearing the word of God, Satan tempts Prophet Moses (PBUH) as to how it is known that this is the word of God and he has sought to see God to be sure (Tha'labī, 1422: 4/275; Khāzan, 1415: 2/244). Knowing the possibility of seeing God does not contradict the status of Moses (PBUH) mission, because for someone who is ignorant of the issue of seeing, having the knowledge of monotheism, is possible (Ṭabrisī, 1372: 4/729-732; Abū al-Futūh Rāzī, 1408: 8/376-389), Moses (PBUH) asked God to grant him the ability to see Him (Baḡāī, 1427: 3/108; Suyūṭī, 1404: 3/115), but he had not yet reached a position where it was possible for him to see God (Ṭayyeb, 1369: 5/449).

The second group of commentators, believing that Prophet Moses (PBUH) considered it impossible to see God, in the interpretation of this part of the

verse, have mentioned their reasons for requesting vision as follows:

Upon hearing the word of God, Prophet Moses (PBUH) expressed the desire to "Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk" (Q.7:143)¹ from the intensity of desire (Mughātil ibn Sulaymān, 1423: 2/60; Qushayrī, 2000: 1/564; Jurjānī, 1430: 1/697), Prophet Moses (PBUH) requested a visit from God on behalf of his people (Shiybānī, 1413: 2/352). In this verse, the purpose is to see the divine revelations and not God himself (Ṭabrisī, 1372: 4/729-732). The meaning of seeing in this verse is essential knowledge (Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīmī, 1363: 4/189; Tabātabāī, 1390: 8/236-260) or the heartfelt seeing (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1415: 2/236; Qumī Mashhadī, 1368: 5/169-176). The purpose of Prophet Moses (PBUH) is to ask God to show himself by revealing some of the verses of the Day of Resurrection that cause people to know (Nahāvandī, 1386: 2/649).

This study, regardless of the discussion of the possibility or impossibility of seeing God, which has been discussed in many scientific studies and is beyond the scope of this article, examines the opinions and reasons of commentators regarding the request to see God by Prophet Moses (PBUH), and will show:

1. In the interpretation of the phrase "Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk Qāla Lan Tarānī"² (Q.7:143)³, what interpretive opinions have been given

١. «أرِنِي أَنْظِرْ إِلَيْكَ» (اعراف/١٤٣)

2. All translations are from Holy Qur'an translated by Yusufali: <http://www.parsquran.com>

٣. «قَالَ رَبِّ ارِنِي أَنْظِرْ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ لَنْ نَرَأِي» (اعراف/١٤٣)

and which of these opinions are acceptable?

2. What is the effect of examining the relationship between verse 143 and other verses of Surat al-A'rāf in identifying the acceptable opinions and interpreting the verse?

1. Categorization of the Opinions of the Commentators

Among the interpretations examined in this study, some commentators have remained silent in interpreting this verse and have taken it in its apparent meaning. Some other commentators have mentioned all the opinions of previous commentators and have not chosen a specific opinion. Apart from these two categories, we will continue to examine the opinions of other commentators, which can be divided into two main groups:

1-1. First Group: Believers that Believe Prophet Moses (PBUH) Considered it Possible to See God

The commentators of this group believe that Prophet Moses (PBUH) considered it possible to see God, and in response to those who believe that this ignorance is not compatible with the dignity of a prophet, they say that knowing God may not contradict his prophetic status and his belief in monotheism. Because his purpose was not similitude and embodiment, and for one who is ignorant of the issue of vision, knowledge of monotheism is possible (Ṭabrisī, 1372: 4/729-732; Abū al-Futūh Rāzī. 1408: 8/376-389; Kāshānī, 1300: 4/102). In explaining the reason for the request of Prophet Moses (PBUH), the commentators of this group are divided into several categories:

1-1-1. The First Category: Requesting a Meeting to Reach Certainty

These commentators believe that, as Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH) says in his request for the resurrection of the dead, he wants it to reassure his heart: "When Abraham said: "Show me, Lord, how You will raise the dead," He replied: "Have you no faith?" He said "Yes, but just to reassure my heart." (Q.2:260) in this verse, Prophet Moses (PBUH) also asked to see his God in order to achieve heartfelt certainty (Ṭūsī, n.d: 4/533; Kāshānī, 1300: 4/102; Khaṭīb, 1424: 5/477; Madrasī, 1419: 3/440; Sabzivārī, 1406: 3/208).

Tha'labī and Khāzan have stated another reason for the need of Prophet Moses (PBUH) for heartfelt confidence. These two have quoted a barrier. When Prophet Moses (PBUH) heard the word of God, Satan tempted him to find out how it is known that this is the voice of God and not the voice of Satan. This is where Prophet Moses (PBUH) had to seek the sight of his God to put an end to this doubt (Tha'labī, 1422: 4/275; Khāzan, 1415: 2/244).

Investigation: If his request was for attaining certainty, since he, like Prophet Ibrahim (PBUH), is a great prophet, God's justice requires that his request be granted. But at the end of this verse 143, we encounter the rejection of this request by God and the repentance of Prophet Moses (PBUH): He said: "O my Lord! show (Thyself) to me, that I may look upon thee." Allah said: "By no means canst thou see Me (direct); But look upon the mount; if it abide in its place, then shalt thou see Me." When his Lord manifested His glory on the Mount, He made it as dust. And Moses fell down

in a swoon. When he recovered his senses he said: "Glory be to Thee! To Thee I turn in repentance, and I am the first to believe." (Q.7:143)

Khāzan, Tha'labī and Sadī do not provide a reason for their vote.

1-1-2. The Second Category: The Request of Prophet Moses (PBUH) as Proof of the Possibility of Seeing God

These commentators (Beyzāwī, 1418: 3/33; Nasafī, 1416: 2/109; Ras'anī, 1429: 2/245; Ibn Kathīr, 1419: 3/421; Abū Ḥayyān, 1407: 1/863-864; Ṭūfī, 1426: 290; Tha'labī, 1418: 3/74; Fakhr Rāzī, 1420: 14/353; Ibn 'Ādil, 1419: 9/300; Abū al-Su'ūd, 1983: 3/269; Kāshifī, nd: 353; Khaṭīb Shirbīnī, 1425: 1/588; Shūkānī, 1414: 2/276; Qāsemī, 1418: 5/178; Ṣadīq Ḥasan Khan, 1420: 2/571-572; Khaṭīb, 1424: 5/477; Ṭantāvi, 1997: 5/369) believe that it is possible to conclude the permission of divine vision from the request of Prophet Moses (PBUH) to see God. In support of this opinion, some have referred to verses 22-23 of Surat al-Qiyāmah: "Some faces, that Day, will beam (in brightness and beauty * Looking towards their Lord" (Q.75:22-23) or a verse that announces the impossibility of seeing God for the infidels: "Verily, from (the Light of) their Lord, that Day, will they be veiled" (Q.83:15) (Ibn Kathīr, 1419: 3/421; Tha'labī, 1418: 3/74; Shinqīfī, 1427: 2/248; Qāsemī, 1418: 5/178).

Referring to verse: "([O Noah!]) So ask not of Me that of which thou hast no knowledge! I give thee counsel, lest thou act like the ignorant!" (Q.11:46), Abū Ḥayyān states that if the request of Prophet Moses (PBUH), like the request of Prophet Noah (PBUH) to save his son, was impossible, it would have been answered in this way, and he

derives the possibility of seeing God from it.

Some commentators of this category, in explaining the second part of the verse, which says: "Lan Tarānī" (Q.7:143), have stated that this "Lan" does not mean eternal negation (Tha'labī, 1418: 3/74; Ibn 'Ādil, 1419: 9/300).

Also, some theologians have considered that God made his visit conditional on the establishment of a mountain in the following verse: "By no means canst thou see Me (direct); But look upon the mount; if it abides in its place, then shalt thou see Me." (Q.7:143) and the establishment of a mountain in itself is a possible thing, and these theologians know it as a reason for the possibility of seeing God (Qāsemī, 1418: 5/178).

Investigation: The reasons given by many commentators in this category are the same theological reasons and issues that are discussed among those who believe in the possibility of seeing and the impossibility of seeing God. Since the study of this discussion is not the subject of this research, we use the relationship between the verses to reject the opinions of this category, and we draw attention to the continuation of verse 143 of Surat al-A'rāf: he said: "Glory be to Thee! To Thee I turn in repentance, and I am the first to believe." (Q.7:143). Since in this verse Prophet Moses (PBUH) repents for the request he had at the beginning of the verse, it can be concluded that even if his intention was to see God, according to this part of the verse he has repented of his request. Therefore, despite this repentance and glorification at the end of the verse, the commentators of this group cannot consider the vision possible based only on the request of Prophet Moses (PBUH).

1-1-3. The Third Category: The Request of Prophet Moses (PBUH) to Grant the Possibility of Seeing God

Some commentators have quoted Ibn Abbas as saying that Prophet Moses (PBUH) in this verse asked God to grant him the ability to see him (Baqāī, 1427: 3/108; Suyūṭī, 1404: 3/115) and the commentators in this category do not give a specific reason.

1-1-4. The Forth Category: Prophet Moses' (PBUH) Repentance and Expression of Faith as a Reason for his Belief in the Impossibility of Seeing God

These commentators believe that although Prophet Moses (PBUH) initially believed in the possibility of seeing God and had this request, the repentance given at the end of verse: "Glory be to Thee! To Thee I turn in repentance, and I am the first to believe." (Q.7:143)¹. shows that his request was impossible.

In order to prove this opinion, they have cited a hadith from Imam Sādig (PBUH) which says: "I am the first of the believers; That the divine essence is not visible" (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1415: 2/232-234) and according to this hadith, which shows that the repentance of Prophet Moses (PBUH) was for asking for sight, it has been concluded that sight is not possible (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1415: 2/232-234; Bahṛānī, 1415: 2/580-586; Ḥuwayzī, 1415: 2/63; Qumī Mashhadī, 1368: 5/169-176; Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīmī, 1363: 4/189; Qarā'tī, 1388: 3/166-171).

Investigation: Paying attention to the end of the verse, which is the

repentance of Prophet Moses (PBUH), is one of the cases of paying attention to the relationship between verses and the words in the verse, which helps the commentator in interpreting this issue and reduces the scope of differences in this verse. The same point was used in the second category vote.

1-1-5. The Fifth Category: Prophet Moses (PBUH) was not in the Position and Level of Meeting God

In his commentary, Ṭayyeb has given two introductions. Although Moses (PBUH) considered it possible to see God and asked God, but his talent and ability are not enough to be able to see God. Then, referring to the different levels of the prophets, he says:

Considering that the holy position of Muḥammad (PBUH) was higher than the position of Moses (PBUH) and his talent was more, it can be said that what Moses (PBUH) could not bear, Muhammad (PBUH) observed even in Mi'rāj. Therefore, he says: "Then he approached and came closer [to God], * and was at a distance of but two bow-lengths or (even) nearer" (Q.53: 8-9) to the word of the Almighty: "For truly did he [Muḥammad (PBUH)] see, of the Signs of his Lord, the Greatest!" (Q.53:18). There are many works of God that even the Holy Prophet (PBUH) who is the best of all cannot see, and perhaps the meaning of this hadith, which is attributed to the Muḥammad (PBUH) himself, is that he says in his prayers: "We did not know You and did not worship You as your right". (Ṭayyeb, 1369: 5/449)

Investigation: The repentance of Prophet Moses (PBUH) in the continuation of this verse: "Glory be to Thee! To Thee I turn in repentance, and I am the first to believe." (Q.7:143),

١. «قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ» (اعراف/١٤٣)

confirms the impossibility of seeing God by him. The reference of this group of commentators to the verses of Surat al-Najm in proving the possibility of seeing for the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH) who is in a higher rank than him, is not proof of the possibility of materially seeing for the Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). The meaning of seeing in the verses of Surat al-Najm may be having the necessary knowledge. But what certainly comes out of the conversation of Moses (PBUH) with his God, and especially his repentance from his request, shows that the request for seeing is with the eye and is rejected by his Lord. Also, what is said in the verse addressed to Prophet Moses (PBUH) that he cannot see God: "And his Lord addressed him, He said: "O my Lord! show (Thyself) to me, that I may look upon thee." Allah said: "By no means canst thou see Me" (Q.7:143). It is not necessarily generalizable to all the prophets. The grace and superiority of some prophets over others is specified in verse: "Those messengers We endowed with gifts, some above others: To one of them Allah spoke; others He raised to degrees (of honour); to Jesus the son of Mary We gave clear (signs), and strengthened him with the holy spirit." (Q.2:253) and of course this opinion also needs to be completed.

1-2. Second Group: Believers that Believe Prophet Moses (PBUH) Considered it Impossible to See God

The group's commentators reject Moses' view of seeing God as possible for three reasons:

The first reason is that such a request was not worthy of Prophet Moses (PBUH) who is one of the five great prophets, and his position is not

compatible with such negligence and ignorance (Tabātabāī, 1390: 8/238).

The second reason is that in the continuation of these verses, Prophet Moses rebuked his people for asking to see God and called them idiots and said to his Lord: "wouldst Thou destroy us for the deeds of the foolish ones among us?" (Q.7:155) Yet how can he himself do something that he has called people idiots for? (Tabātabāī, 1390: 8/256; Makārim Shīrāzī, 1371: 6/356).

The third reason is that Imam Sādig, in response to Mu'āwiyeh, who asked about the possibility of seeing God, rebuked Mu'āwiyeh bin-Vahab and said: "O Mu'āwiyeh, how ugly it is for a man who has lived in the kingdom of God for seventy or eighty years and has eaten his blessings during this time and has not known the God who created him and bestowed blessings on him..." (Burūjerdī, 1366: 2/458; Tabātabāī, 1390: 8/256) So this lack of knowledge for the Prophet should definitely be uglier.

Then the commentators of this group have given several other reasons for seeking the sight of God for Prophet Moses (PBUH) which are presented in several categories:

1-2-1. The Sixth Category: Seeking to See God from the Intensity of Enthusiasm

These commentators (Mughātil ibn Sulaymān, 1423: 2/60; Qushayrī, 2000: 1/564; Jurjānī, 1430: 1/697; Miyyudī, 1371: 3/732; Nasafī, 1416: 2/109; Ibn 'Arabī, 1422: 1/240; Abū Ḥayyān, 1407: 1/863-864; Sīvāsī, 1427: 2/81; Kāshānī, 13: 4/102; Pānīptī, 1412:

3/403; Shūkānī, 1414: 2/276; Šāvī, 1427: 1/556; Quṭb, 1425: 3/1368; Ālighāzī, 1382: 1/416; ‘Āmilī, 1360: 4/225; Mughnīyeh, 1425: 214; Abū Zahrih, nd: 6/2945; Šadīq Ḥasan khan, 1420: 2/571- 572; Faḍl Allāh, 1419: 10/237; Zuḥaylī, 1422: 1/719; Sha‘rāvī, 1427: 7/4338-4342; Šābūnī, 1421: 1/435). believe that although Prophet Moses (PBUH) knew the status of his Lord and always practiced piety in the word, in expressing this word from the intensity of the passion that arose in him as a result of hearing the word of God, he becomes unconscious and seeks the visit of God (Jurjānī, 1430: 1/697). Or in the words of Miybudī: “The fire of the heart ignited, patience ran out of the heart, he became impatient, he said: “‘Arinī ‘Unzur ilayk” (Q.7:143)”

In confirmation of this matter, Ibn ‘Arabī has quoted a hadith from the Messenger of God which says: “God is beautiful and loves beauties” and then explains, Moses (PBUH) is eager to see the speaker when he hears the good words of God (Ibn ‘Arabī, 1410: 2/165).

In showing this enthusiasm for hearing the word and seeing the vision of God, Sha‘rāvī refers to verses seventeen and eighteen of Surah Taha, which says: “And what is that in the right hand, O Moses?” * He said, “It is my rod: on it I lean; with it I beat down fodder for my flocks; and in it I find other uses.” (Q.20:17-18). He believes that as in the case of love, Moses has extended the word only to be acquainted with the beloved for a few more minutes and while it is enough to answer “rod”, he begins to explain and elaborate, in this verse also the purpose of seeing is to ask for more love with the beloved (Sha‘rāvī, 1991: 7/4338-4342).

Investigation: Opponents of this opinion believe that such a request is not worthy of a high-ranking person like Prophet Moses (PBUH), who is one of the five great prophets, and his high position is not compatible with such negligence and ignorance (Tabātabāī, 1390: 8/238). In explaining this critique, it should be said that Moses (PBUH) is Kalīm Allah (having ability to speak to God) and he is not an ordinary person to compare his ability with other people. The ability to speak to God is a power that only a few infallibles can have. So that such a person becomes impatient in the position of speaking with God and out of enthusiasm, and asks God for more love and affection, and while hearing the voice of the beloved in a conversation full of love, seeks to see him, even if he knows he is not in a position to meet his God, it is not a far-fetched demand. Perhaps Moses (PBUH) himself knew during this request that the answer would be “no”, but he prolonged the words only to hear the answer of God or for some other reason.

1-2-2. The Seventh Category: Request of God Vision for the People of Prophet Moses (PBUH)

Many commentators (Shiybānī, 1413: 2/352; Ibn ‘Abd al-Salām, 1429: 1/222; Jurjānī, 1378: 3/243; Kāshānī, 13: 4/102; Ḥuwayzī, 1415: 2/63; Baḥrānī, 1415: 2/580-586; Qumī Mashhadī, 1368: 5/169-176; Ibn Abī Jāmi‘, 1413: 1/487; Ḥā‘rī Ṭehrānī, 1338: 5/14; Khusrawānī, 1390: 3/318; Qarā‘tī, 1388: 3/166-171; Šādeqī Ṭehrānī, 1419: 167; Zubaydī, 1428: 2/390; Dakhīl, 1422: 219; Thaqaḥī Ṭehrānī, 1398: 2/470; Ja‘farī, 1376: 4/206). in their commentaries point out that

Prophet Moses (PBUH) in this verse at the request of his people asked to see God. In the explanation, these commentators refer to verses that show that the children of Israel wanted to see God: "The people of the Book ask thee to cause a book to descend to them from heaven: Indeed they asked Moses for an even greater (miracle), for they said: "Show us Allah in public,"" (Q.4:153)¹ and verse "And remember ye said: "O Moses! We shall never believe in thee until we see Allah manifestly," (Q.2:55).² Also, the verses that show that they were tormented because of this request, such as the verse: "but they were dazed for their presumption, with thunder and lightning." (Q.4:153)³ and verse 155 of Surat al-A'rāf that says: "when they were seized with violent quaking..." (Q.7:155)⁴ and the continuation of the same verse that Prophet Moses (PBUH) calls them idiots for asking to see God: "wouldst Thou destroy us for the deeds of the foolish ones among us?" (Q.7:155).⁵

Another reason of this group of commentators (Ḥuwayzī, 1415: 2/63; Bahrānī, 1415: 2/580-586; Qumī Mashhadī, 1368: 5/169-176; Qarā'tī, 1388: 3/166-171; Zubaydī, 1428: 2/390; Thaqafī Tehrānī, 1398: 2/470). is a narration of Imam Reza (PBUH) in response to Ma'mūn, that is summarized by Thaqafī Tehrānī as follows:

١ «يَسْتَلْكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تَنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَى أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرَنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً» (نساء/١٥٣)
 ٢ «لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّى نَرَى اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً» (بقره/٥٥).
 ٣ «فَأَخَذْتَهُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ» (نساء/١٥٣)
 ٤ «فَلَمَّا أَخَذْتَهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ» (اعراف/١٥٥).
 ٥ «أَتَهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَّا» (اعراف/١٥٥).

The best answer from these forms is the answer that Imam Reza (PBUH) gave to Ma'mūn and the result is that when Prophet Moses (PBUH) said to the children of Israel, God spoke to me, they said we do not believe until we hear the word of God ourselves and Moses chose seventy of them and took them with him to the mountain. They heard the word of God from six directions and said, "We do not believe this is the word of God, until we see God." Therefore, lightning came and all of them died and were resurrected by the prayer of Moses (PBUH) and asked that Prophet Moses (PBUH) ask God to show Himself to him so that he could see the truth and narrate His attributes to them, and this increases their knowledge. Moses (PBUH) rebuked them and explained the reason for the impossibility of perceiving God. They were not convinced. Moses had to offer their request to God and left the matter to God's grace and will, so it was said to: "ask me what they wanted. I do not accuse you of their ignorance". At this time, Prophet Moses asked God their question and received a negative answer, an eternal denial... (Thaqafī Tehrānī, 1398: 2/470)

'Allāmiḥ Tabātabāī has considered this narration weak.

Investigation: The fact that this group of commentators have attributed the request to see God to the people of Prophet Moses (PBUH) is ruled out due to the order and relationship between the verses. Although in the above verses this request has also been raised by the people of Prophet Moses (PBUH), in the verse under discussion "Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk Qāla Lan Tarānī" (Q.7:143)⁶ it is quite clear that this is a one-on-one conversation

٦ «قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْظِرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ قَالَ لَنْ تَرَانِي» (اعراف/١٤٣)

in *Miqāt*. Prior to this request, the subject of making promises to Moses (PBUH) was mentioned:

We appointed for Moses thirty nights, and completed (the period) with ten (more): thus the term (of communion) with his Lord was completed, forty nights. And Moses had charged his brother Aaron (before he went up): "Act for me amongst my people: Do right, and follow not the way of those who do mischief." (Q.7:142)¹

And Moses (PBUH) appointed his brother as his successor before he came. Also, in verses 144 and 145, the issue of choosing Prophet Moses (PBUH) and receiving the Tablets (*Alwāh*) is discussed:

(Allah) said: "O Moses! I have chosen thee above (other) men, by the mission I (have given thee) and the words I (have spoken to thee): take then the (revelation) which I give thee, and be of those who give thanks." * And We ordained laws for him in the tablets in all matters, both commanding and explaining all things, (and said): "Take and hold these with firmness, and enjoin thy people to hold fast by the best in the precepts: soon shall I show you the homes of the wicked,- (How they lie desolate)." (Q.7:144-145)²

«وَوَاعَدْنَا مُوسَى ثَلَاثِينَ لَيْلَةً وَأَتَمَمْنَاهَا بِعَشْرِ فِتْمٍ مِيقَاتِ رَبِّهِ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً وَقَالَ مُوسَى لِأَخِيهِ هَارُونَ اخْلُفْنِي فِي قَوْمِي وَأَصْلِحْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ» (اعراف/ ١٤٢)

«قَالَ يَا مُوسَى إِنِّي اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسَالَاتِي وَبِكَلَامِي فَخُذْ مَا آتَيْتُكَ وَكُن مِّنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ * وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَابِ مِن كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّوْعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ يَأْخُذُوا بِأَحْسَنِهَا سَأُرِيكُمْ دَارَ الْفَاسِقِينَ» (انعام/ ١٤٤-١٤٥)

Paying attention to the relationship between the verses and the content of all the verses around the verse under discussion shows that this date is different from what Moses (PBUH) took 70 Israelites with him.

The same is true of the commentators who have cited verse: "wouldst Thou destroy us for the deeds of the foolish ones among us?" (Q.7:155).³ Prophet Moses (PBUH) said this sentence about calf worshipers and had nothing to do with the request of the children of Israel to see God. The connection between verses 148 to 156 of the Surah clearly shows this issue.

1-2-2. The Eighth Category: The Purpose of Seeing God is to Receive the Necessary Knowledge and Visit by Heart

This group of commentators (Abū al-Futūh Rāzī, 1408Ah, 8:376-389; Qāsemī, 1418Ah, 5: 178; Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīmī, 1363Ah, 4:189; Tabātabāī, 1390Sh, 8:260-236; Ḥusaynī Hamidanī, 1404Ah, 7:18-32.) consider seeing as the meaning of necessary knowledge and believe that this knowledge, which is interpreted as seeing and meeting, will reach only the righteous of its servants on the Day of Judgment, as he said: "Some faces, that Day, will beam (in brightness and beauty * Looking towards their Lord." (Q.75:22-23)⁴ and Therefore, its eternal negation in the sentence of "*Lan Tarānī*" will be about the world (Tabātabāī, 1390, 8: 242-236).

Abū al-Futūh Rāzī cites the following verses in explaining that the meaning of "knowledge" for "seeing"

³ «أُتَهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَّا» (اعراف/ ١٥٥)

⁴ «وَجُودٌ يَوْمَئِذٍ نَاصِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهَا نَاطِرَةٌ» (القيامة/ ٢٢-٢٣)

is common in the Qur'an and Arabic theology: "Seest thou not how thy Lord dealt with the Companions of the Elephant" (Q.105:1), "Seest thou not how thy Lord dealt with the 'Ad (people)" (Q.89:6), "Hast thou not turned thy vision to thy Lord?- How He doth prolong the shadow!" (Q.25:45), "Hast thou not Turned thy vision to the Chiefs of the Children of Israel after (the time of) Moses?" (Q.2: 246).¹

Another group of commentators, (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1415Ah, 2:236; Qumī Mashhadī, 1368Ah, 5:169-176; Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīmī, 1363Ah, 4:189; Burūjerdī, 1366Sh, 2:455; Qarā'ī, 1388Sh, 3:166-171; Ḥusaynī Hamidanī, 1404Ah, 7:18-32; Dāvar Panāh, 1366Sh, 15:64-66.) citing hadiths from Amīr al-Mu'minin (PBUH) and Imam Sādig (PBUH), have considered the purpose of seeing in this verse as a meeting by heart:

Amīr al-Mu'minin (PBUH): The eyes did not see him by seeing the eyes, but the hearts saw him with the realities of faith. It is not known by analogy, it is not perceived by the senses, it is not likened to people, it is described by verses, it is known by signs. And he, peace be upon him, said: I did not worship a God whom I did not see (Fayḍ Kāshānī, 1415 Ah: 2:236).

Burūjerdī in explaining the second hadith says:

Ibn Babiwayh has narrated from Hisham about verse: "Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk Qāla Lan Tarānī"(Q.7:143), I was in the presence of Imam Sādig (PBUH) when

Mu'āwiyeh ibn Wahb and Abd al-Mulk ibn A'yun entered, Mu'āwiyeh said, "What do you say in the hadith narrated from the Holy Prophet (PBUH) that he has seen God, how did he see God, or about the hadith narrated from Amīr al-Mu'minin (PBUH) that he said: Believers see God in Paradise. What are these observations like? Imam Sādig (PBUH) smiled and said: O Mu'āwiyeh, how ugly it is for a man who has lived in the kingdom of God for seventy or eighty years and has eaten the blessings of God during this period and he did not know the God who created him and blessed him. O Mu'āwiyeh, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) did not observe God with his eyes, knowing that seeing is possible in two ways, one is seeing with the eyes and one is seeing with the heart. If someone says that I have seen God with the eyes of the heart, it is true and correct, and whoever claims that I saw God with the eyes of the head has lied and disbelieves in God and has denied the verses of the Qur'an..... (Burūjerdī, 1366Sh, 2:458)

Investigation: The fact that God is not visible to the material human eye and the purpose of meeting God is necessary knowledge and a heartfelt meeting is a clear and undeniable issue. However, a few points should be noted about this request in verse 143 of *Surat al-A'rāf*. First, the request for a heartfelt meeting is not compatible with the statement of this verse: "Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk" (Q.7:143).²

Secondly, this request is made by Moses (AS) and is rejected by God: "Qāla Lan Tarānī" (Q.7:143)³ If the purpose of Moses (PBUH) as a great

«أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ» (فيل/١) ، «أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِعَادٍ» (فجر/٦) ، «أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ» (فرقان/٤٥) ، «أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَىٰ الْمَلَأِ مِن بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِن بَعْدِ مُوسَىٰ» (بقره/٢٤٦)

«قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ» (اعراف/١٤٣)

«قَالَ لَنْ تَرَانِي» (اعراف/١٤٣).

prophet is to ask for the necessary knowledge and a heartfelt meeting with God, what is the reason for his request not being granted? Although some commentators have said in response to this point that it is possible for the mountain to remain fixed (as it is conditioned at the end of the verse) and have considered this as a reason for the possibility of seeing God (Qāsemī, 1418Ah, 5:178), it is not compatible with the appearance of the verses.

The third point is the issue of the repentance of Prophet Moses (PBUH) which is raised at the end of this verse: “said: “Glory be to Thee! To Thee I turn in repentance, and I am the first to believe.” (Q.7:143).¹ There is no need for repentance if their request is a heartfelt visit that most elders achieve.

1-2-4. The Ninth Category: Request to See the Signs of Resurrection

Nahāvandī, Ṭabrisī and Zamakhsharī have brought another aspect in the interpretation of this verse which shows that the purpose of the words of Moses (PBUH): “*Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk*” (Q.7:143) is that God, by revealing some of the signs of the Day of Resurrection, introduce yourself to me so that I know as if I seem to see you. As it is stated in the hadith: “You will soon meet your Lord as you see the moon on the night of the fourteenth” (Zamakhsharī, 1407: 2/156; Ṭabrisī, 1412: 1/467-469; Nahāvandī, 1386: 2/649).

Investigation: In rejecting this opinion, we should very briefly refer to the same two previous issues, namely the rejection of the request of Prophet

Moses (PBUH) and his repentance to God.

In the following, these cases will be examined separately.

2. The Effect of the Relationship Between the Verses in Reviewing and Supplementing the Opinions of the Commentators

As mentioned, the opinions of the commentators in the interpretation of this verse can be divided into two main groups and nine categories. The first group expresses the views of commentators that believe that Prophet Moses (PBUH) considered it possible to meet God, and the second group expresses the views of the commentators who considered Prophet Moses (PBUH) to consider meeting God impossible. Paying attention to the relationship between the verses of the surah and the words of the verse helps the commentator in rejecting the opinions of the first, second, seventh, eighth and ninth categories:

- The opinion of the first category, who believe that vision is for certainty, is rejected by citing the phrase “*Qāla Lan Tarānī*”(Q.7:143),² which rejected the request of Moses (PBUH) and the phrase: “said: “Glory be to Thee! To Thee I turn in repentance, and I am the first to believe.” (Q.7:143),³ which shows the repentance of the Prophet.

- The opinion of the second category, who consider the request for a vision as a reason for its possibility, is again rejected by quoting the final phrase of verse 143 and the repentance of Prophet Moses (PBUH) from his request.

² «لَنْ تَرَانِي» (اعراف/١٤٣)

¹ «قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ» (اعراف/١٤٣).

³ «قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ» (اعراف/١٤٣)

• The reasons of the seventh category, who believe that this meeting was for the people of Prophet Moses (PBUH), were also rejected, citing the context and connection between the verses. Verse 142 shows that the request of Moses (PBUH) was with God at the time of his 40-day promise that he would come alone and hand over the people to Aaron (PBUH) and not when he took seventy people with him to the meeting place. Also, verses 144 and 145 show that the request before receiving the Tablets (*Alwāh*) is the same one that was mentioned after returning and seeing the calf worship of the people: "He put down the tablets" (Q.7:150),¹ all this shows that Moses (PBUH) was alone in this period.

• The citation of some commentators to verse 155 of *Surat al-A'rāf* is also rejected due to the connection between the verses of the surah. The explanation is that the statement of Prophet Moses (PBUH): "wouldst Thou destroy us for the deeds of the foolish ones among us?" (Q.7:155),² is related to the return of Prophet Moses (PBUH) and seeing a calf worshiper who called his people to repentance and took seventy people to the appointed time. After the context of the verses, it appears that this sentence was given as an excuse for calf worship and not as an excuse for the request of people to see God.

• The opinion of the eighth category, which has considered the meaning of seeing God as having necessary Knowledge or having a heartfelt meeting, is rejected in two ways due to the connection of the words in the verse: One is the word "*Unzur*" in the

phrase: "*Qāla Rabbi 'Arinī 'Unzur Ilayk*" (Q.7:143),³ the other is the repentance and return of Prophet Moses (AS): "Glory be to Thee! To Thee I turn in repentance, and I am the first to believe." (Q.7:143).⁴

• The ninth category vote is also rejected based on the two phrases of the verse that the request was rejected and Prophet Moses (PBUH) had repentance.

Investigating the relationship between the verses complements the votes of the fourth to sixth categories.

The fourth category, citing the repentance of Prophet Moses (PBUH), believes that he considered seeing to be possible for any reason and then repents by rejecting his request. The reason of the commentators of this category, which is acceptable according to the context and the relationship between the phrases in the verse, was also used in rejecting the opinions of the first, second, eighth and ninth categories.

The fifth category believes that Prophet Moses (PBUH) is not in the position of meeting God. In completing this opinion, with the help of examining the relationship between the verses, we can refer to verse: "(Allah) said: "O Moses! I have chosen thee above (other) men, by the mission I (have given thee) and the words I (have spoken to thee)" (Q.7:144)⁵ that God explicitly stated the cases that Moses has chosen for and gave a limit for this choice: for mission and speak, and not, for example, for seeing God! That is,

³ «قَالَ رَبِّ أَرْنِي أَنْظُرُ إِلَيْكَ» (اعراف/ ١٤٣)

⁴ «قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ» (اعراف/ ١٤٣).

⁵ «قَالَ يَا مُوسَى إِنِّي اصْطَفَيْتُكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ بِرِسَالَاتِي وَبِكَلَامِي

فَخُذْ مَا آتَيْتُكَ وَكُن مِّنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ» (اعراف/ ١٤٤)

¹ «وَأَلْقَى الْأَلْوَاحَ» (اعراف/ ١٥٠)

² «تُهْلِكُنَا بِمَا فَعَلَ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَّا» (اعراف/ ١٥٥)

his position is to this extent, and of course this issue confirms the discussion of the evolution of religions, and if his position is at the level of the prophets after him, it will not be the turn of the mission of Jesus (PBUH), Muhammad (PBUH) and other imams. Verse “Those messengers We endowed with gifts, some above others: To one of them Allah spoke; others He raised to degrees (of honour); to Jesus the son of Mary We gave clear (Signs), and strengthened him with the holy spirit” (Q.7: 253)¹ is another confirmation of this issue and clarifies it.

When he asks the request, Allah said: “By no means canst thou see Me (direct); But look upon the mount; if it abides in its place, then shalt thou see Me.” (Q.7:143)² indicates that if the conditions are provided and the servant acts better and can tolerate these concepts, this request is not impossible either. As about the revelation of the Qur'an on the mountain, verse: “Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, verily, thou wouldst have seen it humble itself and cleave asunder for fear of Allah. Such are the similitudes which We propound to men, that they may reflect.” (Q.59:21)³ shows that the mountains with all their greatness cannot bear this burden, but the same Qur'an when it is revealed to the heart of the Prophet: “With it came

down the spirit of Faith and Truth * To thy heart and mind, that thou mayest admonish.” (Q.26: 193-194)⁴ His heart has the capacity to receive this greatness.

In completing the sixth category verdict, who considered the request to see God out of eagerness, one should pay attention to the beginning of the verse. This request for vision occurred after speaking to God: “When Moses came to the place appointed by Us, and his Lord addressed him, He said: “O my Lord! show (Thyself) to me, that I may look upon thee.” (Q.7:143)⁵ and contrary to the opinion of the commentators who have compared him to ordinary people, the request is not far from the mind. The fact that Prophet Moses (PBUH) is *Kalim Allāh* (a person who God talks to) has shown his high position in relation to other people and the fact that he asked to continue the relationship he has established with his God, and after hearing the voice of God, asking to see Him is not far off. This request is never comparable to the request of people who say “we want to see God” out of unbelief: “Show us Allah in public” (Q.4:153).⁶

In the end, we see that Prophet Moses (PBUH) fainted and when he regained consciousness, he glorified God and repented: “When his Lord manifested His glory on the Mount, He made it as dust. And Moses fell down in a swoon. When he recovered his senses he said: “Glory be to Thee! To Thee I turn in repentance, and I am the

١ «تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ» (بقره/٢٥٣)

٢ «لَنْ تَرَانِي وَلَكِنْ انظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُ فَسَوْفَ تَرَانِي» (اعراف/١٤٣)

٣ «أَلَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُتَصَدِّعًا مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ» (حشر/٢١)

٤ «نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ * عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ» (شعرا/١٩٣-١٩٤)

٥ «وَلَمَّا جَاءَ مُوسَى لِمِيقَاتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهُ رَبُّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ» (اعراف/١٤٣)

٦ «أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً» (نساء/١٥٣)

first to believe." (Q.7:143)¹ which is due to knowing the position of God and that with the position that God has, this request has a place of repentance. Thus, the context of the verses shows that Moses (PBUH) is fully aware of his position, and if he made a request out of love that he is not in that position, it does not mean that he was unaware of the impossibility of seeing God.

As a general conclusion, it should be said that these studies show that regardless of the third category opinion, which does not provide a reason, attention is paid to the relationship between the verses and the relationship between the words of the verse, on the one hand, is used to reject the votes of the first, second, seventh, eighth and ninth categories, and on the other hand, it complements the votes of the fourth to sixth categories.

Conclusion

- In the interpretation of verse 143 of Surah al-A'raf, the opinions of the commentators about the intention of Prophet Moses (PBUH) to meet God are divided into two groups and nine categories. The first group who believe that Prophet Moses (PBUH) considered seeing God possible and express their views in five categories and the second group who believe that Prophet Moses (PBUH) considered seeing impossible and their opinions can be divided into four categories.

- The votes of the first, second, seventh, eighth and ninth categories are rejected due to the relationship between the verses and the words of the verse.

- The votes of the fourth to sixth categories are acceptable and are

completed with the help of verse relationship.

- This study shows that examining the relationship between verses in rejecting unacceptable opinions and proving acceptable opinions helps to interpret the verse and paying attention to this type of relationship leads to the completion of these opinions and clarification of meanings.

- Criticism of the opinions of the commentators, considering the relationship of the verses of the surah, shows that the request of Prophet Moses (PBUH) to see God was because of ecstasy and eagerness. This request was not far from the mind considering his position as Kalīm Allāh (a person who God talks to) and it is natural that Prophet Moses (PBUH) after hearing the words of God, was eager to visit Him. This request is never comparable to the request of the children of Israel who say "we want to see God" out of unbelief.

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¹ «وَنَحَرَ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا فَلَمَّا أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ» (اعراف/١٢٣)

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Abū Zahrih. No Date. Zahrat al-Tafāsīr. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.

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Tha'labī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. 1422 Ah. Al-Kashf va al-Bayān. Beirut: Dār Ihyā' al-Tarāth al-'Arabī.

Thaqafī Tehrānī, Muḥammad. 1398 Sh. Ravāni Javīd dar Tafsīri Qurāni Majīd. Tehrān: Burhān.

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Qurān. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmīyyah, Manshūrāt Muḥammad ‘Alī Bayḍun.

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39. Sīvāsī, Aḥmad ibn Maḥmūd. 1427 Ah. ‘Uyūn al-Tafāsīr. Beirut: Dār Ṣādir.

40. Suyūṭī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Abibakr. 1404 Ah. Al-Dur al-Manthūr fi al-Tafsīr bi al-M’thūr. Qum: Mar’shi Najafī Library.

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45. Shiybānī, Muḥammad ibn Hasan. 1413 Ah. Nahj al-Bayān ‘An Kashf Maānī al-Qurān. Qum: Al-Hādī.

46. Ṣabūnī, Muḥammad ‘Alī. 1421 Ah. Ṣafvat al-Tafāsīr. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.

47. Ṣādeqī Tehrānī, Muḥammad. 1419 Ah. Al-Bīlāgh fi Tafsīr al-Qurān bi al-Qurān. Qum: Maktabah Muḥammad al-Ṣādeqī al-Ṭehrānī.

48. Ṣāvī, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad. 1427Ah. Ḥāshīyat al-Ṣāvī ‘alā Tafsīr al-

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59. Faḍl Allāh, Muḥammad Ḥusayn. 1419 Ah. Min Vaḥy al-Qurān. Beirut: Dār al-Milāk.

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